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MODERN CLASSICS

FRIDA KAHLO

Small Poster (19 x 28.7 inches / 48 x 73 cm)

Large Poster (31.5 x 48 inches / 80 x 121,5 cm)



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PRINT SETTINGS

Please use Acrobat Reader to print and make sure that the settings 'Actual size' and 'Auto portrait/landscape' are selected.

SAVE PAPER & TONER

Only print out the pages you need.

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INTRODUCTION

FRIDA KAHLO

Frida Kahlo (1907-1954) was a Mexican painter whose body of work was first and foremost a portrait of her suffering body and constant pain.

She represented her suffering and her life as a woman in colorful and surrealist paintings. Today she counts as one of the most colorful and inspiring of artists.

From an early age her life was marked by the blows of fate. She fell ill with polio aged six and from then on was lame in her right leg. She wore several thick stockings to hide this thin leg because the other children cried "Frida, pata de palo!" - Frida, wooden leg! - after her, and from then on she wore long skirts. She didn't allow this to get her down though and took up sports such as soccer, boxing, and wrestling to regain her strength. She mostly wore very colorful, traditional clothing, which became a kind of trademark.



At age 18 she was in a terrible bus accident and was pierced by an iron bar. She survived the accident and during her long recovery began to paint "out of boredom", as she later said, since she had to spend more than a year in bed.

The majority of her paintings are painful self-portraits that show how she was feeling at the time and how sad and lonely she was.

She painted everything very precisely – just like a photographer. She was familiar with such realistic representations from an early age since her father was a successful photographer. Just as he did, she tried to capture and hold on to the visible world in portraits and still-lives.

But in contrast to her father's photography, her paintings are unreal, dream-like, and absurd. They are more than realistic, something we also call surreal. Because of this, Frida Kahlo later became counted as one of the surrealists, although she defended herself against this label: "People think of me as a surrealist. This is incorrect. I've never painted dreams. What I depicted was my reality." And anyone who's standing in front of one of her paintings would understand what she meant by this.



After the accident she had to spend the greater part of her life in a full-body plaster cast or a steel corset. Over the course of 29 years she endured 32 operations and 20 bone fractures, the majority of which were spinal. In 1953 her right leg was amputated. She spent her final years in a wheelchair and died from a lung embolism at the early age of 47.

Frida Kahlo – Mexican painter, style icon, and women's rights campaigner – has, meanwhile, become a cult figure. Her battle with her own disability and suffering marks her out as one of the exceptional personalities of modern art.

'El Marco' (The Frame) is the name of her self-portrait of 1938, which depicts Frida Kahlo's well-known face with the large eyes, deep-red painted lips, and bushy black conjoined eyebrows.

Micha Labbé

