



Frida & Diego: Art, Love, Life

By Catherine Reef

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Nontraditional, controversial, rebellious, and politically volatile, the Mexican artists Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera are remembered for their provocative paintings as well as for their deep love for each other. Their marriage was one of the most tumultuous and infamous in history—filled with passion, pain, betrayal, revolution, and, above all, art that helped define the twentieth century.

Catherine Reef's inspiring and insightful dual biography features numerous archival photos and full-color reproductions of both artists' work. *Endnotes, bibliography, timeline.*

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 7 Up—The lives of Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo were marked by exceptional artistic talent, political fervor, and an all-consuming passion for each other that even outlasted their two marriages. Private and professional heartbreak and an idiosyncratic outlook on life and the world influenced the pair's intensely personal paintings. Readers will learn much about the artists in this dual biography, including information on their numerous love affairs. Still, every relationship clarified for the couple that they couldn't really exist or produce art without the other. Superb examples of Rivera's and Kahlo's paintings are reproduced in glorious full color, replete with rich Mexican-folkloric and earth tones, and the work is filled with excellently reproduced contemporary photos that place events in historical and personal context. Striking use of color elsewhere, as on chapter-opening and back-matter pages, also figure into the handsome design. A well-rounded treatment of two giants of 20th-century art, this volume tracks the separate and combined trajectories of its subjects' lives and careers and allows for comparisons and contrasts. It is highly recommended for public and school libraries and will be useful for units on modern and Latino art and for studies of women artists.—Carol Goldman, Queens Library, NY

From [Booklist](#)

Starred Review Reef profiles the lives, accomplishments, and relationship of the two most recognizable figures in Mexican art: Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera. The story opens in 1922, with Rivera painting a mural in Mexico City's National Preparatory School. Kahlo, a mischievous student before the near-fatal traffic accident that would leave her in pain for most of her life, watched the muralist work for hours. Shifting back in time, the story tells of each figure's childhood, youth, and development as an artist, giving particular attention to Rivera's years spent training in Europe and Kahlo's devotion to painting despite significant health problems. After their first marriage in 1929 (they would divorce in 1939, then remarry in 1940), the stories of their lives are intertwined in a complex, braided narrative, woven with colorful strands of their art, their politics, their romantic liaisons with others, and their intense, complicated relationship. Along the way, Reef points out each individual's artistic development and unique qualities as a painter. Archival photos and color reproductions of artworks further enhance the narrative. Writing a dual biography is challenging, but in this case, the portrayal of each person would seem incomplete without an understanding of the other. A handsome biography that is both engaging and enlightening. Grades 7-10. --Carolyn Phelan

Review

a JLG selection

"An ingenuous way to present the two artists to a young adult reader."

—*The New York Times*

* "A handsome biography that is both engaging and enlightening."

—*Booklist, starred review*

* "Compelling reading for art lovers."

—*Kirkus, starred review*

* "A well-rounded treatment of two giants of 20th-century art, this volume tracks the separate and combined

trajectories of its subjects' lives and careers and allows for comparisons and contrasts."

—*School Library Journal*, starred review

"Reef tackles the unconventional love story head-on, with a candor that pulls no punches with its youth audience."

—*Bulletin*

Users Review

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Hans Diaz:

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William Martel:

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