

Frida Kahlo

Born 1907, Mexico City, Mexico; died Mexico City, Mexico, 1954



Frida Kahlo

was born in Mexico in 1907. She loved to draw when she was a child. When Kahlo was 18, she was in a bus accident and had to stay in bed for months to recover. While she was in bed healing, she made paintings about what she felt and saw, including many **self-portraits**—paintings of herself. When Kahlo was better, she showed her paintings to the famous Mexican artist Diego Rivera, who encouraged her to become an artist, and who later became her husband.



Frida Kahlo, *Frieda and Diego Rivera*, 1931

A **portrait** is a picture of a person. A **self-portrait** is a picture of the artist him- or herself. Kahlo painted this portrait of herself and her husband, Diego Rivera, to commemorate their visit to San Francisco in 1931. The bird above the two figures holds a **banderole**, or ribbon, with a Spanish inscription that reads:

Here you see me, Frida Kahlo, with my beloved husband, Diego Rivera. I painted these portraits in the beautiful city of San Francisco, California, for our friend Mr. Albert Bender. It was the month of April in the year 1931.

Fun Fact!

Microscopic examinations of this painting show us that Kahlo originally painted herself wearing a pink dress with blue decoration and pink shoes, instead of the green dress and red and green shoes she wears in the final painting.

Look at the different colors Kahlo used to depict herself and her husband, the artist Diego Rivera. What do you think about the choice of colors for each of the figures?

Explore

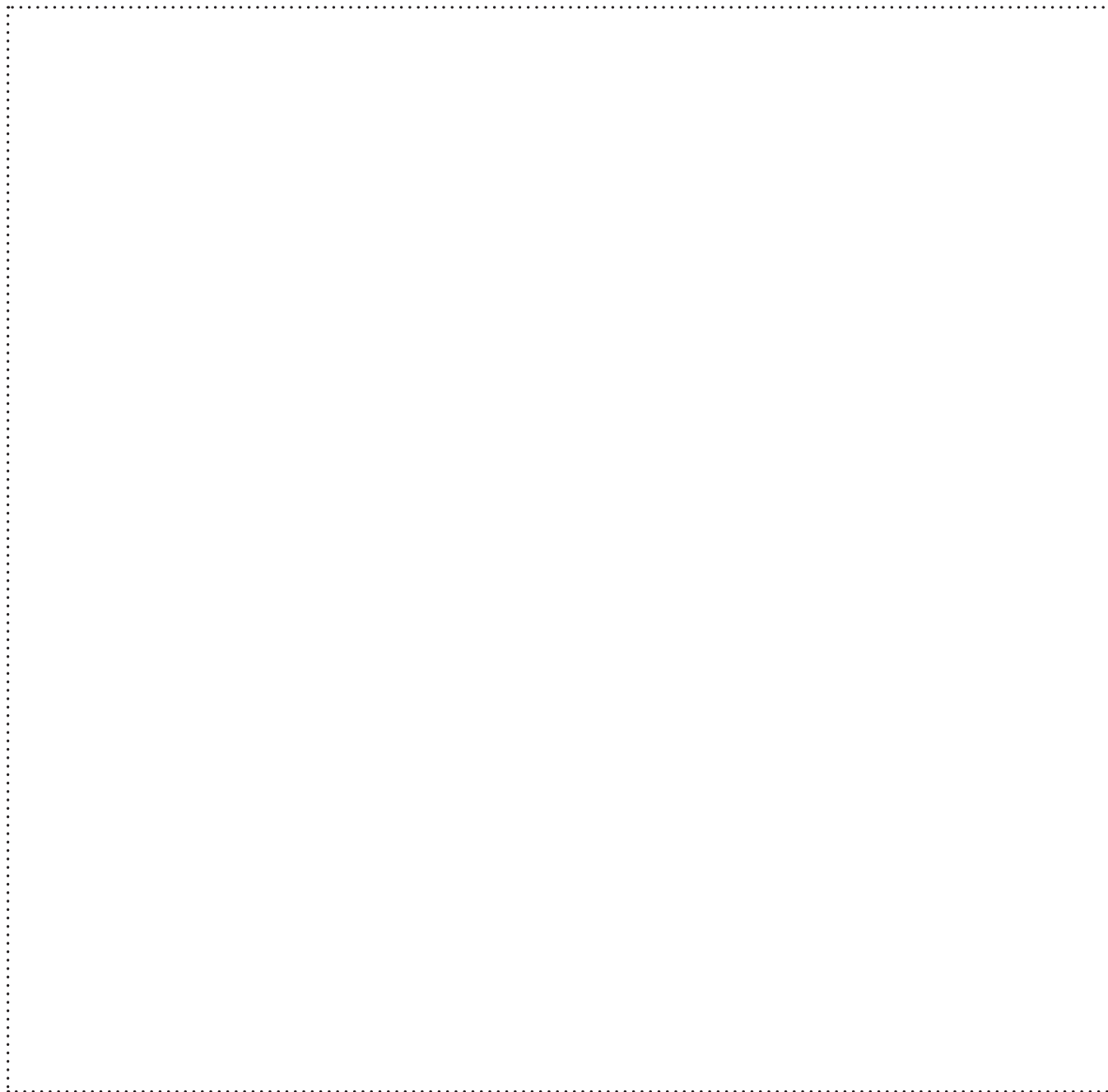
What is happening in this painting? What do you see that makes you say that?

How would you describe the people in the picture? Who do you think is the most important figure? What do you see that makes you think that?

What clues in the painting tell you about who these people are and where they are from?

Create

In the space below, draw a portrait that celebrates a special day in your life. Will you include someone else in your portrait? What will you be wearing? What other objects will you include in your picture?



Front cover image: Frida Kahlo, *Frieda and Diego Rivera*, 1931 (detail); San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Albert M. Bender Collection, gift of Albert M. Bender; © 2021 Banco de México Diego Rivera Frida Kahlo Museums Trust, Mexico, D.F. / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

For more information about this work, watch *The Country Dog Gentlemen Travel to Extraordinary Worlds* at sfmoma.org/countrydog.



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