



Self-Portrait on the Border Line Between Mexico and the United States

How does a balance of formal, thematic, and contextual qualities reveal layers of meaning?

<p>FORM How it “is”</p>	<p>THEME What it is about</p>	<p>CONTEXT Who, When, Where, Why</p>
<p>ACTUAL COMPOSITION: Horizontal: full body self-portrait with identifiable/detailed object</p> <p>ART ELEMENTS: organic/geometric shapes, lines, textures, colors, values (dark and light)</p> <p>DESIGN PRINCIPLES: symmetry, dominance, rhythm, pattern, contrast</p> <p>2D&3D QUALITIES: central “flat” figure; foreground, middle- and background create illusion of depth</p> <p>SIZE/SCALE: 11 ¾ x 13 ½ inches</p> <p>MEDIA/MATERIALS: Oil painting on tin</p> <p>PROCESSES/METHODS: Retablo=Mexican devotional paintings (thanking saints in times of crisis) but different theme</p> <p>SKILLS: Drawing, painting with fine brush strokes</p> <p>STYLE: Narrative, naïve, Surrealism (dreamlike imagery + realism)</p> <p>OTHER: one of many self-portraits</p>	<p>BROAD SUBJECT/BIG IDEA: Cultural Identity, Duality of Life, Nature & Society, Border/Boundaries</p> <p>SUBJECT MATTER: Self-Portrait with landscape/cityscape (mindscape)</p> <p>“VIEWPOINT”/ PERSPECTIVE Introspective—Center of narrative; “Carmen Rivera painted her picture in 1932”</p> <p>VISUAL SOURCES: Central pose of Frida (pink dress, lace gloves) planets, plants, flags (papel picado--cut paper), Mexican artifacts/ruins, US industrial materials & structures, “Ford”</p> <p>ART HISTORICAL REFERENCES: Botticelli, Rousseau, Laurencin, Chagall, Rivera’s murals, Surrealists; Dali, Varo, Fini, Stettheimer, Carmen Lomas Garza</p> <p>LITERARY SOURCES: Surrealist Poet Andre Breton told her she was a Surrealist...Animal Farm (Trotsky), WW II literature, Frida Kahlo biographies</p> <p>OTHER ARTS CONNECTIONS: Music: Mexican folk music, ballads Theater: Evita, Westside Story Dance: Ballet folklorico, tango Film: Under the Same Moon, El Norte, Crash, Babel</p> <p>OTHER SUBJECTS: Math: balance Language Arts: love stories, family legends, autobiography Science: environment, planets, machines, automobiles, botany Social Studies: cultural conflict, industry/economics, ancient cultures, geography, rituals, Physical Education: gesture Vocational Education: collaboration towards shared goals</p>	<p>WHEN: 1932</p> <p>WHERE: Painted while waiting for Diego Rivera to finish mural in Detroit; after miscarriage she stayed in Henry Ford Hospital; felt detached from her ancient homeland</p> <p>BY/FOR WHOM: Frida Kahlo (1907-1954), signed Carmen River</p> <p>WHY IT WAS CREATED & VALUED: Intention/Purpose(s) Deep introspection – painting eased her sense of isolation”; reveals homesickness/stuck in limbo.</p> <p>SIGNIFICANCE/RELEVANCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal tragic life: polio at 7, crippling bus accident left her in permanent pain, broke pelvis and back, plaster corsets for long periods of time... • Social at 22, married muralist Diego Rivera (age 42) in 1929; environmental residents of Mexico City but commissioned to do murals in Detroit, NYC, SF. Divorced in 1939; remarried 1940 • Cultural: grew up during Mexican revolution; recognized primarily by the intellectual elite in Mexico and internationally; celebrities visited her in Mexico City • Historical: fully immersed in the artworld but late to get recognition; 1st solo show in 1953 prior to her death • Artistic: Self-portraits depict loneliness; painted self because “she was the person she knew best. • Educational: inspired women artists as a role model • Political: Communist/anti-Capitalist philosophy; believed that industry was part of Capitalism, machines were bad luck and cause of pain • Spiritual: Adaptation of Mexican culture/folk art elements into a contemporary suggestion of conflicting social and personal identities

FTC insights, assessments, and questions: