

# A hispanic art report: joe villarreal, clara aguero and frida kahlo

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Art is something that people of all ages over the world can appreciate. Art doesn't expect you to speak the same language; it's just there for you to admire it.

Today I would like to introduce six Hispanic Artists who have touched the lives of Americans. Some were visitors to the United States, others were native born with strong Hispanic family backgrounds. See how a world of creativity and passion influenced their lives and ours.

Meet Frida Kahlo, this beautiful woman led a very passionate life full of tragedy and circumstances. Magdalena Carmen Frida Kahlo Calderon was born on the sixth of July in 1907 to Matilde and Guillermo Kahlo. From a young age Frida began suffering with one of her many illnesses. At age six she was stricken with polio, which made her right leg noticeably smaller than the other was. By the time she reached high school she led a life of mystery and lies. She was a bright student who attended the best preparatory school in Mexico. She was known as a rebellious student who flirted with many of the male students. Her high school notebooks were filled with sketches, including one of herself in a straw hat.

Frida fell in love with a young man by the name of Alejandro Gomez Arias, a charismatic leader of the Cachuchas. He was intelligent, attractive, well-mannered young man of a good family. They were very good friends who spent much time together, but never talked of marriage. One of their outings the two of them were involved in a terrible accident. The bus they were traveling in collided with a turning streetcar. The collision was very serious; Alex landed underneath the streetcar but regained consciousness and

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sought to help Frida. He found her bathed in blood, without her clothes, impaled on the rod of a metal handrail. A clad worker who had seen the accident pulled the rod out of her. This accident left Frida suffering for many years. She later developed a relationship with Diego Rivera which turned into a love affair that lead into marriage. Their marriage was not a welcomed one by her peers and parents. Diego was a fat, older man who was known to be a womanizer.

Her father expressed his concern and gave his blessing to the marriage. A marriage that would prove passionate, dangerous devoted and un-devoted over and over again. The two were married for over twenty years on and off. However, during this time Diego continued to support Fridas work. He was an encouragement from the beginning to the end. Fridas work has been seen in the United States as well as the southwest. Americans such as Edward G. Robinson was among the first to purchase her art. Many paintings were painted as thank you gifts and appreciation to individuals such as Dr. Leo Eloesser of San Francisco, California, who cared for her during a brief hospital stay involving a problem with her foot. Freda visited the United States many times. She became well know as an artist. Many of Fridas paintings were an array self-portraits and turmoil. They depicted things that were going on in her life. You could almost tell mood she was in by the type of paintings she painted. Frida suffered much from her illnesses, mostly related to her early accident. Her heavy drinking and bouts with depression helped to lead her downward spiral. Although she and Diego divorced they later re-married and he took care of her until she died at the age of forty-

seven. She lived a passionate life, full fancy clothing, signature jewelry, passion for excitement, and a deep love for her beloved Diago.

Joe Villarreal is a native of San Antonio and has been drawing since the age of three. Joe found that he liked drawing since he entered his first contest at school in 1964. Villarreal did very well in the contest receiving a blue ribbon for his efforts. He now has a total of eleven first place awards that he has won in competitions. He took art classes in elementary, middle, and high schools. His first art show was in 1969 at Trinity University. He then attended the Warren Hunter School of Art where he learned to paint with oils as well as air brushing and hand painting signs. After schooling, Joe began working as a graphics designer for a major research and development firm for 20 years. There he painted cover art for technical publications and brochures as well as in plant posters and illustrations. In 1963, Joe suffered a work-related injury that eventually caused an early retirement. He says that it is a constant struggle and sometimes it is very difficult for him to paint. His love for art keeps him going each and every day. In over 40 years as an artist, Joe has painted portraits, sports art, landscapes, still life, western art, cultural art, and contemporary southwestern art. Among his many exhibit shows, he is also the first Latino native to unveil a 6 x 8 painting in front of the Alamo depicting the Battle of the Alamo. He gives lectures at local schools, community organizations and most recently the Edgewood Academy of Art. He stresses to these students the importance of confidence, self-esteem and personal values as a key to success. Joe encourages the students to take advantage of the talents they have and develop them by practicing

constantly. Joe has sold paintings to collectors as far away as Japan, Germany, Italy, England, Canada, Mexico, and throughout the United States. He currently has 28 print editions on the market. His cultural works are of the most popular that people collect and are selling out fast! Actors Jesse Borrego and Edward James Olmos have added his artwork to their collections. Since Joe has done sports art, some of the Dallas Cowboys and San Antonio Spurs own his work as well. Villarreal has been a member of the San Antonio Water Color Society, the Artist Alliance, the Art Cellar and the famed River Art Group. He is also a member of the San Antonio Living History Association and the United States Military Veterans Parade Association. He continues to make many donations year round. He has helped over 50 benefactors over the years including schools, churches, churches, non-profit and scholarship organizations including fund raisers for the terminally ill. He unveiled a painting that is a part of his series Mis Recuerdos (My Memories) on television in March 2000. Some of Joe's paintings were part of the PBS special The Mexican American which aired in August 2000. Joe has been nominated for many awards and accommodations in his hometown of San Antonio.

Another hispanic artist by the name, Clara Aguero, resides in Savannah, Georgia and in Bogota, Colombia, South America. She holds five professional art degrees. She has a Bachelor of Arts in Interior Design, a Bachelor of Arts in Commercial Art, a Teaching Certificate in Art Education K-12, a Masters of Arts in Printmaking and a Master of Fine Arts in Photography. She has taught in the United States at such as Hampton University, Florida Com. College