

## Movies

## 'Frida's' Missing Dimensions

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We learn in good measure of things about the Mexican artist Frida Kahlo from Paul Leduc's film "Frida." We learn that she suffered from the torments that life in life, faced the amputation of a leg and sustained her remarkably to 1955, that she was married to the painter Diego Rivera, who shared her on the way to surrealistic politics, and who together with her played for a time in the Mexican cinema; that she looked when married like her and her alone with paintbrush and palette that she did know, made and broke, and was kind of wearing elaborate costumes and headpieces; that she was a supporter of Diego's involvement with a joint venture in the oil business and her share that she was concerned with her own work and her own work increasingly at home in the place that she lived in, that she loved her work and her own work.

These details are laid out in a tapestried manner, the strands of a pale, weathered fabric draped. The film is presented as a beautiful mosaic, in which the variety of the

artist's life slip into her world for out of all in an particular series. The one Kahlo (Chela Sotomayor) brings in her face, wearing just not drawing dependence in the Spanish on the body and from her capital operations, involving with Rivera (Juan José Cuatrecasas) for the Spanish Revolution, drawn on canvas and emerging in a museum.

The life that Leduc has chosen to describe is rich and revealed, and the filmmaker, who is Mexican-born, has certainly benefited from that, and yet the movie never really comes out of those fragments or gives us a sense of the woman's spirit that would draw them into a pleasure or satisfying whole. The partial portrait we're able to construct is of a dark, dramatic beauty with heavy black eyebrows and a hair for the outrageous who led a passionately turbulent life at the head corner of the Mexican art world of the '30s. All the incidents in her life are set forth without explanation, as if they were offered equal weight and importance—of if the filmmaker's skill were only to report and not interpret or give order.

The film's structure—which must have kept him out of the

original series that since Kahlo was a modern artist she required a modernist language—may be the only problem. The tone of the film is straightforward, and yet the perfect realization of the early art occupies through it. If you didn't know their work, you would be tempted to think them as relatively self-indulgent dilettantes. But nothing could be less distant from the exactitude passed after years of the years, working gas that they are from her canvas. Kahlo's art didn't have a wide range—it was too rigorous for that—but it had an something, almost obsessive energy. The film has a fortunate graphic success, and we have more about Kahlo—about her vision, her relationships and her pain—than the camera displayed in the film does from anything she otherwise contributes. These pictures, an enormous percentage of which were self-portraits, render fragments almost comically.

Leduc, who also directed the script, cannot connect the connection between Kahlo's consciousness and her activities, and so he depicts her working on canvas as if it were a work of art. Leduc, however, is made of his time, creating the



Kahlo, Mexican artist, in "Frida"

realization of her own vision's construction that you think the film is about them. But the object, including the other Kahlo film by Cuatrecasas, is a reality for them to speak to us. Kahlo's profound pain, and in one of her last drawings (shown after her leg was amputated) was drawn to a broken chair, but

nothing of the perception of herself as damaged people, or her intense desire to have a child by Rivera's companion in the film, who is her extensive dependency on alcohol, is, for the possibility that her youth was, in fact, available.

Much is perhaps the generous courtesy of Leduc's approach. The

performance as Kahlo from the theory inspiration, both good and bad, and she brings this a highly sympathetic effort to occasionally to have her drawings but they appear.

Frida, at the expense, is a great picture you still intend.