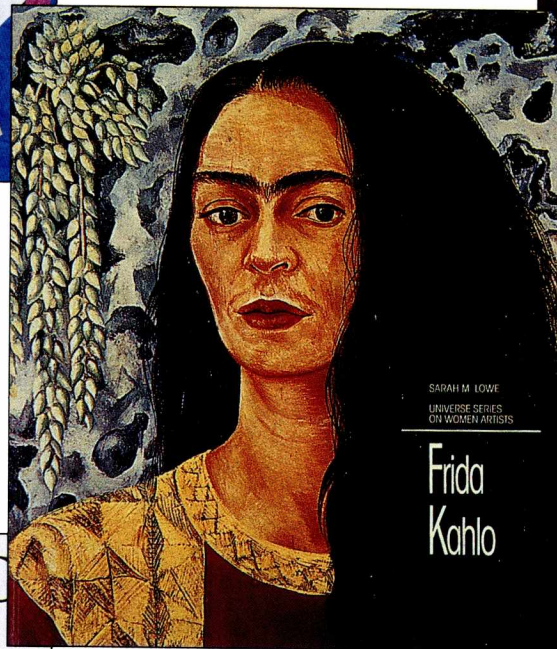
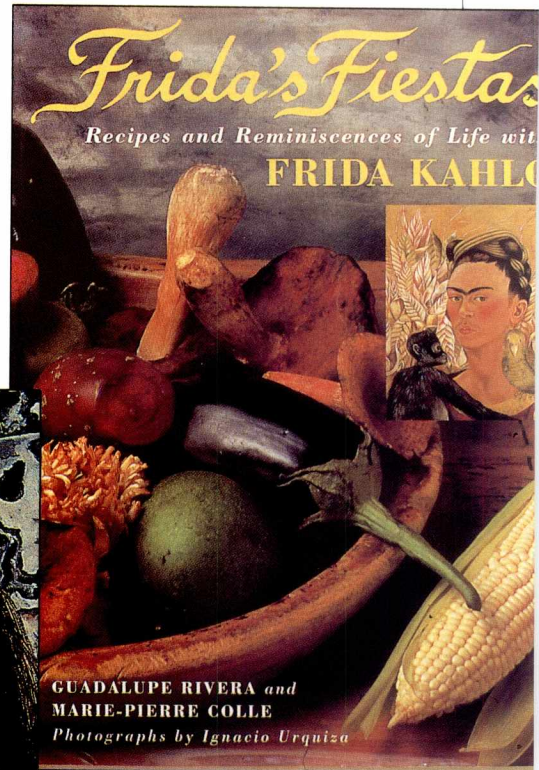
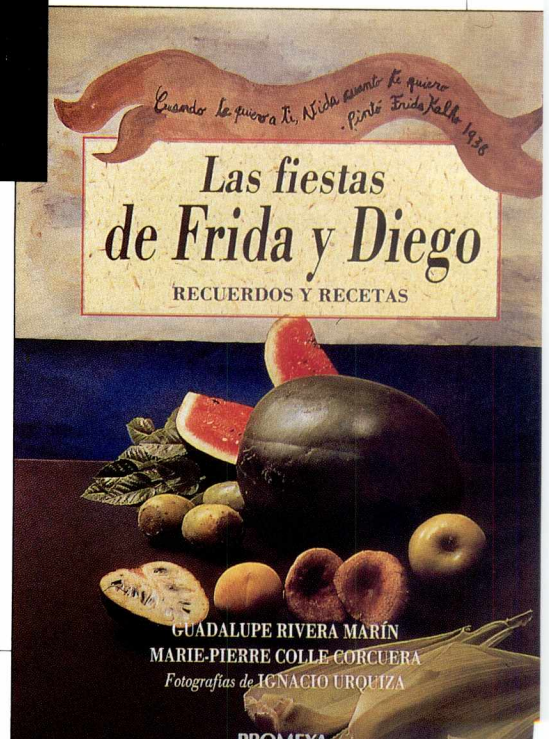
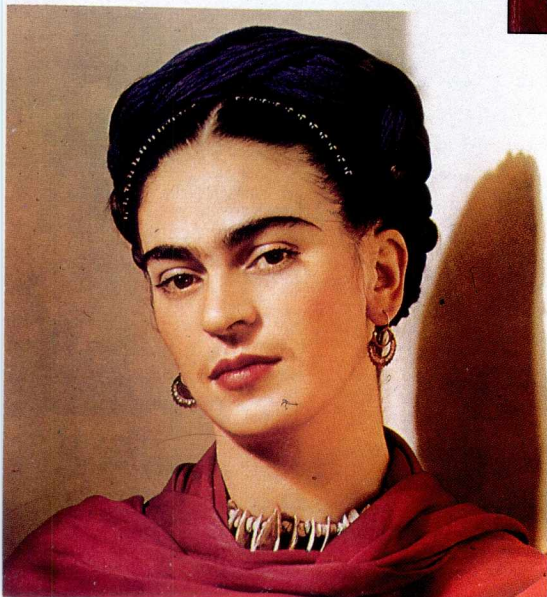


# Reviews



FRIDA KAHLO



**Frida Kahlo & Ignacio Aguirre**  
**Cartas de una pasión**

(Letters of a Passion)

Luis Mario Schneider (preface)

Ricardo Noriega (design)

Glypho, Taller de Gráfica, S.C.

(pre-press production)

Editorial Trabuco y Clavel

Mexico City, 1994, 64 pp.

Much has been written about Frida Kahlo. Nevertheless, this volume of previously unpublished letters, in her own hand, helps reveal another of her facets. For Frida-followers this book is a new delight.

Ignacio Aguirre was a novelist and engraver from Jalisco. From 1915 (when he was only 15 years old) to 1917 he fought against Pancho Villa as a member of the forces commanded by Carranza. In 1920 he took up arms again, in support of General Alvaro Obregón. From 1921 to 1929 he worked in the Secretariat of Communications and the Office of the President of the Republic.

At the same time he devoted himself to art. He was one of the founders of the League of Revolutionary Writers and Artists in 1933 and the People's Graphic Workshop in 1937. In 1940 he won first prize in the Latin American Engraving Exhibit at the World Fair in New York, a city where he put on five exhibitions. He also showed his work in Washington in 1942.

He was a friend of the photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson, for whom he also posed as a model. A photo of him was even used for the cover of the catalogue for the photography exhibition held at New York's Museum of Modern Art in 1987.

He painted several murals, and the one he did in Mexico City for the Military Aviation Library—destroyed when the building was demolished—bore witness to his love affair with Frida Kahlo.

Their liaisons were held at Puente de Alvarado No. 45, where Aguirre

lived and where Frida addressed most of her letters (which were always stamped "For immediate delivery"), as well as in the aviation library or the home of very close friends.

Unfortunately none of Aguirre's letters have been found, although from one of Frida's we deduce that he did write her:

(August 19, 1935)

*I kept your letter like a treasure  
 —Your voice gave me the purest  
 joy—I didn't know what to do—  
 and I sat down to write this letter  
 which will be unable to tell you,  
 with my words, everything I  
 would like to say—everything you  
 deserve for giving me so much!—  
 your beauty—your hands—you.  
 I wish I could be so pretty for you!  
 I wish I could give you all that  
 which you have never had, and  
 even so you wouldn't know how  
 wonderful it is to be able to love  
 you. I will wait all the minutes  
 until I can see you. Wait for me at  
 six fifteen on Wednesday—below,  
 in the big hallway of your house,  
 because I think that's easiest—  
 Call me tomorrow at six in the  
 afternoon; I just want to hear  
 your voice, even if only for a  
 moment. If you call me, I will  
 gather many little flowers for you  
 and I will bring them to you on  
 Wednesday, but if you don't call  
 me I will bring them to you  
 anyway—so many that they could  
 make a garden on your chest—  
 the color of humid earth.  
 The frogs are still singing for us  
 —and our river is waiting—the  
 chaste town is looking at the  
 Great Bear constellation—and as  
 for me—I love you.*

While Ignacio Aguirre's letters to Frida Kahlo have not been found, the testimony of his love and admiration remains in the lecture he gave on her in 1986, four years before his death:

*... Frida is the event of each day,  
 with birds and flowers, forget-me-nots,  
 pelicans, marigolds, the moisture of the  
 garden and the aroma of a burning*

*comal [traditional Mexican griddle]....  
 One day (and I don't want to brag about  
 the thousands and thousands of  
 anecdotes I know about Frida) I was  
 painting a mural for the Military  
 Aviation Library, which was then  
 located on Balbuena Street. Frida was  
 helping me... today it's nothing but dust,  
 a memory amidst the nostalgia of what I  
 am..... When Diego Rivera had to go to  
 New York to talk with Rockefeller about  
 the mural he did, which was later  
 destroyed for reasons all of you know,  
 Frida went with him. Scandalously  
 beautiful Frida... I haven't seen, heard  
 or read anything about Frida Kahlo. I  
 knew her so well, I was so close to her in  
 her artistic work, her struggles and her  
 life, that I wouldn't want to change or  
 upset the image I have retained of her. I  
 simply remain with the Frida I know,  
 who I looked at and listened to for  
 many years.*

Luis Mario Schneider's preface to *Frida Kahlo & Ignacio Aguirre, Cartas de una pasión* provides the historical context of this love affair and mentions the factors that may have begun and ended it. The book also includes Kahlo's manuscript letters, together with a typescript version of each one; the images which María Esther Velázquez Piña Aguirre gave the publishers, together with the letters; and the full text of the lecture Ignacio Aguirre gave on his beloved Frida.

Marybel Toro Gayol.  
 Managing Editor.

**Frida Kahlo: Images  
 and Icons**

**Frida Kahlo**

Sarah Lowe

Universe Publishing

New York: 1991, 128 pp.

**Frida Kahlo: The Camera Seduced**

Elena Poniatowska and Carla  
 Stellweg (essays)

Chatto & Windus Ltd.

London: 1992, 125 pp.