

emotionally moved by the ways in which she shifted and changed to create her persona."²

There are many wonderful photographs of Frida taken by professionals, novices, friends and family members, among them Ansel Adams, Manuel Alvarez Bravo, Lola Alvarez Bravo, Lucienne Bloch, Imogen Cunningham, Hector García, Nickolas Muray, Bernard G. Silberstein and Edward Weston. Stellweg's essay discusses the role of each photographer in Frida's life and singles out Lucienne Bloch:

Kahlo and Bloch enjoyed each other's company; they went to the movies, drew together, cracked jokes, and sang off-color Mexican songs. Bloch made a unique series of photographs of Kahlo showing off, having fun, mimicking for the camera expressing the fun-loving daredevil side she usually hid from photographers.³

Who is Lucienne Bloch? The captions document the backgrounds of most of the photographers, but not Bloch, who is mentioned but not identified as an artist who created many fresco murals of her own, together with her husband Stephen Dimitroff. They learned the technique working with Diego Rivera as assistants, apprentices and friends. Bloch's images are outstanding: Frida is alive, a real person, not an enigmatic, mysterious myth!

More than twenty-five books and papers have been written about the "mythological Frida" since Hayden Herrera's biography was published ten years ago—most of them by women. If Frida were alive today, I suspect, she would poke fun at the growing bibliography and plethora of

interpretations. She would probably go out of her way to become more outrageously cryptic for "interpreting scholars and journalists." Or she might get bored with it all as she did with the monumental "old man," Trotsky.

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Frida's Fiestas. Recipes and Reminiscences of Life with Frida Kahlo

Guadalupe Rivera and Marie-Pierre Colle

Ignacio Urquiza (photography)

Spanish edition, Mexico City:

Promexa, 1994, 223 pp.

(English version, New York: Pavilion Books Limited, 1994, 224 pp.

Each time we open the trunk of memories of Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera we find a reason not only to talk about them but to put out a new book about them. This time Diego's daughter Guadalupe Rivera joins with Marie-Pierre Colle to show us the salt and pepper in these two artists' lives: the gastronomy and the parties.

Without being a novel, *Frida's Fiestas* maintains an intimate link between characters and recipes. Rather than a simple book about the couple's favorite dishes, this volume shows some of the ways in which Frida expressed her love for all things Mexican, for Diego, for her friends and—as she always said—for life in general.

Guadalupe Rivera lived with the couple and as a result, this book describes a loving and enthusiastic Frida who was generous with her support, even organizing parties so her university friends could meet the famous painter of the

Revolution and his wife, painter of scandalous canvases.

The book also reveals little-known anecdotes, such as the relation between Frida and Diego's first wife, Guadalupe Marin (mother of Guadalupe Rivera), who prepared the food for her ex-husband's wedding, since she knew which were the favorite dishes of the demanding Diego. The wedding ended with a scandal *a la mexicana*.

Famous personages passed through the dining room of the "Blue House" more than once. Tina Modotti, Juan O'Gorman and Trotsky, among many others, enjoyed the famous *chiles rellenos*, *chiles en nogada*, *pozoles*, *enchiladas*, *pulques* and *tequilas*. The cause for celebration mattered little—it could be anything from a political meeting to the Day of the Dead.

The Riveras' lives were dedicated to reviving Mexican traditions, and they carried this out in many ways as part of their daily lives, from their way of dressing to how they celebrated and, above all, what they ate.

In a time when it was fashionable for women to wear short hairstyles, with heavily made-up eyelids and mouths and straight knee-length dresses, Frida Kahlo deliberately broke away with her original way of dressing, using regional outfits from the states of Oaxaca and Veracruz as well as the Tehuantepec Isthmus. Dressed in this special way, she made the rounds of the flower and fruit stands in the Coyoacán market several times a week.

Frida's Fiesta was printed in August, the month the book begins with a listing of the special dates the Riveras celebrated throughout the year, each with its own menu and recipes and a short story for dessert.

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² Poniatowska and Stellweg, page 118.

³ *Ibid.*, page 112.