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FRIDA KAHLO

AU-DELÀ DES APPARENCES

Palais Galliera
15.09.2022 – 05.03.2023

10 AVENUE PIERRE 1^{ER} DE SERBIE, 75116 PARIS

#expofridakahlo



FRIDA KAHLO: UN DON PASSELLI/VOGUE ITALIA; TONTI/REX USA; L'ARTE/REX USA; CONCESSION GEMINQUE/CF DNA

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FRIDA KAHLO

AU-DELÀ DES APPARENCES

PRESS RELEASE

15.09.2022 - 05.03.2023

The Palais Galliera celebrates Frida Kahlo (6 July 1907-13 July 1954), one of the most widely recognised and influential artists of the 20th century. Getting away from the clichés attached to her personality, the exhibition *Frida Kahlo, au-delà des apparences [Frida Kahlo, Beyond Appearances]* invites visitors to explore the private side of the artist's life, and to understand how she constructed her identity through the way she presented and represented herself.

For the first time in France and in close collaboration with the Museo Frida Kahlo, the exhibition features more than 200 objects from the Casa Azul, the house where Frida was born and brought up, including garments, accessories, correspondence, cosmetics, medicines and orthopaedic aids. When the artist died in 1954, these personal effects were placed under seal by her husband, the Mexican muralist Diego Rivera, and were not discovered until fifty years later, in 2004.

This precious collection - which includes traditional *Tehuana* dresses, pre-Columbian necklaces that Frida used to collect, and hand-painted corsets and prosthetics - is presented, along with films and photographs of the artist, to form a visual narrative of her extraordinary life.

Frida Kahlo used her appearance as a means of expressing her doubts and feelings about herself and her politics: after a serious accident at the age of 18, Frida devoted herself to painting. She adopted traditional clothing, which was a statement of her Mexican identity, but also a way of coping more comfortably with her disability. The exhibition *Frida Kahlo, au-delà des apparences* traces how the artist cultivated her image. An image that amounted almost to a manifesto reflecting her cultural heritage, but also her experience of gender and of living with a disability.

In an exhibition that is both biographical and thematic, the Palais Galliera looks at the artist's visit to Paris and her relationship with the Surrealist group.

The visit continues with a capsule exhibition from 15 September to 31 December 2022, which considers Frida Kahlo's influence on contemporary fashion and how she has remained an icon and source of inspiration for designers such as Alexander McQueen, Jean Paul Gaultier, Karl Lagerfeld for CHANEL, Riccardo Tisci for Givenchy, Maria Grazia Chiuri for Dior or Rei Kawakubo for Comme des Garçons.

CURATORS :

Circe Henestrosa, curator and designer of the exhibition, Head of the School of Fashion, LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore

Miren Arzalluz, director of the Palais Galliera, assisted by Alice Freudiger

Gannit Ankori, curatorial advisor, PhD, Henry and Lois Foster Director and Chief Curator, Rose Art Museum, USA

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FRIDA KAHLO

AU-DELÀ DES APPARENCES

SCENOGRAPHY

15.09.2022 - 05.03.2023

The Palais Galliera lends itself perfectly to an exhibition devoted to the amazing career of Frida Kahlo. The rooms, which are all different, reflect different facets of Frida: her personality, her tragedy, her iconic character and her style – a style that is inseparable from her life, her personality, her condition and her work.

On the exhibition trail, each of these facets is clearly identified and characterises a unique emotion. Each gallery is different and every section has its own identity. Although the clinical aspect is sometimes accentuated, there is an overall atmosphere of warmth created by the ambience of the Palais Galliera.

The scenography plays on a range of more or less warm blacks and whites. The reason for this sober choice of colours was to ensure that the works on display stand out and that the walls and vaulting of the garden-level galleries, which are naturally coloured by the brick, do not impede their legibility.

Sandra Courtine, scenographer of the exhibition



© Sandra Courtine

FRIDA KAHLO

AU-DELÀ DES APPARENCES

15.09.2022 - 05.03.2023

EXHIBITION TRAIL



Frida Kahlo by Toni Frissell, *US Vogue*, 1937. © Toni Frissell, *Vogue* / Condé Nast

SECTION 1 : “Here I was born”

Garden Level, galerie courbe [curved gallery]

Magdalena Carmen Frida Kahlo y Calderón was born on 6 July 1907 in Coyoacán. Her mother, Matilde Calderón y González, was of mixed Spanish and indigenous descent from the Oaxaca region. She passed her taste for traditional clothing on to her daughter when she was very young.

Her father, Wilhelm (Guillermo) Kahlo, a German emigrant, arrived in Mexico in 1890. He became a leading government photographer, capturing Mexico's architectural heritage and the country's path to modernity. He also featured Frida in a quantity of portraits reflecting his affection for his daughter. It is reasonable to assume that, having learned to pose from her father at a very young age, photography was the first medium of artistic expression for Frida Kahlo. She went on to pose for many leading photographers, with whom she was able to express her identity, long before she became a painter.

Frida's life was shaped by a number of events. First, at the age of six, she contracted poliomyelitis. To cope with the isolation forced on her by the illness, she invented an imaginary friend. This early experience gave rise to her double in painting, a recurring motif in Frida Kahlo's work that art historians most often associate with one of her most important paintings, *The Two Frida* (1939).

The other major trauma occurred on 17 September 1925, when, at the age of eighteen, Frida Kahlo was involved in a serious accident that left her bedridden for months and meant she had to give up studying medicine. It was then that she began to paint.

Four years later, in 1929, she married the internationally renowned artist Diego Rivera. “*I have had two serious accidents in my life. One was being hit by a tram. The other was Diego*”, she later said. The couple divorced in 1939, but then remarried in San Francisco in 1940. Their relationship was always stormy, but Frida Kahlo remained committed to it throughout her life.

SECTION 2 : Casa Azul

Garden Level, galerie courbe [curved gallery]

Frida Kahlo was born in the Casa Azul; she lived there most of her life and died there in 1954. Her parents, who had built the house in 1904, decorated it in the European style that was in vogue at the time. Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera refurbished it in the 1930s. They painted the grey walls bright blue and filled it with objects that reflected their attachment to all things Mexican, including folk art, pre-Columbian sculptures and votive paintings. The Casa Azul became a cultural centre, attracting personalities from Mexico and beyond, including Leon Trotsky and André Breton, who arrived in the country in the late 1930s. Often confined to the house because of her health, Frida Kahlo transformed it into a microcosm of Mexico. Archaeological statues decorated the lush garden. Hairless *Xoloitzcuintli* dogs, parrots, ducks, monkeys and a deer roamed among the lemon trees and multicoloured flowers.

SECTION 3 : Gringolandia

Garden Level, galerie courbe [curved gallery]

"The gringas [American women] love me, they notice all the dresses and rebozos [shawls] I've brought with me, they are in awe of my jade necklaces, and all the painters want me to pose for them."

Frida Kahlo left Mexico for the first time, shortly after her marriage, when she accompanied Diego Rivera to "Gringolandia", as she called the United States. Rivera was a famous artist and had been commissioned to paint murals in San Francisco, New York and Detroit. At first, Frida Kahlo was referred to patronisingly as Rivera's "exotic" third wife who "dabbled contentedly in art." Her experiences in the United States (1930-1933) were both complex and pivotal. In San Francisco, where she was photographed by illustrious photographers, she developed her distinctive *Tehuana* style and also began to paint more seriously. Although she enjoyed exploring New York in all its magic, she was also critical of the wealth gap and the racism she witnessed. In Detroit, a traumatic miscarriage radically transformed her art, leading her to reinvent herself as a painter, and to shatter taboos.

In 1938, she made a triumphant return to New York as a fully fledged artist, and had her first solo exhibition at the Julien Levy Gallery. André Breton, whom she had met earlier that year in Mexico, wrote an essay for the exhibition in which he compared Frida Kahlo's work to "a ribbon around a bomb".



Necklace made of pre-Columbian jade stones assembled by Frida Kahlo. © Museo Frida Kahlo - Casa Azul collection - Javier Hinojosa, 2017

SECTION 4 : Paris

Garden Level, galerie courbe [curved gallery]

After her debut in New York, Frida Kahlo was invited by André Breton to exhibit her work in Paris. However, she had nothing ready to exhibit when she arrived in January 1939. In the end, the Galerie Renou et Colle organised a group exhibition entitled *Mexique*, in which eighteen of her works were shown. Frida Kahlo received a warm welcome from many of the famous artists present at the opening: "...many congratulations for the *chicua*, including a huge embrace from Joan Miró and great compliments for my work from Kandinsky, congratulations from Picasso, Tanguy, Paalen, and other leading lights of *Surrealism*", she wrote. That same year, the French state acquired its first ever work by a Mexican artist: *The Frame*, a self-portrait by Frida Kahlo.

During her brief stay in the French capital, Frida Kahlo fell ill and was hospitalised. Marcel Duchamp and his partner Mary Reynolds, whom she adored, nursed her tenderly back to health.

Frida also enjoyed the company of Dora Maar, Jacqueline Lamba and Alice Rahon, and spent time exploring Paris, the flea markets and Paris fashion. In Elsa Schiaparelli's boutique, she admired the surrealist creations of Salvador Dalí and Leonor Fini.



The Frame, Frida Kahlo, 1938
© Centre Pompidou, MNAM - CCI, Dist. RMN Grand Palais / Jean - Claude Planchet © Banco de México, D. Rivera F. Kahlo Museums Trust / ADAGP, Paris 2022



SECTION 5 : Disability and creativity

Garden Level, galerie d'honneur

The accident that had almost cost Frida Kahlo her life at the age of 18 put an abrupt end to her dream of becoming a doctor. During her convalescence, the bedridden young woman began to paint, using a folding easel and a mirror built into the canopy of her bed. *"I paint myself because I am so often alone"*, she said, as self-portraiture became an essential aspect of her art. Frida Kahlo underwent dozens of operations in the hope of alleviating her serious health problems and the pain that coursed through her right leg, spine and genital organs. She sometimes had to wear corsets and other medical devices, which she decorated and transformed into art works.

In crafting the image of her disabled body, Frida Kahlo was a pioneer. At a very young age, she began to develop a deep understanding of the power of clothes and accessories in constructing her identity. She maintained control over her image – in her life, in her photographs, and in her art – revealing and concealing both her exceptional abilities and her disabilities. She built a visual vocabulary with which to express physical and emotional suffering, while describing her own resilience and ability to create meaning, joy, beauty and art.

Corset in plaster painted by Frida Kahlo.
© Museo Frida Kahlo - Casa Azul
collection - Javier Hinojosa, 2017

SECTION 6 : Art and Dress

Garden Level, Galerie Sud [South gallery]

Frida Kahlo's powerful self-portraits, the photographs for which she posed, and her carefully composed outfits are all complementary modes of artistic self-creation. As a teenager, Frida dressed unconventionally to express her personality and to hide her leg, which had been afflicted with polio. When she was about 20 years old, she adopted the traditional Mexican outfits that she was to wear for the rest of her life. Although she created a unique hybrid style, blending elements from different regions and periods, she particularly identified with the women and the matriarchal culture of Tehuantepec. She adopted their embroidered blouses, long skirts, elaborate hairstyles and *rebozos* [woven shawls] in a fascinating personal interpretation of *Mexicanidad* [Mexicanness]. Through her choice of clothing and accessories adapted to her medical needs and physical characteristics, she became an agent in constructing a bold and original look. As the darns, cigarette burns, nicotine stains and paint marks on many of her clothes suggest, her outfits were an integral part of her life, her art and her identity.

Shawl, *huipil* and skirt.
© Museo Frida Kahlo - Casa Azul
collection - Javier Hinojosa, 2017

SECTION 7 : Frida Kahlo, a contemporain look

Exhibition from 15 September to 31 December 2022

Ground floor, Salon d'honneur

Unique, transgressive and unforgettable, Frida Kahlo has become a world-renowned cultural icon. Her influence as a muse in fashion history has been continually re-appraised by contemporary designers who have used Frida Kahlo's various identifying symbols as inspiration, thereby creating a visual repertoire that addresses such themes as trauma, disability, ethnicity, sexual identity and politics. Accessories, jewellery and extensions of the body have been used as metaphors to conceal, to reveal and to interpret her multiple identities and her hybrid style.

Among the designers featured: Jean Paul Gaultier, Yohji Yamamoto, Maria Grazia Chiuri for Dior, Alexander McQueen for Givenchy, Rei Kawakubo for Comme des Garçons, Riccardo Tisci for Givenchy, Karl Lagerfeld for CHANEL...

Comme des Garçons ensemble, Spring-Summer 2012 ('White Drama' collection).
Collection of Palais Galliera, Paris.
© Courtesy of Comme des Garçons, SS 2012 / Jean-François José

FRIDA KAHLO

BIOGRAPHY OF FRIDA KAHLO

AU-DELÀ DES APPARENCES

15.09.2022 - 05.03.2023



Frida Kahlo revealing her corset painted under her hair by Florence Arquin, ca. 1951. Private collection. © DR / Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo archives / Bank of México, fiduciary in the Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera Museums Trust

1907

6 July: Magdalena Carmen Frida Kahlo y Calderón is born at Casa Azul, in Coyoacán, near Mexico City. She is the daughter of Guillermo Kahlo, a photographer of German descent, and Matilde Calderón y González, a mixed race woman of Spanish and indigenous (Oaxaca, Mexico) extraction.

1910

Beginning of the Mexican Revolution. As an adult, Frida Kahlo would claim 1910 as her birth year, in solidarity with the Mexican Revolution.

1913

Frida Kahlo contracts poliomyelitis at the age of six; her right leg and foot remain permanently disabled.

1925

17 September: Frida Kahlo is seriously injured in a car accident. She begins to paint during her convalescence.

1929

21 August: Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera get married in Coyoacán.

1930

Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera arrive in San Francisco; they spend most of the period 1930-1933 in the United States.

1932

Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera move to Detroit, where Diego Rivera is commissioned to paint murals.

4 July: Frida Kahlo suffers a miscarriage and nearly bleeds to death. After that, the style of her paintings gets bolder.

1933

In March, Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera move to New York, where Nelson Rockefeller has commissioned Diego Rivera to paint a mural for the Rockefeller Center. Diego Rivera included a portrait of Lenin, which led to the destruction of the mural.

20 December: the couple return to Mexico.

1937

Diego Rivera arranges for Leon Trotsky, a Marxist leader exiled in Mexico, to be granted asylum. Frida Kahlo and Trotsky have a brief affair that ends in July.

1938

André Breton and Jacqueline Lamba spend time in Mexico.

1939

Frida Kahlo goes to Paris for a solo exhibition. She eventually exhibits eighteen paintings in the group show *Mexique*, at the Galerie Renou et Colle (10-25 March). The exhibition brings together photographs, pre-Columbian antiques, 19th-century paintings and Mexican folk objects from André Breton's collection.

The French state acquires Frida Kahlo's painting *The Frame*, now in the Centre Pompidou.

Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera divorce.

1940

César Moro and Wolfgang Paalen organise the International Exhibition of Surrealism at the Galería de Arte Mexicano in Mexico City. *The two Frida* and *The Wounded Table* are included in the exhibition.

20 August: Trotsky is assassinated.

Frida Kahlo goes to San Francisco for medical treatment. She remarries Diego Rivera in December.

1941

Frida Kahlo's father, Guillermo Kahlo, dies.

1943

Frida Kahlo begins teaching at the National School of Painting, Sculpture and Engraving of the Ministry of Education, known as La Esmeralda.

1946

Frida Kahlo goes to New York for an operation on her spine.

1950

Frida Kahlo spends most of the year in hospital and starts using a wheelchair.

1953

Lola Álvarez Bravo organises Frida Kahlo's first solo exhibition in Mexico City at the Galería de Arte Contemporáneo. Frida Kahlo attends the opening in bed on 13 April.

Frida Kahlo has her right leg amputated below the knee because of gangrene.

1954

Frida Kahlo is admitted to hospital, but on 2 July, against the advice of her doctors, she takes part in a demonstration against American intervention in Guatemala. This is her last public appearance.

July 13: Frida Kahlo dies at home at the age of forty-seven. Her ashes are kept in the Casa Azul.

FRIDA KAHLO

AU-DELÀ DES APPARENCES

CATALOGUE

15.09.2022 - 05.03.2023



Frida Kahlo, au-delà des apparences

Edited by Circe Henestrosa and Claire Wilcox
Éditions Paris Musées

The exhibition, which opens at the Palais Galliera in September 2022, is the next stage in an itinerary that began in Mexico between 2012 and 2014, and continued in 2018 at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. It offers a new perspective on the history of this artist, whose charisma, incredible style and sense of mise en scène have never ceased to be a source of enchantment.

Authors:

Gannit Ankori, Professor of History and Theory of Art, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts;

Miren Arzalluz, Director of the Palais Galliera, Musée de la Mode, Paris;

Oriana Baddeley, Professor of Art History, University of the Arts, London;

Circe Henestrosa, Exhibition Designer, Independent Curator and Director of the School of Fashion, LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore;

Kirstin Kennedy, Curator, Victoria and Albert Museum, London;

Adrian Locke, Curator, Royal Academy of Arts, London;

Jaime Moreno Villarreal, writer, editor and translator, author of the book «Frida in Paris in 1939»;

Claire Phillips, curator at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London;

Chloë Sayer, independent researcher and curator;

Hilda Trujillo Soto, Director of the Dolores Olmedo, Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera Anahuacalli Museums in Mexico City until 2020;

Claire Wilcox, Senior Curator of Fashion at the Victoria and Albert Museum and Professor of Fashion Curatorship at the University of the Arts, London.

About the book :

The catalogue published for this Paris exhibition is an expanded edition of the catalogue created by the Victoria & Albert Museum in 2018.

Format: 21.6 x 28 cm

Binding: hardback

Pagination: 240 pages + 48 pages of booklets

Illustrations: approx. 150

Price: 42 €

Available for sale : 14/09/2022

ISBN : 978-2-7596-0532-3

“Fashioning Frida”

By Claire Wilcox and Circe Henestrosa

Frida Kahlo (1907–1954) sits at her easel, fully robed in her Tehuana dress, with brightly embroidered blouse and full skirt billowing to the ground. In her right hand, she holds a fine sable brush, and in her left an artist's palette, which rests on her knee. Kahlo is intent on her unfinished painting, despite the looming presence of Diego Rivera (1886–1957) behind her, watching her paint. Kahlo depicts herself dressed in a *resplandor*, a festive headdress worn at weddings and on saint's days. The starched lace ruff forms an aura around her face, while her watchful eyes meet the viewer's. As with many of Kahlo's art works, the power of the self-portrait lies in its sense of anguish and a tense ambiguity about who is regarding whom.

Self-Portrait as a Tehuana (Diego on My Mind), one of Kahlo's larger works, was not finished until 1943. By then, she had added a force-field of tendrils, adorned her hair with bougainvillea flowers and leaves, and anointed her forehead with Rivera's portrait, thus uniting three of the main preoccupations of her life: her Mexican identity, self-portraiture and her complex relationship with Rivera. Twenty-one years older than Kahlo, Rivera was the leading muralist of his time and together they were at the forefront of Mexico's artistic, cultural and political elite, even accommodating Leon Trotsky in the Casa Azul [Blue House] during his exile from Russia in the late 1930s.

The Blue House in Coyoacán, once a village on the outskirts of Mexico City, but now part of the city's suburbs, was the epicentre of Kahlo's life. Here we see her, with habitual cigarette in hand¹, in the bright sunlit courtyard with her hairless *xoloitzcuintli* dogs² and mischievous spider monkeys³, or indoors, bejewelled and made up, lying atop carefully arranged bed covers and lace-edged sheets in her four-poster bed. Kahlo's sick bed functioned as both refuge and stage, for following a traumatic accident in 1925 in which she almost died, she spent extended periods encased in immobilizing plaster corsets, writing in January 1950, from hospital: '*Still corseted up and just a f...rigging mess! But I'm not discouraged and I'll try to start painting as soon as I can.*'⁴ In lieu of access to her easel, the plaster of her corsets became a three-dimensional canvas.

Unlike Rivera and other male artists who asserted their artistic freedom by being depicted in paint-spattered workwear, Kahlo rarely appeared casually dressed, even at her easel, for although underestimated as an artist in her lifetime, she was frequently photographed at work. Her charisma and careful regard for the art of dressing offered a photogenic appeal that was at odds with the uncompromising nature of her art; as the founder of Surrealism André Breton observed, her painting was like '*a ribbon around a bomb*'. [...]

Kahlo's powerful style is as integral to her myth as her paintings. It is her construction of identity through her ethnicity, her disability, her political beliefs and her art that makes her such a compelling and relevant icon today. Her resplendent *Tehuana* dresses; striking headpieces, hand-painted corsets and prosthetics masterfully masked her physical impairments, but were also a form of self-expression and an extension of her art.⁵ [...]

Today, the Blue House is a museum, but it still feels like a home, overflowing with Kahlo's collections of Mexican popular arts and crafts. The rooms are filled with pre-Columbian sculpture, walls are lined with ex-votos (devotional paintings)⁶, the kitchen retains its colourful tiles and glass display cases are crowded with pottery figures, dolls and toys. Family photographs still dot the walls, along with heroes of the Russian Revolution, while Kahlo's erudition is reflected in the Spanish, English and German volumes on art, anatomy and political history, and the novels and poetry that line her book shelves. Kahlo and Rivera's lives and art are impossible to comprehend without an understanding of their political ideology following the turmoil of the Mexican Revolution, and the community of artists that was drawn to Mexico during the 1930s. [...]

Despite her atheism and commitment to Communism, Kahlo's work was imbued with Catholic imagery, which Kirstin Kennedy explores in her essay on the traditions and meanings of the *resplandor*.⁷

Many individuals in Mexico have helped to make this exhibition possible, but we are grateful particularly to Hilda Trujillo Soto, the Director of the Museo Frida Kahlo. Her essay *Treasure in the Blue House* tells the remarkable story of the opening of Kahlo's bathroom in 2004, and the discovery of an extraordinary collection of jewellery, surgical corsets, medicines, cosmetics, photographs, letters and, above all, clothing. These objects are so familiar to art historians from her self-portraits and the countless photographs that exist of Kahlo. Locked away by Rivera on her death in 1954, they remained undisturbed until 2004, and the V&A Museum is privileged to be the first to show these priceless artifacts, outside Mexico.[...]

In November 2017, a team of conservators, mount-makers and curators visited the Blue House to prepare for the exhibition at the V&A Museum which would reunite Kahlo's clothing with some of her self-portraits. Whilst there, they detected many traces of pigment on the skirts upon which Kahlo rested her palette and brushes; some are stained with red paint and small splashes of blue and black ink (Kahlo was an inveterate letter writer), while others have paint embedded in the textile fibres or faint brushstrokes of paint across the surface of the fabric.

Kahlo's commitment to the Tehuana dress of her native Mexico was not for show, or for staged photographs, but an integral part of her daily dress, as the many darns, cigarette burns and stains demonstrate. Perhaps one of the most moving discoveries was the realization that a dash of green paint on one of Kahlo's pre-Columbian necklaces, consisting of jade beads unearthed from archaeological excavations which the artist had strung herself, and which are similar to those featured in her 1933 *Self-Portrait with a Necklace*, is in fact a deliberately applied brushstroke of green paint. It is tempting to speculate that Kahlo was trying to match the colour of the stones while painting herself.

The symbiotic relationship in Kahlo's life and work between her art and dress cannot be overestimated. Kahlo, as always, forged new ground, meaning that art historians and costume historians have been brought together by the remarkable legacy of both Kahlo's art and wardrobe: the material properties of her clothing bring her paintings to life, while the paintings offer dress in all its symbolic meaning, thus changing the fields of biography, self-portraiture and sartorial expression forever.

¹ A pack of American Lucky Strike cigarettes can be seen in Gisèle Freund's photograph of Frida Kahlo sitting in front of her father's portrait (1951). Nickolas Muray, Frida Kahlo's lover, took the photographs for a Lucky Strike advertising campaign.

² This ancient breed of hairless dog, almost extinct in the 1950s, was rescued by breeders belonging to the Mexican Kennel Club. Among Frida Kahlo's dogs, one was named *Señor Xolotl*, another *Señorita Xolotzin*.

³ Frida Kahlo's spider monkeys (*Ateles*) would wreak havoc in the Blue House. One was called Fulang Chang, another *Caimito de Guayabal*. The species, native to the tropical forests of Central and South America, is characterised by its long, prehensile tail.

⁴ *Tibol*, 2004, p. 379.

⁵ Painted on small wooden, pewter or copper panels, *ex-votos* depicted a danger, sometimes fatal, that could be avoided through the intercession of a saint or other religious figure. Frida Kahlo's paintings, many of which are painted on metal, were deeply influenced by the narrative structure of *ex-votos*.

⁶ According to the 1930 census, 97% of the Mexican population was Catholic. Frida Kahlo's mother was herself a devout catholic.

“Frida in Paris, 1939. Make sure you don't go unnoticed in life”

By Jaime Moreno-Villarreal

On 10 March 1939, the exhibition *Mexique*, organised by André Breton in tandem with American gallery owner Julien Levy, opened at the Galerie Renou et Colle. Julien Levy had recently held a very successful Frida Kahlo exhibition in New York. It was he, incidentally, who had suggested to her that she stop calling herself Frida Kahlo de Rivera or Frida de Rivera in favour of the more elegant Frida Kahlo.

What can be said of this beautiful young painter, wife of the famous Diego Rivera, who was exhibiting in Paris dressed in such a singular fashion? Her entire person, like her art and her outfits, was characterised by great distinction. Some contemporary accounts stated that she wore Mexican national costume – an absurdity, since her clothes was obviously regional. They were typical of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, a region far from Mexico City that Frida had never actually visited, but which, for family reasons, she felt an affinity with. She added elements from other parts of Mexico and accessories of all kinds, including pre-Columbian articles, such as jade necklaces. Frida cared about how she looked and was constantly experimenting with new items and combinations for her outfits.

From her first trip abroad to San Francisco where she accompanied Diego Rivera in 1930, she found that her outfits attracted admiration. As she wrote at the time to her mother: "*The gringas [American women] love me, they notice all the dresses and rebozos [shawls] I've brought with me, they are in awe of my jade necklaces, and all the painters want me to pose for them., they are a bunch of idiots but very good people.*"¹

There is no denying that Frida's need for self-assurance often led her to denigrate others in her correspondence, a habit that she pursued with abandon against the Surrealists in Paris.

During her short winter visit to Paris in 1939, she hated the drabness of the city and the dreary clothes in the streets, but the fashions inspired by Surrealism appealed to her, as evidenced by her visit to the Maison Schiaparelli, where she gazed admiringly at models designed by Salvador Dalí and Léonor Fini. These two artists operated outside André Breton's Paris circle, and she met each of them personally through Julien Levy. Frida was aware of Breton's criticism of the Surrealist-inspired haute couture collections but she did not endorse them, reserving her sarcasm instead for certain women associated with the Surrealist group who wore Indian saris as evening dresses. In a letter to Diego recounting her first meeting with Peggy Guggenheim, she dismissed her as "*a Jewish Gringa, who is as boring as the rest of them, dressed up like a circus Indian, loaded with money and with a headful of shit*"². In Frida's eyes, dressing like a *Tehuana* in order to stand out was a mark of artistic authenticity, whereas adopting exotic outfits alien to one's own tradition was just a sham.³

In Paris, Frida did not paint, as she said herself, but drank heavily. She was suffering from a serious kidney infection and was admitted to the American Hospital in Paris, where she stayed for ten days. Moreover, in New York, shortly before embarking for France, she had scalded a numb toe on her crippled foot with a hot water bottle. In the Paris hospital, she was treated by Dr Henri Oberthur, who prescribed orthopaedic shoes and sent her to a shoemaker in the Rue du Faubourg Saint-Martin with a drawing of the model to be made, assuring her that the shoes would help heal the toe and be "aesthetically acceptable".

The photographs and pencil sketch that Dora Maar did in her studio provide unexpected evidence of her discomfort. For the session, Frida made sure she wore the huipil and gold necklace that she wears in Nickolas Muray's famous colour portrait in New York, now known as *Frida on White Bench*.⁴ But in these full-length photos, with her hands on her stomach, she looks unwell, and her own account seems to confirm this: "*the inflammation of the intestines and bladder was so severe that I had stomach ache for over a month*". As for the sketch, it shows her lying exhausted in the studio. Frida didn't like these photos and kept only one, which she gave to her sister Cristina in Mexico City. On a table in one of the photos, there is a small ceramic bird from Tonalà (Jalisco State) that Frida Kahlo had given to Dora Maar, one of many objects she had brought to France as little souvenirs. Her present to André Breton, which stands out from the rest, is one of the most beautiful portraits of Frida by Nickolas Muray, a gelatine-silver print known as *The Breton Portrait*.

When she came out of hospital, Frida was invited by Marcel Duchamp's lover, Mary Reynolds, to move in with her in the Rue Hallé. There she discovered many Surrealist publications and admired her hostess's collection of earrings, which hung in pairs on the walls of her bookbinding workshop, pieces from a variety of places, most of them bought at flea markets. Thanks to the involvement of Duchamp and Julien Levy, Peggy Guggenheim, a close friend of Mary Reynolds who also collected earrings, offered to take Frida's Paris exhibition to her gallery in London. But these were troubled times, and Frida decided to cancel the project and leave as soon as possible – the possibility of an impending war was reducing art sales in London and presented a potential danger for her works.

She told Peggy and sent her a pair of Mexican earrings as a gesture of apology. Peggy Guggenheim's response was somewhat curt: "*Dear Frida, the earrings are lovely. I am so sorry you didn't come to London and that you refused to do your exhibition here. What a pity! Thank you so much. Bon voyage. Yours affectionately. Peggy*"⁵

Just as she used to hide her limp and physical problems under loose petticoats, Frida Kahlo dressed in such a way that she never went unnoticed. Her physical beauty and her intelligence made her a highly attractive woman, and in Paris she had several love affairs: with Jacqueline Lamba (Breton's wife), Michel Petitjean, Manuel Martínez (a refugee Spanish militiaman who had gone into hiding) and the wife of the Surrealist painter Wolfgang Paalen. Alice Paalen was a poet and designer who had worked for Elsa Schiaparelli.⁶ When she met Frida, it was love at first sight. She presented her with her book of poems *Sablier couché*, with a fervent dedication that made Jacqueline Lamba jealous. Frida wrote about it with unstinted sarcasm to Diego: "*As you see, all these old women are 'poetesses on heat' who love tropical countries and have been to India two or three times. They sunbathe under their sun lamps and are all horny because their husbands have their heads in the Surrealist clouds. Then they see someone like me come along, disguised as a Tehuana and strangely enough, it drives them crazy!*"

The relationship between Frida and Alice turned out to be much more than a fling. In Paris, Frida had invited the Paalens to visit Mexico City, which they did that same year, never to return to France. In Mexico, Alice remained close to Frida and became a painter, adopting her maiden name, Rahon, as her artist name. Frida's relationship with Jacqueline Lamba was a lasting one, too. They met again in Mexico and in the United States. A belated letter from Frida to her – which she copied into her diary – contains details of Kahlo's stay in Paris.⁷ Frida mentions a huipil with magenta ribbons that she had given her, as well as the snails in the ('miniature') *Self-Portrait* of 1938, which she had also given her. There is also mention of a doll in a wedding dress that the two women had found at a flea market and that Frida had always identified with Jacqueline, and of lace skirts with ruffles and, surprisingly, of an "*old-style blouse*" that she often wore, as depicted in the painting *The Two Frida* (1939) – clothes that were probably close to the nineteenth-century style worn by her mother. From her affair with Michel Petitjean there remain the letters he sent her, to which she did not reply. A sensitive complicity had brought them together and, when she left France, Frida entrusted him with *The Heart* (1937) as a sign of her loving gratitude: three different outfits and a torn-out heart illustrate her pain and passion in the face of Diego Rivera's passing infidelity with her sister Cristina. The painting is a statement of *despecho* [spite] which, according to popular etymology, consists of literally tearing a passion from one's chest (*pecho*) out of resentment and dismay. The heart bleeds on the ground, from north to south, in a diagrammatic representation of Frida's journeys from Vera Cruz to New York (her foot transformed into a sailing boat) to join Nickolas Muray and Pierre de Lanux, lovers in whose arms Diego's infidelity could be forgotten. On the shaft protruding from the hole in her chest, two little angels swing between love and hostility, as if on a swing. Frida disposed of this painting in order to put the memory of the betrayal behind her, wanting to be reconciled with Diego – as she wrote to him. The opening of the exhibition *Mexique* was a success. A press article describes the impact of the artist and her work: "*A beautiful Mexican woman, dressed in national costume, received congratulations and tributes. It was Mme Kahlo de Rivera, author of the strange, cruel paintings [...]*"⁷ Vassily Kandinsky complimented her and found her paintings extraordinary, but she doubted his sincerity and wrote as much to Diego: "*I don't know if he really meant it...*". Kandinsky, recounting this meeting to Josef Albers, focuses on the clothes: "*[...] Diego di Rivera's wife [...] was there in person, in Mexican dress – very picturesque. Apparently she goes everywhere dressed like that. There were a lot of rather eccentric looking ladies – very Montparnasse – but none of them could rival the Mexican outfit.*"⁸ Of the works by Frida Kahlo in the

1 Frida Kahlo to Matilde Calderón, 21 November 1930, in *Tu hija Frida. Cartas a mamá*, Mexico, Siglo XXI, 2016, p. 67.

2 During her trip to Paris, Frida Kahlo wrote to Diego Rivera on 16, 28, 29 January, 13 February and 16 March 1939. Quotations with no note appended are from these documents, as well as others from the Diego Rivera – Frida Kahlo Archives.

3 *Tehuana*: an inhabitant of the isthmus of Tehuantepec, in the south of Mexico (Tr.)

4 The *huipil* is a traditional embroidered tunic (Tr.)

5 Christine Frérot, *Alice Rahon et le Mexique. La révélation de l'art*, Paris, Riveneuve, 2021, p. 16.

6 *Fuentes*, 1995, p. 208-209.

7 Roger Lannes, «Le Mexique et André Breton», *L'Intransigeant*, 12 March 1939.

8 Letter from Vassily Kandinsky to Josef and Anni Albers, 17 March 1939, *Les Cahiers du Musée national d'art moderne*, special issue Kandinsky – Albers. *Une correspondance des années trente*, Paris, Centre Pompidou, 1998, p. 129.

exhibition, *The Frame* (c.1938) was the only one that was sold. It was purchased by the French state for the national collections thanks to Julien Levy and André Dezarrois, director of the Jeu de Paume. Along with her souvenirs of Paris, Frida kept a photograph of a dinner on the Normandie, the liner on which she sailed back to New York. The elegance of her outfit is in stark contrast to the clothes of her fellow diners. Seated on her right is André Dezarrois, whom she had met by chance on the ship, and who was planning a major exhibition of Mexican art at the Jeu de Paume. He was hoping for support from Frida and Diego. But then war broke out.



Customised satin boots.
© Museo Frida Kahlo - Casa Azul collection - Javier Hinojos, 2017



Frida Kahlo by Dora Maar, 1934.
Private collection. © DR / Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo archives / Bank of México, fiduciary in the Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera Museums Trust / ADAGP 2022

FRIDA KAHLO

AU-DELÀ DES APPARENCES

APPLICATION

15.09.2022 - 05.03.2023



A DIGITAL EXHIBITION TRAIL FOCUSED ON FRIDA KAHLO

To accompany the public through the exhibition, Paris Musées has developed a digital guided visit to supplement the regular Palais Galliera app. This new trail, devoted specifically to Frida Kahlo, retraces the life and extraordinary style of the artist, focusing on the most emblematic pieces in the exhibition. The Frida Kahlo tour also includes an audio-description feature for the visually impaired.

This trail is available for free, in French, English and Spanish, when you download the Palais Galliera app.

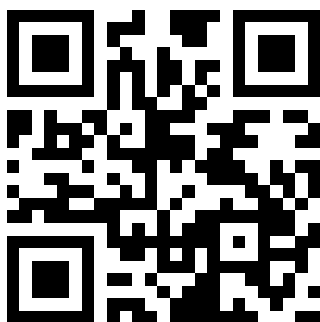
ABOUT THE PALAIS GALLIERA APP

The Palais Galliera app was developed for the first presentation of the collections tour "A History of Fashion. Collecting and exhibiting at the Palais Galliera" (presented in the Gabrielle Chanel Galleries from 2 October 2021 to 26 June 2022).

In addition to practical information to help visitors prepare their visit, this tool offers a variety of content illustrated by a large number of photo and video archives, organised into four visit circuits:

- A «Collections» tour allows visitors to understand the history of fashion through twenty iconic pieces from the museum's collections;
- An «Architecture» tour invites visitors to discover the museum, ON the inside as well as the outside;
- A «History of the Museum» tour traces the history of the museum and the development of its collections through a timeline of key dates;
- A «History of the exhibitions» tour explores the museum's archives through a selection of its most outstanding exhibitions.

This app can be downloaded free of charge on Android and iOS, in French and English. In addition to the 4 mediation packages above, it is supplemented from time to time by specific exhibition visits, as is the case here for the exhibition "Frida Kahlo, au-delà des apparences".



FRIDA KAHLO

AU-DELÀ DES APPARENCES

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

15.09.2022 - 05.03.2023



Workshop "Madame Frida"
© Myriam Loussaief & Doris Arlot

OUR WORKSHOPS AND GUIDED TOURS (IN FRENCH)

Children 4-6 years old

Workshop "Little Fridos", 1 h 30 (visit + workshop), 8 participants
A great treasure hunt in the exhibition, followed by a graphics workshop during which the children make a doll in the image of the artist.

Children 7-12 years old

Workshop "Fashion according to Frida", 3h (visit + workshop), 8 participants
An introductory fashion design workshop for Frida Kahlo aficionados and creative minds.

Workshop "Autel adoré", 3h (visit + workshop), 8 participants
A decoration workshop. Participants make a triptych photo frame inspired by Mexican popular culture. This workshop is also held for families, on other days.

Workshop "Madame Frida", 2h (visit + workshop), 8 participants
A creative workshop during which children design a piece of jewellery for a bag or a key ring in the image of Frida Kahlo.

Teenagers 13-17 ans

Workshop "Reverie & Inspiration bag", 4h (visit + workshop), 6 participants
A sewing workshop for learning how to make a patchwork bag inspired by the outfits, accessories and reveries of Frida Kahlo.

Adults

Guided tour of the exhibition, 1h30, 18 participants
Wednesdays 1.30 pm.

Workshop "Sweatpil !", 3h (workshop), 6 participants
An introductory sewing workshop during which participants will make a huipil (a traditional Mexican tunic) from sweatshirt fabric.

Workshop "Etole d'hiver", 3h (workshop), 6 participants
An introductory sewing workshop during which participants will make a Mexican-inspired linen and cotton stole.

For disabled visitors

Visits in French Sign Language, 1h30, 15 participants (over 15 years)
Thursdays 6.00 pm.

Lip-reading visits, 1h30, 15 participants (over 15 years)

Guided tours for visually impaired visitors, 2h, 12 participants (including accompanying persons)

Visit and workshop suited to persons with mental, psychic or cognitive disabilities, 2h, 10 participants (including accompanying persons)

Our programme of cultural activities can be consulted on our website. Reservation is required on the online ticket-sales service: www.billetterie-parismusees.paris.fr

PARIS MUSÉES OFF

At the Palais Galliera, Thursday 15 September 2022

In celebration of the exhibition and more specifically to mark the Mexican Independence Day, the Palais Galliera is, for the second year running, hosting a Paris Musées OFF! Organised in collaboration with TRAX Magazine, the evening will showcase by two artists from the new electronic music scene, including a special, internationally renowned, guest from Mexico, an expert in Latin-American, Caribbean, Brazilian and rare groove music... Vamos de fiesta !

Booking on: www.billetterie-parismusees.paris.fr

DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS - DAY OF THE DEAD

At the Palais Galliera, Wednesday 2 November 2022

Listed as an intangible cultural heritage of humanity by UNESCO, *Día de los Muertos* is the famous "Indigenous Festivity dedicated to the Dead", which brings all Mexicans together for three days in festivities that are both codified and sacrosanct. In every home, offerings are placed on family altars, and on 2 November, when the dead are commemorated, Mexicans go from one cemetery to another throwing flower petals and lighting candles to guide the souls to their graves. *Día de los muertos* is a happy blend of Aztec customs and Catholic beliefs.

As part of the exhibition, the Palais Galliera invites children accompanied by their parents to come (in costume) to celebrate *Día de los Muertos*, with a special range of free activities: participating in the construction of an altar for the dead; making skeleton masks; family visits; and a performance by an all-women Mariachi band.

Booking on: www.billetterie-parismusees.paris.fr

"¡ VIVA LA VIDA !" FESTIVAL

9 September 2022 – 25 March 2023

Created by the Collectif Nadieshda, with the support of the Mexican Embassy and The Mexican Cultural Centre, Paris, the *¡Viva la Vida!* festival is an invitation to experience many facets of Mexican culture: Mexican folklore, Mexican cuisine, Mexican literature and music, as well as Mexican arts and crafts. The festival enlists the participation of Mexican clubs, groups, and restaurants in Paris in a wide range of activities – talks, theatre, dance, concerts, exhibitions, workshops, and cinema – all on the theme of Frida Kahlo.

Programme on: www.sre.gob.mx and [@vivalavidafest](https://twitter.com/vivalavidafest)

FRIDA KAHLO

AU-DELÀ DES APPARENCES

BOOKSHOP & STORE

15.09.2022 - 05.03.2023



Frida Kahlo Corset © Museo Frida Kahlo - Casa Azul collection / © Katerina Jebb

THE ALBUM BY KATERINA JEBB

To mark the exhibition, the Museo Frida Kahlo and the Palais Galliera have invited visual artist Katerina Jebb to capture the Mexican artist's world in the legendary Casa Azul. In this album, the photographer's scans engage in a dialogue with Frida Kahlo's writings. This book is the trace of an encounter that transcends time, between two artists in search of a narrative beyond appearances.

Born in England, Katerina Jebb lives and works in Paris. Self-taught, she initially concentrated on photography but then developed a body of work based on photomontage. She asserts the singularity of her vision and her aesthetic investigations by exclusively working with a scanner. By letting the scanner transcend the subject, she has built up an inventory, a digital series, by exposing everyday objects to the cold light of day. Her work has been presented in numerous exhibitions and galleries in France and abroad. She has also contributed to many publications.

"Corpus. Frida Kahlo by Katerina Jebb", Editions Paris Paris, Price: 15€ – ISBN: 978-2-7596-0533-0 - Available at the bookshop from 15 September 2022.



© Mañana Maison d'édition

MAÑANA MAISON D'ÉDITION X PALAIS GALLIERA

The Palais Galliera has invited Mañana Maison d'édition to present an exclusive selection of 'coup de coeur' objects inspired by the highly personal world of Frida Kahlo. This exciting collaboration has resulted in a series of pieces representative of Mexican arts and crafts that combine traditional know-how, age-old techniques and contemporary aesthetics. Among the objects in the store you will find embroidered cushions, hand-woven shawls, everyday objects made of black clay, small lucky hearts made of blown glass...

Available in the bookshop from 15 September 2022 and in the Pop-up Store (the bookshop extension in the West Gallery) until 31 December 2022. And also on website: www.manana-maison.com



© Macon & Lesquoy

MACON & LESQUOY X PALAIS GALLIERA

The Palais Galliera has renewed its collaboration with Macon & Lesquoy. Founded in 2009 by Marie Macon and Anne-Laure Lesquoy, the eponymous French designers of embroidered accessories produced five exclusive pieces inspired by treasures from the Museum, which they sold alongside our first collections exhibition. For our Frida Kahlo exhibition, Macon & Lesquoy have designed three new exclusive pieces in the style of the legendary Mexican artist.

Available in the bookshop from 15 September 2022 and also on the Macon & Lesquoy website: www.maconetlesquoy.com

The House of CHANEL is proud to support the Palais Galliera in staging an exhibition dedicated to the life of Mexican artist Frida Kahlo (1907-1954) in the Galeries Gabrielle Chanel, which have opened in October 2020. Curated by Circe Henestrosa, Miren Arzalluz and Gannit Ankori, the “*Frida Kahlo, au-delà des apparences*” exhibition helps visitors intimately discover Frida Kahlo’s identity through extraordinary storytelling, comprised of the artist’s wardrobe, and items kept at Casa Azul, where Frida Kahlo was born, raised and worked.

Frida Kahlo has been a source of inspiration to countless creatives, including Karl Lagerfeld for CHANEL, who admiratively dedicated and photographed the CHANEL Spring-Summer 1993 Ready-to-Wear collection campaign and an editorial series for German Vogue in March 2010, with Claudia Schiffer, to Frida Kahlo’s unique style.

This cultural event, which comprises more than 200 items, constituting a unique artistic vocabulary, highlight Frida Kahlo’s role in the development of modern artistic movements.

In keeping with its commitment to creation, which is at the heart of its activity, and its support for the Palais Galliera, Paris Fashion Museum, CHANEL is pleased to contribute to the public’s discovery of the “*Frida Kahlo, au-delà des apparences*” exhibition, thereby contributing to the museum’s influence among a Parisian and international audience.

Bruno Pavlovsky,
President of CHANEL SAS

FRIDA KAHLO

AU-DELÀ DES APPARENCES

15.09.2022 - 05.03.2023

PALAIS GALLIERA, PARIS FASHION MUSEUM

10, avenue Pierre I^{er} de Serbie, Paris 16^e

Getting there:

By métro line 9, Léna or Alma-Marceau stops

By RER line C, Pont de l'Alma stop

By Vélib', stations at: 4, rue de Longchamp ; 1, rue Bassano ; 2, avenue Marceau

By bicycle: lock-up points in front of the museum

Opening times:

Tuesday to Sunday 10am to 6pm

Open late on Thursdays and Fridays until 9pm

Closed on Mondays, and 1 May, 25 December and 1 January

Rates

15€ (Full rate) to 13€ (reductions)

Free to people under 18 years

Bookshop & Store

Open during museum opening times

Pop-up Restaurant *Les Petites Mains*

Open from mid-May to the end of October, 11am to 8pm

Access via the Square Galliera, entrance on the Avenue du Président Wilson

Follow us !

#expoFridaKahlo



www.palaisgalliera.paris.fr

THE PALAIS GALLIERA IS PART OF THE CITY OF PARIS MUSEUM NETWORK.

VISITORS INFORMATION

PARIS MUSÉES,

The City of Paris museum network.

Paris Musées is a public institution that incorporates the 12 City of Paris museums and 2 heritage sites. It is the leading museum network in Europe. It includes art museums (Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris, Petit Palais - Musée des Beaux-Arts de la Ville de Paris), history museums (Musée Carnavalet - Histoire de Paris, Musée de la Libération de Paris- Musée du Général Leclerc- Musée Jean Moulin), former artists' studios (Musée Bourdelle, Musée Zadkine, Musée de la Vie romantique), writers' houses (Maison de Balzac, Maison de Victor Hugo in Paris and Maison de Victor Hugo in Guernsey), the Palais Galliera, Paris fashion museum, museums bequeathed by major donors (Cernuschi Museum of Asian Art, Cognacq-Jay Museum) as well as heritage sites: Paris Catacombs and the Archaeological Crypt of the Île de la Cité.

Paris Musées was founded in 2013. Its mission is to promote, curate and present the collections of the City of Paris museums, which contain one million works of art and are open to the public free of charge. Paris Musées also offers free and unrestricted (Open Content) access to 350,000 high-definition digital reproductions of works from the collections of the City of Paris museums. Constant attention is paid to research and the conservation of the collections as well as to their enlargement through donations and acquisitions.

The museums and sites administered by Paris Musées run an ambitious exhibition programme, accompanied by cultural and mediation services for all – especially those who are not often exposed to cultural activities.

Most of the museums have been renovated in recent years and now offer services and visitor experiences adapted to the needs of the public, thanks in particular to an innovative digital policy both in the museums and online.

Paris Musées publishes rigorously produced, educational catalogues and organises art history lectures given by the curators of the City of Paris museums. These lectures are also available online.

THE PARIS MUSÉES CARD,

A freedom pass for exhibitions !

The Paris Musées card is valid for one year and gives unlimited, no-queuing access to all the temporary exhibitions in the 14 City of Paris museums (except the Archeologic Crypte of Notre-Dame, and the Catacombs of Paris). It also entitles the holder to special rates for activities (visits, lectures, workshops, shows, etc.), to discounts in the City of Paris museum bookshops and café-restaurants, and to receive regular updates on museum news.

There is a Paris Musées card (starting at €20) for everyone according to their preferences and visiting habits. Visitors can subscribe to the Carte Paris Musées at museum ticket offices or online at: www.parismusees.paris.fr