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MEDIA INFORMATION

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The WNET Group Presents *Becoming Frida Kahlo* Tuesdays September 19-October 3 on PBS in Honor of Hispanic Heritage Month

Explores the life and work of the artist through interviews with Kahlo's great-niece, Diego Rivera's grandson, curators, biographers, historians and more

Becoming Frida Kahlo, a new three-part documentary series, strips away the myths to reveal the real Frida – a passionate and brilliant artist living through extraordinary times. The series explores the major events of Kahlo's life, both personal and political, from her lifelong health problems to her complicated relationship with artist Diego Rivera, whom she married not once but twice. Their shared political commitment made both artists controversial figures – from their association with Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky in Mexico to their paradoxical relationships with some of America's wealthiest figures. Throughout her life Kahlo used her artwork as a way to process her own emotions, producing what are now some of the most valuable—and most widely reproduced—paintings of the twentieth century. Featuring interviews with Frida Kahlo's great-niece Cristina Kahlo, Diego Rivera's grandson Juan Coronel Rivera, biographers, art historians and more, ***Becoming Frida Kahlo*** produced by multi-award winning Rogan Productions Scotland, premieres Tuesdays, September 19-October 3 at 9 p.m. ET on PBS ([check local listings](#)), pbs.org and the [PBS App](#) in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month.

Episode 1 – ***Becoming Frida Kahlo: The Making and Breaking***

Premieres Tuesday, September 19 at 9 p.m. ET on PBS ([check local listings](#)), pbs.org and the [PBS App](#)

The series premiere tells the story of the young Frida growing up in a time of revolution, from her rebellious school days to an encounter with the man who would change her life: Diego Rivera, then one of the world's most famous artists. When a tragic accident

thwarts Frida's ambition of becoming a doctor, young Frida spends many lonely months recuperating and discovers a new passion: Painting. When she finally ventures out again into Mexico City, it has become a thriving hub for artists and intellectuals from all over the world. The ambitious young Frida tracks down the renowned Rivera, and his response sets her on a new path as an artist. Becoming entranced by the politically radical and sexually liberated photographer and former Hollywood actress, Tina Modotti, Frida sees Rivera again at one of her parties and marries him six months later. Although very much in love, she soon discovers that life with Diego, 20 years her senior, isn't all wedded bliss; there are many other women in his life, and his work always comes first.

Episode 2 – ***Becoming Frida Kahlo: Love and Loss***

Premieres Tuesday, September 26 at 9 p.m. ET on PBS ([check local listings](#)), [pbs.org](#) and the [PBS App](#)

San Francisco is abuzz with excitement at the arrival of Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera, and Frida's ultra-Mexican style catches the attention of celebrities and photographers. With Diego constantly working and determined to succeed in her own right and in the face of his many affairs, she paints a powerful marriage portrait, "Frida and Diego Rivera," which is selected for exhibition. In Depression-era New York, she meets fellow artist Georgia O'Keeffe who deeply inspires her, and they kindle a romantic relationship. Later in Detroit due to a commission Diego receives, Frida learns she's pregnant and her worst fears are confirmed when she loses her child. She spends 13 days in the hospital with her close friend Lucienne Bloch by her side and turns once more to her art and paints "Henry Ford Hospital," a devastating portrait of her miscarriage and loss. Tragedy continues when she learns her mother has fallen ill and later dies, leading her to create one of her most powerful paintings: "My Birth." Meanwhile, in New York City, Diego takes another controversial commission at the newly built Rockefeller Center. Pushing the boundary too far for his American patrons, he paints Vladimir Lenin into the new mural. This original mural is hacked off the walls by order of the Rockefellers, with images of it only surviving through Frida's own photographs. Upon their return to Mexico, Diego begins an affair with Frida's sister, Cristina.

Episode 3 – ***Becoming Frida Kahlo: A Star is Born***

Premieres Tuesday, October 3 at 9 p.m. ET on PBS ([check local listings](#)), [pbs.org](#) and the [PBS App](#)

On the run from Stalin, Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky arrives in Mexico, and Frida begins a short-lived affair with him. Meeting the influential leader of the Surrealist movement, Andre Breton, Frida impresses him and ventures to Paris to find Europe on the brink of war and that the exhibition Breton had promised her was not what she had expected it to be. Disappointed with Breton, Frida finds solace in a relationship with his wife, Jacqueline. Finally returning to Mexico after months away, Frida discovers Diego's

shocking affair with her sister, and he asks for a divorce. Once more, she pours her pain into her work, and creates a masterpiece, "The Two Fridas." When Diego is implicated in an attempt to take Trotsky's life, he flees to San Francisco, leaving Frida in Mexico City where she's eventually arrested. When Diego realizes that Frida's health is failing, he begs her to join him, and the pair reconcile and remarry. Frida's health continues to deteriorate, and she spends her last years of life in excruciating pain, often confined to bed in a steel corset. She continues to paint and produces works that speak to her trauma, pain and artistic genius. She dies in 1954 at the age of 47, leaving an extraordinary legacy of a woman defying expectations, experiencing extremes of love and loss, and creating some of the most enduring art of the 20th century.

Becoming Frida Kahlo is a production of Rogan Scotland for BBC. Louise Lockwood is director. Becky Marshall is producer. Mexico producer is Maria Teresa Scotti. Esther Gimenez is series editor. Executive producers are Mark Hedgecoe, Nancy Bornat, James Rogan and Soleta Rogan. For The WNET Group, Laura Metzger Lynch is senior producer. Jayne Jun is supervising producer. Matthew Clark is production general counsel. Jane Buckwalter is programming services and distribution. Stephen Segaller is executive in charge.

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About The WNET Group

[The WNET Group](#) creates inspiring media content and meaningful experiences for diverse audiences nationwide. It is the nonprofit parent company of New York's [THIRTEEN](#) – America's flagship PBS station – [WLIW21](#), THIRTEEN PBSKids, WLIW World and Create; Long Island's only NPR station WLIW-FM; and [ALL ARTS](#), the arts and culture media provider. The WNET Group also operates [NJ PBS](#), New Jersey's statewide public television network, and newsroom [NJ Spotlight News](#). Through these channels and streaming platforms, The WNET Group brings arts, culture, education, news, documentary, entertainment and DIY programming to more than five million viewers each month. The WNET Group's award-winning productions include signature PBS series ***Nature***, ***Great Performances***, ***American Masters*** and ***Amanpour and Company*** and trusted local news programs ***MetroFocus*** and ***NJ Spotlight News with Briana Vannozzi***. Inspiring curiosity and nurturing dreams, The WNET Group's award-winning Kids' Media and Education team produces the PBS KIDS series ***Cyberchase***, interactive ***Mission US*** history games, and resources for families, teachers and caregivers. A leading public media producer for nearly 60 years, The WNET Group presents and distributes content that fosters lifelong learning, including multi-platform initiatives addressing poverty, jobs, economic opportunity, social justice, understanding and the environment. Through Passport, station members can stream new and archival programming anytime, anywhere. Community-supported, The WNET Group represents the best in public media. Join us.

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over 42 million adults on linear primetime television, more than 15 million users on PBS-owned streaming platforms, and 56 million people view PBS content on social media, inviting them to experience the worlds of science, history, nature, and public affairs; to hear diverse viewpoints; and to take front-row seats to world-class drama and performances. PBS's broad array of programs has been consistently honored by the industry's most coveted award competitions. Teachers of children from pre-K through 12th grade turn to [PBS LearningMedia](#) for digital content and services that help bring classroom lessons to life. As the number one educational media brand, [PBS KIDS](#) helps children 2-8 build critical skills, enabling them to find success in school and life. Delivered through member stations, PBS KIDS offers high-quality content on TV — including a PBS KIDS channel — and streaming free on [pbskids.org](#) and the [PBS KIDS Video app](#), games on the [PBS KIDS Games app](#), and in communities across America. More information about PBS is available at [PBS.org](#), one of the leading dot-org websites on the internet, [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), or through our [apps for mobile and connected devices](#). Specific program information and updates for press are available at [pbs.org/pressroom](#) or by following [PBS Communications on Twitter](#).