

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



**Ella Sharp Museum and Jackson School of the Arts opens *Frida Kahlo's Garden* January 28, 2021 at Ella Sharp Museum**

3225 Fourth Street, Jackson, MI – January 11, 2021 – Frida Kahlo (1907–1954) is considered one of the most significant artists of the twentieth century. Her body of work, consisting of some 250 paintings and drawings, is at once intensely personal and universal in scope, and relies heavily on the natural world. The exhibition *Frida Kahlo's Garden* transports visitors to Kahlo's garden to experience her world as she did. *Frida Kahlo's Garden*, hosted by Ella Sharp Museum and Jackson School of the Arts, opens to the public on January 29 at Ella Sharp Museum. The exhibit opens for museum members on January 28 for an exclusive first look.

The garden at Casa Azul (or Blue House), Kahlo's lifelong home in Coyoacán, Mexico City, was a creative refuge and a source of inspiration for the artist and her husband, Diego Rivera (1886–1957). The garden, which was filled with native plants, housed Kahlo and Rivera's collection of pre-Hispanic artifacts and

folk art displayed on a four-tiered pyramid inspired by the Mesoamerican city of Teotihuacan. This exhibition offers insights into the ways in which the garden at Casa Azul, the diversity of plant life in Mexico, and the rich cultural history of the country nourished the creativity of the world's great artists.

Often overshadowed by her husband's career and the traumatic events in her life, this exhibition approaches Kahlo from a different angle, to broaden the discussion of the artist by focusing on the influence of her surrounding environment, both natural and nationalistic. This approach examines her garden, her home, and the revolutionary influences that impacted her life.

Kahlo's works are filled with colorful and compelling depictions of flowers, foliage, and fruits, many native to Mexico. Her choice of botanical imagery reflects the embrace of archetypal Mexican indigenous and natural elements that defined art in the decades following the Mexican Revolution (1910–20). Through her profoundly personal paintings, which convey cultural, spiritual, and intimate messages, her reverence for nature, and her nationalistic fashion sense, Kahlo has become an icon within the artistic world.

Visitors to this exhibition will explore iconic photographs of the artist and her home and garden, in addition to reproductions of several of her paintings. Also included are information about native Mexican plants that were grown in her garden, a dress from the Mexican state of Oaxaca where Kahlo sourced much of her attire, and examples of folk art collected by Kahlo and Rivera. Additionally, visitors will learn about Mexican culture, including traditional festivities, food and drink, and agricultural practices.

This exhibition is made possible by NEH on the Road, a special initiative of the National Endowment for the Humanities. *Frida Kahlo's Garden* is adapted from the exhibition, *FRIDA KAHLO: ART, GARDEN, LIFE*, organized by guest curator Adriana Zavala at The New York Botanical Garden. It was made possible with

major funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, Karen Katen Foundation, The LuEsther T. Mertz Charitable Trust, MetLife Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, National Endowment for the Humanities, New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature, and Gillian and Robert Steel. It was adapted and toured for NEH on the Road by the Mid-America Arts Alliance.

**Exhibition:** *Frida Kahlo's Garden*

([www.ellasharpmuseum.org/exhibits/frida-kahlos-garden](http://www.ellasharpmuseum.org/exhibits/frida-kahlos-garden)).

**Host Organization:** Ella Sharp Museum and Jackson School of the Arts

**Exhibit Location:** Ella Sharp Museum

**Runs:** January 28, 2021 – March 16, 2021

**Gallery Hours:** Wednesday – Saturday, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m., Sundays 12 – 5 p.m.

\*Wednesday – Saturday: Closed 12 pm to 12:30 pm for cleaning\*

**Location:** 3225 Fourth St, Jackson, MI 49203

**Admission:** \$5/Adult; \$3/child, museum members and children under 5: Free

**Contact:** Ella Sharp Museum

[www.ellasharpmuseum.org](http://www.ellasharpmuseum.org)

517-787-2320

[info@ellasharp.org](mailto:info@ellasharp.org)

In conjunction with the exhibition, both Ella Sharp Museum, Jackson School of the Arts, and the Jackson District Library are hosting events and activities that include preschool art classes, painting classes, workshops, free admission days, toddler tours, and more. For the complete list of events and details, visit

[www.ellasharpmuseum.org/exhibits/frida-kahlos-garden](http://www.ellasharpmuseum.org/exhibits/frida-kahlos-garden).

About NEH on the Road



NEH on the Road (NEHOTR) is a fully funded initiative of the National Endowment for the Humanities, designed to create wider national access to the ideas, themes, and stories explored in major grant-funded NEH exhibitions. Mid-

America Arts Alliance has provided the curatorial adaptation, design, production, and tour management of the NEHOTR program since 2002. Each exhibition is designed to fit within 2,000 square feet and features abundant artifacts, integrated didactic panels, banners, and other supporting materials that best reflect the content and scholarship of the original large-scale exhibitions. Learn more at [www.nehontheroad.org](http://www.nehontheroad.org).

#### About the National Endowment for the Humanities



Created in 1965 as an independent federal agency, the National Endowment for the Humanities supports research and learning in history, literature, philosophy, and other areas of the humanities by funding selected, peer-reviewed proposals from around the nation. Additional information about the National Endowment for the Humanities and its grant programs is available at: [www.neh.gov](http://www.neh.gov).

#### About Mid-America Arts



#### Alliance

Mid-America Arts Alliance (M-AAA) strengthens and supports artists, cultural organizations, and communities throughout our region and beyond. We achieve this primarily through our national traveling exhibition programs, innovative leadership development, and strategic grant making. We are especially committed to enriching the cultural life of historically underserved communities by providing high quality, meaningful, and accessible arts and culture programs and services. We believe in more art for more people. Additional information about M-AAA is available at [www.maaa.org](http://www.maaa.org).

#### About Ella Sharp Museum



The Ella Sharp Museum, a 501(c)(3), was founded in 1965 and offers programs, exhibits, and experiences preserving community history, advancing art appreciation, and connecting children with astronomy. Our 6-acre campus includes the Hadwin Center with exhibit galleries, program spaces, rental facilities, and offices; the Merriman Sharp farmhouse, a one-room schoolhouse, a log cabin, barn and the Hurst Planetarium. Our mission focuses on providing

opportunities to connect our community with history and the arts. Additional information about Ella Sharp Museum is available at [www.ellasharpmuseum.org](http://www.ellasharpmuseum.org).

About Jackson School of the Arts



The mission of the Jackson School of the Arts is to provide quality, accessible arts education programs for Jackson County youth, regardless of their financial means. Additional information about the Jackson School of the Arts is available at [www.jacksonarts.org](http://www.jacksonarts.org).

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For more information please contact Jena Smoyer, Ella Sharp Museum  
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