

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Biographies: Diego Rivera*

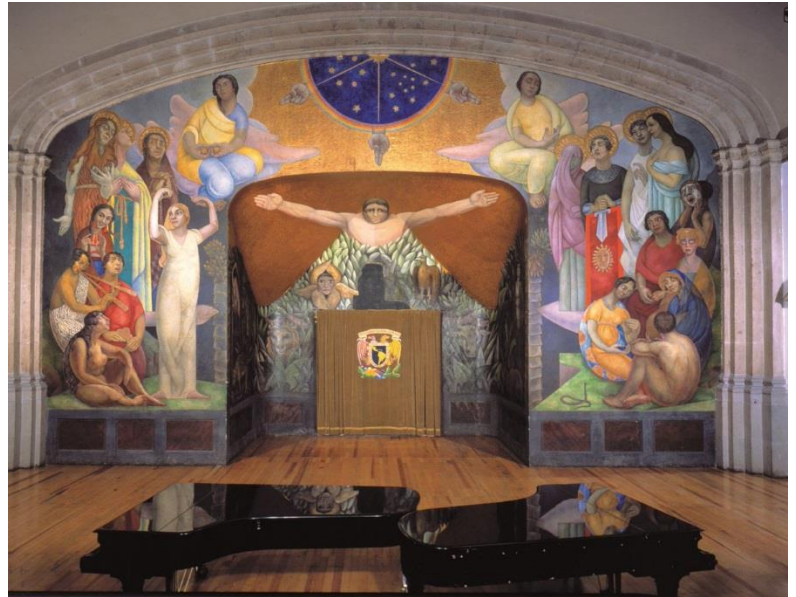


Diego Rivera was a talented Mexican painter who became the most famous Mexican muralist because of his talent and political-cultural ideals. His full name was Diego María de la Concepción Juan Nepomuceno Estanislao de la Rivera and Barrientos Acosta y Rodríguez.

Diego Rivera and his twin brother, Jose Carlos Maria, were born in the city of Guanajuato, on December 8, 1886. His twin brother died a year and a half later.

His father, Diego Rivera, was a teacher and the editor of a liberal newspaper. His mother was María del Pilar Barrientos. In 1892, the Rivera family moved from Guanajuato to Mexico City.

Diego's father wanted a military career for Diego. At the age of 10, Diego went against his father's wishes and began taking night classes at the San Carlos Academy in the Mexican capital, where he amazed his teachers with his artistic skills. After his first individual exhibition in 1907, the governor of Veracruz awarded him a scholarship which he used to go to Spain and worked in the workshop of Eduardo Chicharro, one of the most outstanding portrait painters in Madrid. Two years later, he went to Paris.



While in Paris, he met the Russian painter Angelina Beloff and married her in 1911. They had a son named Diego in 1916 who died in 1918.

In January 1922, he began to paint his first mural called The Creation inside the Simon Bolivar Amphitheater at the National Preparatory School of the National University in Mexico City. The mural is seen in the photo to the right. The mural's central theme was

the formation of the Mexican race. From that first mural, his career as a muralist was established.

He married his second wife, Guadalupe Marín, in December 1922. They had two daughters: Lupe, born in 1924, and Ruth, born in 1926. In 1928, he divorced Guadalupe Marín, and a year later, married a Mexican artist named Frida Kahlo, the one he is posing with in the photo to the right. They had a famous, stormy, and celebrity love that lasted until her death.



Diego Rivera was known for his communist ideology. He did, however, paint some murals in the United States of America. During one of those trips, he experienced one of his most unusual incidents. In 1933, the American millionaire Nelson Rockefeller hired Rivera to paint a mural in the entrance hall of the building that would be known as the Rockefeller Center, on Fifth Avenue of New York. It became one of the emblems of American capitalism.



The mural Rivera designed for Rockefeller was called Man at the Crossroads. Everything was going very well, until, when he was about to finish it, Rivera included a portrait of the former Russian president and communist leader Vladimir Lenin in the mural. The reaction of the American press and the controversy that it provoked was immediate. Rockefeller saw the portrait as a personal insult, and shortly afterwards ordered that the entire mural be destroyed. Rivera painted the same mural in Mexico and called it Man, Controller of the Universe.

Frida Kahlo died in July 1954. A year later, Diego Rivera was diagnosed with cancer. On November 24, 1957 Diego Rivera died at his home in San Angel, and was buried in the Rotunda of Illustrious Persons, Dolores Civil Cemetery, Mexico City.

His works are highlighted with his murals, more than three thousand paintings, hundreds of drawings, graphic works, and illustrations, as well as his many writings.



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## ANSWER THE QUESTIONS

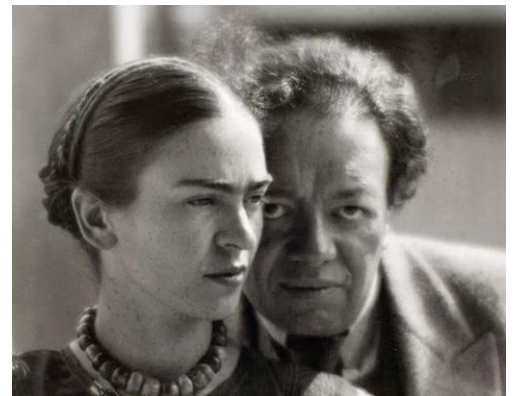
1. How old was Rivera when he started taking night classes at the San Carlos Academy?

- a. 21
- b. 19
- c. 15
- d. 10



2. What was the name of Diego Rivera's second wife?

- a. Frida Kahlo
- b. Guadalupe Marín
- c. Angelina Beloff
- d. Pilar Barrientos



3. Whose portrait did Rivera add at the last minute in the Rockefeller Center mural?

- a. Nelson Rockefeller
- b. Frida Kahlo
- c. Vladimir Lenin
- d. None of the above

4. Diego Rivera was a capitalist.

- a. True
- b. False

5. What was the name of Rivera's first mural?

- a. The Creation
- b. The Formation of the Mexican Race
- c. Man, Controller of the Universe
- d. Man at the Crossroads

