

****Translated Document****

Mr. Fernando Trevino Lopez, Director of MARCO:

Dolores Olmedo Patino, President of the Diego Rivera Trust Committee and former Director of the Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo Museums, as well as Diego Rivera's assistant, Rina Lazo, and the students of Frida: Arturo Estrada and Arturo Bustos, certify that "Dualidad de mi existir", is without a doubt an original Frida Kahlo artwork. We would also like to say that the statements by Marta Zamora lack a respectable ethic, and have no actual validity, because she does not have the necessary authority to attest such a claim, especially after having authenticated this specific piece in 1988.

The painting which Mrs. Zamora refers to was painted by Frida Kahlo for the painter Isabela Villasenor, which Frida called "Mi pequena venadita (My little deer)"; a work prior to "Venadita Herida (Wounded deer)" from 1946, which were inspired by "Granizo", a pet deer in Diego and Frida's home in Coyoacan. We know that Isabela Villasenor, an artist who died before her time, had the painting in her possession for many years, hidden from the public in the hands of her family, and it was never exhibited. We had this painting in our possession several times last year, when it was being offered for sale in Mexico City. In 1988, as we stated, Marta Zamora issued a COA (certificate of authenticity), as well as Isolda Kahlo in that same year. Afterwards, in 1991, Mrs. Olmedo issued a COA for the piece, and we are sure that, if needed again, the COA would be re-issued because its authenticity is certain.

The director of the INBA museum, Miriam Molina and Mr. Mario Vazquez, besides knowing the painting, asked for our opinions, and that is why it was included in the exhibition at MARCO.

Because Marta Zamora's doubts and "supposed veracity" has sparked controversy, we need to state the following: in the first place, the investigator has no technical experience for analyzing an artwork and secondly, she should not appoint herself as the authority to question the authenticity of works by Frida, simply because she wrote a book about the artist. Besides, the fact that she owns a printing press doesn't grant her the necessary qualifications nor the supposed authority to appoint herself, in less than 10 years, as an irrefutable authority on Frida Kahlo, as she aims to be.

On the other hand, to point out the lack of veracity in her 'famous book', "El Pincel de la Angustia", her major preoccupation has been: to try and sell the paraphrased rehashes of her book, which has now been published in English. Ever since her book appeared, Zamora has been stricken with an unmeasured desire to get rich at Frida Kahlo's expense, by exploiting the rights, which belong to the Diego Rivera trust, for several years now. Mrs. Zamora has dedicated herself, with no authority whatsoever, to reproduce the artist's work in postals, posters and souvenirs, as well as granting COAs, which have been disseminated all around Mexico and part of the USA. She has reproduced the artwork from the Dolores Olmedo Foundation, the Gelman collection and the Casa Azul museum, where, in some instances, she has included the INBA's authorization. We must stress that nobody is authorized to grant COAs over Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo's work, if they do not include a joint signature from Mrs. Olmedo or the Trust.

Regarding the “investigator’s” (Zamora) book, we must state that it is filled with errors and that her investigations lack solidity when she tries to shed new light on her ideas. There are mistakes in information, dates and works; an example is the illustration on P.380 of her book, where there is a naked portrait in which Zamora states that Mrs. Olmedo told her that Frida had used her face and Lola Olmedo’s body in that drawing. Nevertheless, Mrs. Olmedo asserts that the drawing is not Frida’s, but by Maria Izquierdo, and that she was never a model for them.

It’s great that this opportunity has risen to publically exhibit Zamora’s mediocrity and her lack of work ethics, as well as to show the abuses she has committed against the Diego Rivera Trust. We know that Diego Rivera, when donating his work to the people of Mexico and creating the Trust, included very clear clauses regarding the protection of the rights of his work, due to the limited economical resources his museums (Anahuacalli and Frida Kahlo) had to subsist. He left all the reproduction, literary and artistic rights to said Trust, protecting his works from commercial exploitation and partial or total reproduction. Therefore, the only one who can have the reproduction rights is the Trust, which was instituted before the decrees, which consider Rivera and Frida’s work as national cultural heritage, appeared. We affirm there is no retroactive law!

We insist, that neither specialists from Christies Latin American art department, nor specialists from Sotheby’s, are a guarantee for authenticating the veracity of an artwork, whatever it might be. This, because both institutions are dedicated to selling and auctioning, and they can’t be held responsible, as they state, if a work of art is authentic or not. Both Sotheby’s and Chritie’s accept artworks from their owners who wish to sell them, trusting in the good will of the person who entrusts the piece for its sale.

On the other hand, neither Hayden Herrera, who has claimed to on other occasions, nor any writer who alleges to know it all, are capable of knowing if a piece is or is not by Frida Kahlo, unless they actually saw her paint it. This is not the case, even though they have investigated and catalogued artworks based on information obtained by people who did know the artist and her work. Besides, we have generously granted our time and knowledge to the people who have done research on Frida, and Mrs. Olmedo has granted them access to the information they can obtain from the archives at the Frida Kahlo Museum; such is the case with Hayden Herrera, to whom we dedicated three years of our time, so she could do her investigations, and since it was a doctorate thesis she was authorized to publish her work, which was later published by Harper & Row publishers in New York. In the case of this book, Hayden Herrera was granted the rights for English edition reproduction only, but by no means was she authorized to publish in other languages, and the payments for the rights of these publications have not been covered yet; furthermore Herrera has not been authorized for the reproduction of the artworks from the Dolores Olmedo Foundation and Frida Kahlo Museum, which are included in her second book, “The Paintings”.

But for the knowledge of the public, historians and art critics who are not familiar with the rights that exist over Rivera and Kahlo, it must be known that nobody can nor should make use of said rights, without the previous authorization and payment of the artistic and reproduction rights. That said, we insist, the aforementioned artwork was a gift for the painter Isabela Villasenor, intimate friend, who was married to Gabriel Fernandez Ledesma, another distinguished intellectual and artist.

To conclude, we should state that a journalist by the name of Ms. Clara Torres presented herself before Mrs. Olmedo, with a bad copy of a fax in which the artwork and the signature were not visible, agreeing to meet on the 13th of this month to search in Mrs. Olmedo's archives, if in fact a COA was issued, where she later learned that she had indeed extended a COA of said piece to her dear friend, Mrs. Yolanda del Puerto Portilla; but Clara Torres, without the prior confirmation of the veracity of the document from Mrs. Olmedo, and without her knowledge, dishonorably recorded and published her friend Yolanda. That same Saturday 13th on the evening, Mrs. Olmedo tells us that journalist Clara Torres called her and she immediately complained, telling her she had no right to do such statements without having her answer beforehand. Mrs. Olmedo wishes to make her friend Yolanda's honesty public, and acknowledge the document in her possession, which is signed by Mrs. Olmedo own hand.

We who sign are sure that "Dualidad de mi existir" is an artwork by the painter Frida Kahlo, and so it can continue to be exhibited in this great museum.

SINCERELY

Dolores Olmedo Patino, Rina Lazo, Arturo Estrada and Arturo Bustos

Mexico DF, June 13th 1992

NOTE:

We wish and authorize Mr. Trevino Lopes to make this clarifying letter public in the newspapers in Monterrey.

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