

Colour floods the skies above Carnaby Street as *¡Frida Icónica!* opens today

A landmark moment for public art: Carnaby Street goes full Frida, all 250 metres of it



Caption: Carnaby Street unveils '*¡Frida Icónica!*', a public art installation featuring papel picado banners and a large-scale mural inspired by the life and work of Frida Kahlo, launched in collaboration with Tate Modern ahead of today's opening of the exhibition '*Frida: The Making of an Icon*'. Picture date: Thursday June 25, 2026. PA Photo. Photo credit should read: Jack Hall/PA Media Assignments.

London, UK, 25 June 2026 -Today *¡Frida Icónica!* takes over Carnaby Street, transforming the cultural hub into a vivid celebration of one of the art world's most enduring and iconic figures, in conjunction with Tate Modern's much anticipated exhibition, *Frida: The Making of an Icon*.

Traditional *papel picado*, designed by artist Alejandra Ballesteros, will fly above passers-by on the street, crowned by an anamorphic mural composed from four portraits by Frida Kahlo and contemporary artists. The installation brings Frida Kahlo's extraordinary world of colour, queer identity and Mexican heritage to the heart of Soho – and it's available for all to enjoy.

The beautifully designed 3.25m x 2.5m anamorphic mural comes together to form Frida's iconic profile when viewed head on. The *papel picado*, or 'pierced paper', a staple of Mexican folk art, runs the full length of Carnaby Street, featuring motifs and themes drawn from Frida Kahlo's life and work. The installation will transform when lit up from day to night through one of London's most famous thoroughfares.

Carnaby Street and Soho have long been a stage for radical creativity, self-expression and cultural reinvention. The area boasts a mix of independent galleries, design studios and concept stores, so it is fitting that a tribute to Frida Kahlo, an artist who lived and worked unapologetically, finds a home here.

¡Frida Icónica! launches in collaboration with Tate Modern's *Frida: The Making of an Icon*, which also opens today and runs until 3 January 2027. The exhibition brings together over 30 works by Kahlo, presented alongside modern and contemporary artists from across the globe who have drawn influence from her aesthetic, identity and biography, exploring her journey from a little-known Mexican painter to a worldwide cultural phenomenon.

The Carnaby Street installation extends the celebration out of the gallery and into the city. *¡Frida Icónica!* will remain in place until 31 August offering a striking and joyful public art experience to everyone who walks through Soho this summer.

Catherine Riccomini, Director of Marketing and Communications at Shaftesbury Capital, said: *"Welcoming ¡Frida Icónica! to Carnaby Street this summer is about creating a shared cultural experience for London that makes Soho and Carnaby Street unlike anywhere else in the city. It has been brilliant to collaborate with Tate Modern, bringing together two of London's most celebrated cultural destinations to share Frida Kahlo's life, art and legacy in the heart of the city. By bringing world-class culture into a vibrant public space, we hope to make art more accessible and part of the everyday experience of Londoners and visitors alike. ¡Frida Icónica! is a tribute to Frida Kahlo's spirit and the richness of Mexican artistry and heritage and we hope it inspires everyone who encounters it."*

Catherine Wood, Interim Director of Tate Modern, said: *"Tate exists to champion artists, and we passionately believe that everyone should have the right to access art for free. We are thrilled to be collaborating with Carnaby Street to help bring the remarkable work of Frida Kahlo into the creative heart of London, offering even more people the opportunity to discover her extraordinary journey from a little-known Mexican painter to a worldwide cultural phenomenon."*

Tobias Ostrander, curator of *Frida: The Making of an Icon* at Tate Modern, said: *"Frida Kahlo's fearless celebration of identity and her unflinching portrayal of her personal struggles, speaks to so many different groups and generations. Bringing together key works from across her career alongside artists from around the globe, Tate Modern's exhibition delves into these narratives to explore her undeniable impact on contemporary art today. It feels fitting that Carnaby Street - a space with an equally rich history of championing radical voices - will pay homage to Frida's vibrant and enduring legacy."*

ENDS

Notes to editors

¡Frida Icónica!

25 June to 31 August 2026
Carnaby Street, Soho ,
More information available at thisissoho.co.uk

[Frida: The Making of an Icon](#)
25 June 2026 – 3 January 2027
Tate Modern, Bankside, London SE1 9TJ
Tickets available at tate.org.uk and +44(0)20 7887 8888
Free for Members. Join at tate.org.uk/members
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Frida: The Making of an Icon is organised by the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, in collaboration with Tate Modern. The exhibition is in partnership with Lead Global Supporter, Bank of America. Supported by John J. Studzinski CBE. Further support from The Dyers' Company. With additional support from the Frida: Making of an Icon Supporters Circle and Tate Members.

Shaftesbury Capital

Shaftesbury Capital PLC is the leading central London mixed-use Real Estate Investment Trust and is a constituent of the FTSE-250 Index. Our property portfolio under management, valued at £5.4 billion, extends to 2.8 million square feet of lettable space across the most vibrant areas of London's West End. With a diverse mix of shops, restaurants, cafés, bars, residential apartments and offices, our destinations include the high footfall, thriving neighbourhoods of Covent Garden, Carnaby, Soho and Chinatown. Our properties are close to the main West End Underground stations and transport hubs for the Elizabeth Line. Shaftesbury Capital shares are listed on the London Stock Exchange ("LSE") (primary) and the Johannesburg Stock Exchange ("JSE") (secondary) and the A2X (secondary).

About Soho

Soho is a world-famous shopping and dining destination in the heart of London's West End, synonymous with culture, creativity and innovation. Made up of one square mile of vibrant interconnecting streets including the globally renowned Carnaby Street, it's home to a multi-dimensional mix of international flagships, independent boutiques and innovative, new concept stores. The epicentre of London's dining scene, its unique day-to-night hospitality offer comprises high-quality restaurants, cafés, bars and pubs.

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About Tate

Tate celebrates the world's greatest modern and contemporary art, as well as the best of British art from 1500 to today. Every year it welcomes millions of people to its four galleries – Tate Britain, Tate Modern, Tate Liverpool and Tate St Ives – to enjoy unforgettable exhibitions, spectacular commissions and unique events. At the heart of these activities is a growing collection of over 70,000 works of art, ranging from paintings and sculptures to installations and performances. Tate cares for this collection on behalf of the public and, as one of the world's



biggest lenders of art, shares it with museums and galleries throughout the UK and across the globe. For more information, visit tate.org.uk

About Tate Modern

Tate Modern is the world's most popular museum of modern and contemporary art. It is free to visit and open to all, welcoming millions of people each year. The museum's collection displays span 100 years of art by renowned artists from around the world, presented alongside a diverse and international programme of exhibitions, commissions and events. For more information, visit tate.org.uk/visit/tate-modern