



### Being Fire

Being Fire. Multisensory Muralism arises from reflecting upon the bodies both represented and involved in the mural artwork of José Clemente Orozco. A large part of the strength of his paintings comes from the complexity with which he imbued characters, situations, and corporalities. On top of it, Orozco himself was disabled: he lost his left hand in a firework accident, and he also had myopia and hearing loss, which were reflected on his works.

*The Man Of Fire* has inspired various interpretations that associate him with mythical characters such as Prometheus and Dionysus. It has also been discussed the possibility that it represents Orozco himself, while the three human figures that surround him would represent Gerardo Murillo, known as *Dr. Atl*, David Alfaro Siqueiros, and Diego Rivera.

The murals also appeal to the spectator's body. Orozco created an immersive scenery in the *Capilla Mayor* where each mural is a window towards various scenes. The spectator is forced to modify their body posture according to the building's architecture to appreciate it as a whole, and as such they become an active part of the artwork.

Orozco's work was part of the nationalist educative crusades set on march by José Vasconcelos, who oriented the muralists' works to promote, idolize, and essentialize the Mexican mestizo body type. Notwithstanding, Orozco represented both realistic and cartoon-like human bodies; grotesque and robotized. Individual bodies as they perform actions and gestures, and masses of bodies both generic and alienated. This opposed the unifying ideal of Vasconcelos: for Orozco, the consequences of racial theory were terrible, and the antagonism and superiority of certain races was questionable.

The murals are exhibited in a space that evolved from a hospice to a museum, and invite us to question how, even if looking to achieve educational and social functions, they are heirs to modern and colonial projects. Within Orozco's metaphor about being agents of change, here we stumble with some questions: Which bodies get access to culture and cultural heritage sites? Who are museums directed towards? How can we transcend the normative sensory logic in order to make room for the knowledge and the participation of diverse bodies and functionalities?

All of the above inspired *Being Fire. Multisensory Muralism*, an exhibition that looks for a new interpretation of Orozco's work through different sensorial experiences with the goal of offering a space for diverse audiences, ideas, and corporalities. *Being Fire* is possessing a knowledge that is felt, that pierces the body. It's thinking about the importance of transformative processes and questioning their transcendence beyond their visual normativity.

From this moment on: feel, listen, touch, imagine, and transform this space.

