

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
NEW YORK

11 WEST 53rd STREET
TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 5-8900
CABLES: MODERNART, NEW-YORK

OFFICE OF THE PUBLICITY DIRECTOR
SARAH NEWMAYER

June 17, 1940.

TO City Editors
Art Editors
News Photo Editors
Feature Editors

Dear Sirs:

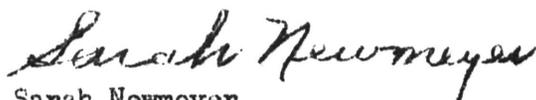
The Museum of Modern Art has commissioned the Mexican mural painter, José Clemente Orozco, to paint a large (18'x9') fresco on one wall of its exhibition galleries. Mr. Orozco is generally considered one of the great artists of the Western Hemisphere. He has chosen as the subject of his fresco THE DIVE BOMBER.

Mr. Orozco has arrived in New York and will start work on the fresco tomorrow (Tuesday, June 18). The fresco will have a number of unusual features, and a photograph of Mr. Orozco on the scaffold at work on it would probably be of interest to many of your readers. Mr. Orozco speaks English and has a number of interesting theories on modern art and particularly on fresco painting.

You are therefore invited to come or send a representative to a

PRESS CONFERENCE
at 4 p.m., Tuesday, June 18
to meet Mr. Orozco and possibly photograph him
starting the fresco
at the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street.

Sincerely,



Sarah Newmeyer
Publicity Director

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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

11 WEST 53RD STREET, NEW YORK

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NOTED MEXICAN ARTIST PAINTS FRESCO "THE DIVE BOMBER" ON WALLS OF THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, announces that it has commissioned José Clemente Orozco to paint a large fresco on the southwest wall of the Museum's third floor gallery where the modern section of Twenty Centuries of Mexican Art is currently being shown.

Orozco will paint the mural in true fresco on six plaster panels three by nine feet, which have been attached to the wall. The division into panels will make possible its occasional showing in other cities. During the painting of the fresco visitors may watch its progress every afternoon. It is intended as part of Twenty Centuries of Mexican Art and when completed will be on view until the exhibition closes September 30.

The Orozco fresco is the second major work the Museum has commissioned as part of its exhibition of Twenty Centuries of Mexican Art, which shows the modern art of Mexico against the background of that country's entire artistic culture. For two weeks after the opening of the exhibition the Museum presented a concert program of Mexican music which it had commissioned Mexico's foremost conductor and composer, Carlos Chavez, to arrange and supervise.

For several decades Orozco has been one of Mexico's greatest artists. The subject he has chosen for the fresco in the Museum is The Dive Bomber. Instead of presenting a realistic picture, however, the completed fresco will convey a sense of power, of might--a machine monster of modern war.

When asked if a certain preliminary sketch was the head of an aviator, he said: "Yes, perhaps,--" he turned the sketch upside down--"or, it might be a bomb. A picture must be capable of being looked at from any direction. Its plastic qualities remain the same. I plan to paint this fresco so that the individual panels can be turned upside down or rearranged in any order, changing but not disturbing the basic composition."

Orozco was asked if his selection of The Dive Bomber as his

*in true fresco the artist paints on fresh plaster with permanent colors ground in water.

subject had any political significance. 109

He said, "Of course not. I simply paint the life that is going on at present--what we are and what the world is at this moment. That is what modern art is, the actual feeling of life around us or the mood of whatever is just happening. As for political significance, that can be found in any painting if the observer wishes to see it there. Flowers could have a political significance, or a quiet home scene. As for the fresco I am now doing, no political significance is intended. Of course, a modern painting can mean one thing to one person and one thing to another. It is anything you like and is for the enjoyment and use of everybody. No one has to accept another person's meaning. Each can draw his own meaning out of a modern painting."

Orozco was born in Zapotlan, Jalisco, in 1883. When he was about seventeen years old an explosion damaged his eyesight and caused the loss of his left hand. In Mexico City, 1900-1904, he studied agriculture and architectural drawing. He began painting in 1909 and produced a series of illustrations, drawings and paintings depicting war scenes and the underworld life of Revolutionary Mexico during the years 1910-1917.

From 1917-1919 he was in California, where he did some painting. He returned to Mexico and in 1922 was commissioned by the Secretary of Education to paint frescoes in government buildings, particularly in the Preparatoria in Mexico City and in the Orizaba Industrial School. He has recently been commissioned by President Cárdenas to take charge of the decoration of the new building under construction for the Mexican Supreme Court, near the National Palace in Mexico City. In the United States Orozco is represented by frescoes in Pomona College in Claremont, California; at the New School for Social Research in New York; and at Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire.

Orozco never had any formal training or study in art. In 1932 he travelled in Europe and since his return he has painted frescoes in the Palacio de Bellas Artes in Mexico City and in the University, State Palace and Orphanage at Guadalajara, Jalisco. He has recently been working on a fresco in the public library at Jiquilpan, Michoacan, which he interrupted to come to New York for the purpose of painting the fresco in the Museum of Modern Art. He believes it will take him about four weeks to complete this fresco. On his return to Mexico he will resume his work on the fresco in Jiquilpan.