

PROYECTOS MONCLOVA

Opening of the exhibition *Pase Ud. Hasta nuestros días* by Josué Mejía

- Proyectos Monclova opens the exhibition *Pase Ud. Hasta nuestros días* (Come on in, into our times) by the Mexican artist Josué Mejía on Tuesday 07 February 2023.
- The exhibition will run from 07.02.2023 until 01.04.2023
- The presentation uses the exhibition: *Twenty Centuries of Mexican Art* presented in 1940 at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York as its starting point

On the 7th of February, Proyectos Monclova inaugurates the exhibition *Pase Ud. Hasta nuestros días* by the Mexican artist Josué Mejía, in which he takes as his starting point the exhibition *Twenty Centuries of Mexican Art* presented in 1940 at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York, originally planned to take place in Paris, but was derailed due to the risk of transporting the works to France during World War II. Mejía questions the historical account set forth by the Mexican government between the wars on the linear evolution of national art, which began with pre-Hispanic art, continued with viceregal art, then folkloric (popular) art, and ended with modern art.

In an exercise of archival review, the artist traces press releases and critical texts of the time to analyze the development of the *Twenty Centuries...* exhibition and to imagine unofficial moments that could have occurred during the transfer of the works and their placement in showcases and pedestals within the museum. Thus, the artist proposes alternative stories to the official one through frescoes and drawings that are displayed on the first floor of the gallery.

The exhibition *Pase Ud. Hasta nuestros días* brings together drawings that allude to the installation of the *Twenty Centuries...* exhibition, such as the showcases where pre-Hispanic pieces are usually presented, the curtains and those of the MoMA. Other drawings reference the works that were sent from Mexico for the exhibition: cartoons published in print media, figurines of Mayan and Mexica origin, models and paintings from the first half of the 20th century.

Mejía also takes up the criticism that surrounded the exhibition in New York through three frescoes in which he references the comments of the art historian and writer Manuel Toussaint

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about the excess of pre-Hispanic pieces that were transported to New York but in the end were stored, and some about his discontent at the absence of a 16th-century convent fresco in the exhibition. Mejía's use of the fresco has to do directly with a questioning about the use of this pictorial technique in pre-Hispanic times, in the viceregal period and at the beginning of the 20th century in Mexico.

Josué Mejía studied Visual Arts at the National School of Fine Arts of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM). He was part of the 2020 generation of the SOMA Educational Program. His work is based on historical reviews in order to recognize the shaping processes of the past. Based on this, he traces other stories that allow him to make use of historical "inaccuracies" in order to tell alternate narratives that function as counter-stories to official ones. To carry out this search, he interviews the objects, furniture, frames, tickets and letters that were present during "important" moments in history. With this, Mejía shows that these objects have been mediators of complex diplomatic agreements.

His work has been presented at: the Museo Jumex (CDMX, 2022), Guadalajara 90210 (CDMX, GDL, 2022), at the Material Art Fair (CDMX, 2022), the SCAD Art Museum (Savannah, 2021), at Galería Embajada (Puerto Rico, 2021), at the Tamayo Contemporary Art Museum (CDMX, 2020), among others. He has been a fellow of the FONCA Young Creators program (2018, 2021) in the Alternative Media category.