

Francisco Ugarte / Polyforum Siqueiros Intervention

“In my work I use context as any other material.” Hans Haacke

Different materials, substances and physical agents compose the present work. However, what determines the joint of these elements, here and now, is the fact of conceiving context as any other material. And not just as one among many others, but also as the detonator that enables and justifies the presence of the rest. The context rules, determines.

Is there another way, in a place like this? Yes, indeed. Ugarte could have ignored his Majesty, the context, and could have introduced to the space, to this particular space –which is obviously not an exhibition room– a series of previously-conceived pieces and then articulate a staging; namely, an exhibition. Fortunately for every user and visitor of the Polyforum, his choice was to generate several questions and comments from the inescapable historical, symbolic, aesthetic, and social baggage of the environment. These trigger dialogues with the building’s architecture as well as with the plastic interests manifested by the artist along his career. In other words, he couples to the context without contradicting his practice.

Parallel, this decision entails healthy doses of institutional critique and consequently, political questions. But, of course, not in an evident, coarse and “responsible” way, as some contemporary creators do. Ugarte’s first gesture is to make room, clear areas, emphasize forms and camouflage radiations. All these are strictly formal actions that, paradoxically, strip down the institution in front of its public and its history. Siqueiros is left naked, his messianic obsessions and his visionary desire, but also his drawing achievements by implementing the polyangular perspective. Both, the unfortunate official interventions to the space and the *La marcha de la humanidad* (the outdoor murals) grievous conservation state are emphasized. Also, the dodecahedron that shapes the building designed by architect Guillermo Rossel and the pillars that erect it from the ground, like a 70s spaceship, become even more perceptible. The virtuosity of this piece and large part of Ugarte’s work is located on the precision and austerity of his visual strategies. These denounce, make visible the evident what no one perceives anymore and, at the same time, activate spaces from a reciprocal seduction between the context and us who produce it with out intermittent presence.

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