

**PRESS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 30, 2016

**MEDIA CONTACTS**

Rebecca McGrew | 909.607.7358

[rebecca.mcgregor@pomona.edu](mailto:rebecca.mcgregor@pomona.edu)

Justine Bae | 909.607.7543

[justine.bae@pomona.edu](mailto:justine.bae@pomona.edu)

**POMONA COLLEGE MUSEUM OF ART  
AWARDED \$175,000 GETTY FOUNDATION GRANT**

**Funds will support major exhibition:**

***Prometheus 2017: Four Artists from Mexico Revisit Orozco***

CLAREMONT—The Pomona College Museum of Art has been awarded a \$175,000 Getty Foundation grant to support the exhibition and publication for “Prometheus 2017: Four Artists from Mexico Revisit Orozco” under the Getty-led initiative, Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA. “Prometheus 2017” will examine José Clemente Orozco’s 1930 mural on the Pomona College campus and the multiple ways his vision resonates with four artists working in Mexico today.

**“Prometheus 2017” is scheduled to open September 5, 2017.** Isa Carrillo, Adela Goldbard, Rita Ponce de León and Naomi Rincón-Gallardo activate Orozco’s mural by reinvigorating *Prometheus* for a contemporary audience. These artists share Orozco’s interest in the relationships among history, storytelling, and power, but navigate their own 21st century approach to political causes and personal mythologies.



José Clemente Orozco (Zapotlán el Grande, Mexico, 1883), *Prometheus*, 1930, Fresco, 240 x 342 inches (610 x 869 cm), Pomona College, Claremont, CA. Photography © Fredrik Nilsen

Orozco's *Prometheus* represents the first mural painted in the U.S. by a Mexican muralist, and signifies the beginning of a complex decade of Mexican engagement with U.S. publics. For Pomona College President David Oxtoby, "*Prometheus* is an exemplar of the College's historical commitment to art. The story of the mural's realization reflects the dynamic exchange of ideas that continue to be a hallmark of the College's liberal arts curriculum."

Pomona's commitment to art is demonstrated in the 21st century by a commission to James Turrell for a public Skyspace, as well as the campus-wide acclaim for the projects developed in response to Pacific Standard Time: Art in LA 1945-1980, the first iteration of the Getty-led collaboration in 2011.

The latest grant to Pomona College is one of the Getty Foundation's recent implementation grants to 43 organizations across Southern California totaling \$8.45 million for Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA—an extraordinary series of concurrent exhibitions at museums throughout Southern California starting in Fall 2017 exploring Latin American and Latino art. In March 2014, the Pomona College Museum of Art received a \$100,000 Getty Foundation grant to support research and exhibition planning of the "Prometheus 2017" exhibition. The current \$175,000 grant supports exhibition-related costs and the production of the exhibition catalogue.

Orozco's vision of Prometheus as an allegory for art that attempts to reach a wider audience—bringing knowledge and enlightenment to the masses—highlights the ethos of Mexican muralism to transform society. Orozco's *Prometheus* reflects the tensions in his practice between a commitment to a political message and private agency. Orozco's esoteric and iconographic engagement with the myth involves his own biography and elite ideas about the artist as a prophet or seer.

Carrillo, Goldbard, Ponce de León and Rincón-Gallardo utilize strategies of engaged historical or archival research, public intervention, or intimately scaled social practice to connect with their publics and advance social issues in a variety of ways. The work of the four artists presented in "Prometheus 2017" aligns with Orozco's complicated humanism and, in subtle ways, references the themes of *Prometheus*.

Carrillo's intimate psychological portrayal of Orozco explores esoteric and personal tensions between the individual artist and his or her desires. Goldbard fabricates replicas of vehicles that were central to acts of political violence in recent Mexican history, and then uses pyrotechnics to destroy them. She embraces the metaphor of fire as both tool of creation and destruction. Working closely with a variety of communities and individuals, Ponce de León addresses a contemporary social praxis while connecting her public with private dialogues. Her project engaging with *Prometheus* will be forged through collective work sessions with the mural's continually shifting audience. Examining Greek mythology and historical dreams of utopia in Mexico, Rincón-Gallardo links a personal narrative with an exploration of the themes that are at the heart of *Prometheus* and Orozco's turn to myth.

"Prometheus 2017" will explore an important historical work of art, its reception and history at Pomona, as it provides critical entry to the artistic practice of a group of contemporary artists who expand the canon of contemporary art. Ultimately, the project will result in an exhibition and publication that bring a singular work of art into the contemporary discourse of artists working in Los Angeles, California, and Mexico.

**Rebecca McGrew**, Pomona College Museum of Art senior curator, leads the research and curatorial team for “Prometheus 1930/2017.” McGrew curated the critically-acclaimed and award-winning exhibition and accompanying publication “It Happened at Pomona: Art at the Edge of Los Angeles 1969-1973” presented as part of *Pacific Standard Time: Art in L.A. 1945-1980*. The team comprises: **Terri Geis**, Pomona College Museum of Art curator of academic programs, was part of the research and editorial team for the exhibition and publication “In Wonderland: The Surrealist Adventures of Women Artists in Mexico and the United States” (Los Angeles County Museum of Art and Museo de Arte Moderno, Mexico City, 2012). **Mary Coffey**, Dartmouth College professor of art history, is an eminent art historian who specializes in Mexican visual culture and muralism and Latin American art and culture. She recently published *How a Revolutionary Art Became Official Culture: Murals, Museums, and the Mexican State* (2012), an in-depth examination of the aesthetics of politics of Mexican murals which won the College Art Association’s 2013 Charles Rufus Morey Award for 2012’s distinguished book in art history. **Daniel Garza Usabiaga**, artistic director of Zona Maco in Mexico City, where his projects focus primarily on emerging contemporary artists in Mexico. His most recent publication is the 2013 award-winning *Mathias Goeritz y la arquitectura emocional. Una revisión crítica (1952-1968)*.

The Pomona College Museum of Art (330 N. College Ave., Claremont, CA) is open to the public and free of charge, Tuesday through Friday, from noon to 5 p.m., Thursday, noon to 11 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. For more information, call (909) 621-8283 or visit [www.pomona.edu/museum](http://www.pomona.edu/museum).

The Museum collects, preserves, exhibits and interprets works of art; and houses a substantial permanent collection as well as serving as a gallery of temporary exhibitions. Important holdings include the Kress Collection of 15th- and 16th-century Italian panel paintings; more than 5,000 examples of Pre-Columbian to 20th-century American Indian art and artifacts, including basketry, ceramics and beadwork; and a large collection of American and European prints, drawings and photographs, including works by Francisco de Goya, José Clemente Orozco, and Rico Lebrun.

“Prometheus 2017: Four Artists from Mexico Revisit Orozco” is part of Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA a far-reaching and ambitious exploration of Latin American and Latino art in dialogue with Los Angeles, taking place from September 2017 through January 2018 at more than 60 cultural institutions from Santa Barbara to San Diego, and from Los Angeles to Palm Springs. Pacific Standard Time is an initiative of the Getty. The presenting sponsor is Bank of America.

#

#

#