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Visual Analysis of the Chicano Mind

The Chicano Mind by Guillermo Martinez is an art piece that can be seen in the C building at Pasadena City College, although I have passed by this mural numerous times I never stopped to wonder what it means to me or how it might affect me from just taking a minute out of my day to observe it, since I have taken this class that has changed. In this beautiful painting we can see what would appear to be man stretched out with his arms open wide, I like to think he could be a Mexican man and that reason will make sense later in this analysis. The man can be seen stretched out almost in a crucifixion pose his abdomen is exposed and what seems to be his intestines he's holding onto them tightly with a clenched fist, surrounding him are faces that display different levels of emotions some showing sadness and others showing anger, confusion and despair, what makes this detail more eerie and striking after observing it you realize that the faces have no eyes. The man's face can be seen almost as he is in pain or a form of perseverance and under him is written "Viva La Raza" which means "Long Live the People" or "Long Live the Race" the phrase is often meant to express ones Latin American heritage, Call for social Justice or equality and Unity.

There are some pieces in this mural that defiantly stand out to me and make me wonder what the artist was trying to convey in the painting for instance one of them is the faces having no eyes and looking very sad and hopeless around the man. I believe that their faces represent the heritage and culture that was stripped away from them, the faces each represent a different emotion and a different character we can see soldiers, workers, ancient warriors and not to mention we see different age groups within the faces. Another part that stands out to me is the man in the center his positioning and face he makes, makes me think he is following the footsteps of the people behind him in the sense that he is also being stripped away from his heritage and the way he's spread out makes it seem very vulnerable, Judging by his face I would come to the conclusion that he is against this and does not want it to happen and he's holding onto whatever he can to remain who he is. I think the fact that he's holding onto what's coming out of his stomach signifies that he's holding onto what makes him, him. The face he makes just adds to the agony that he appears to be in, and his eyes show so much emotion they almost seem to show that he's fighting for perseverance and resistance unlike the other faces who are sad and confused.

One thing that also seems to stand out a lot to me is the color tones the artist uses, and the line work it seems to be very flowy and smooth there is almost no sharp edges, this reminds me

of the freedom the man in the center is fighting for. Another attention to detail that I enjoy and intrigued me was the words that make up Viva La Raza can be seen to be made up of soldiers on horseback fighting each other in formation, I think this attention to detail adds more to the fact that this piece is meant to be a resistance piece of one losing their identity and heritage. It amazes me how many times I would pass by this mural, and never once did I think to take a minute to just appreciate or analyze what is happening in it. Luckily for this class it shows a lot that I resonate with. Personally, I have always struggled with the fact that I don't feel Hispanic enough for my culture, and throughout my life I feel like some of my environments around me have contributed to that. The older I get my heritage has slowly started to slip from my grasp and much like the man in the painting I'm holding on to whatever little bit I can, so that my future generation can embrace what makes them, them.