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RED, White and Blue

No medium is more aptly capable of conveying the message of social and political reform than that of social realism. This movement allowed artists the opportunity to convey powerful messages to those who needed the exposure, whether voluntarily or not. Social realism depicts the struggles of the working class, and is a voice for the change of its conditions. Armed with conviction and a handful of painter's brushes, Diego Rivera vehemently pursued this idea in his artwork. Rivera came to be amongst the world's most renowned painters of this movement through several highly provocative works. He often fought against the injustice or oppression incurred on the proletariat. His most well known works are a composition of fresco murals that garnered him the attention of prominent patrons. While Rivera's murals most often depict the struggles of the proletariat Mexican, his arguably most famous work is not directed at Mexicans, but instead, its expected viewership is American. As his native Mexico underwent countless political changes, Rivera was commissioned to paint a mural for the newly erected Rockefeller Center, in New York. The same changes, which were influencing life in Mexico and overseas, were finding their way into Rivera's belief system, and amongst these beliefs, is the inherent superiority of communism. *Diego Rivera's Man, Controller of the Universe* seeks to guide a capitalist America towards communism through the vertical division of its visual surface, in which Rivera first reflects the evils present in a free-market America, and then highlights communism's contrasting ability to triumph in overcoming them.

