

MAGIC CARPET JOY RIDE

Magic Carpet/Home by Maria Elena González is an outdoor public sculpture that replicates the life-size floor plan of an apartment in Nickerson Gardens, a public housing project in the Los Angeles neighborhood of Watts, and visually transforms it into a magical flying carpet. Crucial to the project is that the sculpture is placed in a public park where members of Nickerson Gardens and surrounding communities can have direct access to the work and where it can become a part of daily life. Viewers are encouraged to touch the sculpture, which is coated with a soft, thick, rubber playground-safety surface, and interact with it; use it as a bench, meeting place, or playground. *Magic Carpet/Home* breaks down barriers traditionally placed around art – cultural, intellectual, otherwise – and encourages new thought and enthusiasm for contemporary art.

At a scale of 1 / 1 the sculpture shows the architectural floor plan of an apartment – the kitchen, bathroom, closets, etc. – and visually transforms them into a playful illusion. The artist's use of materials reflects the language of "streets"; the rubber and parking lot paint remind us of asphalt and traffic grids. Combined with the blueprint of an apartment, these elements suggest an exchange between interior and exterior.

Magic carpets are associated with the idea of freedom, fantasy, and travel. By representing a standard apartment as a miraculous flying carpet, the artist wishes to express her hope that our lives, and metaphorically our homes, can soar to great height and be transported anywhere we choose.

Maria Elena González was born in Havana, Cuba in 1957. She lives and works in Brooklyn, New York and Basel, Switzerland. González has received numerous awards and grants, including the Rome Prize for 2003. *Magic Carpet/Home* is a nation-wide project of outdoor public sculptures based on the floor plans of local public housing units. It first landed in New York, where it was supported by The Public Art Fund. The Baltimore and Los Angeles installations of *Magic Carpet/Home* have been supported in part by Creative Capital.

Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions is a non-profit interdisciplinary contemporary visual arts center that maintains an unwavering commitment to innovation in the visual arts by presenting work that is new, untested, controversial, and experimental. The organization originated in 1978 from a need for a Los Angeles venue that supports, exhibits, and advocates innovations in art making. Since its inception, the organization has presented the work of over 5000 artists in over 3000 exhibitions, performances, screenings, and works of public art.



EL GOZO VUELO DE LA ALFOMBRA MÁGICA

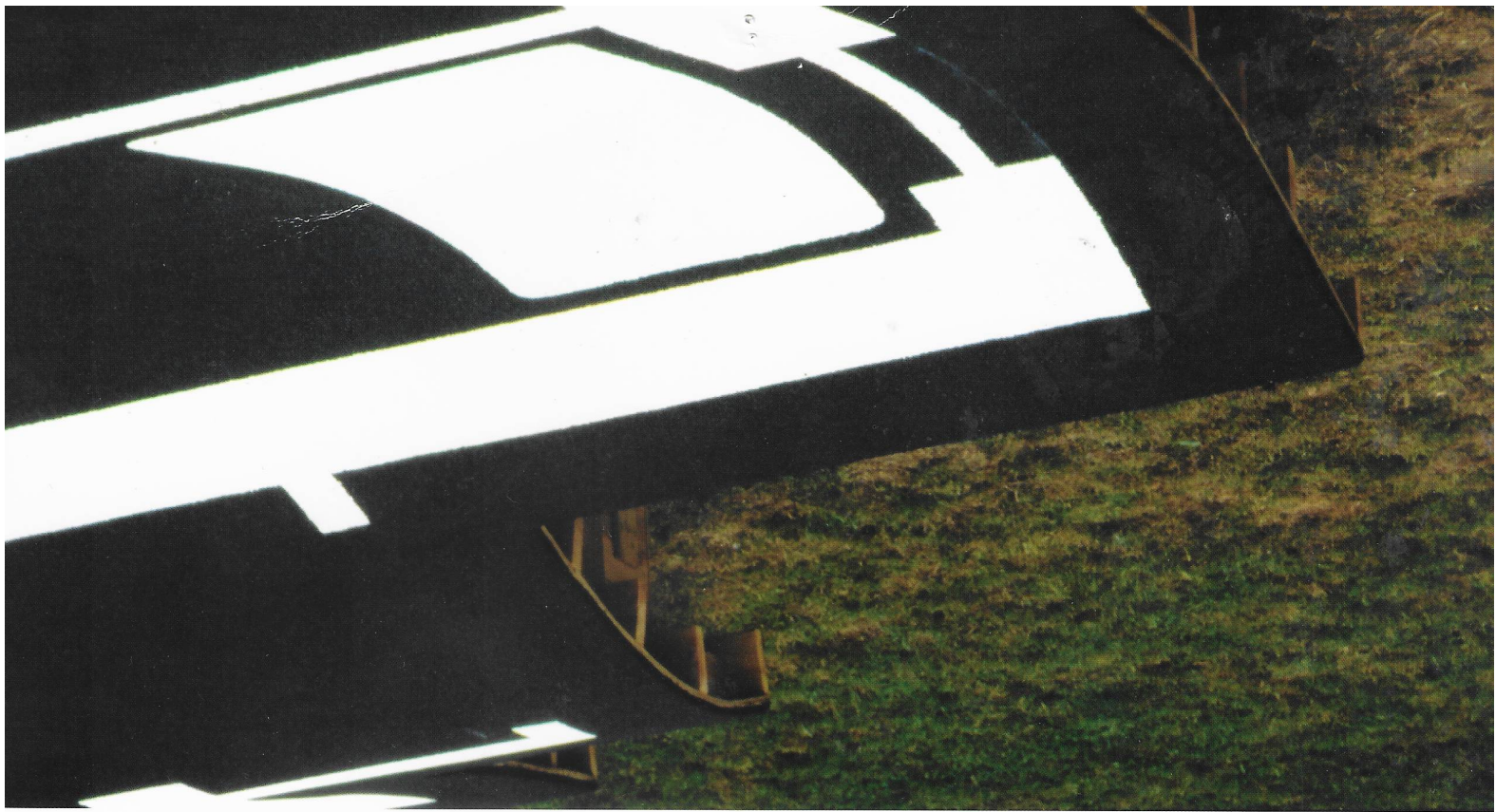
La *Alfombra Mágica / Hogar* escultura exterior pública creada por Maria Elena González, es una replica de tamaño real de la distribución de un apartamento en Nickerson Gardens, un proyecto público de viviendas del vecindario de Watts en Los Angeles, que se transforma en una alfombra mágica voladora. Lo que es más crucial para este proyecto es que la escultura esta ubicada en un parque público donde los miembros de Nickerson Gardens y las comunidades circunvecinas pueden tener acceso directo a ella y se convierte en parte de su vida cotidiana. Los visitantes pueden tocar la escultura, que esta cubierta con una superficie suave, gruesa, de goma que es segura para jugar. La *Alfombra Mágica / Hogar* rompe las barreras culturales e intelectuales que tradicionalmente rodean al arte y estimula ideas nuevas y el entusiasmo por el arte contemporáneo.

En una escala de 1 / 1, la escultura muestra el plano arquitectónico de un apartamento -- la cocina, baño, ropero, etc. -- y visualmente los transforma a una ilusión juguetona. Su uso de materiales reflejan el idioma de "la calle," el caucho y la pintura como el asfalto y las marcas de tráfico, y los combina con el plano de un apartamento; sugiriendo el intercambio entre interior y exterior.

Para la artista, la alfombra mágica representa y esta ligada a la idea de la libertad, fantasía y los viajes. Al utilizar el plano de un apartamento como una milagrosa alfombra voladora, la artista desea expresar sus deseos y esperanzas de que en nuestras vidas y metafóricamente en nuestros hogares, podemos alcanzar ciertos niveles y ser transportados a donde queramos.

Nacida en La Habana, Cuba en 1957. Ella vive y trabaja en Brooklyn, New York y Basilea, Suiza. González ha recibido numerosos premios y becas, incluyendo el Premio de Roma 2003. *Alfombra Mágica / Hogar* es un proyecto escultural exterior público a nivel nacional basado en los planos de unidades de vivienda pública. La instalación *Alfombra Mágica / Hogar*, New York, fué auspiciada por The Public Art Fund. Las instalaciones en Baltimore y en Los Angeles de *Alfombra Mágica / Hogar* son auspiciadas en parte por Creative Capital.

Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions es un centro interdisciplinario de artes visuales contemporáneo sin fines de lucro, que mantiene un apoyo fijado en la innovación de las artes visuales, presentando obras que son nuevas, controversiales y experimentales. La organización se originó en 1978, de la necesidad de tener en Los Angeles un lugar que apoye, muestre y promueva innovaciones en la creación artística. Desde el principio, la organización ha presentado las obras de más de 5000 artistas en más de 3000 muestras, demostraciones, presentaciones, y obras de arte público.



LOS ANGELES CONTEMPORARY EXHIBITIONS
 24 May 2002 - 23 November 2003
 MARIA ELENA GONZÁLEZ *Magic Carpet/Home*
 An interactive outdoor sculpture presented at Ted Watkins Park in the Los Angeles neighborhood of Watts

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

Mnemonic Architecture, Bronx Museum of Art 2002
 The Center for Art and Visual Culture, University of Maryland, Baltimore [solo]
 The Project, New York [solo]
 DiverseWorks, Houston, Texas [solo],
 traveled to Art Museum of the University of Memphis, Tennessee, and Art in General, New York.

Magic Carpet / Home, wood, rubber, paint, metal 2003
Alfombra Mágica / Hogar, Madera, caucho, pintura, metal
 32' x 26' x 2'

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