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LACMA presents a groundbreaking exhibition on the universal concept of home



Installation photo featuring Daniel Joseph Martinez's *The House that America Built*, 2004-2017 in the exhibition *Home—So Different, So Appealing* at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, June 11, 2017 - October 15, 2017, © Daniel Joseph Martinez, photo © Museum Associates/LACMA.



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LOS ANGELES, CA.— *The Los Angeles County Museum of Art* presents *Home—So Different, So Appealing: Art from the Americas* since 1957, a groundbreaking exhibition on the universal concept of home, and the first group show at a major Los Angeles museum to focus on Latino and Latin American art since the 1950s. Offering an extraordinary look at one of the world's most basic social concepts, this exhibition explores the differences and affinities within artworks relative to immigration and political repression, dislocation and diaspora, and personal memory and utopian ideals. *Home—So Different, So Appealing* features approximately 100 artworks by 40 Latino and Latin American artists. This expansive exhibition includes painting, sculpture, installation, performance, photography, film/video, and public sculpture by U.S. artists from the largest historic Latino groups—of Mexican, Puerto Rican, and Cuban origin—plus artists from Argentina, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico, Venezuela, and Uruguay, among other countries. Included in the exhibition are works by internationally recognized artists Antonio Berni, Abraham Cruzvillegas, Leon Ferrari, Beatriz González, Felix González-Torres, Guillermo Kuitca, Daniel Martínez, Gordon Matta-Clark, Amalia Mesa-Lains, Raphael Montañez Ortiz, and Doris Salcedo, as well as emerging and established Los Angeles-based artists Aida Aguilar, Carmen Argente, Cristina Fernandez, Ramiro Gomez, Salomón Huerta, and Camilo Ontiveros. Among the many large-scale works in the exhibition, Maria Elena González's participatory sculpture *Magic Carpet/Home* (2003/2017) is being presented outdoors on the LACMA grounds.

"We are thrilled to present *Home—So Different, So Appealing*, the first of five exhibitions at LACMA in conjunction with Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA, the ambitious regional collaboration devoted to exploring Latin American and Latino art in dialogue with Los Angeles," said Michael Govan, LACMA CEO and Wallis Annenberg Director. "The spirit of exchange is evident in the conception of this exhibition, a collaboration with the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center (CSRC), LACMA, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (MFAH). Drawing from a range of artist voices, this exhibition offers a thought-provoking look into the ways in which Latin and Latin American artists have understood the idea of 'home' amid a changing political and socioeconomic landscape."



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Exhibition co-curators Chon Noriega (CSRC director and adjunct curator at LACMA), Mari Carmen Ramírez (curator and director of the International Center for the Arts of the Americas at MFAH), and Pilar Tompkins Rivas (director of the Vincent Price Art Museum) added, "This exhibition is not a historical survey but a thematic investigation of home—a dwelling, residence, or place of origin—an embodiment of one of the basic concepts for understanding an individual or group within a larger physical and social environment. Here the artists speak across art history and social history in order to get at something about home that is so different, so appealing."

Home—So Different, So Appealing is presented as part of the Getty's Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA initiative. Following its presentation at LACMA, the exhibition will travel to the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (November 2017–February 2018). The exhibition is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue published by the CSRC Press and distributed through University of Washington Press.

The exhibition is organized thematically into sub-categories of "home" spanning seven decades, allowing both historical and contemporary artists to create a dialogue across time and space. The curators use a "constellation model" that allows for works by artists from different nationalities and generations to be compared and contrasted on a level playing field. As co-curator Ramírez, whose earlier exhibitions developed this model, explains, "The constellations are arranged according to conceptual or formal affinities as well as tensions that illuminate unsuspected relations between the artists and their production."

The first section, , focuses on the emblematic single-family house and the far-reaching economic, social, and psychological consequences of the utopian American Dream. In artists transform and deconstruct domestic furniture and spaces into sculptures and paintings to reveal the public significance of private objects. Mapping Home uses maps and floor plans to further the discourse on home, combining the visual language of geography with representations of domestic interiors and furnishings. The fourth theme, , includes works that blur the boundary between debris and domesticity, echoing the ways in which low-income urban dwellers recycle materials to construct both homes and identities. features works by artists who excerpt home elements, distancing household objects from their domestic contexts as if to reduce them to pure form, yet close inspection of these works reveals traces of history that can never be fully erased. examines home as a gendered space in which the relationship of the female self to domesticity is negotiated through relationships with household routines and furnishings. explores the ways in which home and nation are constituted in relationship to each other through violence and patriotism. The final theme, , addresses immigration, displacement, and diasporic notions of home captured in the context of northward journeys and border crossings. Several works in this section show how contemporary realities such as political conflict, human trafficking, and informal economies have driven individuals to dream of and search for "better" homes.

"This exhibition is not just about home," explained CSRC director and co-curator Noriega. "The artworks often draw from the material of home itself, from architectural plans to actual space, but also furnishings, mattresses, personal effects, and rubbish. The constellations are just a starting point for some broader themes that run across the entire exhibition, especially the body in relation to home, homelessness, nation, and migration. These artists breakdown the notion of home as somehow a boundary between inside and outside, public and private, self and other, citizen and foreigner."

Highlights from Home—So Different, So Appealing include:

Miguel Ángel Rojas, *Nowadays*, (2001/2008): The title of this exhibition is drawn from this text based work by Miguel Ángel Rojas, a response to British artist Richard Hamilton's iconic 1956 collage *Just what is it that makes today's homes so different, so appealing?* An early example of Pop art, Hamilton's work depicts the excesses of American consumer culture. Rojas strips away Hamilton's garish imagery but reproduces his title in coca leaves—the raw material for cocaine—linking American consumerism with the trafficking of drugs between the United States and his home country, Colombia.

Raphael Montañez Ortiz, multiple works in film/video and mixed media, (1957–96): In the late 1950s Ortiz shifted from Abstract Expressionist painting to the destruction of household objects. The first things he destroyed were movies purchased at a corner store intended for home film libraries. In the early 1960s, Ortiz undertook a series of Archaeological Finds in which he tore into his own furniture; like an archaeologist, he sought to find remnants of contemporary material culture within the objects themselves. Between 1985 and 1996, Ortiz produced approximately 50 "computer-laser-videos." Working with Hollywood films on laserdisc for home viewing, he used software to advance and reverse one- to 10-second clips at different speeds. These works reveal a violent "dance" buried within the conventional scenes, giving them an almost holographic intensity to domestic exchanges.

Livia Corona Benjamin, *47,547 Homes* (2000), *10,000 300 Square Foot Homes* (2005), and *75 Backyards* (2010)—from her photograph series *Two Million Homes for Mexico* (since 2000): Corona Benjamin depicts public housing developments in Mexico built to provide living space for former agricultural workers forced to take low-wage jobs in urban centers. More than two million such homes were constructed during Vicente Fox's presidency (2000–06), and although the communities resemble post-World War II American suburbs, most are devoid of basic infrastructural necessities such as schools, markets, and churches. "These are not the neighborhoods of a 'Home Sweet Home' dream fulfilled," writes the artist, "but are ubiquitous grids of ecological and social intervention on a scale and of consequences that are difficult to grasp."

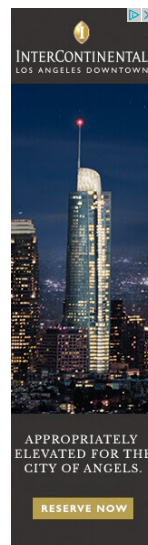
Abraham Cruzvillegas, *Autoconstrucción* (2010): Abraham Cruzvillegas grew up in a shantytown south of Mexico City whose inhabitants were constantly rebuilding their homes using makeshift materials, a practice the artist refers to as *autoconstrucción* (selfconstruction). This sprawling site-specific sculpture—originally used as a jungle gym—recalls this tradition, incorporating objects and refuse from family homes. The work was inspired by the construction of Cruzvillegas's childhood home in Colonia Ajusco, a squatter community that emerged in the 1960s in a volcanic stone area that urban planners had deemed uninhabitable.

Carmen Argote, *720 Sq. Ft.: Household Mutations* (2010): For this work Carmen Argote tore out the multi-room carpet that once covered the floors of her childhood home and resituated it in a gallery setting. The carpet, painted white except for a one-foot border around the edges, fluctuates between sculpture and painting, and also between architectural representation and personal artifact: as the artist notes, "every stain, every mark" is part of her family's story. As an artwork, the carpet is monumental, but as a one-to-one representation of an actual home, it seems quite small within the expansive space of the museum.

Daniel Joseph Martinez, *The House America Built* (2004/2017): *The House America Built* is a to-scale model of "Unabomber" Ted Kaczynski's cabin in the Montana wilderness (itself modeled after Henry David Thoreau's cabin at Walden Pond). Martinez paints the exterior with Martha Stewart Living paint colors that are in season at the time of the installation (here, the spring 2017 palette). When the work was first made, Stewart had just been convicted of insider trading. Drawing on Kaczynski and Stewart's concurrent incarceration in federal prison and their similar family backgrounds—both are second-generation Polish Americans—Martinez links domestic terrorism, consumerism, and shelter. The work also gestures to Gordon-Matta-Clark's *Splitting* (1974, also included in the exhibition). MattaClark is also a second-generation American born around the same time as Kaczynski and Stewart.

Julio César Morales, *Boy in Suitcase* (2015): The video work powerfully evokes the real-life story of an eight-year-old boy who was smuggled inside a suitcase from the Ivory Coast through Morocco and into Spain. The work is part of a larger examination into human trafficking worldwide; through ongoing research, Morales has assembled an archive of more than 500 images of failed border crossings, which he variously incorporates into works of art.

María Elena González, *Magic Carpet/Home* (2003/2017): In this participatory outdoor sculpture María Elena González transforms a to-scale replica of the floor plan of a public housing unit into an undulating wave. This version of the work, based on an apartment building in Watts, was first made in 2003 and installed in South L.A.'s Ted Watkins Park, where local residents interacted with it over a six-month period. By recreating this sculpture on the LACMA campus, González extends the dialogue on form and function from the original community to a public museum.



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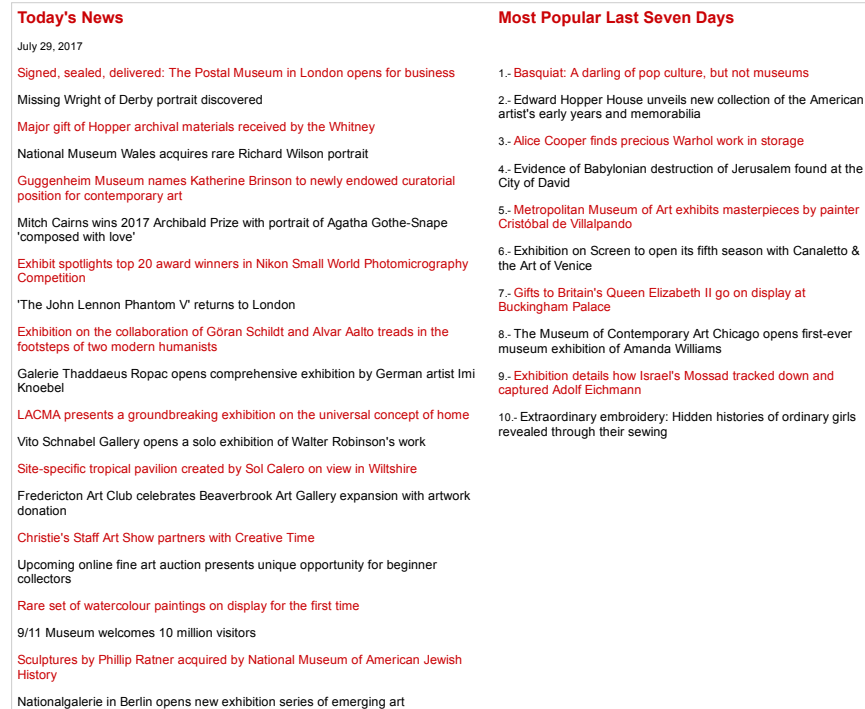
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