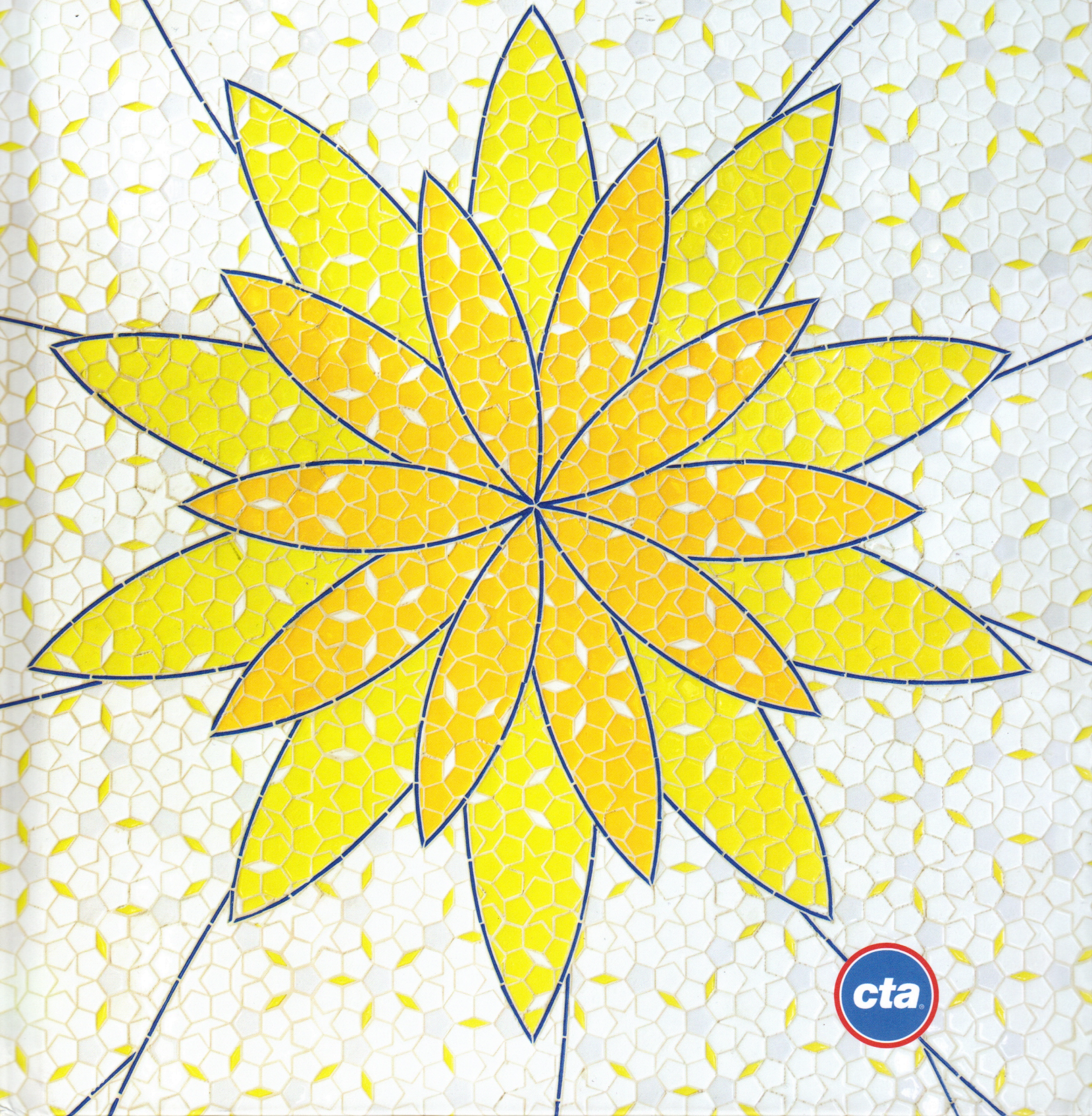


# Elevated: Art and Architecture of the Chicago Transit Authority





## Ellen Harvey

2007

### *Carpet*

*Carpet*, a glass and marble mosaic floor piece commissioned for the 60-foot-long entrance ramp to the **Francisco** station in Albany Park's historic district of Ravenswood Manor, was intended to look like an oriental-style rug from its inception. "I wanted it to be unmistakable," said Ellen Harvey (b. 1967). The artwork creates a welcoming, unexpectedly domestic space in the outdoors. She thought a lot about what it means to most people who take the train every day to and from work and what her artwork might communicate to them along the way. "The commute can be such a non-event," said Harvey, "I thought it would be nice if it said 'you're special'."

For her homage to this ordinary daily action, Harvey designed a pattern of repeating red, blue, and yellow floral clusters enclosed in multiple borders, evoking a warm feeling of home from both perspectives of riders arriving and departing.

Mosaic of hand-cut marble

Harvey collaborated with the storied Mosaicos Venecianos de México on fabrication and installation of *Carpet*. The glass mosaics factory is well known for working with some of the greats of Mexican muralism, including Diego Rivera.

As a conceptual artist who regularly creates public projects, Harvey's reimagining and transformation of space often plays with historic and cultural references. As objects, oriental rugs are longstanding luxury goods and also one of the first great icons of international trade. *Carpet* is a way to think about how objects and ideas move between cultures as well as serving as a literal, heavily trafficked route. With Albany Park reportedly being one of the most ethnically diverse neighborhoods in the United States, *Carpet* has been laid in the right spot.









Francisco ●









The small, quaint clapboard **Francisco** stationhouse, serving Albany Park and Ravenswood Manor, was built in 1907 and remained relatively unchanged until the Brown Line Capacity Expansion Project improvements were completed in 2009. The expansion project made station upgrades to meet ADA requirements and extended platforms to accommodate eight railcars instead of six.

Because of the historic nature of the surface level station, Francisco was disassembled and renovated. The tongue-and-groove wall paneling was restored, and the station was rebuilt on a new foundation and platform deck with a new 60-foot-long concrete ramp (where artist Ellen Harvey installed her floral mosaic *Carpet*) for accessibility leading to the front door. The turnstiles were relocated into an enclosure on the platform. The wood beam supports and angled brackets of the canopy were restored, and a wood paneled windbreak was replicated.

A small and simple auxiliary entrance, with glass walls and curved roof, was added on Sacramento Avenue.

When the Northwestern Elevated Railroad built this branch of the Brown Line, it was not a heavily populated area of the city. The Francisco station, set in the center of the tracks, was constructed in a residential community of brick bungalows and frame houses, and its scale remains in harmony with its surroundings.







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