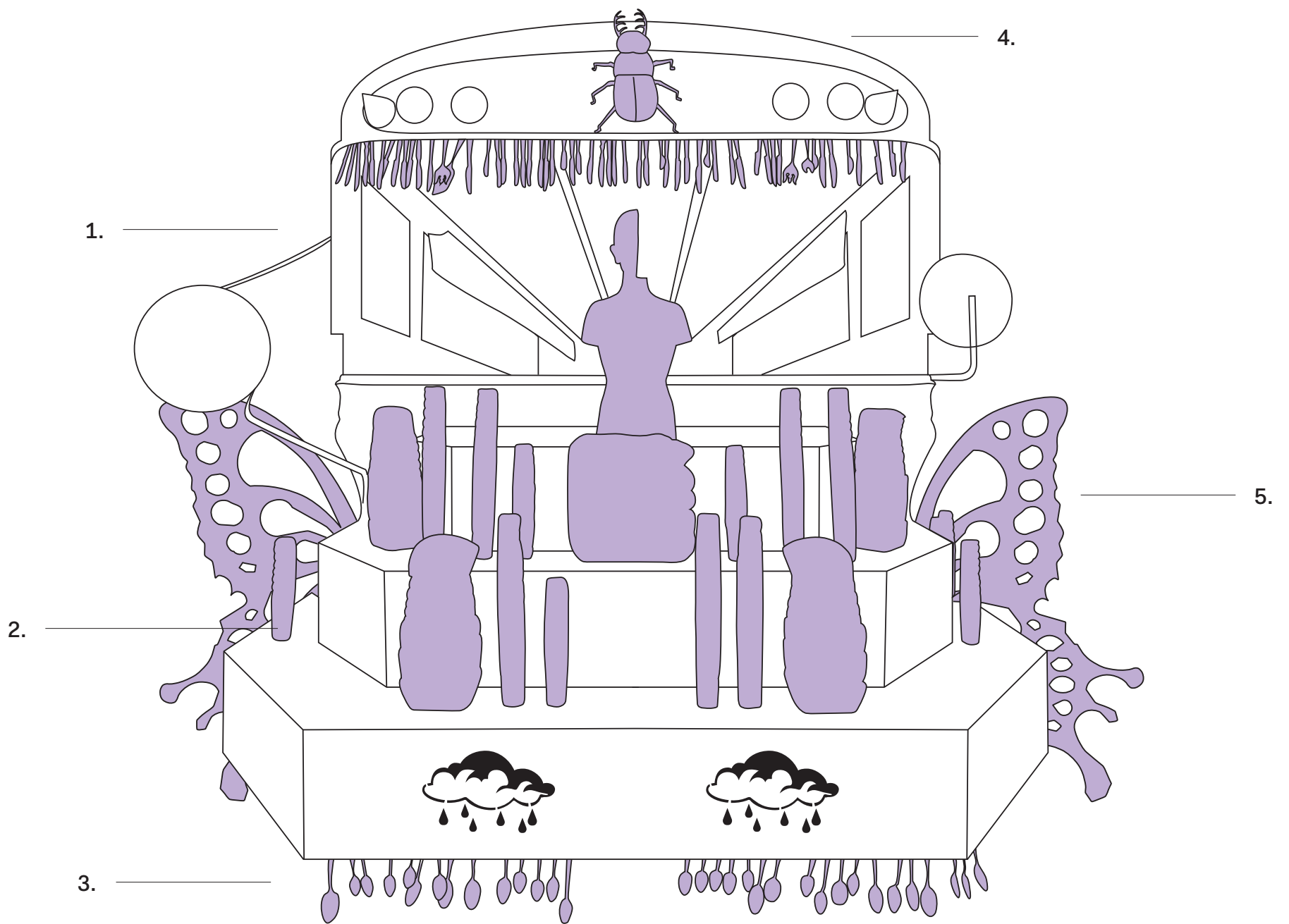


GUADALUPE MARAVILLA

MARIPOSA RELÁMPAGO

Looking Guide



1. Boy (Medical figure)

Maravilla often includes anatomical models in his Disease Thrower series as references to his own cancer or illness in his family and friends. He found this plastic model of the torso of a child in a market in Mexico City. Placed at the front and center of the sculpture, the pearl-white sculpture recalls the ghosts of the children who first used this school bus and those children who have journeyed across borders in search of safety.

2. Carved volcanic rocks

On the tiered front of the bus, you find many sculptures carved out of volcanic rock. Corn or maize, a culinary staple, symbolizes life and fertility in many cultures of the Americas and appears throughout Maravilla's work. The hand at center is gripping a melting ice cube and references the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (known as ICE), federal law enforcement agency tasked with enforcing U.S. immigration law through the forced removal of individuals, often separating families in this process. Maravilla hired artisans in El Salvador and Mexico to create these sculptures, one of the ways he creates and supports microeconomies through his work.

3. Utensils

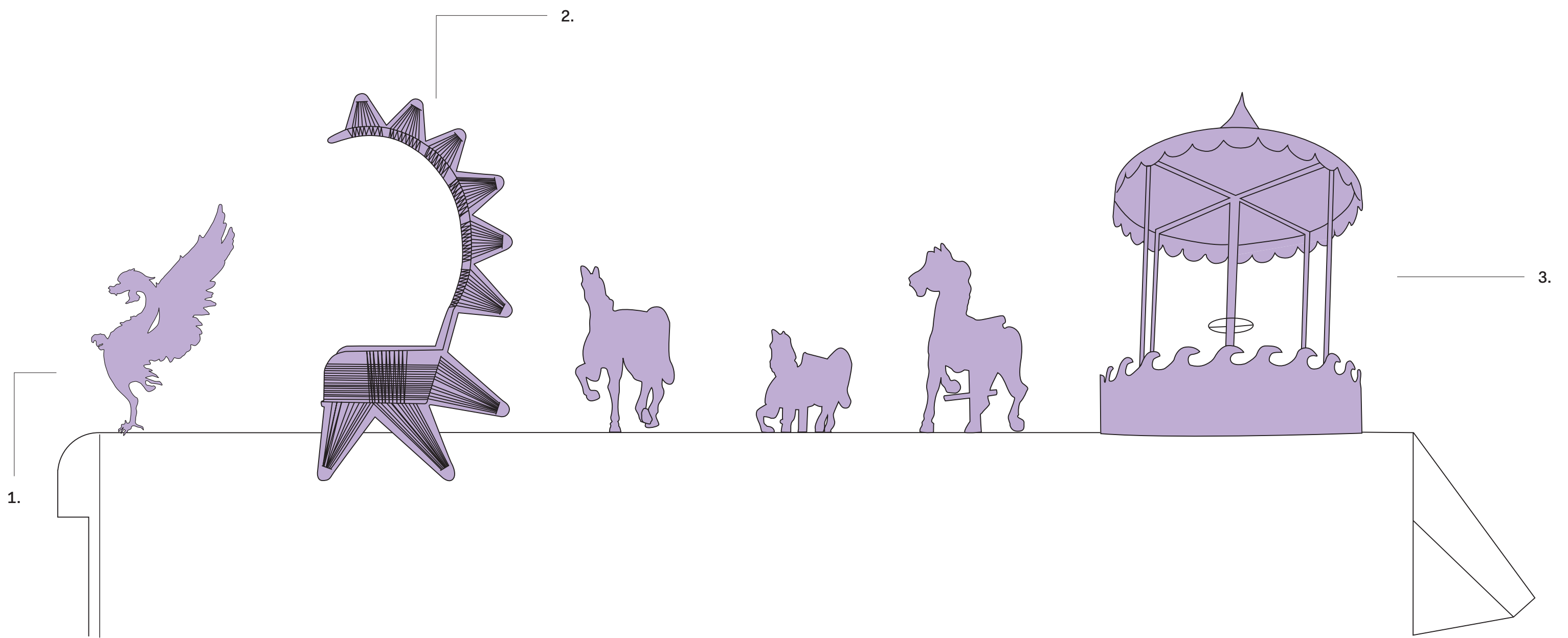
Forks, spoons, and knives are used on the bus to reference the importance of community coming together. Maravilla has worked with the undocumented community providing healing workshops over several years and they often conclude by eating together as a group.

4. Scarab beetle

As a child, Maravilla was always curious about the plants, insects, and animals around him, and animal imagery appears throughout his artwork. At the top center of this sculpture, he placed a large sculpture of a scarab beetle perhaps in reference to the insect's symbolism of strength and rebirth in many ancient cultures.

5. Butterfly wings

Maravilla frames the front of his sculpture with a pair of butterfly wings, so that the entire bus could be read as the butterfly's body. The butterflies migrate between Michoacán in Western Mexico and the United States without being affected by the border. The animal also represents transformation and rebirth through its incredible process of metamorphosis. Maravilla chose to name his sculpture "Mariposa Relámpago," after overhearing a conversation between two elders (abuelitas) who described a "lightning bolt butterfly," a powerful imagined merging of two airborne phenomena.



1. Dragon

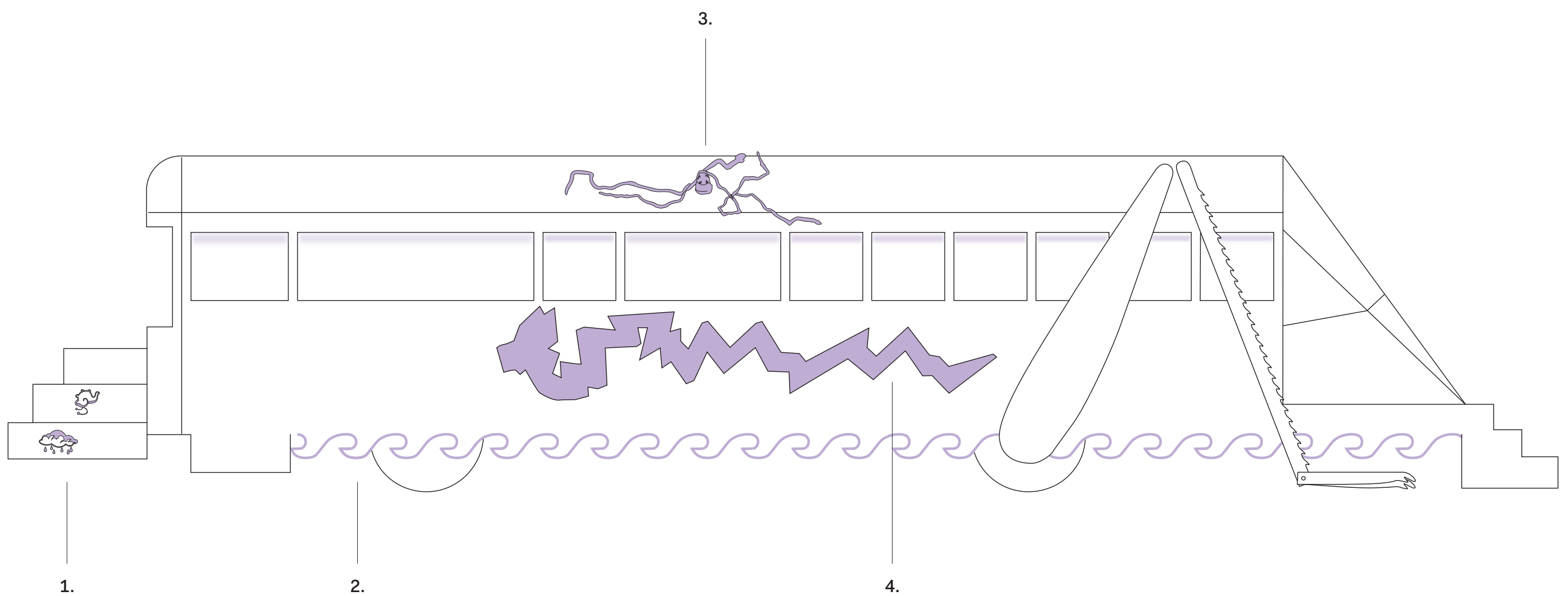
A silver dragon sculpture sits atop the bus like a figurehead on a ship's bow. A mythical creature, the dragon, has diverse symbolism throughout the world but often represents protection. A wire basket of a dozen eggs hangs from the figure's claws and underscore the sense of protection for those undergoing a healing ceremony. The eggs are carved from white onyx, a stone used to repel negative energy.

2. Chair

Maravilla designed and commissioned this chair to be made in El Salvador. Its design recalls the Acapulco chair, which is an icon of traditional Mexican furniture developed from the hand-woven hammocks of the Mayan. With its curving top and ray-like appendages, the chair resembles a throne. Mounted on top of the bus, it will serve as a seat for the artist when playing the gong during sound bath ceremonies.

3. Carousel and horses

Maravilla found the small carousel that sits atop the bus at an open air (tianguis) antique market in Mexico City. He had a vision to place it on the bus as a "memorial to children lost on their way to the border." Also, the carousel is intended to be used by the ancestors or spirits during ceremonies.



1. Purple light

Purple is associated with the divine in many belief systems, and in this sculpture, purple light appears to shine out from the work's inner core. When Maravilla underwent healing ceremonies while recovering from cancer, he had a recurring vision of a purple, pixelated goat jumping around him, and he always felt rejuvenated following this vision. The color purple came to signify hope and energy for the artist.

2. Metal wave pattern

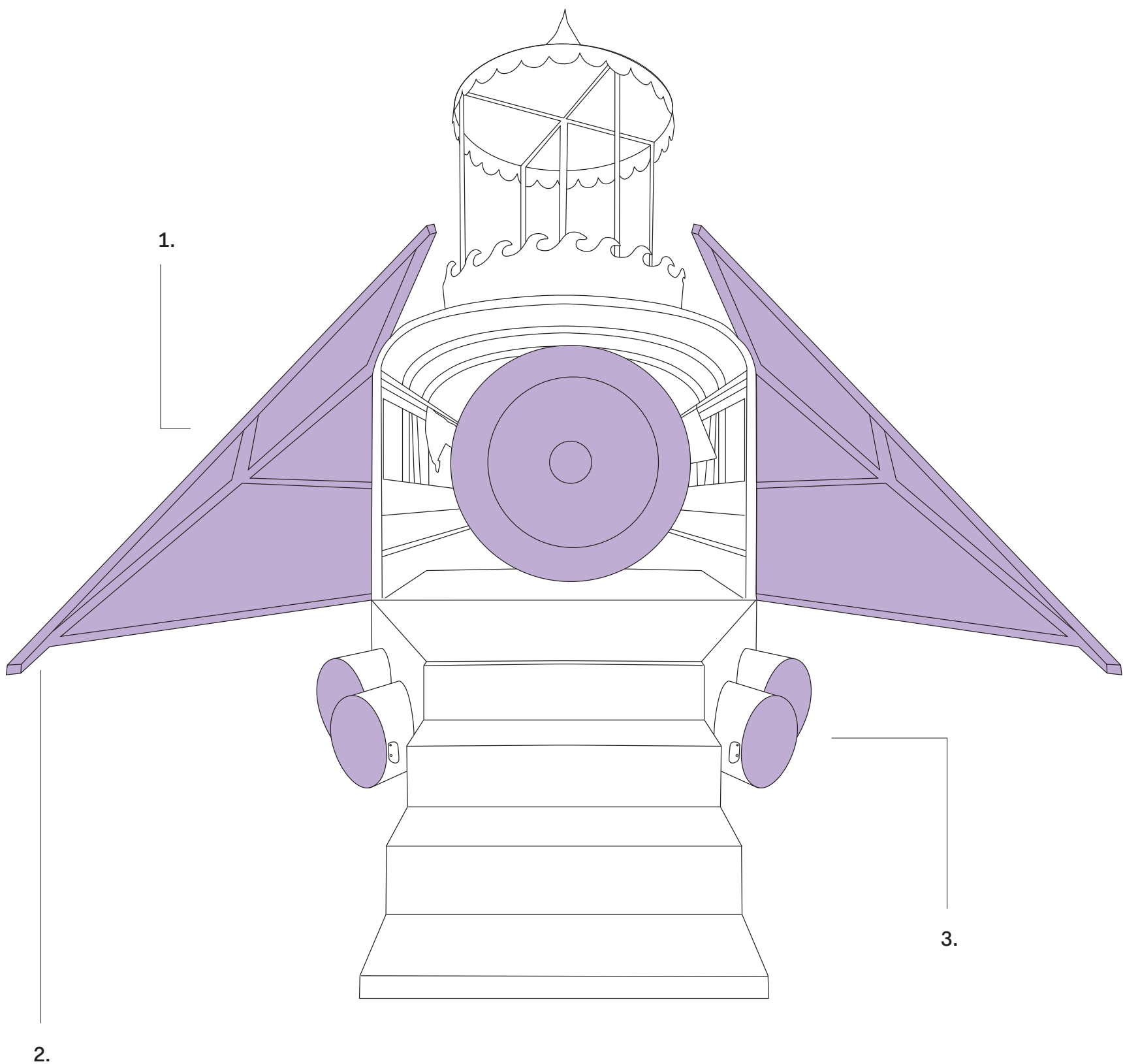
The wave pattern along the lower edge of the bus and surrounding the carousel suggests the flow of water. Essential to life, water plays a central role in many migration stories, especially the dangerous crossings of bodies of water. It also makes up a majority (around 60 percent) of the human body, a fact vital to many alternative healing modalities, such as sound therapy. Maravilla's incorporation of water imagery in this work gestures to the theme of travel and to healing practices central to his work.

3. Snakes

The sinuous snakes integrated throughout this sculpture began as tree roots. Maravilla collected them and worked with an alchemist based in Mexico City to plate them with metal. This process of material transformation relates to the snake's transformation and symbolic rebirth through shedding its skin.

4. Stone serpent

This 12-foot serpent is a lightning bolt, a serpent, and a migrating Monarch butterfly. It was carved from volcanic stone by an artisan, Miguel Angel Peña Cervantes, based in Mexico and designed by Maravilla. It recalls the detailed sculptures that adorn many Mayan temples and pyramids. Serpents are important social and religious symbols in many ancient civilizations of MesoAmerica — the vehicles for celestial bodies to travel and reminiscent of rebirth.



1. Gongs

Maravilla was introduced to sound therapy during his treatment for cancer and began incorporating gongs into his art in 2012. He studied gongs and sound healing with Don Conreaux, a celebrated Australian-American healer, and learned how to produce different frequencies to target specific parts of the body. Maravilla uses gongs that are handmade in Germany and the United States and carefully calibrated to specific frequencies associated with planets and elements. The four gongs mounted here produce vibrations that travel through the entire sculpture. During a ceremony, participants can sit or lie inside of the sculpture to receive vibrational therapy.

2. Doors

The angled doors extending off the rear of the bus appear like the wings of an insect or spaceship. When opened, the rear doors imply the sculpture might take flight, and when closed, they protect the work's sublime interior. These doors also allow the sculpture to be placed in a variety of environments, including outside — one of the artist's hopes to travel this work throughout the world.

3. Pots (Tamaleras)

Throughout this sculpture, Maravilla has repurposed the large pots known as tamaleras used to steam tamales. Here, they take on the appearance of rocket boosters, powerful engines that will propel this otherworldly sculpture on its journey.