

# The New York Times

NEW YORK, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1999

## Online Art Lights Up A Square in Mexico City

The spotlight is on Mexico City this week, or, if you prefer, the spotlight can be off, too. Visitors to "Vectorial Elevation" ([www.alzado.net](http://www.alzado.net)), an online artwork that made its debut on Sunday, can momentarily command 18 searchlights installed on three sides of a public square in the heart of the Mexican capital, then receive live Webcam photos of their actions illuminating the night sky.

From 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. daily until Jan. 6, visitors to the site can create their own lighting design, using any or all of the 7,000-watt beams (which can be seen up to 10 miles away), through an interactive 3-D rendering of Zocalo Square on the Internet. Once the design is submitted, the robotically controlled searchlights move into position for six seconds. Cameras in three places snap pictures of the real-time display, which are loaded onto a personalized Web page so its address can be e-mailed to its creator.

Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, a Mexican media artist, was commissioned by the Mexican government to devise the project. From within the square, he said, the successive displays of Internet-submitted designs look more natural than traditional lighting shows. "It's just a constant transformation," he said. "There's no way the power of this light can be ignored." The site will not be active on New Year's Eve, when Mr. Lozano-Hemmer will select previously made designs and program a seven-minute light show.

MATTHEW MIRAPPAUL

