

MISSION TRAILS FIELD STATION PUBLIC ART

ARTWORK DESIGN

BY ROMAN DE SALVO



Artist Roman de Salvo is creating a permanent public artwork for the new field station planned for Mission Trails Regional Park. The artist spent several months learning about the park and working with the field station's design team to develop his artwork design.

The artwork consists of a large boulder with trail-like channels carved into its surface. A functioning drinking fountain fixture rises out of the highest point of the boulder. When a curious park visitor activates the spigot, water flows through the array of tiny trails in serpentine paths down the slopes of the boulder.



Inspired by the park's extensive trail system and archeological sites, the sculpture will be a simplified microcosm of the park that playfully celebrates some of its essential ingredients - water, stone, trails, and human energy. With this artwork, de Salvo aims to recreate the joy of finding and following trails on an intimate scale.



The artwork will be located among other boulders in the field station's outdoor gathering space adjacent to the covered picnic area. The sculpture will encourage a sense of discovery and contemplation in visitors as they study its carved trails and activate the water feature.

De Salvo's artwork references the archeological remains of grinding rocks used by the Kumeyaay, who were the first people to extensively live on and make use of the land that became part of the park. For de Salvo, these grinding rocks embody a sense of history, timelessness, and a connection to human activity in the park. Through the act of carving into the boulder, de Salvo hopes to create a formal parallel to the grinding rocks, themselves.

