



Commission for Arts and Culture

FACT SHEET

Public Artwork for Mission Trails Field Station

About the Artwork

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. 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. 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. 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.

About the Artist

Roman de Salvo is a San Diego-based conceptual artist who works in both sculpture and installation, infusing the ordinary with surprise and poetry. Much of de Salvo's work is site-specific, and he has contributed temporary and permanent installations to the San Francisco Art Commission Gallery, inSITE'94 at the San Diego Natural History Museum, 96 Containers in Copenhagen, Caltrans District 11 Headquarters, San Diego, the New Children's Museum, San Diego, and the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego. His projects often transform vernacular objects into artworks of poignant humor. He has exhibited in institutions and galleries across the country and has work in several museum collections. He received his BFA from the California College of Arts and Crafts and MFA from the University of California, San Diego.

About the City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture

The Commission for Arts and Culture serves in an advisory capacity to the Mayor and City Council on promoting, encouraging and increasing support for the region's artistic and cultural assets, integrating arts and culture into community life and showcasing San Diego as an international tourist destination. The Commission, through its Public Art Program, promotes artistic development and transforms the built environment of San Diego's public buildings and spaces through the inclusion of public art in capital improvement projects.