

GLADSTONE GALLERY

Brian Boucher, "Ugo Rondinone Brings a Rainbow-Hued Mountain to Miami Beach," *Artnet News*, November 4, 2016

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Ugo Rondinone Brings a Rainbow-Hued Mountain to Miami Beach



Ugo Rondinone, *Miami Mountain* (2016). Photo Matt Newlson, courtesy of the artist and The Bass, Miami Beach.

A totem constructed of giant limestone boulders has come from the Nevada desert to the moist climes of Miami Beach, courtesy of Swiss artist Ugo Rondinone. *Miami Mountain* (2016) features five rocks, painted in a Day-Glo rainbow of colors, and is a new acquisition by the Bass Museum of Art.

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The 41-foot-tall work, comprising stones weighing up to 40 tons each, echoes *Seven Magic Mountains* (2016), a popular installation that the artist recently executed in the desert near Las Vegas, courtesy of the Nevada Museum of Art and the Art Production Fund.

While the Nevada installation will be in place for two years, the Bass's new work will take up permanent residence in Collins Park. The Miami "mountain" is actually a little taller, too, standing six feet higher than its desert counterparts.



Ugo Rondinone, *Seven Magic Mountains* (2016). Photo Gianfranco Gorgoni, courtesy of Art Production Fund and Nevada Museum of Art.

"It's so different from the *Seven Magic Mountains*," said Bass executive director and chief curator Silvia Karman Cubiñá by phone. "There, it's a special art pilgrimage, and the experience is very spiritual. Here the engagement starts with casual surprise but moves to awe."

Those aren't the only differences, the artist says. Unlike Nevada, he told artnet News by phone, "Miami doesn't have any mountains, so it will be the city's first."

The new work, says the artist, grows out of another beloved installation, his giant stone figures in New York's Rockefeller Center, which he erected in 2013. There, he said, he brought natural materials into the artificial setting of the city, while the Day-Glo rocks reverse the equation and bring artificiality into nature. Once the stones are painted, he said, "you can't distinguish whether it's natural material or something like Styrofoam."

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Ugo Rondinone. Photo Christian Grund, courtesy of the artist.

The two settings present different environmental challenges, Rondinone observed. Nevada, he said, is earthquake territory, whereas Miami is a land of hurricanes. In any event, an iron spine provides the colorful works of art with much-needed stability.

The open vistas of the desert allowed a long approach to *Seven Magic Mountains*, whereas the encounter with *Miami Mountain* will be more sudden. But as Rondinone points out, the park resides at a crossroads, so viewers will discover it from various angles, and, he says, “It will create a moment. It will be more concentrated.”

A diverse public is already encountering the work, said Cubiñá, pointing out that commuters and people who work in the area inevitably smile and pull out their phones when they happen upon it.

Even in a remote setting, *Seven Magic Mountains* lit up Instagram. When tens of thousands of people arrive in Miami Beach for the annual art fairs in December, it will be sure to get even greater exposure.

“I hope so,” said Rondinone.