Splash of Color in Desert

Seven neon stone totems may soon rise in the desert just south of Las Vegas. The project, “Seven Magic Mountains,” is by the Swiss-born artist Ugo Rondinone, who in 2013 took nine 20-foot-tall bluestone figures to Rockefeller Center. Those figures were rough and primitive in an urban setting; the new ones will be painted in artificially bright yellows, purples and other colors and placed in a natural, remote environment. They will be constructed from car-size stone cut from a Nevada quarry and stacked 32 feet high.

The public installation, along Interstate 15, may open late this year or in early 2016, and will remain on display for two years. The project is the largest undertaking yet by the nonprofit Art Production Fund, also responsible for Prada Marfa, a permanent sculpture in West Texas. “Seven Magic Mountains” is being produced in partnership with the Nevada Museum of Art in Reno.

David B. Walker, the museum’s executive director, is still raising funds from corporate and private donors to pay for the project, which he said was expected to cost “north of $3.5 million.”

“There is so much poetry in Ugo’s work,” he said. “To see it on display in these large, beautiful colored rocks in contrast to this mountainous background, I just feel it is beautiful and is going to be a game-changer.”