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The InterContinental® Miami: Art in Unexpected Places

Over 30-years old, the InterContinental® Miami is an icon of the Miami skyline and a keeper of art in unexpected places. In the early 1980s, Theodore Gould a developer from Washington D.C. built the Miami Center and the Pavilion Hotel, now the InterContinental® Miami. His vision was to create a world trade center-like complex in the heart of Downtown Miami which would sustain global commerce to Miami. To create this, he hired the renowned architect Pietro Belluschi, designer of the Juilliard School and the Pan Am (now Met Life) building in New York City.

Belluschi blurred the lines of art and architecture when constructing the Hotel. Numerous trips on the Concord netted the purchase of a travertine marble quarry in Italy for the project. No expense was spared as the antique Florentine marble covers the entire exterior and interior of the property. The slabs were cut and numbered in Italy, shipped to the mouth of the Miami River and reassembled by number so the veining matched throughout. Other materials used throughout the interior of the InterContinental® Miami include Brazilian green marble, Portuguese rosate marble and South African black granite. Precious woods are also used throughout the interiors, including the rare babinga from Africa and from the Orient burned cedar and black teak. The InterContinental® Miami and Miami Center complex are considered the largest marble structure in Florida.

In 1984, Mr. Gould's vision left him bankrupt and the InterContinental® brand bought the hotel. Today, the InterContinental® Miami greets over 500,000 people each year, guests and locals, all passing through its lobby and perhaps one of the most significant sculptures in the country, *The Spindle*. Remarkably, it is the only hotel in the world to have been built around a work of art. In 1981, internationally renowned English sculptor Henry Moore (1898-1986) was commissioned to create the 18-ft, 70-ton marble sculpture. Made of travertine marble with a base of ooba tooba granite from Brazil, it was dropped into the lobby space by helicopter and from that point the hotel lobby was built. *The Spindle* is the largest of the artist's sculptures in private ownership and is appraised at over \$20 million USD.

The Hotel continues to incorporate the arts through the use of technology. Its 2012 renovation included the installation of two 19-story LED digital canvases on the exterior of the building that have transformed the Miami skyline. Facing towards Downtown Miami, Miami Beach and the Port of Miami, LED lights create an animated and unique art experience on the Hotel's tower. *The Spindle*, sitting on a fountain pool under a clear story atrium roof, is now at the center of an interactive lobby with touch-screen technology and digital art walls that create a 'new media' art space at the hotel.

The InterContinental® Miami, a true monument to art and luxury, is capturing the pulse of the *New Miami* – global, sophisticated, luxurious, artistic and edgy.

