

What drew you to Broomfield's Bench Project?

I like the concept of utilitarian art. I have designed benches before and liked the idea of doing it again. As I researched it, Broomfield looked like a nice community.

How did you come up with the idea for your piece?

It's hard to say how ideas are initially conceived and evolve. I proposed several pieces for this project, and used the reading materials I received about Broomfield history and the site descriptions to come up with their themes. This one is about organic growth and germination. It is the beginning of a tree - a sprout from a seed. I like to take a minimal initial concept and then let the shapes and form do the rest of the work.

Tell us about the creation of your piece.

The purple seed part is made with high pressure tank heads, like you find on very large air compressors. I enclosed them and rounded them off. The stem is created with a machine called a pantograph that is about 40 feet long and 20 feet wide. With the pantograph, I can make a small line drawing and it is enlarged and cut out of solid $\frac{3}{4}$ " steel. The tricky part of this piece is the bench area. I used $1\frac{1}{2}$ " square tubing in a curve. It is many small pieces welded together. I then used a plasma cutter for the perforated metal on the back and the seat. I think it looks like caning in an old chair. For this, I had to use a technique that we developed in my studio. When you weld steel, the heat creates warping, and the steel ends up shaped like a piece of cooked bacon. We created a way to heat treat the metal so that it ends up like you see it here – straight and even.

After the piece was fabricated, it was sandblasted and primed. Then the color was applied with the same paint system used on offshore oil derricks. It is made for immersion in the ocean, so it is extra tough.

This piece weighs a ton....literally.

How do you think your piece reflects its site?

I want my piece to be fun to look at against the big cottonwood behind it. I think the colors work well in this context. It is a large piece, but the larger setting keeps its perspective appropriate. This piece is built the same as a bridge, and it is going to be here for generations.

What do you hope the Broomfield community will take away from an encounter with your piece?

Fun. This piece is all about fun. I want Broomfield to enjoy it and become friends with it. I want a relationship to develop over time with this piece. I want it to be a small part