



M Mariposa
Arts Council

WORKING LANDS, WORKING ARTISTS

*Leveraging Arts and Design to Support Sustainable
Agriculture Planning in Mariposa County*

Artist Concept: Jackie Baxton

THEME

This large-scale sculptural horse bit serves as a tribute to Coulterville's rich equestrian and cattle ranching history, and pays homage to the profound influence horses have played in development and transformation of Western and Indigenous landscapes and cultural narratives in California.

Years before paved roads provided access, Coulterville was the first road to Yosemite National Park and was traveled by horse-drawn stagecoaches, mule teams and solo riders. As early as 1870, a Wells Fargo Agent and the Post Master, Nelson Cody (Buffalo Bills brother), both used horses to get mail and packages through these mountains with horses, and in 1896, an 8-ton locomotive was hulled to Coulterville by a mule team. To this day, this part of the county retains some of the largest cattle ranches, and remains active with cattle drives up to the High Country.





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MATERIAL + DETAILS

The piece will be made out of reclaimed and new metal and sourced material in a welded construction. These materials connect the new with the old and speak toward the prevalent historical and contemporary influences of horses in agricultural landscapes.

Scale:

6 feet tall by 4 feet wide.

Location:

County sites are available for this piece (like the Coulterville County Park), but other locations recommended by the public may also be considered.



1

The top ring of the bit is made out of a round cattle feeder.

2

The main components of the bit will use mild steel pipe; the same pipe ranchers use for the main fence post that bears most weight for the fence. This material will provide thickness for the bit while keeping it light-weight.

3

The bit will be inlaid with locally-sourced quartz crystal (B) or alternative stone (depicted in this example rendering as turquoise.)

4

Sourced from reclaimed disk blades (C), the bit conchos can be etched or painted with images of ranchers working cattle, like roping, branding, cattle running, etc. Other options (depicted in this example rendering) include ornate lettering in the style of cattle brand lettering, with a “C” for Coulterville” and an “M” for Mariposa. (See Survey)

5

The bottom ring is made out of historic metal wagon wheels (D) from the artist’s working horse ranch in Hunters Valley.



A



B



C



D

The sculpture is based on a three-piece dog bone gag bit, this is the first style bit I have ever hand-made (D) and it what I ride my horses in and work colts in, too. (It’s soft in their mouth and flexible, ideal for the comfortability for working horses.)



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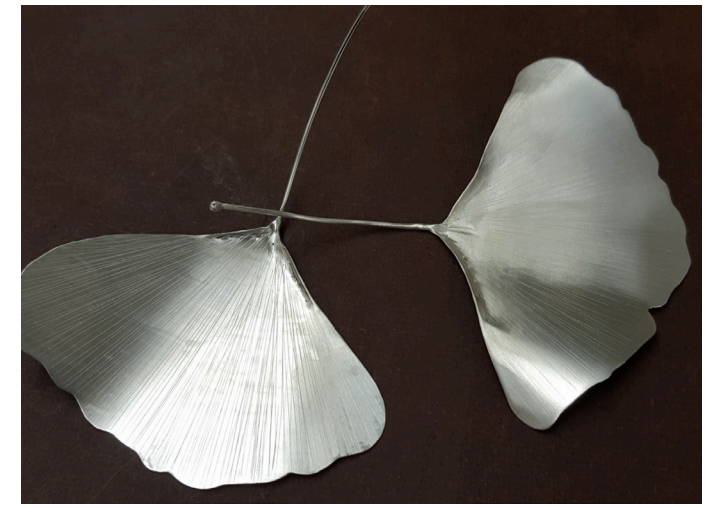
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About the Artist

BIOGRAPHY

Jackie Baxton is a metalsmith, sculptor and jeweler who creates artwork and lives on her horse ranch in Hunters Valley in Mariposa County. She creates dimensional artwork that speaks towards the experiences, challenges and myths of agriculture and landscape.

Jackie earned her BFA in Sculpture at California College of the Arts, Oakland, and her MFA in Spatial Design at San Jose State University. She is an arts instructor and lecturer at San Jose State and Evergreen Community College, and provides arts education programming to youth in Mariposa County. Jackie's artwork has been featured in exhibitions across California and her custom horse bits, jewelry and bolos have been sold across the United States. Jackie is currently exploring large scale sculpture and enjoying a successful season of competitive barrel racing.



Jackie's inspiration comes from Native American stories, the American frontier in the iconic Western narrative, the lived history between these two groups, moving through the natural world. She conveys these stories through taxidermy, wood burnings, metal casting and using found objects.

Top Left: Western Box Turtle bronze sculpture on Stockton Creek Preserve, Mariposa.

Top Right: Glass and bronze sculpture with rattlesnake taxidermy.

Lower Left: Detail of sweet iron bit with sterling silver and turquoise and old buffalo nickel.

Lower Center: Glass shooting star flowers and bronze cast sculpture

Lower Right: Cast metal ginkgo leaves.



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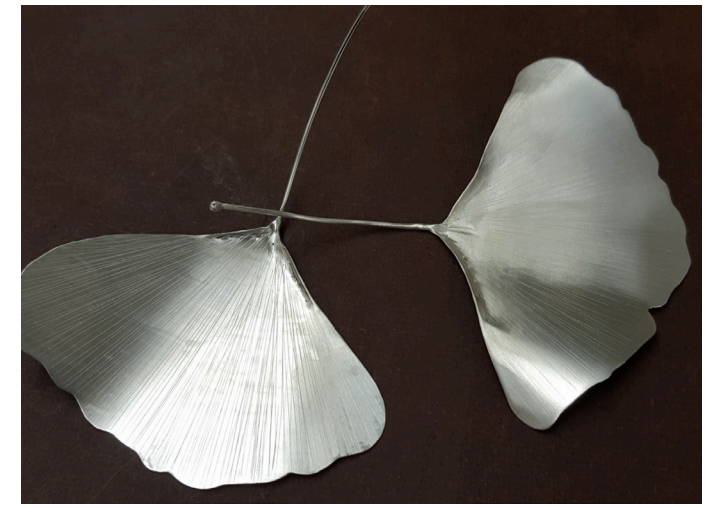
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