

Cultivate Your Mind in the Orchard of Knowledge

Artist: Beatrice Coron

Completed: February 2010

Santa Teresa Branch Library / 290 International Circle, San Jose, CA 95119 / Council District 2

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Beatrice Coron's artwork for the new Santa Teresa Branch Library consists of three separate artwork elements built around the theme "Cultivate Your Mind in the Orchard of Knowledge."

Tree of Knowledge includes three glass panes in the window wall that runs the length of the Library's main lobby. The artwork builds on the idea of age rings in the cross-section of a tree trunk: images in each concentric ring speak to a specific period of history and growth in the region, from the earliest period of indigenous inhabitants to the present. The panes are of hand-made art glass; varied treatments were used in the glassmaking process to fuse distinct images and patterns into the different rings in the design. The panes are placed so that both children and adults can view the work at close range.



Tree of Knowledge pane.



Bibliotree.

Bibliotree is sculptural element in the form of a tall flourishing tree made of water jet cut steel. The cut outs in the trunk are letters from the alphabets of the many languages contained in the Library's collection. On the lower branches of the tree are books and objects associated with reading; these continue onto the higher branches, which also contain objects representing newer forms of media. In this way the work suggests a developmental progression: the roots of language in letters and alphabets flourish into literature and on into other media. The trunk is backed in Corten steel and the foliage in copper; over time these will oxidize to brown and green respectively, adding another dimension to the *Bibliotree*'s appearance. *Bibliotree* is located within the landscaped area adjacent to Library's front entry.

Orchard Walk, 26 thematic sidewalk insets made of stainless steel and flamed granite, are embedded in the concrete along the walkway that runs between Santa Teresa Blvd. and the Library entrance. The insets each feature the title of a literary,

media or music reference, each with a different fruit in the title along with the author's, director's or composer's name and a corresponding fruit image. The titles were drawn from world literature and media as well as items in the San Jose Public Library collection. The *Orchard Walk's* adjacency to the *Bibliotree* creates a fanciful relationship between the two works; it is as if the insets are "leaves" of the tree that have fallen onto the walkway.

Orchard Walk also includes a "welcome mat" in the main entrance to the Library. It contains whimsical images of two people, male and female, tending a garden and framed in the words "Cultivate Your Mind in the Orchard of Knowledge," the artist's unifying theme for the group of artworks.



An Orchard Walk element.

Through the elements of this artwork Beatrice Coron connects the strong historic sentiment for the area's orchards and agricultural past with the evolving cultural diversity of the present community that comes together because of a shared interest in the Library.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Beatrice Coron has worked extensively in the art of paper cutting. Her work is in libraries, museums and collections across the United States and internationally. She has translated that aesthetic into the media of metal and in glass in public artworks nationally and internationally; her artworks are featured in a wide variety of public settings in several nations.

More about the artist and her work can be found at www.beatricecoron.com.

ABOUT THE PUBLIC ART PROGRAM

The City of San José Public Art Program seeks to build community identity by initiating artworks and exhibitions that enhance the civic landscape. Through active community engagement, public art strives to reflect the City's diversity, historic richness, and envision its present and future.

The Public Art Program is part of the City's Office of Cultural Affairs, a division of the Office of Economic Development. The Public Art Program was established by a 1992 municipal ordinance that provides public art through funding from City capital improvement projects and eligible private development.

For further information and photos, please contact the San José Public Art Program.