

ROB SATTERWHITE

Artist's Statement

Raw metal transforms as I bring out the simple beauty and inherent strength of the metal through my outdoor garden and patio sculptures. The detailed journey from rusty, crude material, involves many steps like cleaning, grinding, burning, cutting, and polishing. Tools like a plasma cutter and chemicals like muriatic acid are just part of my world. The final design is always in mind, but may not come into play for days or even weeks into the process.

I've always been a *hands-on* guy. So working with large metal sculptures is a wonderful outlet for my creativity. And these strong, heavy pieces that feel "rooted" to the earth, allow me to incorporate natural themes and breathe life into the polished and lustrous hard surface of the metal. Then grinding various textures into the metal with the sparks flying — that's a real stretch from the rusty metal piece I started with.



PANELS Metal garden panels are 2-sided metal panels with cut-out designs that are easily staked in the ground. Floral patterns, leaves, and animals are the most popular. But my imagination has no limit. A themed grouping to go alongside a path is fun. I also do custom work, like panels to flank the entry to an office space. Or a small coordinated colorful story of panels going down a path.

TOWERS Square metal towers allow me to create animated designs where each side offers a new view. An example would be tree-like branches with birds. Or a mixed media tower with earth, wind, fire, water — each element represented on a side, augmented with patterned colored glass. I love to enhance the center of the towers with light for a special effect at night—the design shows through nicely! And groupings, tall or short, are quite delightful.

FIRE Some of my towers feature a fire element at the top. Fire towers are a great addition to the garden or porch, especially with the extra wide wicks that I use. They are really dramatic, but simple in their beauty and seamless design. Creating this *flow* between the metal and fire and my designs involves a lot of *magic* behind the curtain!

WATER Water fountains as metal towers allow the water to cascade gently over the flat top, down the sides, and over my designs. The result makes beautiful sounds. I remember one of my first fountains which was a bamboo design. Slight adjustments made different sounds. And I incorporated an underwater light which is one of my favorite features. The background around the bamboo had a feathered grass pattern, and the tower sat in a matching metal planter to catch and recirculate the water.

FINISH It may sound old-fashioned, but I make art that I would want to keep myself. I pay attention to detail, do the research, put in the time, finish with several clear coats to provide durability outdoors, and much more. All of this takes a lot of extra time. Hard work mixed with magic.

And I think it's worth it.

