

# Populous Fremonti – Tree at the Narrows Public Art Project Fact Sheet



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Photo: Craiq Smith

**Title:** Populous Fremonti - Tree at the Narrows

**Location:** On the north bank of Tempe Town Lake, near Priest Drive and the Loop 202

**Artist:** Joe Tyler

**Completion:** 1998

**Medium:** Welded steel

**Description:** The artwork was created to represent the "Fremont Cottonwood" Populous fremonti. This Arizona native tree grew along the banks of the Salt River. The sculpted tree provides a large shaded area and the roots can be used for seating, creating an ideal place for rest and reflection. The surrounding stone seat walls visually draw the pedestrian into the sculpture setting. The stone seat wall is designed to display donor's names and accommodate the installation of plaques. The names of the Adopt-A-Tree donors are engraved into the steel leaves.

**Funding:** The project was funded through city of Tempe Capital Improvement Project Percent for Art funds with additional funding from the Adopt-A-Tree program.

**Artist biography:** Joe Tyler received his BS in Horticulture from Arizona State University. He earned his Masters of Environmental Horticulture at ASU in 1974. Tyler's works can be seen all over Arizona as well as in Germany, Japan, California, New Mexico, Texas and Nevada. Tyler has received many awards for his work and has held several professional positions in the field of horticulture. He has created public art for the cities of Tempe, Scottsdale, Chandler, Tucson and Yuma, and art for major business corporations.

**Artist statement:** It seemed quite natural for me to have plants and mythology as my major sculptural subjects because of my extensive knowledge in botany and environmental horticulture and my interest in mythological stories. I enjoy taking rough cold steel and bending, twisting, pounding and heating it into a soft, sensual, sculpted organic form. Roots are an important theme in my work because of their symbolism. I want the viewer to think about the inseparable relationship between foliage and roots. I hope to convey the message that Man's Destiny is inseparably linked to the destiny of the Botanical Kingdom.