

JANE STANFORD:

Celebrating 200yrs | 1828 - 2028

ART PROPOSAL

Richard Becker

Stanford MS, Class of 1988
Fellow, National Sculpture Society

Working Title: *DUE TO JANE*
(portrait of young Jane Stanford)
Patinated bronze, polished
stainless steel, and granite



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

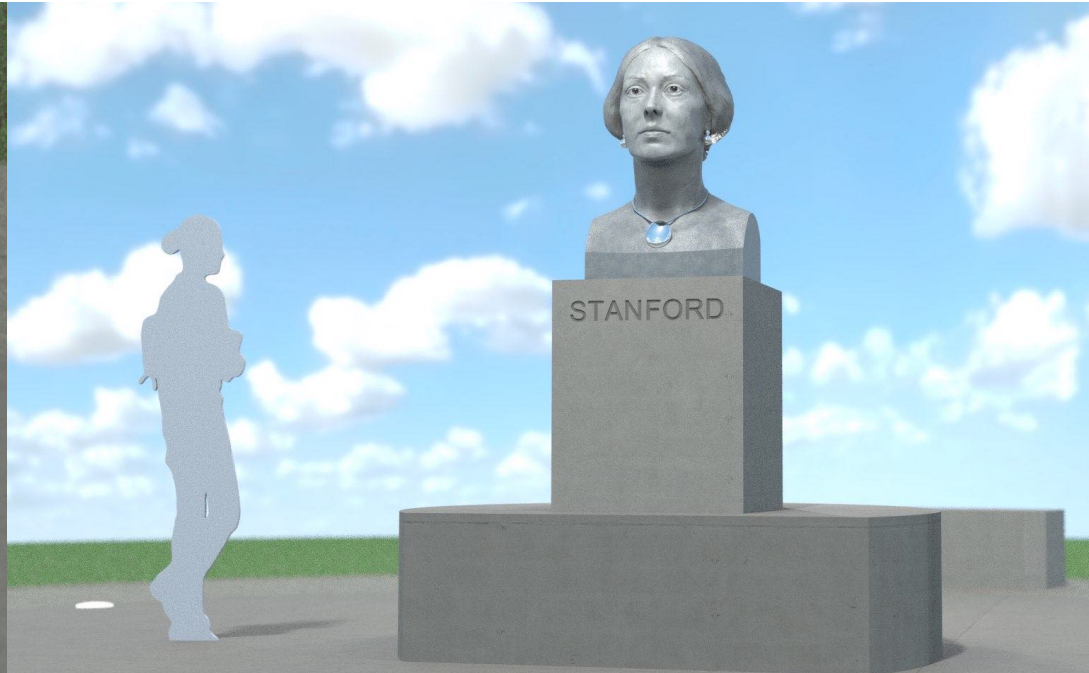
This proposal presents a commemorative sculpture honoring Jane Stanford — co-founder and steward of Stanford University — conceived to reflect her strength, leadership, and enduring influence.

The work centers on a forward-looking portrait of Jane at college age, presented without the trappings of her era and conceived as a permanent outdoor installation for a prominent campus setting. Monumental yet approachable, the sculpture is intended to invite reflection, gathering, and engagement as part of daily campus life.

Fabricated in durable, museum-quality materials, the project would be developed through a collaborative process aligned with Stanford University's standards for public art, campus planning, and long-term stewardship.

WHY NOW

Jane Stanford's 200th birthday in 2028 presents a unique and timely opportunity to honor her foundational role in shaping Stanford University. Despite her critical contributions as co-founder and steward, her presence on campus remains understated. This project will recognize her leadership and vision through a powerful, enduring artistic tribute that reflects her central role in the university's history.



WHY THIS PROJECT MATTERS

This sculpture meaningfully expands Stanford's public recognition of Jane Stanford, whose leadership was vital to the university's survival and identity. It offers a powerful opportunity to elevate her presence on campus with an artistic tribute that honors her legacy with dignity and contemporary relevance.

Beyond commemoration, the work will:

- **Inspire current and future generations** by making Jane's story accessible and relatable, motivating visitors to recognize their own capacity to lead and make meaningful choices.
- **Serve as a catalyst for engagement and reflection**, encouraging students, alumni, faculty, and visitors to connect with Stanford's origins and ongoing mission.
- **Balance and enrich the historical narrative** by providing a visible, forward-looking tribute that complements and broadens the existing campus tributes.
- **Enhance Stanford's cultural landscape** with a site that invites gathering, conversation, and a deeper understanding of the university's foundational values.

This project contributes to a richer appreciation of Jane Stanford's enduring influence, reinforcing Stanford's commitment to leadership, resilience, and vision.



CONCEPT DESCRIPTION

The sculpture presents an elevated, twice life-size bronze portrait of a young Jane Stanford, mounted on a granite pedestal and accented with polished stainless steel. Jane is portrayed intent and forward-looking, her expression conveying resolve, intelligence, and moral clarity.

Depicted without Victorian markers, the portrait avoids historical distance and presents Jane as a timeless leader — directly connected to the students she empowers and the future she envisioned. The work is conceived as monumental without intimidation, offering dignity, presence, and accessibility in equal measure.

SPATIAL INTENT & VISITOR ACTIVATION

A welcoming, monumental catalyst

Designed as a spatial anchor — a place to meet, reflect, and reconnect with Stanford's origins — and, through Jane's story, empowering visitors to act on the truth that their own choices, even in the face of profound adversity, have the power to change the world.

Integrated engagement

Developed in coordination with campus planners, the surrounding space would support informal gathering and quiet reflection, allowing the work to become part of daily campus life rather than a destination only for formal visits.

MATERIALS & PRESENCE

The sculpture will be executed in patinated bronze with polished stainless steel elements, mounted on a granite base. At approximately ten feet in overall height, the materials and scale signal permanence, dignity, and contemporary relevance while remaining appropriate for close viewing and human engagement.

KEY CONCEPTUAL ELEMENTS

A forward-looking portrait of young Jane Stanford

Jane is portrayed at college age, intent and engaged, establishing a direct visual and intellectual connection to the students whose lives she continues to influence.

Depicted without the trappings of her era

By removing Victorian markers, the work presents Jane as a timeless leader rather than a historical artifact, positioning her legacy in dialogue with the present.

The mourning locket transformed into a mirror

Once a symbol of personal loss, Jane's locket becomes a reflective surface in polished stainless steel — subtly inviting viewers to see themselves within the legacy she shaped.

A considered response to existing representation

Jane Stanford's existing campus sculpture depicts her kneeling beside her standing husband and son. This work offers a complementary perspective, affirming her role as co-founder and steward during the university's most vulnerable years.

A tribute to resilience and vision

Following Leland Stanford's death, Jane funded, sustained and defended the university. This portrait honors her decisive leadership.

A 200-year forward gesture

Conceived in anticipation of Jane Stanford's bicentennial in 2028, the sculpture frames her legacy not as commemoration alone, but as a living presence that continues to shape Stanford's future.



Jane Lathrop Stanford
1828–1905
Co-Founder of Stanford University

In 1884, Jane and Leland Stanford lost their only child, Leland Jr., to typhoid fever at age fifteen. In their grief, they resolved to create a university in his memory—one that would be “for the children of California,” open to all regardless of wealth, religion, or background.

After Leland Sr.’s death in 1893, Jane Stanford assumed full responsibility for the university’s survival. She personally funded its operations, defended its independence, and shaped its academic vision. Her leadership ensured the university not only endured, but flourished.

Jane Stanford’s legacy is one of resilience, vision, and generosity. She transformed personal loss into a lasting institution of learning, empowering generations to pursue knowledge and excellence.

<https://richardbecker.com/monuments/janestanford>

work in progress, V1.0d

Jane Lathrop Stanford

1828–1905

Co-Founder of Stanford University

In 1884, Jane Stanford and her husband, Leland Stanford, lost their only child, Leland Stanford Jr., to typhoid fever at the age of fifteen. In the depths of grief, they resolved to create a university in his memory—one that would be “for children of California” and open to all, regardless of wealth, religion, or background.

Together, they founded Leland Stanford Junior University in 1885. After Leland Stanford Sr.’s death in 1893, Jane Stanford assumed full responsibility for the university’s survival. She personally funded its operations, defended its independence, and shaped its early academic vision. Her leadership during these critical years ensured that the university not only endured but flourished.

Jane Stanford’s legacy is one of resilience, vision, and generosity. She transformed personal loss into a lasting institution of learning, empowering generations to pursue knowledge and excellence.

ARTIST PROCESS & PROJECT EXECUTION

I approach institutional commissions through a collaborative, phased process that supports stakeholder input while maintaining artistic clarity.

Typical project phases include design refinement and review, structural and material engineering coordination, fabrication using archival, outdoor-rated materials, and installation planning and on-site coordination. My experience with civic and institutional projects emphasizes vibe, historical accuracy, durability, safety, and long-term stewardship.

Artist Credentials

Richard Becker is a Fellow of the National Sculpture Society and a Stanford alumnus with decades of experience in high-profile portrait and institutional commissions. His work is recognized for artistic mastery, thoughtful storytelling, and enduring public presence.

ESTIMATED TIMELINE

Following final approval, fabrication and installation typically require 12–18 months, depending on scope, approvals, and site coordination.

NEXT STEPS

This proposal is offered in a spirit of respect and responsibility. I welcome the opportunity to discuss the work further and refine it in collaboration with Stanford University stakeholders.

RICHARD BECKER

S T U D I O L L C

