

# JOSE VALENCIA

## CUSTOM GUNSTOCK CARVING

*By: Mississippi Marshal  
Photos by: Chucky*



*J. Valencia*

Antiqued cast ivory buffalo skull inlayed in a Cimarron 1873 saddle ring carbine butt stock.

Some graphic elements courtesy of Lauren Bavin ©2005 Lauren Bavin



I was wandering up and down vendor's row enjoying the rain at Winter Range this year looking for that one thing that might be different. I looked at engraving, case-coloring, the latest guns to be released, knives, jewelry, clothing, gun carts, and such. Did I mention that I looked at everything there was to look at and then some? I sauntered into Jose Valencia's tent and looked at the beautiful custom knife engraving and then, there it was, some of the most beautiful gunstock carving I believe I have ever seen. Jose's carving was majestic and absolutely flawless. I then spotted the cast ivory inlays he had created. Jose was busy with a customer so I eased out of the tent and headed back to the **SHOOT! MAGAZINE** booth. A few hours later I saw Jose talking with Chucky, so when they had finished I asked Chucky what he wanted. Chucky said Jose was interested in advertising his work in the magazine. About three weeks later Chucky called me up to his office and asked if I had a gun I wanted carved. He had my attention. Chucky went on to say that Jose Valencia had called and wanted to carve a couple of gun stocks for us to feature. He also told Chucky that he already had a set of Henry Golden Boy stocks to engrave that he would give to us. Anthony Imperato of Henry was nice enough to provide us with a Golden Boy.

I just happened to have a new Cimarron Model 1873 Saddle Ring Carbine that I had purchased from Texas Jack's for my grandson, Grayson. I gathered the information from Chucky and made the call to Jose. Upon first talking with Jose I realized he was very passionate about his work. When I told him the carbine was for my grandson I could hear the excitement in his voice to do the project. Jose said he would carve the stocks as well as inlay a buffalo skull in the butt stock. I sent Jose the stocks the next day.

When I first looked at the finished stocks goose bumps rose up on my arm so big you could hang a hat on them. They are a pure work of art. The buffalo skull is a cast ivory inlay that is flared into the stock. Jose also carved a pair of Ruger factory grips that are fitted for Old Model Vaquero 7-1/2" .45 Colts There was a note from Jose stating that he hoped my grandson would like the work.

Jose turned the three guns into family heirlooms to be enjoyed for generations.

A few weeks later the custom carved Henry Golden Boy stocks mentioned earlier arrived. The stocks are a custom design by Jose with many hours of intricate, detailed carving and stippling.

In my conversations with Jose he stated that as a kid he had always been intrigued with the scroll works that were cast on the old toy guns. As he developed his skills with designs he began to customize them into his own creations. Jose has been carving since 2004 after attending the Arizona State Fair and meeting Doctor Lew Jensen, a retired dentist who designed the rotary carving tools Jose uses. Dr. Jensen spoke very highly of Jose and is also very impressed with the progress Jose has made as his student. Jose also was schooled under Keith Hone to learn how to carve animals.

Jose entered and won first place at the Arizona State Fair with a carving of an elk into a rifle butt stock. His talents don't stop there. Jose also does custom cast ivory inlays by request. The cast ivory featured here was completed by first cutting the outline of the buffalo skull about 3/16" deep and flaring the bottom so when the ivory polymer hardens it cannot come out of the stock. The ivory polymer is poured to a raised height of approximately 1/3". After the polymer hardens it is sculpted and finished to an antique ivory finish. The custom carving is performed with a modified rotary tool that turns at 312,000 rpm. The speed allows for very intricate carving as well as stippling. After the carving, sculpting, and stippling are completed, a hardener and stain are applied to protect the wood. After the hardener and stain dries, several coats of Tru-Oil is applied. The end result is a fine sculptured finish that will last for generations.

Jose also sculpts wine bottles for special occasions by request as well as engraves knives.



Custom carved eagle feather and buffalo skull in factory Ruger grips.



The detail of Jose's carvings is created with custom high speed rotary tools.

When talking to Jose he said that he has made a commitment to carving for a living and is putting in the time to perfect his craft. I think this is only the beginning of what we can expect from Jose as he is quickly developing into one of the top carvers in the business.

If you have that special piece that you always wanted to have carved, give Jose a call.



Floral carving in the 1873's forearm.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**  
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This Henry Golden Boy with a floral carved stock and forearm was shown at the 2006 Arizona State Fair.



Countless hours by Jose turned this carbine into a beautiful heirloom to be passed from generation to generation.