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# fighting global warming & brand building for treepeople

by Pat MacKay

The piece of land is prime. The intersection of Mullholland Drive at Coldwater Canyon where the views stretch for miles across the San Fernando Valley—and (at the right season of the year) beyond to the snow-capped peaks of mountain ranges. These four acres form the core of a boutique-sized project with global-sized ambitions. TreePeople is fighting Global Warming—one tree at a time.

When the time came for Andy Lipkis, TreePeople founder and president, to create

their new visitor center and educational base, TreePeople Center for Community Forestry, he turned to The Hetteema Group—the Pasadena-based experiential design company.

“The assignment seemed straightforward: master plan and design the guest experience for this 35 year old organization”, says Phil Hetteema, creative executive of The Hetteema Group. Phil’s distinguished career includes 15 years at Universal which he capped with the creative vision and execution of Universal’s

Islands of Adventures. “But when we started digging into TreePeople we discovered that what they really needed first was a clear definition of who they were and what their mission was.” “Thus Step One became brand building” adds Emily Aiken of The Story Studio who joined the Hetteema Team for this project.

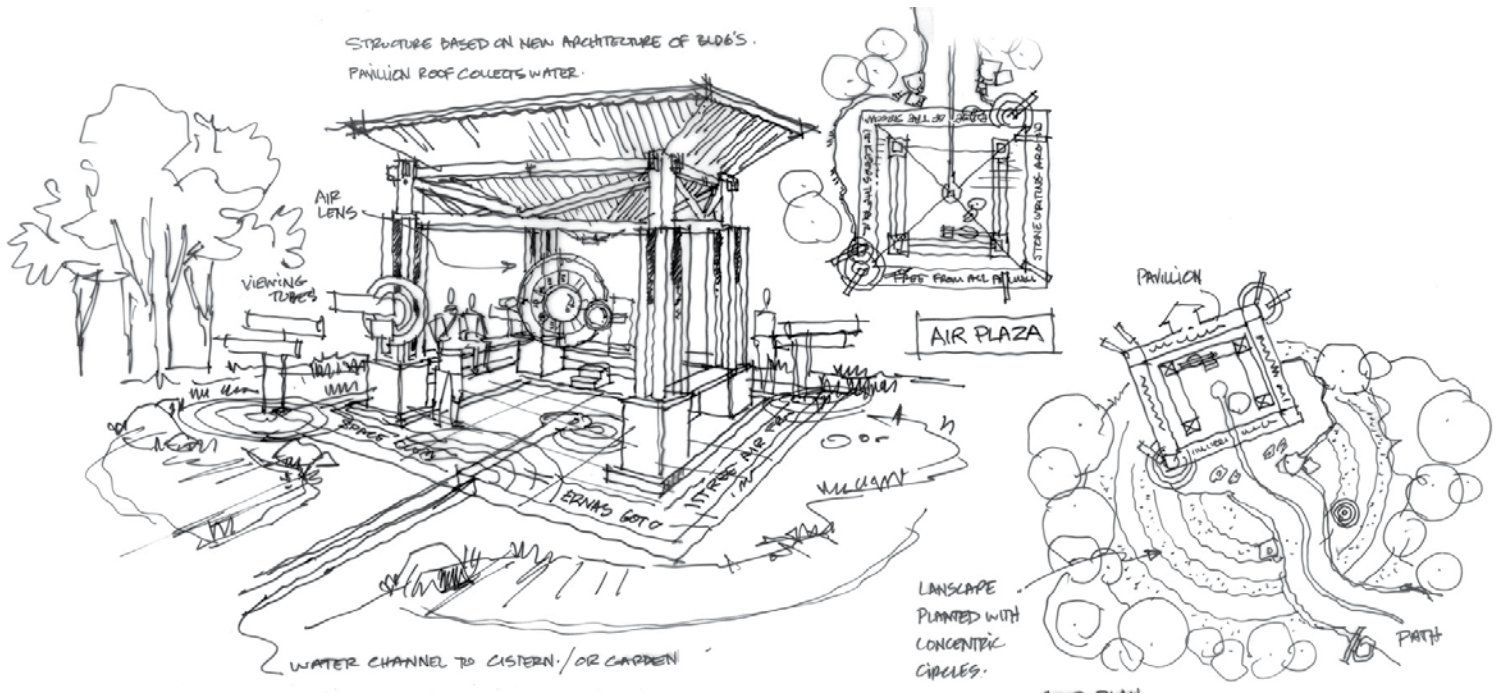
The Hetteema Group engaged in a deep and penetrating study of the organization, interviewed key stake holders, synthesized the information and crafted a Brand message and mission. This Brand then informed the creation of the interpretive master plan itself. TreePeople’s Andy Lipkis recognized that The Hetteema Group broken the code on their brand. Phil Hetteema continues, “ Andy said ‘you know us better than we do’ “. A great compliment from the client, indeed, but then Phil’s resume does include a starry roster of brands, he has shepherded into destination attractions including Dr Seuss, The Hulk, Terminator 2, Jurassic Park, and Spider-Man.

THG’s interpretive master plan came to life as multiple architects and a landscape architect collaborated on the recently opened \$10 million, TreePeople Center for Community Forestry. Architectural design of the center was provided by Marmol Radziner and Associate, and Carlos Madrid III of DMJM Design/AECOM. Mia Lehrer & Associates was the landscape architect.

The TreePeople Center is a destination for 70,000 annual visitors including 10,000 students, and 6,000 volunteers in search of inspiration and education on the campus which includes:



Ecology Tour at Tree People Center for Community Forestry. Interpretive Master Plan by The Hetteema Group/ Phil Hetteema creative executive.. Photo: Corinne Cunningham



**Concept Design** for TreePeople Plaza.  
*Interpretive Master Plan by The Hettema Group/  
 Phil Hettema creative executive.*

- The LEED platinum-certified Conference Center to promote sustainability in Los Angeles and around the world;
- S. Mark Taper Foundation Environmental Learning Center- a training classroom;
- La Kretz Urban Watershed Demonstration Garden with hands on exhibits ;
- 216,000-gallon cistern that stores rainwater collected from the buildings and from the parking grove for use in landscaping;
- W.M. Keck Foundation Nursery for native plants that restore damaged local watershed.

Throughout the campus, TreePeople's brand message is delivered in a low-keyed signage and demonstration exhibits—perfect for

school groups by the bus load as well as hikers and dog walkers headed out to Coldwater Canyon Park. The solutions are designed to inspire simple and natural, low tech ways that individuals and governments can use to make a difference in the environment:

- Plant three trees around your home and reduce air conditioning need by 50%;
- Plant one acres of trees and absorb CO2 emissions equivalent to driving a car 26,000 miles;
- Plant shade trees and cool the city temperature by up to 10degrees F;
- Switch roofs and parking lots to reflective surfaces in 100 major urban areas and offset 44 metric gigatons of greenhouse gases.



The Hettema Group specializes in uniquely creative design in the world of experiential entertainment for museums, visitor centers, theme parks, and resort developments. THG's strong conceptual thinking – breakthrough, out-of-the box solutions –combines with top quality design for: Destination Resorts & Parks; Retail, Dining & Entertainment Lifestyle Destinations; Museum and Exhibit Design; Shows, Entertainment, & Attractions.

TreePeople fighting global warming one tree at a time...with help from Mother Nature and The Hettema Group. **ipm**

Pat Mackay is currently on assignment with The Hettema Group as director of special projects. She also heads up the ten year old consultancy, Ones&ZerosMedia, which specializes in entertainment industry marketing, digital publishing, and trend-tracking.

