

Spreading a set of values, one tree at a time

Pitzer College is bringing art to life with their latest permanent installation. “Sick-Amour” by Los Angeles artist Joel Tauber will bring a seedling Sycamore tree to Pitzer College’s campus to serve as a reminder of the need to give proper care for urban trees.

“Sick Amour” began in 2006 when Mr. Tauber rescued an ailing Sycamore tree from the middle of a parking lot outside of the Rose Bowl. After nursing the tree to health, he reproduced seedlings to plant at public locations as symbols of hope and renewal.

“After swimming one day at the Rose Bowl, I saw this tree in the middle of a giant parking lot and it

struck me as forlorn, isolated and lonely,” Mr. Tauber said. “It was not protected from cars and was clearly not getting enough water. So I wanted to call attention to this tree to get people to start thinking about the care we give to trees in urban spaces.”

Through his efforts, Mr. Tauber secured approval from the city of Pasadena to remove asphalt surrounding the tree and put boulders in place to protect it from cars. After caring for the tree for more than a year, it produced over 200 offspring that the artist is planning to plant throughout Southern California and Western Europe.

“At first it was just me and the tree,” Mr. Tauber said. “And then the life of tree improved and now there are a community of people taking care for it and its offspring. My hope is this will help spread the ide-

ology imbedded in the project that the offspring of the tree will have better lives than their parent and hopefully other urban trees will have better lives too.”

A tree planting ceremony is scheduled for today, Wednesday, November 11 at 3:30 p.m. at Pitzer College’s Pellissier Mall. Pitzer College President Laura Skandera Trombley and Mr. Tauber will speak at the ceremony. There will also be a plaque installed to explain the project.

“It’s not only a public artwork, but also a living breathing tree that will be evolving and growing over next 20 to 40 years,” said Ciara Ennis, Director and Curator of Pitzer Art Galleries. “So this project dovetails perfectly with Pitzer’s core values including sustainability and environment practices.”

—Tony Krickl