

Studio Tippell

A Husband-and-Wife Team Packs a One-Two Punch

By Russ J. Stacey

He has over 20 years' experience in the building industry, starting with high school summer internships at his father's company; she was recruited by a commercial developer out of university and went on to nurture a passion for design and color.

Matthew and Leslie Tippell, the creative force behind Studio Tippell, provide a comprehensive range of development and design solutions with their respective firms, Maximilian Development Company and L.T. Designs.

Maximilian Development Company specializes in land acquisition, planning, project management and marketing, gaining the entitlement approvals, then selling that land to builders and developers. The company also provides

consulting services for builders, developers and investors looking for short- and medium-term solutions. Working mostly with private builders whose specialties include infill and master-planned communities, Matthew really enjoys "clients who are passionate about what they do."

L.T. Designs' expertise lies in creating exterior color palettes and material selections for houses and commercial properties. This entails selecting paint, roofing and masonry materials, hardscape, finish hardware, signage — basically anything that goes on the exterior — and tying everything together so it's a complete package.

After graduating with a psychology degree, Leslie started working for a high-rise commercial developer. The

In the Christopherson Homes Grasslands at Ragle Ranch project, L.T. Designs created a palette of "Coffee and Cream" for this rustic Craftsman style house. Architect: Hunt Hale Jones Architects





PHOTO COURTESY OF STUDIO TIPPPELL

Mayfield Lane in Napa is an infill subdivision located between Highway 29 and the Silverado Trail. Acquisition and planning/design: Maximilian Development/Robert Hidey Architects. Exterior Color & Materials by: L.T. Designs.

Southern California native honed her business acumen in estimating, tenant-improvement work and project-coordination roles. She then moved to San Francisco and worked in purchasing, collaborating with architects and design professionals. Craving more creativity and looking to fill

a niche in the Bay Area market, she launched L.T. Designs in 2002 after the birth of her son, Maximilian.

“I really love color,” Leslie says. “And you have to love what you do, bringing that joy, excitement and vision to your product.”

The advantages of marketing two companies under Studio Tippell are numerous, with the number of industry contacts they have and their ability to see a larger range of interior and exterior product being two of the most prominent. They assert that the real benefit of creating Studio Tippell is this crossover collaboration.

Jeff Lawrence, President of Watt Communities of Northern California, agrees. “We have used Studio Tippell on several of our Northern California projects. Leslie and Matthew have worked as a great team for our higher-end single-family and multifamily projects. Having two talented disciplines collaborating on our projects has added tremendous value.” For additional reference, Jeff Lawrence can be contacted at jlawrence@wattcommunities.com.

Matthew says that he and Leslie feed off each other trying

Studio Tippell Services

L.T. Designs

Capabilities:

- Exterior Color Schemes
- Interior Color Schemes
- Color Presentation Boards
- Color Blocking
- Digital Color Renderings
- Product Development
- Material Selections
- Architectural Specifications
- Finish and Hardscape Selections
- Client and Consultant Coordination

Maximilian Development

Land Acquisition Consulting:

- Project Feasibility
- Due Diligence
- Pro Forma/Budget Preparation
- Site Plan Design and Review
- Land Sale Management

Project Management Consulting:

- Product Design Review
- Entitlement Approvals — Local, State and Federal
- Team Management
- Development Scheduling
- Neighborhood Relations

to discover what works, what's popular and how people's lifestyles affect product. "But we're both very independent individuals and have two distinctly different companies."

Matthew's family has a long tradition of home building. While studying real estate and marketing at university, he interned at both a leading home builder and a leading advertising agency. Matthew then worked in acquisition and redevelopment in London before returning to California in various project management, acquisition and planning positions for a number of companies before starting Maximilian Development Company.

"I've gathered close to 20 years of experience for both private and public builders in nearly every role of the industry," Matthew says, "from accounting and marketing to on-site construction and project management, to acquisition and planning."

Matthew's father, Gordon Tippell, is past president of both the Orange County BIA and the Southern California

BIA, and a member of the California Building Industry Hall of Fame. And he has currently taken on two additional roles as non-executive chairman of Maximilian and president of G.E. Tippell, an international consulting company.

"I'm happy to say that I'm now recognized more for being their father and father-in-law than I am in my own role," says the elder Tippell.

Both Maximilian Development Company and L.T. Designs serve mainly the Bay Area, but each company is flexible. Staying primarily in Sonoma, Napa and Solano counties, Maximilian accepts larger acquisition projects as far afield as Southern California. L.T. Designs has worked on projects in Northern and Southern California and is currently collaborating on a master-planned community in Russia.

Leslie says her ideal client is one who is not only design oriented and cares about the architecture, "but also puts me on the team where my input is valued."

Tiburon Mist Townhomes — chocolate brown and taupe were used on this waterfront townhouse in Tiburon to give a "Shabby Chic" feel for this relaxed seaside community.



PHOTO BY BRUCE SCHNEIDER