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By Jim Simmons

Poems are made by fools: But God didn't make this 20-foot-tall "tree" at the Cerritos Library.

TRENDS & PHENOMENA

A library made more lovely by a tree

Remember the tree of knowledge? Well, more and more of them are sprouting up. From the Cerritos and Buena Vista libraries in suburban Los Angeles, to their counterparts in Florence, Ala., and Tulsa, trees are taking reading to new heights. And inside, no less.

NatureMaker's trees are one-of-a-kind works of steel art — arboreal sculpture — that cost from \$10,000 to \$1 million and have served as centerpieces for mega hotels, casinos and theme parks for years. Now they're branching out, so to speak.

"The whole idea is to create an 'experience.' It's all a means of bringing people in," says Gary Hanick, a co-founder of NatureMaker in Carlsbad, Calif.

The tree at Hardesty Library in Tulsa, which opens May 18, even has seating and interactive touch screens.

The company also designed a tree for the children's emergency room at Lynchburg General Hospital in Virginia. "It gives kids hope. It makes it less scary because nature is so universal," says Hanick.

— Craig Wilson