

# Permaculture Design Course, Nature and Spirit

Westminster Woods, Occidental, CA, March 5-10 and March 26th-31<sup>st</sup>, 2012

## Core Instructor Bios

### Kat Steele



Kat Steele is a permaculture activist, designer, educator and founder of the [Urban Permaculture Guild](#) in Oakland, CA. She facilitates workshops on ecological design, sustainability and permaculture as well as publicly speaks about eco-social design, city repair and the power of placemaking. Trained in Ecovillage Design with the [Findhorn Foundation](#) of Scotland, Natural Building with [Kleiworks International](#), and Permaculture Design with the [Occidental Arts and Ecology Center](#), she also holds an MA in Creative Arts from [San Francisco State University](#). She has served on the boards of Bay Area nonprofit organizations devoted to peace, justice and sustainability, the [NorCal Chapter of Architects, Designers, Planners for Social Responsibility](#) (ADPSR) and [Bay Localize](#) in Oakland. In 2006 she became one of a 1,000 [Climate Project](#) trainees

empowered to present a version of Al Gore's Inconvenient Truth slide presentation. Kat recently moved to Big Sur, CA to lead sustainability initiatives at the [Esalen Institute](#). She is devoted to localization and community resiliency, believing it to be a key strategy towards sustainability and "thriveability."

### Jay Ma



Jay Ma is a permaculture designer, facilitator, natural builder, and community organizer committed to cultural healing through Peacemaker Principles. He received his first permaculture design certification through [Naropa University](#) in 2001, a B.A. through New College of California in Culture, Ecology, and Sustainable Community with a concentration in Eco-Dwelling & Natural Building. Jay is a graduate of the pioneering two-year training intensive in Regenerative Design & Nature Awareness. Jay has facilitated educational programs, retreats, workshops, and events as well as community land development projects with organizations including the [Regenerative Design Institute](#), [the Institute of Noetic Sciences](#), [Gaia University](#), [Omega Institute](#), [Harmony](#)

[Festival](#), and others. Jay is co-founder and director of programs and development of [Living Mandala](#), and works with other regenerative educators and institutions organizing educational courses, workshops, and events for ecological and social regeneration in the Pacific Northwest and beyond. He is currently an associate with [Gaia University](#) in Organized Learning for Eco-Social Regeneration. Jay is also a certified Permaculture Teacher, a Fire Walk Instructor through [Sundoor International](#), and is passionate about renewing Rites of Passage experiential programs for people of all ages.

## Jeffrey Adams



Jeffrey Adams is founder and principal of [terrasophia](#), an ecological design consulting and education firm synergizing practical experience and systems thinking with a passion for solution-oriented action to cultivate resiliency through public and private design and education projects. In 2010 Jeffrey provided technical experience and program development as Water Sustainability Coordinator for the innovative [10,000 Rain Gardens Pilot Program](#), a partnership between the Salmon Protection and Watershed Network and Marin Municipal Water District. Over the past decade Jeffrey has collaborated with a variety of non-profits, community groups, schools, and individuals to raise awareness and build skills for sustainability and regenerative living, including [G3 - the Green Gardens Group](#), the [American Rainwater Catchment Systems Association](#), [Los Angeles Conservation Corps](#), [Sacred Mountains Foundation](#) in the Navajo Nation, AZ, [Plenitud Iniciativas Eco-educativas](#) in Puerto Rico, the Campus Center for Appropriate Technology at [Humboldt State University](#), and [Daily Acts](#) in Sonoma County, CA among others. He designed his own interdisciplinary Bachelor of Science degree at Humboldt State University in Indigenous Technology with a minor in Environmental Ethics, and is certified as a Permaculture Design Consultant, Qualified Water Efficient Landscaper, and in Greywater System Design and Installation. He has also been an Accredited Professional through the American Rainwater Catchment Systems Association since 2009. With experience facilitating workshops and implementing projects around the United States and working in the construction and landscape trades for 15 years, Jeffrey brings a practical and integrated approach to each project. Jeffrey was residential site manager for [Sunrise Ridge Gardens](#), a permaculture inspired 7-acre lavender and mixed fruit orchard in West Sonoma county, CA from April 2010 to July 2011. Jeffrey has recently relocated to New Mexico to pursue a graduate degree in Water Resources while continuing to collaborate on ecological design and education projects.

## Spencer Nielsen



Spencer Nielsen began his permaculture journey volunteering on farms in New Zealand in 2003, though ecological design and eco-systemic thinking initiated his path from the beginning. Growing up in the hills of Marin County and spending summer's in his grandparents garden in Canada, Spencer continues to blend his passion for wild and tended Nature – through work with youth in the wild lands and farms & gardens. Spencer has a background in Ecology and Environmental Education, and is currently working on a master's degree in Integrated Eco-Social Design with [Gaia University](#). He is weaving together his passions for inner and outer nature, wild and tended. He is currently directing his energy towards creating programs for youth rites of passage from a permacultural perspective. Spencer uses permaculture principles to design his life, his master's degree, his youth programs, weaving an ecology of life. Spencer has studied Permaculture Design with the [Regenerative Design Institute](#), Permaculture Teaching with [Esalen Institute](#), and Edible Forest Garden Design with [Southern Oregon Permaculture Institute](#), as well as various teachers throughout northern California. With experience farming, gardening, mentoring youth, guiding vision quest, facilitating the inner journey, Spencer's way of seeing is a cross-pollination of wisdom traditions from around the world.