

From left, Stephanie Breitbard with colleague Evie Simon. Breitbard holds a master's degree from Harvard Business School and worked in fashion. Simon previously worked in the nonprofit sector.

FEAST for the SENSES

Contemporary art mixes with decor at the new outpost of Simon Breitbard Fine Arts in Menlo Park.

By Wendy Bowman

Stephanie Breitbard's role as an art gallery owner was born when friends began admiring a collection of works by Bay Area artists that she and her husband had assembled at their Mill Valley residence. When several of those friends asked her to help acquire pieces for their own homes, she launched her own art consulting firm in 2007. Breitbard and her business partner, Evie Simon, set up Simon Breitbard Fine Arts in San Francisco's posh Jackson Square in 2015, and will open an offshoot of the popular gallery and consulting firm in downtown Menlo Park in June in response to demand from clients, more than half of whom live on the Peninsula and have limited time for the drive into San Francisco.

The new space will offer the turnkey services for which the pair have become known—think a trip to the client's residence, gallery tours, mock-ups of how the artwork will look in the home, and delivery and installation—all carried out from a beautiful 1,500-square-foot residential-like setting bedecked with furniture, decor, vibrant colors and decorative wallpaper. As for the art itself, expect an ever-changing display of 200 works of one-of-a-kind, contemporary photography, painting, mixed-media, sculpture and works on paper by more than 100 emerging and midcareer artists, including aluminum works by Petaluma sculptor Matt Devine, and fashion-inspired collages by Los Angeles artist Jay Kelly.

"We want our clients to get the 'art bug,'" says Breitbard. "These are pieces that they will look at every day for many years to come, and we want them to enjoy the process of exploring their art tastes, learning about artists and seeing their homes transform with art."

Adding a special twist is a collaborative marketing effort supporting some of the women's favorite local high-end interiors brands. Among them: a rotating exhibit displayed on de Gournay's signature handpainted wallpaper, chairs by furniture designer Fyrn, stunning cabinetry pulls handcrafted from perforated and hammered metals by interior designer Krista Hoffman, MoxieMade decor elements from Evars + Anderson, innovative mural designs by Willem Racke, and a rotating luxury line of Oriental rugs from The Oriental Carpet.

"The team has such a natural sense of what looks good in the home, but still with some intrigue and unpredictability to it," says client Krista Giovora of Hillsborough. "We could never have found so many incredible pieces on our own. They are also superprofessional and organized—a pleasure to work with!" 779 Santa Cruz Ave., sbfinearts.com