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Designing woman: Local entrepreneur opens new shop in Lafayette

By Sophie Braccini



Leslie Price in front of her new store. Photos provided

Leslie Price began her design career 17 years ago, while raising her two sons in Moraga. She started in real estate staging houses. Wanting to work with her hands, she developed an upholstery and a cushion making enterprise in her garage, before embarking in the next phase of her business life just a few weeks ago as she opened her first store front: Price Style & Design in Lafayette.

Price explains how as she staged homes, buyers would sometimes ask her to create their newly purchased home's décor. Word of mouth was all it took to grow her interior design practice.

Remi Vranesh hired the interior designer for the front of her home, kitchen, living room and dining room, and says that she could not imagine hiring anyone else. Vranesh believes that hiring a professional saves you from making mistakes, and ends up not adding to the final cost since professionals get wholesale prices. She qualifies the quality of Price's service as unprecedented.

Maura Richards, another client, adds that Price worked within their budget to redo all their painting, window treatment and furnishings. Both she and Vranesh say that Price has created beautiful spaces that their whole family, children included, enjoy everyday.

Price says that the passing of her mother was a turning point in her life. Her mom had been a painter all her life as well as an art collector. When she died, Price and her brothers spent time together going through their mother's work and collections, reminiscing and sharing their joyful childhood memories, with art all around them. Price says that this was a defining moment for her, when all her professional experiences came into perspective and gave her a clear focus for what would be next for her: creating happy places for people around the art that inspires them.

When the opportunity to get a space to show her designs and work on clients' proposals appeared, she decided to take the plunge.

The intimate showroom-atelier is an upbeat yet peaceful and inviting space that the businesswoman created as an inspiring workspace for herself and her clients. Furniture, light features, objects and of course art create an engaging sense of place.

She displays paintings by Bridgette Thornton, a young local artist. Thornton now lives and works in Los Angeles, but it is on the walls of Campolindo High School that Price first spotted her work. She saw it again on Serena & Lily's website - a well-known site focusing on home décor and original art - and she reached out to the young woman.

"Her work is so happy," says Price. She showed Thornton schemes for her space and the young artist painted the pieces now in Price's space. The businesswoman adds that Thornton also does commission art if people want different color schemes.

Price also displays in her space couches by Robin Bruce, an American manufacturer that Price considers a well-priced quality manufacturer. She wanted to have a line people could get a feel for on the floor.

The designer has surrounded herself with orange and pink because those are the colors that make her happy, but when she works with clients she starts with what appeals to them, with the art and the colors that inspire them and their family.

Price finds the Lafayette location convenient to reach her clients who are located all over Lamorinda and in Walnut Creek. She says that she loves to work in a space that is not her own house, that she appreciates being able to invite clients in, and also being able to have space to store her inventory of designs.

On top of interior design, Price does paint color consultation, upholstery, art curation and styling services.

She loves working with people in the middle of a remodel. Price Style & Design is located at 3439 Mt Diablo Blvd. in Lafayette.

More information at www.pricestyleanddesign.com. More on Thornton's art is available at www.bridgettethornton.com.



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