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THE CULTURE ISSUE

Local artists share their
insights and inspirations

*At home with Brentwood art dealer Macie Sears





Macie Sears and daughter
Isabelle in the kitchen of
their Brentwood home.





Living with Art

Macie Sears' passion for art infuses her family life with color, composition and inspiration. Beauty is on the walls, in the garden and throughout their day-to-day lives.

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● **Art** dealer Macie Sears co-owns the Sears-Peyton Gallery in NYC, but most of her day-to-day work is conducted at her LA gallery—just across the lawn from her Brentwood home. She'd thought about opening a gallery in Culver City, but, she explains, "I have three young kids and I have to be around." So with the help of architect Tim Barber, she and her husband, screenwriter Jay Scherick, converted a garage on their property into the "Art House," Macie's gallery and office. While she shows clients artwork inside, kids are often splashing around in the pool just outside the French windows.

Her business, representing artists who are more process-driven than political-minded, doesn't seem to suffer from the unconventional setting. In fact, it may be enhanced by the real-life locale.

Prospective buyers see an artist's works surrounded by the white walls of the Art House, then they see it in a real home—Macie's—where it's surrounded by a busy family's presence.

By using her home as an extension of her gallery, Macie and her family get the added benefit of being surrounded by an ever-changing collection of works by her favorite artists. "I've realized that it's important to have art in the right place. You can love a piece, but you need the right place for it." She had found the right spot—in her entry at the foot of the stairway—for a big red painting by Isabel Bigelow. "After a month of having it there," she says wistfully, "it sold." And it hasn't yet been replaced. "I'm still looking for the magic piece."

"Art really enhances a home. I've gotten to live with the art I sell in such a profound way. It's on every wall. I see how important it is. Besides children and pets, what could be more enriching?"



Macie and client Sue Laviolette look over works by Karen Revis and Cecil Touchon in the Art House. Laviolette, an interior designer and art advisor, helped Macie with the décor of the Art House. Nunny, the family rabbit, hops through the room while children play poolside.

Bunny Love

Surrounding a family photo are works by MaryBeth Thielhelm (above) and Isabel Bigelow (right). Far right: Macie's 8-year-old daughter Isabelle holds *Portrait of Josephine*, a prized original photo by Los Angeles photographer Diana Thater. "We won it in a raffle at a fundraiser at the Santa Monica Museum of Art," Macie says. "Jay and I saw it and knew Isabel would love it." Macie is a big fan of the museum. "It's so accessible. The people there are so kind, and there's no pretension. It's a little museum that's doing such important, fabulous things."

Isabelle acts on her love of bunnies with art of her own: she knits thin scarves that she sells to raise money for the Rabbit Rescue Shelter. And every night she hangs a scarf over the framed *Josephine*.







Art Inspires Artists

Macie's son James, 11, built his tree house by hand with the help and guidance of Christopher Haskins, co-founder of Sense of Wonder, a local camp that honors the simplicity in life. "Together they talked about what James wanted—secret locks and hidden doors. They drew up plans, made a maquette and spent weekends working on it. They sawed every board by hand. It was a great learning experience about planning ahead, about how things take time and about hard work." And in the process, art is created.



European and Asian influences come together in Macie's living room.



TALKING ART

In the past, Macie and her partner Gaines Peyton, who would fly in from New York, held "Art in the Garden" parties for hundreds of guests to introduce them to the work of their clients. "They were successful," Macie says, "in that they made people aware of the artists and their work, but they were so big you couldn't go into depth about much." Recently she's begun holding smaller gatherings, bringing in artists to talk with small groups of collectors. Guests at a recent evening honoring Utah painter Clay Wagstaff "got a deeper knowledge of his work," she says.

Sears-Peyton Gallery represents about 30 artists who, as Macie puts it, "share a certain sensibility. Their work is process-driven rather than intentionally provocative." The work she sells, she says, "speaks to the heart. It's more poetic than political." And she likes it that way. "Our artists' work really holds up throughout the years. I see it more as time goes by."

Macie Sears can be reached at 310-889-9772 or through her website, searspeyton.com.

At a recent gathering for artist Clay Wagstaff, guests mingled in the garden before assembling in the Art House for a talk by the artist.