



PHOTOGRAPH BY LAURA KUDRITZKI

Family Ties

Working Together Has Enhanced The Bond Between This Mother-And-Daughter Design Duo

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THE INTERIOR DESIGN INDUSTRY is all about relationships. That, says Eugenia Jesberg, is among the key lessons learned in the nearly three decades since founding her practice. Like most designers, she relies on showrooms, fabricators, artists, and countless others to deliver sublime spaces tailor-made for her clients.

In January, her professional life assumed its most meaningful relationship yet: Eugenia's daughter, Emma, joined her firm.

It isn't the first time that the 30-year-old has followed in her mother's footsteps: The California natives both studied art history at Trinity College in Hartford, Conn. After earning her degree, Eugenia worked in finance before enrolling in the interior design program at San Francisco's Academy of Art. When she launched her business in Mill Valley in 1993, with a 2.5-year-old and a 1-year-old (a son who now lives in Colorado), proximity of her home to her office was essential.

ABOVE Eugenia & Emma Jesberg at Jesberg family home in Belvedere.

TOP Stinson Beach (Seadrift), EJ Interior Design, incorporates a neutral palette with rich textures to not compete with the view. For maximal comfort, Swivel chairs and sectional by Flexform, Moon table by Ochre, custom rug by Tufenkian.



ABOVE Stinson Beach Master bedroom, cozy and fresh textures for sunny and foggy days alike. Custom upholstered bed in quadrille fabric and shearling chaise.



LEFT Stinson Beach kitchen with fresh white cabinetry, shiplap design with weathered oak accents. Light fixture by Apparatus and backsplash by Fireclay.

BELOW Stinson Beach master bath with custom designed weathered oak cabinets and sconces by Fuse.



"Growing up," recalls Emma, "I spent a lot of time in and out of the office, helping out where I could." In high school, she started a business called The Returners with friends who interned with her mother. The group collected fabric samples from designers, then sorted and returned them to the showrooms at the San Francisco Design Center. Post-college, Emma held merchandising positions with West Elm, Williams-Sonoma and Gap while taking design classes on the side. "I never questioned that I would eventually join the firm," she says, "but I really wanted to get experience at other companies."

When the Bay Area's shelter-in-place orders went into effect in March, Emma was the newest of EJ Interior Design's handful of employees. "It's been a crash course," says Eugenia, noting that in the early months of the pandemic, mother and daughter lived and worked together in Marin. "Emma walked into an established business, but she's here to expand it and grow it and take it in a different direction, too. I'm excited to see her develop her aesthetic and design sense."

Zoom meetings with clients, as well as virtual tours of showrooms and studios, have become commonplace for the duo. Both especially enjoy curating art and creating custom pieces that, as Eugenia puts it, "solve a puzzle." A through-line of her portfolio is connecting the landscape with the interior schemes. Light and tactile elements are also priorities. Current projects include the "fast and furious decorating" of a transitional abode in Tiburon and a modern Aspen residence several years in the making.

The Jesbergs constantly bounce ideas off each other. Emma, who recently moved into a new apartment in San Francisco, says with a laugh: "I can't make a single decision without consulting my mom first!" For Eugenia, an even greater compliment is having Emma on staff now. "I always dreamt it," says Eugenia, her voice quivering with rising emotions. "I'm very lucky to have Emma as my daughter and my best friend. I'm blessed that we have this relationship that's pretty unique." **CH**