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MARTHA MIDGETTE'S INTERIOR DESIGNS ARE CHOCK-FULL OF SENTIMENT. SO WHEN SHE DESIGNED HER PERSONAL HOME, SHE FILLED IT WITH PERSONAL STORIES TO TELL.

WRITTEN BY **BLAKE MILLER**
PHOTOGRAPHY BY **KATHERINE JOHNSON**



When Martha and James Midgette walked into their two-story brick colonial in Raleigh, they knew it was exactly what they'd been looking for. "It had great details and exuded the type of feeling you want when you walk into a home: welcoming and cozy," says Martha, an interior designer. "With so much character, we could tell that this home had stories to tell. I could easily picture where I'd put our Christmas tree or imagine watching our kids play in the backyard."

The Midgettes purchased the home in September 2019 and decided to live in the house for a while before moving forward with any major renovations.



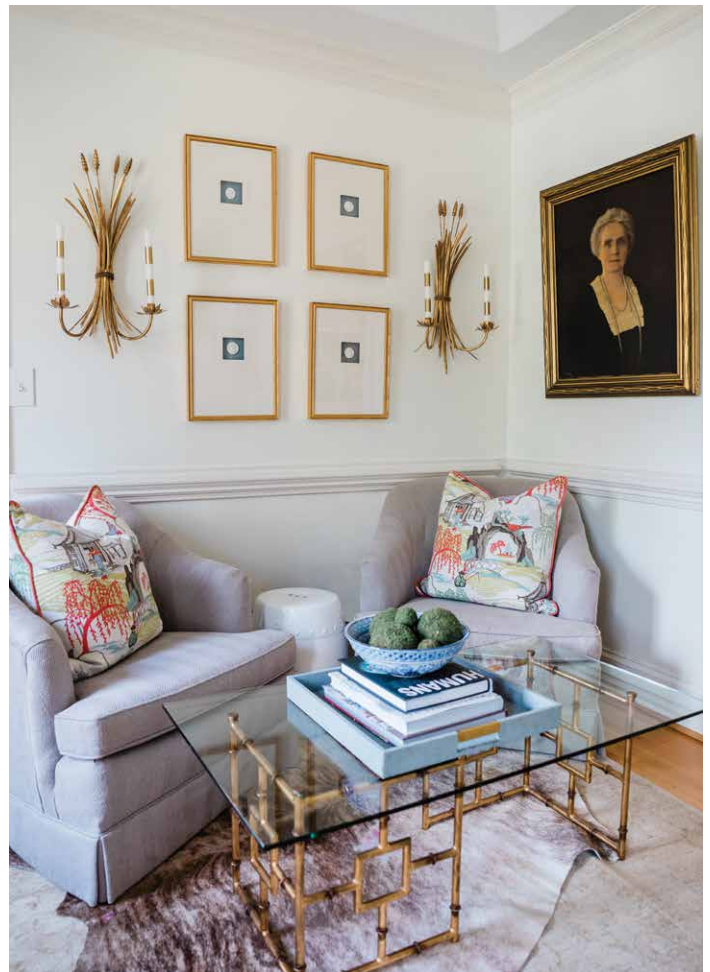
PORTRAIT: CALLIE PITTS DAVIS



They focused on smaller updates, such as refinishing the hardwood floors and painting the entire home, which instantly brightened the space. Midgette’s style can best be described as storytelling design; she incorporates family heirlooms, artwork, and antiques that carry special meaning or an endearing anecdote of how they came to be. “I love sentimental pieces that have been collected and have a story of their own,” says Midgette, who has scoured thrift stores, Craigslist, estate sales, and Facebook Marketplace for her home’s most beloved finds.

The designer applied her philosophy of designing with meaning and purpose to her own home’s interior design. Though they opted not to do a whole home renovation, the Midgettes did tear down one wall between the kitchen and living room. “There were two double doors between those spaces originally, and it completely closed off the kitchen,” she says. “I love hosting and entertaining, and everyone always gathers in the kitchen. In order to help with the flow and to have more space, we took down that wall and it made a huge, dramatic difference.”

Next, Midgette brought in lots of color. “I love decorating with art, pulling colors in to connect it back to the fabrics,” she says. Some of the couple’s most notable artwork was purchased during their travels. “I started collecting back in





middle school and high school, gathering art from places I've been, and we've continued to do this as a couple," she says. The gallery wall in the sunroom features an array of artwork they have collected over the years. "There are really special, really great memories from a lot of them," Midgette says. Another notable, sentimental piece is the Jennifer Flannigan artwork in the living room, which was a gift from Midgette's siblings.

Though the home originally had wallpaper in some of its rooms, Midgette wanted to add more. "If I could put it in every room, I would," she laughs. "I love colors and patterns, and wallpaper adds all of that to a space." In her son's nursery, she opted for classic blue-striped wallpaper by Thibaut, while in the laundry room she chose a bold coral by Schumacher. The guest bathroom features a similar bold color choice with Thibaut's Cairo pattern wallpaper in green and white. ♦