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# MODERN ROMANTIC

A DECADE'S  
WORTH OF  
COLLECTED  
FURNISHINGS  
MELD IN THE  
ST. PAUL HOME  
A DESIGNER  
CHOSE FOR  
LOVE.



Classic and modern elements blend easily in Jacqueline Fortier and Jack Boespflug's living room. Mostly traditional furnishings are juxtaposed with bare wood floors and windows dressed in inexpensive raffia shades, kept rolled up to expose the windows' simple architecture. The small sofa with its vibrant red velvet upholstery and an exuberant parrot-pattern slipcover on the armchair add colorful punch to a primarily neutral backdrop. The oil painting, which adds a touch of formality to the space, was one of Jacqueline's many flea market finds.

Jacqueline Fortier never had any doubt as to what she wanted to do when she grew up. "Some people are born to do something," she says. "By the time I was four, I was saying I wanted to be an interior designer." She began her training on Saturday mornings, rearranging the furniture on her side of the bedroom she shared with two sisters.

After leaving North Dakota farm roots to study design, Jacqueline developed her eye and talent over a decade spent working in Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York. All along the way, she collected furnishings and accessories that caught her eye, amassing enough finds to fill four storage units that were scattered from coast to coast.

Although she helped clients design and personalize their homes, Jacqueline's own furnishings remained homeless until she followed her heart to Minnesota a couple of years ago.





The wide, gently arched opening between the dining and living rooms (above) makes the small house feel much bigger. Because Jacqueline and Jack (left) entertain at least once a month, they purchased a large dining table, one of the only new pieces in the house. The table's simple lines balance more formal and decorative flourishes in the Chippendale chairs around it and a reproduction French Provincial table to the right.



## IF IT DOESN'T LOOK DECORATED,

Handpainted silk wallpaper panels (above), framed in simple black wood, are focal points in the dining room. A faux-painted Swedish *secretaire* (above right) holds a collection of reproduction Etruscan pottery from Italy, a few flea market finds, and Jacqueline's own paintings. An antique garden urn rests on a thrift store table in the upstairs study (far right), where black-and-white prints pop against the neutral walls. Jacqueline bought the arch-top cabinet (near right) the day she was moving from New York to Minnesota. It's filled with some of her favorite pieces, including plates from her wedding china.

The man she loved was there, and her instincts told her that's where she'd find home.

She was right. When she and her husband of one year, Jack Boespflug, got engaged, the first thing they did, even before setting a wedding date, was to start looking for a house. The one they chose sits in a modest, transitional neighborhood in St. Paul. Like many of its neighbors, it was built in the early 1900s, has a classic foursquare plan, a front porch close to the street, and an unassuming facade. But inside, the tiny house holds a

few surprises. "It was like a mini-mansion, with its front and back stairways and the butler's pantry," Jacqueline says of her first impression. "It has a wonderful, livable flow."

She and Jack also fell in love with its aged beauty. "We didn't look at anything newer than 1940s," she says. "I wanted wood floors, a kitchen that's human scale, and plaster walls—I think they age better, like antique furniture."

And this was a place where Jacqueline could imagine putting her beloved furniture and

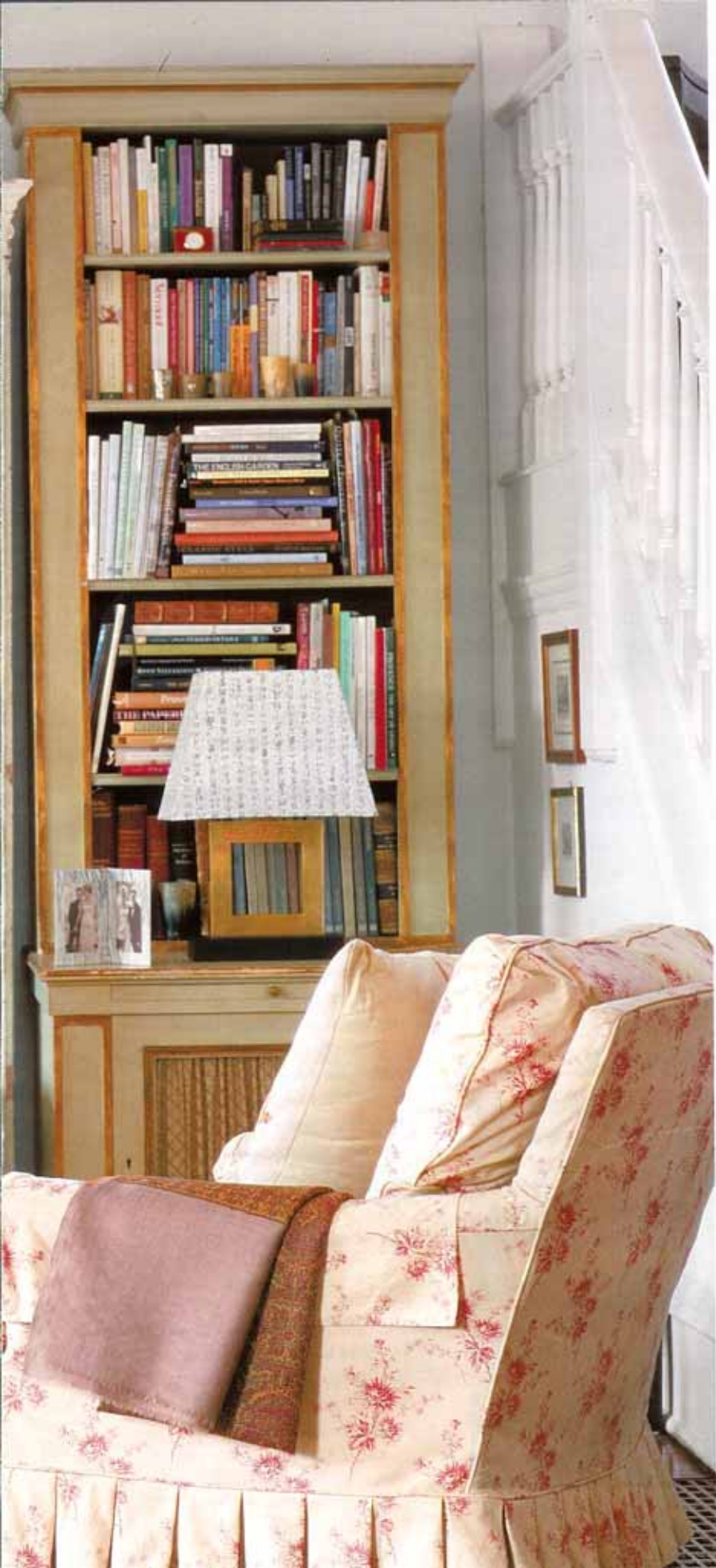


I KNOW I HAVE THE RIGHT MIX.

JACQUELINE FORTIER







collections. "When I walked in this house, I really imagined it almost exactly the way it is now, except I wanted the red sofa in the library," she says. Despite that clear vision, there were some challenges. For one, the storage units held many more pieces than would ever fit in this house. "I had the mother of all garage sales," Jacqueline says.

With the benefit of being able to "shop" among the things she had collected over the years, Jacqueline tackled the house in much the same way she handles her clients' projects. "I don't really believe in the idea of 'decorating,'" she says. "I look at houses in a more natural way, from a human perspective, and with function in mind."

That means she tries to let a room develop naturally, relying on her instincts to tell her if a piece feels right for a particular spot, has a purpose, and adds beauty to a space.

Her starting point is to first place the pieces that are most important—either from an emotional standpoint or a functional one. For her, that primary piece is a faux-painted Swedish *secrétaire*, where she keeps stationery, including her own handmade cards. It's placed just opposite the front

Jacqueline is an avid collector of books, and she's carved out this charming space opposite the living room for the keeping and enjoyment of her books. She left the three vintage bookcases as she found them but slipcovered two flea market chairs in a cozy floral.



door, creating a sense of entry.

The rest of the interiors are a comfortable blend of classic and modern elements, with a feeling of romance underlying it all. Although she isn't drawn to the lace and ruffles many associate with romantic decorating, creating romance in a home is one of the things Jacqueline pays attention to as a designer. "I believe that what you put in your surroundings can affect how you act toward one another and how you live your life," she says. "I truly believe that this house has made the first year of our marriage more romantic." That feeling stems from both the structure and the interior design. "The spaces are so intimate," Jacqueline notes.

She also focuses heavily on texture. "For most people, their first question is: What color should I paint the walls?" Jacqueline says. "I try to ignore color at first and go with texture; again, it ages better."

One of the home's most potent charms is that it could be anywhere—New York, Los Angeles, Paris—proof that its essence comes not from its location but from the people who live in it. 🏡

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The butler's pantry (above left) was one of the first things Jacqueline liked about the house. A cane bench, a table for toiletries and towels, and a luxe velvet shower curtain puddling on the floor add romance to the upstairs bath (left).