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PROFESSIONAL and personal

Starr Miller helped a Cornelius family
find the right look for their home

One family home in Cornelius is proof positive that working with an interior designer can yield results that are anything but cookie-cutter.

The homeowners brought Starr Miller (of Starr Miller Interior Designs, Inc., winner of the National Interior Design Society's Designer of the Year Award for 2012) onto the project after leveling the dated existing home on the lot and rebuilding from scratch. Their only regret in taking on the project was not bringing in a designer from the start.

"It would have helped to have had a designer's input while working with our



Interior designer Starr Miller helped a Cornelius family find the right look for their lakeside home.



Above: Whimsical accessories punctuate the design throughout the home.

Right: In the dining room, which opens to the home's entry, Miller kept the ikat-patterned, silk shantung drapes simple in order to show off the fabric's beauty. A smaller version of the family room rug ties the spaces together. Miller hired artist Diane Beard to install a swirl-patterned wall treatment in teal.

Below: Artwork is not limited to the walls of this Cornelius home.



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builder," they say. Even so, getting Miller's help a year after moving in was, "the absolute best decision" for the outcome of their home's design.

LIFE IS TOO SHORT TO BE NEUTRAL

As with every client, Miller initially focused on getting to know the family and determining what they valued most. "In my industry," she says, "designers are encouraged to develop a look and to sell it exclusively. But I think that's



really wrong for the client."

Starr says the key to ensuring client satisfaction is determining their value system as well as their aesthetic. In this case, it became clear that above all, the homeowners valued spending relaxed time with each other and feeling comfortable in their home.

"The owners were happy and fun," she says, "And they had a collection of bright, modern artwork."

In the great room (comprised of the kitchen, breakfast nook and family room), Miller opted for bold color. Says the owner of those selections, "I used to be afraid of color, but Starr broke me of that. Life is too short to be neutral." Aqua and orange dominate with window treatments, pillows and upholstery, echoing back

hues from the Australian artwork that inspired the palette. Miller brought in a large, color-blocked rug from Kannapolis' Rug & Home to pull everything together and add a touch of up-to-the-minute style.

Cozy-yet-modern upholstered barrel chairs that rock and spin, and a curved leather sofa invite lounging with a clear view of the cove out of the windows and of the television (which tucks away behind a painted panel when not in use) above the stone fireplace.

Though the space's design remains simple and clean, Miller added layers of interest with details. Orange piping on the window treatments; striped fabric wrapping the edges of the window seat cushions; and sculptural copper lamps come together to animate the space. The

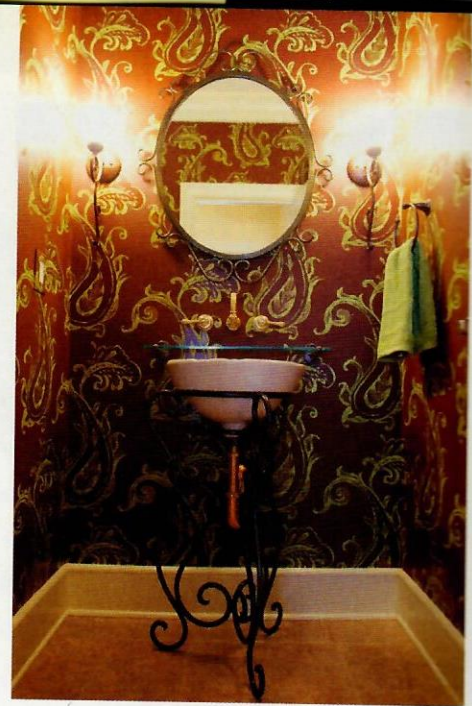
kitchen and breakfast nook tie in seamlessly with tapestry window treatments in rich, sunny hues and a custom rug bound in coordinating trim.

In the dining room, which opens to the home's entry, Miller kept the Ikat-patterned, silk shantung drapes simple in order to show off the fabric's beauty. A smaller version of the family room rug (also from Rug & Home) ties the spaces together. Miller hired artist Diane Beard to install a swirl-patterned wall treatment in teal, but the long wall shared by the dining room and

entry posed a challenge for stopping the wall treatment. "We got creative with a solution," Miller says, "incorporating existing sconces and a console table into a metallic paint treatment," which effectively delineates the two spaces.

BRING ON THE DRAMA

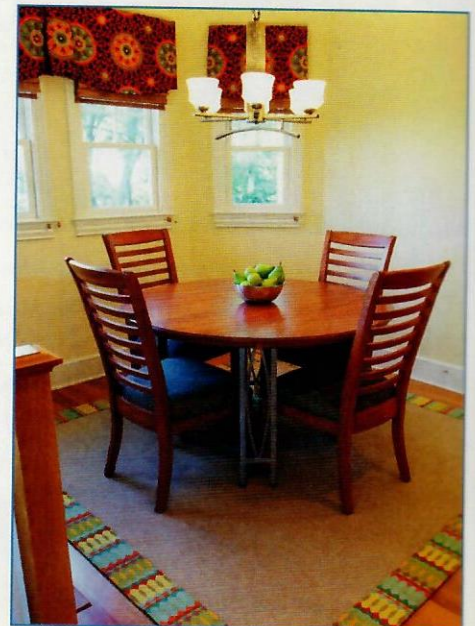
For a dash of unexpected drama, Miller installed chocolate brown and bright green wallpaper in the downstairs powder room. The large-scale paisley pattern gives the impression



For a dash of unexpected drama, Miller installed chocolate brown and bright green wallpaper in the downstairs powder room.

of hand stenciling, an artistic touch in keeping with the creative choices throughout the home.

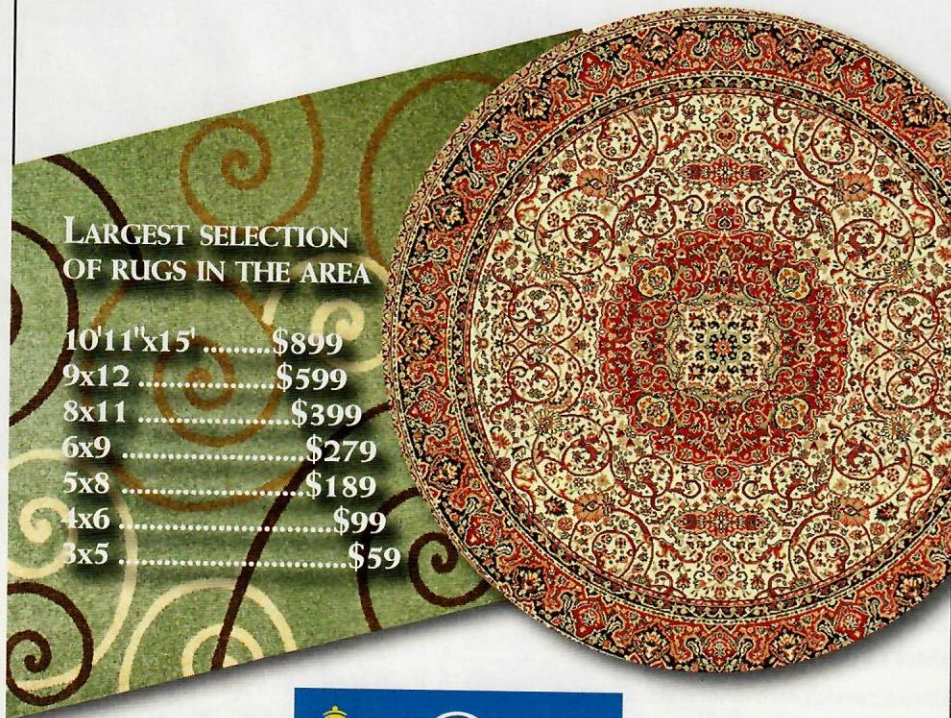
Working with an accomplished designer like Miller gave these homeowners freedom to reflect their personal tastes without fear of making poor design choices. Miller not only respected, but encouraged the owners to make selections that were unique to their own tastes. In so doing, the foundation was laid for a cohesive, polished design that reflects the owners' personalities. This personalized approach to design clearly works for both designer and client. **LNC**



The kitchen and breakfast nook tie in seamlessly with tapestry window treatments in rich, sunny hues and a custom rug bound in coordinating trim.

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