

Favorite
Gifts to Give

Southern home.

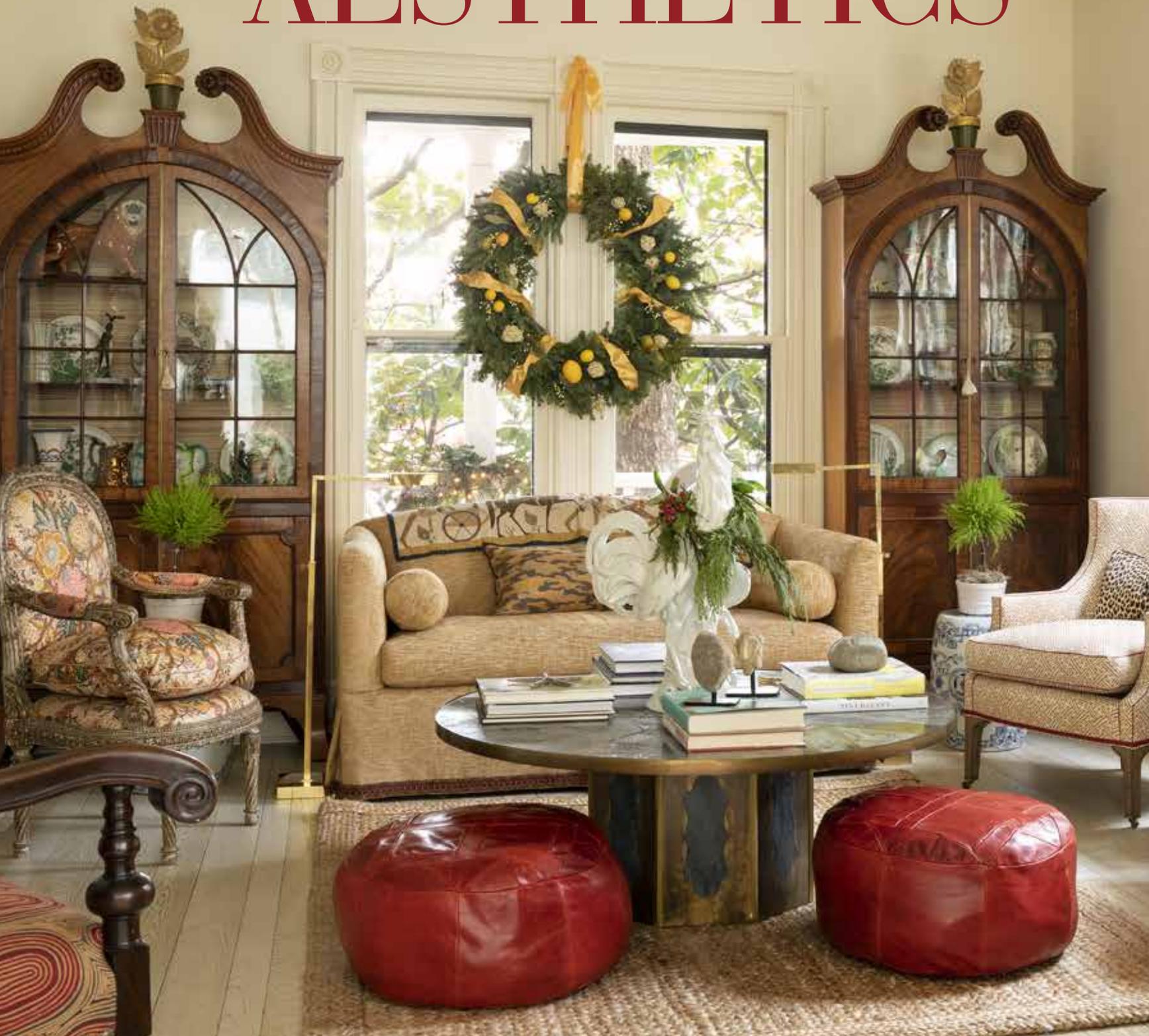
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**FESTIVE IDEAS
FOR EVERY ROOM**

the
Season's Best
DECORATING IDEAS

a Chat with
James Farmer

the art of
AESTHETICS





WELCOME TO THE HOME OF
DESIGNER JOSH HILDRETH, WHERE
CLASSICAL STYLE MEETS GLOBAL INFLUENCE
IN THE HEART OF THE CAPITAL CITY.

TEXT ANDREA FANNING | PHOTOGRAPHY GORDON BEALL



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A pathway marked by more than 30 steps and the glow of a dozen lanterns leads past magnolia trees, tidy boxwoods, and a large evergreen to a charming entry bedecked in fresh-cut swags and wreaths. Located off Cathedral Avenue in Washington, DC, this circa 1891 farmhouse belongs to residential and commercial designer Josh Hildreth, president of Josh Hildreth Interiors and DMG Interiors. With a signature style that highlights hospitality and the ethos of the human experience, Hildreth's personal abode illustrates his acumen for connecting art and ambiance to form and function—both during the holidays and throughout the year.

Originally from Minnesota, Hildreth's family summered with his uncle who lived in North Carolina, giving him opportunities to visit drivable Southern cities rich in architecture and aesthetics, such as Williamsburg and Charleston. He quickly fell in love with the abundance of warmth and welcome he witnessed. "People in the South really do have a sense of wanting to live beautifully at home," says Hildreth. "There's something in the soil that values and appreciates design and attracts people from all over."

Magnetized by the culture and resources,









Hildreth eventually moved his life and work to the nation's capital, and in 2012, he and husband Rick Robinson acquired a 4,200-square-foot farmhouse with wintertime views of the National Cathedral. The exterior maintained its historical appeal, while the interior had already received extensive renovations. Hildreth and Robinson added their preferences to the layout by combining parlors, widening and raising entrances, and adding glass openings for better views of yard. They also deconstructed two corner fireplaces to make one double fireplace, and they brought back replica plaster cornices to replace ones that had been removed years prior. "Whether you have an old or new house, one of the most helpful things in shaping your design plan is to find the thing that made you want to buy that particular house, and let it inspire the rest," says



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Hildreth. “For example, this house had a staircase with a unique railing and paneling with an inset. We made the front porch railing match the staircase railing and found ways to echo those elements throughout the home.” The existing mahogany newel post with a gothic egg shape also sparked the design for arched openings to the bedrooms and an interior alcove.

From room to room, that feeling is underscored by clever curation. Robinson’s primitive art collections from time spent working in Africa reside alongside unique pieces that include a vintage Tibetan tiger rug, custom sofas covered in Champlimaud fabric, and 18th-century Italian potted sunflower fragments. “My home is a little bit like a laboratory where I can combine things that came from my

family, things I found along the way, even mistakes from work with clients,” says the designer. “It’s important to include the things that are important to people, and when you start to see rooms as more than a square, you can create unpredictable moments within a space that are interesting and engaging.”

Though the design is ever evolving, the home continues to be a source of retreat and respite for its owners, as well as a place where they can welcome friends and family throughout the year. As the weather turns colder, the doors to this abode open wide and often for parties galore. “We love sharing our home with others,” says Hildreth. “We see it all as an opportunity for bringing people together and celebrating the human experience.”