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The dining table and chairs, which Johnson painted in Amy Howard's Kumquat, are pick-ups from the Habitat for Humanity ReStore. The vintage light fixture hanging above is from Slate Interiors.



ROSE-COLORED GLASSES

ARTIST JEAN JOHNSON WAS
ABLE TO LOOK PAST THE
REPAIRS AND SEE THE TRUE
BEAUTY HIDING IN HER HOME.



Vintage glasses are a mix of Etsy finds and hand-me-downs, and various accessories snagged from Cotswold Marketplace add a layered look to the vintage bar cart that belonged to Johnson's grandmother.
Opposite: A pair of bamboo chairs flanks Johnson's great-grandmother's secretary in the living room. The red and green sitting chairs were gems Johnson picked up at the Habitat for Humanity ReStore. The crystal lamps on top of the secretary were a wedding gift.



When Jean Johnson and her husband first began dating in New York, they never intended to end up back in Charlotte. Her husband, a native Charlottean, grew up on Canterbury Street, but New York was the new norm and the new hometown. When he was offered a job at Bank of America, however, the pair couldn't say no, and back to Charlotte they came. They enlisted the help of Johnson's mother-in-law for their home search, and as crazy luck and circumstance would have it, a home became available – on Canterbury Street. Johnson fell in love immediately.

"I admit I walked through the home with rose-colored glasses the first time," Johnson recalls. "I remember finding gum and writing on the walls in a walkthrough after we signed

the contract and realizing it was in pretty bad shape. But I saw the potential and was really excited to get to work." With a background in fashion and textiles and an MFA from SCAD, Johnson knew she could make this run-down house a home fit for their family . . . in time. "The first couple of years, sadly, were spent fixing things you don't see," she laments, "electrical, facia, insulation, etc."

Two years into the new home, and newly pregnant with their first child, Johnson worked with contractors to renovate their kitchen, knocking down a wall and adding cabinets. They removed tiling and replaced it with hardwood floors. At the same time, they updated one of the two master bedrooms and bathroom, ripping it out entirely and starting over. "The house was built in 1951, with the second master being added in the '60s – and it was so obviously done in the '60s," Johnson says.



The blush sofa from Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams Outlet sits atop a sisal rug from Cotswold Marketplace layered with a smaller kilim rug Johnson purchased from Etsy – creating a soft moment in the room. A pair of Clarence House dragon pillows from Judy Brown at Cotswold Marketplace are perched on Johnson's grandmother's chairs with her coral secretary just beyond.





“There was a huge vanity in the middle of the room along with a small toilet and shower on a separate but raised level just beyond it. It was completely strange, and we used that room as storage for the first full two years we lived here.” They gutted the space, creating a separate bedroom and bathroom, and adding a closet perfect for the room.

The remainder of the home, as Johnson puts it, has been a work in progress and still has things to be done. “We want to work on the backyard, and I am constantly editing as I go along.”

Most of the things in Johnson’s home are inherited or found locally in consignment shops with some treasures found in the Lowcountry as well. “I have a booth at Cotswold Marketplace,



so I am partial to it being an incredible resource, but I also love Slate Interiors and Sleepy Poet, and I make a habit of visiting the Habitat ReStore,” Johnson says. “I can almost always find a gem or, at the very least, get inspired.”

Her in-laws lived in Argentina for a time and have passed down many things that make

Left: Johnson’s grandmother’s etageres hold various treasures and found objects personal to Johnson and her family. Art from Ellen Bradshaw, Etsy, and handmade pieces dot the room. The bold blue sofa is from Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams.

Top Right and Bottom: Johnson and her daughter sit perched in the breakfast nook. The bench cushion is covered in Schumacher fabric from Cotswold Marketplace. The tulip table and hide rug are both from IKEA. Johnson found the chairs on the streets of NYC and recovered them in fabric from a neighbor. The Big Chill fridge was a HomeGoods find that adds a vintage feel to the space. The bright yellow bar stools are repurposed from the Habitat for Humanity ReStore.



Johnson's home interesting. "All the brightly colored pieces no one wanted, I loved, and I wanted," she says.

When asked what influences Johnson's style, her response comes as no surprise because it's so clearly represented at every turn: textiles, natural found objects, animals (especially turkeys, bugs, and sea life), music, travel, worldly pieces, family keepsakes, and, of course, color. "My secret to making your home look layered is to buy what you love when you see it – doesn't matter if it has a purpose yet, you will always find a

place for it," she says. "Style with objects that are meaningful, and make comfort a priority."

She also suggests calling in help if you're stuck, using herself as a perfect example. Last year, Johnson called friends Angie Perrson and Merrin Lowe from Swell Décor to help her design her office space and bring her vision to life. "Designers *can* get stuck, especially with personal spaces, and I was definitely stuck," Johnson admits. "They gave me the exact ideas I needed to move forward, particularly help choosing the most perfect



green for my walls: Gecko by Sherwin-Williams. They also suggested lots of functional IKEA pieces that keep it all organized but fresh.” She found the ideal navy-blue antelope rug to complete the room and, alas, it all came together.

The kitchen and den are Johnson’s two favorite spaces. “I love all the light in the kitchen. We have no rules on messiness, so it’s easy to use and a true outlet for us as a family,” she explains. “I love the den because it holds so many memories. I love the layout with a view into our ‘backyard jungle,’ the vaulted ceiling, and the Stark rug that I snagged for \$250 at the outlet.”◆

Left and Right: Jean Johnson in her home studio, which is painted in Sherwin-Williams Gecko. Her friends at Swell Décor helped organize her studio with several IKEA pieces and even added a dress form for her work space. A tin barrel in the corner holds her fabric finds from Cotswold Marketplace.