

French 19th-century lantern from Chateau Domingue. Antique fireplace surround from M Naeve. Art by Jessica Halonen from David Shelton Gallery. Egg Collective side table, custom circle pillow, and custom armless club chair from M Naeve.



# SLOW MOVEMENT



Table is 19th century from Area. Swedish chairs, also 19th century, are in vintage linen from M Naeve. Custom silk rug from Carol Piper Rugs.



An 18th-century French marble-top console from W. Gardner, Ltd. On console, Joe Davidson's *Emaciated Landscape*, 2005, made from layers of Scotch tape.

MAX BURKHALTER

## DESIGNER MARGARET NAEVE PARKER MAY SPEND YEARS PERFECTING A DESIGN PROJECT — TO EXQUISITE EFFECT.

There are designers who promise a 30-, 60-, or 90-day turnkey project. This is not in Margaret Naeve Parker's lexicon; she might spend years with clients to achieve the kind of layering that makes a home authentic. Case in point: a French-style, new-construction house in Afton Oaks for attorney Brett Braden, his wife Lisa, and their four children, which Parker has worked on for eight years. "A house has a better feeling if it's done over a period of time, with the designer and clients working together," Parker points out. "It's okay to take your time." A slow design approach is not for everyone, but it has its fans. "I have another project I've been working on for 10 years," adds Parker, who opened her Westheimer antiques store, M Naeve, in 2006. Just 27 at the time, Parker had little interior design experience, but the Bradens loved the exquisite, poetic vignettes she created for the store with

Belgian, French, and Scandinavian furnishings. "This couple was job number two for me. The amazing thing is that my design career has grown with them."

First things first. The house's good bones — clean architectural lines and a stunning slate roof — laid an exquisite foundation. "It was a great house that just needed a little work," says Parker, who installed antique iron lanterns in front and removed the first-level shutters, which distracted from its simplicity. The porch was enclosed to make a sunroom for the kids, and antique architectural elements, such as a large limestone mantel, were added. An odd niche in the dining room was transformed into a bar with the addition of green-painted antique French doors. The existing oak floors were already in great shape, and Parker painted the walls throughout the same custom off-white paint from Benjamin Moore. "They

wanted a softer palette, and it's something I'm known for," she says. "I'm a big fan of painting a house one cohesive color, even if it's 10,000 square feet. It tells a much better story than doing one room pink, the other green, etc."

When the Bradens moved from their former home in West U, they left their furniture behind and started over. "Every year, we did something to the house," Parker says. "It still feels fresh, even though we started eight years ago. If you buy timeless things, it's always going to read that way." The biggest challenge was how to create a beautiful home filled with pale antiques with four children in residence. "They are a rare client who said 'okay' to antiques and a light palette," Parker says. "They wanted their kids to grow up appreciating art and beauty." Of course, Parker used child-friendly furniture where possible, such as rustic wooden tables and slipcovered Christian Liaigre chairs and sofas. But there's not a single yard of outdoor fabric — a default

BY REBECCA SHERMAN. INTERIOR DESIGN MARGARET NAEVE PARKER. PHOTOGRAPHY PÅR BENGSSON FOR INDEPENDENT ARTISTS AGENCY. ART DIRECTION MICHELLE AVIÑA. FLOWERS BY MATT JOHNS.



Christian Liaigre chairs and sofa from David Sutherland Showroom. Tapestry pillow by Martyn Thompson, custom round pillows in Holland & Sherry linen and velvet from M Naeve. French trumeau from Kay O'Toole. Egg Collective coffee table and antique Swedish chair from M Naeve. Vintage vases turned into lamps, with shades sourced in Paris. Jan Kath rug from Carol Piper Rugs.

THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE WAS HOW TO CREATE A BEAUTIFUL HOME FILLED WITH PALE ANTIQUES WITH FOUR CHILDREN IN RESIDENCE.

Mid-20th-century Willy Guhl concrete chair and antique Rouen urn, both from M Naeve.



solution for many designers that Parker feels isn't necessary. Machine washable linens, mohairs, and wools hold up against wear and tear, and slipcovers are a great option, she points out. The most fragile antiques, such as four Swedish Gustavian-era chairs that Parker purchased in Belgium, are placed in areas that have less traffic, such as the living room. In the breakfast room, handcrafted wood chairs by Egg Collective have seats upholstered in durable hide. Other spaces were strategically considered: In the sunroom,

where the children take many meals and play with friends, the wood table and set of Eames molded plastic chairs can be wiped clean.

Although the Bradens prefer traditional furnishings, they "wanted a happy, easy house," says Parker, who encouraged them to consider contemporary art, Danish modern pieces, and furniture with clean lines. They grew to love the mix as their style evolved. "If you take your time, you will achieve a more layered look because your taste naturally changes,"

Parker says. "It has been exciting for me to see that happen."

The house incorporates all the signatures that M Naeve is known for, such as a balance of something very old and something early 20th-century in each room. "There are textures and materials happening, too," she says. "Over the fireplace, we put a cool Paul Fleming sculpture that goes up onto the ceiling, so contemporary art mixes with antique beams. It's an awesome moment and the epitome of what I do."



In the breakfast room, antique iron lighting from Kay O'Toole. Joe Mancuso's *Tulips*, 2013, acrylic on linen, from Barbara Davis Gallery.



Left: Vintage Danish stool from M Naeve.

Above: In the dining room, antique French doors from Chateau Domingue open to reveal a bar.



Clockwise from top left:  
Early-20th-century Italian wing chair in Holland & Sherry fabric. Paco, the family dog.

Antique fireplace surround from M Naeve. Ceramic objects from Found.

In the family room, antique African stool from Area and antique French coffee table from M Naeve. Early 20th-century Italian wing chair in Holland & Sherry fabric. The Paul Fleming hydrocal-and-resin wall sculpture, 2014, was commissioned.



Margaret Naeve, wearing Dior from Tootsies. Antique Rouen urn and 19th-century French iron table, both from M Naeve. Hair and makeup David Armendariz for Studio A Salon.



Owen Drysdale's *Embankment 2*, 2014, oil and graphite on Yupo paper, from Barbara Davis Gallery. Antique Swedish baroque chair. French 19th-century iron-and-marble table. Silvered bronze candlesticks from M Naeve.



Chair and sofa are Christian Liaigre from David Sutherland Showroom.



In the master bath, a pair of rare Andoux-Minet rope chairs. Elise Morris' *Line Stray 1.1* and *Line Stray 1.2*, 2015, mixed media on paper, from Kathryn Markel Fine Arts.



In the breakfast room, Knoll Saarinen table, ceramic bowl and ladder-back chair from BDDW in New York.

