

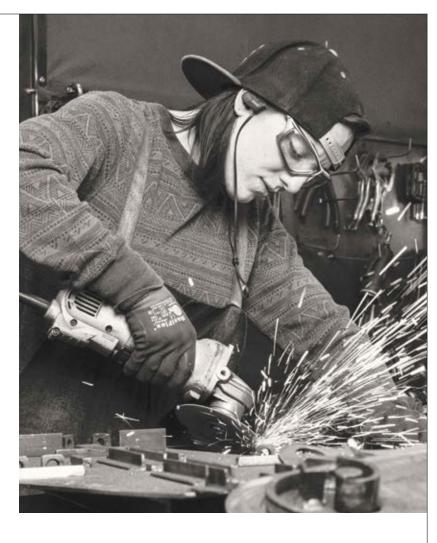




## HAMMERTON NATURAL LIGHT

TEXT: ERIKA HEET

evi Wilson grew up around the rhythmic clang and din of metal, in his father's ornamental iron shop in Salt Lake City, Utah. His mother, a seamstress, further taught him the art of handcrafting. This interplay of hard and soft "provided contrasting elements in design—form and function," or, as he says metaphorically, "overalls and high heels." Wilson went on to study architecture in Europe, focusing on ornamental iron, and embarked upon "vagabond travels through the west coast." He founded Hammerton in a Salt Lake City garage in 1995, its compound name aptly describing what he intended to produce and convey. "Hammers are used in every trade, from watchmakers to blacksmiths, and 'ton' is a village or town," he says. "Hammerton was a great name for a group of artisans applying their craft."

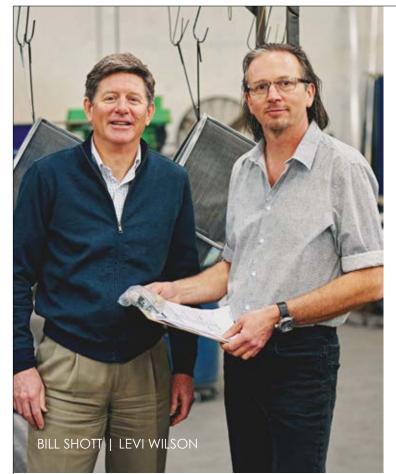


That garage has grown into a 50,000-square-foot facility, where artistically inclined craftspeople make sparks fly as they grind and finish metal pieces, where Wilson can conjure a new prototype in a matter of hours, and where sales, design and high-end clients touring the shop coexist with gritty fabrication stations nearby. Machine shops, heat sinks, powder coating bays, assembly, pottery kilns and the glass "hot shop" are all under one roof, allowing Wilson and CEO Bill Shott, who became Hammerton's president in 2005, to have complete control over quality, speed, flow, shipping and, of course, artistry. Shott, who describes himself as "a bit of an ideologue," found Hammerton after spending 25 years in Silicon Valley running software startups. "I grew up with an appreciation for high-end home furnishings," says Shott, whose wife, Nancy, is also part of the Hammerton team. "My mother was an interior designer," he says. "My favorite class was woodshop, and lighting was a natural extension from that."

Wilson's designs are rooted in the interplay of materials, with metal and glass dominating much of the work. A recently debuted piece, the 500-pound, 7-foot-plus Element chandelier—its many protruding crystal arms extending like an oversize sea urchin—reflects his love of nature. "Nature is the foundation of all great design," Wilson says. "Quartz crystal and the science behind how it grows led me to chirality, or the idea of asymmetry and how it relates to nature's design. So I guess science could be considered the inspiration." Its scale (opposite) doesn't faze him in the least. "The Element is small compared to a lot of the custom fixtures we create," he says. And, he adds, "I did not design the Element for most people. Most of the time I have to design for others. This was done for me."



STUDIO







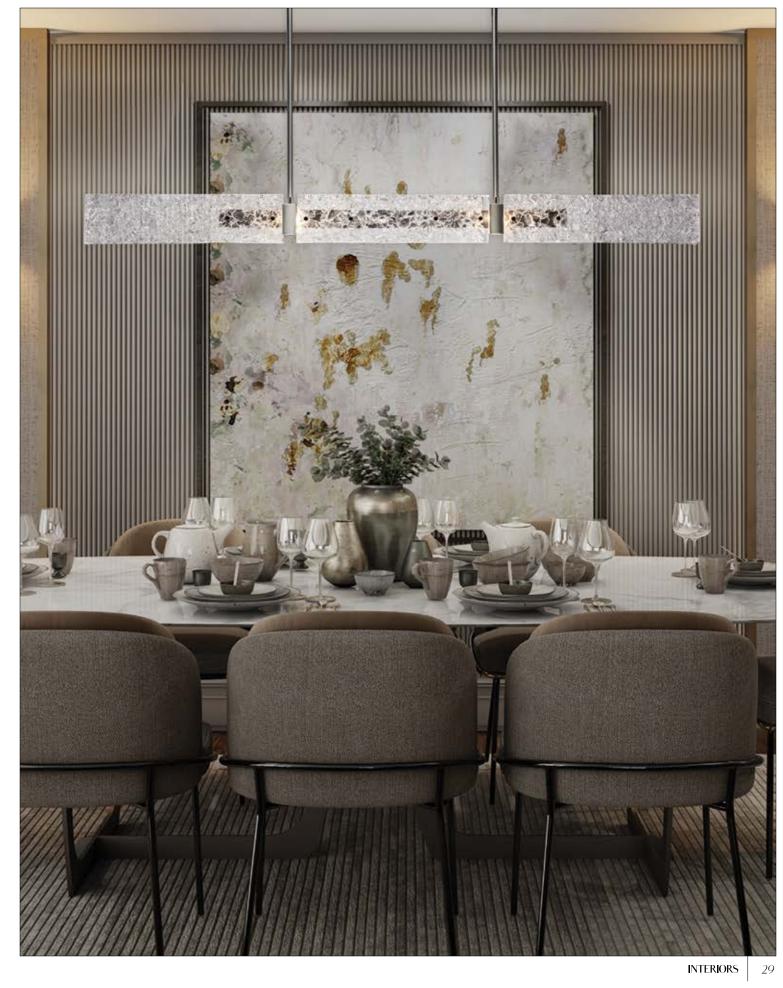




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