

25 STAFF TRAVEL AND SHOPPING PICKS

# MOUNTAIN LIVING

25<sup>th</sup>  
Anniversary  
Issue

LEGACY AWARDS  
TOP MOUNTAIN TALENT

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Lighting Designer  
**LEVI  
 WILSON**



PHOTOS: THIS PAGE, JENIFER OLSON; OPPOSITE, HAMMERTON STUDIO

**HAMMERTON, Salt Lake City, Utah** [hammerton.com](http://hammerton.com)

Lighting designer Levi Wilson learned to forge metal while working at his family's ornamental iron shop, but his work truly blossomed when he co-founded his multimillion-dollar lighting company, Hammerton, more than two decades ago. Although influenced by industry, design, fashion, mathematics and science, "Nature is my primary inspiration," Wilson says.

He points to his Element chandelier as an example. Although each of the geometric components is symmetrical, the result is unquestionably asymmetric, resembling a crystal that organically took shape over time. "I wanted it to look like something you'd see under a microscope," he says.

In the early days, Wilson lived in his van, dropping off brochures for architects and designers working on second homes in Vail and other mountain towns. But a well-timed advertisement accelerated the company's growth, and within a year, it grew from a two-man shop to more than a dozen employees.

An artist who works in a variety of materials such as metal, glass, mica and rawhide, and ranging in style from rustic to ultra-modern, Wilson's designs are still manufactured in the company's Salt Lake City headquarters, with 95 percent shipped to luxury homes and hospitality properties around the world.

While he takes pride in every one of the company's products, Wilson admits to being particularly intrigued by his high-end custom pieces. For a skiing enthusiast, Wilson created gondola-shaped fixtures delicately suspended from a cable. And the company's popular Gem collection, which resemble faceted glass stones, also started out as a custom project.

Designed and built to the highest standards, Wilson hopes that, like fine European antiques, his creations will stand the test of time. "I want to make pieces that will live on for generations, long after I'm gone," he says. "To me, that's quality, and that's the story I want to hear." —*Tate Gunnerson*



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**SNAPSHOT**

*Founder and vice president of design, Hammerton, Inc.*

*Started Hammerton in 1995 in a 2,000-square-foot shop. Today, Hammerton is located in a 50,000-square-foot Salt Lake City manufacturing facility.*

**FIRST JOB**

*Worked in his family's Salt Lake City ornamental iron shop as a boy, doing everything from sweeping the floors to blacksmithing.*

**FIRST BUSINESS**

*Mountain Moose Design—he and a partner created anything out of iron or steel to make money.*

**BIG BREAK**

*Had an idea for a new lighting product line for second homes in mountain regions. The timing was right: After placing one ad, the business exploded, growing from two employees to 15 in one year.*

**INSPIRATION**

*Finds inspiration in fashion, design, industry, mathematics, science and nature.*



Hammerton's metal heritage fuels their innovative work in glass, and all glass tooling is fabricated in-house, as seen in Gem blown glass chandelier (top); and Carlyle sconce with kiln-fused glass shade (below).