



# FIVE UNDER FORTY

*Colorado Homes  
& Lifestyles* is  
honored to present  
this year's "Five  
Under Forty"  
winners. These  
professionals have  
taken design to  
a new level with  
their fresh and  
innovative concepts.

*Story by* RICH A MITCHELL

*Portrait Photography by* ELEANOR WILLIAMSON





« *From Left to Right*  
“Five Under Forty”  
winners Lauren Winter,  
Ashley Stevens, Nikki  
Holt, Adam Gilmer  
and Julie Riffin  
on location at the  
Hotel Clio in Denver.



# NIKKI HOLT

Residential studio  
design director at  
Kimberly Timmons  
Interiors in Denver

[ktinteriors.com](http://ktinteriors.com)

STEPPING INTO a client's home and reimagining the space is a rush for residential studio design director Nikki Holt. "While all design work has the potential to be personal, none meets that need quite like residential design," Holt says. "The intimate aspect of residential design is truly what draws me to it most."

Holt's career path to design started early. During her school years, she preferred design shows to cartoons. All recreational activities, whether indoor or outdoor, required an impressive color palette and attention to design. "I would choose my preferred parks and restaurants by their color scheme, declaring I wanted to go to the park with the blue slide or the café with the green booths," Holt tells us. "My observation of color was often met by looks of dismay by the adults in my life, leading me to realize most people didn't look at the world the same way I did."

An elevated taste in color and design led Holt to study design at Rocky Mountain College of Art and Design. She graduated cum laude in 2013 with a BFA in interior architecture and design. "It was there where I finally felt like I



≈ *Farmhouse Revival*  
A dramatic chandelier provides ambient lighting in this bright and airy foyer. The use of reclaimed wood, textural stone, oak flooring and a neutral color palette makes for a timeless design in this transitional farmhouse in Castle Pines.

had found my people—people who also noticed the color of the restaurant booths."

Holt worked as an interior designer at a Montana firm before finding her "design home" at KTI. "I have immense gratitude for the beauty I get to create there alongside a phenomenal group of individuals," she says. "I am so lucky to lead a team of talented, hardworking, fun designers and to be supported and mentored by the most ambitious and passionate principal and creative director, Kimberly Timmons." »







# ADAM GILMER

Principal at Berglund Architects in Edwards

[berglundarchitects.com](http://berglundarchitects.com)

INTEGRATING HIGH-TECH modules into his architectural design is an essential tool for architect Adam Gilmer, principal at Berglund Architects in Edwards, Colorado. "I love the collaboration between our entire team that begins in the design process with simple sketches, then modeling the spaces in 3D in the computer, then finally experiencing the finished space. The process is very rewarding."

Gilmer has been bringing projects to life at Berglund Architects since 2005. Upon graduation from CU Boulder with a degree in environmental design, Gilmer joined the firm as its second employee. The Colorado native has since been a leader in computer modeling. "I have extensive experience in three-dimensional computer modeling, which has

## » *Pool with a View*

A combination of an imported Italian custom cut linear slate, two colors of a cement board panel system, and ultra-smooth stucco make up the exterior of this impressive abode in Vail. The full-length lap pool incorporates two acrylic windows to capture views while swimming.

been a critical design tool in several of the complex residences and mixed-use projects upon which we have worked," he tells us.

A passion for sustainable building practices is also evident in Gilmer's work. "The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design [LEED] program ensures an environmentally sound, green home by documenting the assemblies, energy use and waste during and after construction," Gilmer explains. "If a home does not go down the LEED path, the home should be designed and built with energy-efficient assemblies that surpass code requirements."

In addition to working in harmony with the environment at work, Gilmer enjoys spending time outdoors during his free time. "Growing up in Colorado, it is easy to say that I am inspired by the mountains." »





# JULIE RIGGIN

Owner of Julie Kay Design Studio in Colorado Springs

[juliekaydesignstudio.com](http://juliekaydesignstudio.com)

A CAREER IN INTERIOR DESIGN was fated for Julie Riggins. “My mother inspired my path as an interior designer. She is so very creative, and I grew up surrounded by an abundance of seasonal decorations and homemade crafts,” says Riggins. “She did an amazing job at creating a happy home for us.”

Riggins’ love for all things creative started at an early age and led her to pursue a career in design after graduating from the University of Missouri, Columbia with a BS in architectural studies. After working in design at prestigious firms in Chicago, she founded her own firm.

In 2020 Riggins moved with her family to Colorado Springs, and she recently opened a studio designed for personalized client interaction. “I see it as my job to really get to know my clients genuinely so I can create a unique and highly personal space,” she tells us. “My bespoke interior design and space-planning services are specifically designed to

» **Statement Piece** The homeowner’s fun eclectic taste in art adds a jolt of color and interest to this updated living room. A patterned oversize rug adds a layer of texture. “This is a space for adult relaxing and entertaining with friends and family,” Riggins tells us.

work with families like yours, so you can find the most joy and possibilities within your current reality.”

Creating a comfortable home for military families is also one of Riggins’ passions. “I am married to an Army guy, so I understand the challenges of living a military lifestyle,” says Riggins. “Whether it’s your forever home or temporary housing, you deserve to live in a space you feel proud to call home.” »



PHOTO: ROBERT RADIERA FOR STYLISH PRODUCTIONS





# ASHLEY STEVENS

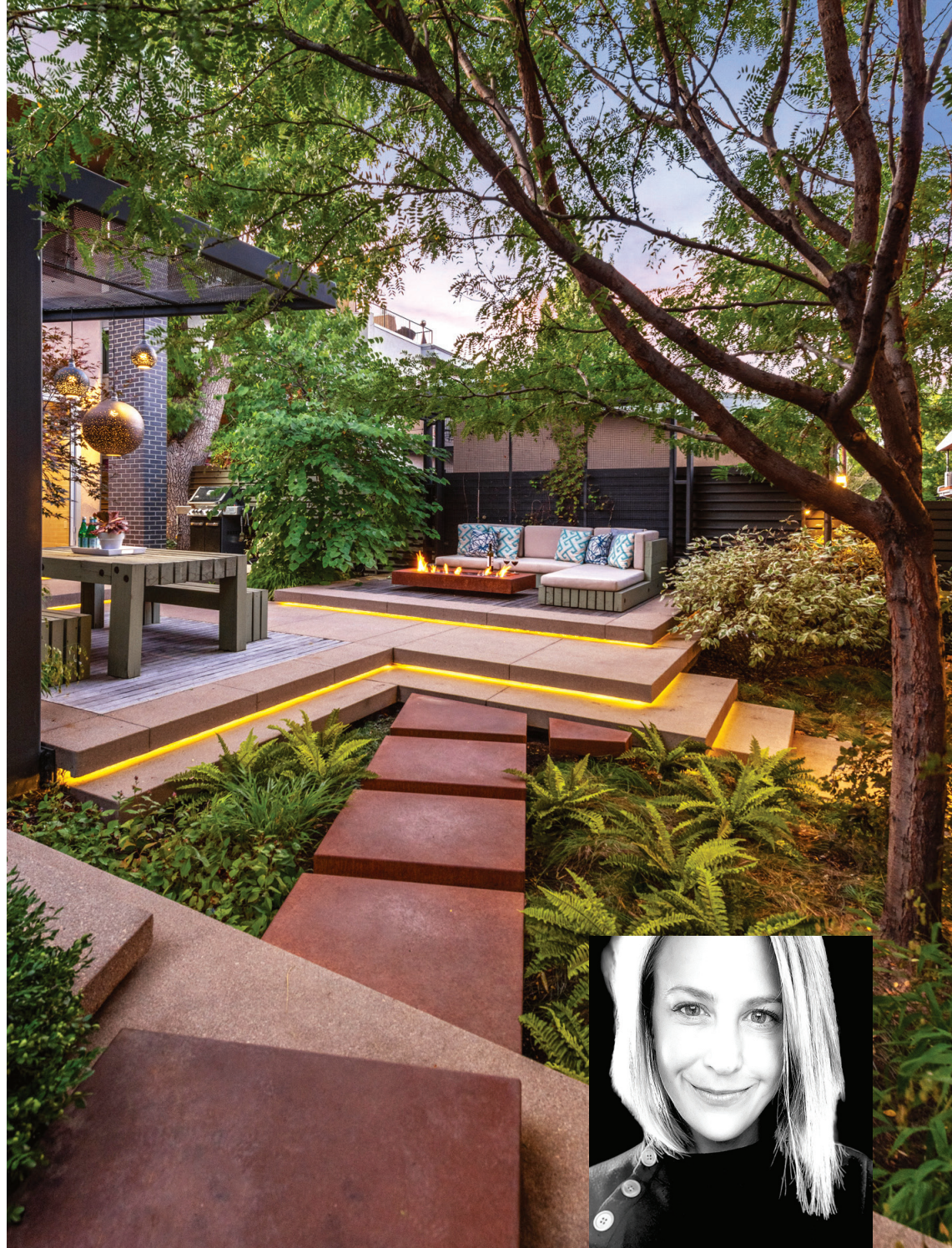
Principal at Evoke  
Landscape in Boulder

[evokelifeoutside.com](http://evokelifeoutside.com)

WORKING WITH THE LAND comes naturally to Ashley Stevens, co-founder of EVOKE Landscape. Growing up in verdant Minnesota, Stevens would spend much of her time outdoors with her mom in the garden, surrounded by lush greenery. “I grew up around gorgeous gardens, which definitely planted the seed,” Stevens says. “I’m a true believer that spending time outside and connecting with nature makes us all better humans.”

An enthusiasm for spending time outdoors intermixed with Stevens’ strong interest in art. She graduated from CU Boulder with a degree in art history in 2009. But she later discerned landscape design to be her life’s calling.

After working as a landscape designer at Marpa, a top local landscape design firm, Stevens felt it was time to venture into her own landscaping business. She teamed up with her husband (whom she met at Marpa)



## ≈ *Lush Landscape*

Custom steel arbors define the eating and lounging spaces. Cantilevered sand-exposed concrete terracing with inlays allows for linear lighting. An oxidized steel fire pit and floating stepping stones lend a sense of urban edge.

and founded EVOKE, a landscape design firm specializing in outdoor living in the Denver and Boulder area. “When my husband and I first started dating, we would spend afternoons driving around Denver looking for inspiration and talking design,” Stevens says. “As they say, the rest is history.”

Two children later, Stevens hopes the love of creating modern, lush outdoor spaces runs in the family. “Our two young boys are into trucks and construction,” Stevens says. “It’s become a family affair.” »

PHOTO: GREGORY MUNTZ





# LAUREN WINTER

Interior designer at Inside Stories in Denver

[insidestories.com/denver](http://insidestories.com/denver)



A TRIP TO THE BOOKSTORE at an early age ignited Lauren Winter's passion for interior design. "When I was young, a family friend took me to a bookstore and told me I could pick any book I wanted. I selected a book with a collection of residential home layouts," Winter tells us. "I pored over that book for weeks, looking at the different spaces and ways to configure rooms."

Since then, Winter has been honing her skills in design, offering her clients whimsical, innovative ideas influenced by her extensive study of design at Kansas State University. After graduation, she headed north and worked for prominent design firms in Chicago. But Colorado is where Winter ultimately wanted to call home. "I spent the

≈ *Light & Airy* Taj Mahal quartzite from Francini wraps around the range hood, flanked by floating shelving and sconces from Visual Comfort. White and white-oak cabinets plus sculptural pendants from Hinkley lighting complement the stone. Barstools from Nuevo provide contrast and softness with the rounded shape.

first seven years of my design career in Chicago and was looking to make a move to a city that still had a thriving design culture mixed with a little bit more of a laid-back feel. Denver felt like a more family-oriented city, and the proximity to the mountains allows you to feel completely refreshed with just a short drive."

Diversity is key for Winter, who appreciates the individuality of each project she works on. "Recently I've worked on an automobile repair shop lobby, a modern mountain home, a full home space plan re-work and a few projects that just needed a refresh in some rooms. The variety of the projects and services makes the job interesting, and I'm always learning something new!" ❖