

# BEST SHOW

*Modern art & mountain views inspire a young Aspen interior designer to create a first project so stunning it swept the Colorado ASID Interior Design Awards. Cyndia Zwahlen reports. Photographed by Jason Jung*

**t**he ink was barely dry on her new business cards when interior designer Robyn Scott, then 27, got the call for what turned out to be a dream assignment. Her clients, an artist and her husband, wanted to renovate and remodel their newly purchased 4,500-square-foot vacation home, built in 1968 in Snowmass Village.

A large collection of modern art— including the artist's own ceramics—and the home's panoramic views of Snowmass Mountain were to be the focal points of the hillside home. The seamless blend of art and interiors achieved in the home might be attributed in part to the modern aesthetic Scott shared with her Florida-based clients and her intimate knowledge of their art collection and the Snowmass area, where she has spent many winter vacations. In fact, she says, she shares more than a sense of design with her clients: They are her parents, Gary and Barbara Sorensen.

"They needed a designer that understood that the art was the most important element. They wanted someone

to design around the art, and I know the art so well," says Scott, owner of Robyn Scott Interiors Ltd. of Aspen. "We pretty much had the same vision."

That vision entailed knocking out interior walls, reconfiguring windows and taking out the low ceilings to open up the floor plan and maximize the views, a specific goal of her father's. A monochromatic color scheme comprised in part of camel-colored walls, cherry floors and amber-toned fir ceilings serves as the clean backdrop her mother desired for the carefully chosen and meticulously lit artwork.

Scott's approach appealed to more than just her parents: The project swept the awards categories for residential design at the Colorado chapter of the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) Interior Design Awards ceremony held in Denver on May 15. Scott, who turned 29 in March, won first place in the main residential category: homes more than 3,500 square feet in size. She also took first place in the Single Space/Entertainment category for the home's living room, and first place in the Single



The entryway is crowned by three of Robyn Scott's mother's ceramics, giving visitors an immediate taste of the art contained within. Copper-clad front doors by T & E Enterprises, Basalt, (970) 927-8071. Barbara Sorensen's ceramics available through Susan Duval Gallery, Aspen, (970) 925-9044.





Space/Private category for the master bathroom. The kitchen took second place in its category.

Scott's multiple wins are a first in the five-year history of the Colorado awards. "That's a major deal, major," says Mimi Luna Hillen, chairperson of the 2003 Interior Design Awards and one of the 400 members of the Colorado chapter of the ASID. "We are thrilled for her."

Scott began the project by picking Morter Architects of Vail and lighting designer Gregg Mackell of Denver's 186 Lighting Design Group. Then she set out to clear the sight lines to views out the large windows on the main level. She tore out the entry's original corkscrew staircase and replaced it with a straight staircase with a glass-walled railing. Her goal was to create a design that was "interesting but transparent."

The entryway also features a dark, mottled, copper-clad door with large bronze pulls—intricately detailed semi-circles that appear on the inside and the outside of the door. The pulls were cast from ceramic pieces done by Scott's mother. Ceramic pieces perch in a windowed niche above the door and atop short rock walls that push in from the outside, bringing the mountainous outdoors in. "It's kind of our little shrine of major ceramic pieces," says Scott.

That feeling of spare but serene space extends into the dining and living rooms. To avoid blocking the view by using a chandelier over the glass-topped dining table, Scott chose a display of Dale Chihuly art glass strewn across the tabletop. Lit from above, the organic forms glow and throw off light and reflections.

Scott tossed out heavy curtains that once hid the mountain views, leaving the nearly floor-to-ceiling windows bare across the back of the house. The old Colorado moss-rock fireplace—which Scott considered dated—was covered across the top with drywall and painted a neutral tone while the bottom was







In the dining room, Scott used a mixture of glass, steel, rusted metal, wood and stone to reflect her mother's ceramics and tie the project to its mountain surroundings. Smart Table by Cattelan Italia, to the trade at Charles Eisen & Associates, Denver Design Center, (303) 744-3200; Fretwork dining chairs by Berman Rosetti, John Brooks, Denver, (303) 698-9977. Dale Chihuly art glass from Susan Duval Gallery, Aspen, (970) 925-9044. *Opposite:* Clever lighting techniques and soft colors give the kitchen the illusion of added space.





A freestanding glass shower adds a unique focal point and function to the master bathroom—it separates the husband and wife's vanities and closets, but doesn't inhibit the flow of the room. Glass shower doors by Sopris Glass, Carbondale, (970) 963-8603; slate tile flooring from Design Materials, Denver, (303) 256-2800.

*Opposite top:* Bronze pulls cast from Barbara Sorensen's ceramics add an inviting personal touch to the front door.

*Opposite bottom:* Sleek chrome fixtures and a cool granite countertop provide the perfect backdrop for a sculptural ceramic bowl-turned-sink.



wrapped in copper and steel and seated upon a new hearth of dry-stacked Colorado sandstone. The copper of the fireplace echoes the colors and rough texture of the large art piece by Armand that hangs above it.

The kitchen was a special challenge for the designer, because budgetary constraints meant she could not enlarge it or move its plumbing. However, Scott achieved a light, almost weightless look in the kitchen by using the subtle beauty of quartersawn cherry for the flat-front cabinets, a soft-colored granite that complements the ceramics and, perhaps most importantly, interesting lighting. Hidden light shines down from the cabinets on to the softly reflective counters and up from the top of the cabinets, torchère-style. Rope lighting was installed under the bottom cabinet toe-kicks to further contribute to the airy, floating feeling of the kitchen.

The master bath was another area where Scott was constrained by space and budget. She solved the issues via the room's centerpiece—a tall, glassed-in shower and a slate tile floor. Its transparent walls help give the room a spaciousness beyond its actual dimensions.

"This was not a very big budget for Aspen," says Scott. "They really would rather spend their money on a new piece of art than upgrading a cabinet."

A lower budget, though, is the last thing on a visitor's mind when confronted with the now-open, art-filled and artfully filled spaces of this Snowmass Village retreat.



## DESIGN DETAILS

### INTERIOR DESIGN

Robyn Scott  
Robyn Scott Interiors Ltd.  
Aspen, (970) 309-1164

### ARCHITECT

Morter Architects  
Vail, (970) 476-5105

### LIGHTING DESIGN

Gregg Mackell  
186 Lighting Design Group  
Denver, (303) 534-5350

### OTHER ASID WINNERS

#### RESIDENTIAL UNDER 3,500 SQUARE FEET

First place: Lane Elizabeth Oliver  
Lane Elizabeth Oliver Interior Design Inc.  
Denver, (303) 722-4288

#### RESIDENTIAL KITCHEN

First place: Judy Gubner, ASID, and Colleen Johnson, ASID  
In-Site Design Group Inc.  
Denver, (303) 691-9000

#### RESIDENTIAL OVER 3,500 SQUARE FEET

Second place: Nancy Heller and Doug Walter  
Doug Walter Architects  
Denver, (303) 320-6916

#### RESIDENTIAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION

First place: Sandra Elizabeth Clinger, Allied ASID  
Lifestyle Interior Design  
Denver, (303) 388-1565

For more details, see Resources on page 149. ■■

To see photos of other **ASID WINNERS**, go to [coloradahomesmag.com](http://coloradahomesmag.com)