RISING DESIGN™

Elevating the Next Names in Interior Design

Westedge DESIGN FAIR

OCTOBER 29-31, 2026

BARKER HANGAR SANTA MONICA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Six Designers. Six Blank Spaces. One Shot at the Spotlight.

WestEdge Design Fair introduces Rising Design™

A new platform for emerging design talent created by WestEdge co-founder Megan Reilly and acclaimed designer Julee Ireland, debuting this fall with a live design challenge, original content and mentorship

Santa Monica, CA – September 28, 2026 – There is no shortage of design talent. The challenge is creating the opportunities for the next names in design to be seen.

This fall, WestEdge Design Fair will introduce Rising Design™, a new platform created by WestEdge co-founder Megan Reilly and acclaimed designer and Home Renovation School founder Julee Ireland to discover, champion and connect emerging design talent. Rising Design makes its debut at WestEdge with six Southern California designers, a 100-square-foot design challenge, mentorship and a 10-episode short-form content series, culminating in a live reveal on Opening Night, Thursday, October 29, at Barker Hangar in Santa Monica.

But the competition is only the beginning. Rising Design is designed to grow beyond its WestEdge debut, creating opportunities for emerging designers to showcase their work in real-world settings, connect through intimate events and mentorship, and tell their stories through original content. The goal is to build a platform where emerging talent doesn't just get discovered, but gets the opportunity to build meaningful relationships and careers.

"Every established name in design once had a first room that got people talking," said Reilly. "Rising Design is about finding those designers early and giving them a stage, an audience and opportunities to connect with the people who can change the course of a career."

"There are so many talented designers who need more opportunities to show people what they can do," said Ireland. "We wanted to create a platform that gives emerging designers a chance to be seen, supported and celebrated, while connecting them with the people and brands who can help them move forward."

For its inaugural challenge, six designers will each transform a blank 10' x 10' space on the Fair floor into a personal vision of restoration, comfort and recharge. A meditation room. An artist's studio. A private retreat. A space designed for a real client or an imagined one. The interpretation is entirely theirs.

Each designer begins with a story about who the space is for and how that person wants to feel, then translates that story into just 100 square feet of color, pattern, materials and function. The constraints are real: three 10-foot walls, a $500 stipend, a curated selection of products and one personal item from home. At least 60% of each space must be finished in Sherwin-Williams paint, including a Continuity Color.

Guided by Ireland, the six designers will be evaluated by an expert jury on concept, creativity, design, execution and wow factor. WestEdge visitors will also have their say through the People's Choice Award.

"Give a designer 100 square feet, $500 and a story to tell, and you find out who they really are," said Ireland. "That's what makes this so exciting to watch."

MEET THE DESIGNERS

Amanda Lauren @itsamandalauren, a design writer whose work has appeared in Forbes, Real Simple, Better Homes & Gardens and Real Homes. Amanda also designs virtually through Intro. Rising Design gives her the opportunity to bring her classic, traditional point of view into a physical space.

Janet Shaw @janetshawdesigns committed to becoming an interior designer in January 2024 and made her WestEdge debut as a ReBuild Room designer in 2025. Now she returns with more experience and a bigger stage.

Neeve Salamat @neeve_salamat has an architecture degree from SCI-Arc and more than four years of professional experience. Neeve grew up watching HGTV's Design Star. Now she gets a design challenge of her own.

Noyemi Hofer @studionoyemi, a career changer who launched her studio after training at UCLA Extension and working alongside other designers, is drawn to old homes, vintage furniture and antiques. Her philosophy: "Every project has two clients, the homeowner and the home itself."

Roberto Guzman @sstudioroberto, a fourth-year Interior Design student at Woodbury University and president of its IIDA Campus Center, brings three years of freelance residential experience and a growing interest in hospitality and experiential design.

Tisha Hyman @saltanddashdesign, founder and principal designer of Salt & Dash Design, blends modern elements, vintage character, rich textures and unexpected details to create interiors that feel warm, elevated and personal.

Rising Design isn't just about the finished rooms. It's about the people behind them. A 10-episode short-form video series follows the six designers from first sketches and shopping trips through sourcing challenges, creative breakthroughs, setbacks and final installation.

The series will premiere this fall across Instagram, YouTube and WestEdgeDesignFair.com, giving audiences a front-row seat as the rooms take shape. The designers aren't just competing. They're the stars of the show.

The six finished spaces will be unveiled on Thursday, October 29, during Opening Night at WestEdge Design Fair. An expert jury will select the 2026 Rising Designer Award, while WestEdge visitors will vote for the People's Choice Award.

The 2026 Rising Designer Award includes a prize package valued at $10,000+, including a trip to the 2026 World Architecture Festival courtesy of GROHE SPA, including airfare and hotel; a Sherwin-Williams Designer Prize Package; a feature on one of the leading home design websites, Apartment Therapy; a one-year Houzz Pro subscription; and lifetime membership to Home Renovation School. The People's Choice Award includes a prize package valued at $2,500, including a trip to Modernism Week 2027 in Palm Springs and a one-year Home Renovation School membership.

Rising Design debuts with founding partners Sherwin-Williams Design+, the program's exclusive paint partner; GROHE SPA, presenting the World Architecture Festival prize; and Apartment Therapy. Additional support comes from House of CODA, Mathis Home, Livette's, Houzz Pro and Home Renovation School.

More information: westedgedesignfair.com/rising-design

RISING DESIGN DETAILS

Rising Design Reveal: Thursday, October 29, 2026 | Rooms on View: October 29–31, 2026

WESTEDGE DESIGN FAIR 2026

October 29–31, 2026

The Barker Hangar, 3021 Airport Avenue, Santa Monica, CA 90405

Opening Night Party: Thursday, October 29, 6:00–10:00 p.m.

Fair: Friday–Saturday, October 30–31, 10:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.

Tickets: $25 advance / $30 onsite for Friday–Saturday

Opening Night Party: $135 advance pricing; $150 after October 6

VIP All-Access: $175

Trade, students & press: Complimentary with pre-registration by October 23, 2026.

For tickets, registration and additional information, visit westedgedesignfair.com.

MEDIA CONTACT

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Full media kit: westedgedesignfair.com/press-info

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