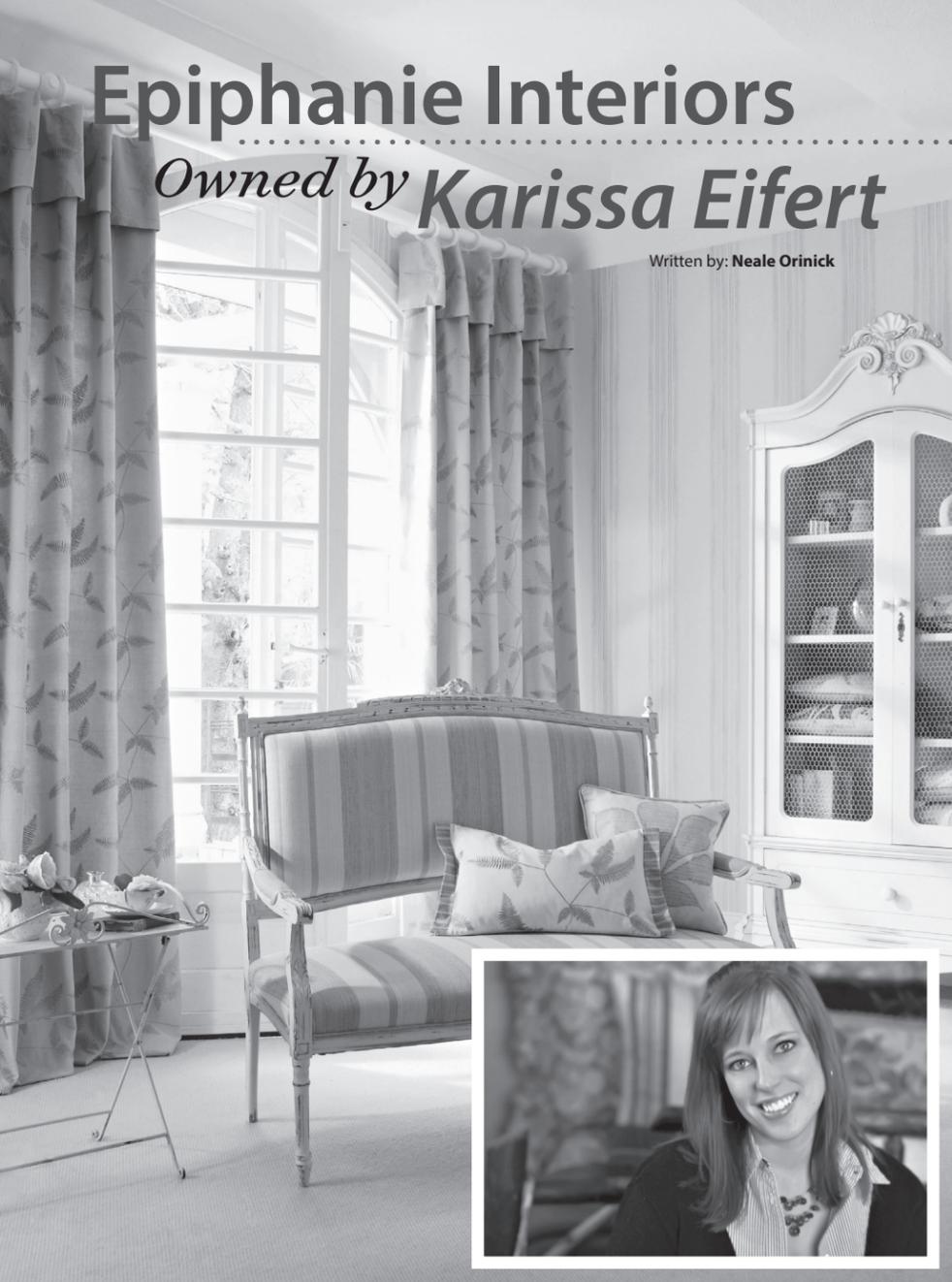


Epiphanie Interiors

Owned by **Karissa Eifert**

Written by: Neale Orinick



Karissa Eifert of Epiphanie Interiors is living the dream. She wakes up every day excited to jump into projects at her dream job in the community she loves. Karissa's interest in art and design began at a young age. Her favorite classes were always English and Art; places she could use her imagination and create. She even took her first swing at interior design at the age of 7 where, through persistence, she convinced her parents she needed a white canopy bed with matching heart bedding and window coverings. "I loved creating that bedroom, it became my favorite place to be," Karissa says. That penchant for persistence and creativity has shaped her business to this day.

Although decorating was a hobby she enjoyed, Karissa didn't find her real passion for interior design until an internship with an Omaha-based designer during college. "I did a number of internships," Karissa says. "Mostly because I was unsure which path I really wanted to take. I did an internship in graphic design and another in merchandising, but it wasn't until I spent some time shadowing an interior designer that everything really clicked. I had an epiphany during a meeting with a client – this was what I wanted to do, and today I can't imagine doing anything else."

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That moment also lent itself to the naming of Karissa's design firm, Epiphanie Interiors. Being an interior designer means wearing many hats: designer, detective, teacher, cheerleader, and sometimes even, counselor. It takes some detective work and a lot of listening at the beginning of each project to learn a client's likes and dislikes, wants and needs, and how that all fits into the budget and space available. "Listening is the most important skill an interior designer can have," Karissa says. "I have to really hear and understand a client's wants and needs while studying the nuances and their personality. Sometimes, clients don't really know what they want until they see it, and I do the work of fitting the puzzle pieces together to create a beautiful, but functional space that uniquely reflects who they are."

The biggest challenge Karissa faces as a designer is helping clients readjust their expectation of how much time is realistically needed to complete their custom design projects. "I blame HGTV," Karissa jokes about some clients' misconception that major remodeling projects can be whipped out in the span of a television show. The reality is most projects (including those you see on TV) require a six-month to yearlong commitment on the client and designer's part. "A design project can be broken down into three phases: concept, procurement, and install," Karissa says. "The first two phases take the longest, but the install is often the only phase you see on TV. Custom work takes time and planning, but the end result is definitely worth the time investment."

Karissa offers this piece of advice for anyone considering a design or remodel project: take some time to brainstorm what styles you like. She suggests cruising around on Pinterest and Houzz, and checking out interior design and lifestyle magazines to collect

images of rooms that appeal to you. If you like some aspect of the image, save it. It doesn't matter if you choose the rustic look of a log cabin, and an edgy, modern piece of artwork from a celebrity's Hollywood estate, there is a common thread amongst your choices. Discerning the pattern in your choices, helping to shape an idea into a design concept, and then make it a reality is what Karissa does!

Another great resource when considering a design project is *The Lavish Podcast*, a podcast Karissa created with fellow designer Kara White Monroe. "Kara and I realized we get asked quite a few questions over and over from clients, and thought a podcast would be a great way to not only answer those questions, but offer tips on how people can feel more comfortable with the process. We often reiterate that people should trust their instincts when it comes to design, buy only what they love, and remember that this process should be fun! The end result will be a place where you and your family love to spend time."

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For more information on The Lavish Podcast visit:
www.thelavishpodcast.com

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