



DESIGN & REALTY
trends

BUREAU

Balancing ACT

Local designer Kerra Michele Huerta opens a women's-only workspace while also decorating some of DC's most whimsical rooms.

By Jennifer Barger // Photography by Greg Powers

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Many co-working spaces leave more than a little to be desired when it comes to aesthetics.

That's not the case with Bureau (bureau.studio), interior designer Kerra Michele Huerta's new women's-only communal-office nirvana. On the third floor of an Adams Morgan Victorian, the decor whiz known for her easygoing West Coast style welcomes clients (and works alongside other members) in bright rooms sparked with oversize floral wallpaper, powder-pink armchairs and contemporary art in neon hues.

"I wanted a place that was a sanctuary, a spot that leads to collaboration and friendships," says Huerta. "Plus I'd found other co-work outfits to be pretty bro-y!" So far, she's drawing creatives—stylists, photographers, social-media mavens—and other professional women.

This eclectic yet calming aesthetic comes across in Huerta's residential design projects too. "I call what I do power-clashing—mixing organic patterns and fluid shapes," she says. "I like rooms that are boho, minimalist and modern, but I don't do the same thing over and over again."

This means Huerta's spaces come across both a little bolder and a little breezier than the average DC drawing room. Think a row-house den spiced up with aqua walls, a mustard-yellow sofa and lacquered black Chinese chairs, or a kitchen redo with leather drawer pulls and tiles reminiscent of a kasbah.

"I try to get the balance right," says Huerta. "That often means groupings of completely opposite things—mint green with emerald green, an organic pattern with something hard-edged and cold. It's like a Noah's Ark of design."

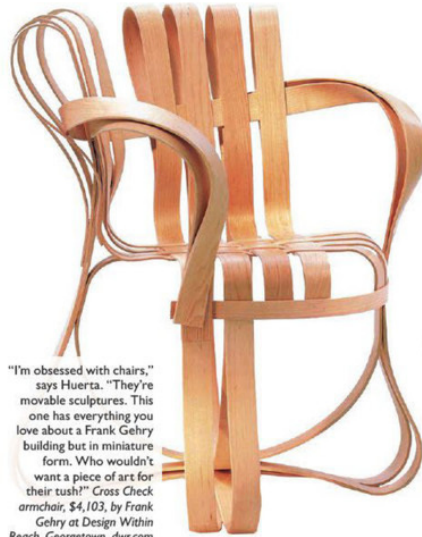
Here's how she suggests getting her Los Angeles-goes-to-DC vibe at home.



"There's not a single room I've designed that doesn't have a vintage piece in it," says Huerta. "Vintage doesn't have to mean dingy, and the unexpected color and paint application on this midcentury credenza proves it." \$925-\$1,100, Martha Leone Design, Herndon, Va., marthalonedesign.com



"Art is very personal and speaks to people in different ways," says Huerta. "This piece by a great DC artist feels both strong and delicate." "The Universe Has a Way of Explaining Itself," \$850, by Laura McGuigan at Latela Art Gallery, Downtown, lateladc.com



"I'm obsessed with chairs," says Huerta. "They're movable sculptures. This one has everything you love about a Frank Gehry building but in miniature form. Who wouldn't want a piece of art for their tush?" Cross Check armchair, \$4,103, by Frank Gehry at Design Within Reach, Georgetown, dwr.com



"Every room should have at least a small injection of whimsy, and these tongue-in-cheek forms in luxe materials do the trick without feeling cheap." Heart sculpture, \$795, by Kelly Wearstler at The Washington Design Center, Downtown, designcenterdc.com



"I love a statement sofa, and this sexy number has it all: a unique shape, unexpected color and drama," says Huerta. Edie sofa, price upon request, by Holly Hunt at The Washington Design Center, Downtown, hollyhunt.com

"This pillow has a lovely mix of organic and graphic shapes, and the colors are neutral enough to work in most rooms or palettes," says Huerta. Ikat pillow, \$59, West Elm, Downtown, westelm.com