## NEW HOMES & CONDOS

## Turning an old garage into a hub of art and design



Recently, I've been working on a new home design show, scurrying around as us behind-the-scenes

I've also recently moved our design studio, completely changing the physical setup and overall approach to how we work.

designers often do.

As any entrepreneur will tell you, work gets done not by sitting at a big desk, in a corner office, but rather in coffee shops, at the kitchen counter and around a table filled with other varied opinions and perspectives.

I decided to forgo the lone wolf workspace, instead creating a collaborative hub that allows flexibility and nurtures that all important tête-à-tête.

My friend, Lucia Graca Remedios, owner of photography galleries Analogue Gallery, and I were chatting and the idea was hatched to combine our workspaces into a new hub of art and design.

We also made the bold choice to move up north, relocating to an up and coming art locale, joining those that have already forged the path to the "Dupont Corridor" along with some of the city's longest running galleries. It's no secret I'm a big advocate for embracing the democratic design ideals and simplicity in form that IKEA offers. It was an obvious choice to take this opportunity to truly showcase the possibilities here.

MELISSA DAVIS

## LIFE WELL-DESIGNED

If a designer opts for an IKEAinspired studio, maybe others will begin to see it through the lens I wear and the words I preach.

This being a photography gallery means the photos need opportunity to take centre stage.

Topted for Benjamin Moore's Simply White (last year's colour of the year) on the walls and ceilings. Oh, I forgot to note our office was a motorcycle garage, complete with concrete block walls and oil-stained concrete floors. A few coats of sealing primer and an off-black floor paint makes for a perfectly imperfect base.

The design firm side of things required storage, which I added in abundance by running IKEA SEKTION cabinets the length of the main room, white on white, topped with their white counter. It both disappears, and adds a crispness, against the rough walls.

In the spirit of collaboration, we've used a single square BEKANT table, surrounded by ODDMUND leather chairs. We all pull up a chair, work, meet, share cocktails after hours.

The point is — we're in a forced togetherness that brings about discussion, the lifeblood of the creative. I used five SINNERLIG pendants staggered above the table adding natural texture that brings down the ceiling height and infuses necessary warmth.

The entry space we decided to fit as a lounge. It shows how one might style Lucia's photography in their own home, and offers the unpretentious tone I insist on in my working relationships.

The camel-coloured STOCK-HOLM chairs are paired with what I can only describe as breathtakingly beautiful SVAR-TAN collection. With influences from India, this limited edition of textiles, bowls, tray table and rugs is that combines minimalist and organic in perfect harmony.

We used nearly every piece in our space, layering the grey and blacks in offering patina and texture that shifts an otherwise cold space into one which is in some manner soulful.

So much of our studio translates into how I approach home design — the overarching notion being that a well-designed space is thoughtful — and that physicality, style, and emotional results can be achieved on any budget!

 Melissa Davis is a celebrity designer well-known for her appearances and work on several HGTV programs. Visit her at www.melissadavis.com.



Designer Melissa Davis made a bold decision to move her office north, and to relocate in an up-and-coming art studio.



It was decided that the entry space would be fitted as a lounge, offering an unpretentious tone that Davis insists in all her working relationships.



In the spirit of collaboration, a single, square table is surrounded by leather chairs.



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