



OFFICE SPACE AT HOME

Interior designer and artist Ivan Meade rethinks the typical office space and showcases how you can bring his chic style home

BY **JENNIFER BLYTH** PHOTOS **JO-ANN RICHARDS**



Entering Meade Design Group's second-floor office, visitors are struck at once by the baroque motif backdropping the modern chrome chandelier and sleek glass dining table.

It's an intentional juxtaposition of traditional and modern, showcasing designer Ivan Meade's talents for a diverse clientele, but also illustrating how both styles can complement each other beautifully.

The second thing visitors notice is that this is no typical office, even for a designer – no waiting room sofas, no side tables loaded with last month's magazines.

This, for all intents and purposes, is a home. "For me it was important to showcase what we

do for a living and make the space a reflection of what we can do in commercial design, but having all the comforts of a home. After all, we spend the same amount of time if not longer in our work spaces than in our homes, so why not feel cosy and bring some personality to the space we spend most of our time in?" Meade says.

Approaching his downtown Victoria office as he would a client's home, Meade's talents as an artist, working in paint, photography, sculpture and graphic design are everywhere – in the self-designed wall dressing, in the stone and silver *objets d'art* and in the paintings displayed throughout.

The large-scale baroque wall » PAGE 47



UP CLOSE WITH IVAN MEADE

Originally from Mexico, Ivan Meade has lived in Victoria for 10 years now. He embarked on his interior design career in 2002, moving to his current office in Victoria's trendy Old Town in 2008.

Meade Design Group is a multidisciplinary interior and graphic design studio, known for its stunning interiors and eye-catching graphics. Meade's talents are evident throughout the office, in the wallpaper, mirror, faux fireplace and works of art.

"Personally, I like contemporary design – I love to live in the moment and to see what's happening and project that," he says.

Meade knows that his tastes don't always reflect those of his clients, but he expertly blends modern and traditional elements. "As a designer, you have to have an appreciation for the past," he says. "I try to design with an idea of timelessness."

Considering clients evolving style and needs, the goal is "to make it look like their home with interesting pieces that will grow with them. With good design done properly, you feel comfortable in your space." □



QUALITY IS KING "A must-have for me in my work space is quality," says Meade. "It lasts longer, and these are things that you touch every day." Foundation pieces, like desks, lamps, chairs and tables can be as stylish as they are functional.



1 **ClassiCon Zelos desk.** \$8,129 *Inform Interiors* 2 **Desk 51, by Blu Dot.** \$979, *Designhouse* 3 **Besta Burs high-gloss black desk.** \$299.99, *Ikea* 4 **Tom Dixon pressed-glass Bead and Top pendants.** Call for pricing, *Inform Interiors* 5 **Vibia Code table lamp.** \$2,822, *Gabriel Ross* 6 **Brasa floor lamp.** \$149, *Ikea*



LIGHT IT RIGHT Where possible, use natural light, augmented by a variety of artificial lighting and controls. "The combination of different types of lighting creates ambiance and avoids creating areas that are too bright," says Meade.

treatment, repeated on a smaller scale in the adjacent kitchen nook, shows off Meade's graphic design talents, paired with a black-framed section of Fornasetti wallpaper from Cole & Son, set over a large mirror. "When you open the door, the wall treatment is very bold, but when you're in the room, it doesn't overwhelm," Meade notes.

Colours in the skylit heritage suite have been kept neutral – creams, black and warm grey on the high ceiling and dropped crown moulding to prevent the room from feeling cavernous. Original fir floors refinished in a darker tone add a little drama while allowing the wood grain to show through.

"The colour scheme we chose is very neutral as I wanted the designs being created for our clients to be the main focus and be unaffected by the surroundings," Meade says. "In your own home, don't be afraid of colour, pattern and texture. My advice is to make your home office a reflection of who you are and what you do in it."

Meade's home-like setting has a practical application as well.

"I started, like many other designers, working from home, and when I moved to my first studio I started missing some of the amenities I used to have at home. One of those amenities was the extendable table that has been really handy

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7 Grid wall pockets organizer, by Mio Culture. \$75, Lumiaire **8** Blue Lounge Cable Drop cable clips \$12 pkg. of 6, Room in Order **9** Alessi Chirp magnetic clip holder. \$31, Vancouver Art Gallery (special order) **10** Coo Coo Clocks wall tattoo. \$59 pkg. of 3, Surface Collective **11** Citrus tree wall graphic, by Blik. \$30, Lumiaire



MAKE A STATEMENT Bring your own style to the room, using colour, texture and pattern. Wall decals, playful accessories and trendy storage pieces add personality.

BLEND ELEGANCE AND ORGANIZATION

Build the perfect bookshelf or tabletop by combining several pieces of varying size or shape to create a vignette. Layer for depth, but don't fill the shelves completely. "You need breathing space in design – space for the eye to rest," says Meade.



"both functional and beautiful to look at."

Less obvious design details also complement the lighting. A high-gloss topcoat on the floor and polished chrome accents throughout – hardware, taps, lighting and accessories – add a reflective, contemporary touch to a traditional design, helping bridge the two styles. "For me the most beautiful metals are chrome and silver. I love the reflective quality and it doesn't feel pretentious."

Wherever your office is situated, "make the space functional first, taking care of your floor plan, ergonomic needs, lighting and storage," Meade advises. Then "you can have fun and bring colour, pattern and texture to the space with elements that will reflect your own personality." ■

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when we had large meetings with contractors and families."

Like the rest of the office, the small galley kitchen is a lesson in blending form and function. While full cupboards up and down would have overwhelmed the tiny space, Meade chose clean, black lower cabinets, accented with contemporary chrome hardware, but left the floating upper shelves open, trimmed in luxurious white Vancouver Island marble – a detail used judiciously to add elegance without great expense.

Beyond this "public space," Meade moved a wall to create his ideal work area. For desks, he chose open-legged tables topped in 3form Alabaster (a recyclable material that looks like marble), adding an airier feel with less expense.

While desk materials are flexible, height is less so, Meade says, suggesting 29 inches as an ergonomically sound height for a desk. And while Meade opted for sleek black leather-and-chrome for the meeting table chairs, he notes that ergonomic, adjustable office chairs offer maximum flexibility for longer work sessions.

Appropriate lighting is also essential for any office.

"Our studio faces east, so we can benefit from the natural light in the morning, but in the afternoon and particularly in the winter, we have to supplement with artificial light," Meade says. A combination of pendants and track lighting is