

MOXY WASHINGTON, DC DOWNTOWN DASH DESIGN Q&A

What is the narrative of the space? How does the design reflect that narrative?

The building is located on the corner of 11th and K streets, in the middle of the city, and just near the convention center. The hotel is actually comprised of two buildings, a new steel structure that abuts an existing historic brick building which was once residential. The new tower is clad in a black steel façade, that is reminiscent of the wonderful modernist steel structures developed by Mies Van der Roë in the mid part of the last century.

The interiors were meant to create a dialogue with the building architecture...a transition from the well detailed and ordered exterior, the interior is a contrast of textures, utilizing the exposed building materials, such as concrete and steel, along with exposed building systems, juxtaposed against reclaimed wood, burnished metals and large expanses ceramic tile. These all come together to create a warm, welcoming, and eclectic public space that is the bar and living room of the hotel.

In order to bring the hotel to life, we opted to create subtext that was a little less obvious and not at all the typical Washington kitsch. We wanted to celebrate American Modernism which is obvious by the building exterior and pulled through the interiors by the choice of furnishings and accessories. In addition, art and artifacts were specifically designed to bring to life another not so well-known story about DC which is that it established one of the earliest bike share systems. Clever nods to this are found throughout the property.

As Moxy is a brand focused on a younger Millennial guest, the center of the public space is the large bar, which is both the check in and the hub of the hotel. From the bar radiates a small market, a comfy lounge and a large outdoor terrace filled with games and places to gather. Floating above the bar is the mezzanine which has places to chill out or work with a little library and a rec room which does double duty for impromptu meetings.

The Moxy formula is to create great public spaces that encourages “community” while providing a well-designed micro sized guest room where everything is in its place. In order to enhance the sense of space in what are small rooms, the bathrooms were designed as translucent glass box that is a further nod to the building’s exterior. The room pulls a typical Moxy formula together, with a platform storage bed, wood peg wall on which your clothes and additional furniture are hung, as well as an assortment of art and accessories that make the room unique to this DC neighborhood.

As the designer, tell us about the process of the brand and ownership and how those relationships contributed to the design.

The project was definitely a team effort, on all aspects. The Marriott team created a concept of rules that stick true to the Moxy Motto while working with ownership & local architects established the cultural roots and values of the City.

It became a collaboration of dynamic values both Globally and locally.

What are the moments you are proud of? And what moments would you change?

Dash is proud to be able to create a space that is both welcoming and filled with moments of surprise. The love shines through in the details. Taking the conventional hotel formula and mixing it up. Challenging the formal reception, lobby space and engaging it with an active bar, fun filled events & a mezzanine that can be both quite or engaged.

Who are some of the local artists / craftsman you have worked with to add an authentic touch to the space?

Michael Crossett, a mixed media artist local to the DC area, worked on the mural for the public space.

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When selecting finishes for the space, how were you able to keep true to their design, but within budget?

The selected finishes were a mix of brand standards and our initial concept. We worked hand in hand with ownership to ensure the items being specified and the look & feel of the space met the budgets criteria. Value Engineering was minor, the budget was kept on the radar from the start and allowed us to execute the intended large and impactful moments.

What did Dash do to interpret the brand standards to make it a unique space that feels different / special?

We really wanted to delve into what spoke true to DC, and use these elements to tie back into the local setting. For example, our arrival wall is an urban map of the DC grid, the brass conduit piping and white wash brick hold true to brand standards. Yet, we manipulated it in a way to celebrate the city's grid using and nod back to the bike share program that began in DC by using bicycle inspired pendant to indicate significant landmarks in the city.

What one hospitality space inspires you, and made you want to be a designer?

"Fontainebleau hotel by Morris Lapidus. The hotel was one the leading anchors in the hospitality industry that introduced a different way in which people vacationed and travelled. The hotel began to push the boundaries of the hotel experience further.

I remember as child walking through the space, feeling the curved walls with my little hands, feeling the monumental scale of the ceiling height, and observing the beautiful women descend the grand stair case for that impactful moment of arrival. It was a space that spoke to me through the sub-conscious psyche and created moments in which I travel through time and constantly reminisce.

This made me want to designer, to be able to create a space in which moments happen and memories are made."

Michelle Komornik
Senior Designer at Dash Design

The Hospitality Industry Network