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# DISTRICT FRAY

A LIFESTYLE • ENTERTAINMENT MAGAZINE • JULY 2020

THE  
CULTURE of  
STYLE 20 D.C.  
VOICES

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Behind the scenes photo from July cover shoot. Photo by Tanira Dove.





**THE CULTURE OF STYLE.** Our July issue celebrates the bold, brilliant and authentic D.C. we strive to highlight each month in our magazine. Thank you to our cover subjects Carolyn Becker, Pierre Edwards, Kelcie Glass and Maps Glover and the countless other local visionaries who shared their stories with us this month. It's been an honor to amplify your voices. This issue is for you.

**MONICA ALFORD**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Behind the scenes of our July cover shoot at Meridian Hill Park. Photos by Tanira Dove.



# CULTURE

While these 20 individuals could rock any runway, their style is about more than their threads. We've chosen our visionaries because they are the pulse of the city – creating art, growing businesses and building community with an air of magnetism, individuality and flair. They're setting the tone for innovation, artistry and expression, and they just happen to look great doing it. We've asked them what style means to them and how they define D.C.'s unique style identity.

## THE CULTURE OF STYLE

WORDS BY LANI FURBANK // PHOTOS BY TONY POWELL



**CAROLYN**  
BECKER

It may not seem like it at first glance, but Carolyn Becker's two passions – thrifting and veganism – are cut from the same cloth. They're both wrapped up in the life she leads as a sustainable living advocate. Thrifting came first, as she followed the example of her saving-savvy parents while growing up in Bethesda. She jokes that she was “born at the thrift store,” and that connection is still just as strong today.

Every aspect of the bright, colorful, patterned outfit she's wearing on the cover is secondhand, procured through expert shopping at thrift stores – mostly Goodwill. Becker's love of thrifting is central to her Instagram account, @petite\_punk, where she shares secondhand finds and sustainable living tips. She also works for Goodwill of Greater Washington as the senior manager of communications and community engagement, handling social media and photography, managing the blog, and planning events for community-focused platform Finding Your Good.

She describes her style as low-key, eccentric, '80s-inspired and “somewhat awkward,” and says in recent years, she's learned to stop worrying about what others think. “As you grow up and get older, you shed different roles and grow into your sense of self through your experiences.”

That sense of self was also shaped by her stature, which is prominently announced via her Instagram handle and bio. Standing at 4 feet, 9 inches, Becker says her height has always set her apart.

“It's something that will never change. I think being petite inherently has formed my identity, in terms of being comfortable with standing out and being different.”

Though she has been teased about her height in the past, she's come to embrace this unique aspect of herself.

“I'm very proud to be petite, because being petite has allowed me to grow in many ways,” she says. “I'm this height. I will get some attention for X, Y and Z reasons. So, why not be proud?”

Both her stature and personal style make her a memorable figure around town, whether she's hunting for vintage or locally made pieces at her favorite retail spots like Goodwill, Meeps, Fia's Fabulous Finds and Femme Fatale, or eating her way through the city.

Veganism is something Becker adopted a little later in life – approximately four years ago, when a friend challenged her to try going vegan for a week. She breezed through that trial week and hasn't looked back.

“It was easy to transition from being vegetarian to vegan,” she says. “I just went full force and kept going.”

In making everyday choices, Becker sees myriad similarities between secondhand shopping and a vegan diet, namely conscious consumption. She makes the point that what you consume affects the environment, and others.

“The way that a food is made and packaged affects the world in similar ways as how a piece of clothing is made and how it affects the people who make it; the animals who are harmed in the process or affected; how it's sold. They operate in very similar ways.”

In other words, she says, both require being mindful and thinking about what footprint you're making when you support certain brands and make purchases.

“In an effort to live more sustainably, I'm really trying to evaluate what I do and don't need, which has led me to significantly downsize my closet and rethink what necessities are.”

That mentality is what guides her when sharing resources and communicating with her Instagram audience via @petite\_punk and her food-focused platform @dcveganlife.

## **“IN AN EFFORT TO LIVE MORE SUSTAINABLY, I'M REALLY TRYING TO EVALUATE WHAT I DO AND DON'T NEED, WHICH HAS LED ME TO SIGNIFICANTLY DOWNSIZE MY CLOSET AND RETHINK WHAT NECESSITIES ARE.”**

She's also started rescuing food from grocery store dumpsters in an effort to combat food waste.

“I am doing a lot of learning as I'm going into different grocery store dumpsters in terms of what brands I want to support and how much is being thrown away.”

During the pandemic, Becker has been cooking at home a lot more, either with rescued food or with groceries she buys at her go-to stores like MOM's and Yes! Organic Market. She still loves getting takeout from spots like VegHeaven and Smoke & Barrel, and her all-time vegan hit list includes Little Sesame, Calabash Tea & Tonic, Bethesda Bagels, Busboys and Poets, Roscoe's Pizzeria, Senbeb Cafe, and Elizabeth's Counter. These are just some of the restaurants she regularly highlights on Instagram.

“I've always viewed @dcveganlife as not my page, but the community's page,” she says. “I always use it to amplify businesses across the D.C., Maryland and Virginia area.”


She's also been using that platform for fundraising and advocacy, like her recent campaign in support of the Afro-Vegan Society, whose mission is to “offer information, resources and support to encourage and inspire people in marginalized communities to transition to vegan living.”

“Time is money, and sometimes education takes up a lot of time. When one has other competing priorities, it can be hard.”

That's why she supports the organization's educational work to make veganism accessible to all.

“Whether it's with Goodwill or my [own Instagram accounts], I go at everything I do with, ‘How can I inform or educate or help the community?’” she says. “I want to build community and make others be friends with each other, especially unified over similar passions, beliefs or interests.”

*Learn more about Becker and connect with her at @petite\_punk or @dcveganlife on Instagram.*



**PIERRE**  
EDWARDS

Visual artist Pierre Edwards sees both his work and his personal style as a way to communicate without words.

"The ability to put on a garment and feel a different way has always been very interesting to me," he says.

He takes inspiration for his sense of fashion from his dad, who immigrated to the United States from Guyana in the 1980s and eventually settled in Prince George's County, where Edwards was born and raised.

"I remember watching my dad get dressed when I was a kid. It was a special moment to me, just watching him. As a young kid, you geek out about every single thing your dad does. I always remember, like, 'Man, I can't wait 'til I get dressed and put on cologne.'"

His dad's influence, as well as his Guyanese background, come together in an aesthetic that evokes Caribbean culture and Blue Note Jazz Club artists, with modern elements peppered in. Just as he communicates his heritage through his attire, his creative work is about sharing his experiences.

# "I CAN COMMUNICATE AND USE MY MEDIUMS TO HELP SPEARHEAD THIS CONVERSATION AND MAKE THE BLACK EXPERIENCE IN AMERICA BETTER. IT'S MY DUTY TO DO SO."

"For me, being an artist is very much about communicating time, perspective, [and] thoughts and feelings, and trying to speak for individuals [who] maybe don't necessarily have the medium to speak. It's always about representing myself, my family and the culture I cling to in the best way I possibly can, and trying to speak for that culture."

He does this through both his own art studio, District Dodger, and his boutique creative studio for commercial work, Studio Sonic, which he runs with partner Eliud Arbelo.

"District Dodger is the artist and Studio Sonic is the engine," he explains.

When he's not crafting narratives for high-profile clients like The Smithsonian, Under Armour and ASICS, he's

sharing his own perspective in video, photographs, stage visuals and conceptual installations. In recent months, his creative work has shifted.

"You speak to the times, and right now for me, it's very much about wanting to communicate what it means to be Black in America. We've gotten to this place [that's] so divisive. There are people, individuals, brands and corporations that don't even feel comfortable saying, 'Black Lives Matter,' which makes no sense to me. The only thing we're trying to do is convince equality."

Edwards became a father last year, and says that has intensified his drive to find purpose in his art.

"It's hard to even describe the feeling that you have when you look at your child," he says. "I think the sense of focus and clarity comes on pretty thick when you have a kid."

His upcoming work was born out of the national reckoning around race and oppression.

"Honestly, this last month-and-a-half has really left an imprint on me that I don't think will ever wear off. I was an artist that was Black, and I just led by example. But I realized in this time, I have to be more literal."

Whereas previous exhibits explored theoretical topics like alternate dimensions or ultraviolet light rays, he's now tackling the concrete issue of racism.

"I don't have the privilege to create from such an existential place. I can communicate and use my mediums to help spearhead this conversation and make the Black experience in America better. It's my duty to do so."

He is currently working with found objects, paint and projections to help others relate to his reality.

"I do honestly think a lot of people just don't understand and I think that understanding is the first step, right? I'm not into the divisiveness at all. I don't think that it's beneficial in any type of capacity. I have the ability to create in a way that can spark conversation [and] understanding, which then will hopefully lead to a better experience for people that look like me."

His upcoming pieces will comment on the state of policing: a glass display case full of rubber bullets and a projected piece, "Super Predator 2020," that pushes back against the moniker originating in the '90s that villainized young people of color in urban neighborhoods as violent criminals. He hopes telling these stories will lead to greater empathy.

"Without tragedy, there's no triumph. You have to communicate the tragedy so people can understand the resilience of a people and the

power that people hold. I think that a lot of people think when slavery was abolished that everything was cool for Black people, and that's not true. There's been many different eras of oppression, even to this day."

His goal is to direct the proceeds from these projects and future work toward a grant for young Black artists, or to develop a Black art curriculum. Edwards largely credits his hardworking parents for his own successes, and similarly, says his efforts today are for the next generation – especially his own daughter. "I realized that I have to do everything that I can to make this world better for her to live in. That's my only goal."

*Learn more about Edwards and follow his work on Instagram @districtdodger.*

# KELCIE GLASS



For someone who looks as glamorous as native Washingtonian Kelcie Glass, it's somewhat surprising that she doesn't strive to be the center of attention. She's a communications professional with her own marketing and PR firm, the director of media for a creative collective for Black women, the co-owner of a vintage clothing store, and the founder of a new media site dedicated to the exchange of information in support of racial equity. In every one of these roles, her goal is to amplify the voices, stories and creative work of others.

Her outfits though, like the shimmering yellow gown she's wearing on the cover, can't help but attract attention.

"I always end up looking a little bit more glamorous than I would like to," she says with a smile. "I call it Black girl glam. I'm a bunch of different genres mixed together, and always have a hint of an extra something on top."

"Black girl glam" is the energy she brings to each of her projects, which all fall in the realm of communications and media. Glass graduated with a degree in marketing and public relations.

"All of these different things come together to make me who I am," she says.

Her first venture was vintage clothing store Mila & Fire, which she started with her best friend during their last year of college as a creative outlet before landing full-on careers.

"The way we found a niche in the vintage space was to redesign items we found to make them a more feminine fit. Or if something came one way, we could mix it up and make it signature so that we weren't just like every other vintage online store."

Then came her marketing and PR firm, Kelcie Glass, LLC. She offers a range of services, from press outreach and social media optimization to advertising and event management, with the goal of supporting progressive organizations, especially small businesses led by women of color.

She was later brought onto the team for GIRLAAA, a collective that strives to make space for female creatives of color, including artists, DJs, musicians and more. Her role was, naturally, marketing and outreach.

"A large part of GIRLAAA is amplifying the work creative women are doing already and just centering it. I'm a fangirl for everybody, too."

She says GIRLAAA has been very heavily on the front lines

with the recent Black Lives Matter protests. The team has been designing flyers, printing collateral and painting murals to further the cause.

"We're moving in this space, and we're continuing these conversations."

Most recently, the current social justice movement sparked an idea for a new undertaking. Glass' first thought on how to contribute was to create a website that highlights small Black-owned businesses.

"A lot of the Black-owned businesses being highlighted are pretty large," she says. "They still deserve to be supported, but there are a lot of smaller businesses that aren't getting in the big publications, like in the *Complex* and *Cosmo* lists."

But she was already seeing that happening, and wanted to do something broader.

"I was like, 'What do we need right now?' And I feel like for me and my friends, we need a hub where we can hit all of those resources in one spot."

So her spark of an idea morphed into *The Black Exchange*, an all-encompassing media venture to include news, different Black-owned businesses featured weekly, as well as petitions and organizations to donate to. Glass hopes this will allow people to stay focused on the important issue at hand.

"I feel like there's so much drop-off where you're clicking around, like, 'Here's where I shop at Black-owned businesses. Here's where I can sign a petition.'"

It also plays to her strengths.

"[*The Black Exchange*] is a way for me to join the conversations happening right now in an authentic way: by writing about it and marketing what people are sharing, [and] marketing Black-owned businesses. That feels more personal for me just because the world is kind of loaded right now, and I feel like it's an outlet and an opportunity."

Regardless of which of her many hats she's wearing on a given day, Glass says her personal style always shines through.

"We're talking about being a creative woman taking up space. I think your style has a lot to do with that."

Connect with Glass at [www.kelcieglass.com](http://www.kelcieglass.com) or @thefire on Instagram. Learn about her projects at [www.blackexchange.co](http://www.blackexchange.co), [www.milaandfire.com](http://www.milaandfire.com) and @girlaaa.world on Instagram.

# "WE ARE TALKING ABOUT BEING A CREATIVE WOMAN TAKING UP SPACE. I THINK YOUR STYLE HAS A LOT TO DO WITH THAT."

# MAPS GLOVER



One look at Charles County native Maps Glover, and you can tell he's a creator. He's typically wearing an original piece of art, like the hand-painted jacket, pants and shoes that grace the cover of this issue. As a painter, illustrator and performer, Glover views his personal style as yet another medium to express his ideas.

"It's a protest," he says. "It's a response to the world. It's definitely a response to the box Black folks are put into when it comes to their fashion."

Glover remembers being told how he should and shouldn't dress by everyone from his employers at art institutions to his own parents.

"Even my parents at times would tell me I wouldn't be able to get to certain levels of success because of the way that I dressed."

Now, through his performance art and his everyday style, he's turning heads in a positive way. Over time, his mom has come to appreciate his stylistic vision.

"There was one time in high school [when I wore] some basketball shorts over top of some long johns."

His mom's response?

"She looked at me like I was crazy. Like, 'Why the hell would you wear that to school? That's insane.' Ten years later, Kanye comes out with the shorts over the joggers. So, my mom literally called me and apologized. She was like, 'I didn't realize that you were ahead of the fashion curve.'"

His self-embellished garments often come about because of one of the occupational hazards of being a painter.

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"As soon as I would paint, it would get on my clothes," he says. "What am I going to do now? The paint is already there."

It's also a way to upcycle tired pieces.

"I like to take clothes that I've worn for a while, and after they've gotten to a point of like, I either throw this away or I revamp it, [I ask myself], 'How do I bring this back to life?' And so, I'll paint on it."

Many of the expressive outfits Glover wears have also been used as costumes for performances. The pants pictured here, with a piece of computer hardware sewn into them, were originally created for his performance at the Superfine! Art Fair.

"I had a mask on and wires all over my body," Glover explains. "People could only talk to me through social media, but I was physically there walking around with a sign that said 'Follow me.'"

The jacket is his answer to the times we're living in.

"I feel like we're literally in flux, and this feels like a battle cry in a way. This feels like I've been through it, but somehow it's dystopian."

The back of the jacket reads "Protect Black Women," a statement reflective of Glover's concern that Black women have not been protected enough in society.

"It just brings me so much anger and also sadness. I just wanted to bring that to light in the fashion."

Issues of social justice and racial equity are now at the forefront of public discourse, but Glover has been working in this realm for much longer.

"I've been creating work that responds to police brutality for the last five years," he says. "It feels like, 'Oh my God, you're finally listening to me.'"

One of his most powerful performances last year was a protest and tribute to those who lost their lives at the hands of law enforcement.

"I documented all the people – Black, white, Hispanic, men, women – who have been killed by police brutality, and throughout the year, I was jumping in honor of those people."

He jumped for each of the hundreds of deaths, and fellow artist Timoteo Murphy photographed him at the peak of the jumps.

"It was really like their spirits are levitating out of their bodies," Glover says.

His work is also centered on the idea of freedom and the internal dialogues that he has as a Black man.

"It's a lot about identity. It's a lot about freedom and wanting to express the truest nature of myself and of people who experience life in a similar way that I do, whether it be people who have an awesome relationship with their mom [or] people who love eating crabs on Sundays – just the range of it all."

Whether he's drawing, painting or performing, he sees boundless worth in the act of creating.

"Creativity is probably one of the most undervalued skill sets in this country. It is the ability to make something that was invisible visible. It's the opportunity to turn a light on for someone in a way that [they were] never able to see or hear or absorb."

In its truest sense, he views creativity as a tool to bring people together.

"Creativity is the key to innovation. It's the key to our evolution. It's the key to us really seeing each other and uniting as people."

*Learn more about Glover and follow his work at [www.mapsglover.com](http://www.mapsglover.com) or @mapsglover on Instagram.*

## CHRISTYLEZ BACON

### PROGRESSIVE HIP-HOP ARTIST

**His Style:** It's just how I feel comfortable showing up. I love my hair texture, so I don't cut it. I grow it out as an afro. It's very reminiscent of the '70s with the Black Power Movement, where a lot of Black folks were redefining Black beauty standards, but really making a lot of advancements socially – similar to what's happening right now. I love rockin' hats, so I'll rock a hat, a little fedora. Because I used to wear hand-me-down clothing growing [up] in the projects with my mom raising my two siblings and myself, all of my older brother's clothing became my clothing. I like to put a little suit together, but with a little flair that'll separate it from a Capitol Hill thing. So, I add different flavors to it with customized ties from RETHINK Tailoring mixed with different accent colors. It's really minimalist, too. A big wardrobe isn't necessary. It's not about labels, name brands [or] money.

**City Style:** D.C. style varies so much because we have so many influences. You have the D.C. that I grew up in: Southeast, east of the Anacostia River-style. You have the uptown folks, which pertains to my experiences growing up here, and that's a whole different style guide unto itself. My folks from that era might remember Universal Madness, Alldaz Gear, HOBO, Solbiato Sport, etc. Then you have west of Rock Creek Park, which is a totally different vibe. You've got Capitol Hill, with their suiting. Then you have international communities and transient D.C. There are so many people from all over the place here contributing to what is now D.C. identity in 2020. It's an international city, so you get a little bit of everything. It's a potpourri.

Find him at [www.chrstylez.com](http://www.chrstylez.com) or @chrstylezbacon on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook.

## ELIJAH JAMAL BALBED

### SAXOPHONIST, COMPOSER + EDUCATOR // FOUNDER, THE JOGO PROJECT

**His Style:** Style is an important part of my life. As a performer, looking and feeling good onstage impacts my overall performance. It's a very personal journey. It's all about colors and contrast. Sometimes, you have to break a few rules to discover something new. My style is a quirky mix between streetwear and GQ. In 2014, I saw one of the greatest jazz musicians – Roy Hargrove (1969-2018) – wear a tux onstage, but with all-white [Nike] Air Force Ones. I remember looking in awe of his swag. As an up-and-coming jazz musician, I always thought you had to wear a suit and tie onstage. Some situations call for that, too. But in that moment, I learned as an artist, you can do what you want. When I'm in my true element, my style is equal parts street and sleek.

**City Style:** D.C. style comes from the culture: go-go, jazz, mumbo sauce, Shooters Sports, Chocolate City, 51st state, DC Fray, "Beat Ya Feet." The list goes on. If you're here long enough, you gotta have some D.C.-themed shirts. I recommend Bailiwick and Crank Rock.

Find him on Instagram and Twitter @ejbjazz. Learn more about The JoGo Project at [www.jogoproject.com](http://www.jogoproject.com) or @thejogoproject on Instagram and Facebook.

## KATSUYA FUKUSHIMA

### CHEF + PARTNER, THE DAIKAYA GROUP

**His Style:** [I express] my uniqueness with what I believe in, with what I love, in what I wear, in what I do and [in] what I represent. I want to be comfortable [first and] foremost. [I] never know when I have to grab an apron and jump in the kitchen. So, I wear jeans and T-shirts a lot, [and] accessories with cool vintage coats and jackets. I love Stetson hats of all types, and I only wear Adidas Superstar sneakers. On my current bucket list: Adidas will let me design a kitchen shoe with them.

**City Style:** A wide range of ethnicities and ages makes up D.C. There are people very rooted here, but transitory as well. Khakis to dark suits and white shirts on the Hill, conservative downtown, cool and hip on U Street, young university kids in baseball hats and shorts in Adams Morgan. I'm generalizing here. But my point is, D.C.'s style is all over the place. It's not like New York City where everyone is just cool.

Find him on Instagram @katsuya\_fukushima and Twitter @chefkatsuya. Learn about his restaurants at [www.daikaya.com](http://www.daikaya.com) or @daikayalf, @daikaya2f, @haikandc, @bantamkingdc, @hatobadc and @tonaridc on Instagram.

## EMMA G

### SINGER/SONGWRITER, MUSICIAN, ARTIVIST (ARTISTIC ACTIVIST) + PODCASTER

**Her Style:** Style is self-expression. Style is confidence. Style is the freedom to be unapologetically you and wave your freak flag (a.k.a. individuality) proudly. My personal style changes from day to day, depending on my mood. One of my favorite quotes is, "What you are to be, you are now becoming." I dress as who I want to be that day. It might be a sports bra or bikini top coupled with elaborate jewelry, [or] dress pants and platform boots. I might go for the more girly dress coupled with zombie heels, or it might be a bodysuit with kickass boots and my bra showing – because the world is still so scared of women's bodies. Either way, my style will always encapsulate attitude, femininity and a whole lot of being unapologetic about who I am.

**City Style:** D.C.'s style identity is so diverse, and I love it. I think it's one of the reasons I wanted to make D.C. my home. I'm originally from New Zealand, but I was a born dual citizen. D.C. is corporate with a little bit of sass, sexy with a little bit of fierce and funky with a little bit of go-go. Wherever I go, I always find myself complimenting – and being complimented by – women and men who just rock who they are through their style.

Find her at [www.emmagmusic.com](http://www.emmagmusic.com) or @emmagmusic on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook.

#### CLOCKWISE FROM TOP ON PAGE 30.

Chrstylez Bacon. Photo by Erin Scott Photography.

Katsuya Fukushima. Photo by Jennifer Chase.

Emma G. Photo by Nick DePinto.

Elijah Jamal Balbed. Photo by Nick Moreland // @nickychinito.



## BARNETTE HOLSTON

### CONTENT CREATOR // MANAGER OF ACCOUNTING OPERATIONS, NATIONAL COOPERATIVE BANK

**His Style:** I think style is an expression of your inner self. It's a way to showcase the best part of yourself. While I follow the trends, I don't normally jump on the bandwagon of what's new, now and next. I like to find pieces or wear things that I've styled in a way uniquely for me. I go by the adage "When you look good, you feel good." I'm known for being the guy almost always in a suit. Going to events around town, the attire is usually business casual and I really enjoy a great-fitting, bold-patterned suit. I tend to gravitate toward the suit patterns and bold colors that D.C. men usually shy away from. If it's a more casual setting, you will not see me in athleisure unless I'm going to work out. I tend to opt for an elevated casual look – think of it as preppy with an edge.

**City Style:** I think D.C.'s style identity is evolving. Those who are not from D.C. tend to think Washingtonians have no style. You have to go to New York for real style. But if you think about it, critics are generally looking to what they see most. That's primarily what they see on the Hill. In reality, most of those people aren't even from D.C. However, D.C. is much more than the government. D.C. has so much going for it outside of the government, and there's a growing group of creatives showcasing different and unique fashion styles throughout the other industries in the city. I think this has started a movement and Washingtonians are starting to break away from the idea of cookie-cutter dress. What we're seeing now is people are caring more about what they look like and showcasing their own individual style and uniqueness.

Find him at [www.dcfashionfool.com](http://www.dcfashionfool.com) or @dcfashionfool on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook.

## JEN JEAN-PIERRE MAULL

### LIFESTYLE BLOGGER // SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER, AMERICAN NURSES ASSOCIATION

**Her Style:** Style is showing and expressing your personality through clothing on your body. I live by the motto "Inhale fashion, exhale style." What this means is, take what the trend forecast gives you and make it your own. We are all unique and our style offers us a chance to show the world exactly who we are or how we are feeling at that moment. My personal style is relatable with an edge. I love high-waisted, wide-leg pants, anything leather, and jumpsuits are life. Because I tend to wear basic pieces, I look to my jewelry, shoes and hats to elevate my look and allow me versatility. I do love a good statement suit as well.

**City Style:** D.C.'s style identity is eclectic, trendsetting and full of personality, but unfortunately most media outlets have not done a great job in going to the right places to scope it out. D.C. has been seen as the land of the stiff suits, but take a moment to walk on Howard's campus, U Street, H Street or Marymount's campus, and you will see something completely different. D.C. is

not solely Capitol Hill and society galas. There is so much more to this metropolis. Black people have been rocking the coolest gear and showcasing the most unique style in D.C. for the longest, but just not getting the limelight.

Find her at [www.jenjeanpierre.com](http://www.jenjeanpierre.com) or @jenjeanpierre on Instagram, @jennjeanpierre on Twitter and @jjpblog on Facebook.

## MAX KULLER

### PRINCIPAL + EXECUTIVE WINE DIRECTOR, IN LIVING KULLER RESTAURANT GROUP

**His Style:** I am one of those ultra-lucky people who somehow has personal style that largely reflects my literal birth name, and it's honestly pretty surreal. My name is Max Kuller (pronounced color), and I've actually been called Mr. Color (or Colors) by a few people who hadn't previously known my name. In my artwork, domestic dwellings, restaurants and daily outfits, I adore layering and juxtaposing a range of kaleidoscopic colors, rich textures, bold shapes, patterns, language, symbols, graphics and historical referents to sometimes inspire critical thought, but often to promote fun, diverse thought and bold personal expression from others. And of course, to express myself and my interests. There is a social element of my style as well, as I have found bold expression invites more ice breakers for conversation.

**City Style:** [It's] always evolving, and in each moment unavoidably in some way reflective of the constant changes resulting from the ever-revolving administrations setting up shop in the city, and often speaking to whatever the political moment [is]. There is a lot of great, diverse personal style on display in an array of ways, especially in our neighborhoods. D.C. is truly one of those places where there is a bit of everything, even if on "normal days" it can seem a bit subdued. Coco Chanel once noted that, "A sense of freedom is always stylish." When we reflect on the city's history as the place to make our voices collectively, freely heard, it is clear that if indeed a sense of freedom is stylish, D.C. is perhaps the home of style's most hallowed ground.

Find him on Instagram @maxkuller. Learn more about his D.C. restaurants on Instagram @estadiodc, @oysteroysterdc, @scrappys\_bagelbar.

## ABA KWAWU

### PRESIDENT, TAA PR

**Her Style:** Style is self-expression: a non-verbal depiction of who you are in a moment. My personal style is fashion-forward and bossy for work and more relaxed and creative otherwise.

**City Style:** I'm not sure that D.C. has a style identity, per se. There are so many different types of people, and D.C. is a powerful capital city, and one full of creatives and entrepreneurs as well.

Find her at [www.taapr.com](http://www.taapr.com) or @taa\_pr and @abakwawu on Instagram and Twitter and @taapublicrelations on Facebook.



**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP.** Barnette Holston. Photo by Diego Leon // @dandyinthebronx. Max Kuller. Photo by Ashley Mitchell, Haystack Media. Aba Kwawu. Photo by Violetta Markelou. Jen Jean-Pierre Maull. Photo courtesy of subject.

## JOCELYN LAW-YONE

EXECUTIVE CHEF + CO-OWNER, THAMEE

**Her Style:** There are a few things about fashion and style that are entwined with my personality. I designed my own clothes and shoes in Burma. I picked out the fabric and had somebody make it – I was 10 years old. I still take those kinds of risks and initiatives today. I don't have any limits. When I met Alice Cooper at his Cooper'stown [restaurant] opening in Phoenix, The Godfather of Shock himself came up to me, looked at my tiger print, studs and leather outfit, and said, "I don't know how you're gonna take this, but more people are gonna remember your outfit than mine." The reason I'm drawn to these vibrant colors is that I was born a mile away from a massive golden structure, Rangoon's iconic Shwedagon Pagoda, which is adorned with rubies, sapphire and jade. That vivid imagery has been such a big part of how I decide what makes me happy to wear.

**City Style:** What I see is that it's like anything goes – from sports teams to high fashion – depending on where you are in the city. There's a real sense that you can go as wild as you want, but the downside is that it gives the green light to people thinking, "I can just walk out in my pajamas." Sadly, in the United States, style and fashion are very ageist. There aren't very many styles, style icons, models or people of my generation who are sought after and celebrated. It seems that after a certain time, especially after retirement, people are not trying to be stylish anymore. They've given up their business suit and become drab and bland. That's why I think people notice it more with me: I still make an effort. Why can't a woman my age be stylish?

Learn more about Thamee at [www.thamee.com](http://www.thamee.com) or @thamee\_dc on Instagram.

## ANELA MALIK

FOOD BLOGGER + ADVOCATE

**Her Style:** Style means making your own lane – even when it's not the standard. I feel like when you find a space where you really feel comfortable, then you settle into your style. And for each person, that space is a little different. [My style is] a mix of no-nonsense, get shit done energy, with a dash of sarcasm and lots of humor. I'm living to dismantle white supremacy, eat good food and do it with a cute top – and most importantly with comfy shoes. As a Black woman often in predominantly white spaces, I have enough discomfort. I don't have room for that anymore in my personal style.

**City Style:** There's a pull in D.C. between [the] east and west sides of the city, suited and super casual, young and old, etc. The stark segregation of D.C. makes it feel like there's multiple identities, but they sometimes scrape up against each other instead of neatly weaving together like I hope they would. There's also a pulse here I wish everyone could feel – of history, of Black excellence, of transplants' dreams. [D.C. is] almost similar to New York City, but I find it to be a little less frantic, personally.

Find her at [www.feedthemalik.com](http://www.feedthemalik.com) or @feedthemalik on Instagram and Facebook and @feed\_the\_malik on Twitter.

## CARL MAYNARD

PHOTOGRAPHER, BRAND STRATEGIST +  
GEOSPATIAL INTELLIGENCE CONSULTANT //  
FOUNDER, WALK WITH LOCALS

**His Style:** Style is a person's way of speaking for [themselves] without having to say a word. [My style is] grandpa chic? Is that a thing? At the core of every outfit, I start with the idea of being comfortable. I can't feel uncomfortable in any occasion if I'm comfortable with what I'm wearing. I also strive to give casual a really cleaned-up feel and look put together at the same time. Every aspect of my outfit is thought out, from how many buttons are undone at any given time to the amount of cuff my pants have. The day and occasion dictate that. That being said, one day I want to just dress exactly like Owen Wilson in *Midnight in Paris*.

**City Style:** When I think of D.C.'s style, I think of tailored casual. There are so many well-dressed people in this city and it's always done with such ease. My favorite thing about D.C. style is how tailored and relaxed everyone looks at the same time. To me, this city is not about the label on your apparel, but how you rock what you wear. No one cares if your tee costs \$100. Also, wherever I go in the world, I will always see New Balance shoes and think of D.C. Sorry, Boston.

Find him at [www.carlnardphoto.com](http://www.carlnardphoto.com) or @carlnard on Instagram and Twitter. Learn more about Walk With Locals at @walkwithlocals on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook.

## MAYRA MEJIA

WRITER + BODY LIBERATION ADVOCATE //  
FOUNDER, PLUSH DMV

**Her Style:** Style is self-expression. As a fat person, I grew up thinking that I couldn't participate in fashion because I never saw anyone who looked like me wearing the clothes I loved. I've since spent many years unlearning those arbitrary fashion and style rules, tossing them aside and wearing things that bring me joy. My personal style is playful and feminine. I love florals. I wear them all year-round. I love different textures. Pleats and ruffles are a weakness of mine. At night, I like to switch it up and be vampier: lots of sheer tops and body-hugging outfits.

**City Style:** If I were to think of D.C. as a whole, I wouldn't think of it as a super stylish city. But that's only at first glance. When you look beyond downtown D.C. and actually take a look at the locals, we are super fashionable. One of my favorite things to do pre-corona[virus] was to go out and people-watch. I get so inspired by how others style their clothes.

Find her at [www.mayraymejia.com](http://www.mayraymejia.com) or @badbadprettygood on Instagram and @mayratweets on Twitter. Learn more about Plush DMV at @plushdmv on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook.

### CLOCKWISE FROM TOP ON PAGE 34.

Jocelyn Law-Yone. Photo by Scott Suchman. Carl Maynard. Photo courtesy of subject. Mayra Mejia. Photo by Sigute Meilus. Anela Malik. Photo courtesy of subject.



## ADDIE OWUSU

### STYLE BLOGGER + RETAIL MANAGER

**Her Style:** Style is art. It is an expression of who we are, who we hope to be and how we see the world around us. In many ways, it is our individual reflection of the world seen through unique lenses and angles. My style is classic with a bold edit. The shapes and cuts I wear are usually traditional, but I tend to style them in a way that feels powerful. A broad shoulder, a cinched waist and the color red will always sing to me.

**City Style:** D.C. is so interesting to me, style-wise. It is such a melting pot of transplants that it makes it hard to define. Oddly enough, when I think of D.C. style, I think about the people who play drums by Gallery Place, and the go-go music on 14th and U. They are part of the heart of the city.

Find her at [www.9to5tohh.com](http://www.9to5tohh.com) or @addieohh on Instagram.

## TRAP BOB //

### TENBEETE SOLOMON

#### ARTIST, TRAP BOB WORLD, LLC

**Her Style:** Style is self-expression. It's not just one thing – it's everything about you. It exists naturally. My style is bold, loud, vivid and ever-changing.

**City Style:** D.C.'s style is loud, passionate and fun. It's rich in culture, and you can't copy it even if you tried. It comes from within and it goes far beyond clothing.

Find her at [www.trapbob.com](http://www.trapbob.com) or @trapxbob on Instagram and @trapbob on Twitter.

## MATTEO VENINI

### CHEF + CO-OWNER, STELLINA PIZZERIA

**His Style:** To me, style is edgy, yet sophisticated, functional, slim-fit and spontaneous. My personal style is Italian with a French twist. My tattoos are an expression of my professional life, and my love for food and Korean mysteriousness and sassiness.

**City Style:** The preconception is that D.C. is filled with conservatively dressed politicians, but in fact the city attracts Europeans and young professionals in technology – all with very distinct styles – from retro to hip, edgy to chic.

Find him on Instagram @matteo\_venini. Learn more at [www.stellinapizzeria.com](http://www.stellinapizzeria.com) or @stellinapizzeria on Instagram.

## CHELSEA XERON

### ENTREPRENEUR

**Her Style:** To me, style is self-expression. It's a way for me to convey my personality, my mood and my energy. My style

is clean and functional. On top of running three businesses, I have a busy 15-month-old, so my wardrobe has to make sense and transition seamlessly from work to mommy life. Pockets are essential!

**D.C. Style:** D.C.'s style identity is evolving. It used to be extremely stiff and in some ways it still is. I think people are finally finding the courage to be themselves in a city where everyone wants to be taken seriously.

Find her on Instagram @chelseaxeron. Learn more about her businesses at [www.nikosgelato.com](http://www.nikosgelato.com) and [www.studio52dc.com](http://www.studio52dc.com), or @nikosgelato on Instagram and Facebook and @studio52dc on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook.



Chelsea Xeron. Photo by Hunter Scott.  
Makeup by Beauty by Ruben. Styling by Joy Kingsley-Ibeh.



**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP.** Trap Bob. Photo by Shaughn Cooper // @shaughncooper. Matteo Venini. Photo courtesy of subject.  
Addie Owusu. Photo courtesy of subject.