



"We'd describe the salon's image as a modern, multifunctional workspace that combines playfulness with functionality."



Studio CITY

This new salon-cum-studio space is the perfect balance of blank canvas and creative oasis

While not hairdressers, Danny Mendoza-Hall, Ben Ottewell and Carla Mendoza-Hall are no strangers to the hair industry; the trio previously teamed up on their creative production company, Fondness (now Grid productions), where they worked with brands such as Wella and Treatwell. For their latest venture, they decided to custom build a space that would enable them to carry out this work to an even higher standard, while also allowing others to do the same. Explaining the business model, Danny says: "Hair professionals will be able to come in, rent a chair and create content – or rent the entire space as a studio."

Grid Studios includes six styling stations, all of which can be moved around or stored away, maximising versatility. There is also a matching Lotus Westbury backwash from Salons Direct, which is on its own island, with plenty of space to manoeuvre around for filming. "When we first saw this space, we knew it would be perfect for filming; it's got 3.5m high ceilings, which means it's easy to facilitate shoot lighting," explains Danny. The premises also features a large glass frontage, allowing ample natural lighting, and a custom-built lighting system that means content creators can match the colour temperature that's filtering through the south-facing windows, ensuring consistency when shooting.

Speaking of shooting, the space

is fully equipped with tripods, phone holders and backdrops – hairdressers will be able to walk in with just their tools and their phones and start shooting. Another unique aspect of the space is the shoot bathroom, where the walls and floor have been covered in a terracotta-pink micro-cement, which is waterproof and stain-resistant. In fact, vinyl tiles can be stuck to these surfaces, giving hairdressers and brands freedom to customise the space. The ceiling height is very tall for a bathroom too, another bonus for shooting.

When it came to designing the space, Danny, Ben and Carla turned to Temi Johnson, who helped them deliver their vision. Explaining the collaboration process, Ben says: "We provided Temi with our brand guidelines and she drew inspiration from our brand identity and colours." One of the standout design elements? The original 1950s herringbone flooring, which had to be sanded back eight times before it could be revarnished. However, Danny also praises the café and courtyard, explaining: "Before we took the lease, this site used to be one of our favourite cafés, so we wanted to make sure we could keep this community element."

Reflecting on the renovation process, Danny says: "We wanted to create something that will make a difference to people who want to create amazing content. In every space we have worked in before, we have had to compromise in some way; this time, we weren't going to do that." **HJ**

GRID STUDIO'S TOP TIPS

1 Bring in a professional to help

Dealing with the council was the most painful part of the build, so I wouldn't do this again without a dedicated project manager.

2 Think about how clients will use the space

As we're not hairdressers ourselves, we worked with Jordanna Cobella to get additional insight.

3 Don't compromise

Sticking to our guns means we have a lot of features you won't find anywhere else.

KEY FACTS

Name: Grid Studios

Address: 49 Old Street, London, EC1V 9HX

Owners: Danny Mendoza-Hall, Ben Ottewell, Carla Mendoza-Hall and Creative Partner Jordanna Cobella

Size: 130msq inside – 75msq outside

How long have you been in the premises: Opened 1 June 2024

How many staff: Four

Budget: £130k for the build and fit out