

# THE ART OF beauty

With leading salons and gyms doubling up as boutique galleries, you can enjoy great art as you prettify, says Pip McCormac

**W**hat do you see in the mirror at the hair salon? Perhaps you bury your face in magazines, avoiding the roots you've gone to touch up. Or maybe, over the hum of hairdryers, you've spotted something that leaves you feeling beautiful inside as well as out.

That is the aim, anyway, in a new breed of beauty parlour that has ditched the shots of models with fashionable hair for art, an ever-changing display of real, buyable work. A salon wall within a salon.

'When my clients arrive they instantly feel invigorated,' says Michael Charalambous, founder and creative director of Nyumba in London's Chelsea. He has filled the

space with African art from his birthplace of Tanzania – seashell donkeys made as part of a local outreach programme and 70-year-old statues of tribal warriors. 'It's easy to feel intimidated in salons, so I created an extension of my home, somewhere to relax,'

Charalambous says of the bazaar-like backdrop he has put together.

After 30 years at the top of his business, Charalambous' regulars include Jade Jagger and Olivia Palermo, and I bump into artist India Jane Birley (sister of Jemima Goldsmith) on the way out. 'It's wonderful to step into a different world,' she says of the

collection. 'Much more enlivening than just a regular trip to get your hair cut.'

This is part of the movement to care for your soul as well as your appearance, thinks colourist Josh Wood. 'I've shown Picasso and Damien Hirst as well as new talent – our clients love to know about the people behind the work.' Pop into his London Lansdowne Atelier now to see Carolyn Quartermaine's fabric-inspired paintings.

In the Cotswolds, the new Soho Farmhouse has an ever-changing exhibition in its spa, and seasoned gallerist Rebecca Hossack

believes it's a sign of our times. 'There's so much less time to go to exhibitions,' she says. 'Seeing art somewhere you're already going is a wonderful way to double up.'

Hossack supplies work to The Third Space gyms and branches of Gail's Artisan Bakery, with an Aboriginal season opening now. 'It's great to be able to take art out of its little white box, to put it in front of people,' she says. 'And it enhances their experience of everyday activities with a touch of culture.'

Think about this when you're hanging work at home, about placing it around your dressing table to add some aesthetic inspiration. After all, as Charalambous says, 'Art is so much more tasteful than neon lights.'

The walls of the Third Space gyms feature a range of art, including the abstract work of Petra McCarthy, below



FROM BELOW: Hair colourist Josh Wood; a Carolyn Quartermaine piece currently on display at his Notting Hill salon



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'Care for your SOUL as well as your appearance'



FROM TOP: Hair salon Nyumba is packed with African art; founder Michael Charalambous styles interior designer Sophie Stanbury's hair in Nyumba's art-filled surroundings

