

Kara Francis



My name is Kara Francis and I have been in the hair industry for over 2 decades. I am a specialist in the colouring and cutting of all hair textures. Making people look and feel their best is something I take pride in as I strongly believe that everyone has something that makes them uniquely beautiful. My job is to bring to light that which is already there, so they can leave my chair oozing with confidence and strutting to the sound of their own personal theme tune.

I am most known for my ability to colour match and blend colour. When working with colour change or colour, attention to detail is essential. Correction often requires patience and a keen eye of seeing what needs to be done. The final step is to structure a plan to make the necessary corrections without compromising or damaging the condition of the hair.

I have a passion for creative and vivid colours. A greater part of my Instagram contains what I like to call my art pieces. An explosion of colour that draws inspiration from sources ranging from nature to anime. I just love creating beautiful life pieces of art on people's hair.

Hairdressing has been my salvation as I grew up at a time when there was very little support for those who have dyslexia. The only subject that resonated with me was art and that was because I could escape into my deepest thoughts, manifesting them onto a blank canvas for all to see without the added pressures of right or wrong.

At the age of 16 I left school early and joined the High Street Kensington branch of Toni & Guy as an apprentice. I was captivated by the magic of creativity showcased by the colourists and stylists, and I felt a strong sense of belonging. It was like watching a live infomercial as the clients would enter the salon looking defeated but leave transformed into their best selves. Hairdressing was the perfect way to exercise my creative brain while exploring my passion for helping people.

After a year with Toni & Guy I took the opportunity to finish my apprenticeship at Charles Worthington, which was a salon of great prestige. During my time there I was exposed to photo shoots, celebrity and the importance of keeping up with trends. I owe so much to both Toni & Guy and Charles Worthington as they set me up with an amazing foundation for my hairdressing journey.

Eventually I would open Hair London, a salon located outside of Paddington station. The transition from hairdresser to salon owner was a real eye opener as I was responsible for bills, staff and promotions. The experience developed my resilience as well as how to inspire others to support my vision. The work that my salon produce would not go unnoticed, and I was soon approached by one of the reps from Keune to be an educator.

Initially, I was apprehensive about becoming an educator because of my dyslexia, however, I was shown that I could use visual and kinaesthetic learning to retain information. What a game changer this would be as it helped me to expand my knowledge and motivate others to attain a more scientific approach to hairdressing. My time with Keune enabled me to attend trend collections, learn presentation and stage skills and I often visited the headquarters in Holland. The other part of the role was to deliver education to salons up and down the country. In 2018, I formed part of the creative process for the “Colour Your Mood” collection in 2018 where I presented my work on stage in London, Manchester and Exeter.



The engineering works on the Elizabeth Line would affect the visibility of the salon, which caused the foot flow to decline. Additionally, the landlord insisted on a rent increase and the combination resulted in the salons closure.



Letting go of my salon was one of the toughest decisions I've ever had to make. But as the saying goes “when one door closes another door opens”. I had been chatting to Errol Douglas via Instagram and he invited me to his salon to discuss a management role opportunity. Unfortunately, the role wasn't to be, but Errol and his business partner did offer me and my clients a new home in Belgravia. This was a new experience for me as the clientele was completely different to Paddington and they demanded a higher level of service. Fast forward to 2020 and Covid. The government brought in restrictions to reduce the spread of infection which had a knock-on effect on the hospitality industry. With all of us stuck at home we decided to focus on remotely training the apprentices on Zoom to ensure everyone stayed positive and occupied through that uncertain time. I was responsible for delivering colour theory. I found this very rewarding, and I still donate my spare time to deliver training to the apprentices. As an experienced hairdresser I believe it's important to hold the door open for the next generation of aspiring hairdressers coming through. I am extremely thankful to Errol and his business partner for being part of my hairdresser journey.



It is essential for a hairdresser to keep up to date with trends in the fashion industry, so it helps that it's a hobby of mine. I love what I do and my desire to always be learning ensures that I can continue to provide a service that makes others feel good.



If I win this award, I will use this platform to help inspire and elevate the next generation of hairdressers to reach their aspirational goals.

Case Study

My Lady Jane is a historical fantasy series being produced by Amazon Studios.

Using the creative brief as a guide, I constructed individual mood boards for each character. I drew inspiration from the boards, and this helped me to visualise the hair colours for each character.

Often when working on a TV set, the actor's hair is styled with hot tools and tonnes of hairspray every day. As a result, the hair can appear dull and lifeless, and the camera can make it look ten times worse. To ensure the hair would retain its shine and lustre I applied a clear gloss treatment after every colour service. The brand I use contains a conditioning treatment that locks the shine in for longer resulting in a super glossy look that the camera absolutely loves. The success of this treatment gave me the idea to start offering the treatment to my clients as an additional service.

Some of the characters were required to wear wigs and pieces that needed to be coloured. I used a reverse highlighting technique on the wigs and pieces to add greater depth and dimension to the hair, giving it more movement and life.

Thank you for your consideration.