

## A M A N D A R O B E R T S

All made up

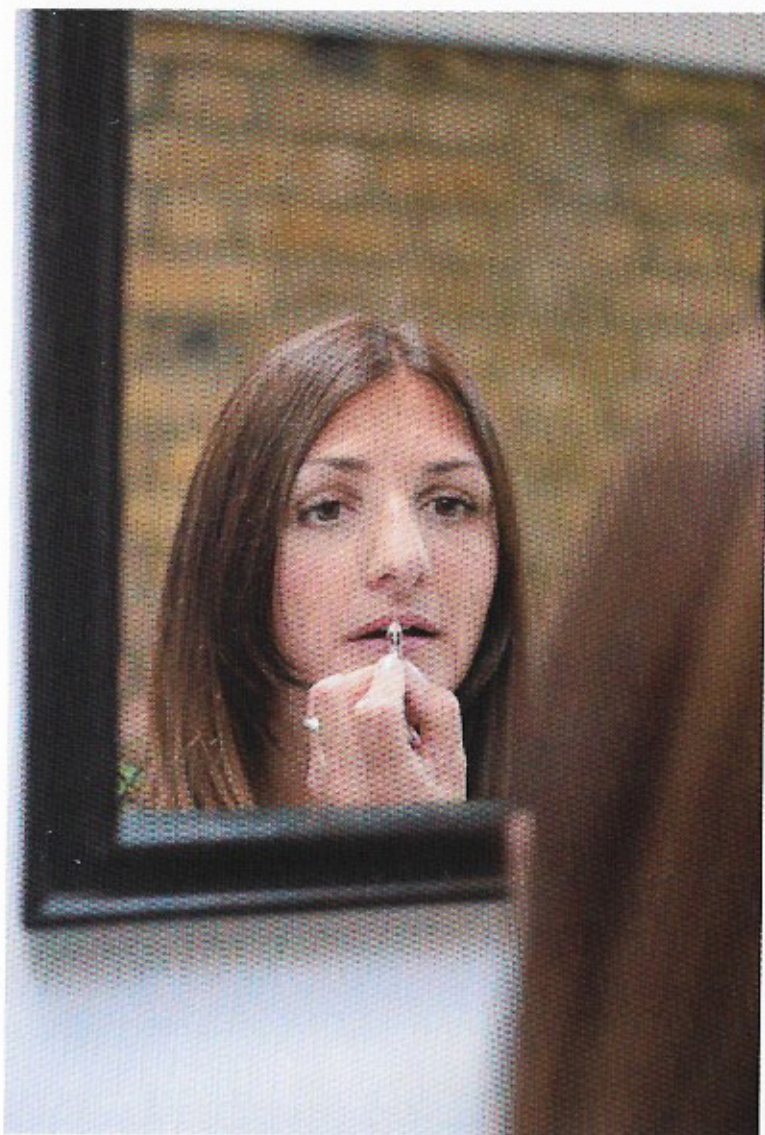


Amanda grew up in Barnes and moved to East Dulwich 19 years ago. She immediately noticed how friendly the area was. "I have always felt happy and safe here. Even though it's become more gentrified, it's still friendly."

Amanda trained as a hairdresser, but hairdressing was never part of her plan. She always wanted to be a makeup artist, but had been told that it would be helpful to start by learning to cut and colour hair. This proved to be invaluable advice and after training at Delamar Academy, she soon started getting work in the theatre, initially at the English National Opera, then at the Phantom of the Opera, which gave her a brilliant training.

Her husband Matt began to get a bit fed up with her working such long hours, often not getting home till late at night. When they decided to start a family she made the jump to working for herself, initially finding work by word of mouth. She and Matt had married in Richmond Park and she managed to get onto Richmond Park's wedding suppliers list. As she became more established she built up more local work, with the East Dulwich Forum playing a big part in spreading the word. Nowadays more than 80 per cent of her clients are local.





Amanda starts by meeting with the bride-to-be, usually at her home, for a trial. Going to her home and having a really good chat helps Amanda work out what look her client is aiming for. A few will have quite unrealistic views, but most just want to look like themselves "but nicer". It's helpful to know where they're getting married to get an idea of what look to go for. "If they're getting married at the Asylum in Peckham it's likely to be boho hair, floaty dresses and a wildflower bouquet. If they're getting married at Dulwich College it's going to be a bit more formal." And having a look around their home will help gauge their taste. Having done it for so long, Amanda usually gets it right first time.

Wedding hair and makeup is the bulk of Amanda's work, but she also does photoshoots and makeup lessons. When we ask what she sees herself doing in 10 years she has to think hard. She thinks she'll still be doing weddings, but would like to be back doing a bit more TV and film work too.

As Amanda is our last business we will not be taking the chain further, which is a shame, as she would have loved to send us to Blush & Ivory, the bridal boutique in Dog Kennel Hill, but we must end here.