

HABITAT

AN INSIDER'S LOOK



PEAK PERFORMER

A BRITISH gym is blurring the line between PLEASURE and PAIN with elegant aesthetics in the MIDST of heart-pumping cross-training ACTION.

WORDS NICOLE THOMAS

At first glance, Another Space looks more like a boutique hotel or sanctuary than a place where gym bunnies go to sweat it out. This

top class, non-membership cross-training gym, located in London's Covent Garden, combines the best of the health and wellbeing worlds: a chic set-up, Cowshed beauty products in the change rooms and a health food and smoothie bar. Oh, and the gym facilities aren't bad, either.

Launched in May 2016, Another Space is the sister company to the luxury health clubs of Third Space – bespoke gyms designed to make members feel at home.

“The core idea [behind Another Space] comes from a well-accepted premise: cross-training is better for you and more enjoyable than just doing one type of exercise,” says Colin Waggett, CEO of Third Space. “The luxury touches and beautiful design ensure that each visit is an inspiring experience, from the moment you cross the threshold to the moment you leave.”

To create the gym's fresh, minimalist interiors, the company worked with Goldstein Ween Architects, as well as their own interior designer. >



“We’ve worked with quite a few architects over the years, as well as interior designers. The architects we used here do a lot of high-end residential work, and we wanted to carry that luxury contemporary home feel into the studio,” says Colin, who was also the CEO at Fitness First for seven years.

While some clients are happy to give architects vague briefs and then only reappear late in the process, Colin says that working with Goldstein Ween was a united endeavour throughout.

“It was highly collaborative. We have our own interior designer, and we also wanted to make sure each and every operational detail was just right. It was a total team effort,” he says.

Another Space, which specialises in yoga, HIIT (high intensity interval training) and spin, features dramatic light displays in the exercise areas, a blackout screen that drops once yoga classes begin and bespoke punching bags that read ‘Kick A_S’. The communal areas are all about clean lines, natural light (via floor-to-ceiling glass windows) and simple typography; a dash of Nordic restraint that’s a perfect contrast to the high-octane energy required for the HIIT and cycle classes.

“We made some structural changes, such as adding the spectacular central staircase, which allows the light to flood downstairs which, while straightforward enough, was expensive,” says Colin of the two-storey space.



As seamlessly as the space appears to be inhabiting its old shell, the alteration didn’t come without its difficulties, which included making sure that neighbours weren’t privy to adrenalin-pumping music every time a class was held.

“Working in an old building always has its challenges. Getting the acoustics right has been challenging – we make a fair bit of noise in some of our classes, and we’ve taken sophisticated measures to insulate sound between studios and away from our neighbours. We’ve also made sure that the acoustic quality in the studios is exceptional,” says Colin.

Both Another Space and Third Space sit within the luxury health sector but, rather than rolling the concept of Another Space into the Third Space offering, they’ve been kept completely separate, allowing each brand to speak to its particular audience.

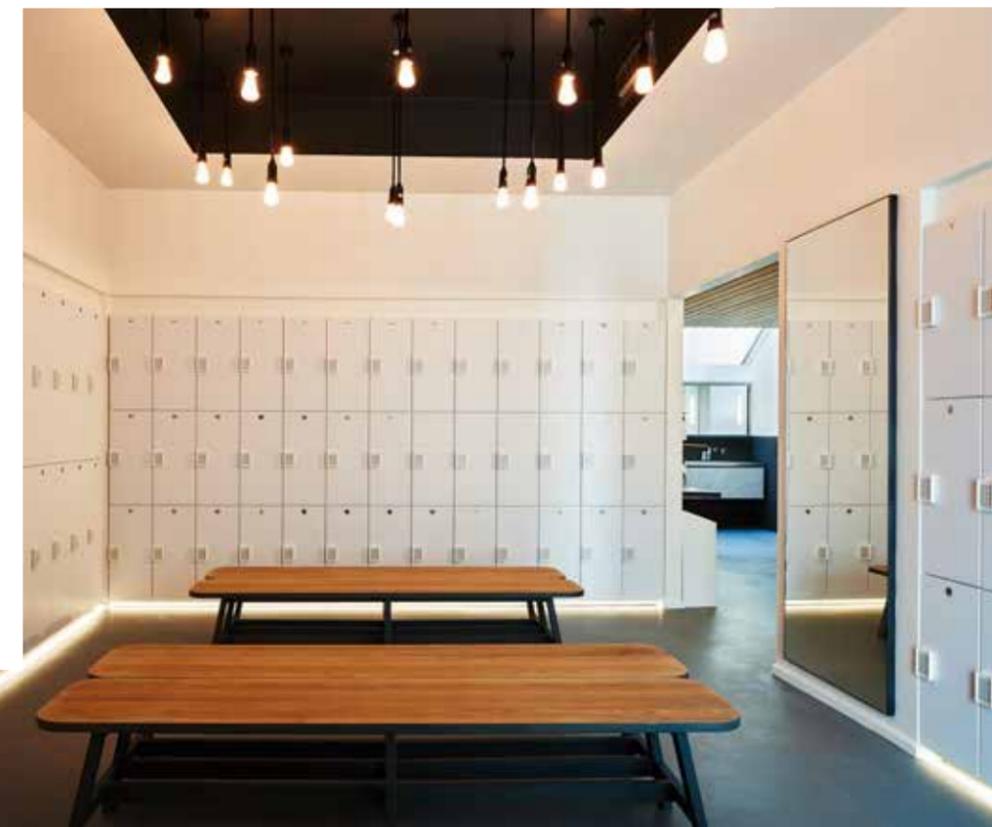
“Third Space and Another Space are sister companies, but day-to-day they operate quite independently. They appeal in some cases to different people, but also to the same people at different stages in their life, or even at different times in their week. The main challenge is being single-minded about what each brand and proposition is about and making sure it’s best-in-class in the market. If the customers of each business are happy – and we think they are – then we’re happy,” says Colin. >

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Another perk that Another Space has enjoyed has been the backing of investment firm Encore Capital, which acquired Third Space in 2014, and hired Colin. (Encore Capital's stated mission is to "seek to invest between £1 million to £10 million in buy-outs and development capital opportunities, working closely with entrepreneurs and management teams to help build scalable and successful businesses".)

"One of the benefits of being a sister company to Third Space is that business is established and profitable, with a strong balance sheet, so we've been able to fund it that way," explains Colin.

And Another Space is going so well that an additional site has been earmarked for later in 2017, with 10 more London sites planned for the end of this decade.

"We'll definitely be opening another site late this year, [or] early next, and are looking for more

sites for next year and beyond. I never like to say exactly how many we'll do," says Colin. 📌

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