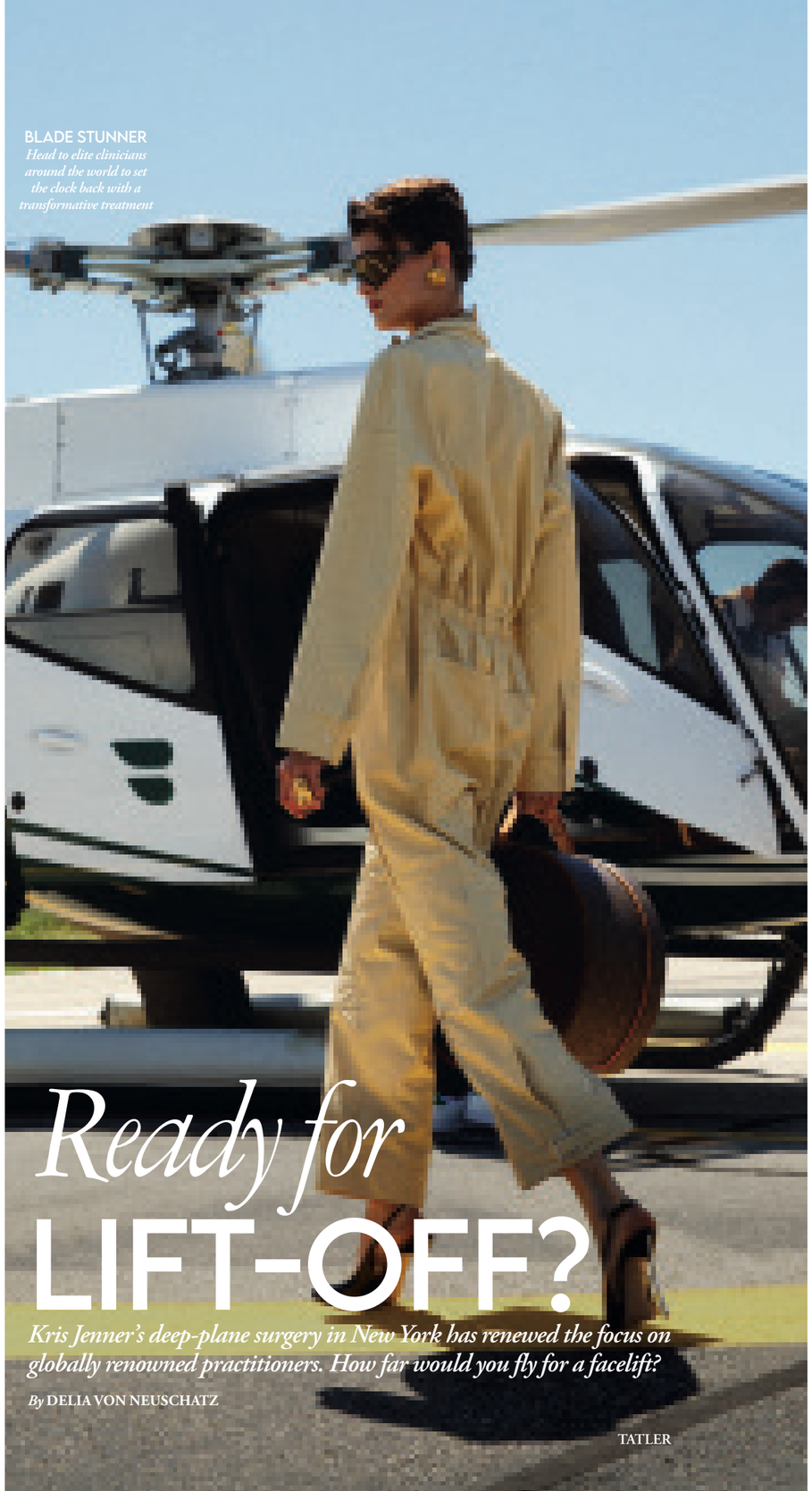


BLADE STUNNER
Head to elite clinicians around the world to set the clock back with a transformative treatment

Ready for LIFT-OFF?

Kris Jenner's deep-plane surgery in New York has renewed the focus on globally renowned practitioners. How far would you fly for a facelift?

By DELIA VON NEUSCHATZ

United States

DR BEN TALEI
Beverly Hills, California

'Happy' is an oft-used word at Talei's practice in Beverly Hills' Golden Triangle. Indeed the surgeon himself says, 'I'm best known for making patients look younger, fresher and happier.' His techniques are the AuraLyft facelift, using advanced muscle modulation techniques, and the Cupid Lift 'which I created to make the mouth look younger, sexier and happier'. One happy customer was the singer Sia. Onstage at an awards show in 2023, she gushed: 'I had an amazing facelift with Dr Talei… He's doing so much good work, and not just for the pop stars of the world.' Among Talei's charitable endeavours is fixing the cleft lips and palates of children in developing countries. *beverlyhillscenter.com*

DR TIMOTHY MARTEN
San Francisco, California

Marten is one of the titans of advanced face- and necklifts; and the board-certified, triple aesthetic fellowship-trained surgeon boasts more than 40 years' experience. Having built his reputation on the deft concealment of scars, as well as natural results and optimal neck contour, he says: 'The creation of a good neckline is perhaps one of the best markers of a master facelift surgeon.' Eschewing any specific technique, he prides himself on a bespoke approach: 'The goals cannot be uniformly achieved using a single "cookie-cutter" operation, as each face is unique.' Marten performs one facelift a day from a historic art deco medical building in San Francisco, where patients are pampered in overnight recovery suites and can avail themselves of make-up artists, lymphatic massage therapists and an on-site hyperbaric oxygen chamber. *martenclinic.com*

DR DAVID ROSENBERG
New York City, New York

One of the earliest advocates of deep-plane facelifts, Rosenberg has had 20 years to master this approach; his muscle-suspension technique not only creates age-appropriate results but also leads to expedited recovery times. Being equally adept at browlifts and rhinoplasties, he often combines procedures. (For instance, 'the nose naturally droops with age, and a subtle nasal tiplift can dramatically rejuvenate a person's appearance when paired with a facelift'.) He's renowned for the natural-looking outcomes of his rhinoplasties, nearly half of which are correcting botched work by other surgeons. Of his artistry, he declares: 'There's nothing quite like waking up in the morning, looking in the mirror and feeling great about your reflection.' But he's an artist in more ways than one – see the large-scale abstracts in his Manhattan clinic. He painted them himself. *drdavidrosenberg.com*

DR MIKE NAYAK
St Louis, Missouri

Triple board-certified, Nayak specialises in preservation deep-plane extended lifts. His goal is to 'make people look younger and prettier; not like they had a nice facelift but like they never needed one in the first place'. Though his Omakase Facelift simultaneously addresses signs of ageing in the face and neck, he still stresses that 'the result has much more to do with what the surgeon sees and understands – and a good surgeon takes a handful of different techniques to generate really pretty results'. Unlike most of his peers, he's wonderfully transparent: Nayak posts his prices online. *nayakplasticsurgery.com*

DR NEIL GORDON
Wilton/Greenwich, Connecticut

Although Gordon avoids social media, advertising or giving procedures catchy names, he's a global thought leader in his field. He adopted the deep-plane facelift 30 years ago – long before it became popular – and since then has been recognised for advancing the technique in multiple ways, among them by preservation. (This involves limited delamination and, by keeping skin, fat and muscle together, reduces potential injury to these precious assets.) He operates on the face and neck as one unit, and says: 'If you don't include the neck, there's no purpose in doing it.' Performing one facelift a day and carrying out 100 per cent of the work himself, he practises out of the only retreat in the US to combine a private surgical centre, hotel and medispa. Better yet, it's located on a bucolic 18th-century estate in Connecticut, an hour's drive from Manhattan. (Jennifer Aniston and Sandra Bullock have been spotted.) *retreatatsplitrock.com*

DR ELIZABETH CHANCE
Charlottesville, Virginia

Chance's practice is exclusively dedicated to female patients and known for a discreet service which includes meticulous post-operative care. Chance specialises in the extended deep-plane face- and necklift. Why is it her favourite procedure? Because 'in my hands, it's such a powerful tool for rejuvenation, bringing youth, vigour and beauty back to the face. What it contributes to refining and beautifying the female face is just extraordinary.' While she operates on a broad span of ages, perimenopausal women in their mid-forties to fifties comprise the largest part of her clientele. And a physician patient, thrilled with her results, has described her as 'a technical phenomenon'. *drchance.com*

DR STEVEN LEVINE
New York City, New York

Too bad the publicity-averse Levine performed Kardashian matriarch Kris Jenner's recent, much acclaimed facelift. It's made him a social media phenomenon, and now we all know he favours a variation of the SMAS lift over the more invasive deep-plane approach. With a background in microsurgery and post-cancer reconstruction, Levine for years used to share a practice with Dr Daniel Baker – a legendary veteran of plastic surgery – before branching out on his own; and as an aesthetic starting point, he has patients bring in photos of their younger selves. While his focus is on faces, he also does body work: breast lifts and reductions, liposuction, thigh lifts and tummy tucks. He accepts new patients only through referrals – if you're one of Jenner's friends, it's said you can get in front of him by giving a secret password. *stevenlevinemd.com*

DR DAVID HIDALGO
New York City, New York

Hidalgo's experience stands out, even among the elite. His career began as a reconstructive microsurgeon at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center where he served as chief of plastic surgery, rebuilding ravaged breasts, bodies and faces; before that, he graduated with a double major in fine arts and biology from Georgetown. He's known for his facelifts, rhinoplasties, breast augmentations and so-called 'mummy makeovers'. His practice's walls are distinguished by graphite drawings of family members through the years, chronicling the ageing process. (He's been sketching since he was six.) And he says: 'A blending of aesthetic vision derived from my background as a practising visual artist, together with surgical skills honed from world-class training, produces striking but natural results devoid of surgical fingerprints.' *drdavidhidalgo.com*

DR STEVEN TEITELBAUM
Santa Monica, California

Most famous for his breast surgeries (augmentations, reductions, lifts and revisions), this Harvard-trained doctor began his career in post-cancer reconstruction. He says there are two things people say to him: first, 'You have the most beautiful results I've ever seen'; secondly, they talk 'about the easy and low-pain recovery'. He's also renowned for excellent tummy tucks, post-partum reconstructions and 'menopause makeovers', which address the stubborn body changes that come with age. The surgeon claims 'there's not an Academy Awards where I don't see many of my patients on the red carpet'. But what gives him the most professional gratification is operating on mammogram technicians, fellow plastic surgeons and oncological surgeons: 'People who know the way things should look and who see that I understand all of the issues that go on with the breasts.' *drteitelbaum.com*

DR STEVEN COHEN
San Diego, California

'The human face has always been a mirror of inner life,' says this surgeon with more than 30 years of experience in plastic surgery. Cohen made his name in facial rejuvenation and contouring – particularly deep-plane face- and necklifts – and in grafting regenerative facial fat. Now he's recognised worldwide for pioneering a stem-cell-enriched version of the latter; a method of 'injectable tissue replacement' which provides superior volume retention and improved skin quality. He's also a co-founder of the London Regenerative Institute, where such anti-ageing treatments as advanced exosome therapy are administered, as well as cellular age testing and stem cell banking. Like quite a few of his peers, he's an accomplished artist, whose mixed-media paintings on handmade Japanese paper have found their way into numerous private collections. *facesplus.com*

DR CHIA CHI KAO
Santa Monica, California

Described as 'technically extraordinary' and 'a tremendous thought leader' by his peers, Kao has taken facial rejuvenation in a new direction with his Ponytail Lift and Ponytail Facelift. (These rely on an endoscope inserted through small, hidden incisions to enable the lifting of both facial muscles and tissues upwards in one sweep, from the top of the head to the bottom of the neck.) According to the doctor: 'It's very, very natural. It follows and preserves the anatomy while lifting along the axis of beauty.' Kao has been perfecting his surgical techniques for nearly 30 years and his methods extend to body work and fat grafting. *kaoplasticsurgery.com*

DR MARC MANI
Beverly Hills, California

'Being a practising portrait artist, I particularly love facelifts,' says Mani, who performs the deep-plane version both open and endoscopically. (Considered one of the United States' two leading practitioners of the latter – the other is Dr Chia Chi Kao – his trademarked Scarless Lift re-shapes the face without that tell-tale line ▷



READY, PEDI, GO!
There's no limit to air miles travelled or time spent in the business of first-class grooming

◁ in front of the ear.) Another of his specialities is rhinoplasty, 'the procedure that demands the most artistic sculptural skills' – which explains why beauty mogul Huda Kattan chose him for her nose job. 'Honestly, he's so good that my brother didn't even know I'd had one,' she revealed. When he's not painting, Mani devotes his time to pro bono work, providing transformative surgeries to survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking. *marcmani.co*

Elsewhere in the world

DR ALEXANDRE MARCHAC
Paris, France

Marchac comes from a long line of surgeons – five generations, in fact – and his training focused on micro- and complex reconstructive surgery. His speciality is to combat ageing on the face and neck, as well as around the eyes, with a modified deep-plane lift. As for his aesthetic, natural is the name of the game. 'It's kind of cheesy to say that,' he observes, 'because every surgeon claims they want natural results. But not everyone achieves them.' As for his hometown clientele, he continues: 'There's a difference when you compare Paris to other cities or countries. In France, women are very conservative, so the first thing they say when they come in is not "I want a perfect jawline" or "I want high cheekbones", but "I want to look refreshed." They would rather no one noticed they've had any work at all.' *drmarchac.com*

DR VINCENT NGUYEN
Paris, France

Both men and women seek out the services of plastic and reconstructive surgeon Nguyen, who performs a range of procedures on faces, breasts and bodies (including Brazilian butt lifts and genital cosmetic work). On faces, he'll use either the SMAS or deep-plane method, as required by the patient's anatomy and desired outcome. He's best known for his breast reconstructions and a revolutionary use of custom-made implants. The former chief of the prestigious plastic surgery department at l'Hôpital Saint-Louis, Nguyen describes his speciality as 'the most fascinating of all, because it allows me to artfully fix and improve the body from head to toe'. *chirurgie-esthetique.paris*

DR FRANCISCO GÓMEZ BRAVO
Madrid, Spain

'The necklift is the new facelift,' declares the paradigm-shifting Bravo. He says the former is the key to facial rejuvenation because a crisp jawline is created not by tightening the lower face but by re-contouring what's underneath the jaw. Though his deep-plane technique, which preserves the thickness of the neck's superficial layers, has garnered him awards, Bravo is not just 'the necklift guy'. He's won acclaim for a technique combining breast implants with a fat transfer to create a natural-looking cleavage; and for his pioneering open/closed approach to rhinoplasty, exposing the cartilage without scarring. Likening the experience to haute couture, Bravo does everything himself, including the suturing; given the location of his practice, in the upscale shopping area of Salamanca, it's a fitting analogy. *clinicagomezbravo.com*

DR ANDRÉS FRESCHI
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Although Freschi introduced the deep-plane facelift to South America, it's not his only claim to fame. The facial plastic surgeon is renowned for the way he can speed up recovery times by reducing the likelihood of common snags: using a stimulator to avoid nerve damage and a patented hemostatic sponge to prevent clotting, 'the most frequent complication'. His patients – 80 per cent of them from overseas – see him for his naturally youthful results and nearly undetectable scars. For optimal outcomes, Freschi advocates a preventative approach to rejuvenation. 'Given the fact that the best and most natural results are observed in young people,' he says, 'the sooner, the better – because it changes the ageing process!' *andresfreschi.com*

DR ALEXIS VERPAELE
Ghent, Belgium

Verpaele gained international recognition for helping to develop the Minimal Access Cranial Suspension lift (a short-scar, minimally invasive procedure which requires less time under the knife or in recovery than more traditional methods) as well as for his pioneering work with nano-fat. Together with colleagues, he has developed a microneedling technique that can deliver nano-fat of a uniform consistency – it's been taken up globally – leading to improved texture and elasticity, as well as reduced pore size. 'Our hallmark is facial rejuvenation with preservation of a natural, non-operated appearance,' he says. *tonnardverpaele.com*

DR BIANCA KNOLL
Frankfurt, Germany

While Yale alumna Knoll also operates on the body in her elegant Frankfurt practice, her focus is on deep-plane face- and necklifts, and profileplasties (which correct side views of the face, often by combining treatments such as rhinoplasty and chin augmentation). Her background in craniofacial surgery gives her an edge, with no detail too minute for her consideration. 'My approach is not guided by notions of "ideal beauty", but by facial proportions,' says Knoll, 'as well as the nuanced balance of a patient's individual features and – most importantly – by perceived emotions.' These latter are a concept outlined by the surgeon in a landmark study showing that even the subtlest variation in a subject's brows had a significant effect on how their mood was perceived – a topic Knoll frequently lectures on. *dr-bianca-knoll.co*

DR MARIO PELLE CERAVOLO
Rome, Italy

Trained by the legendary plastic surgeon Ivo Pitanguy in Brazil, Ceravolo is a master of the scalpel, with more than 30 years' experience in performing facelifts, necklifts and breast surgeries. It's no exaggeration to say that his innovations have helped shape his field; most notably, his incision-free techniques for tackling neck laxity and minimising both prominent platysmal bands and submandibular (salivary) glands, which have resulted in shorter recovery times and fewer side effects. His unique SMAS sculpting approach for the face delivers a customised outcome, and patients fly in from far and wide for his eye surgeries, addressing hollowness and appearance, which he can change by raising the lateral angle and thus 'transforming a round eye into an almond shape'. *isaps.org*

DR LESSANDRO MARTINS
São Paulo, Brazil

Martins is a plastic surgeon with an expertise in deep-plane facelifts. But his proficiency also extends to endoscopic lifts, browlifts, forehead reductions, liplifts, necklifts and otoplasties. Plus any type of rhinoplasty (primary, secondary or preservation) with his 'fishbone' technique involving precise bone cuts to allow for reshaping without unpredictable fractures. 'The objective of a facelift is repositioning muscles and skin so you end up with a leaner face and a natural play of light and shadow.' So, drawing inspiration from da Vinci's *sfumato* technique, his procedures aim to highlight and darken features appropriately. In 2024, he and fellow surgeon Steven Levine performed side by side facelifts on 65-year-old identical twins, employing their respective techniques of deep-plane and SMAS. The jury's still out on which sister had the better results. *lessandromartins.com.br*

Non-surgical

DR DORIS DAY
New York City, USA

Across the street from the Frick Collection, dermatologist Day focuses on 'longevity beauty'. She employs a combination of topicals, devices and injectables that 'create lasting balance, so you look great but nobody knows what was done'. But first, Day asks patients what they like best when they look in the mirror. (The aim is to show them 'what they naturally have and that I'm not the one creating it'.) She explains: 'I'm helping to celebrate their own authentic beauty, and there is a lot of power in that change of mindset.' The doctor's forename was chosen by her physician father because Doris Day was his favourite movie star; she says she also inherited his healthy living ethos. Namely, 'we should all die young at an old age,' she laughs. 'And we should be beautiful doing it.' *dorisdaymd.com*

DR AVA SHAMBAN
Beverly Hills and Santa Monica, USA

Shamban's clinics are one-stop shops for dermatological care, from medical to cosmetic. Each offers lasers and energy-based devices that address all aspects of rejuvenation and prejuvenation, not to mention machines that freeze fat and tighten both muscles and skin. With some 50 employees on call, she's always ready for that 'coterie of Hollywood people' who need to prepare for a photo shoot or red-carpet walk at a moment's notice. Still, she stresses the importance of the individual approach; her protocols always take into account ethnicity, skin type and age. And her goal? 'To change the way the future looks for you, so that you look like the best version of yourself and not like you're entering the witness protection programme.' *avamd.com*

DR GIULIO BORBON
Milan, Italy

The impossibly chic Studio Borbon attracts a worldwide clientele in search of its helmsman's signature 'face harmonisation'. This is a multipronged take on balancing that aims to optimise skin quality, laxity and volume by deploying dermal fillers, energy-based devices, regenerative treatments and sometimes the scalpel to replenish what was lost. However, says plastic surgeon Borbon, 'I don't want to change people's appearance, only to replace what has gone.' Thus he uses minimum filler, is always guided by ultrasound for 'precision and safety' and achieves 'results that make us really proud and a little bit renowned'. *studioborbon.com*

DR SHINO BAY AGUILERA
Fort Lauderdale, USA

Bay Aguilera is a board-certified dermatologist and dermatologic surgeon specialising in advanced regenerative and aesthetic medicine. He's internationally recognised for coining the idea of 'functional' aesthetic medicine, which aims to address the root causes of visible ageing and health issues. In an effort to slow the former, he uses bioregenerative substances such as Sculptra, Radiesse and Renuva – as well as peptides, exosomes and micronutrients – to stimulate the body into producing its own collagen, elastin and fat. As he explains, there's more to functional practice than simulating youth with synthetic gels: 'We focus on cellular-level rejuvenation, combining artistry with science to restore harmony, vitality and balance to the face and body.' Not that his own looks haven't been maintained with judicious plastic surgery. (Step forward Dr Chia Chi Kao.) *shinobayderm.com*

DR ANTONI CALMON
Paris, France; London, UK

Calmon is the go-to guy patronised by the fashion set. From his clinics in Paris and London, he administers discreet rejuvenating treatments from head to toe; he is particularly regarded for his non-surgical facial re-contouring, which gives structural lift and definition without visible volume. (His signature 'jawlift' technique – using ultrasound to guide calcium-based injectables – restores tension and redraws facial lines with precision.) The doctor is also sought after for micro-modulated toxin delivery that prioritises natural movement and luminous skin texture. Most of Calmon's patients hail from the public-facing worlds of culture, film and politics. They choose him, he says, for results 'that whisper elegance rather than announce intervention'. *drantonicalmon.com* □

PHOTOGRAPHS: DANIEL SACHON; GREG LOTUS/TRUNK ARCHIVE