

“*What lies deeper in the skin ... are what causes the true ageing deformity. Lifting the skin simply does not work well*”

as well as outer skin – the trunk, branches as well as the leaves.

“To lift a fallen tree you need to lift the entire tree from the trunk (ligaments), not just the leaves,” he says.

Father Time takes its toll and for many it shows in the face as the skin begins to lose volume and elasticity due to sun exposure, smoking, wear and tear, and even blinking thousands of times a day.

Zoumaras says you can tell the age of a person by the anatomy of their face.

“The reason for this is the descent of the face as we age,” he says.

While time marches on, Zoumaras observes men and women of all ages have an innate desire to look beautiful and, if attending a function for example, will shower and cleanse, put on make-up to conceal blemishes, style

their hair according to trends and wear fashionable clothing.

“Plastic surgery is the final continuum of beauty treatment,” he says.

“Today this desire to look your best is influenced by social media with many 20-somethings presenting to my office for enhancements of cheeks, lips and even surgery.”

So if there is a little sagging in the face, does it really need the entire “tree raising” or just a little skin lift?

“When I talk about a facelift, I mean, lifting and rejuvenating the entire face. The entire face includes the brow, eyelids, face and neck,” he says.

“Once upon a time, a facelift, simply and semantically speaking, was meant to lift the facial skin. Although lifting the skin is important, the skin is a mere cover for the face, and only contributes to 20 per cent of facial ageing deformities.

“What lies deeper in the skin – the muscles and ligaments – are what causes the true ageing deformity of jowls, lower eyelid hollowing, and deep naso-labial folds.

“Lifting the skin simply does not work well or last a long time. It’s akin to a Band-Aid fix that is temporary as it does not address the underlying problem.”

**Zoumaras freely concedes not everyone who has jowls and loose skin seeks a facelift.**

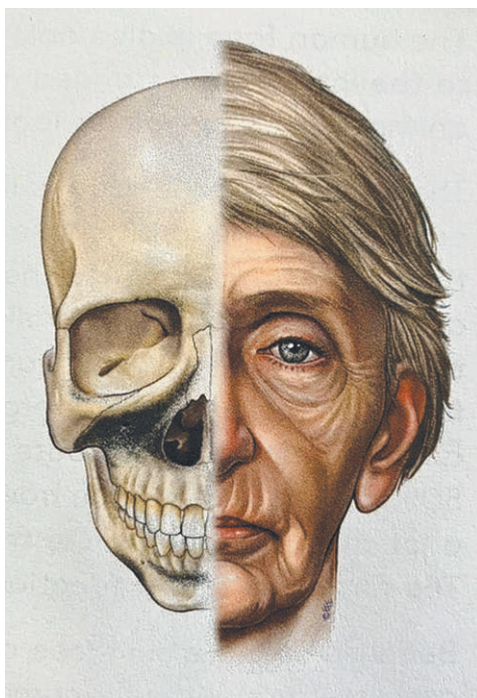
For some it creates a face full of character, but for others it can be an issue of concern every time they look in the mirror. And with each passing day, it is a one-way street.

This is where he says the decision for some facework can be due to “an internal calling that has everything to do with psychology”.

“A facelift empowers and gives confidence,” he says.

“Many patients value the way they look, and it forms an important part of who they are.

“Others have reached a point in their life where they want to do something for themselves and be confident.”



Some numbers from the book to mull over:

- The average age of a facelift patient is 55, but Zoumaras says it can “benefit patients from as young as 30 and certainly in their late 30s and early 40s, I am doing more and more facelifts in younger patients”.
- Just 20 per cent of his patients say they want a facelift “to look younger”.
- The “ancient golden ratio of phi which is 67 per cent” is a rule for beauty – the face should be divided into thirds and the nasal projection should be  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the length.
- A facelift plastic surgeon dedicates 6-8 hours for a full face and neck lift.
- The first documented modern facelift was on a German ballerina in 1901, then the reconstructive skills learned by surgeons in WWII repairing the form and function of the injured led to modern cosmetic surgery for aesthetics rather than function.
- A proper facelift takes in five concentric layers of the face going down to the bone, not just the outer layer of skin.

Zoumaras likens this final point to restoring a fallen tree, saying you need to work on ligaments, muscles and subcutaneous tissues

**Clockwise from main: Plastic surgeon Dr Jack Zoumaras; at work in his Edgecliff surgery; with his parents Nicolas and Joulia at his graduation; with wife Maria in Paris while he was studying facial surgery; and artwork showing sagging skin associated with ageing, and on the left the bony skeleton that loses volume around the orbit (eye), nose and oral cavities, from the book *The Art of a Facelift* by Zoumaras. Pictures: Dean Martin, John Fotiadis**