



THE ART OF A FACELIFT

Leading surgeon Jack Zoumaras on why facelifts can and do change lives, where they can go horribly wrong, and why the cosmetic cowboys need to be stamped out

Story BRAD CROUCH

Wrinkles from an occasionally misspent youth – and sometimes misspent adulthood – give me character, I say.

Laugh lines show I've laughed a bit.

But after reaching a certain age I'm wondering if the teabag eye bags are such a good look. Is nip 'n' tuck only for crazy Californians seeking youth, or is it something that can restore confidence, and keep people like me verging on codger status in the career game, in a society where so much revolves around youthful looks?

Is a facelift only for desperate Hollywood celebs trying to cling to youth, or is it as natural an extension of staying self-confident and relevant as make-up, hairstyle and clothes?

These questions and more I put to a man who grew up in Cowandilla, the much loved son of Cypriot immigrants, who trained for almost two decades to become an "artiste", a specialist in facial plastic surgery, and is now one of the country's foremost and respected plastic surgeons.

Artiste Plastic Surgery is the name of Dr Jack Zoumaras's clinic. And the name of his new book is *The Art of a Facelift*.

"The name Artiste Plastic Surgery was chosen as it speaks of elegance, sophistication, professionalism and skill," Zoumaras says.

"The word 'artiste' is French for artist, and plastic surgery is a perfect blend of art and science ... as a facelift plastic surgeon I sculpt one's eyes, nose, and face to give patients balance and empower them with confidence."

It is a field of fascination for many. It holds the promise of near-eternal youth, and the fear you could end up like a celebrity horror story, or someone on "Botched" – a FoxTel show about cosmetic surgery gone wrong.

Zoumaras dispels myths and sheds intriguing light on the field in his book and during an in-depth interview with SA Weekend.

Some background. He grew up in Cowandilla, by far the youngest of five in a close-knit family, quipping he is "the living proof the oral contraceptive pill is 99 per cent efficacious because I am the 1 per cent".

Dad Nicolas was a slaughterman at the abattoirs, mum Joulia a full-time homemaker, and Jack was the first in his family to go to university after graduating from Adelaide High.

He wanted to study medicine since childhood and would "read the Adelaide Advertiser every year on those students who got into medical school".

A honours degree in health sciences at the University of Adelaide was followed by a medical degree at Flinders University where he decided on plastic surgery, followed by years more training, work and study in New York, Paris and San Francisco to sub-specialise in facial plastic surgery. His qualifications are lengthy.

From Cowandilla, he is now based in Sydney's ritzy harbourside Darling Point with wife Maria and son Nikolas, and his book makes it clear family and God are pivotal in his life.

He describes the birth of Nikolas, which occurred a few years after he became a plastic surgeon, as a pivotal moment which would inform his work from thereon in.

"... having Nikolas gave me purpose and zeal for life," he writes.

"The moment I looked into his eyes I was overwhelmed with profound love. I was so proud of him and truly felt the calling to be the best role model for him, and this gave me a huge stimulus to step it up with my private practice."

But enough background – if you are reading this you no doubt want to know about facelifts, and the book provides as detailed a breakdown of the procedure, its variations and history, as you are likely to find.