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Dr. Jonathan Pontell excels
in the art of maintaining and
enhancing patients' beauty

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Artistic TOUCH

Facial plastic surgeon Dr. Jonathan Pontell brings unrivaled experience and around-the-clock accessibility to the art of maintaining and enhancing patients' beauty

by **BILL DONAHUE** | photography by **JODY ROBINSON**

The face, much like a museum-worthy painting or sculpture, is a work of art—delicate, unique and, in truth, in need of occasional maintenance to preserve its beauty. Whether to maintain or enhance, the decision to change one's face should be entrusted with a gifted sculptor of sorts, one blessed with exceptional skills honed by some of the country's finest medical institutions. In other words, someone like Jonathan Pontell, M.D., F.A.C.S.

Dr. Pontell is a board-certified facial plastic surgeon at the Aesthetic Facial Plastic Surgery Center Inc., which is based in Media. His training, experience and artistic sensitivity have combined to make him one of the region's most sought-after specialists in all facets of facial plastic surgery. In fact, he is routinely featured in respected publications as one of the region's best facial plastic surgeons, and his practice draws patients not only from the Philadelphia area but also from New Jersey, Delaware and the entire East Coast.

"People come to me because I'm a specialist with a huge amount of

experience; we do only surgeries and procedures of the face and neck," says Dr. Pontell, who has been in practice since 2000. "Specializing in facial plastic surgery gives you more experience. I perform more than 100 rhinoplasties a year and probably 150 facelifts a year. For me, that's what I enjoy doing, and for the patient, they tend to get a better result by seeing someone who specializes."

Dr. Pontell performs surgeries such as facelifts, less invasive mini-facelifts, rhinoplasty (also known as a nose job), blepharoplasty (eyelid surgery) and brow lifts/forehead lifts. He also offers a number of minimally invasive procedures, from laser skin rejuvenation and cosmetic injectables to other noninvasive treatments such as Ulthera, which is a procedure designed to tighten the skin of the face and neck for a more youthful, rejuvenated appearance; he was the first surgeon in the Delaware Valley to offer this lifting procedure. Although the face and neck are clearly his specialty, he also offers options to help patients reduce their waistlines, including treatments of a high-intensity ultrasound device known as Liposonix.

Life-changing Results

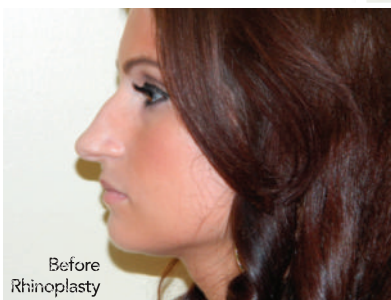
"The two procedures I most enjoy are facelifts and rhinoplasties. The mini-facelift is a popular treatment option for people who prefer smaller, less involved procedures," he says. "With a mini-facelift, the incisions are hidden in the creases around the ears, whereas with a traditional facelift, an additional incision under the chin is necessary. The mini-facelift is an excellent option in patients who don't have extensive aging in the neck. The larger, traditional facelift is necessary in patients with very heavy or fatty necks. The mini-facelift is usually performed in the office under local anesthesia in about an hour and a half. It is less invasive and has much less downtime than the traditional facelift."

As many as 80 percent of the facelifts he performs are of the less invasive kind. "A lot of people with full-time jobs are opting for the minis, even though the traditional surgery is typically going to be slightly more effective and longer lasting," he says. "In these kinds of cases, they will want to do the next best thing, and it's my job as the surgeon to help them achieve the look they want in the best manner possible, considering all the variables."

Regardless of the procedure, each patient begins their journey with a consultation, through which Dr. Pontell learns their specific wants and concerns, as well as thorough evaluation of their bone structure and skin condition. He believes the best results are achieved through personalized care and individualized treatment plans. Depending on the patient, a treatment plan might consist of a single procedure or several procedures performed during a single session.

"Sometimes people will know exactly what they want and think they need, coming in and saying, 'I want a mini-facelift,' and other times they need more guidance," he says. "There's a process to figuring out the procedure that makes the most sense. ... Here, we take the time to provide the best possible experience; I'm accessible 24/7 if they have any questions, both before and after the procedure. I give patients my cellphone number and even my home phone number so they can reach me anytime they need me."

Dr. Pontell's skills have been honed from years of academic training after acquiring his doctorate at Jefferson Medical College, including a specialized residency in otolaryngology and head-and-neck surgery at the State University of New York Health Science Center at Brooklyn, as well as a



fellowship in facial plastic and reconstructive surgery at Mount Sinai Medical Center in New York City. Also, for three and a half years he served the U.S. Army as director of facial plastic and reconstructive surgery at Tripler Army Medical Center in Oahu, Hawaii, as well as visiting surgeon to the Republic of the Marshall Islands and to Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. After his military service, he traveled extensively throughout the country and spent time learning from professionals he characterizes as "masters and leaders" in facial plastic and reconstructive surgery.

Today he performs about half of his surgeries in the office under local anesthesia and the other half, which require sedation or general anesthesia, at fully accredited surgical facilities equipped with the latest surgical and anesthesia technologies. The rest of his team—nurses and anesthesiologists—have the experience and credentials designed to promote patient safety before, during and after surgery. Furthermore, he personally oversees his patients' recovery process to help ensure that the healing proceeds smoothly and on schedule. As a result, his patients achieve outstanding aesthetic results—"I couldn't be more pleased with how my nose looks," says one patient following her rhinoplasty, while others describe him as "a gifted artist" and "a wonderful surgeon"—who are able to return to their daily

activities shortly after their procedures have been completed.

Enhancing the structure and aesthetics of a patient's face, however, requires much more than exceptional training and a deft hand; it also requires imagination. Considering his artistic background, it's no surprise that Dr. Pontell chose facial plastic surgery as his vocation. As the son of an artist mother and woodworker father, he grew up "doing things that were creative," such as wood carving and stained glass, learning from those influences and applying them to his own interests. As he grew older, he began taking an interest in medicine and, specifically, surgery.

"I thought surgery was just an amazing thing," he says. "The idea of taking people apart and putting them back together with better form, function and appearance really appealed to me. I'm proud to offer an entire spectrum of treatments for facial rejuvenation, not only with surgery but also fillers, injectables and ultrasound devices that have completely no downtime. I chose to specialize in facial plastic surgery—not just dabbling in it, which some doctors do—because what's more important than someone's face?" ■

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