

EDITOR: SARAH BROWN

RETHINKING THE FACELIFT

IS TRADITIONAL
SURGERY PASSÉ?
SANDRA BALLENTINE
ON THE NEW OPTIONS
THAT HAVE PEOPLE
WONDERING: DID SHE
OR DIDN'T SHE?

WITHOUT A TRACE

THE LATEST COSMETIC INNOVATIONS SEEK TO RESTORE YOUTHFUL
CONTOURS, SEAMLESSLY. PHOTOGRAPHED BY GRANT CORNETT.

Back in my fresh-faced 30s, there were a few things I thought I'd never have to do: lie about my age, have a facelift, or talk to strange men on Skype. Fast-forward to my 40s, and I'm at my desk anxiously awaiting an on-line consultation with Chia Chi Kao, M.D., one of plastic surgery's ascending stars. With high-profile clients

scattered around the globe (Tahiti, Saudi Arabia, Singapore—oh, the sun damage), the Santa Monica-based surgeon is a virtual-office visit veteran. I, on the other hand, am a self-conscious wreck. What should I wear? Is concealer out of the question? Why did I have that third glass of Cabernet last night? Not that he'd make any decisions over the Internet, but what if he thinks I need . . . work?

Kao belongs to an elite corps of doctors (a handful that includes top surgeons like Sherrell Aston, Trevor Born, and Jason Diamond) who are pushing the facelift forward, doing highly customized work that, well, doesn't look like work. While most traditional lifts rely on one big pull to iron out lines and hoist everything skyward (which can result in that terrifyingly tight, unnatural look that you can *beauty >124*