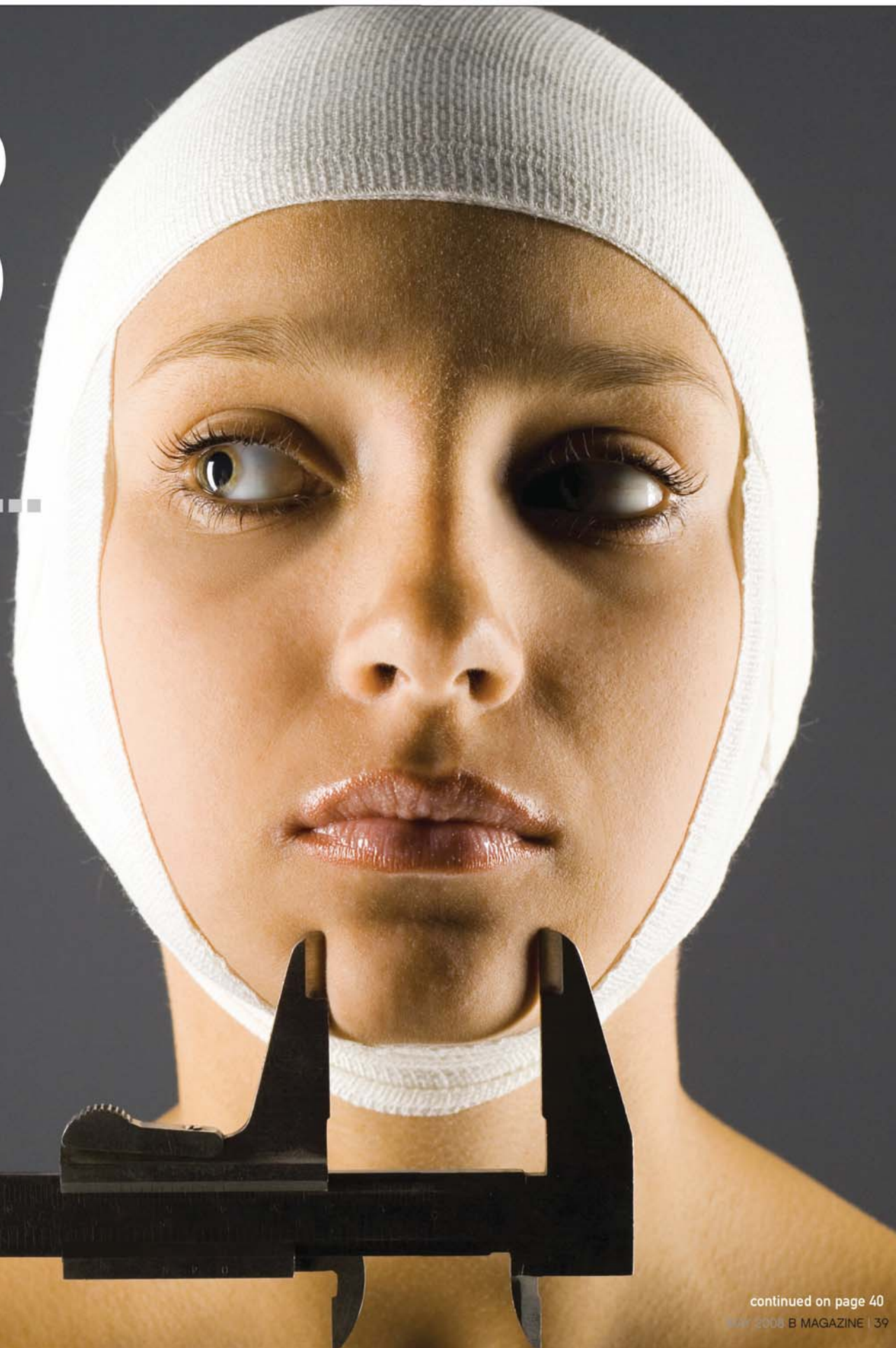


# PLUMPED PULLED AND STRETCHED...

AND WE'RE TALKING HUMANS!

BY ANN KAPLAN

We are living in an industry of pulled, stretched, plumped and augmented people; an era where there is no limit to how young you can look. We know we can whittle off a few years and doors are forever opening for new procedures. There is hope after fifty, at least hope to maintain that youthful façade housing our fit (and wise) characters. But what happens if we take it too far? Some of my stretched and pulled friends are mere shadows of themselves. I don't think I would even recognize them if their "matter" ran out. Are we becoming too dependent on the wonder drugs – the injectable youth serum? The answer, after spending years (aging) in this industry, is "no." Some people will always take anything too far, but the majorities are more conservative.



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### NATURALLY, IT'S BETTER

It has never ceased to amaze me that there are those who will look at cosmetic enhancement and scoff at the thought of it; they believe that beauty comes from within and to tamper with nature is, well, wrong. I do agree on one thing, beauty is not skin deep, and the slightly augmented can attain to this. Beautiful is on the inside, it is seen in a balanced life where our priorities are not superficial yet we care enough to take care of ourselves and be the best we can be.

Protestors to any form of cosmetic enhancement appear to have a preconceived notion that those seeking some sort of enhancement, be it in goops and creams or a full facelift, are ladies of leisure – the ones who strut a stretched and pulled cheek, looking down on the rest, wanting to raise an eyebrow (but not able to). In fact, those that unjustly tear apart the cosmetic enhancement industry have one common denominator, naivety to what they perceive as an industry for only “beautiful people”.

### REALITY

The majority of surgical recipients are not those that are portrayed on reality TV shows, or the humorous caricatures we may envision, they are those who “just want to look normal.” They might have a problem that has stopped them from gaining confidence (sometimes it is self inflicted) and with cosmetic enhancement they can gain the confidence that enables a new, positive take on life. Many people; however, do not go beyond the viewpoint that beauty and enhancement is only for the wealthy, and miss seeing the happiness that even a “less privileged” person finds in a little enhancement.

I do not believe that cosmetic enhancement is not acceptable, nor do I believe it is always the answer. When a person makes an informed, intelligent decision(s), I believe they should have the right, the freedom to choose how they want to look to the world around them. However, just like everything else, have your eyes open, wide. It may be a little here and a little there, but it all adds up.