


Aesthetics, Unfiltered

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Who's to Judge?

Hi friends,

It's been a terrible few weeks for humankind and I sincerely hope you're all managing to find small moments of peace during these dark days. Please know, as I jump into this newsletter, I'm doing so with an acute awareness that the topics I cover are absurdly trivial relative to current events. But if you're here, now, reading this, maybe you could use a brief distraction? Nevertheless, I'm sending love to you and yours.

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With terror and heartbreak dominating the headlines, you perhaps missed this recent newsflash from the [New York Post](#): “‘Morning Show’ fans cringe at Jennifer Aniston’s face: ‘Unrecognizable and weird.’”

Sigh.

As a Gen X-er, I'm a longtime Aniston fan. I've marveled at her unwavering beauty over the decades. Unlike some of her counterparts, she's managed to maintain her aesthetic identity. She still has that fresh, vibrant appeal that first charmed *Friends* fanatics back in the nineties. Aside from some (reportedly-regrettable, always-iconic) hairstyle experimentation, Aniston has never strayed too far from her famously “natural” look. And, thus, for 30-plus years, she has remained remarkably recognizable, courtesy of... who knows what: subtle work? Phenomenal genes? Some self-prescribed combo of meditation, sleep, and copious H2O?

I don't know how she does it — and I lack the credentials to speculate. But that's not stopping the righteous users of X, the platform formerly known as Twitter, from commenting on Aniston's appearance. I'll spare you the nonsensical specifics, but as you can glean from *The Post* headline, people are asserting that Aniston has had work done. And they're voicing their disapproval. Shocking, I know.

In all honesty, I don't see it. I mean, yes, her jawline and neck are pristine at 54, which usually points to some form of upkeep. I don't think she looks altered or unusual, though. But then, I'm not known for my keen eye. Dr. Sam Rizk, on the other hand, is infinitely more attuned to facial shifts. And the NYC facial plastic surgeon told *The Post* that he believes Aniston “definitely had surgery” — likely a deep plane facelift and a blepharoplasty (a.k.a. eyelid surgery).



But why the outrage? A woman (allegedly) chooses to care for her face — to put stuff back where it used to be — and the social-media pundits pounce! They see a woman taking agency over her appearance and interpret this action as an invitation to judge. To hurl baseless insults. Why? Thousands of people treat themselves to these procedures every year in order to look and feel their best — and I'm guessing, in most cases, *their* faces aren't foundational to their careers. The majority, I'm willing to bet, aren't confronting constant scrutiny and unsolicited commentary from a generally bitter public.

How impossible it must be for women in the spotlight, particularly those, like Aniston, whose faces are so familiar, so ingrained in our collective conscience, that they've almost become a sort of public property — which, under mob rule, must never, ever change, be it at the hands of time or a plastic surgeon.

What I'm saying isn't especially novel or deep. I just find the she-looks-odd-so-she-must've-had-surgery narrative surrounding females of a certain age to be so tired and irksome. What do you guys think? If you watch Aniston on *The Morning Show*, have you noticed anything different about her appearance of late? I still marvel, week after week.

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Celebs aren't the only ones seeking self-improvement, of course. New [data](#) from The Aesthetic Society shows a 14% increase in the total number of cosmetic procedures performed in 2022 — an uptick they attribute mostly to a rise in nonsurgical treatments. Surgical procedures were actually down 12% compared to 2021. However, as the organization notes, 2021 was a banner year for plastic surgeons, thanks to the widely

publicized “Zoom boom” — the unprecedented surge in cosmetic treatments following lockdown. According to The Aesthetic Society report, “2021 eclipsed pre-pandemic surgical counts by 55%.”

The top surgical procedures had by women in 2022:

1. Liposuction
2. Breast augmentation
3. Abdominoplasty (tummy tuck)
4. Mastopexy (breast lift)
5. Removal/replacement of breast implants

Noninvasive fixes climbed 23% last year, led by neurotoxins, skin-focused enhancements (like chemical peels), and fillers. While less popular overall than the leading nonsurgical treatments, **thread lifts** — one of the more polarizing procedures in aesthetics — were **up a staggering 72%** from 2021, defying critics, who frequently denounce them as ineffective and problematic.

Speaking of nonsurgicals, the FDA recently approved the hyaluronic acid (HA) microdroplet injectable, SkinVive. Unlike traditional HAs which impart volume, SkinVive aims to improve skin quality and hydration. While many injectors are celebrating its launch across social media, others are quietly expressing concerns about potential complications. I’m collecting intel now, which I hope to share soon, but if you have any questions about this skin booster, please drop them in the comments. Thanks for reading! xx