

Dissolving String Facelifts and Bone Injections: Oscar Stars Scramble to Be Camera-Ready in 48 Hours

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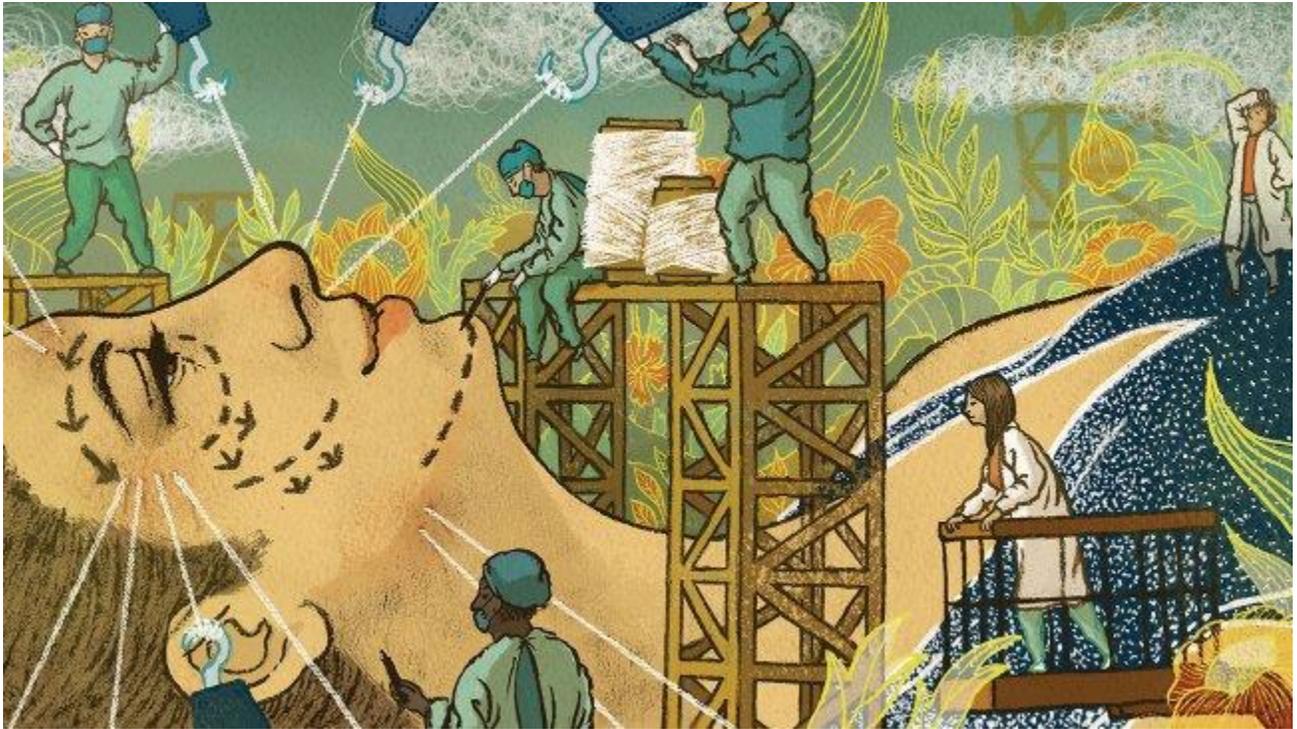


Illustration by: Meen Choi

They've picked their outfits. Now stars, male and female, will customize their faces last-minute with new techniques, from instant lifts to bruiseless injections.

From the morning of Jan. 14, when they hear their names called on TV, to Feb. 28, when they step onto a raucous red carpet all froofed and finished, a helluva lotta work goes into getting nominees photo op-ready for the Oscars. They're all — guys, too — scheduling in the maximum number of beauty treatments that can fit into a four- to six-week window (on top of slim-down-fast Hollywood phenom "Oscarexia" and a stepped-up workout program).

Fitting a full-blown face-lift into that time frame isn't the best plan — not if you don't want to unveil to the world a countenance that appears as if it hasn't fully settled yet (last February's social-media reaction to Uma Thurman comes to mind). The desired reaction is the kind that Raquel Welch elicits: "*How* does she look like that?" To pull off your own Dorian (or Doreen)

Gray face, it takes small refinements executed frequently. "These people are doing constant things like lasers, dermabrasion, peels and filler," notes dermatologist Peter Kopelson. "Leading up to an awards show, they're not starting at square one. They're minutely perfecting something that's close to perfect," like making already-small pores miniscule and tightening skin so that it's worthy of thousands of camera flashes. (See the below timetable for advice on how to time such tweaks.)

Dermatologist Harold Lancer notes: "Now, looking cut or pulled is the opposite of desirable. You just want to look like the clock stopped." Lancer has what he thinks is the answer, not only for an instant Oscar uplift, but for the future of non-face-lifts: the Silhouette Instalift. This minimally invasive "string face-lift" has been performed in Europe for quite a few years (with no relation to the "puppet face-lift" trumpeted several years back involving strings that need to be later removed). Now it's been FDA-approved in the U.S., with Lancer being one of the few doctors in the country equipped to perform the procedure because he was the first to be trained by the doctor who helped create the FDA clearance.

Made out of glycolic acids and lactic acids that dissolve, Instalift strands have unique anchoring cones on them; placing them to raise the skin upward requires some artistry. It takes about 30 to 45 minutes, is relatively painless, needs local anesthesia and minimal downtime and costs \$2,000 to \$5,000. "I have now done enough to see precise and gratifying results. Very few things in cosmetic medicine are this gratifying," says Lancer. "In the future, Instalift strands may be part of the solution to do knee lifts, breast lifts, even for crepey necks." Since the company that owns the strands, Sinclair Pharmaceutical, is changing hands, no one but Lancer will have this technique for a while. There is another thread lift in existence, called PDO, from Korea, designed for a small directional lift, which only lasts four or five months. Instalift can reportedly last anywhere from a year to 18 months, and the procedure can be performed two weeks before a big event.

Lancer adds that two people who attended the Grammys and three who will be at the Oscars on camera have just had Instalifts done, noting: "This will ultimately replace the face-lift, as cutting the skin takes volume away, and what we want is volume restored. This is the best new development in anti-aging in the 21st century. No one wants distortion anymore. It's a brilliant way to elevate the skin. It's the Benjamin Button procedure."

EVERYBODY KNOWS ABOUT PREPARATION H FOR TIGHTENING

(What? You don't? Go to the Google), but what about bone injections to sculpt the face, a procedure that is geared specifically for high-definition screens? Plastic surgeon Jason Diamond does "facial sculpting" on many celebrities right before red carpets (\$1,000 per syringe, with treatments requiring four to six syringes on average). He explains, "This treatment helps high, lateral cheekbones catch the light. It enhances the prominence of jaw angles and the center of the chin, which frame the face and create definition. It's what makeup artists attempt to do with contouring." In this procedure — which can be done the day before the Oscars because there is zero bruising and no pain, as the bone area has few nerve receptors — Diamond applies a filler like Radiesse above the cheekbone, the center of the chin and the lower jaw area. "When you think, 'That guy looks photoshopped,' this is what he's done," says Diamond. "It's different from

other fillers in that it is augmenting bone structure, not filling a crease. It's undetectable." If you can only do one thing before the Oscars, Diamond recommends facial sculpting, sometimes in combinations with other procedures "five days before, like micro-needling."

Finally, for an added youthful boost to the lip without going over the line into trout-mouth territory, Beverly Hills plastic surgeon Lawrence Koplun has a quick fix — and it doesn't even require an office visit. "I suggest a bit of topical anesthetic like Emla [which costs \$22 on Amazon] to plump the lips up a few hours before show time." Then, back to Old Faithful: "Even Preparation H works."

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