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AT THE HEART OF ISLAND LIFE

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Jordan and Jersey

The cosmetic surgery
connection **Page 18**



ROUNDER bums, larger breasts and fuller lips are the bread and butter of Jeya Prakash's life.

He's the Harley Street cosmetic surgeon to some of Britain's – and Jersey's – richest people. A confidante to the famous, a trusted guardian of priceless secrets, a tabloid newspaper editor's dream if only he could be persuaded to spill the beans.

Hello! would be a roll-call of those he's nipped, tucked and lyposucked but sadly for the salacious, his lips are sealed as tight as the botox-filled foreheads of his clients.

Not that he is unprepared to talk – he's a remarkably open, warm and likeable man – but his (spoilsport) doctor's oath prohibits the opening of the treasure chest of gems which no gossip could resist.

Attributes

The one former client he is willing to openly discuss is Jordan and only because she's been very happy to talk publicly about him and her two most famous attributes.

For those who haven't closely followed her career, the young Katie Price started out as a pretty Page 3 girl with low self-esteem about the very assets which got her onto the page in the first place. Mr Prakash agreed to help her with a couple of enhancements but when Katie morphed into Jordan and demanded a bra-busting third operation, he declined to help anymore and not, it seems, in the politest terms.

'She begged and begged me to do the third one for so long and I told her to get lost. I said don't come to me anymore or I'll shoot you,' he grins, before adding 'but we're still friends.'

Jordan, of course, was able to find another surgeon to turn her from model into megalith and the rest is tabloid history. Mr Prakash screws up his nose and simply says 'grotesque' when asked to comment on the results.

It is this attitude which separates Mr Prakash from a pack which is so often vilified and while cosmetic surgery tourism flourishes in Poland, Slovakia, Romania and South Africa, Mr Prakash prefers to have more of a long-term relationship with his clients than the surgical equivalent of a holiday fling.

He sees patients at least three times before agreeing to do anything for them. They have to fill in a questionnaire which is laced with psychological mines to weed out those with what he describes as an 'underlying personality disorder' and those who are there to please a third party rather than themselves.

'If they are doing it for their husbands, I would not do it,' he says. 'It has to be for yourself.'

He also won't touch smokers until they have properly given up: 'If they are not prepared to look after their bodies, then why should I?' he asks.

Only after they have completed this psycho-obstacle course to his satisfaction – and 30% don't – will he unsheath the scalpel, but when he does get to that stage he has absolutely no qualms at all about providing his expensive services to make people happy. And that is what he says it's all about: he makes people happy for a living.

'We are not just talking about the body here, we are talking about the mind. People come to me afterwards and hug me and kiss me and say "you've changed my life, doctor". They say they've changed their job, changed their boyfriends and changed their own attitude towards themselves. They say "I love myself, previously I hated myself".'

Mr Prakash is from Madurai in southern India, a place that is home to 300 temples. He meditates every day, but only after a 20-minute shower and a ten-minute head-to-toe



moisturising session. He is in his early 50s, looks ten years younger and is the personification of calm. He sees the paradox of people coming to him – the meditating spiritual person – to find beauty from the outside rather from within.

'Always in life there are paradoxes. You can't have happiness if you haven't experienced sorrow. For some people a little cosmetic surgery prepares them to change their inner mind and find inner enlightenment. Some people take this path – it's expensive and hurting and a painful path but that's the way they want it,' he says.

Emphasising the pride he has in his work Mr Prakash uses various words in the place of 'cosmetic' ahead of the word 'surgery'. He uses 'aesthetic' and 'psychological' and, with a hint of the high-faluting, 'surgical sculpture', although he points out that there's more risk attached to reshaping the human body than there is to chiselling lumps off a piece of marble.

The marble won't sue for a start.

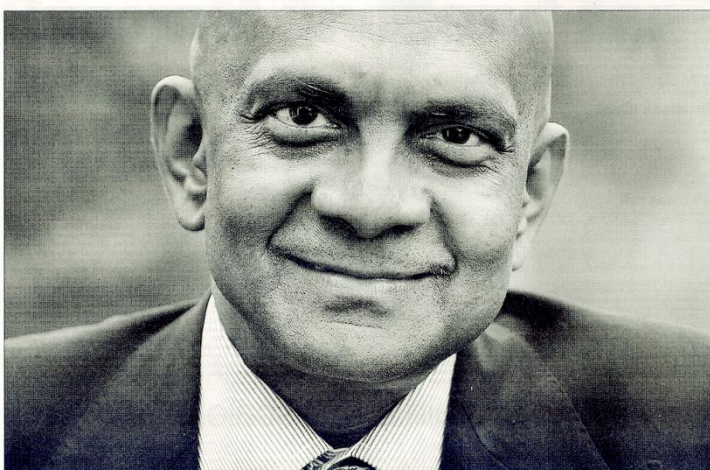
There are risks attached to any surgery but with cosmetic it's not generally about life or death.

It's about expectation and reality.

'I'm not a magician, I'm a surgeon and at the start it is important to demarcate my limitations to the patient. And just as a patient seeks a good doctor, a cosmetic surgeon should seek a good patient who does not have unrealistic expectations. There is so much media hype that expectations do get raised and people take things out of all proportion,' he says.

Mr Prakash is also careful to weed out the dismorphophobics – the surgery junkies for whom enough is never enough. Happily, they are relatively rare and the

Jeya Prakash provided his services for Jordan's first two breast enhancements. He drew the line at the third and describes the result as grotesque



Jayo Prakash feels that Jersey is the perfect place for patients to recuperate and says there is a serenity here PHOTO: MATTHEW HUTTON/GETTY IMAGES

average profile of Mr Prakash's patients is far more ordinary.

Celebrities, pop stars and the mega-rich aside, they tend to be happily married women in their 40s with a couple of kids, comfortably well off without being rich. Forty per cent of them want their breasts enhanced, 30 per cent are looking for a facelift or their eyelids lifted and the remainder have a dislike of their nose or want liposuction or fancy a backside like J-Lo's.

That profile applies as much to his Jersey clients as it does to those in the UK. He has been seeing Islanders in his Harley Street surgery for several years but has now developed a partnership with the Little Grove in St Lawrence where he carries out consultations. Later this year, with the opening of new a clinic at the nursing home, Mr Prakash will also be able to carry out non-surgical procedures such as botox treatments.

He also sees Jersey as the perfect place for recuperation for UK patients.

'Whenever I land at the airport I feel a serenity in this place and the pace of life is much better. There is a peace here and people communicate better here. I think recovering patients would enjoy the serenity and the privacy the Island can afford them.'

Mr Prakash is a wealthy man who

treats wealthy people, he has a home in Surrey and a surgery in Harley Street but a heart still firmly embedded in India. It is the base of his charity, which goes by the achingly honest name of Vanity for Charity, for which he performs cosmetic surgery on Bollywood film stars who, instead of paying him, make sizeable

donations to support projects including a school for the blind and an orphanage.

It's a million miles from dealing with vain models and their inflatable chests and it clearly gives him the balance which provides his near-enlightened state of calm.

'I need to do something that makes me happy and it makes me happy to make people beautiful. And when I go to India it is not the pleasure of giving the money. I get simple love from the children without any expectation and that gives me an enormous amount of pleasure. It is a natural way of sharing happiness.'

No interview with a cosmetic surgeon would be complete without the obvious final question and, professional to the end, he answers it without it even being asked.

'If you were to come to me, I would say you looked great. It's not for me to tell you, it has to come from within.' A perfect answer, of course, but one which inevitably has you pondering 'what exactly did he mean?'

'Always in life there are paradoxes. You can't have happiness if you haven't experienced sorrow. For some people a little cosmetic surgery prepares them to change their inner mind and find inner enlightenment'