

the aesthete

Carolyn Chang, MD, FACS, 39. A-list plastic surgeon who performs volunteer postmastectomy breast reconstruction for patients in the African-American Breast Health Program at California Pacific Medical Center. Shot on location in Chinatown.

Don't ask Dr. Carolyn Chang about *Dr. 90210*. "The public is fascinated by active cutting. It's a gross fascination." That's not what drew Chang as a med student. "I'm visual, and I love using my hands. In medical school, I told them I wanted to do surgery, and they paired me with the only woman in Stanford's plastic surgery department at the time—only about 7 percent of board-certified plastic surgeons are women." **LABOR OF LOVE** The celebrities and socialites who fly in to see her not only leave looking better, they help subsidize Chang's other work: "Doing [free] breast reconstruction for cancer patients keeps my practice grounded. Life has been good to me, and this is something I can give back." **VELVET ROPE** What about those who become dependent on the outer "fix" cosmetic surgery provides? "I don't take everyone who comes in the door. You know when something's not right—when plastic surgery does more harm than good—and that's when you need to say no." **NO REGRETS** "When you're in med school, you lose your 20s. Once you're in private practice and running a business, you lose your 30s. But I'm starting to realize that that's OK—I wouldn't do anything differently. I can't imagine not being a surgeon." **AMERICAN BEAUTY** So what would the good doctor change about her own looks? "Just an endoscopic brow lift for now—and maybe a little lipo while we're at it. Ask me again in five years."

"You can't use plastic surgery to fix how you feel inside—you need to figure that out yourself."

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