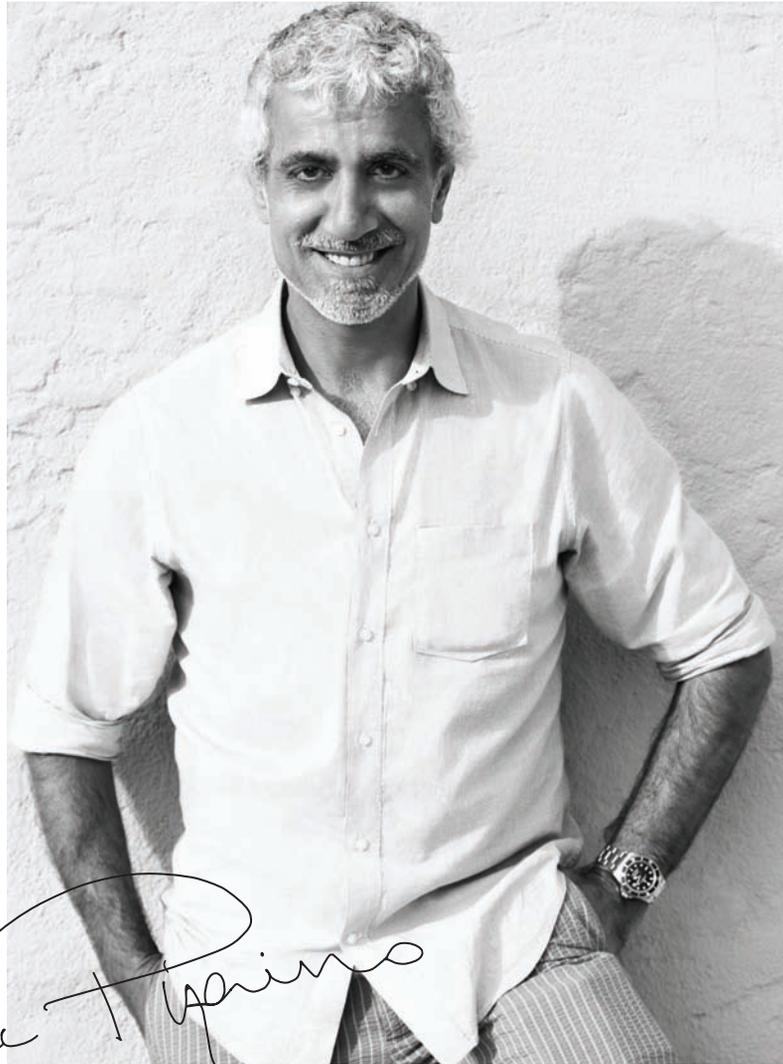


THE EXPERTS



Ric Ferrino

It's no secret that the world is oversaturated with products, places and people all claiming to be the best, particularly when it comes to our bodies. 'Hope in a jar' is the oldest marketing concept around, but even the most savvy consumers sometimes doubt whether they're getting any real results from their time and money. We say: consider the source. Rather than reaching for the latest potion concocted by an anonymous behemoth, or depending on a neophyte expert, the top of the line in personal care right now is made up of those with years of real-life experience, who have melded their life and work to create a uniquely specialized experience for their clients.

THE EXP

Hairstylist Ric Pipino's salon on Centre Market Place, arguably one of the prettiest blocks in New York City, is a physical expression of his vision and his career. Raised in Australia, he had two brothers who were hairdressers, and though he himself never intended to be one, the charms of the salon proved irresistible to him as a schoolboy: "All these girls in the salon, it was kind of fun. I was all about working." He continued on to London, training and traveling as he went, and began doing his first shoots for magazine editorials, the space where hairstylists can truly begin to play. As his skills developed, he says, "My brother was already in New York, I decided to come for a visit and once you come to New York, you can't really go anywhere else, can you? I really started working editorially right away."

He traveled the world doing hair for the top magazines and models in the world, learning tips and tricks along the way. "Editorial makes you confident that you can do anything or get out of anything," he says.

He has opened salons in Miami's Shore Club and New York's Bryant Park Hotel, but after years of working in other peoples' spaces, he decided it was time for one of his own. "It's really fun being here, a real jewel box," he says, gesturing around the space, and it's no real-estate euphemism. While the space is small, it absolutely glows, from the psy-

chedelic black and white cutting floor to the warm turquoise of the waiting area, though truly, one wants to call it a living room – the living room of your chicest friend, of course, filled with quality furniture and good art and glass tables and vitrines full of interesting objects, mostly designed by Pipino's friends and intended for sale, although his salon manager

notes that anything without a price on it is something he's not sure he can part with. He credits his fiancée Jenne Lombardo with her eye for feminine details, and she comes through regularly with friends; his family of regular clients has followed him through his move downtown. "I'm really happy with the space, it's harder to do a small space but it's better to be warm. We had to make that uptown client want to come down here, and we do it by making her feel sexy." It's not only about the results, although for maximum wattage he employs a rotating staff of experts in eyebrows,

nails and makeup, it's about the process from start to finish. The entire salon is designed to keep visitors comfortable and relaxed, and employs a full complement of tricks to do so. For instance, instead of overhead lighting, the full-length mirrors in front of the chairs are backlit by a beauty light, the favorite tool of photographers shooting skin up close, for maximum glow. "I knew what I wanted to achieve," he says, "I wanted to make people look pretty while they're getting their hair cut. To me, form and function means less clutter but better design."

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This same dictum applies to his new product line, Revolution in Cut, which is intended to simplify in much the same way. Clients can find themselves in the hair types throughout the line and use the same products at home that they're using in the salon (none completely finalized at press time, but we can tell you that the volumizing product is amazing) and recreate the results. "I cut hair, that's what I do. It's really performance products. It's about you, your style, the whole package – changing a style, what makes it easy for you."

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Launching a new product line is a challenge for even an established brand, but for Nicholas Perricone, starting his line of products went against everything the establishment in his field knew. “Initially, when I first came out with my Anti-Inflammatory concept, it was not well-received, academic institutions are pretty rigid in their approach, but they were ultimately proven wrong. Now other doctors are coming out with lines, but they’re not developing, just putting their names on it. It’s really changed the game in terms of science-based products. Products need to be based on science, not hope in a jar. A consumer should get something from what they pay for,” he says, and he’s made a career out of putting the science into skincare.

Known to millions from his Oprah appearances and New York Times bestselling diet books, Perricone is not just a brand name. “I’m a physician, nutritionist and a researcher, as well as a dermatologist, and you also have some creativity as well. It’s an unusual combination,” he says of the characteristics that led him down this path. His latest product, Cold Plasma Cream, is a perfect case study in how his multi-faceted mind works. “It’s a product I wanted to develop for years but it took some technology to make it happen. The problem I was trying to address was something I’d been thinking about because I’m a nutritionist and a lot of the products we’ve created surround the cell with nutrition that they can then feed off of. The issue is that there’s such a thing as biochemical individuality: some people require thousands percent more of a nutrient to absorb it. We wanted to provide a huge quantity, and then the cells could take whatever we need. It requires something called ionic suspension, which you can’t usually produce in a jar, but this technology isolates the molecule and acts as a penetration enhancer to get ions into the cell. Now we can feed all the cells whatever they need.” He creates the concepts for his products, writes up the formulas, takes out patents and has a lab make up and do clinical testing all in his Connecticut office, remaining as hands on as possible for a man this busy. “There’s never been any balance, it’s always been just going every day and getting to it – fixed appointments, talking to chemists, patent attorneys, talking to individuals about research – its not just cosmetics related, there’s some skin-cancer related research as well. My epitaph will read “Never a boring moment,” he jokes.

“I just wish I had more time to do research, the more research I do the more interesting things I find,” he says. Some of his research has led to major industry-wide advancements, like

the inflammation-aging connection that brought attention to DMAE, and there are more potential developments in the future. He theorizes that the penetration enhancement technology in Cold Plasma can be used for science, perhaps to get insulin into diabetics. “I always thought, if we didn’t do this research, someone else would, but it doesn’t work that way. It seems like there’s only so much you can do and bring to the public. Those benefits should be translated for the consumer. Pure science for just science makes no sense to me, the idea is to help people.” In bad times as well as good, it’s important to focus on your health, and so he sees a steady and continued interest in his products. “The creams are

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highly effective, of course you see a difference, but its not going to decrease your risk of Alzheimers. The A-I diet, the supplements, and the topicals are a three-tiered thing, its always been an integrated approach. It’s a long list of approaches that changes people’s habits and lives. We look upon it as life-changing, that we’re really educating consumers. We really

focus on the positive aspects, and we believe that vanity is a good thing – it motivates people, and if the desire to be beautiful makes someone healthier, that’s fine with me.”

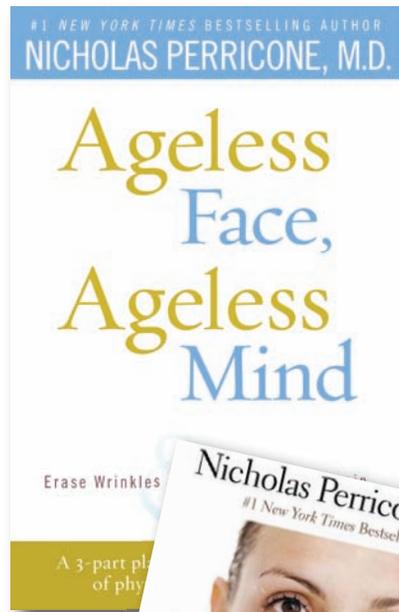
Motivating people towards beauty and health is something that Tracy Anderson has staked her career on. It’s her vision of beauty that has shaped the goals of thousands of women around the world. A dancer most of her life, she struggled with significant weight gain when she started college, and began 10 years of experimentation and study to develop a method that would not only cause her to lose the weight, it would entirely reshape the female body, focusing on the small muscle groups to create the kind of tiny, bird-like figure so many women crave. She had occasion to test the method and appa-



ratus she designed after a 60-pound weight gain during her pregnancy, and within weeks was back into size- 0 jeans. She then tested her workout on 150 women of all shapes and sizes to determine if her method could produce the same teeny-tiny dancer type body in anyone.

She's also taken her show on the road, training Madonna and Gwyneth Paltrow for movies and tours, working intensively in person and via the internet to make sure they keep up with her program, and the results showed. Madonna's biceps have made more recent headlines than her hits, all of which she credits to Tracy. Her DVDs have become bestsellers, and they are killer – endless dance routines that leave all but the most experienced gasping for breath. "It's the most frustrating thing in the world if you're a non-dancer," she has admitted. "It takes time to learn. But once you do learn it and you're able to just go through the 45-minute tape and dance around, it will be literally the best friend your body has ever had. You're not hitting your joints over and over again from the same rotations, you're burning an extreme amount of calories and you're working your muscles in different movements every few beats so that lots of other, smaller muscles have to wake up and help too."

However, if the results you can achieve at home aren't enough for you, Tracy Anderson Studios in LA and New York, her members-only studio concept is the embodiment of her research. Each studio includes a staff of similarly motivated



trainers, offering over 85 classes a week, nutritional guidance, as well as several unique fitness systems designed to focus on the muscle groups she considers most important, including bars, bands, cubes and the Hybrid Body Reformer, a resistance apparatus that uses aerobics and dance moves to reshape the body. "I wanted to know if we can really change the body against genetics and we can," she says. "This is a new way of doing things, it's a new formula."

When you look over the flawless faces, great hair and incredible bodies of these gurus' poster clients, it's important to wonder if those results are applicable to those of us living in the real world, but all of these approaches are predicated on being available to everyone who cares enough to try them. A cut with Pipino is hundreds of dollars less than his peers because, he says, "I want a girl who likes my work to be able to come in and have her dream haircut with me, personally."

Perricone goes regularly on QVC to explain the benefits of his products start to finish, and when Anderson first arrived in New York, she taught large group classes at the Marriot to introduce her techniques to the curious. The experts are out there—it's up to consumers to take advantage. ■

