



The appeal of the little dimple is simple. After all, it's also known as a *gelasin*, derived from the Greek word meaning “to laugh.” As early as the first century, Latin poet Martial extolled its magnetic nature by deeming those without “the *gelasin* joyous” to have a “face less gracious.” Shakespeare exalts “pretty dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids” in *Antony and Cleopatra*, and in China they are still believed to be a sign of good luck.

Most attribute the age-old allure of the dimple to its representation of youth, approachability and innocence. Almost all babies sport them in their chubby cheeks, and since we're hardwired to find newborn faces adorable, dimples elicit an almost Pavlovian tug.

The dimple, which results from a divide of the *zygomaticus major* muscle in the cheek, was proved to be hereditary by Gregor Mendel in the mid-1800s. But biology does not have to be destiny. According to a *New York Herald* news item, by the turn of the 20th century, surgeons had begun using a special knife to give patients overlooked by nature a “pretty, life-like dimple...as effective as the genuine print of an ‘angel’s kiss.’” And in 1936, American inventor Isabella Gilbert created the Dimple-Maker—a piece of headgear that pressed temporary indentations into one’s face.

More recently, to meet the rising demand of a youth- and selfie-obsessed society seeking subtle ways to turn back time, surgeons have honed their skills in the field of dimpleplasty. The minimally invasive permanent procedure is a one-way ticket to looking young but not overdone.

Through generations of social and political upheaval, dimples have maintained their allure. Perpetually adorable actress Shirley Temple and her trademark dimples shot to fame during the 1930s. And things got decidedly meta when she played the title character in the 1936 film *Dimples*. Blues singer John Lee Hooker crooned, “You got dimples in your jaw... I got my eyes on you” in 1956’s “Dimples.” Sixty years later, BTS bemoaned the temptation of the indentation by singing “I shouldn’t have seen that cheek” in 2017’s “Dimple.” One look at Brad Pitt or Kate Middleton, though, and you understand why they’re impossible to miss.

Words by Katie Calautti

Artwork: “Oooh #4” by Todd Robinson, 2013. Courtesy of the artist and Galerie pompon, Sydney. Photo: Document.

2.

Features

48 — 112

48

Jenny Slate

58

Home Tour: Adolf Loos

66

Phoebe Bridgers

76

Tiny Temper

84

At Work With: Hariri @ Hariri

90

The Vacant Muse

94

Island Time

106

Rebecca Horn