

BY JANE RIDLEY
DAILY NEWS FEATURE REPORTER

maternally

Post-baby surgery lifts the spirits of three NYC mothers

62% percentage of mothers who would consider plastic surgery to regain their pre-baby figures

NOW
FOCUS

If money were no object, 62% of mothers would consider plastic surgery to regain their pre-maternity figures.

That was the surprising result from a new survey by the American Society of Plastic Surgeons.

The research also found that the age of women seeking "mommy makeovers" — tummy tucks, breast enlargements, liposuction and breast-lifts — is much lower than a decade ago.

"I see many more women in their 30s and 40s," says Dr. Matthew Schulman, assistant professor of plastic surgery at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine in Manhattan. "This type of surgery has become much more accepted and mainstream."

Instead of putting it off until their 50s and 60s, many of Schulman's clients consult him about a year after they've added to their family.

"The weight gain associated with pregnancy, the loosening of the skin and stretch marks, are a major concern for them," he says. "Hormonal changes, especially after a second child, can take their toll on the body."

"Breasts deflate, weight settles on the hips, and thighs and stretched stomach muscles won't snap back through exercise."

The package of correctional procedures, which can take up to five hours to perform, cost an average of \$20,000, depending on the amount of surgery.

"My 'mommy makeover' patients are the kind of women who always took pride in their appearance and want to look as good as they did before they had their kids," adds Schulman. "It gives them back their confidence."

Here, three of them share their recent experiences.

Nely Petrizo

39, salon and spa owner, College Point, Queens

Pregnant with her son, Pietro, Nely gleefully acted on the wrong advice.

"My family and friends kept saying: 'Eat as much as you want, so you have a healthy baby growing inside you,'" recalls the Dominican Republic-born mom. "So I ate pasta, bread and more pasta."

"I gained between 75 and 100 pounds. When Pietro was born I was very happy with him, but very unhappy with myself."

Nely lost 30 pounds in the first three months after the birth, but after nine years of yo-yo dieting, she felt heavy and out of shape.

Her biggest problem was her stomach, which hung over her belly. The skin had

my belly and the size of my breasts after breastfeeding.

"I could never wear tight dresses, and it was difficult to be in a relationship."

"I'd been raised to believe that if

you needed to lose weight, you did it yourself through diet and exercise."

"But no matter how much I tried, the flab wouldn't go away."

She toyed with the idea of traveling to Brazil for surgery, but was terrified of scarring and something going wrong.

Last February, however, inspired by a client who was treated by Schulman, she went under his knife at his practice on Park Ave.

Like other "mommy makeover" patients, she did not need to stay overnight and was discharged the same day.

"It took me three months after the consultation to get the courage," she says. "But I'm so glad I did."

Nely, who describes the aftermath of the operation as "a little painful," had a combined tummy tuck and breast reduction, shrinking from a 38D to 34C.

She went on to lose 35 pounds and ditched her size 16 clothes for size 8.

The \$16,000 bill was footed by her husband, Vincenzo, 42, who runs a construction business.

"At first, he thought I was crazy, but now that it's been done, he is very pleased," says Nely. "I feel much more confident and don't have to hide myself any more."

"The scar is very thin and below my bikini line, so I can wear a two-piece swimsuit. And now that my breast size

has been reduced, I love that I don't always have to wear a bra."

Miguelina Nunez

31, administrator, Washington Heights, Manhattan

As someone who always prided herself on her petite figure, Miguelina was horrified by the state of her post-pregnancy body.



\$21,900
MIGUELINA NUNEZ

Recalls Nunez, "I was hungry all the time and ate for two. Thick rice and bean dishes were my favorite."

Thankfully she swiftly lost the weight through diet and exercise, but her tummy remained big.

"I was devastated to see how it looked," she says. "I thought I could work out and it would go away, but it didn't."

Her second child, Nicholas, was born 18 months ago. Al-

though Miguelina gained a relatively average 30 pounds and lost the weight afterward, her stomach looked even worse.

"I realized that the only way I was going to reverse it was through surgery,"

she says. "I exercised, but the stomach muscles were just not tightening."

"I had a lot of loose skin and lost sight of my bellybutton!"

Miguelina, who was also unhappy about her small breasts, consulted Schulman and opted for a full mommy makeover in June.

She had a 3½-hour operation with a tummy tuck with muscle repair, a breast-lift and implants. She went from a 34A to a 34C and a size 4 to a size 2.

As for the \$21,900 cost, she took out a credit card loan and is paying it back in \$400 monthly installments.

"It was quite painful after the surgery, but I am feeling much better," says Miguelina, who took two weeks' vacation from work to fully recuperate. "I love my body again."

"I feel like this is how I am supposed to look."

"It's given me back my confidence."

"I rushed out and bought a bikini," says Miguelina. "It looks great, and I'm having a great summer."

Kimberly McDaniel

36, stay-at-home mom and former EMS, Brooklyn

After she delivered her daughter, Jillian, 18 years ago, Kimberly felt incredibly depressed about the state of her stomach.

She had developed a potentially life-threatening condition during pregnancy called pre-eclampsia, which can cause high blood pressure, water retention and rapid weight gain.

"I gained about 110 pounds, most of it in the final trimester," says Kimberly, a petite woman who had effectively doubled her weight. "It was awful, and because of the pre-eclampsia, I had to be induced."

The pounds came off, but her skin had been stretched so much that it settled on her belly in wrinkle marks.

"I'd go to the gym, but it didn't help," she recalls.

"I wanted to have surgery, but then because I could never wear two-piece bathing suits and my stomach would spill the top of my jeans."

Unfortunately, due to another onset of pre-eclampsia she gained the same amount of weight during her second pregnancy with son, Ashton, now 10.

"My stomach bothered me even more," says Kimberly, who later had a tubal ligation that left her looking "like two bellybuttons."

She was especially bummed when Ashton unkindly compared her tummy to Freddy Krueger's face.

"That's exactly how it looked!" she laughed. "There was so much excess skin."

This year, after moving to New York from Tacoma, Wash., she had resolved that she was time for surgery. She also wanted to



\$19,300
KIMBERLY MCDANIEL

grateful

The three moms proudly show off their new figures at the Rita Hazan Salon; from left, Miguelina Nunez, Nely Pe-trizzo, Kimberly McDaniel.



YOU SHOULD KNOW

For more information about "mommy makeovers," visit drsulmanplasticsurgery.com or call (212) 289-1851. Kimberly, Miguelina and Nely were treated to a more conventional makeover for our photo shoot at the Rita Hazan salon in Manhattan. Their hair was styled by Eddie Ngai and James Deceurs, and the makeup artist was Sandy Linter. For more information, visit ritahazansalon.com or call (212) 586-4343.

next June to her fireman fiancé, Colin, 32.

"I want to look and feel beautiful in my dress," she says.

Schulman performed an abdominoplasty (tummy tuck) and breast-lift in June for \$19,500.

my body."

He got his wish. She claims she is far more outgoing and confident since the surgery.

"I love my stomach now," says Kimberly. "I feel great, and it was worth every cent. And there are so many summer dresses I can wear

No more roamin' around: Julius Caesar (Greg Hicks on the ground) and Mark Antony (Darrell D'Silva)

STEPHANIE BERGER



RSC: Hail, 'Caesar' No place like Rom

BY JOE DZIEMIANOWICZ
DAILY NEWS THEATER CRITIC

Most of the plays presented by the Royal Shakespeare Company have tucked in modern touches — clothes, for example — primarily for contemporary resonance.

The troupe's raucous "Julius Caesar" does the opposite. It goes back in time and conjures Rome's legendary history of violence, power struggles and aborted alliances.

In an invented prologue, the wolf-reared twins Romulus and Remus rise up and savage one another, grunting and snarling like rabid dogs until one lies dead at the hand (and teeth) of the other.

Ah, the evil that men do — to borrow from the Bard in this luxuriously quotable work. And women, too.

Credit director Lucy Bailey for concocting this raw bit of butchery. She serves it up like an amuse-bouche for the buffet of carnage and mayhem she's carved out of Shakespeare's popular tragedy.

It's a violent play. At times, her take has a horror-movie feel. Gashed arteries gush, screams pierce the air, ominous music blares and a severed head gets hefted around like a kettlebell at the gym. It's politics as death sport, people. Look around the world these days, and that, alas, is all too easy to relate to.

Amid the mayhem, the RSC cast delivers uniformly clear-spoken performances that make this tragedy of 44 B.C. easy to follow at every blood-spattered turn.

In the title role, Greg Hicks, so

wispy and wiry, he lacks the physicality to be commanding. Similar sort of pale washes off the gentlemanly John Mackay plays the conspiratorial Cassius.

Sam Troughton, meanwhile, makes a brilliant Brutus, the Roman torn between love for Caesar and the freedom-loving public. Injured while playing the star-crossed duo in "Romeo and Juliet," the actor performs us a crutch. If he's a more vulnerable Brutus, there's nothing tentative in his work. He is magnetic and convincing.

He is matched by the robust Darrell D'Silva, who brings a raw energy to Mark Antony, Caesar's true-blue ally, roaring bravely to life. He brings the familiar "Friends of the Romans, countrymen" speech so

with fury, not trilled r's and p's poetry. Mark Antony's got words, and gets it done as he rallies the crowd against the plotters.

To create those Roman thrills, Bailey projects images on a half-dozen panels. The effect is more odd than effective. The same for looming images of Rome in flames that looks like a leftover from a metal-band music video.

Despite that, the real music is Shakespeare's words and the way they are delivered. "Julius Caesar" makes for a strong last installment in the RSC's welcome residency.

'Julius Caesar'

★★★★★

Park Avenue Armory,
643 Park Ave., at 66th St.
Through Aug. 14. Tickets:
\$69-\$250; (212) 721-6500

YOU SHOULD KNOW

"Julius Caesar" is part of the Lincoln Center Festival's residency by the Royal Shakespeare Company at the Park Avenue Armory. Remaining performances are Thursday, Aug. 4, and 13 at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, Aug. 7 at 2:00 p.m.