INTERVIEW
with — Dr. Gianluca Plotino

Q: Dr. Plotino, you are a much-respected lecturer and researcher in the field of endodontics. How would you characterize your approach to teaching, and how has this changed over time?
A: When I was a student at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Rome, Italy, I had an endodontics professor who sparked my passion for this specialty and I later started teaching and supervising students in their graduation thesis. I work only part time at university—now at the Sapienza University of Rome—but I still really enjoy lecturing and supervising students in their research programs. It is always a pleasure to guide young dentists in their first steps to becoming endodontists. Finally, I am most fortunate to have the opportunity to give lectures worldwide, because it entails a mutual exchange of ideas with colleagues and this makes for great intellectual stimulation.

Q: How can a conservative approach to endodontics benefit a field that has undergone incredible advancements in materials and digital technologies?
A: Incredibly! New technologies and devices are drastically changing our profession each day. Consider the improvements in diagnosis owing to CBCT or improvements in the quality and safety of the instruments that we use for root canal preparation owing to the newest manufacturing processes and thermal treatments, for example. Furthermore, research in the field of disinfection and on the development of new filling materials has given us the ability to treat even the most desperate endodontic cases, enhancing the outcome of the treatment.

Q: You are scheduled to speak at the upcoming ROOTS SUMMIT 2016 in Dubai. What are you looking forward to the most about the conference?
A: In my presentation, I will seek to convey an in-depth understanding of the mechanics of reciprocating motion in relation to endodontic instruments and why it represents a great advancement in the safety and quality of dental practice. I will share my research on this topic and above all demonstrate how it can be applied in the daily clinical practice of both general dentists and endodontic specialists.

Q: What do you hope a dental professional will gain from participating in the Clinical Masters™ Program in Endodontics?
A: Dentists have to approach dental practice intensely, seeking to achieve clinical expertise. While dental schools do a great job of providing a solid foundation for a career, it is not enough, so it is up to dentists to build on that foundation by pursuing postgraduate advanced clinical training that exemplifies today’s top dentists. They should have interest in what they do and seek to perform to their best to achieve the highest clinical results through continuing to advance their education and training and keeping up to date.

Q: What is the aim of the course, and how does this differ from other courses?
A: The aim is to train the participants to become the best endodontics practitioners. We seek to inspire in them our passion for this discipline of dentistry and share our skills to equip them to perform top-level treatments and deal with the most difficult of situations.

Q: What are some of your current research areas of interest?
A: I like to conduct research to confirm my clinical experiences and this is the reason I have published so many articles in some of the most prestigious scientific journals of our field on several topics regarding both endodontics and restorative dentistry. The main current research areas of interest are how new treatments may improve the quality and performance of mechanical endodontic instruments, and this is being investigated through the most advanced technologies.

Q: In your opinion, what are some of the main challenges that face endodontists today?
A: They must help patients see the value of their clinical work and need to understand the importance of an effective case presentation, since it ultimately determines what kind of dentistry they are able to perform. Today, it is also important to master the business of dentistry to build a successful practice.