Press Book

Liisa Winkler

MOUSTER

Biography

Winkler was raised in Belleville, Ontario, Canada where she was a student at the Quinte Ballet School of Canada. She is married to Ryan Boorne, and they have two children together. Winkler has been known to support and work with foundations such as the David Suzuki Foundation which works to protect and conserve nature & the environment, World Animal Protection for which she is an Ambassador, and Farm Sanctuary, an organization which works to protect farm animals from cruelty and promotes compassionate vegan living.

Winkler was discovered by Mode Elle Owner / Agent Audra Anderson while she was back to school shopping with her mother and best friend at age 15.

Winkler became the Gucci "It" Girl, landing three consecutive contracts in 1999 & 2000. Winkler has since then appeared on the runway and in campaigns for designers such as Gucci, Calvin Klein, Zac Posen, Ralph Lauren, Valentino, Donna Karan, Balenciaga, Dolce & Gabbana, Celine, Escada, Marchesa, Michael Kors, Versace, Armani, BCBG, MaxMara as well as in numerous advertising campaigns including Guerlain Paris, The Gap & Ugg Australia. Winkler has appeared on the covers and in fashion magazines such as Italian, Spanish, Australian & British Vogue, Harper's Bazaar, ELLE, Marie Claire, Allure, Glamour, Numero, V, Flare & Fashion Magazine (in which Winkler has appeared on the cover a total of six times) and also appeared in the 2001 Pirelli Calendar shot by Mario Testino. She was a student a Centennial Secondary School, Belleville. Winkler landed an exclusive with Balenciaga, appearing on the runway for their Fall / Winter 2011 collection alongside Miranda Kerr, Liya Kebede & Stella Tennant as well as in the Fall / Winter 2011 print campaign which was shot by photographer Steven Meisel.



Print media



The world idolizes supermodels.

The creatures who prowl the most-prized catwalks are as famous as film stars. Reality TV hopefuls shed pools of tears in pursuit of the Next Top Model title. And besides a megayacht, a supermodel girlfriend is a billionaire's most succinct symbol of success.

her achievements. At least not when compared with, say, an Olympic-ranked alpine racer or cross-country skier. Those are the sports Liisa Winkler will be watching with pride and admiration as the 2010 Olympic Games unfold.

Though she has a career, a husband (she married former National Ballet of Canada principal dancer Ryan Boorne in 2003) and two children to be envied, Winkler gets the differmovement and remarkable stamina, even in the most absurd ence between working for decades to reach a goal, and having conditions. Like posing soaking wet in a skimpy dress while success handed to you on a sequined platter.

That's because her own dreams of becoming a ballerina told years earlier, when she attended summer school at the

National Ballet of Canada, that her height might hinder her hopes of a career in classical dance. "They do a huge amount of testing, including a physical exam, and they said my kneecaps were too big and that meant that I would probably grow too tall," Winkler says on a break from shooting at a Toronto photo studio. "When you are en pointe, you grow a foot, then But there is one supermodel who doesn't think much of you throw your arm up-and you have to have a partner tall enough to reach that arm."

But along came modelling, where Winkler's height worked in her favour. At 15, she was whisked off to the runways of Milan, Paris and New York, and won starring roles in campaigns for Gucci, Donna Karan and Ralph Lauren. She became known for her highly tuned body awareness, fluid the winter winds howled around her in the hills of L.A.

"It was a two-day shoot for American Vogue, at the end of which were dashed when she sprouted to five-foot-11. She had been I was shaking and throwing up," she recalls. "I couldn't even do the last shot. I was told later that I probably had hypothermia." »











LIISA WINKLER

This month's DESIGN SCENE supermodel cover star LIISA WINKLER joins our Deputy Editor ANA MARKOVIC for an exclusive interview talking about her unparalleled portfolio and work with top creatives in the industry, shares the secret to longevity and discusses social media's impact on today's industry.

Take us back to the beginning, how did your modeling career start? What was your first modelling job was?

I started modelling at the age of 15 after my best friend and I were scouted in a local shopping mall in my hometown of Belleville. My best friend and I did everything together, so we both did some test shots and I just kept going. My first job was for a catalogue in Toronto called Holt Renfrew, and we did group shots wearing themed outfits. I remember one where we were all wearing raincoats with umbrellas. I officially started working in Australia, and then spent some in Paris, and New York. Things didn't take off right away, but when they did, I was on the edge of stopping and going back to school!

You started at an early age, do you feel like you missed out on anything, what are the pros and cons of starting young?

I gained so much life experience and was able to travel and learn so much in this way, that I don't feel that I missed out at all. I did not go to university, but am in school now studying something that I love and would not have been ready to choose this when I was younger.

You worked with so many great great photographers and designers, what are the projects you are most proud of?

I loved working with Tom Ford at Gucci & there was an Italian Vogue cover with Steven Meisel that was very pivotal in my career. I loved working on some of the more interesting stories, like one with a big group for W Magazine with Carter Smith, and a Brittish Vogue story & cover where I got to spend a week on a game reserve in South Africa, and was hunted by hungry lions. I am super grateful to Mario Testino, Carine Roitfeld & Steven Meisel for all of their support!

And the most challenging ones?

My first job for American Vogue with Herb Ritts where we shot up in the Hollywood Hills in December. I was soaking wet and they had a big wind machine to make the flowy dresses move. I got hypothermia on the second day and was sick for almost a week afterwards!

If you could go back, would you make some of decisions about your career differently? Is there any projects you wish you weren't part of?

Nothing that I would not have done, but much that I might have encouraged myself to do! I always took a step back from my career, as it never felt like something that I could work on and be proud of. I was taught that we should work hard for things in life, and this seemed to be too easy and so I did not allow myself to fully embrace it. I see now, that modelling is a jumping off platform for many other things, and am very grateful for all that it gave me.

The modelling industry has changed so much in the past decade. Do you think social medias made it easier or harder for someone who is starting out now?

I often wonder if I would have made it in the business if things were as they are now. Everything is public now, and this makes it hard to relax behind the scenes, with a lack of privacy & the pressure to post great shots. It would have shaped me into a different person, but possibly made it easier to connect with people, as I was quite shy in social situations. Social media allows models to share more of themselves with the world, presenting themselves as real people with families, sharing opinions & supporting various causes. I think this has allowed them to extend their careers into their 30s and 40s which is great!

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BLAZER TOM FORD TOP & PANTS HILLARY MACMILLAN

And what do you think about general impact of social medias on fashion industry?

It has allowed models to become celebrities and given them a voice. It has opened up the market to new body types and ideas of what beautiful is. When we know who someone is on the inside, they become more, or less, beautiful and interesting.

When people ask your advice for succeeding in fashion industry, what do you tell them? What is the secret to longevity in the industry?

To pursue your own interests and be yourself, admiring others is great, but you do not need to be exactly like them. Being yourself is far more interesting and important even if you are unsure of how that might be received. Allow that person time to develop and make sure that you have space to be creative in whatever outlet makes you feel alive and inspired!

What do you enjoy the most about your job?

Travel to warm and interesting places, and being a part of the creative process in making someone's vision come to life.

How would you describe your personal style?

Casual, easy and a bit hippie, but in a mannish way? I like baggy dresses with men's blazers, combat boots, converse, a lot of denim & hats!!

How do you stay in shape?

I run home up a big hill every morning after I drop off my kids at school, and try to fit in yoga classes whenever I can. I kind of want to start doing ballet classes again as well.

Do you have a philosophy that you live by?

Start each day with grateful energy, live it like it is your last, and give love as you would give a gift that needs no reciprocating.

What do you enjoy doing when you're not working?

I study herbal medicine full time at a school in Toronto, and have a 7 & 10 yr old, so there is not much free time but I love working with plants and growing my own food as much as possible, hiking & camping with my kids.

What are the causes you support, and why?

Sea Shepherd because our oceans need protecting. David Suzuki Foundation because he is my hero and has done so much for the environment. I also work as an ambassador with World Animal Protection because I love animals, and you cannot care about the environment and not also care about farm animals! They are giving their lives to us and the least we can do is to make theirs happier and free from suffering. They work on various campaigns, the most recent one to keep old fishing nets out of our oceans.

Photography and Art Direction ALKAN EMIN Hair Style and Makeup by CAROLINE LEVIN at P1M Stylist NICOLE CONTADOR Special Thanks to AUDRA at Mode Elle

Keep up with Liisa on her instagram @liisawinkler

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that Canadian model Liisa Winkler has been FASHION's Winter cover girl. She's like our lucky snow angel, with her pale gold hair and strong, serene presence. "I really think of everybody there as my biggest supporters. They've never seemed to rely on what everyone else is doing," she says (and we modestly print).

"She's really done it her way," says fashion director Susie Sheffman, who's been shooting Winkler for the magazine since the mid-'gos.

At 33, an age when most models are winding down their careers, Winkler is enjoying something of a comeback. Having taken a five-year break from the runways—to, among other things, have Stella, 5, and Oskar, 2—she made a strong return for Spring 2012 in New York, walking for Ralph Lauren, Michael Kors, Altuzarra, Marchesa, Zac Posen and more. "I'd walk into a fitting, and they'd all be like, 'Liisa! We missed you! It's been so long!" she says, laughing. "You're talking to the hair and makeup artists, and everybody is your age now...I guess it's the industry right now. It's changing and they're more accepting of women." Still, the backstage regulars stick around, the models less so. "I really didn't know many of the girls. It was all new faces—to me anyway. I had a lot of fun that week with some girls I used to hang out with when we were first starting out, like Danielle Zinaich. She has a family too. We walked around, us moms. Mom models."

This came on the heels of a big Fall 2011 coup for Winkler. She was flown to Paris to walk exclusively for Balenciaga, and she appeared in the preeminent fashion house's fall campaign. "It was my first show in maybe four years. My son is two now, so I just figured that now I can leave for a little bit at a time, whereas before I didn't really want to." Plus, when Balenciaga calls, you answer, though a behind-the-scenes video of the shoot made it look rather dour. "It was very serious. I don't know why. Steven [Meisel] shoots so quickly; I think I was on-set for 10 minutes," she says. "But it was nice to shoot with Liya [Kebede]—she's an old friend. We had a lot of fun behind the scenes."

Asked if she's a Balenciaga girl in real life too, Winkler chuckles. "Um,

no. I would say no. I really like vintage things, second-hand things." So the Balenciaga look is a bit severe and dramatic for her? "Yeah, I'm not exactly severe and dramatic. Just the opposite, I'd say."

Proof of this sentiment is the fact that Winkler and her husband, Ryan Boorne, a retired principal dancer with the National Ballet of Canada, have just gone off the grid and bought a country house in rural Ontario, which they hope will be completely solar-powered. She's also become interested in matters of food safety and environmentally responsible farming. "I read this book, Harvest for Hope by Jane Goodall, and that really inspired me to start trying to raise awareness about genetically modified food," she says. "I'm talking with WSPA [World Society for the Protection of Animals] about becoming an ambassador for their farm-animal campaigns."

It's a long way from the glitz and glamour of fashionland, but then some parts of the industry have never sat well with Winkler. "I think I fought it at first," she says. "I remember my agent was always trying to get me to go to all the parties, and it just felt so wrong to me. It felt kind of like being prostituted out a little bit. Had I been older, I would've been confident enough to not be affected by it. You know, at 16, to send a young girl off by herself to a party with 25- to 30-year-olds who are drinking and doing... You know, it's a very uncomfortable situation. At the time I said no, and I know it held me back a little."

Luckily, Tom Ford took a shine to Winkler in 1999, booking her for three consecutive Gucci campaigns. "I was actually ready to quit at that point," she says. "I was frustrated because if you can't work, you can't get better at it. You have to take what comes your way. And I just felt like I wanted to take control of my life." Where Ford goes, others follow-Winkler enjoyed a career snowball effect, not to mention Ford's own well-documented charms. "He's so nice-and attractive!" she says. "My dad was there one season, and [Ford] talked to him for a while and invited him to a party. And my dad is normal, not a fashion guy. So for him to take the time, it was very nice."

The years since have been kind to Winkler, professionally, personally and physically. In the runway shots of her over the past 12 years, there really is very little discernible difference. She laughs at that, begging to differ, but says she has grown into a confidence and ease with herself that she can bring to her work. "It feels more creative now. I gradually started to realize what I could bring to the table, which is a bit more than just standing there," she says. "I really love that my career is starting up again. I'll definitely do this for as long as I can, and somehow use that to put the word out about what I believe in. In a way, I still need to do it 'my way."

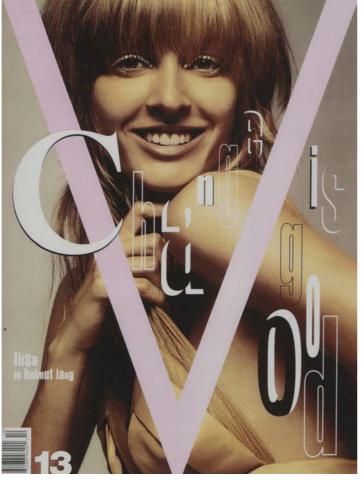
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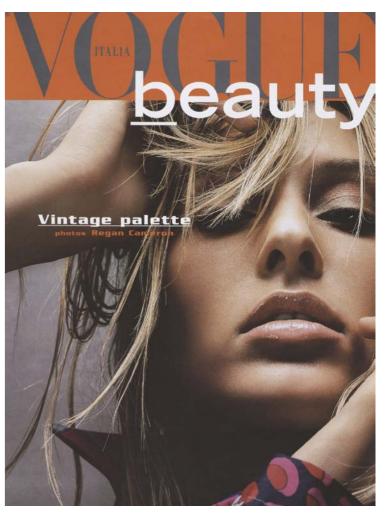
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Wallpaper*

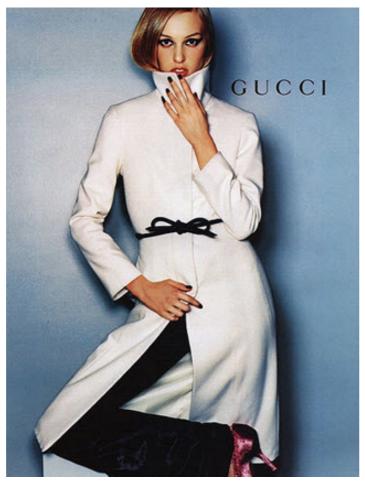


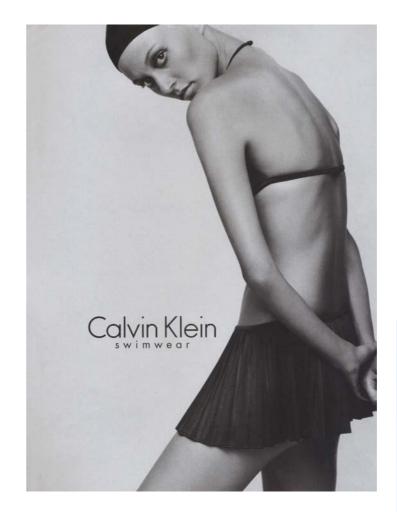




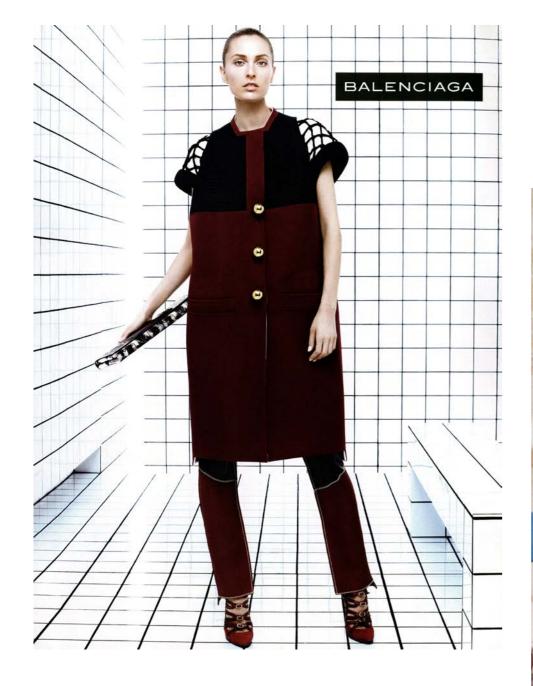
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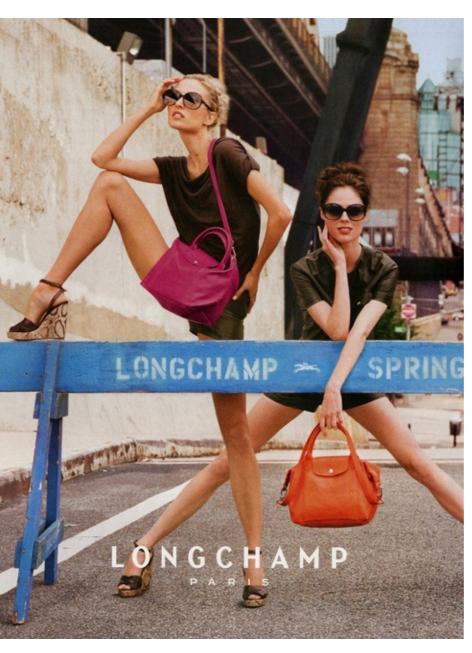
















Runway



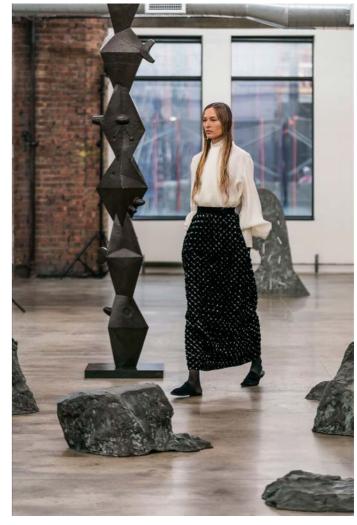
Ralph Lauren, NYFW SS2017



Michael Kors, NYFW SS2018



Ralph Lauren, NYFW FW2018/19



The Row, NYFW FW2018/19



Alexander Wang, NYFW FW2019/20



Etro, MFW FW2019/20



Salvatore Ferragamo, MFW FW2019/20



Hermés, PFW SS2019



The Row, NYFW FW2019/20



Ralph Lauren, NYFW SS2019

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