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the girl behind the lashes

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by Anna Curtis





Lesley Hornby, now known as “Twiggy,” was born in London in 1949. Her father was a carpenter and her mother was a factory worker. While attending an all girls high school, she worked at a salon where she became acquainted with well-known hairdresser, Nigel Davies. Within a year Lesly was transformed into Twiggy, complete with a boyish, bob cut and a unique makeup look.

The false, thick lashes and dramatic eyeliner became her signature as she entered the fashion industry. Twiggy’s petite figure made her perfect for the move towards shorter hemlines and androgynous style. She was different. She was almost the opposite of the heavily curved, long legged models at the time. This made her a rarity, and brought her to the attention of many designers.

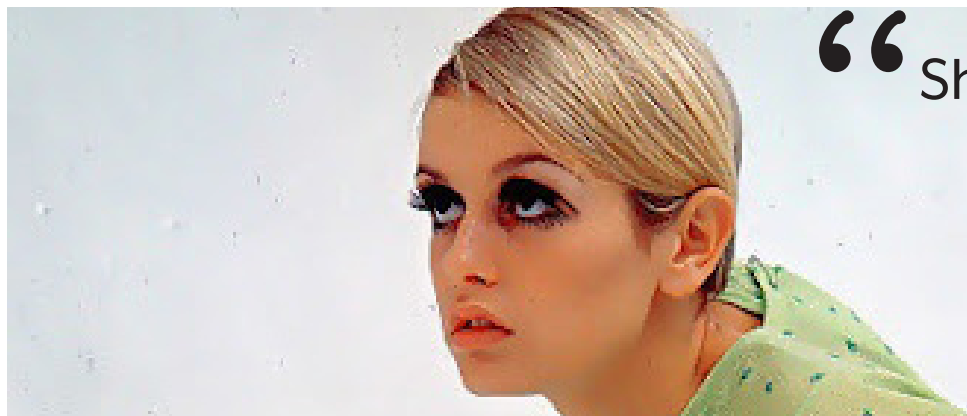
Before long, a photograph of her attracted a reporter from Daily Express. He was enamored with her freshness and named her “The Face of 1966.” She was swept up by the “mod” trend that was lighting a fire in London’s cultural arena. Twiggy’s popularity grew each time she appeared in fashion magazines like Elle and British Vogue.

There were many clothes that Twiggy made attractive to the youths of the 60s. Perhaps the most famous, was the mini. Her figure drew in designers like Mary Quant. On her, the scandalously short skirts and dresses that went as far up the leg as 7 inches above the knee were harder to sexualize.



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I was all
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and then
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... they had
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“She was a trendsetter
a daring dresser
and an icon in
her own right”

She was revolutionary; often wearing shift dresses in printed advertisements for women's magazines. She would highlight her frame in classic shift dresses. She customized the look with buttons, pronounced collars, sweet pastel fabrics, and fun patterns. Her glamorous eyes and fragile legs were always the focal point of a look.

Twiggy was a child when her rise to fame occurred. She was a carefree girl, evident in her interviews and support of important social movements at the time. Even though the height of her modeling career was short-lived, she has gone on to other, exciting ventures. With her celebrity in 1967, she released a single “Beautiful Dreams,” winning awards and increasing her crowds of adoring fans. In 1970, Twiggy formally retired.



Her dream was to be a movie star and almost immediately she starred in the musical “The Boy Friend.” Her performance resulted in two Golden Globe Awards. The following ten years brought a best-selling memoir and a Tony Award for “My One and Only.” After years of married life she began her career in television. She starred in a show of her and as a host on America's Next Top Model, which was one of the most popular reality programs in the country.

Twiggy's influence in the fashion industry has not been forgotten. She is constantly included in events and articles about history's best models. She has even been honored in exhibitions at The New York Metropolitan Museum of Art and The National Portrait Gallery. Today she still enjoys modeling on the side as the face of Marks and Spencer and as an ambassador of Olay's beauty products. Despite the number of years that have passed since girls across the country were copying her mascara technique, she will always be the “It Girl” of the 60s.

