

Campbell, Naomi (1971-) Encyclopedia Article

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Discovered while shopping in 1985, British model Naomi Campbell became an instant success in the United States, where she metamorphosed from a sweet schoolgirl into a polished—and, many would say, primadonna—professional. Her long dark hair, fey eyes, and feline figure established her as the first and for a long time the only black supermodel; her looks were distinctively African in origin but appealed to conservative Caucasian consumers as well. Her 1994 novel about the fashion business, *Swan*, focused primarily on white characters but made an impassioned argument in favor of widening modeling's ethnic base; she also recorded an album and starred in other artists' music videos. Guarding her stardom jealously, Campbell sometimes refused to appear in fashion shows alongside other black models, and she was known for making outrageous demands for hotel rooms and entertainment. Campbell eventually had to face accusations of abuse from modeling agencies and a former assistant.

Further Reading:

Campbell, Naomi. *Swan*. London, Heinemann, 1994.

Gross, Michael. *Model: The Ugly Business of Beautiful Women*. New York, William Morrow & Company, 1995.

Tresniowski, Alex. "Out of Fashion." *People*. November 23, 1998, 132-40.