



super
power

As successful as ever at 45, Christy Turlington is now using her supermodel sway to fight maternal mortality. She tells *Christa D'Souza* about motherhood, maturity and the secret of her serene glow



Opposite: Christy Turlington, during the supermodels' heyday, on a 1991 *Vogue* shoot with Sante D'Orazio.
This page: Christy today. Cashmere/silk sweater, \$495. Lace skirt, \$2,395. Both Burberry Prorsum.
Beauty note: firm, youthful skin is best achieved from the inside. Christy Turlington takes Imedeen Time Perfection Supplements, \$41.50.
Hair: James Peccis.
Make-up: Gucci Westman.
Digital artwork: D Touch.
Fashion editor: Clare Richardson



(featuring Linda's new peroxide-blond hair, Christy decorously draped in a white sheet, and naughty Cindy virtually with her bosoms out). Everyone had their favourite supermodel, but, arguably, it was Christy – the face of Calvin Klein at just 18 years old – whom we most wanted to be. That perfect nose of hers: how many million times must its image have been taken into a plastic surgeon's office to be copied? How can a nose like that come out of the womb?

Only 21 at the time of the Lindbergh cover, and with more than half a decade's work experience, Turlington always seemed both younger and older than her fellow glamazons. She was "a little fawn among all the big lions", said Steven Meisel at the time. But she seemed simultaneously wiser and more mature, as though her mind was on loftier things. Most likely it was: she went on to gain a degree in eastern

Christy Turlington and I are talking about the Investment Pec. That is, the pec you take that you don't really need right now, but if you do, it might save you from having to go later. As fellow dedicated water-drinkers, we know of what we speak.

"Oh, I'm really good about water," confides Turlington. "I have about three litres a day. The thing is, I tend to drink more water in the evening rather than the morning, the downside of which is I then have to get up to go to the bathroom all through the night... Like, don't you find you just have to think about going to the bathroom, and then you have to go? Honest to God, it drives me nuts."

It is a lovely afternoon in Paris. Turlington, 45, is here in her newish capacity as global ambassador for the beauty supplement Imedeen, and the two of us are sitting drinking fresh mint tea in an opulent suite at the George V. It is, she drolly notes, a slight cut above the hotel she stayed in when she came here for the first time in 1984, at the age of 15. "Oh God," she says, flaring those chiselled nostrils, "what was it called? The Hôtel de Ville or something in St Germain, and the beds literally caved in, like in *Les Mis*. For breakfast we got a piece of bread and a pack of jam or honey and a sachet of instant coffee, and there was this fish market outside which was sort of charming, but, boy, did it smell..."

Wearing her favourite Alaïa sandals and a dusky-pink trouser suit by Jason Wu, the perfect complement to her *café con leche* colouring, Turlington is as glowingly beautiful as she was in her prime – perhaps, one could argue, even more so. Few models are recalled with as much fondness or favouritism. Everyone knows that seminal *Vogue* cover by Peter Lindbergh, black and white, and starring Christy, Naomi, Linda, Tatjana and Cindy, all in Giorgio di Sant'Angelo tops. It was shot for the January issue in 1990, the year that George Michael's "Freedom '90" video came out

Born in Walnut Creek, California, the middle daughter of an American pilot and a former stewardess from El Salvador, Christy and her two sisters were brought up in Miami, where their father was based with Pan Am. Very much the sporty type ("My dad always had us doing something, whether it was skiing, softball, track, whatever, in the hope that the more we were exposed, the more something would click"), Turlington was spotted by a photographer at the age of 13 while competing in a local gymkhana. Almost immediately thereafter she was signed up by Ford Models.

"What stood out in Christy right from the beginning was this fantastic, graceful purity," says make-up artist Mary Greenwell, who first met her 30 years ago in Paris and has remained a friend ever since. "All those girls of that era were clever, but she was particularly clever. And sensible. She didn't ever need to shock or disgust. I always thought she'd have made a great first lady."

"Oh, I don't know," says Turlington with her warm, wide "having the time of my life" smile, as she calls it. "When I first came to New York, I just went out *all* the time. It was so exciting to be independent, to be free. Of course, all I was doing was going out in the same way I had been going out in my home town, I was just doing it in this great big city. Same stuff. Same dangers. The only good thing was you weren't driving a car. In those days I'd stay out late and then go straight to the studio in the morning, and you couldn't tell," she continues. "I just didn't feel tired. It's this strange capacity young people have."

Those must have been the days, dancing on the ledges at Indochine, drinking endless sambuca shots (her tippie back then, along with a serious chain-smoking habit), pulling all-nighters at Les Bains Douches with Linda, Naomi, Helena and Kate (or "Little Wagon", as Christy still nicknames her), not to mention the stream of male admirers they all must have had in their wake. In fact, didn't her ascendancy, in the mid- to late Eighties, coincide with the emergence of the serial modeliser? "Oh God," she whoops, and then, leaning forwards: "I actually *dated* one for six years. A *horrible* guy! But I was lucky in that when I first came to New York I stayed with my agent [in Eileen Ford's grand brownstone], and those predator types, luckily they weren't interested in me. I do remember them, though, on their motorcycles and always being backstage... Like *why* were they backstage? Who had invited them there?"

In her time, Christy has been compared to Audrey Hepburn, Leslie Caron and, >



The 17-year-old Christy on her first *Vogue* cover in 1986, photographed by Patrick Demarchelier

philosophy and comparative religion from NYU, has founded two businesses, written a book about yoga and, in 2010, set up her own non-profit charity – Every Mother Counts, a campaign to reduce maternal mortality throughout the developing world.

"I was a young woman who had been given this identity as a supermodel, but that was *not* my identity," she says emphatically. "It was like, wait a minute, before I did that job nobody treated me with kid gloves. It still feels sort of silly trying to justify how normal one's life is, but that's kind of what happens when you are in this profession, it creates something that really isn't all that. Or maybe it is for some people, but it certainly never has been for me."

CHRISTY TURLINGTON: JEFFREY MATTIOLI; LINDA EVANGELISTA: ANDREW HOGAN; NAOMI CAMPBELL: ANDREW HOGAN; CINDY CRAWFORD: ANDREW HOGAN; GEORGE MICHAEL: ANDREW HOGAN



Left: Terlington dancing with Naomi Campbell in 1990. Above: in Kathmandu with Kate Moss for a 1994 *Vogue* shoot. Top right: wearing an Antony Price headdress, 1987



Above: Christy drenched in diamonds, *Vogue* October 1994. Above right: sporty in Prada in 1995. Right: shiny happy people—with Linda Evangelista, *Vogue* May 1990



Above: Christy, far right, with a bevy of supers, *Vogue* October 1988. Left: on safari in graphic Dior, *Vogue* January 1992. Right: wearing Red or Dead, 1992



"It's funny, for years I resented the idea of modelling, but then it dawned on me, I'm so lucky"



Christy in a draped Vivienne Westwood corset, *Vogue*, February 1988

because of that wonderful long neck, Leonardo's *Lady with an Ermine*. Today, though, as we sit here chatting, she calls to mind an exotic version of Mary Tyler Moore. Something about those large white teeth and that clear-as-a-bell voice that rises as it goes along. "Reeccally?" she wonders, delightedly. "No one has ever said that before, but my sisters and I used to love that show when we were growing up." Her face is still radiant: yes, she has crow's feet and lines, especially when she smiles (which is a lot), but the evenness of her skin, the way it hangs so perfectly off that killer bone structure... If this is a millionth of what those Imedeen capsules can do for the mature woman, count me in.

"Look, I don't have bad skin," she explains. "I have good skin, but it's dry – drier than you would think considering I have Latin skin. It's fairly transparent, too, so I'm constantly trying to give it nourishment and moisture, but nothing really holds. So, to take a supplement that works from the inside out, rather than the outside in, makes so much more sense to me. It's like that classic adage, we are what we eat."

However, as Christy would be the first to admit, we're not just here to talk about the logic of finding beauty from within (skin pills, they are a real trend at the moment). We're here also to discuss how promoting Imedeen has allowed her to support the charity she founded in 2010, Every Mother Counts. It was created on the back of a film she

made, *No Woman No Cry*, about maternal mortality; the opening scene contains footage of her shot by her husband just 45 minutes after she had given birth to her daughter, Grace (she has two children with the actor/director Ed Burns: Grace, 10, and Finn, seven). It's graphic stuff: everything seems fine until the camera pans down to her thighs, which are covered in blood, the symptom of a postpartum haemorrhage (PPH). "I hadn't intended to put that bit in the film," she says, "but we had to figure out how to enter the story I wanted to tell. I mean, it looked scarier than I felt because: I was in the right place, I hadn't gone home. But what if I hadn't been where I was? PPH is the leading cause of pregnancy-related death in the world."

Her mission to reduce maternal mortality worldwide is what finally gave some meaning to her career in modelling. "Everything is barter now," she says simply.

"It's funny. There were a number of years when I really resented the idea of modelling. I really wanted to prove myself in other ways – but then at a certain age it dawned on me that, gosh, I'm so lucky that I can actually still make a living out of it, that I can go back to those relationships I forged that now really support what I'm doing in the non-profit world. And it all feels good now. They aren't separate worlds, they all feel very interconnected."

Today, Turlington lives in New York with Burns (whom she met at a Knicks game in 2000 and married in 2003). Meanwhile, Burns's brother Brian is married to Christy's sister Kelly, and they all live in the same downtown neighbourhood. Two little-known facts about the Turlington/Burns set-up: a) at Christmas, everyone, including all the nephews and nieces, wears the same



Christy with her husband, Ed Burns. Right: running last year's New York Marathon for Every Mother Counts

novelty pyjamas; and b) the dogs (they have two Boston terriers) get to sleep on the bed.

"Some people think that's gross, letting dogs sleep in the bed with humans," she shrugs. "I'm so glad my husband thought the same as me on that one. But we were attracted to each other because we have a lot of similarities like that." So how come they didn't have more kids? They seem such the type. Particularly with his Irish American upbringing and her Catholic one. "Oh, I definitely wanted more," she says, "but after forcing my husband to be so active on the childcare front when they were babies, he didn't want to. Unlike me, he remembers those middle-of-the-night episodes in technicolour detail, and those long walks he used to have to take in the middle of February to get them to stop crying... He remembers it almost as if *he'd* given birth."

"Actually, he's extra-cautious, way more so round the kids than me. He literally still cuts their food up for them. My feeling is

you can't have two parents like that. If you're going to be that person, I always told him, then I'll be the other one."

Aside from her children, her commitment to Every Mother Counts and her lucrative modelling career, Turlington doesn't have much time for anything else, though she is still drawn to the idea of writing a novel. At one point she and her husband were asked by Dreamworks to do a "one-hour TV drama loosely based on *Grey's Anatomy* and set in the fashion world... It was pretty good actually," she says. "We took turns writing it – his strength was in story structure, mine was knowing that world." But, for now, that's on hold, as is her master's degree in public health. Yoga, too, her absolute passion for a while, has had to accommodate her revived obsession

with running. "I mean, yoga is a life practice – in many ways, apart from my family, it's the most important thing I've ever done, and my mother, whom I turned on to it, still practises at the age of 75. But when I took up running again I kind of felt like I was made for it, like maybe I should have been doing this all along..."

Upon being asked whether she considers herself a good homemaker, meanwhile, she bristles slightly. "I don't know. I *know* how to do everything, but I really tried to grow up thinking that wouldn't be my identity. I'll cook because I like to and because it is relaxing,

but I would never want to be defined by that. Seriously, there are couples I marvel at who can whip the food up, make it look presentable and socialise all at the same time... Me and my husband do *not* have that gift as a couple. Pot luck, that's the way we'll usually go."

Turlington likes to describe herself as a late developer. She sometimes wishes she could have had the confidence and ease that she has now back then. "What's the expression? Youth is wasted on the young?" she says. "But, at the same time, what would be the purpose if you had all these realisations before you've properly lived your life? You know, all these sentiments about beauty coming from within, they've always resonated when I've read them, but it takes a bit of living to truly appreciate them. To realise we are so much more than our experiences, that we are who we are because of the lessons we've learnt, now that's what true 'beauty' is for me." ■