UK supermodel Stella Tennant dies suddenly at 50

By Godfrey Deeny - 24 December 2020

Stella Tennant, the UK supermodel, has died suddenly at 50. Her family confirmed her passing in a statement, after the model passed away at her home in Duns, Scotland, near her parents' 16th-century estate.
Her family confirmed her passing in a statement: "It is with great sadness we announce the sudden death of Stella Tennant on 22 December 2020.

"Stella was a wonderful woman and an inspiration to us all. She will be greatly missed.

"Her family ask for their privacy to be respected. Arrangements for a memorial service will be announced at a later date."

The grand-daughter of Andrew Cavendish, the 11th Duke of Devonshire, Tennant was the most famous blue-blooded model of the past quarter century. Born in Scotland, Tennant’s grandmother was Deborah Mitford, of the famous aristocratic siblings.

Tennant emerged in fashion in the early '90s, when her insiders like fashion writer Plum Sykes and stylist Isabella Blow – intrigued by an aristocrat with pierced nose - began suggesting her for editorial shoots. Steven Meisel shot her for the cover of Italian Vogue; while Karl Lagerfeld gave her an exclusive contract as the new face of Chanel. She would continue to grace the catwalks of Chanel practically until Lagerfeld’s death two years ago.

She would also appear in numerous ad campaigns – Giorgio Armani, Calvin Klein, Burberry, Hermès and Chanel, to name a few – adding a nonchalant élan; and a more cerebral and androgynous vision of beauty with her long boyish frame, black hair and blue eyes.

In 2012, she was one of a group of hand-picked models to appear in British fashion for the closing ceremony of the London Olympics; by 2014 she was one of 200 signatories who signed an open letter opposing Scottish independence in that year’s referendum on the issue.

A distant cousin of Princess Diana, Tennant was married to French photographer David Lasnet, with whom she had four children. There have been reports that she recently separated from Lasnet after 21 years of marriage.

According to a statement by a Police Scotland spokesman: "Officers were called to an address in Duns around 11.30 a.m. on Tuesday, December 22, following the sudden death of a 50-year-old woman.

"Her next of kin have been made aware. There are no suspicious circumstances and a report will be submitted to the procurator fiscal."

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