

# **Eunice was a “working class tomboy”**

**Scots model and actress, Eunice Olumide, revealed she was a working class tomboy with low self esteem – and didn’t even believe modelling was a real job before she became one of the industry’s stars.**

Olumide, who was brought up in Wester Hailes, said she had been more into sports than fashion and didn’t see herself as beautiful or attractive.

She admitted she rejected several agency scouts before eventually deciding to “give it a go”.

Speaking on the BBC Scotland documentary Icons of Style, available on the BBC iPlayer, she also claimed the fashion industry is rare in that it doesn’t discriminate against those with a working class background.

She said: “If I’m really honest I was not really that much into fashion. I, like many people across the United Kingdom, grew up in a typical working class council estate. We didn’t have a lot of extra money.

“I did not think that modelling was a real job, so it was funny. I had been scouted about four or five times before I decided to give it a go but it’s certainly not something that was on my radar.

“I remember going to see an agent. I was with my mum and I

remember walking into the room and, to be honest, I had quite low self esteem in terms of my appearance, so it was really quite strange to be told that I was beautiful or attractive.

“I couldn’t really get my head around that, particularly being a tomboy. I just didn’t see that in myself at all.”

## **Tomboy**

Olumide said her look growing up was that of a tomboy in Inside Out Nike Air Force 1 trainers, baggy jeans and a bomber jacket. She didn’t wear makeup and sported a “massive afro” hairstyle.

She has gone on to a successful career with fashion shoots around the world as well as success as a designer, as an actress and presenter and as a DJ with leading musicians.

Olumide was also awarded an MBE in the 2017 Birthday Honours for services to broadcasting, the arts and charity.

Speaking on Icons of Style, she praised the fashion industry for not discriminating against her working class background.

She said: “I think what is quite interesting about the fashion industry is that not only is it an industry where women actually get paid more to do the same job as men but it’s also an industry that it doesn’t particularly matter if you’re from a working class background or an upper class background, so the discrimination in that sense is a lot less.

“For me it was a transformative experience.”

Olumide also describes tartan as unique and, when presented at its best, “spectacular”. She said: “I think that tartan definitely plays a role in not only my identity but in Scottish identity in general.

“I think that we’ve a tendency to think of tartan as this

thing that's kind of backward looking and parochial as opposed to really recognising its truly unique and abundant nature.

"It is something that I think when done right can be spectacular."

\* Icons of Style is available on BBC iPlayer.



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