

ICONIC MANAGEMENT

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Ingo Nolden spent 12 years perfecting his skills in model management at Viva Paris and IMG New York. Over 2 years ago in 2006, Ingo felt ready to start his own endeavor – more than just a model agency, Iconic focus on talent management – signing female models that have more to offer than just their face – they are personalities with various other skills – such as singing and presenting. Ingo and his team will then design the models a highly individual career plan and set to work at getting them lucrative deals around the globe – from runway to advertising to TV commercials to endorsements. They count Bar Rafaeli and Angela Lindvall among their top clients so they are obviously doing something right. Here Ingo talks to LEXPOSURE.NET about how he’s busy building Iconic: ‘just like polishing a rough diamond’ he says.

Where, when and why was Iconic Management established?

I established Iconic in July 2006 in Berlin and the aim was to create a model management company that offers a truly personalized service. I chose Berlin because it has the biggest potential out of all the German cities and the fashion scene is getting more interesting here now. Previously I had worked abroad, but being German I wanted my company to be company in Germany.

How small did you start?

We started off with just 12 models, but they were some of the biggest names. Bar Refaeli, Angelia Lindvall and Mini Anden were all there from the outset. Bar + Angela I had worked with in L.A and NYC and we just had a good understanding with each other, and I was Mini's booker at IMG in NYC. Now we have 50 models on our books.

Had you always wanted your own company?

Yes it was the fulfillment of a lifelong dream. I had known for at least 10 years that I wanted my own company, so I get a lot of job satisfaction from running Iconic.

There were obviously a lot of model agencies already out there – so what was it that Iconic set out to do differently from the rest?

Our models are more than just pretty faces – many of these girls are artists, they have great personalities and a powerful presence and that's why we are a management company and not just a model agency. Our models have other talents such as singing, designing or writing and we take care to market them towards new lucrative global directions.

What has been one of the strangest fashion moments you have personally experienced?

Well at the 2005 New York Diane von Furstenberg runway show, the ceiling literally suddenly collapsed all over the audience. I only got covered in dust but sitting right next to me was this famous journalist (I think she was from The Daily Telegraph) and she was actually a bit injured. There I was feeling lucky at sitting front-row, the next thing you're covered in ceiling.....that was strange, yes! But we rolled with the punches, dusted ourselves down and went straight on to the next show anyway!

How many models from you do runway and is it the favourite part of their job?

We have about 15 to 20 models walking in the international shows every season. For most models I think it's the most exciting part of the job, sure. Runway is true fashion, its where the relationship between the designers and the models is most apparent – and then you have the 'immediacy' of the moment, the fact that you all getting shown this collection for the first time ever – its an amazing feeling for us watching and of course an even greater feeling for the models walking – all eyes are on them and as they walk to the end of the catwalk they have the eyes of the camera lenses on them which represent hundreds of thousands of eyes worldwide – im sure it's quite the thrill.

What's the favourite part of your job?

I like working on getting great advertising deals for the top girls. I enjoy the negotiation process. And of course a 6-figure sum is the figure I like best! We are very disciplined when it comes to following the general international rules – we're very German in that way!

Who are the most famous models you have on your books?

Bar Refaeli, Angela Lindvall, Bianca Balti, Rosie Huntington, Mini Anden and Shannan Click to name a few.

How has your company expanded over the years?

We are a young company anyway – only 3 years old – but recently we established a new Iconic division at “PMA Models Hamburg” in order that we are still open to more commercial possibilities such as catalogue. So there they take care of that for us which is useful and equals about 30% of our revenue, while in Berlin we focus on the talent management.

When signing a new model, what are you always looking for?

The models we sign are outstanding personalities with amazing features (skin, hair, profile etc) and represent the young, modern and iconic look of today and tomorrow.

Tell us about a few of your favourite up and coming models?

We believe in all of our 50 represented talents. One girl we are very excited about is the 20 year-old up-and-coming indie singer and model Janine Henkes.

How is your company divided up?

We have an art department, a scouting department, a development department, a management department and of course a financial and legal department. I worked for years at Viva Paris and IMG NY and these experiences have helped to influence how I run my own company. The result is ICONIC.

How close an eye would you say you keep on the competition?

I see iconic like a rough diamond that I'm polishing. I want the base in Berlin to be very strong and stable before thinking about any sort of expansion. We will just keep on working the way we are and not worry too much about the competition. I want Iconic to represent Germany on the international stage, I want us to shine.

Do you have a company motto?

Be ICONIC.