

SUMMER CLAU



AN UN-OFFICIAL BIOGRAPHY

A Dancer In San Antonio



Summer Lyn Glau was born on July 24, 1981, in San Antonio, the second-largest city in the state of Texas and the seventh largest city in the United States. Even though she grew up close to the Mexican border, she's not of Latin origins. Her ancestors were German, Irish and Scottish.

Her father is a general contractor and her mother is a schoolteacher. Her parents were always supportive and helped her to pursue her dreams. She has a close relationship with her two younger sisters Christie and Kaitlin, who are her best friends.

"They have always been supportive of me, no matter what I wanted to do. I remember my mom, she used to work for my ballet company. She worked in the wardrobe department, she used to go with me to my ballet camps. They're a huge part of why I am where I am."

Like a real Texas girl, she's really into boots and denim skirts. And she admits to listen to a lot of Country music, enjoying listening to Gretchen Wilson and the classics like Loretta Lynn, Dolly Parton, Patsy Cline.

A very shy girl, she began dancing at age 5. She felt that it was a comfortable way to express herself because she didn't have to speak. She was on a scholarship to a ballet company and homeschooled by her mother Mari from grade 3 to 12 so she could dance all the time and become a professional ballerina.

"Ballet is the hardest thing for a young girl to grow up doing. It's strange to look back and realize that was my entire life. I woke up and I went dancing. I didn't go to school. I stayed home and did correspondence because I was working during the day. At the time, I thought it would be the end of the world if I had to be a normal girl."

Throughout her teenage years she danced at the Majestic Theatre in shows like *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, *The Happy Widow*, *Peer Gynt* or *Paint Your Wagon*. She was a member of the Ballet San Antonio Academy and was a soloist with the company.

"I danced classical ballet my whole life. That was my destiny; that was my identity. I was known as Summer The Dancer. And I thought that's what I'd do all my life."



She got hurt when she was 19 and felt as her life was over. While at home and running for the phone she smashed her foot in the fireplace and broke one of her toes. She already had bad tendonitis in her heels and lost mobility on one of her feet. She danced on it broken for four months, until the pain was just too much to take.

She came out to L.A. for a summer to try to do some musical theatre, but couldn't wear her pointe shoes at all. She studied some other dances, like tango, for a while and in 2001 became part of **Selena Forever**, a stage musical done in honour of famous singer Selena Quintanilla Perez who was tragically murdered at the age of 23. They did several successful representation in California. Summer confessed to have always loved Selena and that she was really excited to dance for the "I could fall in love" tribute.

While in L.A. she also ended up going to some auditions and doing commercials. She discovered acting made her really happy and took on a course on public speaking and worked hard on being able to talk in front of people and be expressive.

"I came into L.A. for the summer, and I had a friend who was dancing at the theater, and I thought, Well, I can still dance—I just can't put on my shoes. So I came out here thinking it would be a getaway for the summer, and I ended up auditioning for jobs and booking them right away. I still danced. I danced tango for a year until I got some acting work. And then that was it. It was the right fit for me. I moved my things out here and went for it."

The Joss Whedon Era



Summer's first television series role was a guest spot on Joss Whedon's **Angel** in the now classic episode "Waiting in the Wings", in which she was able to demonstrate both her acting skills and her ballet training. The episode first aired on February 4, 2002.

Missing the ballet audition because she was out of town, she got cast purely based on the reading she had done, which really worried the choreographer who wasn't sure if she could do all the particularly technical dancing part. They chose the 1841 French ballet Giselle for this episode, one of the most elaborate in classical ballet Summer had never danced before. But she rose up to the task and magnificently danced the part of Giselle. On the acting side, she did a very strong and emotional performance, all in a very convincing Russian accent. This episode was shot on location at the Orpheum Theatre in downtown Los Angeles.

This did not elude the show's director, Joss Whedon, who soon after, cast her in his new series, **Firefly** an epic science-fiction/western show which premiered on Fox on September 20, 2002.

The series is set in the year 2517, after humans have arrived at a new star system, and follows the adventures of the renegade crew of Serenity, a "Firefly-class" spaceship. The show explores the lives of people who fought on the losing side of a civil war and now make a living on the outskirts of the society, as well as the pioneer culture that exists on the fringes of their star system. The ensemble cast portrays the nine characters who live onboard Serenity. Summer plays the role of the very traumatized River Tam. A child prodigy from a very young age, intelligent beyond her years and athletically gifted, River is sent to a private school by her parent but ends up in a Government Academy. Extensively experimented on to become the perfect assassin, River can no longer control her emotions and descends into insanity and nurtures psychic and "intuitive" abilities.



"The thing about River that I like is that she doesn't have a lot of lines. Especially in the series she had to show what she was thinking just by the way she moved or by how her face was moving. I think that has helped me a lot as an actor."

Fox pulled the plug on the show around Christmastime, after only eleven of the fourteen produced episodes were aired.

Between 2003 and 2004, Summer guest starred in several famous series such as **Cold Case**, **CSI**, and **The 4400**. She also had a small part in the MGM feature **Sleepover**.

Due to the successful sales of the **Firefly** DVD Box set and the massive fan campaign a sequel of the series entitled **Serenity**, came to life in 2004.

The \$40 millions film started filming on June 3, 2004 and wrapped on August 26, 2004. It was entirely shot in California.



Summer reprised her role of River Tam in this Universal movie, in which she was given a more significant part. The film takes place approximately two months after the events of the final episode and focuses on River and her involvement with the Alliance, as well as developing Mal's character further.

For Summer, the movie included two minutes-long fight scenes, for which she had to go through 6 month of training and 3 month of fight-camp. A special style of fighting was created especially for her, to use the amazing dancing skills and flexibility that she possesses. She proudly realised about 90% of the stunts herself, but admitted to having had a very hard time.

The movie received generally positive reviews and opened at number two, taking in \$10.1 million its first weekend, spending two weeks in the top ten, and totalling a US box office gross of \$25.5 million and a box office gross of \$13.3 million elsewhere.

Serenity won several awards and for her acclaimed role Summer won a Saturn Award (Best Supporting Actress) and an SFX Award (Best Actress).

Mammoth and Initiation of Sarah

In 2006 Summer played major roles in two very different movies.

Firstly Mika Boreem's twin sister Lindsey in the ABC horror movie **The Initiation of Sarah**. A remake of the 1979 horror movie of the same name. The movie began filming on May 1, 2006 in Louisiana.

Using her real-life experience to help creating her character, Summer explained that her sisters got a kick out of **Initiation of Sarah**.

"This is the only show I have done with a bunch of girls my own age. We laughed and laughed! Mika and I were like real sisters."

And secondly Vincent Ventresca's daughter Jack in **Mammoth** a comedy feature film directed by Tim Cox and produced by Plinyminor in association with the Sci Fi Channel.

Shot partially in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, the film had to be relocated to Bucharest, Romania after Hurricane Katrina. It started shooting on June 20, 2005 and wrapped on July 4, 2005.

An 80's B-Movie homage, **Mammoth** is a funny movie that allowed Summer to evolve in a new genre, which she really enjoyed. The film was nominated for an Emmy for Outstanding Special Visual Effects for a Miniseries, Movie or a Special.

Both roles earned her some fair critics in the press and were released on DVD in 2007.



The 4400 and The Unit

That same year she also appeared in three episodes of the third season of Coppola's **The 4400**, reprising her role of schizophrenic returnee Tess Doerner already played in one of the 2nd season's episode in 2005. The episodes were shot in early 2006 aired between July and August 2006.



She gave life again to a character that had been written especially for her after she had to step back from playing the part of **The 4400**'s returnee Lily Moore because of conflicting schedules with the shooting of *Serenity*.

Her character has had a nice development in this season, which allowed Summer to demonstrate some new acting skills.

"My character might be creepy, but I think our relationship (Tess/Kevin) is sweet. It's different; so different, you know?"

Summer also got cast as Crystal Burns in the second season of CBS's military drama **The Unit**. Sean Ryan, the executive producer of the series knew her work from *Firefly* and asked for her.

Initially planned for three episodes, she finally guest starred in seven episodes throughout the season. Her episodes aired between September 2006 and April 2007. This new role, quite different from everything she had played before, gave her the opportunity to explore new parts of herself as an actress.

"It was exciting for me to get to push myself in a new direction. It's definitely very different from anything that I've done. It's definitely more sexy. She's more aggressive. She's manipulative. And it was actually really fun for me!"

Starting as a the deeply-in love girlfriend of new recruit Jeremy Erhart, her character takes on a darker path after her fiancé gets badly hurt while on a mission. She's irremediably attracted to another military-man who's also in a dire situation and ends up threatening the security of the whole unit. Summer confessed to have had no idea she was going to have so much fun playing a bad girl.



On a more personal level, this role allowed Summer to meet fellow Texan actor Daniel Wisler, who played her on-screen boyfriend on the show and later became her real-life boyfriend. They stayed together for close to three years and separated in early 2009.

In early 2007, Summer flew back to Vancouver to guest star in three more episodes of **The 4400**'s fourth season, giving life once again to the schizophrenic Tess Doerner. She was sad to learn later that year that the show was cancelled and wished she could have been there for the series' final episode too. But she had had to leave before it was shot to start working on a new highly secret project.

Terminator

In late 2007 and after much speculation, it was finally revealed that Summer was going to portray Cameron Phillips, a good Terminator in the upcoming film tie-in television series **Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles**.

The pilot was mostly shot in Albuquerque, New Mexico, where Summer had a great (although cold) time. The rest of the series was done in the L.A. area.

This new Fox series, co-starring Lena Headey and Thomas Dekker, started on January 13, 2008 with a bang and over 18 millions viewers in the US. The ratings dropped slightly more each week, but a strong ever-growing fanbase supported it.



Even though the first season was given 13 episodes it got shortened to 9 because of the 2008 writer's strike, which put the writers out of work for months.

With a lot of action sequences and fighting, Summer once again did a lot of stunts for the show. As she's always enjoyed playing empowered women, she loved the fact that they chose a girl to play this new terminator.

"I've turned down a lot of roles that I feel are not portraying women in a light that I would like to see. I can't change the way people write and produce. I turn down roles that I feel are not encouraging to young girls. That's just my way of contributing."

The first season ended on March 3, 2008 with Summer's character in an exploding car. But her fate was not the only one uncertain. The show's dropping in the ratings was a source of big concern for the network and the word 'cancellation' was floating in the air for a long time. They've finally agreed to a second season of 13 episodes, which they started shooting in June.

In light of the good reception this new season got, the network allowed for 4 more episodes and then in autumn signed for a full 22 episodes season. This new season saw Summer's character going through different phases and evolve a lot.

The young woman loves how open and how curious the character is, how it gives her a lot of opportunities, as an actress, to try different things. She admits to find Cameron particularly challenging because she keeps adapting and changing so fast in every script.



"I want to walk a fine line that makes viewers wish she could feel as humans do and then suddenly be shocked by a cold decision or point of view she has."

Several episodes focused on her character and are some of the fans favourite. Season 2 episode "Allison from Palmdale" was Summer's personal favourite. This episode for the fans ties with season 1 episode "The Demon Hand" which even features Summer dancing. She chose the music and choreographed the scenes.



"Chopin was always my favorite as a dancer. Aaron Cash (the dream sequence terminator) helped me put together the steps for my scene"

In 2008 Summer won her second Saturn Award as Best Supporting actress for her role on T:SCC. She was also nominated for two Teen Choice Awards (TV Breakout Star Female and TV Actress) and a Scream Awards (Best Actress).

The first episode of the second season aired on September 08, 2008 with a lot of viewers. However, the ratings decreased over the

course of the second season and at the 2009 May UpFronts Fox confirmed the cancellation of the series. They nonetheless choose to produce the full 22 episodes promised and aired them all.

The series wrapped production on February 24, 2009 and the series final episode "Born To Run" aired on April 10, 2009.

For her role as Cameron, Summer was once again nominated for a Saturn Award in 2009 as Best Supporting Actress, but lost to Dexter's Jennifer Carpenter. She also got nominated for a Teen Choice Awards (TV Actress: Action Adventure).

"I am devastated that our show will not be back, but I can't say that I'm ungrateful for the opportunity to be part of something so special. I'm really proud of what our team put together."

Post-Terminator Days

On March 09, 2009 Summer guest starred on the 17th episode of the second season of **The Big Bang Theory** as herself in an episode wisely entitled "The Terminator Decoupling".

This hilarious episode allowed for Summer to show a new side of herself and undoubtedly allowed her a bit of fresh air from shooting the final episode of T:SCC as both episodes were shot in parallel in the WB studio lot in February.



In mid July it was reported that Summer turned down the lead role in indie film **Trophy Kids**. She passed on the film due to creative differences

At the end of July an official announcement was made that Hadley Klein (media assistant on TSCC), was creating a new rat-tag comedy **Good Morning Rabbit** starring Kristina Apgar and Alex Frost. Summer was part of the supporting cast and appeared in the pilot episode "National Hamburger Day" which started shooting on August 13, 2009 and wrapped on August 22, 2009. The series sadly was never picked up by networks and the episode never aired.

Dollhouse



In August 2009 it was officially confirmed that Summer would guest star along Eliza Dushku in Fox's **Dollhouse** playing a somewhat geeky and eccentric programmer. Summer was delighted to be reunited with **Firefly/Serenity** creator and director Joss Whedon.

She was originally supposed to be doing one stint in a double episode which was shot mid-September 2009 and aired on December 4 2009, but she later returned towards the end of the season for another two episodes, including the series final which aired on January 29, 2010.

"I see Bennett as a sensitive, creative girl, who spends all of her time alone in a world of her own. She is a mad scientist who is searching for happiness. This is a challenging role in many ways. The most challenging thing is the dead arm!"

Deadly Honeymoon / Legend of Hell's Gate

Summer was then cast in the Lifetime movie drama **Deadly Honeymoon**, co starring along Chris Carmack and Zoe McLellan.

The drama is inspired by the real-life mysterious disappearance of groom George Allen Smith who went missing during the newlywed's cruise in the Caribbean in the 2005.

The film had a budget of \$1 million, and was shot entirely in Hawaii under 20 days. The shooting took place between September and October 2009.

Summer took the opportunity to take a little bit of time off on the Hawaiian sandy beaches with her boyfriend Cooper Reynolds Gross.

The movie premiered on Lifetime Movie Network on April 25, 2010 and received good reviews. LMN allowed for four additional repeats on its channel in April and May. It was later broadcasted in several countries worldwide.



On October 24, 2009 it was reported that Summer had joined the cast of **The Legend of Hell's Gate: An American Conspiracy** a western relating the adventures of three outlaws on the run in 1876 and story of how 'Hell's Gate' at Possum Kingdom Lake, Texas came to have it's name.

The film was written and directed by Tanner Beard and also stars Eric Balfour, Henry Thomas, Jenna Dewan and was shot mostly in Boerne, near Summer's hometown of San Antonio, Texas.

The film wrapped after one month of filming on November 21, 2009 and premiered in festivals in Spring 2011. The film is set to be released via VOD and in some theatres in Spring 2012. A DVD will follow later in the year.

More superheroes

On June 11, 2010 Summer was officially added to the cast list of Joe Lynch's new horror/comedy/thriller movie **Knights of Badassdom**, which follows the exploits of a group of LARPer (Live Action Role Players) who accidentally release a big badass demon. Summer portrays a fellow LARPer named Gwen.

The film which was shot in the area of Spokane, Washington also stars Ryan Kwanten and Peter Dinklage.

A lot of special effects are expected to be in this new film that started shooting on July 12, 2010. The movie wrapped filming on August 20, 2010 and is expected to hit theatres in Spring 2012.



At the end of June, it was revealed that Summer had been added to the cast of **Superman/Batman: Apocalypse** the ninth entry in the popular, ongoing series of DC Universe Animated Original PG-13 Movies.

Summer stars as the voice of Kara aka Supergirl, this marks the first time Summer ever dubbed an animated character. The movie was released directly to DVD and BluRay on September 28, 2010.

Summer also voiced Supergirl in the new PSP3 video game **DC Universe Online** which hit the stores in 2011.

The Cape



On March 12, 2010 it was announced that Summer had joined NBC's superhero-themed drama pilot **The Cape** in a leading role. The pilot, directed by Simon West was shot at the end of Mars in the L.A. area and was one of the most expensive pilot ever done. The show was officially picked up by NBC on May 14th and resumed shooting in September. The series received a 13 episodes order and premiered on NBC on Sunday January 9, 2011.

Summer plays Orwell, a cute and intrepid investigative blogger who fearlessly goes after corrupt cops and costumed bad guys. She soon teams up with The Cape and provides him with crucial support. While going undercover, she plays a lot of different characters and uses a lot of different disguises. The writers also used her dancing background in the show.

Sadly the show didn't get the success executives were hoping for and was therefore cancelled after 10 episodes only. A DVD was later released.

Alphas, Human Preservation Project and Scent of The Missing

2011 was a bit lighter for Summer as she decided to take a step back from work; devoting time to her other passions in life.

Her first job after the cancellation of *The Cape* was a guest role in SyFy's new sci-fi series **Alphas**, which introduced us to a world where there are people with special abilities known as Alphas. The episode was shot in July in Toronto and aired on August 22. In the series' 7th episode "Catch and release" Summer appears as a rogue Alpha on the run with a knack for making stuff out of anything at hand. Skylar Adams is a brilliant and gifted woman, the part and the look both being a little edgy. This was also for Summer her first opportunity at playing the role of a mother. This episode also marked a reunion for Summer with *Alphas* executive producer Ira Steven Behr, after the two had previously worked together on **The 4400**.



Summer later appeared in the music video for Keith Urban's song "**Long Hot Summer**", which was released on June 27, 2011. The music video premiered on 16 August 2011 on CMT and was directed by Trey Fanjoy. It was shot down the 500 block of South Broadway in Los Angeles and then moved down to the beach at Pacific Coast Highway, Malibu, California. The song reached number one on the U.S. Billboard Hot Country Songs chart for the week of 22 October 2011.

"I had an hour to say yes and we shot it the next morning... That is the last job I shot in my 20's... I know it's nothing like what I've done before but the funny thing is that it's more ME than anything I've ever done. I acted like myself and wore all my own stuff and danced to my favourite kind of music! It's a special memory for me."



Later in the year, Summer also took part along in a new trans-media project **The Human Preservation Project**. Initially inspired by the unique world portrayed in 5 Gum's TV commercials and launched with mysterious coded messages, The Human Preservation Project (at www.SurvivalCode.com) is an Alternative Reality Game from 42 Entertainment starring Terry O'Quinn and Summer Glau. The journey is an online sensory test and a call to action, with the simple mission of stimulating your senses, as players access over 20 original games, puzzles and challenges to solve. As they unlock these sensory testing facilities, players can access digital pages of a new graphic novel that tells the World of 5 mythology and watch video diary extracts featuring the actors. Summer plays Natalia Suttinger, a young, passionate, neuro-scientist.

"When I heard the idea, I didn't know a whole lot about it, but I thought, "This is the future, and this is a great way of getting a product out there and getting people involved in a more emotional way." I learned a lot, and I thought it was exciting. We shot quickly, but it felt very personal for me, and I liked the challenge of getting to look directly into the lens and talk to everyone and anyone who joins the game. I had a great time."

And lastly from December 1, 2011 to December 16, 2011 Summer was in Hammond, a small town next to Baton Rouge, shooting a new pilot for TNT's **Scent of The Missing**.

This new drama centers on Aly (Tricia Helfer), a tenacious, strong-willed K-9 Search and Rescue volunteer who works with an equally determined partner — her mischievous golden retriever, Puzzle. Summer plays a new member of the K-9 Search and Rescue team, Sedona, who is beautiful and very wealthy but much tougher than she looks. The show is based on the best selling book *Scent of the Missing: Love and Partnership with a Search and Rescue Dog* of by Susannah Charleson.



We will know in 2012 if the show gets picked up for a full season.

The Serving Girl

In July 2007, Joss Whedon told the ComicCon audience about a pet project he'd been working on for some time: composing the score for a short film, a ballet starring Summer Glau. The dancer confirmed it in February 2008. Both protagonists are very dedicated to the concept, admitting that they've been talking about it for years. Unfortunately with Summer shooting for SCC and Joss working on his new show Dollhouse, they could just never find the time to do it and the so the project was postponed.

"It was going to work out better when we were on strike. We wanted to do the ballet for years because Joss writes his own music and I do my own dancing, so I thought it was an amazing idea. But now he's been thrown into an amazing project and I have to go back to work. But we're hoping to do it this season"

Sadly the project kept being pushed back and never made it out of pre-production so far, but both Joss and Summer still hope to make it one day.