

# MAGGIE JOURNAL

## ROLLERSKATING IN LA WITH APPELUSA

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*We caught up with Appelusa, one of the star's of Chet Faker's Gold video, to get some tips on our to skate like a pro.*



You've seen Chet Faker's Gold video, right? For sure you have, it's had almost 20 million views, and has just been nominated for the 2015 MTV Video Music Awards for best choreography. And those girls! They totally inspired me to learn to skate. I think rollerskating is the sexiest, most beautiful and elegant sport I've ever seen. Oh, and Appelusa. Appelusa, Appelusa, Appelusa McGlynn: world champion rollerskater and more recently, the girl in the '58' blue crop top in the music video Gold. Check her out below. Appelusa comes from a long lineage of skaters; in fact, her family, the Flemings, own Skateland in Northridge, Los Angeles, USA. Her granddaddy bought the place back in 1968.

Skateland is where Appelusa and I meet. And this is where I strap on my skates. Appelusa guides me through my first ever rollerskating lesson. I had imagined I'd pop on the skates and glide just like a 'Gold girl'. But alas, I can hardly even stand on my own two feet. I'm given a device to help me. It looks like an elderly person's walker frame – me, I look more like a Golden Girl than a Gold girl. But it's awesome, coz it means I can actually move forward. Appelusa points out my white-knuckled death grip and I loosen up as best I can.

There's a bunch of kids on the rink with us, and a handful of adults, and they are literally making rings around me. Skating is a lot harder than the pros make it look. I'm definitely gonna need a lot more practise before I'm dancing down the highway gettin' ma sexy on like a Gold girl.



Appelusa is incredibly patient with me and encourages me throughout the entire lesson. In all honesty, I'm pretty bad at it. It's the first time I've had a pair of skates on my feet since I was a chubby little kid who'd hold on for dear life to the nearest wall/fence/bit of shrubbery/innocent passer-by. Nothing's really changed. Till now. Watch this space, people. Oh yes, I plan on ditching the rollerskating Zimmer frame in no time and pulling some kickass moves.

Unlike me, Appelusa says she actually feels more grounded and steady on her feet in skates. And it's no wonder given the amount of hours she must've spent in them over the years. Appelusa's grandparents, father, aunt and uncle were all skaters, as was her mother; who was not only the first club skater but also a rollerskating instructor at the Skateland rink for almost 30 years.

Appelusa was brought up as a figure-skater from around the age of 2 and started competing at the tender age of 5, performing freestyle, figures, dance and pairs. She also did synchronised skating (like synchronised swimming but on skates) in Glendale, LA. Appelusa competed in the world championships on the Gold Coast in Queensland, Australia in 1999, and in Germany in 2002 where her team came third – making her the first world champion skater of the family.

Although these days Appelusa isn't skating competitively, she still skates regularly in music videos and TV commercials, including playing Pinky in the Bud Light commercial and Nickelback's She Keeps Me Up music video. She's skated on TV shows such as Glee, That 70's Show and The Goldbergs. And stay tuned for more videos coming up! She also coaches and teaches freestyle routines, and an event called Creative Solo, where kids get dressed up as characters and express themselves creatively through skating.

Appelusa is also an accomplished actor, voice over artist, and a freelance and fine art photographer. Her voice overs range from radio ads to audiobooks specialising in young adult novels – she even has her own home studio. She's been in several short films and recently starred in her first feature movie, The Death of Tom Brimwald. She's also co-written a comedy series with Adam Dick, which is currently in development. The series is about synesthesia, which Appelusa describes 'is like a cross wiring of the senses'. Appelusa has three different types of synesthesia herself. She explains that it's a condition that's just starting to 'come out' and be talked about, saying, 'The artist, Pharrell [Williams], has synesthesia, where [when] he hears notes, he sees colours'. Appelusa decided to write a fictional comedy about the condition to 'kinda make light' of the situation.



This lovely lady has clearly created one heck of a career for herself, and being featured as one the super sexy artistic skaters in Chet Faker's Gold video is, to me, one of her best moments yet. I watch this video quite often (you're welcome for the views, Chet!) I find it mesmerising, intoxicating and alluring. Gold was named Top 5 of 2014 from Entertainment Weekly and was choreographed by the world-renowned choreographer Ryan Heffington.

Gold came about when Appelusa got a call from her friend April Corley (wearing the green cardi in the video) about the audition. They then contacted their friend Candice Heiden (in the floral shorts) – and in the end, all three girls were cast, with Candice getting the lead role. Sounds like there's a real camaraderie amongst the LA roller girls with job opps being shared around. As Appelusa says: 'It's about getting the best person for the job'. How lovely, especially in a city where there's fierce competition just for a seat on the bus.

The three roller girls combined Ryan's dance choreography with their knowledge of skating, resulting in that fabulous piece of art down the highway under those big bright truck lights. They shot all night long and then watched the sunrise.

I'm super stoked that I was fortunate enough to have a rollerskating lesson with this amazing woman! Thanks Appelusa! Promise I'll practise!