

A publication dedicated to upcoming and established models and professionals

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GLOBAL elle

MAR 2023 M O N T H

**SPOTLIGHT: FABRICS OF
MULTICULTURAL AUSTRALIA**



ARIA AWARDS

An exclusive sneak peek
at the ARIAs red carpet

INTRODUCING

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OPENING REMARKS

For most of us, each new year marks a chance for redemption, and 2023 is no exception. Every article in this issue speaks to challenge, opportunity, and the transformative power of hope despite the current pandemic.

Every single one of these articles speaks to the people who are passionate about the modelling industry and I'm definitely excited to share them with you.

Please keep your eyes on our magazine in the coming years because whatever challenges 2023 may hold, one thing still remains constant: our commitment to you, our readers and friends. God bless.

Olivia Robinson
Editor-At-Large

GLOBAL elite MODELS

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Introducing Abi Grigsby - a charming and beautiful model who's destined to be a superstar





The biggest names in the Australian music industry recently gathered at Sydney's Harder Pavilion to celebrate the 2022 ARIA Awards. After several COVID-affected events over the past two years, finally, the 2022 ARIA Awards became the first "normal" ceremony in a long time.

The 2022 ARIA Awards paid tribute to those we lost this year, especially to the three titans of Australia's music industry, such as Archie Roach, Judith Durham, and Olivia Newton-John. That said, Yolngu artist Baker Boy was the star of the night, winning in five categories — Best Solo Artist, Album of the Year, Best Hip Hop/Rap Release, Best Cover Art (by artist Adnate), and Best Mixed Album (by Pip Norman, Andrei Eremin, Dave Hammer and Michael O'Connell).



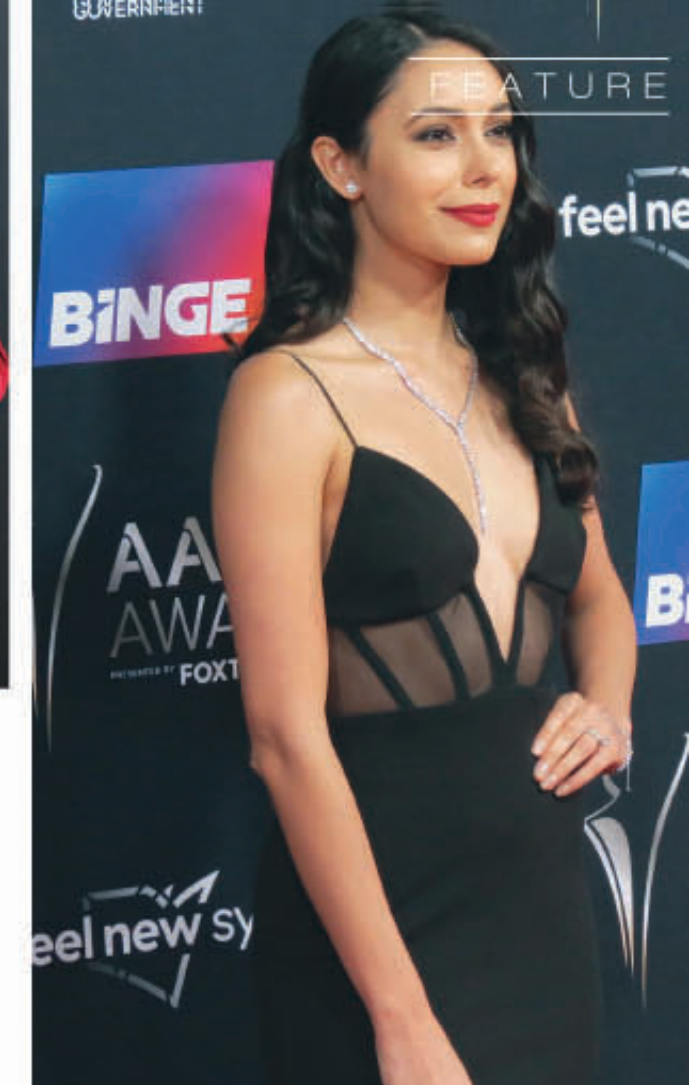
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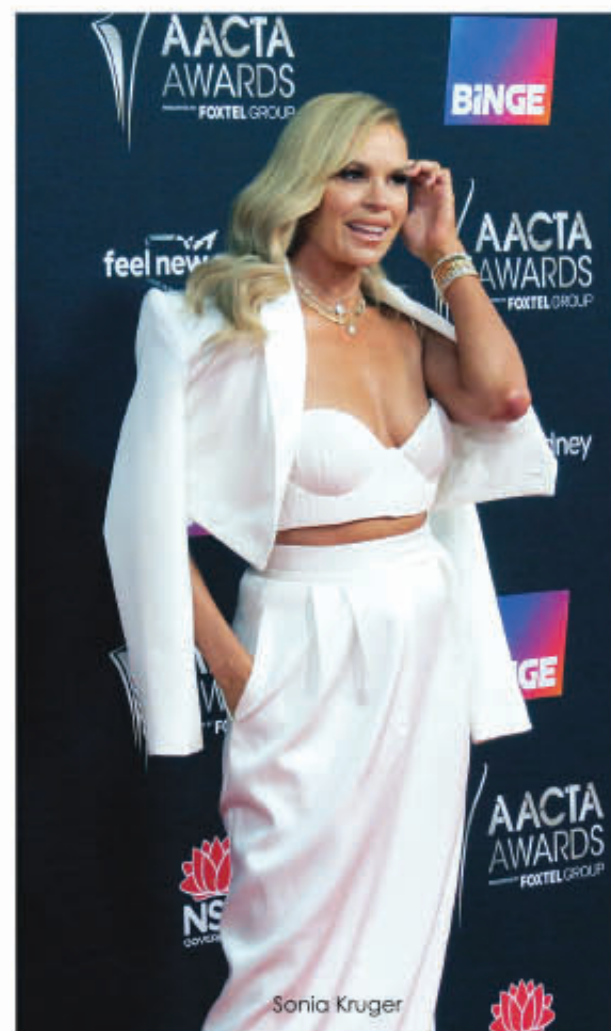
The Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts Awards 2022



The red carpet was rolled out in Sydney's Hordern Pavilion 5th December 2022 at 6:30 pm AEDT as the Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts (AACTA) Awards held its official ceremony for 2022. The cream of the crop in the Australian Entertainment industry attended Australia's night of nights as the who's who of show business gathered to celebrate the best in TV and cinema.



Elsa Pataky and Chris Hemsworth



Sonia Kruger



The cast of Preppers



Leah Purcell accepting Best Lead Actress



Baz Luhrmann's *Elvis*, starring Austin Butler as the King of Rock 'n' Roll and Olivia DeJonge as Priscilla Presley was the star of the night as it swept the awards categories, taking home a whopping 11 trophies, including Best Film, Best Director, Best Lead Actor, and Best Supporting Actress.



Spankie Jackzo, Hannah Conda and Kween Kong



The cast of *MasterChef Australia*



Mystery Road: Origin cast

JOJO

ALMAZORA SEBASTIAN

Jojo Almazora Sebastian is a Filipino-American from Kapolei, Hawaii, based in Sydney, Australia – he's a devoted and compassionate frontliner and nurse who works in the Operating Theatre at a busy Metropolitan Hospital in Sydney. However, on weekends, this orthopaedic nursing unit manager transforms into a charming and dashing tuxedo-attired fashionista, singer-entertainer, and master of ceremonies.

Jojo has been an awardee in Sydney's Best Dressed for the last two years due to his excellent dressing sense and confident personality. For 2021, Sydney Best Dressed Organisation has awarded him the Top Male Fashion Icon of the Year. This landed him an award for the Inaugural Ceremony of World's Best Dressed. He was nominated for Manila's Best Dressed for 2020-2021 to represent Australia in the prestigious Annual Event in 2022 and was awarded at the 2021 Australian Modelling and Fashion Awards. He was also named an ambassador for Sassy and Company Clothing in 2020-2021, which endeavours to teach everyone in the community fashion sustainability and to breathe new life into old clothes through recycling and repurposing.

Jojo been quite busy in the Catwalk for the past 2 years – he participated in the runway at the Sydney's Best Dress 2020, Australian Multicultural Fashion Festival 2021, Sassy and Co Fashion Runway 2021, Australian Modelling and Fashion Festival and Awards 2021, Australian Fashion Preview 2021 and 2022, This Is Me Fashion Show 2021 and 2022 and Miss Earth Australia Fashion Show 2020 and 2021 amongst other. Jojo recently walked for Trinity Dawson – a Sydney Designer, in the New York Fashion Week last February 2022, LAKME Fashion Show in June 2022, and the Australian MultiCultural Fashion Exhibition in August 2022. He was invited back to grace NYFC in September 2022. The Australian Multicultural Fashion Exhibition 2022 is a concept that Mr. Rox Molavin – the CEO of RGEM Promotion and Jojo, came up with, which aims to promote social awareness and cohesion in the multicultural community through fashion.

We recently caught up with Jojo to discuss his journey in the fashion industry, and here's what went down:

How did you get into the modelling industry?

I started in the industry at a very young age. At age 5, I was already asking my parents to see and audition in the Philippines. Unfortunately, it did not come easy because of the unrealistic standards that the industry used to expect from young kids. I remembered it being ruthless. At the age of 7, my parents explained that it was because of various reasons why I was not getting any bookings. However, since I was adamant that I really wanted to pursue this, my parents did not give up, and it was just a matter of time before I finally booked a print ad and runway modelling gig. So that is how it all started.

What do you like most about being a model?

What I like the most about being a model is the ability to express my uniqueness and individuality in someone else's design. I believe that this form of expression is very much alive and something that will never go old.



Ryan Aguas
PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY

What is the best advice you have ever been given?

To ignore the noise and chaos that others create while I reach my dream. I believe that if I mind the noise and chaos, it hinders me from reaching my goal.

What are your future plans? Inside your career or out of it.

I am learning to sew because I am planning to get my designs out there, hopefully.



Model: Jojo A Sebastian
Photographed by: Ryan Aguas
Skin Care: Chocolate Day Spa
HMUA: Benz Reyes

Ryan Aguas
PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY



Diana OMUOYO

Diana Omuoyo is the reigning Ms. World Universal 2022. She's a multicultural and multi-lingual IT professional passionate about promoting inclusion, equality, STEM, and quality education.

Diana's involvement and commitment to the community have always been a key part of her life because it gives her purpose and a sense of belonging. She stays active by supporting socio-economic causes globally, being an ambassador to change, and continuing to raise awareness on critical issues.

Because of her deep passion and aspirations in the community, a friend suggested that she enter a pageant as a way to expand her dimensions in philanthropy. She had never imagined joining a pageant before, so she was initially surprised by the recommendation because of her lack of industry knowledge. She then researched pageantry, got a better understanding, and gained insights into how most platforms are founded on service to the community and philanthropy.

So, when the opportunity to join Ms. World Universal came up, it was an easy decision for her primarily because the platform's mission and vision aligned with her goals, passions, and values. The rest, you can say, is history.

We recently caught up with Diana to discuss her journey in the pageant industry, and here's what went down:

What do you like most about being a beauty queen?

Winning a title is a humbling experience; most people don't realize that it is synonymous with leadership and service to others. As a modern woman of colour, I am navigating the world amidst the challenges of social & cultural norms that continue to divide the community. As Ms. World Universal and a beauty queen, I am

privileged to have a platform I can leverage to promote causes, spread awareness, and impart change.

Pageantry has also afforded me great opportunities to participate in the community, charity, and social events where I have met like-minded individuals. Throughout this journey, I continue to grow and learn a lot about myself as I interact and share with people from all walks of life.

Downside to being a beauty queen?

One of my personal challenges is juggling a demanding full-time job, personal/community commitments, hobbies, family/friends, and the title holder's duties. However, because this role is very important to me, I always make time to be present and committed, which simply means multi-tasking and better time management.

One of the downsides I experience regularly is that, while pageants continue to gain popularity, there is still some lingering stigma about beauty queens and pageantry. So, I constantly debunk myths and educate others about my title and platform. I stay grounded in the knowledge that even if I may fail to change the perception of some, it is still important for me to continue to stand in my truth for my purpose and the vision for my title as a beauty queen.

What has been the most memorable experience of being in the pageant industry so far?

I have had many monumental experiences and milestones on the journey to Ms. World Universal. The most memorable one so far was at a charity event where I met and chatted with mothers from a minority community who expressed the hope that their daughters – by seeing someone that looks like them on a platform

like this – would be inspired to believe that they too can dare to dream big and chase their dreams. This highlighted the importance of representation and just how impactful it is for our under-represented communities. At that very moment, I knew that my decision to join the pageant world was right.

Who have been the most interesting people you've met so far in the industry?

I have interacted with so many people over the last couple of years across various domains – NGOs, Fashion, Media, Pageantry, Founders, Sports, Leaders, and Community Advocates, among others. Everyone brings a unique view of the world and diverse perspectives. The one thing that has been a common denominator in many of these interactions has been the shared passion for giving back – that was unsurprising yet an interesting discovery.

What has been the most valuable lesson you've learned while in the pageant industry? This can be about the industry or about yourself.

I started my pageant career comparatively late, so gaining a deeper understanding of the meaning and power of the crown was one of the major learnings on my journey. I always thought that in order to enter or even win a title, I would have to change to become "pageant worthy" [Whatever that means]. But, throughout the process, I realized I just needed to be my authentic self and showcase the strengths and leadership traits I already have that make me a great title holder.

While the quest for the title is, in fact, a competition, the title[s] do come with a lot of responsibility. So, on a personal level, it has forced me to map out my primary focus and the goals I want to achieve with this title. I now represent Ms. World Universal, myself, and the organizations I support, and I want to be remembered as a selfless person, fearless in the pursuit of her dreams, a great friend, someone that was a positive role model that used her voice to influence positive change that made an impact in other people's lives.

Working in an industry whose only emphasis is on the outside characteristics of a person, how have you stayed grounded?

To stay grounded, I remind myself why I joined pageantry and the goals I strive to achieve. This keeps me focused and motivated to navigate the daunting aspects of the industry. Focusing my energy on the positives, the learnings, and the road ahead has been a constant 'saving grace.' It has also become extremely important for me to maintain overall mental wellbeing and good physical health instead of trying to fit into a superficial mold. I wake up every day and choose to love the space I occupy and the body I am in, and this journey of self-love is one I am hoping others will learn to embrace as well.

Is your family supportive of you being in the pageant industry?

My decision to join the pageant world surprised a lot of people, but I am lucky to have had a lot of support from friends and family along the way.

What are your future plans? Inside pageantry or out of it.

On a personal note, I plan to spend more time mentoring and advocating for & mentoring women of color, underrepresented communities, and young adults to pursue Technology and Engineering careers. My ultimate goal and ambition are to have a seat on a board of a charity organization / foundation where I can leverage my experiences and passions for philanthropy to continue to support Education, Equality, Inclusion and STEM initiatives on a local and global scale.

I stand firm in the belief that Education plays a key role in socio-economic wellbeing within our communities and that technology is one way to create a pathway for everyone to access quality learning. Another aspect of this is understanding that Education is not just limited to textbook/school learning but also includes knowledge sharing around cultural & societal issues. It is important to continue to create awareness around the dangers of exclusion, discrimination, the single story, and bias.

For my year in reign, I also look forward to continuing to work with the Ms World Universal Director and pageant network to support their plan for the year and fulfill all other duties as defined by the pageant organization, leveraging my network and social media platforms to promote my cause[s] and expand my reach.



FOMA 2022

FABRICS OF MULTICULTURAL AUSTRALIA



Fabrics of Multicultural Australia (FOMA) is a sustainable platform that stimulates economic growth for the creative sector and generates bilateral trading opportunities while fostering social cohesion. It works in conjunction with Foreign Governments and their Trade Commissions based in Australia. Enabling them to leverage visual arts, textile design, and visual storytelling as a conduit to bringing together and sharing unique cultural perspectives in a way that visually depicts Australia's uniquely diverse identity to the globe.

Stemming from our nation's diverse landscape are a myriad of unique stories, perspectives, customs, and social identities, all of which function harmoniously to position multiculturalism as one of Australia's greatest strengths. FOMA continues to leverage the influence of our creative sectors across a variety of mediums, showcasing to a global audience the interweaving threads that collectively form the unique identity of contemporary Australia from an economic and cultural perspective.

FOMA annually presents an exciting line up of initiatives that comprise of activations, panel discussions, cultural exhibits and runway shows in collaboration with Foreign governments and Cultural Institutions.

Photo Credit: Victor Hawk



TV1 is an entertainment and lifestyle global streaming platform offering Australian content. TV1 promotes the most exhilarating events, the most glamorous and successful people, the most in-demand celebrities, the hottest rising stars, and the most exciting trends down under. TV1 may be new but it's most certainly in demand and 100% Australian. We are committed to making Aussie local talents, events, and entrepreneurs easily accessible to both our local and international audiences via the highest quality streaming technology.

Co-founded by the StarCentral Media Group and the Australian Millionaire Business Network, the TV1 channel is the home for independent Australian Screen content. We very much welcome our local screen practitioners from emerging through to the established to make TV1 their home. By streaming your content on TV1, you join a family of rising stars, entrepreneurs, celebrities, and various artists.

MISSION: Our mission is to present the most unique and compelling original Australian content by tapping into the hottest local talents and events.





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Abi Grigsby is a rising model who has made a name for herself in the modelling industry through her natural talent and dedication to her craft. Abi discovered her love for modelling at a young age and pursued it relentlessly throughout her childhood and teenage years. She honed her skills through pageants, runway shows, and various photoshoots, building a solid foundation of experience and confidence to serve her well in her future career. She initially got into the modelling industry by entering beauty pageants. She joined the Top Model of the World Philippines pageant in July 2016 with two weeks' notice. The pageant needed a specific number for the competition to go ahead, and the pageant's director contacted her to join. She eventually became the second runner-up, which shocked her as she had no previous experience in pageants so she wasn't expecting to make it into the Top 5.

The following year she entered a pageant called "Mutya Ng Pilipinas Australia" (Pearl of Australia) beauty pageant. She gained a lot of exposure in the modelling industry by joining this pageant, which led her into meeting the majority of the photographers that she now works with regularly. When she competed overseas, she also gained several contacts with various modelling agencies and photographers. Throughout 2017 she also competed in the Miss International Australia pageant, finishing as second runner-up and winning the Miss Model of the World Title. Furthermore, she competed in the Miss Teen Universe Australia pageant in December of that year. All of these competitions led her to meet so many creatives in the industry; photographers were looking for fresh faces to shoot, and makeup artists needed a model to work on for skill enhancements. Slowly, through these connections, she was able to build the network that she currently has.

As she looks to the future, Abi remains focused on her craft and committed to expanding her horizons. With her talent, drive, and passion for her work, Abi is poised to become one of the industry's most sought-after models, inspiring audiences and fellow models alike with her artistry and vision.

Model & Mode magazine recently caught up with Abi to discuss her journey in the modelling industry and here's what went down:

Could you please tell our readers something about yourself that others don't probably know about?

Most people don't know that I am actually quite a sporty person. When I tell people I play cricket, I'm often met with a shocked response, as those around me see me post a lot of my modelling work, so they assume that I model full-time. However, I do enjoy playing community sports, as it gives me a chance to stay active, as well as allows me to socialise and meet new people.

How did you become a model? What's it like to be a model?

I started modelling when I was 17, and it all began when I started participating in beauty pageants. As I am half Filipino, I competed in the local Miss Philippines pageants they held in Melbourne. Starting in small competitions led me to compete internationally twice so far and was an excellent gateway to the modelling world.

As for how it feels to be a model, I don't feel any different from the people around me. Modelling is essentially a paying hobby for me, and it certainly has taken me places. However, at the end of the day, I just feel like anyone else - a simple human being just trying to get by in this crazy life!

What has been your greatest triumph, to date?

The greatest triumph to date would be competing in international beauty pageants and gracing magazine covers, just like this one.

Every now and then, I still remember my teenage years, when I was painfully shy and so insecure about my looks. I remember every day fantasising about looking like someone else. It took me years to build self-confidence and finally be happy in the body that I am in.

What has been your greatest lesson, and how have you used that lesson in your life?

The greatest life lesson I carry with me to this day is to not worry about trying to please everyone or anyone. At first, I found it difficult to accept that there are people who won't like you based on your life choices, interests or simply have different preferences in life. Still, I have learned that you should never let someone's disapproval of you deter you from doing whatever it is you want in life.

ALL HAIL
Abi
 GRIGSBY

If you could travel back in time and alter one historical event, where would you go and what would you attempt to change?

If I could travel back and alter a historical event, I would prevent the holocaust from happening and save millions of innocent lives. The holocaust was heavily touched on throughout my teenage years, particularly in high school, so that historical event, in particular, has always had a profound impact on me. It is definitely a touchy subject for myself and others, even in this present day.

What do you think you came into this life to learn, and what do you think you came here to teach?

I believe I came into this life to learn that things won't always go the way you planned, no matter how certain you are of the situation. I had big plans for my life when I was 18 that didn't come to fruition, and honestly, when I realised things wouldn't turn out the way I'd always hoped, I felt disheartened and didn't have a plan for the next step.

Over the past few years, I've learned to trust the process and the struggle you go through. I've always firmly believed in the saying, "everything happens for a reason." I also think that in life, you are never denied, only redirected!

What projects are you working on right now?

I am currently focusing on my pageantry and hoping to compete internationally again this year. Most people don't realise how much time, effort, and preparation goes into competing in pageants, especially internationally. A lot of work goes behind the scenes for both the organisers and the contestants, so I am currently building myself up to be able to give my best performance when the time comes to be on stage again!

What would you still like to attempt in your modeling career?

In terms of my modelling career, I would still like to give international modelling a try. I have never had the opportunity to travel for work opportunities. However, I believe modelling would be a great opportunity to gain that experience in working abroad, as I've always loved the idea of travel, so it would be fulfilling to get paid work out of it too!

What advice would you give to those hoping to follow in your footsteps?

As cliché as it may sound, my only advice would be to keep going and never give up. When I first decided to get into modelling, and start participating in beauty pageants, I had my share of people who discouraged me and tried to sway me against it. I found that when I cut off people who didn't support me and instead surrounded myself with people who believed in me, it fuelled me to try even harder for them and to prove to myself that my ambitions are valid and achievable goals.



A woman with long brown hair, wearing a white wide-brimmed hat, a white short-sleeved dress with a ruffled waist, and brown leather boots, is sitting on a sand dune. She is holding a brown leather crossbody bag and sunglasses. The background shows a beach with waves and a blue sky with clouds.

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