

Dedicated to showcasing beauty queens and kings who have made the most outstanding contributions in the pageant industry

# GOLDEN SASH

DECEMBER 2021

Cover Photography: Tony Palliser

MEET HALL OF FAME AWARDEE

*Lojo*  
ALMAZORA  
SEBASTIAN





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Agsa  
2020

The AGSA is a ceremony aimed at showcasing beauty queens who have made the most outstanding contributions to the pageant industry during the year. To provide integrity in the judging of the categories, National Directors were invited to nominate beauty queens who have competed in their respective pageant systems in the specified categories. The ceremony was brought to you by MS Entertainment Network in collaboration with StarCentral Magazine.

Unfortunately for 2020, biosecurity measures and travel restrictions have been put in place to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Thus, for 2020, each National Director were able to nominate their own champions from their respective pageant systems and they awarded their champions during the AGSA ceremony.







# JOJO

## ALMAZORA

# SEBASTIAN

*A glimpse to pageant hosting*

By Alwin Ignacio

Before Jojo Almazora Sebastian becomes the first Hall of Famer Pageant Host Inductee of the Australian Golden Sash Awards, the hosting wonder from Down Under, share a recollection from his reckless youth years in Laguna with its bucolic charms, laidback surroundings and the kindest of people, an unforgettable all by myself past time: "I was always in front of the mirror, with a comb on my hand as my pretend microphone."

That season under the sun, the hosts who were en vogue are Martin Nievera, who babbled and out talked his Filipino celebrity guest in the late night talk show "Martin After Dark" and Johnny Litton, the televised conversations with the new moneyed and seasoned bourgeoisie, had a considerable impact on the pubescent Sebastian.

The winner of the TV Presenter award from Aberdeen Fashion Arts and Media Awards, however, gives credit to the main person who was instrumental in planting the "hosting seed" to him, the one and only Josephine Sebastian, his mommy dearest.

He shares: "I believe it is my mom who brought about it during my early childhood. You know, she has a strong and pleasing personality, and it seems like in all the programs of the various organizations she was part of, her task was to be the host. She tagged me along in those hosting gigs, and I was always mesmerized by the way she handled herself on stage. She was always confident, in and out of it, but she had a special aura about when she held the microphone. I remember her eyes twinkled. She beamed. Her smile was radiant! Seeing my mommy Josephine on stage, made me feel good. I am so proud her."

When his time to host happened, it was in a local beauty pageant in his hometown. He was a young man of sixteen summers then: "The stage was all mine that time because my co-host did not arrive. Was I a nervous wreck? Of course! But you know, when I was 16, I was not the type who will chicken out to an event just because I will be going solo. I did give it my best, and I should say, I passed with flying colours I guess because at the end of the gig, they gave me a talent fee of P500. From that earning, I bought a Penshoppe shirt that I was saving for the longest time. "

The shirt, he has kept it, neatly tucked in closet in his home away from home, in Hawaii. A wonderful memento of how, when and where he lost his hosting virginity.

Sebastian admits that nowadays, he still gets nervous when he does hosting. He explains: "I believe it is important to keep all those butterflies in your stomach, to be a little ill-at-ease, to be even huffing and puffing like the big bad wolf. When you do something that you love, all these feelings, are part and parcel of it. "

"For me, all of these means, that am not over confident and I am not complacent with what I do that is why the good kind of nervousness is still present," the Ryan Seacrest and Xian Lam hosting admirer carries on. "Being over confident or complacent, I never want to be in such a predicament. "

How does he conquer his stage jitters? Sebastian's swift reply: "Believe it or not, I learned to realize as I mature as a host that the amount of energy you spent in being nervous is the same when you are excited, you know. What I do is that I psyche myself by talking to the candidates before the pageant starts. IT does do me good to have short and sweet conversations with them."

Photo Credit: Tony Palliser



With 22 pageants under his belt and more of them are about to transpire in the nearest future, Sebastian's impart what he thinks are his strengths that pageant organizers recognize and appreciate: "My main role as a host is to make sure that I showcase each and every candidate. Usually, I request permission from the pageant organizers that I will be given permission to chitchat with them. To know them a little better and not just rely on what are written on the cue cards. I do my research as well so that come pageant time, I will be able to give the most import information about the ladies. They are after all, the central figures to any given pageant."

Some do's and don'ts in pageant hosting, Sebastian imparts: "Never outshine your co-host, if you have one. You must work as a team. I make it point to rehearse with my co-host, with the permission of course from the pageant organizers. Also, this night is for the ladies, so they must be front and centre and not you. Never take away their moment to shine. They rely on you to have their moment on the stage and it is imperative to give that to them. I don't cut their answers during the casual interviews. I smile at them, look them in their eyes. And make them feel that my sincerity and I am there to listen to their answers. I am their friend on stage."

Jojo's favourite pageant segment: "Oh, it is always the awarding of the winner," he declares. "There is a magic that is so palpable when the awarding of the winner happens. The joy is authentic. You know, these ladies worked hard for it. Being a candidate is not walk in the park and the one who becomes queen truly deserves all the accolade and love."

The low downs in the world of pageant hosting are a plenty. Sebastian divulges: "The criticisms can be savage and I had

my share of social media bullying. Some of criticisms of course are objective. A handful are amusing. And there are a lot who are just there to nit-pick or undermine you simply because the one they root for did not make the cut. They think since I am the host, I did not announce the right name. "

"Some pageant fans are passionate about the queens they support," Sebastian continues. "Instead of them carrying out their disgust and gripes to the organizers, since I am the host, I am the easiest target of their bashing and hating. I just take it all in stride knowing that their feelings are eating them up. There is a ready document, the paper that contains the name of the queen that can be shown to those who continue to pester and are not gracious in accepting the reality of it all."

"I keep myself current by making sure that my skills are in check, my information is up to date and my humility intact by embracing the fact that there is no formula to pageant hosting and my learning continues," avers Sebastian about his edge. "I also love doing and trying new things when it comes to hosting. Being current does not mean totally forgetting your foundation, it means that your growth is constant and the hunger to learn and hone your new skills set are for real. Observing. Researching. And communicating well helps you to evolve. You know, I constantly remind myself that I am only as good as my last hosting gig. All the congratulations, I put it to my heart and not in my head."

In conclusion, the future is indeed rainbow coloured and sparkling for Jojo Sebastian as he wants to realize: "Hosting the Oscar's perhaps? That will be a blast. Or maybe, the most coveted beauty title of all, the Miss Universe. Wow! That is some dream, huh! Or an awards night in my beloved Philippines, I think that spells and screams fun!"







# GET TO KNOW *Debasrita* MUKHERJEE

36-year-old Debasrita Mukherjee is a mother of a 10-year-old gymnast, a wife, and the dutiful daughter of two beautiful souls, who has taught her great life lessons. She feels life is too short to be good at one thing. Hence, she's an HR professional working for an esteemed organisation in Sydney. She's also a Bollywood, Indian classical, and belly dancer as well as a plus-size model and an influencer. She's an advocate of mental health awareness as well and she strongly stands for women's rights, empowering them and creating domestic violence awareness.

Debasrita has won numerous titles in pageantry in the last couple of years; she was the winner of Curves and Curls international, a brand ambassador for WOW, Mrs. Asia International, Mrs. Glamour Quarantine Queen, Mrs. Confidence Face Of India, and runner up at Mrs. India Australia. Her motto in life is to inspire women struggling with insecurities, body image issues, trauma, and mental health issues to embrace themselves and feel confident about themselves. In her own words, "I have been through it all, and if I can do it, so can you."











*Alina*

*Miss Supermodel Universe Finalists*



*Chloe*



*Cali*



*Maddys*



*Paige*



*Jamie*



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