



# A FORCE OF NATURE

TV newscaster and Emmy awardee **CHER CALVIN** talks to **ASTRA C ALEGRE** on the choices she has made in life and how she has stayed on top of her game

Photography **FRANK HOEFSMIT** Creative Direction **ANTON SAN DIEGO**  
Hair and Make-Up **CORINA GARCIA** Venue: **REVOLVE BEACH MALIBU HAUS**

**BEACH  
BABE**

Cher  
photographed  
wearing a  
men's shirt  
from Zara



**ALL THE  
RIGHT  
CURVES**

Cher wearing  
a chartreuse  
gown by  
Alexis  
Monsanto



**Y**OU MIGHT SAY it was serendipity. KTLA news anchor, Cher Calvin, was taking up Political Science in New York University when she decided to attend a class in broadcast journalism “on a whim.” The rest, as they say, is history.

Calvin earned a degree in International Politics and Broadcast Journalism from NYU. While still in college, on her junior year at NYU, an opening at *Time* Magazine presented an opportunity for her to work part-time as news desk assistant editor. Her first big story was the assassination of the former prime minister of Israel, Yitzhak Rabin, which broke out during her shift. She was in the right place, at the right time.

She says, “It was one of the first overnight shifts I was doing for the news desk and when the story broke, I had to make sure all of the reporters were on it. It was a lot of pressure, when you’re working for the biggest news magazine, to mobilise everyone.” The breaking news became the cover story.

While still an undergrad, Calvin interned and eventually worked at CNN New York. The TV news anchor, Diane Sawyer, was a big influence. “I admire her career,” Calvin says. Another memorable interviewee was Hillary Clinton. “She is such a powerful woman and you feel that strong presence instantly.” She has yet to fulfill her dream interview of all living US presidents.

While on a Christmas vacation in Manila in 1998, she received an offer to work at GMA7. “When this opportunity came, I dropped everything,” says Calvin, who was born in New York City to Filipino parents. Her father, Roger Calvin, is from Floridablanca,

Pampanga, and a movie actor and matinee idol in the 1960s; her mum, the late Delia Santos, was a doctor from Malolos, Bulacan.

“I moved to Manila for many reasons,” she says. “First, to seize the opportunity to start my on-camera career doing a one-minute news update for GMA7.” Her original two-week vacation extended to five years. She was one of the hosts of *Mornings@GMA* with Paolo Bediones and Tisha Silang.

From GMA7, she moved to ABS-CBN where she co-hosted a magazine show called *F* together with Angel Aquino and Daphne Oseña-Paez for four years. Her most memorable interview at that time was with Prince Albert II of Monaco who came on an eco trip to the Philippines. Calvin interviewed the prince about environmental awareness, a cause he passionately advocates.

She remembers her experiences with her co-hosts. “The most memorable are the trips we did for *F* to Singapore and Australia because we had such a fun time, exploring these countries as we featured their fashion, food, and spas,” she relates.

“Our second anniversary special was in Palawan where we had to learn how to camp and went through challenges like in *Survivor*. It was gruelling for us girls who were not so used to roughing it!”

She adds, “Our friendship and love are

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**A VIEW TO  
A THRILL**  
Magenta  
gown by  
Alexis  
Monsanto



**MODEL  
BEHAVIOUR**  
Dress by  
Black Halo



strong. We had such a special time on our show. We became a family and are still keeping in touch.”

Another program that Calvin hosted while she was with ABS-CBN was the political show *Points of View*, together with Ricardo “Dong” Puno, Mo Twister, and Jessica Zafra. She won a Golden Dove Award for the show in 2000 and 2002. She then went back to anchoring the news for ANC and *News Central*.

Calvin was then offered a job at Fox 5 in Las Vegas. “After a hard and long debate I felt that after five years it was time to go back and explore the American news market.” She returned to the US in 2003 and started doing a morning show with Robin Leach for Fox News in Las Vegas. A year later, she moved to Los Angeles where she joined the award-winning KTLA *Morning News*.

In 2005 Calvin won her first group Emmy award for the 24 May KTLA *Morning News* slot which came after hers. The segment host of this segment was absent so Calvin filled in for her. It was the segment that got the Emmy nod. Again, Calvin was in the right place, at the right time.

It was a proud moment. The first person she called was her dad whom she considers her “mentor for life.”

She says, “Throughout my life and career, my father has always given me wise words of advice—from work, to friends, and love. He has seen it all—the triumphs and heartbreaks—and has always had just the right words to say to heal or to celebrate. His advice to me has always been to work hard, be kind, be grateful.”

Daughter and father see each other as often as possible. She flies back and forth between New York and Los Angeles “to spend time together even if only for a few days,” says this only child. “What’s nice is that we Face Time a lot and talk and text every single day.”

## “BREAKING NEWS IS THE MOST DIFFICULT FOR BROADCAST JOURNALISTS”

Her mother, whose 20th death anniversary they mark this year, “has been my driving force along with my father,” Calvin shares.

“Together they instilled in me a sense of respect and a command of what I do with my life. One thing my mother always said was to be independent, to have a career I have passion for, and that family comes first. I cherish her words every day of my life as I carry her memory with me always.”

She says she is blessed with the career she has chosen. “I find most rewarding about being a broadcast journalist is being able to give pertinent information to our viewers.”

It also has its challenges. Calvin says, “Breaking news is the best and also the most difficult for broadcast journalists. There is no script to follow. You have to remain calm, be accurate and informational. You never know when it’s going to end. It could last five minutes or the whole day. Breaking news coverage always keeps you on the edge of your seat when you are on the anchor desk as you never know what is going to happen next.”

But things don’t just happen in her life. She makes things happen. To help the victims of super typhoon Yolanda in the Philippines, Calvin got in touch and mobilised all her contacts in Los Angeles and together, they brainstormed for



**WINNER  
TAKES IT  
ALL**

Cher, in her  
own Hob Nob  
dress, next  
to her Emmy  
statuettes





“I AM MOST PROUD OF MY EMMY WIN FOR THE TYPHOON HAIYAN TELETHON BECAUSE IT BROUGHT NEEDED HELP TO THE PEOPLE OF TACLOBAN”

ideas on how they can best help the victims. It was very important for Calvin to be able reach out to her fellow Filipinos during this tragic incident.

She co-produced and hosted the KTLA TV special titled “Season of Sharing: Help for the Philippines.” The three-hour fundraising telethon raised US\$152,000. It also won an Emmy award for Best News Special at the 66th Los Angeles Area Emmy Awards. “I am most proud of my Emmy win for the typhoon Haiyan telethon because it brought needed help to the people of Tacloban,” she says.

Would she ever consider going back to the Philippines to work or to live? “I would love to come back and hope, in some capacity, to be involved in Philippine media in the future,” she says. “With the power of social media, perhaps that’s possible.”

Outside of work, Calvin enjoys travelling to new places. “I just recently came from the island of Hvar in Croatia,” she says. “What a stunning place! I love discovering hard-to-get-to places and exploring its history, culture, food, and people—or simply getting lost to get to know the place.”

As to the future of her career, Calvin says, “I would be blessed to be able to keep doing what I am doing. I am blessed that I’ve been with KTLA for 10 years now.” And personally, “to have a family of my own.” ●