



Pascual uses his eye for beauty in everything he does

PJ PASCUAL: Stylin' in New York

Text by **ASTRA C. ALEGRE**
Photo courtesy of **PJ PASCUAL**

After a successful stint at Oprah magazine, PJ Pascual now styles for Hollywood celebrities as well as famous fashion houses.

He was the only Filipino editor at Oprah's magazine. "It was an honor to work for O," Peterson Jason "PJ" Pascual recalls. As an associate accessories editor, he was given the task to do market research in accessories from high to low-end labels, focusing on the latest trends. "I was the only editor allowed to go to all of Ms. Winfrey's cover shoots in New York."

He was never star struck, Pascual says. "Whenever Ms. Winfrey made surprise visits at the office, I always greeted her with a smile. She always said hello to me and congratulated my department for doing a superb job." He became close to Oprah's best friend, Gayle King. "She would always call me to her office and ask my opinions on different things. She saw my potential, that I have an eye for beautiful things."

But King was not the first one to recognize Pascual's special talent. His mother, Millette, told him early on that he "had an eye for beauty." She said, "from a pile of rubble, I can spot something beautiful." Pascual considers his mom as his style icon. "She molded me to become the person I am. I was exposed to the world of art, fashion, and travel."

After finishing Business Management at the De La Salle University, he started his journey to New York. There, he enrolled at the Fashion Institute of Technology. "Having a degree in business became a foundation of my career in fashion.

Making contracts and billing clients are some of the things I learned from business school," he says. "In fashion, I learned the different types of fabrics and construction of garments. When I look at clothing samples, I always check the seams. I know if the garment was made well or not. I did not become a designer, but I know what's expensive and what's not by looking at the garment."

"Working at Oprah's magazine for three years prepared me to be a good stylist," Pascual says. He learned how to mix and match high and low-end accessories and clothes, choosing what will best fit his client's personality. Right now, he has six female clients and works with two fashion houses, Angel Sanchez in New York and Jay Ahr in Paris.

He compares his clients to a beautiful painting. What's most important are the accessories. He loves accessory pieces from Dries Van Noten, Lanvin, Balenciaga, Giovenco, Tom Ford, Vivienne Westwood, Liberty of London, and Comme des Garçons.

Pascual also uses a lot of Filipino designers such as Celestina, Rafe, Monique Lhuillier and Bea Valdes. "Filipinos have exquisite taste. Our country is my inspiration when I style my clients. I mix the elements of our culture with the western civilization. I will keep on striving to do my best to promote the Philippines. I am proud to be a Filipino." ■