

STYLING A CAREER

Reader Jessica Joseph meets star stylist, Ami Patel to see if she has what it takes to get into fashion

PIC: DEEPAK TURBHEKAR



of her work. Ami breaks it down for her — styling a model for an editorial shoot, styling for a product shoot, styling a person. “Styling for a model is the easiest because anything you put on them looks good,” she says. “Editorials are imaginative because you have to go that one step further into fantasy. They can be very liberating, because fashion is being new at all times. You have to recreate a ‘Wow! I haven’t seen that before’ feeling. When you are styling for a product shoot, you have to keep in mind the requirement of the product, its image, the brand colours, etc. When styling a person, his or her body structure is the most important thing to take into account. Then it’s the nature of their work and life requirements.”

She gives Priyanka Chopra’s example to illustrate how they decide on her looks. “For Priyanka’s promotional activities, we arrive on a look that draws from her character,” says Ami. “So for *Don 2*, she wore a sleek Giorgio Armani suit. For *Teri Meri Kahaani*, she’s happy to wear colours.”

Jessica was really eager to know what Ami’s fantasy shoot is. “It would be Giselle Bündchen on a beach in a metallic bikini and a jacket, and lots of layering by way of textures, accessories. Just all out!” she says.

Much of a stylist’s homework involves meeting new designers, talking about their collections, viewing

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Jessica Joseph is a fresh BMM graduate poised at a crossroad. As a visual thinker, she knows she wants to get into the fashion world, but cannot decide between styling, fashion marketing and visual merchandising.

Instead of talking to bored career counsellors at education fairs, she requested to speak to fashion director and stylist Ami Patel. “I wanted to know what the career avenues are in media and as a stylist. Since Ami styles

Priyanka Chopra, one of my favourite stars and edits a luxury magazine, I thought she would be the best person to guide me,” she says.

Ami fits us in between a meeting and an Art of Living lecture she is giving. Effortlessly chic in white skinny jeans and a magenta James Ferreira

off-the-shoulder top, she notices Jessica’s eyes light up at the sight of shopping bags from major brands, and Chanel chappals near the door.

But she bursts her sparkly bubble a little later, talking about what a responsibility it is to make sure all the garments are returned in perfect condition. “Once a couture gown got lost in transit when I was returning it, and I had sleepless nights because I would have had to compensate for it. It cost a thousand dollars. If you work for a magazine, you are buffered against such mishaps, but freelancers have it very bad,” she says. “In fact, London

milliner Philip Treacy insists that stylists come in chauffeured cars to pick up his hats. I understand why.”

Jessica can barely wait and as soon as Ami settles down she starts shooting questions. “What did you study?” is her first question. Ami explains that she studied BCom and Commercial Art simultaneously and stumbled into styling. “I was the art director at a magazine and was used to thinking graphically in terms of page layouts. I started going to shoots and ended up styling the models. There was no career such as styling then, let alone degrees for it.”

Jessica is curious about the nature

collections at fashion weeks or the Internet (“Ask Google Raja,” as Ami says), and collecting books brought out by couture houses. “I buy many books, and stylists should collect them for reference. For instance, Dior has documented all its couture in a book. Fashion magazines are a more accessible resource for young girls like you,” she finishes.

Eventually, they lapse into girly talk about which designers Ami prefers and the trends she’s into.

Jessica is now ready to leave, with enough to think about on what she wants to pursue. Or buy.

Growing up in shipshape

Shenaz Treasurywala’s love for travel started as a toddler because she grew up on a ship

Yes, that’s me. I know it looks a bit scary. I’ve always been surrounded by boys! This image brings back so many memories from my baby days. I spent the first six years of my life on a cargo ship that carried potatoes and rice around the globe. My dad was the captain of the ship and these men are the crew members. I was the only woman on board (besides my mom) and hence all attention was on me. I was certainly the only child on board. This picture was taken on my third birthday when the crew threw a little party for me. Pretty

FLASHBACK

Shenaz Treasurywala

Celebs pick their favourite picture



unique for a three-year-old to celebrate her birthday in the middle of the ocean, surrounded by drunk sailors!

It reminds that I’ve had an exceptional childhood, one that not many kids get to experience. I was treated with utmost care and concern. Growing up on the ship had its pros and cons. More

advantages though. I could swim before I could walk. By the time I was six I had touched every continent and visited most countries, experienced different cultures. I could speak a few languages because the crew was from all parts of the world. I’d eaten food from every country and already decided I loved Thai, French and Japanese food.

The disadvantage was that I hadn’t interacted with many children and went absolutely nuts when I’d see cute boys my age. I still do. Some things never change.

— As told to Sneha Mankani

