

# es of Mirror Mag



the model who thought it less than amusing.

Having begun his career as a picture story writer at Lake House, Mettasena took to photography with a Minolta XGM camera with only a single 50mm lens purchased for Rs. 4000 by his parents. His very first cover girl was for a Lake House publication-a young Rosy Ramanayake (later Senanayake) who was starring in Suraduthayo. That first shoot, whetted his curiosity for the dynamics of cover pictures. Years later freelancing for the Sunday Times and shifting between taking pictures for news and feature stories - it was the covers that would spark his creativity.

Yearning for change and experimentation with different processing techniques of photographic film and backdrop settings, would lead to collaborative attempts with leading designers and make-up artistes - namely Purnima Abeyratne and Ramani Fernando.

The modernistic outlook of these designers at the time is what Mettasena attributes to the futuristic and edgy feel of each of our Mirror Magazine covers in those early years. It was a time when a concept lay in the mind's eye of a photographer and would require much sweat and time to bring it to life visually.

The covers themselves would be conceptualized with the designers, the make-up artistes in tow whilst backdrops would be selected at a particular location or physically created. With limited resources and monetary constraints to consider, the designers and make-up artistes would put their own resources into the shoots.

This was essentially how our Egyptian themed cover of July 1993 (see pic below) came into being. Artist Athula Siriwardena handpainted the backdrop of the grandiose setting of Cleopatra's throne room for that issue replete with hieroglyphic figures and Egyptian art work. But the

## THANK YOU FROM MIRROR MAGAZINE

To the designers and make-up artists who willingly helped shape the face of each of our covers - a big thank you from the Mirror Magazine team.

- Purnima Abeyratne
- Ramani Fernando
- Suralini Kotelawala
- Ruwani Herath
- Shalini Siriwardena
- Shobhi/Niroshan/Azhar
- Thushara de Soyza
- Fouzul Hameed
- Michael Wijesuriya
- Nomali Perera
- Sonali White De Silva
- Johann Peiris
- Wipula Sandanayake
- Ramzi Rahaman

shoot itself would require a studio and designer Purnima Abeyratne willingly converted her shop/saloon located on the second floor of Majestic City for the task. In addition, the outfit and Nushara's headpiece et al were designed by Purnima herself. On most occasions, outfits would be designed from scratch especially for the shoots.

The pictures of those early years

were captured with an emphasis on the primary colours which came into play when selecting backdrops and fabric for outfits - since these were the colours that would print well. A look back at some of our covers today would reveal the reason behind those unison tones. In other words our covers were shot in living colour.

For added effect photographs which were captured in black and white would have tones applied when the films were being developed. This was as far as manipulations would go. The rest remained as it was - the subtleties of reality as photographed in those early years.

On a trip to India, Mettasena met E.G.K. Chandan, owner of a studio in Bangalore, who impressed by his portfolio would later introduce him to fashion guru Prasad Bidappa and well known Indian photographer Ritu Nanda. From such high profile associations would spring opportunities to photograph young models who had star potential such as Nafisa Joseph who was photographed at just 15 years for the Mirror cover in Bangalore in 1995. Two years later she would go on to win the Femina Miss India title. But her story had a tragic end - in 2004 she took her own life.

It was a daunting task to search out a fresh face each week for the cover but still - it was a team effort that was set in motion - to place in front of its readership a visual piece of art. And at one time or another, the Mirror Magazine covers would serve as pin-ups in many a youngster's bedroom. Monday mornings would see phones ringing off the hook in search of our cover girls and contact details. As for the models themselves - as a Mirror cover girl, they had stepped into the spotlight and careers would begin to take off. As for directors and advertisers, the magazine covers offered an opportunity to find their next stars.

