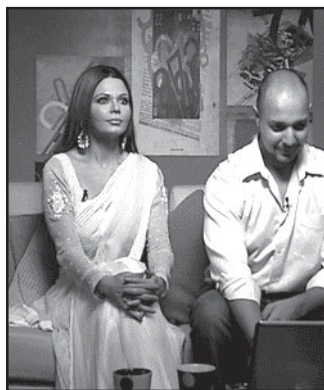


Rakhi Sawant Finally Selects Life Partner On Reality TV Show



Mumbai: (IANS) India's first televised 'swayamvar' concluded here late Sunday with item girl Rakhi Sawant choosing Toronto-based Elesh Parujanwala as her life partner in a unique reality TV show.

In NDTV Imagine's "Rakhi ka Swayamvar", Rakhi made the final choice from the three finalists — from the original list of 16 contestants in 26 episodes. The other two finalists were young aspirant Manas Katyal and businessman Chhitiz Jain, both from New Delhi.

"I have been watching Elesh from day one. On and off the camera, he has been the same and has really taken care of me. He is everything I was looking for and I am glad to have found him on the Swayamvar. The swayamvar means finding a jeevan saathi (life partner) and I have found Elesh.

"Today is our engagement. I am ready to get married now, but we need to understand each other better off camera. We will soon get married in front of all of you in keeping with all our traditions," Rakhi said after announcing her choice to a waiting audience across the country.

Decked up in red and gold lehenga-choli by Neeta Lulla and kundan jewelry, Rakhi looked a perfect bride. Elesh, Manas and Chhitiz too were dressed for the occasion — in traditional sherwanis and turbans. In the dramatic finale, she garlanded Elesh — as the audience clapped on.

The colorful event, held at the Hotel Leela Kampinsky here Sunday, saw a host of celebrities like choreographer Saroj Khan, actors Ravi Kishen and Ram Kapoor, who posed as brothers to the bride, apart from others like Smita Bansal and Sudha Shivpuri in the audience.

Why Was Shilpa's BF Missing From Opening?



Considering Bollywood actress Shilpa Shetty and her beau Raj Kundra are supposed to be business partners, it was strange not to see him at the opening of their first spa.

"He couldn't be here on Sunday because of other business commitments. In fact, he reached Mumbai Monday and I left for Jaipur," Shilpa explained after the event that took place Sunday.

Shilpa didn't allow herself to miss Kundra at the event as she seemed more than happy with the bonding she shared with yesteryears diva Rekha. The ageless diva is no longer that unapproachable. This Shilpa discovered when she invited the actress to inaugurate her spa. Rekha not only agreed immediately and

without fuss, she showed up for the event on the dot.

Shilpa says Rekha has always been a source of inspiration. "She, according to me, is the perfect Bollywood diva. There's such a mystique surrounding her. We've been constantly in touch to discuss many things," she said.

But now the friendship has gone beyond sharing beauty tips to another level of sharing confidences and philosophies of life. Apparently, after the spa was officially declared open, Rekha sent Shilpa a letter saying Shilpa is doing everything that she (Rekha) always wanted to do.

"It is one of the most heart-warming moments of my life. The two of us are now very close," said Shilpa.

Saif's Movie Should Break All Records: Bebo



Her recent release "Kambakkht Ishq" has seen the best opening of 2009 so far. But Kareena Kapoor wants boyfriend Saif Ali Khan's "Love Aaj Kal" to even surpass her film's record and enjoy phenomenal success at the box office.

"I really want 'Love Aaj Kal' to break all box-office records. Yes, 'Kambakkht Ishq' is my film but then so is 'Love Aaj Kal'. For both Saif and me 'Love Aaj Kal' is a not just a prestigious project but also something which is very close to our hearts", Kareena told IANS.

"Love Aaj Kal" is Saif's first production venture. Tell her that expectations are huge from the movie as well as Saif and she nods in agreement. "Yes, I'm aware about the huge expectations and I also know that 'Love Aaj Kal' has turned out to be a lovely film. The good part is that the film has generated all around positive vibes and everyone expects good things from the film," she

said. With Saif playing two characters - Jai Vardhan Singh and Veer Singh (the younger version of Rishi Kapoor) - "Love Aaj Kal" touches upon the universal essence of love.

According to director Imtiaz Ali, "the process of relationship might be different in different eras, but the experience of being in love remains the same". Another factor that makes "Love Aaj Kal" a special film for Kareena is the fact that it has Imtiaz at the driving seat.

"I have worked with Imtiaz in 'Jab We Met' and ever since then we all expect so much from him. He has great sensibilities of a storyteller and can't set a foot wrong. I really hope and pray that 'Love Aaj Kal' manages to strike a chord with audiences in the same way as 'Jab We Met'," she said.

New York: Worth Taking A Bite Out Of This Apple

BY JYOTHSNA HEGDE

After star craved months of waiting arrives Yash Raj's latest, New York. Director Kabir Khan tells us a story of friendship conceived, cherished and tested over the span of time before, during and after terrorist attacks of 9/11. Kabir Khan's earlier movie Kabul Express too had references to 9/11, but this time around the documentary filmmaker slowly but surely shows signs of the making of a maverick filmmaker.

New York does not beat around the bush and gets to the story right away. Omar (Neil Nitin Mukesh) is detained by the FBI for interrogation after arms and ammunition are found from the trunk of a car owned by him. FBI agent Roshan (Irrfan Khan) along with his



and Omar agrees for the under cover operation only to prove him wrong.

While on the surface everything seems perfectly normal, Omar does uncover the truth Sam has been hiding. And there are many shades of gray where the "truth" is concerned. Kabir Khan does a wonderful job of never going over

the top in dealing with any of the issues, and yet raising a whole of questions mostly about right and wrong. Does one wrong really cancel another wrong? "An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind" the Mahatma guided us. Some profound thoughts do arise at the end of the movie and all this while we enjoy the regular Bollywood masala on the side, now that's good work. How and why Sam becomes a part of terrorist

activity and the dilemma Omar faces when faced with the truth all culminate to an exciting climax.

Not exactly known for their acting prowess John, Neil, Katrina surprise us with their sincere performances in New York. It looks like Katrina packed in some pounds which works in her favor because she is not just a glamour quotient in the movie, but definitely part of the plot. John and Neil too render some of their better performances to date. Irrfan Khan is a natural. Aditya Chopra, the producer and Kabir Khan the director clearly make a good pair. Kabir Khan shines mostly because of the balanced viewpoint portrayed throughout the movie that carries a rather sensitive subject matter of terrorism at the heart of its storyline. Music by Pritam blends with the story and is never overbearing. "Hai Junoon" is easy on the ears. While everything seemed to work perfectly for New York, the make up artists could've easily gone easy on the lipsticks where male actors were concerned, especially Neil. Cinematography compliments the clever direction.

New York is one of those movies where everyone involved has given their creative best. The narration is clean and clear all the way. All incidents and characters small or big contribute to the story. It is entertaining and yet feeds ample food for your thoughts. This one well deserves its successful run at the box office.

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boss are actually after Sam (John Abraham), Omar's friend who they believe runs a terrorist sleeper cell in New York and intend to get to Sam through Omar. Omar refuses to accept the allegations against his friend as he recollects his early days in the US as a student at NYU.

The campus of NYU serves as the meeting ground for Omar, Sam and Maya (Katrina Kaif) and life is just beautiful for the three musketeers as they bond over games, food and music. Omar falls in love in Maya only to realize that she is actually in love with Sam. Before he can express his feelings to Maya on 9/11, they learn about the terrorist attack on the Twin Towers and their world comes to a crashing halt literally and emotionally. Omar decides to walk away and has not been in touch with either of his friends since then. Roshan however insists that Sam is guilty

Smart Kitchen Tips Contest

Have a smart kitchen tip that you would like to share with our readers? Submit tips at contact@nripulse.com with 'KitchenTips' in the subjectline.

Selected tips will be published in the next issue of NRI Pulse.