

King of Bollywood: Shah Rukh Khan and the Seductive World of Indian Cinema

By Anupama Chopra

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Here is the astonishing true story of Bollywood, a sweeping portrait about a country finding its identity, a movie industry that changed the face of India, and one man's struggle to become a star. Shah Rukh Khan's larger than life tale takes us through the colorful and idiosyncratic Bollywood movie industry, where fantastic dreams and outrageous obsessions share the spotlight with extortion, murder, and corruption. Shah Rukh Khan broke into this \$1.5 billion business despite the fact that it has always been controlled by a handful of legendary film families and sometimes funded by black market money. As a Muslim in a Hindu majority nation, exulting in classic Indian cultural values, Shah Rukh Khan has come to embody the aspirations and contradictions of a complicated culture tumbling headlong into American style capitalism. His story is the mirror to view the greater Indian story and the underbelly of the culture of Bollywood.

"A bounty for cinema lovers everywhere."

--Mira Nair, Director, *The Namesake* and *Monsoon Wedding*

"King of Bollywood is the all-singing, all-dancing back stage pass to Bollywood. Anupama Chopra chronicles the political and cultural story of India with finesse and insight, through fly-on-wall access to one of its biggest, most charming and charismatic stars."

-- Gurinder Chadha, director of *Bend it Like Beckham*


"The 'Easy Rider Raging Bull' of the Bollywood industry and essential reading for any Shah Rukh Khan fan."

--Emma Thompson, actress

"Anu Chopra infuses the pivotal moments of Shah Rukh Khan's life with an edge-of-your-seat tension worthy of the best Bollywood blockbusters."

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Although he's not a household name in America, Shah Rukh Khan, sometimes called the Tom Cruise of Hindi film, is a world-famous superstar, the kind who generates Elvis-level hysteria wherever he goes. Born in New Delhi in 1965, Shah Rukh grew up loving movies, with American John Travolta and Bill Cosby among the stars he admired. After graduating from high school, he moved from theater to television to movie acting, gradually finding his niche with brooding antihero roles, the sort that other actors rejected for fear of spoiling their leading-man image. As Shah Rukh has become a bigger star, playing a variety of roles, he also helped the industry expand. His films range from traditional themes (*Asoka*) to remakes of classics (*Devdas*), song-and-dance romances and even *Mission Impossible*-type films like *Don*. Chopra, a Mumbai-based freelance journalist who comes from a filmmaking family herself, offers readers both the life story of Shah Rukh and a condensed history of the Indian film industry. Even if you know nothing about Indian cinema, her prose style (Bollywood now recoiled from the mafia like a man shrinking from a sore-covered leper on the street) makes this a bizarrely fun read. (Aug.)

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About the Author

Anupama Chopra lives in Bombay, India.

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