

Mr. Perfectionist dons the director's cap



Think Aamir Khan, and the “don’ts” are the defining thoughts. In an industry where networking is an essential, next only to oxygen, what’s behind that perpetual loner profile?

“It’s certainly not something that I have planned. I do understand that it would help if I did some things, but I can’t really be otherwise. I think it is every individual’s right to decide what he wants to be a part of, and what he wants to keep out of. Some things I am just not comfortable doing, it springs from the person I am...” says the elusive Bollywood star.

And the rest? “Sometimes I genuinely don’t have the bandwidth to do anything at all, apart from what I am working on. When I am doing a film, I just cannot bring myself out of that, everything else sort of goes into soft focus. It may seem like a tactically good move to be more visible during those phases, to do more things to be talked about, but I find it very, very difficult to do something else. I guess you can call me a reluctant star.”

How street savvy is that for an industry veteran of 17 years? “I know I have an impractical approach to life, not just in this respect, but in many things,” he adds.

Appearing as a child actor in ‘Yaadon Ki Baaraat’ (1973), Khan’s career started eleven

years later with the film, ‘Holi’ (1984). He received his first commercial success with ‘Qayamat Se Qayamat Tak’ (1988) and won a Filmfare Best Male Debut Award for his performance in the film. After eight previous nominations during the 1980s and 1990s, he received his first Filmfare Best Actor Award for his performance in ‘Raja Hindustani’ (1996), his biggest commercial success so far. He won acclaim for his role in the Academy Award nominated ‘Lagaan: Once Upon a Time in India’ (2001) and received his second Filmfare Best Actor Award, as well as numerous other awards.



Being a part of several commercially successful movies and delivering highly acclaimed performances, he has established himself as one of the top and most successful leading actors of Hindi cinema

With ‘Taare Zameen Par’, which released on December 21, Aamir dons the director’s cap for the first time, to tell the story of an unconventional teacher who helps change the life of a child with academic problems.

Initially, Amol Gupte, who has written the script and is also the creative director, was the director of the film. But ‘Mr. Perfectionist’ wasn’t satisfied with the work and decided to handle the project in his own way. The actor explained how he took over the reins as director. “About a week into the shooting I was not very happy and Amole Gupte and I had a meeting and I expressed my reservations. Obviously we realised that we had creative differences, so I offered to pull out. Gupte gave it some thought and both of us decided that perhaps I should take over the responsibility.”

Aamir conceded that acting and directing together for the first time was a bit of a challenge. “It is challenging and comes with its own demands so I did the best that I could. I think I’m quite happy with the way the film has turned out.” ■