



**Kajol**

# Ready for a comeback

**A**fter a long break for marriage and motherhood, actress Kajol is all set to re-enter Bollywood with a new film, Kunal Kohli's 'Fanaa', co-starring Aamir Khan, which is scheduled for a May release. But this time its only fun that she is acting for. She does not want to become a full-time actress with a tight schedule.

Born to star actress Tanuja and Shomu Mukherjee, acting was in Kajol's blood as her great grandmother Ratanbai, her grandmother Shobhana Samarth, her mother and aunt Nutan were all renowned actresses of their time.

Kajol schooled at St. Joseph's Convent in Panchgani, Maharashtra. Later, she enrolled in Sophia College, Mumbai, but gave up studies to join the movies at the age of 16. She started her career with films like 'Bekhudai' and 'Udhaar Ki Zindagi', but she truly arrived with 'Baazigar', which proved to be a big turning point in her career.

Kajol's real moment of glory, however, came in 1995 when she took the nation by storm along with Shah Rukh Khan in Aditya Chopra's maiden venture, 'Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge'. As the simple and lovable Simran, who meets her true love Raj on a trip through Europe, Kajol brought to screen a quality of freshness and charm that seemed long forgotten.

She was then paired with Ajay Devgan in the action thrillers 'Gundaraj' and 'Hulchul' (1995) and in Indra Kumar's romantic comedy, 'Ishq' (1997). Later, the actress changed tracks to take the daring decision of playing a villain in Rajiv Rai's murder mystery 'Gupt' (1997). A girl of

immense talent, she surprised everyone with her acting in the film, for which she became the first woman to win the 'Filmfare Best Villain Award', in 1997.

But the same year, the trilingual 'Sapnay', with Arvind Swamy and Prabhu Deva, failed. However, that was all forgotten in 1998. First there was the runaway hit 'Pyaar Kiya To Darna Kya' with Salman Khan. Then came Tanuja Chandra's 'Dushman', her first attempt at a double role which wowed audiences and critics alike, and the country had a new uncrowned number one actress.

Then came 'Pyaar To Hona Hi Tha' with Ajay Devgan, which opened a new chapter in her career. But probably even she was not prepared for what was coming with Karan Johar's 'Kuch Kuch Hota Hai' with Shahrukh Khan — the nation fell in love with the tomboy she played. Kajol played tomboyish Anjali of the first half with as much ease as she slipped into *sarees* and a demure look in the second.

Right after the success of 'Kuch Kuch Hota Hai', Kajol married Ajay Devgan on February 24, 1999.

After her marriage, Kajol became very selective with her movies, and was seen in films like 'Raju Chacha' and Karan Johar's 'Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham'.

Other than winning a Filmfare award for the film 'Gupt', she has won the Filmfare Best Actress Award for 'Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge' in 1996 and also for 'Kuch Kuch Hota Hai'. She won one more Filmfare award for 'Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham' in 2002.

Little wonder that Kajol is rated as the pick of the leading ladies of her generation. Her return is keenly awaited. ■



Kajol in a still from 'Kuch Kuch Hota Hai' and, top, from 'Fanaa'