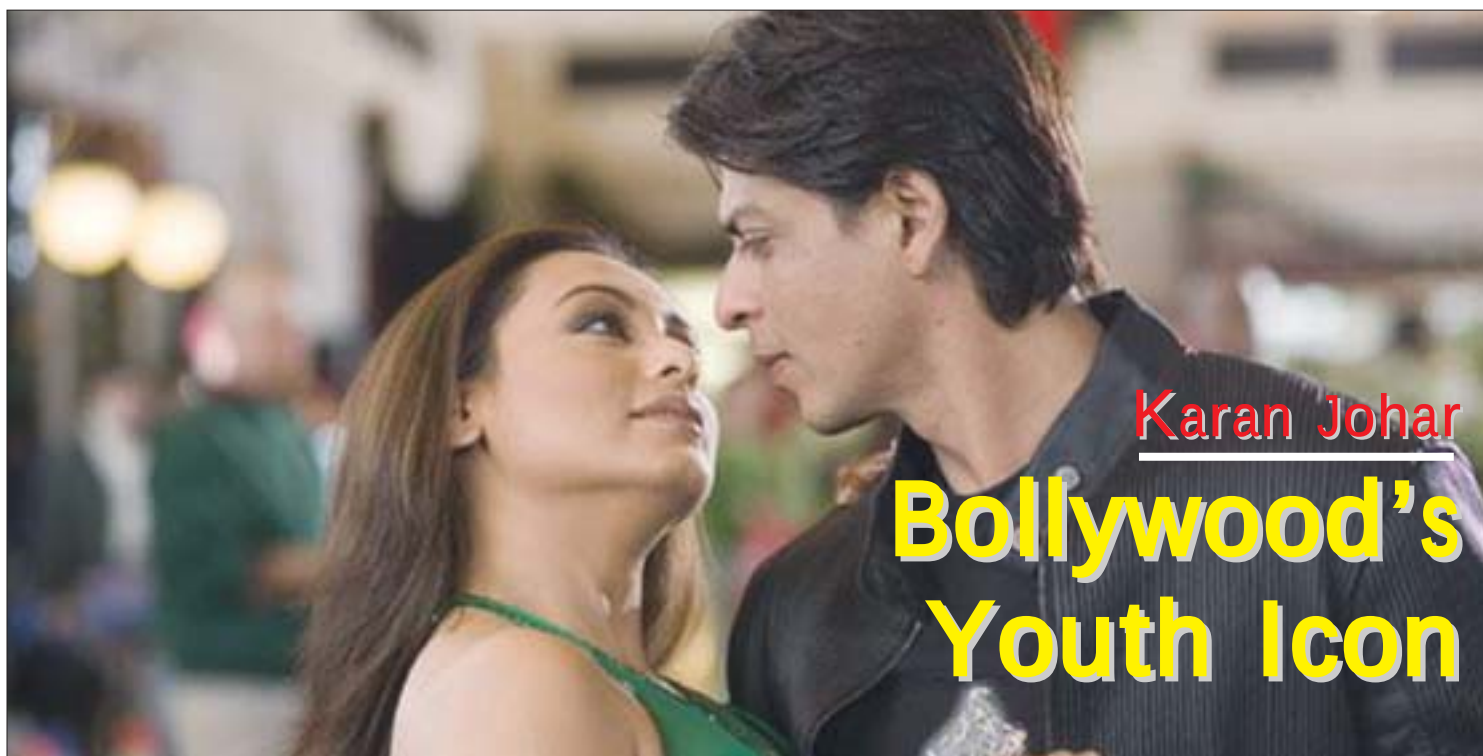




A still from 'Kabhi Alvida Naa Kehna', the latest directorial venture by Karan Johar (photo below), known for his ability to touch the audience's pulse each time.

Kabhi Alvida Naa Kehna' (Never Say Goodbye), the latest film by Karan Johar, one of Bollywood's most successful young directors, has been declared a box-office success both in India and abroad. Produced under the banner of Dharma Productions, the film stars Amitabh Bachchan, Shah Rukh Khan, Abhishek Bachchan, Rani Mukerji, Preity Zinta and Kiron Kher in pivotal roles. Set in the New York City, it was filmed over a 90-day shooting period in the U.S. and a few scenes were shot on four large sets in Mumbai's studios.

Johar has yet again created a minor sensation, having decided to tackle a subject that Hindi cinema generally shies away from: Infidelity in marriages. It was clearly calculated risk, but Johar seems to have yet again come up a winner. The film's success would suggest that he knew what the audience wanted.

According to Johar, what he aims to convey through his film is that nobody should suffer a loveless marriage. "I haven't been irresponsible towards my audience. The message, if any, is marry for the right reason. And if you're in a miserable marriage, you're wronging two people," he said in an interview.

Son of the renowned film director Yash Johar, who died last year, Karan Johar was born in 1972 and studied at the Greenlawns High School and attended H.R. College in Mumbai. A versatile director who seems to instinctively feel the pulse of the audiences, Johar was first seen as Shah Rukh Khan's close friend, Rocky, in the movie 'Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge' (1995). He was also Assistant Director of the film and helped Aditya Chopra in writing the screenplay.

This young director has already carved a niche for himself in the film industry ever since he made his direc-

tional debut in 1998 with 'Kuch Kuch Hota Hai'. The film went on to become a blockbuster and a new passionate director was born in Bollywood. His second film as a director, the multi-starrer family drama 'Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham' was released in 2001. This film, too, was highly successful.

In 2003, he showed his versatile talents in 'Kal Ho Naa Ho', for which he wrote the script, besides producing the film. Kabhi Alvida Naa Kehna is his third film as a director and fourth film as writer.

His movies, generally classified as emotional melodramas, find a strong appeal among the young audiences in India and abroad. His movies exemplify the tradition and paradoxical nature of the Indian people, especially the urban population. They reflect the people's craving for opulence and attention, and their hankering to flaunt their possessions and wealth. His films consistently celebrate material luxuries and are characterised by elaborate sets, exquisite costumes and well-picturised songs.

A recipient of a number of Filmfare awards for his talents, Karan Johar has also hosted a television chat show called 'Koffee with Karan' commissioned by *Star World*, in which he interviewed renowned celebrities from Bollywood and India's glamour world.

Johar describes his show as being "casual, cooler and hipper". With the first season of the show ending in 2005, the young director will begin the second season in the second half of 2006. The second season is said to include interviews with prominent industrialists.

He also hosted the 2006 Zee Cine Awards in March this year in Mauritius. Bollywood expects a lot more quality films from this versatile director. He is here to stay and can never say good-bye to Bollywood. ■

