



# Imran Khan & Deepika Padukone in *Break Ke Baad*

By Steven Baker

**How does it feel to be releasing your fifth film *Break Ke Baad*? Do you feel like a bankable star?**

I am aware that I have had a certain amount of success and I have a certain box office clout, so I am in a position of some power. But I have a hard time taking it seriously. I have a hard time saying 'I am a star'. I think that is a good thing, as the second you start thinking you have reached somewhere then maybe you will get complacent and take things for granted. I still think of myself as someone who has something to prove.

**Tell us about your character (Abhay Gulati) in the film...**

If you see the promos, it is a young, urban love story about a boy and a girl who have been dating for a really long time. The characters are about twenty-three or twenty-four years old and they have been dating since they were about fifteen or sixteen. Within the first twenty minutes of the film, you see them break up and see what happens after they break up – what their journey is, who they become, what they learn. My character is a guy who is not a very ambitious person and he doesn't know what to do in life or what kind of career he wants. The only thing he is clear about is that he loves this one girl and he wants to be with her. The girl however, is very ambitious and career minded, and this is what leads to them splitting up. She goes to Australia, and after some time he

Imran Khan is back with *Break Ke Baad*, a film the actor describes as "a young, urban love story". Helmed by debut director Danish Aslam, the project sees Imran paired opposite Deepika Padukone for the first time, in a production that has been shot in Delhi, Mumbai and Mauritius. Steven Baker went head to head with the actor to talk all things *Break Ke Baad*, including the reason he originally turned the part down, why the 27-year-old does not accept he is a star, and how Deepika has left an impression on him.

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realizes that he has to get this girl back and follows her there. In the process of trying to get her back he learns what he wants to do in his own life

**It sounds a bit like *Love Aaj Kal*. Perhaps a touch of *Wake Up Sid* also?**

Yes there are elements of both of them you are right. *Love Aaj Kal* for the break-up angle and *Wake Up Sid* for the fact that the guy doesn't know what to do in life. At its core, more than that, *Break Ke Baad* is a love story. It's a film that celebrates the concept of being in love. The guy is a classic old fashioned hero who will do anything for the girl he loves and follow her to the end of the earth.

**So quite different from your role in your last release *I Hate Luv Storys*?**

Very different, absolutely. That guy was a player, he was quite shameless.

**It seems as if your audience wants to see Imran Khan only in the type of romantic hero role you mentioned. The other types of film you have done appear to have been less accepted.**

Yes you are right about that. Although I wouldn't blame it on the audience's expectation, but on the quality of a film. I feel that if a film has not worked, you can't argue with that. If it has not worked it has not worked.

**How was it working with Deepika Padukone for the first time?**

I have got to know **Deepika** over the course of making the film. She has really impressed me personally and professionally. She is someone who really cares about her work and puts in a lot of effort and is very concerned with improving herself and becoming a better actor. These are the kind of people you want to work with, people who care that much. On a personal level she is very humble and down-to-earth and I would say that she has become a very dear friend to me, possibly more than any of my other co-stars.

**When director Danish Aslam narrated the film did you accept it immediately?**

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No, when I first heard the narration I said no to it. I liked the first half but felt the second half was not working. I then went on and signed *I Hate Luv Storys*. I had shot for nearly a month when I bumped into **Danish** again and he said he had reworked the script. I took it from him again and he had dramatically changed the second half and it was really good. I called him up the very next day and said 'Listen, it's awesome I am on'.

**Has the content of the film been influenced at**



## Will we see any more choreographed moves like 'Pappu Can't Dance'?

Most of the songs are in the background. But there's one song called 'Dooriyan' which is the only lip-synch song in the film, which has a dance and where we are actually singing. It is an awesome track. It was the last song that we recorded for the film and the last that we shot. It has come out really well.

## Deepika Padukone *Break Ke Baad* Interview

Since making her Hindi cinema debut opposite Shah Rukh Khan in *Om Shanti Om*, Deepika Padukone is the outsider who has risen to become one of today's leading heroines. The 24-year-old star jetted into London on Monday on an 8-hour flying visit to promote new release *Break Ke Baad*. The Kunal Kohli-produced film sees Deepika share screen space with Imran Khan in a coming-of-age drama about what happens once a relationship ends. The model-turned-actor spoke to Steven Baker about working with Imran, why she still feels like a newcomer, and her plans to do a stage show with SRK.

You have had hits with romantic, peppy films like *Love Aaj Kal* and *Bachna Ae Haseeno*; now you are back

## with *Break Ke Baad*. Is this your niche in Bollywood?

I don't want to be typecast as a heroine who does a certain kind of cinema, which is why I experiment with the type of films that I do. But yes, I won't deny that romantic love stories or romantic comedies are what I enjoy doing the most, because as an audience those are the kind of films that I like watching.

## Are there similarities between you and your character Aaliya Khan in the film?

In a lot of ways yes, and in a lot of ways no, *Aaliya* is very ambitious and wants to achieve a lot for herself, which I identify with. But she is also someone who sacrifices her relationship, and doesn't believe in love or marriage, and those are things I don't connect with.

## all by the producer Kunal Kohli?

Not at all! It is very much **Danish's** film. **Kunal** has been an extraordinary producer and being a successful director himself, I can imagine that there might have been some expectations from people that he might shape it to his taste, but he never did that. **Danish** has made the film exactly the way he wanted it and the way he saw it, and I would really commend **Kunal** for that.

## What is your favorite song in the film?

The *Break Ke Baad* album is not your normal commercial Hindi film music. It is a little off-kilter. The album itself has a modern rock sound, a little bit like **Jason Mraz**. There's an English track in there called 'Don't Worry About Me' which I really like. The response has been good, and for me, that is the track that I really like.



to try out new ideas.

**You have studied acting from Anupam Kher's 'Actor Prepares'. How did that help you when you first entered the industry?**

I have absolutely no film background. I don't come from a film family and I had never been on a film set until my first film. In a lot of ways, it gave me little information about what to expect. But at the same time, I think the best education I've had is to actually be on a film set and learn from there.

**So, having worked as an actor for three years, do you feel like you are an established star, or do you still feel like a newcomer?**

I still feel like a newcomer, and I hope I feel like a newcomer forever. Because I always feel that the minute you feel like you have achieved everything, then you don't enjoy your work as much. So I hope I feel like a newcomer forever.

**From 'Love Mera Hit Hit' to 'Dhoom Tana', you are associated with a number of popular film songs. Are there any plans to do a stage show or world tour in the future?** *Continued on page 30*

**After appearing with senior actors like Shah Rukh Khan, Saif Ali Khan and Farhan Akhtar, how is it working with a younger star like Imran Khan?**

I think when I am working with some of the older actors I am in awe and I am often just trying to learn as much as I can from them. Whereas, I think with people like **Imran** and **Ranbir**, we are all in the same age group and we are all just learning. I think I am a lot more free to just discuss things, talk and

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