

Soni Razdan on life after marriage: 'I was sort of written off'

Veteran actor Soni Razdan says the film industry wrote her off after marriage and she had to rely on television to find consistent acting work.

Razdan made her debut in Hindi films in a supporting role with the 1981 film, "36 Chowringhee Lane", and went on to work in acclaimed movies such as Shyam Benegal's "Mandi" and "Trikal", Vidhu Vinod Chopra's "Khamosh", and Mahesh Bhatt's "Saransh".

She married Bhatt in 1986 and the couple have two daughters—Shaheen Bhatt and Alia Bhatt.

The 69-year-old actor revealed that she was not getting many acting offers after her marriage. In fact, it was her husband who offered her "bit" roles in his films, including "Daddy", "Sadak", "Sir" and "Gumrah", among others.

"I was sort of written off, people didn't bother about me at all. Then I came back. In fact, Sidharth's (P Malhotra, filmmaker) father was the one whose company gave me work consistently. So, I was shooting every month, but not for more than eight or 10 days," she told PTI.

Razdan said television gave her an opportunity to return to work, eventually opening doors for her to resume her acting career. She went on to feature in shows such as "Junoon" and "Saahil" in the 1990s.

"That (TV) was what gave me the strength to come back into acting. Then after that, things followed on from there. So, many other things happened."

Razdan fondly recalled the phase of parallel cinema of the 80s and her collaboration with the likes of Benegal, Aparna Sen, Naseeruddin Shah and Shabana Azmi.



"They (Naseer and Shabana) set a trend at the time with alternative cinema that grew in those days... They got great roles. Everybody wasn't as fortunate. But we followed on from there and did different things. Television came in, then films changed a bit, and then OTT came, so there's an evolution which has taken place over so many years."

Razdan said as she grows older, her approach to acting has also evolved.

She yearns to play "meaty" roles and is less concerned about factors such as the "length of a role" or "how she is perceived".

"I feel free now, I've shaken off a lot of baggage of what I had when I was younger. Also, it doesn't matter so much how you look. Like, those days you are so conscious of how you look, you've to look a certain way, you've to be this, you've to be that because you are in that age."

Bollywood alone is not cinema: Devkanya Thakur

Last year inclement weather played the spoilsport and restricted the International Shimla Film Festival to a one-day affair. Now as the sun god seems to be smiling, the Queen of Hills once again beckons cine enthusiasts with its vast palette of movies from across the world.

The 12th edition of the three-day festival is a bouquet of films from countries as diverse as Iran, Portugal, Canada, Mexico, Bulgaria, China Croatia, Indonesia, Italy and Palestine.

In the vast variety, which the festival offers filmmaker Tribeny Rai's internationally acclaimed feature film Shape of Momo, which has already won many international awards, including Taipei Film Commission Award and the Songwon Vision Award at Busan Film Festival, shines bright. The opening film Lullaby from Azerbaijan and Portugal, a short film directed by Ayan Melik is set against the backdrop of the Karabakh conflict. Pitching an Azerbaijani soldier and an Armenian soldier against each other, in times of conflict and war like situations engulfing the world, the message of humanity is what the 14-minute film underscores. The closing film Nyingma... Through Her Eyes, a 20-minute Indian short film directed and written by Liton Paul is set in a high-altitude Himalayan mountain village in the Spiti Valley of Himachal Pradesh. Winner of the Golden Royal Bengal Tiger Award for Best Indian Short Film at the 31st Kolkata International Film Festival in 2025, it centres around a young girl's dream to attend school in the face of environmental challenges and economic reality.



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Devkanya Thakur, founder of the festival, is especially proud of the Himachali section they have curated and singles out Chupi Roh, Disha Bhardwaj's directorial signature in particular. In Pahadi and Dogri, the film deals with gender identity. Tenfa, a 30-minute Kinnauri short film directed by award winning interdisciplinary maker Nihaarika Negi, which rediscovers Kinnaur's linguistic and sonic layers through magic realism is another highlight. Devkanya, who has been assiduously putting together the festival since its inception, would really like local languages like Pahadi and filmmakers from her region to gain more attention. Though the festival is supported by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (Government of In-

dia), the Department of Language and Culture (Government of Himachal Pradesh), and Himalayan Velocity, she beseeches the state government to make arts not just cinema but also literature in local dialects a top priority. She quips, "Bollywood alone is not cinema." As movies from the North-East, latest example being Nagaland filmmaker Theja Rio's film Angh securing direct entry to the International Feature Film category at the 2027 Oscars, clearly focus on local languages and stories are the flavour of the season and of the festival too. Rohit Ravindra Jadhav's Halgi, a Marathi short film revolves around a traditional drummer, who experiences 'every beat of the drum as a crushing weight of caste obligations, social shame, and emotional suffocation.'



Source: Kelly Brook on Instagram

Rakul Preet Singh looks alluring as she flaunts her hot-toned legs in sexy black outfit in this picture.

Taylor Swift announces The Life of a Showgirl: The Encore with four new songs dropping September 25

Taylor Swift has more music coming. On September 25, she'll release The Life of a Showgirl: The Encore, an expanded version of her 12th studio album, adding four new songs: Patient Zero, Cleveland!, Pink Clouding and Babylon.

Swift shared the news just one day after first teasing Patient Zero as a solo single. She explained on Instagram that the extra songs came from a celebratory trip to Sweden with collaborators Max and Shellback, where the mood turned into studio time. As she put it, "we did what we do when we feel anything at all: We wrote more songs."

The new tracks will slot in as numbers 13 through 16 on the album. Photographers Mert Alas and Marcus Piggott, who shot the original cover art, handled the new artwork too. For now, the release is streaming-only, with no physical edition confirmed.

Also, Swift is set to receive the inaugural Artist Director Award at the MTV VMAs in the coming days, and last week she made a cryptic cameo in a "Law & Order: SVU" themed Emmys sketch that fans had already begun picking apart for hidden clues.

Some of the clues had actually been there all along, quietly tucked into the details. In her Opalite music video, which dropped in February, a poster in the background carried the intriguing message, Patient For The Encore.



The forever-heartthrobs club: From Milind Soman to Sidharth Malhotra, a toast to the Internet's ultimate, timeless crushes

A fan frenzy around Sidharth Malhotra during the promotions of Vyaan has us revisiting a familiar Bollywood phenomenon: the men who seem to have a permanent place on our crush list. Trends may change, new faces may arrive, and screen heartthrobs may come and go, but a certain kind of charisma is timeless.

From the super model era of Milind Soman and Arjun Rampal's brooding appeal to Ranjesh Duggal's classic good looks and Harshvardhan Rane's intense romantic charm, these are the evergreen men who have kept fans swooning across generations. And yes, Sidharth Malhotra's latest fan-favourite moment proves that some crushes are simply built to last.

Trends in pop culture come and go, but true charismatic appeal is permanent. While Bollywood delivers fresh talent every season, a select group of actors possesses an irresistible mix of sharp features, intense screen presence and undeniable allure. These five leading men continue to occupy a permanent spot on our collective crush list.

The intense romantic: Harshvardhan Rane

Ever since Sanam Teri Kasam, Harshvardhan Rane has earned a reputation as the ultimate tragic romantic hero. His brooding eyes, athletic build, and soulful intensity give him an irresistible romantic pull.

