



A painter's tale

Uday Shirali, personal make-up artist to Priyanka Chopra tells his unlikely story of becoming a make-up artist

Words | Nagma Hasan

It makes for a wonderful tale when a greeting cards artist turns into the man behind Bollywood's and now international star Priyanka Chopra's gorgeous looks. Personal make-up artist to the star, Uday Shirali, loves challenges, given the melange of looks he has created for Priyanka in her movies, it is hardly a surprise that he has done his job well, he has. Meet the artist and how he came to be.

Tell us about your journey as a make-up artist?

I started off as an artist but it was quite contrary to what I am doing now. I used to paint, sketch and make greeting cards. But like luck would have it, one of my friends saw my work and suggested me to try my hands at make-up. It was quite a diverse career move, but when I was introduced to Bollywood's sought after make-up artist Pandhari Juker, I took

the plunge. What I am today I owe it to him. He is my guru, my teacher. With him, I got a chance to work with biggies like Sridevi to Madhuri Dixit. Despite the fact that I started off with a meagre sum of Rs 50 I endured. With whatever little I earned I would save it to buy make-up products. Then one day I got my big break when Pooja Bhatt who asked me to work as an independent artist in Zakhm. After that, there was so much to look forward to, I bagged more projects and worked with actresses like Sushmita Sen, Mahima Chaudhury, Preity Zinta, which helped me grow as a make-up artist.

Tell us about your association with Priyanka Chopra? The camaraderie you both share?

After working with some top notch actresses of their time, I was given a chance to work with Priyanka Chopra where she

was judging a beauty pageant. That was 9 years ago. She loved my work so much that she took me on board as her personal make-up artist for Karan Johar's Agneepath. Ever since then I have worked with her on all her big projects from Barfi, Gunday, Teri Meri Kahani, Dil Dhadakne Do, and most recently Bajirao Mastani. The best part of working with her is that she is very easy going. She trusts me with my job. She is a make-up artist's dream because she is experimental with her looks and doesn't mind trying something new which keeps me on my toes.

How easy or difficult is it to work with stars?

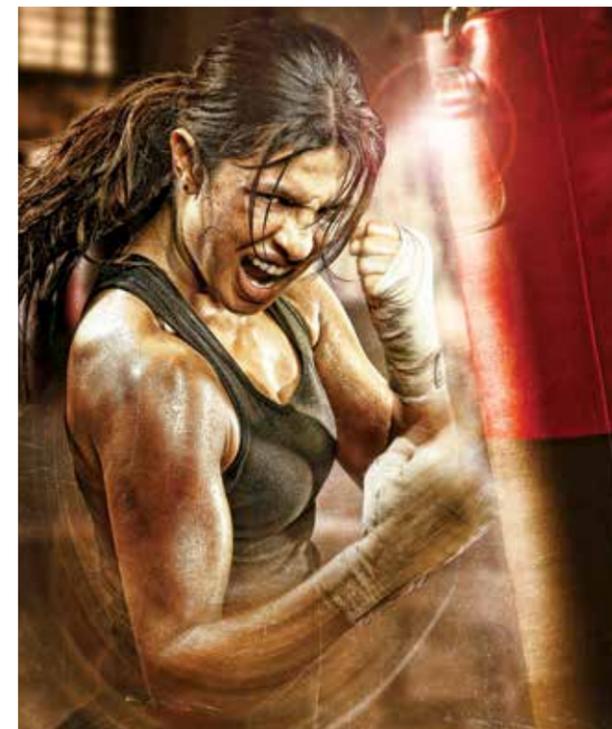
It is not very difficult to work with stars. All you need to know well is the skin of the actor you are working with, and then the rest falls in to place. When we work on the look of an actor for a movie all we need to worry about is getting the base make-up right and then it gets easy to give the look. The only thing the stars expect from an MUA is to not waste their time and ruin their skin.

Awards and accolades won.

I won 2 awards for Barfi IIFA and Screen.

What is your USP?

I love trying new things which is only possible in films and ads as I always get to do something new every time. A make-up artist should know the knack of studying the skin at the first go and always be open to challenges and never limit themselves to create.



Your views on the importance of education in beauty and make-up?

It is crucial for one to get educated, especially because it is to do with the most sensitive part of a human body—the skin. Unless one doesn't know the skin type one will never be able to give the desired look and make-up that one is expecting.

What are the most challenging aspects of your job?

The most challenging aspect of being a MUA is to create a convincing look of a character in a movie. I remember whether it was Priyanka Chopra's Mary Kom look or the Jhilmil look in Barfi and now Kashibai is Bajirao Mastani, all of these have been most difficult to create.

What do you enjoy most in your job?

Giving new looks every time is the most I enjoy as a make-up artist. With every new look there is a lot of research involved and that is when I get to learn so much about new techniques. Every time there is something new I learn along the way.

What inspires you in this business?

I have always been in the creative field that is one reason that inspires me to be in this business. There is so much to experiment in terms of creativity.

Your future endeavours?

Apart from the films I will be doing in the coming future with Priyanka Chopra I also want to build and educate make-up artists and fulfil their dream to become successful. **SS**

TRIVIA

Favourite cuisine: Malvani fish curry

Favourite holiday destination: Maldives is beautiful

Favourite stress buster: My kids

Most memorable moment: When I was applauded for Sushmita's make up in the movie Fiza for the Song Mehboob mere

Personal style statement: We have to constantly be on our toes so my good to go jackets and trousers are always with me.