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BRAD PITT & SRK

BRAD PITT MEETS SRK

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Interviewer:

You know, I'm just going to say it because I'm pretty sure everyone in this room is saying it in their heads. This is a pretty incredible moment. Brad Pitt and Shahrukh Khan, two of the biggest global superstars. Gentlemen, this is a very special moment.

Brad Pitt:

Alright. Good on you.

Interviewer:

Brad, this is not your first time in India, is it?

Brad Pitt:

No, no. We actually shot a *Mighty Heart* here. So, we were here for a few months and got to explore a lot of the country. It was a fantastic experience. Good to be back here.

Interviewer:

You know, there are locals in Pune who got used to seeing you on the bike and you waving out to them.

Brad Pitt:

Yeah, it was good. I got to scoot around on an old Royal Enfield and put a helmet on and just get out amongst the masses. It was really nice.

Interviewer:

You know, it's interesting. Both of you actually started your movie careers around the same time. Brad, *Thelma, and Louise*, your big breakout, released in 1991. And that led to this exciting long career. Shahrukh, *Deewana*, which was your first film, big runaway success released in 1992. What's the secret to staying relevant, successful, and influential for 25 years.

Brad Pitt:

Hoof. You want to take that one?

Shahrukh Khan:

No, I will give it to you.

Brad Pitt:

I will say luck, I will say a little bit of luck. But also, trying to reinvent, you know, constantly trying to look for something new, something different. And I, you know, fortunately, I guess we were able to survive our mistakes along the way. And I think just staying relative.

Shahrukh Khan:

Yeah, mainly that. I think, you know, to be able to survive your mistakes and mistakes are normally things which are very close to your heart, you know? And if they went wrong somewhere down the line, the only thing that keeps you going is the fact that you're still surviving. And you try and do it as often as you can, as much as possible.

And I think, he more than me will tell you that, you know, to be such a successful star around the world, there are a lot of, lot more expectations from you and you need to keep it very simple then. You don't need to be trying to work for those expectations or keep on doing the stuff that people expect of you. You keep on doing what started you off, which is being relevant, being novel, trying to, you know, kind of reinvent yourself and the simple things which made you want to be an actor in the first place.

Interviewer:

You know, you both have enormous success, but also enormous pressure. How do you balance or how do you really combine artistic integrity with commercial success? Because that's a huge pressure on both of you, right, I would imagine.

Brad Pitt:

I will say, you just have to make sure you get time for yourself, time for your friends, time for your family, and let the next idea percolate. And it's not, it's not so difficult to achieve a balance. I'm able to compartmentalize pretty well, the private life and the public life. How about you?

Shahrukh Khan:

I do that too completely. I mean, as far as work is concerned, I think what he says is the, actually the crux of it, you know, if you can be leading your public life, which is on sets also, invariably, I think if you can protect it in terms of that from your private life and your private life from the public life. I think when you go back home and you're leading the regular stuff that you're supposed to do, in whatever form with family, friends, I think it just keeps you kind of grounded. You know, like my kids, I mean more often than not don't like my films. That nice.

Interviewer:

Really?

Brad Pitt:

Yeah.

Shahrukh Khan:

And that's nice. Oh, this one was so boring papa. So, you know, it's like, it's not the biggest thing in the house, Papa's film to do well. It is not a special thing. It should not be a special thing with family and friends. And invariably, you know, we make friends even in the film industry, and then everybody kind of just starts pushing you along and saying, you know, this was the best thing you did. Yeah, it was different. I think the real friends in the film industry also tell you, oh, keep it simple and keep it normal. I think that's what actually really helps you and takes the pressure off. That at home you're a nobody. And as long as you're a nobody with your friends and at home, I think you can be a big star like Brad Pitt outside.

Interviewer:

You know, I would imagine that it's not just me. Everyone in this room, I would imagine, wants to know how do you pick the films that you do? How do you decide what you want to do next as an actor?

Brad Pitt:

Well, for me, it depends a lot about, you know, who's telling the story. You know, it usually starts with a script, a good piece of writing, and the decision to go investigate that. And then you want to, I want to surround myself with filmmakers I respect because we are ultimately putting ourselves in the director's hands and there you have a real freedom to go explore, to go out as far as you can go. And you know you're in really good hands.

So, and at the end of the day after, I don't know about you, but after doing it so long, I want to do it with friends and people I like, and that seems to be more important than the people I surround myself with than anything else.

Shahrukh Khan:

Absolutely. It's exactly the same thing. I've even said it before that I sometimes don't even want to know the story, as long as the people who are telling the story are people I enjoy working with. As a matter of fact, because now in India, there's so many new filmmakers, I don't know them, I haven't gotten to know them personally. And it's not just doing it for a friend, but I try to spend a couple of years with them before I start the project, you know, just to be comfortable. I think, you know, after 20 or 25 years of work, what matters to you most is the people who are making the film for you and the people that you're trusting with, whatever little bit of talent you have and you say, okay, this is in your hands, now try and make me look the best you can. And I will completely trust you.

And you can only do it with people that you are, you know, kind of easy with or friends, like you said. I've done that for the last 15 years. I really, never really worked out of, a lot of people call the comfort zone. But it's not the comfort zone. Or maybe you require that comfort to be able to tell a better story.

Interviewer:

Good to have talented friends, right?

Shahrukh Khan:

Yeah. That's, yeah. That's important.

Brad Pitt:

Sure. How long is, how long is a shoot on a Bollywood film?

Shahrukh Khan:

If it's an action, dancing film, about 120 days, 140 days. Sometimes longer if things go wrong. And if it's a simpler film, then about 70 days.

Brad Pitt:

It's about the same with us. And we don't have dancing.

Interviewer:

Right.

Brad Pitt:

I would never make it in Bollywood because I can't dance.

Shahrukh Khan:

No.

Brad Pitt:

I can't. I can't.

Shahrukh Khan:

We will make you dance in Bollywood.

Brad Pitt:

Really?

Shahrukh Khan:

Yeah. We make everyone dance in Bollywood.

Brad Pitt:

I think it'd be the first film and the last.

Interviewer:

Do your roles seep into your life? Do they change you? Do they stay with you or do you discard them?

Brad Pitt:

I guess, they kind of feed each other. Your individual life and when you're investigating in the film, it has to in some way. But I quickly discard them and move on to the next, move on to the next project.

Shahrukh Khan:

I use a term which I describe a lot of film work and I call it demotional. I'm extremely emotional when I'm doing it and then I'm completely detached once it's over. I need to just move on to, I can't stick onto something. And I've been asked many times playing this character role, has it changed your life? No, it hasn't. You know, because like he said, it feeds off your experiences and then you try to put them into a character or a role. And then you just move on, it's your experiences finally.

Of course, the quirks that you put in or any mannerism that needs to be put in, or research into a biopic kind of space, all that, yes. Those, I think, are you know, just technicalities as an actor that you learn and work and prep for. But beyond that, no. I would do one and I take a two-hour-long bath on the Friday the movie releases. Try it, it works. Two hours and then by Monday I'm through with it. I don't want to be a part of it anymore. Yeah

Interviewer:

Was there one character that was just hard to wrap your head around, one character more than others that was difficult to get into?

Shahrukh Khan:

I don't know, I would ask him about Benjamin Button. I'd ask him about a film, I forget the full title, 12 monkeys.

Brad Pitt:

Yeah, yeah.

Shahrukh Khan:

Yeah. I find you amazing in that one.

Brad Pitt:

Ah, thank you.

Shahrukh Khan:

It was fantastic! I don't know how many of you have seen that film. He was mind-blowing in that film. I mean, that's where I became a big fan of Brad, as an actor, burn after reading. And there's some, lots of them, hundreds of them. But I would ask you, just to continue with that one, with Benjamin Button or any of these films.

Brad Pitt:

Those were all, they took, especially 12 monkeys. A lot of insanity, locking myself in a room for a couple of weeks and just seeing how crazy we could get. But no, it's just part of them, I wouldn't call them all challenging, but it's what we do. I wouldn't say any were difficult. Some, you know, landed better than others. But it just seems part of the process, part of the craft.

Interviewer:

You know, I'm going to speak for most of the fans and I'm going to ask you about Fight Club, Tyler Durden.

Brad Pitt:

No, that was just fun. That was just fun. Yeah. Anytime, you know, something is irreverent and, and it was a great piece of writing and a real, a dear friend of mine, David Fincher directing, and Edward Norton, no, we mainly just laughed. Much like this one actually.

Interviewer:

Shahrukh for you, a particular character that was hard to wrap your head around.

Shahrukh Khan:

You know, because we have singing and dancing in our films, more often...

Brad Pitt:

I can't sing either.

Shahrukh Khan:

You can't. I also don't, I'm mini Vanelli. They sing it from the back, I just. Because they have singing and dancing, it does become, and as you know, the commercial films, the singing, and dancing does come in a set-piece and it's just part of no storytelling. You just have to do it because you have to do it, maybe in some films in the background. So, you really can't, a lot of people say this and maybe I'm going to be speaking against them when I say this, but you can't really get into a character if you have to sing and dance every 20 minutes in a film. It's not a musical, it's not been laid out like that. You're not playing, I don't know how you pronounce the name, Bob Fosse. You're not, you know, there's not all that jazz.

Somewhere down the line, it's just a song and dance. I don't know, I'm sorry to say how to dance in character. You know, how would an X person dance in this, we always do our regular dancing. So, it becomes difficult mainly when I'm playing a more realistic role, like say My Name is Khan. But then again, those are the technicalities. It's not something that you can't do. It's challenging maybe. You spend some time, prep it as well as you can, and hope it lands well like you said.

But no, it, I can never say it as an actor that, oh, this was so difficult. It took the life out of me. No, I don't think there's been a role like that. All of them are nice. I find the ones which are regular roles, those more difficult to play, especially in the Indian commercial scenario, that you're just a regular guy. I'm playing it. You know, if they have crutches and stuff, then it's easier to play, I think.

Brad Pitt:

How long do you have to rehearse for a dance number, a set-piece?

Shahrukh Khan:

You know, I started off, there was a movie many years ago when I started in 94, 95, I released a film called Baazigar and that was the first time they had a dancing number for me, like a set piece with a lot

of dancers. And I went for rehearsals. I went for four days of rehearsals, and day and night, I used to go two in the afternoon, finish at 4:00 AM in the morning, and I thought I will kill it. And because the song that I've done before I was miserable at, on the sets, it was pathetic. And then I came back after four days and nights and did the shot and I was exactly at the same level of misery. And I did it as badly. And so, about 20 years, 15 years back, I decided never to rehearse.

Brad Pitt:

Really?

Shahrukh Khan:

Because I can't get better. So, I just, you know, as soon as I come on the sets, I just request the choreography. I start touching their feet and all. So, you know, I just don't want to, just do it this much only, take one shot. So, they normally shoot with me, hello, and that's it.

Interviewer:

He's actually being very modest. He is quite good. He also invented the Shahrukh Khan style, haven't you?

Shahrukh Khan:

You know, there's a style that is kind of famous now where I put my arms out and I do nothing. I just put my arms up.

Brad Pitt:

Very smart.

Shahrukh Khan:

Do nothing. So, whenever anything goes wrong in dancing where there are those complicated steps, where you have to do all that. So, when they do that, what hip hop, bib bop, lock, and pop, so when they do that stuff, I say, you know what, my character would just stand like this. And they are like, yeah, yeah.

Brad Pitt:

I'm going to try that line.

Shahrukh Khan:

Yeah please, just stand.

Brad Pitt:

I'll tell you a story. One day, one time in a film I had to be an organist, play an organ. And Organ, you're playing with all four limbs, hands, and feet. I could not, I couldn't even get the piano part. Unfortunately, you know, they shoot the hands and they cut down and shoot someone else's feet, but I couldn't even get the piano part. I couldn't get both hands. So, what we did was I had the baseline with the left hand and what we did was we got another guy who could play an organ whose hand looked close enough.

And we cut a hole in the back of my jacket and he slid his hand through and I just did this. And he made the thing where it looks great.

Interviewer:

Well, tell us which movies so we can go back and look.

Brad Pitt:

Tree of Life.

Interviewer:

Tree of life.

Brad Pitt:

Yeah.

Interviewer:

Thank you very much.

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