

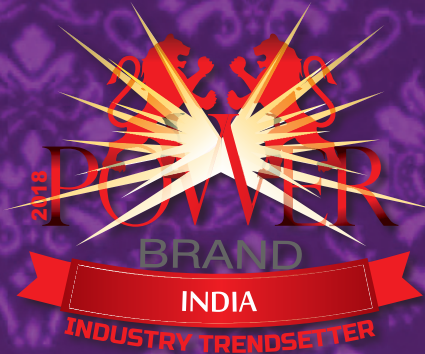
Kay Kay Menon has established himself as an actor of much versatility, but has also confounded his fans by acting in typical Bollywood fare, often essaying popular villain roles. He made his debut in the role of a muslim fundamentalist in 1995 with Saeed Mirza's *Naseem* and since then it has been no looking back. With memorable performances in films like *Black Friday*, *Sarkar*, *Hazaaron Khwaishein Aisi*, *Corporate*, *Gulaal*, *Haider* today he is one of the most sought after actors in the hindi film industry.

Trained in Business Administration, Kay Kay started his career in the advertising industry, working with Kinetic Honda and Marlboro Cigarette advertisements in India. His first theatre break was opposite Naseeruddin Shah in Feroz Abbas Khan's *Mahatma vs Gandhi*. He





KAY KAY MENON



## BRILLIANCE THAT ENDURES AND ENDEARS

also gathered experience of working on the small screen with Zebra 2 and Last Train To Mahakali. He received widespread praise and critical acclaim for his role as a young Prime Minister in the Zee TV series Pradhan Mantri. In fact, mainstream media of those days wrote rave reviews about the actor.

Over the years, Menon continued with his experiment with roles and genres – and every time a new challenging character came his way, he gave it both life and language and made it his own. In 2007, his role in Anurag Basu's Life in a Metro, as an adulterous husband garnered widespread critical acclaim as well. In 2008, he appeared in Shaurya where his portrayal of an army brigadier and the climax scene with bloodshot eyes is still talked about amongst cinema lovers. In 2009, the role of Dukki Bana in *Gulaal*, where he portrayed the leader of an underground Rajpoot rebellion unit, won him accolades anew.

When asked about how he remembers his characters – having played so many of all different hues and color, Kay Kay Menon is quick to retort back – "... I always tell people that I perform people, not roles," he said. "For me, the fact that a character is an ACP or a DCP or a professor is purely incidental. When people ask me if I'm playing the role of an ACP in Vodka Diaries, I say no. I'm actually playing Ashwini Dixit,

the man."

His character in Vodka Diaries – Ashwini Dixit is indeed unique in its build-up - it has the potential to charm audiences, as Menon adds with conviction - *"If a story is well told and if a director's intentions are noble and have integrity – and you can immediately make that out – then that's enough for me to proceed,"* he said.

Every artist has his unique way of preparing himself for a character, and great artists like Kay Kay don't ever hesitate to go that extra distance to find perfection. As Menon describes his process of preparing for a role, as both *"boring and elaborate"* - He voraciously reads and re-reads the script to the point of exhaustion – a process he compared to *Aladdin* and his magic lamp.

"Alladin has to keep on rubbing the lamp and slowly, a form comes out of it," Menon said. "That's how I prepare. I work with a script until all of a sudden, when you don't expect it, a form of the character begins to emerge. That's what I wait for. It requires a lot of boring hard work."

Take a bow, Kay Kay Menon for there are few who can hold a candle to such well-honed genius.

