

## First Amritraj-Reliance Entertainment film to hit screens Oct 1

Indian-American producer Ashok Amritraj and Anil Ambani's Reliance Entertainment will Oct 31 unveil their first film under a unique five-year, co-production deal - a comedy 'The Other End of the Line'.

The film stars Jesse Metcalfe of 'Desperate Housewives' and Shriya who recently starred opposite Rajnikanth in the Indian blockbuster 'Sivaji: The Boss.' Shot in [Mumbai](#) and San Francisco, it also features Anupam Kher.

'It has a lot of songs... American and Indian, though no dances,' Amritraj told IANS in a telephonic interview, sharing the larger vision on what had led to the pact between his Hyde Park Entertainment and Reliance Entertainment.

The former tennis ace-turned film producer said he had never dealt with an Indian or an Asian group before, although he has made 98 films in Hollywood over the past quarter of a century.

'Reliance were looking for investing and I was looking to blend the world. So it made a lot of sense.'

'The Other End of the Line' is the story of an Indian credit card phone operator (Shriya) who travels to San Francisco, disguising herself as American, for a romantic liaison with a man (Metcalfe) she met through her work.

Upon her arrival, however, she decides to keep her true identity a secret, which threatens to dampen the sparks between her and her potential beau.

Amritraj said Reliance Entertainment was an investor with Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM) as distributors. And the fact that Adlabs Films, part of the Anil Ambani group, owns some 250 screens across the US, should prove useful, he indicated.

The Hyde Park promoter said he was intending to build a global cultural bridge across Asia, India, the Middle East and America. 'It felt like the right move,' he said.

Reliance Entertainment, he said, was one such group his Hyde Park Entertainment was working with for financing his independent productions - but in India it is the only one.

Asked how the reported deal between Reliance Entertainment and Steven Spielberg would affect his own ties with the Indian group, the producer said he was glad that more people were looking at Bollywood and Hollywood and wished them luck.

About the making of his latest film, Amritraj recalled that about five years ago he had talked with Tracey Jackson, an actress-turned-screenwriter for MGM, who wanted to develop something that could be shot in India.

Jackson had written 'The Guru', the story of an dance instructor from India who dreams of coming to America and becoming a big star.

But during the long development process, MGM was sold to Sony in April 2005 and the product was

put on hold for some time before he decided himself to do the film, with MGM as distributors.

Partly shot in India, the film was developed largely in America.

Currently under post-production for a 2009 release through 20th Century Fox is 'Street Fighter', based on the popular video game. 'With this, we have been able to bridge the cultural gap,' Amritraj said.

'It has a number of Asian actors and provides a nice platform for Asian, Indian and Middle Eastern distribution.'

Amritraj's previous Hollywood comedies have included 'Bringing Down the House' starring Steve Martin and Queen Latifah, and 'Raising Helen' starring Kate Hudson.

One of his recent releases 'Traitor', starring Don Cheadle and Guy Pearce, was among the top 10 at the box office for ten weeks, Amritraj said.

As part of his continuing plans to 'blend the world', Amritraj's Hyde Park Entertainment Group has struck a deal with the Singapore government's Media Development Authority to raise a multimillion dollar fund between Asia and Middle East to finance both Hollywood and cross-cultural films.

Acting as a bridge between the film industries of Asia and America, Hyde Park Asia will produce or co-produce three to four films per year, consisting of a mixture of major Hollywood films and cross-cultural titles, aimed at a global audience.

Having produced or executive produced nearly 100 films with a worldwide gross in excess of \$1 billion during his 27-year Hollywood career, Amritraj said: 'I am looking at other cross-cultural stage... to blend the world.'

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