Now give me more family films: John Abraham

Bollywood's hottest heartthrob John Abraham admits he was under pressure before the release of his first family drama 'Baabul', but says he is now comfortable with the genre and ready to do more such films.

'The tension was all coming from within me. I was doing something I had never done before. Mr. Ravi Chopra had put a lot of faith in me by putting me in 'Baabul'. It had a full-on cast. All of them had proved themselves in mainstream cinema. I was new to this set-up. It made me nervous in the beginning. I had to break my mindset as an actor,' John told IANS.

Also starring Amitabh Bachchan, Hema Malini, Salman Khan and Rani Mukerji, the film is about a man fighting society to get his widowed daughter-in-law remarried.

'I was very, very happy. Now give me more family films. Middle class women, here I come.'

John's role of the man, who wants to marry the widowed Rani, was tough to cast but the actor jumped at it.

'I heard the script. It moved me to tears. If a script sounds good, all the characters will shine. The important thing is not to fall so much in love with your role that you forget the larger picture. In 'Baabul' everyone contributes to the emotions and drama.'

Has he so far missed out on family audiences?

'Well.... I endorse the children's TV channel Hungama. But yes, I've never done a film aimed expressly at a family audience. Whether it's 'Jism', 'Aetbaar' or even 'Dhoom', these weren't aimed at family viewers. But surprisingly children are my biggest fans. That's really heartening.'

Vishal Bhardwaj, who's producing the John starrer 'No Smoking', informs that his young son Aasman is a huge fan of John.

'That's so sweet,' the actor said. 'When you've the kids on your side, you get the moms and dads as a bonus.'

John admits 'Baabul' was a novel experience for him.

'The audience has never seen me in this kind of film before. It's important for me to try to see how the audience accepts me in mainstream film with such huge mainstream actors like Amitji, Hemaji, Rani and Salman.'

John has full faith in cinema's power to heal.

'This film can have as much impact as Ravi Chopra's earlier film 'Baghban'. I believe it changed people's mindset. After seeing 'Baghban', people in the cities went back to their villages to get their parents.

'If my 'Baabul' or Deepa Mehta's 'Water' encourages even one man to extend his hand to marry a

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widow, I'd feel happy.'

John says he comes from a generation that believes everyone has the right to live with dignity.

'I see no problem in a woman getting married again. I can't understand how anyone can be prevented from remarrying.'

Subhash K. Jha (© IANS / India eNews)

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