"I won't settle for an A-certificate for *Aakrosh*. Let me make films that have a social purpose. Or I go back to making *De Dana Dan* —Priyadarshan

I'm actually convinced TV's definitely my future. But acting is something I'm craving to do. I'm not saying I'm an actor, but I really want a Hollywood movie to come in
—singer Peter Andre

screen savour

German director Emre Koca's film *Seppi & Hias* is autobiographical, and though his own irreverence towards religion, it attempts to understand cultures

A tale of two boys

Seppi & Hias, a Turkish-Bavarian film about a charming friendship between two boys in the backdrop of cultural differences and religion, proved to be a clear favourite at FTII's International Students' Film Festival held recently

One film that relieved the somewhat heavy and intense mood of the International Students' Film Festival at FTII was Emre Koca's Turkish-Bavarian venture *Seppi & Hias*. This short fiction comedy from HFF Munchen (University of Television and Film Munich, Germany) was certainly a breath of fresh air with delightful characters and a refreshing dose of humour. Shot in the beautiful locals of Bavaria, *Seppi & Hias* explores a friendship beyond cultural and religious boundaries.

Yusuf (Seppi) is a nine-year-old Turkish boy living in a small upper Bavarian village with his single mother. He and Matthias (Hias), a German, are best friends and are infamous for troubling people. Playing garage-door-football and eating Leberkas (Ham burger) after school are their favourite activities together. The film revolves around their friendship and their sins which they ultimately have to confront.

Seppi & Hias boasts of being the first Turkish-Bavarian film, the beauty of it lying in the way it blends both these cultures with a certain irreverance towards relgion. So while Hias, the trouble-maker of the two, sends Seppi in his place for the first confession on his Communion day out of fear of all the mischief he's done, the latter, who is threatened by his conservative Turkish Islamic uncle of going to hell for eating pork, goes ahead and confesses his sin instead.

Talking to Koca, the writer-director and co-producer of the film, we realise that this autobiographical project is actually much more than just a light-hearted story of two friends. "*Seppi & Hias* is the story of my best friend and I and our childhood. The character of Seppi is based on me. But it's also a homage to Bavarian writer Ludwig Thoma and films in the '60s since a lot of them were shot in this particular region where my film has been made," Koca informs. The film also displays Koca's passion of shooting with children and youngsters, as he features two of the most wonderful debutant child actors seen on screen in lead roles. They undoubtedly are the soul of the film.

> "There is a lot of Turkish population in Germany and the general perception of them is that they are not secular. But my film conveys the opposite. So I hope it makes some difference in resolving this whole issue

A Turkish by origin, the filmmaker reveals how he has brought his own not-so-religious attributes to Seppi's character where he eats pork until his uncle comes by and warns him of turning into a pig if he continues eating the same. "I am very independent of religion. I eat pork myself. But yes, by not taking this whole subject of religion seriously, I attempted to show how both these religions are interconnected. It's a co-incidence though that my film has released at a time when the discussion in Germany is quite the opposite," he says. Koca tells us how Germans are of the opinion that Turks are not integrated and are rigid about their traditions and rituals. "There is a lot of Turkish population in Germany and the general perception of them is that they are not secular. But my film conveys the opposite. So I hope it makes some difference in resolving this whole issue," he smiles.

Another significant aspect of integration that the film successfully showcases is the local football club FC Bayern Munchen, of which both Seppi and Hias are hardcore fans. Not being a mere sport, the club is a symbol of identification for the locals, irrespective of their origin. At the club, they are all 'Mia san Mia' (We are we).

Apart from plans of making a TV serial out of this film, Koca is also willing to make films in India. "I might make a TV series on this film. I feel it would be interesting for many people in Bavaria as it's funny and deals with a connected issue. As for India, I truly believe in the concept of Indian films. I think entertainment is very important and I want to make films belonging to that genre," he signs off keeping his fingers crossed.

– ARWA JANJALI

'The angry young man was my discovery'

Salim Khan talks about his much-publicised split with partner Javed Akhtar

Everyone remembers Salim-Javed as the formidable scriptwriter duo, who penned some of the most memorable films of the '70s and '80s. Sadly, they broke up in the mid-'80s, both going their own ways. Neither of them could write many successful scripts on their own, but both continue to be in the limelight. Javed Akthar is ofcourse an extremely successful lyricist, while Salim Khan is the proud father of the mega successful star Salman Khan.

Their split was one of the most talked about ones in Bollywood and Salim Khan — perhaps buoyed by the super success of *Dabangg* — had a lot to reveal on *ETC*'s show *Bollywood Business* hosted by Komal Nahta recently. He said, "When Javed had come from Bhopal, he hadn't come to be a writer. He had come to Mumbai to be a director. I discovered the talent in him,"

For the first time in 29 years, Salim Khan spoke on what caused the famous duo to part ways, "We were near Javed's house one evening when Javed told me he wanted to split.... that he'd been thinking about it for some time now. I got up, shook hands with him and started walking towards my car. He also started to walk with me, but I held him, turned him towards his house and said, 'I can look after myself.' I came back home and didn't tell anyone about it. The next evening calls started coming in asking about the split. It was only after a few days that I announced the split."

But what was the reason behind ending such a wonderful and successful association? "Javed wanted to use this partnership to start writing lyrics too. I hadn't consented to the use of my name for something that I had no interest in and knew nothing about. I told him to constrict the partnership to scriptwriting, while he could write lyrics on his own," explained Salim Khan.

Javed Akhtar was working as an assistant director in an S M Sagar production of which Salim Khan was the script writer. "From there we got to know each other. He started coming to my home and that's how we started growing close. One day Sagarsaab came home with a story that he wanted me to script. Javed was there with me at that time and requested that he work on it (the script) with me. We got Rs 10,000 which we split in half. That was how the partnership started!" reminisced Salim Khan.

Just when it looked that Salim Khan was done, he came up with another startling declaration. "The 'Angry young man' image was conceptualised by me for the film *Zanjeer*. Javed wasn't even my partner when I wrote the film," he clarified and added almost as an afterthought, "And I believe even Javedsaab would confirm that it was solely my creation."

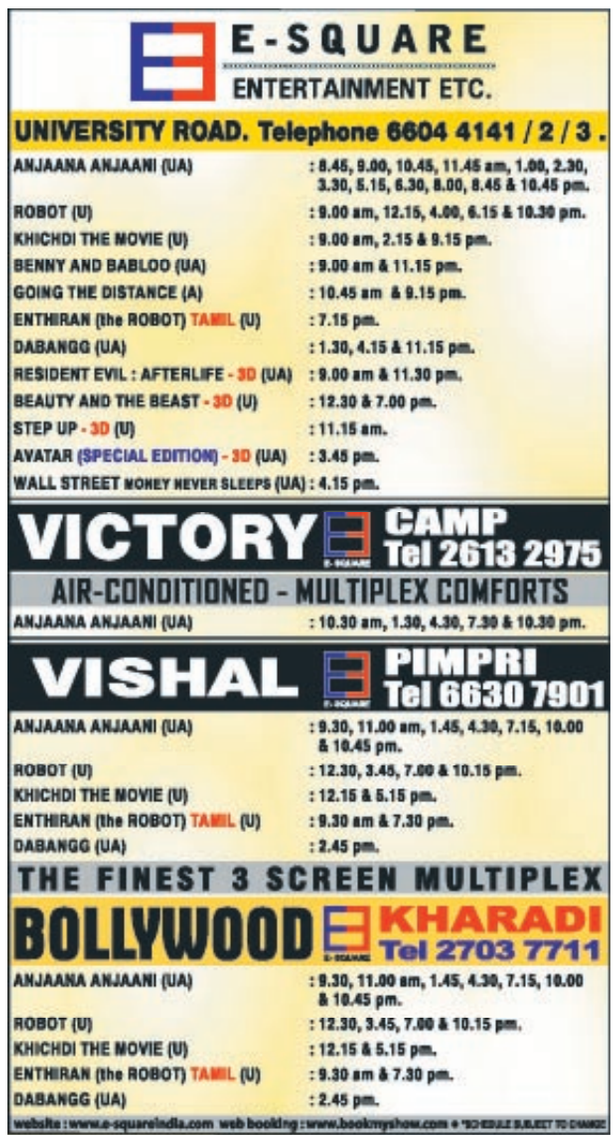
The ace scriptwriter feels that the Big B doesn't quite acknowledge his role in the shaping up of his career. "If Amitabh doesn't remember, I'd like to remind him that his two successful associations, with Manmohan Desai and Prakash Mehra, were because of me," stated Salim Khan, quite matter-of-factly.

This explosive interview will be aired on October 7 at 8:30 pm.

'Break Ke Baad' to hit screens in November

The release date for Imran Khan, Deepika Padukone starrer *Break Ke Baad* has been finalised — it will hit screens on Nov 26.

Directed by Danish Aslam, *Break Ke Baad* is described as young, frothy, romantic comedy. It is also the first independent production venture of filmmaker Kunal Kohli.

Prasoon Joshi has written the lyrics and Vishal-Shekhar have composed the music for *Break Ke Baad*.

The first promo of the film will hit the screens today — Oct 1 — along with Priyanka Chopra, Ranbir Kapoor's film *Anjaana Anjaani*. IANS