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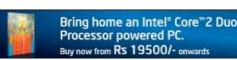
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# Out of the closet: **Bollywood goes bold and**

18th Aug 2008 22.40 IST By Nikhil Kumar

Imagine two leading Bollywood male stars doing the Tango together. They gaze into each other's eyes. Their bodies rub as one of them stretches backward while the other one leans

over.

Steamy though it may sound, it will transpire on the silver screen in Karan Johar's production Dostana, starring Abhishek Bachchan and John Abraham in lead roles along with Priyanka Chopra. The movie's promo is being screened in theatres and has already become fodder for many an idle talk.





The most explosive bit of the promo is when John and Abhi stand together and John declares: "We are gay, and he (Abhi) is my boyfriend". What follows are fleeting shots of John and Abhi working out together and walking hand-inhand on the streets. In one shot Abhi is shown lying on top of John.

However, in the movie John and Abhi are only pretending to be gays. They are shamming because of one little lie they have to live up.

Such a 'queer' promo might have raised hackles a few years back, but today it looks completely acceptable. Back then, a simple ad featuring Shahrukh Khan topless (if I may say so) in a bathtub full of rose petals had stoked the rumors that he was "a gay". While in movies everything with homosexual connotation was shown with derisive humour. Why go far? Remember the scene in Partner when Govinda meets Katrina Kaif's gay friend who croons the memorable Hindi song:

Today, the gay pride is out of the closet, not just in Bollywood, but in Indian society as a whole. Just last month, there was a Gay Parade in New Delhi in which some high-class socialites had taken part. Last weekend there was a similar parade in Mumbai flagged off by none other than the Bollywood bombshell Celina Jaitley,

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<sup>&</sup>quot;Aadmi hoon aadmi se pyaar karta hoon."

who, though a heterosexual, was taking part on behalf of a gay friend who died recently.

Those who know the film industry inside out vouch for the fact that it is not without people with homosexual tendencies. Only such people don't unfurl the rainbow flag of their sexual orientation. They prefer to keep their private lives private.

However, for starters, a movie on two robust young men pretending to be gays is not bad. By Bollywood standards and its history, that's quite a feat.

Bravo! Karan Johar and Tarun Mansukhani.

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