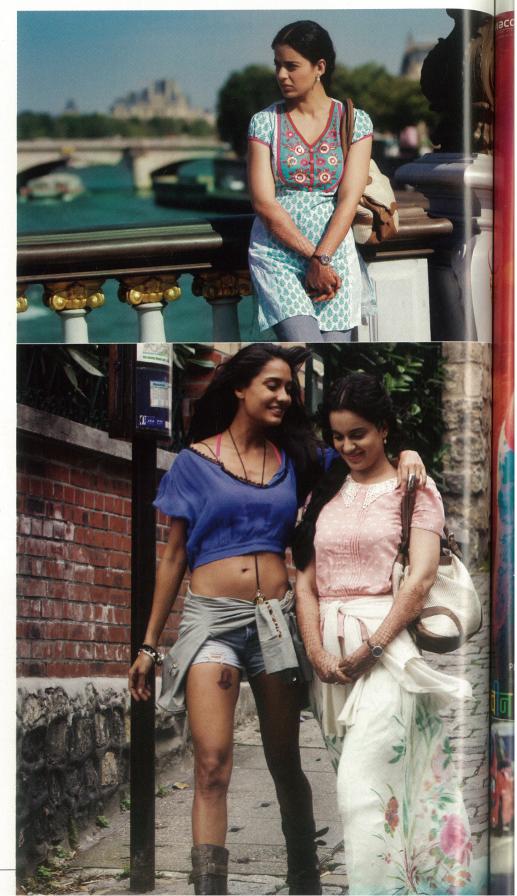
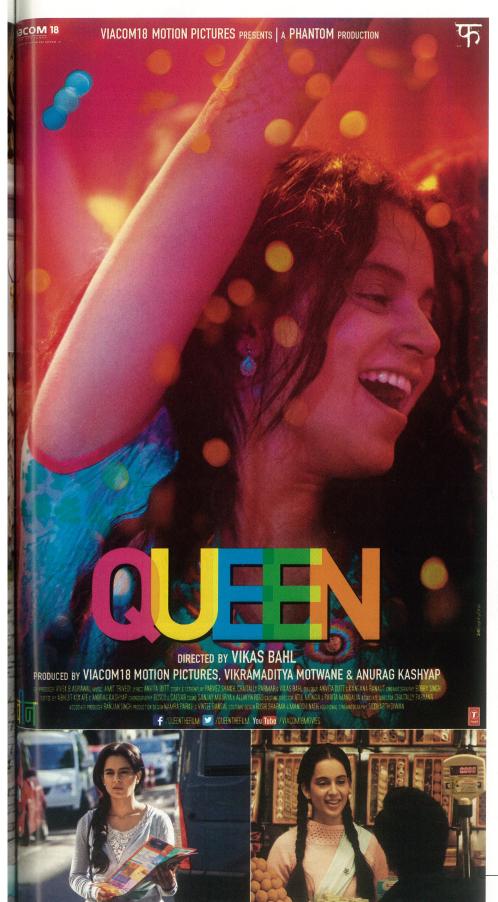


volution, in the true sense became yet another genre of Hindi cinema with Rani (played by Kangana Ranaut) taking centrestage. A nondescript, heartbroken, demure girl sans self belief turns into a confident, smart and optimistic woman who accomplishes a sense of identity on her solo honeymoon to Paris and Amsterdam. With each stage of Rani's emotional upheaval, her gradual progress is smoothly translated through an updated change in attire. The soul-searching while on her fullof-adventure trip becomes apparent in her misshapen kurtis paired with non-fitting capris giving way to wispy, mid and full-length dresses and skirts - her expression of attaining freedom. Behind this change of look were costume designers and stylists Rushi Sharma and Manoshi Nath.

The duo credit the director and his quick 15-minute narration that hooked them on to the project. "First she got over him...and then she got over herself," were the words Vikas Bahl used to describe his muse Rani to Sharma and Nath. "We had to design this character since we have always wanted to paint how heartbreak looks. The challenge was not while portraying the 'pink' of the Rajouri girl or the 'olive green' of heartbreak. The challenge lay in showing the 'sunshine yellow' of freedom and how Rani transitions to it," says Rushi. Nath sums up the transition and explains, "Her ill-fitting, printed blue kurta epitomised her clumsy, fearful running in Paris, which transitioned to free-flowing, sunlit, gauzy and transparent-like Rani. And finally the peaches and lace dress in which Queen walks away from Vijay to her freedom. Her hair, her bag, her footwear, all of these subtly transforms Vikas' Rani to Queen."

Portraying the role to perfection, actor Kangana Ranaut fleshed out and brought soul to Rani's character. Rushi shares that the first time Ranaut wore the now famous *Hungama* costume, which is a non-flattering printed blue kurti with embroidered bell-bottom denim, her first reaction was, "Oh God!





I am back in Himachal. This is how my parents sent me to school!" And that formed the crux of Rani's deglamourised wardrobe.

For the first stage of Rani's journey Sharma and Nath bought textiles from tiny gullies of Chandni Chowk, denim fabric from the popular Mohan Singh Palace and footwear from the illustrious Balli-Maran — all in Delhi. The two then dyed, embroidered and tailored-to-fit silhouettes or precisely not-to-fit Ranaut. The transition wardrobe made the designer-duo get flirty, willowy fabrics painted and printed, use provincial lace and crochet to enhance simplicity and add femininity of the evolved Queen.

Apart from the Rani-to-Queen costume designing, the young stylists say, "It was a dream to design for Vijaylakshmi (played by Lisa Haydon), which was a complete contrast to Rani's appearance. Her opening scene where Vijay is dressed in fuchsia boy shorts and white muslin shirt established her free spirit. And creating distinctly diverse styles for the four boys of different nationalities and life experiences was a challenge too. But at the end, we as designers have a big responsibility to be truthful to the characters we style."

## SHIBANI DANDEKAR

A TV anchor and model-turnedactor, Shibani Dandekar born to Marathi parents grew up in Australia with two siblings. After making a mark as a host in American television shows, Dandekar soon formed a music band called D-Major with her two sisters and shifted base to India. Along with her career in music, she took over the Indian television industry as a popular TV host. Dandekar made her presence felt as the hot anchor on the Indian Premier League. She later tested her dancing skills and participated in a reality dance show Jhalak Dhikla Jaa (Season 5) and became a household name in no time. The multi-talented girl has recently featured in a Mikey McCleary music album.