

# Pooja Batra brings Hollywood to B-town

## To feature in an NBC TV series too

**Roshmila Bhattacharya**

roshmila.bhattacharya@hindustantimes.com

**T**She was instrumental in getting Sylvster Stallone and Denise Richards on the credits of Sajid Nadidwala's Kambakkht Ishq. And had things worked out, she would have got an Indian actor, whom she doesn't want to name, a super Hollywood launch in a \$30 million movie to be directed by Rob Cohen. Pooja Batra's company, Glow Bell Inc. is now helping LA Casting, a full service casting company, set up shop in India.

### Abroad spectrum

Batra who is married to surgeon Dr Sonu Ahluwalia and settled in Los Angeles, will be spearheading the India operations as LA Casting looks to unearth Indian talent and give Bollywood professionals a platform to get one step closer to Hollywood and vice versa. "There have been a couple of enquires for Hollywood actors for a reality show but it's too early to divulge any details," she says.

The actress who was last seen as Noor Jehan Akbar Khan's 2005 Mughal dream, Taj Mahal—An Eternal Love story, doesn't have any "worthwhile" Bollywood projects to report on. "I was offered Rakesh Omprakash Mehra's Dilli 6 but the dates didn't work out," she says, adding that she's not interested in doing Indian TV but could be seen in an NBC TV series that may unveil this Fall.

Outsourced is about an

American, Todd, played by Ben Rappaport, who is forced to move halfway across the world to oversee a call centre in India after his Chicago office, that sells novelty items, decides to downsize.

Directed by Ken Kwapis of The Office fame, the show features a group of Indian actors working in American, that includes Cheena, Sacha Dhawan, Rizwan Manji, Rebecca Hazlewood, Anisha Nagarajan and Pooja Batra. Batra is hoping for a meaty role now that the pilot has got the green light.

The actress says

that post Slumdog Millionaire's Oscar euphoria, middle America has suddenly woken up to Indian culture and actors. "Anil Kapoor, my co-star in Virasat, is a hit on the TV series, 24. I've seen all the episodes and everywhere I go, I hear people sighing over what a good actor he is and what a

looker too," she says. "Irrfan Khan is in New York shooting for the third season of the HBO series, In Treatment. And Dileep Rao has made an impression in Avatar and Inception. I feel proud to be an Indian."

**Pooja Batra**

Anil Kapoor is a hit on the TV series, 24. Everywhere I go, I hear people sighing over what a good actor he is and what a looker too.

—Pooja Batra

