

ONE-TO-ONE
'I believe in destiny'

Actress Akshaya Shetty talks to us about her journey in the industry and what made her leave a corporate job and take up acting

■ **What made you shift from a corporate career to acting?**

Acting is my passion, so I left my job in 2017 and decided to follow my passion. Following my passion stopped me from sinking into depression.

■ **What struggles did you face as a newbie?**

From the corporate world to the entertainment industry, it was not a smooth journey. It was like starting from scratch. It took 10 months to find the right contacts.

■ **Which characters have made an impact on your career?**

I loved the show *Mann Kee Awaaz Pratigya* which is written by Vishal Watwani, who is also the writer-producer of *Hello Jee*. The era when bahus were crying over spilled coffee, *Pratigya* was a story of a woman who fought for her rights. Her attitude towards life was very inspiring!

■ **People in the industry say that luck matters. Your comment?**

I believe in luck and destiny. My first acting project was a short film, *Hifaazat*, which I got because of my co-star, who recommended me to the director. She noticed me sitting in an audition room waiting for my turn and asked if I would do a short film.

■ **What changes would you like to see in the industry?**

Upmarket, girl next door, fair skin, young—these are the requirements of the industry. Why can't a girl who is 30+ play a lead role or a love interest? TV still has a long way to go when it comes to casting a dark-skinned girl.

■ **What advice would you like to give to people who want to become actors?**

I must say I am not the right one to advise anyone as I am still exploring it. Every day brings a new lesson. Never take any opportunity for granted.

■ **What kind of films would you like to do?**

I want to do women-centric and message-oriented films.

GURNAAZ KAUR

Ultimate grey and illuminating have been declared as the Pantone colour (s) of 2021. It is the second time in 22 years that Pantone has selected two shades in the same year. It describes the two colours as independent but complementary, representing the theme of unity and mutual support.

The scheme of colours sounds good but what is the importance of this annual announcement and does it have any bearing on the vast world of interior or fashion design? "A standardised palette of hues, the nomination and selection of Pantone colours set the tone for the upcoming trends in the realm of design, while also shedding light on the previous year's demeanour. The narrowing down of these hue choices emphasises integrating them in a plethora of ways into spaces via materials, pops of colours, textures and objects," say Disha Bhavsar and Shivani Ajmera, interior designers who run Quirk Studio.

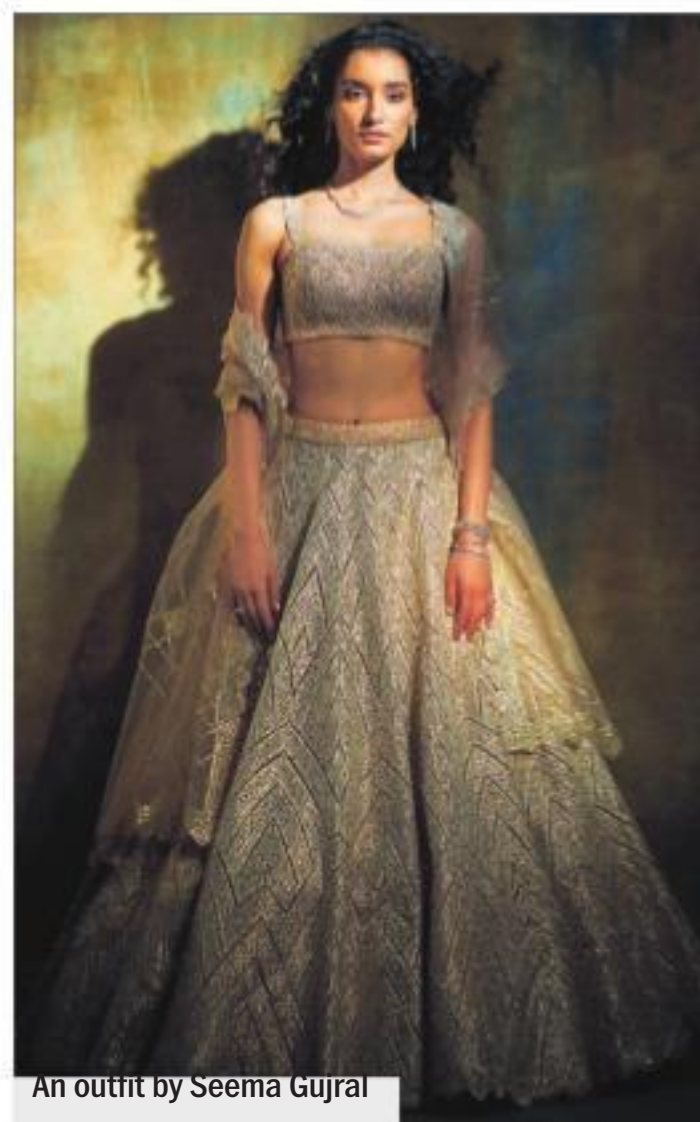
A derivation of nature, this colour trend every year has a huge meaning for interior designing. Interior designer Natasha Aggarwal explains, "The Pantone colour selection is reflective of when sunshine falls upon rocks. It is a reminder to make our choices more sustainable and responsible. Natural stones and textures bring in elements from the environment into the living space, which is a dire need in today's time. Yellow is not just attention-grabbing but also creates a canvas for accessorisation. Likewise, grey is an extremely versatile colour, thus it often finds a way into most trends."

As an architect, Shobhit Kumar looks at the Pantone system as the standard language for colour communication between designers, manufacturers, retailers and customers.

"The Pantone colour of the year is a trendsetter in many

Shades of hope

Here's how to use ultimate grey and illuminating yellow, the Pantone colours of 2021



An outfit by Seema Gujral



Natasha Aggarwal



Rajesh Bhandari



Disha Bhavsar and Shivani

EXPERT SPEAK

- Ultimate grey and illuminating do not have to be used in equal proportions.
- Light grey is always a great alternative to white for those looking to create a peaceful and tranquil environment.
- Yellow is an energising colour, and it is recommended that it be used as an overall hue or an accent colour in areas meant for play or where groups of people gather, like

- a kitchen or living room.
- Juxtaposing illuminating with ultimate grey in table liners, sheeting and home accessories, including pillows and table-tops, infuses vitality.
- Painting a front door in bright yellow illuminating conveys a warm and welcoming message when supported by solid and dependable ultimate grey in the exterior finishes.



—Shobhit Kumar

different markets. The array of products and colour combination palettes offered by Pantone all revolve around the particular colour and many designers and product brands dive in to follow the trend and become part of the community. It gets a lot of media attention as well, keeping the craze alive for the whole year," he says.

Fashion is a world of its own and while it may occasionally reflect on the Pantone colour, there are other factors to keep in mind while preparing a collection. Couturier Seema Gujral says, "Our colour scheme and ensembles are created keeping our collection in mind." She says there are themes to follow and it cannot be based on just one shade. At the same time, those who like to be in sync with the Pantone colour, Seema says, "They can add the shade by using trending elements like double dupat-

tas and embroidered belts, some jewellery and other accessories, which bring the modern element to essentially traditional Indian festive wear using the Pantone colour of the year." When it comes to incorporation of grey and yellow into interiors, Rajesh Bhandari, a marble expert, suggests, "Using grey stones to generate backdrops or highlight walls is a great way to incorporate the colour without

dampening the environment of the space. Yellows can be amalgamated with interiors through smaller elements like sculptures or art pieces as well as through larger highlight walls. Covering up unwanted elements such as columns can be enabled with subdued grey stones in order to make them inconspicuous or in yellows to create focal zones for artwork." These tones can be around you beyond wall paints, like

Natasha opines, "Pairing grey elements with a wooden finish or natural materials can create a warm and cosy environment. Yellow on the other hand is a great way to add an accent wall or detail to a space. As it draws in more light and warmth into the space, yellow can also be incorporated into spaces through textural additions by means of upholstery and accessories. Yellow and grey can add a focal area to space."



The Year Ahead
MADAN GUPTA

If your birthday is on FEBRUARY 17

Number 17 stands for confidence. However, it also makes you a complicated individual. The transit of Jupiter in April will affect you in many ways. It will be better for you to start any new venture only after April. Do not take a decision when it comes to your love life. This year will continue to be influential in the education sector. People pursuing higher education will do better. Work hard with honesty and dedication without worrying about the results.

Towards the end of the year, avoid taking any decision to bring about drastic changes in work place or business. The period after July will be good for building up new contacts. Avoid taking too many risks.

Positive colours: Black & violet

Select days: Sunday & Tuesday

Favourable numbers: 1, 4 & 9

Gems recommended: Blue sapphire & diamond

Charity on Birthday: Donate green fodder.



You share your birthday with Paris Whitney Hilton (February 17, 1981), who is an American media personality, businesswoman, socialite, model, singer, actress, and DJ. She is a great-granddaughter of Conrad Hilton, the founder of Hilton Hotels. Hilton began her modeling career as a teenager.

ChatterBox

Mukul Chadda and Rasika Dugal spread message of food conservation

Food for thought

Where millions of people lose their lives because of hunger, one third of the food produced globally is wasted. Real-life couple Mukul Chadda and Rasika Dugal have teamed up for a short movie called *Zero Hunger*. It has a strong message of food conservation.

The movie is written and directed by Mukul's 14-year-old nephew Neel Menon. It was initially made for a school project dealing with the United Nations' sustain-



able development goal of zero hunger.

Mukul and Rasika jointly say, "It was simple, quirky and powerful. We were very impressed with his direc-

tions, and what he wanted from every shot."

The movie has been released by The Robin Hood Army, a zero-funds volunteer organization that works to get

surplus food from restaurants and communities to serve the less fortunate, for their video campaign on food conservation with the message #SpreadLoveShareFood.



SUPRIYA PILGAONKAR

Up close & personal

Prince Harry and Meghan Markle recently announced that they are expecting their second child. Now, as per CBS' latest announcement, the couple will be interviewed by Oprah Winfrey. The interview is scheduled to air on March 7. Winfrey will first speak with Markle about stepping into the royal life, marriage, motherhood, her philanthropic work and how she handles life under the public eye.

The two will then be joined by Prince Harry to discuss their move to the US and future goals. Meanwhile, Markle and Prince Harry are now based in Los Angeles after declaring their independence from the royal family in 2020. The couple reportedly landed a multi-year deal with Netflix in September, which will allow

Oprah to interview Prince Harry and Meghan Markle

them to develop documentaries, feature films, scripted television shows and children's series.



Make way for Ishara - Zindagi Ka Nazara

A new Hindi entertainment channel *Ishara - Zindagi Ka Nazara* is all set to be launched on March 1. Along with the announcement, the channel also introduced its two new shows - *Janani* and *Humkadam*.

Rooted in culture but told from a modern perspective, *Janani* will see veteran actor Supriya Pilgaonkar essay the lead role, while *Humkadam* will have Gurdeep

Kohli and Bhumika Gurang play the central characters.

While sharing her experience, Supriya says, "For me, it is very important to connect with the story to be able to portray it. The character of Savita has many layers to her and as the story unfolds, we learn so much about her personality. When I was approached for this show, I was instantly attracted simply by the name *Janani*."

Meanwhile, Gurdeep, who will be seen in *Humkadam*, says, "There has been a stereotypical way saas-bahu stories have been told on television and *Ishara* is breaking out of this with *Humkadam*. It is a story of two women who learn to stand by each other in their toughest time and realise that they can be each other's strength. Personally, it has been an enriching experience for me."