



**T**he grandeur in Manish Malhotra's bespoke ensembles is often as larger than life as some of the Hindi films that he designs for. That's because movies have influenced him since childhood, says the acclaimed designer, who has styled a range of Bollywood's screen divas over the years.

From Kajol, Karisma Kapoor, Rani Mukerji to Aishwarya Rai, Preity Zinta and Kareena Kapoor – Malhotra's Midas touch has worked its magic on several names in tinsel town. He continues to design for films and his "design philosophy" itself is driven by the creativity of the cinematic world.

"Movies have been an influencer since childhood. I continue to be in awe of movies. The perfection of the 1960s and 1970s colours is what I grew up with and that reflects a lot in my design philosophy," Malhotra told IANS in an interview in New Delhi.

His romance with Bollywood started when he first served as a costume designer for actress Juhi Chawla in the 1989-released film *Swarg*. Later, his work for Urmila Matondkar's look in the 1995 film

*Rangela* won him his first Filmfare award.

The designer says he "looked at costume designing like no other designers looked at that time" and that's how he got introduced to people who became his "closest friends".

"I have a more than 24-year-long relationship with Bollywood and movies. I live and breathe films. My closest friends belong to this industry and are always around to support my work," said Malhotra, who is known to attract the crème de la crème of Bollywood at his shows.

From designing for some of the style goddesses in the past to dressing up the current crop of Hindi filmdom's leading ladies including Deepika Padukone, Sonam Kapoor and Alia Bhatt – he is a hit all the way. Now he's also up for designing for a period film.

"People associate me with modern India due to the kind of work I have done in the past. If I ever get a chance to do a period film, I would love to explore that world," said the designer, who is now ready to showcase his new collection at the grand finale show of Shree Raj Mahal Jewellers India

Couture Week 2014, starting in New Delhi on July 15.

Sharing his thoughts about his show, Malhotra said: "Finale is about celebrating fashion, grandeur and craftsmanship. It's not just about creating a collection but also about creating an experience like never before. It's about creating an everlasting impact."

But glamour is not all that Manish Malhotra is about.

He does his bit to promote the crafts and traditions of the country by creating collections using Kashmiri, Phulkari and Chikankari embroidery.

He says, "Kashmiri thread work, zari and tilla work have now become a vital element of my signature work."

"As a label and a designer, I take a keen interest in workmanship and hence my clients get exclusive work crafted by artisans from all

around India in my designs. With my couture collection 2014-15, I am trying to bridge the gap between the old world and the new world by preserving my signature craftsmanship with a timeless touch and a dash of modernity," said the designer, who has collaborated with real estate group Logix for his show. – IANS