

= Kalki Koechlin =

Kalki Koechlin (/ ʔkʔliʔkeʔklʔʔ / ; born 10 January 1984) is an Indian actress and screenwriter of French ethnicity , who predominantly works in Bollywood . Apart from acting in films , she is also a regular presence in theatre productions in India . Koechlin is the recipient of a National Film Award , a Filmfare Award and two Screen Awards .

Drawn to theatre at a young age , Koechlin studied drama and theatre at University of London , and worked simultaneously with a local theatre company . After returning to India , she made her screen debut in the romantic drama Dev.D in 2009 , and her performance as Chandramukhi earned her the Filmfare Award for Best Supporting Actress . She then starred in the comedy @-@ dramas Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara (2011) and Yeh Jawaani Hai Deewani (2013) . These were top @-@ grossing Bollywood productions , and both earned her Best Supporting Actress nominations at the Filmfare Awards . Koechlin co @-@ wrote the screenplay for the crime thriller That Girl in Yellow Boots (2011) , in which she also played the lead role . She won the National Film Award ? Special Jury Award , among other accolades , for her role as a young , disabled girl in Shonali Bose 's coming @-@ of @-@ age drama Margarita with a Straw (2014) .

Koechlin has also garnered critical acclaim for her performances in the crime thriller Shaitan (2011) , the political drama Shanghai (2012) , and the comedy @-@ drama Waiting (2015) . She appeared in Freedom Matters (2016) , a documentary aimed at spreading awareness on human trafficking , alongside Kailash Satyarthi . Koechlin has also used YouTube as a platform or forum for issues that she advocates for , appearing in videos including , AIB 's It 's Your Fault , Culture Machine 's Printing Machine and Y @-@ Films 's web @-@ series entitled Man 's World .

Along with her film career , Koechlin has written , produced , and acted in several stage plays in India . In 2009 she won The MetroPlus Playwright Award for the play Skeleton Woman . She co @-@ wrote Colour Blind (2014) , which was presented at the Sir Mutha Venkata Subba Rao Hall in Chennai , and made her directorial debut on stage with the tragicomedy Living Room (2015) . Koechlin is also an activist and promotes various causes ranging from health and education to women 's empowerment and gender equality . Koechlin was married to filmmaker Anurag Kashyap from 2011 to 2015 .

= = Early life and background = =

Kalki Koechlin was born in Pondicherry , India , on 10 January 1984 to French parents , Joel Koechlin and Françoise Armandie , who came to India from Angers , France . She is a descendant of Maurice Koechlin , a French structural engineer , who played an important role in the design and construction of the Eiffel Tower . Koechlin 's parents are devotees of Sri Aurobindo . The family later settled in Kallatty , a village near Ooty in Tamil Nadu , where Koechlin 's father established a business designing hang @-@ gliders and ultralight aircraft .

Koechlin was brought up in a strict environment in Ooty where she spoke English , Tamil , and French . Her parents divorced when she was fifteen ; her father moved to Bangalore and remarried , while Koechlin continued living with her mother . She has described the time that she spent at Kalatty , between the ages of 5 and 8 , before her parent 's divorce as her " happiest " . Koechlin has a maternal half @-@ brother from her mother 's preceding marriage , and a paternal half @-@ brother from her father 's subsequent marriage .

Koechlin studied at Hebron School , a boarding school in Ooty , where she was involved in acting and writing . She has admitted to being shy and quiet as a child . Koechlin aspired to study psychiatry and become a criminal psychologist . After completing her schooling at the age of 18 , she moved to London and studied drama and theatre at Goldsmiths , University of London . There , she worked for two years with the theatre company Theatre of Relativity , writing The Rise of the Wild Hunt and performing in plays such as David Hare 's The Blue Room and Marivaux 's The Dispute . She worked as a waitress on weekends .

After completing her studies , Koechlin moved back to India and lived with her maternal half @-@ brother in Bangalore . Unable to find work there , she moved to Mumbai , where she worked with

theatre directors and with Atul Kumar and Ajay Krishnan , the founders of a Mumbai @-@ based theatre company called " The Company Theatre " . They were looking for actors for a theatrical festival , Contacting the World , to be held in Liverpool .

= = Film career = =

= = Debut and further roles (2009 ? 12) = =

After moving to Mumbai , Koechlin auditioned for Anurag Kashyap 's Dev.D (2009) , a modern take on Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay 's 1917 Bengali novel Devdas . In the film , Koechlin plays the role of Leni , a young girl who turns to prostitution after a leaked sex tape scandal . Her character was based on Chandramukhi , a pivotal character in the novel , a prostitute who fell in love with the titular character . Kashyap initially rejected Koechlin as she was not Indian , and did not match his visualisation of the character . But he changed his mind , and offered her the role after seeing her audition tape . The film met with generally positive reviews and was a box office success . Raja Sen of Rediff.com called it a " fantastic visual ride " , placing it second on his list of the best movies of 2009 . Koechlin garnered praise for her performance . Shubhra Gupta of The Indian Express described her as " astonishingly apt " and called her journey in the film " riveting " . Koechlin went on to win the Filmfare Award for Best Supporting Actress .

In 2010 , Koechlin played a supporting role in the black comedy The Film Emotional Atyachar , co @-@ starring Ranvir Shorey , Mohit Ahlawat , Abhimanyu Singh , Vinay Pathak , and Ravi Kishan . Her performance in the film as Sophie , a manipulative woman who is abducted by two corrupt policemen , garnered mixed reviews from critics . Komal Nahta of Koimoi thought Koechlin 's performance in the film " average " , while Blessy Chettiar of Daily News and Analysis felt that she was " underused " .

Koechlin had four releases in 2011 . The first was Bejoy Nambiar 's Shaitan , a crime @-@ thriller with an ensemble cast that included Koechlin , Rajeev Khandelwal , Gulshan Devaiya , Shiv Pandit , Neil Bhoopalam , and Kirti Kulhari . The film received positive reviews from critics and Koechlin was nominated for the Best Actress Award at the Star Screen Awards . She then starred in Zoya Akhtar 's coming @-@ of @-@ age comedy Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara . In an interview with NDTV , Akhtar expressed her wish to work with Koechlin after seeing her in Dev.D and the then @-@ unreleased That Girl in Yellow Boots . Koechlin played the supporting role of Natasha , a South Bombay girl who works as an interior designer . In an interview with Hindustan Times Koechlin revealed that she was keen to do the film , because after working in films like Dev.D and Shaitan , she feared being typecast in dark roles such as prostitutes , troubled teenagers , and misfits . Koechlin took diction classes to improve her Hindi for the film . The film was a box @-@ office success and grossed ? 1 @-@ 53 billion (US \$ 23 million) worldwide , becoming , at the time , the ninth highest @-@ grossing Bollywood film in history . Koechlin 's performance was well received by critics . Gaurav Malani of The Times of India deemed her " excellent " , and Raja Sen in his review for Rediff.com highlighted her and Roshan and called them " histrionically strong enough to manage varied roles " . She received her second Filmfare Award nomination for Best Supporting Actress for her role .

Later in 2011 , Koechlin made her debut as a screenwriter with Anurag Kashyap 's thriller That Girl in Yellow Boots , which she co @-@ wrote with Kashyap . Koechlin said that Kashyap was looking for a woman 's perspective for the story , and so he asked her to write the script . Co @-@ starring with Naseeruddin Shah , Koechlin played Ruth , a British woman , a role partially based on her own experience in India . Shot in thirteen days , the film was screened at the 2010 Toronto International Film Festival and the 67th Venice International Film Festival . It opened to critical acclaim , and Koechlin was widely praised for her performance . Giving the film three @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half stars out of four , Roger Ebert wrote that Koechlin " creates a memorable woman who is sad and old beyond her years " . Sukanya Verma of Rediff.com described Koechlin as " unrestrained and uncorrupted " . Saibal Chatterjee of NDTV also lauded the film and deemed her performance as " absolute perfection " . Koechlin 's final release of the year was the Sanjay Leela Bhansali @-@

produced comedy *My Friend Pinto*. She played the role of a naïve, aspiring dancer in the film. Mrigank Dhaniwala of *Koimoi* criticised the film's "scattered screenplay", but praised Koechlin for her performance.

In 2012, Koechlin was cast opposite Emraan Hashmi and Abhay Deol (her second collaboration with Deol) for the political @-@ thriller *Shanghai*. The film, directed by Dibakar Banerjee, was based on the Greek writer Vassilis Vassilikos's 1967 novel *Z*, and was premiered at the 2012 Toronto Film Festival. Koechlin played a political activist. The film received positive reviews from critics, and had an average run at the box office. Koechlin garnered a mixed response for her performance in the film. While Russell Edwards noted the "biting edge" she brought to the role, Aniruddha Guha thought of her as the "weakest link" in the film.

= = = Critical acclaim (2013 ? present) = = =

In 2013, Koechlin starred in the supernatural thriller *Ek Thi Daayan*. The film was based on *Mobius Trips*, a short story written by Mukul Sharma, the father of Konkona Sen Sharma, who also starred in the film. Koechlin's role was that of Lisa Dutt, a Canada @-@ based music teacher who is suspected of practising witchcraft. For her role in the film, Koechlin learned to play the guitar, and lip synced the track "Yaaram", a first. On its release, the film received mixed to positive reviews from critics and had average box @-@ office earnings. Koechlin received positive reviews for her performance in the film. In her review, Anupama Chopra remarked that Koechlin was, "an interesting actor but the film doesn't know what to do with her".

Koechlin then went on to star in *Yeh Jawaani Hai Deewani*, a romantic comedy co @-@ starring Deepika Padukone and Ranbir Kapoor. She played the role of tomboy, Aditi Mehra. Koechlin described her time on the film sets as "fun", and developed a close friendship with Padukone. The film emerged as one of the highest @-@ grossing Bollywood films with earnings of ? 3 @. @ 02 billion (US \$ 45 million). Koechlin was lauded for her performance and comic timing. Rajeev Masand, writing for CNN @-@ News18, deemed the cast terrific, saying that: "Koechlin invests heart and spunkiness to the part". She earned her third Filmfare Best Supporting Actress nomination.

Later in 2013, Koechlin appeared in a video entitled *It's Your Fault*, along with VJ Juhi Pandey. Dealing with the issue of sexual assaults on women, the video mocks the mindset that blames women for provoking rapes. The video was created by All India Bakchod, and was released on their YouTube channel. The video went viral, with over 150 @, @ 000 views in two days. Koechlin's sole release in 2014 was Saif Ali Khan's *Happy Ending*, where she plays a comic role of a girl obsessed with Khan's character. She credited her performance in *Yeh Jawani Hai Deewani* for landing her the role. She said that people noticed her comic timing in the film, and that worked in her favour. The film opened to mixed reviews and was a box @-@ office failure. Despite the film's mixed reception Koechlin garnered praise for her performance. Saurabh Dwivedi of *India Today* wrote that "Koechlin steals the show with her perfect portrayal of a nagging girlfriend", and Rohit Vats of *Hindustan Times* noted that, although her character in the film felt a bit forced, she delivered a "charming" performance.

Koechlin then starred in Shonali Bose's drama *Margarita with a Straw*, playing Laila, a young woman with cerebral palsy who leaves her home in India to study in New York, unexpectedly falls in love, and embarks on a journey of self @-@ discovery. Her character was inspired by Malini Chib, Bose's cousin. In an interview with the *Times of India*, Koechlin acknowledged that the role was the most challenging of her film career, and she took six months off her filming schedule to prepare for it. She underwent a six @-@ week training workshop with actor Adil Hussain. The workshop aimed at making her "body language seem natural", while also focusing on the speech pattern of patients with cerebral palsy. She spent considerable time with Chib and her physiotherapist and speech therapist. She also attended a month @-@ long workshop in Delhi, where she worked on the movement of each body part separately. Although the film covers aspects of physical disability, Koechlin dubbed it "a romcom with some hurdles". The film premiered at the 2014 Toronto International Film Festival, and was also screened at Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival, BFI

London Film Festival , 19th Busan International Film Festival , and the Santa Barbara International Film Festival . Margarita with a Straw received generally positive reviews . Koechlin garnered universal acclaim for her portrayal of a disabled person , with Saibal Chatterjee of NDTV calling her " absolutely brilliant " and her performance " virtuoso " , and Leslie Felperin of The Hollywood Reporter wrote that Koechlin gave : " a bravura performance in both physical and emotional terms " . Deepanjana Pal , in her review for Firstpost , wrote : " [Koechlin] has done a good job of miming the physicality ... but what is truly remarkable is the lack of artifice in her expressions " . John Beifuss , writing for the The Commercial Appeal , gave Koechlin the highest praise and said that she : " delivers the type of performance that in a major movie garners Oscar notice like Eddie Redmayne as Stephen Hawking in The Theory of Everything but she 's never a showoff " . Koechlin won The Best Actress Award at The Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival , Screen Award for Best Actress (Jury) , and garnered a nomination for the Best Actress Award at the Asian Film Awards . She then went on to win the Jury Award at the 63rd National Film Awards .

In 2015 , Koechlin appeared alongside Parineeti Chopra , Richa Chadda , and Bhumi Pednekar in Y @-@ Films 's mini web @-@ series Man 's World , a satire on gender roles . The series was released on YouTube . She then starred in Anu Menon 's Waiting , an independent film about the relationship between two people who befriend each other in a hospital , while nursing their respective comatose spouses . The film had its world premiere at the Dubai International Film Festival (DIFF) in December 2015 , and had its theatrical release in India on 27 May 2016 . The film and her performance received positive critical reviews . Sukanya Verma of Rediff.com called the film " absolutely riveting " , and also lauded Koechlin saying , " There ? s something stunningly unhindered about Kalki and her aura . She uses this quality in the most mesmeric fashion to create a woman we sympathise with and wish well for " . Kunal Guha in his review for the Mumbai Mirror remarked " this film belongs to Kalki , who impresses by managing to wordlessly convey her character 's state of mind in every scene " .

In January 2016 , Koechlin appeared in a video called Printing Machine that talked about the approach of media and society towards crimes against women . The five @-@ minute video was released on YouTube and features a poem penned and recited by Koechlin . The video was well received by critics and viewers . She also received a letter of appreciation from Melinda Gates , co @-@ founder of Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation , for her contribution to bringing the attention to women issues .

= = = Upcoming projects = = =

As of March 2016 , Koechlin has several upcoming projects . She will feature , alongside Ali Fazal and Gulshan Devaiah , in Soni Razdan 's Love Affair , a fictionalised version of the 1959 Nanavati murder case . Koechlin also signed up for Konkona Sen Sharma 's directorial debut , A Death in the Gunj , in which she will play a Kolkata @-@ based Anglo @-@ Indian woman . She attended an acting workshop conducted by the casting director , Atul Mongia , and also learnt an Anglo @-@ Indian accent for her role . Filming for the production completed in March 2016 after a six @-@ week shoot . Koechlin will also feature in director Howard Rosemeyer 's Jia aur Jia , alongside Richa Chadda . Koechlin and Chadda play strangers of the name same who embark on a road trip together Koechlin is also filming for Pakistani director Sabiha Sumar on a documentary entitled Azmaish ? Trials of Life , for which she visited Karachi , Lahore and Skardu to observe the Pakistani culture of the provinces Sindh , Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa . She has also committed to star in the Shahnawaz NK 's bilingual film CandyFlip opposite Prakash Raj and Gulshan Devaiah .

= = Stage career = =

Koechlin has been associated with theatre from a young age . As a child , she attended theatre workshops in Pondicherry . Her mother was adamant that she complete her studies before venturing into an acting career , sending her to London to study drama and theatre . During her years in the film industry , Koechlin has continued to participate in theatrical productions . She has written ,

produced , and acted in several stage plays in India . In her interview she said , " Theater is really an actor 's playground " , and continued : " There 's nothing like performing for a live audience " . Koechlin opened her own theater company , Little Productions in June 2015 .

Koechlin won The Hindu 's 2009 The MetroPlus Playwright Award along with Prashant Prakash for the play Skeleton Woman which they co @-@ wrote , directed by Nayantara Kotian . The play is a modern adaptation of an Inuit folk tale about a writer ; Koechlin played the protagonist 's wife . It premiered at the Prithvi Theatre , Mumbai . Asmit Pathare of Mumbai Theatre Guide in his review wrote : " The actors being the playwrights themselves , seemed to know what they were doing " . She also co @-@ wrote Colour Blind , a play that attempts to rediscover different aspects of the personality of Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore through his life and writings . In dual roles , Koechlin plays the Argentine writer and intellectual Victoria Ocampo (a close associate of Tagore) , and a young woman who is writing a research paper on him . Aditi Sharma of Mumbai Theatre Guide calling Koechlin the " star of the play " noted that she " really put in an effort to build her character and it shows " .

Koechlin also worked in Rajat Kapoor 's What 's Done , Is Done , an adaptation of Shakespeare 's tragedy Macbeth . She played Lady Macbeth and doubled up as one of the witches for the play . The first show of the play was staged on 5 June 2016 in Mumbai . Koechlin 's other stage appearances include Atul Kumar 's Trivial Disasters , The Real Inspector Hound , Ajay Krishnan 's Hair , where she plays Rapunzel , and Kapoor 's Hamlet , The Clown Prince . In 2015 , she made her directorial debut on stage with a play entitled Living Room . Development of the play began in 2014 , when Koechlin wrote a four page conversation between Death and an old woman who is in a strange surreal space , about to die but unwilling to exit the world . She further worked on the script of the play in 2015 . In a 2016 interview with Mumbai Mirror she said , " Last year , when I was unemployed for six months , I started fleshing out the story . It turned into a comedy on life and death " . The play was staged at the Ranga Shankara Hall , Bangalore , on 24 July 2015 .

= = Personal life and off @-@ screen work = =

Koechlin married film @-@ maker Anurag Kashyap in April 2011 , at her maternal home in Ooty . The two met while filming her debut film Dev.D. On 13 November 2013 , both Koechlin and Kashyap issued a joint statement addressing their separation . On 19 May 2015 , Kashyap and Koechlin filed for divorce at a Mumbai family court . Amidst all the news and speculation surrounding the separation , Koechlin revealed that she regretted being so transparent about her personal life , stating in 2012 that : " It just takes centre stage instead of your work " . Since her divorce , Koechlin has rarely mentioned her personal life in interviews .

After the separation Koechlin said in an interview with Daily News and Analysis : " [But] everyone has doubts , we 're all human . Even as an actor , you have days when you haven 't slept enough , you don 't feel like you 're good enough or pretty enough ... But ultimately , it 's all about attitude . You must live with a little abandon and not be self @-@ conscious . You ought to stop staring at yourself in the mirror , and just smile a little ! " .

Koechlin identifies herself as a feminist and is also involved with several humanitarian causes . She is vociferous on a variety of issues , including education for children in rural areas , women 's rights , gender equality , and gender pay inequality . She has also used YouTube as a platform or forum for issues that she advocates for . Koechlin actively participates in the P & G Shiksha campaign for educating children living in rural parts of India . Koechlin participated in the 2015 Mumbai Marathon , a charitable event that aimed to spread awareness about issues such as : education , health issues like cancer and AIDS , and senior citizen welfare . Koechlin was accompanied by Shonali Bose 's cousin Malini Chib . Koechlin spoke at a conference on child sexual abuse organised by actor Rahul Bose 's non @-@ governmental organisation HEAL . Koechlin also opened up about going through sexual abuse at the age of nine .

Koechlin wrote an article on gender pay inequality for the 22 August 2014 issue of Forbes India . She is vocal in her support for gender pay @-@ gap issue : " Equal pay won 't happen because there is a hero @-@ based industry . So we need to strive for scripts that empower women , make

women our heroes , too . " She recited a monologue entitled An Intense Piece about the Truths of Womanhood on International Women 's Day at the India Today Conclave . Koechlin was appointed by Vogue India as the ambassador for their Vogue Empower initiative to spread awareness of women 's safety and empowerment .

= = Media image = =

Koechlin has been acknowledged in the media for her unconventional roles in films and her straightforward personality . Reviewing her work in Printing Machine , film critic and journalist Subhash K. Jha deemed her the : " free @-@ thinking actress this industry [Bollywood] needs " . Megha Shah of the GQ called her " someone who can speak her mind , sound intelligent and also look stunning in a bikini " . Members of the media have subsequently labelled her as a role model for women across the country . Bhavya Sadhwani , describing her as " a real life heroine " , lauded her for : " voicing her opinions without an iota of inhibition " . The Week stated that with her powerful performances , and by voicing her opinions , she : " has always stayed ahead of her contemporaries in the industry " .

Following her portrayal of such characters as those in Dev.D , Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara , Shaitan , and Margarita With a Straw , Koechlin gained wider recognition and earned the tag of a " nonconformist " . Clarisse Loughrey of The Independent described her as : " a Bollywood pioneer thanks to her unconventional roles and outspoken public presence " . Don Groves of Forbes wrote that she has : " managed to subvert stereotypes by playing characters who are nothing like each other " . The columnist and film critic Vinayak Chakravorty cites Koechlin as one of the " new ' new wave ' actors " who has proved her easy screen presence in her short time in the film industry .

Koechlin is described as a style icon by the Indian media and has been dubbed as the " queen of experimental fashion " . Raedita Tandan of Filmfare deemed Koechlin 's fashion appeal as " effortless " and " un @-@ diva esque " . The slow @-@ process multimedia artist Riyas Komu felt that Koechlin 's persona was " inspiring " , and that she represented " a sense of eclecticism " . Koechlin has been a part of numerous fashion shows , including the Lakme Fashion Week , India International Jewellery Week , and Mijwan Fashion Show (Shabana Azmi 's annual fund raiser) . She also made a guest appearance at the Milan Fashion Week , one of the global " Big Four Fashion Weeks " .

Koechlin is particularly known in the Indian media and film industry for her dedication to her work . Atul Kumar , founder of The Company Theatre , and her co @-@ star in Hamlet , noted that : " [h] er commitment as an actor is relentless " . The director Shonali Bose , while filming Margarita With a Straw , said Koechlin was able to give perfect long takes for the film because of the : " intense hard work that she put into the preparation of her role " . Her former husband , Anurag Kashyap ? who directed her in three films ? believes that she : " has grown as an actor since Dev D. " . Rajat Kapoor , in whose Hamlet Koechlin performed as Ophelia , believes she is an actress who has the " sensitivity and understanding of filmmaking and theatre " .

Koechlin is a celebrity endorser and has been associated with several brands and services , including : Coca @-@ Cola , Olay , Vogue , Micromax , Titan , Grey Goose 's Style du jour , and AOC International . In an interview for Asian News International , Koechlin said that she : " believes that everyone , whether an actor or a model , should endorse a brand which matches their ideologies " . She was also the brand ambassador of the " Cinema For Care " section , aimed at creating awareness about disability issues at the All Lights India International Film Festival (ALIIFF) held in Thiruvananthapuram , Kerala in November 2015 .

= = Filmography = =

= = Awards and nominations = =