

SINGING FAIRY

Luck is truly shining on Shruti Haasan, the talented daughter of superstar Kamal Haasan. The girl makes her debut as music composer and actress this year. She narrates her fairytale to *Hi!*





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Shruti Haasan's her own person. Sure, she can't detach the genetic connection with south Indian superstar Kamal Haasan and mother Sarika, a National Award winning actress. Reams of tabloid print have been fanatically dedicated to her estranged relationship with her mother. But we are not going there. The young girl carries her lineage rather discreetly on her waif like shoulders. She's roughed it out like any aspiring artist and thoroughly enjoyed her gigs crooning at Mumbai's Hard Rock Café and Blue Frog with her rock band Extramentals. To shoot with *Hi!*, she flew in from Chennai, where she was recording and composing the score for *Unaipol Oruvan* (the Tamil remake of last year's super hit *A Wednesday*) starring her father.

It's an eventful year for the singer-composer, as she makes her silver screen debut with *Luck* opposite Imran Khan. The role isn't that of a typical pretty nymphet; Shruti had to perform daredevil stunts—cliff hanging, deep sea diving... She's ecstatic to have pulled through the fear factors in the film. Leading ladies in movies no longer dance around trees in wet saris, so being an actress wasn't tricky for this tomboy. "Cinema has always been a part of my house, but I'm also one of those people who can never do

one thing. But I wouldn't say I am a jack of all trades, master of none. I think there is one life and there is no point in being satisfied," she says.

For many years, Tamil's hot shot producers waited with big signing amount cheques to launch Shruti, but she dashed off to study music at a prestigious music school in LA for two years. "I'm passionate about art too. I doodle; I make my own comic strip. It's my way of dealing with stuff that is happening around me. I have grown up in a house which was so infused with art that it is not funny. My dad plays three instruments himself. My parents influence me to great music."

She's learnt Hindustani classical music for five years, her fingers move swiftly on the piano keys and drumming the tabla is therapeutic. The music of the legendary Ilayaraja or prodigy AR Rahman was a part of the Haasan household. And Shruti aims to strike a symphony, amalgamating the two different schools of music. "I love people who push their boundaries. Recently, I heard the soundtrack of *Dev D* and I fell in love. I think that is such a perfect example and amalgamation of what is considered commercial and great music. A lot of people are doing that today and I'm happy to be a part of these times. I would love to be a part of a movement

where people are doing different things, thinking out of the box. It could be a short film—it could be graphic media, artists into mixed media, fashion designers...I could go on and on."

The big break as *Unaipol Oruvan*'s music composer may have been a blessing due to the heavy weight Haasan name, but the 23-year-old prepared industriously to work with senior musicians. "There is no ego in music and anybody who has an ego is going down faster than he came up. The older musicians I've worked with are amazing and there is so much to learn from them."

"I'm a nomad at heart, so it is an exciting prospect to keep living out of a suitcase. I would say I'm free spirited, but I'm grounded in my values—I don't know if that makes sense. I have my own value system and I believe in it firmly. I believe in family and those basic traditions, but otherwise I like to walk off and do my own thing, so yes, that way I'm free spirited," she signs off.

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