

Many big actors turned down AndhaDhun: Sriram Raghavan



Ayushmann Khurrana

Chaya Unnikrishnan

Several well-known actors had turned down *AndhaDhun* before Ayushmann Khurrana came on board to play the visually-impaired pianist in the National Award-winning film. This was revealed by Sriram Raghavan during a chat at the Indian Film Festival of Melbourne where he won the Best Director Award. He said that while some actors didn't buy into his vision, others didn't see commercial merit in the movie.

"A lot of big actors said no to the film. They couldn't understand how the movie would pan out. At the time, we didn't have the complete script. And I was like, if they can't understand it now, then it's fine because they won't suit the role," the filmmaker said.

Sriram had various artistes in mind for the role, but Ayushmann's name never came up! Till the *Boolhaat* actor texted Sriram asking to audition for the part. When the *Boolhaat* director asked him if he could play the piano, the actor said that while he knew how to play the guitar, he would learn the keys for the film. Sriram says it was the enthusiasm that he was sold on. Once the film's casting was complete, he was convinced that he had found exactly what he the story demanded — an actor who was well-versed with musical instruments and could take



Sriram Raghavan

to piano easily and an actress (Tabu) who could take on Simi so effortlessly.

When quizzed about the shooting process and whether a dark film could be draining on the cast and crew, he said, "I remember the crazy journey all of us took. The film is good crazy and good mad. We experienced that first hand. We were literally living it, it was organic and it was a great journey."

The film not only went on to be a hit and got its actors acclaim but Ayushmann also won his first National Award for his performance in it.



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