

Introducing

SONA CHARAI POTRA
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BRIDE & PREJUDICE'S

AISHWARYA RAI

India's biggest star hits the U.S. as a dancing Jane Austen heroine

In India, Aishwarya Rai is the highest paid actress, the star of Coke ads and the subject of an estimated 17,000 worshipful Web sites. In the U.S.? She's about to find out. Rai makes her English-language debut in the new movie *Bride & Prejudice*, a retelling of the Jane Austen classic *Pride and Prej-*

udice in the style of India's Bollywood musicals. A former architecture student, Rai, 31, who lives with her parents in Mumbai, took up acting after winning the 1994 Miss World title. "I thought, 'I don't see myself in the Olympics. This is my one chance to represent India,'" she says of entering the

pageant. Though not married ("It will happen when it's meant to happen," she says), Rai has been linked with fellow Bollywood star Vivek Oberoi. But forget anything too steamy onscreen—in Bollywood tradition she's never even kissed a leading man. Claims Rai: "You don't really miss it." ●