

## " I WANT TO UNDERSTAND CINEMA"

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- Gayatri Pagare

Vishal Bharadwa's 'Kaminey' was an instant hit with the audience and so was the character of Sunil Bhope played by Amole Gupte. Here, Gupte shares his experiences about his character and 'Aseema' his production house, with Gayatri Pagare



**Director, scriptwriter and now an actor in Kaminey. How was your experience in Kaminey as Sunil Bhope?**

It was definitely a good experience and people also accepted me as an actor. I don't want to make a career out of it. But I want to examine my skills. Earlier, I used to act in theatre. I have acted in many dramas at Awatar theatre with the likes of Feroz Khan and Shutosh Govarikar.

**How did Vishal Bhardwaj approach you for this movie? What made you take up acting?**

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**How did Vishal Bhardwaj approach you for this movie? What made you take up acting?**

Vishal is my good friend. He did not show me the script, but yes he told me about the character and I found it convincing. I took two days to think and then I went ahead with my decision. After trying my hand at direction, I wanted to test my acting skills, and this was a good chance for me.

**Sunil Bhope was a political character and some thoughts of Bhope was close to the thoughts of MNS leader Raj Thackeray?**

I don't think that Bhope is a normal politician. While acting I did not think about my character to be like my other political leader. My role is as a politician and is no way related to Raj Thackeray.

**The censor board gave the film an 'A' certification. What is your opinion about it?**

First of all I don't know what is adult content? If there are heroines in bikinis and in short dresses that doesn't mean that it is a 'U' grade film. There is nothing like adult content in this film.

**If you will get another chance at acting, would you like to act again?**

Yes, definitely. But I don't want to repeat myself. I don't want to put myself in any specific category. I played Bhope once, so I definitely want to try another category in future. If I would get a good opportunity to play a different role, I will play. I don't want to get stuck to any particular category. Next time I will try something different.

**"Tare Zameen Par" was a different movie, appreciated by both the masses and classes. What was your inspiration for the movie?**

I don't think "Tare Zameen Par" was a different movie. It was a simple subject dealing with the relationship of a mother and her child. There was a movie like 'Beta' and many others which have touched on this subject. So, I don't think that was a different subject.

**So what made "Tare Zameen Par" a big hit? Or do you think the treatment of the movie was different?**

I think, not the subject nor the treatment made it different. It was presented in a simple way and that thing made it different than any other movie. It was presented as it is. We haven't added any drama and we tried to keep it as a simple story.

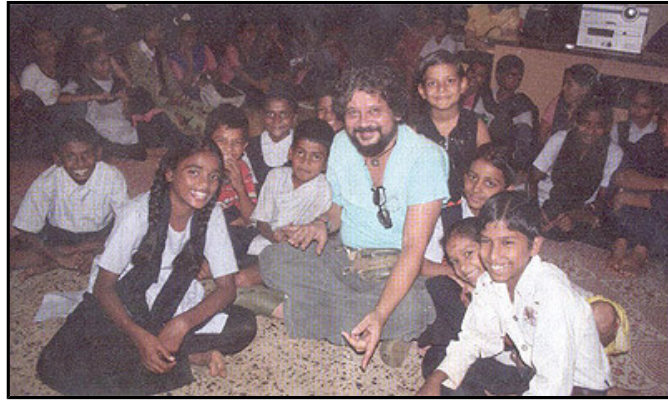
**Do you think the Indian film industry has to change?**

Yes, there are some movies which are good and now Indian cinema is also changing. But here directors only think about the commercial aspect. Proper artistic films are not happening any more.

**Are you working on any movie?**

Yes, I am working on two scripts to direct. But the name has not been decided yet. This is again a child-centred subject. I am very much comfortable with children and I want to bring their problems in front of society.





**You always spend time with children and you teach cinema as a subject to Aseema and Pali-Chimbi School. How did you come in touch with these two?**

Two and half years back I came to do a volunteers program at Aseema. I have written songs for them. When I spoke to the children there, I felt like visiting them again. I found these children have good understanding about cinema and so took the onus of teaching them more on the subject.

**These children have made one short film “Ansu Bane Moti”. Are you going to make more films with children?**

Yes of course, these children have 15 – 20 scripts ready. One by one we will start shooting them. Though I was around, it was the children who did the direction and even the camera handling. They understand how to do particular shots, which angle should be used to take a shot and so on. It was an enjoyable experience for me.

**How is your relationship with the children? Do they share their problems with you?**

Yes, these children come from very poor families. Some have an alcoholic father, some do not have a mother. Each have their own set of problems which they share with me. They opened up very well during the classes. I also get some ideas for my movies from these children. That's why I said this work I am doing is not any social work. I am a selfish person and I am doing this for my own good. I get to learn many things from these children.



**What else do you plan for the children? How do you manage finances for a children's movie?**

I want to make a book of these children's scripts. Aditi Roy suggested that I make this book on the scripts and put it in different bookstalls in the children's section. There is no question of finance, I have a handycam that we use to shoot a film. My wife is the best editor, she edits all these films.

**Have you got any offer from any other school?**

Yes, many schools. But it's not possible for me to take their classes and I am happy with these children. I take workshops for these children and if others want to learn they are welcome to my class.

**There are two parts of your classes – one for cinema and one for theatre? Who decides this?**

This is their decision. Sometimes I teach them together. There is no hard and fast rule for children that they have to stick to a particular class. They can change whenever they want to. A cinema student learns script writing and direction, while a theatre student learns acting.

**Would you like to make any contribution to Marathi cinema?**

Yes why not. There are good films in Marathi which are highly intellectual like Shwaas, Valu. Good literature like Shamachi Aai etc. I definitely want to do that kind of work in Marathi movies.

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