

# VIKRAM PHADNIS

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In conversation with Vikram Phadnis who has been in the industry for almost a decade as a designer before he turned director. His last movie 'Hrudayan-tar' received a good response and now he is back with his second directorial 'Smile Please'. During the chat, he tells us about 'Smile Please' being selected for Indian film Festival in Melbourne. Read on to know the journey of 'Smile Please'.



It is quite fascinating to see that you have been a designer for many years and of course your first movie 'Hrudayan-tar' did really good, and the second one is already garnering appreciation too. So what was that one thing that made you direct?

It was an organic decision, as you know I have been a costume designer for so many years and now I wanted to do something different like tell stories. I wanted to tell stories and direct after being in the industry for so long as a cos-



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tume designer. This was a natural progression because after you do a thing you don't want to do it again but then finally I directed both my films and there you have it.

Can you share with us your experience of directing a movie for second time now?

It was amazing because with my first movie 'Hrudayan-tar' I received such good response that I wanted to write and tell another story. When I finally wrote this movie I realised I need to write more emotional movies and so I wrote it the way I wanted to direct it. The experience was great because I had great actors, story, and great music in the film. I think film making is about telling stories and it is an en-

tire package of why people should enter the theatre.

How was it working with 'Mukta Barve' for the second time?

It was amazing because she is a great actress and she has proved it with 'Hrudayan-tar' and other cinemas. I wanted to work with somebody I'm comfortable with and she knows the craft. The film needed great actors as it was not an easy film to work on because it's not a comedy or romantic film and we needed people with depths. I think everybody who is on board has a lot of depth and soul.

How did you come on board with 'Smile Please'?

The story is an inspiration of what happened with my mother but it's not a biography but it was in my house so I wanted to do something that is true and I did not want to make a fictitious story. I wanted to tell the true story and that is why 'Smile please'. This movie is also selected for Indian film festival in Melbourne. So that is a great achievement because even before the release they acknowledged it from the trailer and synopsis of the movie that this movie should be shown across the world.

Do you look at box office numbers and do you follow it?

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Marathi cinema has evolved a lot over the past few years and how important is it according to you for a film maker to have a commercial aspect in the film?

It is very important because at the end of the day you are not making a video for home but you are making it so that it reaches maximum number of people but I believe commercial is not the reason why you should be making a film. I feel every director has an agenda but my agenda is to put out a beautiful story and in the process I also wanted