

Ghar Jamai

Produced by:
PRASAD SHAHABADI
Directed by:
ARUN BHATT

Ghar Jamai

Music:
ANAND-MILIND
Lyrics:
SAMEER

SCREEN

Fighting to win is a habit

FASCINATING feats of fighting the most fearful odds and winning is common in the family. The Shahabadis have been blessed (they firmly believe they are) with the power to overcome. They have been tried and tested and even tortured by the tormenting and tumultuous times but they have mastered the art of towering over all turmoil, triumphing and growing into examples for others less privileged to follow.

The torch was first lit by B.P. Shahabadi 30 many years ago. He was a man of many adventures, prepared to face any season, rough or fair. He was in very close touch with the happenings in the country which was just trying to emerge as a power among the powers of the world. He was in constant touch with some of the leaders who ruled and Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the first President of India was one of them. It was during one of their many talks that Shahabadi talked to Dr. Prasad about his film-making activities and Dr. Prasad showed interest in spite of all his other activities in various spheres of life - He was the first president of independent India after all. He asked Shahabadi why he didn't try his hand at making a film in Bhojpuri, his own language, which was spoken by so many and who could benefit because film was a medium which reached out to the maximum number of people and it could be used both as a medium of education and entertainment or education through entertainment, he believed. Shahabadi took him seriously and went all out and made the first ever Bhojpuri film in the country somewhere in 1962.

He played and burnt his fingers badly. The film, 'Ustad' with Vinod Khanna, Chunky Pandey, Jaya Prada, Kimi Kakkar, Asha Parekh and a whole lot of lesser stars bombed at the box-office like no one's business after all the obstacles he had overcome during the making. It shocked and shook him up for a while and it took him some time before he could put Nirmal Pictures back on the pedestal he had built with his father's blessings.

The adventure had to go on. He couldn't stop. There was no way out. He signed Mithun Chakrabarty at a time when Mithun ruled. He started the film with a known director but things just didn't work out. Then some time later he signed Arun Bhatt as his director, made some necessary changes and started 'Ghar Jamai' with Mithun, Varsha Uspalkar, Kader Khan, Shakti Kapoor, Prem Chopra, Vikram Gokhale and Anita Nagaria in key roles. The film which he describes as 'a social with a serious subject treated in a light hearted way' (better known as comedy) was started in January 1991 and he has already completed more than half the film which is quite a feat, he believes. He has worked out a tight schedule and it all goes well 'Ghar Jamai' will be ready for release sooner than was expected. 'We are all very excited about the film. We have all our resources set to face any odds. The only thing that can come in our way now is the human factor over which I have no command and noone has. I have a very understanding director in Arun Bhatt and a very good team to work with. I don't see any reason why we should not be through successfully', Rajkumar says.

He did not give up all the same. He tried out his son, Rajkumar Shahabadi. He loaded him with responsibilities and challenges and Rajkumar shouldered them with ease which was something that thrilled the father no end. He gradually shifted all the responsibilities to Rajkumar. And it was Rajkumar who saw the three-films through and saw them through very successfully. He gained the complete confidence of his father and was appointed the executive producer of Nirmal Pictures and the country somewhere in 1982.

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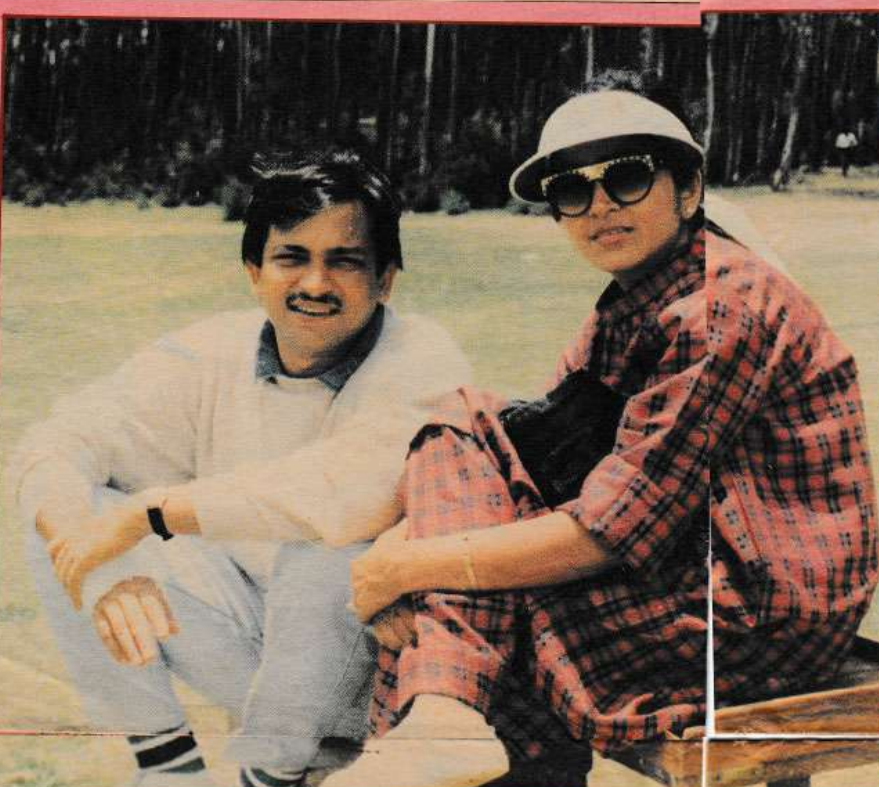
Talking about the Mithun factor he says he is not blind to the realities of Mithun's films, not doing well but he is sure Mithun is a social subject is sure to win. He rattles off names to prove his belief. 'Pyar Bhukta Nahin', 'Ghar Ek Mandir', 'Pyar Ka Mandir', 'Prem Pratigya' and even 'Pyar Ka Devta' and he is sure something like 'Jamai Raja' is what Mithun needs to walk out of the woods and 'Ghar Jamai' will give him all the scope to stage his fight back in fighting back and winning. It's a gift he is inherited with and wants to make the best of.

- Ali Peter John

The success of the film and the encouragement he received spurred him on and he decided to take 'film business' seriously. He started his own distribution company and within no time his company was one of the most

seriously. I learned the ropes very fast. Within no time I felt as if I knew the ins and outs of the working of this industry. I was ready to face anything anytime and my only ambition was to make Nirmal Pictures a banner which would be true to its name, clean in all its dealings, respected and reputed'. Rajkumar picked up all that he could during the making of 'Sasural', 'Tula' and 'Gangadham' and in the process even fell in love with the heroine of his film, Sadhana Singh, and married her. Today Sadhana is his right hand woman, his lieutenant with a responsible job. She is the production co-ordinator.

Rajkumar planned his next film like a prince (Rajkumar). He decided to make a multi-starrer for a change. It was like playing with



Accepting a rare challenge

HE has lived all his life with films, among films, among filmmakers and with one of the stars of Hindi cinema, his father, Vijay Bhatt. He was trained in whatever he knows about cinema at the grand ancestral institution. It was a school which believed in clean cinema, in cinema which gave the audience entertainment laced with a great deal of our religious ideals, our values, our traditions and customs, everything to do with the Indian way of life and his father made some of the best films of his time ('Ram Roy' and 'Baji Bawar' were just two of the many) and they were also the most successful films of all times which have earned Vijay Bhatt a permanent place in the history of Hindi cinema. 'I was privileged to work with my father and his influence is still very strong. I believe in using films as a medium of inspiration and even education to a certain extent because I firmly believe cinema is the best medium of communication and instruction if it is used in a positive way. I also believe in changing with the times and tackling burning subjects of the day', Arun Bhatt who is now busy directing 'Ghar Jamai' for 'an ambitious young and dynamic producer Rajkumar Shahabadi' says.

Arun Bhatt branched off with his father's blessings and made a name. It was not really a dream fulfilled but he kept plodding on because he knew there was no other way out. Nothing very adventurous was happening but he kept trying. He couldn't be someone like his father but he was not going to give up trying, he told himself. He made some films for his father's banner, Vijay Films International but they were nothing to be remembered for long. They only proved that the man knew his job and knew it reasonably well.

Then something happened. His father announced a film, 'Hing Aur Pathar' with Shakti Kapoor who was then in peak form and nothing Arun who had just made an entry. The film was made with no resources spared. 'My father put everything he had into the making of the film, his money, his fame everything was at stake and we all worked day

and night to make the film a success. But misfortune struck us. The film proved to be an outright disaster and we didn't know what to do. Vijay Films International, the banner, nourished by my father and my uncle Shankarbhai Bhatt which was a respected banner was in danger. We tried our best to keep the banner flying. It was difficult but we tried and finally found a way', Arun Bhatt remembers.

Good fortune came the way of the Bhatt's when they discovered Gujarati cinema and within a matter of years Arun Bhatt was synonymous with success in Gujarati cinema. He gave new life to a dying Gujarati cinema. He made all kinds of films on all kinds of subjects and a starved audience lapped up everything he gave and kept asking for more. Arun directed twenty-two films, most of which were hits. Some thing suddenly happened to Gujarati cinema and it suffered some sort of a sudden shock. The diagnosis proved futile because no one could point out what had really gone wrong. Various measures have been taken to revive it but time to time but it has fallen flat every time.

Talent, whatever little was left of it, which had gone from Bombay was needed to come back like prodigals. They came and they were accepted each in their own way. Arun tried and found a good project, 'Jamai Zindabad' to be made with Aomee Khan and Farooq an established producer like Prasad Mehra. All his efforts went in vain when the film failed to come alive and Arun was looking for the light again.

Till he found Rajkumar Shahabadi and Rajkumar found him. They had several meetings. They sorted out all the puzzles, cleared all the cobwebs and started 'Ghar Jamai'. Says Arun: 'I opted for the subject because it was my kind of project. I was something that I could deal with in a film. It is a social comedy. I have tried like I always try to say something serious in a light-hearted way. I am sure people don't come to theatres to listen to lectures and sermons. They come to a film to enjoy themselves. My basic purpose is to entertain but in the

process of entertaining I also try to smuggle in something serious, something I want to say. I have always tried it and 'Ghar Jamai' is no exception. I am very lucky to have an enthusiastic producer like Rajkumar Shahabadi who is a modern man with his roots deep in our culture. He likes the subject I am making and we are going all out to make a film that will give him satisfaction as a producer, give me satisfaction as a director, give Mithun and Kader Khan who are playing two different sons in law and everyone connected with the film and above all the audience satisfaction. It is my earnest and sincere effort. Let's see what happens'. Arun says his film would not be what it is shaping up to be if it was not for the cooperation of his artists. My film has Mithun in a very difficult and different role. He is not like he is in so many films he has been seen in recent times. He is playing a lovable character and I am sure he will be loved. Varsha Uspalkar also has a good role which is a little different from the heroine who just sings and swings and suffers and goes away to be forgotten forever. The characters in my film are all strong characters and I have some of the best actors playing them. I have good and dependable actors like Kader Khan, Shakti Kapoor, Prem Chopra, Anita Nagaria, Sushwita Mukherjee, Anjan Shivastava and Vikram Gokhale. I am also paying a lot of attention to the music and so I have the best we have today, Sameer and Anand-Milind. It is a challenge to make a film like this which is far away from the films we are making but I have accepted the challenge and expect to make the best of it. I know this film is very important for us. It has to reach as many people as possible. That's my job and I hope to succeed in a big way this time. I have still not paid what I want to in Hindi films. This is my best chance'. Arun Bhatt says. His hopes will have to be fulfilled and the only man who can inspire those hopes, fill them and fulfil them is Arun Bhatt himself. His father who is still aware of the things going on has told him that and Arun knows he is right.

- A.P.J.

Executive producer Rajkumar Shahabadi and production coordinator Sadhana Shahabadi.

Co-producer Ashok Kumar Apparwal (left) and director Arun Bhatt.

