

Arfi Lamba : Preferably different

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A blink n miss role in Slumdog Millionaire landed him at Cannes. Back with Fugly, Arfi Lamba speaks on being a producer, his passion for films and more...

By Somdatta Sen

How has life changed after Slumdog Millionaire?

The life I live today is because of that film only and I am ever thankful to be a part of it. I got the role by stroke of luck and it was a small one. I was said that it was a DVD film and would not release. But the same made me reach Cannes, one of the biggest platforms of cinema ever. That actually shaped my perspective of cinema and how I want to be a part of it.

Then what prompted the gap of 3-4 years?

It was unintentional. I signed few films including an international project which got delayed and then I started my own production that took some time. I was doing few acting workshops so that I pick up the best. I wanted to be in a position where I can say no to films which didn't interest me. I prefer to do so hereon.

How did Fugly turn up?

I met Kabir Sadanand, the director first in 2010 for another film which didn't take shape. But I shared a great rapport with him and I knew whenever he makes his next film, he would hopefully make me a part. That's what happened. I got a call from him for Fugly and came for an audition to Akshay's office and the rest just followed. Fugly is a big film with superb production values. Akshay Kumar and Ashwini Yerde have been hugely supportive as producers. Kabir as a filmmaker is very keen on improvisations and he guided us through scenes in the entire film literally like a teacher. I play Aditya; he is a miser by nature and takes a count of every penny spent. But his friends mean life to him. He is timid as a person, conforms to societal norms but how he transforms and takes a stand at the end is beautiful. It's a very relatable character, a must find in every friends group.

Being a producer, does it make you more conscious?

Obviously. One thing that I have promised myself is to never trouble my producers. Filmmaking is an extremely difficult job, and I empathise with them. As for my production, Bombay Berlin Films, the production work is majority handled by my partner who is based in Germany. She manages it all so that I get to be an actor. We make documentaries there; help with abroad shoots, feature film productions etc.

How do you see the industry today as an outsider?

It's tough but it has always been like that. Being an outsider is difficult anywhere but it depends on how you take it. It's a good time in cinema with films like Shahid, Queen and Kai Po Che being made. So I will work on my craft and hope for things to fall in place. Amitabh Bachchan, Shah Rukh Khan and Akshay Kumar have all excelled being outsiders, so it's hardwork that counts at the end.

