



Interview | Arjun Rampal: Every film will find its audience

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Arjun Rampal in a candid chat about the business of filmmaking and his experience as a producer



While the promotions for *Daddy* are pretty much over, Arjun Rampal is still busy with the movie. The actor recently travelled to Norway for the screening of the film at the Norway Film Festival. "We were the closing film for the festival," he says. The biopic that saw Arjun taking on the role of a producer saw him juggling multiple responsibilities. But the actor seems very pleased with the end result. Here, he speaks about his vision for the movie and his changed outlook towards success and failure...

Are you happy with the movie's business?

It's got an overwhelming response in Maharashtra. I am very happy. Everyone who has seen it has really liked it. We were quite aware that the film is for the people here. And though it has a local flavour, it is also a human story, about a man. When it's a human subject, things like religion or the state that he comes from don't matter. We have made the film with that thought. Now, we hope it reaches out further slowly and steadily.

You had emphasised on the importance of controlling the budget, how has that helped with the returns?

We are pretty much safe. We got a good deal with Amazon as well as satellite telecast. It's important to keep in mind that when you know that you are making a film on a character, who comes from Maharashtra, the film will be doing its major business here. Almost 60 to 70 per cent of the contribution of the film has come from Maharashtra. These kind of films are not very popular in the North and Delhi. But there also, it's not that bad. It has only shown growth.

Do you look at scripts differently now that you are a producer too?

I have always looked at scripts as stories that have to be told. Every film will find its audience. Sometimes it finds it immediately, sometimes it takes time for it to grow and find it, but it will happen. A film is going to be there forever, so it's important to choose the right subject. It has to be a subject that you can be proud of, which will contribute towards cinema.

Arun Gawli was expected to be out on parole, but that didn't happen. Were you disappointed that he couldn't see the film?

More than me, I think it was disappointing for the family that he couldn't be here. The film is not going anywhere, he will watch it whenever he comes out.

Did they like the biopic?

They were super thrilled. We were happy to see the response of the whole of Maharashtra. The family sat together – they have a large family – and they were very emotional after they saw it.

Considering it has such a local flavour, do you think it would be a viable project in Marathi?

To remake this in Marathi? And act in it? No. Maybe someone else can do it though.

After making *Daddy*, has your outlook towards success and failure changed?

When you make a film, you have to know that it will have a certain audience. Then you make the film according to that audience. You have to understand that this will be my main market, and if it grows beyond that then it's a bonus. When we decided to make *Daddy*, we knew Maharashtra is going to be our main market and we have succeeded with that, whatever comes from the outside is a bonus. You definitely have to be aware of the subject that you are making. If I made *Daddy* into a Rs 60 or Rs 70 crore project thinking that it has to be pan-India, then yes, I would be making a mistake. But, yes, it's very easy to go crazy. So, how and where you position your film becomes important. Then from there, it can grow. The kind of momentum that it has got in Maharashtra, you will see it growing in its second week, not only in this state but others too.



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