

# "I am growing fast as the number one comedian"

He is making a name for himself, both as a comedian and a character actor. He has played major roles in some big name movies. Cinesouth.com talks to **Ramesh Kanna**.

ONE COMES across different experience each time one sits to interview a person.

You cannot extract replies easily from the majority of actresses. You will have to try your utmost. What is it that prevents them from coming out of the shell? You will never know!

You need not face any such problem in the case of actors or directors. At the slightest instigation, they will open out. All the hidden news would flow out like water from mouths.

The comedians are known for their cascade like outflow of news and views. An interview with a comedian lightens your heart and make you laugh joyfully. For the comedians have a goal of keeping others in good humour. To uphold the happiness of all and sundry is the prime concern of their life. Humour is their life-blood. Comedy is their driving force. Their profession is very holy as they cause mirth in the minds of others.

We met one such good soul. He is no person other than Ramesh Khanna, who is scoring great victories today both as a comedian as well as a character actor who shines in performance based roles also.

Can you explain about your fifteen-year long struggle to make a mark as a film personality?

"I have sewed as an understudy to many direc-

tors. I could also direct a film on my own. But that movie didn't see the light of the day even after reaching the premises of the censor board. Then came another chance to direct. A full stop was put to it after five days of shooting. Then I became an assistant to Director K.S.Ravikumar. Meanwhile, I wrote dialogues for four films. As I had written the dialogues for 'Peria Kudumbam', the makers of that film offered me another chance to direct a film. I conducted the shootings of that film for two days, with Jayaram and Meena participating in them. That film also had a break. When I started curving me for my bad luck the film started to breath again. I completed that film titled 'Thodarum' with Ajit, Devayani and Heera in the lead roles. In those days, Ajit was not that famous. 'Thodarum' proved to be a grand success in those days."

How is that you became an actor while you were dreaming to make it big as a director?

"Even as I started directing 'Thodarum' I received an invitation from Vikramants act. He has been earmarking at least one scene for me in all his films. As he liked my comedy very much, he shot my comedy track separately and specially to add it to the film 'Gokulam' which had already been released. He gave me a chance to act in the film, 'Unnidathil Enn-

aikkoduthaen' also. Even on the first day of shooting for 'Thodarum', I went to act in Vikraman's film. All had to wait for me, the director, for half-a-day. I received rave reviews for having acted in 'Unnidathil Ennaikkoduthaen', which was released well before 'Thodarum'. I was labeled as a natural, different comedian. Then, I acted in the blockbuster, 'Padayappa'. As I was in Mysore in connection with the shootings of 'Padayappa', they arranged for the editing of 'Thodarum' in Mysore itself.

People told, during the release of 'Thodarum', that the scenes of the new films should not be shown in T.Vs. But the very same people who told like that gave advertisements in T.Vs. 'Thodarum' was released without any advertisement. You might not have there-fore seen any clippings, comedy scenes and song sequences of that film in the T.Vs. Yet, that film ran successfully for 87 days.

Today, I am growing fast as the number one comedian. After seeing my performance in 'Unnidathil Ennaikkoduthaen', Vivek has changed his method of acting. Formerly Vivek was doing his comedy by doing mimicry gimmicks. Now he has stopped doing mimicry and opts for different dimensions. Certainly I have set a trend in Cinema with my performance in 'Unnidathil Ennaikkoduthaen'

How did Vikraman offer such a big character to you?

I must thank him for doing so. At first, I didn't know that it would be that big a character. At the most, I expected to act in just four or five scenes in that film. I never expected to receive such a big reception because of that film.

Popular magazines such as Kumudham and Anandavikatan had made a special mention about me. I became cautious thereafter. Now I am paying attention only on the characters that are inter turned with the story.

I won't resort to do mimicry. All that is very simple. It is not hard to mock at others. One must provide comedy on his own accord. As I am a creator, I am able to dish out my own comedy. I am working under very efficient directors. They never tell me, "Sir, you can develop the comedy scenes yourself". They come to me with the comedy track conceived originally by their imagination."

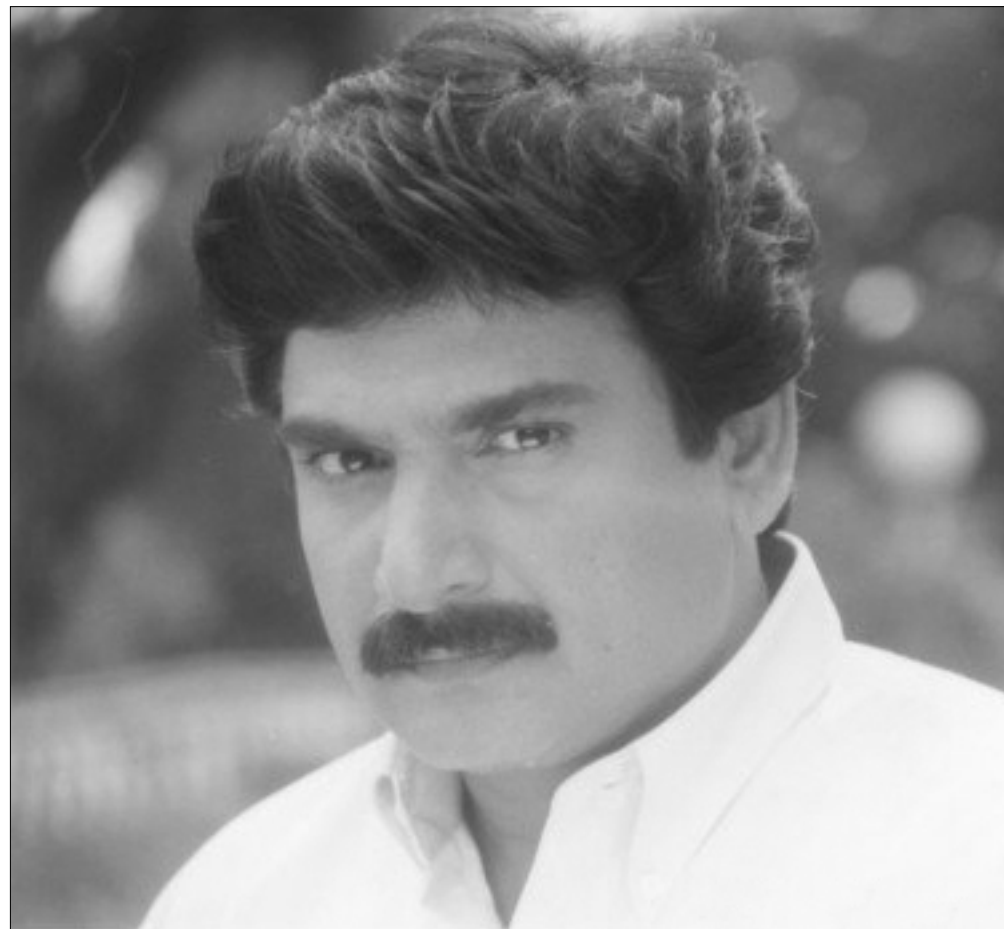
For what reason did you choose cartoonist Madhan to write down the dialogues for your next directional venture, 'Genius'?

I have been going through the jokes of Madhan from my very early ages. I am used to reading the questions and answers of 'Hai Madhan' too. I have written the dialogues for five films. My share in the comedy of K.S.Ravikumar's films has always been large. It was I who created those 'love letter' comedy scenes. But the dialogues for 'Genius' required a knowledgeable, well-informed person to write down. All said and done, I am an ordinary person. Therefore I selected the extraordinary person, Madhan, to pen the dialogues for 'Genius'.

In the beginning, he refused to write for films. "I have my own circle of readers. I won't condescend to the level of writing for films," he quipped. But I insisted. He was impressed with the story told by me. Rather my ways of speech and approach prevailed over him. Accepting my offer, he gave me all the dialogues in writing."

Friends?

'Friends' had activated me and made me the number one comedian. Previously it was either he or me and vice versa. Things have changed for the better for me. These days people approach others only when I am not in a position to accommodate my dates for them. Director Siddique had seen the video clippings of all the comedians of the day. As he wanted a man who could shine as a comedian as well as a character artist, he chose me finally.



All rounder: Ramesh Kanna is gaining fame as a comedian, actor and director

## Deplorable shooting spots

As film making moves from studios to outdoor filming, the use of studios is diminishing. As a result, the studios are languishing or being sold off according to a report on [movies.indianinfo.com](http://movies.indianinfo.com)

IN THE EARLIER films, the movies were shot in the studios only and outdoor shooting was a big affair. Storms and whirlwind used to be brought within the studio. By using a white cardboard on the background of black cloth showering moonlight would create even the image of moon. Shaking trees would create breeze.

Now, more movies are being shot at outdoor locations. Moviemakers go to villages for shooting rural scenes. The real moon in the sky is shot. Now even the rains and storms are shot in reality.

When the creators realized that they could take the films livelier, they started moving for outdoor shooting and the studios

became idle. Their plight today is pathetic.

When outdoor shooting became famous, the studios in Chennai started getting closed one by one. Currently, there are only two good old, studios in Chennai now.

One is A.V.M: the other one is Vijaya-Vahini studio. Of these Vijaya-Vahini is said to be the biggest in Asia.

The sale of Vijaya - Vahini studio is now being negotiated, for the bargain price of Indian Rs. 38 lakhs. It seems that it will

be sold within 6 months.

Following Vijaya-Vahini, the Mohan studio situated in Saligram is ready for sale, as its lease period is over.

It is worth mentioning that Kodambakkam (which is sometimes referred to as the Hollywood of Tamil Nadu) had many studios that were sold and they were converted into multi storied residential flats.

Many of us really don't know that some floors of the famous A.V.M. studio have been let out to private individuals.



## Haven't I heard that before?

A.R RAHMAN is back, this time with Vairamuthu, to deliver the tunes for the film 'Star' writes Ezekiel for [chennaionline.com](http://chennaionline.com). It has been quite a long wait for A.R Rahman's fans, for this is his first Tamil film since last Diwali. 'Star' is a product of Sri Subhrajothi Films and has Prashanth and Jothika starring in it. Praveenkanth has directed this film. The songs are melodious and

striking, but there seems to be an air of similarity in some of them. One cannot deny the fact that this film lacks the usual 'Rahman punch'.

The song 'Rasika' sung by SPB and Sujata is a fast moving number with impressive lyrics (written by Piraisoodan). 'Machcha Machchiniye' sung by Unnimmon sounds rather mediocre. The

song 'Thom Karuvil' by Shankar Mahadevan is a great number with equally remarkable lyrics and is sure to be a chartbuster. The folk number 'Nenthukitten' is very appealing - thanks to playback singers Karthick, Chitra and the lyrics penned by Palani Bharathi. In this song, traditional musical instruments like Gatam, Thavil, Nadaswaram have been put to good use. 'Manasukkul

Oru Puyal' sung by SPB and Sadhana Sargam carries the Rahman-Vairamuthu trademark.

A.R Rahman, Lyric writers - Vairamuthu, Palani Bharathi, and Piraisoodan - have got together to create the tunes of 'Star'. Compared to the earlier hits of Rahman-Vairamuthu, 'Star' fails to keep up to the standards set by this gifted pair.

## Superstars in the making

BOTH OF THEM are towers of strength. They hold their heads high in the firmament of the actors of the Tamil film industry.

They keep their head and shoulders above the other young heroes, the everlasting and evergreen mega stars of Tamil Cinema. It is expected that these young heroes, Ajith and Vijay, will be winning and inheriting the fame which is now being enjoyed by Rajini and Kamal reports [cinesouth.com](http://cinesouth.com).

But who is going to be the Rajini of tomorrow? And

who is the Kamal among the two? These are the million dollar questions. Though time alone can unravel this secret, there is scope to read between the lines spoken about the national awards. Tomorrow's signal is reflected in the replies made by them against the queries on the national awards.

What do they actually think about the national awards?

Ajith: I am possessed by the desire to win a national award. I hope I would get a good name from 'Citizen'. I believe that the film would receive rave reviews through

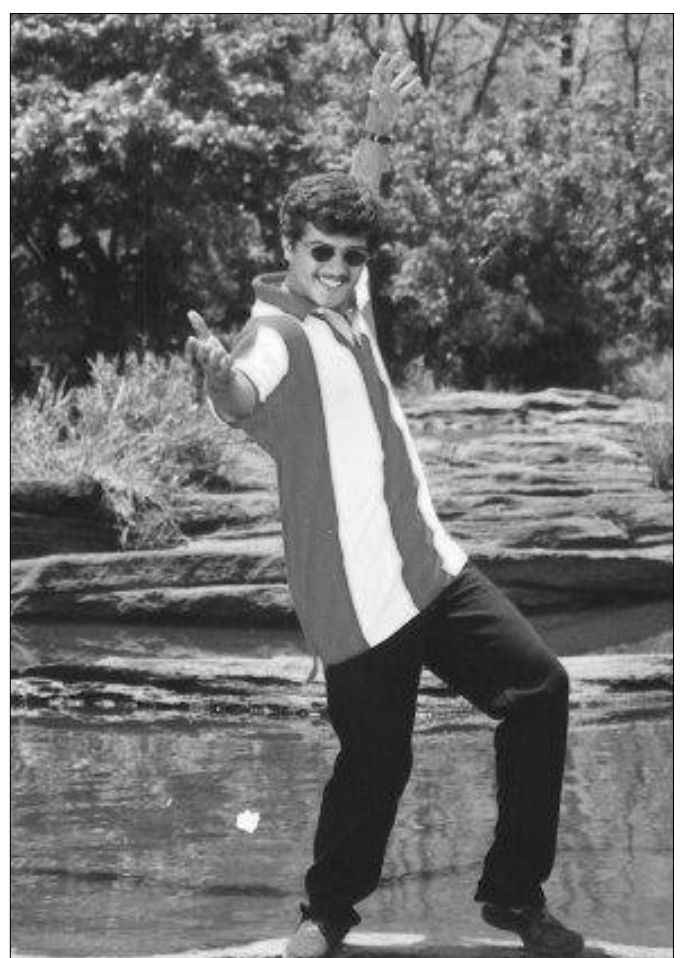
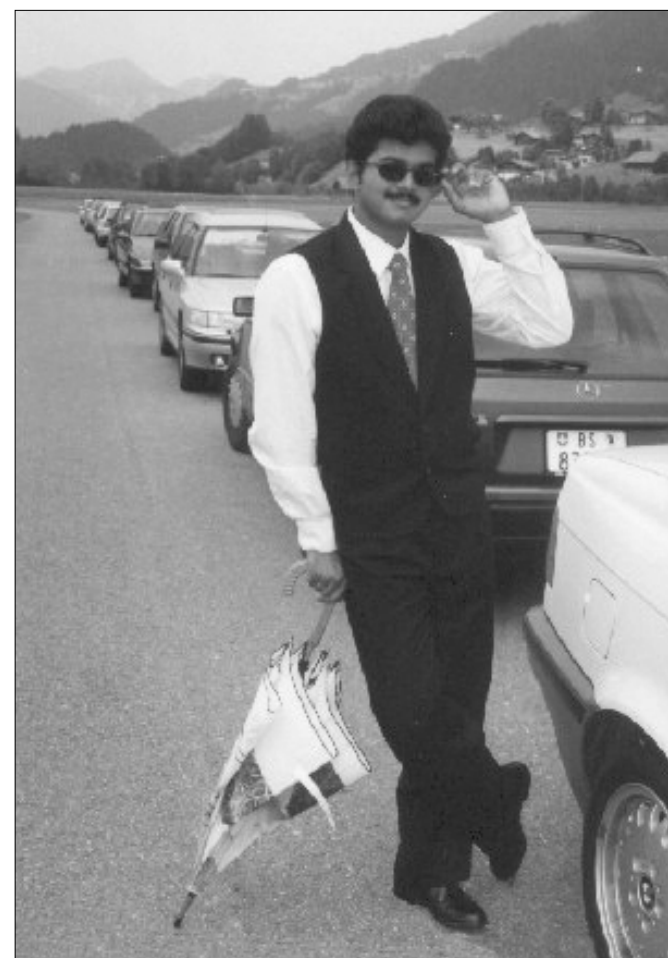
the length and breadth of India. I fervently expect that my image would grow large with the release of this picture. In all probability, the movie has a fair chance of bagging at least four national awards!

Vijay: Maybe national awards are something out of my reach! I am conscious of that fact. So I do not entertain any desire to win a national award at all. I just want to act continuously in films. The most important thing for me is to cater to the needs of the viewers. I must provide enjoyment to them. For the present the State

Award itself would suffice for me!

With a discerning look into the words uttered by these two heroes, you might by now, have decided as to who is Kamal and who is Rajini among these two. Let us wish them well. Let each shape up as the actor of his heart in the years to come, we conclude.

But Ajith throws another bombshell also. "It is my intention to take an incarnation of a new Ajithkumar by mixing the acting styles of both Rajini and Kamal in an equal measure. I hope to shine in that new role!"



Future superstars: Vijay (left) is aiming to cater to the entertainment of the viewers, while Ajith (right) is hoping for national recognition with his new movie 'Citizen'. Can these comments assist in clarifying the speculation as to which actor is going to be the next Kamal and which the next Rajini? Only time will tell.

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