

Celluloid Bravehearts

BT meets up first-time filmmakers of the state to find out more about their dreams and passion for the camera

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"Is cinema more important than life?" asked François Truffaut and some youngsters from the state would vouch for the fact that it truly is. Youngsters across the state are scripting their ideas on celluloid like never before and taking to the camera with a vengeance to come up with short films and documentary films on social issues close to their heart. Meshank Lakhia, a still photographer got mesmerised by the lens and decided to take the plunge by making *Lifeline*. "I had concepts in my mind but lacked the know-how of how to go about doing things. Luckily I got this from one of the filmmaking groups in the city. We did a brave feat of making four films in a day with editing and shooting intact," he says.

Environmental issues, innovative concepts and thrillers are favourite themes for these budding filmmakers, who are studying in colleges and schools. A group of four friends, Rahul Bhole, Deep Panchwani, Vinit Kanojia and Parikshit Marathe have three productions to their credit titled *Project Fear*, *Jungle Journal* and are working on a new project. "We started making *Project Fear* when we were in the first year of college and did everything on our own. Our film didn't make it to *On the lot*, the reality show produced by Steven Spielberg, but it was one of the selected entries to be aired at their site. We took two years to make our first film but I think once you have made it, the next one is a cakewalk."

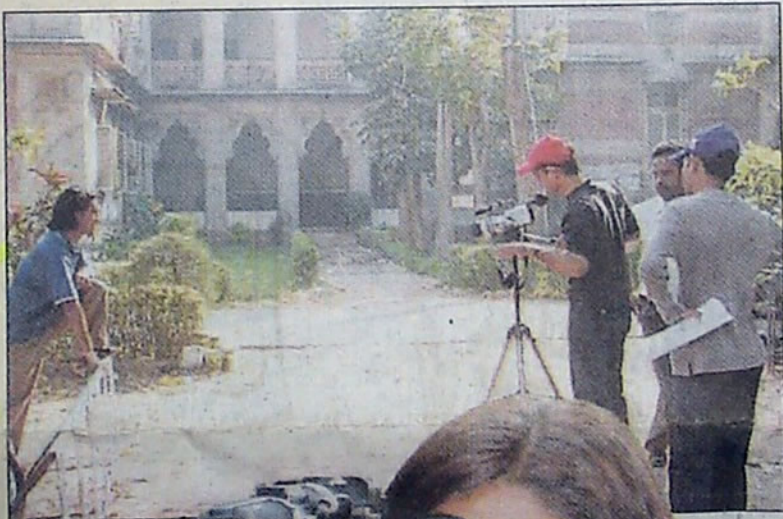
Lack of platform and a resource pool are two things that all these budding filmmakers seem to find wanting in Gujarat, but internet seems to be filling this lacunae areas. Rebecca Sudan Gadhavi, an independent filmmaker explored the theme of social responsibility of advertising in her first film *Attention Please* and is working on her second. "All you need is motivation, ener-

gy and good financing," she says.

Mehul Upadhyay who runs a group in Ahmedabad that encourages first-time filmmakers says, "We have around 150 people from all walks of life and with one passion - filmmaking. Through our network we help first time filmmakers with resources and equipment."

Formal education in filmmaking and editing do not seem to be pre-requisites for these first-time filmmakers. Bhargav Valera, a radiographer who has just tasted first blood with his film *Ring* that is nearing completion, made on a budget of Rs 15,000. He says, "In Ahmedabad once you make a film you have no one to brainstorm as to where to show your film. I have learnt a lot while making this film and aim to send it to a festival in Delhi."

So, all you budding filmmakers there, may be it is time to bring life to your ideas.



Youngsters are now discovering the joy of film-making