He refuses to take orange juice and avoids sandwich, instead asks for a cup of chai as he settles down to converse with me. "You are most welcome" I was promised by director and filmmaker Rahul Rawail when I asked him for this interview. It's too humble a gesture from the man who has been there in Bollywood ever since he was 15 years old and done that. [He hates the term Bollywood, prefers it to be called Indian film industry] I was curious to know how Mr. Rawail started his career. "I assisted the showman himself; Raj Kapoor and learnt a lot from him about filmmaking." reminisces the man, who simultaneously juggled college and assisting at the tender age. "I have always been fascinated by cinema. Its pull is tremendous, it fancied me all the time, so I ended up doing my studies from St. Xavier College, Mumbai and could simultaneously pursue something that I was always interested in" says Mr. Rawail with twinkle in his eyes.

Directed films like Betaab, Aarjun, Aanjaam, Aur pyaar ho gaya, Kuch khatti kuch meethi, Arjun pandit, Jo bole so nihal, Buddha mil gaya to name a few, Mr. Rawail has worked with many stars and superstars including Shah rukh khan, Aishwarya Rai, Kajol, Sunny Deol, Suniel Shetty Bobby Deol, John Abraham and many more. When asked who his favourite actor is whose work he enjoys and appreciates the most? "Late Sanjeev Kumar undoubtedly" pat comes a reply from the veteran director. "And from contemporary league of stars Aamir Khan is someone who gets under the skin of the character so aptly. He is not only intuitive but very spontaneous" he opines. He was addressing to entertainment students at MET, right from early in the morning. Even after having spent more than four hours at stretch in the midst of number of queries he answered and some heated discussion, where he spoke at length Mr. Rawail was as fresh as an early morning bird. Dressed in snow-white kurta pajama and wearing kolhapuri chappal this tall, hefty director was amazed to see the keen interest that students have nurtured for film making subject. As the time flew by Mr. Rawail only got better with his words.

So my next question is obvious. How does he keep his energy level and enthusiasm maintained? "It's so interesting to see that today's generation is so keen to understand the science of film making. I like to answer their queries and when you like something profusely, you don't get fatigued by doing it" he answers with a hint of smile. The man who takes immense pride in being part of the film industry yet maintains so humble attitude, can make one wonder. "I have worked with a number of actors, some of them have changed but some of them are just what they have always been. But it doesn't matter. Your attitude and approach gets you what you deserve and not what you desire. Beside that industry is getting more and more professional." He stresses.

In today's age when we go gung ho about the arrival of our cinema on the global stage Mr. Rawail is also more than happy about the fact that our cinema has global audience as well. "Indian films have been perceived in the west as the most vibrant and colourful cinematic expression. Today we experiment a lot and come up with a lot of new and original concepts which are watched at the global stage. And yes believe me, our films are watched with a keen interest in various film festivals worldwide. He says with a conviction. Currently working on his new project tentatively named Six, he feels there are certain limitations and obstacles our industry faces. and censorship tops his list of burden. "There are times when censorship gets on the director's nerve. Certain ideas need to be portrayed in a particular way; it is only pertinent to have certain expressions which are very important for the plot. If you remove them your story loses the charm. So I am not for the censorship. It kind of blocks your creative expression and hampers the plot." Opines Mr. Rawail.

As the conversation goes on smoothly, I yank the question deliberately kept in the end. "Does the casting couch exist in the industry?" The prodigious filmmaker.

As the conversation goes on smoothly, I yank the question deliberately kept in the end. "Does the casting couch exist in the industry?" Opines Mr. Rawail. "Yes, it does but it exists everywhere not in the film industry alone" he states it tersely. "Casting couch is for those who want to get into the business and climb the rungs rapidly, especially those who lack talent and determination. But a real gem does not require such feeble support. Real talent prevails in the long run." concludes the prodigious filmmaker.

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