

= Vikram ( actor ) =

Vikram ( born as Kennedy John Victor on 17 April 1966 ) is an Indian film actor who predominantly appears in Tamil language films and has won seven Filmfare Awards as well as one National Film Award and Tamil Nadu State Film Award amongst other recognitions and was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by the People 's University of Milan in May 2011 .

He made his debut in the 1990 film En Kadhal Kanmani , which was followed by a series of small @-@ budget Tamil , Malayalam and Telugu films in the 1990s , many of which went unnoticed . However the success of Bala 's tragedy film Sethu ( 1999 ) , in which Vikram appeared as a rogue turned lover , started Vikram 's successful career as an actor . In the early 2000s , Vikram appeared in a series of masala films , with Dhill ( 2001 ) , Gemini ( 2002 ) , Dhool ( 2003 ) and Saamy ( 2003 ) becoming commercially successful ventures . During the period , Vikram also appeared in diverse roles and received critical acclaim for his performance as a blind villager in Kasi and a Robin Hood @-@ esque figure in Samurai . In 2003 , Vikram 's performance as a gravedigger with autism spectrum disorders in Bala 's Pithamagan saw him win the National Film Award for Best Actor , with his character only speaking a couple of lines of dialogue in the entire film . His appearance as an idealistic lawyer with multiple personality disorder in Shankar 's blockbuster Anniyan ( 2005 ) also won critical acclaim , as did his appearance as a superhero in Kanthaswamy ( 2009 ) . Vikram 's portrayal of Veeraiya , a tribal leader inspired by the Ramayana character Ravana , in Mani Ratnam 's Raavan saw him secure further accolades , as did his appearance as a mentally challenged adult with the maturity of a six @-@ year @-@ old boy in Deiva Thirumagal ( 2011 ) . He consequently appeared in multiple get @-@ ups as a bodybuilder and a crippled hunchback , losing up to 35 kilograms for sequences , during the making of Shankar 's romantic thriller I ( 2015 ) and won rave reviews from critics for his performance . It is currently the third highest @-@ grossing Tamil film of all time .

Vikram has promoted various social causes and appeared as the Youth Envoy for the United Nations Human Settlements Programme in 2011 . He has been a brand ambassador of Sanjeevani Trust and a school for special children , Vidya Sudha , which he stayed at during the making of Deiva Thirumagal as well as having long @-@ term associations with the Kasi Eye Care and running his own welfare association through the Vikram Foundation . In 2016 , he produced and directed the video to the flood relief anthem , Spirit of Chennai , as a tribute to the city 's volunteers following the 2015 South Indian floods .

= = Early life = =

Vikram was born in a Tamil Family as Kennedy to a Christian father and a Hindu mother in Madras , Tamil Nadu , on 17 April 1966 . His father , John Victor alias Vinod Raj was a native of Paramakudi and ran away from home to start a career in films . His father however did not fare successfully , and only managed to act in supporting roles in Tamil films and television serials and this inspired Vikram to take part in theatre lessons and become professionally trained in classical and cinema dance forms to ensure he became a leading actor . Rajeshwari , Vikram 's mother , was a sub @-@ collector and her brother , Thyagarajan is an established director @-@ actor in the Tamil film industry ; with his son , actor Prashanth , being Vikram 's first cousin . Vikram has a younger sister , Anita , who is a teacher and a younger brother , Arvind , who was previously set to make his film debut in the 2008 film Saroja but eventually did not feature . Vikram is used as a screen name as he disliked his original name , Kennedy ; the name Vikram was composed by taking " Vi " from his father 's name , " K " from Kennedy , " Ra " from his mother 's name and " ram " from his sun sign , Aries .

Vikram was educated at Montfort School , Yercaud , a boarding school in a hill station near Salem and graduated in 1983 . He has mentioned that he used his opportunities at school well by taking part in karate , horseback riding and swimming and noted that such early exposure to activities gave him confidence as a youngster . Vikram lurked in the fringes of the school 's theatre club for a long period and often took part in backstage work before being handed the lead role in a school

adaptation of Molière 's The Doctor in Spite of Himself after the original lead had contracted chicken pox . Despite expressing his interest to join films after school , his father forced him to go through education with Vikram subsequently graduating in English literature from Loyola College , Chennai and working half way through an MBA programme . Through the prolific dramatics club , Vikram appeared in stage productions including college adaptations of The Caine Mutiny Court @-@ Martial and Peter Shaffer 's Black Comedy , receiving best actor awards for his performances . After winning a Best Actor Award at a function held at IIT Madras , Vikram was knocked down by a truck during a major motorbike accident on the way home and suffered a serious leg injury . He remained hospital @-@ ridden bed for three years during college and subsequently went through twenty three surgeries to stop his leg being amputated . Vikram then returned to finish the final year of his degree after his accident and secured permission to finish his dissertation at home , as he was only able to walk on crutches for a short period .

= = Film career = =

= = = 1990 ? 1999 = = =

Vikram began his professional career by modelling in advert films for brands including Chola Tea , TVS Excel and Alwyn watches as well as appearing in a six episode television serial titled Galatta Kudumbam which aired between November and December 1988 . During the final year of his M.B.A programme at Loyola College , he was recognised by the film industry , with veteran director C. V. Sridhar approaching him for a lead role in a film . Vikram made his film debut in 1990 by appearing in En Kadhal Kanmani , a small budget love story featuring him alongside Rekha Nambiar , with Sridhar 's Thanthu Vitten Ennai opposite Rohini being his next release . He then signed on to be a part of cinematographer P. C. Sriram 's college love story , Meera with high expectations , however the three films failed to launch his career . His appearances in Meera and in Kaaval Geetham , with another veteran director S. P. Muthuraman , helped him secure film offers from the Malayalam and Telugu film industries . In 1993 , he almost signed on to appear in Mani Ratnam 's Bombay and featured in the initial photo shoot alongside Manisha Koirala . However Mani Ratnam wanted Vikram to remove his beard for the role , and Vikram could not do so due to continuity problems with another film he had signed and hence was dropped from the project .

Between 1993 and 1994 , Vikram appeared in a series of films where he portrayed supporting roles . He appeared in three successful Malayalam films by appearing with Mammooty , Suresh Gopi and Jayaram in Joshi 's successful action film Dhruvam , before teaming up with Gopi again for Shaji Kailas 's Mafia , which explored Bangalore 's criminal underworld . Furthermore , Joshi cast him again alongside Mammooty in the action drama Sainyam in the role of an air cadet . During the period , Vikram also appeared in the small budget Telugu film Chirunavvula Varamistava in the lead role and as Akkineni Nageswara Rao 's eldest son in the family drama Bangaru Kutumbam with both films failing commercially . A brief return to Tamil films also proved unsuccessful , with his role in Vikraman 's multistarrer Pudhiya Mannargal with music composed by A. R. Rahman turning out to be a commercial failure .

Throughout 1995 and 1996 , Vikram appeared in further Telugu and Malayalam films to receive income , being kept away from Tamil films due to a lack of offers . He played the lead role in Malayalam film Mayoora Nritam directed by Vijayakrishnan 's and even played villain in Street opposite Babu Antony and lead roles in the small budget Telugu films Adalla Mazaka and Sriraj Ginne 's Akka ! Bagunnavu ? . He collaborated again with Mammooty in Indraprastham and Suresh Gopi in Rajaputhran , before appearing in his first lead role in Malayalam with Itha Oru Snehagatha opposite Laila . Vikram signed Amitabh Bachchan 's first Tamil language film production , Ullaasam , which also featured Ajith Kumar and Maheswari . The big budget film created anticipation prior to release but was ultimately panned and fared poorly at the box office . However , Vikram acknowledged the film for expanding his female fan base as a result of the soft @-@ personality of his character . He followed it up with appearances in the unsuccessful films Kurralla Rajyam in

Telugu and then in the Ilaiyaraaja musical Kangalin Vaarthaigal , before playing a short role in Parthiban 's critically acclaimed film , Housefull .

During his struggling phase , Vikram dubbed for other heroes in films including voices for Prabhu Deva in Kaadhalan and Minsara Kanavu , Ajith Kumar in Amaravathi and Abbas in Kandukondain Kandukondain respectively . Vikram has mentioned that he did not look down on dubbing and saw it as a " dignity of labour " . During the period he also attended dancing classes every day , and tried acting out different scenes , different characters with his small group of friends . He began to turn down chances to play supporting roles in films and was intent on making a breakthrough as a lead actor and notably turned down the role of Swarnamalya 's fiancée in Mani Ratnam 's Alaipayuthey . Vikram also rejected approaches from television serial producers , citing that working in television would reduce his chances of becoming a mainstream actor . He also refused opportunities to take part in film events as a backing dancer , with actor Sriman revealing that Vikram was " one amongst not many " who was not interested in travelling to Canada to participate in such shows .

= = = 1999 ? 2001 = = =

In 1997 , debutant director Bala offered him the role of the rogue , Sethu ( Chiyaan ) , in the film Sethu . To prepare for the character , Vikram shaved his head , lost twenty @-@ one kilograms and grew his nails long for the role . After beginning production in April 1997 , the film went through development hell after industry strikes and lack of funds hampered progress . During this phase , he did not accept other acting offers in order to maintain the continuity of his looks . The film then struggled to find a distributor , who shunned it due to the tragic climax and the film remained unreleased . Vikram described the period of production as " the worst phase of his career " as he was financially strapped and " his fire was in danger of dying down " . He turned down an opportunity from a friend to take up a job in technology and attempted to stay in the industry by directing a serial titled Mounam Pesiyadhey , with Ameer as his assistant director . Sethu finally released in December 1999 and initially began running at a single noon show at a suburban theater but gradually gained an audience through word @-@ of @-@ mouth publicity . Eventually it ran for over one hundred days at several cinema halls across Chennai . Vikram was constantly being mobbed by people on the streets as a result of the film 's success . Critics praised Vikram 's performance with a reviewer referring to Vikram as " a revelation " and that " he is very natural and his acting in last few scenes are just too good and could even be compared with the best we have seen " . Similarly , a critic from the Malaysian daily , New Straits Times , described the film as an " unforgettable experience " and described Vikram 's performance as " praise @-@ worthy " . The performance drew accolades with Vikram winning the Filmfare Special Award ? South and the Tamil Nadu State Film Award Special Prize for his portrayal of the title character , while reports emerged that he missed out on the National Film Award for Best Actor by a single vote to Mohanlal . Post @-@ Sethu , Vikram has described the film would have been close to him regardless of its commercial success and that it put him on the " right path " , with Vikram choosing to adapt the prefix of Chiyaan to his screen name .

Vikram did not sign up to a film for sixty five days after the release of Sethu , to ensure that he made the right career move . Vikram spent time completing projects he had agreed to feature in before the release of Sethu and hence made a couple of appearances in the Malayalam films , Red Indians and the horror film Indriyam . He also played a leading role in Siragugal , a rare Tamil telefilm produced and featuring Radhika Sarathkumar , which was shot entirely in the suburbs of London . Furthermore , he also completed two Telugu films during the period ; 9 Nelalu and Youth . 9 Nelalu featured Vikram as the husband of the character played by Soundarya , who faces the challenges of being a surrogate mother . The film won positive reviews , with a critic mentioning that Vikram gave a " controlled performance ; while Vikram 's newfound popularity in Tamil films saw the film dubbed into Tamil soon after as Kandane Seethayai , with an inserted comedy track by comedian Vivek . His next release was Rajakumaran 's Vinnukum Mannukum , alongside Sarath Kumar , Kushboo and Devayani , which revolved around an ordinary boy falling in love with an actress . Vikram has since mentioned his displeasure at being a part of the film , claiming that he

had arguments with the director for every single shot and that " everything in that film , right from the first shot was wrong " ; the film became a failure commercially . His next film was Dhill where he played an aspiring police officer , Kanagavel , who tackles a corrupt policeman . To appear trim in the role of the aspiring police officer , Vikram went on a strict diet eating only fruits and drinking juice . The film opened to positive reviews with a critic from The Hindu claiming that " Vikram has the ability and potential " and that " Vikram has once again proved that his success in Sethu was not a fluke " . Dhill subsequently went on to become Vikram 's first success in the masala film genre and led the way for more such films in the same genre for him . Vikram 's portrayal of a blind folk singer in Vinayan 's Kasi won him the Filmfare Best Tamil Actor Award and the film also did well commercially . For the movie , he sunbathed on the terrace of his beachside home in Chennai for a sunburnt look and got dizzying headaches while practising to look blind . Again , Vikram 's performance won positive reviews from critics with a reviewer describing it as an " extraordinarily detailed performance " and that " as the blind singer , he brings laughter , tears and a lump in one 's throat " .

= = = 2002 ? 03 = = =

The following year , Vikram went on to play the title role in Saran 's Gemini produced by AVM Productions , his first big @-@ budget film in the Tamil industry , which featured him in the role of a local rowdy . The action film won good reviews , with a critic citing that Vikram " delivers a convincing performance " and consequently became a box office triumph . Similarly , the film 's soundtrack composed by Bharathwaj had become popular prior to release , with Vikram also singing a version of the hit song " O Podu ! " for the album . Balaji Sakthivel 's Samurai was his next release featuring him as a vigilante Robin Hood @-@ esque figure who kidnapped corrupt politicians . Vikram had signed the film in early 2000 and the film was on hold during production leading to a two @-@ year delay and the film finally opened to average reviews and collections . The critic from The Hindu drew praise for Vikram 's " admirably well @-@ maintained physique and powerful eyes " , whilst another labelled that the film 's single major positive was Vikram 's convincing portrayal . His final release of the year was Prabhu Solomon 's King , a drama film which featured him alongside Sneha and Nassar . Vikram played Raja , a magician , who is unaware that he has been diagnosed with multiple sclerosis with his family trying to keep the truth away from him . The film also met with an unfavorable response commercially but won positive acclaim from critics .

The success of Dharani 's Dhill resulted in the film 's team collaborating to make a film in a similar genre , Dhool , which also featured Jyothika , Reemma Sen and Vivek . The film saw Vikram play Aarumugham , a villager , who comes to the city seeking help in regard to a water crisis back home but subsequently ends up tackling the corrupt politicians who are behind the water scam . In regard to his performance , the Rediff.com review praised his enactment citing that " Vikram is at his peak " and that " he seems as much at home with comedy as with action , in romance as in emotional sequences " , while the critic from The Hindu also praised his performance . The film became a blockbuster and his fifth success in two and a half years with Vikram being dubbed as " the matinee idol of our times " by a leading Indian newspaper . He also featured in the romantic film , Kadhal Sadugudu with Priyanka Trivedi which was a critical and commercial failure , with reviewers claiming that " there are times you wish Vikram were a little more brisk and dynamic " in regard to his performance . Post release , Vikram was critical of the film 's failure confessed that the story " underwent a lot of changes after the initial narration " , lamenting he was " taken for a royal ride " by the producers .

Vikram was then signed on by K. Balachander to appear in his banner 's biggest production till date , Saamy , directed by Hari . Vikram played Aarusaamy , an honest cop working in Tirunelveli who solves the region 's communal problems with his down @-@ to @-@ earth approach . Vikram worked on his body for the film , sporting a thick waist to show notable differences from his other police film , Dhill and also put on eight kilograms . The film took a large opening , grossing over Rs . 7 crores in 10 days in Tamil Nadu , while also taking the largest opening of the new millennium in Kerala , with the Telugu remake rights also sold for a record price . Due to the good opening , the

film has proved to be profitable just 10 days after its release and consequently went on to become a blockbuster . Vikram 's performance also was lapped up by critics earning him a nomination for Filmfare Best Tamil Actor Award , with the critic from Sify claiming Vikram had " succumbed to the superstar image trap " , but is the " mainstay of the picture " .

= = = 2003 ? 09 = = =

Later that year he starred in Bala 's Pithamagan along with Suriya , Sangeetha and Laila , playing the role of Chitthan , a gravedigger with autism spectrum disorders . He did not have any dialogue in the film and the actor 's acting muscles were stretched as he had to use body language and facial expressions to convey his feelings and thoughts , with Vikram also applying the make up for the character himself . The film won positive reviews with the critic from The Hindu calling it a " symphony on celluloid " , while noting that it will be a " milestone in Vikram 's career " and " he carves a niche for himself in the viewer 's mind with his expressions and excellent body language " . His portrayal won him both the Filmfare Best Tamil Actor Award and the National Film Award for Best Actor , with the latter accolade making him only the third Tamil actor to win the award . His next release , the revenge drama Arul directed by Hari , garnered poor reviews and box office collections .

Vikram signed on to feature in the action thriller , Anniyan directed by prominent director Shankar in March 2004 . Vikram agreed to shoot for the film for 140 days , which was revealed to be amongst the longest contracts signed by an actor in a Tamil film . The film featured him as a character suffering from dissociative identity disorder with three distinct personae : a meek lawyer , a suave fashion model and a psychotic serial killer . Prior to release , the film was touted as the most expensive South Indian film ever , costing Rs 26 @. @ 38 crores , and released across India with 400 prints . Anniyan took an " extraordinary opening " , went on to become a blockbuster grossing more than Rs.100 crores through the original and two dubbed versions . Vikram 's performance was unanimously praised , with a reviewer from Sify citing that " Anniyan truly belongs to Vikram and the film is unthinkable without him " and " it is a role that could have been reduced to a caricature by a lesser actor " . The film won 8 out of the 15 awards possible at the 2005 Filmfare Awards South , with Vikram adjudged Best Actor . Later in the year , he signed and completed Shafi 's comedy film with Asin , Majaa , in less than five months . The film which also featured Pasupathy as his brother , saw Vikram work as the assistant director under Shafi . Majaa faced a poor response at the box office and fetched average reviews with a reviewer citing that " you will surely find something missing " .

Vikram then signed up for Bheema in October 2005 , with the film facing severe delays and only releasing in January 2008 . The film saw him portray Sekhar , who grows up idolizing the gangster played by Prakash Raj , and Vikram revealed that he approached the film like an actor even though the film 's script was written " for a star " . Upon release , the film gained mixed reviews though reviewers praised Vikram 's performance with a critic claiming that " Vikram breathes life into the film " , " he looks sensational with his toned body , killer looks unarguably delivers yet another outstanding performance of his career " and to " see the film only for him " . Similarly the review from The Hindu was critical of the excessive violence and mentioned that " as narration gives way after a point , Vikram can only appear helpless " . His next release , Kanthaswamy , directed by Susi Ganesan and also featuring Shriya Saran , became the first superhero film in Tamil cinema with Vikram being featured as a vigilante dressed as an anthropomorphic rooster , Kokorako and CBI Officer . Kanthaswamy became Vikram 's most expensive production beating Anniyan , with the film boasting of high production values of having an innovative pre @-@ launch trailer and with scenes shot in Italy and Mexico . The film earned a mixed response from critics with the reviewer from Sify claiming that the film " strikes a fine balance between style and substance " and proceeding to state that " Vikram is mesmerizing and has given an extra dimension to the characters he plays in the film and steers it to the winning post " , suggesting that " there are very few people in Indian cinema who can do the larger @-@ than @-@ life fantasy character as easily as Vikram " . Sudhish Kamath of The Hindu labelled the film as " slow death " , claiming that " as an actor , Vikram has nothing to do "

. The film took a strong opening with a collection of Rs . 37 crore , including Rs . 16 crore in Tamil Nadu , at the box @-@ office in the opening week of its international release . The film subsequently went on to become one of the most profitable films of the year and ran in theaters for over one hundred days .

= = = 2010 ? 2014 = = =

Vikram then featured in Mani Ratnam 's bilingual films Raavanan and Raavan , inspired by the ancient Sanskrit epic Ramayana , with Vikram featuring as the tribal leader , Veeraiya , in the Tamil version and the cop , Dev Pratap Sharma , in the Hindi version of the films which were shot simultaneously . Vikram revealed that changes between the two characters during filming took up to 45 minutes , with Abhishek Bachchan playing the tribal leader in the Hindi version whilst Prithviraj played the cop in the Tamil version , with Aishwarya Rai also in the cast . Vikram was initially apprehensive because both roles were to be shot almost simultaneously but revealed he succeeded by showing differences in his body language and expressions . Vikram revealed that he and Abhishek Bachchan played the roles in the respective versions without inspiration from one another . Despite being a non @-@ speaker and making his debut in Hindi , he dubbed his lines in the language remarking jovially it was the " most difficult thing in the world " . After promotions at the Cannes Film Festival and a premiere at Leicester Square in London , the two versions and the dubbed Telugu version released simultaneously in 2 @,@ 200 screens worldwide and took a big opening on day one earning 20 crores . The Tamil version , Raavanan won rave reviews from critics with The Hindu calling it a " masterpiece " and claiming Vikram " raises the bar higher with every venture " . The critic cited that " emotions of love , animus , anguish and joy dance on his face in quick succession " , concluding that " Vikram lifts the role to an admirable level " . The critic from Sify labelled it as a " astonishing portrayal " , while the critic from the Hindustan Times praised Vikram 's " ability to get into Veeraiya ? s skin and emote with conviction " . The Tamil version consequently went on to become a commercial success , with Vikram 's performance leading to him winning the Filmfare Award for Best Tamil Actor among other accolades . In contrast , the Hindi version fetched mixed reviews with critics agreeing that Vikram 's performance as the tribal leader was more convincing than Bachchan 's . Baradwaj Rangan , writing for The New Indian Express rated the film 4 / 5 and said " Raavan falls for Sita ( and vice versa ) in an intriguingly idiosyncratic take on the Ramayana ? if you can get past the lead performances , that is " whereas Taran Adarsh , writing for Bollywood Hungama rated it 1 @.@ 5 / 5 and said , " On the whole , Raavan is a king @-@ sized disappointment , in terms of content " though mentioning that Vikram was " first @-@ rate , although the role isn 't substantial enough " . Raavan subsequently went on to become a surprise flop at the Indian box office . The film was also screened at the Venice Film Festival and the Busan International Film Festival , with Vikram in attendance .

After two years of discussions , Vikram began a film under the direction of Selvaraghavan in a project dubbed by the media as Sindubad . The film began shoot and completed a schedule by early 2010 in the Himalayas with Swati Reddy appearing as the female lead . However , the film was reported to be momentarily shelved and subsequently never took off again after the producer Singanamala Ramesh walked out . Vikram then agreed terms to feature in Vikram Kumar 's 24 produced by Mohan Natarajan , with Ileana D 'Cruz signed on to play the female lead role . The film progressed briefly with shots being canned in caves , before the director was ousted from the project , cancelling the film . Vikram then also shot briefly for a third successive shelved project directed by Boopathy Pandian for the same producer , featuring him in the role of an investigative cop ; however the film failed to progress and instead Natarajan financed Vikram 's next . His 2011 release , Deiva Thirumagal directed by A. L. Vijay , saw Vikram portray a father with a developmental disability having the mental maturity of a seven @-@ year @-@ old . To prepare for the role , Vikram visited homes for the mentally challenged such as Vidya Sagar and Vidya Sudha for a month , watching their body language and taking notes . He also communicated with the patients , to pick up the nuances of people with impaired speech . Vikram has since gone on to describe his role as Krishna as the best character he has ever portrayed . The film which also featured Sara Arjun , Anushka

Shetty and Amala Paul in supporting roles , opened to predominantly positive reviews from critics and enjoyed commercial success at the box office . The reviewer from The Deccan Chronicle described that the film was " Vikram ? s show all the way " and that " his rendition of a mentally challenged man trying to cope with the everyday realities of raising a child is a work of art " , praising his " fiery , complex performance as one of the more viciously honest depictions of mental illness cinema has seen " . Similarly another critic described that the on @-@ screen chemistry between Vikram and his daughter , played by Sara Arjun , is " magic " and their performances " are sure to leave a lump in your throat " . The critic from The Hindu praised the film and Vikram 's performance but analysed that " a problem arises only when you stop looking at Krishna as a character , and begin to see him as Vikram , the hero " and that Vikram should have " underplayed a little here and there and it would have worked better " . However Vikram once again completed a sweep of the top acting awards that year , with further recognition at the Vijay and Filmfare Awards .

Vikram next featured in Rajapattai ( 2011 ) alongside Deeksha Seth under the direction of Suseenthiran where he played a henchman trying to get a break in the Tamil film industry . The film opened to mixed reviews from critics in December 2011 and performed below expectations at the box office . Vikram also completed half of a fantasy period film during 2011 , Karikalan in which he played Karikala Chola , a Tamil king who ruled in 270 BC , opposite Zarine Khan under the direction of graphics director Kannan , but the film was later shelved owing to production troubles . He then appeared in his second project with director Vijay , portraying the lead role of a blinded RAW agent in the action @-@ thriller , Thaandavam . The film , which also featured Anushka Shetty , Amy Jackson and Lakshmi Rai in pivotal roles , opened to mixed reviews in September 2012 . For his role of a blind man , Vikram trained under noted human echolocation specialist Daniel Kish , with the latter also playing a cameo in the film . A critic from Sify.com noted that it was " Vikram and him alone who diverts your attention from the film 's little logical script flaws and spellbinds you with an endearing act that is Thaandavam 's biggest strength " ; subsequently the film did average business commercially . The actor was next seen portraying the title role in Bejoy Nambiar 's bilingual David , which released with different cast members in Hindi and Tamil . Vikram remained the only common lead actor in the versions , with his segment playing out a love story between a careless drunkard fisherman and a mute girl played by Isha Sherwani . While the Tamil version opened to predominantly positive review , the Hindi film also won mixed reviews , with both films performing average business at the box office .

= = = 2015 ? present = = =

Vikram signed on to collaborate again with Shankar for I , a romantic thriller opposite Amy Jackson , in early 2012 . Following hushed production developments , it was revealed that the actor would sport four significantly different looks in the film : a body builder , a beast , a model and a hunchback . He put on weight to portray the bodybuilder , sticking to a diet of protein and coffee , to ensure his muscles are defined on screen . Vikram subsequently lost weight to portray a model , before shaving his head and reducing his weight to 56 kilograms to portray the crippled hunchback . He changed his physique by eating small meals of egg whites and apples instead of regular food intakes , while engaging in an intensive weight loss regime to become thin . The cast and crew of the film reportedly struggled to recognise the actor at times , while he also stayed away from the media for close to a year when sporting the look . Taking almost three years for production , Vikram described the film " as the toughest he has ever done " and regularly suffered folliculitis as a result of the prosthetic make @-@ up he had to wear . The film opened amidst much expectation in January 2015 to mixed reviews , though critics gave Vikram 's portrayal of Lingesan , unanimously positive reviews . A critic from Times of India noted " Vikram bowls you over with a heart @-@ wrenching performance whether he is handsome or disfigured " , while The Hindu added his transformation was " laudable " , and that " Vikram wins hearts as the earnest @-@ to @-@ boot gym rat and as the strapping new model on the block , he floors the audience with his performance as Koonan , the deformed hunchback " . Similarly Rediff.com noted the actor " is truly impressive and deserves much applause " , while Sify.com added he " lived the role " . Despite mixed reviews ,

I performed well at the box office , as well as becoming the most successful Tamil film of all time in Kerala . He then worked on Vijay Milton 's road @-@ thriller , 10 Enradhukulla ( 2015 ) , which featured him as an unnamed race driver who goes on a road trip through India . Paired opposite Samantha , the film opened to mixed reviews and did not perform well at the box office . A critic from Sify.com however noted Vikram " breathes life to his role and his energy level is highly infectious " , adding that " the way he smiles , dances and fight is a treat for his fans " . Likewise a critic from The Hindu criticised the film 's script adding " it 's hard to see Vikram in this fluff " . Vikram is currently working simultaneously on two different projects , with the first release likely to be Iru Mugan , an action film directed by Anand Shankar , featuring him alongside Nayantara and Nithya Menen . He is also a part of Thiru 's Garuda , where he features alongside Kajal Aggarwal .

= = Other work = =

= = = Film and television work = = =

Apart from acting , Vikram has also been a part of other film @-@ making processes with credits as a playback singer and as an assistant director . In 2000 , Vikram and actress Meena launched a pop album titled Kadhalism , which the pair would sing and appear in music videos for , although the project was completed without much promotion . Following the success of Bharathwaj 's music for Vikram 's 2002 film Gemini , Vikram sang a version of the hit song " O Podu ! " for the extended version of the album . During the making of Kanthaswamy in 2009 , the music composer Devi Sri Prasad had asked Vikram to sing a few rough tracks during the film ? s song composition in Malaysia . The producers were impressed with his voice and Vikram ended up singing four songs in the film . Furthermore , Vikram also recorded all four tracks in the Telugu version of the album titled Mallana . He then went on to sing for a film he was unrelated to , by lending five different voices in " Meghame " for G. V. Prakash Kumar 's album in Madrasapattinam . He sang two further songs under Prakash Kumar for his Deiva Thirumagal , singing in the voice of his character , an adult with the maturity of a six @-@ year @-@ old . In 2011 he sang the song " Laddu Laddu " for his film Rajapattai under composer Yuvan Shankar Raja 's direction . Vikram announced his own production company Reel Life Entertainment in July 2009 and announced that Sasikumar would direct his first film , the action thriller Easan , featuring Samudrakani , Vaibhav , Abhinaya and Aparnaa Bajpai . However , after 90 % of the shoot had been completed , Vikram pulled out of the venture citing that Sasikumar had overshot his budget and the director eventually bought and released the film . The actor however was later listed as one of the three producers for his 2013 bilingual film , David , thereby making his debut in film financing . Vikram has also worked as the assistant director under Shafi in Majaa , and has mentioned he would like to direct a film in the future .

= = = Philanthropy = = =

Vikram has promoted various social causes with several of his charity work being linked to characters he had portrayed in his films . He has been a brand ambassador of Sanjeevani Trust and a school for special children Vidya Sudha , which he stayed at during the making of Deiva Thirumagal . Moreover , he has had a long @-@ term association since the making of his film Kasi with the Kasi Eye Care , which does free eye surgeries for the poor . Vikram has also set up The Vikram Foundation through his fan club to provide heart operations for the poor , educate poor children and rehabilitate victims from natural disasters . Every year Vikram has celebrated his birthday doing charity work across Tamil Nadu and in 2008 , he organised a camp where a thousand of his fans pledged their eyes in an eye donation appeal .

He has lent his support for the Chennai @-@ based charity , The Banyan , and appeared in the charity musical Netru , Indru , Naalai directed by Mani Ratnam for the cause . The actor also starred in the 2010 " Mile Sur Mera Tumhara " music video on national integration alongside a bevy of Indian actors and musicians , describing the experience as " phenomenal " . In 2011 , Vikram was



selected as a Youth Envoy for the United Nations Human Settlements Programme with his aim being to spread awareness about the statutes of U.N Habitat which include urban stabilisation and to help formulate plans for effective water management , slum eradication and women and youth empowerment . Soon after he announced two further social projects , " Karka Kasadara " and " Patchai Puratchi " , with the former being to identify school and college drop outs and help them to stand on their own feet , while the latter was about planting trees with an aim to make Chennai go green . In 2016 , he produced and directed the video to the flood relief anthem , Spirit of Chennai , as a tribute to the city 's volunteers following the 2015 South Indian floods .

= = In the media = =

Since the success of Sethu , Vikram 's intense performances and variety of roles has received critical acclaim . His performances as a rogue turned mentally ill patient in Sethu , a gravedigger with autism spectrum disorder in Bala 's Pithamagan , a Brahmin lawyer with multiple personality disorder in Anniyan and a mentally challenged adult with the maturity of a six @-@ year @-@ old boy in Deiva Thirumagal are all roles in which he played a mentally affected man , with Vikram mentioning he does such roles to reinvent himself on screen . Furthermore , Vikram has enjoyed a large fan following in Andhra Pradesh as a result of a series of successful dubbed Telugu films with Aparichitudu , dubbed from his Tamil film Anniyan , being among the most successful Telugu films of 2005 . All his films are thus released in Telugu soon after their original release in Tamil , while Anniyan was also dubbed in Hindi as Aparichit . He has also enjoyed success in Kerala , where his films have demanded large box office openings akin to Malayalam film stars . In 2004 , Vikram participated in a live stadium stage event organised by producer P. L. Thenappan titled " Vikram Mega Nite " . The event , held in Singapore , attracted several hundreds of his South East Asian fans and was held in the form of a stage musical .

His pan @-@ Indian popularity has also prompted him to be regularly considered for brand endorsements . In 2005 , Vikram was signed as Coca @-@ Cola 's brand ambassador in Tamil Nadu . He has been the ambassador for Brooke Bond 3 Roses , Manappuram General Finance and Leasing Ltd and Josco Jewellers since 2010 . In 2015 , Vikram has endorsed Big Deal TV , a celebrity @-@ driven home shopping channel .

He is amongst the most decorated actors in terms of awards in the history of Tamil cinema . He holds a National Film Award for Best Actor ; a feat only matched by four other actors in Tamil films . Moreover , Vikram holds seven Flimfare Awards South , with the tally being only second to Kamal Haasan who has ten wins . In 2010 his film , Raavan was promoted at the Cannes Film Festival and then screened at Venice Film Festival and the Busan International Film Festival . Within weeks of release , Deiva Thirumagal was sent to the Asia Pacific Screen Awards after it was nominated by the Film Federation of India and the National Film Development Corporation . Vikram is also a recipient of the Kalaimamani Award from the Government of Tamil Nadu in 2004 . Other recognitions includes a string of Cinema Express Awards , Vijay Awards and Tamil Nadu State Film Awards , including recognition in three different categories . In 2011 , Vikram was awarded an honorary doctorate from Università Popolare degli Studi di Milano ( People 's University of Milan ) in the field of Fine Arts . Vikram accepted the title on 29 May 2011 and in his next release , Deiva Thirumagal , he was credited as Dr. Chiyaan Vikram .

= = Personal life = =

Vikram met his wife , Shailaja Balakrishnan , for the first time when he was in crutches , following three years of being hospital @-@ ridden after his broken leg in the late 1980s . Vikram got married to Shailaja in 1992 at Guruvayoor in an event which saw dozens of other couples get married at the same time at the same place . The pair also then had a low @-@ key wedding ceremony conducted at the church at Loyola College , Chennai . She originates from Thalassery , Kerala and now works as a psychology teacher at a leading Chennai school . Shailaja also worked in the team of Deiva Thirumagal by giving professional advice on how people with special needs are treated and helping

develop the characteristics of the character played by Vikram . Vikram has a daughter , Akshita and a son Dhruv , with Vikram suggesting that his son is a keen actor . He resides near the beach in Besant Nagar , Chennai and has stated that he would remain based in Chennai regardless of any offers in other regional films .

= = Filmography and awards = =

= = = Selected filmography = = =

= = = Awards and nominations = = =