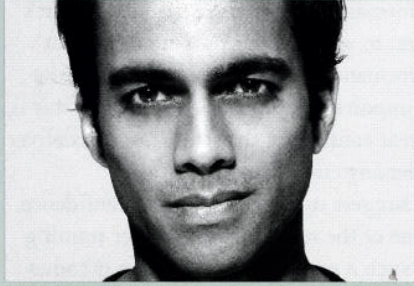


One to Watch Acting



Valmike Rampersad

Valmike Rampersad garnered rave reviews for his performance in *OPEN SECRETS*, with veteran actor Saeed Jaffrey. Prior to this, he starred in the short film *AISHA AND NADEEM*, focusing on Guantanamo Bay. Most recently, he has featured in BBC radio soap *Silver Street*.

What training have you received?

At the start, I trained after work in the evenings and at weekends with a Method Acting coach. After quitting my job, I enrolled full-time at Central School of Speech and Drama. I loved learning about Chekhov and Meisner in particular. I still see my drama coach whenever I have the opportunity. She teaches stuff taken from other areas such as Chi Gong, Tai Chi, etc., and adapts it to acting. Training really is an ongoing process—I learn from every actor and crew I work with. I think ultimately you don't really learn how to act, you learn how to get in touch with your emotions.

What kind of roles attract you?

Probably not surprising, but I enjoy playing characters that challenge and push me. In other words, characters not like me at all. Recently I played a suicidal manic depressive in *OPEN SECRETS*. I learnt to smoke, lost weight and grew my hair so that I could physically transform into the dishevelled character I had imagined when I read the script. I find it liberating not to play up to stereotype. I like characters that have a lot of depth and layers. I'd love to have a crack at some of the roles Christian Bale and Edward Norton play.

What's the best advice that you've been given as an actor?

Never compare yourself to anyone else. It's the most destructive thing to think others are better than you (even if they are!). Concentrate on what you are doing.

Most significant moment in your career so far?

It's still early days for me but I have had some wonderful experiences so far. Acting alongside Saeed Jaffrey in *OPEN SECRETS* was a great learning experience. It was great to see someone with such an established career in the business being as enthusiastic and passionate about his work. I really enjoyed filming my first green screen project *GET TO KNOW ME* at Zentropa studios, because it was a different way of filming for me. My imagination was working double time.

You'll die happy when...

I have fulfilled my ambitions, had some great experiences, enjoyed the company of my family and friends, and can say "I have no regrets." ■

www.valmike.com