

A. VINCENT

Tell us about your family background and whether there was anything in your childhood that turned you towards cinematography.

I was born in 1928. My earliest memory was seeing a darkroom with red light and a small stool. My father was a photographer. I remember that he was always developing and printing in a small room attached to our home way back in 1932, I remember this used to happen as early as when I was three years old. I used to go to the darkroom and look over the dark room table

Photography in those days used varichrome film, panchromatic film came later. Varichrome film used to be developed in a darkroom with deep red light. So, in this way, as a part of growing up, I imbibed the technique of making images in the town of Calicut in Kerala. I need not further explain my transition as a person to photography.

Do you have any strong visual image from childhood that has marked your memory?

The memory of the developing image. As a small child, the transition from a blank film sheet, to the image appearing on it in a grayish neutral shade, ultimately becoming very dark and then, only when it was washed in a solution the base would clear up and a picture would come, in a negative form. I still remember how the hair naturally turned out clear white on film, in the negative image. That is the basic memory that remained in my subconscious mind. Whenever I think about any new technical form or any innovation my mind gives me a flashback of whatever happened after the age of three.

What is your first memory of cinema?

Cinema – as I said, my father was a photographer, a painter, and a bit of a poet, a mixture of all those arts. He was associated with a film theatre (a cinema) where he worked as a part time operator and projectionist and he also used to make the publicity design.

Tell us more about your father's association with the film theatre.

He was associated on a friendly basis. Two theatres were owned by a single owner who was known to my father, and my father used to be a part of the program and shows at this theatre. He was a commercial artist also, and he used to make paintings and designs for the theatre. So during my growing up I was exposed to the visual communication mode existing in those days.

What is your memory of the earliest films that you saw?

I started seeing silent films from the age of about 4-5. There used to be an orchestra and people making sounds behind the screen. I have actually witnessed the transition from silent to sound and I remember seeing the first Malayalam talkie in the year 1936 or so. Because my father worked in the theatre, I used to get an exclusive seat in the theatre, somewhere in the middle stall, and I used to get a tree ticket for all the shows. This was a part of my growing up. I was also exposed to all the literature available on photography at that time – like the British Journal of Photography, Pears Encyclopaedia of Photography etc.

Can you tell us little more about the early Malayalam cinema?

Early Malayalam cinema? In the early days, Malayalam films were made once in a blue moon. Finally, after the year 1947 some film studios started coming up in Kerala. Later on I happened to work in all these. One of the early films I recall is a film called *Mangadmasam* made by Gemini studio. May be it was released in the year 44 Or 50. I still have a vivid memory of the shots and sequences projected on the screen. Vayjantimala's mother Vasundharadevi was the heroine and Ranjan was the hero. I still vividly remember the lighting, especially the way they used the backlight used.

By the way, when all this fuss about bounce light and reflectors started it did not sound very new to me as I was already exposed to the whole process of making photographs from using skylight, using bounced light from the ground, and using back cloth field camera, the one where you see the image upside down. And then I witnessed the transition from slow varichrome film to high-speed camera films like the ones that Ilford Company of Britain used to market - the panchromatic films called HP2, 3, 4. I have seen all the phases of the progress of technical improvements.

When did you take the decision to be a photographer?

In those days Calicut was an out of the way town. May be it had some historical importance because this is where Vasco de Gama landed, but it was still a backward town without much by the way of political and social progress. The college was only up to intermediate, nobody ever thought of becoming an engineer or of becoming a doctor. By chance my father met somebody who happened to be in Gemini's studio in Madras. That's how I joined there as an assistant way back in 1947, just before independence. I was born in 1928, so I was 18 or so. This was the famous Gemini studios which made *Chandralekha*.

The film (*Chandralekha*) was in the process of being made when I joined. Actually I worked as an assistant on that film. Later on, after the release, they shot a part of it again in Hindi using mostly mid shots and mid long to close up shots, for those scenes I was given the chance to work as second assistant to the cameraman Mr. Kamal Ghosh.

What kind of experiences did you have as an assistant and who were the camerapersons that you have assisted?

At that time the famous cameraman (K Ramanathan) was totally in charge of the studio. He is the one who photographed *Kalpana*, the film made by Udayashankar. During the period in which *Kalpana* was being made, as camera assistants, my colleagues and I were allowed are allowed to enter the set and witness the shoot. *Kalpana* was literally very beautiful.

This K. Ramanathan was the director of photography. But I was assisting this other man, a Bengali cameraman called Kamal Ghosh who in his earlier career was related to Nitin Bose. So that's how people say I have a Bengali way of photography. In Madras there was also another cameraman from Bengal called Jiten Bannerjee. He had his own people trained under him, who later took over his type of work, and so on.

So in South India, Madras was the main centre, there were also studios in Coimbatore and Salem, but they were all related to the centre in Madras. Just like the solar system revolves around two or three nodal points, these centres revolved around Madras.

But the most important influence for me was nature. In my transition to a cameraman, I witnessed life in nature in it's raw. I used to watch when there was a storm, and look out for lightening. I still draw inspiration from the memory of a

storm striking the coast of Calicut in 1932. I drew on that vision even recently when I was doing visual effects for a serial.

A lot of those early Malayalam films have storm effects. Storms created in the studio. Like in the film *Neelokari*. Have you seen it?

I was the cameraman in *Neelokari*. That was my first Malayalam film and I was associated in the script writing as well. But it so happened that of the two directors involved, one had small pox. So I had to get involved with everything. The film was made in 1953 in Gemini studio. I had to work in each branch script, camera, art and publicity.

Can you tell us about the relation between cameraman and assistants at that time? Was it like that of a master and a student?

You can't compare that (the cameraman-assistant relationship) with the *Gurukul* method of taking a child under your care and teaching him. Even my father didn't tell me much; it was only through natural curiosity that we came to know about the names of the chemicals used in photography in the first two years of my school.

I was taught in Malayalam but later on I was fortunate to get admissions in a European boys school. The name of the school was St. Joseph's European Boys High School. There I was exposed to a better mode of education and one of my teachers was an Anglo-Indian man. He started teaching us science. He made us learn the subject, not only for us to be prepared for an examination but also for it to remain in our minds.

And at that time a film called *Wizard of Oz* came to one of the theatres. This teacher arranged for our whole class to see this film. This was actually my

first contact with the 'ambition' of cinema. Now they have digitally enhanced it. I don't remember whether it was colour or B&W, but I felt that it was colourful. Recently I got to see a portion of it that they have enhanced in colour. That memory of those houses going up in the air, we are now able to recreate that on film with the 'blue screen'.

One thing that lots of cinematographers say is that when they were assistants the cameramen would not tell them a lot of things.

In those days they (the cameramen) were secretive. Many of the cameramen who were good were/are secretive. I will not mention any names. But let me tell you what used to happen. See, there was this Mitchell diffusion disk, and these cameramen had a habit of rubbing the marking off with a file, so that you would not be able to tell what exactly they were using. Many of them had lots of pockets and they used to tell us that when he is shooting use this one or that one from the pockets. Because my association with the media (photography) I knew about these things, so after 2-3 years I started creating my own diffusers. I had made holes with a diamond laser in an optically flat Belgian glass. You know we used to get this kind of glass that is just right for the 3 inches filter slot.

I used to make grooves on it and polished it with something called Wellington knife polish (it used to come from Britain), it was a brown powder. Take a spoon of it, put it in a glass, and use for whatever it is that you have to grind. You can create very soft diffusion out of it. Then we learnt about heating glass with hydrochloric acid and put wax, scraped out small holes, poured acid and then remove it by wash it off. This acid would create grooves on the glass and that would act as a diffuser. Even today I make my own fog filters with this kind of simple process. People say I have got a very smooth skin. And by

applying Vaseline (American Vaseline, not the Indian one, Indian Vaseline does not suit our climate) to my fingertips I can make any type of fog filters. Most probably my skin has got an absolute temperature that is unique. I am one degree below normal temperature this helps in applying grease consistently on any surface. Usually at normal human body temperature, Vaseline starts melting. But with my skin it does not melt. So you could say that God gives all these things for the creation of creative visual images.

You used to work on a Mitchell camera

Yes, basically a Mitchell camera till recently.

You use to use stockings as well?

Yes I used socks. All these things were done in the 49-53 period, I created rays on the glass itself.

How did you do that?

As I explained, this correct skin temperature, smoothness of the skin and skill, all this comes into it. But I don't use it everywhere. I don't make the faces foggy, because you want attention on faces. If somebody wants a jewel to be picked in a frame, then I would ensure that only the jewel will glitter and not the hand, the hand will be going near the jewel clearly and highlighted in such a way that definition of the image will be crisp.

I tried to tell many people but they didn't have the ideal combination, they didn't have my skin temperature, one degree below normal.

Can you trace for us the kind of learning graph in your career? What I mean is how with each film you faced a succession of technical and aesthetic problems and worked on new solutions.

You know what is evolution. I evolved into a person like that. Necessity is the mother of invention, and for every necessary problem I innovated new methods of work.

So could you tell us about 3-4 problems, which led you to innovative methods?

Lots of Directors come and discuss with me their problems. Even the computer people are not able to understand the visualization they want to create. The person whom I am working with now gives a storyboard. He is a painter and he say he is not compatible to my mode of thought and he is not able to create the particular look I want. Even in Ten Commandants (a tele serial shot by Vincent) you see the colour changes and things like that are done chemically. I can do that; I can even make blood disappear.

Can you tell us, three key sequences in your career, which you think, stand out in technical terms?

See, in earlier days when I was working in Gemini studios under Kamal Ghosh he did this film with Bhanumati and Ranjan based on this film called '*Corsican Brothers*'. The film was called '*Nishat*', so being an assistant I used to help in cutting the mattes but I didn't want to work with the matte system. So I started doing this blue screen process in year 52-53 for B&W photography.

I found out a way of putting a black screen to create masking on the camera. I knew the purpose of using the blue screen and attaching all the

paraphernalia. But I never put a mask on the lens; I use it to work on the lighting. Many assistants and students of mine had taken over that system. See, light normally travels straight but if you place an object in front it bends, so the bending of light is involved here. To avoid all these things, the unwanted light has to be cut of from the area that is to be photographed.

How much would you cut?

That is what I want to explain to you, it wont be much of a problem, because film has got an inherent speed and the blue areas will become black when they are unlit.

So how do you use a blue screen? Is it basically for a double role kind of thing?

Yes, a person (actor) can cross over also if you under light the background and do it with skilful lighting. You won't know that he has crossed over such and such areas. In those areas you can keep it subdued and manipulate your exposure.

So you put a blue screen behind?

Yes, and then rewind and re-expose for the background. Many shots we took more than one time or even two times. Suppose you are photographing a train in movement in two halves. If you take the train this will move. I have found a method of tackling this in such a way in two halves it would not move. You ask a question or pose a problem, I will find out how to solve the problem. No thinking, no sitting and going to the room and smoking a cigarette. I am not a smoker. I don't smoke because I feel smoking will destroy your brain cells. So

your innovative spark will not ignite in your brain. Smoking and drinking is not advisable to a cinematographer.

When you start working on the look of the film, how do you go about it?

As a cinematographer, for all films, whatever language they may be in, I insist on going through the basic script first and get to know the theme of the film and the mood of the film. You have to know all this to think of which lens to use in particular situation. Then you know the use of focal length, how to vary the focal length to create a particular look on the screen.

I have worked with Sridhar, his first film I have photographed, and it was done under the condition that he will be director only if I am the cameraman. In this way I have worked with many new directors, they are all famous now.

When you begin lighting, do you light for the whole frame or do you emphasize certain points in the frame?

The audience should see whatever we intend the audience to see. You know that there is a macular area in the eye. When you aim on an object or highlight a particular object where do you look, you look for the centre point. This centre point may vary but if you study the rules of composition, you will realize that there are some lines towards which your eye will be naturally attracted and if there is anything moving away, your eye will follow along that line and concentrate on a particular spot and if there is nothing in the picture it will move away. The human eye has a particular character of always moving out of frame.

So we never allow the viewer's eye to move out of the frame, and never create an image that is boring. In B&W days we used to fix a particular spot in the

frame where we wanted that the viewers would look, so you can't say I missed it, you can't miss anything.

When this shift to colour happened then you must have had many variables.

In colour, just because colour is there you have to be more careful so that the viewers look at that particular point where the director wants them to look. That's why the cameramen's job is very tough; you cannot put two bounce boards and fill up the whole frame with light just like that. I personally call it lighting for visibility, we used to light in order to pinpoint attention and even in colour filming the method remains the same. There are a lot of ways by which you can make colours look darker or lighter and so create attention.

Now suppose a new cameraman comes and underexposes a film, that is a different aspect. A film is made for a particular specification. A manufacturer may call a particular batch of stock a 500 ASA film but it may really not be so. It is 500 ASA as per a particular standard or specification. It is not 500 ASA for the whole frame so you have to choose the intensity of light you use, the hue, tint and shade.

Also, as far as underexposure is concerned, let us suppose you shoot the film at 500 ASA, but when you do so any subject you are going to photograph will not turn out, it will give you a very faulty and washed out film. You must have seen how after 3-4 copies negatives fail to give you proper print. Now India is one of the countries that has the worst projection theatres, I think you will agree with me on this. They do not have any standard but manufacturer is tying a standard for your negative exposure level and for the print level called gamma. You can overstep that but ultimately the lab will compensate the exposure you are giving,

they are not giving printing exposure. That is why calling a film 500 ASA is wrong unless you want light where you want it, otherwise it will not give you a presentable picture.

Did you work for a 'lit' feeling or for an 'unlit' feeling. Some cameramen make you conscious of the cinematography and some want you to be unconscious of it.

You have seen my films; for instance there is a film in Hindi called *Dil Ek Mandir*, starring Rajendra Kumar.

It is easy to make a frame visible, but it's difficult to make a frame impressive. That requires a high level of technical skill, especially in B&W. In the days of B&W cinema, film only recorded certain shades, maybe 21 or 22 shades in all and some of them remained out of visibility and still others remained within shadows. Now suppose you want to shoot a night scene, people would say that night does not look like night because it's underexposed. The lab does not have sufficient density on negatives to print it down to a certain level, and the projector operator will not be able to give proper illumination on the screen.

You have limitations when you have white on the screen. The pupil of the eye has to react according to the brilliance of the white on screen. If the screen becomes very white, the pupil will tend to reduce in order to diminish exposure to the retina. So, there are a lot of aspects that come into this situation, and you have to work to maintain a reasonable state where the viewers' eyes will not start blinking. In this modern style of cutting, with lots of small bits flashing on the screen, it will give you a lot of eye strain because you are asking the retina to react all the time.

Did your style of lighting change when you moved to working in colour?

That is a very difficult question to answer. The very first film I photographed in my career is (*Kal ne kedar mile?*) and that happened to be the first film to be processed and printed at Gemini studio. Till then all the films were going either to London or to the Technicolor lab and later on to Film Centre lab. Anyway, this work was done at Gemini studio, we started experimenting and the quality they gave us is superb even today. If you look at the print it will look as fresh as it was then, so the processing was quite up to world standard. So transition to colour took place there.

There were lots of problems; one of the problems was colour blindness on the part of technician who handled the job. This problem was overlooked and underestimated by many filmmakers. Same thing with the cameraman also. I can't single out somebody and say this, but unless you go through a test when looking through the camera you cannot differentiate between two pairs of eyes.

Which was the first film on which you were a full-fledged cameraman?

My first film was in Telugu. It was supposed to be photographed by Kamal Ghosh but for some reason he could not do it so the producer-director asked me to take over and to do the whole film.

Did you use a meter while working on this film?

Yes, I used a meter but as a standby. Because of my association with photography I had a good idea of the illumination which a particular film requires in relation to the ASA setting. And we didn't have different grades in printing. We had just one grade. So we had to be very careful about the exposure, so that the viewer's eye would be able to adjust.

What was stock you used for your first film?

We were using mainly Kodak and Agfa film, super pan-normal film, 64 ASA, Tri X, [many average films were on Plus X (Double X)] which used to give a silver tone, light up an artist, so that he will look a like silver statue. Only B&W film can produce that.

Did you communicate with other cinematographers?

Only later on, when I became independent.

Then I took active part in discussions with cameramen like Marcus Bartley, Adi Irani and Jiten Bannerjee. Marcus Bartley was a still photographer as well. They were very good cameramen, the moonlight that they would shoot used to look like moonlight. But the condition of the projectors in the theatres could not cope up with our technical progress in photography.

You are saying that if the conditions of the theatres had been better cinematography could have developed much more?

Not much better, and certainly this was the case earlier, but now the laboratory quality is not up to the mark as well. Again, the same factors come into play; suppose they have to develop 100 prints in three days naturally they will not do it with care. And as for the theatres, they are not spending money. They are just spending a few annas on a carbon rod, which will burn of if you keep it on full amperage level, the carbon will burn if not quickly, then certainly in normal time, so they keep the amperage less and the carbon is getting flatter with use.

What was your relationship with your lab?

In B&W days I used to go for final grading. I never used to process film, in those days I depended on the gamma. I used to tell the lab, process this film to .65 gamma, .66 is lab standard but I used to ask for gamma .64-. 65. This was because I wanted an image that would be a bit softer, where the blacks will not be that black. That's why I explained to you about this 'silverish' tone. Now, if you go down to .62 it will be flattish but you can vary your exposure and change your gamma. This gives you a totally different world. I was personally fiddling with this gamma level, and with the total values to be set up in the lab.

Did you have a different lighting pattern for men and women?

Yes, we were influenced by what we used to call the 'Bengal' style. In this mode of work there would be different lighting for different characters. If two persons started talking (in the same frame) we would try to compromise the tonal values between the two, adjust by filtering or softening effects.

Did you use filters for heroines particularly?

I suppose I would generally not photograph out of focus. One cannot be entirely romantic with photography (ie highly diffused shots) because you have to keep in mind what came previously and to keep your mind open for the transition to the next shot.

Lot of people say one of the things that got affected in the transition to colour was contrast ratio. The contrast ratio of colour film is lower than that of B&W, and that this affected the composition by leading to flattening within the frame.

The contrast level may be lower than technical parameters; then you have to start meddling with the gamma level. In this way you can increase the contrast in colour film. You can also do so by changing your printing light. The lower you go in punching lights the flatter the image will get. The British standard or manufacturer's level - always view this film speed with a pinch of salt – if it says 100 ASA is met at 100 fc of light for a particular subject, it is for what they call the average subject. In India we don't have average subjects. Each person is different. Rajni Kant is different from MGR, Shivaji is different from Nagesh. Indian photographers face different problems, so your mind has to adjust.

Which was the biggest set you ever lit up?

I worked for number of films. There is a film called *Apsara aur Insaan*, starring Sridevi, I did the special effects for that film. Sridevi lands from heavens on earth, and because of this the earth starts glowing. I happened to do all the songs, because my assistant who worked for me for 20 years was doing the photography. He came to me and asked me to help and guide him. Finally they asked me to do a few songs. That was one of the largest sets I had worked upon. For the first time we used five generators. There was a lake, a lot of mountains and a glowing sun. The story of the film says that whatever she touches has to glow. Sabu Cyril (my son in law) was not the art director; he was just out from the art school then. I took him with me and asked him to paint, so this was his first encounter with cinema.

I knew Sridevi well, as I had photographed her first film as a baby when she was five years old. We shot it in colour. She was very enthusiastic when she came to know that I was shooting the film. You must have seen in the film and

how she merges into the atmosphere. All those shots I have created by using double the exposure.

I must add that I used to create a shimmering ocean in the background, and even recently I have done it for Ramamurthy film serial. I have a lot of techniques using silver and gold foil. There is a knack in knowing how to fix it, how you light it, and I was using grease to create that shimmer.

It depends on the character in the foreground and you have to avoid the person, that is why the crucial application of Vaseline. I can apply around the body, and overlapping the Vaseline, without the audience noticing it, so that when the film runs 48 frames this shimmering looks real.

Did you make a conscious effort to use less light?

Every shot or a sequence demands its own method of work. In some sequence suddenly the director may demand to shoot against a real background and ask us to keep the window open, not by using a light or a light covered with cloth as the window. And then suppose a director wants a window in the background. There you can change the size of the window and make it look changed in the same place. Place the character at a certain distance and change the focal length of the lens, so you will get the same view.

I personally developed an idea to balance daylight & tungsten. I mixed both. I always worked with mixed lighting to compromise on side of better.

What are the qualities of an interesting location?

See with changing times, our relationship to locations has differed. Nowadays the cameraman has very little say on the choice on locations. I insisted on going to the location before, just like the art director. If you have gone

to the location before, you can prepare yourself before going to the actual shooting. A good cameraman is someone who adjusts to these things. My second son is working with me and sometimes I send him to do color grading, so I am involved in all the process from scripting to printing. Photography is one aspect of filmmaking where you have to devote full time and energy

Do you have a particular favourite in terms of aperture setting?

Yes, when working indoors I stick to f2.8, it may be high speed or low speed stock. This gives me flexibility in terms of lighting. With 100 and 500 ASA the range is in two stops. When you are using slow film if you light it for 2.8 we cut two stops so that the range increases. We plan before hand, bring the exposure down to 2.8 and do not use slow film. But use the high-speed film instead.

Do you use a spot meter?

No, I don't use a spot meter because it will give you only an exact reading for the spot, not for the frame. I depend on the reflected light meter; where you again have to calculate for the shadow region and for the highlights. I prefer it this way.

Have you done hand held camera work?

Yes, I used a hand held camera in 1953. I worked with a Mitchell camera. I have carried it on the shoulder.

Why did you use the hand held camera?

We had to. There were no cranes and trolleys available at that time, so I created a movement on the shoulder, while sitting and standing. In *Amardeepam* this man's memory goes as a result of a blow to the head, so he ducks by instinct. The camera ducks with him. There is a sequence in which he has to duck in front of the branch of a tree, and on the other side is the same character (in a double role) It was a complicated shot and we had to make the camera duck with him. I remember it was Shivaji Ganeshan who was doing that role.

In this way I have had to do lots of hand held movements and following shots. Way back in 1960 I have taken a shot with Arri IIA, sitting inside a car, and then following the hero and heroine going through the roads of Madras. When they get down we follow them (in the same shot) into a textile showroom. For this shot we had lit up the showroom earlier and we had to synchronize the lighting up of the scene with our entry from the car into the showroom. All this was coordinated only with hand signals, there were no wireless sets available at that time. I shot at about 10.30 in the morning, in those days in Madras, the traffic was not very heavy at that time in the morning.

What about awards?

I didn't get many awards, especially central govt. awards. But I got the Filmfare award for best photography for *Prem Nagar* in 74-75. Last year I received the Andhra Govt. award for a film called *Annammacharya*, directed by Raghavendra Rao.

Can you tell us something about the ratio of payment to the cinematography department in comparison to the money spent in the rest

of the departments of filmmaking, and can you tell us whether you have seen this ratio change?

Is this a relevant question? In those days this was not at all a relevant question. There was no comparison. But nowadays you see, it's a very difficult question to answer because such and such person is paid so much. You must have read about Hollywood artists. They even get 20 million dollars. How can a technician even talk in those terms? Even now, in Malayalam films, we are not paid even 10% of the worth. But they (producers) had made millions of rupees even then.

But, even then, is the ratio of the money, which was spent on the floor during that time and the money that is spent now, the same?

See, personally when I was involved in making a film, at that time the top most artist was paid Rs 5000. In 1953, the budget may have been 1 lakh and 5000 may be with the hero and heroine and the third artist. Nowadays the cameraman is no doubt paid more than in those days. But that is in no way compatible in percentage to the amount spent on the stars. When you are talking about payments in crores for the stars and in thousands for the cameraman, then what is the worth of the cameramen's work. But also, just because nowadays you are photographing a lavish one crore-rupee set, your position and remuneration as a cameraman has not necessarily altered, has it? If they spend one crore on the set, it also means that they will make you work night and day to get the benefit out of what they are spending. It means that we have to stay awake till 5:30 in the morning, break and then come back after two hours for the next shift at 7:30 in the morning. That is the work of 1 crore. But does this conform to our subject of discussion?

We are also trying here to get a sense of the work conditions for a cinematographer in the industry, and we are trying to see this over time.

You know that's a very sad point.

I had an active working life of 52 years. But actually my working life began when I was a child. Early in the morning I used to get up and go to the studio, clean up the dust in my father's studio, arrange the water etc., and then go to school, come back to the studio in the afternoon and then work again.

Nowadays people talk about child labour. I was a child when I worked in the photography studio. I liked to work. And this continued when I became a cameraman. We worked because we liked it, but because of that, in the bargain, there was no overtime, no Dipawali, no Christmas, nothing. In spite of all those things, we worked.

And there are some producers who will not pay you anything, they will give you some token advance, you will work for 2-3 months and if you say anything about the payment then they will find someone else.

What do you think about the new digital cameras that have now been introduced?

With these digital cameras, it is as if we are again going back to the basic box camera. Lenses do not have proper resolution, they are compensating the cost of production by using cheap plastic, making it light weight - that's why I say that it is going back to the box camera level.

I have worked with all the modern cameras. None of the changes in the film field have affected my work because I was stepping ahead. I think my brain refuses to stay away from a particular stage.

But they (new technologies) will come to stay. May be the format will change like it did with cinemascope. Once there was 3D then 3D film went out.

It has to continue. The creativity has to continue. We have to try to think out how and where the equipment can best be put to use.

What do you think is the difference between film and video?

Video image is far inferior to the film image. In this there is a generation loss. You have to digitally enhance the depletion of colour you have in the image which is lost in storage, electrical disturbances, etc. You have this problem of lighting values because it is working in reverse to our negative.