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His clay models make Aamir's 'Taare...' twinkle

Kumar Manish | TNN

Ahmedabad: Colourful fish floating in the air, sword fish and sea horses jostling for space, stars and planets giggling and coming alive on screen, the hare and the tortoise playing see-saw together and dolphins jumping into floating clouds.

If this three-minute dream sequence in Aamir Khan's blockbuster 'Taare Zameen Par' brought those fairytale moments alive and touched your heart, thanks this Gujarati animation film designer from Surendranagar and an National Institute of Design (NID) graduate, Dhimant Vyas.

Vyas, who is based in Mumbai now, worked painstakingly for two months to etch out the protagonist Ishaan's lively imagination on the screen. He headed a team of four working on this special sequence. "I got in touch with Aamir Khan during the making of the special anniversary edition three-disc-DVD for 'Lagaan'. I made the caricatures of the main characters for the special edition which he liked a lot," says Vyas.

"When Aamir decided to use animation for 'Taare Zameen Par', he approached me. He initially wanted to use the classical animation style with an artistic touch to it. I suggested trying the clay animation tech-



Dhimant Vyas

nique and showed him some interesting samples which he liked. We then decided to go ahead with clay animation," adds Vyas.

Vyas, who hails from Ramarda village of Surendranagar district, has a diploma in applied arts from K K College of Fine Arts in Vallabh Vidyanagar and then specialised in animation film design from NID. Vyas is now working for Shekhar Kapoor's film 'Pani' which involves concept art and storyboards.

"Aamir was not interested in using human characters but mostly elements from nature, and clay technique fitted the bill. Making clay toys is also a part of growing up. Aamir gave me complete creative freedom for the dream sequence," he added.