

Srikanth: A Film Review

Reviewed by
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“Sir, Newton ne gravity jaroor discover ki thi, par iska matlab ye nahi ki usse pehle apple kisi ne girte huye nahi dekha hoga. Par kisi ne gravity ke baare me nahi socha hoga sir. Uske liye aakhe nahi chahiye.”

This visionary statement extends a profound invitation to young minds, urging them to trust in their unique potential and explore new things with confidence and an individualistic approach. It certainly goes beyond a compelling message, reminding them that their vision is as extraordinary and unique as any renowned figure or celebrated icon, empowering them to discover their distinctive identities.



Cinema has always been one of the most potent vehicles for expressing fundamental concepts and truths, using symbolic themes and real-life events of prominent figures to inspire the world. Countless stories on the big screen have affected people's lives, setting examples and leaving a lasting impression on society. One such amazing example shines through the silver screen with the Hindi biopic Srikanth released in May 2024.

The phrase "Some people are destined to create history" perfectly embodies the journey of Srikanth Bolla, a visually impaired industrialist and the founder of Bollant Industries. His amazing life has been wonderfully shown in the film, highlighting his unwavering will to overcome hardship despite several failures. This cinematic narrative powerfully captures his determination to rise above challenges and make a lasting impact. This film, starring Rajkumar Rao as Srikant, has been well accepted by audiences of all ages, particularly school and college students, as well as parents who want their children to be motivated by this excellent personality. Garnering a strong response from audiences and becoming a widely discussed topic in the digital world, the film achieved an impressive 8.2 rating on IMDb.

Plot

This biopic narrates the life of Srikanth Bola, an Indian entrepreneur who gained huge recognition as the founder of Bollant Industries, which employs differently abled individuals and freshers to create eco-friendly products. The narrative begins with the birth of a boy in the traditional family of Seetharamapuram village in Machilipatnam. The kid is named after cricketer Krishnamachari Srikkanth by his father in a joyous environment. The celebration, unfortunately, does not last long, and soon they realise the truth of the visual disability of the newborn. The father can't bear the hard truth and wants to bury the infant to save him from the hardships of life due to his impaired vision, but God has other plans for him, and the mother saves his life. As the boy grows, his life's hustles and obstacles multiply with each step. The incidents show how disability becomes a curse for an innocent early in his school life, questioning our empathic conduct as a society. Despite these hurdles, Srikanth excels in school; nonetheless, he is expelled due to behavioural concerns. However, as we all know, life never closes all doors for us. Srikanth, too, receives hand-holding and mentorship from teacher Devika, who never abandons her supervision and helps him file a court petition to study science, the stream not allowed for differently abled students. As the chronicle moves further, Srikanth Bolla's journey proves a testament to overcoming challenges. He firmly refuses to let his blindness be seen as a weakness *"Mujhe bheekh nahi mangni hai teacher. Mujhe padhna hai teacher"*, in his pursuit of education and career in the mainstream. His battle to study science showcases his determination, resilience, and persistent desire to live a life of his choice shrugging all his limitations. Further, Devika's encouragement inspires him to apply for foreign scholarships, and his efforts are rewarded when he gets admitted as the first international visually impaired student at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology after being denied admission at the Indian Institute of Technology. As he confidently says: *"India ke kisi bhi college ne jise paise bhar kar bhi admission nahi diya, usse duniya ke top 4 universities ne scholarship deke bulaya hai."*

MIT helped him meet his dreams, and make new acquaintances. Now the life showers the drops of love in his life, and now enters Swathi as a friend through social media and later on his love interest. Swathi encourages him to fulfill his dreams and return to his nation. Returning to India, he starts a computer institute, unfortunately, the venture proves to be a failure. After a couple of trials, he finally founded Bollant Industries with the support of his partner Ravi Mantha, resulting in the history we all know today. Srikanth Bolla's revolutionary attitude *"I want to give more chances to students like me, because all we need is an opportunity"* paved the way for his success making him a living example for present and future generations.

Characters

Rajkummar Rao's performance as Srikanth Bolla is nothing short of spectacular. His performance is both forceful and subtle, conveying Srikanth's enthusiasm tenacity, and high self-esteem. Rao's ability to portray profound emotion and power through his character is genuinely admirable, making this one of his best performances to date. Additionally, the character of Srikanth's friend and investor Ravi Mantha played by Sharad Kelkar, and Jyothika's memorable performance as Devika Malvade who portrays Srikanth's teacher bring depth and realism to the story and help shine Rao's lead role brilliantly, adding to the film's emotional and uplifting tone. They all collectively contribute to a memorable silver screen experience for the viewers. Other characters too have played their part superbly weaving the story in one convincing thread from beginning to end. Who can forget beautiful Alaya as Veera Swathi, Srikanth's friend, and beloved, Jameel Khan in an impressive role as A. P. J. Abdul Kalam, Srinivas Beesetty as Sri's father (Damodar Bolla), and Anusha Nuthula as Sri's mother (Venkatamma Bolla). Collectively, they all have succeeded in making the film a must-watch for everyone.

Direction, Cinematography, and Music

Undoubtedly, the director Tushar Hiranandani kept a sensitive eye on minute details focusing on a comprehensive narration. Every frame has been painstakingly constructed to further the narrative in this visually spectacular cinematography. The movie gains a depth of visual poetry from the use of light and shadow complementing the justified settings of scenes.

At the same time, music contributes to the emotional depth of the story tremendously. The song "Papa Kehte Hai" is a treat to the year, and succeeds in maintaining the sentimental tone, and emotions of the movie. As a whole, the story develops a brilliant piece of inspiration on the big screen.

Closing Note

Indian cinema has profoundly earned a great status worldwide through its brilliant narration of remarkable pieces. We have a legacy of wonderful films, particularly the biopics of eminent personalities. Certainly, these films not only entertain but educate society and generations in many layers. Srikanth is one such cinematic gem which apart from chronicling a convincing story of a man's journey from rags to riches, hits our senses with dialogues like "*Visually impaired students ke liye Indian education system mein science ka option hi nahi hai*". Srikanth's declaration "Kuch bura nahi hua hai humare saath, aur bechare toh hum bilkul bhi nahi hai" will keep inspiring the young minds for generations who at times lose focus in the

face of adversities, and surrender to the circumstances. No doubt Srikanth secures its place as an exceptional cinematic experience that captivates from start to finish.

Finally, the film brilliantly conveys the message that a dream is not what you see in sleep, but the one you live awake to actualise it.

Note: Dialogues used in this article have been taken from the movie, and the image is abstracted from IMDB- <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt23790740/>