





Ashish Avikunthak

Glossary of Non-Human Love

2021

Duration: 94 mins

Preview: 28 May | 7 pm – 8:30 pm

On view: 31 May – 4 June

Screening time: 7 pm – 8:30 pm

The future-yet-to-arrive is the present-we-live-in. To make a film about our future today is to invoke a present that is lost in past. For the first 21 years of the 21st century we lived in a future that not only arrived staunchly but has steadfastly become our grim past.

Our future is a parallel universe that exists here and now because there is nothing new about the future. We live in a derelict future that has already been imagined in someone's fiction. We are not living in someone's dream; we are living in someone's story that has already been told, not once but many times.

Our present is a bureaucratic nightmare that Franz Kafka anxiously inscribed in *The Trial* (1924); a catastrophic epidemic that Albert Camus fervently portrayed in *The Plague* (1947); a fascist despotism that George Orwell described in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949); a viral deformity that enervates our sense of being that Jose Saramago forebodingly apprehends in *Blindness* (2004). Here future is a weary past that is debilitatingly embodied in our delinquent present.

Our 2001, was not the sanitized opulence of Stanley Kubrick's *Space Odyssey* (1968) that was infatuated with its own impotent inventiveness. It was the first year of a new millennium when two fast moving Boeing 767s pierced the World Trade Centre in less than 20 minutes and started a war that has killed millions for over two decades. Our present has become the future of Andrei Tarkovsky's space station in *Solaris* (1972) that resembles a ravaged, crippled, and abandoned world in which we search for unrequited love that is unfortunately a simulacrum which cannot be consummated.

Our 2015, was not the romantic technocracy of *Back to the Future II* (1989) that Marty McFly enlivens, but it was more like a disheveled landscape of Andrzej Żuławski's desecrated and fractured *On the Silver Globe* (1989), in which we incessantly search for an absent messiah who perhaps knows what we really don't want.

Today, we live in a present in which Gods, ghost and bots have become one. Here divine intervention is technocratic invention. It is not merely one proverbial butterfly that flapped its wings in Johannesburg and caused an earthquake in Jhumri Telaiya. Billions of butterflies are flapping their wings concurrently and this venerable earth is getting warmer irrevocably, day-by-day, minute-by-minute. Today, a microwave used to re-heat a dried, cold Neapolitan Pizza in a desolate suburb of New Jersey causes flooding in the hyper congested Dhaka. This is not some dystopic future, but it is our bipolar present.

Our now is a forlorn future that is hurtling towards a world proliferated not just by humans but also by nonhumans—convoluted forms that occurs in a state beyond being human. Invisible algorithms, labyrinthine codes, unbreakable ciphers, and tortuous cryptograms copiously wrapped in electromagnetic waves now stoutly control our collective imagination, endlessly archive our infinitesimal desires, and comprehensively colonize our affective universe. We live in a nonhuman present in which we must constantly prove our humanness.

Don't you not get exasperated when you must solve inane picture puzzles to show that you are human on your bank's website that holds your life's hard-earned savings? Have you not panicked when the super-fast elevator taking you to the 27th floor of your glass-faced office got stuck between 17th and 18th floor? Have you not cursed the junked nail that punctured your Enfield motorcycle tyre when you were savoring that once in a lifetime solo trip in Ladhak? Have you not tightly shut your eyes in-front of your neighborhood Ganesh temple and prayed for the wellbeing of your adorable daughter?

Nonhumans are everywhere even inside us—remember your father's cardiac pacemaker device that freaks out metal detectors in air-conditioned terminals? In this world densely populated by nonhumans we must not just be human or appear human but also perform humanness.

My film *Glossary of Nonhuman Love* is a wrinkled parchment about such an insecure future that exists in our precarious present but is delicately sutured to our dilapidated past. A future that is as devastatingly decrepit as our perilous present and our pungent past. Here artificial intelligence has possessed our humanness. In this present-as-future, non-humans unknown to us chaperon our lives, our rage, our indignation, our solidarity, our comradeships, our exhilaration, our despondency, our longings, our affections, and our intimate yearnings that is even unknown to us.

These nonhumans entities don't merely conduct our being, they have become us, or rather we have become them. It is a world where humans have become nonhumans, like a cryptic algorithm whose formula has been dislodged in the sinews of our neural network that has been permanently incapacitated by Alzheimer's.

This film is about such a parallel universe that simultaneously exists in our present space-time continuum. Here nonhuman can be bots; but they can also be divine spirits from our traumatized past that has discreetly possessed us. They can be furious Goddesses from a primordial era that will not abandon our distraught souls. They can be revolutionaries from a fortuitous future that is more unfortunate than our fissured past. Who knows?

The only thing we know is that these Gods, Goddesses, bots, spirits, or algorithms have colonized our senses, subjugated our humanness, subverted our desires, and made us efficacious nonhuman. However, they have not been successful in forsaking the idea of love.

Glossary of Nonhuman Love is an extract from their Operation Manual.

In sixty-four words, this film defines multiple contingencies in which the emotional lives of human beings are colonized by the divine possibility of nonhumans. The film wonders what does it mean to be human in this world infested by nonhumans?

Ashish Avikunthak



A Cosmos of Love?

In a grey, internal courtyard, two kids play an interminable game of badminton, smacking a shuttlecock parabolically over a central well, from one side to the other. Their concentration is palpable. Slowly, our eyes tire of following the shuttle, tire of waiting for a mistake. We shift our focus to the picturesque courtyard and notice a woman in a saffron kurti, standing facing us from across the well. Inexplicably, before we tire of her too, the scene ends. According to the opening credits, *Glossary of Non-Human Love* is an extract from an operating manual of the same name, for artificially intelligent beings in a parallel, simultaneous universe. In that universe, having possessed humans, the beings, "...have not been successful in forsaking the idea of love."

The scene described above, with its slapping game of badminton and a statuesque woman, is a glossary entry in this operating manual, about "disaffection." It is typical of the many scenes in *Glossary*.

In "Affection," the scene before, the camera scans down from a ceiling within an unmaintained haveli, and then cuts to the courtyard described above. This time, one sees two women, one seated on the well wall, and the other standing beside her. And then it cuts again to doorways under which women bare themselves in the much the same way as statues on temple walls, reliefs, and compounds. But they aren't seated in niches or on a relief, but in the doorways to toilets!

If I have given the impression that Avikunthak's work has a narrative from one scene to the next, affection to disaffection, or is filmed, juxtaposing pretty and not-so-pretty backgrounds, then let me correct myself about both the form and content. The *Glossary* contains many entries filmed in recurring locations, lending the feel of some kind of narrative, or teleology. And so too, some of these words—such as affection and its opposite, or desire or intimate—can be found within the cosmos of what we'd consider "love." The Inuit really do have fifty words for snow: how many do we, humans, have for love? Are "persistence", "purity", and "phenomenon" among them? Are they terms for a love that we know, understand? I can only speculate.

Sure, if we follow the opening credits, in a synchronous, parallel universe, "Artificial Intelligence *have* possessed human beings," but why is the verb plural? Even the title gives me pause: would AI need a glossary of *non-human* love? Surely, they already know about non-humans, what they need to know is *human* love. Perhaps I am being overly technical, a grammophile to the core. Let's say we are to understand the opening as "Artificial Intelligence *has* possessed human

beings” and the film is indeed a glossary of *human* love distilled for individuated Artificial Intelligences...then whether narrative or not, whether within our cosmos of love or not, we still cannot make heads or tails of the work’s form: neither a filmi narrative, nor concretely any kind of searchable, usable, glossary. The content defies the form.

So let’s forget about our understanding of love and longing and beginnings, middles and ends. At least we can say this is not a film in which our own prejudices and preconceptions guide us.

Except. Except, except, except. Except for the non-human part. How are discussions about “love” framed? Time and again, like mirages against a drab background, we are given clues. We see characters from Bengal’s Jatra theatre tradition haunting the camera’s frame. Kali and Durga walk down the street as part of a small gang. Later, they survey their domains from atop the aforementioned haveli’s roof. At nearly every moment, the Jatra characters’ presence seems otherworldly. As if to lend credibility to their presence, add some veracity and gravity to such apparitions, the camera movement remains random. We are inserted into the scene. We are at once running from their presence and also walking with them. They too, have something to do with love.

Love, in *Glossary of Non-Human Love* begins with characters—the AI possessed humans—discussing a girl and a dark-skinned youth. The artificially intelligent beings jog their memories, hit refresh, and slowly start their learning process. For the majority part, love here is about Radha, Krishna and other gopis who are often jealous—jealousy too, is a scene in *Glossary*. Woven into the glossary, one also finds Gandhari’s love for her son, Duryodhana, as well as Shiva’s iconic phallus, and the imagery of Kali, Durga, her lion, and Mahishasura. And this is where

things get complicated: as we listen or read the dialogue, we wonder what kinds of love the AI is actually learning about. It seems like all examples of love come to them from divine and semi-divine figures. Divinity being, of course, a kind of artificial intelligence of its own, the original artificial intelligence, *svayambhuva*. So, who’s learning what, and from whom?

The entries are set in multiple locations, each of which provides its own mood: a bedroom, a classroom, a staircase, an upper middle-class apartment, a slightly more modest apartment, a forested area, on the river Hooghly, an inner courtyard, outside a temple, near some train tracks, outside a latrine, in hallway, on a porch, among others. Watching the dramatization of these entries—which contain few movements that seem “natural”—one wonders: does it matter where they are? Often, the compositions have the feel of a formal arrangement and exercise that Avikunthak has composed. I would be perfectly happy to hang a couple of stills on my apartment wall! For example: the third shot in “vagina”, in a bedroom. A male actor stands against a wall, head slightly tilted away from the camera and towards the window on his right. A female actor reclines on a regal bed, resting her left elbow on a bolster. Unlike an odalisque, she gazes out the window, and a soft light shining through illuminates her face, green sari and red blouse. The colours and sari’s drape feels romantic, heavier than fabric, as if from a painting. And indeed, the actors barely move, becoming part of the composition, as if painted.

We are so taken by the composition, we may forget the dialogue.

But the characters do converse, albeit in a mechanical way for the most part. Once, I worked at a centre whose focus was the study of human emotions, historically. We often joked, gesturing like stiff robots and



speaking in mechanical voices: “what is hu-man love.” It wasn’t a question: questions are tonal, not like the mechanical always-statements of the robots of parody. Avikunthak’s actors too, play characters whose artificial intelligence has not fully grasped tonality in its spoken language. Often, their dialogue verges on the comic, absurd, and reminds us of Henri Bergson’s idea of humour. According to Bergson, humour is something rigid, mechanical, grafted onto a human body, which ought to be more flexible, elastic, spontaneous. From this angle, the film betrays comic overtones, with the AI-possessed humans’ movements and speech unable to rise to the passionate caprice of the gods they speak about. Like the composition of shots, dialogues spoken in such a manner are difficult to parse. There is little emphatic intonation to guide our ear, undercutting the dialogue’s ability to sustain our interest. But perhaps that’s the point. The AI is learning dialogue, reciting the lines, and learning the part, but not ready to perform. Or, perhaps, Avikunthak can do a re-take when they’re ready!

Owing to the film-maker’s process, the images and the spoken words don’t straightforwardly relate to each other. He writes his dialogues, thoughts, and observations in English, he works with a translator who transforms his writing into a formal Bangla that is rarely, if ever, spoken. But rather than dialogue per se, the actors are then given their lines when and where he may find them appropriate—a short sail down the Hooghly may inspire one part of the dialogues, and so, those are dished out to the actors, while a stretch of woodland or a bedroom, or a classroom, or courtyard, may inspire another. Thus, the dialogue chafes against the settings and the framing terms (rebirth, ability, fierce, etc...) displayed as in the intertitles of the silent film era. The film asks us to make sense—perhaps make sense where even the director wasn’t

always clear. What kinds of meanings can we find the juxtaposition of the image and sound, between the script and the setting?

We may enter these scenes, therefore, through many gateways—the images, the dialogues, the production process—but I have left out history. History too, is a lens, and the film’s takes on the human body, especially the nude body, ask us to think historically. When we have been conditioned to view the nude human body sexually, with a sense of titillation. But history—at least the history writ large upon our temples, tells a different story, in which sexuality and its excess function neither entirely pornographically nor entirely didactically. The scenes at Khajuraho, Konark, Modhera (the most famous ones), in addition to countless others, are neither akin to our disenchanted realm of pornography, nor can they be succinctly understood as forms of “public education”—common explanation from embarrassed uncles and tour guides. As if someone, seeing some image on a temple wall, decided what recourse to take in that evening’s intercourse! No, we know that temples were exclusive spaces, spaces of privilege patronized by the wealthy, by royalty, with priests as intermediaries. These were spaces that celebrated the divinity of the human body, in all its forms, one of which was its sexuality. And it was a privilege to do so. Maybe there’s something of such a history in the film as well, an attempt to engage with that past. But we, as viewers, we moderns, are stuck in our contemporary Victorianism: prude to the core, aghast by the mention of sexuality, repulsed (but not quite!) by the human body.

My students, for example, are uncomfortable with moral ambiguity. They like poems to “mean” something stable, for novels to be representationally safe, and to consume media with a moral undercurrent. Recently, while attending a talk-back in a theatre, one

member of the audience complained that the director had left things too ambiguous, “What is the message!” He thundered. Once again—not a question, but a demand. It seems adults also want their media to coddle them, be soft on their sensibility. To them, I say, don’t watch this film. Because you won’t find clarity, nobody’s going to hold your hand and show you how. In our rule-bound society, we are trained to desire clear answers. We gloss over potentially disruptive topics for the sake of convenience. It helps us remain comfortable, complicit, and complacent.

But *Glossary* offers no such certitude, and our only complicity is sitting through it, letting it inundate us with scene after scene in which the setting, dialogues, and imagery do not cohere in expected ways. In which nude members may comically flop around during mechanical exercises. But our task remains as with all works of art: to be amused and confused, continue to make our own connections, ask questions knowing that we will not find a stable answer.

Kedar A. Kulkarni

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The Stoic Habits of Reduction

A pattern develops around Ashish Avikunthak’s films, especially among his last few. The very mood is deliberately repetitive. *The Glossary of Non Human Love* (না মানুষ প্রেমের কথামালা) is perhaps the most minimal of his productions. It is an anti-plot film, with no space given to any affective ecology. The film is strung together by sixty-four glossary entries, each standing in for the sixty-four *yoginis*, the sacral female force made incarnate in the Puranic and the Tantrik traditions. The *yoginis* are the liminal figures standing at the cusp of the divine and the mortal. In the mythical sources they sometimes appear as bloodthirsty sorceresses,

and on other occasions, as semi-monastic, celibate and esoteric seekers of occult power or *siddhis*.

Indeed, *The Glossary* is a quest to reach the antiquarian foundations of a whole civilization. Right at the outset an actor/actant tells us about the presence of a parallel universe to which we shall soon be privy, should we be mindful enough. The film is also a quest to attain cinematic minimalism. The glossaries, collectively, are part of an intellectual toolbox as it were, a formal device that helps to suture a narrative that does not have a plot. The sixty-four entries limn the dialogues and the frames.

Among themselves, the glossaries effectively build a tapestry that revolves around the questions of attachment and victory, desire and amnesia, violence and play. And these material desiderata lead to anguish and eventual catastrophes. The detached anguish is man-made and yet is inevitable. It is necessitated by an eternal return of mortal quests that can only be observed from the astral plane of a deep anthropological habitat — cinematically gestured at here. There is hardly any deliverance or metamorphosis at the end of the journey, for the journey is but a circular, eternal quest—there is only psychosocial continuity and connectedness among the interlocutors.

The most fundamental leitmotif concerns the nature of affection and disaffection (taking forward the themes of *Vrindavani Vairagya*). Attachment is deeply sensual, and yet the triggers of such sensuality can be decoded. There are certain rites and rituals of courting, falling in love, of lovemaking itself and severe *viraha*. Hence, the very process is

enumerative and astral, what an entry in the film calls *prem korar prokaron*—the many tools of conducting the business of love. The romantic motif is seamless and fluid. Violence is inevitable between the genders and lovers must turn blind inside the pink pool of attachment. Those engaged in the repetitive quest of attachment are butterfly like creatures; they become companions to and corrupt the lungs of other floating and attached beings. The *yoginis* wish to rid themselves of the curse of attachment and violence, but are repeatedly mired in the cursed web. Lost among their world, at times the consultative females (often impersonally designated *janaika*) assert that they have created the other gender as the savior principle, trying to save men from themselves and as a protective force for the females. Genders are but construct—hallucinations, mere churnings of mortal desires.

The rites of attachment are relentless and indifferent. Lovers decide to impregnate certain bodies and seek pleasure in others. The participants are at once aware of these cycles of violent desire and yet willfully decide to submerge in the rose-tinted basin of romantic ties. The *yoginis* chortle as they realize the truth about the hard ritualistic repetition involved in the seeming variations of all erotic possibilities. It is telling that in two entries (Gloss # 33 and # 34), *leela* and *paramananda* are at once expressed as Dalliance; pure mortal pleasure is also a surpassing astral hallucination.

To the attached being, casual hurting and being hurt is as essential a quality as limitless giving. Certain creatures fly. They travel in the ethereal region. Others give birth. Still others function in the dark netherworld. It is easy to delude oneself into multiple forms of attachment, and carry on



with the eternal rites. And it is here that there seems to be a double move in Avikunthak's imaginative palate.

On one hand, his last few films are clearly critical testaments to our fevered times, commentaries on the repetitive excesses and the fallout of violent desire in our world, the devastating effects of wishing to remain forever young and addicted to flash and glam. It is a discursive addiction. The inevitability of a perpetual emergency comes most vividly in his earlier film *Aapothkalin Trikalika*. The nature of such emergency could be varied and various: medical, political, financial or personal. But each has an existential root, challenging the well-being and claim of a settled spiritual habitat. It follows that we are mired in a world of cannibal metaphysics, to invoke the anthropologist Eduardo Viveiros de Castro; the borderline between humans and the animistic has been erased in contemporary living. The hallucinogenic has infiltrated the deepest recesses of our world.

On the other hand, Avikunthak's films mark the limits of finitude, of our knowing helplessness when stranded at the doors of the inevitable and eternal civilizational principles of repetitive misery. True, modernity and clinical science have disturbed forever "the locus of all our care and endeavours," our 'surrounding world' or *umwelt*, as Edmund Husserl would call such a locus in his monumental *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*. But can the excesses of modernity be ever fully exorcized? Thwarted thus, *The Glossary*, at its very centre, therefore begins to mark the equity of existence. One must be attentive to the rites of desire and learn to practice endurance. For wounding and being wounded are also at once a necessity and an illusion. Gloss # 63

constitutes a remarkable frame in the very practice of *reductive attention*, where a player concentrates on playing the harmonium, a seemingly innocuous musical instrument but one that requires utmost attention (*nishtha*) in mastering its respiratory reeds. There are other such tropes of attentiveness, spread across the film: cycling, board games, purposeful perambulating by the cyborg like creatures. Sometimes, the film takes recourse to other wellsprings in order to rummage around among the roots of the pre-modern, which lie dormant beneath the contemporary: for instance, Avikunthak repeatedly invokes the power of storytelling/*vak* and recounts certain mnemonic memory tools. These mark the habits of a sluggish civilization; not any freedom from the permanence of emergency. Gloss# 47 and # 48 name *prapancha* and *shohoj* both with the same designation: Innate. Living is learning to practice the delusional. It is another name for participating in the gradual process of an internal reduction, by way of accelerating the permutations of desire in daily existence.

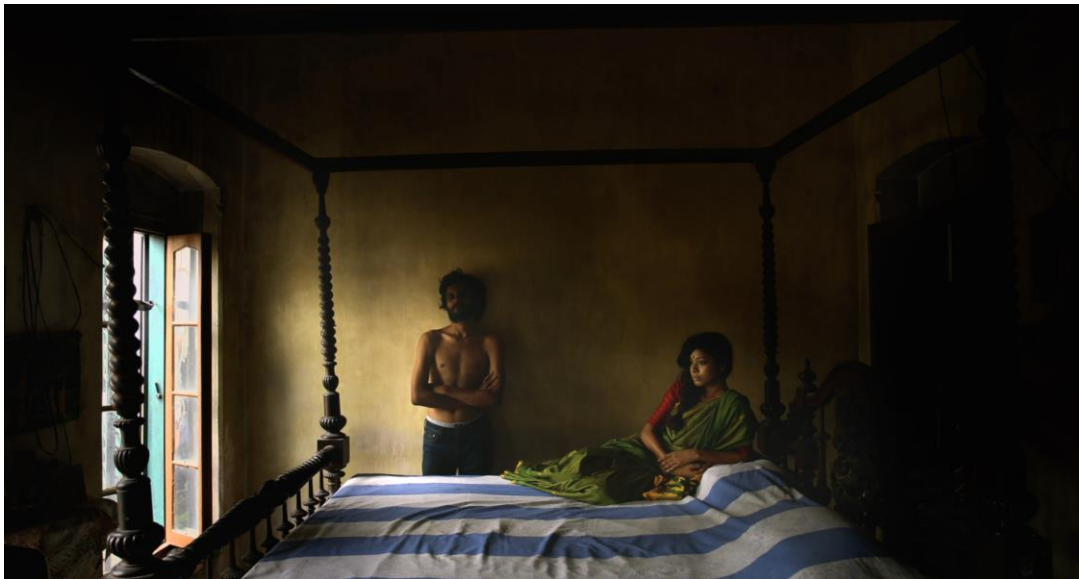
Avikunthak is clearly reenacting a dialogue and trying to revive, cinematically, an existing bond between our times and a much older tradition that quietly flows within the recesses of all that is modern. The immediate mediators in his cinematic quest are the early indigenous practitioners: the early films of Dadasaheb Phalke, the documentaries of S. Sukhdev and the mature Mani Kaul, that of *Siddeshwari* and *Satah se Uthta Aadmi*.

All around there is the relentless flow of life; only the initiated are able to catch a whiff of the slow power of the hallucinatory in the deepest caverns of subcontinental living. In a world that wakes up everyday to be

entertained, even with the news of the nameless dead and the destitute, Avikunthak recreates and cultivates the habits of despair. *The Glossary* is a civilizational conversation in such a minimal ritual practice. The toolbox approach severely reduces the possibility of any message laden moral commitment and takes us to the world of stoic preparedness in the wake of relentless calamities. To that extent Avikunthak's last few films are as much a critique of the contingent as they are a reflection on the static core of all flow that informs our lives.

Prasanta Chakravarty

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Love: A Scene of Language

"The necessity for this book is to be found in the following consideration: that the lover's discourse is today of *an extreme solitude*. This discourse is spoken, perhaps, by thousands of subjects (who knows?), but warranted by no one; it is completely forsaken by the surrounding languages: ignored, disparaged, or derided by them, severed not only from authority but also from the mechanisms of authority (sciences, techniques, arts). Once a discourse is thus driven by its own momentum into the backwater of the "unreal," exiled from all gregariness, it has no recourse but to become the site, however exiguous, of an *affirmation*. That affirmation is, in short, the subject of the book which begins here ..."

Roland Barthes, *A Lover's Discourse: Fragments*, Fragment 1

"The image is peremptory, it always has the last word; no knowledge can contradict it, "arrange" it, refine it.

Fragment 47

In keeping with a lover's discourse, Ashish Avikunthak's *Namanush Premer Kothamala* is an utterance, not an analysis. Framed as a glossary, it is a poem that works actively to resist the making of images. Its structure is wide open. Each elaboration on an aspect of what could be called love leads to another elaboration. Without order, hierarchy, or denouement. It does not lead to what Barthes calls the "the thing itself,"

the subject/lover watching himself leave, the precision and “completeness” of a separation or an exclusion.

In a parallel world, non-human AI beings that look deceptively like us circle around the enigma called love. In that they talk it, think it through, think through human frames of references old and new, they take jabs at it so to speak. The words come out staccato – not held together by predictable motions of love. They are held together by the becoming of a new mythology, an emerging form of legibility.

Three women talk of a lover they took at various times in a night each thinking of the other woman while making love to him. Was it yesterday? Or an age ago? Is it a memory of an event or perhaps of an imagination? Were they in the same place? Did each woman not also talk about making love to the other women? Details blend. As do the women into a tree.

Woman 1: That is what he used to do. He used to kiss me and when I would be aroused, I would see he would eye you shyly. That is why I would ask him to kiss you as well

Woman 2: it would be night and dark. I could not even see him. I used to only witness your union. And be happy to hear cries of pleasure

Woman 3: Yes, his pleasure would be intense

Woman 1: I agree with you

Woman 2: the girl's love games would enchant me

Woman 3: I don't remember any other girl

Woman 1: I have experienced her within my body. But I have failed to see her with my eyes. It is true that every time I kissed that man, that girl

also kissed me at the opposite end

Yet it is a study of amour in which meditation on love is held at a physical distance, its sensual remove palpable.

Frames seem ready to burst with colour, fecundity and earth. This film could easily be a meditation on water. Nothing in this world is dry, barren or even brown. Greens, rusts and yellows fill the screen. Even the broken and derelict are full. Melancholy is pink. Yet this fullness stands on its own, in solitude.

Naked bodies abound. Three women and a man populate the everyday world sometimes in the nude, seemingly gesturing to the erotic one does find in the every day. In a game of shadow cricket, in doing the dishes, in wedding practices that inaugurate and domesticate the erotic by making a bride eat fish. The erotic charge of this meditation is held close to the screen by the viewer. The diegesis is meticulously devoid of touch.

Shape shifting, time travelling, carrying another in oneself, impregnated by another's coitus – these nude bodies populate lush jungles, modern homes, and buildings that carry the weight of the living and dead. The bodies are blocked to set a stage of positions, not of flows. The staccato persists in movement within the frame. There are no real days or nights, dusks or dawns. Only a mid-morning-early-twilight light and an air heavy with in-betweenness. Here memories surge to the surface – memories of the mythological past, the recent past, the new, and the yet to manifest.

“To scrutinize means to search: I am searching the other's body, as if I wanted to see what was inside it, as if the mechanical cause of my desire



Avikunthak's latest sounds like "an explosion of language" during which the "volume of love" shapes a loved one across an expansive time. It looks like a might changed its mind and decided to lift a veil and reveal the world. Warm dense colours bleed from the landscape and the architecture onto the light. *Namanush's* exteriority turns the interiority of love outward looking for a new shape to contain it. It reads like a letter made of 64 fragments looking for a love it knows well and has lost.

Sushmita Banerji

Sushmita Banerji is an Assistant Professor at the International Institute of Information Technology, Hyderabad

were deep in the adverse body..."

A Lover's Discourse, Fragment 25

Love has a difficult glossary. This collection of words reaches everywhere looking to shape singularity. And perhaps to shape singular mates. Superstar Amitabh Bachchan has a love-dread of a character he alone can have. Gandhari's lament on Duryodhan's death is both a word for a love and a trace of a dying. A dying son, a dying folk art (*Jatra* in this case), a mother-artist surviving. An aging man pops an artificial eye out, revealing a love-object held so dear it is the body itself. It must be the seeing that is not to see. Gandhi's forays in to the mysteries of vitality and the female body is an inward-looking love that cannot render itself without the body of the sexual other.

Credits

Director & Producer: Ashish Avikunthak

Additional Producers: Debleena Sen & Soumya Mukhopadhaya

Cinematography: Basab Mullik

Editing: Barnali Bose & Ashish Avikunthak

Dialogue: Ashish Avikunthak, Debleena Sen & Sougata Mukherjee

Principal Cast: Sagnik Mukherjee, Debleena Sen, Satarupa Das,
Megha Roy, Prasanta Sarkar, Jaysree Mukherjee, Bijoli Sarkar

Sound Design: Sukanta Mazumdar

Colorist: Manas Bhattacharya

Calligraphy: Sudeep Chakraborty

Poster: Sharanya

Sales / World rights holder: Ashish Avikunthak

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