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• **For a niche audience: Dwando** Shoma A. Chatterji  
Posted online: Aug 07, 2009 at 1515 hrs

**Producer: Suman Ghosh**

**Productions**

**Writer, Director: Suman Ghosh**

**Stars: Soumitra Chatterjee,  
Ananya Chatterjee, Koushik Sen,  
Samrat Chakrabarti**



Sudipta married to Anik Sen for 10 years, falls in love with Rana. Till then, she and Anik led a normal married life, but without children. Sudipta's affair with Rana became serious enough for Sudipta to consider a new relationship. At this point, Anik is diagnosed with suffering from brain tumour. While they are awaiting the results of biopsy, Sudipta discovers that she is pregnant with Rana's child. Just when motherhood is within her grasp, she has to make the critical choice of keeping the child or abortion.

She barges into the spacious home of the lonely, eccentric, arrogant and rude neurosurgeon one rainy night to ask him whether her husband will live or not. "If he lives, I will abort the child and if he does not, I will keep it," she tells him. The doctor is now faced with the conflict of how to save the unborn child. This question creates and sustains the conflict in the film. The Mahabharat spells out five reasons when lying is not a sin. Dwando takes off from this truth.

#### **Technical expertise**

Suman Ghosh made his presence strongly felt with his Podokhhep. Critics have panned Dwando as having been inspired by Krzysztof Kieslowski's Decalogue-II. Others say, it carries a hangover of Somerset Maugham's The Painted Veil which Hollywood has filmed thrice over several decades. Dwando, however, is a contemporary, typically Bengali-Indian conflict. It can and should be looked at from that perspective as an independent film rather than as one that is influenced by other films from other times and other lands.

The film explores the transition in the relationship between and among Sudipta, Rana and Anik. It is structured with fluid editorial sweeps that move between the past and the present, embracing everything from Sudipta's growing relationship with Rana juxtaposed against the fraying edges that once bonded Anik and Sudipta within marriage, the social backdrop they belong to, Anik's hospitalization and the conflict between the patient's wife and his doctor.

Ghosh begins an argument but leaves it incomplete, leaving his audience to decipher the resolution. If there is one. His signature lies in the slow pacing of his film, as he explores Sudipta's dilemma. The script is dotted with direct references and quotes from T.S. Eliot, Walt Whitman, The Mahabharata, marking the film strictly for a niche, intellectually aware audience. Barun Mukherjee's cinematography is brilliant for this intensely dark film, with semi-silhouetted frames of Sudipta and Rana in the opening scenes, to the bright lights of the hospital, leading finally, to the dark interiors of an antique home, lit by a table lamp, the Black-and-White old photograph of his wife on the wall. Tanmoy Chakraborty's art direction adds texture to the backdrop. Mayukh Bhaumik's mood music is ideal though Ghosh could have done without that scene of Sudipta walking within the ruins against the backdrop of a beautiful song and the dragging, overdone party scene that begins to jar.

Soumitra Chatterjee's Dr Mukherjee is brilliant, characterized with a prominent limp that is the trademark of a great actor. Ananya's designer costumes tend to draw attention away from her wonderful low-key performance as Sudipta. Samrat's Rana is designedly kept sketchy while Koushik Sen as Anik is wasted in a marginal role that had greater scope. Dr. Mukherjee's back story is superfluous because he could have taken a decision without indulging in self-pity. It goes against the grain of his character. It would have been interesting had his 'sentimental indulgence' turned out to be a lie too.

### **Verdict**

Three stars to Dwando - one for production values, one for acting and one for cinematography.