



## Veiled Conflicts

**Premankur Biswas** Posted online: Monday , Jul 27, 2009 at 0524 hrs

**Film:** Dwando

**Director:** Suman Ghosh

**Cast:** Soumitro Chatterjee, Ananya Chatterjee, Kaushik Sen

**Rating:**\*\*\*

**Running at:** Inox (City Centre, Swabhumi), Jaya



The first hour of Suman Ghosh's *Dwando* sweeps past in a flurry of Fabindia curtains, designer stoles and tissue sarees. Men and women (dressed in swishy kurtas and sarees) speak in affected accents, indulge in vacuous conversations and look wistfully out of, yet again, Fabindia curtained windows. It's almost as if Ghosh wants us to grasp the futility of their existence by pushing these characters and their aspirations to the verge of meaninglessness. The irrelevance symbolised most starkly by the stilted conversation between the characters of Ananya Chatterjee (who plays a bored young woman) and Samrat Chakraborty (an America-returned techie) which ends up with him inviting her to his room to "test waters".

Ghosh's strategy is not a new one. What we know as sensible Bengali cinema has over the years created a blueprint for such directorial motives. Showing characters in their urban context (which more often than not means tastefully done up drawing rooms), fiddling with props like cellphones and laptops, is an easy way to establish ennui. However, with time this strategy has grown grotesque, maybe because filmmakers have refrained from touching it or experiment with it. It wouldn't be wrong to call these scenes an intricate circuitry of meaningless lines filigreed on the film.

Thankfully, Dwando rises above its callow first half, most of which is devoted to establish the dilemma of a woman (Ananya) torn between her ailing husband (Kaushik Sen) and her lover (Samrat). Ghosh manages to get almost everything right in the second half, using his directorial prowess to amass different aspects of filmmaking to create a delightfully moody chamber drama evocative of Rituparno Ghosh's underrated gem, Raincoat. Or maybe it's Soumitra Chatterjee. As a neurosurgeon who plays a pivotal role in the unfolding of Ananya's future, Chatterjee is almost luminous. His very presence infuses the frames of the film with such mellow dignity that you think this is how you will want to be when you are old and serene. Even when he maniacally philosophises his profession (he claims that there is

poetry in blood and gore), you are drawn to this man who seems to wield a secret moral advantage over everybody around him. An advantage so potent that when revealed it will make us cower and slither away. Dwando, confirms what I have suspected for a long time, Soumitro

Chatterjee is an actor who has decided to very stoically to film his own graceful decline into the night.