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Showing, not telling



• [Sravasti datta](#)



Nicolas and Lata

De Sidere, an experimental film, interweaves different artistic forms to present a video contemplation on desire

In a world saturated with images and information, *De Sidere 7*, an experimental film, by Nicolás Grandi, filmmaker, arts educator, musician and sculptor from Buenos Aires, and Lata Mani, feminist historian and cultural critic, is a sensuous, visual exploration of desire.

Screened recently at Indian Institute for Human Settlements, *De Sidere* interweaves text, storytelling and performance to present an 'ensemble video contemplation' giving space to different aspects of sexuality.

The film is a compilation of five performances by Deepak Srinivasan, Joshua Muiwa, Shabari Rao, Tsohil Bhatia and Niranjani Iyer, tied together in a single narrative. "We weaved them into a loose narrative, allowing the integrity of the performance to remain," explained Lata.

With additional layers of poetry and text, the film is premised on the question, what does desire mean to you? There were essentially two approaches: an observational stance and artistic study, with a lot of attention to detail.

The interesting part was that the film 'showed' and did not 'tell', leaving it open to audience interpretation, as Lata observed about the film: "Image, text and sound opens out perception. We want the audience to experience, and at the same time observe the film."

Each of the performers owned their art and broke moulds on sexuality, which is seen often primarily through the prism of the body. The fluidity of gender, going within and stretching the boundaries of the body through movement, situating one's identity within the city—these were some of the themes explored in the film.

The film showed desire and sexuality cannot be defined or judged. As Lata pointed out, in society, "desire is narrowed, sequestered and instrumentalised. Desire and sensuality are broader than how they have been presented." The film concluded with Tsohil's poem, a few lines which were apt: "Some painted desires with water, on canvases; body and mind. And the bottles stored in cool and dark shall turn out to be fine..."

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