

‘Baba Baby O’ review: An uninspired love story with a glib treatment of the key theme

Story:

Directed by Aritra Mukherjee, ‘Baba Baby O’ is the story about Megh Roddur Chatterjee (Jisshu Sengupta) – a 40-something bachelor and accomplished professional – who decides to become a single father through surrogacy. Although his relatives cannot comprehend his reasoning behind the step, his decision is supported by his self-professed progressive parents. Meanwhile, Megh’s life takes a new turn when he bumps into Brishti (Solanki Roy) – a toy store owner – and falls head over heels at the first sight.

Brishti has a complicated relationship with her mother and hates kids in general. But despite their differences, she finds solace in Megh who comes to her rescue every time she is in crisis.

The tension increases further when Brishti’s fiancé Souvik (Gourab Chatterjee) returns from Sydney to take her back with him.

Review:

What could have been a dopey love triangle has been marketed as a movie about a topical social issue, in line with the motto of Windows Production, founded and run by Nandita Roy and Shiboprosad Mukherjee – a cult of ‘socially relevant’ Bengali movie production house. Similar to most of their movies, ‘Baba Baby O’ too scratches only the surface of the chosen social issue, coupled with a frothy screenplay and poor dialogues.

The film starts with a focus on the struggle of a single man who opts for surrogacy to enjoy fatherhood instead of going for traditional marriage just for the sake of it. At the onset, it shows the expected backlash from the traditional Indian society with such urgency that it almost gets your hope high about the quality of the movie. But as the story progresses, the single fatherhood or surrogacy turns into a mere plot device rather than the key foundation. It soon turns into a common plot where the boy needs to overcome challenges to get the girl.

Even in that case, the girl’s character lacks a coherent backstory to establish why she hates – not just dislikes, but *hates* – children and why the protagonist with a strong fatherly instinct falls in love with her nevertheless. The sub-plots of the girl’s complicated relationship with her mother, her NRI boyfriend, and the garnishing of homosexuality references here and there are so deeply infused with the main theme that the movie becomes less about the protagonist’s fatherhood and more about a common family drama.

However, despite the poor narration, the cast has done their jobs well. Jisshu Sengupta hits all the right chords as a 40-something man trying to live a life of his choice. Debutant Solanki Roy is also fitting in her role; although she could have done better with some spunk. The supporting

cast Bidipta Chakraborty and Reshmi Sen have also done justice in their roles. Rajat Ganguly and Mainak Banerjee try their best to bring comic relief (albeit with cliché dialogues) from time to time. Gourab Chakraborty has also done justice to his role.

Other than the performance of the actors the only savior of the movie is Chamok Hasan and Amit-Ishan's music – particularly the songs 'Ei Mayabi Chander Raate' and 'RongMoshal' are worth mentioning.

Verdict:

As an audience, we expected more from the director Aritra Mukherjee, whose directorial debut was 'Brahma Janen Gopon Kommoti'. Unfortunately 'Baba Baby O' is neither as entertaining nor as well made.

Surrogacy – especially single fatherhood – is undoubtedly a socially relevant theme that needs exploring. But its treatment in 'Baba Baby O' is dry and immature. However, the performance of the lead and supporting actors make the movie worth a watch. So go for it if you are looking for a lighthearted movie to enjoy on a Sunday evening. It's currently streaming on Hoichoi.