

Anurag Kashyap's Sole Experiment with Animation: A Re-focus on *Return of Hanuman*

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Abstract

Anurag Kashyap, known for his innovative storytelling and boundary-pushing narratives in Indian cinema, ventured into the realm of animation with his project "Return of Hanuman," marking a significant shift in both his creative focus and the broader landscape of Indian animated films. Though he himself flushed with embarrassment regarding his debut venture in this genre and did not make another animated film till date, interestingly enough the Central Board of Film Certification let go of Kashyap scot-free with regards to his fourth film (unlike his other films) categorizing it as an "education film" This paper examines Kashyap's sole experiment with animation, unraveling the intricacies of his approach to storytelling, visual aesthetics, and thematic depth within the framework of traditional Indian mythology. By analyzing the film's narrative structure, character development, and its reflections on contemporary societal issues, this study highlights how Kashyap reconceptualizes the iconic figure of Hanuman for a modern audience. Furthermore, the research explores the technical aspects of animation employed in the film, assessing how they enhance the storytelling experience while also maintaining cultural authenticity. In re-focusing on "Return of Hanuman", this paper underscores its significance not only as an artistic endeavour by Kashyap but also as a pivotal contribution to the evolution of Indian animation, bridging the gap between mythology and modern storytelling. Through this examination, this paper aims at a re-evaluation of animated cinema's potential to explore complex themes and engage diverse audiences in the intercultural dialogues of the 21st century.

Keywords: animation, mythology, visual aesthetics, storytelling.