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# Women Who Will

*Kama Sutra: A Tale of Love*

Directed by Mira Nair

Written by Nair and Helena Kriel

A Trimark release

**BY AMY TAUBIN**

**A**n even more inept movie about women and power, Mira Nair's *Kama Sutra: A Tale of Love* makes sex seem so tedious that, had I seen it at an impressionable age, I would have been celibate for life. Set in 16th-century India, *Kama Sutra* follows the transformation of a young servant girl named Maya (Nair never resists the obvious) into a great courtesan. Or something like that.

Jealous of Princess Tara, once her childhood friend and now her mistress, Maya impulsively seduces Tara's future husband Raj Singh on the eve of their wedding. As punishment, she's banished from the court. Wandering off, though not very far, she's discovered by the court sculptor, who makes her his muse and his girlfriend but then rejects her because he's afraid of commitment. Those great male artists, they're all alike.

When the Raj sees the statues of Maya, he realizes that he's still obsessed with her and forces her to return to him. Then the artist sees Maya fucking the Raj and realizes that he's still obsessed too. Then Princess Tara gets jealous all over again, even though there's nothing she likes less than having sex with her husband. The resulting quadrangle can only end in disaster. The Raj condemns the artist to be crushed to death by an elephant (a method of execution that makes lethal injection seem civilized). Having thus experienced love and loss, Maya understands that nothing is permanent and journeys on to a higher plain. Or something like that.

This is an exceptionally stupid film. It is also stunningly unerotic. I'm sure it will make its way to the midnight slot on Cinemax very soon.