

## PHASE

*by Samania*

pt. I  
something is wrong  
this is temporary  
sweet but not serious  
curious but not aware  
ill but arousing  
a beautiful phase  
drowning in tears, not their own  
fleeting, confused  
oscillating between feeling and numbness

most depictions of confused women don't reflect confused women  
they reflect a confused gaze  
a dirty lens  
the dirt is invisible  
it's called discourse  
a cocktail of history, stories, and science  
accounts sans accountability

phase is your film, of which we wanted no part  
what is seen through this frame is not reality  
it is a view  
a view that won't define or lasso our experience  
this gaze is not required  
this gaze may seem loving  
this gaze deceives you  
what is a phase, is this gaze  
not our experience  
we politely exit  
in our absence, your frame becomes visible  
see you in the future

*by Ania Catherine*

pt. II

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SAMANIA, based on their experience as a couple and hearing comments such as “I don’t get it, I’m just worried about you, It’s just a phase,” decided to call-out the less visible and seemingly innocent discourses around romantic love between women. PHASE has two prongs: a SAMANIA film strikingly shot/edited by LA-based creative Delaram Pourabdi and a poem by Ania Catherine.

“It’s just a phase.” Find a woman who hasn’t heard these words regarding her attraction to or relationship with another woman. PHASE is a response. There has been a recent and drastic increase in the visibility of female-female relationships throughout media. However, subtle and implicit forms of delegitimation and ridiculization of relationships between women are omnipresent. As French intellectual Michel Foucault has written, power’s “success is proportional to its ability to hide its own mechanisms”; PHASE highlights the less visible (and therefore underestimated) yet still powerful forms of heterosexism. Increased media presence should not be conflated with sexual equality. The social acceptability of such comments needs to be challenged, as these subtle forms of discrimination could be easily eliminated were people made more aware of their harm.

#NOTAPHASE

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*SAMANIA is an artist/scholar duo composed of Samira Mahboub and Ania Catherine. Samira (Germany) and Ania (USA) met in 2013 while pursuing master’s degrees at the London School of Economics Gender Institute. In 2014, they collaborated on their first film, cloth, which was featured in the International Museum of Women’s exhibition “Imagining Equality” and in the Huffington Post’s “5 Amazing Ways Women and Girls are Breaking Gender Stereotypes*

*Worldwide”. Together they combine their creative work (performance, fashion, art) and academic interests (gender, coloniality, sexuality) to translate sociopolitical subjects into a digestible visual form. In addition, Samira works in New York as a model represented by Wilhelmina, and Ania in Los Angeles as an artist and choreographer.*

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