

Directorial Vision And Inner Meaning: An Analysis Of Andrew Sarris's Auteur Theory In The Film Sore

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Abstract

This study aims to uncover the directorial vision and inner meaning in the film Sore: Istri dari Masa Depan by Yandy Laurens, an aspect often overlooked in previous studies that tend to emphasize narrative and commercial dimensions. This research employs a qualitative approach through close reading of the film text as the primary object, combined with Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis to unpack denotative, connotative, and mythical meanings in several key shots representing the characters' emotions and conflicts. In addition, Andrew Sarris's auteur theory is used to trace the consistency of directorial style and to identify interior meaning as a representation of the director's personal presence within the work. Data were obtained through repeated viewings of the film, comparative analysis with Yandy Laurens's other works, and interview tracing as supporting data to strengthen the interpretation. The results show that Yandy Laurens holds a directorial vision that places emotional honesty, humanity, and depth of interpersonal relationships above mere visual aesthetics. The use of still shots and silence becomes a distinctive signature functioning as a marker to convey the characters' inner processes in a deep and reflective manner. Semiotically, each scene presents not only literal meaning but also constructs myths about love, loss, regret, and self-reflection within the context of modern urban human life. This study affirms that the film is a strong manifestation of Yandy Laurens's auteur signature, positioning film as both a medium of inner reflection and a critique of the existential condition of contemporary humans.

Keyword: Film, Directorial Vision, Inner Meaning, Andrew Sarris, Auteur.



INTRODUCTION

The screen opens with a gloomy night landscape, capturing the panicked trail of a young man named Jonathan who isolates himself from the bustle of his hometown. His gloomy personal space is interrupted by the arrival of Sore, a stranger who barges in with a claim that defies reason: she is his wife from the future, who has come simply to change her husband's bad habits. Under the direction of Yandy Laurens, the film *Sore: Istri dari Masa Depan* does not merely present a romance that crosses time, but frames the silent struggle of modern humans alienated amid the pace of their own civilization. This film was born and beats precisely in the midst of the anxiety of an urban generation that is gradually losing its existential footing.

At this point, film is essentially undergoing a transition of cultural anxiety; a combination of various image fragments arranged into a single unit, capable of moving dynamically from one scene to another, complete with sound, color, and a storyline able to capture viewers' attention (Hafnan, 2021). *Sore*, both as a marker of character and as a marker of the time when the sun sets, appears to dismantle the illusion of human control over the course of fate, reminding us that behind the fast pace of capitalism lie vulnerable subjects nearly destroyed by their own negligence.

Reading such cinematic traces cannot be separated from the long conversation of previous researchers who have dissected this phenomenon from various perspectives. Several earlier readings tend to position *Sore: Istri dari Masa Depan* merely as a commercial popular culture product that pioneered the boom of sponsored web series trends in Indonesia to provoke the empathy and consumption desires of the middle class (Manggarsari & Lindsay, 2025; Mulia, 2019; Putri & Iskandar, 2025; Riswari et al., 2025). In another corner of the conversation, structural studies attempt to dissect the time-travel narrative it offers (Yogaprayuda & Swandi, 2026), comparing it with the tradition of Western science fiction that is subsequently domesticated into local melodramatic sentiment (Rachman, 2020).

Within this continuously flowing and overlapping discourse, discussion of the director's position is unfortunately often reduced to merely an image assembler subject to sponsors' orders. The studies that proliferate are more preoccupied with parsing audience reception absorbed in emotion or measuring the effectiveness of product placement within the story (McQuail, 1996). It is as if this film emerged from a vacuum, with no single architect deliberately entrusting his inner turmoil to it. Yet, if read more closely—frame by frame, through directorial decisions that reject exploiting tears and instead choose silence as the language for conveying grief—there exists a very dense, repetitive trace bearing a distinctive inner signature.





However, previous studies have failed to notice that the film *Sore: Istri dari Masa Depan* holds a more complex ideological landscape behind the wrapping of its cross-time love story, namely a complete manifestation of the creator's directorial vision and inner meaning. It is precisely the effort to untangle this knot that becomes the urgent calling of this research: to uncover how Yandy Laurens not only arranges scenes but registers his presence as an Auteur amid an industry that frequently demands aesthetic compromise.

This research will employ Andrew Sarris's analytical lens, which seeks to penetrate the layer of the director's technical competence to arrive at the interior meaning (Wollen, 1969) that constitutes the most secret essence of the film *Sore*. To dissect the visual signs hidden within gestures, lighting, and the composition of inanimate objects surrounding the characters, Roland Barthes's semiotic method is brought in as a tracing instrument. Through a sharp reading of the everyday myths constructed in the quietest scenes, this study focuses on the extreme case of two timelines meeting, an effort to reveal the hidden meaning and vision concerning the redemption of urban humans and how a director inserts his inner authority to admonish the times.

METHOD

This research refuses to hide behind mechanical numerical formulas, instead taking the path of qualitative reading through close reading of the visual artifacts offered. Yandy Laurens's main work, with emphasis on the film *Sore: Istri dari Masa Depan*, is positioned as the text. To dissect the anatomy of this text, Roland Barthes's semiotic lens is brought in not to mutilate the film as one would dissect a cold machine, but as a tracing instrument to unravel the visual signs hidden behind the actors' silence (Noor, 2022).

Barthes's semiotics makes clear that every frame does not simply exist literally, or denotatively, but stores a layer of connotative meaning and myth that resonates with the suppressed cries of its characters. In Barthes's (1977) formulation, a sign is born from the union of signifier and signified; when a still shot is placed not as empty space but as a signifier of the most honest communication, the dissolving emotional processing within it becomes the signified in the viewer's mind.

The operational steps began with intimate observation, with the researcher's eyes acting as a silent witness repeatedly tracing the film's form—watching it at least three times—in order to fully absorb the storyline, the arrangement of scenes, and how each shot holds its meaning. However, this microscopic reading of *Sore: Istri dari Masa Depan* must not be left standing orphaned in a soundproof room. To test the durability and autonomy of a directorial signature,



the shot findings were compared with the films *Jatuh Cinta Seperti di Film-Film and 1 Kakak 7 Ponakan*. This cross-case comparison serves as a tactical maneuver to trace the evolution of the director's grammar of silence, which is then contextualized through tracing historical podcast interviews to capture the intentions and creative struggles amid the bustle of the industry.

At the final stage, all the gathered data—shots, semiotic connotations, film comparisons, and interview data—are fused into a single analytical thread using Andrew Sarris's Auteur Theory as the main lens. This final tracing radically seeks to penetrate the technical shell of cinematography to reveal the interior meaning nested within the recesses of the film, uncovering the director's vision that orchestrates silence as a maneuver of resistance to admonish the times and tend to the wounds of humanity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Yandy Laurens's Directorial Vision

In a podcast with Raditya Dika titled *Full Spoiler Film Sore in 2025*, Yandy revealed that during the making of *Sore: Istri dari Masa Depan* he wanted to show how he explored the emotional aspect of a character experiencing grief, and how painful it was to be trapped in a time loop in order to save her husband, Jonathan. Beyond that, Yandy wanted to highlight how childhood experiences and a relationship with parents full of unconditional love can influence a person's future life choices, as reflected in Jonathan's character. Yandy also explained on the podcast with Raditya Dika that the film tells the story of *Sore* traveling through time to change Jonathan's habits, because eight years from the film's starting point Jonathan would die of a heart attack. Despite carrying the concept of time travel, Yandy successfully packaged an extraordinary moral message into an authentic work that left a deep impression on audiences. The film's success did not happen by chance, but was born from the director's strong vision, which became the foundation of its distinctive storytelling.

Yandy consistently places feeling, emotion, and honesty far above mere visual beauty in each of his films. For Yandy, if a scene fails to convey honest emotion, he will not hesitate to change it even if it already looks aesthetically stunning (Dika, 2025). In the production process, Yandy always builds a healthy yet professional working environment, because he believes that good work can only be born from good relationships between people. When writing and directing, Yandy regards the process as an effort to "destroy his own identity"—he sets aside his ego as a director in order to understand the characters deeply, so that the film becomes purely about the story itself rather than about his personal ambition (Dika, 2025).

This aligns with his firm principle that "your life matters more than this film," in which

Yandy deeply humanizes his actors and crew by prioritizing the resolution of their personal problems above any scene targets. Yandy believes that when a person feels fully accepted as a human being, they will give a far more honest and profound performance (Mananta, 2025). Yandy Laurens is a director whose directorial vision takes the form of an inner service that views film not merely as an industrial commodity, but as a space for mutual understanding and connection between human beings (Mananta, 2025).

Semiotic Analysis of Several Shots in the Film Sore



Figure 1. The scene of Jonathan conversing with Sore at Jonathan's photography exhibition.
[Source: Film Sore: Istri dari Masa Depan, Cerita Film Productions, 2025.]

Table 1. Semiotic Analysis of Figure 1.

Meaning	Meaning
Denotation	Jonathan and Sore look toward the photographic work in front of them, with the camera focusing more on Jonathan.
Connotation	The focus on Jonathan shows that he is seriously thinking about or interpreting something.
Myth	This shot builds the meaning that once a person focuses on what they see, they will interpret it with a deeper and more honest heart and mind.



*Figure 2. The scene of Sore conversing with Jonathan at Jonathan's photography exhibition.
[Source: Film Sore: Istri dari Masa Depan, Cerita Film Productions, 2025.]*

Table 2. Semiotic Analysis of Figure 2.

Meaning	Meaning
Denotation	Sore is conversing with Jonathan, facing her face toward him.
Connotation	Sore's gaze appears to be absorbing the meaning of the photography Jonathan is explaining.
Myth	Her eyes speak honestly, based on the belief that a person's deepest honesty radiates through a gaze that cannot be manipulated by words.



*Figure 3. The scene of Sore and Jonathan looking at Jonathan's photographic work.
[Source: Film Sore: Istri dari Masa Depan, Cerita Film Productions, 2025.]*

Table 3. Semiotic Analysis of Figure 3.

Meaning	Meaning
Denotation	Jonathan and Sore stand side by side, discussing the meaning they see in one of the works at Jo's photography museum they are viewing.

Connotation	The position of Jonathan and Sore standing side by side in their new life still shows a difference in how they understand things; here it is shown through how each of them sees the meaning behind Jonathan's work.
Myth	Art such as photography is positioned as a medium that not only records reality but also serves as a bridge to unite feelings and perspectives within a relationship.



Figure 4. The scene of Sore collapsing unconscious with a nosebleed, and Jonathan embracing Sore's body lying on the road.

[Source: Film Sore: Istri dari Masa Depan, Cerita Film Productions, 2025.]

Table 4. Semiotic Analysis of Figure 4.

Meaning	Description
Denotation	Sore lies on the road at night with a nosebleed, while Jonathan embraces her in panic and sorrow.
Connotation	This scene shows the crisis Sore is experiencing, the sense of loss Jonathan feels, and the fear of a sudden separation within their relationship.
Myth	This shot builds the meaning that love often feels most precious when faced with the terrifying possibility of loss.



Figure 5. The scene of Sore sitting alone on a park bench.

[Source: Film *Sore: Istri dari Masa Depan*, Cerita Film Productions, 2025.]

Table 5. Semiotic Analysis of Figure 5.

Meaning	Description
Denotation	Sore sits alone on a park bench, surrounded by trees with leaves beginning to yellow.
Connotation	Sore's solitude in the park shows that she is contemplating and standing at an important decision point. The atmosphere of the park helps depict feelings of loneliness, self-reflection, and the phase of change Sore is about to undertake.
Myth	This shot builds the meaning that in life, major decisions are often born from solitude and deep contemplation.

Comparison of the Film *Sore* with Two Other Yandy Laurens Films

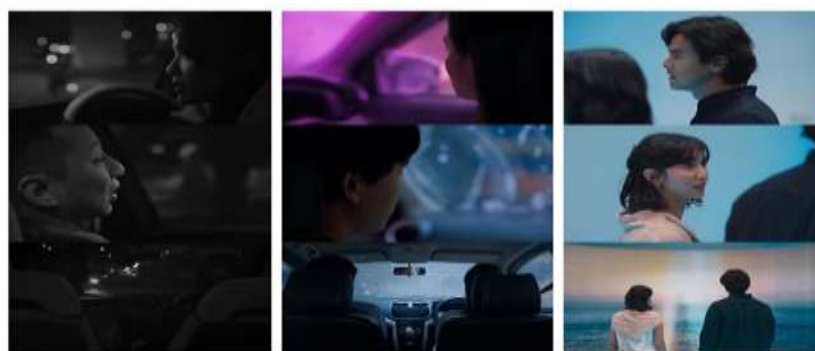


Figure 6. Stills from the films *Jatuh Cinta Seperti di Film-Film*, *Satu Kakak Tujuh Ponakan*, and *Sore: Istri dari Masa Depan*.

[Source: Film *Jatuh Cinta Seperti di Film-Film*, Cerita Film Productions, 2023; Film *Satu Kakak Tujuh Ponakan*, Cerita Film Productions, 2024; Film *Sore: Istri dari Masa Depan*, Cerita Film Productions, 2025.]

Yandy Laurens's directorial style possesses a highly consistent visual character in capturing shared moments through the careful use of still shots, as seen in the films *Jatuh Cinta Seperti di Film-Film*, *1 Kakak 7 Ponakan*, and *Sore: Istri dari Masa Depan*. In *Jatuh Cinta Seperti di Film-Film*, this closeness is created as Bagus and Hana discuss their hopes and happiness. Meanwhile, in *1 Kakak 7 Ponakan*, a similar method is used to capture the moment when Moko voices his complaints as a member of the "sandwich generation" to Maurin. This theme reappears in *Sore: Istri dari Masa Depan* through the scene of Jo and Sore meeting at the photography exhibition, where the camera seems "trapped," highlighting the honesty of the characters' feelings. For this reason, Yandy Laurens employs the still camera technique and a three-shot pattern beginning with an over-the-shoulder shot, moving to the other character, and ending with a medium shot capturing both characters—successfully turning these shots into a space for the audience to grasp inner meaning. For Yandy, emotional closeness is far more important than mere technical visual beauty (Dika, 2025).



*Figure 7. Stills from the films *Jatuh Cinta Seperti di Film-Film*, *Satu Kakak Tujuh Ponakan*, and *Sore: Istri dari Masa Depan*.*

*[Source: Film *Jatuh Cinta Seperti di Film-Film*, Cerita Film Productions, 2023; Film *Satu Kakak Tujuh Ponakan*, Cerita Film Productions, 2024; Film *Sore: Istri dari Masa Depan*, Cerita Film Productions, 2025.]*

Yandy Laurens's directorial style does not present the still shot merely as an aesthetic choice, but as a space for the audience to absorb the depth of emotion that cannot be conveyed through words. In line with his vision of always prioritizing honesty of craft over visual grandeur, Yandy consistently applies this narrative-visual pattern in *Jatuh Cinta Seperti di Film-Film*, *1 Kakak 7 Ponakan*, and *Sore: Istri dari Masa Depan*. This pattern shows a sequence of turmoil or



conflict experienced by the main characters, which is then immediately followed by a static shot in which the characters simply remain silent. In auteur theory, films directed by a particular individual tend to display recurring thematic patterns and a distinctive visual style that make it easy for audiences to recognize the director (Indri et al., 2022).

In this context, the still shot becomes a distinctive trait marking Yandy Laurens's presence as an auteur, because the technique continues to appear repeatedly throughout his filmography as a medium for conveying the characters' emotional experience. This silent shot becomes, in fact, the most meaningful moment, inviting the audience to witness the character's inner process of working through emotion and searching for a solution to their problem. According to Barthes (1977), a sign is a combination of signifier and signified. Through this technique, Yandy demonstrates that the static shot is the signifier—"silence" in front of the camera is the most honest form of communication for capturing a character's humanity—while "honesty" or "the process of working through emotion" is the signified (meaning) that arises in the viewer's mind. When words or dialogue are no longer able to represent the honesty of a character's feelings, Yandy, as director, depicts it through a silent shot. That silence is a "representation that cannot be represented" by the script.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the film *Sore: Istri dari Masa Depan* is a complete manifestation of Yandy Laurens's directorial vision, one that surpasses mere technical cinematographic competence. Through the lens of Andrew Sarris's Auteur Theory, it was found that Yandy fulfills the three main pillars of auteurism, especially at the level of interior meaning. This inner meaning is realized through the consistent use of still shots and a "grammar of silence" that is not merely an aesthetic choice, but a space for characters to process honest and profound emotion. Roland Barthes's semiotic analysis reinforces this by showing that every visual sign in the film, from a gaze to the side-by-side positioning of bodies, serves as a marker of urban humans' redemption and search for the meaning of life amid their own silence.

The results of the comparison with Yandy's other works, such as *Jatuh Cinta Seperti di Film-Film* and *1 Kakak 7 Ponakan*, demonstrate the existence of a repetitive and distinctive "inner signature." This confirms Yandy's position as an auteur who views film as a medium of inner service, in which he sets aside his director's ego in order to give space to human honesty. Ultimately, this vision offers a new perspective within the Indonesian film industry: that a director's authority lies not only in visual grandeur, but in the ability to embed profound meaning that admonishes the times and tends to the inner wounds of the audience.





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