

# **A journey through the mind of a Transgender**

**Visual Communication - Project 2  
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## Approval sheet

The Visual Communication- Project 2 entitled “A journey through the mind of a Transgender” by Ashika Singh is approved, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Master of Design degree in Visual communication of IDC School of Design, Indian Institute of technology.

Guide: Prof. Sudesh Balan. 

Chairman: Prof. Santanu Bandopadhyaya. 

Internal Examiner: Prof. Mandar Rane. 

External Examiner: 

## Declaration

I declare that this written submission represents my ideas in my own words and where others' ideas or words have been included, I have adequately cited and referenced the original sources. I also declare that I have adhered to all principles of academic honesty and integrity and have not misrepresented or fabricated or falsified any idea/data/fact/-source in my submission. I understand that any violation of the above will be cause for disciplinary action by the Institute and can also evoke penal action from the sources which have thus not been properly cited or from whom proper permission has not been taken when needed.



signature \_\_\_\_\_

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## Abstract

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For years, transgender individuals have struggled for acceptance, protection, and visibility even among other minorities. With the list of states legalizing gay marriage growing and broad acceptance into pop culture, the gay and lesbian population has gained increased visibility and protection in recent years. However, transgender individuals have not been afforded the same rights.

The project is an effort to encourage the society to emphasize and acknowledge the transgenders. Through the medium of poetry. Poems based on different emotions of a transgender is the outcome of this effort.

The following report describes my journey as I broaden my understanding of the Transgender community and subject and arrive at a design solution that allows me to contribute with the best of my abilities as a visual communicator in a meaningful way to the same. I have tried to understand the existing attitudes and emotions of the transgender people and society and to weave together a series of poems as it's reflection. The research represented here cannot be considered complete for I know I have only scratched the surface, but it is a start in trying to understand where the problem lies, and the steps needed to be undertaken to rehabilitate this minority community who are very much a part of Indian past, present and the future

## Objective

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For years, transgender individuals have struggled for acceptance, protection, and visibility even among other minorities. With the list of states legalizing gay marriage growing and broad acceptance into pop culture, the gay and lesbian population has gained increased visibility and protection in recent years. However, transgender individuals have not been afforded the same rights.

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The following report describes my journey as I broaden my understanding of the Transgender community and subject and arrive at a design solution that allows me to contribute with the best of my abilities as a visual communicator in a meaningful way to the same.

## Aim

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To create a poetic expression which will encourage the society to emphasize and acknowledge the transgenders.

# Introduction

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Every day, transgender and gender non-conforming people bear the brunt of social and economic marginalization due to discrimination based on their gender identity or expression. Advocates confront this reality regularly working with transgender people who have lost housing, been fired from jobs, experienced mistreatment and violence, or been unable to access the health care they need. Too often, policymakers, service providers, the media and society at large have dismissed or discounted the needs of transgender and gender non-conforming people, and a lack of hard data on the scope of anti-transgender discrimination has hampered the work to make substantive policy changes to address these needs.

A considerable amount of projects have been undertaken by many within the community as well as allies to sensitise the Indian masses on the subject. This project aims to add to an over view of their sufferings and their mind journey, portraying the reality and normality of the transgender person's life. I strongly believe that we need to acknowledge their existence and respect them as human beings. Although the subject is complex and layered, I decided to take up the challenge.

Note- The reference for the project is made for male to female transgender



## ● My motivation for the subject

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Whilst growing up and through school, gender for me meant 'male' and 'female'. Years later, as a young adult I came across transgender people who we call 'hijras' colloquially. I saw them singing or begging, whilst traveling on local trains. I also got to hear about the LGBT community during my college years through friends. Even so, my knowledge about this community was limited until the day when I was introduced to some of these people. It was only after some personal interaction with a few people from this community, that I started noticing their presence or even acknowledging their existence. Despite seeing the 'hijras' regularly at signals, local trains and at weddings my understanding about who or what kind of people they were, was not complete. I had many unanswered questions, queries and even suspicions about their community. However, despite my curiosity, I hadn't attempted to know more about them. My latent interest in the transgender community was revived when we were asked to take up any subject of study for our project. I thought to myself that this community would be an interesting area of study as not much is known about them or the lives they lead. They seem marginalized despite being a part of our daily lives.

My starting point was the internet which explains and defines the term 'transgender' and all the sub categories very well. However, I wanted to go beyond the book definitions or impersonal information.

According to me, it is only when we look into people's lives, can we begin to understand their mind set and behavior. This led me to seek and personally interact with people from the transgender community. I strongly believed that we need to acknowledge their existence and respect them as human beings. Although the subject is complex and layered, I decided to take up the challenge. I am glad that I did so, as it has been a very rewarding experience overall.

## ● The Transgender

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Transgender is a term used to describe people whose gender identity differs from the sex the doctor marked on their birth certificate. Gender identity is a person's internal, personal sense of being a man or a woman (or someone outside of that gender binary). For transgender people, the sex they were assigned at birth and their own internal gender identity do not match.

Many transgender people are prescribed hormones by their doctors to change their bodies. Some undergo surgeries as well. But not all transgender people can or will take those steps, and it's important to know that being transgender is not dependent upon medical procedures.

### Difference between sexual orientation and gender identity

Sexual orientation describes a person's enduring physical, romantic, and/or emotional attraction to another person (for example: straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual), while gender identity describes a person's, internal, personal sense of being a man or a woman (or someone outside of that gender binary).

Sexual orientation is about who you are attracted to and fall in love with; gender identity is about your own sense of yourself.

Transgender people have a sexual orientation, just like everyone else. Transgender people may be straight, lesbian, gay, or bisexual. For example, a person who transitions from female to male and is attracted solely to men would typically identify as a gay man.



- **The Hijras**

Hijras are those transgenders who take an oath in a formal ritual to join the hijra community which has its own culture and rituals, acts as quasi family for its members providing them with livelihood and social security in times of illness and old age. However while all hijras are transgenders, all transgenders do not join the hijra community or identify as hijras. Like transgenders, hijras believe they are women trapped in men's bodies and make strenuous efforts to do away with their male identity in many ways. This is done by outwardly identifying as female through gestures and clothes while keeping their sex organs intact or by removing their penis either through a ritual ceremony called 'Nirvan' or by undergoing a Sex Reassignment Surgery (SRS).

Those transgenders who biologically change their sex organs are called transsexuals. There are some hijras who want to get a surgery, get implants and transform completely into a woman. But there are others who don't want either gender identity and thus regard themselves as the third gender.

## ● Kinship and Social Organization

**Kinship and Descent-** The major principle of social organization among the hijras is the relation between gurus (teachers) and their chelas (disciples). This relationship is modeled both on the Hindu joint family and on the relationship of spiritual leader and disciple in Hinduism. The guru or senior person in the relationship is alternately conceived of as a father, a mother, or a husband, while the chela is regarded as a dependent. The guru, like an elder in a family, is expected to take care of the chela's material needs and the chela is expected to show respect and obedience to the guru and give the guru "her" earnings. Through the relationship of guru and chela, the chelas of a guru are like sisters. Every hijra joins the community under the sponsorship of a guru, who is ideally her guru for life. Hijras express the view that a hijra could no more live without a guru than an ordinary person could live without a mother. Gurus also provide the umbrella under which hijras earn a living, as economic territories among hijras all come under the control of a particular guru and are off-limits to the chelas of any other guru without explicit permission. Changing gurus, which involves a small ritual and an escalating fee, is possible, though frowned upon. In addition to the guru-chela relationship, there are other fictive kinship relations of which the guru is the center: a guru's "sisters" are called aunt, and guru's guru is called "grandmother" (mother's mother).



A guru passes down her wealth and possessions to one or more of her chelas, usually the senior chela. Gurus and chelas belong to the same "house," a nonlocalized symbolic descent group similar to a clan. The hijra community is divided into approximately seven of these named houses (with some variation according to region). The heads of these houses within a particular city or geographical region form a council of elders, or jamat. This group makes important decisions for the community, is present at the initiation of new members, and resolves whatever disputes arise within the community. Hijra houses are not ranked and there are no meaningful cultural or social distinctions among them, but each house has its own origin story and certain rules of behavior special to itself. When a hijra dies, it is the members of her house who arrange the funeral. In addition to the regional groupings of hijras there is also a loose national organization, which mainly meets on the anniversary of the death of an important hijra guru.

## ● History of Transgenders

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A third sex is also discussed in ancient Hindu law, medicine, linguistics and astrology. The foundational work of Hindu law, the Manu Smriti (200 BC - 200 AD) explains the biological origins of the three sexes: "A male child is produced by a greater quantity of male seed, a female child by the prevalence of the female; if both are equal, a third-sex child or boy and girl twins are produced; if either are weak or deficient in quantity, a failure of conception results. Indian linguist Patanjali's work on Sanskrit grammar, the Mahabhashya (200 BC), states that Sanskrit's three grammatical genders are derived from three natural genders. The earliest Tamil grammar, the Tolkappiyam (3rd century BC) also refers to hermaphrodites as a third "neuter" gender (in addition to a feminine category of unmasculine males). In Vedic astrology, the nine planets are each assigned to one of the three genders; the third gender, tritiya-prakrti, is associated with Mercury, Saturn and (in particular) Ketu. In the Puranas, there are also references to three kinds of devas of music and dance: apsaras (female), gandharvas (male) and kinnars (neuter).

### **Hijras in the Ramayana.**

In some versions of the Ramayana, when Rama leaves Ayodhya for his 14-year exile, a crowd of his subjects follow him into the forest because of their devotion to him. Soon Rama notices this, and gathers them to tell them not to mourn, and that all the "men and women" of his kingdom should return to their places in Ayodhya. Rama then leaves and has adventures for 14 years. When he returns to Ayodhya, he finds that the hijras, being neither men nor women, have not moved from the place where he gave his speech. Impressed with their devotion, Rama grants hijras the boon to confer blessings on people during auspicious inaugural occasions like childbirth and weddings. This boon is the origin of badhai in which hijras sing, dance and give blessings.

### **Hijras in Mahabharata**

Mahabharata includes an episode in which Arjun, a hero of the epic, is sent into an exile. There he assumes an identity of a eunuch-transvestite and performs rituals during weddings and childbirths that are now performed by hijras.



In the Mahabharata, before the Kurukshetra War, Ahiravan offers his lifeblood to goddess Kali to ensure the victory of the Pandavas, and Kali agrees to grant him power. On the night before the battle, Aravan expresses a desire to get married before he dies. No woman was willing to marry a man doomed to die in a few hours, so Krishna assumes the form of a beautiful woman called Mohini and marries him.

In South India, hijras claim Aravan as their progenitor and call themselves "aravanis."

In Tamil Nadu each year in April and May, hijras celebrate an eighteen-day religious festival. The aravani temple is located in the village Koovagam in the Ulundurpet taluk in Villupuram district, and is devoted to the deity Koothandavar, who is identified with Aravan. During the festival, the aravanis reenact a story of the wedding of Lord Krishna and Lord Aravan, followed by Aravan's subsequent sacrifice. They then mourn Aravan's death through ritualistic dances and by breaking their bangles.



## ● Primary Study

### Visit to Humsafar-

The Humsafar Trust is one of India's strongest voices in support of health and human rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) communities. It is an NGO in Mumbai. The initial focus of Humsafar Trust was on activism for providing HIV/AIDS health services to gay men, but soon expanded to provide guidance, checkups, hospital referrals, confidential HIV testing, counseling and outreach for the complete spectrum of the LGBT community.

HST has nurtured a youth LGBT community group 'YAARIYAN' (friendships) and 'UMANG' (joy) for LGBT persons, 'Kinner Kasturi' and 'Kinner Asmita' that represent hijra community.

HST is a convener member of Integrated Network for Sexual Minorities (INFOSEM), the national level network of sexual minorities that has 192 community based organisations representing Lamin, Gay, Kothi, MSM, Bisexual and Transgender community as members.

HST has a Centre of Excellence (CEFE) that has research capacity building and advocacy initiatives. It has an ethics review committee- Institutional Review Board (IRB) that monitors its research projects and is registered with NIH in Washington DC and has a federal wide assurance certificate in place.

## Friday workshop. - Day 1

As suggested by my Project guide, I decided to visit Humsafar Trust to interact with the community people directly. Luckily for me, the day I visited the place, it had a Friday workshop organized for the community exactly at the time of my arrival at the venue. I immediately decided to attend it and registered for the same. Upon receiving directions I navigated towards the main room, where upon entering I saw a huge crowd of the “Hijras”, happily chit chatting in groups and walking around, waving to each other. I instantly fell out of place and I thought no one would talk to me. I got recalled of how the hijras are ignored and scorned at or ridiculed by people like us and this made me fear if they would also treat me similarly, with apathy and next to inexistence. But soon I noticed their held gazes at me and they approached me themselves with their heart warming smiles

It started with music and dance which was performed by a few gay and transgender persons who were well dressed up with full costumes and makeup put on. It looked like they had well rehearsed the dances. While the dance performances were going on, many of the members sang and danced from the places they sat. They looked thrilled as if wanting to be a part of the dance. It seemed to me, that they loved dancing which they did whole heartedly. Every dance performance, aroused excitement and joy among all.

It showed the efforts put in by the participants were irrespective of any competition or award. They danced for themselves, and the people of their community. Everybody was immensely happy and enjoyed and so did I. The trust is a place where the LGBT group can unite, celebrate and share their lives openly.

In the later half of the session, the trust gave counselling, where the anchor read aloud the news or laws newly released by the government if any for their community. People from outside also came to share a helping hand and interact with them, like there was one school's head teachers who came to support their community by inviting them for free computer and english speaking classes.

The Friday session was carried out for 3 hours. I found the session was more about celebrating themselves, a place they enjoy live their life freely.

## **Friday workshop - Day 2**

It was my second visit at Humsafar. The session was carried out in the same manner, where there were dance performances in the start. I tried interacting with some of them but found difficulty in making conversation in the noisy and crowded atmosphere. However, I started conversation with a few of them and exchanged numbers too.

Apart from the dance performances, there were group participation activities where, two designers from a Design firm had come to introduce their plan of the project. They announced, they are making a book which will highlight the issues and rights of the transgender community for which they needed their help. They distributed a form to each one which asked to write about their profession, complains, desires etc on the given form. According to the designers, the information collected will be compiled and transformed to a book.

The thing I observed here was, that a majority of the members came to me, to help them in filling up the form. It showed that, they were illiterate and so could't write on their own. I was shocking to see that the people who looked well educated, too lacked the basic reading and writing skill. Also while filling the column of occupation on the form, i found many of them didnt go for work, they were jobless. When I asked for the reason, they said nobody gives them work, and even if they go for work, they face humiliation and rejection every moment. It was very sad to hear this.

At the end of the day, I was successful in interacting and making a few transgender friends- Sana, Boby, Tapasya. However, I spoke individually to them later.

## Personal Interaction with Transgender persons

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### Talk with Bobby-

I met Bobby first at the offices of the Humsafar Trust. I requested him to meet me in person for my project. He was happy to be involved. We exchanged telephone numbers agreeing to meet again. We met again a few days later. Before I could ask any questions, he requested me to listen his story which in his words is a “Meri hasti roti kahani”. During our interaction I realized that Bobby is not only friendly, but also very kind hearted. Bobby is from a Muslim family and had a strict, traditional upbringing.

### Childhood years-

Bobby's childhood friends were mainly other young girls. He liked playing with his sister's dolls and enjoyed wearing her clothes. This liking for dolls and girl's attire was noted early on by his family and he used to get beaten for the same mainly by his father and elder brother. His mother despite her annoyance, loved and supported him. Sadly, Bobby was subjected to humiliation and domestic violence from an early age.

### Teenage ( Std 5th)-

When Bobby was in 5th standard, he had his first sexual encounter with a cousin who used to accompany him to school. The cousin initiated their relations and also told their mutual friends about this. That day, he understood that he was being used by his cousin.

Bobby thinks that this incident made him a 'transgender'. He believes that if he had not engaged physically with his cousin, he could possibly be 'straight'.

### Adulthood-

Bobby started working as a ----- when he turned 21 years old. He was humiliated often at his work place and quit working within two months. Around this time, he met Dhruv. He realized that Dhruv was also a transgender. Happily for Dhruv, his family accepted his 'being different' and even let him dress like a 'girl' at times. Bobby's family in comparison had forbidden him to wear women's clothes. Dhruv taught him the concept of Koti. He was the one person that Bobby was able to trust and confide in. Bobby heard about and was introduced to 'Humsafar Trust' (LGBT, Community) through Dhruv.

### Talk with Chandni-

I met Chandni at the Bhandup traffic signal. I saw her begging there. As I approached her, she held out her hand for money. I introduced myself and asked if she could spare some time to talk. She immediately agreed and we had a short chat on the roadside footpath. I met her again a couple of times in order to and understand her lifestyle and behavior in-depth. Chandni is a 42 yr old female transgender. She lives in a group along with her other transgender companions. She seems very mature and treated me like her child. She did this I think to make me feel comfortable during our interaction.

### Childhood years-

Chandni's childhood was very hard. Although born as a boy, she knew that she was a woman from within. As soon as she realized and acknowledged this, her troubles started. This duality was not acceptable to her parents and hence they used to humiliate and ill treat her.

### Teenage-

School was extremely difficult for her. She got bullied a lot. She was picked on for being too thin, for being feminine, for not liking football and for hanging round with girls. Her deep desire to be true to her inner self, gave her the confidence to come out in the open with her mother. Unfortunately, her mother failed to understand her or appreciate her child's dilemma.



During this time Chandini had grown her hair. In anger her mother came after her with scissors and tried to cut her hair off. After this incident, Chandini decided to leave home.

#### **Adulthood-**

Chandini moved to Mumbai from Madras. She says that initially after moving to this city, she often tried to commit suicide. However, over time after coming in contact and interacting with people from her community, Chandini has gathered courage to live.

#### **Talk with Sana-**

I saw Sana at Humsafar Trust. I found her most graceful dancer in the dance session on Friday and thought of talking to her. She was a female transgender who had transitioned herself surgically to being a female. After a few meetings with her and knowing her closely, I observed that she had a certain dignity and took great pride in herself. She said, she sees herself as the most beautiful woman on earth. I was really impressed by her confident attitude.

### Childhood-

From an early age, he noticed his feminine behaviour and confused himself as being a gay person. But gradually, knowing himself closely in later life he realised his inner self of being a girl. He tried keeping this feeling to himself for quite a long time, but his brave personality didn't allow him to remain quite anymore. Soon he told his parents about his feminine self, but they didn't agree to it and their behaviour changed towards him. They physically and mentally tortured him which even led to his attempting suicide. He had a lot of cut marks of blades on his wrists which he showed me.

### Teenage-

He mentioned that he had a relationship with a girl named Bhoomika, when he was in school. It happened because Bhoomika had fallen in love with Murgan (Sana), which later turned up in a physical relation. But Murgan cleared it later that it was a forceful act from Bhoomika's side and this incident helped him in knowing his true self that he is actually a girl from inside.

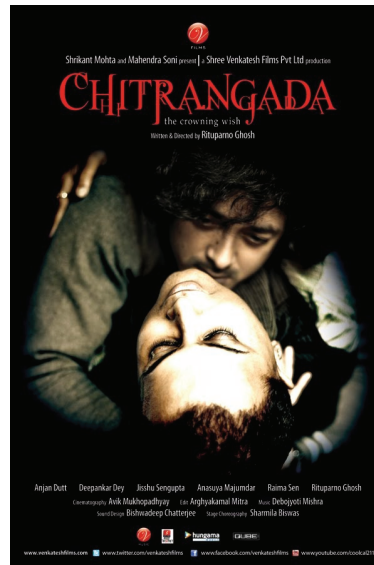
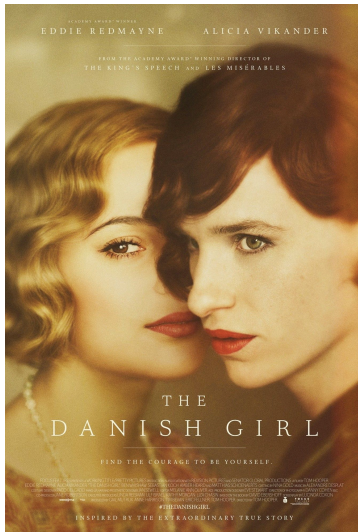
### Adulthood-

Murgan was abandoned from his home at the age of 21. He was out in Jaipur when he had an operation done for changing his gender surgically. Now "she" says that only she owns a control over her life and nobody else and takes pride in every life decision she took.

### Phone call with Ramya

I got Ramya's phone number from a friend. Instead of calling her, at first, I introduced myself through text message and also sent her details about the project. On seeing my message she blocked my number. I persisted in trying to talk to her by calling her after some time. She took my call and requested not to message or call in future. She told me that her life was in a mess and by trying to reach and interview her; I was contributing toward making her life hell. She told me "Mera zindagi ka tamasha mat banao" and cut my call. The exchange with her made me sad, not because I couldn't interview her, but because she seemed to be in pain and her attitude reflected her reluctant nature towards the society. unable to reach out for help.

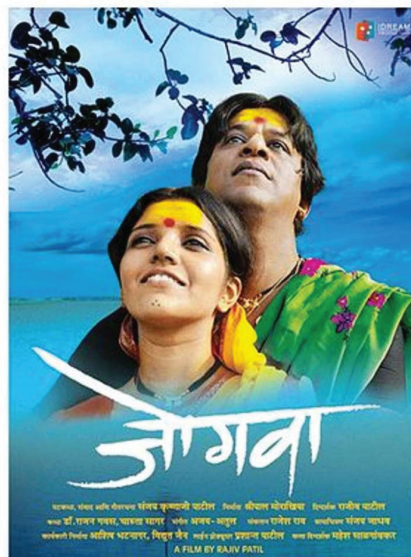
## • Secondary Study



Movies watched

- Chitrangada
- Navaranga
- Jogwa

All the movies showcased different situations and hardships of the life of the transgenders. It helped me to get different perspectives of the transgender's life and societal norms. Each movie had a different approach and raised alternate issues of the same.





## Taking incidents -

After spending time with the transgender people, understanding about their lives and doing a fair study about them, I found that there are many usual and unusual incidents of their lives, of which the society is unaware of. Taking it into consideration, I tried to culminate these situations in my project work. I thought, sharing incidents of their real life will make the project more meaningful and effective, also it will make people aware and increase their knowledge about them. I made attempts to highlight on the following subjects to showcase their lives happenings through my work.

- > Their personal behaviour and habits
- > Their desires
- > Sexual abuse
- > Gender identity problem
- > Humiliation
- > Suicide attempts
- > Rejection
- > Abandonment
- > Fear of self acceptance in society
- > Social stigma

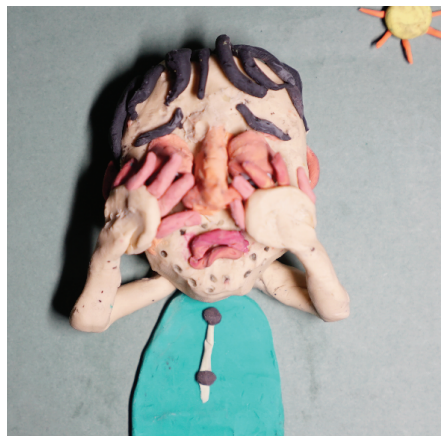


## ● Exploration of Medium -

### Clay Animation -

This was my initial exploration with clay, where I made a 20 seconds stop motion animation of a transgender child which shows his likeness towards femalehood (flowers, dolls, bows, butterfly etc.) and parallaly, his reluctant behaviour towards boyish things and toys like bat- ball, cars etc. Apart from that, when he notices the hair popping out over his chin area, it upsets him and he feels trapped in his own body.

In the clip, attempt is made to portray the transgender boy's real feelings through expressions and gestures.



## Illustrations

Being from a fine arts background, I tried to put my understanding of the transgender people through colors on paper. I started expressing their emotions by making faces of different moods and expressions which could show their dilemma and feelings. The drawings and illustrations are my perceptions and observations of them.





Self desire



Societal enforcement

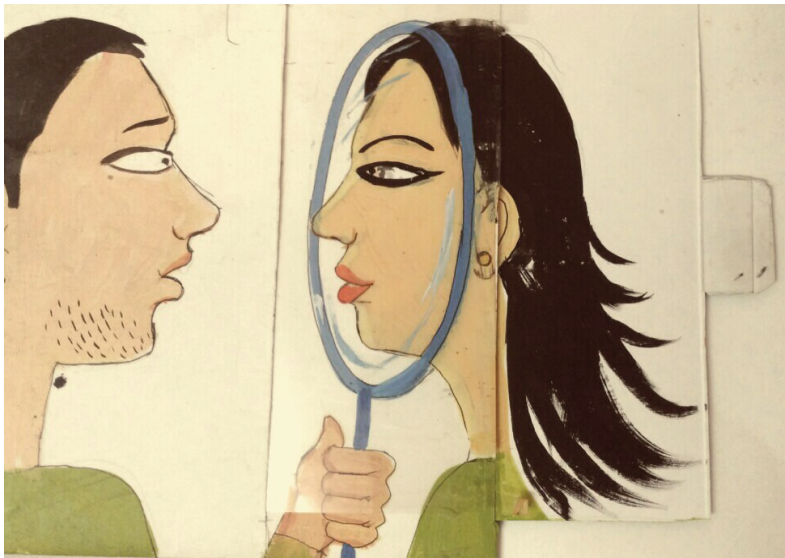
## Interactive Book

I started making interactive images from my observation of the subject. I thought interactive images would show the contrasting behaviour and incidents in its best way.

My initial images showed a comparison of what a transgender person desires in life with what society enforces them to do. I worked with individual images showing contradictory behaviours of the transgenders with society. After knowing them in a better way, I realised, there exists a great difference and disparity between their self pleasures and societal expectations. In order to show that, I designed the image in such a way that, if the outer flip is pulled outside the existing illustration will change to the contrasting image i.e from transgender's mind to the society's mind.



## Interactive images



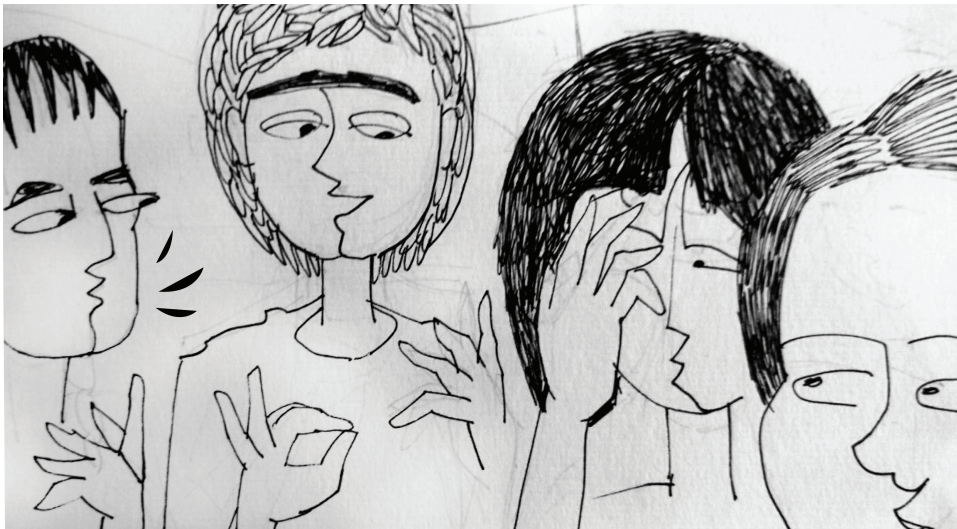
Self desire



Societal enforcement

## Storyboarding

Making stories helped me in enriching and linking the incidents together which I understood of their lives. The storyboard was my designing of the situations and realities of their lives. It was like an attempt to collect different incidents and combining them together to make a visual story out of it for my better understanding.



## ● Final Approach-

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After explorations with styles and mediums, I decided to make a book, comprising of different poems with related illustrations. The initial approach of the poem had its own drawbacks which enforced me to change the style of writing poems. The emotion level of the poem had to be made deep and centric. Henceforth, attempt is now made towards putting forward the situations of their life in a way, that will show their overall hardships and sufferings and not just a few of them. It will give a broader perspective of a transgender's life to the reader.

My final output thus is finalised, which will be poetry book comprising of different poems and illustrations revealing the realities of transgender's life and their journey through their mind.

## Why poem?

Writing poetry is like composing music or drawing and painting. It is original expression of a person's feelings using words unique to that person's feelings. Poetry offers an opportunity to express the feeling in its own metaphorical way. It allows to say things which need to be said (both awful and amazing) without everyone necessarily knowing all the details. Conversely, one can take the tiniest observation and give it a full and detailed expression in poetic form.

It helped me to put my observations in the best effective way. Poems follow a rythm which strikes an emotional chord with the readers and also it remains in the memory of the readers forever.

## ● Exploration of Solution

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### The poems-

The poems I wrote were majorly from my experience out of the meetings with transgender people, observing their behaviours, society's behaviour towards them, watching related movies, ted talks, readings, etc.

Through the poems, I tried to highlight on the major issues, their desires, societal stigma attached to them, their endless quest for identity through direct and metaphoric journey. Attempt is made to show the continuous struggle, paradoxes, incongruities, ugliness and absurdities of life of the transgender people.

### The mirror

Is inspired by a real life incident of Bobby who talks to the mirror late at night

### Like every Every day

It is taken from a real life incident that I observed when I spent time with Bobby. This poem highlights the contradictory nature of a transgender outside home and inside home.

**The makeup box**

It shows the transgender's early age liking for cosmetics and feminine dressing

**The aimless aim**

The poem is about the attempts made by the transgender boy tries to tell his mother about his true identity metaphorically

**The battle**

This poem is about a continuous conflict between the body and soul.

**The recognized ones**

It is a poem where transgender community is taunted for their very existence.

**Fear will dissolve**

The poem is about suicidal attempts by transgenders and how their mind works to self destruct.

**The complain**

In the poem the transgender presents an overall view of the issues he faces in society.

**The prayer**

The poem shows the grief of a transgender who questions God for giving him/her and imperfect body/self.

### **The last step**

This poem highlights the feelings of a transgender person when she is either abandoned or leaves the home by herself.

### **The Banyan tree**

It is a metaphorical poem where a transgender person is compared to a banyan tree as she faces mistrust and humiliation at the hands of her own people.

### **Thanks, But no thanks!**

Here the transgender person mocks the hypocritical society.

### **The letter**

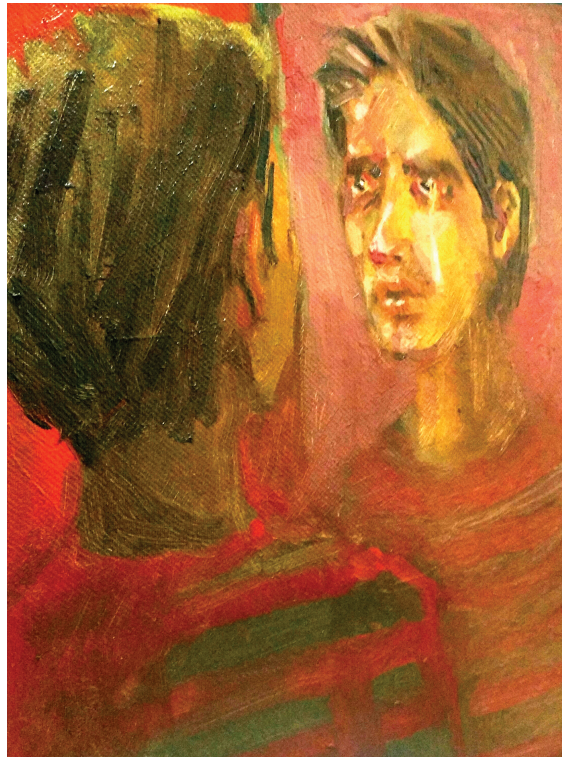
It is the poem in the form of a letter where, the transgender person says goodbye to her family. The letter reveals the mixed feelings when the transgender person leaves the home.



## Deciding Illustration style



Linear?



Oil colour?



Abstract?





Final illustration style-

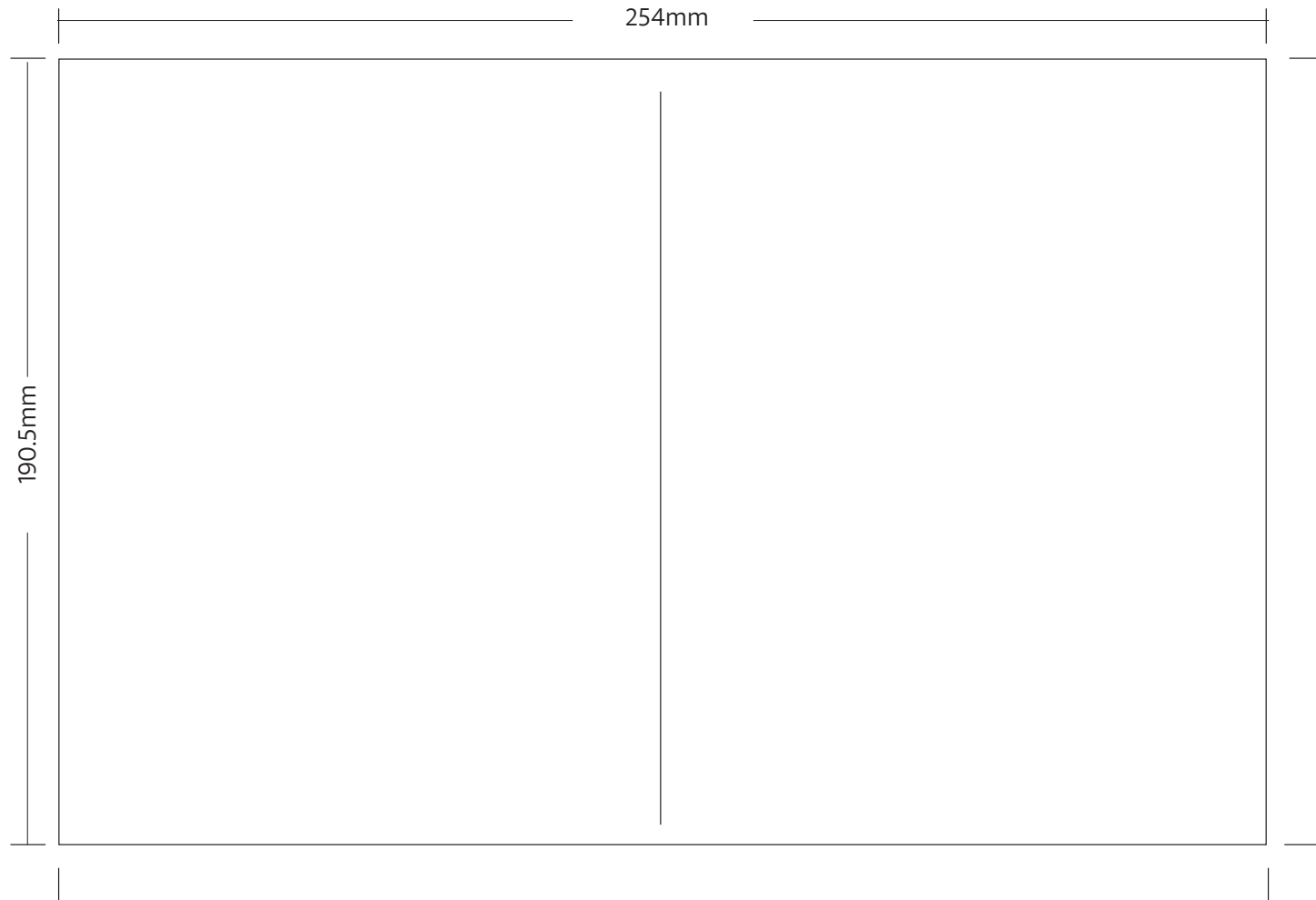
Abstract colourful illustrations.

I choose to use the style because just like the poems it will show abstraction in its own form. Images will not be highly detailed to match the writing sense. It will allow the viewer to get a gist of the writings and explore their own imagination.



## ● The Book

Layout-

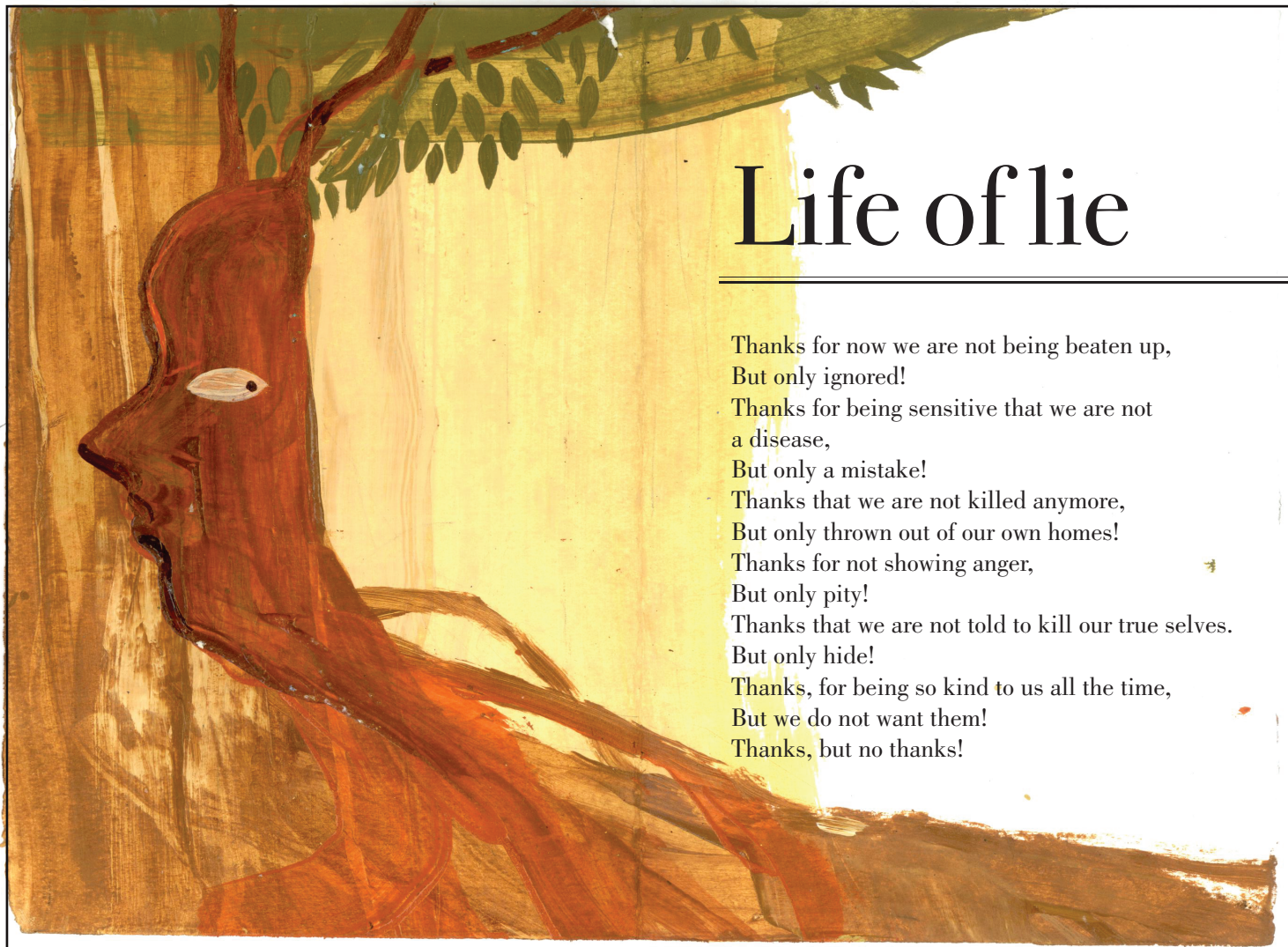




# Thanks, but no thanks!

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Thanks for now we are not being beaten up,  
But only ignored!  
Thanks for being sensitive that we are not  
a disease,  
But only a mistake!  
Thanks that we are not killed anymore,  
But only thrown out of our own homes!  
Thanks for not showing anger,  
But only pity!  
Thanks that we are not told to kill our true selves.  
But only hide!  
Thanks, for being so kind to us all the time,  
But we do not want them!  
Thanks, but no thanks!



# Life of lie

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Thanks for now we are not being beaten up,  
But only ignored!  
Thanks for being sensitive that we are not  
a disease,  
But only a mistake!  
Thanks that we are not killed anymore,  
But only thrown out of our own homes!  
Thanks for not showing anger,  
But only pity!  
Thanks that we are not told to kill our true selves.  
But only hide!  
Thanks, for being so kind to us all the time,  
But we do not want them!  
Thanks, but no thanks!

## ● Conclusion

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Our society has a stereotypical image of the Transgender community. We look down upon them. The common man is judgmental without having any real knowledge or information about this community. I too had a limited view of this community only because I lacked information that would allow me to understand who and what they are. However, after meeting and interacting with transgenders, my understanding of their lives has gradually increased. As I worked on this project, and interacted with them closely, I now have some knowledge of the struggles of their daily life. The basic rights of human beings that we take for granted like identity, gender identity, family support, right to work etc is not available to them. Obviously, all this impacts their mindset and behavior. Their exclusion from mainstream society makes their life very hard. I also gained some understanding of their expectation from society and got to see through their lens for a change their perspective of our society. I hope that through my poems, I am able to give the reader insight into this community and develop some empathy for them as fellow human beings.

Along with this, I also learned and executed various forms of self expressions such as, poem writing, clay animation, to name a few. This project not only helped me to explore the transgender community but also helped in getting an insight of my own forms of expression so that I could project their lives to the world in the best possible way.



## ● References

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