

ADAPTATION OF AN INDIAN AUTHOR'S WORK

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Visual Communication

Approval

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Adaptation of an Indian Author's Work

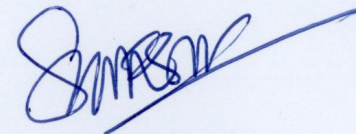
By

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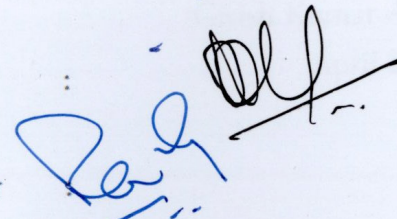
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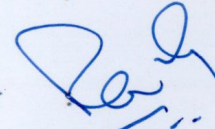


Internal Examiner

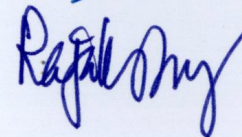
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External Examiner



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ABSTRACT

Film has displaced the novel as the twentieth century's most popular narrative form. Yet increasingly there is a convergence of these two art forms in the sense that major motion picture studios are adapting bestsellers and writers are writing in ways that offer easy adaptation for filmmakers. Furthermore the novelist are also getting involved in the pre-production of the movie by developing the screenplay of their novels.

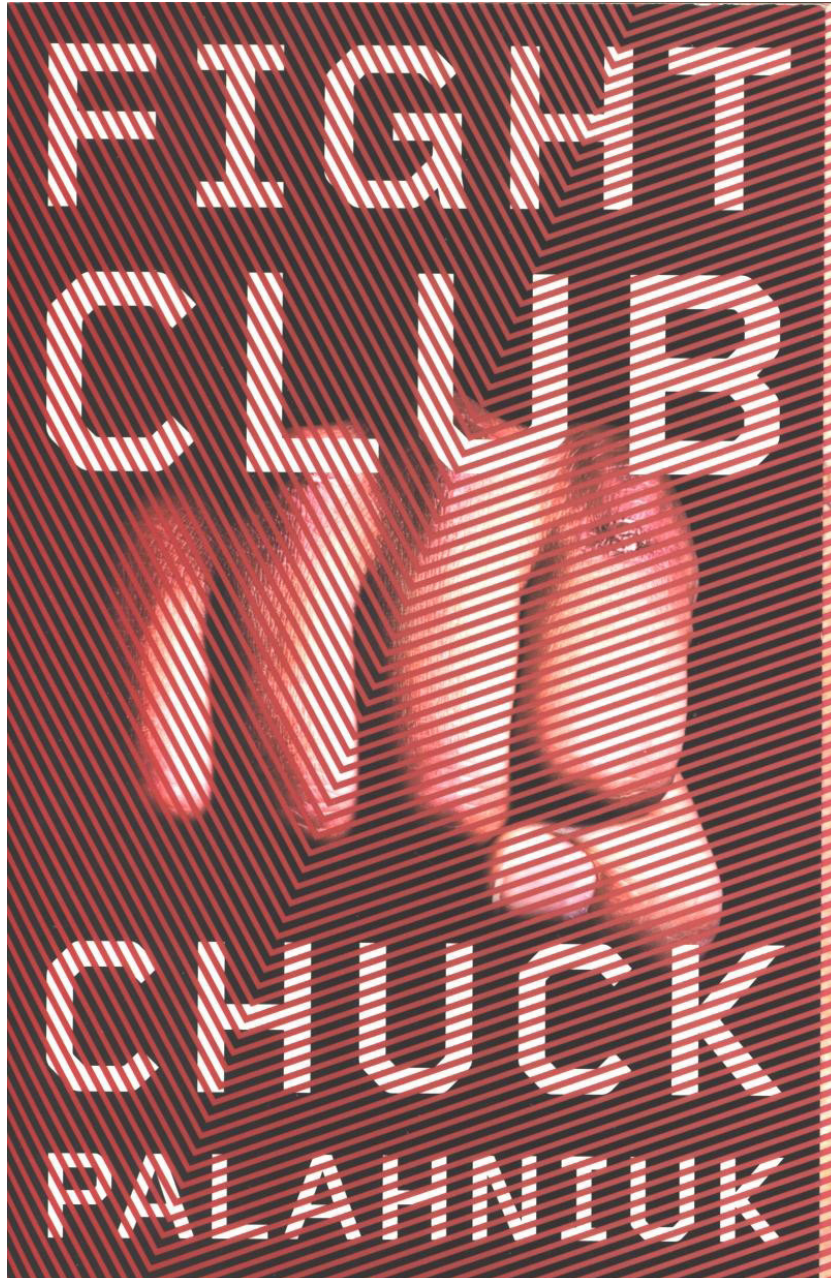
This project is an attempt to understand key narrative functions and how the medium of film can be utilized to enunciate the emotion represented through words in the Novel into Visuals that speak to the audience.

ADAPTING NOVELS/SHORT STORIES INTO FILM

Whenever a novel is adapted into a Film, the fidelity of the Filmmaker's vision to the original medium is questioned. Fidelity criticism depends on a notion of the text as having and rendering up to the reader a single, correct "meaning" which the filmmaker has either adhered to or in some sense violated or tampered with.

There will always be a discussion about faithful representation to the word which in no way be considered as a "successful" adaptation, and to the "spirit" or "essence" of the work.

In this project I will be taking the premise of the original short story, the characters from it and drop them in a different environment. With such an experiment I hope the characters will evolve and tell me a story that would be made into a film. This is in no way a word to word reproduction of the original work but rather an experiment to bring the writer's world and the filmmaker's world onto the screen.



CASE STUDY

Fight Club

Author – Chuck Palahniuk

Director – David Fincher

The Novel

Originally published as a short story in 1995, Chuck Palahniuk rewrote Fight Club as a novel in 1996, winning him an Oregon Book Award and a Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association Award.

The Film

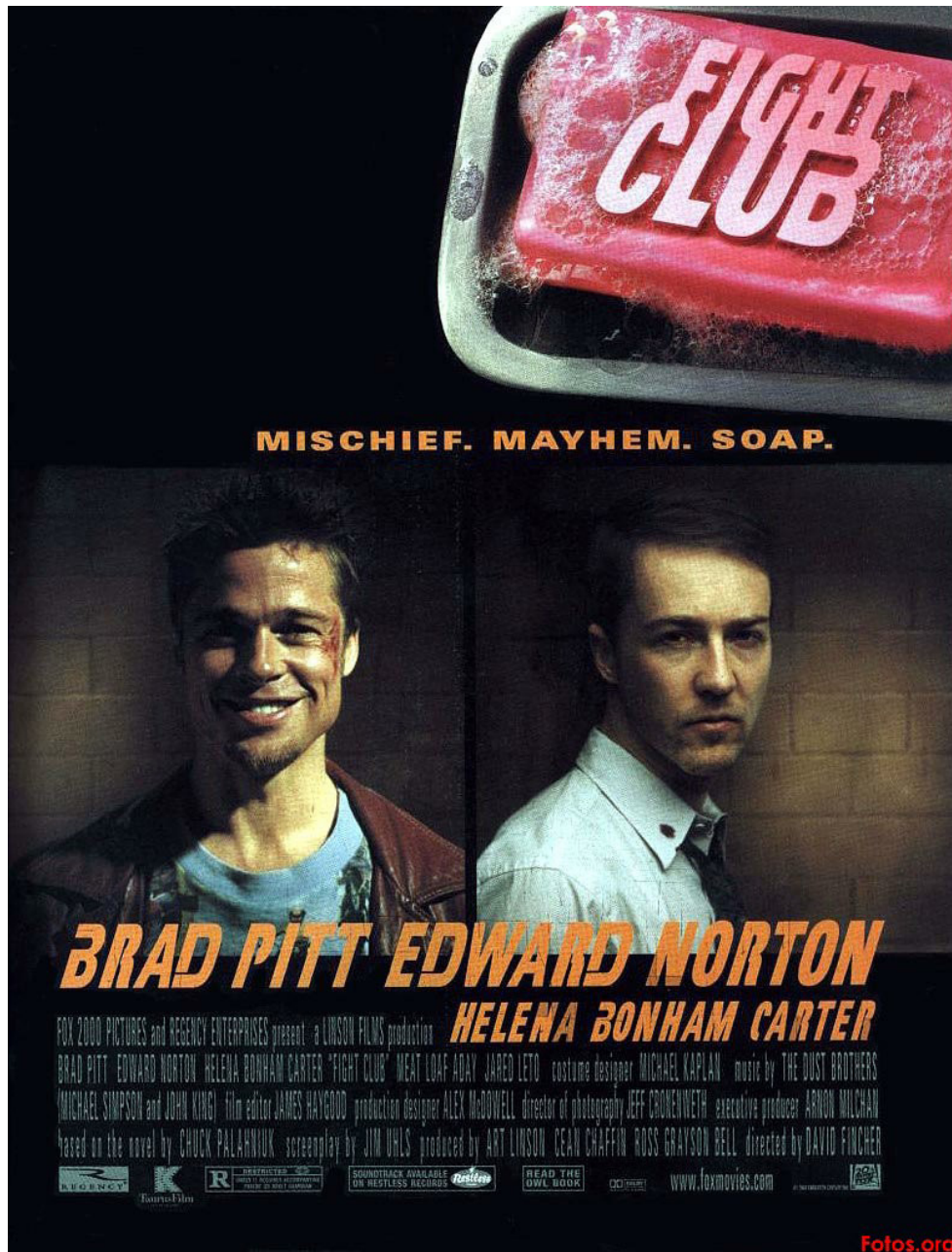
David Fincher who was a fan of the book was chosen by 20th century fox studios to adapt it into a screenplay. Fincher and the screenwriter, Jim Uhls, along with the actors also revised the script several times, seeking help from other experts in the field and from Palahniuk himself.

The Novel vs. The Film

The ends of both the film and the novel differ drastically. In Palahniuk's novel, the Narrator does shoot himself through the cheek, just as Edward Norton's Jack does in the film. What happens next in both stories is, however, quite different. In the film, Jack is reunited with Marla, seemingly rid of Tyler forever and ready to begin to discover a life with Marla. In the novel, the Narrator shoots himself but then wakes up in what he believes is Heaven. Palahniuk's depiction makes it clear that the Narrator is actually in a mental institution. The Narrator believes his psychiatrist to be God. The Narrator continues to see orderlies and other employees in the institution with tell-tale bruises and cuts. They tell him that they are eagerly awaiting his return.

In the film version, Jack is able to reach a middle ground between the two personalities. He "absorbs" Tyler upon shooting himself and is able to become the dominant personality again. As in the novel, it is Marla and his concern for her that allows him to break free of Tyler's hold. However, in the novel it is unclear if the Narrator is truly free of Tyler. Some scholars have suggested that the last chapter may even be narrated by Tyler instead of the Narrator. The implications of such an ending in the film may have been seen by the filmmakers to be too depressing for movie-going audiences.

In the novel, Tyler intends to blow up the Parker-Morris building so that it will fall onto a nearby museum. This is intended to be a "theater of death" to kill the Narrator. In the film, Tyler has planned the detonation of several buildings all of which serve as credit card company headquarters. His intention is to erase the debt record. While Tyler's intentions in the novel are purely destructive, his film counterpart seems to have a more political agenda in mind.

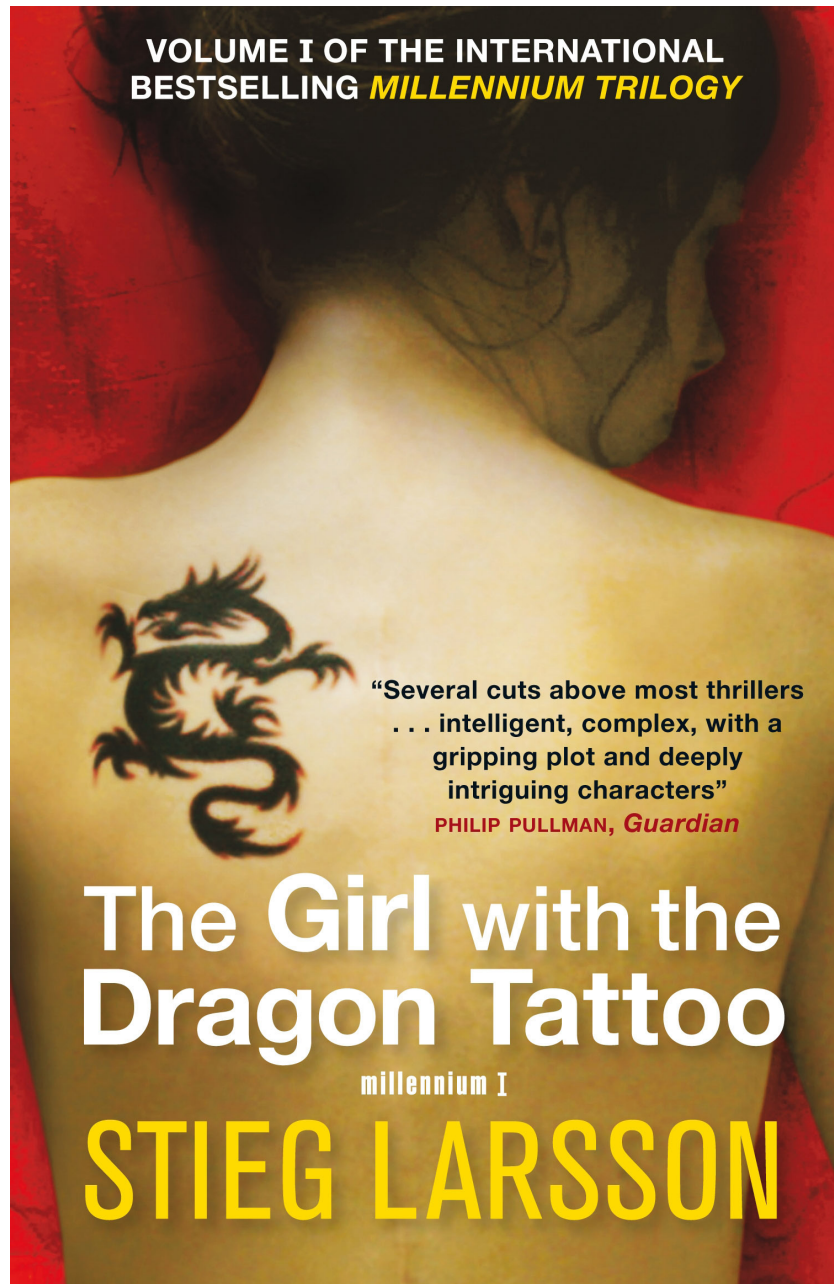


**I am
jack's
complete
lack of
surprise**



Tyler himself is slightly different between the two versions. While much of Palahniuk's dialogue is intact in Uhls's screenplay, the film version of Tyler Durden is more charismatic. Tyler's commitment to his ideology is still strong in the film but Pitt's Tyler is not quite as dark as Palahniuk's. The passage in the novel where the Narrator spots a jawbone in the garden behind the house and hides it from Marla is omitted in the film. When Tyler describes the hunter-gatherer/pre-agrarian society he wishes to return to there is the impression that Tyler vision, while still dangerous, is ultimately intended to free people. In the novel, Tyler gives almost the exact same speech to the Narrator but it is clear that this new world will be led by Tyler. One area in which both Tylers are identical is in their intention to eliminate Marla. In both versions she is seen as a threat that could undermine Tyler's very existence. If Jack or the Narrator are able to be with her, neither will require a Tyler Durden in their lives.

The depiction of Marla in the film closely resembles Palahniuk's. However, the film provides no background on her character. Palahniuk gives Marla a work background in funeral homes though the film gives the viewer no such context. The chapter in the novel in which the Narrator consoles Marla about the lump she found in her breast by telling her an embarrassing anecdote about his past is not visited in such detail in the film. On screen, Jack visits Marla and performs an awkward breast exam before leaving her hotel room. There is no real intimacy between them. Some have criticized the film's depiction of Marla as being less interesting or fleshed out. These critics see Marla in the film more as an object or goal of Jack's affection (and Tyler's abuse) than as a fully realized character.



Girl with a Dragon Tattoo

Author – Stieg Larsson

Director (Swedish) - Niels Arden Oplev

Director (English) – David Fincher

The Novel

The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo (original title in Swedish: *Män som hatar kvinnor*, “Men Who Hate Women”) is a crime novel by the late Swedish author and journalist Stieg Larsson. It is the first book of the Millennium trilogy, which, when published posthumously in 2005, became a best-seller in Europe and the United States.

The Films

The Swedish film production company Yellow Bird created film versions of the Millennium Trilogy, all released in 2009, beginning with *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*, directed by Danish filmmaker Niels Arden Oplev. The protagonists were played by Michael Nyqvist and Noomi Rapace. A Hollywood adaptation of the book, directed by David Fincher, was released in December 2011. The main characters were portrayed by Daniel Craig and Rooney Mara.



The Novel vs. The Films

Lisbeth Salander is a complicated woman. As portrayed in Stieg Larsson's best-selling Millennium Trilogy, she is a Goth computer hacker who is as anti-social as she is intelligent. She harbours extreme hostility towards abusive men, which stems from having witnessed her father beat her mother into a vegetative state as a child. After attempting to immolate the man in retaliation, she is declared legally incompetent and placed under psychiatric care. When we are first introduced to her in *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*, she is working for a major security firm and has just completed a background check on a certain well-known magazine publisher.

Although a social misfit in all the versions of the story, Lisbeth Salander of Larsson's novel is different from that played by Naomi Rapace in the Swedish version and from that played by Rooney Mara in the Fincher's version. They have different character nuances which is related to the narrative styles adopted by the two directors.

The minutia of Sweden's finance laws and political history aren't a vital part of the narrative, and seem to be a stumbling block for many readers. In the adaptation this has been omitted skilfully by both the directors.

In Oplev's version he gives hints to the next book in the series, in affect he is not just adapting "The Girl with a Dragon tattoo", but the entire Millennia series. For instance the Patricide scene in the next book "The Girl who played with Fire" appear as flashbacks in the movie. In the Fincher's version, this comes in as small talk between Slander and Blomkvist.



In the Novel the relationship between, Blomkvist and Erika is established very well. It is also implied that he is a ladies man. In the Swedish version the Blomkvist, Erika chemistry is retained although he is not portrayed as a ladies man. In the English version, Blomkvist, Erica chemistry is downplayed and further more Blomkvist is shown as a sensitive soul.

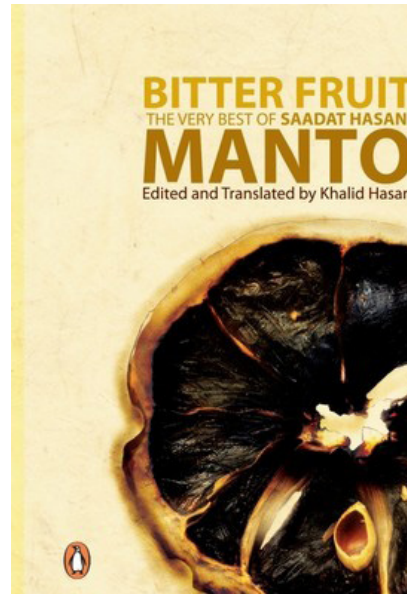
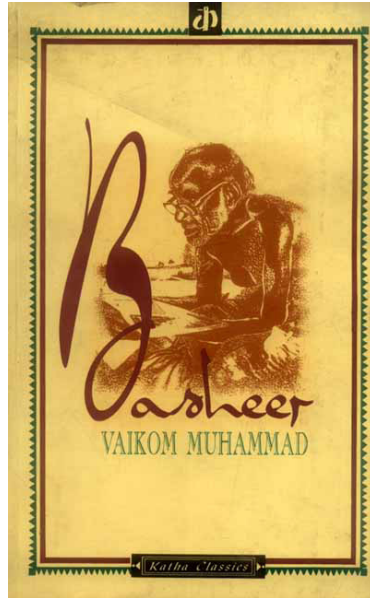
Another big difference between the book and the two films is how Blomkvist finally gets enough evidence to nail Wennerstrom. In the end, it is Lisbeth who provides this information in all three versions of the story. However, there is an additional detail omitted from the Swedish film. In both the book and Fincher's film, Blomkvist only agrees to help Henrik Vanger after the man promises to give him what he needs to prove Wennerstrom's guilt. But when Blomkvist receives the evidence in question it turns out to be useless, due to the statute of limitations. That's when Lisbeth steps in. In Oplev's film, Henrik never makes that promise. This weakens the character of the Blomkvist in the movies. In terms of the role of the protagonist, you go back and forth between Slander and Blomkvist in the book but in the movies, Slander clearly becomes the protagonist.



The Ending

There are slight variations across all three concerning how Blomkvist discovers Martin is the killer. In the novel, he finds a picture in which Martin is wearing the same jacket as the mystery man in the blurry parade photo. In the Swedish film, he and Lisbeth come to the conclusion that all the murder victims were Jewish, which leads them to suspect former Nazi Harald Vanger. Blomkvist breaks into Harald's house, where he is almost shot for trespassing, only to be saved by Martin. They go back to Martin's place, where Blomkvist reveals what he has learned. It is at this point that Martin decides Blomkvist has to die. In the Fincher film, Blomkvist and Lisbeth also come to the conclusion that all the victims were Jewish, which leads them to suspect Harald. Blomkvist then goes over and has a nice chat with the Nazi, at which point he sees a picture of Martin wearing the same jacket as the man in the blurry parade photo. He then breaks into Martin's house looking for clues, only to be apprehended by the man.

Then there is the issue of Martin's fiery demise. In Larsson's novel, he intentionally veers his car into oncoming traffic, resulting in a head-on collision with a truck. In the Swedish film, Martin loses control and careens off the side of the road. Lisbeth has the opportunity to save him, but instead chooses to let him burn to death. In Fincher's version, Martin also loses control and crashes. But before Lisbeth can reach him, leaking gasoline ignites, consuming the car.



BOOKS CONSIDERED FOR ADAPTATION

Finalizing the story

After reading Manto I was inclined to adapt one of his stories but they were either very hard to adapt in terms of economic viability and the availability of actors to play certain roles.

Finally I decided to short list three stories that I can adapt.

1. Barren

Author: Sadat Hasan Manto

The story is about a young man and his relationship with the author. Later it is revealed that he is a pathological liar.

2. Coma man

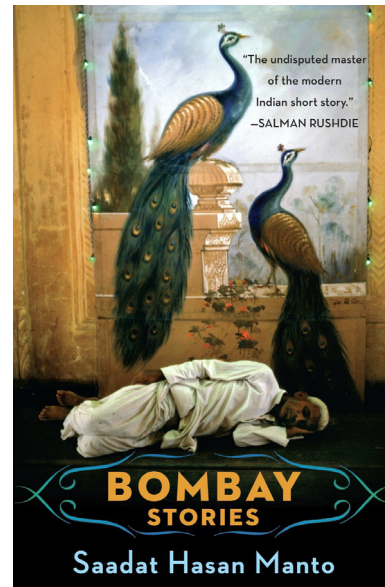
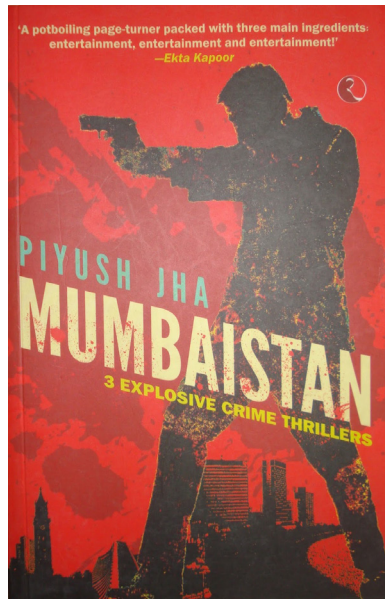
Author: Prakash Jha

The story is about a man who awakens from coma after twenty years, and sets out in search of his wife and himself

3. The Terrorist

Author: K. R. Meera

The story is about an author who suspects his wife is having an affair with a terrorist.





Book - K.R.Meera's Kadhagal

Author - K.R.Meera

Short story - Terrorist

Finally I decided to adapt terrorist because the premise gave me a lot of options to take the story forward. It had the elements of a good thriller. Most importantly I could see it better in my mind's eye when I was reading it. The more shots that I see, the more confidence I have to adapt it.



TECHNICAL STUDIES

Attended the Big League Cine Summit, an online course on cinematography that is open two days in a year. The summit had renowned cinematographers talking about the craft and some of them specific to DSLR filmmaking.

COMPOSITION AND CAMERA OPERATING FOR THE BIG SCREEN

Frankie DeMarco ("Mad Men",
"All is Lost", "Margin Call")



STORY TELLING TECHNIQUES: HOW TO ADD MASSIVE PRODUCTION VALUE

Kevin Shahinian - Pacific Pictures



LIGHTING MINIMALISM: EXTRAORDINARY CINEMATOGRAPHY WITH MINIMAL LIGHTING

Rasmus Heise (Oscar Winning Short
Film "Helium", Sony, Coca-Cola)



HOW TO FILM BEAUTY VS. ACTION

Matthew Santo (Nike, Google,
Reebok and more)



**DELIVERING STORYTELLING
IMPACT WITH LIGHT, LENS AND
CAMERA**

Shane Hurlbut, ASC("Terminator",
"We Are Marshall")



**MOTIVATED LIGHTING: USING
SPACE TO YOUR ADVANTAGE**

David Vollrath ("Lincoln", "Sprite".
Nickelodeon")



**EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO
KNOW ABOUT LENSES**

Caleb Pike (dslrvideoshooter.com)



**CAMERA MOVEMENT THAT
MAKES A DIFFERENCE**



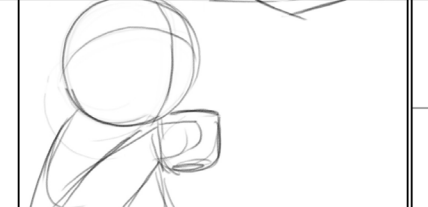

Matt Workman (IBM, Panasonic,
P. Diddy)



SCRIPT TO STORYBOARD

INT. LIVING ROOM. MORNING

Anand is sitting on the couch and watching news about 9/11, two days after the tragedy. (Slider shot from behind) Shot of hot coffee on the coffee table and next to it is his key card. He picks up the coffee and cut to him sipping it while still engrossed in the news. Shot of him from the back as the first shot as he switches off the television.

PAGE	PROJECT	TITLE	CODE
SCENE	LAYOUT - WIDESCREEN - ASPECT RATIO 16:9	ACTION - DIALOGUE - NOTES	PANELS
1		INT EXT / DAY NIGHT	
		INT EXT / DAY NIGHT	
		INT EXT / DAY NIGHT	
		INT EXT / DAY NIGHT	
	THE TERRORIST	INT EXT / DAY NIGHT	

EXT. BUS STAND. MORNING

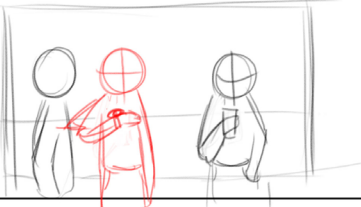
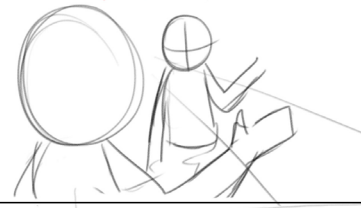
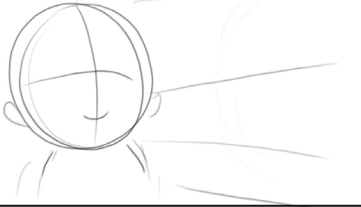

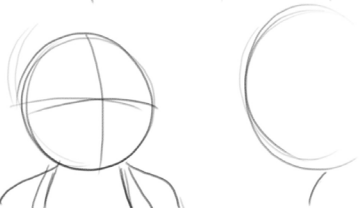
Anand walks into the frame as there is one more person waiting for the bus. Anand looks at him and looks at his watch. He sees Rajesh and waves at him.

RAJESH
Bohot pee li yaar kal raat

ANAND
Thujhe kisne bola itna peene ke liye? Kya koi Competition chal raha tha?

RAJESH
Chod de mere baap. Aap mahan ho pata nahi tereko kyu nahi chadti
In the background the person waiting for the bus looks away from his phone and moves in as if to catch the bus. Anand turns back.

ANAND
Chal bus aagayi

PAGE	PROJECT	TITLE	CODE
SCENE	LAYOUT - WIDESCREEN - ASPECT RATIO 16:9	ACTION - DIALOGUE - NOTES	PANELS
2		INT EXT / DAY NIGHT	
		INT EXT / DAY NIGHT	
		INT EXT / DAY NIGHT	
		INT EXT / DAY NIGHT	
		INT EXT / DAY NIGHT	

TEXT. BUS STAND. MORNING

RAJESH

Chod de mere baap. Aap mahan ho pata nahi tereko kyu nahi chadti.

In the background the person waiting for the bus looks away from his phone and moves in as if to catch the bus. Anand turns back.

ANAND

Chal bus aagayi

INT. BUS. MORNING

RAJESH

Aur suna Bhabhi kaisi hai?

ANAND

Mast hai (with a grin)

RAJESH

Kab tak chupake rakhega? Mila tho zara

ANAND

Chupane ki kya baat hai. Jab chahe mil le. Aisa kar sunday ko free hai? Sunday ko aaja. Sun mera baat par. Usko daaru bilkul pasand nahi hai. Aur eh sab ghar pe nahi chalne wala.

PAGE	PROJECT	TITLE	CODE
SCENE	LAYOUT - WIDESCREEN - ASPECT RATIO 16:9	ACTION - DIALOGUE - NOTES	PANELS
		INT EXT / DAY NIGHT	
3		INT EXT / DAY NIGHT	
		INT EXT / DAY NIGHT	
		INT EXT / DAY NIGHT	
		INT EXT / DAY NIGHT	

INT. BUS. MORNING

RAJESH

Teri tho gayi Mamu. Are yaar bhul hi gaya, tera woh twist aaj publish hone wali hai na

ANAND

Sach mein teri ab tak nahi uthri. Woh kal tha saale jiske jashn mein maine Pilaya tha.

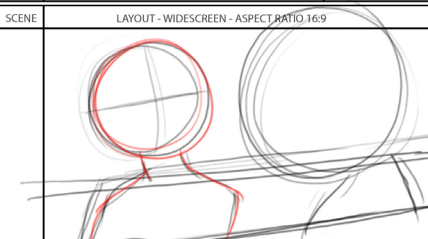
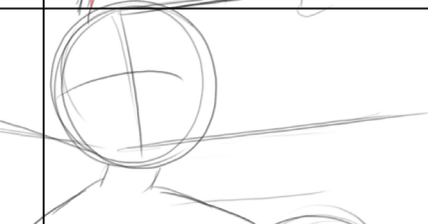
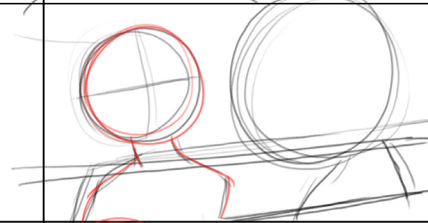
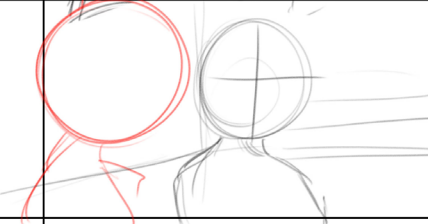

RAJESH

Ha bol le. Ghar pe jab bachhe bhi hojathe hai na tho aadmi hameshe nashe hotha hai. Ab tho tere din gine hua hai.

Anand cuts him off.

ANAND

Tu rooz ki kahani daura mat yaar. Yeh Rajesh Khanna wali story nahi sun ni mujhe. Bas kar. Sun sun, sabse mast baat yeh hai ki mere editor jo hai un-hone bohot achi review di hai. Readers se bhi acha response mila. Hidustan mein bhi science fiction ka daur aa chuka hai.

PAGE	PROJECT	TITLE	CODE
SCENE	LAYOUT - WIDESCREEN - ASPECT RATIO 16:9	ACTION - DIALOGUE - NOTES	PANELS
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		INT EXT / DAY NIGHT	
		INT EXT / DAY NIGHT	
		INT EXT / DAY NIGHT	
		INT EXT / DAY NIGHT	

INT. BUS. MORNING

Rajesh is slowly getting up and being anxious.

ANAND

Ha ha cut le saale.

RAJESH

Chod raat ko celebrate karenge.

Anand nods his head dismissively.

RAJESH

Anand sun na, ek sher yaad aaya. Abhi abhi.

ANAND

Sher bhi bolne laga thu. Acha irshad irshad

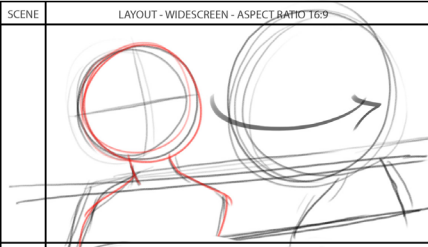


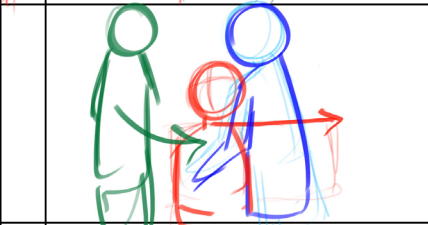

RAJESH

Woh Dariya mein ghar banaye baithe hai. Woh Dariya mein ghar banaye baithe hai. Unhe maloom nahi woh fakta hai.

ANAND

Shukriya Shukriya.

Anand smirks, looks at his watch again.

PAGE	PROJECT	TITLE	CODE
SCENE	LAYOUT - WIDESCREEN - ASPECT RATIO 16:9	ACTION - DIALOGUE - NOTES	PANELS
		INT EXT / DAY NIGHT	
		INT EXT / DAY NIGHT	
		INT EXT / DAY NIGHT	
		INT EXT / DAY NIGHT	
		INT EXT / DAY NIGHT	

CASTING

Casting the right people for the role becomes critical especially when dealing with a difficult subject. A bad performance can trivialize the gravity of the situation.

Also this will be the first time where I will be handling profession actors. Collaborating with seasoned actors will be a good learning curve.

The dialogues in the script was used as a skeletal and later filled in during rehearsals.



ANAND

Anand is born to an orthodox Hindu Brahmin family. His mother was a teacher and his father was an accountant in a small scale industry. Anand was very naughty as a kid. In the summer of 1989 his parents passed away in a car accident. Anand was the only survivor. His elder sister Shilpa had also perished.

Irfan Khan was the owner of the ceramics family that Anand's father used to work at. Irfan Khan and his wife Selma welcomed him into their family of four which includes Ayesha and Farah. They left him be himself. Go to religious gatherings as he wished.

In the riots of 1992, Hindu extremists entered their house, raped the women, pillaged the home and burnt everyone alive. Once again Anand survived. He was filled with hatred and Vengeance.



PANKAJ RAJ YADAV Theatre artist and Acting coach

ANAND

He met a Muslim Cleric named Md. Yousuf who introduced him to Islam and the concept of Jihad. Anand continued to vent his frustrations through his writings. He did very well in college and got an admission in AMU where he met Tareek. Tareek and Anand became best of friends. Tareek taught him about non-violence but was also killed in a riot by Hindus. This made Anand vengeful against and the Hindu community. He returned home Mumbai to Md. Yousuf who by now was a noted name in the Jihadi movement.

Md. Yousuf took advantage of Anand and brain washed him. He was taken to Pakistan and trained by Al Queda and asked to remain dormant until he was given word by his superior.

Anand got a job in a local English newspaper. The editor liked the revolutionary Sci-fi political genre that Anand was writing. He even promised him funds for his own novel.

Things changed on 9/11 not just for the entire world but Anand as well. He got the call from his handler.



VIREN BASOYA Theatre artist and Acting coach

RAJESH

Rajesh is around 36 years of age. Has been married for 8 years. Lives in Dombivilli, Mumbai with his wife and 2 young sons aged 6 and 4. Travels by the local bus every day for work. He works as an accountant in a small scale ceramic factory.

Met Anand on his daily commute in the local bus. When they went drinking together, Rajesh got drunk and had to be dropped off to his house by Anand, this incident cemented their friendship.

On the way home they hit a bar every day and talk about politics, work and life. They have been drinking buddies for the last two years.



VINEET SHARMA Theatre and Bollywood actor

OFFICER YESHWANT SHARMA

An IPS officer with the ATS. He was instrumental in foiling the plot to bomb the United States Embassy in New Delhi on the 15th of June 2001 by Al Queda. It is believed that Osama Bin Laden was responsible for it.

Apparently Al Queda has placed a bounty of 1 million dollars on his head.



MAYA

Newly married to Anand. Small town girl. Loves Aamir Khan and Bollywood movies. Loves to talk and enjoys cooking. Born in a joint family, she is coming to terms with living in a metropolitan city. Doesn't understand the nature of work that Anand is into and doesn't care about it.

She believes Rajesh is a bad influence on Anand.

MONIKA SHARMA Theatre Artist

LOCATION

The location also adds character to the story. I spent a lot of time looking for locations and getting the right permissions to shoot. Some locations worked and some didn't. I had to make a few compromises because of the budgetary limitations.

THE HOUSE



The house needed to be an upper middle class place. The house that we used belongs to Artist Viveek Sharma. The house was perfect. As he was related to the Assistant Director we had the liberty to use the house the way we wanted.

As an artist he has a lot of paintings and art related material all over the house that we had to move in each set up. We kept some of the painting to avoid white walls.

THE BAR



The Bar proved to be the hardest location to find due to issues with shooting permissions. We finally managed to find a bar in Andheri thanks to Mr. Prabhakar, the mess manager from Hostel 7.

We got a permission to shoot just about 4 hours to finish up at the bar. Rehearsals came in handy to finish the shots in time.

THE INTERROGATION ROOM



An empty room is what we were looking for to create an interrogation room. We got lucky and found a house that was empty and converted the room into the interrogation room.

Wanted to move away from the regular single hard light at the top. The decision was made to give the audience a clear view of the talents' face.

THE BUS STOP



The new bus stands will not in tune with the era of the movie. So we searched for bus stops with a single pole. We found one near JVLIR with a nice Blue background which is ideal in keeping in mind the colour pallet of the film.

THE BUS



Shooting inside public transportation was hard. We ran into permission issues and also crowd control was impossible in a moving bus. We decided to shoot inside the IIT Bus and inside the campus. This gave us a lot of control and a lot of time to set up the shots between each circuit of the bus.

REHEARSALS



To reduce the cost of shooting I decided to conduct rehearsals. This also gave me a sense of the capabilities of the actors involved. The coverage of the 3 lenses used (50mm 1.8, 24-70 2.8, 70-200 2.8) and a sense of direction. We started off with just a skeletal structure of the dialogues. Each actor was given his character sheet and they brought it a sense of believability to the characters. The dialogues we developed in rehearsals.

THE SHOOT

My focus was to learn how to direct the actors and get the right emotion in every scene. A scene had to look real so each character was asked to get comfortable with the settings and do what they normally do. Took my time shooting the key moments of the movie.

Also implement the rules of cinematography learnt from 5C's of cinematography. Handling logistics, equipment rental, taking care of the actors and a lot more on a tight budget.

Directing the performance of the actors were my primary focus in this project. Only through performance can the content become appealing for an audience.

THE EUIPMENT

Canon 5D Mark III, Canon 50mm f 1.8,
Canon 24-70mm, Lseries f 2.8, Canon 70-200
f 2.8, 5 feet slider, Chroma tripod (regular).



EDITING

I learnt from the last film that I need to take full length dialogues from each setup for the editing to be smooth. I also took a lot of inserts so that I can break the 180 rule to get a better response from the actors.

The bus scene was especially difficult to edit since the expose varied due to tree cover within the campus. By taking multiple takes I was able to get enough to cut the scene together.



SOUND

The background music is composed by Ramprasad Sedoram. He was the music director for my last film as well. We work on a theme for the movie and then create variation of the same in different scenes depicting different emotions. For this film we have decided to use the music to create pace.

Sound design is headed by Ambu R. He lays down the ambience and the folly track which is revisited several times until we get it absolutely right.

Final sound mixing is done by Kuldeep. We sit together and adjust the levels of Ambience, folly, music and dialogue. He also helped in the dubbing of the artists for the exterior shots.

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