

Animation design degree project, stage 1

***“Ek Rupaiyah”, an animated
short on abandoned children.***

Project Report

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Approval Sheet

The project II titled “Ek Rupaiyah”,
an animated short on abandoned children,
by Juny K. Wilfred (07634004), is approved
by in partial fullfilment to the requirements
for M. Des. Degree in Animation Design.

Guide:

External Examiner:

Internal Examiner:

Chairman:

Thank you

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“tum school mein padthe ho kya? ... dusvi class mein ...? ... ya pandrahvi class mein ...?”

Introduction

Children on the street is not a very new sight to us. They have been a part of the city scenery since long back. The film “*Ek Rupaiyah*” is a little incident that most people in Mumbai would have come across.

A beggar girl coming and holding our hand is not new to us; the film tries to look at the whole act from the kid’s point of view. The small period of research that I was with the kids left a few imprints in me and the movie is a result of this. Centred around the picture of the kid holding a girl’s hand the film shows the difference in the meaning of this act to the kid and to the rest of the people.

This report summarises the journey that have been on for the last few months, what we also call our project two. It is divided into four major sections apart from the concluding notes and reference sections. The introduction speaks about why i chose this topic. The ‘Study’ section explains the research phase. The ideation and the various concepts thought of, are in the ‘Concepts’ section. ‘Final film’ is where the execution is explained.



“**W**hat’s your P2 going to be on?” “*Thought of your story yet?*” There were things that affected me, issues I was concerned about, but still when it came to choosing a topic for a film, I could not point on one. Somehow, I didn’t want to make the movie on some issue or a problem. But yeah, it should not be a movie made for the purpose of the project either. One big lesson that I had got to learn from my friends here at IDC was that design was not just making something look really good—which was one of my notions before I joined here. “*More than anything else*”, my friends would tell me, “*any work should be true to your heart, be it good or bad*”. So the project had to be about something that I would care about. So started a search within me to find out what was it that was close to my heart. There had been situations where I had felt like I really had to react, times when I had felt helpless and when I was made to feel like a fool. And such moments were the ones which first surfaced—as if my film could be one way to say out things which I couldn’t in the first place.

It was on the day we had to submit our topics that I decided I’d make my movie on children. There were a few incidents that came in the paper around

Why the topic?

the same time. One was about a little kid who was found left in the cradle outside the orphanage. In Kerala, the government had started this programme called ‘Ammathottil’—the mother’s cradle—for children who got thrown away. Basically this was a cradle kept outside the orphanage where the babies whom nobody wanted, could be placed. Now, why would such a thing ever exist? Why ever did a need for it arise? So that more children could be found in it each day? It was questions of this kind that were in my mind when I had chosen ‘Abandoned children’ as the topic for my movie.

Inspiration

Having been brought up by my grandparents, would it be any surprise that I grew up listening to stories? It was the saints and biblical characters that gave company during our lunches. A saint who really inspired me was St. Teresa of Child Jesus, also called 'The Little Flower'. Unlike other saints, Little Teresa was canonized not for a big deed or sacrifice. She was known for her 'Little way'. She wrote, "Love proves itself by deeds, so how am I to show my love? Great deeds are forbidden me. The only way I can prove my love is by scattering flowers and these flowers are every little sacrifice, every glance and word, and the doing of the least actions for love." As children, me and my brothers got to hear how, whenever Little Teresa did anything, even as small as pick a flower, she'd say a prayer like "this act is for the souls of the dead". We were told children were the closest ones to God. The daily prayer that our aunt had taught us also included, "We pray, also for the poor children". Since childhood, we kept hearing from everywhere and everyone that children were the most special ones-the closest to God. Calvin and Hobbes, the famous comic strip by Bill Waterson. Has influenced me a lot and my friends would say it has even crept into my behavior. One of the most honest works- really changed how I started looking at things.

The fairytale, "Little match girl" by Hans Christian Anderson tells of a little girl who sold matches. It describes the last moments in her life where, in the cold, she tries to keep herself warm in the heat

of the matchsticks from the last box she had. How could something as scary as death be so serene? So very magical?

"The Diary of a Young Girl," by Anne Frank, where she describes her life during their hiding from the Nazis. The book shows things through a child's perspective.

The movie, "Kaazhcha" (translates as *Vision/ Sight*) by Blessy is the story of how a little boy, Bhuvan, comes into a simple village family in the district of Alapuzha in Kerala. The kid would have lost his family during the earthquake in Gujarat, but is unaware of the fact. The movie shows how Madhavan's family, becomes his new home and how much the love and care he receives over there means to him.

The movie, "Hand of Hunger", by Hashim K. Basheer, speaks about a filmmaker's dilemma between his ambitions as a filmmaker and his responsibility and emotions as a human being. It was a sarcastic comment on our attitude towards the needy. This was one movie where I felt that the filmmaker's concern for the subject was the soul force that pushed forward the film.

"Salaam Bombay", by Mira Nair portrayed the lives of street kids in a manner that I felt was very honest and frank.



Photo Courtesy: Mathrubhoomi

Study

The first days

To be very frank, I had chosen a topic alright, but I had absolutely no idea on what my story would be or what my film would say. The picture was completely blurred and I wasn't sure at all on how to get on with this project. As my guide said, "A good story teller is not always the one who makes brilliant stories ... but could also be the one who remains alert when a brilliant story comes by".

"Surround yourself with anything you can find about the topic. Read books, watch movies look at art work". I began reading all kinds of articles even remotely connected to children, going through websites of organizations that worked for children and collecting any data pertaining to abandoned children. This phase opened up a lot about the children and the various aspects about them that could be addressed: from who they were to the various problems that they faced.

“To write a story about children, first be in their midst. Get to know them personally.” Who else to ask for stories from the street other than the street kids themselves? But then is it that easy to get to talk to them? Would they just open up to you in the first place? Would you not arouse their suspicions? Even if they did not say a word, is there not lot much to observe and learn?

Isn't “Abandoned children”, as a topic, very general? As a first step, the topic was now narrowed down from abandoned children to street children.

What was it about them that I'd address? I could have the kid speaking on his own life on the street- how good or bad it is. Should it be on the problems they face- hunger, sickness, homelessness? Or on how they happened to end up on streets? The threats they need to overcome- violence, exploitation, drugs etc? One that talks of their visions, dreams and aspirations?

Or one about how the street life is- about the freedom they enjoy, the friends they have, how they relate to other kids on the street or how they relate to other well-to-do kids?

Could it be from the perspective of the parents- a story of sorry or one of justification? There were parents who were sorry that their kids had to have such a fate, ones who felt that the kids themselves were to be blamed for running away. Should my film point a finger?

The society as the witness to all this? Or more than that- playing a role in the children's plight.



Research

www. .com

Data collection... the first thing that would come to mind is, ahem, the Google. Well I wouldn't just step over that, right? Did you know that children ended up on streets, even in the developed countries?? Isn't 'street children' also quite broad as a topic? What would the specific topic of my film be?



Children's home, Kochi

This was a visit which had occurred years back, but that I'd say, had planted the seeds in my heart, for me to take up this topic. Now when I reflect back, is it ironic that it was not an intended visit? Had gone along with my aunt after having had a bad quarrel with my parents. Remember, as a child, how it felt after having been badly scolded by your parents? If not, ask a child to tell you what kind of a mood could I have been in, after such a situation.

Ever gave a thought to what it'd take to cheer up a sad kid? The gates of the children's home opened another different world to me. Four kids hanging on to each of my hands, each of the whole group eager to show us around and tell them about anything and everything happening there—the frown that I had been holding on my face (with a lot of effort of course) was slowly vanishing. Things are a lot different where a child's present. Has it not been felt that, when it came to children, there was something magical—a divine ability that they had to bring a smile into the saddest of the situations?

Talks

There isn't a better teacher than people around you. And no better trigger for ideas than the very same group. Haven't we felt that strong love for any work we created that it hurts to even slightly change or modify it? Should try getting opinions from people around you. Can one be a hundred percent neutral in judging one's own work? Would it be possible for me to have absolutely no attachment to my work and judge it?

So where to start? Maybe a small warm up by getting to know what was the general feeling people had about street children. A question as general as this, would it be smart to expect a unanimous answer?

There were many who felt pity for the children, some were sad that the children were there while there were also others who felt that the street kids were a nuisance. Ever thought on how big a role the parents played in making us what we are right now? And what could you expect of someone who hasn't had that privileged guidance and care that is parenting? Was it a surprise or a sad realization that the people were very much aware things like the problems that street kids faced, how they ended up there, what their fate could be-those things that I had thought I'd be telling them? "You know about the children working in threading industry? ", Sumant tells me, "or the dangers they face in

the glass and the cracker industries?" Are children always about being cute and innocent? At least Taruja doesn't think so. She'd say how they have become a part of the dirty landscape the city has developed. "You ever noticed how scary they can be? They have nothing at all to worry about-not concerned about anything and going about doing whatever it pleases them for the moment. They are menacing at times."

But that doesn't form her entire opinion about children. "There was this place we used to go to, and take classes for HIV infected children. You know what, they are never at all concerned about what you had to teach. Least bothered. All they like to do is hug you, hold your hands and just be with you."



Shelter Don Bosco

Ever tried to just be in presence of children? Was it great? Or was it amongst those times you thought there couldn't be any greater trouble? Shelter Don Bosco is an open shelter for street kids, located at Matunga, Mumbai and run by the Don Bosco provincial house. During my research phase, I used to go there daily for about a week and be there for about 3–4 hours. The primary objective was to get into the right environment for saying a story about street children. What would you expect when you walk into a shelter for street children? Over there at the shelter, it was an entirely different picture that I got to see. It wasn't the sad kids who complained about their plight and kept begging that I met there as I had expected. They just called me in right in to their kitchen. Ever been invited right into the kitchen when you visited someone? And if the next thing you know is that you are sitting with them, cutting tomatoes? The kid's world wasn't what I had thought it was.

Had a friend to whom you could really talk? Just non stop? The kids were friendly- really, really friendly- and loved to have people to talk to. Just wouldn't stop talking to me. They were pretty eager to talk and opened up pretty easily.

Would you like to be all alone always or prefer to be in company of others?

They preferred to be in groups and very few sat to themselves.

Would I call myself dedicated and sincere about studies? It wasn't studies alone the kids were interested in; extracurricular activities were considered equally important too. They had this monthly 'mela' where all of them organized programmes, games, had movie screenings etc and of course they invited me to the same.

Everyone one had a different thing to say. Some had to say how they came to end up on streets, another about how life in his village was, about their school and the lessons and others about what plans they had for their future. It was great to listen to these things from them. There was I, with plans of making a movie to showcase how very sad and pitiable lives the kids led on the streets, and hear there were the street kids, telling me about their dreams and aspirations.





A runaway from mysore, ended up in Mumbai restaurants. What picture would you have of this person? Meet Lokesh, a STD x who had left home when he was 7. He then worked as the cleaner and waiter in various restaurants before coming to the shelter. And the things he had to say? Did I tell you that it was after my graduation in engineering that I realised it was arts and design that interested me? *“After studies, I’d get a job, earn loads of money and, go live in the forests”*. “Jungle mein??” *“Are yaar, abhi insaniyat naam ka kuch bacha hi kya hain? Pyar dekhna hain? To jao jaanwaron ke paas.”* Remember I mentioned Calvin and Hobbes as being a big influence on my life? He also had to show his collection of newspaper cuttings about animals and had plans to go to Pune to study about snakes as he had read somewhere about Pune being the best place for that. Similarly he had chosen separate places where he’d study about each animal. A football team of chimpanzees? When someone mocked him, he said it made more sense to teach football to chimpanzees than to teach people like them. Last time a bird shat on you, did you swear out loud? Could you recognize what bird was it, just looking at its shit?

An animator? Was I even aware of animation beyond Tom and Jerry and Disney before I started my masters? I don’t remember this guy’s name. When he came to know that I was in the particular field, he was more than thrilled. Then the talk was entirely about animation. He would tell me what the condition in the market was, how Maya was in great demand, how to go about doing masking and so on.

Was the same everyday. They’d call me to have lunch with them, tell me how the place functioned, what the routine was and all. Slowly my perception was changing. It was no more a shady picture I had about the street kids. I realized that these kids weren’t any different from how we were. They had their dreams, hopes, aspirations and plans for future and, they were working towards it. Here were children, who did, at a time had to struggle a lot, but now looking towards a bright tomorrow and working towards it—children really enthusiastic about their studies, an animator in making, someone into hotel management, one crazy about animals and so on.

Concepts

What would I say?

So ... read pretty much, saw the kids, spoke to them, now what? What would I be saying in my project? I do have a concern for the problems that kids faced. So should I say them again? Have I not heard quite much about these? Would I want to say something that people already know about? Well, I don't think so. Wasn't there something completely new I felt while I was with the kids? An entirely new experience, what the visits had carved in my mind. What was it? These kids too were like us-with dreams and aspirations, they yearn for love, care and affection, need for friends, plans for future and so on.



Forming the concept

So these kids are like us. What was it that made us 'we'? And made them 'them'? Should there not be something in common if they are to be like us? What of that something can I say? About their dreams and aspirations? About their yearning for recognition and kindness? About how little acts of kindness from our part would just bring a bloom to their lives?



Photo Courtesy: The Hindu

What's we like?



Photo Courtesy: The Hindu

Children are magical. Or are they? “Yes, definitely!!” my little cousin tells me. They are innocent and never revengeful. They love playing with others, stories and songs, companionship and friends.

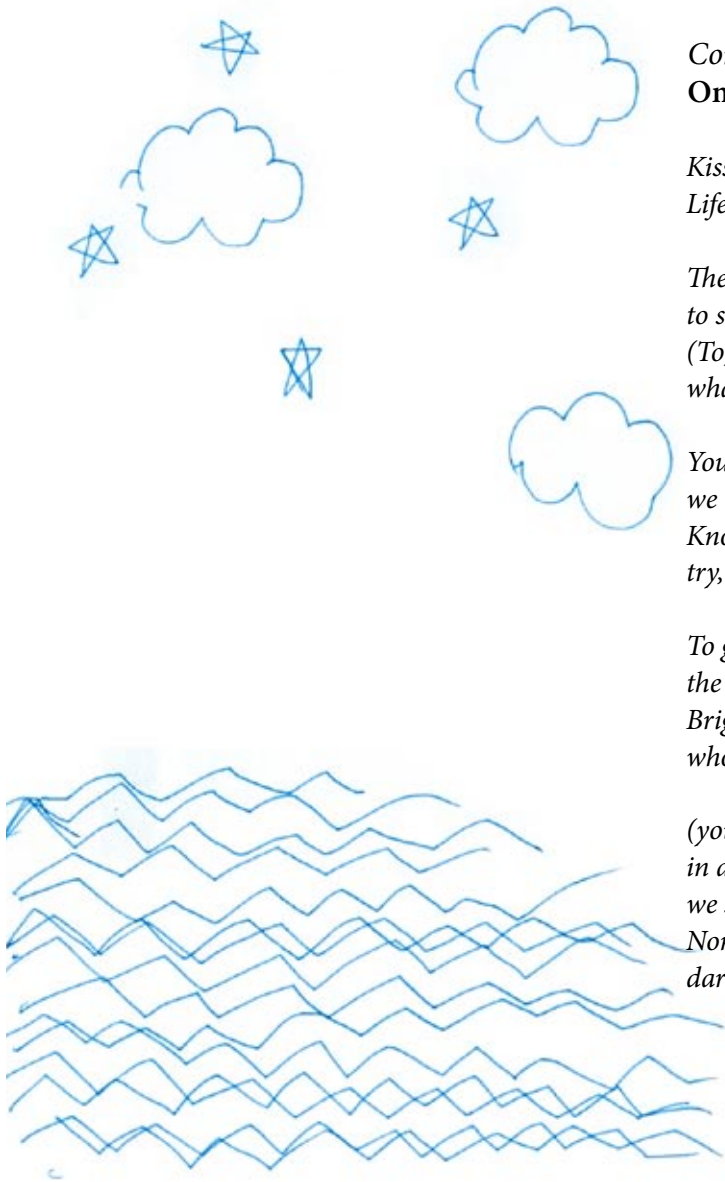
“You know what?? Children can see angels and also the demons!!” ... “Yeah I have seen the devil... he came in the form of a big black worm ...”

Now what would she know about street kids? “No one cares for them. People say that they are thieves and it hurts them bad when they are accused. Even when we give them something, it’s always what is not needed for us that we give away ... they have wishes...they are extremely talented but they have to do hardwork and earn for themselves ... they yearn for a family and are so brilliantly happy when other people go to meet them in orphanages and all ...”

And, would she think that they too were just like her? “God created both of us, and we are the same in front of god ... both are humans ... we both love playing ... we need someone to talk to ...we need friends ... we love going out in groups”

“But there is one thing different...these kids are sad when they see other children go to school. They also crave for education and a school life....but I don’t want to go to school- I love my holidays!!!”

4



Concept 1

One of the captain and the ship.

*Kiss the shore, they keep coming for
Life's a ship, it's swaying all the more.*

*They say it rocks, to be on the waves
to steer it through, it takes more than a Dave.
(To) Take your command, people take a queue
what's grey of life, you don't have a clue.*

*Your shoes sport a shine, your shirt's always neat
we trip on our laces, soiled by the street.
Knots fly past, as you, new lands greet
try, but a single knot, when the ends don't meet.*

*To guide you to the pole, brightly the stars twinkle
the compass of our life has lost the only needle.
Brighten many a life, they say of the candle
who'd ever care, but, of the matches in a puddle?*

*(your ship rules the waves) our going's tougher even
in a stream
we still find colours, to paint our dream.
None to care, nowhere to go, our life's pushed on
dark storm or tempest, there always will be a dawn.*

Initial concepts

The film would begin by showing a captain in his ship. It shows the grandeur of the captain, him getting ready for the office, the uniform etc which gives him the authority in his looks too. He's then shown in his cabin, where there are officers ready to take his order, in the posh restaurants with his wife. Slowly the scene zooms out and the ship is seen.... it further zooms out more and ship is seen. Then it slowly transforms to form a paper boat. As the camera zooms out, two children are seen sitting near the little pool observing the paper boat. Slowly the kids get up and leave the scene.

Concept 2

One in the train

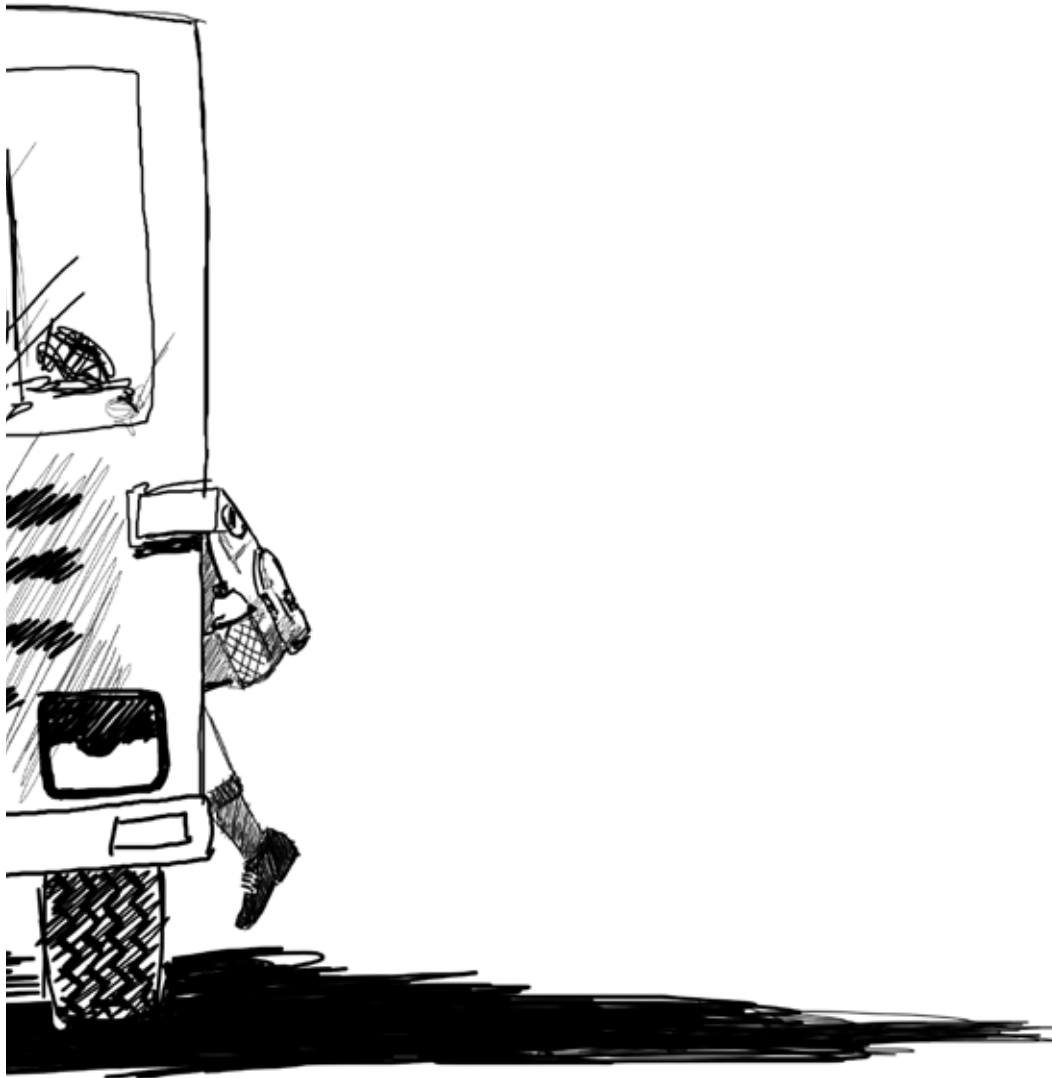
The second concept was formed in the discussions with Raja sir. The trigger was a little kid whom he had met on the train. The story was to start with an image of the swaying handles in the Mumbai local train and the song, “*Pardesi ... pardesi ... jaana nahin*”, in the background. Then it’d show two kids on begging—the elder one playing the instrument while singing and the younger one begging to the passengers present in the train. As the kid goes around begging, slowly it gets revealed that the passengers in the train do not have faces. It was on lines of us turning our faces away from these children. Or more like we pretending not to see them at all. The kid continues begging seeing more faceless faces—even for people who give money, he doesn’t see a face. Finally there’d be a couple who not only gives money but also smiles at him and maybe give him a chocolate from what they were giving their children. The kids walk on and get down at the station. The last shot again shows the swaying handles.



Concept 3

One with the dial up programme

The film begins with a coffee shop, like the Café coffee day. There are people around, including groups of students sitting around. The television in the room has a dial up music programme playing. A kid has called up asking for some song. The host-who is also a kid- begins a conversation asking the questions like, “Where are you from? What class are you studying ... ” and so on. The kid answers these questions. Depending on the answers received, the host kid is trying to form a picture of who has called up. Finally, just when the kid is about to ask for the song, the call gets cut. Now we see the caller. It had been a little kid, calling from a drop-a-rupee telephone. Apparently, the time for the rupee had got over. Then we see how his answers to the questions had come. Like for his favourite actor, he would have looked at a film poster on an adjoining wall and said the actor’s name. Similarly each of his answers would have had been picked from things he saw around him.



Concept 4
One at Haji Ali

The setting is on the walkway leading to the Haji Ali mosque at Mahalakhmi, Mumbai. Four friends have gone for a visit and are walking back when out of nowhere, this little girl comes and holds on to one of their—Soumya's—hand. The kid asks for money, but she refuses. The kid is trying hard to talk them into giving her money and she still refuses. The other three just keep teasing Soumya of the situation she was in. Finally the kid offers to hold Soumya's hand and walk with her in return for money. The four of them are surprised by this offer. By this time, Soumya has had enough of all the teasing and stuff that she gives money to the kid and asks her to leave. But the kid still holds onto her hand and walks with her.



Concept 5
One at the traffic signal

This was suggested by Taruja. The location is a traffic signal. The light has turned red and vehicles stop. As is the case in most parts of the city, kids on the street come to the various vehicles, some are begging, some clean the glasses and so on. This particular girl comes begging from vehicle to vehicle and stops at an auto. She asks for money but the lady in the auto is annoyed and snaps at her, asking her to get lost. The kid, however is amused by this reaction and again pokes at her knee, and asks for money. The response is the same just a bit wilder this time. Now the kid is really having a fun time watching this and continues to annoy the lady. Finally after a number of attempts, the lady gets fed up and gives her the money. The kid, just before leaving, gives one final poke at the lady's knees and runs away. The lady is now visibly furious and tries to get out and beat the kid, but the signal changes by this time and the auto moves forward.

Choosing the final story

Ever been at a junction with many avenues, when you are doubtful about the way you need to take? It can be intimidating. “What is it that **you** want to say? Forget what people around you tell you.”, my teachers and friends tell me.

Was it close to my heart? Yes ... Does it portray what you want to? It does ... Do people react to it the way I want them to? More or less yeah ... Does the story work or does it fall flat? From the way people responded to it in narration, it does work ... Thus was how I finally chose the story at Haji Ali for this project.

The story is an actual incident that occurred on one of our visits to the Haji Ali mosque. It's my friends and me — the people who were actually present—

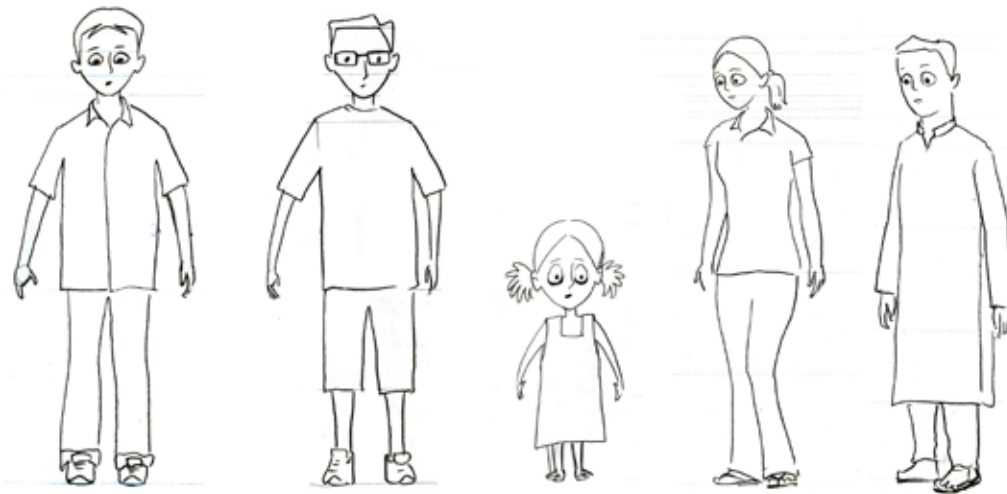
who have also been depicted in the story. Hence, the thing about the story being close to my heart. The conversation has been stitched together from things that various kids spoke that day and later, on other days when I had been to the same place as part of study for my project.

Having said that, I would also add that more than a narration of what happened, this is a relook into the incident, but from the kid's point of view. Why things happened the way they did, why she acted that way, how she looked at the people around her and what the various people and things around her meant to her. This was based on the my observations, learnings and realisations that I had during my association with the children from the street.

After choice of story, the five concepts were looked at again and the things being said in each were listed out, the feelings that were being portrayed in each, along with each of their advantages and disadvantages based on the responses that I had received from the people who had read the stories. Then had a second study on how much each story related to what I wanted to say, and finally zeroed in on the fourth concept. Still it has been an attempt to imbibe the good points each story had into the chosen concept without affecting its soul.



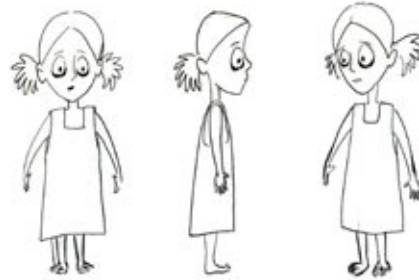
Story development



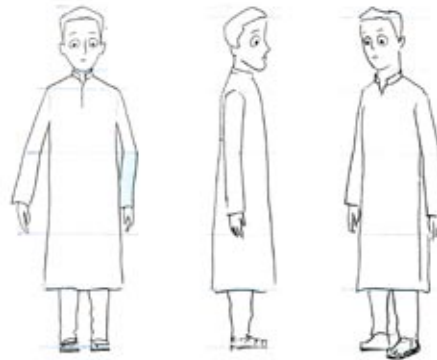
So, the concept's also here. Now how to make it more believable and convincing? The scenes were detailed out. Where the kid meets them ... how she asks them for money ... the way they respond ... this was more of a character development process than story development. It's more about how the characters behave in the situation, what they say and what they do. Since it was a real incident with real people in it, all I had to do was give the place and situation and let the characters act on their own, and accordingly, the various scenes of the story unfolded. What would Soumya say if a random girl comes and holds her hand asking for money? Would she act surprised or she get angry and ask her to get lost? What would Palash and Dhuri have to say about this? Would I ever keep my camera down? How would the kid go about the whole begging thing?

Final film

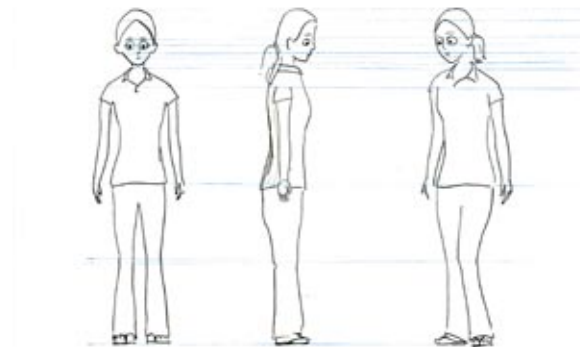
Character study and design



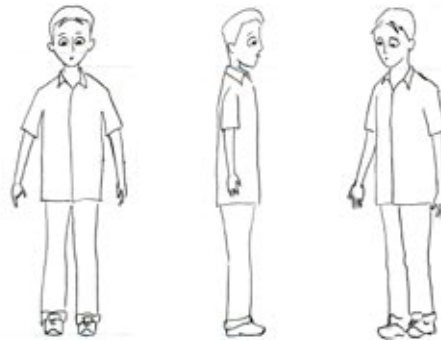
The girl from the street was a little girl of about 7–8 years of age. A bit shabby in appearance, dark in complexion and a slightly dirty face. It's a sad picture that she'd give you as a first impression. But the dirty appearance apart, she's a smart girl. Quite sharp in things that she'd say and the way she'd behave—the kind of girl who'd give tit-for-tat answers. She knows the tricks of her trade, how to get money from people, how to play the emotional game and so on. Still, she still has the child's innocence in her speech and actions—the kind of frankness and straightforwardness that you could expect only from a child.



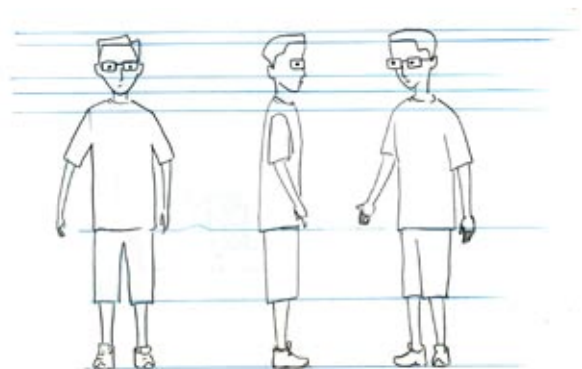
Palash—23 years of age. An easy going person who would get along with anyone. He's one who cracks jokes at occasions, loves having fun. One wouldn't consider him to be a very serious person. He'll have an opinion in most things that happen around and it could more be a harmless enjoyable one than being highly consequential.



Soumya—24 year old girl. Is a very smart girl. For people who know her, hers would be one of the faces that would come to their minds when asked to think of someone they could call a responsible person. A fun loving person, but knows exactly when to be serious. She can seem to be a strict person. Has her set of principles and strictly abides by them.



Dhuri—22 years of age. The third person in the group, is more of the silent nature. He wouldn't talk much, unless really required and most of his talk would be towards his immediate friends. In all a quiet person but is really funny when with his friends-cracking jokes and all.



Juny—24 years. Goes around with his camera. Doesn't talk much sense, most things he says ends up being funny to his friends even if they are not intended to be so. He too observes things silently; draws his own conclusions but would rather keep them to himself. He's obsessed with photography, looking at everything through the lens.

The story



Hands shown. Then zooms out to show the kid.

Dialogue: none

Sounds: Waves, people talking

Music: None



Random people cross. Kid looks on at them.

Dialogue: none

Sounds: Waves, people talking

Music: None



Back shot of people walking. A kid holding her parent's hands.

Dialogue: none

Sounds: Waves, people talking

Music: None

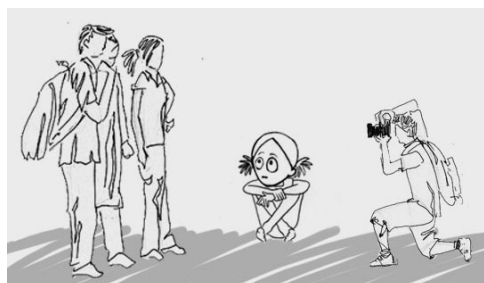


Kid looks toward her side. one of her friends sleeping.

Dialogue: none

Sounds: Waves, people talking, Camera click

Music: None



Side view. Four people taking photos. Kid looks at them.

Dialogue: none

Sounds: Waves, people talking, Camera click.

Music: None



Front shot. Four pose in front of the mosque.

Dialogue: none

Sounds: Waves, people talking, Click.

Music: None



Zoom out to show the kid looking at the photographer.

Dialogue: none

Sounds: Waves, people talking

Music: None



Close up of kid's face. She just blinks.

Dialogue: none

Sounds: Waves, people talking

Music: None



The four walk past the kid.

Dialogue: none

Sounds: Waves, people talking

Music: None



Back view of the four people. Kid looks at them.

Dialogue: none

Sounds: Waves, people talking

Music: None



Pan and zoom into a kid and parent coming towards the other direction.

Dialogue: none

Sounds: Waves, people talking, **Music:**

None



Pan back to show the four friends walking

Dialogue: none

Sounds: Waves, people talking

Music: None



Palash and Soumya look at each other.
Soumya smiles.

Palash: Do ya theen? Yeh to maa hain

Sounds: Waves, people talking

Music: None



Soumya looks down. Eye blink.

Kid: Do na auntee. Please do na.

Sou: Mere paas ek do kuch bhi nahin hain.

Sounds: Waves, people talking

Music: None



The kid looks up at Soumya.

Sou: Aur aunty kaun hai? Mujhe aunty math bula

Sounds: Waves, people talking

Music: None



Kid's face

Kid: To phir Didi bulathi hoon.
Please didi, do na..

... Waves, people talking,

Music: None



Kid shown, she looks down dejectedly
and then suddenly looks up as if she
got some great idea.

Kid: Haan. mein aapke haath pakadke
chalti hoon.

Sounds: Waves, people talking,

Music: None



Three of them turn, surprised.

Dialogue: To phir aap do rupaiye de
do. Ya theen. **Sounds:** Waves, people
talking,

Music: Slightly a tune starts.



Kid's face, looks at Soumya and then looks front.

Kid: Haan...mein aapke haath pakadke wahan tak chalti hoon
Sounds: Waves, people talking (Volume reduces)
Music: The tune plays behind.



Dhuri's face seen behind Soumya. Soumya turns her face slightly.

Dhuri: Haan...haan...de do na AUNTYYY??
Sounds: Waves, people talking
Music: None



Kid turns to Dhuri

Kid: Aunty nahin...DIDI!!!
Sounds: Waves, people talking
Music: None



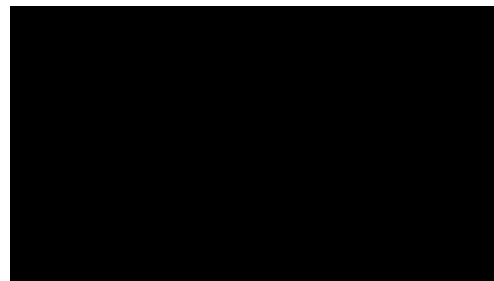
Soumya has had enough. Gives her money.

Soumya: Bus bus...yeh le paise...ab jaa...!!!
Sounds: Waves, people talking.
Music: None



Kid sees a couple walking, holding hands..

Kid: Didi, wahan tak to mein aapke hath pakadke chaloon?
Sounds: Waves, people talking.
Music: None



Fade into black.

Dialogue: none
Sounds: Waves.
Music: None

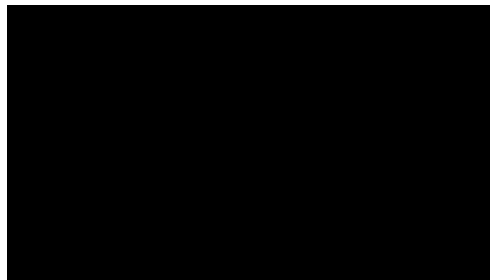


Kid holding Soumya's hand and walking. Back view.

Dialogue: Tum log School mein padthe ho kya? Dusvi class mein? ...gyarahvi class mein?

Sounds: Waves.

Music: Final tune starts. A slow sweet music.



Black screen. Titles

Dialogue: ...baarahvi class mein? Yah terahvi class mein? ...Pandrahvi class mein...

Sounds: Waves. Fade out

Music: Final tune. Plays on for the titles and fades out.

Personal notes on the story

Is the incident too trivial? Isn't it something that anyone who has travelled the streets of Mumbai has witnessed? What's special in you telling this in a film?

Was the incident important enough to have been chosen over the other concepts—which also included stories I had plotted out of the blank? Did it mean so much to me? The scenes and the incident might seem common, but ever thought there could be something more than what you thought there was, was happening? Do the things that we see extend only to those boundaries that we had perceived? Could I not share something that I experienced, with others? How the kid looks at people around her, is it the same picture or atleast something similar in meaning, that we precieve?

Do we not actually form reflections of the whole society? Doesn't each of us represent a much larger group—something that I could call 'faces of the society'? Arent each amongst the four friends completely different from the rest as far as attitude and personalities were concerned? Do we not also at times behave the way they do here in the story, in similar circumstances? Aren't we like one amongst them? Do they not form representatives of the society as a whole? And how would I portray this? Or should I?



Developing the style

Was completely lost on this aspect at one time till Taruja told me that, “the style for your movie will be in your story. You just need to dig a bit deep into it.” So what started as an idea of a completely graphic, style with solid colours, a lot of black ended up being simple hand drawn sketches, with a hand rendered feel. “Why so?” Milind would ask me, “Your story is more about feelings ... could have some nice painting effect ... with ‘flowy’ colours and all.” I wouldn’t be bluffing if I say that for a period, I did think on those lines. But finally it was again the story itself which helped me decide on the style. I’d tell Milind, “What’s so exciting and colourful in these kids’ lives man?” In spite of all hopes and dreams thing and them being just like us kids, the most magical thing about them, which lay in the heart of the earlier thought, was them finding colours in an otherwise shady life.



Sound and Music

The music in the movie is kept extremely subtle. There is a music playing only where it was absolutely thought to be necessary. Else it’s the sounds from the surroundings that forms the background sound throughout the movie.



Closing notes

“Rag pickers” in India; “Parking boys” in Kenya; “Peggy boys” in Philippines; “Pivets” in Brazil; “Pajaro Frutero” in Peru; “Homeless youth or Runaways” in developed countries⁷, uncivilized and ill mannered— behind those dirty little faces, I met some minds with so much hope for the future and goodwill for others. Was an eye opener— a realization that between the shady and the grey lives that are pushed onto each day, all’s not as bad as it seemed ...

... and, a reminder of how blessed I was.

Reference

Books

- [1] Waterson, Bill “Calvin and Hobbes”
- [2] Anderson, H. Christian “Little Match Girl”
- [3] Frank, Anne “The Diary of a Young Girl”
- [4] Kipling, Rudyard “Kim”

Movies

- [5] “Kaazhcha”, directed by Blessy.
- [6] “Hand of Hunger”, directed by Hashim Basheer
- [7] “Salaam Bombay”, directed by Mira Nair.
- [8] “Wages of Tears: Stories of lost childhood”
Pauline Communications.
- [9] “Forgotten Angels—Street Children in Haiti”,
unknown director.
- [10] “Zer‘o’ ”, documentary on street kids in Tamil
..... Nadu, unknown director.

The web

- [11] <http://streetkids.org/>
- [12] <http://www.youtube.com>
Real life videos from the street