



Industrial Design Centre

Indian Institute of technology

VATULA

A short animation film

Shyam Sundar Chatterjee
136340003

Degree Project
Animation Film Design
IDC
Guide: Prof. Sumant Rao

Declaration

I declare that this written submission represents my ideas in my own words and where other's 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 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: Shyam Sundar

Name of the student: Shyam Sundar Chatterjee

Roll No: 136340003

Date: 20/11/14

Approval

The degree project titled “Vatula” a short animation film by Shyam Sundar Chatterjee is approved in partial fulfillment of the requirement for M.Des degree programme in animation and film design.

Guide:

A blue ink signature, likely of the Guide, written in a cursive style.

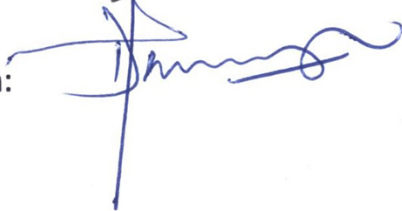
External Examiner:

A black ink signature, likely of the External Examiner, written in a cursive style.

Internal Examiner:

A black ink signature, likely of the Internal Examiner, written in a cursive style.

Chairman:

A blue ink signature, likely of the Chairman, written in a cursive style.

Acknowledgement

I sincerely extend my deepest gratitude to my respected guide Prof. Sumant Rao for his immense guidance and support throughout the process of making the short animation film Vatula.

I would also like to thank our respected faculty members of the Animation and Film Design Department at IDC for their valuable suggestions during all the presentation of development and production stages of the film, whose names are as follows:

Prof. Phani Tetali

Prof. Shilpa Ranade

Prof. Nina Sabnani

Prof. C.P. Narayan

Abstract

We all human beings do not carry anything while we take birth nor when we die on this planet. Even after knowing this universal reality, our eyes gets disillusioned by the web of material world which causes breakdown of emotions into our lives. As we grow old with time various types of material gets attached with human life during the phase that we live on this planet. But when those materials displaced by an inch from our lives, we feel very depressed or emotionally weak, perhaps inject a thought of suicide into our mind and we somehow doomed into the domain of emotional world. Then we find ourselves in a strange space of that emotional world where we couldn't differentiate between life and death. If we feel like to live or die, we couldn't do either of them at times and that gives a very deep urge for cry. But unfortunately we cannot cry in those circumstances to release out emotions for mental relief. So how do we feel when human lives got trapped into emotional miseries due to separation from the objects that we loved most.

The subject of the film is an attempt to express a visual experience of a sad emotion which occurs within a turbulent mind. The subject of the film is to express a constant array of thoughts which keep struggling within ones self in sadness and loneliness. The visuals attempt would be representing an instance of a sole mind caught in an act of expressing its desire.

Contents

Acknowledgement	iv
Abstract	v
Introduction	1
Research and Exploration	2
Ideation and Story Building	14
Story	25
Visual Design	27
Storyboards	27
Character Design	33
Visual Development	36
Final Visual Style	40
Trailer	41
Music and Sound design	42
Conclusion	43
References	44

Introduction

"Unexpressed emotions will never die. They are buried alive and will come forth later in uglier ways."

By Sigmund Freud

"Vatula" is an experience of emotions which a man is feeling inside his mind after losing a person whom he had loved the most. But when the separation happened after the departed one from the protagonist, he was living at a far distance from the place where his loved one died. Being aware of the impossibilities of reaching to the place and seeing his loved one for the last time, he was getting trap into a state of suppressed emotions which rage an upsurge of anger, sadness, depression, loneliness, anxiety, pain, confusion and many dejected thoughts within his mind. The story primarily tries to convey the feelings and emotions of a man who is going through a journey of sad and sweet memories in his mind which are constantly occurring after the death of his loved one. The plot takes viewers inside the world of feelings and emotions in a metaphoric form through the eyes of the character while he is in deep trauma sitting in a place far away from his native place.

Research and Exploration

Before doing my research I made a research upon what is research itself, for what purpose we do research and how we do it, for this I followed few books from our library. Then I started my primary research by exploring subjects like emotions, and how people feel when they got trap in deep trauma and how they react when they are unable to release their suppressed emotions. I tried to study how the human mind works when it experiences different emotional changes. I also tried to explore one major aspect of emotions called suppressed and repressed emotions. Apart from all these what I have said above I also did a profound research on myself, the reason behind doing the self research is to deal with the story with much generosity and affections, ultimately it's a story in which I am representing my personal emotions and how I had felt while experiencing the most plaintive situation of my life.

The subjects which I have explored through research majorly covered a domain of emotions, types of emotions, feelings, catharsis, mind, certain personality disorders, Indian rasa, emptiness, anxiety, clowns, behaviors, loneliness, isolation, separation, and few more things.

Research and Exploration

Emotions: An affective state of consciousness in which joy, sorrow, fear, hate, or the like, is experienced, as distinguished from cognitive and volitional states of consciousness.

Emotion is a subjective term in the field of psychology and philosophy which could be experienced consciously and it is characterized primarily by biological reactions, mental states and psycho physiological expressions. Emotion is often associated and considered reciprocally influential with mood, temperament, personality, disposition, and motivation. Emotions sometimes influenced by hormones and neurotransmitters also. Emotion is often the driving force behind motivation, positive or negative. There are few number of similar constructs within the field of affective neuroscience which could be differentiated from emotion which are Feelings, Moods, Affect.

As per Robert Plutchik's theory there are eight types of basic emotions exist, which are as follows:

Fear, Anger, Sadness, Joy, Disgust, Trust, Anticipation and Surprise.

Research and Exploration

Suppressed Emotions: These are the emotions which constantly occur in the domain of conscious mind. This type of emotions always troubles human mind at different stages. And so we human beings whoever suffers from suppressed emotions always tries to get rid of it somehow. Peoples those who goes through suppressed emotional state always tries to get escape out of the situation either by some psychological treatment or giving up their lives at utmost depression state.

We find these thoughts to be troublesome or maladaptive at certain stages in our lives, so we make a conscious attempt to stop thinking about whatever it may be. We cannot completely eradicate suppressed emotions from our minds and thus it still rests in the conscious mind, it is just reduced in intensity, minimized, muted, or restrained. Unfortunately it may come to our mind at any situation of our lives.

Research and Exploration

Repressed Emotions: Repressed emotions are the emotional thoughts which detached itself from the domain of conscious awareness and deep dive into the domain of subconscious mind. Once it finds the way through the subconscious mind it takes no effort to keep it there.

Repressed emotions majorly dealt with very painful or deeply distressing emotions or thoughts. So much so that the mind itself does not even want to remember or lets the thoughts occurs which exist deep in the subconscious mind. So the mind itself tricks the thoughts to hides. It detaches and forgets that it even dumped them deep in the shadows of the subconscious psyche.

The mind literally tries its level best to detach from the thoughts which brings back painful emotions to realize. So mind treats it like a crime scene body, it never wants it to be discovered or identified again, because it's the killer. And it goes to great lengths to keep it a secret. Repressed emotions always try to haunts one's mind and it even shadows our positive thoughts and influences our decisions without our awareness of it. The influence that it puts upon us always keeps us down or unhealthy. At various situations we feel that there's something very troubling inside our mind but we failed to recognize what is it and we only draw a blank as to what it could possibly be. People find it important to resurface these memories because there could have been possibly terrible effects on our lives and we can do nothing to fix it. It's like being possessed by a demon. It controls us and our personality.

Research and Exploration

Catharsis: A catharsis is a process through which we purify our emotions like fear or pity by doing some type of creative works. According to psychoanalytic theory, in need we release our unconscious conflicts during the process of purification. Aristotle used the word catharsis in the *Poetics* to describe the effects of true tragedy on the spectator. The use is derived from the medical term *katharsis* (Greek: “purgation” or “purification”). Aristotle states that the purpose of tragedy is to arouse “terror and pity” and thereby affect the catharsis of these emotions. Although the exact meaning of catharsis still has been the subject of critical debate over the centuries.

The Conscious and Unconscious Mind: The conscious mind portrays what is seen in general. It includes everything that we are aware of. This is the aspect of our mental processing that we can think and talk about rationally. A part of this includes our memory, which is not always part of consciousness but can be retrieved easily at any time and brought into our awareness.

The unconscious mind is beyond the realm of what we see in our conscious mind. It is the reservoir of feelings, thoughts, urges, and memories that outside of our conscious awareness. Most of the contents of the unconscious are unacceptable or unpleasant, such as feelings of pain, anxiety, or conflict.

The unconscious mind does not respond to desires, but it does responds to the symbols. It responds to the underlying image, and then attempts to manifest that or something better. Every object in our life is like a symbol for something else and we interpret those symbols to make out a story or which makes something sensible.

Research and Exploration

Memory: Memory is our ability to encode, store, retain and subsequently recall information and past experiences in the human brain. It is the sum total of what we remember, and gives us the capability to learn and adapt from previous experiences as well as to build relationships. It is the ability to remember past experiences, and the power or process of recalling to mind previously learned facts, experiences, impressions, skills and habits. It is the store of things learned and retained from our activity or experience, as evidenced by modification of structure or behavior, or by recall and recognition.

In more physiological or neurological terms, memory is, at its simplest, a set of encoded neural connections in the brain. It is the re-creation or reconstruction of past experiences by the synchronous firing of neurons that were involved in the original experience. The way in which memory is encoded, is perhaps better thought of as a kind of collage or jigsaw puzzle, rather than in the traditional manner as a collection of recordings or pictures or video clips, stored as discrete wholes. Our memories are not stored in our brains like books on library shelves, but are actually on-the-fly reconstructions from elements scattered throughout various areas of our brains.

Research and Exploration

Self Exploration: I also did a research on myself. The process during researching on the self helped me a lot in exploring various hidden aspects of my personal life and the things which were there in my unconscious mind or subconscious mind. The self exploration process unveiled few of my personal hidden aspects like behavior, beliefs, habits, values etc.

Releasing Suppressed emotions

Vulnerability, Pain, Emotions, Memories, School
Parents, CROW, Sufferings, Birth, Time, Laugh
Death, Happiness, Trap, Joy, Dark, Clown
Drooped Face, Cobweb, Vagina, Toys, Monbles
Kites, Abandoned Place, Magic, Magician,
Dragging, hanging knot, Psychology,
Without limbs, Sacrifice, long Distance, Tundra
Lonely, Ocean, Cry, Suffocation, chain, Brain
Fine, well, Depression, Puzzle, suicide,
Sex, Rat, Alcohol, Medicines, Poison,
Separation, Cigarettes, Prostitution, Freedom,
Borderline Personality disorder,

Self & Self experiences

Brainstorming for what to research & also for story exploration.

- Dressing
- Social
- Traditional
- Cultural
- Identification (self)
- Behaviour
- Beliefs
- Habits
- History
- Ethnography
- Cast
- Religion
- Race
- Time
- Situation

Research and Exploration

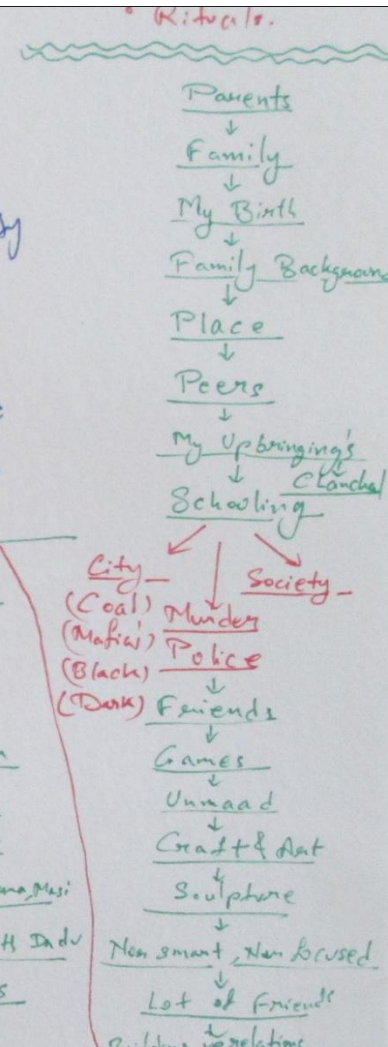
Emotions come out at intervals
Shiv & Bati, Bahunpa, Bauli
Blue

Isolation, +10PE.

The Sculptor, Boatman, River,
Vengeance, Insanity, Mobile Phone, Internet
Ants, Close-shots, Revenge, Water color spot marks
on surface, black bubble balls on walls.

Love, Affection, Regret, Masks, Chairs, Friends,
Care, Protection, Relations, Relatives,
Fish, Snake, Dog, City, Temples, Sachus
Traffic Signal, Clouds, Weather, Shoes,
Coblen, Bamber

Vulnerable
Pain
Emotions
Death
Happiness
Time
Psychology
Depression
3 order line
Disorder
Personality
Cattansis
Repressed
Suppressed
Emptiness



Widows
↓
Crime
↓
Fights
↓
Mamagham
↓
Power
↓
Respect
↓
Dadu, Mamagham
↓
Relation with Dadu
↓
Festivals
↓

Research and Exploration

		Likes	Dislikes	Power	Weakness	Characteristics
Anger	Travelling					
Vengeance	↓ Health Issues					
Insanity	↓ Mother's Health					
Jealous	↓ Bonds	Exploring new places.	Impagren Disk	Family	Anger	Emotional
Poison	↓ Pressure	Temples & books	Anguement	God	Sympathy	Kind
God Pies	↓ Tension	Stories	LIE	Fearless	Kindness	Sympathetic
Phygeni	↓ 114 & 121	Ok Spicy-food	Darkness	My Creativity	Immaturity	Empathy
Small room	↓ Love & Sex	Morning	Injustice	Patience	Talks little more	Devotional
Green colour	↓ More Exposure to	Winter	Interruption	Stubborn	Laziness	Compassionate
can be dryer.	↓ Outen world	Autumn	Politics (kind)	Love	Confusion	Nervousness
Love	↓ Tachan	Festivals	Slow-off	Self-confidence	Tension	Reluctant
Affection	↓ Carzen	Sculpting	Who talks a lot	Seriousness	Loneliness	Fearless
Care	↓ Art on Design	Anti	Who doesn't have	Independent Nature	Emptiness	Lunatic
Consecutive	↓ Synopsis, Pure	Car & T	Chiquette's	Relatives	Disturb Mind	Naive
Fights	↓ Outside Home	Travelling	Garbage	Helpful	Uncontrollable Emotions.	Introvert
Poverty	↓ Loneliness	Maintaining	Rainy	Selfless	Communication	Optimistic
Abusive	↓ Mother's Problem	Perfumes	Summer	Truthfulness	Belief	Determined
Unity	↓ Advanced World	New clothes	Boundation	Loneliness	Negative Thinking	Friendly
Durga Puja	↓ New type of friends	Clear blue sky	Urbanization		one - conclusion	Humble
Sculpting	↓ Animation, Films	Blue lake	Untidy Phos		Over speak	Generous
Fear	↓ Dwellling	Sadhvi's	Sound		Concentration	Respectful
Middle Class	↓ Learning New Things	Study	Waiting			lowest
Unmad	↓ Operation (suffering)	Freedom	Electricity			Considerate
Friends		Knowledge base discussion	If someone orders me			Shy
Power		Peace				Trustworthy
Respect		Rural Places				Helpful
Love		Greenery				Loyal
Festivals		Mystery				Polite
Magic		Magie				Rational
Circus		Stage & Awards				
Mythology		Suiker				
Tension		Eagle				
Love & Sex		Lion				
Rural		Books				
Very Urban		Music				
Loneliness		Movies				
Confusion						
Harshment						
Satisfaction						

The Experience

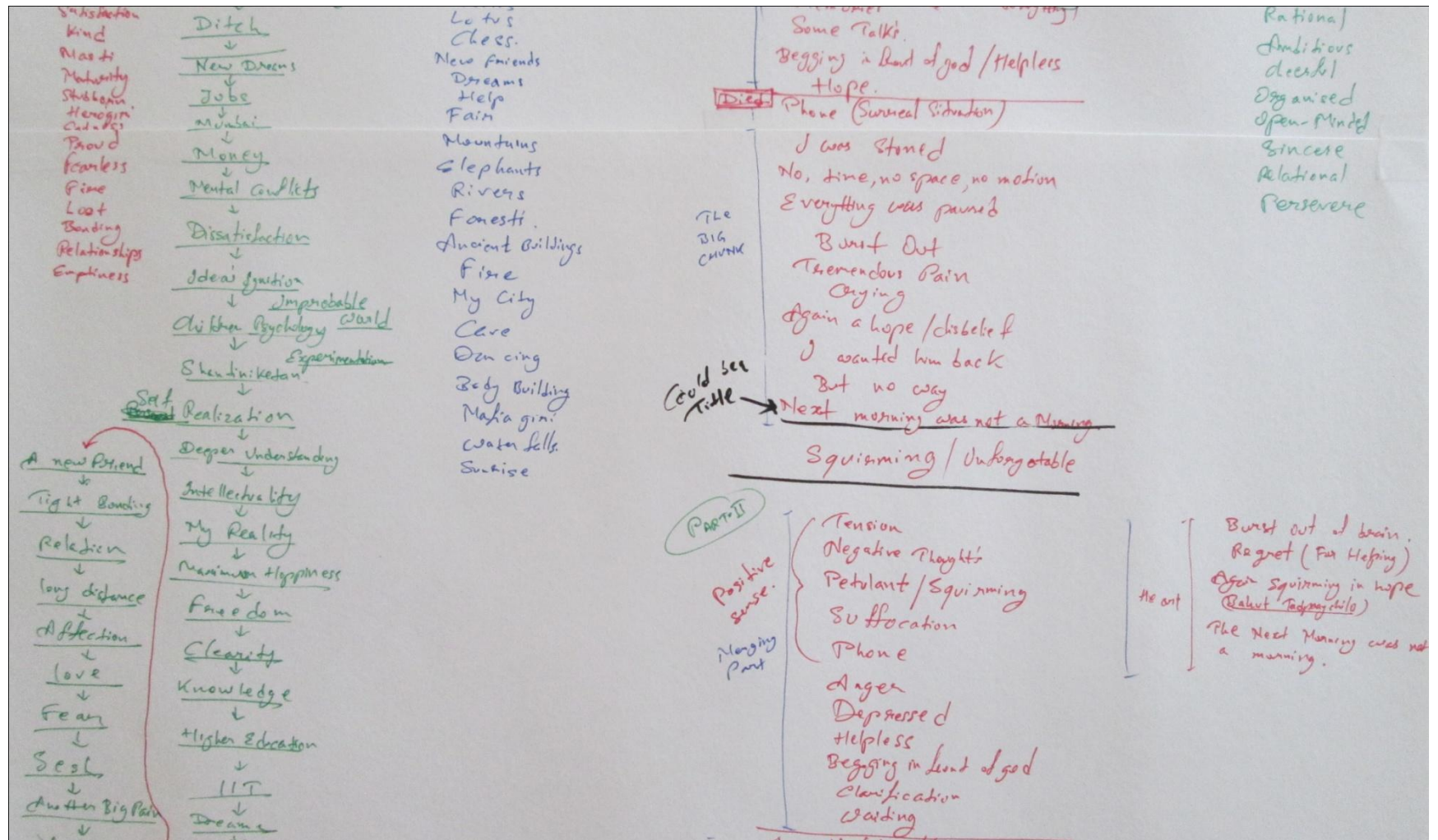
Tension
Disbelief
Regret
Suffocation
Memories

long distance /
I can't do anything

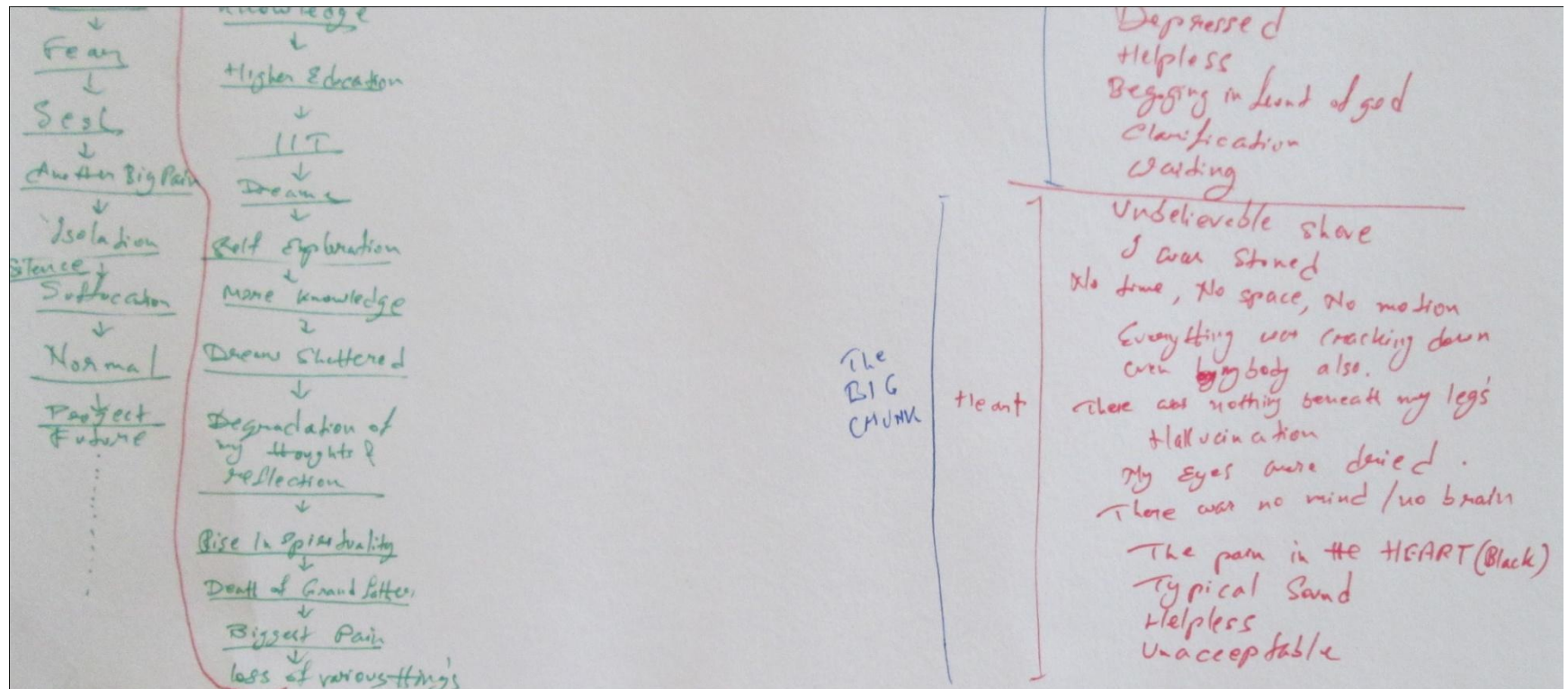
PART - I

Moving Part

Research and Exploration



Research and Exploration



Research and Exploration

Inspirational Elements: Films- “Sita Sings the Blues” by Nina Paley

“Mukund and Riaz” by Nina Sabnani

“Old Boy by Park Chan-wook”

“Static” short film (2011)

“Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge”

Ideation and Story Building

Apart from the research and exploration, simultaneously I was thinking about the formation of the story. As it is a story about my personal experience of a traumatic situation, things were quite fragmented to shape the story. During the overall process of exploration about my subject, whatever had been came into my mind I jotted down all those elements on papers. While I was trying to build up my story, I expressed my thoughts or visuals majorly through drawing a lot of small visual thumbnails rather than writing the stories or ideas using words. As I already said it's a story about self experience and recalling those feelings, emotions, or memories was turned out very difficult for me, because these are the few things which are very lucid or fragile in itself and so constructing a story based upon these elements were very crucial. But my guide Prof. Sumant Rao helped me a lot in giving shape to my fragile story line. Because of him I realized that I am basically trying to make a story majorly based upon separation of a character from his loved one. With the development in the process of making the story, the key elements which came into light are "incompleteness, emptiness, separation, isolation, loneliness, pain, attachment etc. During the process of making up the story I did a lot of brainstorming and mind mapping sessions, incubated ideas and thoughts and then eventually came up with few stories.

Mind-map



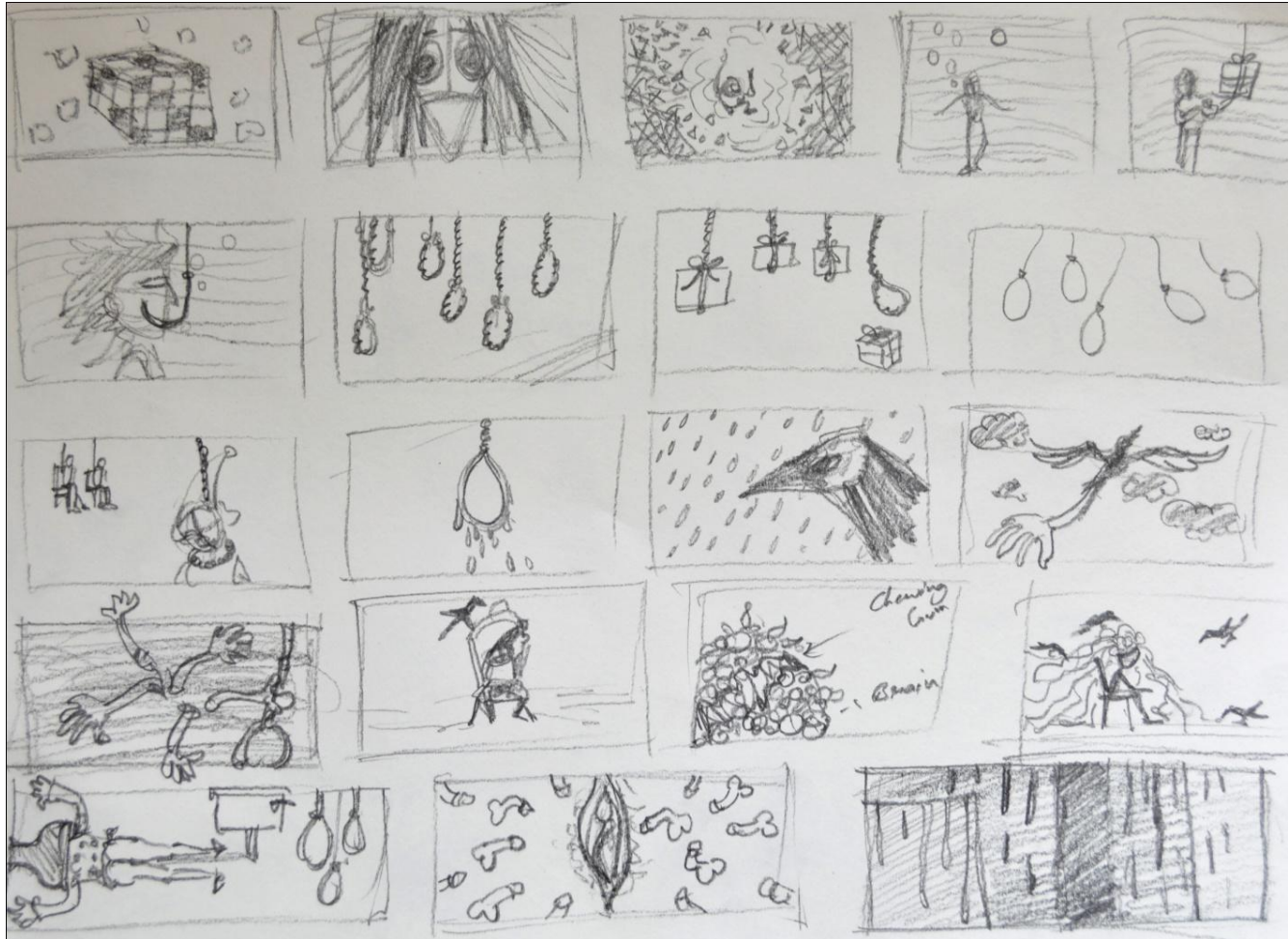
Ideation and Story Building

Visual thumbnails



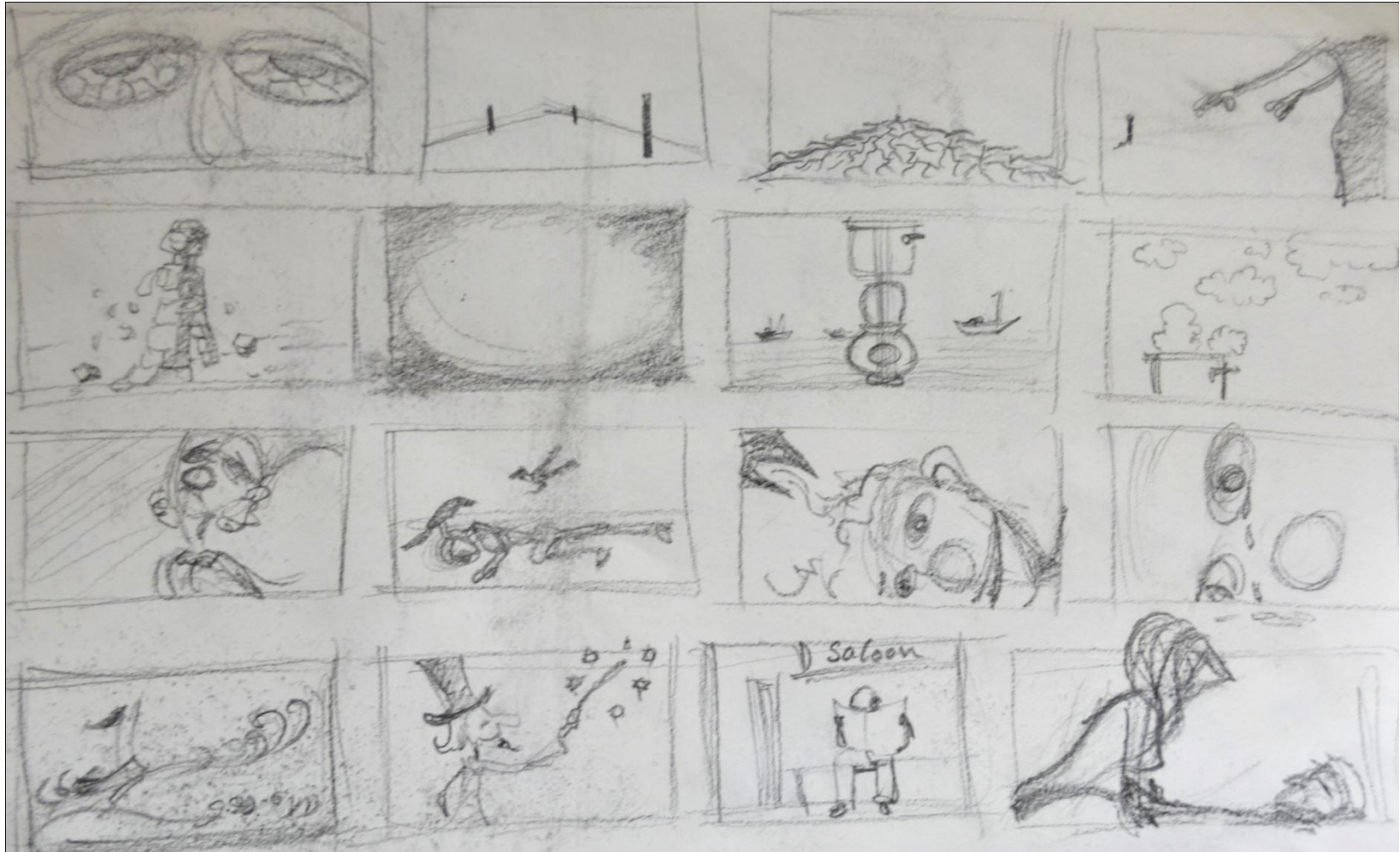
Ideation and Story Building

Visual thumbnails



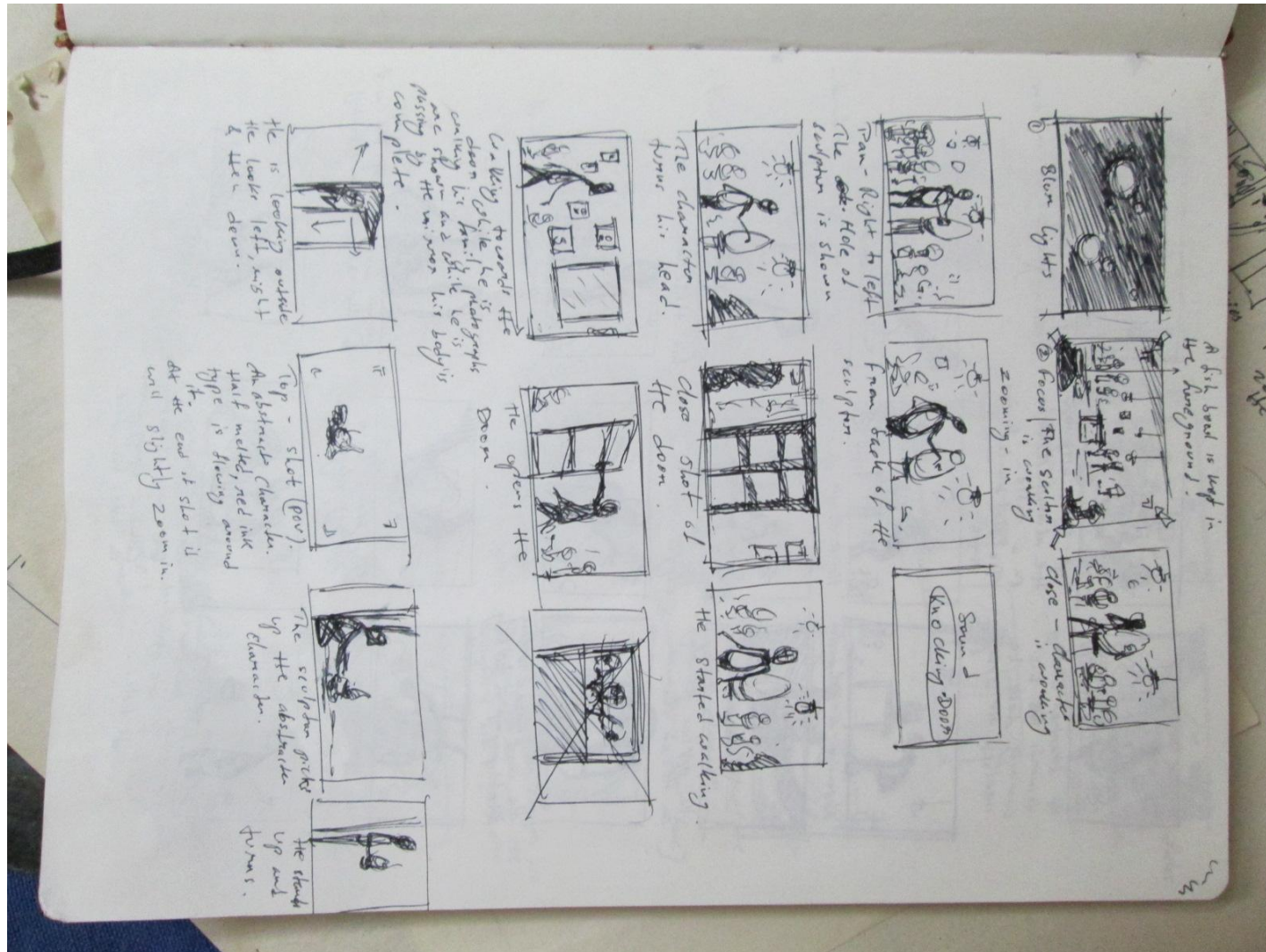
Ideation and Story Building

Visual thumbnails



Ideation and Story Building

Visual thumbnails



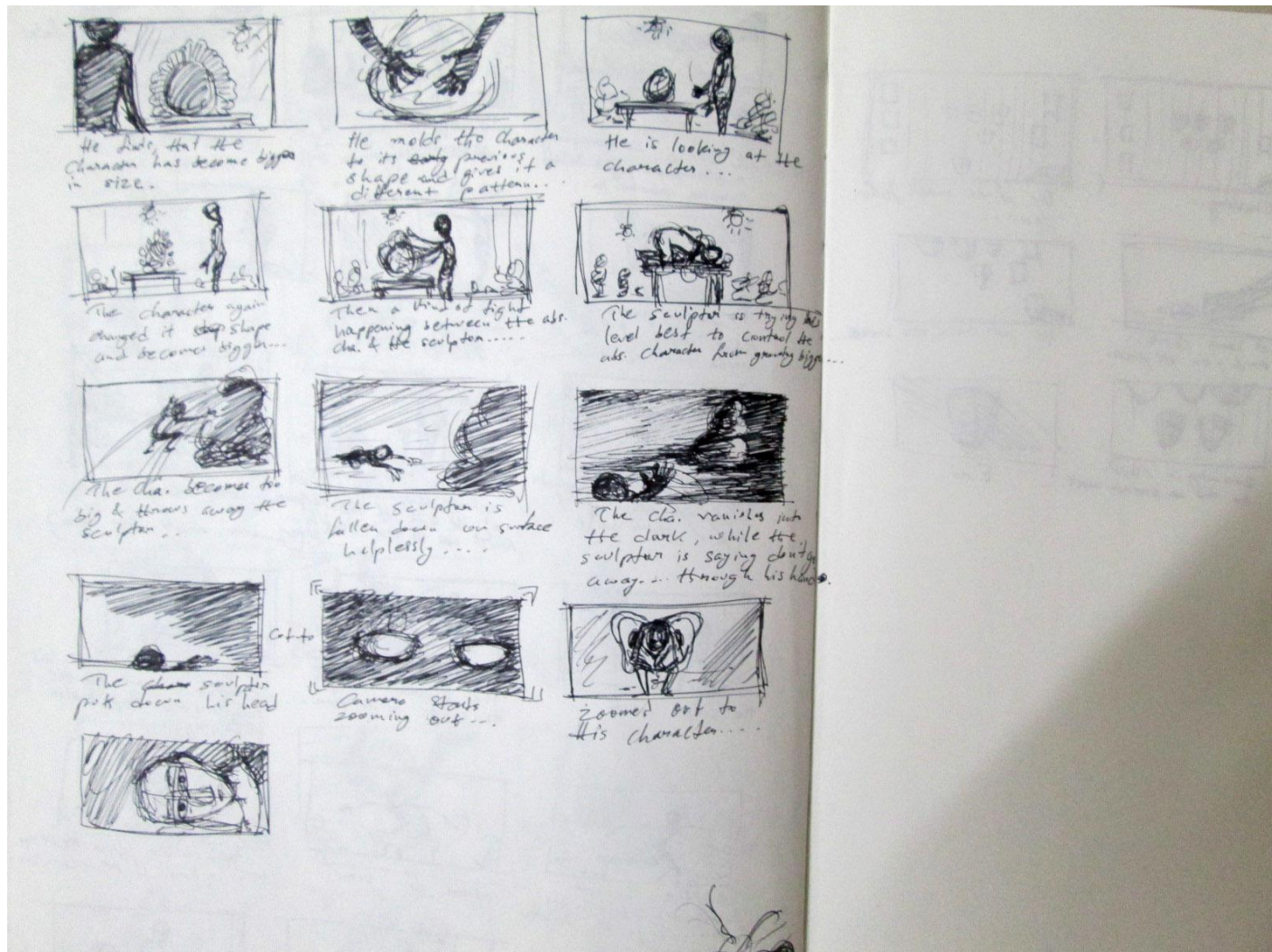
Ideation and Story Building

Visual thumbnails



Ideation and Story Building

Visual thumbnails



Ideation and Story Building

Story-1: I was standing in front my window looking at two kites flying at a very distant, as if they were playing with each other and spending the best moment of their lives. But then the string of one kite got cut and separated from the other one. In amused I raised my hand to grab the string of the kite but it was far away from me. To my failure I left the window and started walking down towards my room. I entered into my room and sat comfortably .I was looking at all my family photographs. I picked up an album from the center table and I started looking at all the photographs. (the character started unfolding each photographs which starts from his childhood days and it ends at a photograph where a pyre has been shot, as he unfolds each pics he sees a blank white space after every turn, in this white space the visuals of the painful moment would be shown throughout the movie instead of showing the visuals at a time like in the other stories. The end pic will end with a pyre shot, and as he is reaching towards the end of the album, his void of emptiness also getting filled. But with the last pic his void will become again unfulfilled). The character gets up from the place where he was sitting and puts back the album on the table. As he turns back, it will be shown that the album was not there on the table, basically it was his day dreaming. The character trying to relive his childhood days in the dream and so the album was his imagination and simultaneously with disturbing visuals in the blank space he is wishing to save the life of the loved one.

Ideation and Story Building

Story-2: Heavily raining on that day and I was working upon a ongoing sculpture, suddenly I heard someone is thrashing my door. I opened the door and to my surprise I found an abstract object seemed like partially melted and broken lying down next to my door. I took the object inside my room and kept on my working desk. I was not not getting any idea about what to do with that object. The shape of the object seemed to me incompleated so I thought why not lets give it a complete shape. With a personal feeling of incompleteness within myself I was happily giving shape to the sculpture. The moment I started giving shape to the object, the feeling of being incompleteness started getting filled with overwhelming moments of joy and happiness. I was feeling like dancing in some unknown world. I was very happy like never before with the outcome of the shape and that was the most overwhelming moment in my life. But unfortunately the joy in my life didn't last longer. The moment the abstract shape took a complete form, it started rejecting all my efforts as if it was wanting to be remain in its own world. I tried my level best to put it back into the earlier shape but I failed to do so, it started growing bigger in size in a uncontrollable manner. That was the most painful moment in my life, I was completely in a numb state where all my senses were died, nor I was able to cry nor I was able to die, I was cracking like a stone. (And then the visuals of that particular moment starts). I returned to my senses, found myself fallen down on an abandoned space, tried a lot to get up on my knees but I couldn't. Again I started feeling the void of emptiness and this time it was a more stronger feeling.

STORY

Final Story: After the death of my loved one I was sitting in a dark corner of my house, far away from my native place and also where the pyre was burning. In a traumatic state and being aware of the fact of impossibilities of reaching my native place and seeing the face of loved one for the last time, I was shadowing more by the feelings of sorrows and pain. With the separation from my loved one, I was attracted more towards the beautiful memories we had spent together. It was a state where I was feeling myself as a dead body, with no urge to survive any more on this planet. As my mind was trying to recall all the beautiful moments that we had spent together in the past, metaphorically I was feeling like a boat which got stuck amidst of a dried river bed with me. The boat is the body of mine and the person who sails it is the soul who had no more desire to lead his life. And the dried river bed is the life which I had been surviving. Somehow I was dragging the boat with no more strength left in my body across the dried river bed to reach some bank of the river bed. I was feeling very thirsty and as it was deserted all around I was almost dying. I was praying to the god for some drops of water. With no more hopes of surviving anymore my body and mind gave up and then I felt down on the land surface. I was breathing excessively, then suddenly a little drop of water fell down on my face, somehow I sip that little drop of water. I took a long breath of relief. Then I got up and started running around here and there in search of more water, but I didn't find any source of water. Eventually all around over the sky, dark clouds started accumulating and it started raining heavily. I was feeling very happy and by that time my thirst was also vanished. The dried river bed again filled up with huge water streams, and I was feeling like playing in the womb of the river. The heavy rainfall was continuing and the more it was raining heavily, the more the level of the water was rising up and I was sailing on the top of it. Eventually the level of the water in the river rose so high that I was able to touch and feel the clouds. The moment I was

STORY

trying to touch those clouds, they were flying away from me, but finally we touched each other. It was the most happiest moment I had felt ever felt in my life, I was feeling like dancing amidst those clouds. As I was dancing more and more, the clouds were turning out more beautiful. Then for my personal happiness forever in life I was carrying the clouds on my boat. I was very happy and with those feelings I was sailing the boat and enjoying it. But unfortunately the joy in my life didn't last longer. From somewhere a wild storm started blowing and that storm took all the clouds away from my life. I started chasing back to those clouds but I failed to catch them. And as I was chasing them, unfortunately the level of water in the river went low. I was squirming like anything and then in that situation I jumped off the boat to catch those clouds. I was almost able to touch it but I missed it by an inch, that was the most traumatic moment in my life. Failing get hold of the clouds, I was freely falling down towards the land, and in that period of time I was feeling like morphing into a stone and breaking my body pieces in to sand particles and eventually those sand particles disintegrate into the ashes left over the pyre of my loved one.

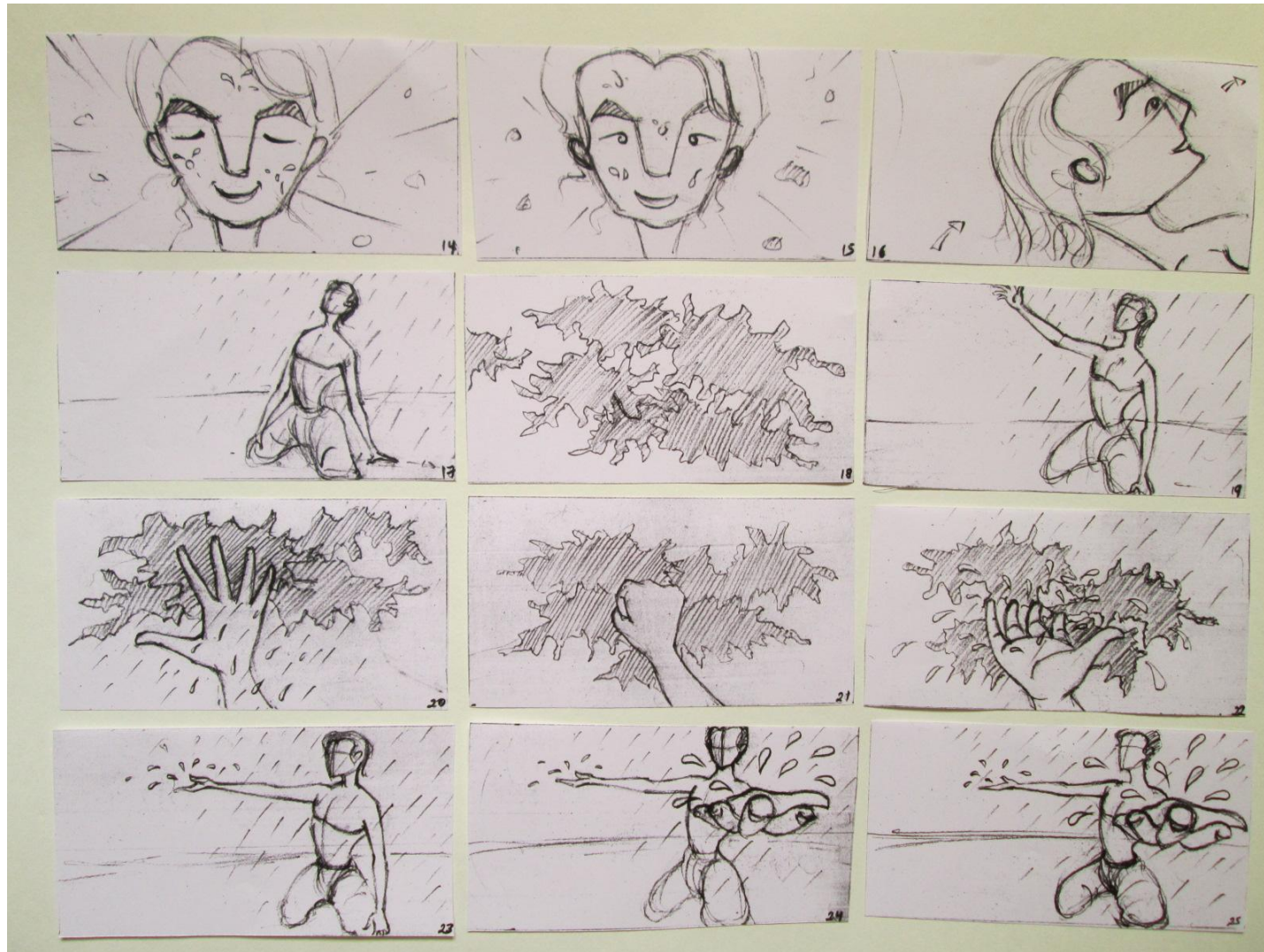
Visual Design

Storyboard



Visual Design

Storyboard



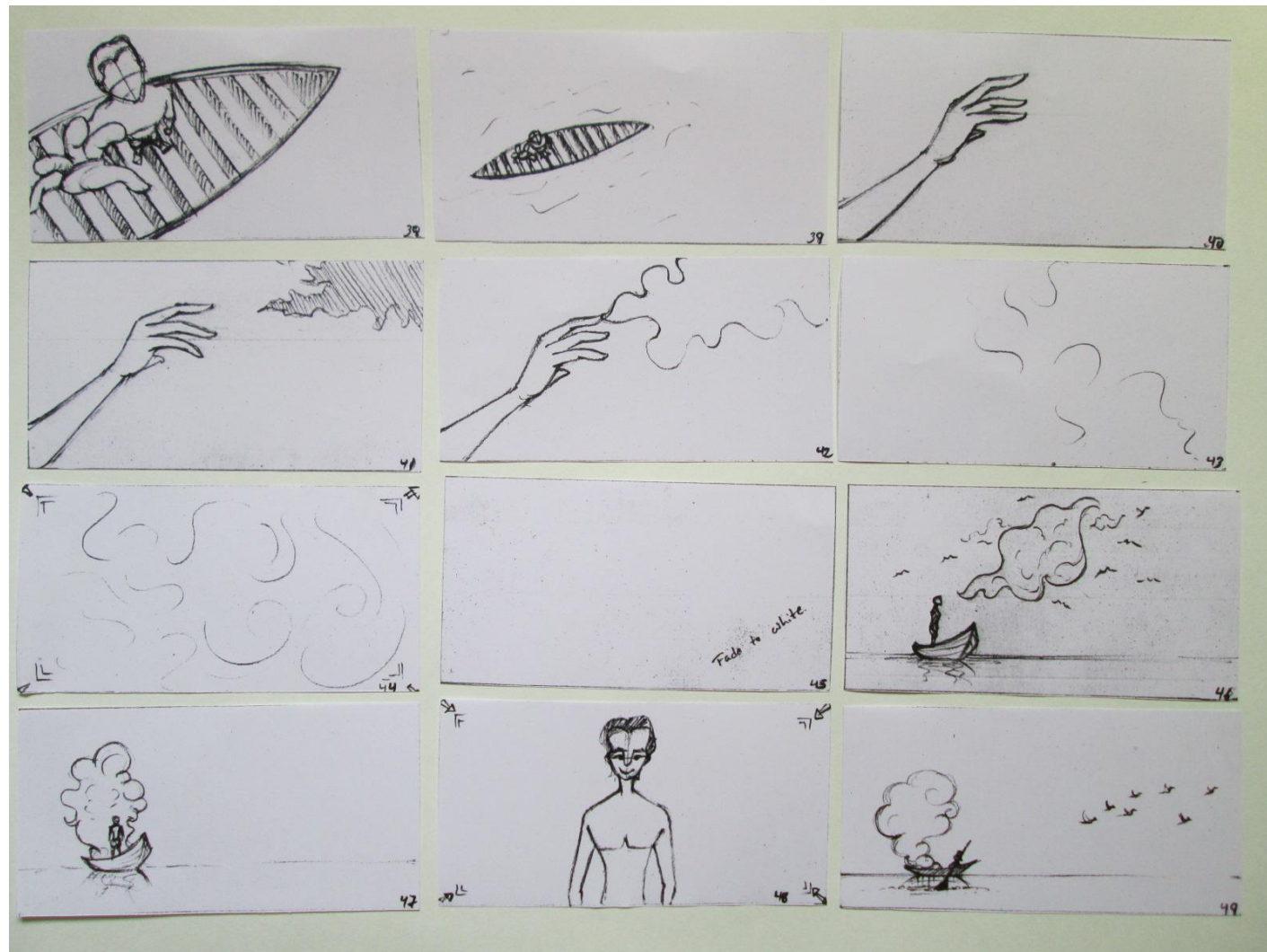
Visual Design

Storyboard



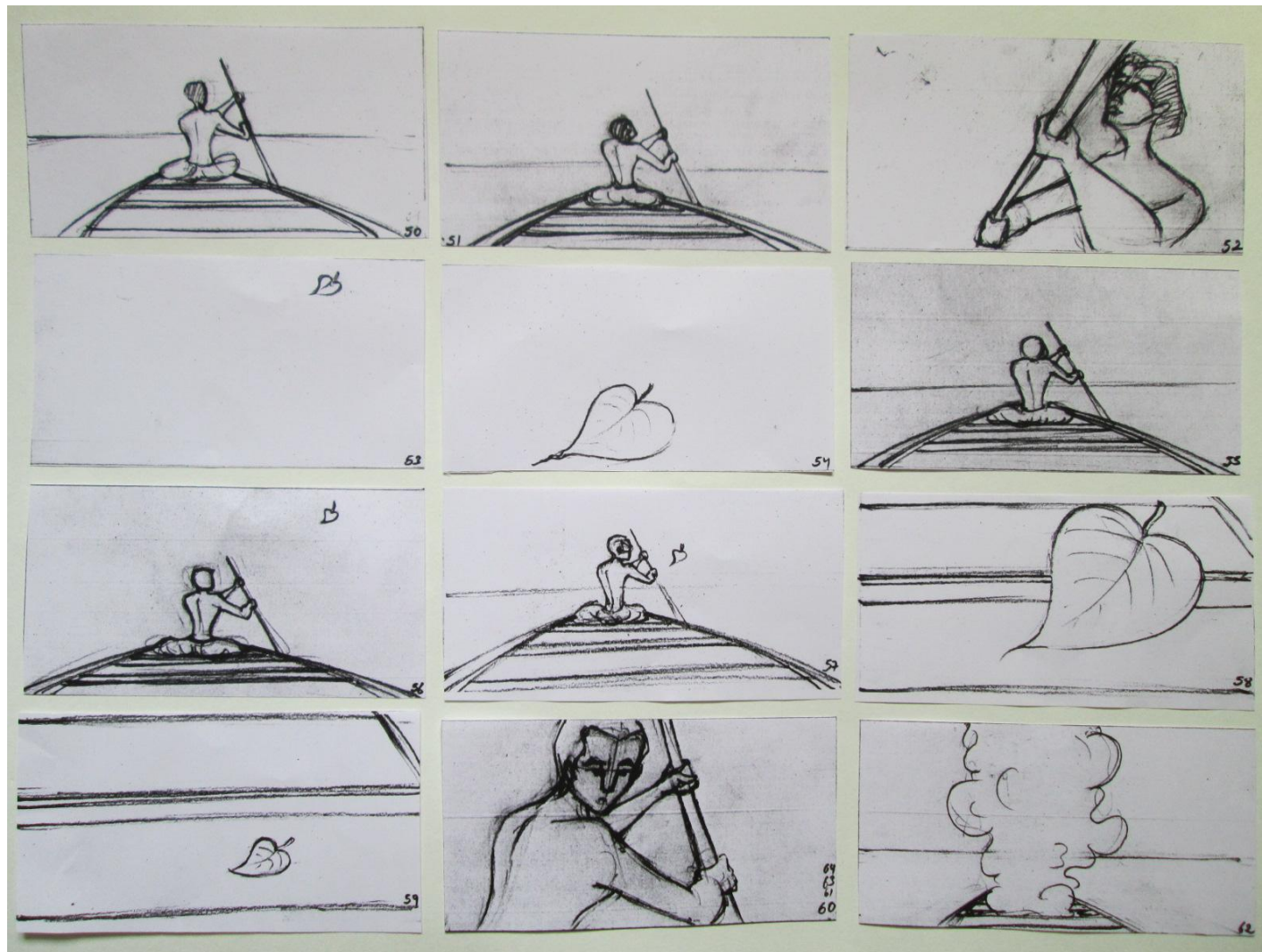
Visual Design

Storyboard



Visual Design

Storyboard



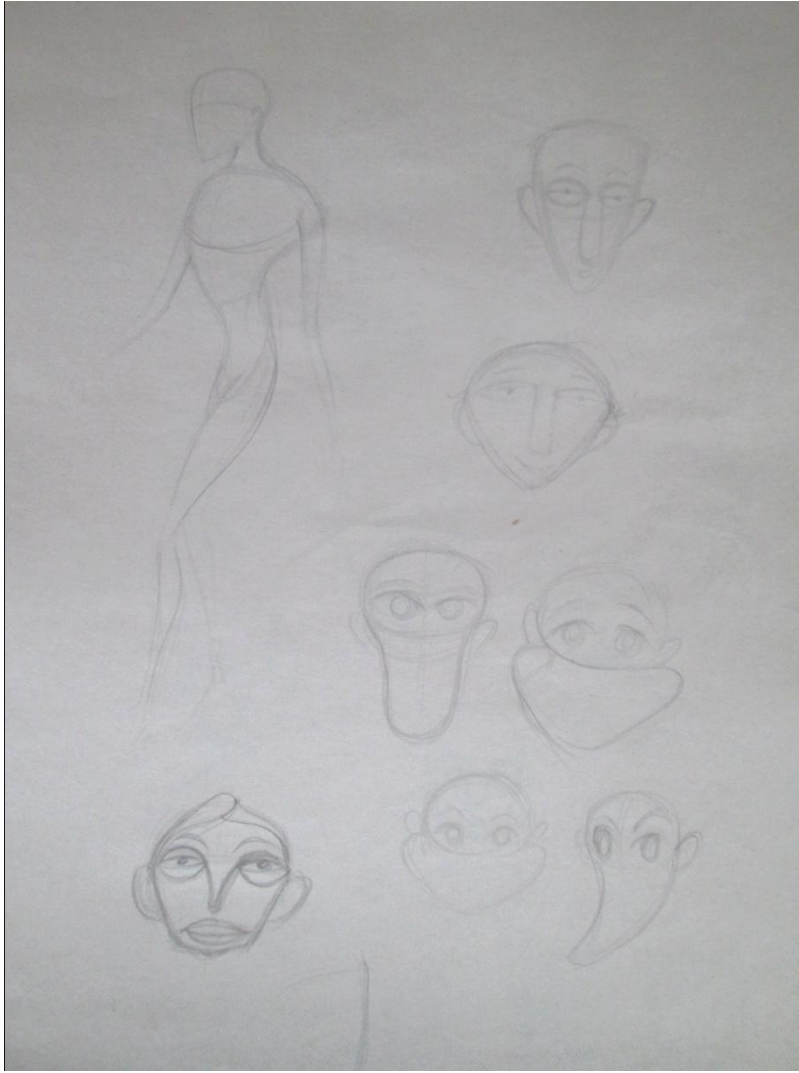
Visual Design

Storyboard



Visual Design

Character Design



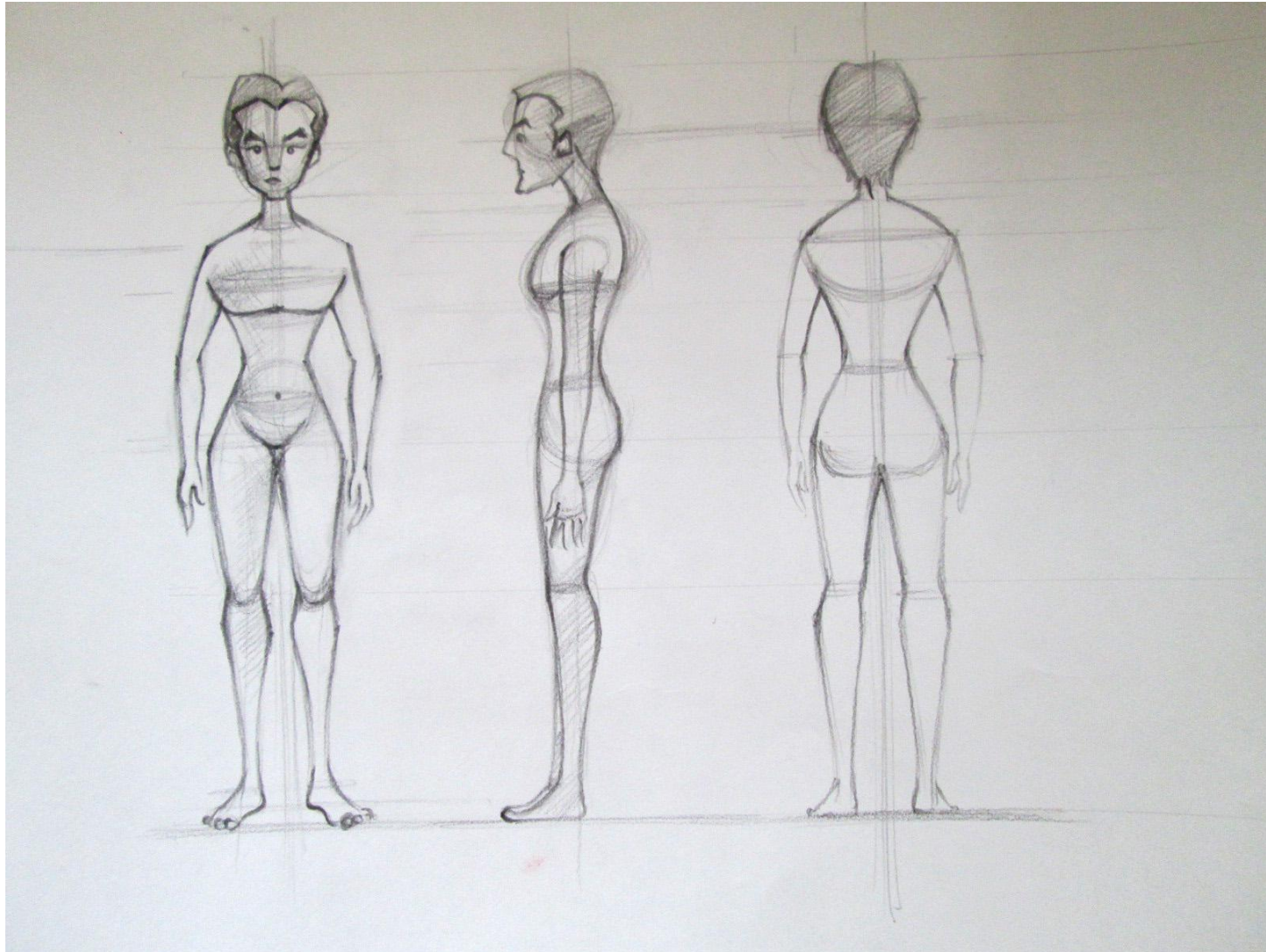
Visual Design

Character Design



Visual Design

Character Design



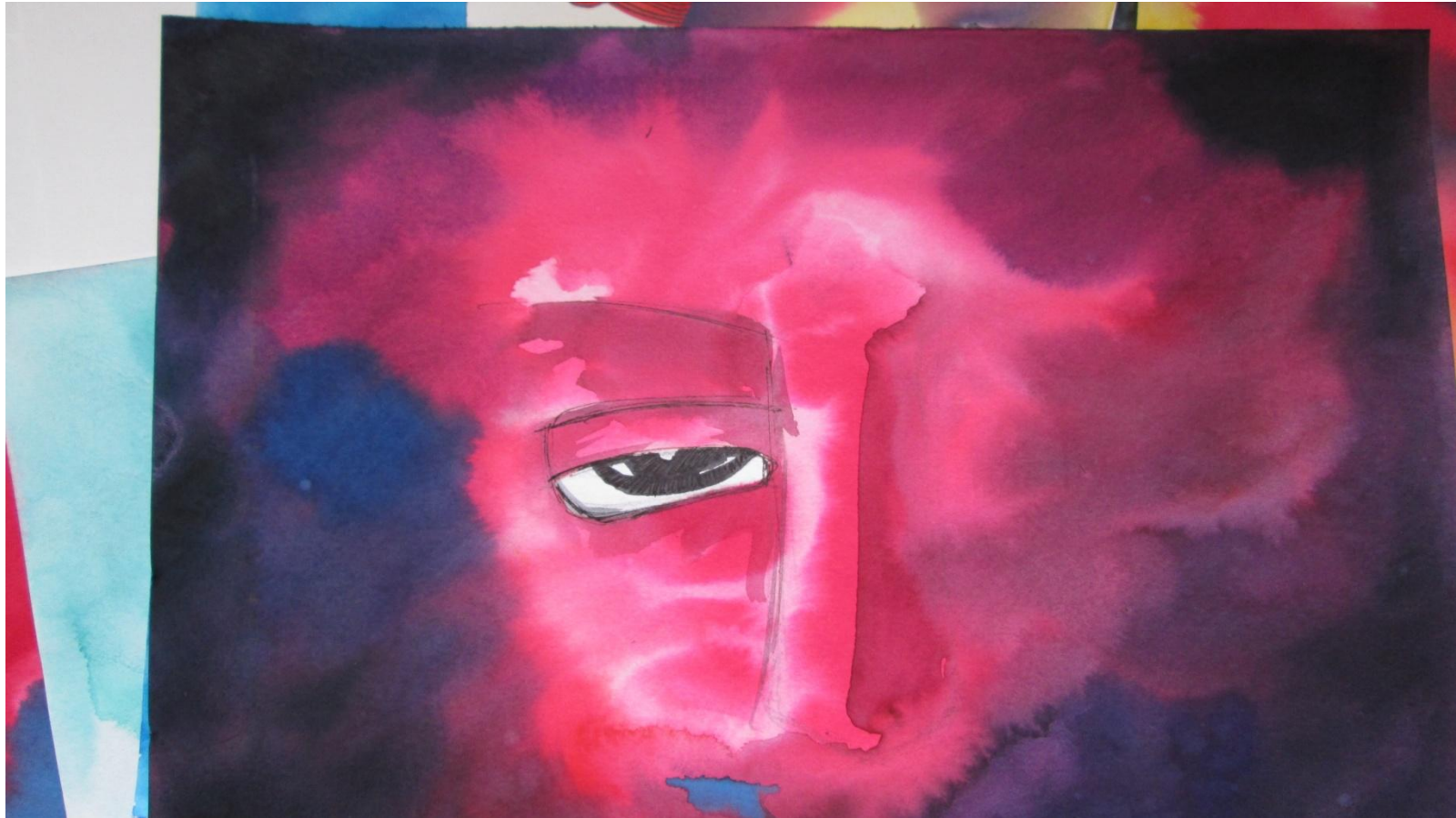
Visual Design

Visual Development



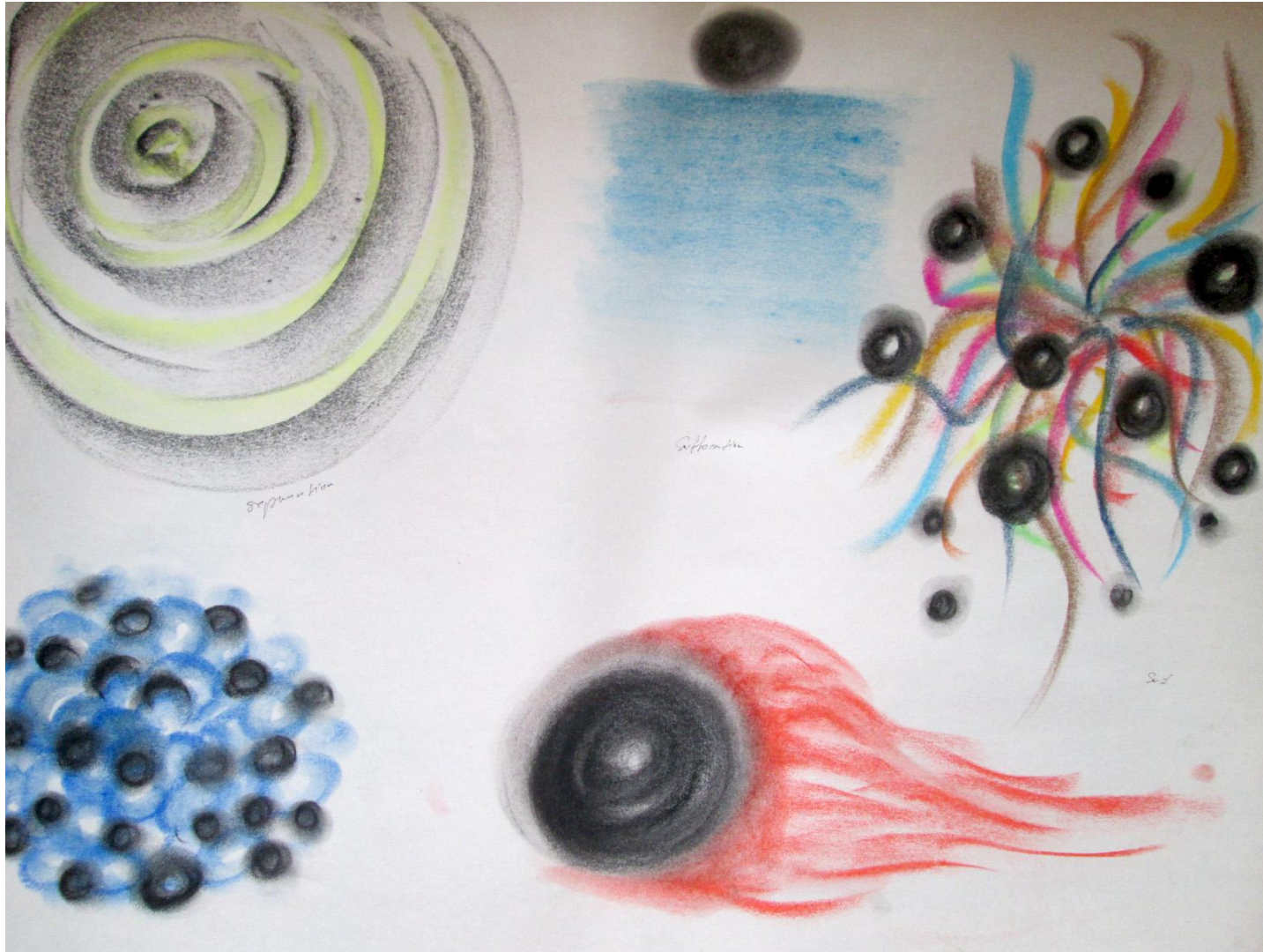
Visual Design

Visual Development



Visual Design

Visual Development



Visual Design

Visual Development



Visual Design

Visual Development- Final Visual Style



Trailer

As a part of the project the trailer is made to reflect an idea about the visual look and feel of the story. Understanding the essence of the story, it is very important to decide the visual style, prior dive into the making of the film and it becomes much more important if it is an animation film.

As my story expressed an idea of separation from dear ones, I have tried to show the first sequence of the story, where the character is in depressed state due to death of his loved one.

Storyboard



Music and Sound Design

Music and Sound always plays a very vital role whenever it comes to visual narration. It's a film about how a person feels in a suppressed emotional state caused by separation from his loved one and in that particular state, how the mind perceiving his past life experiences. So I am looking forward to put a sound which would be complicated, abstract, blurred and kind of complex music and also it has to be a piece of soundtrack which couldn't be related with any other things. I think it would be possible to express the feelings, emotions, traumatic state of the character and the gist of the story through music and sound aesthetically.

Conclusion

Emotions always aroused by certain reason and particularly painful emotions are very stronger than any other types of emotions and it also left scars in the mind of a victim for lifetime. It cannot be wiped out completely but the level of intensity perhaps lowered down but it would occur for sure at some stages of our life. So when it is going to occur anyways in our mind why not accept it and love it as some kind of valuable experience rather than resisting it. Then I thought let's play with my painful emotions and give it a creative shape. While I would be giving it a shape, it would be an experience in itself of expressing the emotions in some shapes and materializing it. The end product could be anything, because it is difficult to play around and giving shape to emotions which is by nature itself very lucid and fragile and also there is no right or wrong emotion so emotions cannot be judged.

So far It's a nice experience and hope it would be a much better experience while I will be making the film in the next semester. I learned the art of narrating good stories and the process of pre-production under my guide Prof. Sumant Rao. Through the project I have been discovering my weakness and strengths.

References

- 1] <http://www.quora.com/What-is-the-difference-between-suppression-and-repression>
- 2] <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/99492/catharsis>
- 3] <http://www.guidetopsychology.com/repressn.htm>
- 4] <http://actskills.com/wp-content/uploads/Effects-of-suppression-and-acceptance-on-emotional-responses-on-individuals-with-anxiety-and-mood-disorders.pdf>
- 5] <http://www.goodtherapy.org/therapy-feeling-empty.html>
- 6] <http://mindandmemory.net/>
- 7] <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/21stC/issue-1.4/mbmcenter.html>
- 8] <http://allpsych.com/psychology101/memory.html>
- 9] <http://psychcentral.com/disorders/depression/>
- 10] <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/info/anxiety/>