

# MUMBAI

A Project Report by:

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Under guidance of

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## 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 cause for disciplinary action by the institute and can also evoke penal action from the sources (which have thus not been properly cited) or from whom proper permission has not been taken when needed.

Abhishek Chaudhary | 09634005



# APPROVAL SHEET

The Animation Design Project III entitled 'Mumbai' by Mr. Abhishek Chaudhary, Roll No. 09634005 is approved for partial fulfilment of requirement for the Masters in Design degree in Animation Film Design

Signature:

Project Guide: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson: \_\_\_\_\_

Internal Examiner: \_\_\_\_\_

External Examiner: \_\_\_\_\_

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to my project guide Prof. Shilpa Ranade for her constant support and guidance. Her encouragement and support were essential for the completion of this project. I would also like to thank Prof. Nina Sabnani, Prof. Sumant Rao, Prof. C. P. Narayan and Prof. Phani Tetali for their time to time inputs.

I would also like to thank Anantha, Sumeet, Dhyan for their support and help. Last but not the least, I am grateful to my parents and friends who had me going even in the toughest phases of the project and were a constant source of inspiration.





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## ABSTRACT

This report attempts to represent my experience of Mumbai as a newcomer in the city, in form of a short animation film. This film was done as my final project as part of my course requirements during the pursuance of my degree in Masters of Design at the Industrial Design Centre.

This short animation film is my take on Mumbai, inspired by conversations of people as they sip their daily dose of 'Mumbai cutting' tea. The project later transformed into the expression of my views of the city. The narration in the film is a collage of my many trivial and nontrivial experiences of Mumbai - the chaotic chawls, the Bollywood influence on Mumbaikers, crowds dancing madly on Ganpati puja, travelling in overcrowded local trains, gushing roads during monsoons, characteristic accent of people and so on. It talks about the life force of this thriving metropolis despite bomb blasts, floods, riots and other struggles. Nothing can break the lively spirit of Mumbai.



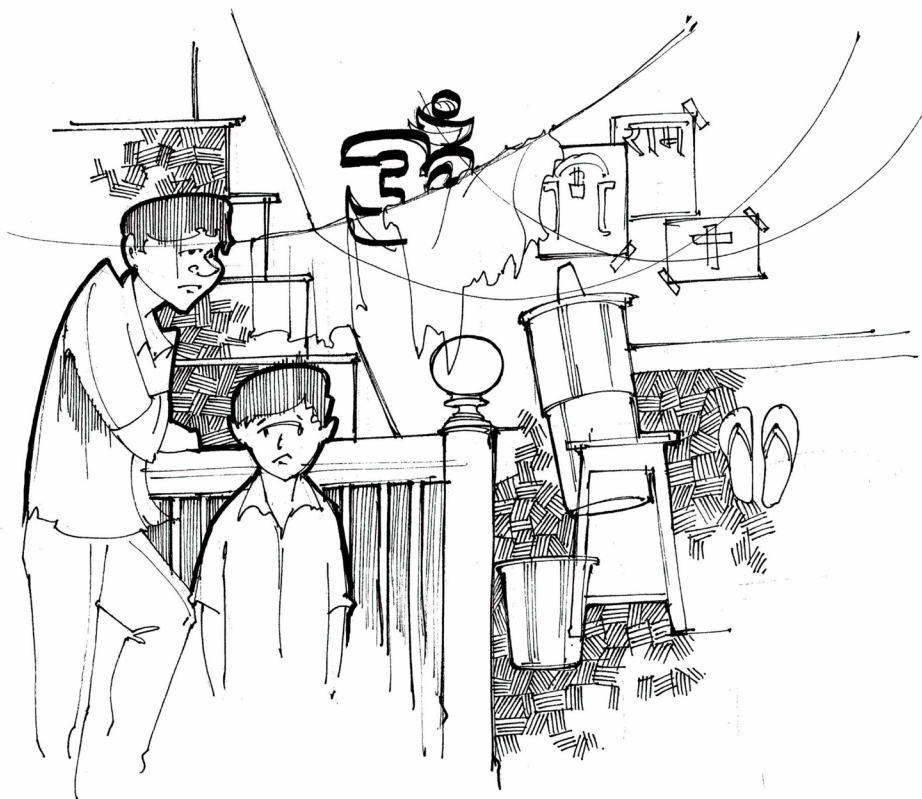
## Mumbai Chawl

### Research—ON FIELD

With the intent to understand and bring out the real sense of the city, I started my research on Mumbai by visiting the core places like South Mumbai, Matunga that consist of chawls and tea stalls. I spent few days sketching, taking snaps and observing the place and people around. I realized that the best way to initiate talk in these places was through sketching; people used to gather around while I was trying to capture the place in my sketches and out of curiosity they often asked what & why am I doing this.

While sketching at one of the Municipal Chawl in VT area, I had a small conversation with a lady, sitting in the common corridor. She said she came to Mumbai with her husband around 15 yrs ago. At that time they were just two people living in their 1 room-kitchen (common toilet outside), now they are five sharing the same space. She even showed me around her 200 (approx.) sq feet home. One of the corners formed the kitchen, while on other side a bed was kept with almirah to its side. The last corner and some space left served as their living area, dinning area, study room, bedroom and so on. The life was so compact and organized. There was no room for a new addition or subtraction from that space.





The corridors of the chawls was playground for the kids staying there, courtyard for ladies, socializing space for elderly, study room for students and a place to keep their water storage tanks too. To avoid people spitting here and there, images and tiles with religious figures and deity were stuck on highly prone areas such as corners at staircase and corridors. Best thing about living in chawls is that everyone knows everyone; how many kids does one have, the timings of someone's office and other details. Elderly persons usually seen sitting at pavements outside the shops at their chawls - chit-chatting, socializing and also taking care who's coming and going out of the chawl.







Most of the chawls in VT area also had offices and cottage industries in it. The chawls in VT are usually situated in the hustle and bustle of the market. There was no particular defined residential area for them. The ground floors of the chawls were typically turned into shops. There were tea stalls, some stalls for snacks like vada-pav, sandwich and pakodas also. Mostly, dabbawalas, hand-pulled lorry people, cottage industry workers were seen sipping tea at these stalls.





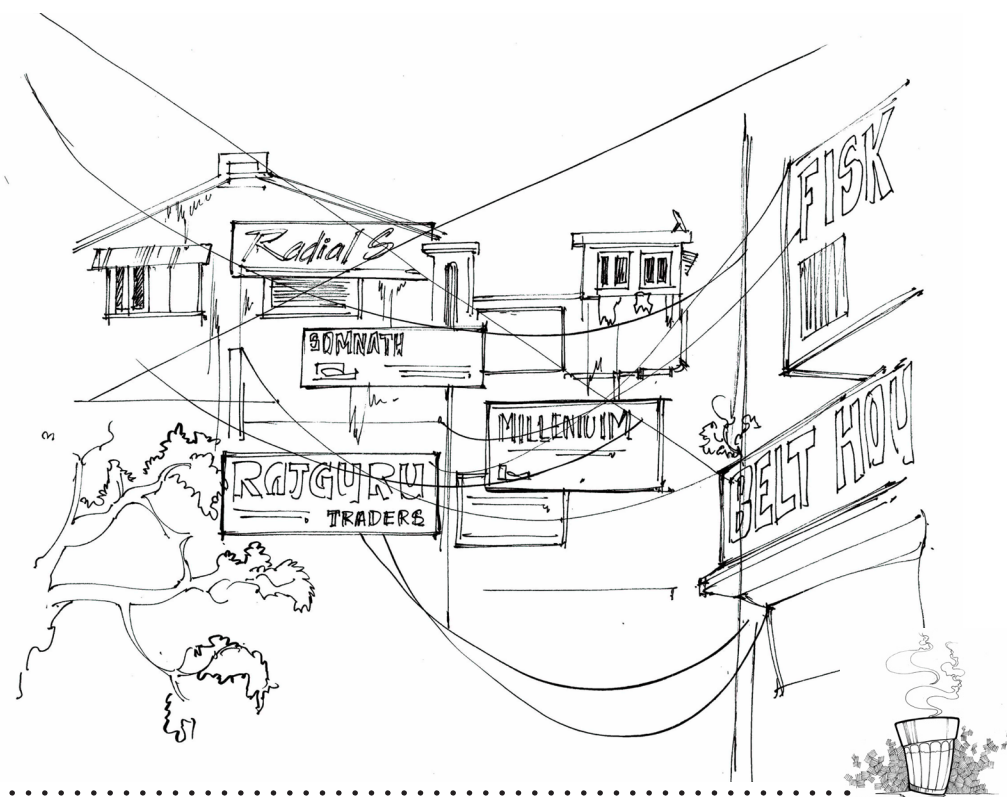
The men in the sketch in left are workers from a cottage industry present in a chawl. Whenever someone asked me what I was doing? I used to say that it's for an animation film. I think they misunderstood as a live action film, since these two workers requested me to make their sketch and asked me to make them look as heroes. Few others also wanted their images to be clicked while I was taking pictures of the chawls.

Apart from experience from this area, I headed towards a chawl in Matunga, suggested by one of the faculty. The chawl here was very different from what I visited in VT. It was more sophisticated and reflected the culture of living in flats rather than chawls. The families staying there seemed quite well to do as few of them had air-conditioners at their places. Even the houses were not 1 room-kitchen, they were quite bigger and had at least a proper bedroom, kitchen and a living area. Also the houses had their personal washrooms. The chawl was situated in a quiet and a proper residential area as compared to ones at VT situated in market. Here also, few of the houses were used at godown / warehouses for companies.





I realized that with urbanization or sophistication in living, the friendliness goes away. From my experiences in chawls at different setups, belonging to different strata of society, the people at chawls in VT were very friendly in nature and though living in a very congested area, seemed more happier than who were staying at the chawl in matunga. They seemed excited about a stranger clicking pictures of their place and making sketches, they even didn't mind taking a complete stranger and showing their places. Especially kids were quite excited to see someone sketching and loomed around me. While no one seemed willing to talk at the other chawl, in fact they seemed skeptic about a stranger, capturing images of their chawl.





During these casual talks I tried to understand the people living out there and know what they feel about their city. Most of them living in these chawls were migrants, coming from different parts of India to this metropolitan city in search of work. They all have different and cherishing experiences of Mumbai. Most of them come to work as a taxi driver, dabbawalas, newspaper walas and etc. And few of them are strugglers who are waiting to give their best shot. During all this I come to know that the whole city is well knitted by each class of people and if you try to pull out any string the whole web will come out.









As secondary research, I also went through few books and also watched movies made on Mumbai chawls. The movies were —

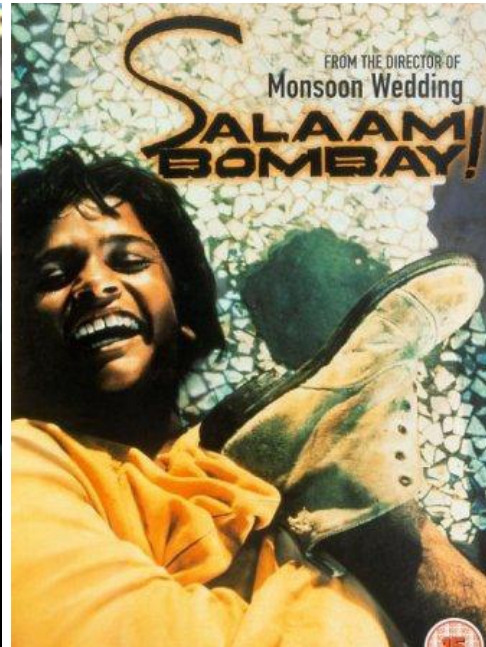
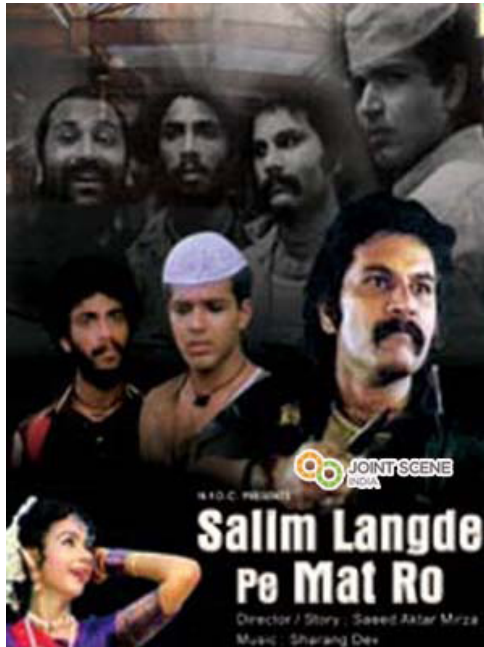
**KATHA** – by Sai Paranjpye

The film is shot on location at Salunke Chawl near Churchgate. In this movie Sai paranjpye beautifully portrayed the life in chawls and the relations people living there. The film talks about the caring & sharing nature of people staying in a chawl and the bonding between them. It beautifully covers the aspect that how everybody knows everybody there; a whole song is sung by people staying at that chawl about a new member who has come to their chawl.

**PIYA KA GHAR** — by Basu Chatterjee

The film describes about the space crunch situation in Mumbai. It is all about a newly married couple and their family who live in a one room-kitchen space in a chawl. The film has portrayed the real life situations like the partitions done with wooden planks within that room, the daily chores of life- storing water early in the morning, the people staying in chawl and their professions and about the caring & sharing nature aspect of the people and their sacrifices for each other, who all are living in such a small space.





### **SALAAM BOMBAY — by Mira Nair**

The film superbly gives the viewer a bird's eye view into the plight of India's urban street children. The film is a realistic picture of Mumbai, which the normal people would not like to see and understand. The movie connects different levels this urban nightmare; prostitution, flesh trade, drugs, child labor through a kid, who has come from village to Mumbai with a dream to earn money.

### **SALIM LANGDE PE MAT RO — by Saeed Akhtar Mirza**

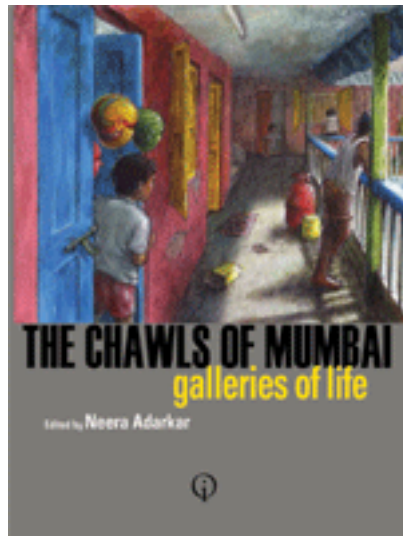
The film tells the story of Salim, a Muslim youth who tries to find his identity in a totally confusing world. This film portrays the Mumbai and the underworld connection and complexity of it. The protagonist, whose role models are successful smugglers and profiteers, lives in chawl, has big dreams. His life promises to change but, his background and past cling to him, casting a shadow that he is unable to overthrow easily.

### **PUSHPAK — by Singeetham Srinivasa Rao**

Is a story about a man who lives in a chawl, struggling for a job and to fulfill his dreams in a city know as Mumbai.







Few of the articles and book I read, related to Mumbai and chawl system.

ORDINARY Mr PAI – by Kalpana Swaminathan

Ordinary Mr. pai is a story; about an insensitive and rude Chawl owner and how a physically challenged girl teaches him lesson. Through the story the physical condition of an old chawl is very well portrayed; broken staircases, leaking ceilings, dirty bathrooms and no maintenance at all. It also shows the unity and caring & sharing nature of residents at chawl.

THE CHAWLS OF MUMBAI – by Neera Adarakar

In her book Neera talks about shifting status of chawls over time in terms of their religious and gender composition, its position in relation to various classes of property available in Bombay, and self-image.

During 19th century and early 20th century chawls began to come up in great numbers in Mumbai. From the mid-nineteenth century onwards as the Indian cotton industry boomed, filling up the breach left by the Civil War in America. The colonial government and an emerging class of Indian capitalists needed labour; and migrant workers thronging the city from the Western Ghats and the Konkan coast needed cheap housing. As Bombay urbanized and industrialized, many chawls were built by private parties on what was formerly farmland. The chawls tended to be socially homogenous, each chawl marked by the stamp of a particular religious or caste group and brought alive by the same festivals and mores.





### FROM CHAWLS TO STARDOM

There have been lots of icons and famous personalities who have grown and spent their struggling period in chawls. Jackie Shroff began life in a chawl that was surrounded by skyscrapers in Teen Batti, Walkeshwar. Jackie goes back often to his chawl.

Another bollywood personality, Govinda lived in a small house on the first floor of Sheikh Chawl with his parents, four sisters and two brothers.

Jaidev and Rohini Hattangadi started their married life in a chawl.

Mahesh Manjerekar still sometimes visits chawl in wadala, where he grew up.

Rakhi Sawant is another success story of a celebrity who once who lived in the chawls.



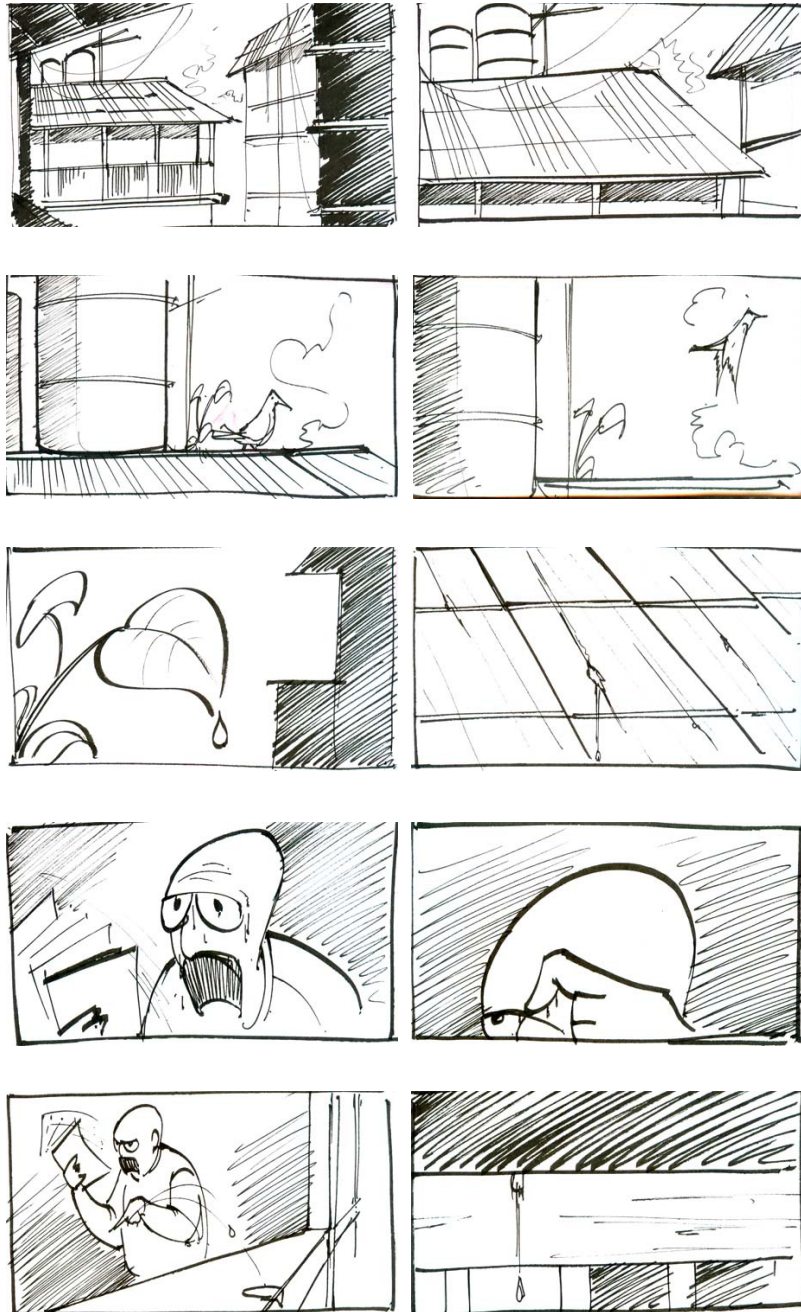
Atul Loke: photojournalist

"I grew up in a chawl. We were 10 of us, living in two rooms, each of which was 10 X 10 feet. I have been a photojournalist for over a decade; but this work is more of a personal diary. These images, titled 'My Chawl: One Big Family', are those of my home, family, friends, neighbours and their children"

Atul loke is a photojournalist, acclaimed worldwide. Presently he is working on his book on Mumbai. Through his photography he is trying to preserve the memories of his life in chawl. He says that in his 100 years old chawl the doors of all houses were always open and residents used to overlook from the common balcony. Even the toilets were shared.







## CONCEPT 1

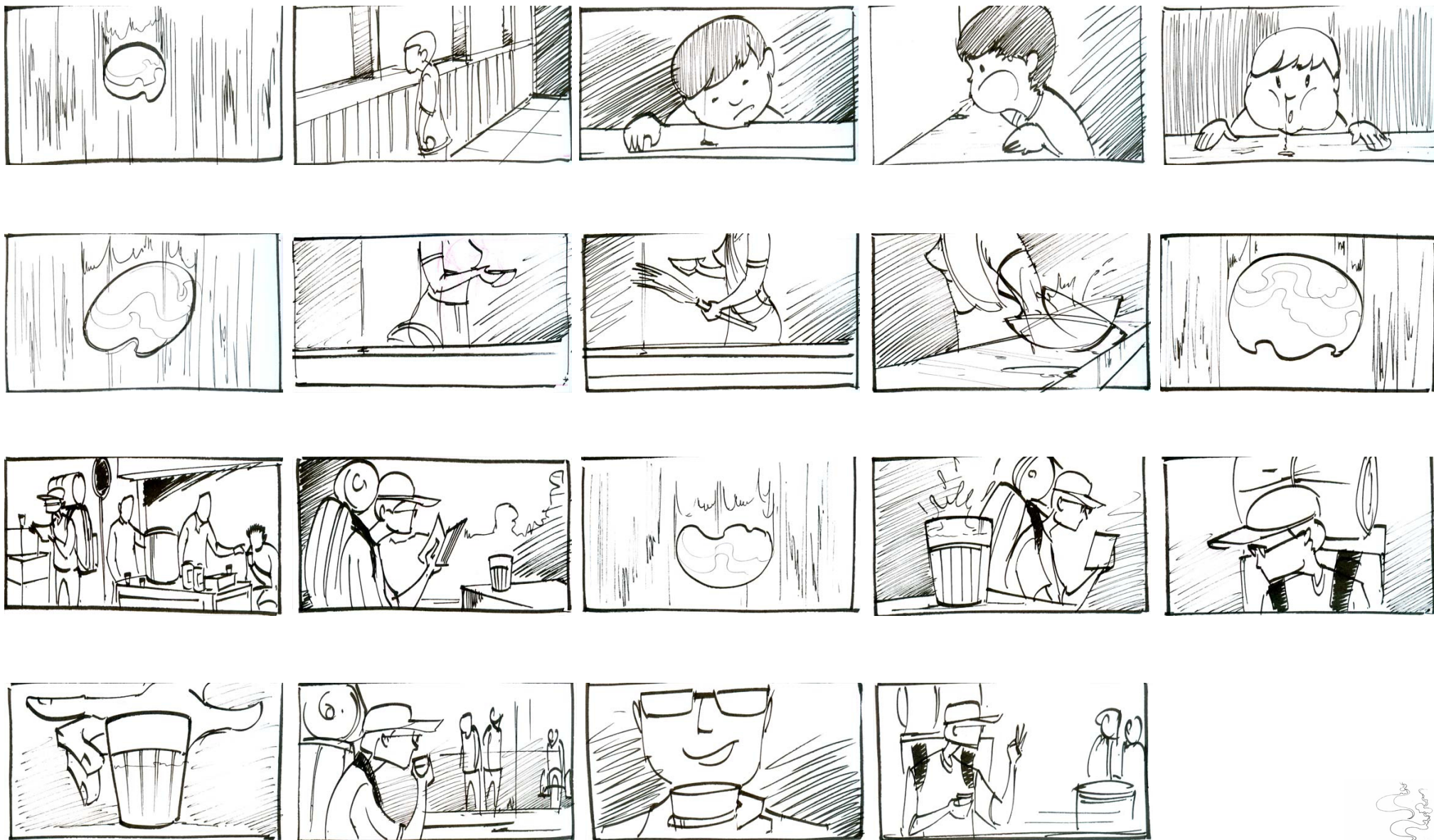
There is a scene of a Chawl. Its 2 O'clock in the afternoon, there is lot of noise from traffic, radio, TV, announcements, etc. Suddenly, there is a power cut and there comes an unexpected weird sort of silence. A pigeon sitting on a Chawl takes flight. A drop of water from the roof comes down on the edge of a railing of the third floor.

There is an old man sitting in the corridor outside, who happens to wipe some sweat off his forehead with his finger and the same shoot on the railing and happens to mix with the other drop which down. The bigger drop-let falls onto the lower floor railing. This falls right in front of a kid who's tucking his head out and leaning onto the railing. He blows to push the drop off and happens to shoot some mucus over the other droplet which all head down further. In the lower floor, a lady is screaming on top of her voice and she's keeping an unwashed bowl onto the railing but she manages to do this with some aggression which results in a drop from that bowl going into the other drop which just came down.

In the tea stall which is below, a tourist who's got his bag pack on is reading a map and his tea glass is kept on the boxes stacked alongside. The drop comes straight into the glass and sprinkle bring his back to attention and he reaches out to the tea glass. A sip goes down and you hear him say "Wah Bhaiya, Nice Tea"

The chawl concept was not constructing the stories very well. And after few discussions and guidance of faculties the focus was shifted to conversations of people as they sip their daily dose of 'Mumbai cutting' tea.







## Mumbai cutting

### Research

Few chai stalls were visited for observations about what people talk about while having tea.

I also tried recording conversation of people at tea stalls, by being in stealth mode. The intent was to capture conversation related to Mumbai as a city and their views on it. In wish of getting the right content I spent hours and had to have so many teas and smoke.

Three tea stalls were covered, starting from the ‘yadav tea stall’ opposite to IIT main gate. Yadav’s tea stall is quite low profile one and mostly workers and auto drivers are his regular customers. While I was there trying to grab some interesting conversations, two auto drivers were talking about the infuriating passengers they served today. There were two young guys, looked like fresh graduates from college, discussing about how did their day go. Then they were planning to call a friend who used to work in night shifts. Also few IIT students came to the tea stall, mainly to buy cigarettes. One of them said “IIT ke andar cigarette milni chahiye, Itni door anaa padta hai”.





The next tea stall covered was one at Hiranandani. Mostly office going people came there. Even the tea stall was managed by 3-4 guys; one of them was making tea, another one collecting empty glasses and serving tea to people. The tea stall also had extensions to it; a small counter for vada pav and a counter selling tobacco, pan-masalas and cigarettes. It was certainly doing better than the yadav's tea stall. People mainly talked about office work, cribbed about bosses, ongoing TV shows and etc. One of the groups was discussing the last telecasted episode of Roadies. In another group a guy was explaining an accident with all drama and emotions and his group was so immersed in it. One of the groups was trying to forecast the result of At corner of the road, two traffic police were ticketing a bike rider, this incidence trigger another discussion about the corrupted police. One of them said "gunda raj hai gunda raj, vardi wala gunda hai, paise le raha hai." Sometimes with the need of the situation I even tried to steer their conversation towards my topic. I tried to pretend as a traveler and asked ways to a place and mode to transport to reach there. And from their answers I tried to take the discussion towards Mumbai traffic, the crowd and things going on in city at present.



But I realized that when I secretly recorded their conversation, the expressions were natural and the comfort level was high. Whereas when I asked them something, they became a bit conscious and the answers were also straight and to the point.

Another visited was near to Hiranandani hospital. The tea stall seemed quite low profile and I guess I went there at wrong time. It wasn't crowded at all, even after spending around half an hour, id could not get much interesting content. I completed my visits at tea stalls with resource full of hours of recordings; ready to be edited.

The recording quality weren't good enough; there were lots of voice overlapping and the conversations or the main content wasn't clear enough. In addition the traffic sound in background made it more difficult for me to edit and compile it. Though at the end I managed to make a sound clip with recordings from field and few sounds from news channels, famous bollywood dialogues and a song on Mumbai at end.



## CONCEPT 2

The idea was inspired from using conversations of Mumbaikers at tea stalls related to ‘cutting’ and what they feel about Mumbai. An audio clip was composed using the recordings from the field combined with some news clippings, dialogues from movies.

I wasn’t very satisfied with this outcome; the hard work for tea stall visits and editing went in vain. I was back to square one. My faculties suggested me that instead of collecting what people think about Mumbai, I should reflect upon my take on Mumbai.



## FINAL CONCEPT

The main question at this moment for me was ‘What is Mumbai’, ‘How do I see it and feel it’?

I started recollecting my personal experiences of Mumbai; my first visit to Mumbai and the other sequel visiting of different places in Mumbai. All this included my first local train journey, which created a completely different image of the city from the one I had in my mind before coming to this place. With treasure from earlier field visits and my experiences of Mumbai I thought to have the story in Hindi as I am more comfortable and can express and articulate well with it.

With my guide’s suggestion and my own interest, I created the script in a form of poem. Poetic narration is something I am comfortable doing. Putting down my thoughts and opinions on paper initiated the process for the final narration. The feeling about Mumbai is quite mixed and difficult to express in words. The poetic narration is my humble attempt to pull all these mixed feelings together.

In my narration I did not go in too much detail of a thing; there are so many things and experiences that if had to put them the movie would have become really lengthy. In this short animation film, I have tried to cover an overview about Mumbai and its culture. The main focus of the narration is about the comparison of high society; the people who drive the financial capital of India with people who run this city; ones who belongs to the bottom of the pyramid of the society. We cannot give credit to anyone of them; it’s a complex network of dependency over each other. In concluding lines, the poem describes about the welcoming spirit of the city for everyone.



## EXECUTION

The last concept was taken forward since it was more about my personal experience on Mumbai and what do I feel about the city. The next task was to pin down key points of Mumbai from my experience and from the research down so far. A poetic narrative was considered apt for conveying the details about Mumbai, about the people of all class, how they are connected and incomplete without each other.

For this project I was looking forward to try some different type of animation (cut out animation). One of the major challenges was to convey the expression in narration through good visuals. As the poem flows from one issue to another without any jump over, the visuals were also planned to transform from one scene to another seamlessly and effortlessly. It took quite a time to figure out those natural transformations from one subject to another, to bring the right mood and feel for the movie.



## PRE-PRODUCTION : NARRATION

एक जाना पहचाना शहर  
जो बेठा है दरिया के किनारे  
और चमकता है , तारो के सिरहाने  
फिर भी सब के लिए नया है  
सबकी उमीदो पे खड़ा है  
किसी ने सुखियों मे पड़ा ,  
तो किसी ने सपनो मे जड़ा है।

सपनो का शहर है ये  
यहाँ रहने वाले लोग, इसे नज़रों से नहीं  
एक सपने सा देखते है  
यहाँ चश्मा नज़र का नही  
सपनो का बेचते है।

यहाँ बच्चा चलना नही दोड़ना सिखता है  
क्युंकी चलने वाला दोड़ मे कहा जीतता है

यहाँ तो बस सपनो की दोड़ है  
और आगे निकलने की होड़ है  
हर कोई यहाँ भीड़ का हिस्सा है  
माना की सुने मे ये एक किस्सा है  
इसकी बात ही कुछ और है  
रात होती कहा यहाँ



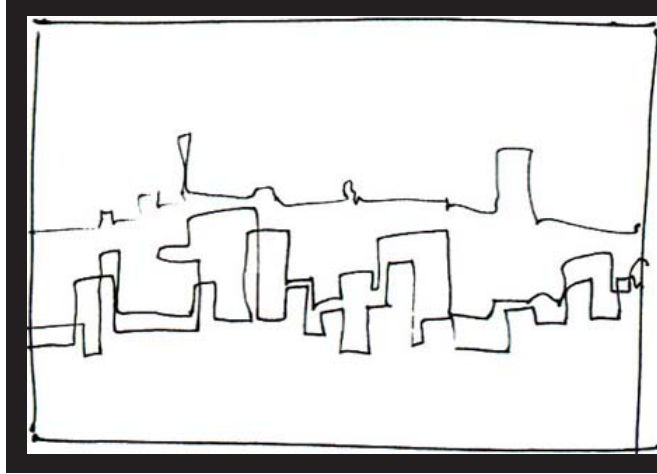
कही हुडदंगो का शोर है  
 तो कही सपने टोटने का सनाटा  
 कही लोकल की रफ्तार  
 टो कही ट्राफिक का थम जाना  
 कभी नए पे खुश होना  
 टो कभी पुराने पे अफसोस मनना  
 समझ नहीं आता , किस की तारीफ करें  
 'इंसान की जो आसमान पे बैठा इसे बुलंदी पे ले जा रहा है  
 या उसके बारे में कहू  
 जो सर पे डिब्बे लिए भीड़ में भागता चला जा रहा है  
 दुनिया ने कंगुरा देखा, मगर नीव को न देखा  
 जगमगाती उची मीनारों को देखा  
 गाड़ियों में बैठे नवाबों को देखा  
 मगर उससे कौन जानता है  
 जो धूल में लिपटा, धूप से जलता  
 ये शहर चला रहा है  
 और इस शहर में जीने की किमत  
 अपने पसीने से चूका रहा है

क्या है असली मुंबई , ये कौन जान पाएगा

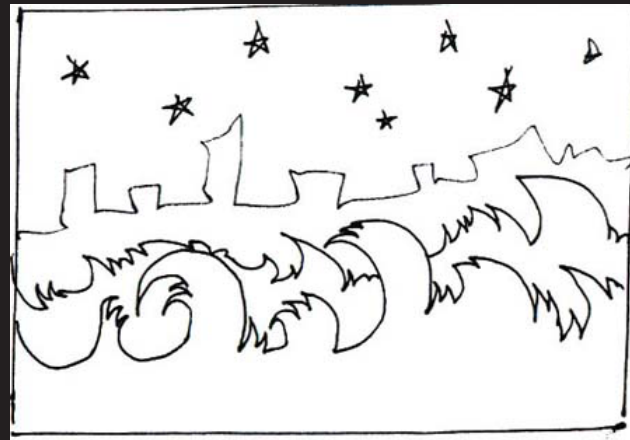
मगर हर सुबह एक उम्मीद लाती है  
 और फिर एक रह निकल आती है  
 शायद इसी लिए लोग यहाँ चले आते हैं



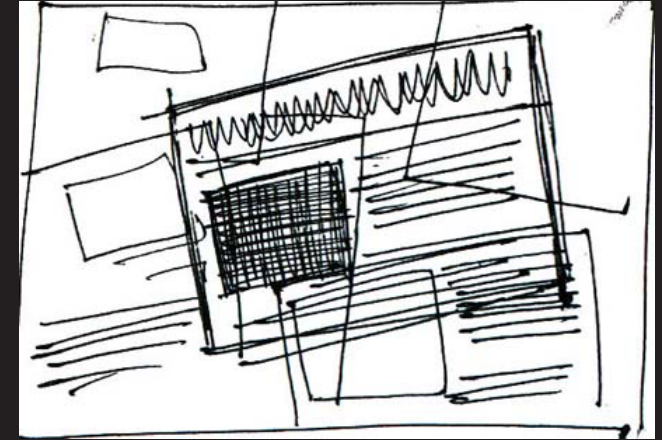
## PRE-PRODUCTION : STORY BOARD



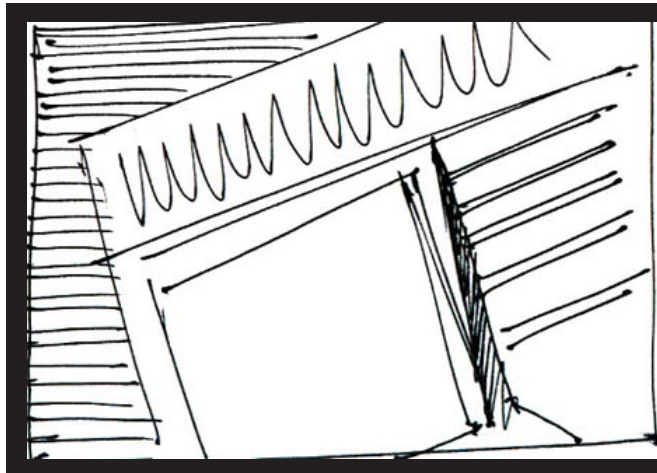
Buildings and city scape



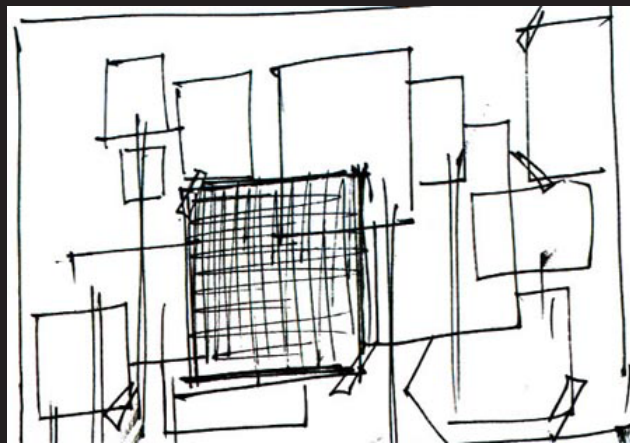
Waves on sea shore



Newspaper articles



Zoom in , newspaper



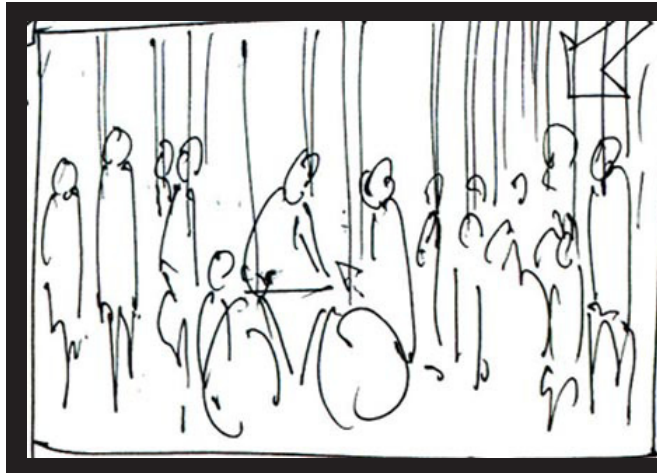
Posters on the wall



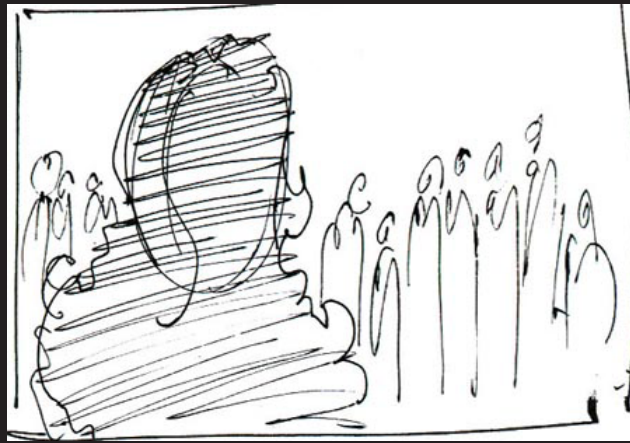
Lines dripping down

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Get merge in the crowd



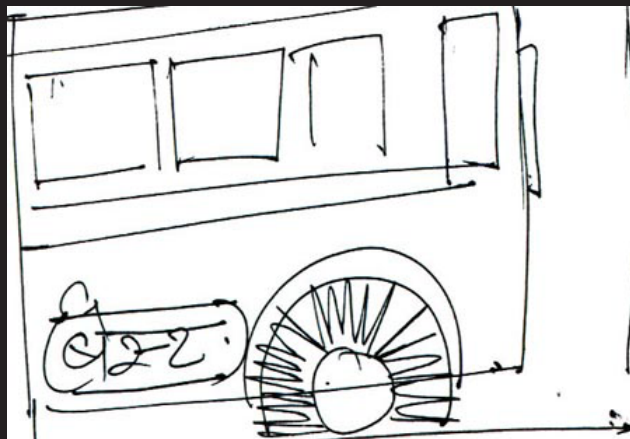
A lady comes in the frame



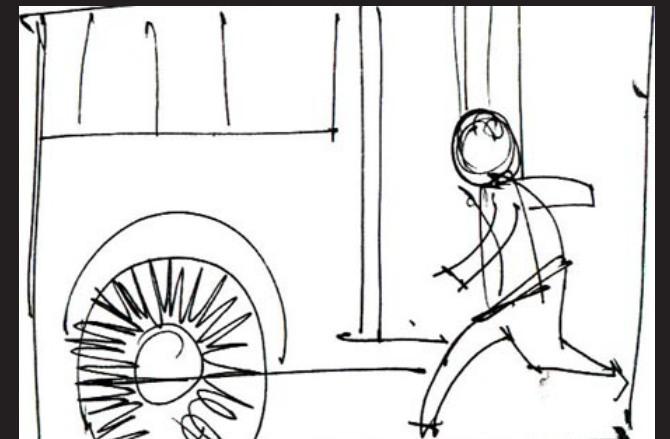
She turns around and zoom in, on her face



Zoom out and she's standing on a red carpet



Bus goes from right to left

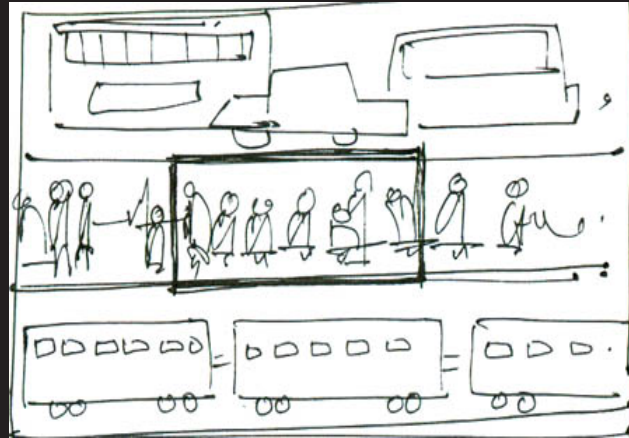


A man chasing the bus

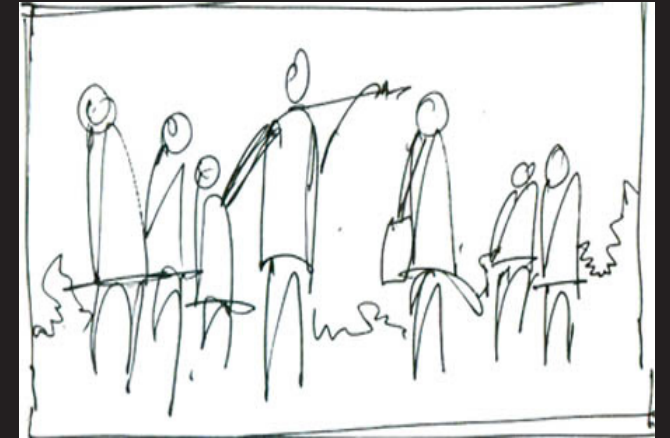
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Standing man, watching the bus



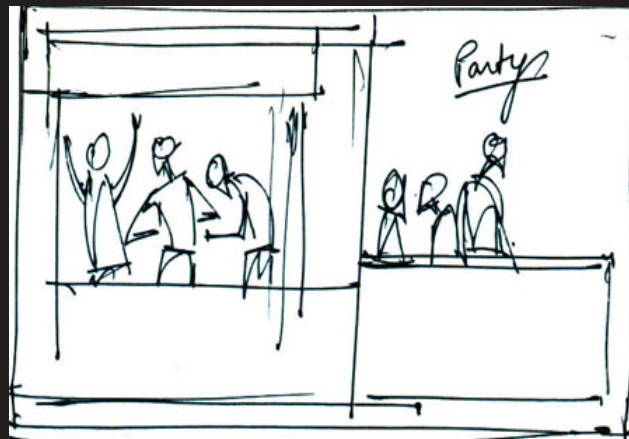
Traffic, local train and crowd



Zoom in, a man walks in the crowd



Book close



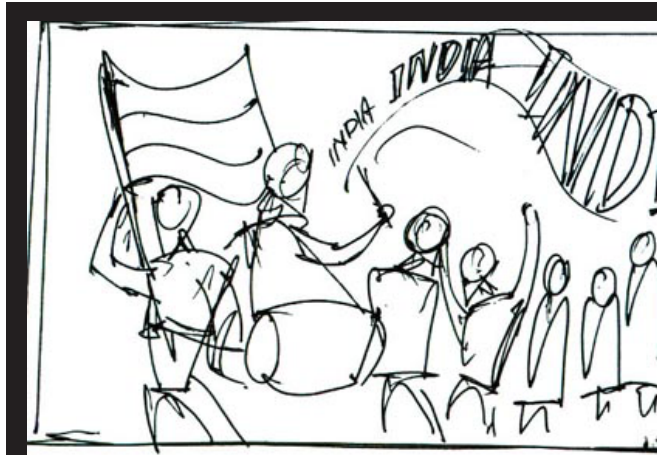
People partying on the house roof top



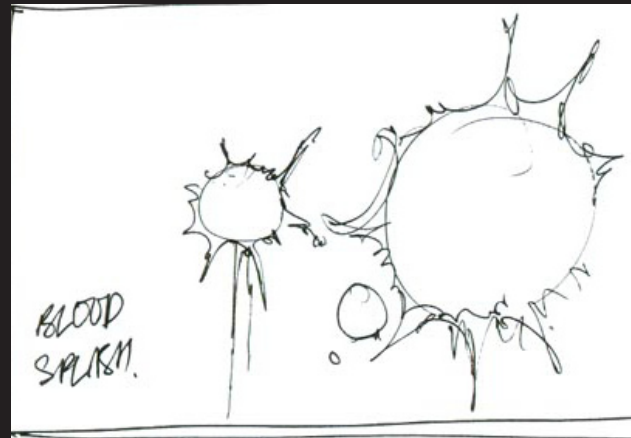
Few people in the house with the drinks in their hand

.....

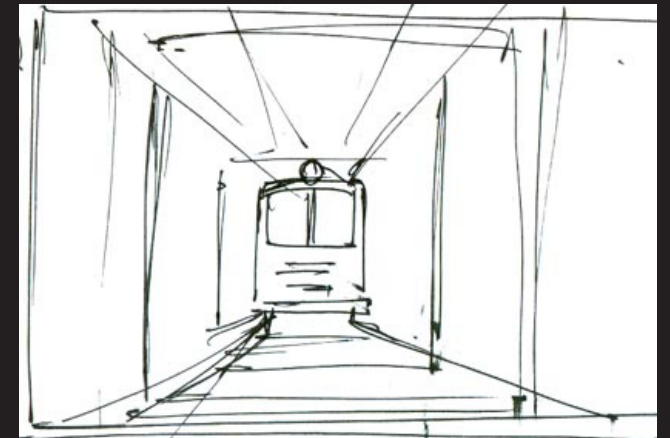




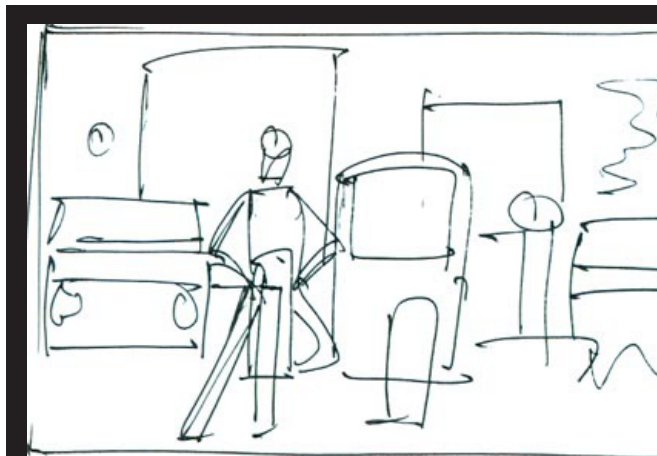
Crowd celebrate the wining match of cricket



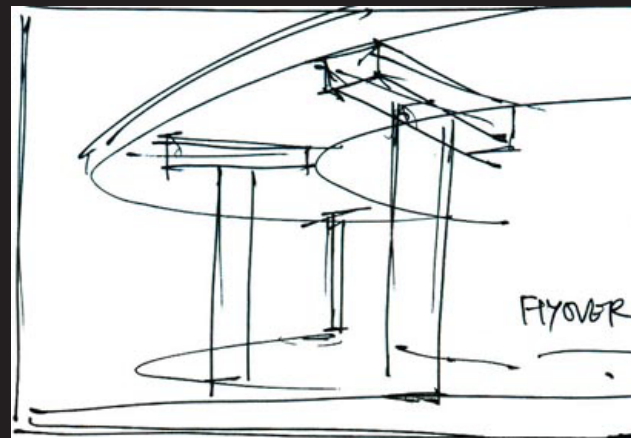
Blood drops



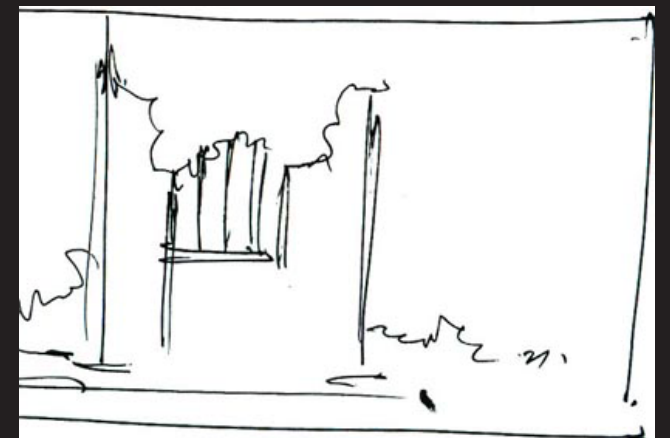
Local train coming



Traffic on red light

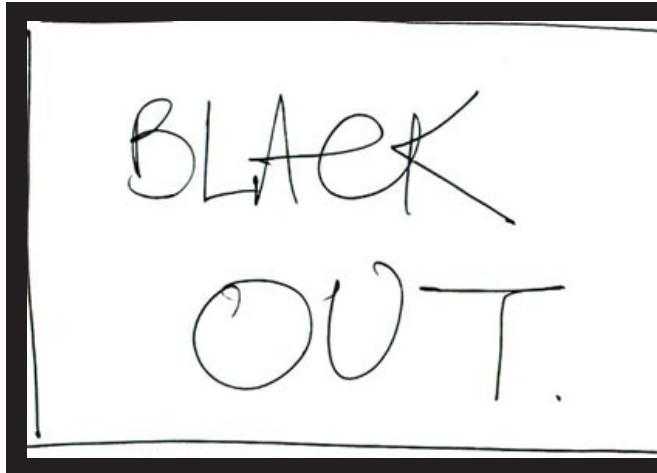


City fly overs



Broken house

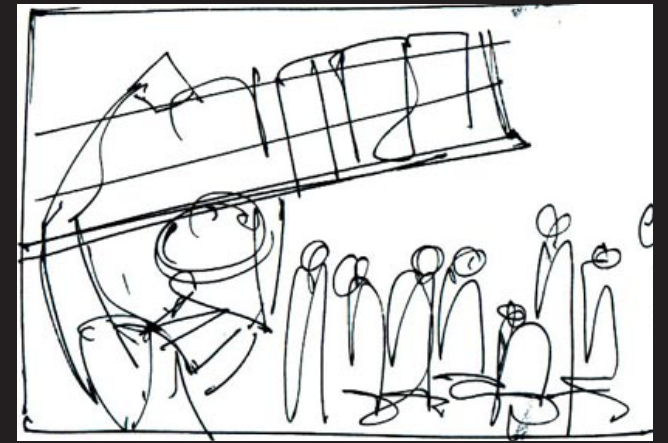
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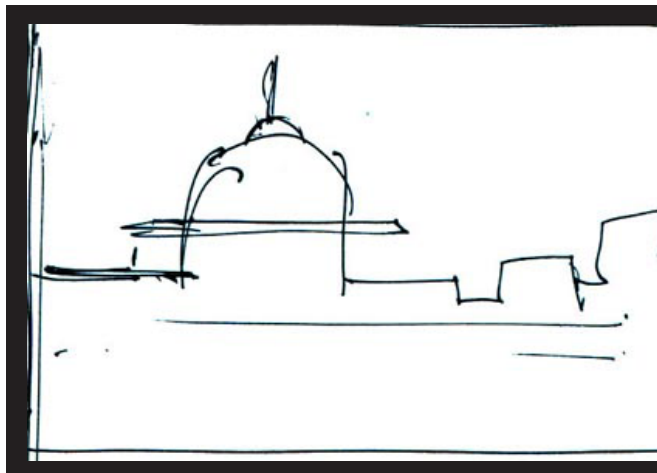
Black out on screen



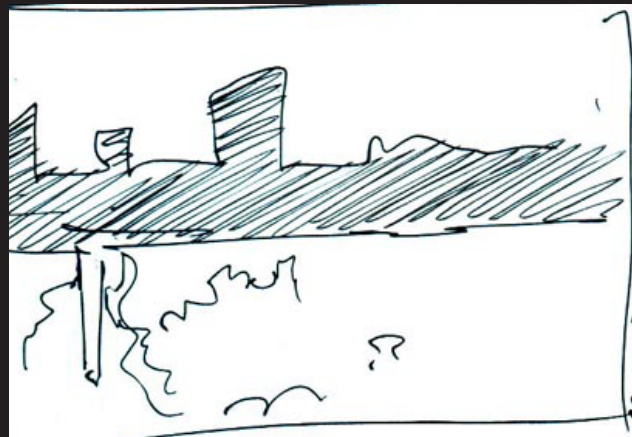
A man standing on stock exchange building



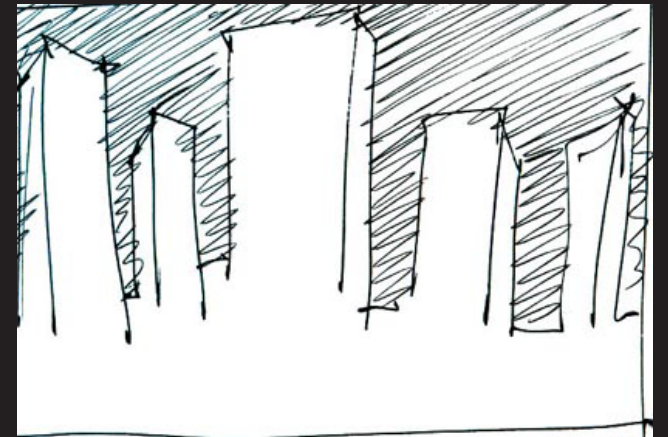
Another man walking with lunch boxes, on his head



A dome structure

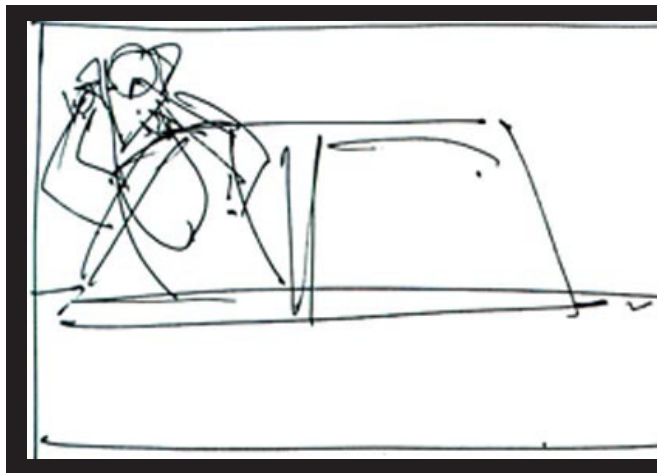


Roots of a tree

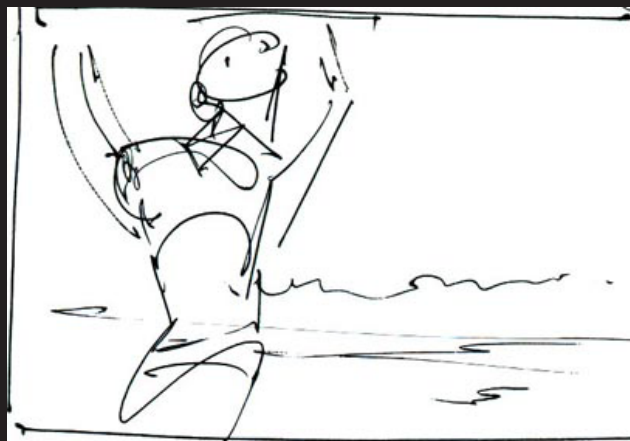


Huge skyscrapers

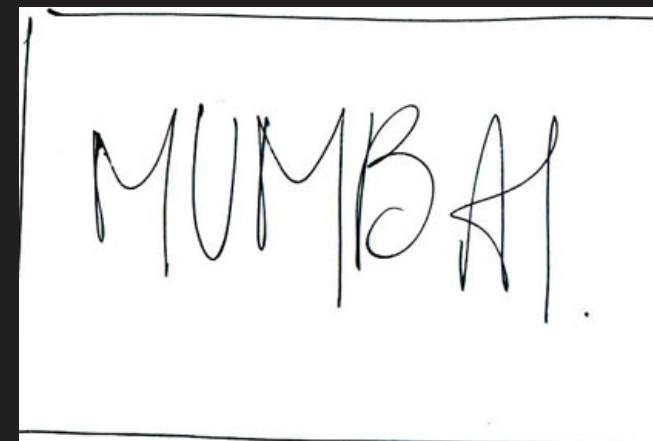
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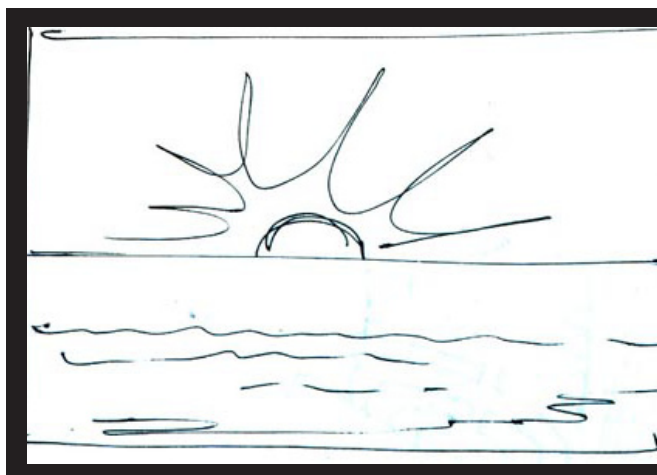
Building rotates and car goes over it



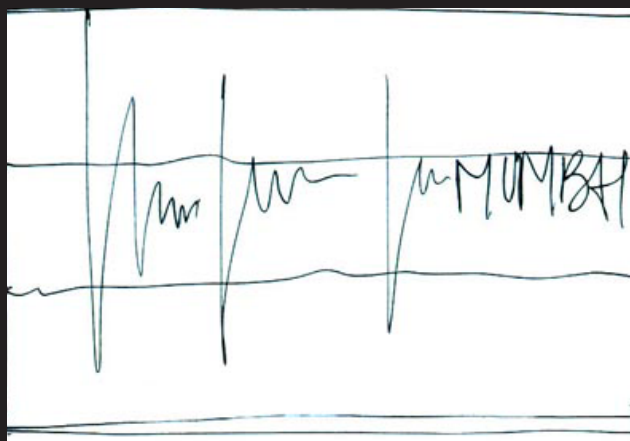
Red lines move in random direction



Red lines move in random direction



Sun rising



Heart beat sencor



## STYLE

According to the narration, there was a need of graphical representation of Mumbai. Personally also I have been inclined towards graphic novels a lot. For this project I wanted to try cutout animation in graphical ways. I thought of having minimum colors and just few colors at particular spaces in the animation, since my poem had comparison in it and what would have been better than to use contrasting colors (eg. black & white). Black & white gives the freedom to play with the negative and positive spaces of the composition.

I wanted to keep the style simple and to limited colors that would give me freedom of using the negative and positive spaces in the composition and also help me move easily from topic to topic. The main objective of choosing this style is to show how Mumbai is changing time to time with the help of transformation in the animation. Also want to give a little bit of graphic looking frames.

### Inspirations

The style is also inspired by different film title sequence, which has made a huge impression on me, and I always want my film to have something similar. One of the most famous and one of my favorite title sequences is 'Catch me if you can'. The main attraction of the sequence is the style and how easily they describe the events of the film in a symbolic manner.

And the other example of other such title sequences are —

BOMBAY TALKIE  
AAGEY SE RIGHT  
COWBOY BEBOPE  
FAKERS CONTACT  
DEAN SPANLEY







BOMBAY TALKIE



COWBOY BEBOPE





DEAN SPANLEY

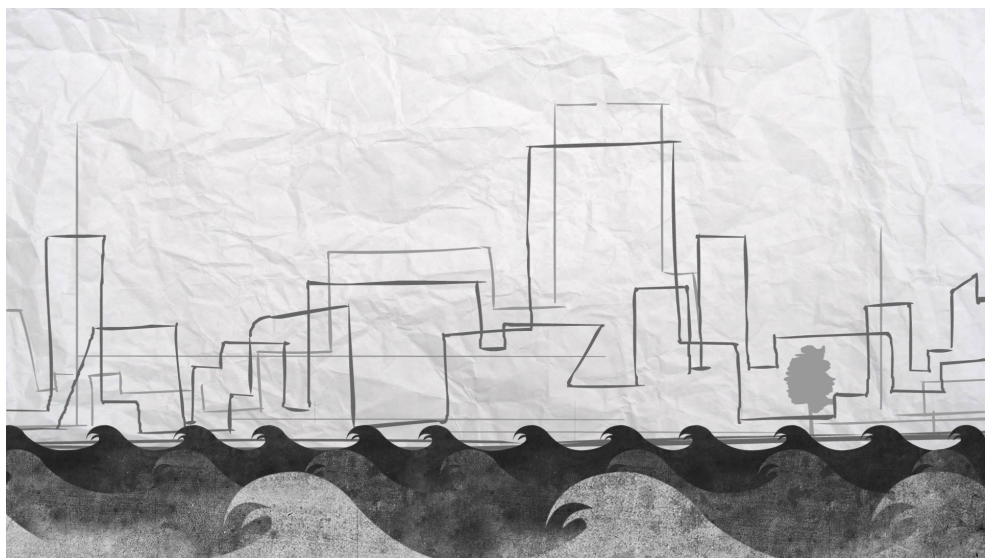


FAKERS CONTACT





## PRE-PRODUCTION : FINAL LOOK



## SOUND

Sound plays an extremely important element in bringing life to the story. There were three layers of sounds used, narration, Sync sound/ Folley/ sound effects and background music. The background music can be optional. Moreover since the whole film is a case sequence where the each transformation brings the different aspect in the film. I wanted the music, which supports the visuals and give a 3 dimensional feel to the frame. I used some of the folly sounds that I recorded on the field during my research.

The voice recording for the narration was very important because it was the narration, which tied all the scenes together, and a poor narration could have weakened the impact of the entire film. I was looking for a low pitch, slightly heavy voice, which had mature-ness and experience in it. With the voice quality the delivery of lines needed to be perfect with right expression and timing.



## CONCLUSION

Every day there are millions of migrants come to Mumbai to fulfill their dreams. Few accomplish them and lot of do not, but this city accept and respects everyone. This city brings the best out of you because there is a struggle on each and every stage. Still in such a hard life people bond together, laugh together and try to make this city more colorful and happier place. A place where dreams come true and anyone with a strong will can make it happen. Can set the ball rolling in his/her favor, that's for the theory. Probably a bit of it is true. Yet Mumbai is a place full of inequalities. The rich live here and so do the poor. The worst however is to find a suitable place to live in. Even then I do have a strange kind of fascination for this city.

The learning from this project was phenomenal. Most importantly, it has made me more sensitive to images and stories around us and has provided me with an vast bank of stories, which will surely inform my future projects. It has also given me the confidence to try out new unfamiliar techniques and enjoy the process. All in all, it has been a very nice experience.



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