

Cross Cultural Acceptance of Ethnic Food

Project II Report

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M.Des Animation and Film Design

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the project work done is an animated short film for 3rd semester M. Des Animation Design and submitted as a written report to the Industrial Design Centre, IIT Bombay is a record of the original work done by me under the guidance of Professor Nina Sabnani. Unless otherwise stated, the contents of this report in the form of the text and image are entirely my own. The views expressed in the documentation as part of the written submission of the project are my own and do not necessarily represent the views of Industrial Design Centre, IIT Bombay



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Date 16/11/18


APPROVAL


The Report Committee for Animation Design, Industrial Design Centre, IIT Bombay certifies that this is the approved version of the following report on **Cross Cultural Acceptance of Ethnic Food** by


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ABSTRACT

Food can be an identity of a community or a culture. The term Ethnic Food categorizes people and their culture. Fermented foods are an intrinsic part of the ethnic food of a community or tribe. Each ethnic group has its own method of fermenting foods. The purpose is for the taste, nutritional enhancement and most importantly for preservation economically. Due to the given climatic and topological conditions farming was not the best way for the source of food, thus fermentation and preservation of food were adapted.

Most of the people tend to associate the aroma of the food with its taste. Most of the fermented food does not give out a good aroma, some gives out a foul smell and most people do not enjoy it, except for the ones who are familiar to that kind of food. Ethnic and Fermented foods are also an identity of a community. Most people from the north-east India face discrimination based on these grounds. Since majority of the people are not aware of the types of food they eat, in most case scenarios they outcast them leading to discrimination.

CONTENT

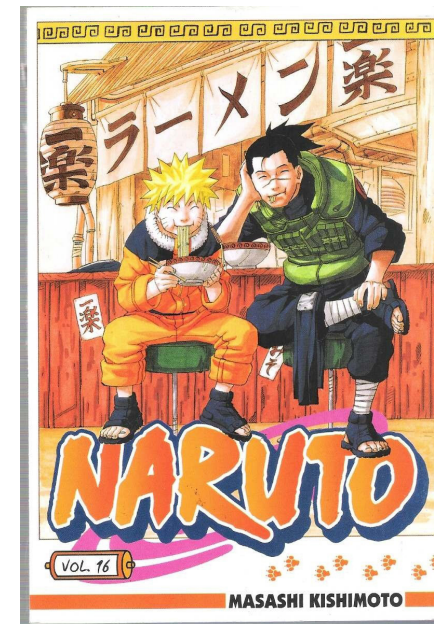
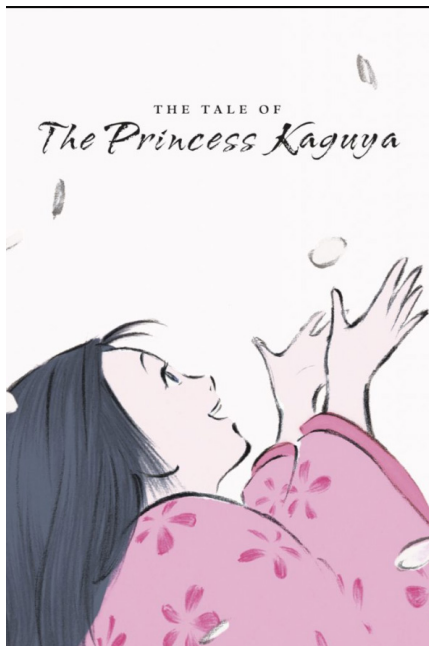
Introduction	1	Animation	26
Inspiration and Influences	2	Obstacles and Takeaway	28
Research	4	Conclusion	29
Story Development	7		
Script	10		
Explorations and Concept	12		
Character Design	14		
Storyboard	15		
Sound	24		
Animatics	25		

INTRODUCTION

Being sent to a boarding school at the age 12, I was not much aware of all the social issues in the society. On the first day of the joining I headed to the dining hall for dinner with a bottle of pickle that my mother had given me in case I don't like the dish they prepared. When I started having the pickle, students around me started making faces and some even moving to another table. I could understand they couldn't take the smell of the pickle. So, I quickly had my dinner and left. The next day the news spread like a forest fire, that there is a weird guy having weird stuff. I was treated like an outcast. Sometimes I would go late for dinner and take a corner seat. Then I would quickly open the lid, scoop out the pickle and then quickly bury it under the rice, to avoid the smell from reaching people's nostrils. After few days I met a friend from my hometown who was quite popular in the school. So, one day as I was having my dinner seated at the corner, he sat with me and I shared the pickle with him. I was surprised to see that students who would move out as I had the pickle shared the same table. My friend asked them to taste the pickle and told them that if they get past the smell the pickle is good. Surprisingly the other students liked it. That was my personal experience but there are many people who have faced discrimination based on the same ground I did. Overtime I have realized that some preconceived notion leads to this situation or discrimination. According to me this could be tackled by providing people with proper information about the food and culture of a place or a region. Further I decided to take animation as a platform for exposure of the food and culture of a region to the people who are not aware of it.

INSPIRATIONS AND INFLUENCES

I have always been inspired by Japanese animation. The reason being the way they were able to portray and showcase their culture in every way and in every genre possible. Naruto is the 4th highest selling manga of all time. The creator Masashi Kishimoto named it Naruto for the love for ramen. In Japanese Naruto means steamed fish-paste cake. I really loved the way he expressed his love for ramen but kept the content interesting.



My exposure to cinema widen when I joined IDC. I was exposed to different thought-provoking films in Prof Ravi Pooviah's and Prof Mazhar Kamran's class. Also I have been watching many animation shorts which helped me open up to new perspective to the world.

For this project it was more of personal experience and influence of the issues around me. I have been hearing a lot of news and incidents about discrimination on the people of North East India since I was a kid. Growing up it was surprising me to know that, these discriminations were not only based on looks but also based on the way you dress up and the food habits too. Many of the people in the North East believes that this issue exists due to the lack of exposure of the culture and practices that exist in the North Eastern region of India.

For the overall looks of the film the inspirations mostly came from the Studio Ghibli films. The reason being that, I wanted a blissful feel for the backgrounds.



Research

The topic Cross-Cultural acceptance of ethnic food is broad concept and engulfs various aspects. But since the task is to make a short film, it is mandatory to narrow it down to an issue or a topic. This includes reading journals, articles, blogs and people's experiences.

People have faced discrimination on many grounds. Food is one of them. Though it may sound overdramatic, but reality is people did face those situations. According to one of the articles by Chestnut there can be three types of discrimination based on food. The first, discrimination because some people are allergic to certain foods which can be considered and should not be judged. The second are those that are avoided because of a religious or cultural believes. The third is however just food avoidance, due to some preconceived notions.

It might be just another anti-discrimination film that would convey THE MESSAGE, if the film is based only on discrimination. The aim of this project is not only to give away the message but also showcase the wide variety of ethnic food available in the North-Eastern states of India. Indigenous and ethnic foods processed and prepared in North Eastern region are intimately connected to their socio-cultural, ecological, spiritual life and health. The processing and preparation of the indigenous and ethnic food is not only to showcase or preserve their culture but also to demonstrate their incremental learning to sustain the life and ecosystem as a whole and to find an economic way to live their lives. With the diversity in the culture and tribe in the North Eastern parts of India, there are various tribes which practice different methods for processing food.

Asking people who faced discrimination and developing a story was primarily concentrated for the initial stage of research. I kept on going with the research but since the subject was too vast, it was better for me to learn deeply about the topic chosen. I decided to stick with my experiences and read more about the ethnic food. North Eastern states of India is rich in diversity. There are many different tribes that has their own way or methodology of preserving and fermenting food.

Table 1. Microbes associated with the fermentation of different traditional fermented food products of North-East India

SI No	Fermented Product	Microbes associated	Reference
1	Kinema	<i>Bacillus subtilis</i> , <i>Enterococcus faecium</i> , <i>Candida parapsilosis</i> , <i>Geotrichum candidum</i>	Sarkar <i>et al.</i> , 1994
2	Hawajjar	<i>Bacillus subtilis</i> , <i>B. licheniformis</i> , <i>B. cereus</i> , <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> , <i>S. sciuri</i> , <i>Alkaligenes</i> sp. <i>Providencia rettgeri</i>	Jeyaram <i>et al.</i> , 2008a
3	Tungrumbai	<i>Bacillus subtilis</i> , <i>Enterococcus faecium</i> , <i>Candida parapsilosis</i> , <i>Saccharomyces bayanus</i> , <i>Saccharomycopsis fibuligera</i> , <i>Geotrichum candidum</i>	Sohliya <i>et al.</i> , 2009; Sarkar <i>et al.</i> , 1994
4	Bekang	<i>Bacillus subtilis</i> , other <i>Bacillus</i> sp.	Tamang <i>et al.</i> , 2009
5	Peruyyan	Lactic acid bacteria, <i>Bacillus subtilis</i> , other <i>Bacillus</i> sp.	Tamang <i>et al.</i> , 2009
6	Soibum	<i>Lactobacillus plantarum</i> , <i>L. brevis</i> , <i>L. coryniformis</i> , <i>L. delbrueckii</i> , <i>L. lactis</i> , <i>Leuconostoc fallax</i> , <i>Leuc. mesenteroides</i> , <i>Enterococcus durans</i> , <i>Streptococcus lactis</i> , <i>Bacillus subtilis</i> , <i>B. licheniformis</i> , <i>B. coagulans</i> , <i>Candida</i> sp., <i>Saccharomyces</i> sp., <i>Torulopsis</i> sp.	Tamang and Tamang, 2009a ; Tamang <i>et al.</i> , 2008
7	Sciden	<i>Lactobacillus brevis</i> , <i>Leuconostoc fallax</i> , <i>Leuc. lactis</i>	Tamang <i>et al.</i> , 2008
8	Mesu	<i>Lactobacillus plantarum</i> , <i>L. brevis</i> , <i>L. pentosaceus</i> , <i>L. pentosaceus</i> <i>L. brevis</i> , <i>L. plantarum</i>	Tamang and Sarkar, 1996
9	Ekung	<i>Lactobacillus plantarum</i> , <i>L. brevis</i> , <i>L. casei</i> , <i>Tetragenococcus halophilus</i>	Tamang and Tamang, 2009a
10	Hirring	<i>Lactobacillus plantarum</i> , <i>L. lactis</i>	Tamang and Tamang, 2009 b
11	Ngari	<i>Lactococcus plantarum</i> , <i>L. plantarum</i> , <i>Bacillus subtilis</i> , <i>B. pumilus</i> , <i>Micrococcus</i> sp., <i>Candida</i> sp.	Thapa <i>et al.</i> , 2004
12	Hentak	<i>Lactobacillus fructosus</i> , <i>L. amylophilus</i> , <i>Enterococcus faecium</i> , <i>Bacillus cereus</i> , <i>B. subtilis</i> , <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> , <i>Enterococcus faecium</i> , <i>Candida</i> sp.	Thapa <i>et al.</i> , 2004
13	Tungtap	<i>Lactobacillus coriniformis</i> , <i>L. lactis</i> , <i>L. fructosus</i> , <i>B. cereus</i> , <i>B. subtilis</i> , <i>Candida</i> sp., <i>Saccharomycopsis</i> sp.	Thapa <i>et al.</i> , 2004
14	Gnuchi	<i>Enterococcus faecium</i> , <i>Pediococcus pentosaceus</i> , <i>Bacillus subtilis</i> , <i>Micrococcus</i> sp.	Thapa <i>et al.</i> , 2006
15	Gundruk	<i>Lactobacillus brevis</i> , <i>L. plantarum</i> , <i>L. paracasei</i> , <i>Leuconostoc fallax</i> , <i>Pediococcus pentosaceus</i> , <i>P. acidilactici</i>	Tamang <i>et al.</i> , 2005
16	Sinki	<i>Lactobacillus plantarum</i> , <i>L. brevis</i> , <i>L. fermentum</i>	Tamang and Sarkar, 1993
17	Ziang-sang	<i>Lactobacillus plantarum</i> , <i>L. brevis</i> , <i>Pediococcus acidilactici</i>	Tamang <i>et al.</i> , 2005
18	Goyang	<i>Lactobacillus plantarum</i> , <i>L. brevis</i> , <i>Lactococcus lactis</i> , <i>Enterococcus faecium</i> , <i>Pediococcus pentosaceus</i>	Tamang and Tamang, 2007
19	Khalpi	<i>Lactobacillus plantarum</i> , <i>L. brevis</i> , <i>Leuconostoc fallax</i>	Tamang, 2009
20	Iphoh	<i>Saccharomyces cerevisiae</i> , <i>Hanseniaspora</i> sp, <i>Kloeckera</i> sp, <i>Pischnia</i> sp., <i>Candida</i> sp.	Tanti <i>et al.</i> , 2010
21	Atingba	<i>Lactobacillus plantarum</i> , <i>Pediococcus pentosaceus</i> , <i>Saccharomyces cerevisiae</i> , <i>Pichia anomala</i> , <i>Trichosporon</i> sp., <i>Candida tropicalis</i> , <i>P. guilliermondii</i> , <i>C. parapsilosis</i> , <i>Torulaspota delbrueckii</i> , <i>C. Montana</i> , <i>P. fabianii</i>	Tamang <i>et al.</i> , 2007 ; Jeyaram <i>et al.</i> , 2008
22	Kodo ko Jaanr	<i>Mucor cinneloides</i> , <i>Rhizopus chinensis</i> , <i>Rhizopus stolonifer</i> var. <i>lyococcus</i> , <i>Saccharomyces cerevisiae</i> , <i>S. bayanus</i> , <i>Hansenula anomala</i> , <i>Pediococcus pentosaceus</i> , <i>Lactobacillus</i> sp., <i>Candida glabrata</i> , <i>Saccharomycopsis capsularis</i> , <i>Saccharomycopsis fibuligera</i> , <i>Pichia burtonii</i> , <i>Pichia anomala</i> , <i>Cryptococcus</i> sp., <i>Trichosporon</i> sp., <i>Debaryomyces</i> sp., <i>Kluveromyces</i> sp., <i>Myxozyma</i> sp., <i>Bullera</i> sp., <i>Rhodotorula</i> sp., <i>Tremella</i> sp.	Tamang and Sarkar, 1995; Tsuyoshi <i>et al.</i> , 2005; Tiwari <i>et al.</i> , 2007; Sekar and Mariappan, 2007
23	Zutho	<i>Saccharomyces cerevisiae</i>	Teramoto <i>et al.</i> , 2002

Since the aim of the project also includes showcasing of the ethnic and indigenous foods of North Eastern states of India, learning the process of preparation and the ingredients required was very much important. The common ingredients used by all the tribes are Soya-bean and Bamboo.



Bamboo Shoot



Fermented Soya-bean

Story Development

Initial concept was only to showcase the types of food available in the North Eastern states of India. But later it led to different approach. The main aim was to educate people about the habits of the people in North East and also the reason behind the practice of fermentation.

Concept 1

Documentary showcasing various ethnic food and the process of preparation. Also, the reason why people of the region adapted the method of fermentation.

Concept 2

A new boy in a hostel trying to fit in. He is discriminated due to his food habits. Students ignoring him at first but finally he manages to take a stand.

Concept 3

A boy from a small village sets out for city in search of job wherein his journey he has to decide to savor his food prepared by his mother.

Concept 4

A boy from a small town got selected for a college in Delhi and is very excited to join. On the other hand, his mother is very much worried of him travelling alone. During his journey he has eats his food prepared by his mother sitting at the door of the train.

Concept 1 was discarded as it was too broad and encompassing all of it in just few minutes was not possible with the time constraint given. Concept 2 was heading more into hostel life deviating from the topic. Comparing concept 3 and 4, I chose concept 4 as I thought it would be more interesting.

Final Story

A boy from a small town Diphu in Assam is all set for his new college in Mumbai. Initially, his parents were not sure about him travelling alone to his destination, as he had never stepped out of his hometown, nor they could afford the travel cost for them to travel with him. But they finally agreed considering the boy's hard work to get admission in an esteemed institute.

Just before the boy boarded the train the mother tells him to have the food that she prepared for his journey on time and share it with people around him. The boy bids goodbye to his parents and waves to them as the train leaves the station. There were two other people seated next to him in the compartment. One was a middle-aged man who appeared to be gazing at the view outside and the other was the man's nephew. As the boy boarded the train he was tempted by all the food sellers, but he remembered his mother's advice not to buy one. So, the boy in order to resist the temptation glances at the majestic view of the hills outside the window and the tracks diverging. As it grew dark, a man dressed in a uniform appears in their view. He takes the dinner order of the two men seated in the compartment. The boy continues to stare out and suddenly his stomach makes a growling noise. Embarrassed, the boy takes out the food prepared by his mother for his journey. He opens the box and enjoys the aroma. For a moment, as he stares at the food he is suddenly reminded of his mother cooking with gusto. He smiles and looks up and suddenly he notices that the other looking at him. The man's nephew asked him what type of food that is which was wrapped in banana leaves. The boy notices that the man's reaction to the food was not positive as he offered it to the man's nephew so sheepishly he puts the food back in his bag. Meanwhile, the food from the train services is served to the other passengers. The food served did not look appetizing and also gave off a foul odor. After taking a few bites, they discarded the food and slept on an empty stomach.

As the boy slept, he started dreaming about the food packed by his mother. He wakes up hungry and finally decides to take out the food. He constantly looked at the man and his tiffin before he reaches his bag. Finally He unzips his bag

Finally He unzips his bag and grabs his tiffin and walks out of his compartment. He sits near the door of the train coach and unpacks the tiffin. Staring at the distant lights of houses and street lamps in contrast to the stars and the moon he savors the food prepared by his mother. Suddenly the boy realizes that someone was standing right behind him. He turns to see that it was the man's nephew. For few seconds It was only the sound of the wheel on the tracks and crickets stridulation before the man's nephew broke the awkward silence between them. The nephew knew that the boy was sitting there to have his food, but he sat down with him and said, "I'd rather hear the crickets at night than a loud snore of my uncle". They both smiled and this time the boy offered his food. After much hesitation, the man's nephew joined the boy. In a matter of moments, the container is licked clean. With contended smiles on his faces, he thank the boy. Curious about the dish, he enquires the boy about it and stay up chatting all night about it.

SCRIPT

SCN1 EXT . RAILWAY STATION

SH1

Nathan bids goodbye to his parents

SH2

Nathan's mother advising him to have his food at time and not to have junks.

MOTHER

hamsi thang nandao, train ha phaing
yaba daaji dao..samlai makham chu
da riyaba kho ji .mmm...ode.ticket
la para dengkkha?

[Go safe ...and do not eat junks on
your way...eat the food that i have
packedand where did you keep
your ticket? you didnt forget your
tickets right?

SON

haii amai ansha niya kha..balaoya
la...ticket bo... dung...(checking
his name on the list) ode train ha
phaing yaba jiya..jadu da

[I am not a kid anymore..i didnt
forget my tickets and
umm...(checking his name on the
list)i wont have junks ..okay.

SH3

Parents waving as the train leaves the station(Nathan's POV)

MOTHER

hamsi thang...ode sohi kha de saing
thi ha

NATHAN

mmm.

SCN2 INT . TRAIN COMPARTMENT

SH1

Nathan sees two person in the compartment, an Aged man looking out the window and showing his nephew the scenery outside.

CONTINUED:

2.

SH2

Nathan is filled with temptation looking at the food sellers in the train. He calls for the food seller but denies himself and looks at the scenery outside.

SH3

View from the window of the train and view of the tracks while rising dusk.

SCN3 EXT. SUNSET TRAIN

SH1

A man from the train services comes to take the order for dinner.

MAN FROM TRAIN SERVICE

raat ka khana sir ?

AGED MAN

haan idhar 2 jan ka...non veg..

MAN FROM TRAIN SERVICE

aur sir aapka?

NATHAN

mujhe nahi chahiye.

AGED MAN

kyun? ghar se khana laye
ho...(speaking to himself)najane
kya kya kate hai..

SH2

Nathan takes out his food that his mother had prepared for his journey. He enjoys the aroma as he opens the box.

SH3

Nathan's memories of his Mother preparing the food. Visuals of the mother cooking in gusto.

SH4

Nathan sees that two people in his compartment were staring at him.

SH5

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

3.

He also notices that the aged man is whispering something to the boy and when he offers it to the boy and grumbles looking at Nathan's food.

AGED MAN
Arey kaisi badboo hai...bandh karo
yeh dibba najane kya kya khate
hai..hmmp..

SH6

Without having a bite Nathan puts back his meal and looks outside.

SCN4 INT. TRAIN

SSH1

Nathan dreams about the food. He looks at the old man and his box. He looks away each time the old man looks at him. He decides to have it.

SH2

He takes out his meal while the old man is not looking and goes out to have.

SH3

Nathan sits near the door of the train coach and eats his meal looking at the stars and the distant lights.

SH4

As Nathan was having his meal, he felt someone was standing behind him. He turns and finds, it was the boy from his compartment.

BOY:
hi.....

NATHAN
mm..hey..tum yaha.. kya kar rahe
ho?

BOY:
mmm...aise hi..kharrate nahi sunna
tha..(smiling)..kya mein beth sakta
hoon idhar.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

4.

NATHAN
..haan...par...

SH5

The boy sits next to Nathan.

BOY:
Ghar ka khana hai..?

NATHAN
haan...khake dekho

BOY:
haan...khilao.

SH6

Nathan shares his food with him.

SH7

After having done with the meal the boy was curious to know more about the about the dish and stayed up chatting all night.

BOY:
yaar ye toh acchi hai..kya hai yeh?

NATHAN
bamboo shoot isse humare waha
waagli bolte hai..

BOY:
bamboo? kaise banate hai?

NATHAN
pehle isse hum sukhathe
hai.....(voice fading)
(Music)

(pull from close shot to wide angle shot)

EXPLORATIONS AND CONCEPTS

For the characters I started with exploring the head shapes. There are three primary characters in the story. For each characters i wanted the head shape to be different from each other so I used to lasso tool to get the desired shapes.



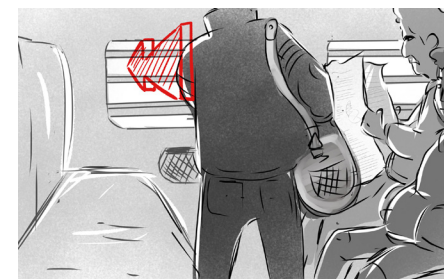
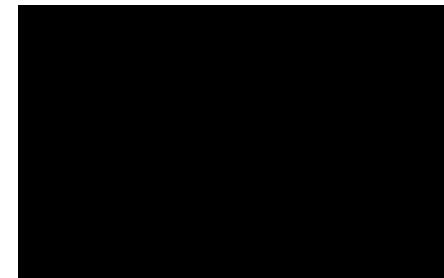
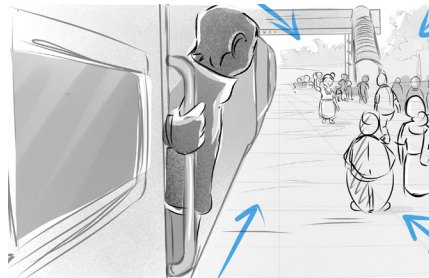
For the background I wanted a traditional feel. The things I was looking for in the background was nostalgia and bliss.

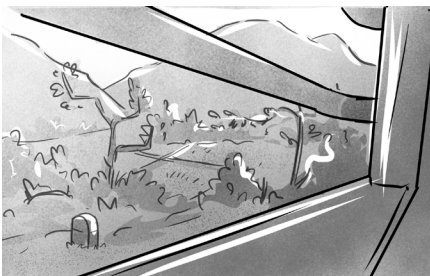


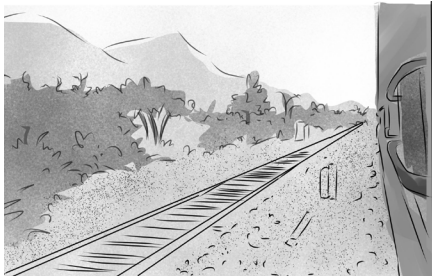
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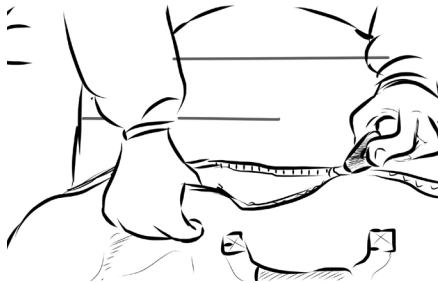
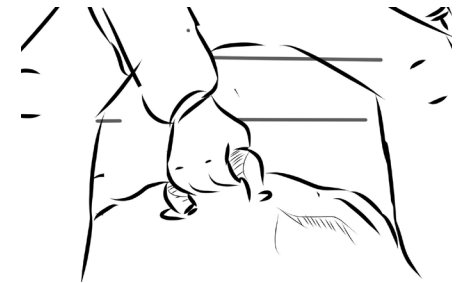
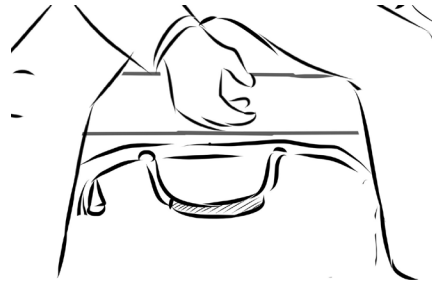


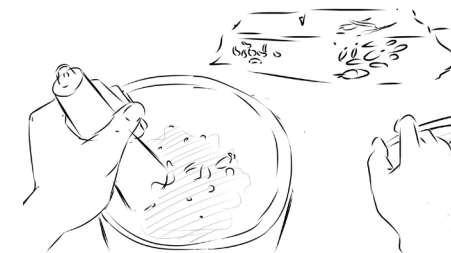
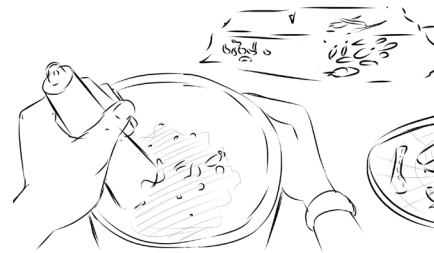
STORYBOARD

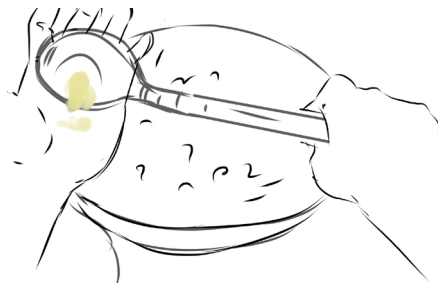




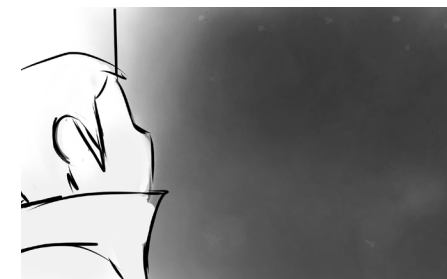
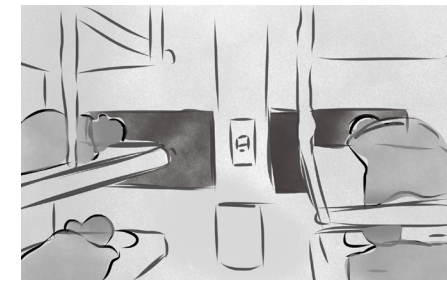
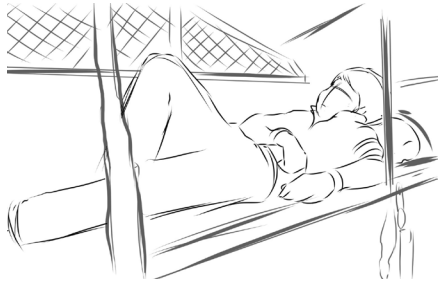
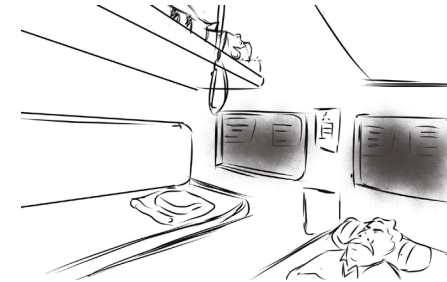
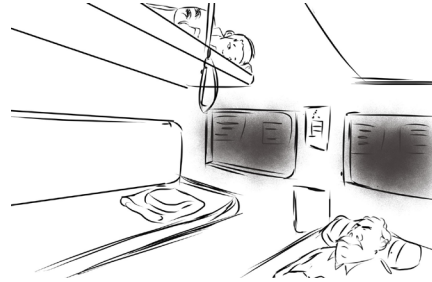


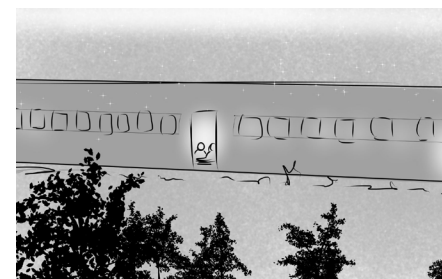












SOUND

Background Sound

Creating the ambience with sound is one the difficult task in animation. While working on the production of the short film I was constantly looking for the appropriate sounds that could add to my sound library.

Background Music

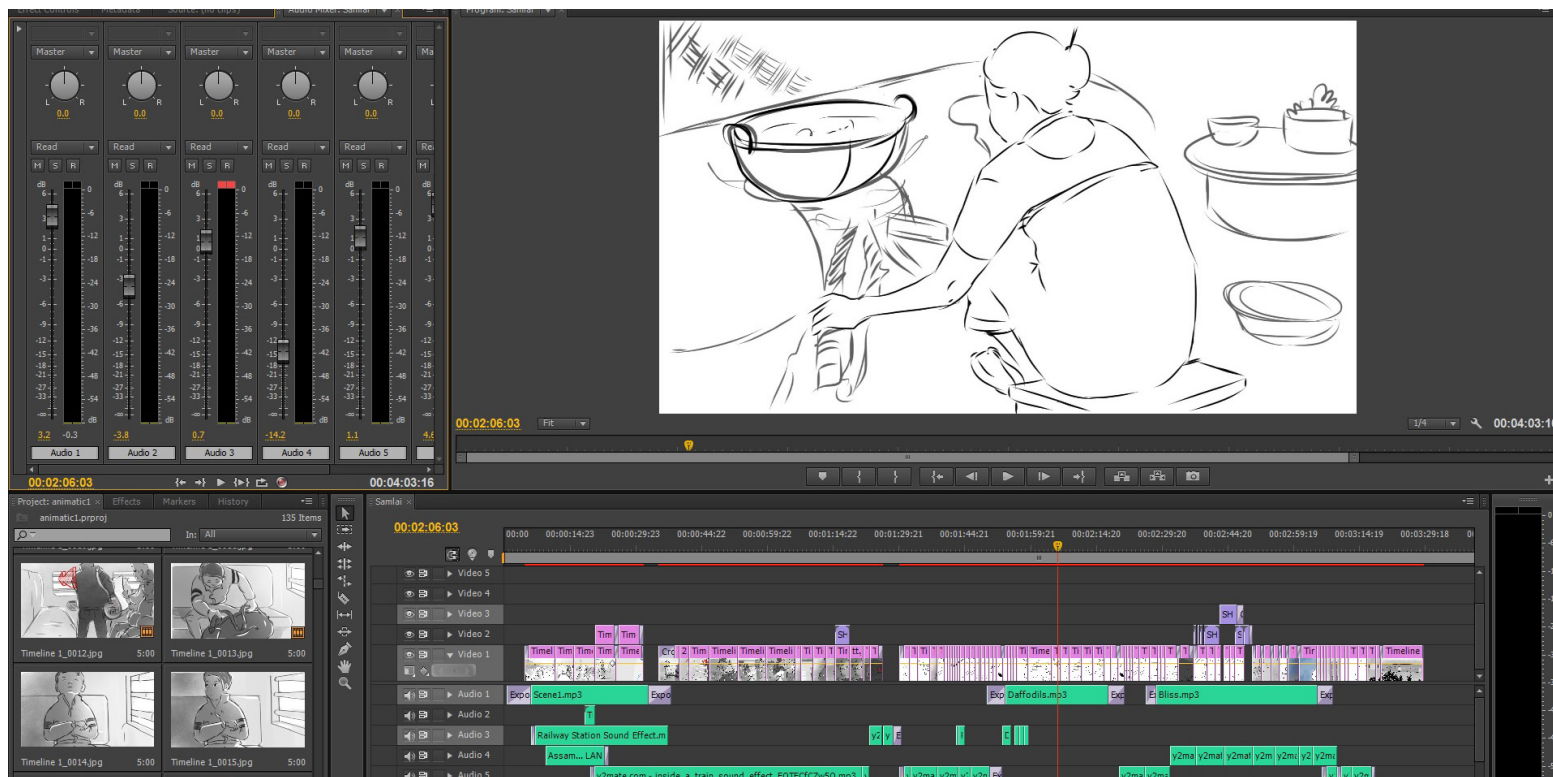
We may not need an orchestra to create the mood, but considering a scene a subtle music could work wonders. Considering the time period of the production, I decided to go for only guitar music. The place where I grew up always had a strong influence of guitar music and fingerstyle guitar is my personal favorite. The entire background score is only fingerstyle guitar music which is composed by a friend of mine Kaputo Kinimi.

Dialogues

It was very important to give an identity to the characters. So I made sure I selected the right person for the job. Since the main character is from Assam, I wanted someone with a very strong accent as the dialogues were to be Hindi. For the Aged Man the voice I was looking for was coarse and heavy.

ANIMATICS

To know the length of the film it was mandatory to make the animatics. It is crucial because it was important to know the right frames that is to be put on hold and also cut down some of the redundant scenes in order to chuck down the run time of the short film.



ANIMATION

Before getting started with the animation, I tried and tested tools and software which best suited my forte. I could use the storyboards as reference for my animation as it was decent enough.

The Process

1. Rough Animation.

The entire rough animation is done in Clip Studio Paint EX. The reason being the brush it offered, and since my style of animation is inspired from Anime I thought it would be appropriate if I used it.

In this step I drew the rough keyframes and timed it. Some of the shots had a close up of the characters hand. I faced difficulties in animating the hand and the fingers but I tackled it by taking video reference of my own and then drawing the rough keyframes.

2. Cleanup.

Considering the time factor I chose limited animation. So the rough key frames were cleaned up and then timed to get the action right.

3. Inbetweening of keyframes.

In this step with the help of the onion skin, the previous or the next keyframes are copied and then transformed and warped to get the desired inbetween.

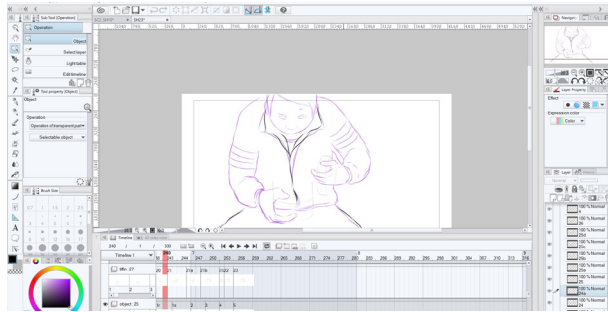
4. Coloring and Shadows.

The coloring of each and every frame is done in clip studio paint. The reason being that it can fill gaps better in comparison to other tools. The light and shade is achieved by using the overlay mode of the layer based animation offered by the software.

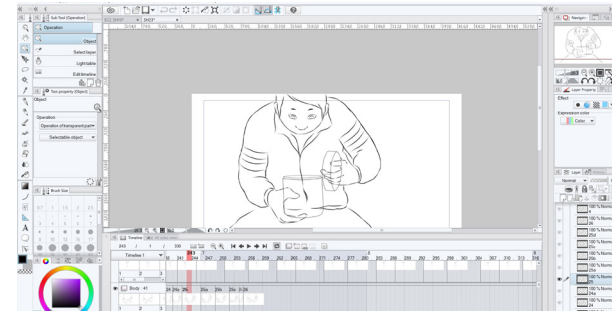
5. Compositing.

All the completed shots are aligned on premiere pro as per the animatics with some tweaks.

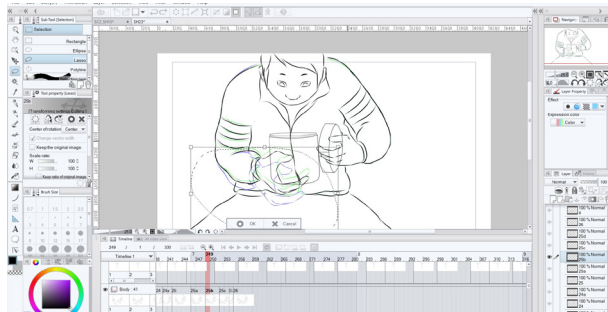
Cross Cultural Acceptance of Ethnic Food



Rough Keyframes



Cleanup



Inbetweening



Colouring



Compositing

Obstacles and Takeaway

First and foremost, I am very much new to this field and I got so much to learn in this process of production for the project. Building a story was indeed a very difficult task. I had many version which I would narrate to my friends and get their feedbacks and make changes accordingly. Since I was used to drawing portraits and human figures, I found it difficult to come out of that and draw cartoony figures. But eventually I settled somewhere in the middle. Since I have a strong influence of the Japanese anime, I pushed myself not to make it completely like it. I found it very interesting to draw the backgrounds. The reason being that in my mind I was revisiting all the places in my village and to bring that to a paper was interesting.

In animation the difficulties I faced was animating the fabric and clothes. It was hard to understand the folds and the way they sway with respect to the wind. I overcame this by drawing one or two frames and the manipulating it using the warp tool. Overall I had many learnings and takeaway from this project, the most important being time management. Since film is a powerful medium and is a medium of self-expression, one should be cautious about the content we show the audience.

Conclusion

A little knowledge is a dangerous thing. One of the reason behind the discrimination on the people of North East India is the lack of knowledge and exposure to this region. Most of the people are not aware of the culture and practices of the people of these region and the reason why the do it. Preconceived notion is a very negative thing. Some people on having this thought creates a negative imagery that they are thinking about. The best way to tackle this problem is making people aware of the customs and culture of the region. This can be done in many ways and I have taken animation as a platform to convey this message.

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