

IDC, IIT BOMBAY

# **BHĀRAM**

The Burden

A Short Animation Film

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Animation & Film Design

Guide: Prof. Nina Sabnani

## APPROVAL SHEET

This Animation Project III entitled “Bharam - The Burden” by K Abhilash, 09634001 is approved in for the partial fulfillment of the Masters Design Degree in Animation and Film Design.

Project Guide:

Chair Person:

Internal Examiner:

External Examiner:

Chairman:

Date:

Place:

## DECLARATION

I declare that this written submission represents my ideas in my own words and where others' ideas or words have been included, I have adequately cited and referenced the original sources.

I also declare that I have adhered to all the 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 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.

Signature

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## CONTENTS

Acknowledgements.....	4
Abstract.....	5
Overview.....	6
Introduction.....	7
Research.....	8
Overview.....	9
The Legend of Naranathu Bhranthan.....	10
A brief history of madness.....	11
Art and madness.....	14
Retelling of the legend.....	18
Visual development.....	20
Character design.....	23
Layout.....	30
Storyboard.....	31
Process.....	53
Conclusion.....	54
References.....	55

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## ABSTRACT

The Legend of Naranathu Bhranthan from the state of Kerala relates the story of the mad saint named Naranathu. His peculiar act of rolling a boulder uphill and pushing it down is an expression of a philosophy relating to vanity in the worldly pursuits of human life. This animated shortfilm is a retelling of this peculiar act of Naranathu, set in a time and location close to contemporary Kerala, using surreal metaphors and retaining the satirical tone of the original legend.

## OVERVIEW

“Naranathu Bhranthan” authored by A.B.V. Kavilppad and published by H & C Publishing House, Trissur, Kerala provides a brief biography of the mad saint Naranathu. He was tagged mad because of his peculiar acts but a deeper insight reveals their spiritual significance. Naranathu struggles to roll a boulder uphill and as he reaches the peak kicks it down with a loud laugh. This act of Naranathu is abstract but there underlies the philosophy of vanity in the worldly pursuits of ordinary human life.

‘Bharam’ examines the abstract nature in this act of Naranathu and re interprets it with a narrative trying to establish that the material possessions of man will turn into a burden rather than satiating his desires.

The uniqueness of this saint lies in the propounding of his philosophy in the disguise of madness. Madness has been a subject of argument by various thinkers such as Michel Foucault. Foucault questions the basis on which a person is considered mad or normal. This film hints towards questioning the same where a common man is considered mad because of his odd behavior.

The approach towards animation in my earlier film, “Meghayana” was based on a story of my own and visually interpreted with surrealism in nature. “Bharam” is based on an existing legend from my native land, Kerala. Therefore the retelling is set in a time and location close to contemporary Kerala, using the native language, Malayalam. The animation character centered, uses surreal metaphors to exaggerate the material pre-occupation of the people and tries to retain the satirical tone from the original story.

## INTRODUCTION

Lores and legends crowd the history of India. One such legend which has struck me in the recent times is the legend of Naranathu Bhranthan from my native state of Kerala. Naranathu's peculiar deeds acclaimed him the suffice "Bhranthan" meaning mad man in the native language Malayalam.

Madness can be argued to be a disturbed state of mind existing in everyone in varying degrees and proportions. In case of the mentally ill, its a permanent state of error which may result in violent, inhuman and animal behavior. Unfortunately it been handled by force from a long time.

The history of insanity with respect to Michel Foucault's study, reveals the different ways with which madness has been dealt with under varying periods of power, rule and scientific advancement. This has led to the questioning of the very nature madness as to "who is mad?"

Surrealism in art has closely dealt with the subconscious mind and the state of consciousness. The surrealist paintings of Salvador Dali, Rene Magritte and lately the comic art of Jean Giraud Moebius reveal a purposeful indulgence with deep consciousness and connecting it to the external world through their art. These visionaries have traveled along the thin line separating madness and the so called normal state.

"Bharam" is a Malayalam word meaning weight, heavy or burden. The film is titled so because it aims to convey the idea that worldly possessions such as wealth, fame and bookish knowledge with no higher purpose can turn into a burden rather than satiating the desires with a narrative using surreal metaphors and events.

# RESEARCH

## OVERVIEW

The research comprises of literature on the legend of Naranathu Bhranthan, essays on “*Madness and Civilization*” of Michel Foucault and surrealism in art.

The research was aimed at analyzing the life of Naranathu focusing on his peculiar deeds which termed him mad and the miraculous deeds which proclaim him divine. If the divine aspect of Naranathu was absent he would have never been a legend. It may be claimed that because of Naranathu’s divine personality, his peculiar deeds, which proclaim him mad, came to be analyzed later as deeds with a spiritual significance. The texts referred were A.B.V. Kavilppad’s “Naranathu Bhranthan” and the chapter on “Parayipetta Panthirukulam” in Kottarathil Sankunni’s “Aithiyamala”( A Malayalam text)

Essays on Michel Foucault’s “*Madness and Civilization*” gave an insight into the world’s perception of madness in different periods of history and arouses the question, who can be mad? Each period in the history of mankind reveals different perception of madness ranging from religious or divine, living with the mad with no differentiation, animal treatment of the mad and clinical treatment in isolation. Since each period with different social and economic conditions highly influenced the perception of madness, I felt it is necessary to question the very nature of it.

Surrealism in art put forth the life and works of artists’ who closely watched their consciousness and gave expressions to the resulting experiences. There seems to be a thin line of separation between such artists and the mad people. The artists’ interviews and writings reveal this thin line of differentiation.

## THE LEGEND OF NARANATHU BHRANTHAN

Long ago a learned brahmin named Vararuchi had to marry Panchami belonging to a low caste, under a trivial situation. They set forth on a journey visiting holy places. On their way Panchami bore eleven sons and a daughter. As and when a child was born Vararuchi would ask, “ Does the child have a mouth? If it has, then you need not accept it.” Panchami had to abandon all the eleven children obeying to her husband. As the last child was born she uttered a lie that it has no mouth. All to her despair she realized that it really did not have a mouth. It is said that Vararuchi deified him on a hill as a God named “Vayilla Kunnilappan” - meaning the mouth less lord. The rest of the children were brought up by various people from various castes all around Kerala who became well known personalities and philosophers. The fifth child among them is the mad saint named Naranathu Bhranthan.

Naranathu Bhranthan's extremely odd behavior and deeds of divine wonder acclaimed him the surname “Bhranthan” meaning mad. He starts his day with an unique activity. Early morning he walks to a foot hill, finds a boulder and struggles to push it to the peak inspite of one of his leg swollen due to elephantiasis. After a hard battle he manages to push it to the peak and to the surprise, he suddenly kicks the boulder off the peak with a loud laugh and claps. This act of Naranathu implies that however hard and long one strives and achieves name, fame and wealth, a moment is enough to bring them tumbling down.

Naranathu wanders around the villages begging alms. After he gets enough at the end of the day he puts a fire in vicinity, cooks and sleeps. Once he ended up near a cemetery. He found a lit pyre and decided to stay back for the day. After cooking his lot he kept warm his swollen leg over the pyre and hummed his unusual tunes. Then came the goddess Bhadra with her followers to dance over the dead. Finding Naranathu near the pyre they decided to scare him away. Naranathu seemed to have no bit of fear and stayed stern not to leave the cemetery. The Goddess finally understood Naranathu's nature and asked him for a boon. Upon his refusal they pleaded him to ask for a boon as they cannot get away without it.

Naranathu finally agrees.

Naranathu- “ When will I die?”

Goddess- “From today 36 years, 6 months, 12 days, 2hrs, 1minute and 12 seconds.”

Naranathu- “ Kindly extend my life by a day”

Goddess - “ Sorry I am not capable for that”

Naranathu - “ Then decrease my life by a day”

Goddess - “Sorry! even that is impossible”

Naranathu murmurs and asks

“Then shift the disease of my left leg to the right one”

The Goddess grants the boon and goes away.

Naranathu on one of his wanderings finds himself in a temple and decides to stay back there. The temple chief could not bear with a mad man living in a temple premise and somehow wants him off the temple. One morning he finds Naranathu stepping down for bath in the temple pool. As he steps down into the water he catches hold of a fish and swallows it alive. The disgusted brahmin calls for the other temple chiefs and village men to blame Naranathu on his inhuman act in a temple premise and to get him off the place. The brahmin blames him and asks him to put his fingers into his throat to vomit the fish. Naranathu agrees but on a condition that after he vomits even the brahmin must do the same.

Everyone agree and Naranathu starts vomiting. To the wonder of all what came out was the sacred “thulasi” flower and milk. On the brahmin's turn it turned out to be a live fish battling for its life. The brahmin prostrated in apology before Naranathu, realizing his divinity.

Thus where the unusual yet divine deeds of this mad saint – Naranathu Bhranthan.

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF MADNESS

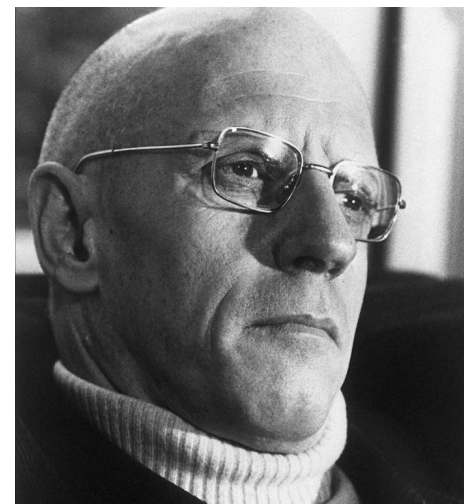
Michel Foucault was a critical thinker whose writing – *“Madness and Civilization, a history of insanity in the age of civilization”* gives an account of the treatment of the mad people in different time periods from the end of the middle ages to the modern era and questions on considering whether- who is mad? The so called mentally ill or the rest who proclaims their companions mentally ill.

Foucault says that his book is - “A history of the other form of madness by which men confine their neighbors to asylums and designate them as mentally ill.”

A brief study on the essays on Foucault’s *Madness and Civilization* reveals that:- During the end of the middle ages leprosy vanished from the face of Europe and the confinements meant for the leper were abandoned but later gave way to its transformation into asylums for the mentally ill.

During the medieval period kings employed fools under the belief that they foretell the fall of his kingdom. The mad enjoyed the luxury inspite of their odd behavior. In the later middle ages the mad were put into sail boats to set sail across the rivers and canals in Europe. As they arrived in different locations some where cured of their insanity, some died due to acute disorder and the rest remained the same. This happened to be a fascination for the hosts as the ships arrived and some carried food and left across the pier were the boats docked.

During the Renaissance the mad mingled with the rest of the society. The sacred image of madness that the end of medieval ages set as the image of the forthcoming apocalypse or the reign of satan, followed in the renaissance as a religious symbol. The paintings of Hieronymous Bosh with images of the madmen and strange landscapes were religious in nature.



Michel Foucault



The ship of fools

In the later Renaissance the theme of madness became more secular. The most popular literary works indicate how madness was accepted and lived among the rest. William Shakespeare's "Hamlet" dealt with the madness against vengeance where Prince Hamlet disguised as mad to kill his uncle to avenge the latter's killing of his father. Cervantes's "Don Quixote" is a tale of a man steeped in his imaginations of chivalry and fancies with the encounters of his world to be his own deeds of a powerful knight.

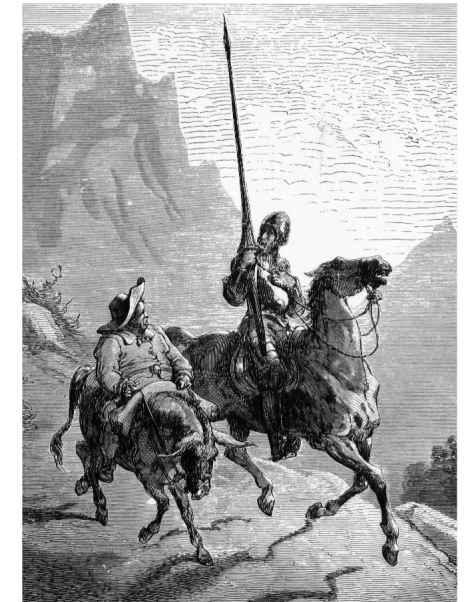
The end of Renaissance also brought an end to the way madness mingled in the society and set forth its course in a contrasting manner in the age what is called as the age of reason- The Classical period.

This period saw the disconnect between reason and unreason which led to the transformation of the image of madness into an image of animality. The mad were confined and isolated. They were inhumanly treated, chained and beaten up.

The dawn of modern era saw the development of new branches of science called psychiatry and psychotherapy. Under the eyes of this scientific advancement the confinements turned into hospitals where the mad were treated under the reason of chemical imbalances in the brain to be the cause of the madness and the cure is to address it with chemicals drugs and electric shock therapy to restore balance. Even though outwardly they were treated kind and compassionate they still lay behind the bars of sting rules and observations. Foucault claims that even if they came out cured they still lay under the guilt of being mad or committed crime sending them to greater remorse.



Hamlet kills King Claudius



Don Quixote and his attendant

Ayurveda was the prevalent science of medicine in ancient India. Graha Chikitsa or Bhuta Vidya is the branch Ayurveda dealing with mental disorders and psychic treatment. According to Bhuta Vidya the causes of mental illness is supernatural. It claims that demons or evil spirits possess the body and mind forcing the possessed to resort to odd behavior. The cause of possession can be traced to the belief of past “karma” or actions of previous cycles of birth. As an effect of those action the afflicted person has to undergo the results. Also the souls of the dead with unsatisfied desires uses the body of the living beings as vehicles to satiate their desires. These beliefs are evident in the rituals and religious practices still prevalent in India. The ritual of “Mudiyettu” in the state of Kerala is performed to please the goddess to ward of the diseases and effect of bad souls on the new born baby.

India is a land steeped in its traditional customs and beliefs. It can be inferred that madness had a similar situation as in the renaissance of the west. The stories of various pious saints relate their extreme practices and tests to prove or accomplish a certain power or knowledge. In Paul Brunton’s “A Search in Secret India” relates an encounter with a yogi who could manifest a scent as wished by a devotee out of no where. As desired by the author himself the yogi could manifest the smell of jasmine, rose and a flower from Tibet where his master lived. The yogi had undergone severe training under a buddhist monk in Tibet to accomplish such a power which seemed out of the comprehension of the present scientific knowledge. The case of this yogi prior to his accomplishment of the power can be viewed as a pursuit towards the impossible and therefore a sign of madness. After the accomplishing, when its presented before the common folk its in the favor of the yogi and tags him with sainthood.



Mudiyettu

## INFERENCE

I conclude by the above inferences that all human beings are mad in varying degrees and proportions. The fact that we engage ourselves in imagination, identify ourselves with the characters on the movie screen, comics, cartoons, poetry and literature is a vent for our madness. Unfortunately our companions the so called ‘Mad’ can not only imagine but live their imagination disconnecting themselves from the rest of the world and subjected to forceful control when they resort to extreme behavior.. Michel Foucault’s analysis reveal the treatment met by the ‘Mad’ in different periods of history. The designation of a person as mad also depends upon the socio-economic conditions prevalent at a point of time in a society. Therefore the question still remains whether whom to be considered as mad.

## ART AND MADNESS

Surrealism is a period in art history which produced art works interpreting man's subconscious mind and dreams. It meant total submission to the activity of the thought without any control and giving expression to those thoughts.

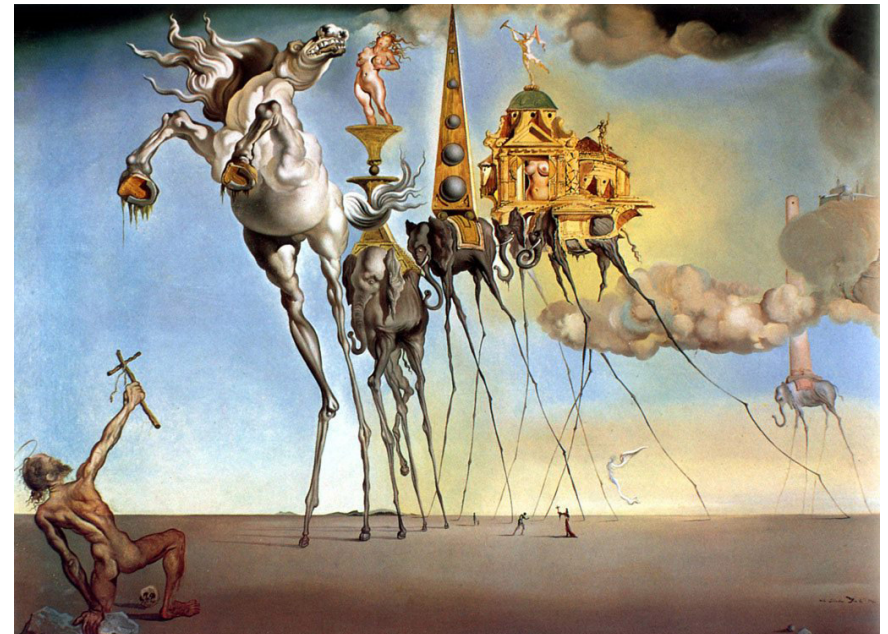
Salvador Dali, one of the pioneers of Surrealism said, "There is only one difference between a madman and me. I am not mad."

Rene Magritte was another artist of the period whose paintings were the interpretation of lucid dreams.

Lucid dreams are dreams which are seen in the state of half sleep just before waking up. Magritte called them as "Dreams which are not intended to make you sleep but to wake you up." Accordingly he said that in his lucid dreams he could see what he saw shortly during the previous day or the visions of dreams which he saw during the last sleep. He concluded that, "If dreams are translation of waking life, then waking life is also a translation of the dream."



Salvador Dali



"The Temptation of St. Anthony" by Salvador Dali



*"Perspective, the balcony"* by René Magritte



*"The Son of Man"* by René Magritte

Jean Giraud Moebius is a French comic artist whose works reveal an expression of the stream of consciousness. According to him, he has out of the body experiences which highly influences him during his work.

Following are excerpts from his interview in a documentary:-

“There were moments I’d the feeling that something was flowing through me, but.. I’ve never said that its a good thing, its just the way it is.

I go into a trance state in which something other than myself stirs inside me You could call it the unconscious or the Gods, genius or whatever. They are all possibilities, or aliens may be!

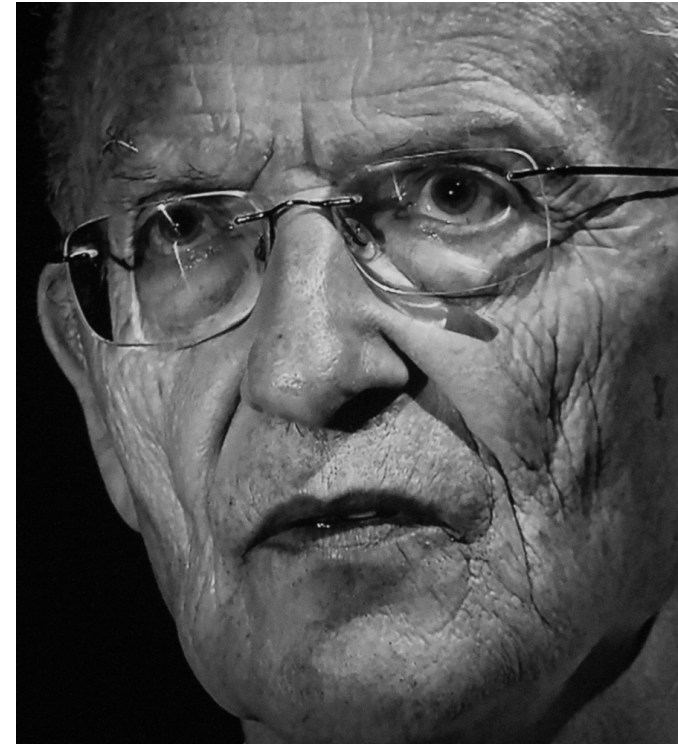
There are also moments in which we are prepared to open ourselves to something that has nothing to do with rationality and sense. It is magic.

It will save you atleast six years of psychoanalysis but then you still have to work on yourself.

Out of body experiences with consciousness, that is all powerful or altered, I find the term altered as a bit stupid actually, I would rather call it quenched consciousness. But these are things that lean towards communication,

Its a kind of a light trance which leaves me aware of whats going on around me. But literally plugs me into another dimension.”

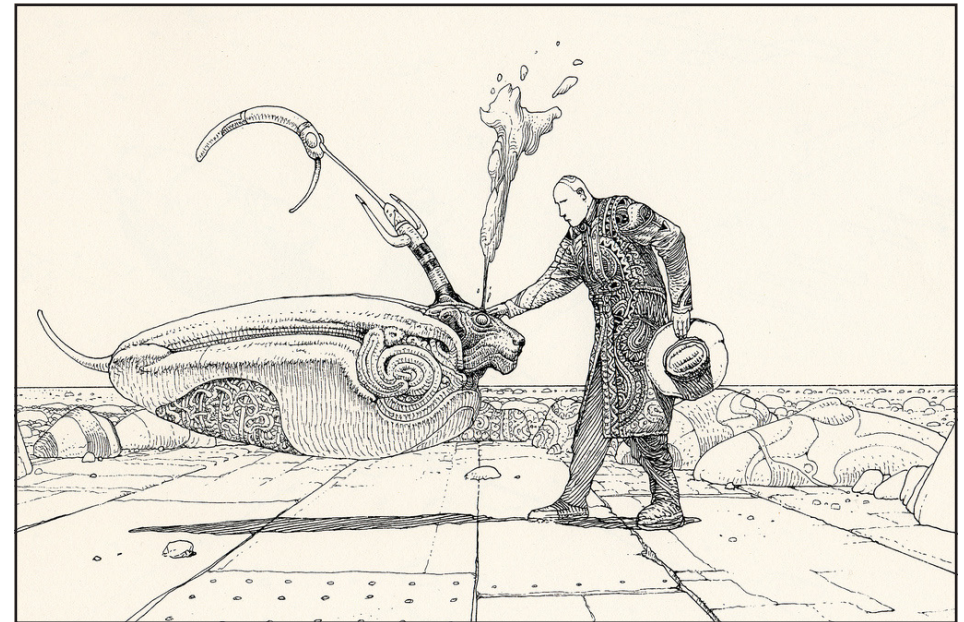
This is an insight into an artist’s mind where he could see, discover and experience of what can be termed as “madness” but fortunately he can experience them and then withdraw from such a realm of experience.



Jean Giraud Moebius



“ARZACH” by Moebius



“40 Days in the Desert” by Moebius

## INFERENCE

Artists in general keep themselves as a witness to the events of a society or withdraw themselves into deeper realms of experience. They are already termed as mad by the common folk. Artists are sensitive beings who may see and experience the unexplained, disconnect themselves from logic and reasoning. We dive to the depths of events that trigger our thoughts and transfer to a different realm of consciousness. Then they connect back to the normal world by expressing those experiences by our works of art.

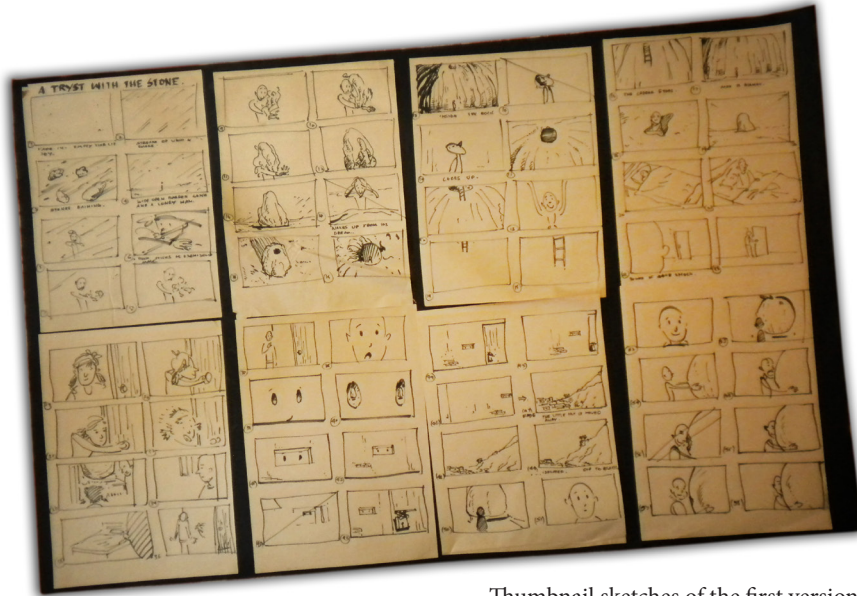
## RETELLING OF THE LEGEND

On the basis of the research I have arrived at a retelling of the legend trying to convince the vanity in the worldly possessions with a bent towards the stream of human consciousness and the society's perception of madness. The primary motive was to use surreal metaphors to emphasize that the worldly pre-occupation of men is an illusion and their perception varies from people to people.

Many versions of the story had to be worked out to arrive at the final narrative. The earliest version of the story had a normal man on a path to self realization. The protagonist finds himself entangled with a rock in real life, which he dreamt of and wants to get rid off it. He finds the rock turning into objects of his desires such as food and wealth. As the events in the story were too far to be related to the actual legend it was discarded.

The second version brought in the idea of projecting people's objects of desires on the rock carried by the protagonist. After producing an animatic the feed back confirmed that this narrative could not clearly establish the desires of the people as the events were randomly placed.

The third version was set in a surreal situation with a modern outlook. The look of the characters were changed to contemporary outlook. The events ranged from the perception of a loving couple, rich builders and a scholar. The objects of their desire turned into floating rocks symbolizing vanity. The end of the narrative was not convincing and as per the feed back there still remained enough room to enrich the story and make the legend simple and communicative.



Thumbnail sketches of the first version

With successive discarding of versions of stories the final version was arrived at combining the convincing events present in the earlier versions and by setting a regional outlook which will enrich the narrative. Thus the story was set in time and location close to contemporary Kerala and dialogues were added in the native language Malayalam.

The protagonist is a normal man who finds himself entangled in a surreal situation where all his material possessions turn into a rock in his dream. As the man wakes up he finds that the rock has become a part of his anatomy and wants to get rid of this heavy burden. A stranger directs him to cross the river, climb up the hill and throw away the rock into the sea, past the hill. On his way up the hill different people encounter the protagonist. These people are steeped in worldly desires and find their desires projected as illusions on the rock carried by the protagonist.

The first encounter is of a child who finds the protagonist acting weird and laughs at him finding nothing over his back. This is an allegory to the child's innocence that its mind is uncluttered and free of desires.

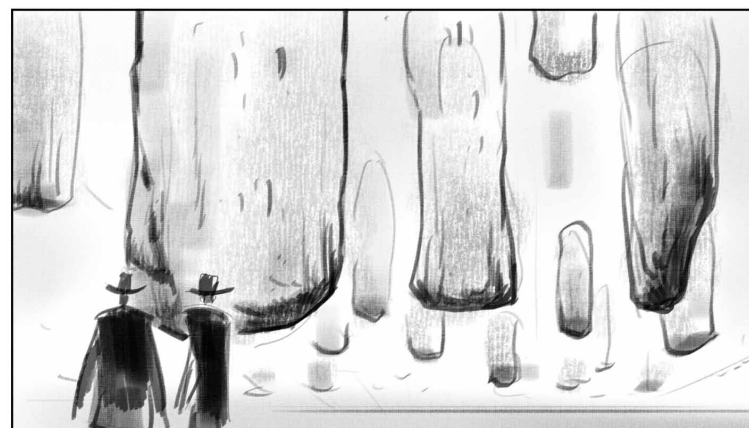
The next encounter is of a man who desires of a fortune to turn rich. He finds the a chest behind the tree trunk and moves forward to grab it but to his wonder he finds the protagonist rising with a lump of treasure chest rising high over his back which he could not even reach to grab.

Then a land lord who is greedy finds the man carrying the rock and tags him mad . He along with his servant mocks at him by placing a hibiscus flower over his ear (a regional notion where the mad people are found with the red hibiscus in their ears) . Later to his wonder he finds a huge mansion grander than that of his own.

The next encounter of a priest who seeks enlightenment through bookish knowledge. He finds the protagonist carrying a lump of sacred books but to his dismay finds that the man is going to throw away all the sacred knowledge. The man struggles to reach the peak of the hill and is able to lift the rock off his back and throws it into the vast sea. The moment he sets himself to throw away the rock the men below perceive that he is going to throw away all the riches and proclaim him mad while the child remains laughing finding nothing on his back.



A storyboard panel from the second version

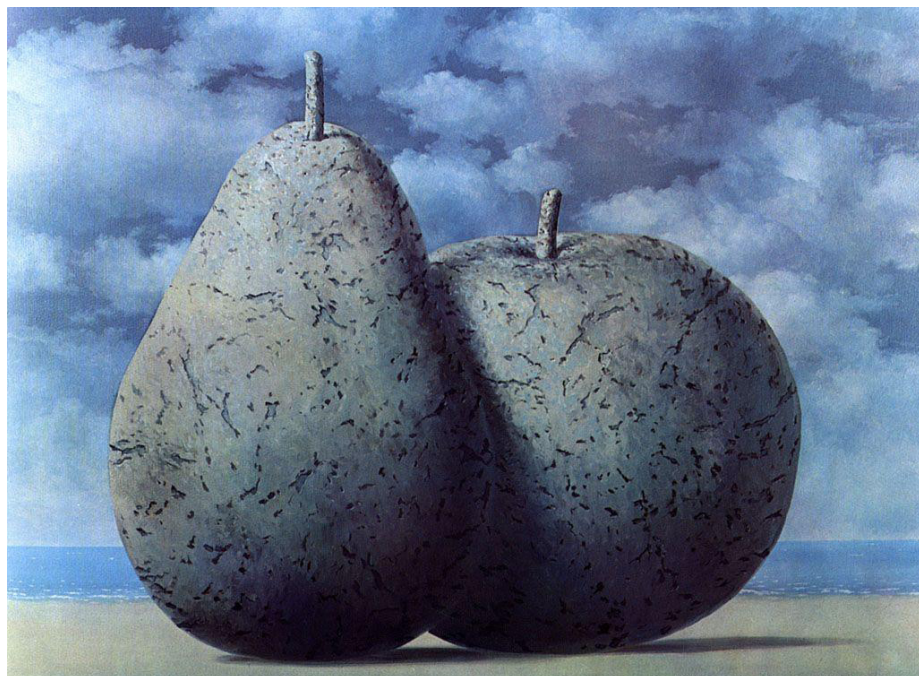


A storyboard panel from the third version

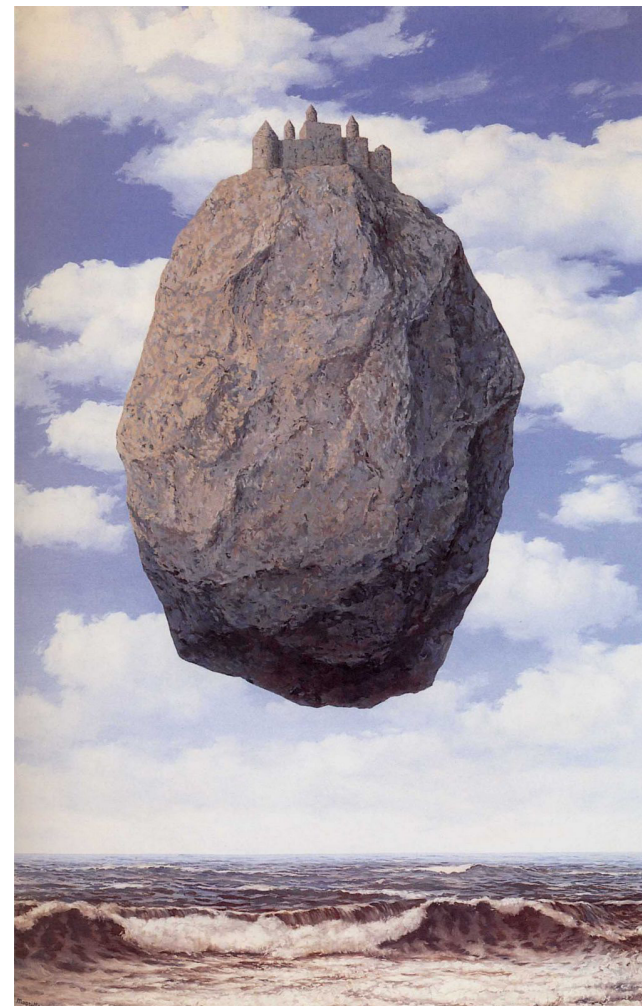
## VISUAL DEVELOPMENT

Images have been the spurring point of ideas for me. Surreal images in particular, have inspired wonderful imagery and subsequently interesting narratives.

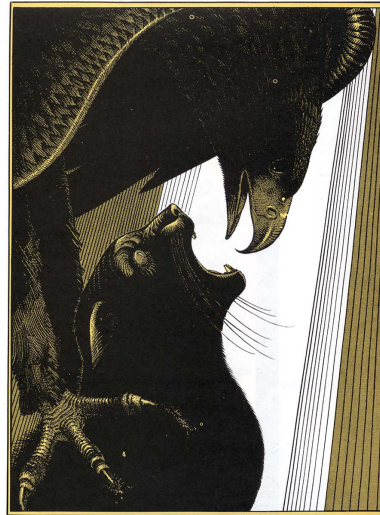
Rene Magritte's translation of his lucid dreams into surreal paintings were a major inspiration from the narrative point of view. They in-turn influenced the beginning of the story.



*"Memory of a voyage"* by Rene Magritte



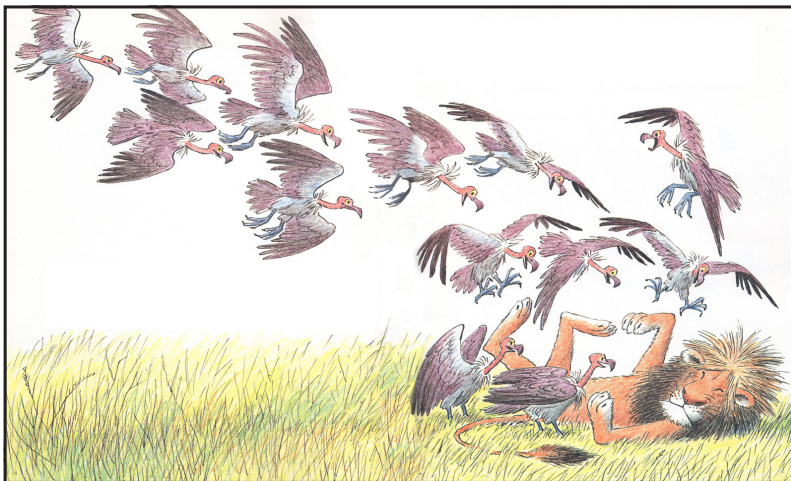
*"Castle in the Pyrenees"* by Rene Magritte



“Pages from the comic book “*Les yeux du chat*”

Moebius’s comics came in as inspiration for surreal narratives. The excerpts from his interview reveals the stream of consciousness which he undergoes during his working process. It is this stream of consciousness which gets translated into a unique narrative style which always ends up unsolved mysteries still keeping us interested into the visual style and events which often depicts surreal worlds and time shifts from future and the present. The visual style of his comics also influenced the visual styling for the story. The transparent nature of the colours and the demarcation of forms using uniform lines which reveal his great draftsmanship.

“*Los Reparados*” by Moebius and “*Les yeux du chat*” or “*In the eyes of the cat*” a Moebius and Jodorowsky production were influential comics.



An illustration Bill Peet



A snapshot from Walt Disney's "Robin Hood"



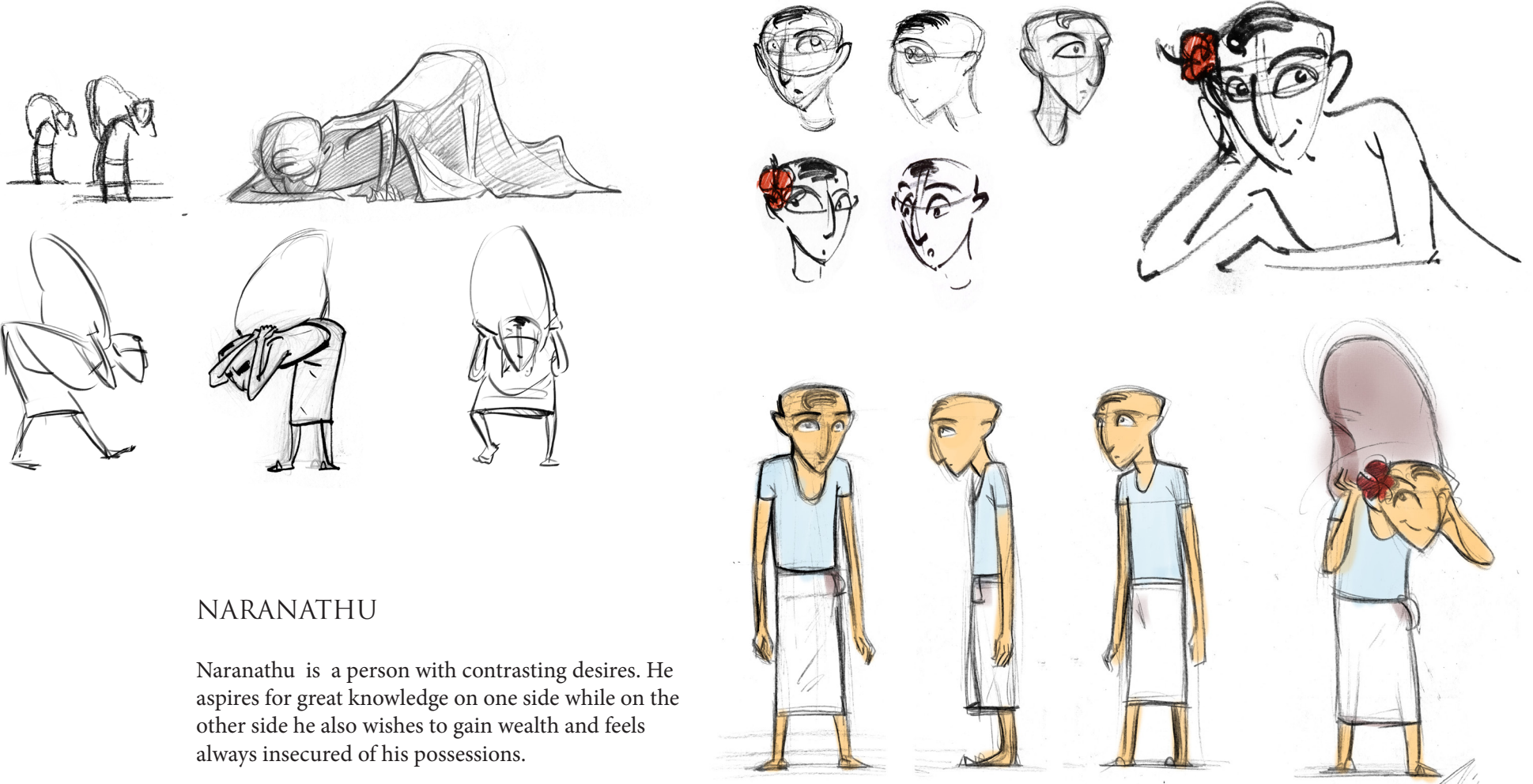
A tiled roof mansion of Kerala

Bill Peet's illustrations have a great storytelling quality in them. The simple cartoon like illustrations with high expressive quality in depicting the emotions of the characters and the staging of situations have influenced the visual appeal of the film.

Walt Disney's 'Robin Hood' came in as a handy reference for the background styling. The transparent colors against the sketchy outlines of the forms was adapted to the backgrounds.

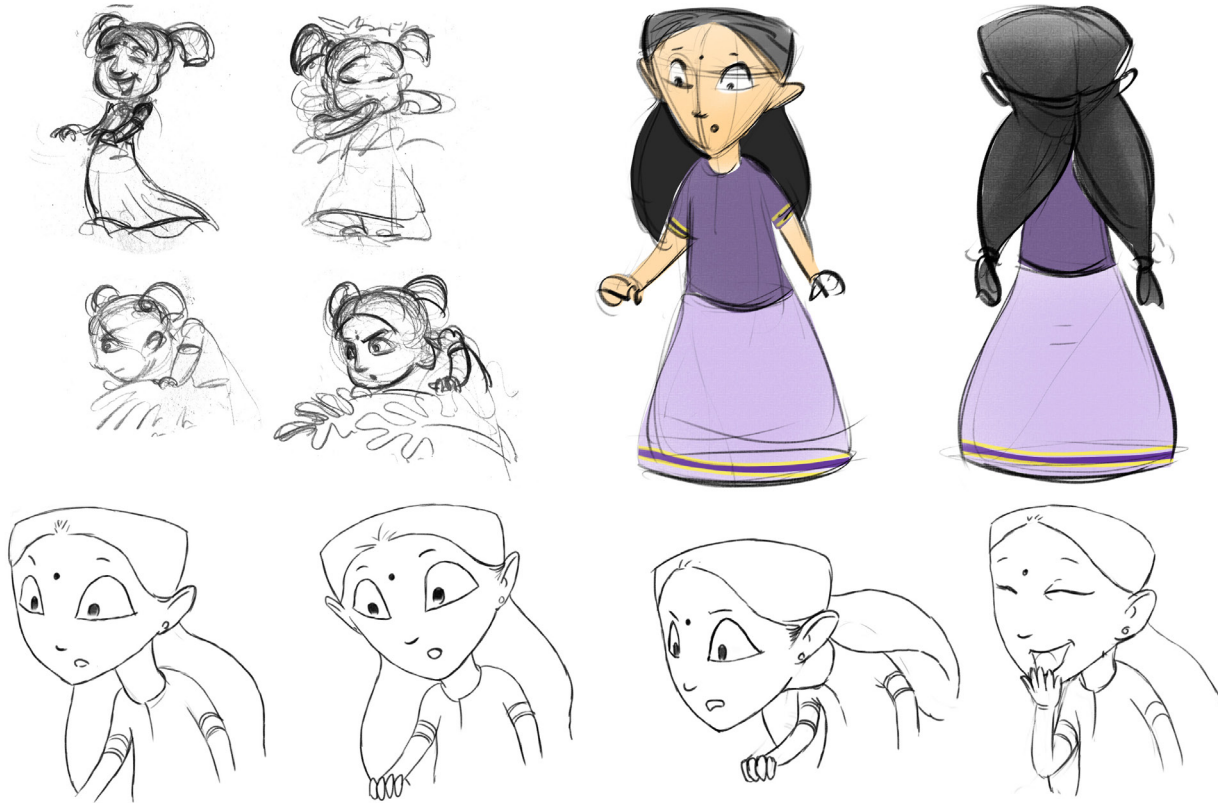
Photographic references of my native land, Kerala, were used to develop the characteristic regional look. Images of fresh green palm grooves, the rubber plantations, tiled roof architecture were referred and adapted to the visual style.

## CHARACTER DESIGN



## NARANATHU

Naranathu is a person with contrasting desires. He aspires for great knowledge on one side while on the other side he also wishes to gain wealth and feels always insecure of his possessions.



## CHILD

The character of a child is portrayed by a girl of age around 5 to 6 years. The regional outlook is brought by the characteristic long hair, knotted around the ears. She wears a blouse and skirt with yellow border lines.



## THE STRANGER

The stranger is a mysterious character. He is visualized to be least revealing with a hood over his head, which covers most of his face. He wears a ochre robe, which indicates that he might be a saint and has a staff in his hand.



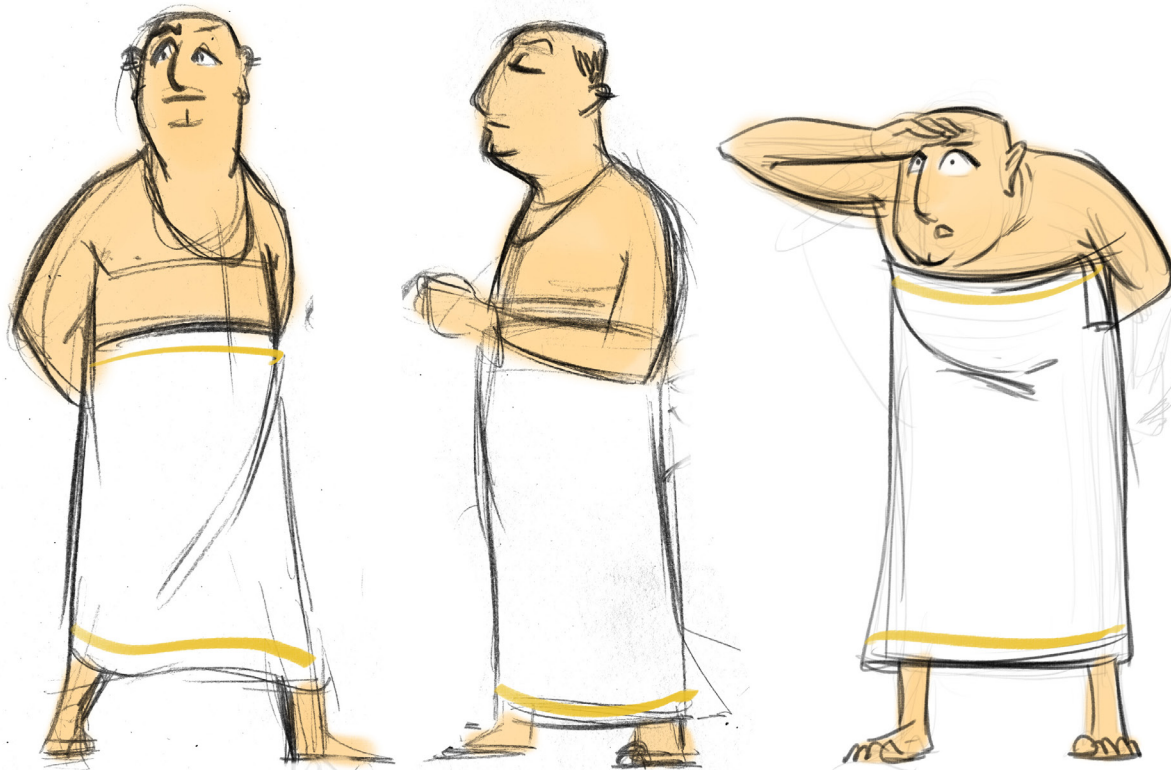
## PAZHAKARAN

“*Pazhakaran*” means the banana seller. He has to clear his debts and wishes for a fortune. He wears a banian and a “*lungi*” a characteristic wear of Kerala, men wear it by wrapping a long cloth around the waist.



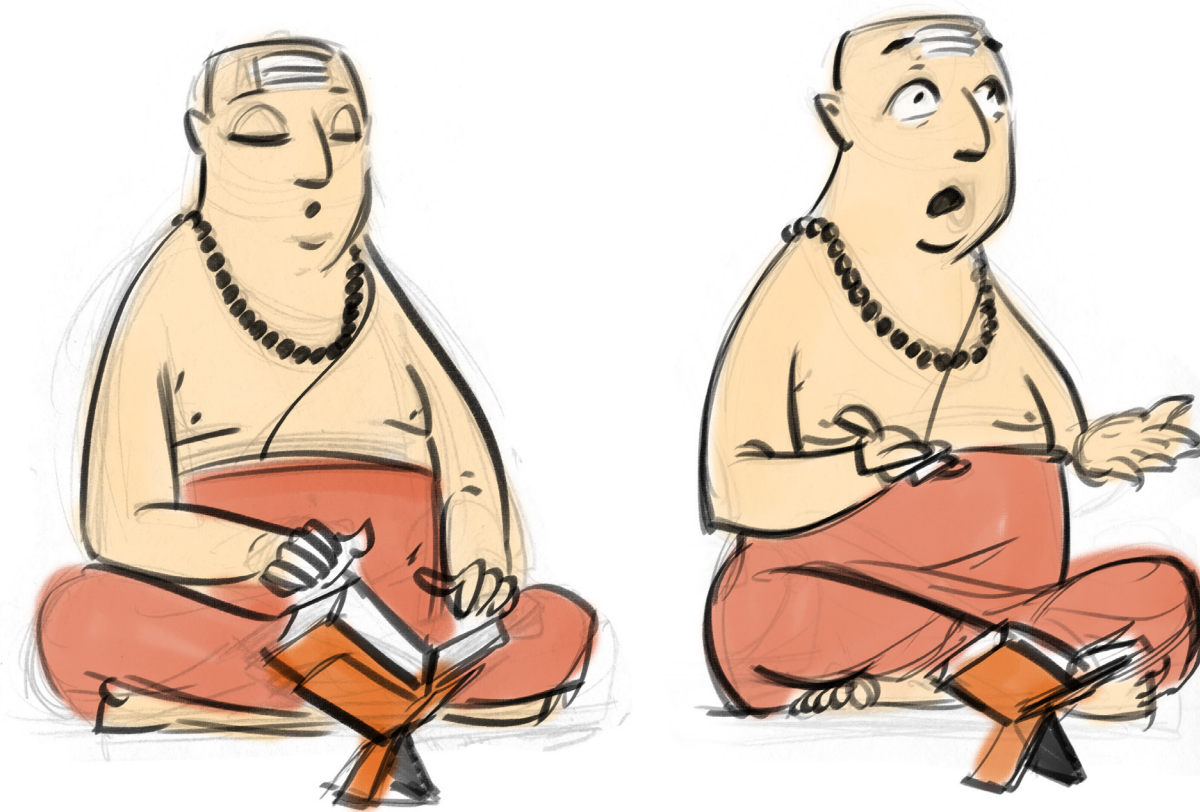
### CHATHUNNI- THE SERVANT

Chathunni is a humorous character. He is the servant of the land lord who always abides by his master but he is also clever enough to convince his master.



## THAMBURAN- THE LAND LORD

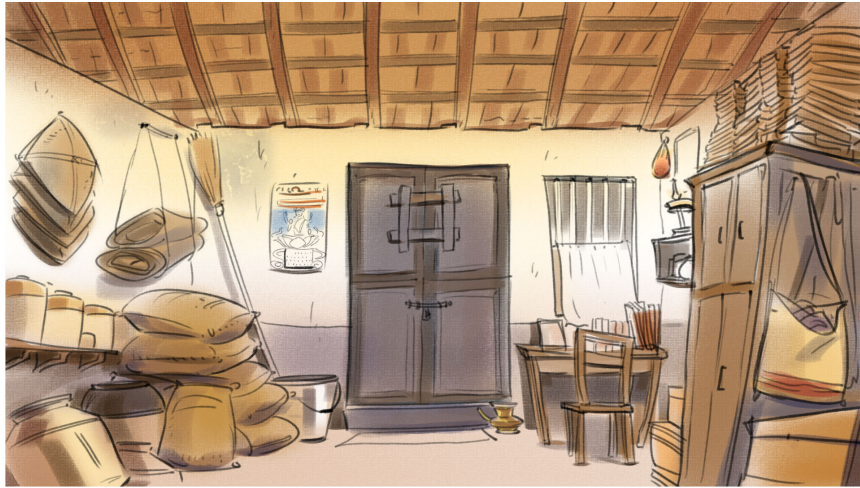
*“Thamburan”* in Malayalam means the master. He is a lanlord who is greedy of his wealth and is never satisfied with his possessions. He has an air of prestige but he is quite foolish in nature and easily convincible by his own servant.



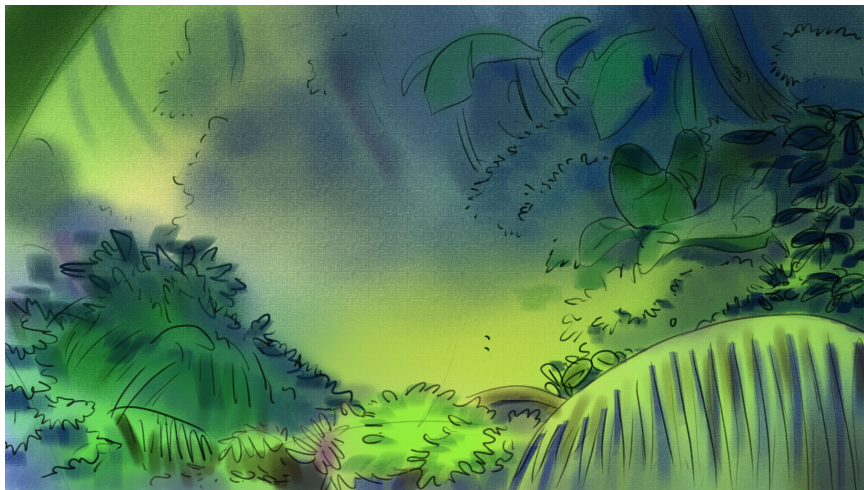
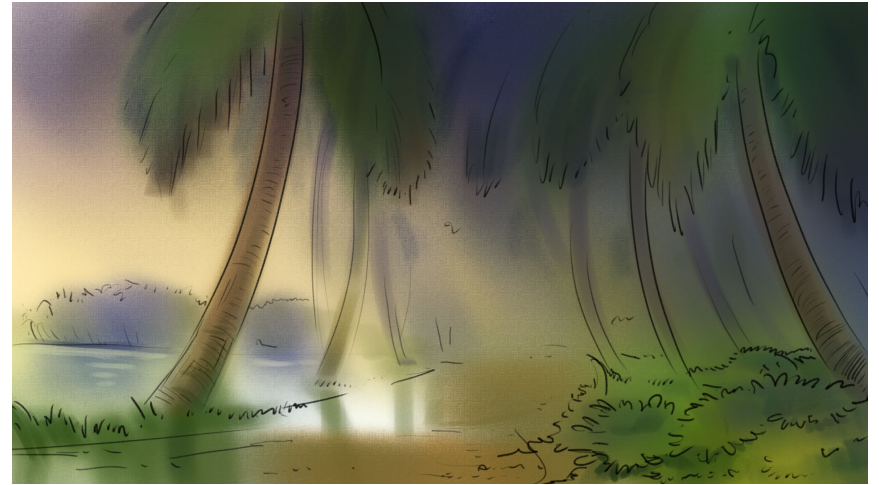
### THIRUMENI- THE PRIEST

“*Thirumeni*” means a priest. He is always absorbed in the knowledge from the sacred books but has no practical relevance to the knowledge gained in such a pursuit.

# LAYOUT

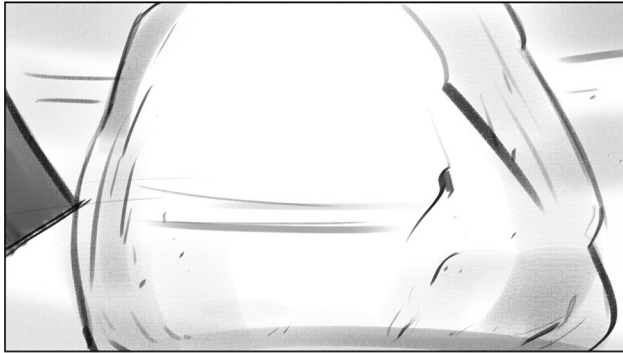


Interior of Naranathu's house

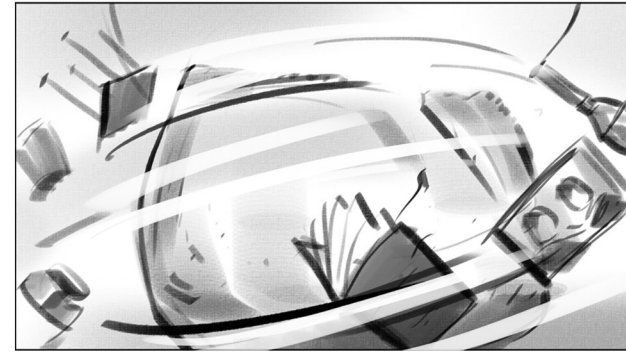


Karimbarakunnu- the hill

# STORYBOARD



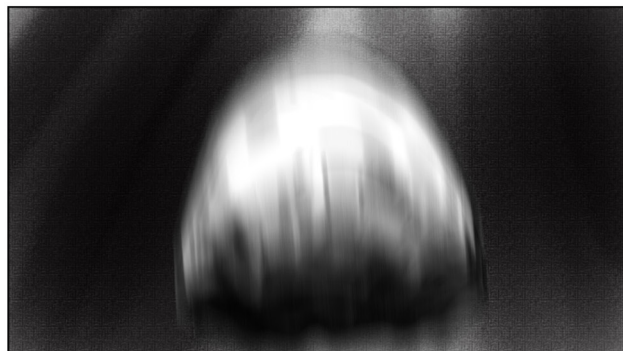
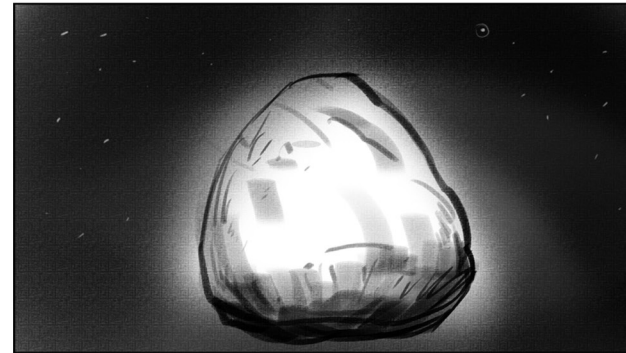
Fade in after the title- a rock is floating



Things floating around the rock and merging in



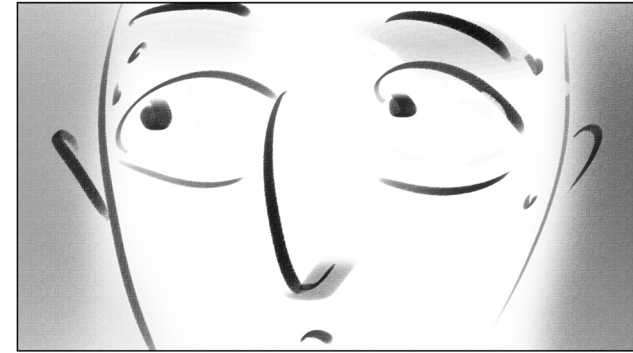
All things merge into the rock



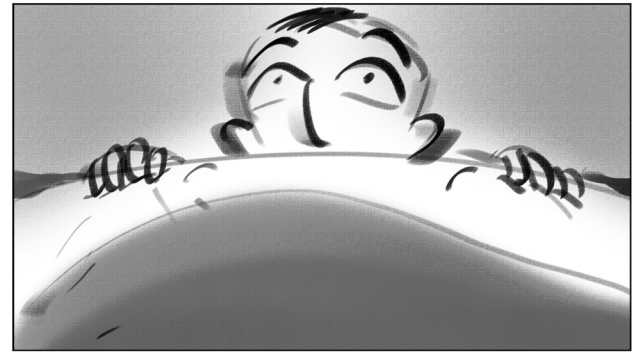
The rock crashes down.



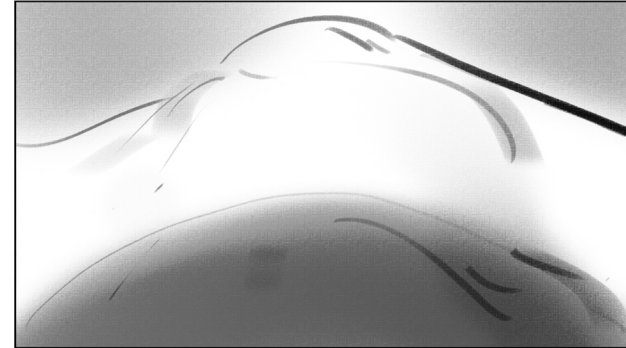
A man wakes up from his dream



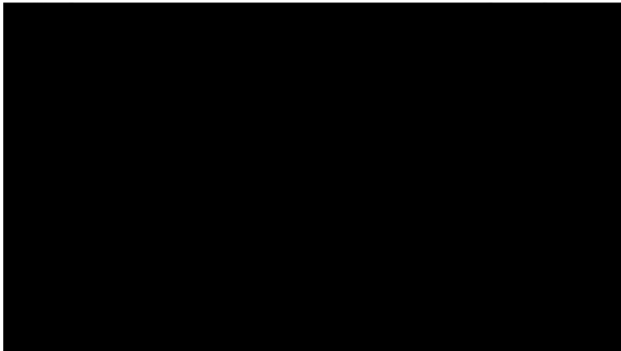
He looks around



He lies down



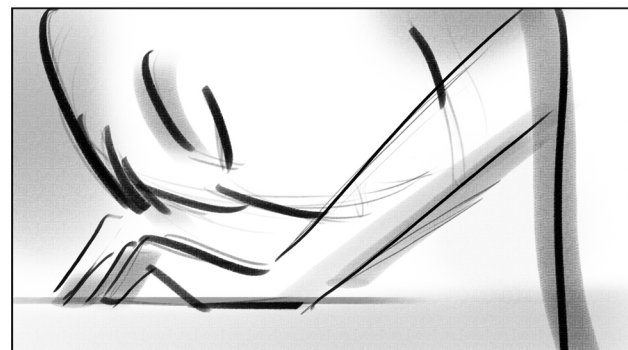
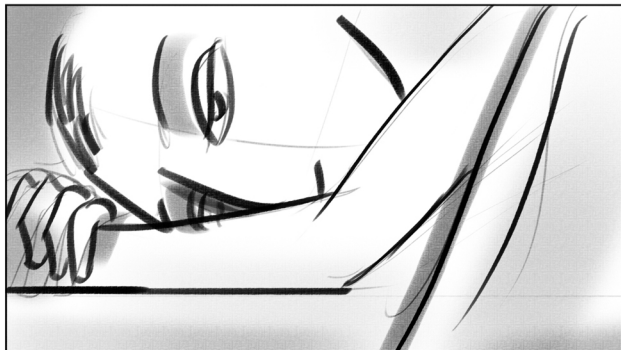
Pulls the blanket over and sleeps



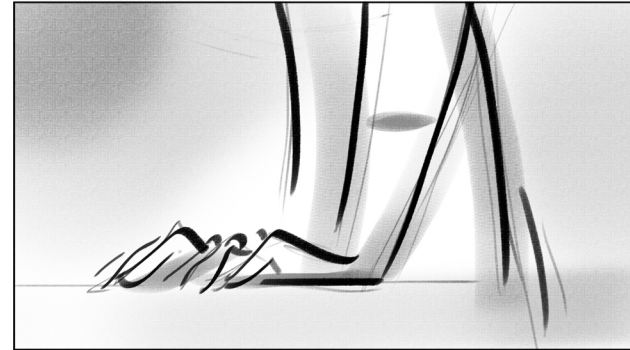
Fade out



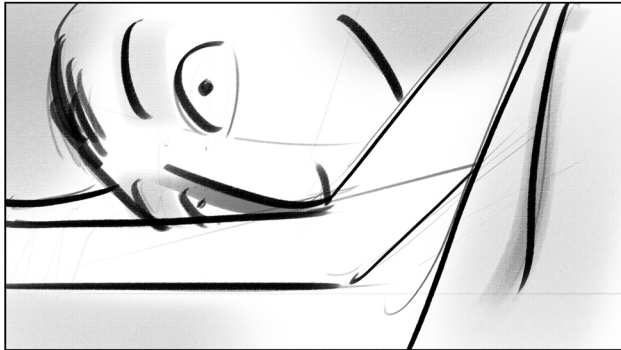
Fade in- man sleeping



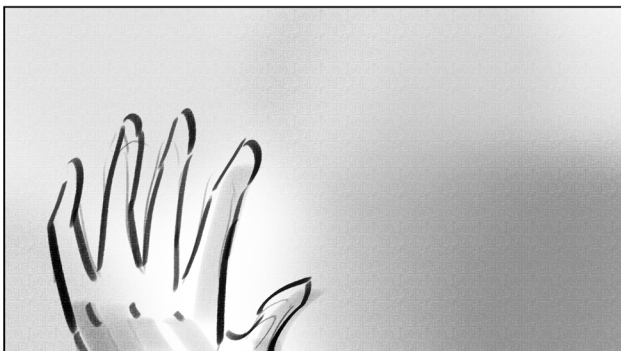
Man wakes up



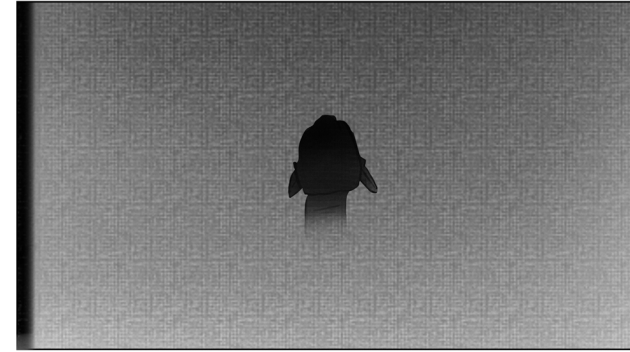
Tries hard to stretch up



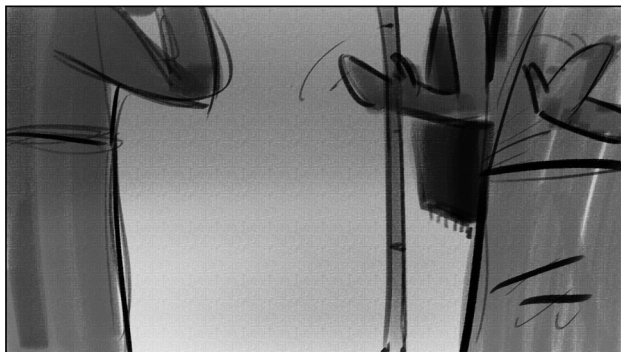
Lands down hard on the floor



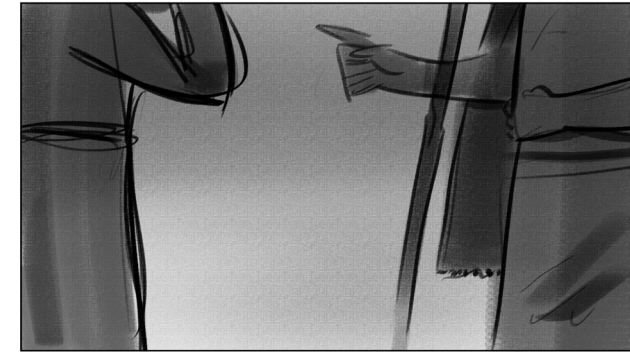
His hand feels a rock!



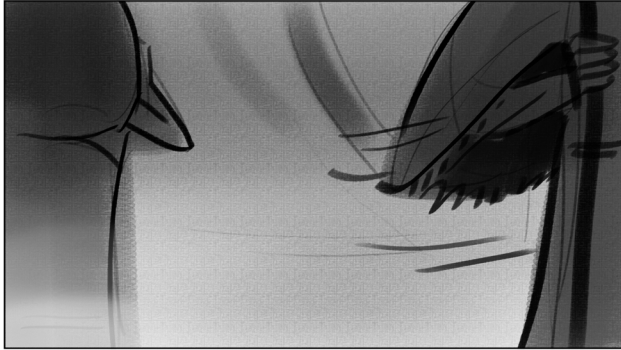
The man stops at the stranger asking for help



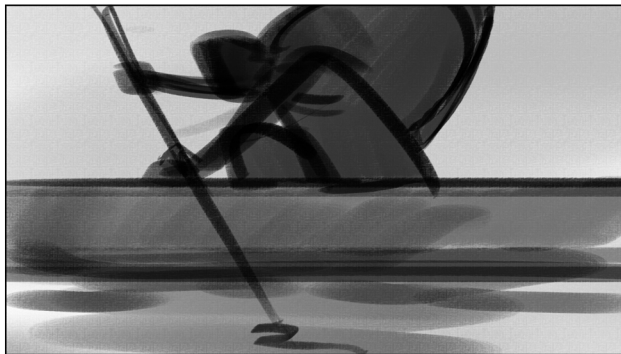
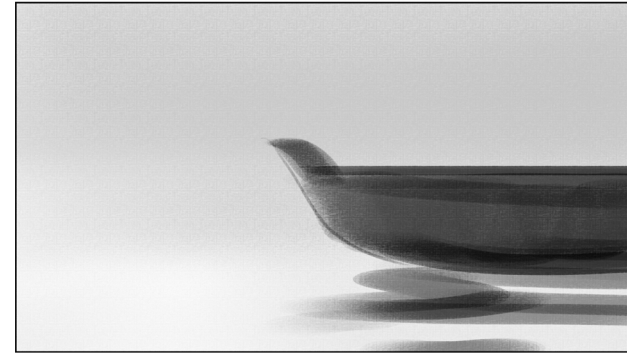
The stranger expresses his helplessness



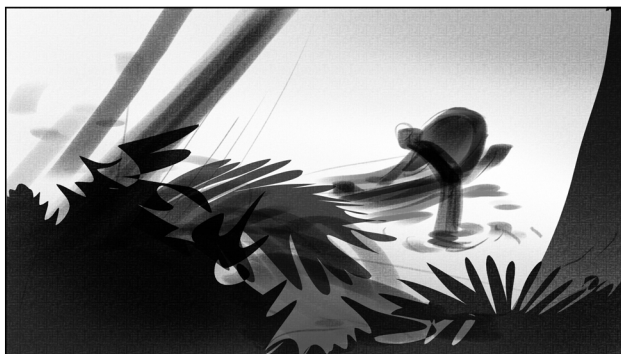
Stranger points to the river and asks the man to cross it and get on the hill to throw the rock away into the sea



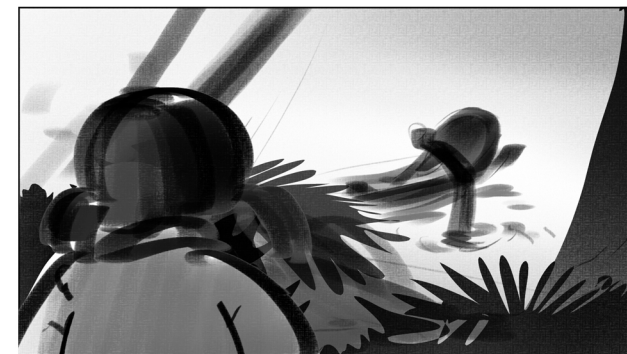
The stranger leaves



Man rowing the boat



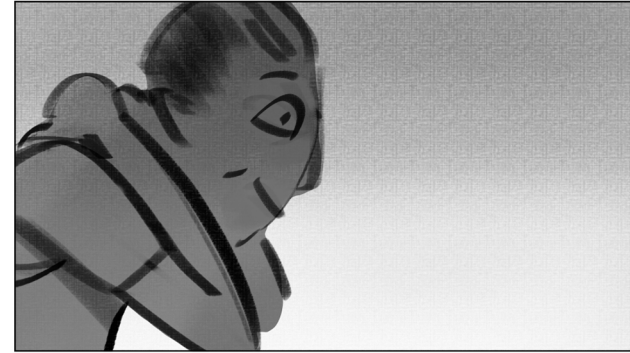
He reaches the shore crossing the river



A child comes over to find the man



The child watches



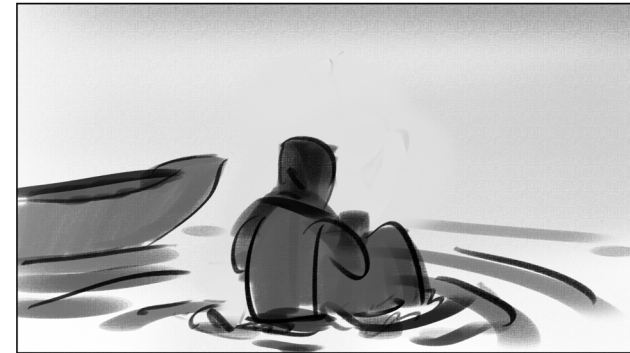
The man plans to get rid of the stone right away



There appears nothing over his back

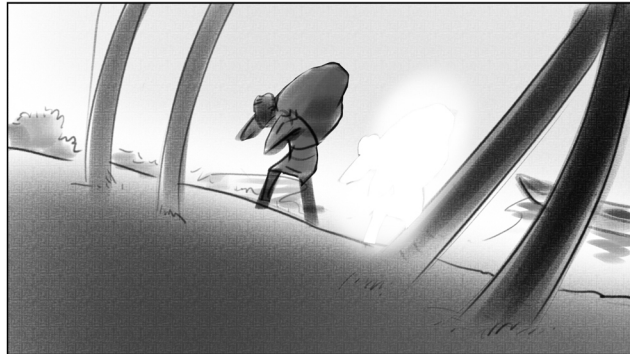


The man struggles



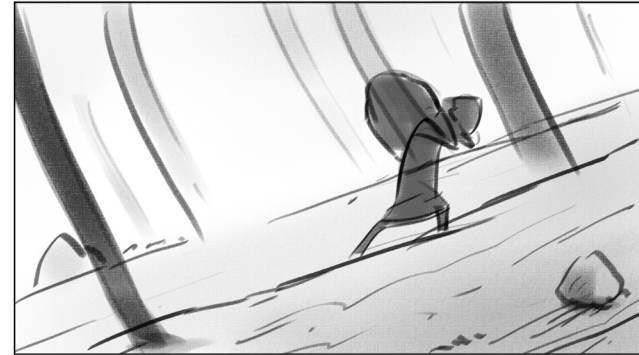


A child laughs at the man



The man continues to walk

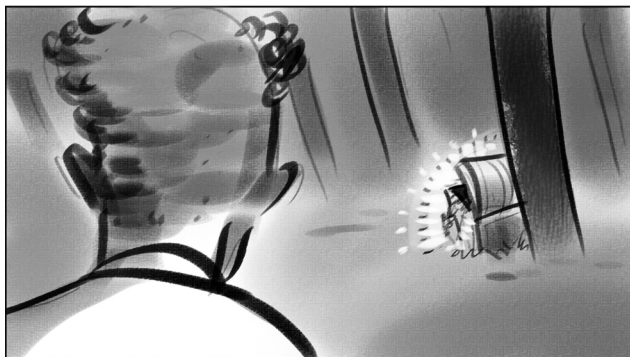




The man rests



A passer by walks down



He finds a treasure chest





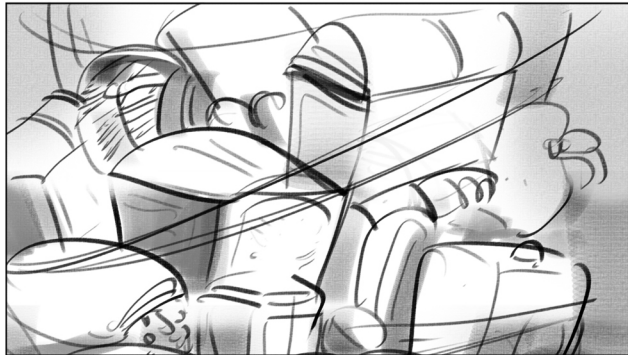
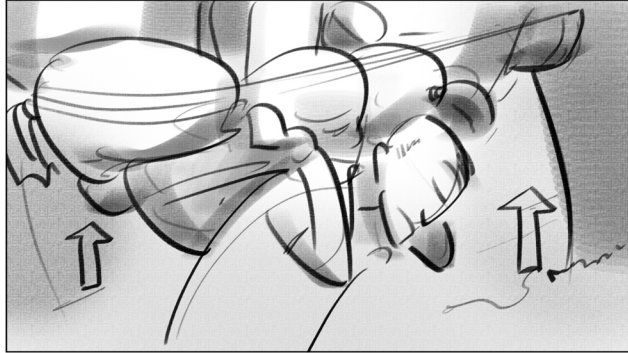
Moves forward to get hold of it



The man rises



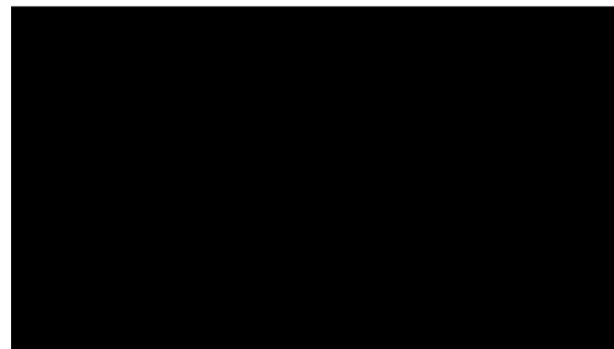
The passer by is lost in wonder

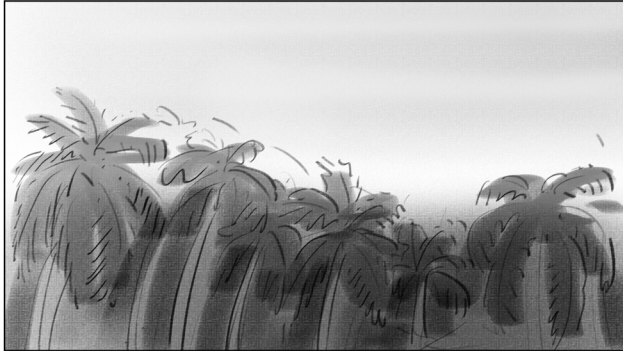


The man carries a lump of treasure chests



The passer by wonders where is the man taking all the wealth

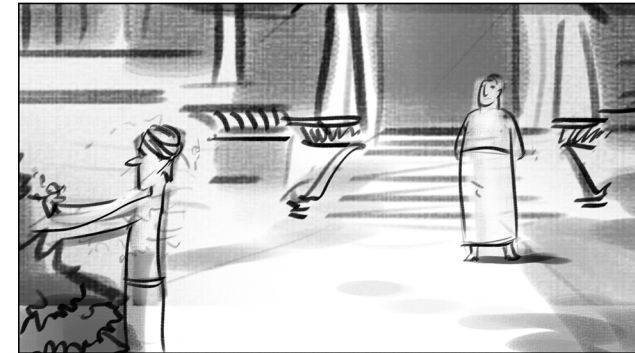




A huge mansion against the palm grove



The man walks by carrying the stone



The servant asks the man "where is he taking the stone along?"



The servant finds the man



The landlord and servant laugh at the man as he tells that he is on his way to the hill to throw the stone away.



The landlord plucks a flower



The flower is tucked between the ear



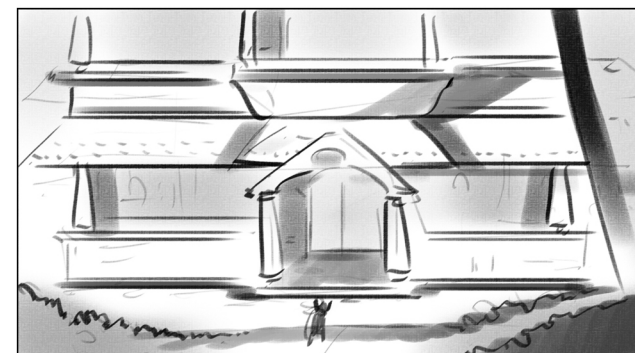
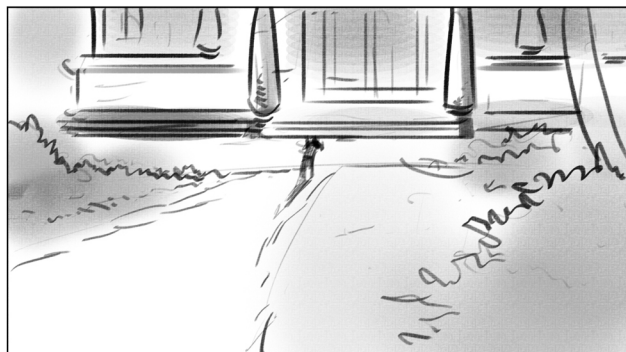
They laugh loud at the man

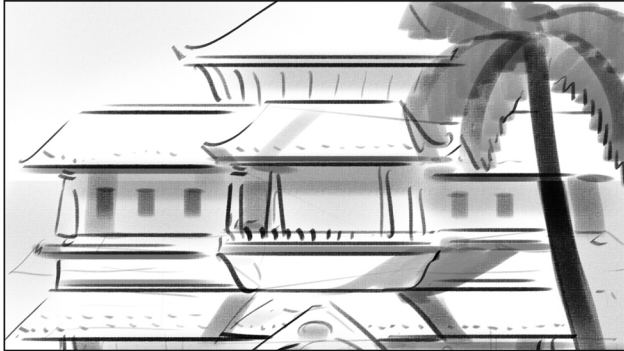


The servant finds something strange

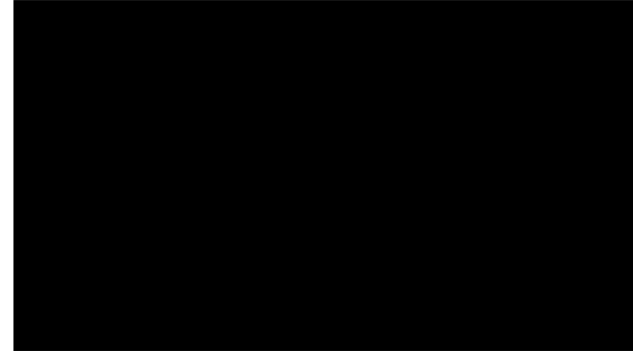


He asks the landlord to take a look





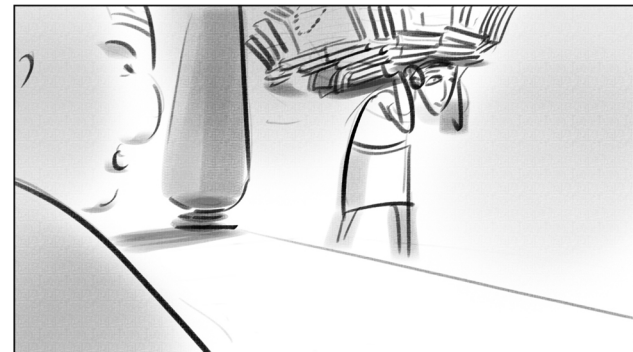
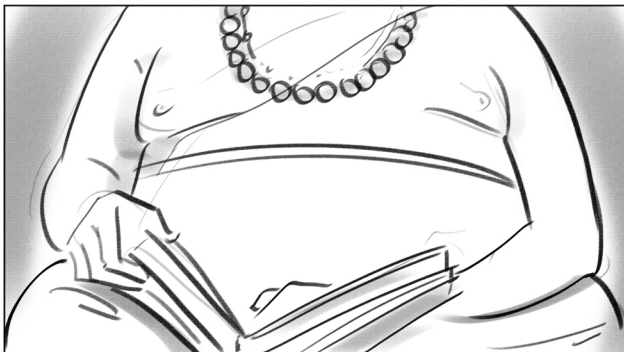
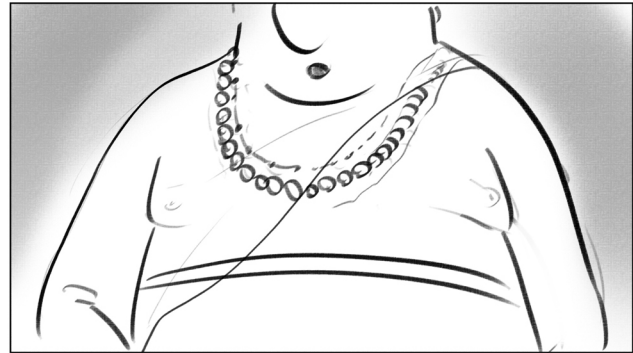
The man is seen carrying a huge mansion



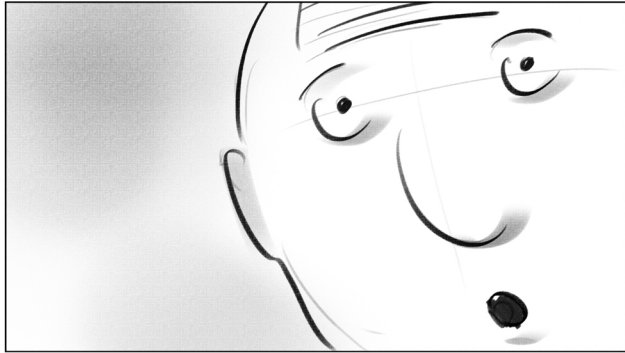
Fade out



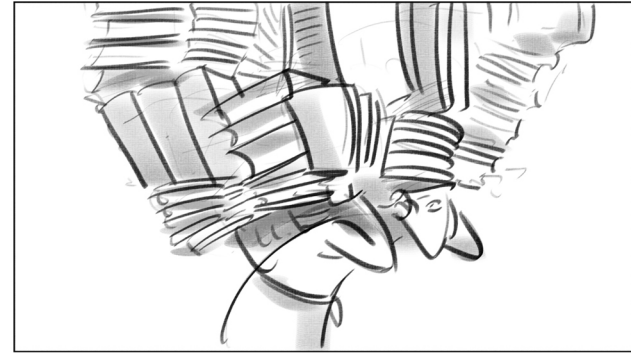
A priest is chanting



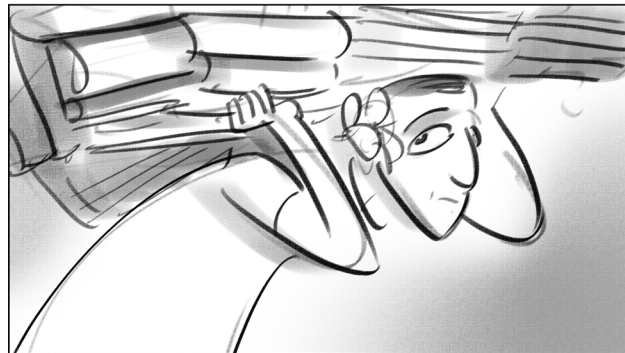
The man appears carrying a lump of books



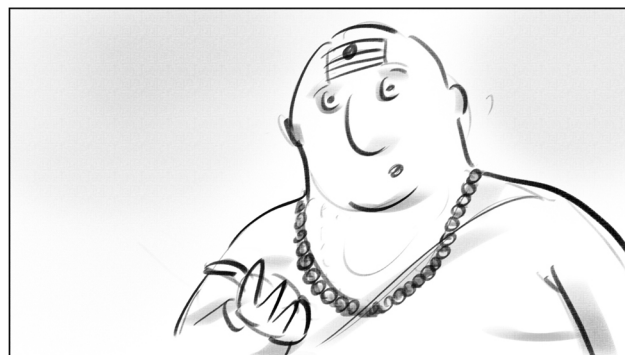
The priest wonders



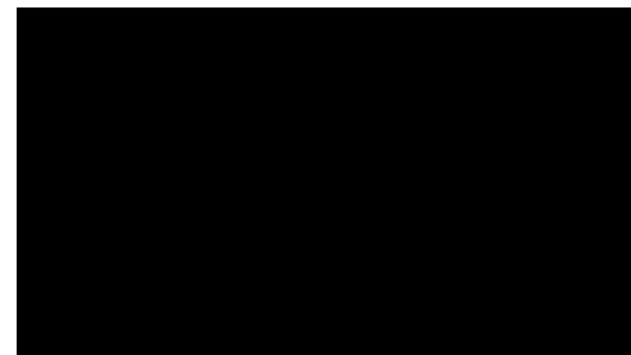
Asks the man where is he carrying all the knowledge



The man replies that he is carrying it uphill o throw it into the sea



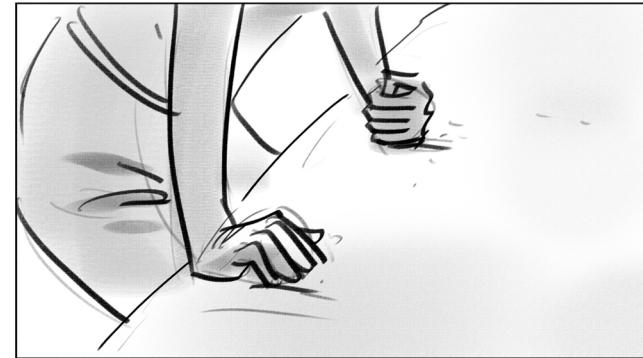
The priest wonders



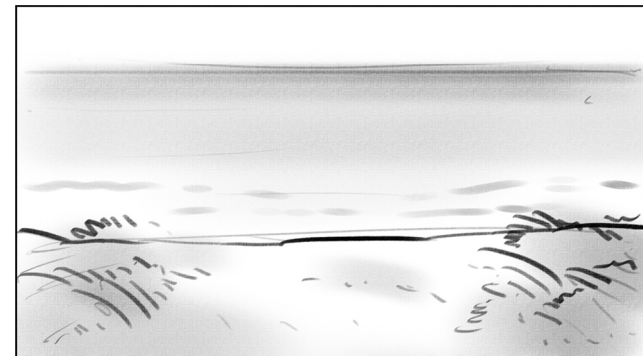
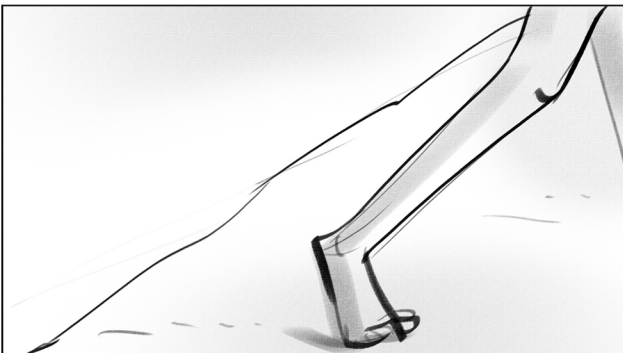
Fade out



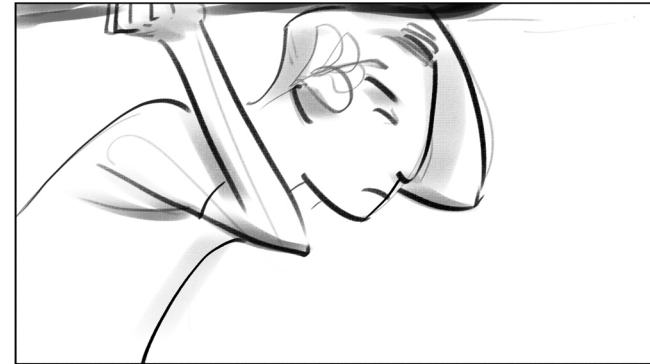
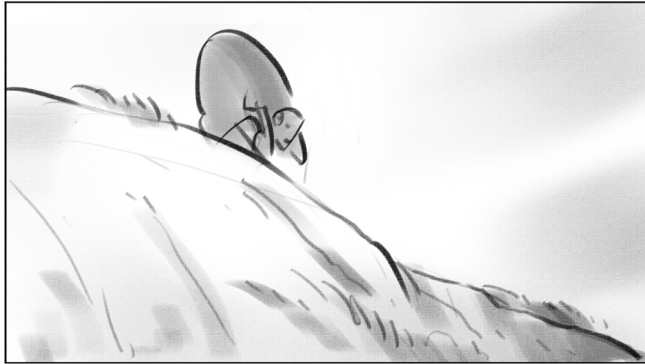
The man reaches the foot of the hill



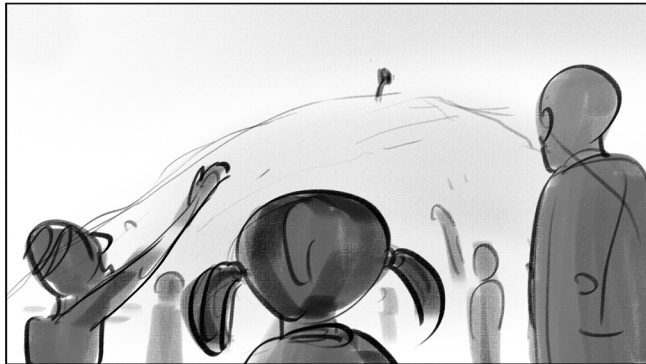
The man climbs over the cliff



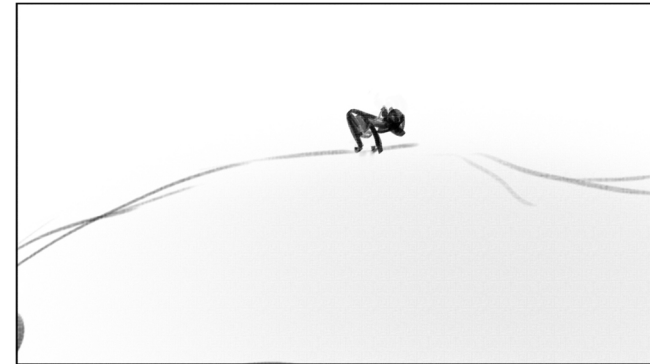
He finds the sea past the hill



The man is able to lift the stone off his back



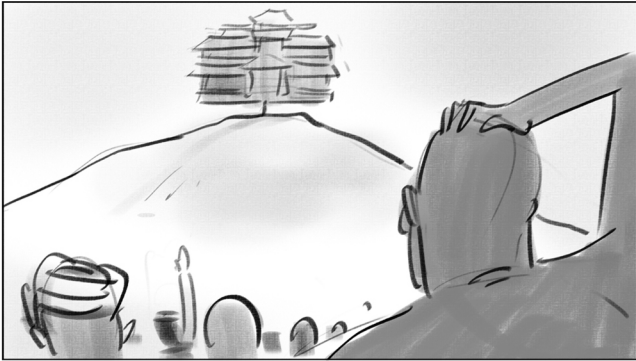
People below shout at the man mocking while the child laughs



In the child's eyes the man is again struggling with nothing on his back



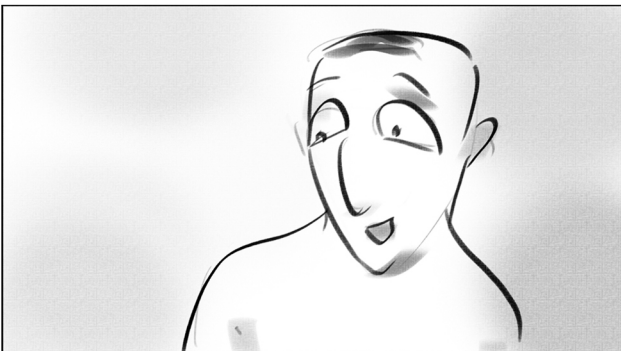
One man finds the treasure and shouts that the man is mad



The land lord admonishes that its not treasure but a mansion



The man throws the stone off his back into the sea

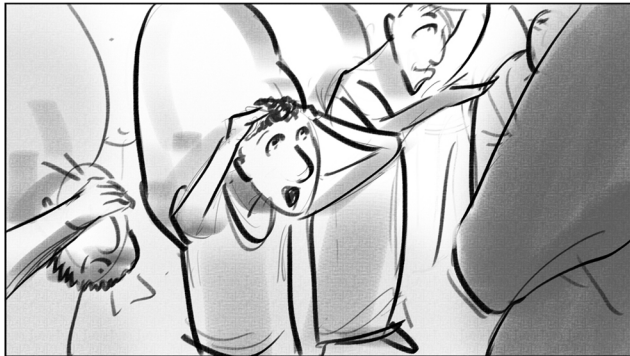


He looks down in wonder

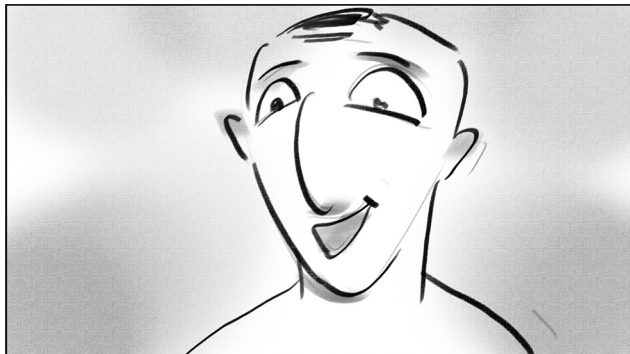


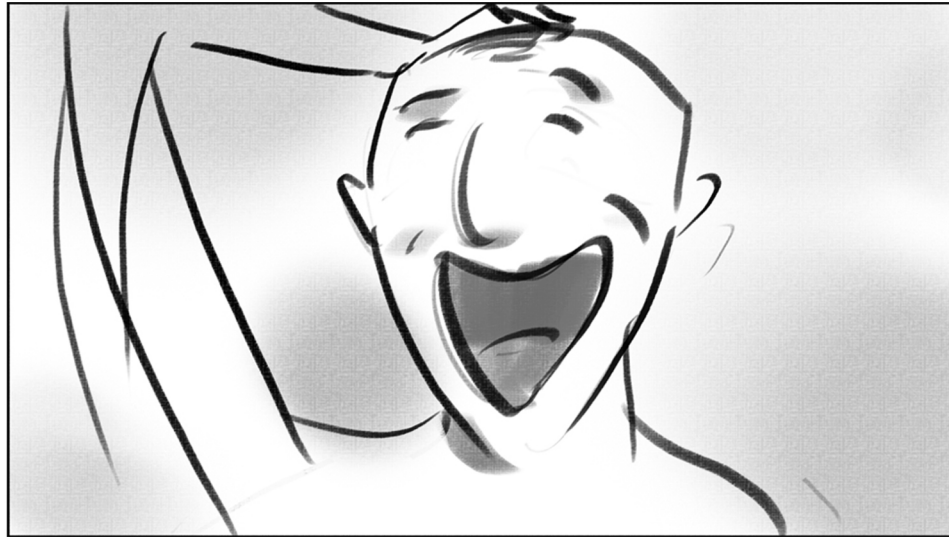


Watches closely to confirm



All the people down appear to have stones on their back





The man laughs loud and louder!

THE END

## PROCESS

Like the earlier project the outline of the visual narrative was established by thumbnail storyboards. Thumbnail storyboard greatly helps to establish the flow of the narrative and composition of the frames. These thumbnails becomes the foundation on which the details of the visuals are laid upon as detailed storyboards. These storyboard panels are set in a time line to form the animatic. The animatic provides a rough cut of the time length of the film.

Since the story of this animation short film had to be finalized after working out three versions of the story, thumbnails were worked out only for the earliest version and subsequently eliminated for other versions. Since there was ample struggle to arrive at a convincing narrative detailed, storyboard were worked and experimented with versions of animatic.

The story of “Bharam” is driven by human characters. Characters were designed keeping in mind the regional nuances. The backgrounds were also created by using photographic and style references.

As a design strategy my aim was to reduce the time taken for animating the characters. Thumbnails of extreme positions, breakdowns and passing positions were laid on paper and taken as a reference to completely animate the character in the digital medium using Adobe Photoshop. This eliminated the time for manually scanning each drawings on paper. I have tried to arrive at a style of animation using jagged lines instead of clear and smooth lines which added to the organic nature of animation also saved time on cleanup process and also reach the maximum effectiveness inspite of my in experience in character animation.

The backgrounds were also made digitally aiming towards a visual style resembling water color washes against pen drawings. The character animation was composited over these backgrounds in Adobe After Effects. Special effects and additional lighting were made in the same program and the rendered image sequence was imported and edited using Final Cut Pro.



Thumbnails

## CONCLUSION

“Bharam” conveys through animation the story of a normal man who walks the path to realize that all the worldly possessions is a burden and must get rid off it for liberation and happiness. It also questions the world’s perception of madness whether who is to be mad or normal? The surreal nature of events in the story suggests the human desires to accumulate wealth, earn fame and indulge in pleasures of luxury in-spite of the knowledge that they might bring temporary satisfaction and happiness but will always turn into a burden once he is steeped in his desires. One has to limit or overcome the worldly desires to achieve peace and happiness of higher nature.

“Bharam” is a new attempt for me in analyzing an existing story and retell it in a different perspective. It has been a challenging experience to make a convincing narrative in the process of retelling. It also puts forward an idea that the existing scores of stories and legends in our country from time immemorial have defied periods and social conditions because of their transcendental nature and that the new perspectives of retelling them not losing its essentials will always enrich them to prevail longer.

This film has been an extension of my exploration in the medium of animation. Character animation in particular, requires persistent efforts and experience to master. One always looks upon in wonder those full length animated features and shorts with many characters who lead the story with great acting making it an enriching experience both in terms of art and entertainment.

The experience of making independent films puts forward a greater concern over the persistent pursuit of making such films in the future. As a student I enjoyed the liberty to put forth my own ideas, manipulate and improve them for a greater learning experience has been exciting, fun and challenging.

The nature of projects out there in the industry or in the realm of independent animation is truly going to be different and pose greater challenges. Changing economic conditions and advancing technology are surely going to bring about

waves of changes but I believe that though these changes can change the appearances of the medium but the strength and success of the medium will still lie on the part of the story telling and the values that they inculcate.

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