

FEMALE SAFETY

ANIMATION PROJECT III

AN III - 75

BY

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Semester IV Project report

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Approval sheet

The project titled Just Another day - An animation film on women safety by Vasundhara Agrawal is approved for partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of 'Master of Design' in Animation.

Guide

:



Internal examiner

:



Chairperson

:



External examiner

:



Date

:



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Abstract

This project aims to understand the issue of female safety through a short animated film. The film intends to evoke a feeling of understanding and empathy towards the experiences women face in their everyday life. The film focuses not only on the physical aspect of safety but also on the mental aspect of safety for a woman.

It portrays how the societal norms very often put so many restrictions on a woman that even doing very simple harmless everyday activities makes her feel hesitant and fearful. How one person's meaningless actions can affect another's mental stability. It portrays a woman's everyday fight with her concern for self-security. The purpose of the film is to talk about things often experienced but less discussed. Many a times when people chose not to discuss about their feelings and concerns its either due to fear of the society or their personal discomfort. But the impact of such a situation is that the society accepts it as part of the behavioural norm and judges those who do things differently. This film is an effort to talk about things less spoken about, seen but ignored and to awaken a feeling of understanding and empathy.

Introduction

It is an unfortunate fact that the female population faces more safety issues than the males all around the world. For numerous reasons women are almost always dominated mentally and physically throughout their lives. Some consider them as the non earning part of the society hence lowering their rights to speech and ownership while others judge them based on her physical strength. This feeling of superiority by men leads to physical and mental dominance which also translates into various form of crimes against women.

However this also increases the level of safety measures people take for their own women family members. Often portrayed as a protective instinct of the family becomes nothing more than a rule book of restrictions for the females of the house. As a result she ends up being told even what she can eat, drink, wear, read, talk, think etc. Even after all this she lives in a perpetual vulnerability of being harmed. She has to be vigilant and alert to every step she takes, every person she meets even the food she eats. Can this kind of objectification of women make her feel safe and secure?

As part of my exploration I aimed at understand the safety of the female gender as a whole and not just women safety, as babies as young as 6 months also get raped in our society. It is a matter of concern for how can small school girls be made aware of how to be alert and aware of any kind of physical and mental harassment without taking away the innocence of their childhood. The same applies to all those women who undergo rigorous year of education and muster courage to go work in a different city away from home.

Therefore the scope of the project is to understand the feeling of 'safe' for a woman which is not only physical but also mental. It aims to portray the difficulties women face even in their everyday lives. How even educated independent women have to struggle to be able to live a perfectly safe tension free day.

The film also aims to send out a small message to the society that any form of harassment is never subtle and the impact of such incidences on a woman's mental stability. Since the conversations in the film are real life conversations it is expected that the women in the audience will be able to relate to the film and while others in the audience will be able to empathise and refrain from wrong doings.

Pre-Production

Research

Women Safety is a vast topic concerning almost everyone in the county. The topic has been explored, and represented through several mediums time and again. Hence i began my research by taking a look at how people from various fields like journalism, film, media and authors have represented this topic in the past.

Newspaper Articles:

Almost every other day there is an incident reported where a woman is either harassed, molested or raped and murdered. With the increase in the number of women stepping outside their homes to work and support their families there is an increasing concern for safety. However what is more disturbing is the fact that such crimes are soaring in number even for the school going women population. Below are a few newspaper reports which were a part of my study.

These two news articles influenced me to concentrate more on the safety issues faced by school going girls and independent working women living in metropolitan cities usually regarded as safe.

THE TIMES OF INDIA Mumbai

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Unruly bikers harass morning joggers, target women at Marine Drive

TNN | Jul 14, 2015, 02:55 AM IST

MUMBAI: A 33-year-old businesswoman was assaulted by three motorbikes along Marine Drive on Friday. The woman, whose name has been withheld on request, jogs along the stretch around four times a week at 6am. Such harassment by bikers along Marine Drive has been a frequent experience of those who regularly walk or run along the stretch early in the morning.

"This has been going on for a couple of years," said the woman, a Worli resident. "If you are walking, they whack you on your butt or they yell and stare. I've been hit twice - once on the back and another time on my hips. The most recent incident was last week when they hit me on the belt." She adds that the incidents could be avoided if there were more traffic cops on the stretch.

"There is hardly any police patrolling for most of the stretch -- just a couple of them, after 6am. It's very scary," says personal trainer Pankti Gosar who regularly runs along Marine Drive often as early as 5.30am. "There are so many bikers there, particularly during this time of the day. Three of them ride on one motorcycle in an extremely reckless manner. They pass commuters, try to drive too close. That stretch gets very unsafe." Gosar runs in a group comprising

different paces. "For a better experience, you need much better patrolling."

"They go really fast and -- they are going

THE TIMES OF INDIA Bareilly

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Targeted sexually by goons, 200 girls ready to give up school

Priyanshi Agarwal,TNN | Jul 21, 2015, 10:41 PM IST

READ MORE » Goons | Girls | Dozen | Bareilly | Assault

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- Goons disrupt wedding, brides sent to marital home without 'pheras'
- Bareilly tense after sectarian clash

BAREILLY: Faced with constant sexual harassment by goons waiting at the other side of a river that 200-odd girls from a dozen villages in Bareilly have to cross every day to reach school, the students have decided to choose safety over their much-needed education.

In what many see as a most telling statement on the state of affairs in Uttar Pradesh, around a dozen villages that send their girls to a school in Shergarh, 45 km from Bareilly, have come together to say that they would rather have their daughters go without schooling than subject them to the teasing and often assault that has now been going on for two years.

A bunch of hooligans, who wait at the other side of the river that the girls have to cross, have been making their lives miserable, harassing the students and often even sexually targeting them. Not willing to give up their studies, the girls had been quiet till now, but on Tuesday their parents, helpless at the police taking no action, decided to discontinue the studies of 35 of these girls. The rest said they will follow suit. The

girls along with their family members also met Union minister and Bareilly MP Santosh Kumar Gangwar, requesting him to help them so that they don't have to drop school.

Movies :

Movies and films have time and again addressed the different aspects of women safety hence it was essential to study the existing films and series. This part is divided into two sections of animation and live action films especially since the ultimate medium of my film will be animation:

Animation Movies and Series:

Komal:

“Komal” is a Short Film based on Child Sexual Abuse. Child Sexual Abuse is a common phenomenon and a serious issue in India. The film deals with educating children and equipping them with the right tools and information, so they know how to deal with it, not after the crime is done, but before it happens. The film has handled a sensitive issue very efficiently. Also the style of animation and narration is quite simple yet effective.



Komal, 2015, a film by CLIMB MEDIA



Vama- Women Harrasment, 2013 a film by Pocket Films

“Vama” -Women Harrasment:

Vama is a stop motion animation short film. This film aims to spread social awareness on the universal issue of women harassment. The film portrays different levels of injustice a female faces right from being a foetus in the womb to a full grown adult. The sensitiveness of the issue was brought out very well through use of bold colors and creation of depth in the staging of the act.



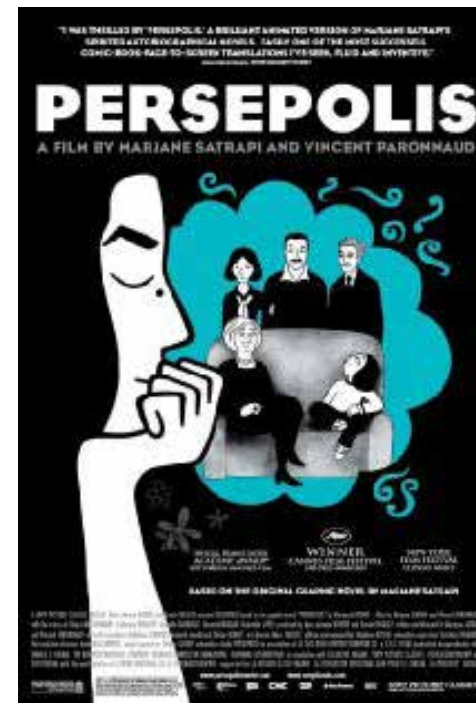
Burkha Avenger, 2013 by Aaron Haroon Rashid

Burkha Avenger:

Burkha Avenger is a Pakistani animated TV series created and directed by famous Pakistani rock star and social activist, Aaron Haroon Rashid. The show features Jiya, an “inspirational teacher” whose alter ego is a burka-wearing super heroine. Jiya uses “Takht Kabaddi”, a special martial art that incorporates books and pens, to fight crime. The main purpose of female empowerment was very well served by the film.

Persipolis:

Persipolis Is a 2007 French-Iranian-American animated film based on Marjane Satrapi’s autobiographical graphic novel. The story follows a young girl as she comes of age against the backdrop of the Iranian Revolution. Although the film is a story and experience of one single woman it speak for a lot of women around the world. The storytelling and animation style of the film is equally impressive.



Persipolis, 2007
by Marjane Satrapi and Vincent Paronnaud

Live Action Short film:

During my research I came across a number of very recently made short films on the issues faced by women. These films heavily influenced me as they even brought out the aspect of self respect and mental struggle a women faces rather than just concentrating on the problem that was already visible



Going Home, 2014 film by Vikas Bahl

Going Home: A short film directed by Vikas Bahl shows a girl driving home alone on a deserted road at night when her car breaks down. An SUV with five men stops by and you would imagine the next scene would show another crime against a woman, but the men help her repair the car. They exchange glances on seeing the girl alone but drop her home safely in the end.

Would every woman in India be dropped home safely? The video says its 'impossible in the real world'. The video asks a very important question that can we give women a world without molestation and harassment. The question raised is not only important the representation although sarcastic shows what is right and what should actually be done. This is also something I was inspired by..

That day after everyday:

Another short film directed by Anurag Kashyap tells the story of three working women and their everyday struggle to reach their workplace. The three women live in constant fear of molestation and harassment not just in public space but even in their own gated community. The film shows how they have been going to self defence classes after office but unable to decide if they are physically ready to fight. This is when their trainer steps in and explain its not the physical but the mental strength which helps one wins a battle. Hence a person can fight and defend themselves when they think they are ready to fight. That day they fight back the colony goons, not only defending themselves but gaining respect in the society as well as their homes.



That day after everyday, 2013 film by Anurag Kashyap



Rape its your fault, 2013 film by AIB

Rape: Its your fault:

Is a satire showing how whatever form of physical harassment a women faces its her fault. No matter how she is dressed where she is located if she is raped, harassed or molested its always her fault. This satirical act gave me goosebumps when beaten and battered women were shown on the screen and all they said was "Its my fault". The films has been able to spread a very important message to the society saying "look how she is silently accepting all your atrocities and blames", "Are you still not ashamed?".

I'am not a woman:

An apology to all the Indian women on behalf of the Indian men. This video by East India Comedy left a thought that will keep revolving in your mind irrespective of you being a man or a woman. The video urges that giving a serious thought is the need of hour, when so much is happening around us. The video starring four men – Rajit Kapur, Neil Bhoopalam, Meiyang Chang and Sorabh Pant starts with them wish to be women and tell us why they are not women. They begin with a wish, regret of not being one and finally apologize to all the women on behalf of all the Indian men for giving them the present disgusting atmosphere to live in! The highlight of the video is when the four demand women to give stronger reply to all their offenders. The video also showcased roadside romeos to outrageously stupid politicians making random comments on something as serious as rape.



I'am not a woman, 2014 film by East India Comedy

Interviews, Observations and Personal Experiences



Interview with Convener, Women Cell IIT Bombay:

In a personal interview with Professor Prita Pant Convener of the Women Cell at IIT, Bombay she explained about the establishment of the women cell. In accordance with the Supreme Court ruling of 1997 on the issue of sexual harassment at workplace The Women's Cell of IIT Bombay was established in 2002. She explained the process the women cell follows to address a problem. Which primarily consists of making a complain to the council, an inquiry into the issue and a recommended course of action for the culprit.

It is surprising how even in a closed and secure surrounding like the IIT women face various kinds of safety issues. Some of which are often related to social media harassment where it becomes extremely difficult to

track the culprit as they often make fake internet profiles. This form of harassment causes major mental disturbance to the victim instead of physical harassment.

She also explained how the institute has set up a Quick Response Team to address and respond to any such issues even at odd hours. This has helped many people to take the appropriate action on time.



Women in Mumbai Locals:

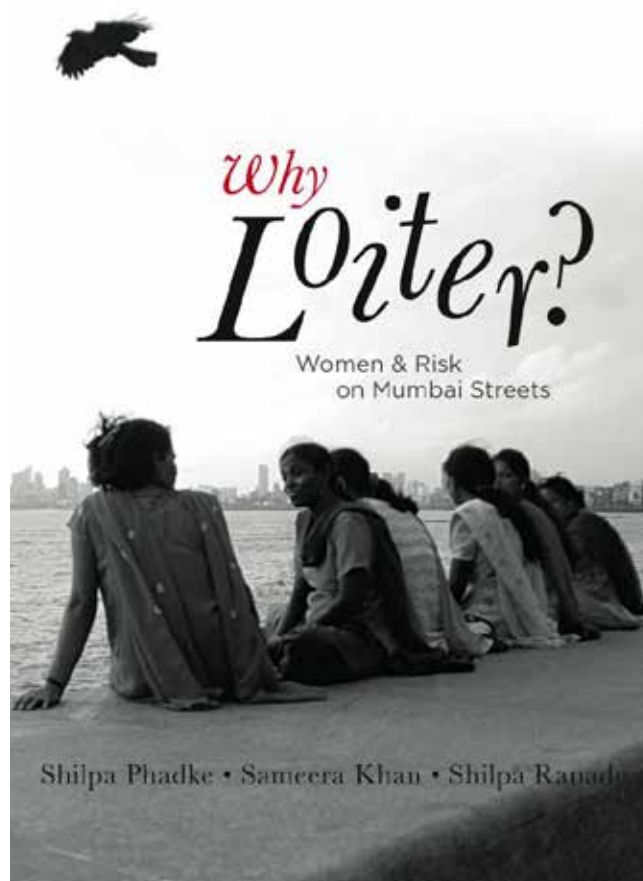
A large part of Mumbai's working women population travel by train. Train being one of the fastest mode to travel within the city of Mumbai is also one of the most risky modes of transport. The short duration stoppage at stations, the heavy rush at peak hours and the poorly designed platforms makes it not only difficult but an everyday struggle for a number of women across the city. But women have adapted to this mode in their own intricate ways which is even fascinating when analysed. Like if a women is a daily passenger and can afford the first class pass they do so. Working women usually leave office a bit earlier than men so that they can avoid the rush hours at least on the platforms and also be home before its too dark. Women passengers travelling late in the night prefer travelling in the general compartment rather than being stranded alone in a women's compartment.

Also late night travellers often have someone to pick them up from stations. Apart from that even the railways provides guards in the women compartment for late night travellers. Such approaches helps people feel safe and secure.

Personal Experience:

I stayed in the city of Hyderabad for four years from 2010-2014, working for a multinational company. I used to stay in a shared flat for the first two years and then shifted to an individual flat for the last one year of my stay. During my solo stay in the city away from home while I had many good and memorable experiences many of them were also not very comfortable. Especially the daily commute to office. People more than often ogle and make you feel uncomfortable in a public place. An intentional uncomfortable touch from a passerby or just being judged by the clothes that one wears are things experienced most often. I remember once i got into a shared auto which had a man and a girl already seated in it, the girl however was occupying more than half the space left for me to sit. When i requested her to move she shifted uncomfortably. I peaked to look over and observed how the man was trying to more and more lean on her. I shouted on the man to sit properly and he was taken aback. He apologised and sat upright. These incidents however subtle they might look has always disturbed my mental peace and made me feel unsafe.

The Book: Why Loiter?



A book that questions women's access to public space vs the claim to public space. It is an effort to go beyond the problem of the real and implied risks associated with women's presence in public. The authors draw from the feminist theory and argue that only by celebrating loitering - a radical act for most Indian women - can a truly equal, global city be created. The book is an excellent read to understand the Indian women who hail from various parts of the society. Women who work and who don't work, rich women and middle class women, it speaks about suffocation and dissatisfaction in abundance. It speaks about the concept of fun and how one controls the amount of fun a woman can have by controlling her degree of freedom. The book provided me with a thorough understanding of the issues faced by women and reconfirmed my observations and experiences such that I could represent it in the film.

Story Explorations

After my initial research and analysis I narrowed down to two areas of female safety which I wanted to represent through my film. One was a story associated with working women of age group 20-30 years of age. And the other was to be able to represent the issue of eve teasing and harrasment faced by a majority of young teenage school going girls. Hence I proposed the below two story lines:

Aarti: Story of a working women

Aarti had a hard time convincing her parents to let her join a new job in another city. Her dream of living in a big city, living life freely and travelling to her hearts content was finally coming true. She enthusiastically moved to her new job in the city of Bangalore. But soon she realised everything was not picture perfect like in her dreams. Her everyday commute to office was becoming more and more difficult with men staring, passing comments, trying to touch her inappropriately. Everyday her list of safety checks kept increasing. Cover your face (pretend too much dust in the city), carry a pepper spray, carry a safety pin, wear appropriate clothes (your favourite clothes are safe in the cupboard), don't stay outside late, don't deviate from your normal office route etc etc. There is always a sense of caution and self imposed restrictions. But what if even after doing all this she doesn't feel safe? What if she is actually not safe? Will Aarti go back to her hometown?

Asha fights back

Asha loved going to school with her friends. She didn't mind cycling 14 kms everyday to school. In fact she enjoyed it, when breeze blew on her face, when she raced with her friends it was the most fun time of her day cycling to and back from school. But one day it all changed when she and her friends got followed by some goons. Their parents got worried, Asha was scared she didn't want to face them again. However with a lot of courage she decided to cycle back to school after a few days, and there they were again. What did Asha do? Did she stop going to school? Did she fight back?

After the initial proposition of the two story lines I explored both the concepts in terms of stories a bit further. Trying to write various stories for my film I realised I had a better understand of the issues and problems faced by working women. Although I was highly disturbed by the issues of teenage school going girls who face the issue of eve teasing and harassment I realised I didn't want to send across any wrong message without having understood the situation properly. Hence I decided to further my work upon a story of working women.

However one very important aspect of the feedback I received after my presentation of story lines was that my current story lines were all focused on the protagonist fighting back. Although this gives the protagonist a nice superhero appeal however it also scars another part of the society as the villain. Therefore the focus should be to show a change within the society itself by portraying both bad as well as good supportive characters. This lead me to write another story.

This story was based on my research and experience and was totally fictional it had no association with any person alive or dead. Although this story was entirely discarded later it was a very productive learning experience in terms story writing and scripting.

The Initial Story:

The news had reported another heinous crime against woman . Again and again they flashed the same thing sometimes verbally and sometimes through text, its always disappointing and saddening to hear a criminal incident especially in the early morning hours. However the rate of these kind of criminal activities were increasing now a days to shocking numbers. This also lead to their everyday arguments about why does she have to go

out to work? why does she have to wear western office formals? why couldn't she take up another job nearby. Door bangs. She leaves the house. Walking down the street she had numerous thoughts bellowing in her mind, voices in her head some from the news some from the people around her. Suddenly someone rushed passed her, a girl running and panting heavily, she turned around and saw the girl run past, in front of her she could see two goons, she felt too scared to even scream she hid in the adjacent lane.

After some time with her mind full of fear she started walking again.....suddenly she saw this huge shadow, she got a bit scared and started walking faster the shadow also picked up pace, suddenly it caught her hand she let out a shriek. She was scared to open hers eyes but when she did she saw this huge man " madam watch out for the traffic, heres your wallet." She was still in shock she could hardly believe what just happened, hastily she boarded the bus, it was a bit more packed than the normal days. A few minutes later she heard "aye" she turned back a man was holding another mans hand and shouting at him " hey, i saw u were trying to touch her, behave yourself". She was shocked as well as happy not very often people stood up for her.

The same day evening when she was returning home she saw a few goons teasing a girl. It was a dark and narrow alley. Her first though was to run off.....but today she felt a bit more confident , in the past her fears had made her believe that people just act as spectators. She went back to a more well lit area and called a few others for help hence together they fought. not only did they fight they also made the goons realise what was it to be real men.

Script for the Initial Story:

Scene1: The scene shows a woman in the kitchen cooking. Sound of TV in the background. When she hears her husband shout.

Ashish : " do you hear this? a woman gets abducted in the board daylight, is raped and thrown back in the evening. do you have many idea how unsafe its becoming out there"

Aarti: is packing her tiffin. does not respond to her husband.

Ashish: " why do you have to go out to work?, I mean everything else is ok but why do you have to wear western office formals? isn't your office in India, hah(mocking laughter) at least you can take up a job nearby.

Aarti: hands over tea to her husband, picks up her handbag, wraps her face with a scarf and leaves
door bang

Scene 2: The scene shows Aarti walking down the road she hears the voices in her head, they just don't stop, they keep coming like a humming bird, "unsafe", "unsafe", "abducted", "job", "clothes", "unsafe", "family", "why? why? why?"

Ramesh (a local goon) along with his friend Kali were standing at the teastall seeing Aarti they start walking behind her

Ramesh: "Yaar aaj dhoop bahut hai na?" (Coming behind Aarti)

Kali: "Ustad sham ko ate hain, dhoop dhal jayegi " (winks) (they come closer to Aarti)

Ramesh and Kali cross in front of Aarti and leave while laughing loudly

Scene 3: Aarti starts walking faster, and faster, she doesn't even look up..... and bam....her shoulder hits someones shoulder and she stumbles

a little.....she turns to apologies but that face just like Kali's even more intimidating.....she nervously starts walking again.....

First man: " O, Madammmmmm"

Aarti: walks faster

First man: "Oye, Oyeeeeeeee...."

Aarti: almost running suddenly someone pulls her back and a car zoom passes her missing her by inches

Second man: "dekh ke chaliye madam"

Aarti: in meek voice almost whispers "thankyou"

First man: arrives panting.....

Aarti: Shocked and scared

First man: "Madam aapka wallet gir gaya tha"

Aarti : looks from the first to the second man (who is not at a distance walking away) and looks down

Scene 4: just then a bus arrives she gets on to the bus.

She was standing behind him when he shouted " Ayeee" and held his hand (third man)

Fourth man: " kya hua bey...."

Third man: " abbey aye ladies to haath kyun lagata hai...tameez se reh" other passengers turned around and stared at the fourth man " aye bus se utaro ise, voices in unison " haan utaro ise....."

The fourth man has to get down from the bus.

Aarti smiles slightly for the first time since the day started. For the first time she looked a little less worried.

Scene 5: Aarti was sitting in the office cafe with her friend Rupa.

Rupa: " see this is the problem it doesn't matter what they wear.....but if we wear clothes like that people make a fuss out of it"

Aarti: "doesn't matter what you wear, people always have something to say"
Aarti again: "but you know what not everyone is that bad i guess....." starts thinking about the man who returned her wallet and the man who saved her from getting banged. She looks up from her thoughts and says "lets go i need to finish work and leave"

Scene 6: she finished her work left office at 7 pm. she took the bus home. as she was walking from the bus stand towards her home she noticed two guys walking very close to a girl walking in front of her and.....before she could comprehend what was happening a cab drove near the girl and the two guys pushed her in.

Aarti runs behind the car and clicks a photo to capture its number.

Aarti: "Hello police station, i am speaking from this area just now two guys kidnapped a girl in a car, the number of the car is MH0071.

Aarti then runs to a nearby shop and tells them what happed. She also calls people from around and allets them.

This scene ends here and cuts to a scene back in Aarti's house where the news can be heard

Scene 7: Reporter:and last night mumbai police rescued a women from abduction. The police was informed of the abduction by a lady who was observing the two guys. The quick wit and action of this lady helped police track the criminals on time.

Aarti smiles while sipping a cup of tea.

Why the story was discarded?

After the initial scripting of the story i realised the story conveyed the topic and the message that i intended but lacked experiential feel. The story looked a bit too staged and exaggerated. Since the film is going to represent a very sensitive issue i wanted a true representation.

Also at this stage the story was very linear and i wanted to look into other forms of story telling. This was the time i tried to understand parallel narrative and its effectiveness in story telling. There was also an idea of telling a story from two different women's perspective, which shows their everyday experience of bad incidents and good incidents. But the issue that was faced here was the same as before that it lacked an experiential telling. Hence a few discussions a different approach was adapted which consisted of collecting incidents.

Hence i moved on to a the approach of collecting various experiences . These experiences would then be analysed for a potential story. Given on the next page are various experiences that I came across some of them being my own .

Collection of Experiences

After exploring a fictional story based on by study and reception i moved on to another approach of collecting incidences. I collected the below short incidences from various interactions and live incidences at various places. The vision was then to build a narrative with these incidences such that they would have real life experiences and help the audience associate better with the film. Below are the individual narratives:

1. She loved to party, to go out with friends, to dance have fun. Being a single child she was brought up with utmost care and love, she was given immense freedom. But still she had secrets to hide, secrets of her drinking times.

2. They all shopped, sometimes window shopping, at others they shopped in real, but more than once they would shop online. It was hard to resist, with all those pretty dresses popping up on the ad window screens now and then. But the biggest problem was always the occasions to wear those pretty dresses. There were not many comfortable occasions to wear them. They couldn't make those dresses a part of their daily routine and it definitely turned heads when they wore it even amongst their own friends.

3. Reading the bollywood updates was the best time of the day for her. The tabloid world so colourful and spicy added colours to her boring life. But sometimes when the cover page ad had an underdressed female star it was a bit more than embarrassing to pick the paper from the common reading table at office. There was always a hesitation of who is watching what you pick from the common table.

4. There was a stir when they read the local news that day. Hidden in one corner was the news of abduction and rape of a well educated working girl, if that wasn't shocking enough they read the otherwise regarded safe and secure route of abduction. It was their daily commute route to office.

5. The first time it happened she got a bit confused....and then after some time it happen again. Another autowala while returning change pressed the change real hard in her hand, he actually held her hand for fraction of a second. From then on she preferred a close catch for the change, keeping her hand a bit low so that their hands don't actually come in contact.

6. He turned back once, he turned twice the third time he turned again she got a bit scared. Nevertheless she kept on walking, it was a dark lane but it was a shortcut to her house. She now regretted for choosing the shortcut. But then he stood there just like that for some time waiting, as if waiting for her to cross. She tried to prepare herself mentally for an attack. But as she took the turn she saw.....she saw a drunk man who was trying to balance himself on his twos. As she past him the other guy stood guard and waited till she entered the community gate.

7. She rarely missed the regular office bus.....rarely.....not that she had to be in office dot at 8:20 am every day, not that her boss was a hitler , also not that her job was a really relaxed one where she never had to stay back late. But if you stay back late the office provided late night cabs but the timings for the morning bus was fixed. Sharp at 7:30 am. If she missed it she would have to take an auto and getting into an auto would mean uncomfortable stares, an awkward touch and sometimes unfair charges.

8. She had tried for the Police Services twice when she couldn't get through she applied for the Security Services. She cleared all the stages one after the other the written exam, the physical test, the interview and the medical but now was the biggest test of telling everyone else because she had to go for a six months training. Her father had rejected her plea before so this time it was time she told her husband. She tried to lie but when her husband got to know the truth he was furious and left the house. When he returned after two hours he asked "what do you want to do?" she said "i want to go", he said "ok go then, the hard work shouldn't be wasted".

9. Changing trains is always difficult, trying to locate the correct platform, finding a coolie, bargaining the exorbitant prices, walking those long platforms.....She finally found a place and sat on the platform bench with her mother. Hardly five minutes had past and at a distance of 6 foot from where they sat two men in their late twenties/ early thirties started talking to each other. Then they started to talk and stare, talk and stare, talk and stare, at first she tried to ignore but then it became evident she was the point of their discussion and amusement. She shouted loud from her bench " kya problem kya hai aapko?", they didn't reply she shouted again " kya ladki nahi dekhi kya? problem kya hai?" they quickly left

10. They had been tricked, they were charged the full fare and promised good seats but had been forced to adjust in the small cabin area of the bus. The small space had to be shared with 7-8 others. He sat opposite to them in a squarish seating design. It was around 12 in the night. She was half asleep when he started touching his foot with hers, she got startled, she moved her leg, after sometimes again he repeated this time to her shock he smirked. She looked at her sister, and they used their secret language to communicate. Her sister realised it was not a matter of mistake now, she was facing the same issue a while ago. They told their father, the man clearly denied all blames, but the shouting of the family in the closed bus made him scared internally. He was moved to another seat at the back of the bus.

11. She looked at him and smiled just before looking at the auto driver. The auto driver in turn looked at the back seat and called one of the two guys to sit on tiny front seat with him. She sat with him comfortably to the end of their journey.

Sequencing of selected stories:

After collecting the stories i tried various ways of sequencing to check if the incidents could together tell a story. This helped me arrive at my final story.

Some of the initial story sequences are as below:

Aligning the stories to check their natural flow:

she rarely missed the regular office bus.....rarely.....not that she had to be in office dot at 8:20 am every day, not that her boss was a hitler , also not that her job was a really relaxed one where she never had to stay back late. But if you stay back late the office provided late night cabs but the timings for the morning bus was fixed. Sharp at 7:30 am. If she missed it she would have to take an auto

The first time it happened she got a bit confused....and then after some time it happen again. Another autowala while returning change pressed the change real hard in her hand, he actually held her hand for fraction of a second. From then on she preferred a close catch for the change, keeping her hand a bit low so that their hands don't actually come in contact.

She looked at him and smiled just before looking at the auto driver. He in turn looked at the back seat and called one of the two guys to sit on tiny front seat with him.

they all shopped, sometimes window shopping, at others they shopped in real, but more than once they would shop online. It was hard to resist, with all those pretty dresses popping up on the ad window screens now and then. but the biggest problem was always the occasions to wear those pretty dresses. there were not many comfortable occasions to wear them. they couldn't make those dresses a part of their daily routine.

reading the bollywood updates was the best time of the day for her. The tabloid world so colourful and spicy added colours to her imaginary life.

But sometimes when the cover page ad had an underdressed female star it was a bit more than embarrassing to pick the paper from the common reading table.

she had tried for the Police Services twice when she couldn't get through she applied for the Security Services. She cleared all the stages one after the other the written exam, the physical test, the interview and the medical but now was the biggest test of telling everyone else because she had to go for a six months training. Her father had rejected her plea before so this time it was time she told her husband. She tried to lie but when her husband got to know the truth he was furious. When he returned after two hours he asked "what do you want to do?" she said "i want to go", he said "ok go then, the hard work shouldn't go waste".

Changing trains is always difficult, trying to locate the correct platform, finding a coolie, bargaining the exorbitant prices, walking those long platforms.....She finally found a place and sat on the platform bench with her mother. Hardly five minutes had past and at a distance of 6 foot from where they sat two men in their late twenties/ early thirties started talking to each other. Then they started to talk and stare, talk and stare, talk and stare, at first she tried to ignore but then it became evident she was the point of their discussion and amusement. She shouted loud from her bench " kya problem kya hai aapko?", they didn't reply she shouted again " kya ladki nahi dekhi kya? problem kya hai?" they quickly left

He turned back once, he turned twice the third time he turned again she got a bit scared. Nevertheless she kept on walking, it was a dark lane but it was a shortcut to her house. She now regretted for choosing the shortcut. But then he stood there just like that for some time waiting, as if waiting for her to cross. She tried to prepare herself mentally for an attack. But as she took the turn she saw.....she saw a drunk man who was trying to balance himself on his twos. As she past him the other young guy stood guard and waited till she entered the community gate.

Final Story

Aarti knew she was late.....not too late but late enough. She rushed out of her house and ran towards the bus stand. She was almost there when zoom the bus went off. She ran behind it for some distance but too late. She let out a sigh..... she went back to the auto stand and got into one of the standing autos. He stared at her, she looked and tried to ignore but he didn't look away. She quickly took out a scarf from her bag and wrapped around her face. The auto stopped in front of her office. She got down from the auto and handed the autowala the money and waited for the change. She put her hand forward for him to return the change. He put the change on her hand and squeezed her hand. She withdrew her hand immediately, he smirked and drove off. (cut) Scene 1 ends but the next scene continues on a roadside a girl is seen standing

Vidya was waiting for the auto when she heard someone call her, she turned around said "Vikram, hey Hi how are you?" Vikram "i am good, you waiting for the auto?" just then an auto arrived. She waved and signalled it to stop. She went closer to the auto (the same auto from scene 1) and looked at the backseat, there were two men already sitting inside, just then Vikram came closer to her, the autowala signalled one of the men to come and sit next to him in the front seat. Vikram got in first, she next and they both got down at the office. (cut)

Scene 2 ends but cuts to a reading/ breakout area in an office

Vidya was feeling restless, she had been wanting to read the bollywood times since morning but uff today's cover page.....these people just dont know what to put even on the newspaper, its so embarrassing to pick a newspaper like that in public. She made another attempt, she went slowly looked around and quickly grabbed the paper from the stand. There you go, oh those filmy updates and gossips how i missed them she thought. (cut)

Scene 3 transitions into Scene 4 camera moves from Vidya to Aarti

Aarti went and sat beside her, picked up another newspaper lying on the table and started reading it, she leaned a bit forward to read it more intently, She gasped, at the location of the abduction. (cut)

Scene 4 dissolves from a location in Aarti's thoughts to the dark alley in Scene 5

He (Vikram) turned back once, he turned twice the third time he turned again she(Aarti) got a bit scared. Nevertheless she kept on walking, it was a dark lane but it was a shortcut to her house.

She now regretted for choosing the shortcut. But then he stood there just like that for some time waiting, as if waiting for her to cross. She tried to prepare herself mentally for an attack. But as she took the turn she saw..... she saw a drunk man who was trying to balance himself on his twos. As she past him the other young guy stood guard and waited till she entered the community gate.

Script for the final Story:

Scene 1: Scene of a house and the situation of someone getting ready to go outside the house

shot 1: Interior of a house. People moving in silhouettes. In focus a bag on the table. A fast hand action pulls it in a swoop

shot 2: Sound of footsteps like running. The door is shown closing with a bang sound

shot 3: External street scene a bus drives past the screen, semi fast speed.

shot 4: A woman(Aarti) running behind the passing bus (in perspective) she screams "Waitttttttt!"

shot5: Slow zoom into Aarti's face where she is looking sad.

Scene 2: This scene spans from Aarti boarding the auto rickshaw till the time she gets down in front of her office.

shot 1: A queue to the auto rickshaws people standing in a line.

shot 2: closeup of an auto rickshaw

shot 3: Aarti bends to look inside the auto rickshaw to see two men sitting inside it. The space remaining for her to sit is very less.

shot 4: She gets into the rickshaw finding it difficult to fit.

shot 5: The auto rickshaw starts moving

shot 6: a front shot showing the man sitting beside Aarti staring at her.

shot 7: Aarti looks at the man and then she looks away

shot 8: The auto driver is shown looking at Aarti through the rare view mirror

shot 9: The man is still staring at Aarti.

shot 10: Aarti looks at the man through the corner of her eyes without turning her head. Pulls a scarf from her bag and wraps it around her face.

Scene 3: The scene is about the interaction between Aarti and the auto

driver

shot 1: Roadside side view an auto stops and Aarti gets down the auto

shot 2: closeup shot of the auto driver putting out his hand and Aarti drops the money from a distance in his hand.

shot 3: Auto drivers hand putting back change in Aarti's hand. The camera first shows the two hands are at a height apart but then slowly the auto drivers hand keeps coming near Aarti's hand and he drops the change and then touches her hand.

shot 4: Aarti's eyes go big in shock. She looks up at the auto driver.

shot 5: The auto driver gives a sly smile, turns his head in front. The sound of acceleration.

shot 6: the auto is shown going in perspective while Aarti still stands there like a statue with her hand holding the change.

Scene 4: The same auto that dropped Aarti comes to another stand where Vidya is standing with her friend Vikram.

shot 1: a girl (Vidya) is shown standing on a roadside from behind

shot 2: a guy (Vikram) calls her " hey" she turns around

shot 3: closeup shot of the Vidya and Vikram talking

Vidya: "Vikram, hey Hi how are you?"

Vikram: "i am good, you waiting for the auto?"

shot 4: just then an auto arrives. the frame shows the auto stops near Vidya and Vikram is a bit behind her.

shot 5: The auto driver (same as before) is looking at Vidya when Vikram comes and stand next to her.

shot 6: The auto driver whistles and a man from the back seat comes and sits next to the auto driver in the front.

shot 7: Sitting sequence backseat left to right: the other man, Vikram and Vidya.

shot 8: Vidya and Vikram look at each other and smile.

Scene 5: An office breakout area scene

shot 1: A newspaper hanging from a stand. Silhouettes of people walking past the stand. Picking other newspapers.
shot 2: a hand goes to pick that newspaper but withdraws
shot 3: closeup of Vidya's eye's looking here and there as if checking if anyone is around.
shot 4: a closeup of a hand that quickly tucks the paper off the clip.
shot 5: Vidya lets out a sigh in relief
shot 6: quick overturning of the front page. Then pausing at a page with girls wearing pretty dresses.
shot 7: shot dissolves into a dreamy face of Vidya.
shot 8: she is seen dreaming of a day out with girls in a dress from the newspaper.

Scene 6: Vidya and Aarti are working in the same office as colleagues.

shot 1: Vidya is seen looking up and smiling in a dreamy way. When the camera pans and we see Aarti sitting next to her.
shot 2: A closeup shot of her looking at the newspaper
shot 3: the camera now shows the closeup of the newspaper. And zooms into the headlines "Woman abducted on her way to office"
shot 4: closeup of Aarti's almost teary eyes. as flashback from the morning auto experience appear in her head

Scene 7: The scene comprises of a dark lane which Aarti takes to go back to home

shot 1: Mid shot of Aarti with her head down is seen walking
shot 2: A perspective view of the long dark alley in which Aarti is walking.
shot 3: she looks at her watch and says "let me take the shortcut i will reach

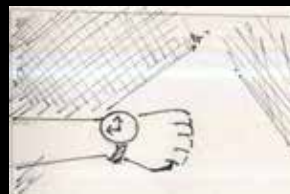
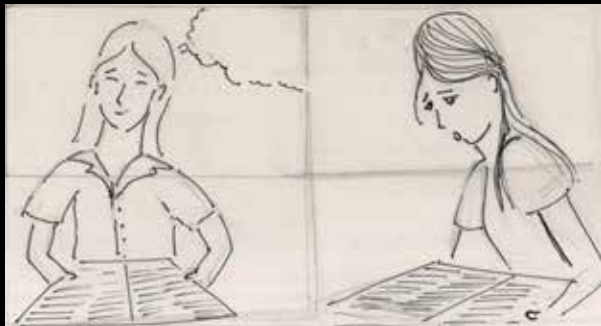
faster"

shot 4: a guy walking in front of Vidya. Smoke coming from his silhouette.
shot 5: Vikram turns (its day end, his half shirt is out, hair ruffled and he has a cigarette in his hand. the prim and proper morning office look is gone he looks more like a ruffian) looks and continues walking.
shot 6: Closeup of Aarti's eyes as she checks for people around her. She continues to walk.
shot 7: Vikram turns back again then turns around and keeps walking.
shot 8: Aarti looks up and her eye brows change into a sign of worry.
shot 9: Aarti sees Vikram going beyond the turn and he disappears.
shot 10: Aarti takes the turn to see a drunk man standing there wobbly.
shot 11: Vikram steps closer to the drunk man
shot 12: Aarti quickly walks past Vikram and the drunk man.
shot 13: She turns back while opening the community gate.
shot 14: she sees Vikram going back
shot 15: Aarti smiles to herself
end

Story Thumbnailing

After the initial script a quick thumbnailing of the whole story was done to for visualization before moving on to the storyboard.



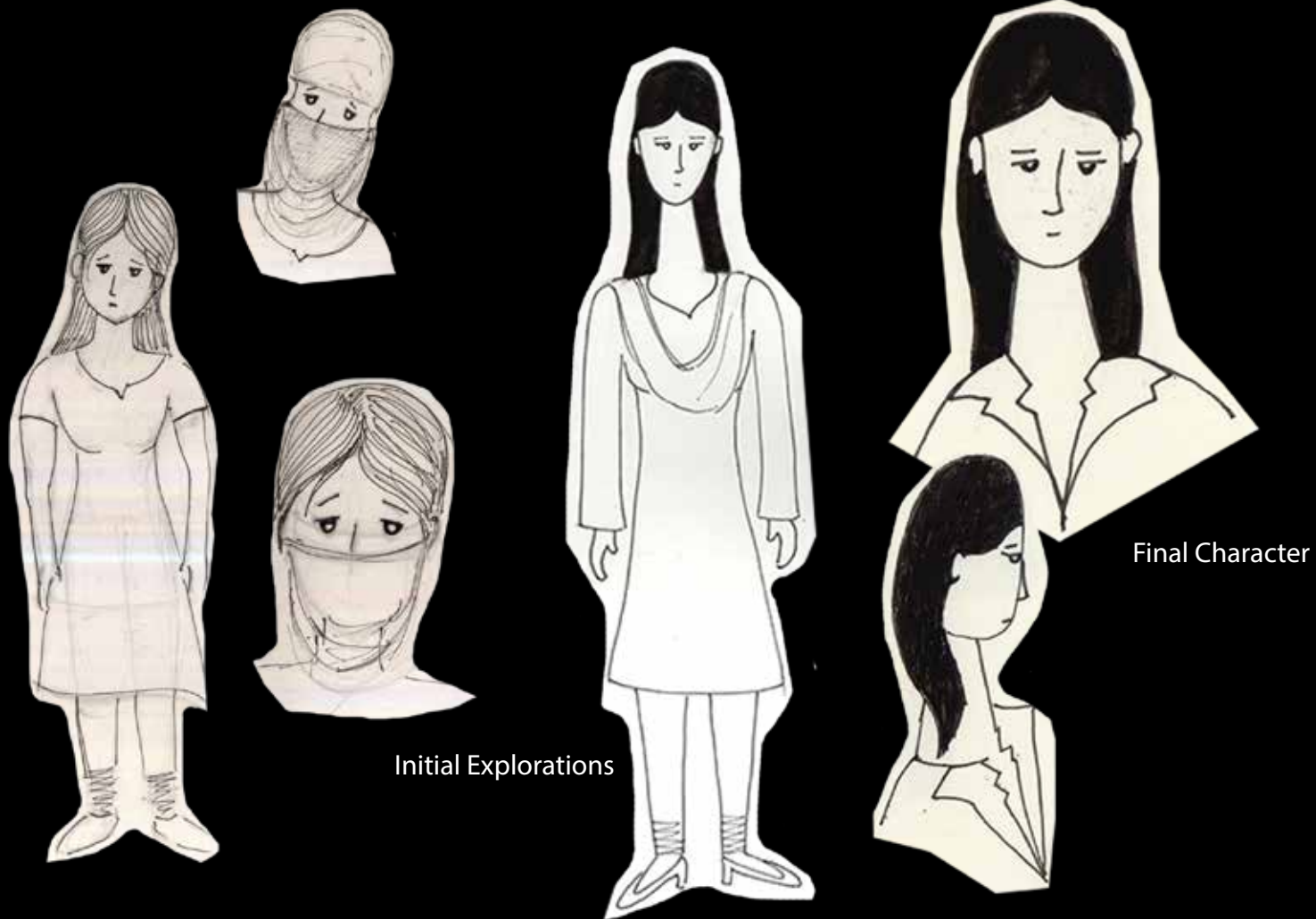


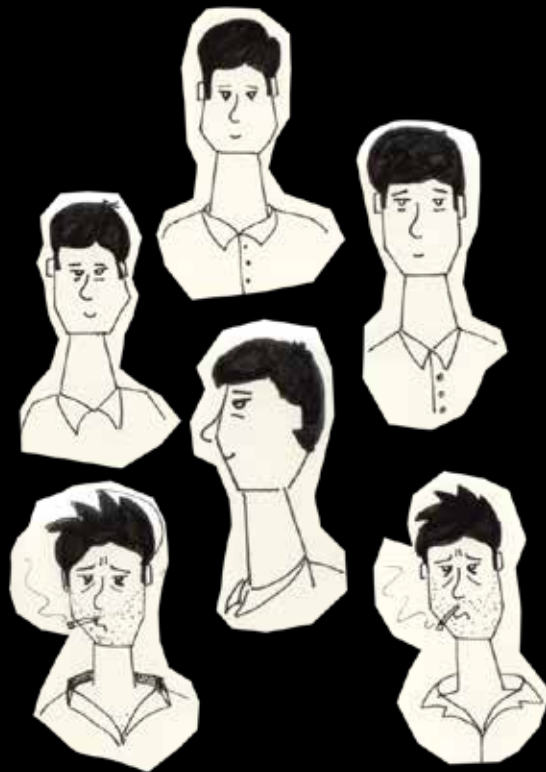
Character Design

When I initially began designing characters I was quite lost. I was unable to understand how to design simple enough characters for an animation film which had a story so close to live action films. However over a few discussions with my Guide we realised that the film could be very well represented in a comic book style. I then started to look at a few comic books and their character style and got influenced by the film and the book Persipolis. This helped me evolve the characters one by one. The structure and the balance of black and white in the characters was exactly what I wanted in my characters. As the story demands I then designed six different characters each of which has been described in the next few pages.

Aarti

Aarti is the main protagonist in the film. She has a pretty face and a shy nature. She works in a multinational company in Hyderabad. Her family stays in Rajasthan hence she stays in a shared flat.





Initial Explorations

Vikram is a 27 years old guy also working in a multi-national company. However Vikram is not very happy with his work life and for him office has become an everyday struggle.



Vidya

Final Character

Initial Explorations

Vidya is a confident independent woman. Also working in a multinational company. She is smart and quick witted. She is a die heart bollywood fan and loves the fancy lifestyle of the tinsel town.



Final Character



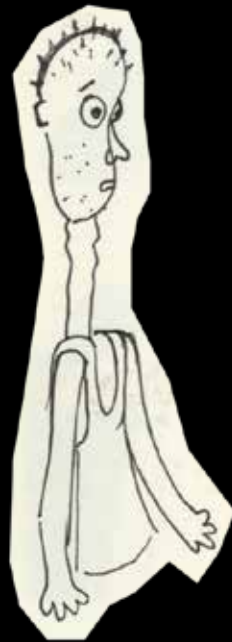
Initial Explorations



Auto Driver



Auto Driver is a decent looking person with a crooked mind. Passengers are unable to percieve his hidden intensions .



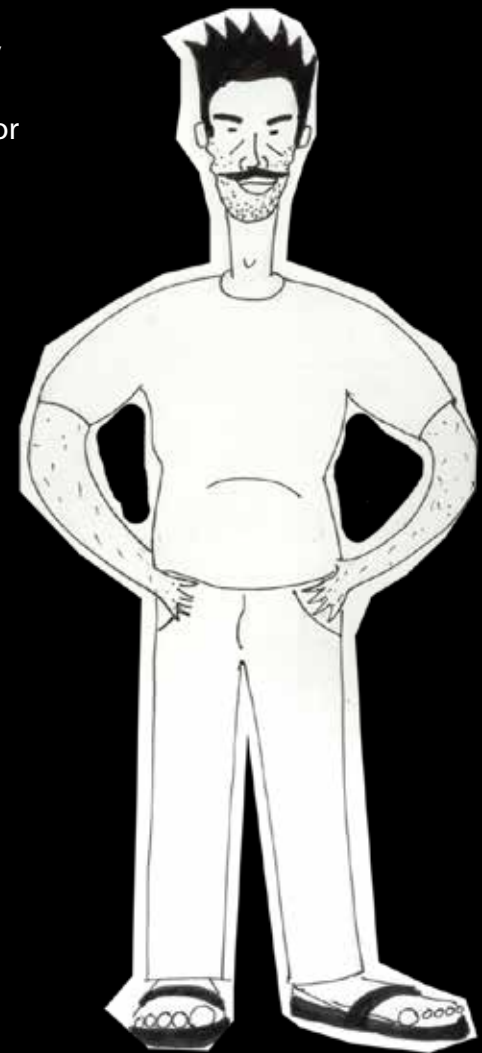
Drunkard

A lonely man who drowns his misery in bottles of alcohol. Often found randomly approaching and scaring people in his semi concious state.



THE Starer

THE Starer as the name suggests is one amongst those millions of oglers who just keep staring and make you feel uncomfortable. They are universally found at least in India and hence can be rooted to a particular name, cast or region.



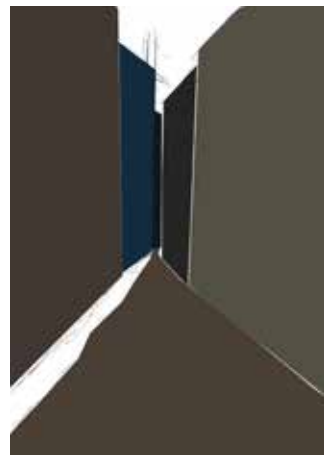
Concept Art



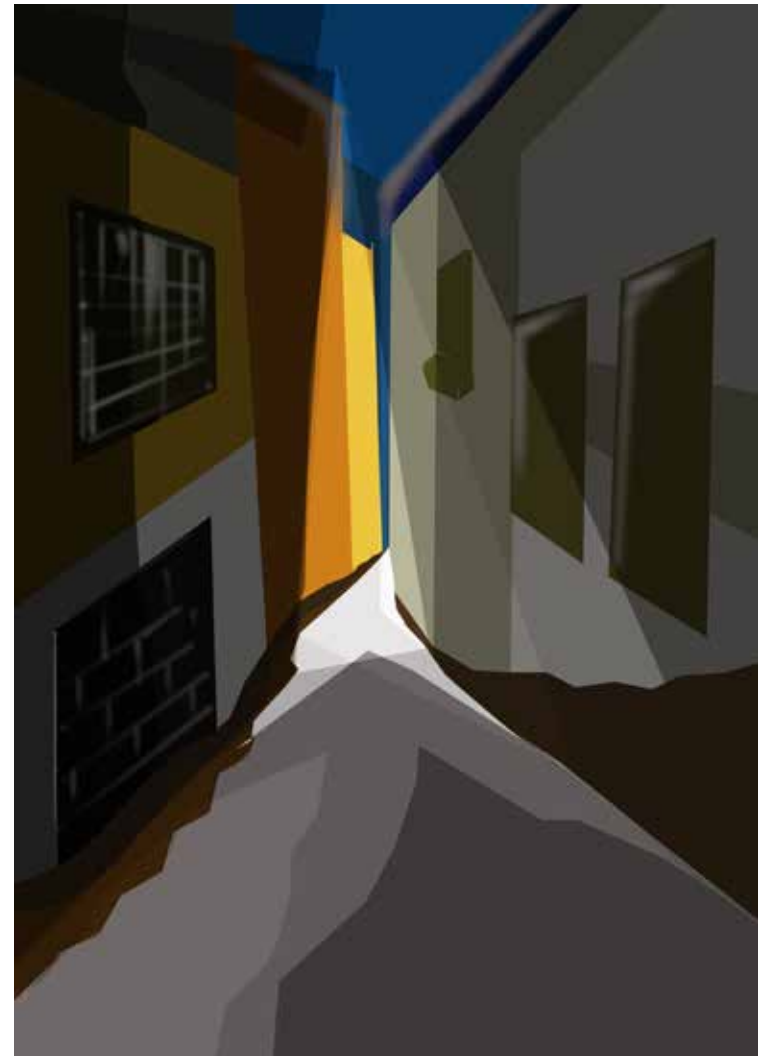
Initial digital sketch of the background done in photoshop



Tried a digital painterly style for the background



Started laying solid colours on the outlines



Laying out layers to indicate light and shadow.

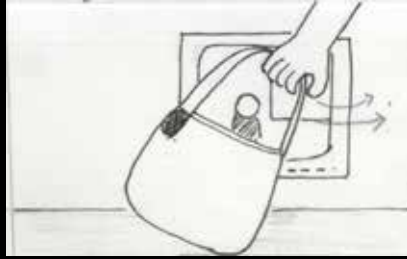


The solid colour backgrounds were multiplied with texture and the effect of lighting was observed by changing saturation levels.

Storyboard



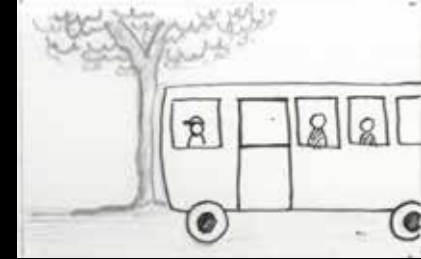
Location: Interior of a house
Sound: NTV: Aur abhi abhi mili ek khabar ke anusar ekkis varshi ek mahila pe hua jaan lewa humla



Location : interior of a house
Sound: sound of foot steps
Dialogue: Anu Anuuu.....main ja rahi hoon!



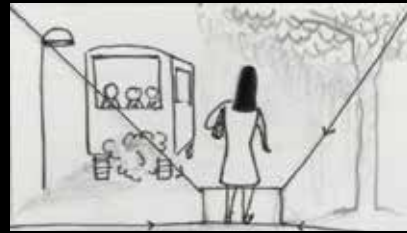
Location : interior of a house
Sound: door banging and footsteps
Dialogue: Murmur of late ho gaya late ho gaya! !



Location : Bus stand
Sound: bus going off
Dialogue: Shit shit shit wait plz.....!



Location : Bus stand
Sound: bus going off
Dialogue: Hey heyy....



Location : Bus stand
Sound: distant sound of bus
Dialogue: everyday same fight.....!



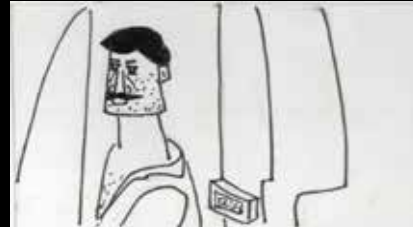
Location : Bus stand
Sound: shuffle of feet



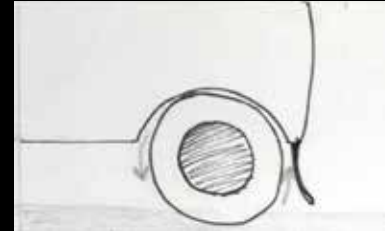
Location : Bus stand
Sound: sighh.....
Dialogue: aab shared auto mein dhakkey khatay hue jana padega



Location : Shared Auto stand
 Sound: people murmuring while waiting for the auto
 Dialogue: yahan bhi line.....!



Location : Shared Auto stand
 Sound: people murmuring while waiting for the auto
 Dialogue: ye autowala.... chadhun ki nai....



Location : Auto stand
 Sound: Sound of auto and passing traffic
 Dialogue: office ke liye late ho jayega



Location : Auto
 Sound: Sound of auto and passing traffic
 Dialogue:
 Starer: yaar mast dikti hai bey!
 Aarti: Pagal aadmi ghur raha hai



Location : Auto
 Sound: continuous auto sound and a swish sound
 Dialogue:
 Autowala: Kaun hai zara main bhi toh dekhun



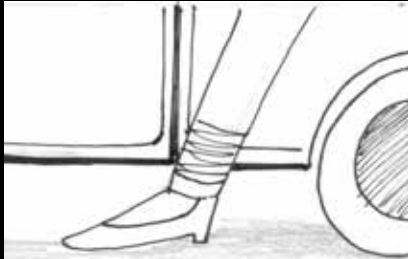
Location : Auto
 Sound: Sound of auto and passing traffic
 Dialogue:
 Starer: kash ek baar mil jaye !
 Aarti: Kya hai??



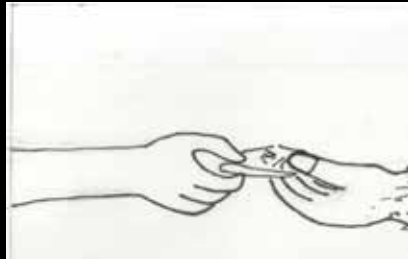
Location : Auto
 Sound: Sound of auto and passing traffic
 Dialogue:
 Starer: Hahaha chehra chupa liya
 Aarti: Aaab dekh bewakoof!



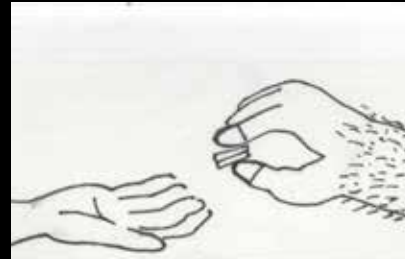
Location : Auto
 Sound: Sound of auto and passing traffic
 Dialogue:
 Starer: Giggles
 Aarti: kya musibat hai ek din bhi bus miss nahi kar sakti.....



Location : Just outside the Auto
Sound: background traffic noise



Location : Just outside the Auto
Sound: background traffic noise



Location : Just outside the Auto
Sound: background traffic noise
Dialogue:
Aarti: why is he so slow.....!



Location : Just outside the Auto
Sound: background traffic noise
Dialogue:
Autodriver: Aise nahi madam.....!
Aarti: Gasp and a low
whatttt.....



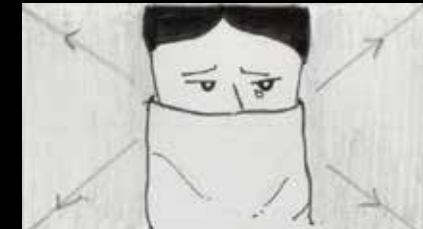
Location : Just outside the Auto
Sound: background traffic noise
Dialogue:
Aarti: did he really??? i mean
how could he...
I cant think my head is spinning



Location : Just outside the Auto
Sound: increase in the
background traffic noise
Dialogue:
Autodriver : Ha ha ha ha!!Ha ha
ha ha!!Ha ha ha ha!!



Location : Road side
Sound: Sound of the auto going
off



Location : Road side
Sound: Low background traffic
Dialogue:
Aarti: sniff...snif....what do they
get but doing such things



Location : Road side
 Sound: Low background traffic
 Dialogue:
 Aarti: i feel so dirty



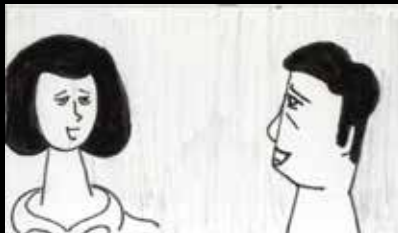
Location : Road side
 Sound: Low background traffic
 Dialogue:
 Aarti: filthy creature.....
 cheeee , how dare he
 touched me



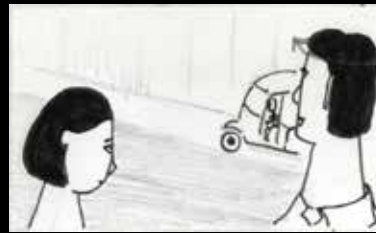
Location : Another Road side
 location
 Sound: Low background traffic



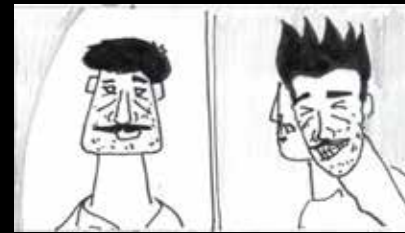
Location : Another Road side
 location
 Sound: Low background traffic
 Dialogue:
 Vikram: Hi Vidya



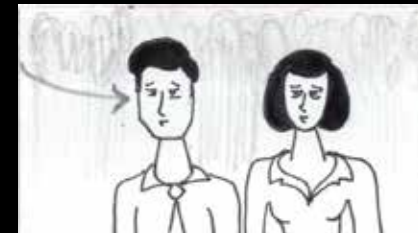
Location : Another Road side
 location
 Sound: Low background traffic
 Dialogue:
 Vidya: Hey Vikram, how are you



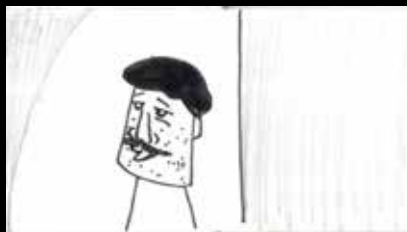
Location : Another Road side
 location
 Sound: Low background traffic
 Dialogue:
 Vikram: Going to office and here
 comes the auto



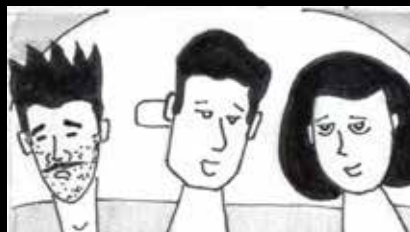
Location : Another Road side
 location
 Sound: Low background traffic
 Dialogue:
 Autowala and Starer: Oh ho
 Angreezi meem



Location : Another Road side
 location
 Sound: Low background traffic
 Dialogue:
 Vikram: Thanks for Vidya i'll get to
 sit in the back seat, he he he he!!



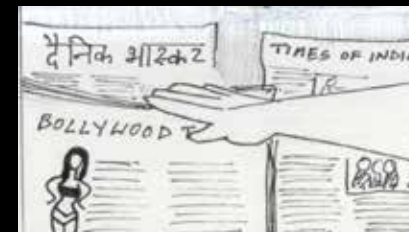
Location : Inside the Auto
 Sound: background traffic
 Dialogue:
 Autodriver: whistles, sala ladki
 ke saath hai iseliye peeche
 bathana padega



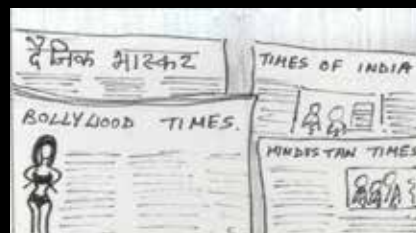
Location : Inside the auto
 Sound: background traffic
 Dialogue:
 Starer: kya natak hai yaar ye
 kabab mein haddi kahan se
 aa gaya, !
 Vidya: see i told you all coz of me
 he he



Location : Office Cafeteria
 Sound: people talking
 Dialogue:
 general murmur aaj kal sab
 jagha wahi khabar/ aur ye
 dekho !
 itney chotey kapdey !/



Location : Office Cafeteria
 Sound: people talking
 Dialogue:
 Vidya: kaise uthaun paper, itney
 saarey log, !
 koi dekhega toh kya sochega



Location : Office Cafeteria
 Sound: people talking
 Dialogue:
 Vidya: ye paper wale bhi na front
 page pe aise pics kyun
 daltey hain yaar



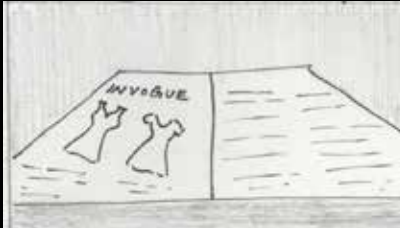
Location : Office Cafeteria
 Sound: people talking
 Dialogue:
 Vidya: so embarrassing.....its
 relatively free now



Location : Office Cafeteria
 Sound: people talking
 Dialogue:
 Vidya: pick up fast vidya pick it up



Location : Office Cafeteria
 Sound: people talking
 Dialogue:
 Vidya: yes!!! finally



Location : Office Cafeteria
 Sound: low sound of people talking
 Dialogue:
 Vidya: Oh man look at those dresses, so pretty



Location : Office Cafeteria
 Sound: low sound of people talking
 Dialogue:
 Vidya: i wish i had this dress/ haan aur pehnegi kahan pagli? !
 Goaaa....



Location : Dreamy transition to teh beaches of goa
 Sound: low sound of people talking
 Dialogue:
 Vidya: hehehe



Location : Office Cafeteria
 Sound: low sound of people talking
 Dialogue:
 Aarti: arey look at that girl sitting alone and smiling



Location : Office Cafeteria
 Sound: low sound of people talking
 Dialogue:
 Aarti: Whattt!!!!



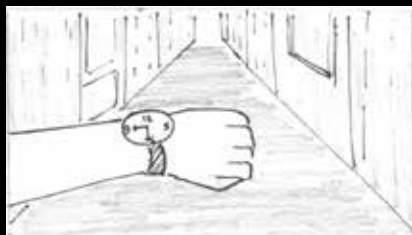
Location : Office Cafeteria
 Sound: low sound of people talking
 Dialogue:
 Aarti: such bastards, rakshash kahinka



Location : Office Cafeteria
 Sound: low sound of people talking
 Dialogue:
 Aarti: Aur wo tarki kya mil jata hai inko chune se



Location : Office Cafeteria
 Sound: low sound of people talking
 Dialogue:
 Aarti: humey kaisa lag hai kisiko nahi pata



Location : Dark lane
 Sound: Sound of night
 Dialogue:
 Aarti: Aaaj phir late ho gaya yaar



Location : Dark lane
 Sound: Sound of night
 Dialogue:
 Aarti: Shortcut se jaldi pahuch jaungi



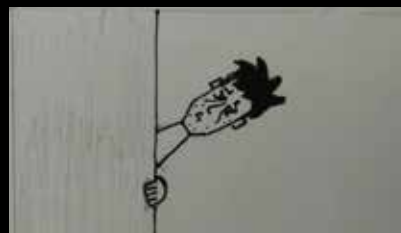
Location : Dark lane
 Sound: Sound of night
 Dialogue:
 Aarti: ye admi.....



Location : Dark lane
 Sound: Sound of night
 Dialogue:
 Aarti: achanak kyun chal pada....



Location : Dark lane
 Sound: Sound of night
 Dialogue:
 Aarti: Jaldi se gali par karle Aarti kuch nahi koga



Location : Dark lane
 Sound: Sound of night
 Dialogue:
 Vikram: Aaa rahi hai kya.....



Location : Dark lane
 Sound: Sound of night
 Dialogue:
 Aarti: kya kar kya raha hai yeh



Location : Dark lane
 Sound: Sound of night
 Dialogue:
 Aarti: koi aur hai kya aas pass



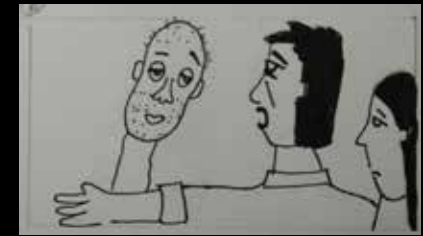
Location : Dark lane
 Sound: Sound of night
 Dialogue:
 Aarti:kya karun.....daud ke
 pachuch jaungi



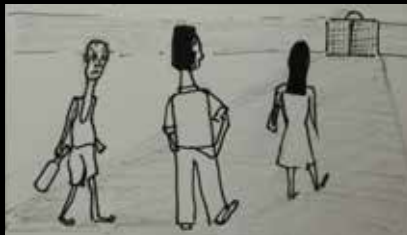
Location : Dark lane
 Sound: Sound of night
 Dialogue:
 Aarti: Loud Gasp....
 Drunkard: Main tera hero.....



Location : Dark lane
 Sound: Sound of night
 Dialogue:
 Aarti: pee rakhi hai isene.....kya
 karun bhagwan
 Drunkard: Loudly madam Main
 tera hero.....



Location : Dark lane
 Sound: Sound of night
 Dialogue:
 Vikram: Ruko.....!!
 You please leave fast



Location : Dark lane
 Sound: Sound of night
 Dialogue:
 Aarti: fast fast faster.....!!
 Thank you God thank you.....



Location : Dark lane
 Sound: Sound of night
 Dialogue:
 Drunkard: sala sabke life mein hero
 hai.....meri meri hi
 life.....!!
 Aarti: Is he still standing??!!
 Vikram: Thank god i was there....!



Location : Dark lane
 Sound: Sound of night
 Dialogue:
 Aarti: I couldn't even thank him....!
 Vikram:at least something
 good
 happened today.

Techniques

The technique followed from the very beginning till now has been described in details in the previous pages. Which was mainly started from selecting a topic to the research, story explorations, story thumb nailing, characters design, concept art to story boarding. This now leads me to the process of beginning animation.

The animation of the whole film I intend to do on paper and pencil. Where the method may vary as pose to pose for a few shots to straight ahead in some. I do not intend to restrict to any one particular animation method and go along with as the shot/ scene demands. The cleanup for each scene will be pencil cleanup which will then be transferred to a digital medium for ink and paint. I intend to use the software Toon Boom or TV paint for the digital inking of the images.

A few samples of the background have been shown in the section of concept art and hence the backgrounds will be made digitally on photoshop. A few scenes may require a reference image for the background and it will be used appropriately. I want to especially explore the lighting aspect for the backgrounds as the film has been spaced and located at different times of the day. A part of the lighting will be managed in the image itself and the rest during the process of compositing in the software After Effects.

There was a lot of deliberation as to if the film should have a narration or a third persons view. A few different narrations were written and discussed and then it was realised that since the film is a very experiential film a representation of the voices in the head would give a good feel to the film. Hence the whole film will have different voices as they speak in the heads of the characters while they interact with each others.

There are scenes in the film which might require some form of dramatic emphasis which will be represented using background themes and music, the other scenes of the film might require various folly sounds to create the ambience of the scene.

All techniques mentioned above have been described in understand with the pre production process achieved till now and the understanding of the process of animation as studied. If required the method and the process might change when the film is being animated.

Learnings and Feedbacks

Although it has been one and a half years now that i have been enrolled in the field of Animation and Film making, I won't hesitate to say that this field is still very new to me and i am learning each and every day. Hence the project till now has taught me a lot. The project lead me to the understanding of the whole preproduction process of animation film making. Starting from the process of research where i got an opportunity to meet and talk to different people and listened to their opinion about a topic concerning the whole nation ,to understanding some really major issues. I started writing different stories and understood how difficult it was to write an effective and good story. I also looked into various ways to tell the story effectively, the initial idea was to tell a parallel narrative where people have different experiences and how can one persons experience flow into another. Over several discussions with my Guide we discussed how the story can be just people telling their experiences to just visuals with no voices, where the audience just experiences things silently.

During the several presentations made for this project lot of feedback received from faculty and friends some being in the lines of character design and how not everyone looks and does the same things. How even a sly looking person can turn out to be very helpful and how a decent looking person can be very mean.

One main feedback received during the initial stages of the story was to focus not just on the problem and the pain of the people but to provide an urge for other to get up and do something. As the increasing number of issues and problem in our society have made us somewhat comfortable and habituated us to live with it. People need to be reminded from time to time of what they can do and also that they need to do something.

The film is spanned across a whole day hence the film demands to have an effective change to lighting to show the same. Also there are several mood and situational changes faced by the different characters throughout the day. Hence it was suggested to explore techniques of lighting for each scene in the best possible way.

Although the character design was inspired by the comic novel style, animation for the film looked more challenging. The film has various scenes which cannot be achieved through one method of animation. Hence it was suggested that i try out straight ahead as well as pose to pose form of animation. The animation style may even vary from scene to scene.

Production

Feedback and Changes

The preproduction process was presented to a jury of seven. The feedback of the jury was as follows:

- Too many characters in the movie made it a bit confusing as the duration of the movie was below 5 minutes.
- The voice track of the movie had too many dialogues which left lesser space for audience interpretation.
- The end of the story didn't fit very well with the theme of the story and it diluted to impact of the story.

The following sections explain how each of these feedbacks was further worked upon. Since the feedbacks required changes in the story and characters a part of the preproduction process had to be redone to fit in the changes.

Revised Story

The film opens in a cafe where four girls are sitting and having a conversation. Describing various incidences of eve teasing that they have heard of. While the three girls on the table narrate stories and experiences one girl Aarti, doesn't say anything. The camera goes into a closeup of Aarti and then dissolves into a scene of her sitting in an auto rickshaw. The voices from the conversations of the other girls go on. As the voices in the cafeteria describe their own experiences Aarti keeps having thoughts of things that have happened to her that made her feel uncomfortable. Flashback of a stranger staring at her in the auto rickshaw, the auto driver looking at her through the rear view mirror and trying to touch her hand while returning the change. All keep coming back to her. The scene once again comes back to the cafeteria where the girls continue talking. And once again Aarti starts thinking how the incidences from the auto rickshaw had disturbed her mind and how she hallucinated the face of the starrer from the auto rickshaw and the driver into her office colleague's face.

The story at this point represents the mental disturbance caused in Aarti's mind due to that particular incident. Also how the conversations the girls have throughout the film are parts of their own experiences but in each of them Aarti finds herself. This is because the incidences described have been experienced by women of all ages in India sometime or the other.

The film continues to show Aarti's hesitations and shyness due to her fear of being judged by the people around her. Even when she overcomes her fear of being judged by the people in the immediate surroundings she finds herself being overwhelmed by the judgemental thoughts that she has been experiencing throughout her life.

As the girls leave the cafeteria and walk away Aarti keeps looking back again and again to check for her safety.

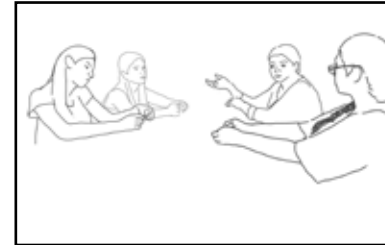
Revised Story



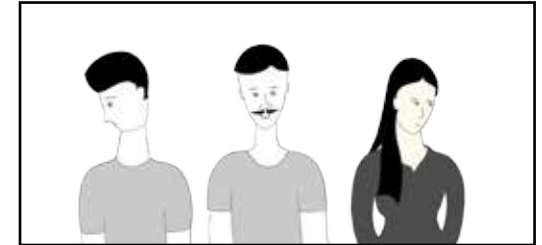
Narration of incidences: "Ek baar....."



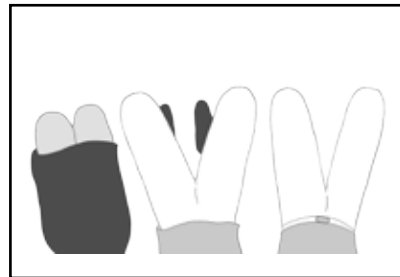
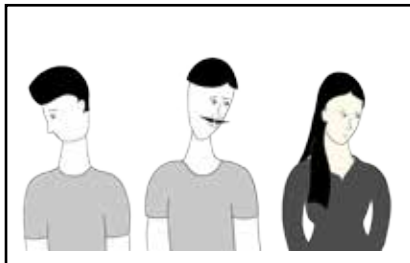
"Toh wo peeche mudke oppose kar di"



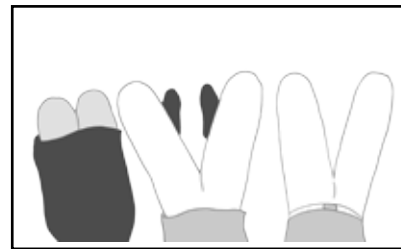
Narration continues



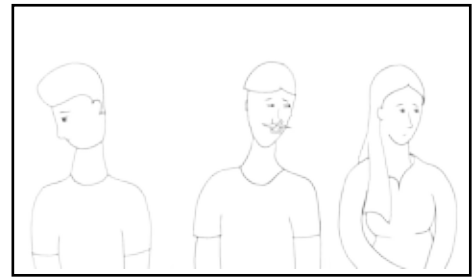
Establishing auto scene where the man checks out the girl sitting beside him



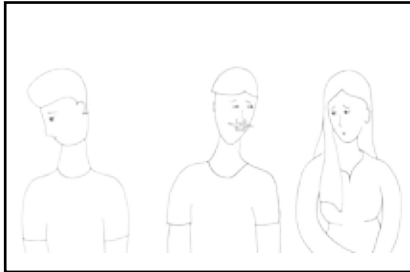
Top view of how guys sit in the suto spreading their legs leaving lesser space for girls



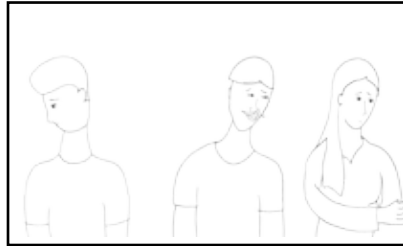
This also leads to intentional or unintentional touching of legs



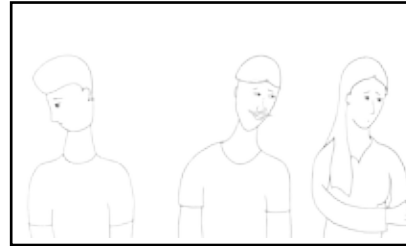
The starrer staring at Aarti



He comes and sits very close to her she looks back at him



.....and moves to the corner of the seat in the auto



The starrer still kepps staring at her



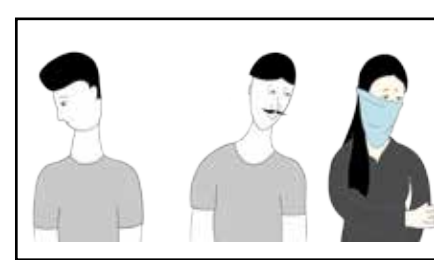
on the other hand the auto driver is checking Aarti out in the mirror



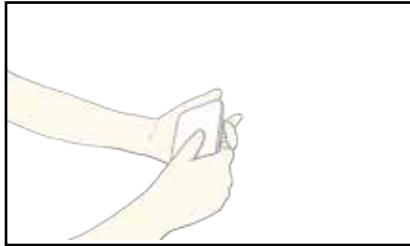
she notices this



and left with no choice covers her face with a scarf



The starrer is sadistically amused at her discomfort



back to the cafeteria these thoughts are causing anxiety in Aarti and she fidgets with her phone



and taps her feet impatiently



midshot of Aarti



While her friend's leg touches hers by mistake

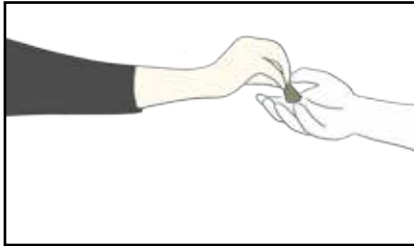


She gets shocked and scared as she is still in her thoughts

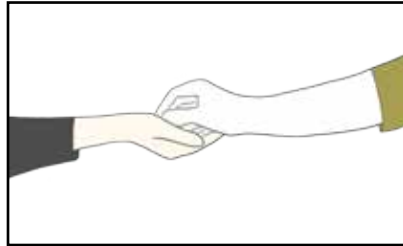


Dissolves into the auto scene where Aarti gets down the auto

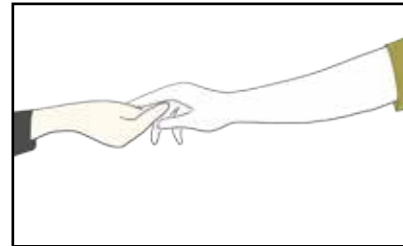




She hands over the change to the Auto guy



and puts out her hand to take back the change



The auto driver subtly touches her hand



She gets a feeling of disgust



.....and discomfort



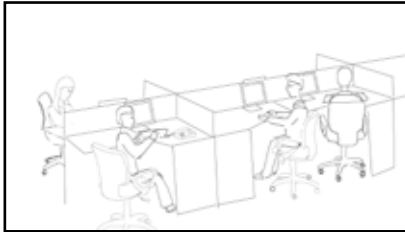
the auto driver smirks at her



and drives off



cut to the cafe scene where she is seen sitting sad



Dissolve again to the office scene



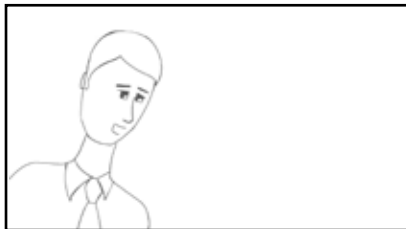
Aarti is seen working



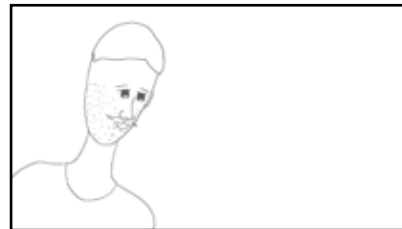
when someone taps her shoulder



She turns around



To see her colleague Vikram



but his face starts transforming into the Starers face



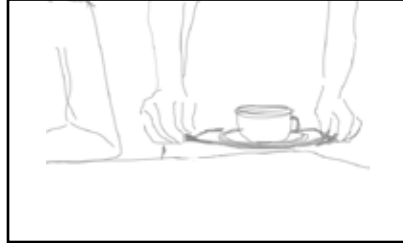
She stares blankly at him unable to understand what is happening



she blinks her eyes



only to find herself looking at the Auto Driver



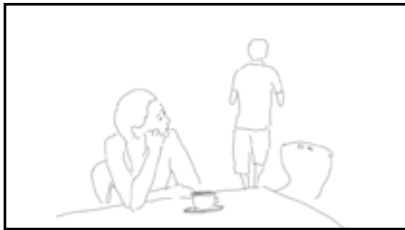
Closeup of the coffee tray being kept



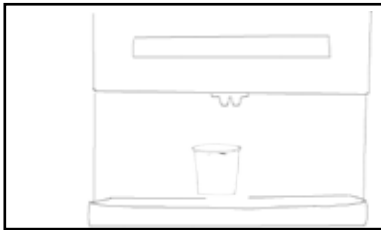
she blinks to find its only the waiter of the cafe



Imagines herself in those dresses



As he leaves she again begins to think



Dissolve into a vending machine



Aarti is drinking coffee when she notices the Bollywood Times news paper



She want to read it but it has an underdressed woman's pick



She checks here and there for people looking



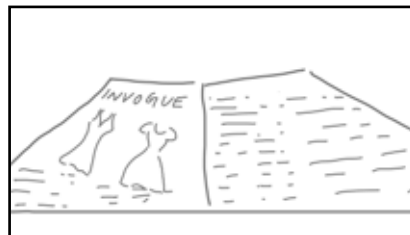
Then quickly takes the paper



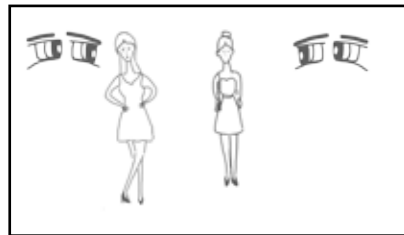
she lets out a sigh of relief



Scene showing her reading the paper



She starts reading teh fashion section of the paper



She imagines herself wearing the pretty dresse but gets uncomfortable thinking that people will judge her



The scene cuts back to the cafeteria where her friends see her tensed and say lets leave



They start walking back but.....Aarti keeps looking back to see if someones following them

Sound Design

New Sound track

The initial sound design of the animatic was direct dialogue based voiceover with the required background and foley sound. However after the changes made in the story the sound design was remodelled. After taking into consideration some of the initial ideas of a voice narration or story telling, I re-looked at how I arrived at the story in the first place. The story itself is a conglomeration of various experiences by different women. Hence the sound should reflect the same. Hence came the idea of recording conversations of experiences and playing them as a layer in the background. This makes the story more generic, the parallel element in the story is not through the visuals but through the voices. A second layer of voice was added, this voice represented the feelings of the protagonist. I intended to keep her monologues short as if she was rethinking that one day. The parallel narrations which would appear in her span of silence would be narrating an incident which happened in a similar situation or at that time of the day. These narrations have been intentionally kept unfinished to prevent distraction from the main story.

Impact of the new sound track

The new sound track triggered a lot of different aspects in the story. The sound track brought in more space for the audience to relate to the characters as they narrate their experiences. It also brought a different perspective to the whole telling of the story. However since there were various voices tellings stories but the screen showed the experience of just one woman it became difficult for the audience to relate or identify the characters. Also the voice recording done initially was a scratch sound with lower quality which had to be re-recorded later. In this process a major problem was that the initial mix of voices were recorded as part of a discussion session spanning over a duration of 3 hours. Thus the spontaneity in the conversation gave a very genuine relatable feel

to the voices. Re-recording the voices thus became a challenge.

Process for the re-recording of the voice track

The previous track was noisy and out of context at a lot of places. As the concept of the voiceover was to keep the genuine feel of an actual conversation it became difficult to get the same emotions in the voices the second time. This was worked around by either reframing the sentences or by introducing a spontaneity by cross questioning and instantaneous replies.

Final mix of the sound

The final sound will consist of one layer of conversational voices which is present consistently throughout the film. The voices in the conversations need to be modulated in terms of volume and pitch based on the environment, that is inside the cafeteria and the other external locations like inside the auto rickshaw, on the road, inside the office etc. The silences in the movie will be filled with ambient sounds. There will not be any music in the film.

Visual Style

The film is being made in two different visual styles. While one part of the film is rotoscoped another is 2D animated. The film depicts a setup where four girls are sharing their thoughts and concerns over the topic of women safety. The form of this part of the film had to be more real to match the actual conversational feel of the voice over. Hence the style of rotoscoping has been used in this part. However details of the characters and the surrounding has been kept minimal to allow the audience to focus on the conversations. The characters in these scenes have been given a particular colour to help the audience identify with the characters. Also these scenes have a lot of texture in them to accentuate the texture in the voices of the conversations.

The second part of the film which is 2D animated is more flat and in simple colours. It depicts the simplified versions of someones thoughts and interpretations of incidences. The graphic novel style of the imagery has been used as it always represents the telling of a story by a third person. The scenes don't have intricate details as when a person recalls an incident or a situation they only concentrate on the main events or the major incidences, things that have actually affected them. Hence the retelling often has a simplified visualisation of the situations.

The film sees a lot of to and fro between the two style throughout the film. The use of two styles also helps to distinguish between the different environments where the incidences are taking place. Keeping a separate visual style for all the parts where the protagonist is thinking helps the audience understand the two environments better.

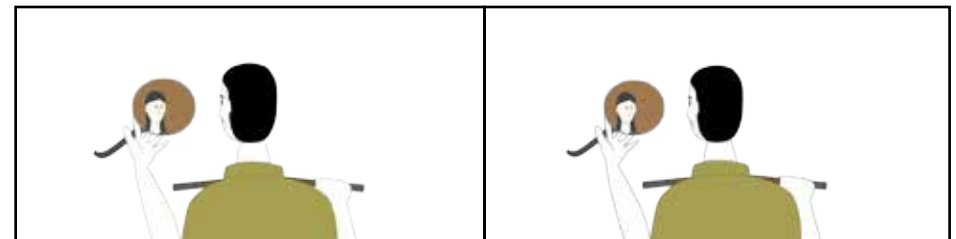
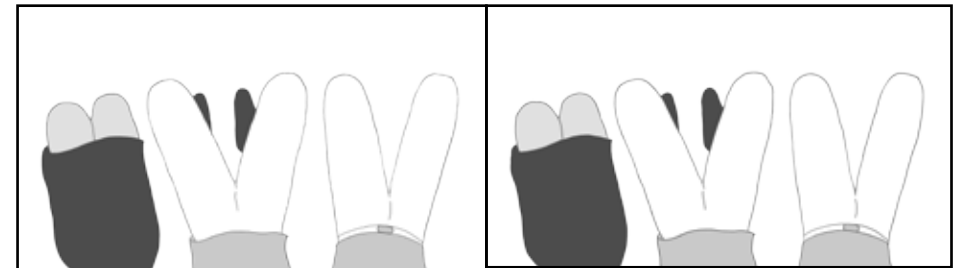
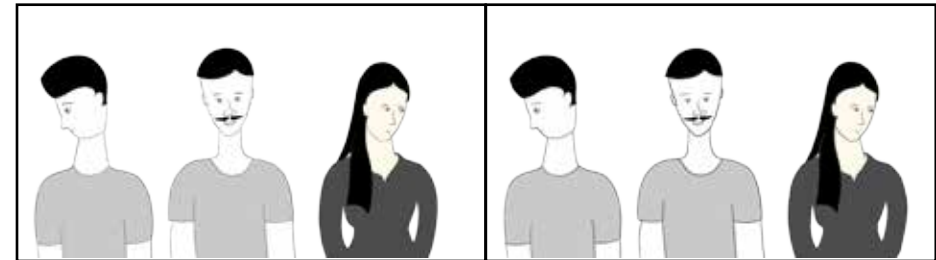
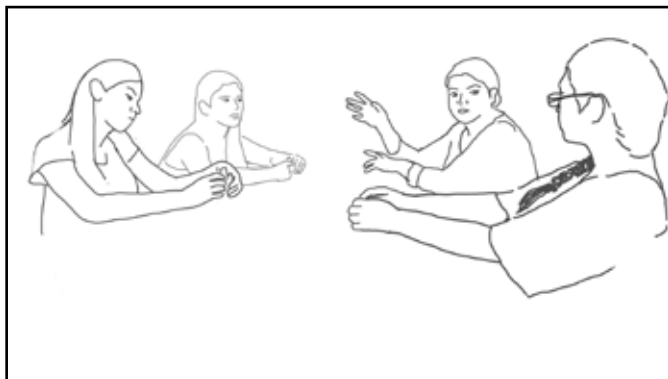
Line Cleanups

The line cleanups for both the rotoscoped as well as the hand drawn scenes vary in term of thickness and colour. Each of the frames of people sitting in the auto rickshaw have been cleaned up with lines of thickness 4 pt and 7 pt. This has been done to show the vibrations in the body of the passengers due to the movement of the vehicle.

Similarly for the rotoscoped scenes the characters sitting far away have line quality which is thinner than the characters sitting closer. This is to show the distance and depth in the positioning of the characters.



The line thickness has also been varied in the rotoscoped scenes to give a feeling of depth by distinguishing between the characters sitting near and far



Each frame inside the auto rickshaw have been cleaned with lines of two different thickness of 4 pt and 7 pt to show body vibrations caused due to the movement of the vehicle.

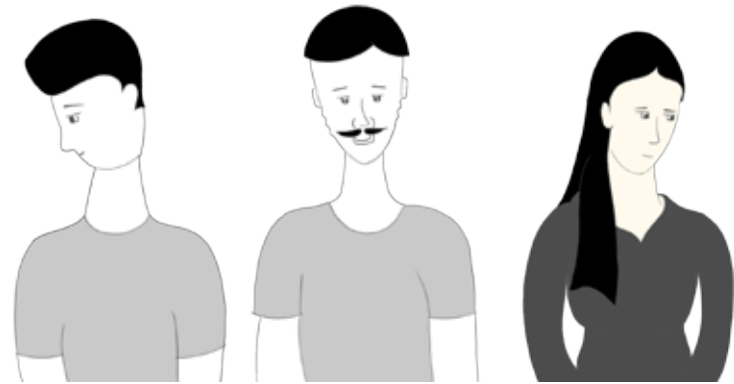
Colour

The colour scheme for the rotoscope style is bright colours overlaid with texture. Although the rotoscope has been done with real characters yet the colour scheme is abstract.

The 2D hand drawn characters have a black and white colour scheme except for the main character which has been given a slightly different skin and object colour. This has been done to emphasise on the happening of the main character.



The frames of the rotoscoped part of the film have characters in four different colours to be able to maintain their identity. The clothes and the hair of the characters have been given a scratchy feeling such that it jitters, this has been done to add some extra motion in the characters as most of the time they are seated in the same place. The body colour however has been solid filled to give clarity to the vision.



The hand drawn part of the film will be coloured mostly in monotone with minimal details. This is to represent the flashback or imagined kind of situations in the feel. Also the image is closer to graphic novel style which always depicts a first person telling of a story rather than seeing it in real time.



Backgrounds

The backgrounds have been created with laying out flat solid shapes and overlaying it with another texture. The colour scheme of the backgrounds are dark to represent the intensity of the subject and to accentuate the characters.

The texture used in the images is to match the voice or the conversations which also have an audio texture



A texture is the selected and overlayed on the whole composite background.



A prespective view of the table is drawn and layed with solid colours.



The background is filled with two different solid colours



The whole image is then layed over with the characters

Technical Details

The film has been made using various different methods of animation each of which need to follow a different technique. Described below are the technical details followed for the methods used.

The technique for rotoscoped shots was as follows:

The shots were shot in HD mode with 1920x1080 resolution with the actual characters. These videos were then imported in photoshop as a sequence of images with every fourth frame. This was done to get a less smoother feel than the actual footage such that it can be matched to the hand drawn animated sequences.

The characters were then traced by putting a layer on top of the actual frames and reducing the opacity of the previous frame. All the characters except the main character were more or less similar in look. The main character was then matched to the created character of Aarti. However the person chosen for the role of Aarti in the rotoscope scene was chosen such that she matched the character at least in terms of physique.

The technique for the 2D animated sequence was as follows:

Initially the animation was started in paper and lightbox but due to the cumbersome process of paper animation and the difficulty in maintaining the consistency of the characters I decided to shift to digital animation. As the animation for a few scenes were already completed in paper I scanned them and then digitized them in photoshop. For the rest of the scenes I used photoshop to animate by creating a new layer over the original layer and deducting the opacity of the previous layer. The consistency of the characters was maintained by duplicating the previous layer and making only the required changes.

Line drawing and colour layer were maintained in different layers and grouped together to avoid confusion. Later only that particular group was switched on and saved as a png file.

Compositing

The compositing of the film will be done in premiere pro where the other forms of animation like scale and movement will be taken care of. The backgrounds have been created separately and will be put together with the character layer during compositing. For scenes depicting characters inside a moving vehicle the motion will be managed using position scale.

The lighting and the camera for the composited scenes will be adjusted in adobe after effects. Especially for scene depicting mental disturbance and abstract scenarios.

Learnings

This project has been a year long journey and so more than learnings I would like to share my experiences. The film since its conception to the finished animation has undergone a lot of changes through various stages. This report depicts that to a great extent as the first part of the report was compiled and presented during the pre production phase over the first six months and the second part during the phase of actual production.

A lot of things have evolved from the initial planning like I had initially planned to make the whole film in 2D hand drawn animation style to maintain the fluidity of the drawings. However once I started animating I understood how tedious the process was and given the time frame I could not complete the animation in time. This forced me to take up digital animation. Although I was familiar with the tools for digital animation it took some time for me to be able to get fluid unbroken strokes of lines.

There were many tricks that I learned to make the animation more lively while animating just the required amount . Like using an eye blink to the background characters, copying the coloured layer and adjusting it to the next frame, using lines of various thickness to show body vibrations, morphing from one scene to another or just putting a simple dissolve to make the transition from one scene to another look smoother. These are some of the techniques used throughout the film to add more meaning to it.

The initial idea of the film was not built on rotoscoped scenes however the voice over gave it a different direction and the story had to be adapted accordingly. I learnt to be flexible with changes as an animated film takes a lot of time, planning and manual labour planning is thus one of the most important aspect of the film. On the other hand I also learnt to improvise scenes on the go, to introduce the nuances which add life when the animatic of a film gets transformed into a full animated film.

Conclusion

Women Safety is not a new topic but women face newer problems each and every day. It is sad but equally surprising how a major concentration of the public goes into creating new problems instead of trying to solve it. Like in my study I found out about social media harassment. Who would think the internet and technology often regarded as such a boon would create so much problem in someones else's life.

Many times we are taught to ignore people and problems for a smoother living. Women often are trained and advised to keep quite not to speak too loud or do things too aggressively. This silence is often misunderstood its time that people start making an active effort to look beyond the silence. This film intends to do exactly the same. It will try to bring out the difference in things as they are perceived and as they actually are.

Through the medium of the film we want to say that no form of harassment is subtle and it does affect a woman's mental stability and health. Every individual is born free and hence has the right to live a safe and enjoyable life.

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