

Design Course

Animation Music Video - 2

The Explorations

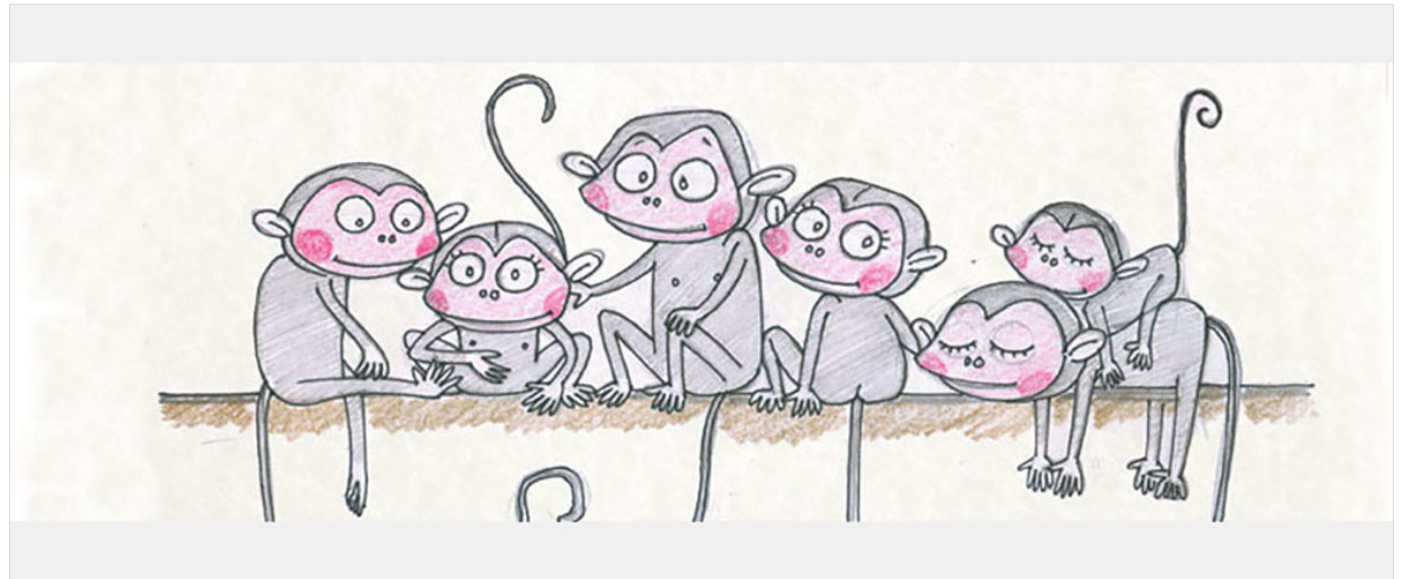
by

Prof. Phani Tetali and Samidha Gunjal

IDC, IIT Bombay

Source:

<https://www.dsource.in/course/animation-music-video-2>



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Source:

<https://www.dsource.in/course/animation-music-video-2/introduction>

Introduction

Animation Music Video-1 in this earlier module, we learned about history of music videos, types of music videos and how to select the song for music video.

To know more about 'Animation Music Video-1' check the below link:

<https://www.dsource.in/course/animation-music-video-1>



In this module i.e. **Animation Music Video-2**, we will go through different explorations with the help of an example. And discuss about elaborating the ideas and explorations for making your own music video.



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<https://www.dsource.in/course/animation-music-video-2/selection-song>

Selection of a Song

As explained in 1st part ([Animation Music Video -1](#)), I searched for songs that I would think that can be suitable for animation. While searching, I found a very interesting song called 'Twelve Monkeys' by Josh Woodward. I found it on an open source music site, which is royalty free.



The Song: Twelve Monkeys - Josh Woodward

Lyrics:

*They caught me back in '85
When they dropped a net down from the sky
In the jungle, I was so alive
Now I just survive*

*Twelve monkeys in this cell with me
Eight of them are family
I fathered them in captivity
Prisoners from the start*

*Smear'd glass cage
As we spend our days on stage
And it's all they'll know*

*Nylon ropes and plastic slides
A concrete world for abstract minds
It's all controlled by man's designs*

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Nothing here is real

*And we're all just keeping busy
In this everlasting zoo
And we're all just killing time
Because there's nothing else to do*

[Chorus]

*I see, the life that used to be
The dancing of the leaves
As I'm swinging through the trees and I am
Searching, for a place to pay my head
The forest is my bed
Till the ring a bell to feed us
And they flash a light to lead us, in this*

[Chorus]

(Song Audio)

(Reference: <http://www.joshwoodward.com/song/TwelveMonkeys>)



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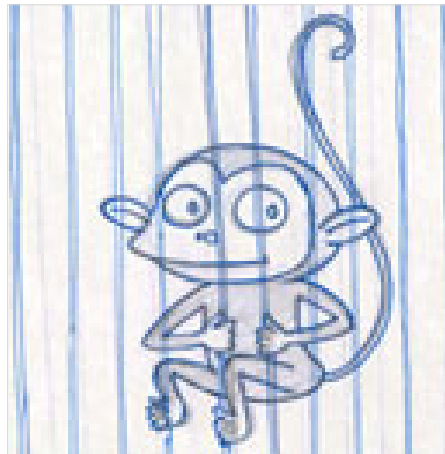
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<https://www.dsource.in/course/animation-music-video-2/initial-ideation>

Initial Ideation

I heard the song many times and tried to understand the meaning, the story in the song. The song is about a monkey who is presently living in city zoo and cherishing his memories of past life in jungle. He compares his free, happy days of jungle life and bored monotonous present life in the zoo. He is also telling story about his family members from the same cage.



In this song there is 'one protagonist' telling the story and 'twelve monkey' characters that are family. I took a print out of the lyrics of the song and tried to visualize the song and made some notes on the page itself.

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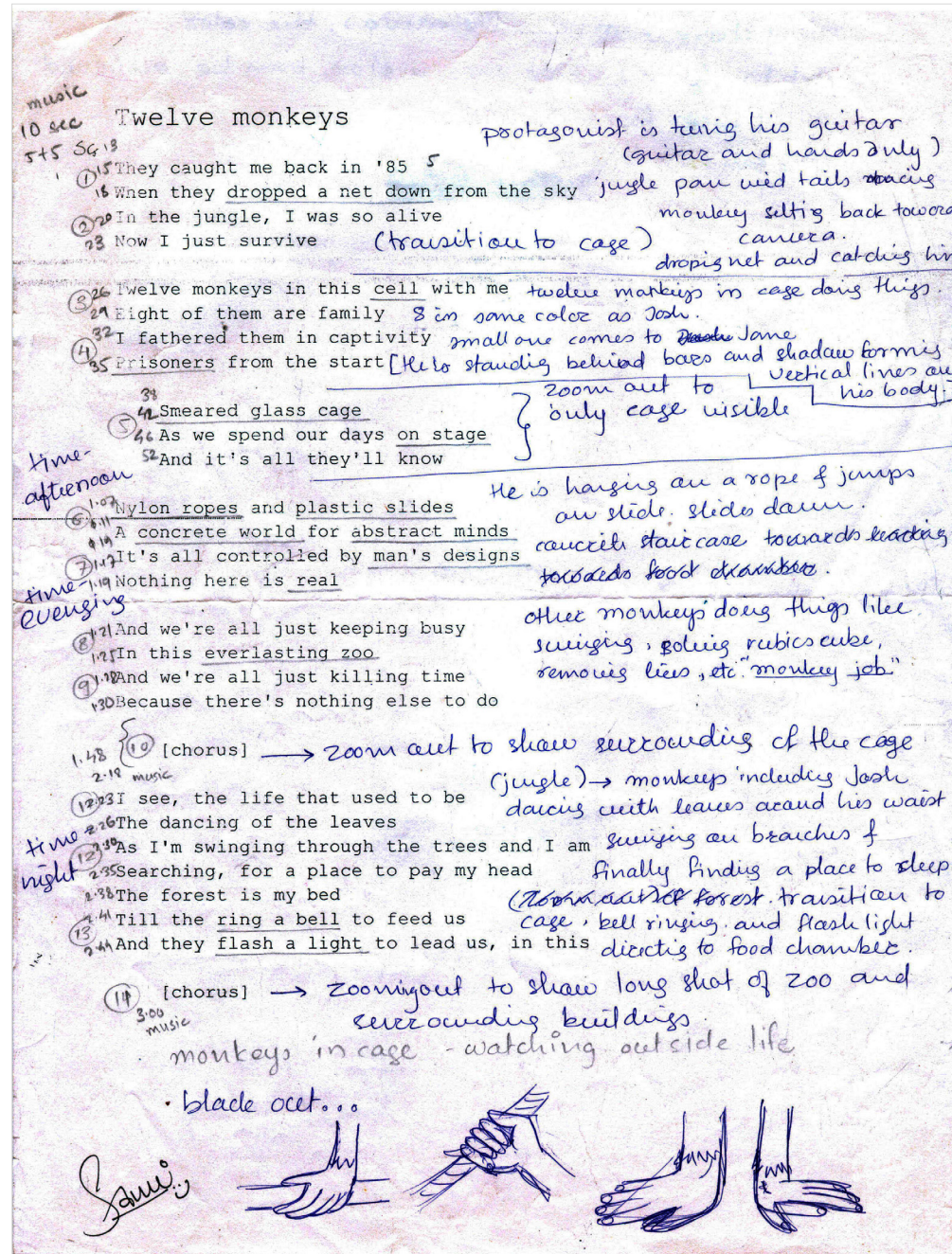
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<https://www.dsource.in/course/animation-music-video-2/song-analysis-and-break-down>

Song Analysis and Break-down

While analyzing the song one should find answers for following questions:-

- What are the characters?
- What could be their Back-story?
- What could be the location?
- Where this story is happening?
- In what time or era this story is happening?



Considering these questions,

- I started visualizing the song as a 'Story' told by the protagonist.
- I named the protagonist as 'Joe' and then constructed a back-story for him.



Background Story



Story Breakdown



Sound Breakdown

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Background Story

The protagonist's name is Joe.

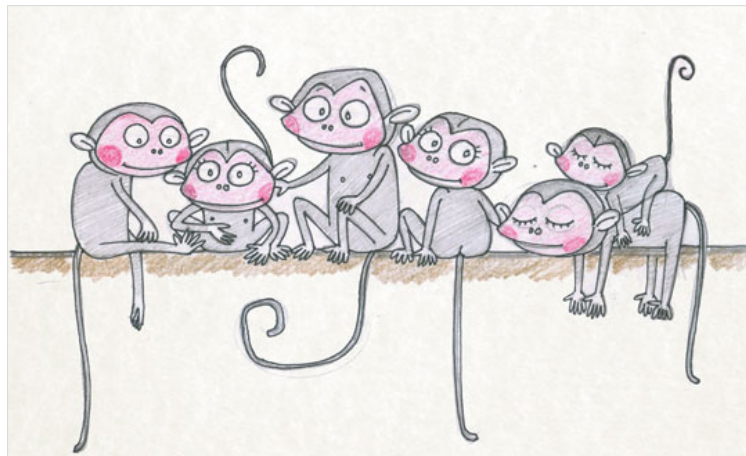


Past Life:

Joe is a monkey who got caught in 1985's from the Jungle in India. He was just a teenage monkey who enjoyed living in the jungle for quite some time.

Now:

Joe lives in city zoo situated in some metropolitan city surrounded by tall concrete buildings on a busy street. At that time, two monkeys were already there to accompany him in the cage. After some time 'Jane' was added to the cage. Joe and Jane are a couple now and now they have 8 children.



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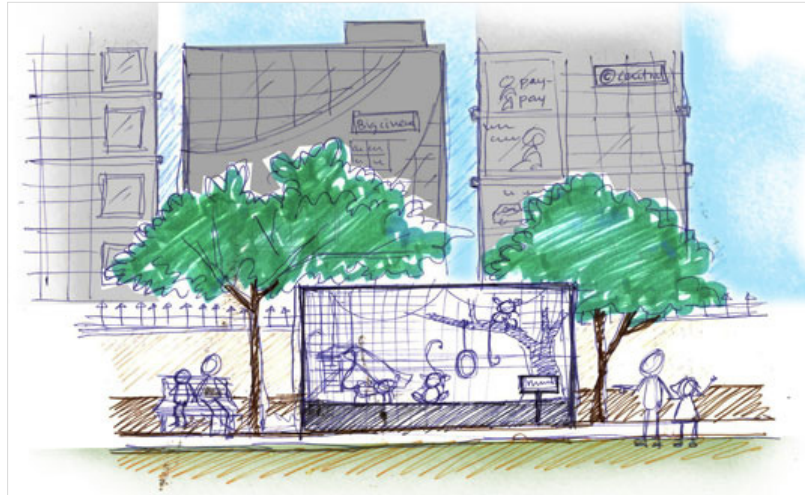
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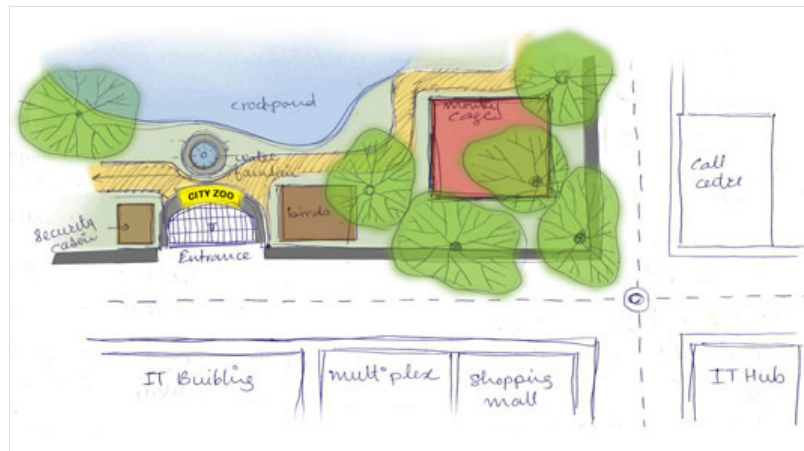
<https://www.dsource.in/course/animation-music-video-2/song-analysis-and-break-down/background-story>

In total – ‘**Twelve Monkeys**’ live happily as ‘Prisoners’ except Joe, because they have never experienced the free jungle life. Here they are provided with few nylon ropes, and plastic slide for playing.

Below are some rough sketches showing location plan and the surroundings of the zoo.



Rough Sketch: Showing elevation of monkey cage and the surroundings.



Rough Plan: Showing city zoo location and internal planning.

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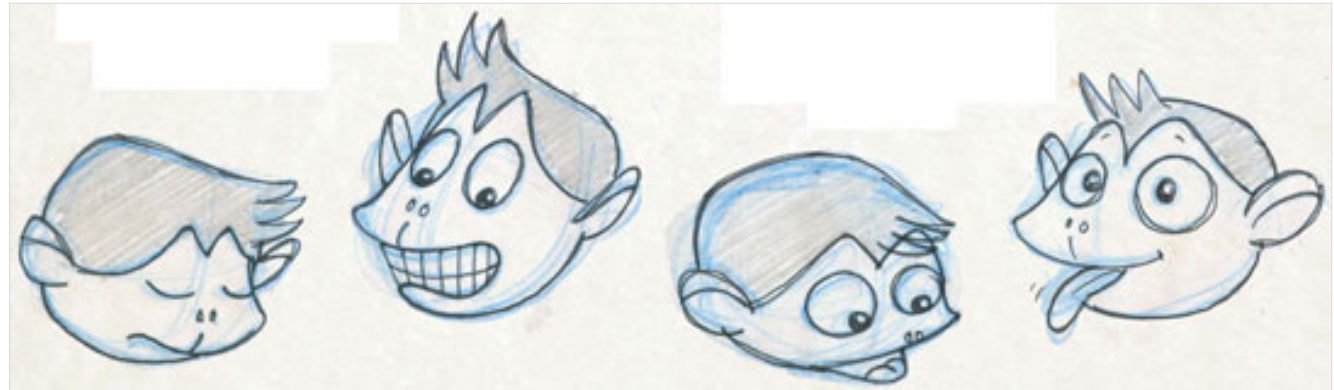
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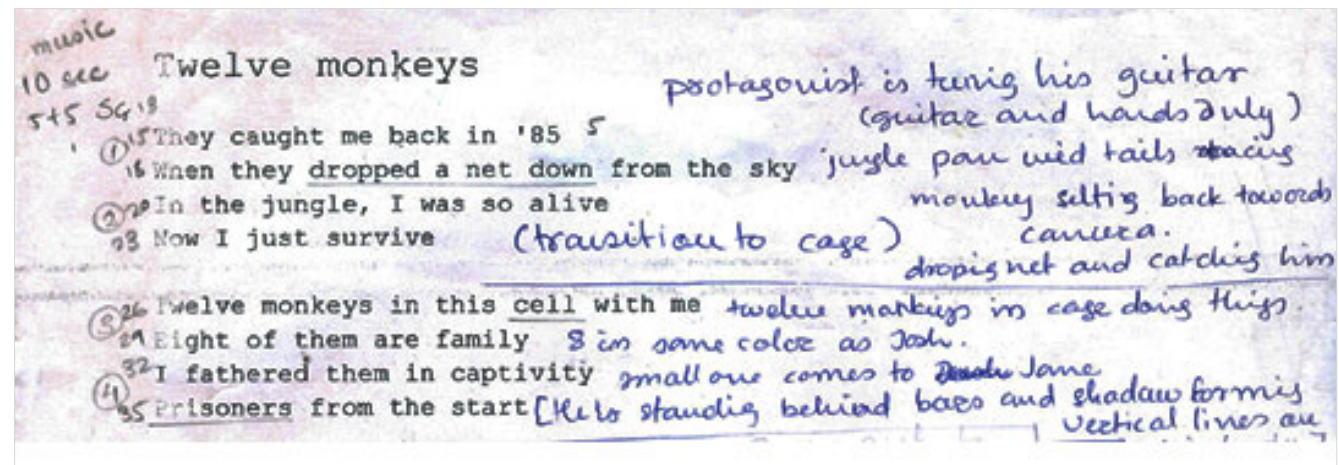
Story Breakdown

After brainstorming about the back-story, I converted the story into the shots /stanzas. Each stanza is completing one set of actions so I marked each stanza as one shot.

Then I started writing story in my words for each stanza. Where I decided what character would be doing what action for each line according to available time. This helps to know which characters will be present in the chosen shot and what actions he or she would be doing.



While doing this I also decided how the transition between two shots is going to happen. There are different ways of showing the transition of place, time and situations. I simply wrote them on the paper next to the song.



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Sometimes you may need to change things while drawing story sketches or storyboard according to timing and camera angles. If you think the story can be portrayed in better way or another camera angle will be more suitable, keep the ideas flexible. You should experiment with different ideas and techniques to make it more dramatic.

Don't forget to write down or sketch all the ideas that come to your mind. You may find some ideas or sketches more interesting and suitable for the story telling.

Source:

<https://www.dsource.in/course/animation-music-video-2/song-analysis-and-break-down/story-breakdown>

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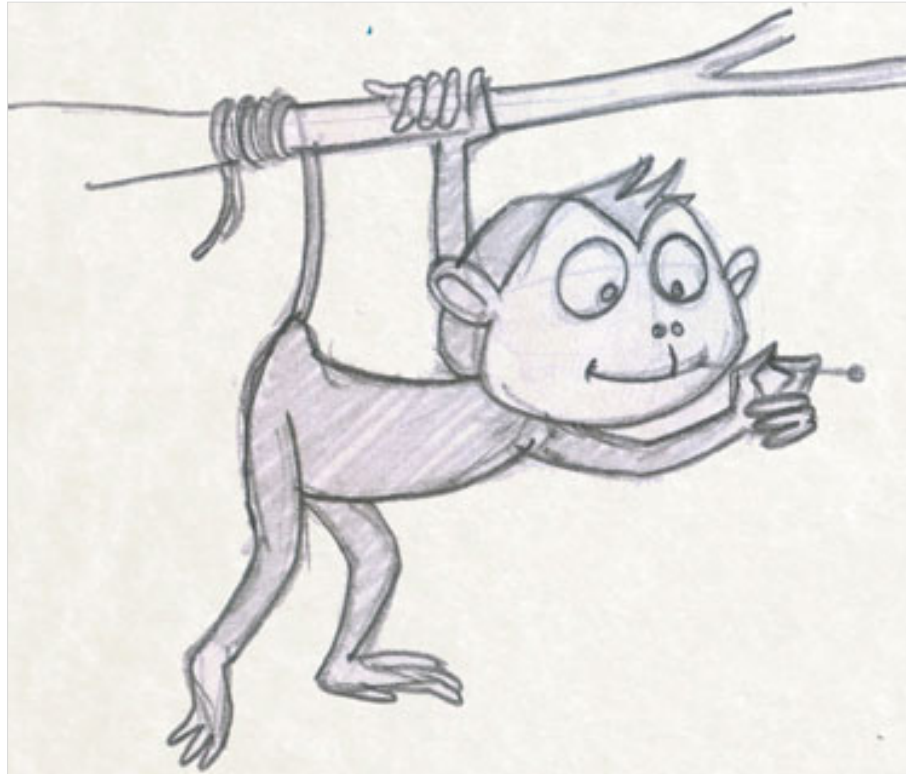
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Sound Breakdown

It is very important to know the timing of the song to synchronize with the animating visuals. For that I used technique called 'sound scrubbing'.

Sound scrubbing can be done using editing software. If you don't have any software right that time, you can use stopwatch and can mark the timing.

I scrubbed the song using software called toon-boom as I am planning to do animation in the same. While scrubbing I calculated the time required for each sentence and stanza to complete. Then marked the frames required for each stanza and chorus. Also, I marked the vocal and instrumental parts of the songs.



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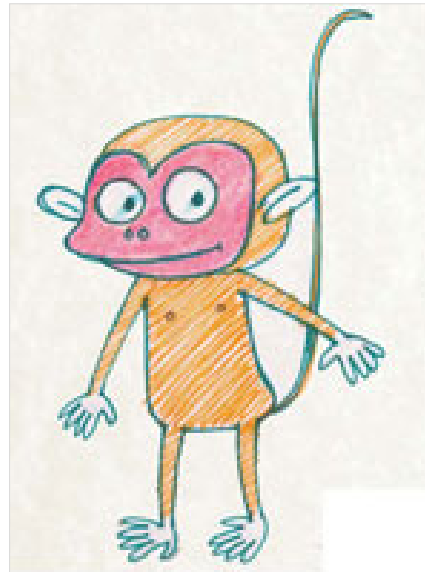
Selection of the Style

For selecting the style, it is very important to understand the story narrated in the song. I have already explained different types of music videos in the previous Module ([Animation Music Video -1](#)).

For more details on 'Types of Music Videos' click here:

<http://dsource.in/course/animation-music-video-1/types-music-videos>

According to that, 'if the song has strong narrative element, then you can make *Narrative type of music video* where visuals are story based.'



On the other hand, if the song is very slow, sad or weird; you cannot follow the narrative style as it will result in very boring and monotonous story telling. Instead, you can use some spectacular, interesting, impressive and completely unrelated visuals and narrative elements. Use abstract ways of making music video that will suit more for this type of songs.

After listening to the song many times, I realized that the song is little monotonous but has lot more scope for animation and creativity. It is a serious and sentimental story told in a linear way. This is the narrative story type song, featuring the singer in it.

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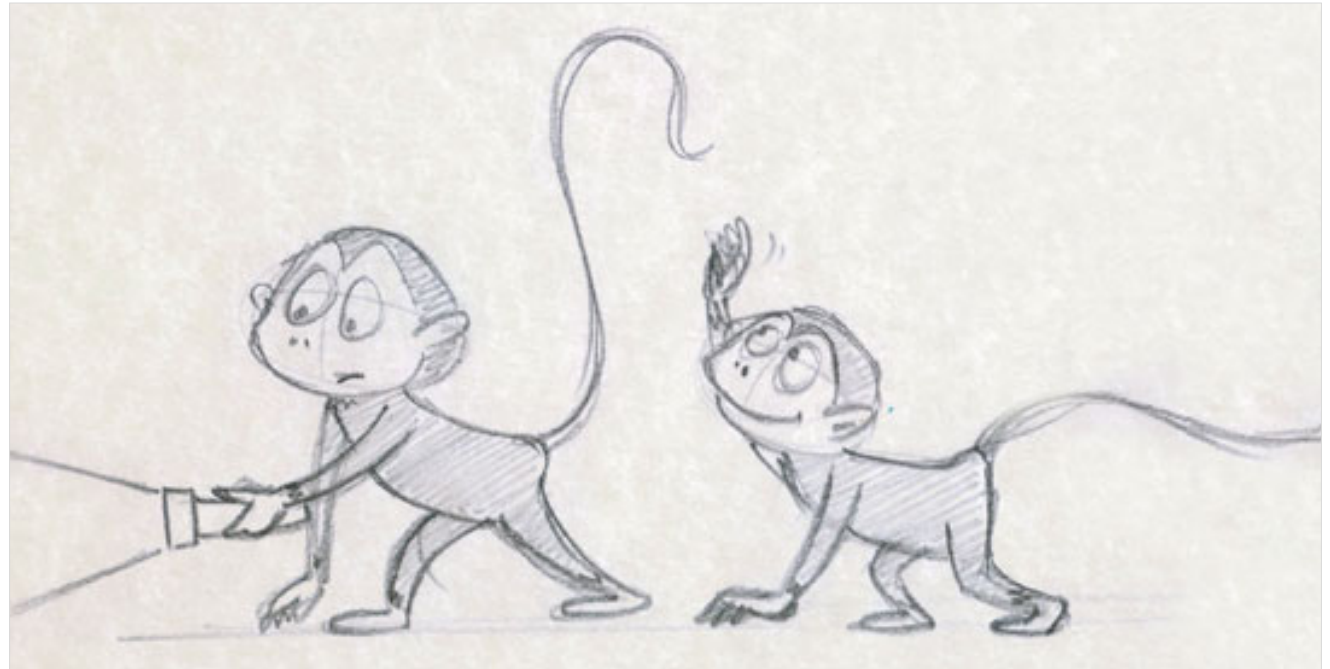
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Hence, I decided to make this music video partly in an abstract way where the visual may or may not follow the song word to word. Which means some visual will be just random visuals. Whereas, some visual will be following the narrative wherever it is suitable. Abstract style have more freedom for being creative and use innovative ideas.



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Explorations and Story Sketches

Once the type of music video is finalized, start exploring different ways of animation. There are many mediums available like classical 2D animation, 3D animation, clay animation, stop motion, cutout animation and many more. Which style you wish to choose, completely depends on you. Only that it should justify the visuals for the song. As I enjoy doing 2D classical animation, I decided that I would be doing 2D animation for this song. Also, I want to mix mediums wherever possible to give it more abstract feel.



Story Sketches:

Once my style and medium is finalized I started scribbling all the initial ideas on paper, drawing different situations and events from the story.

Character Study:

For designing of the characters I started collecting data on monkeys and their behaviors. I downloaded some reference images that can be useful while drawing monkeys. Also, saw some videos to understand the behavior of monkey.

I started exploring different styles to draw monkeys with the help of reference images. While drawing many types of monkeys I found the character style, which will be suitable for this song.

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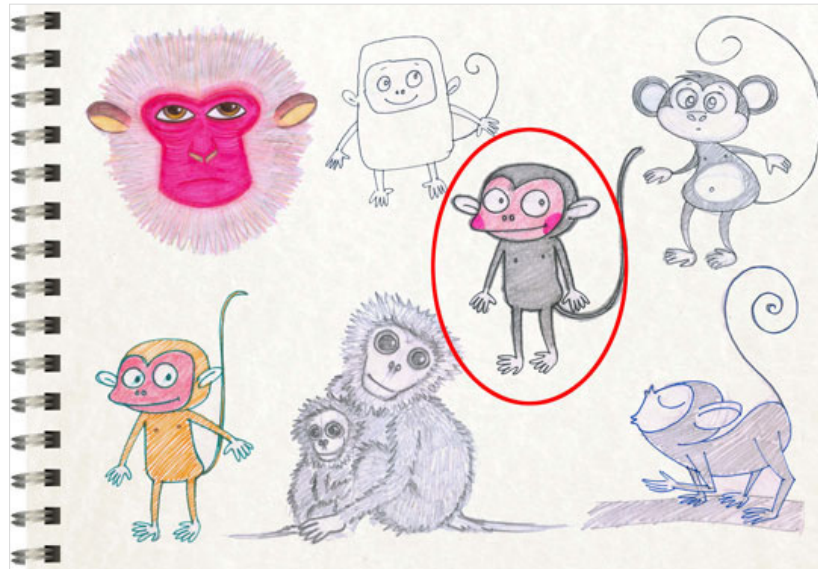
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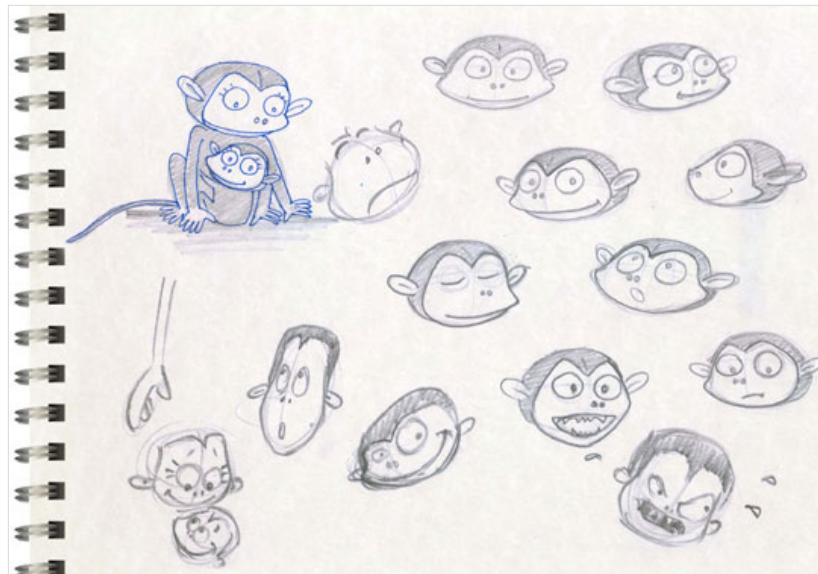
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Once I found my character style I started developing other characters from the story.

I tried drawing baby monkeys, old monkeys, female monkeys, their expressions and different poses.



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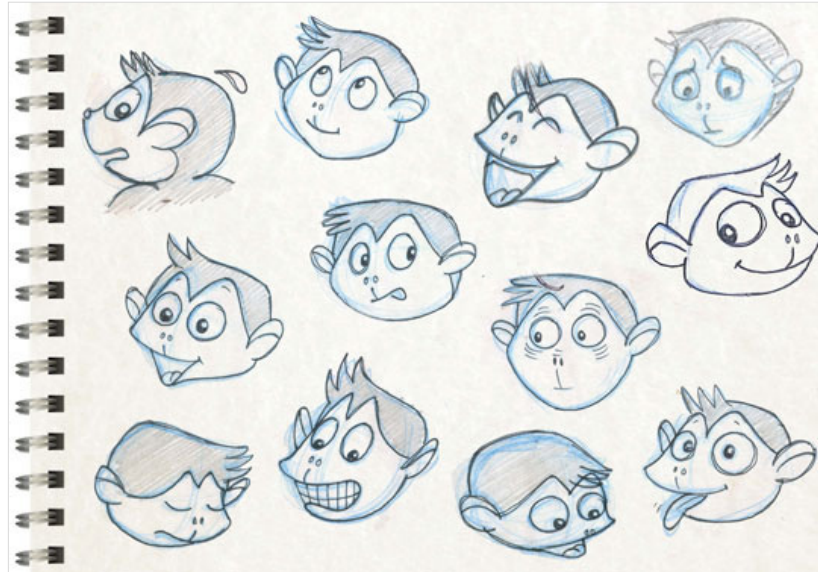
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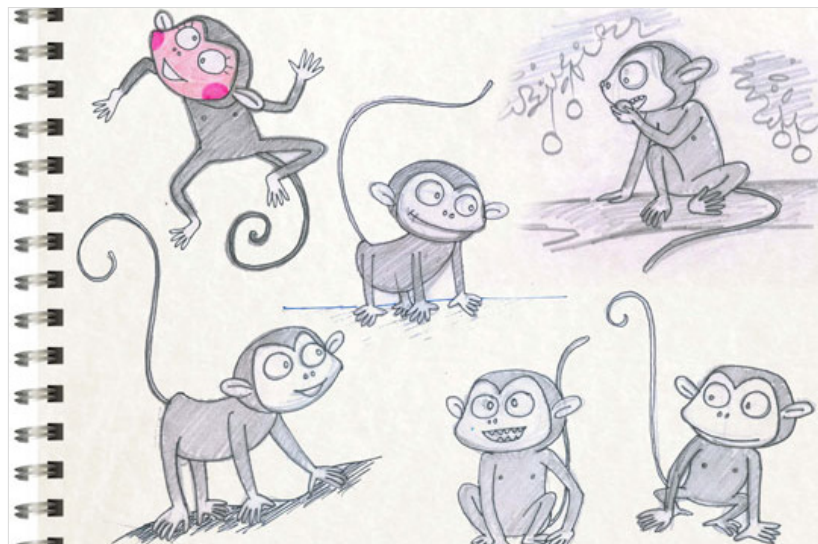
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Some sketches showing facial expressions.



It is kind of practicing to draw the same character in different poses and actions. Like drawing monkeys in different profiles like front, back, 3/4 and side doing all sort of monkey things.



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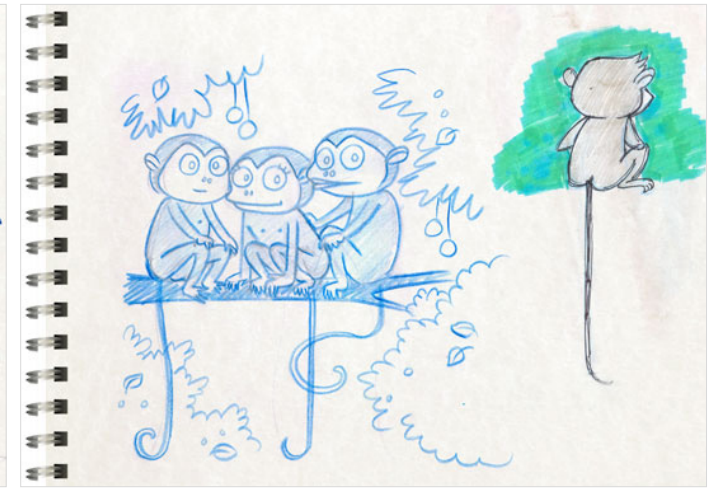
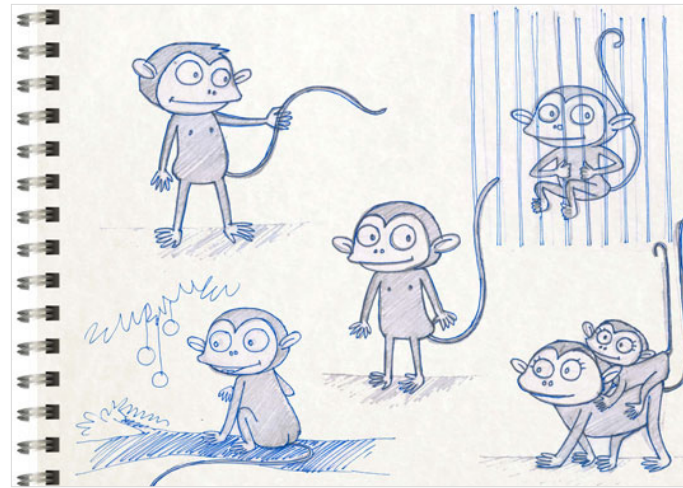
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The story is happening in mainly two locations:

- Past life in Jungles of India and
- Present life in a cage of City zoo.

I tried to study their interaction with both the locations. Few different sketches showing Joe holding bars of the cage, waving and playing with his own tail, monkeys sitting on a tree branch, Joe walking on two legs etc. were also drawn.



As there is one mother and baby duo in the story, I tried to draw them with the help of references. Monkey baby is always hugging to mother's stomach or back.



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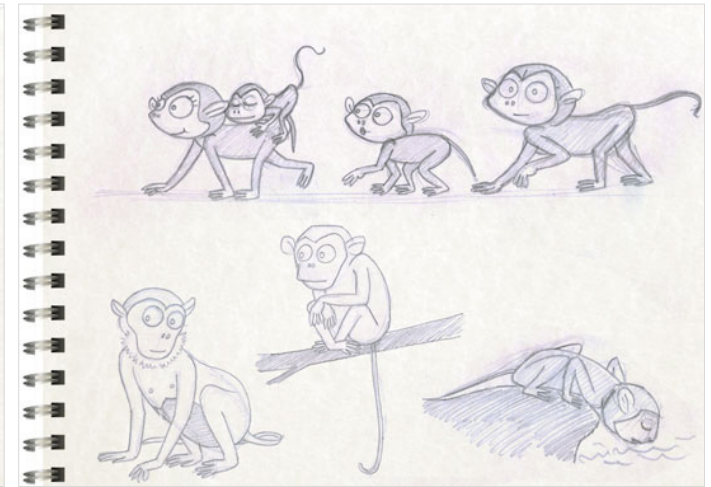
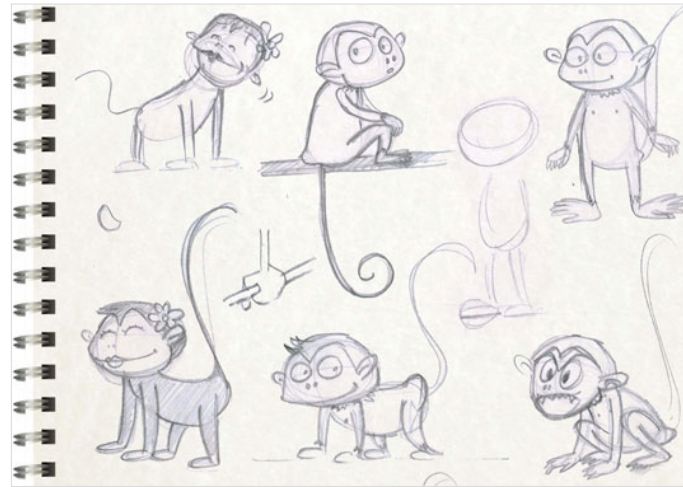
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Other Explorations:



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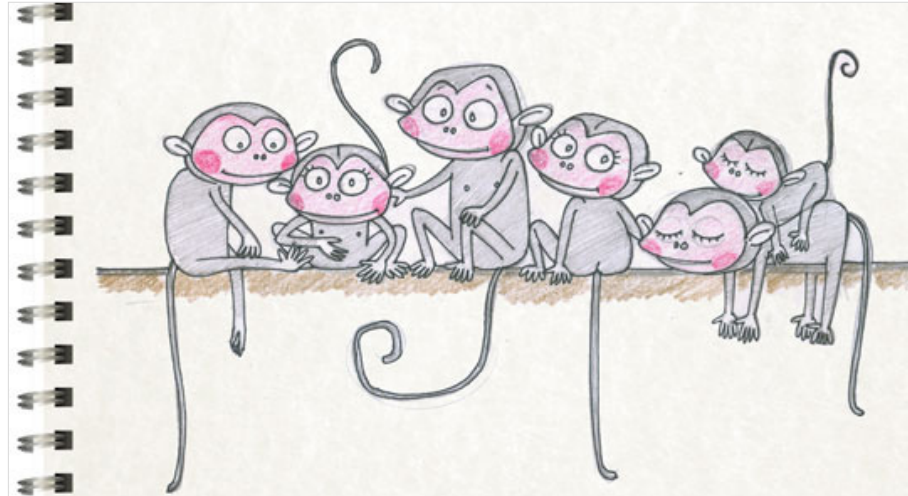
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After drawing many solo character drawings I started drawing them in groups. I took references from you tube videos to understand their group behaviors. In natural habitat, Monkeys always live in a group as a family. In every family, there is only one grown up male who acts as a head of the family and multiple females and many baby monkeys.



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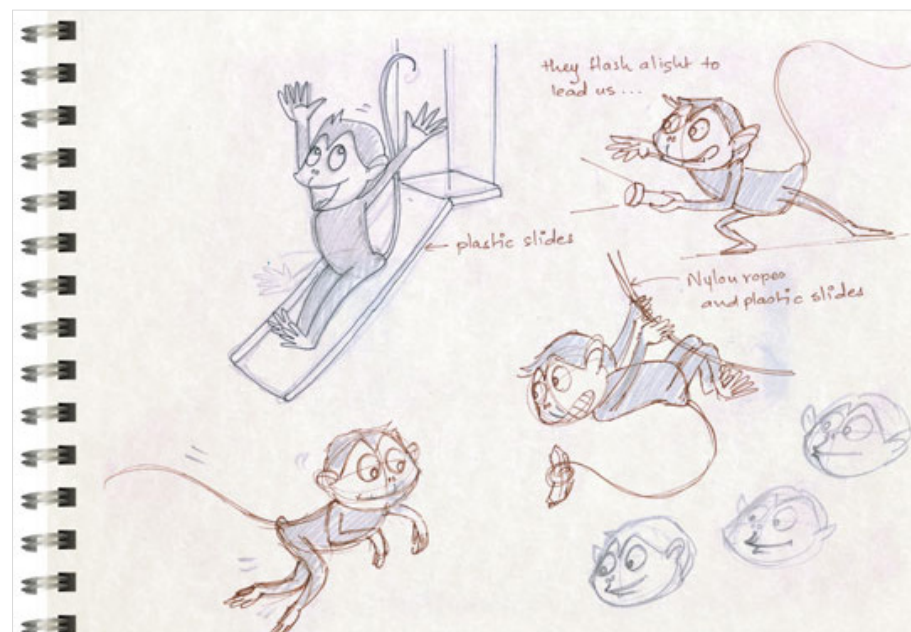
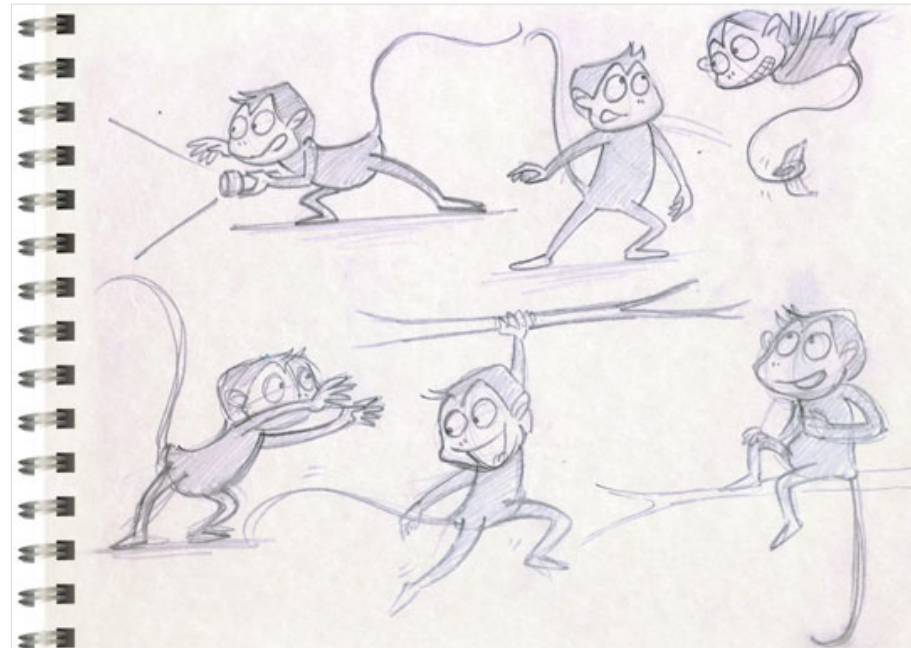
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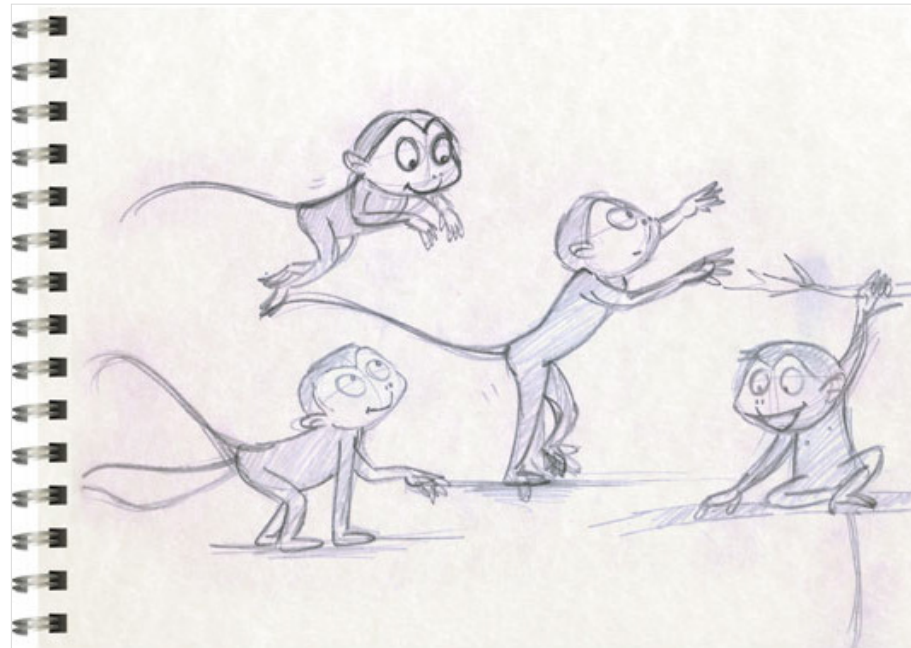
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Animation Music Video - 2

The Explorations

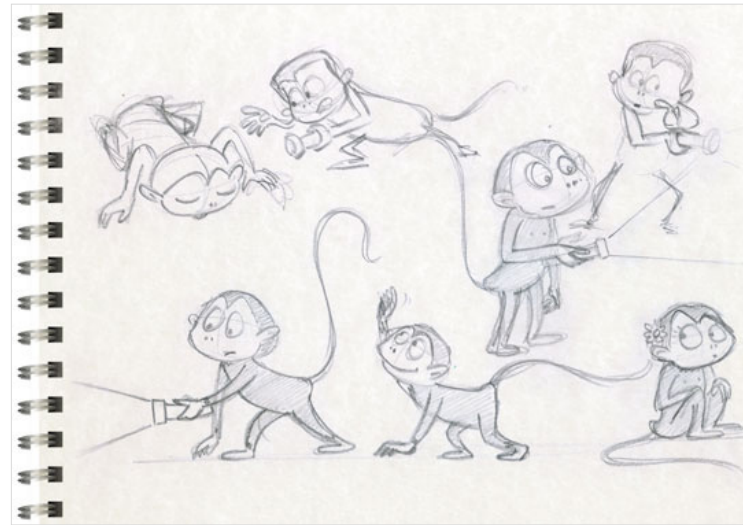
by

Prof. Phani Tetali and Samidha Gunjal

IDC, IIT Bombay

Source:

<https://www.dsource.in/course/animation-music-video-2/explorations-and-story-sketches>



Monkeys are very notorious and active animals. To incorporate these characteristics while animating the character, it is very important to understand their walk cycles and jump cycles. If I make the poses more strong and dynamic, it will help me to reduce the animation and same time actions will be more effective and realistic.



Exploring Background images:

Along with the character designing I also started exploring some backgrounds and props wherever needed.

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<https://www.dsource.in/course/animation-music-video-2/brain-storming>

Brain Storming

While doing explorations it is also helpful to keep on brainstorming about different ideas that might help you to improve your storyline.

Pin them up:

I took all the sketches and pinned them on the soft board in an order same as song or else you can stick them up on the wall. Keep looking at the drawing while listening to the song. Try changing order of the drawings and see how you can make it more dramatic.

Mind map:

Making a mind map always help to build the events in for story. It is very easy; you just have to write down key words randomly. By picking up random words and characters, try to visualize the situations, think about new possibilities to portray the shot?



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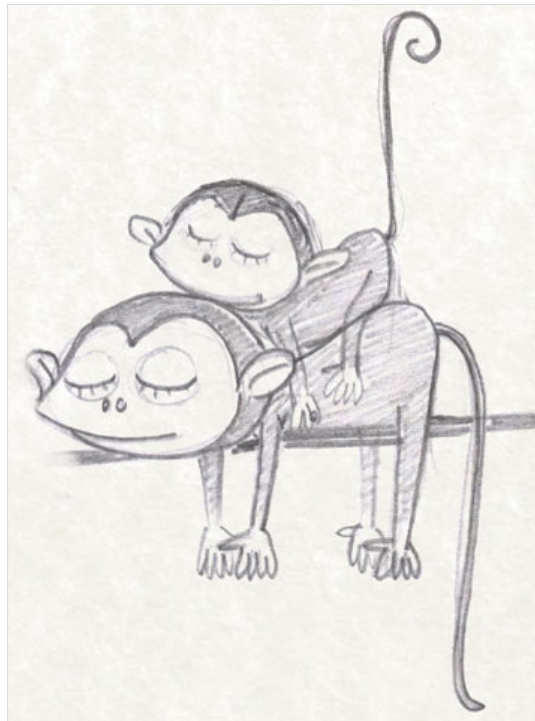
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Discuss:

Discussing the idea with others is very helpful to come up with new set of ideas. Discuss with your pet, your friends and family if you want, they may give you totally different ideas or point of views.

It may happen that after brainstorming a lot, you feel that it is not working. It's totally fine, start afresh and rediscover the song.



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Story Boarding

Once the style is finalized, start illustrating your ideas and plan out the shots and camera angles. Make thumbnail drawings and you can plan out the whole song shot by shot.



From here onwards, I will be explaining the process using the first shot of the song.

Initially, I came up with two different ideas for opening sequence of the song. Hence, two options were chosen for first shot in the form of thumbnail drawings.

- Storyboard thumbnails: Option 01
- Storyboard thumbnails - Option 02

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Animatics

Arrange all storyboard drawings in sequence and then time them. Now try playing them in sync with the song using timeline. This is called as animatics. This will give you fair idea what is working and what is not?



You may need to change duration of visuals according to the timing of the song. Scrub the song and adjust the visuals. This will help you to know the timing required for animating each shot.



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<https://www.dsource.in/course/animation-music-video-2/exercise>

Exercise

Now, you can start making your own music video with the help of steps explained in this module.

Select a small piece from your favorite song and try animating it.

We would like to know about your process and experience about making animated music video. Post it in the comments section of the same site or email us.

If you find this module helpful don't forget to drop a comment. Your feedback is important to us to explain in better ways!



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Video



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Source:

<https://www.dsource.in/course/animation-music-video-2/design-tools>

Design Tools

Animation Design:

Animation is a method of photographing successive drawings, models or even puppets to create an illusion of movement in a sequence. Animation Tool is developed by IDC, IIT Bombay. It is an interactive web space where students can learn about the basics of animation. There are four main types of animation that are commonly used: 2D Traditional Animation, 2D Computer Animation, Stop Motion Animation, and 3D Computer Animation. There's also something called Experimental animation, where you can mix different types of animation together. The Animation Tool teaches things like Straight Ahead, Pose to Pose, Stretch and Squash, and Slow in Slow out, which are all important for making animations look good.

For more information visit: https://dsource.in/tool/animation_tool/



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Contact Details

This documentation was done by Samidha Gunjal at IDC, IIT Bombay.

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