



An animated short film

MILAN

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and
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Design Project - 3
June 2023

DECLARATION

I declare that this written submission represents my ideas and process in my own words. Wherever other's ideas, and words have been included and reference of works have been made, I have adequately cited the original sources. I also declare that I have adhered to all principles of academic any idea/ data/fact/ source in my submission.

I understand that any violation of the above will be cause for disciplinary action by the Institute and can also evoke penal action from the sources which have thus not been appropriately cited or from whom proper permission has not been taken when needed.



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IDC School of Design

IIT Bombay

June 2023

Approval Sheet

The Design Project 3 Titled “ MILAN ” by **Deepak M. Pendam , Roll Number 216340002**, is approved in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the ‘Master of Design’ in the Animation and Film Design at Industrial Design Center, Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay.

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Deepak M. Pendum

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INTRODUCTION

This movie depicts the profound impact of real-life events that transformed my existence. It revolves around the experiences that altered the course of my life, capturing the essence of pivotal moments. The narrative follows an ordinary individual who, on the verge of accomplishing his dreams, tragically loses someone immensely dear to him. Ultimately, this story resonates with my own journey intertwined with my father's.

In the course of one's life, there inevitably comes a time when a profound paradox unfolds. At one moment, you achieve what you've ardently dreamed of, only to have someone incredibly close to you, a constant presence in your life, depart simultaneously. This film revolves around the profound bond shared between a father and son, delving into the son's journey as he embarks on a path leading to his admission into IIT Bombay.

This film holds deep significance to me, as it is dedicated to my beloved father who consistently offered his unwavering support. I cherish the memory of him being the sole individual to encourage me to apply to IIT Bombay. Unfortunately, a tragic turn of events snatched him away from us just one day before I received my acceptance into IIT Bombay.

The moment I received that long-awaited offer letter, a profound decision took root within me—to create a film that would immortalize my father's essence. I yearned to capture and convey our final moments together, forever preserving the memories we shared. Above all, it is the vivid recollection of his valiant battle against COVID-19 within the confines of the hospital that remains etched in my mind.

Throughout the process of creating this film, I have undergone a profound journey of learning. However, simultaneously, it proved to be immensely challenging to express and revisit the raw emotions associated with recent events. It was undeniably painful to delve into the depths of those experiences while crafting this film.

Following my father's passing, my life underwent a complete transformation. Yet, amidst this transformative period, I began to comprehend the true significance of a father's presence. I embarked on extensive research, exploring the essence of fatherhood, his societal role, and the sacrifices he makes. Watching a few short films proved to be instrumental in aiding my creative process for this project.

Within this film, an array of contrasting emotions are depicted. Each scene was carefully designed to evoke distinct feelings, while maintaining a consistent aesthetic throughout. Each sequence serves as a conduit for conveying various emotions, forming a tapestry of human experiences. The presence of the dog adds depth to the storytelling, highlighting the meaningful connections that can be formed and expressed without words.

RESEARCH

Undertaking the research for this film presented its own set of challenges, particularly in recollecting the moments I wanted to portray. It was a delicate task to revisit and extract both the cherished and the sorrowful memories. To navigate this process, I began by creating a mind map, jotting down the key moments I wished to depict on sticky notes. This approach provided a helpful framework during the initial stages of development. It was during the challenging times of the COVID-19 pandemic that I found myself intimately acquainted with the hospital environment, an experience I had never encountered before. The anxieties that arise when a loved one's life hangs in the balance, the cacophony of sounds emanating from the ICU machines, the mounting anxiety triggered by fluctuating heartbeats—all these elements reverberated deeply within me.

The echoes of people crying, the palpable pain in the air, the risky transfers between hospitals to seek the best possible care—all of these aspects had to be delicately balanced with the necessity of putting on a brave face and assuring others that everything was alright. Navigating these complexities and creating an atmosphere of normalcy amidst the chaos proved to be one of the most challenging aspects of this endeavor. From the logistical challenges of managing hospital visits to the financial burdens of daily bills and reaching out to others for financial assistance, all these intricacies were captured within the framework of my mind map. Simultaneously, it was crucial for me to delve into the essence of fatherhood, to truly understand the significance of a father's role, his sacrifices, and the unwavering love he bestows upon his children. To gain insight into this perspective, I immersed myself in watching various short films that explored the theme of fatherhood. Among them, a film titled "Death of the Father" by Somnath Pal and Chaitanya Tamhale left a lasting impact on me. The visual aesthetics and the emotive power of its sound design pushed me further, inspiring me to delve deeper into my own film.

Additionally, I sought out a multitude of films on platforms like YouTube, expanding my knowledge and drawing inspiration from a diverse range of storytelling approaches. The sound design also played a pivotal role in capturing the essence of grief and authenticity. In the film "Death of the Father," the meticulous attention to detail in the background sounds and the overall aesthetic was incredibly inspiring to me. The natural and evocative soundscapes truly conveyed the depth of emotions associated with loss. This attention to even the smallest auditory details left a profound impact on me, fueling my own commitment to creating a rich and immersive soundscape within my film.

Films for references



Express The Tough Love - Happy Father's Day - HealthOk



Death of a father | Chaitanya Tamhane | Somnath Pal



My poor dad - Heart touching short movies (A sad story)



Father and Daughter - by M. Dudok de Wit

Moving beyond the visual elements, the animation process itself played a crucial role in bringing the film to life. To accomplish this, I utilized Toon Boom Harmony, a powerful software designed specifically for animation. With a frame-by-frame animation approach, I meticulously crafted each movement, working within the standard 24 frames per second (fps) to ensure fluid and seamless motion.

Transitioning from my previous experience of creating frame-by-frame animation in Photoshop, mastering a new software like Toon Boom Harmony posed a considerable challenge. However, it presented a valuable opportunity for growth and expanded my skill set in animation techniques, composition, timing, and more. Through dedication and perseverance, I embraced the learning curve and delved into the intricacies of the software, leveraging its advanced features to elevate the animation quality.

Toon Boom Harmony proved to be an invaluable asset, offering a comprehensive suite of tools and functionalities tailored specifically for professional animation. It provided a rich and versatile environment, empowering me to meticulously craft each frame with precision and finesse. This transition allowed me to explore new horizons, enabling me to delve deeper into the art of animation, breathing life into each character and scene.

Moreover, working with Toon Boom Harmony opened up a world of possibilities in terms of composition and timing. The software provided a seamless workflow, facilitating the synchronization of movements and actions within the narrative. By harnessing the software's capabilities, I was able to fine-tune the timing of every animation element, enhancing the overall rhythm and flow of the film.

While the learning process was undoubtedly challenging, it brought immense rewards. The experience of working with Toon Boom Harmony expanded my understanding of animation principles, enabling me to craft nuanced performances and capture the essence of each character's emotions. It also allowed me to experiment with different techniques, exploring a range of expressive movements and bringing a heightened sense of dynamism to the film.

In conclusion, the integration of Toon Boom Harmony into the animation process was a transformative journey. It introduced me to new avenues of creativity, pushing the boundaries of my artistic capabilities. The software's comprehensive toolset and frame-by-frame approach, combined with my dedication and passion, resulted in a visually captivating and emotionally engaging film.



PRIMARY DATA COLLECTION

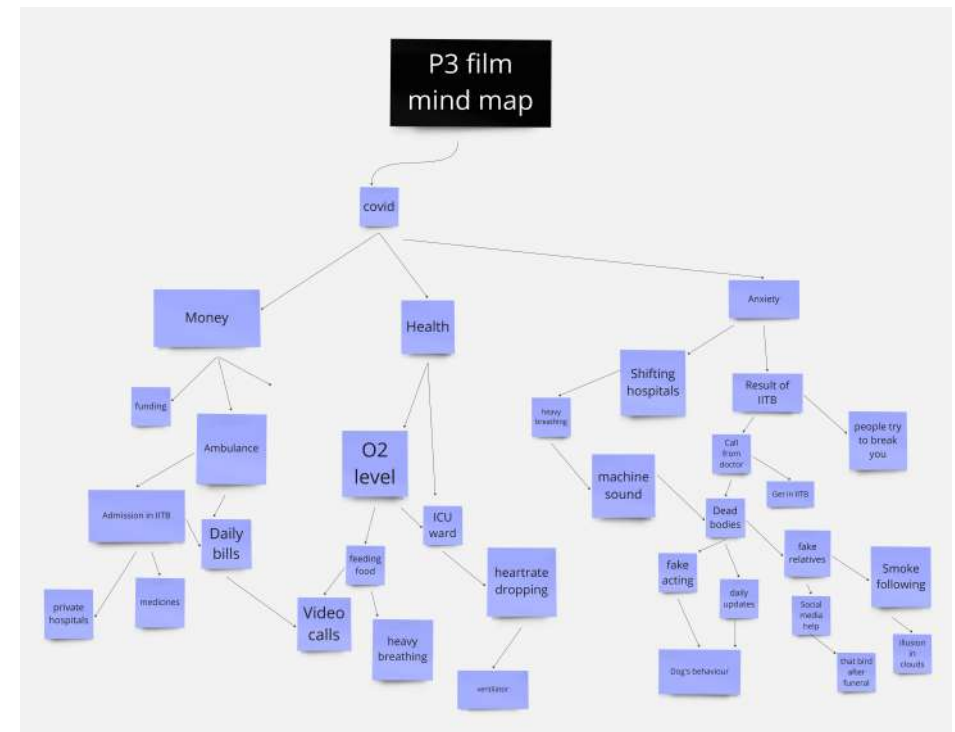
The personal experience I had with my father during the challenging time of the COVID-19 pandemic deeply impacted me. It was an incredibly difficult period, filled with uncertainties and situations I had never anticipated. Each day brought new challenges and emotions that tested my resilience. The realization struck me that what I was going through could easily befall anyone, including myself.

To navigate through the intricate web of my experiences and ensure a comprehensive understanding of the narrative I wanted to convey, I employed a mind map for primary data collection. This technique allowed me to visually organize and connect key points, effectively capturing the essence of my journey. Sticky notes adorned with important details formed the backbone of this mind map, serving as vital reference points during the refinement of the film's storyline.

The mind map became an invaluable tool, aiding me in organizing my thoughts and experiences. It facilitated a systematic approach to storytelling, ensuring that no crucial aspect was overlooked or omitted. By visually mapping out the key points, I could holistically comprehend the sequence of events and the emotions intertwined within them. This process enabled me to refine the narrative arc of the film, allowing for a more coherent and impactful storytelling experience.

The mind map served as a compass, guiding me through the intricacies of my personal journey. It provided a bird's-eye view of the events, allowing me to discern patterns, identify pivotal moments, and explore the underlying emotions. This comprehensive visual representation enabled me to approach the film's narrative with clarity and purpose. In essence, the mind map became an essential tool in capturing the essence of my personal experience with my father during the COVID-19 pandemic. It acted as a compass, helping me navigate the labyrinth of emotions, memories, and challenges I faced. By utilizing this visual framework,

I was able to refine the storyline of the film, ensuring that it authentically portrayed the depth of my journey and resonated with audiences on a profound level. In addition to my personal experience, I engaged in conversations with numerous individuals who also experienced the loss of a loved one due to COVID-19. These interactions revealed the immense difficulty they encountered when attempting to articulate their grief. It became apparent that expressing their emotions and navigating through the complexities of loss posed profound challenges. These heartfelt conversations allowed me to gain deeper insights into the universal struggle faced by those who have endured such painful experiences.



ANALYSIS

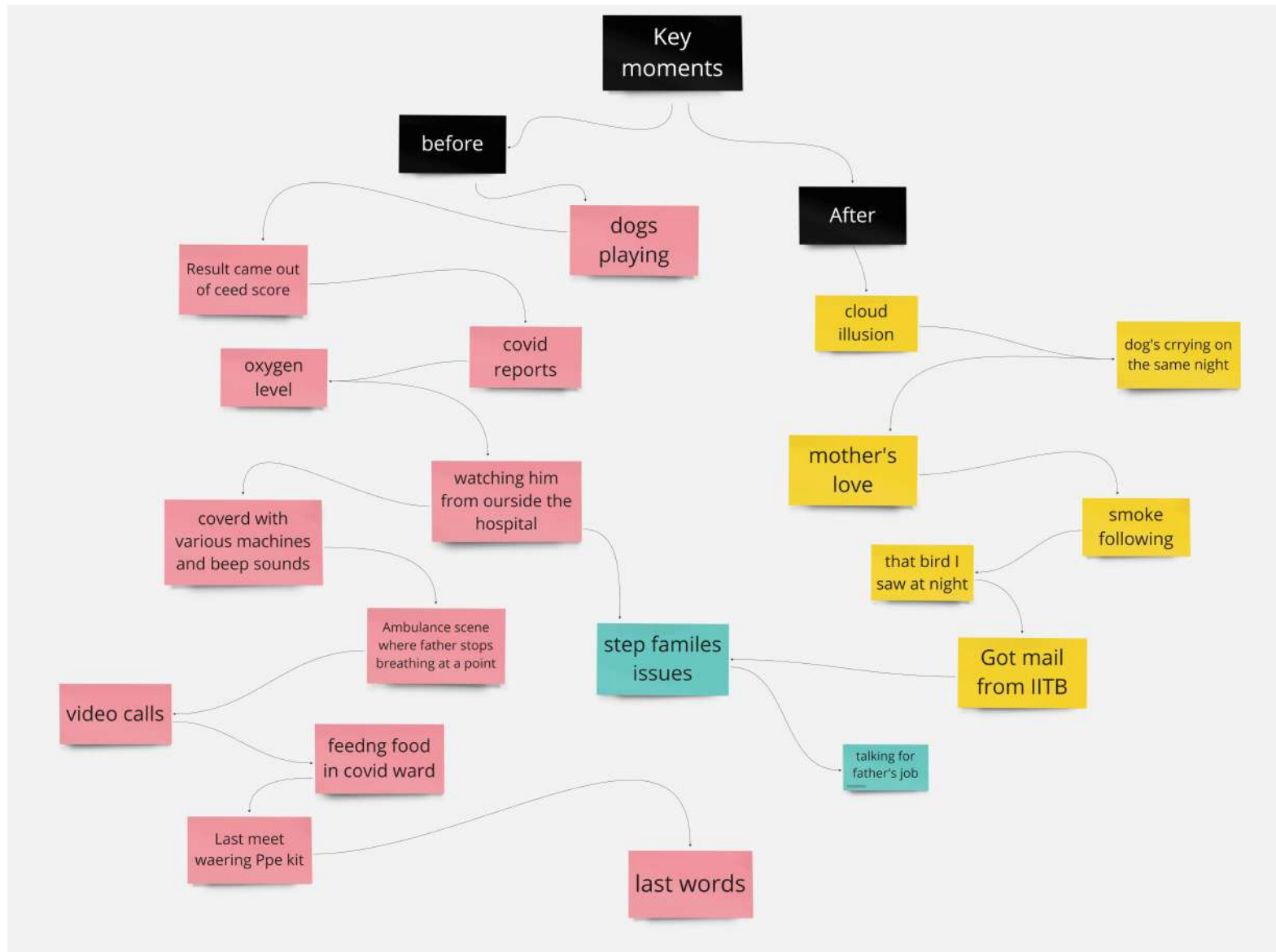
Throughout the filmmaking process and based on my own experiences, I have come to realize that revisiting the time when you lost a loved one is an incredibly challenging task, both mentally and physically. The sudden and profound loss of someone you deeply cared for, such as a parent, can have far-reaching effects on your well-being. Often, a profound sense of loneliness and emptiness envelops you as their absence leaves a void that cannot be filled by anyone else. However, as time passes and we grow, we gradually learn to navigate through the pain, not allowing it to define us. Instead, we embrace the precious memories and lessons we have gathered from that person.

While the pain of loss may always be present, we also begin to realize that the blessings bestowed upon us by our loved ones endure. Their blessings manifest in various forms, intangible but ever-present. Regardless of where we go or what we do, their memory, love, and support continue to accompany us on our journey. It is through these cherished memories that we find solace and derive strength, especially during difficult times. The profound wisdom and guidance they imparted to us in their lifetime serve as guiding lights, illuminating our path and assisting us in overcoming adversities.

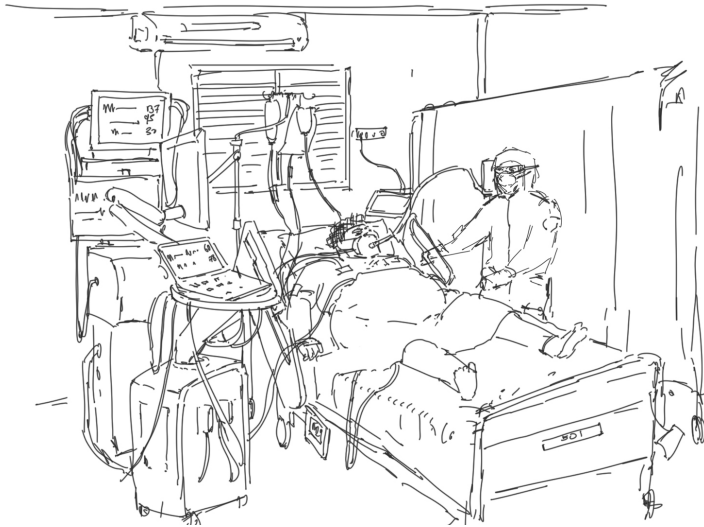
In moments of hardship, these memories and the lessons they taught us become even more valuable. Their words of wisdom and the life lessons they instilled in us serve as beacons of hope and resilience. They remind us of our own inner strength and provide us with the courage to navigate through challenging situations. The teachings of our loved ones become the compass that guides us back to a place of strength and stability, allowing us to emerge from the depths of despair and embrace life with renewed vigor. In summary, delving into the memories of our loved ones can be emotionally and physically demanding. However, with time, we begin to understand that their blessings persist in our lives. Their memories, love, and support remain steadfast, offering us solace and encouragement.

Their teachings and guidance become invaluable tools that help us overcome difficult times and inspire us to lead a life imbued with their enduring love and wisdom.

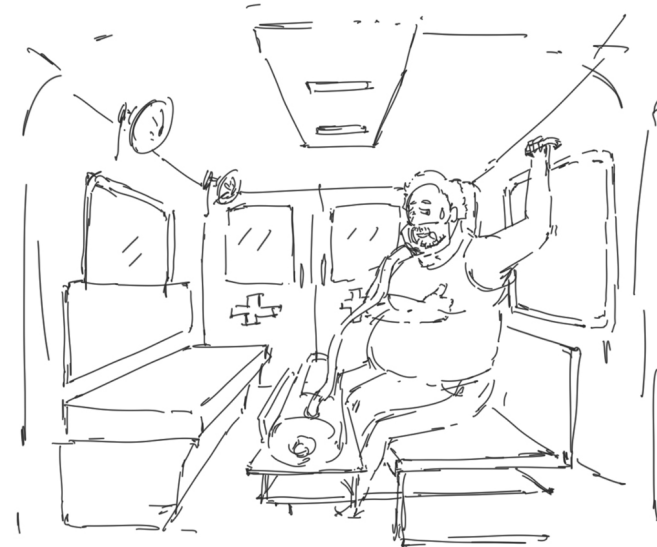
MINDMAP



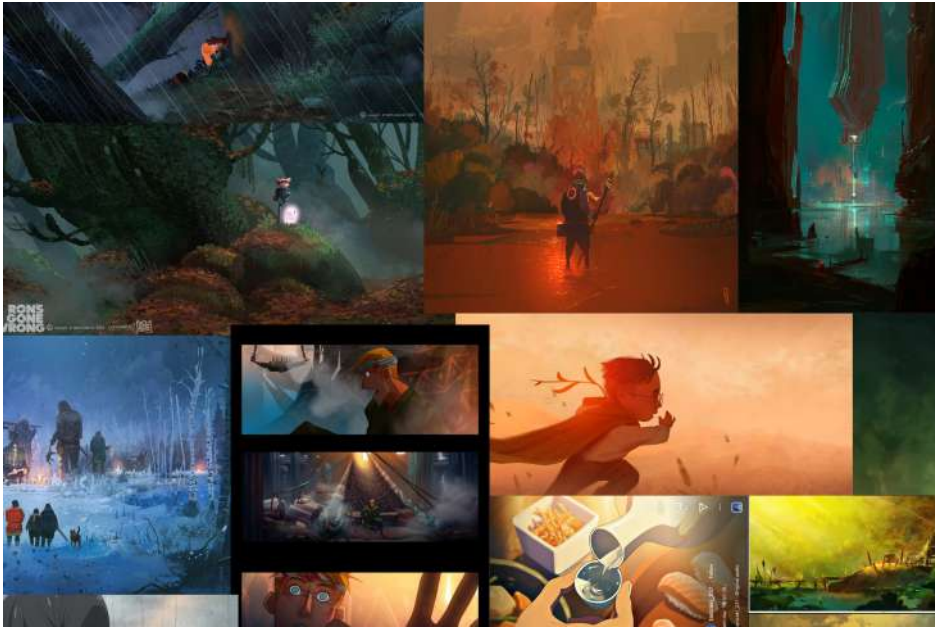
CONCEPTS

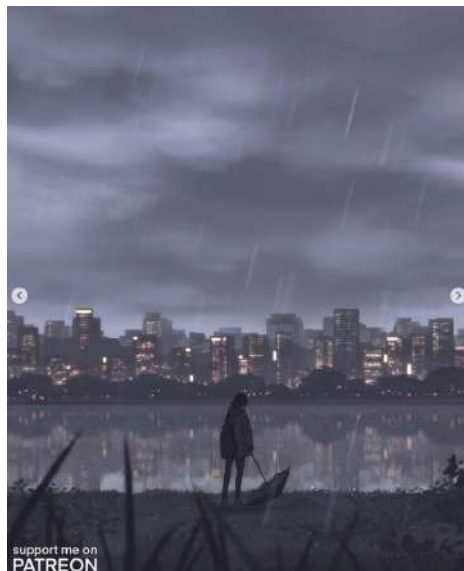
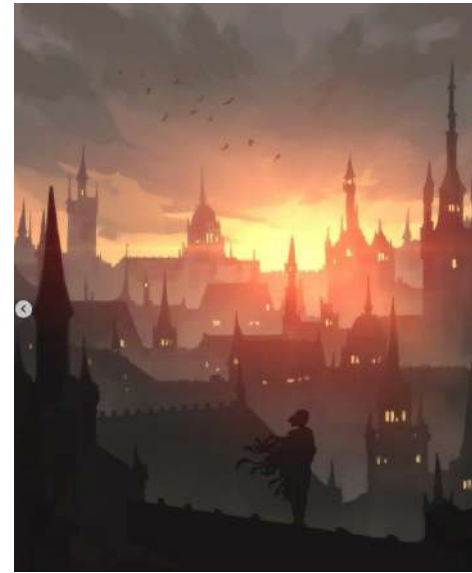


During the initial stages of my father's illness, I vividly recall the distressing experiences of navigating through various hospitals and witnessing the bustling ICU rooms filled with machines, wires, and disconcerting sounds. The process of shifting him from one medical facility to another was overwhelming, and the responsibility of taking care of him fell solely upon my shoulders. Walking beside him, I assumed the role of his primary caregiver, ensuring his comfort and well-being throughout this challenging journey. The memory of those moments remains etched in my mind, a testament to the profound bond between a parent and child during times of adversity. Despite his own circumstances, he directed a reassuring gaze towards me, attempting to alleviate my worries and provide a sense of comfort. In that fleeting exchange, his silent gesture spoke volumes, conveying a profound connection and an unwavering determination to soothe my concerns amidst the chaotic environment of the ambulance. This simple yet powerful interaction served as a testament to the strength of our bond and the enduring love that transcended words..

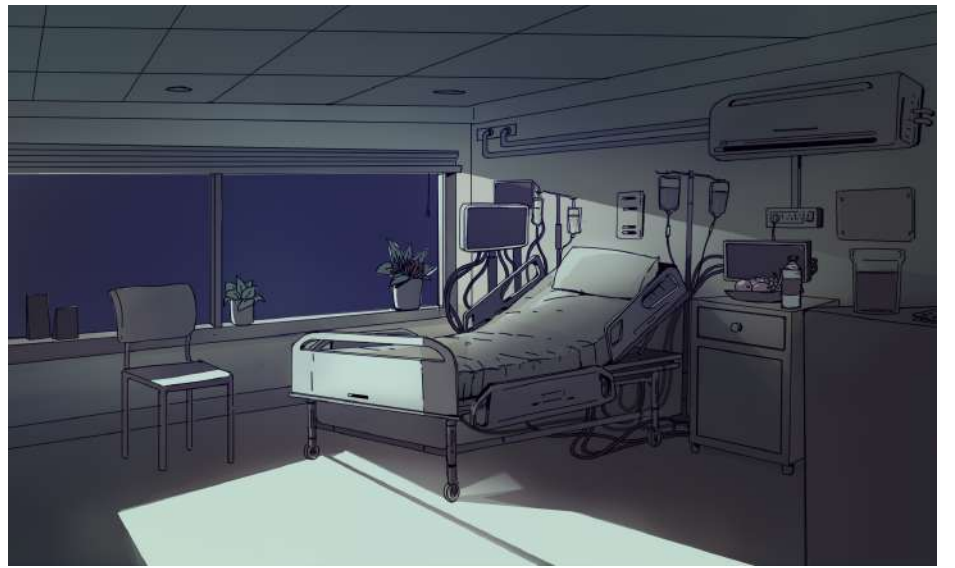


MOODBOARD





FINAL CONCEPTS



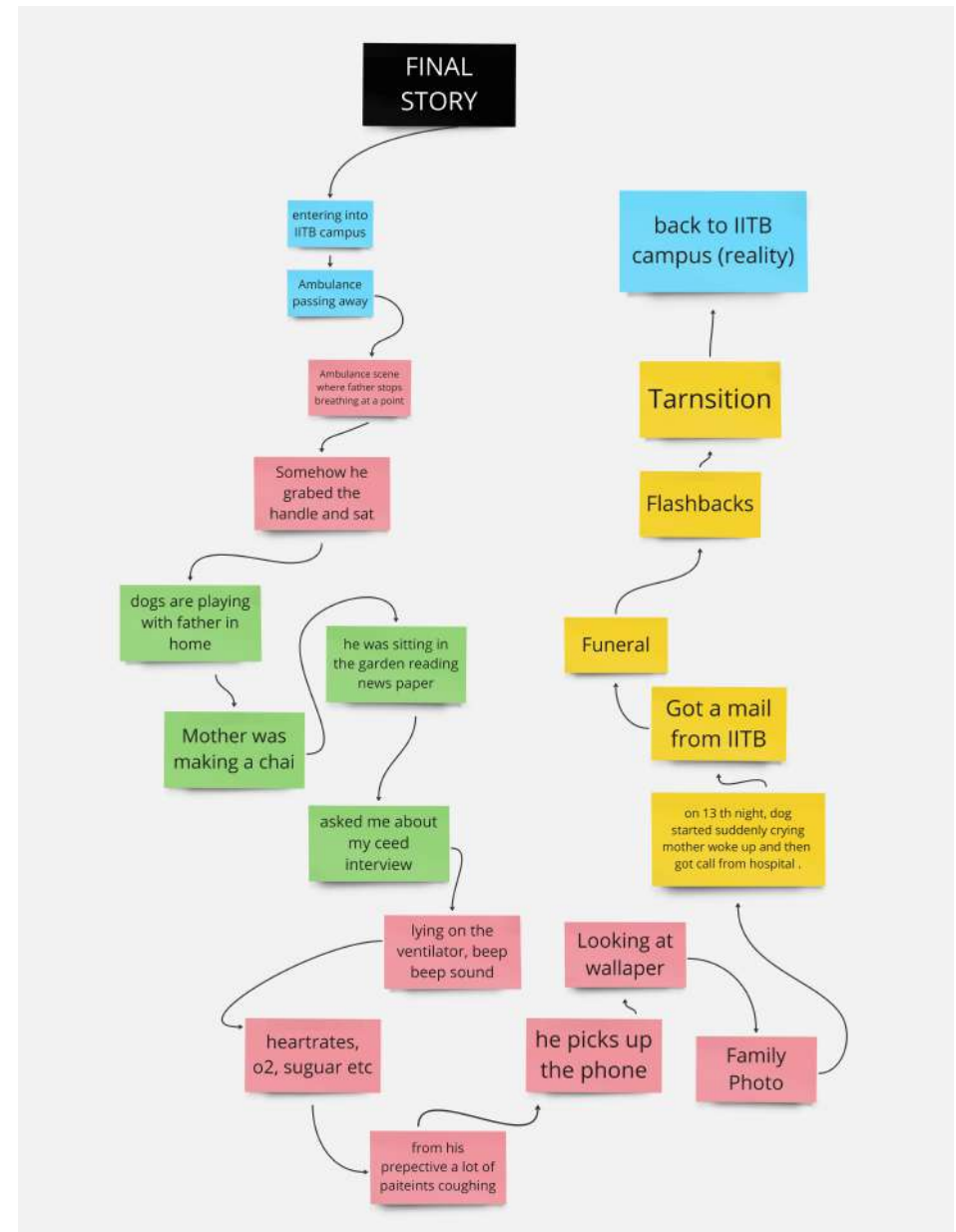
FINAL STORY

This story revolves around a young man who tirelessly pursues his dream, inching closer to its realization. His aspirations are on the verge of being fulfilled, with an impending selection into the prestigious IIT Bombay. However, a heart-wrenching twist of fate alters the course of his journey. Tragically, his beloved father passes away just a day before his anticipated selection into IIT Bombay.

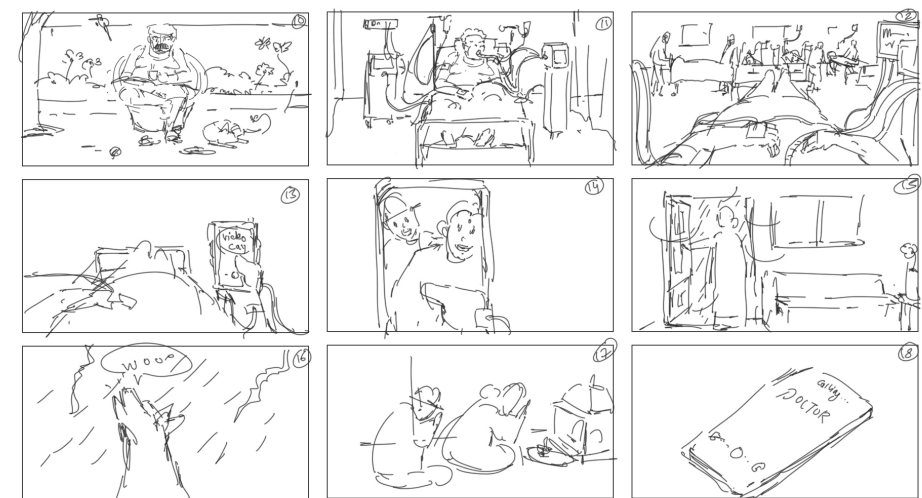
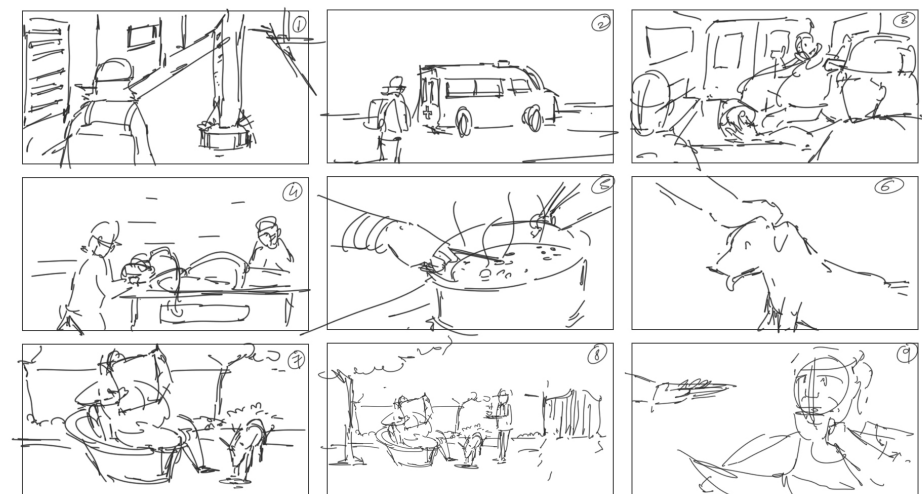
The narrative delves into the protagonist's final moments with his father, capturing the intensity of their bond and the profound emotions that accompany such a loss. Amidst this turmoil, the story also explores the close connection between the protagonist and a faithful dog, showcasing the significance of their relationship.

At its core, this story grapples with the conflicting emotions that arise when one is on the cusp of achieving their dreams, while simultaneously facing the devastating loss of a cherished loved one. It delves into the intricate balance between triumph and sorrow, shedding light on the complexities of human experiences. The protagonist is caught between the elation of almost attaining what he desired and the overwhelming grief that envelops him as he mourns the absence of his father.

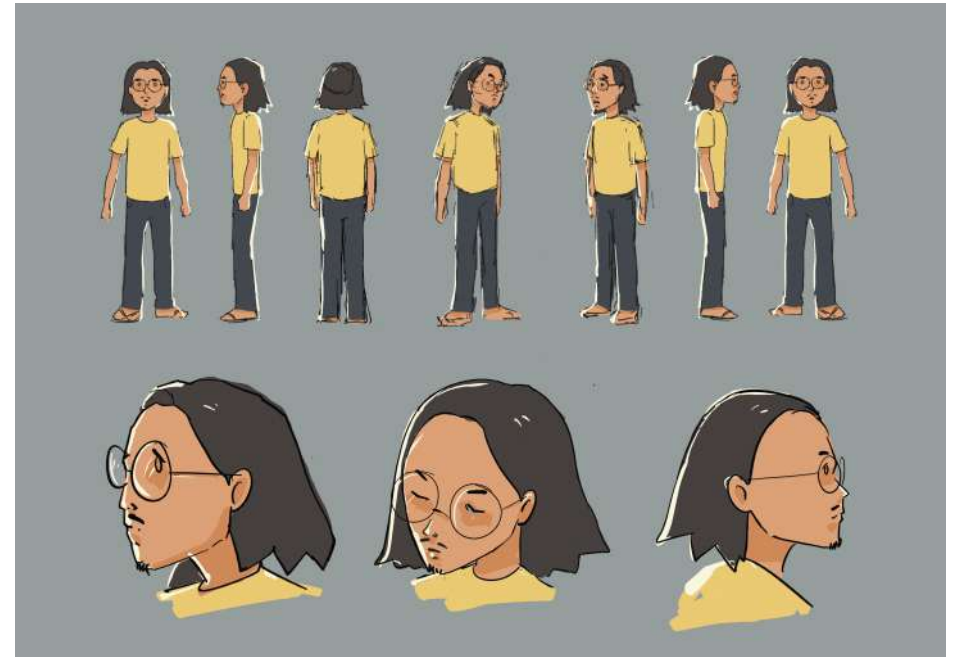
Through the exploration of these intertwined emotions, the story invites audiences to contemplate the fragility of life, the resilience of the human spirit, and the profound impact that love and loss can have on one's pursuit of dreams. It serves as a poignant reminder of the intricate nature of our existence, where moments of profound joy and heart-wrenching sorrow can intersect, shaping our journeys in unexpected ways.



STORYBOARD



CHARACTER DESIGN



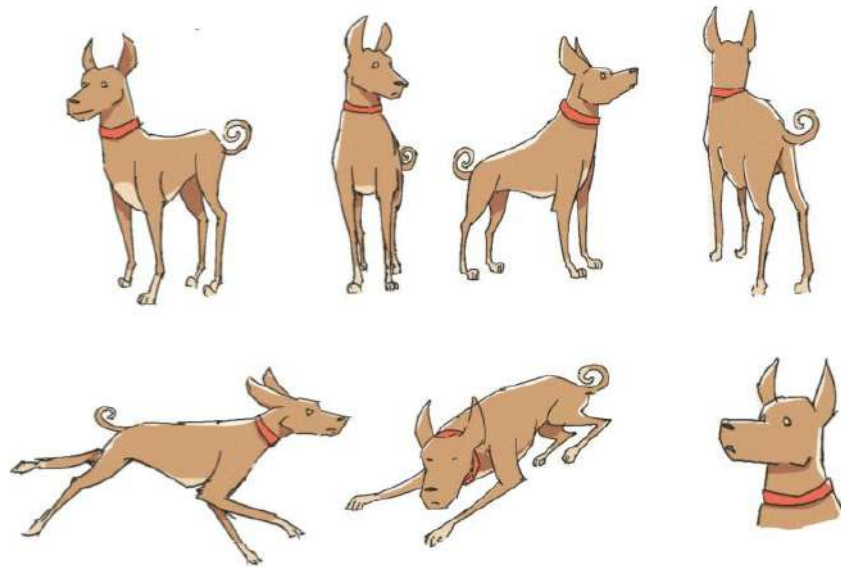
Exploration of the son's character through the lens of various art styles. Aged 24, he possesses a deep passion for the art of painting, which serves as a powerful medium of self-expression for him.



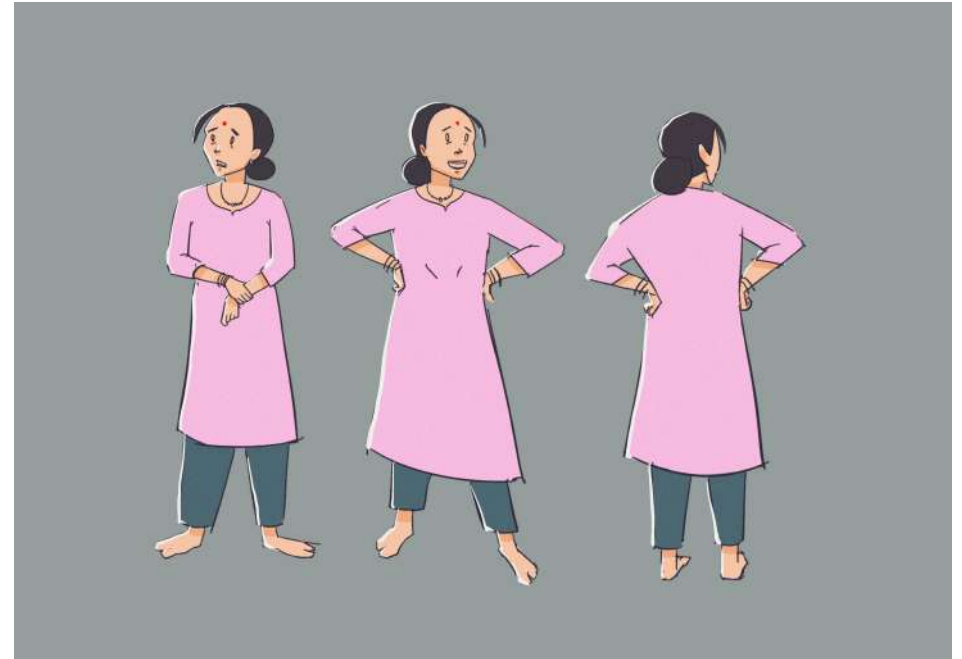


This story presents a captivating exploration of the father's character, unveiling a series of poignant moments shared between the father and his son. The father, named Milan, is a central figure in the narrative, aged 50. Through these carefully crafted moments, the audience gains insights into Milan's personality, his experiences, and the depth of his relationship with his son.





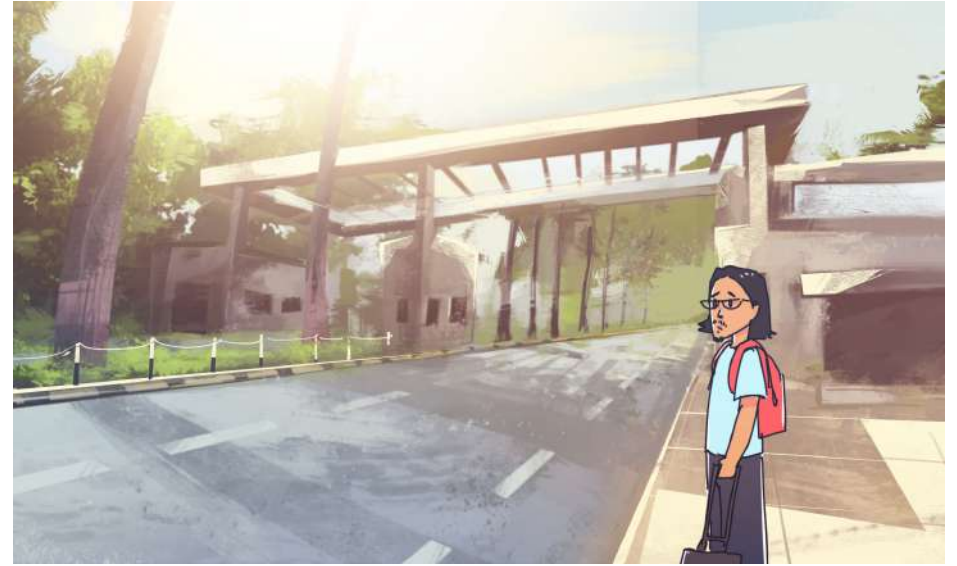
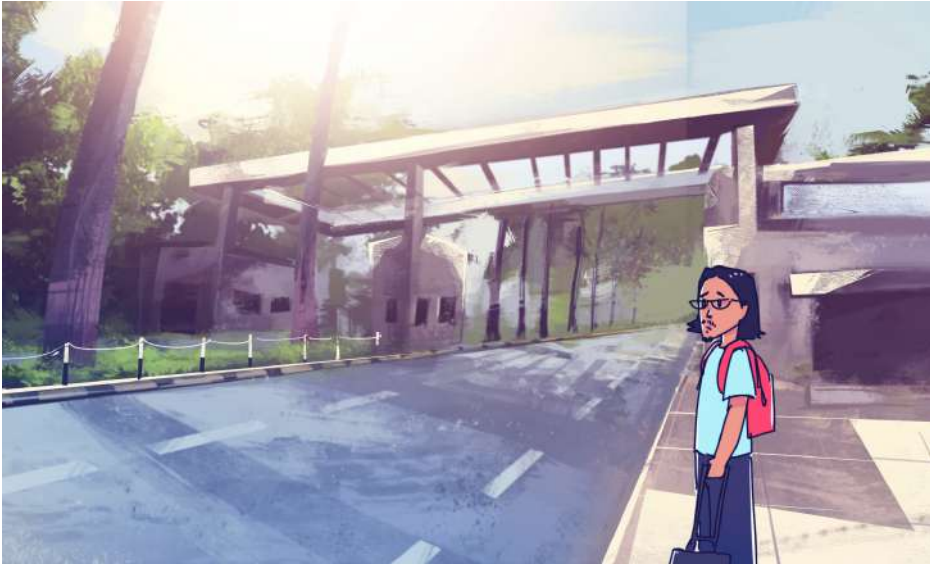
The delightful character of my dog, Tommy. At four years old, he exudes an abundance of energy and possesses a wonderfully playful nature. Tommy never fails to bring a smile to my face with his humorous antics. One of his absolute favorite treats is kajukathli, which he devours with great enthusiasm. His vibrant personality and unwavering zest for life make him an irreplaceable part of my world.



Now, let me introduce you to the final character of this story, the mother, Anju. At the age of 48, she radiates a nurturing presence, always taking care of her loved ones with utmost devotion. Anju's culinary skills are renowned, and she is renowned for preparing delectable dishes that tantalize the taste buds. Her food not only satiates hunger but also brings joy and comfort to those fortunate enough to savor it. Anju's caring nature and her ability to create mouthwatering meals make her an indispensable pillar of love and support within the family.

CONCEPT ART



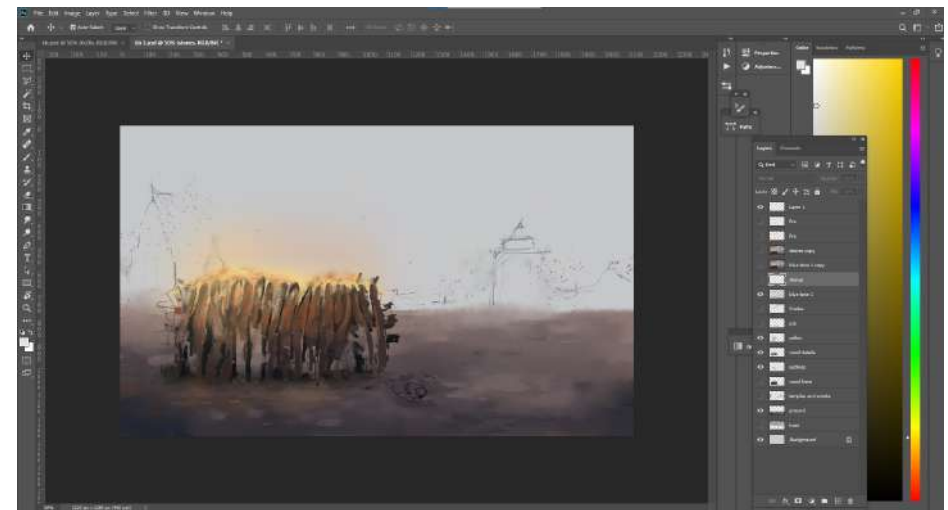
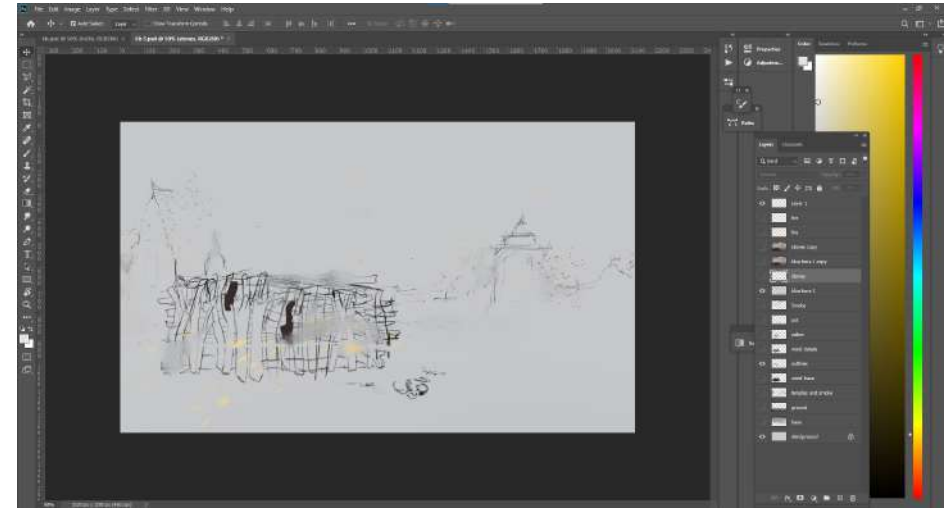


PRODUCTION PROCESS & CHALLENGES

Finalizing the style for this film proved to be a challenging task, as I explored numerous variations. Given the film's diverse range of moods, it was essential for each scene to effectively convey its intended feeling. To begin, I experimented with creating backgrounds using Procreate during the initial stages, seeking to develop a visual concept. Additionally, I ventured into traditional watercolor techniques, hoping to capture the desired aesthetics. However, I found that these attempts fell short or did not align with my artistic vision.

Nonetheless, I remained determined to infuse the essence of watercolor into the backgrounds. I turned to Adobe Photoshop as an alternative, starting with rough lines and focusing on composition and proportion. Gradually, I organized each layer into foreground, midground, and background, applying basic shading to enhance depth. The process of layering played a vital role in achieving the desired outcome. As I progressed, attention shifted towards intricate detailing, paying careful attention to lighting and shadows. By naming and arranging each layer thoughtfully, I was able to effectively convey the desired emotions.

In addition to the intricate layering and meticulous attention to detail in the foreground, there is an underlying presence of watercolor brushes that subtly infuses the backgrounds with a distinct artistic quality. These blending brushes proved to be pivotal in realizing the desired effect, skillfully merging colors and textures to create a harmonious visual experience. The subtle hint of watercolor not only adds a touch of organic beauty but also reinforces the artistic vision of the film



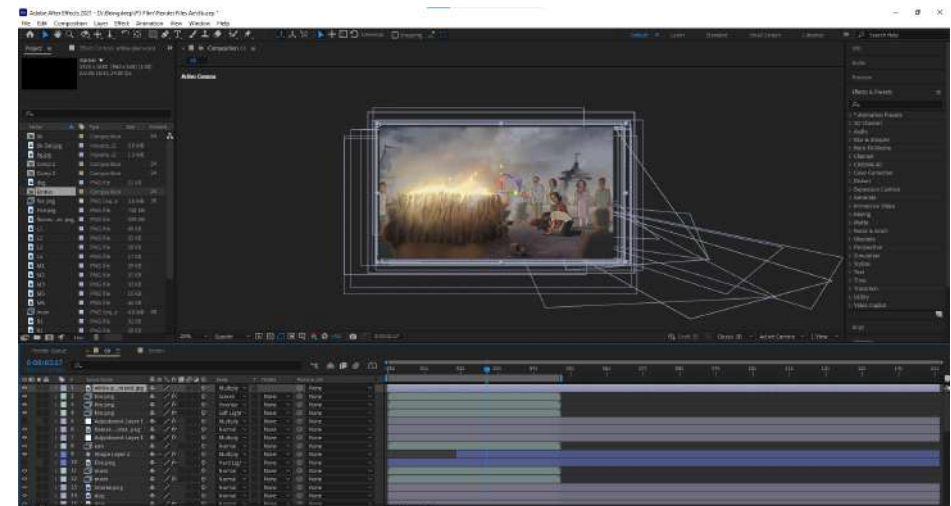
Toon Boom Harmony not only revolutionized the animation process but also significantly aided in the coloring phase. In contrast to Photoshop, where each frame required manual coloring, Toon Boom's vector-based system proved to be a time-saving gem. Leveraging its capabilities, I efficiently applied colors to the animated sequences. By utilizing vector graphics, the process became more streamlined, allowing for quicker and more consistent coloring throughout the film.

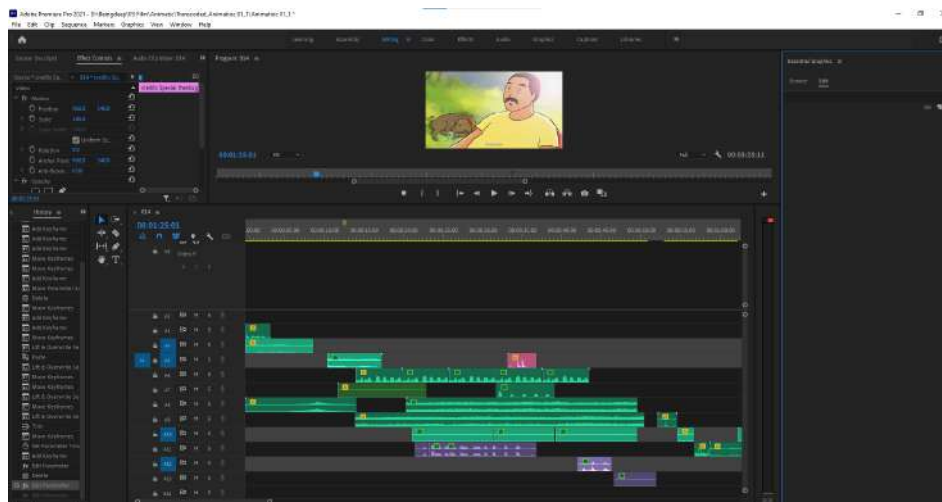
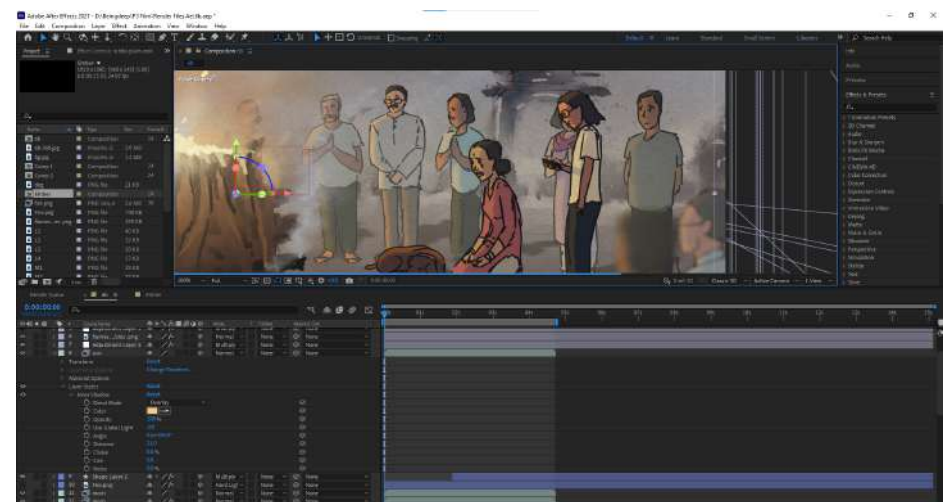
When it came to compositing, Adobe After Effects became my tool of choice. After exporting the PNG sequences from Toon Boom, I seamlessly imported them into After Effects. This powerful software provided a robust platform for compositing, allowing me to combine and fine-tune various elements to achieve the desired visual impact. The flexibility of After Effects opened up a realm of creative possibilities, enabling me to experiment and explore different visual treatments. Through iterative processes, I carefully crafted and refined the visuals to align with my initial vision.

The versatility of After Effects shone particularly bright during the compositing phase. It offered an extensive range of tools and effects that I skillfully employed to enhance the audience's experience. Utilizing techniques such as panning and title animations, I heightened the visual storytelling, creating an immersive and captivating atmosphere. The software facilitated the integration of lens flare effects, shadows, and other visual elements, adding depth and realism to the scenes. By harnessing the power of After Effects, I was able to seamlessly compile all these components, weaving them together into a visually stunning final product. As the film reached its completion, I devoted careful attention to the finer details, recognizing the importance of consistency and cohesiveness. To achieve this, I developed presets for each shot, ensuring a unified visual language throughout the film.

These presets encompassed a range of adjustments, including the addition of noise textures and subtle glows. Tailoring the parameters of each preset to match the specific mood and requirements of each scene, I fine-tuned the visuals, harmonizing them with the overall tone and emotion of the film.

In summary, the combination of Toon Boom Harmony, Adobe After Effects, and meticulous attention to detail played pivotal roles in the creation of this film. Toon Boom streamlined the animation process and provided time-saving benefits during coloring, while After Effects proved to be a powerful tool for compositing, enabling the realization of the envisioned visuals. With the careful application of presets and nuanced adjustments, I ensured a consistent and immersive viewing experience for the audience, ultimately bringing the film to life in a visually captivating manner.





CONCLUSION

In the beginning of my college journey at IIT Bombay, the weight of my father's loss bore heavily upon me, leaving me feeling lonely and filled with sadness. A profound sense of self-doubt plagued me, and I often questioned my worthiness of being in such an esteemed institution. However, the aspiration to create a film dedicated to my father served as a catalyst for transformative personal growth, imparting valuable life lessons along the way.

Reflecting upon my past, I realize that during those initial moments, I lacked confidence, often plagued by feelings of insecurity and immaturity. I bore the burden of being an irresponsible and unsure son. Yet, embarking on this filmmaking journey allowed me to confront these shortcomings head-on, fostering a newfound sense of responsibility towards my mother and friends. Through the trials and triumphs of the filmmaking process, I learned the importance of patience and the significance of trusting my own journey.

Animation, once a source of fear and trepidation for me, became a domain where I confronted my deepest fears. The process of animating this film compelled me to face my uncertainties head-on, serving as a testament to my growth and resilience. While I acknowledge that I am still on a path of improvement, I have gained a renewed sense of confidence in my ability to animate. This newfound self-assurance fuels my determination to continue honing my skills and striving for excellence.

Overall, the journey of creating this film has instilled within me a deeper understanding of my responsibilities, the value of patience, and the significance of trusting in one's own process. It has enabled me to transcend my fears, build resilience, and embrace the transformative power of personal growth. Through this film, I have discovered the strength and courage to navigate the challenges of life with newfound confidence and conviction.

REFERENCES

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fUR5ks-t9TI&ab_channel=BarrPicturesMedia

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CvA4Gn5OudI&ab_channel=QuynhKhuong

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O15dxrBNuAQ&ab_channel=ImagineDevils

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SmqAicD3-Cw&ab_channel=LargeShortFilms

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oo4KXZVAp-sQ&t=12s&ab_channel=KISKIS-keepitshort

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mV_w9Zv-Td-M&t=161s&ab_channel=iHeart