

SWARNA THENGA

(The retelling story of Icarus)

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
of the degree of Master in Design

by

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Industrial Design Center

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY BOMBAY

2014

IDC IIT BOMBAY
PRESENTS



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SWARNA THENGA

FILM BY

JENINJ VADAKKAN

GUIDE


PROF. PHANI TETALI




APPROVAL SHEET

The Animation Degree Project entitled 'SWARNA THENGA', by Jenin J Vadakkan, 136340006 is approved in for the partial fulfillment of the Master of Design Degree in Animation Design.

Project Guide: 

Chairperson: 

Internal Examiner: 


External Examiner: 

Date: 30-04-2015

Place: IDC IIT Bombay

DECLARATION

I declare that this written submission represents my ideas in my own words and where others' ideas or words have been included, I have adequately cited and referenced the original sources. I also declare that I have adhered to all principles of academic honesty and integrity and have not misrepresented or fabricated any idea/data/fact/source in my submission. I understand that any violation of the above will cause for disciplinary action by the Institute and can also evoke penal action from the sources which have thus not been properly cited or from whom proper permission has not been taken when needed.

Signature: 

Date: 30-04-2015

Name: Jenin J Vadakkan
Roll No: 136340006

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

Desire, greed and ego - The human conditions which makes the lives of individuals hard to deal with; for them and for others around them. A kind of a mental disorder. The movie focuses on those particular emotions. In the movie the protagonist gets enlightened of his deeds through the small incident.

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INTRODUCTION

I had heard about the story of Icarus in my childhood. At that time I felt a deep attachment with this Greek mythology. Which inspired me to take this story concept ahead as my degree project. The hard part was retelling this great mythology in modern context based on my culture. I had to make sure that it will not make any damage to great story. In the beginning I came up with a few stories and they was too far away from my personal experience. So I decided to make story which related to my own experiences and environment.

I adapted the emotions of desire and greed from the original story. But my next challenge was the execution of the story in a modern context. When I looked into my experiences, my thoughts reached my church and people living around it.

ORIGINAL STORY

Icarus was the son of Daedalus who was a genius when it came to creating and inventing things. Daedalus, along with his son Icarus, imprisoned by king Minos of Crete within the walls of his own invention, the Labyrinth. But, the great craft man made two pairs of wings by sticking feathers to a wooden frame with wax. Giving one pair to his son, he cautioned him that flying too near the sun would cause the wax to melt. Icarus became exhilarated by the ability to fly. Ignoring his father's warning, he flew higher.

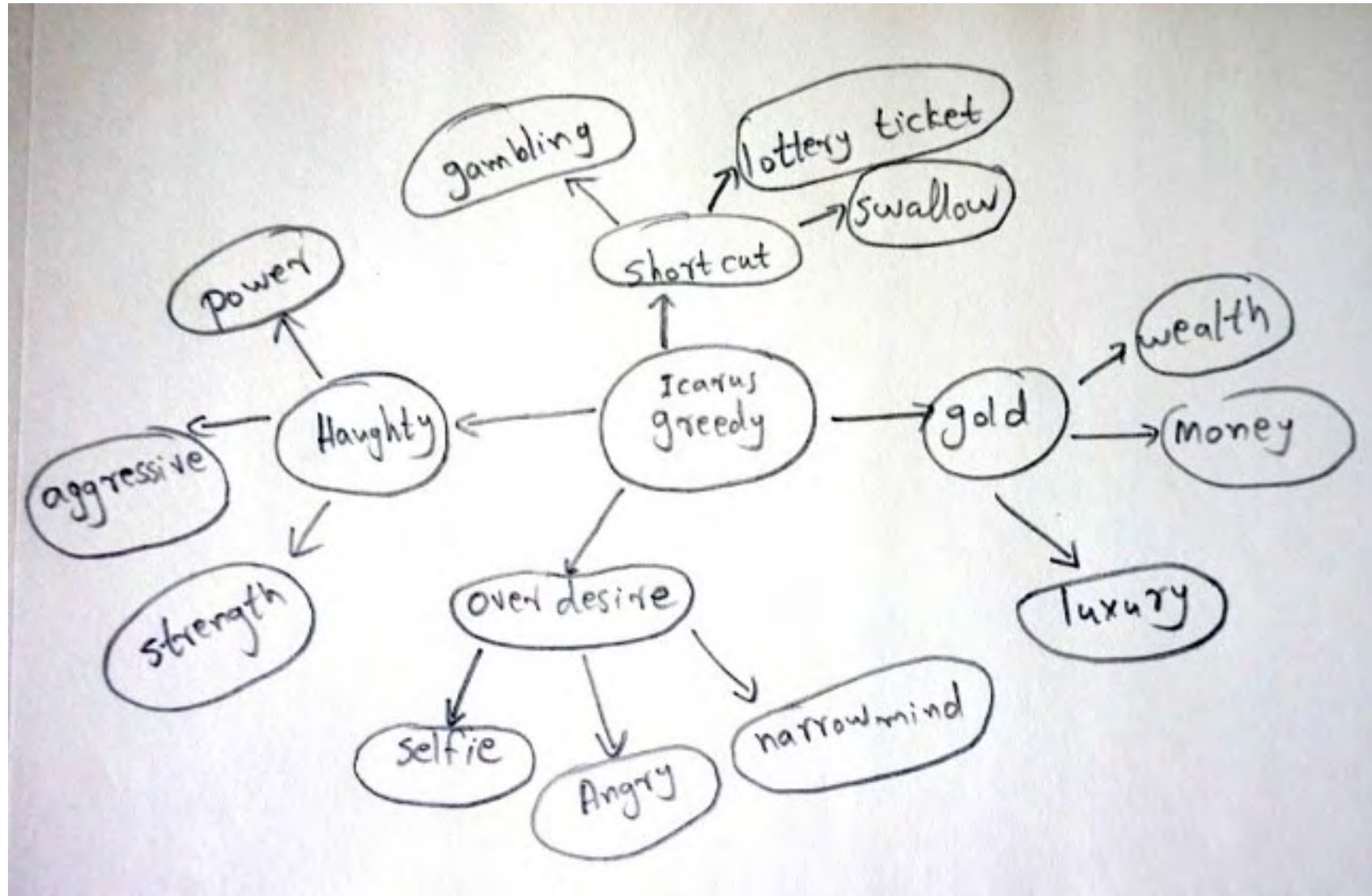
The sun melted the wax holding his wings together, and The boy fell in to the water and drowned. Daedalus looked down to see feathers floating in the waves, and realized what had happened. He buried his son on an island which would be called Icaria, and the sea into which Icarus had fallen would ever after be called the Icarian Sea.

Icaria, is a Greek island in the Aegean Sea, 10 nautical miles (19 km) southwest of Samos.

(Reference: Manorama TELL ME WHY, MYTHOLOGY and wikipedia).

RESEARCH

IDEATION



STORY DEVELOPMENT

STORY 1

‘The main character, a well-dressed gentle man Working in a corporate company. One day, while driving to office one auto rickshaw overtakes his Luxurious vehicle. He keeps hornning, but rickshaw Doesn’t give him way. He loses his temper. The greed is awoken in him. Wings symbolizing greediness appears From his car. In his eyes rickshaw is also having Wings. Both vehicles start flying chasing and over Taking each Other among the clouds. Suddenly, His car collides with a truck. He awakes from dream And jumps from his bed sweating in shock. He realize It was just a dream and walks towards the window Where he sees so many vehicles flying among the Clouds and tall buildings. Soon, he realize that He is In the world of greed...’

STORY 2

The story begins with the rituals which are conducted for the people who passed away. This family is having two children and was performing this ritual for their elder son. Younger son is a very playful kid who wished to play always in water. But, his parents restricted him and never allowed him to go outside his house towards the beach because; they lost their elder son in huge sea waves. Due to this incident, father decided for his younger son not to choose his carrier as fisherman. Every day, this kid peeps through a hole from his house and keep crying through the whole day. Quite often, Father keeps warning him and tries to make the kid understand, but he is very stubborn.

One day father was deeply involved in some work, same as the mother. The kid even was too involved in busy playing. Suddenly, he felt somebody calling out his name from far. Kid peeps through the wall to see who it was. He was imagining his elder brother among the waves calling him to play in water... for a moment; the kid saw both of his parents were busy in their work. He ran towards the sea shore... jumped and leaped on to the wet sands... jumped into the water with full freedom. Same time parents were still unaware of what was happening. Suddenly

dark clouds appear, wind speed increases and tide occurs... a huge wave swallows the kid into the deep ocean...

After a while, parents realized their kid is missing. They saw the small footsteps towards the sea water. Father and mother ran towards the sea, they shouted called out his name ran here and there... and the story ends with the mother and father standing and waiting for their children while the dawn of the sun set....’

STORY 3

Vaasu is the protagonist of this story. He was the only person who continued with this profession which eventually increased his demand for the work. Even the rich people in the village required his service because coconut harvesting is not a matter of profit it’s matter of safety also. They were not willing to risk their life and they knew that coconut tree climbing is a tedious task. So everyone wanted his service. This made him a haughty and greedy person. He dreamt to become rich in a short period of time. He splashed a major share of his money in toddy, lottery tickets and gambling. Sometimes, he was not available for the church’s works.

One day his wife came to the church. The priest was there. She complained that Vaasu had changed a lot. She believed that only priest can do anything about this as he is the final authority in the church. The priest also came to know about Vaasu’s change from the other people and he decided to teach him a lesson.

Next day the priest called Vaasu into the church. He wanted to tell him a secret. He said, “In our church’s land there is a coconut tree that nobody has seen. The tree had a golden coconut. Only our old bishop knew about that tree. Unfortunately, he didn’t pass this message to anybody before his death. You have to find this for our church.” Vaasu was very excited to hear this. And this would realize his dream. Vaasu promised to the priest that he will find the golden coconut. The priest added one more word. He said, “Just find the tree and never try to pluck the coconut.”

Vaasu was so excited and he started to climb coconut trees one by one in search of the golden coconut. Days passed past and he couldn't find that special tree. Day by day, he grew in disappointment and one day he reached a strange place near a river. There was one isolated coconut tree in the banks. This tree was totally different from the others. He walked towards the tree. And Yes! He found that Golden coconut! It was glittering in the sunlight. He couldn't believe himself. He decided to possess that coconut. He forgot the priest's words. He started to climb the tree. Surprisingly, the tree started growing Up for every step that he climbed. He realized that the destination was going far away and his greed for money prevented him from giving up. The tree grows till the sun. After long hours of struggle he fell. While he woke up he was on river bank. He felt that God's hand coming towards him. He looked up. That was the priest. Vaasu understood himself. He hugged the priest and cried like a baby.

FINALIZING STORY

After going through the process of writing the stories, I liked the final story I came up with. After getting it reviewed by my Professor, I did some changes and finalized the story.

FINAL STORY

Vasu was an orphan who was cared for by the church and the only coconut palm climber in the entire village. His only aim was to acquire wealth in a short span of time. He was willing to go to any extent to accomplish this, even resort to stealing. This kind of behavior from an adopted son of the church saddened the Vicar of the church to a great extent.

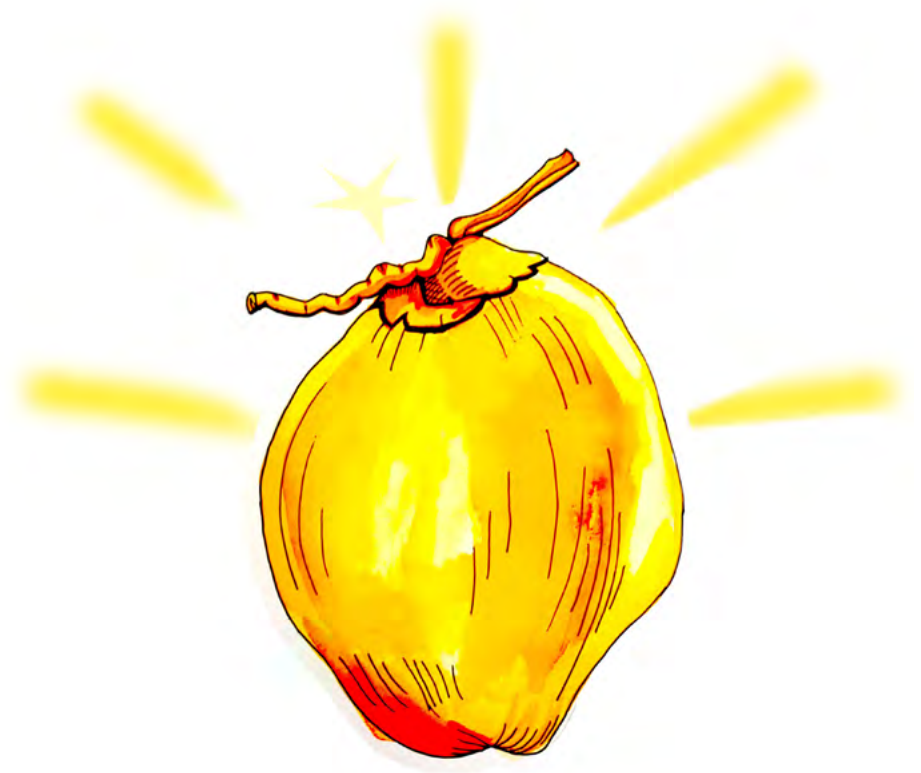
Once the Vicar shared a secret with Vasu about the tree has a golden coconut in the village.” Vasu was very excited to hear this. And this would realize his dream. Thus Vasu began journey in search of that treasure. Vaasu was so excited and he started to climb coconut trees one by one in search of the golden coconut.

Days passed past and he couldn't find that special tree. Day by day, he grew in disappointment and one day he reached a strange place near a river. There was one isolated coconut tree in the banks. This tree was totally different from the others. He walked towards the tree. And Yes! He found that Golden coconut! It was glittering in the sunlight. He couldn't believe himself. He decided to possess that coconut.

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INITIAL CONCEPT

After my research I came to the concept of gold. In Bible Stories and Other Old fables gold is always considered as a symbol of greed. That is how I came to the conclusion of the golden coconut.



CHURCH AND PEOPLES

My primary research was focused on Malabar independent Syrian church. The Church had a very interesting story behind its foundation. The land on which the church is situated, was gifted by a Muslim landlord. The Church has acres of coconut farm which forms the major source of by coconut harvesting. Around 40 families live around the church.

About 300 years ago, when the church was founded, the bishop of the church brought these people's ancestors to work in the farm. He accommodated them in the church's land and in 1963, these people occupied the land permanently with the help of 'Kerala land Reform act'. But they still are part of the church. They are from the 'Vettuva' caste and by profession they are coconut tree climbers. A very physical job. Only these people have the right to climb coconut trees in the village. The current generations are a bit educated and their ego doesn't allow them to do their family tradition. Many of them went other states in search of white collar job.

VISUAL DEVELOPMENT

INSPIRED ARTIST.

K.C.S Paniker (1911–1977).

Very famous painter. Who was successfully captured the essence of village. Most of the water colors are abstract. The richness of color makes painting very beautiful



VISUAL REFERENCE.

For my visual reference I was visited my home town. Which is situated around 8 kilometers from my home. The photographs which I took helped me explore the visuals for the film.

VISITED PLACES.

- 1, Thozhiyur
- 2, Chavakkad
- 3, Guruvayur









GETTING STARTED WITH SKETCHES

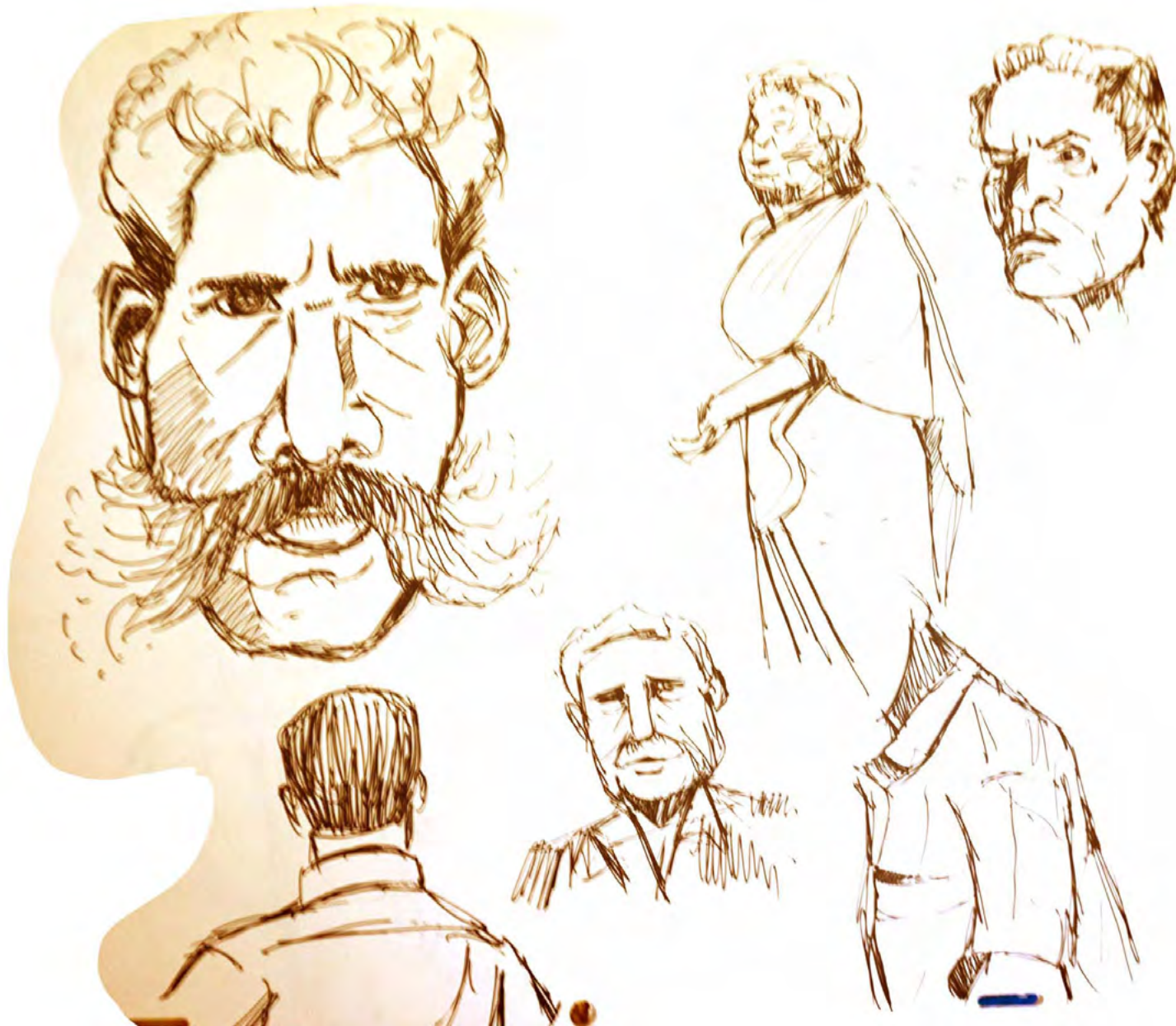
Initial Concept Sketches





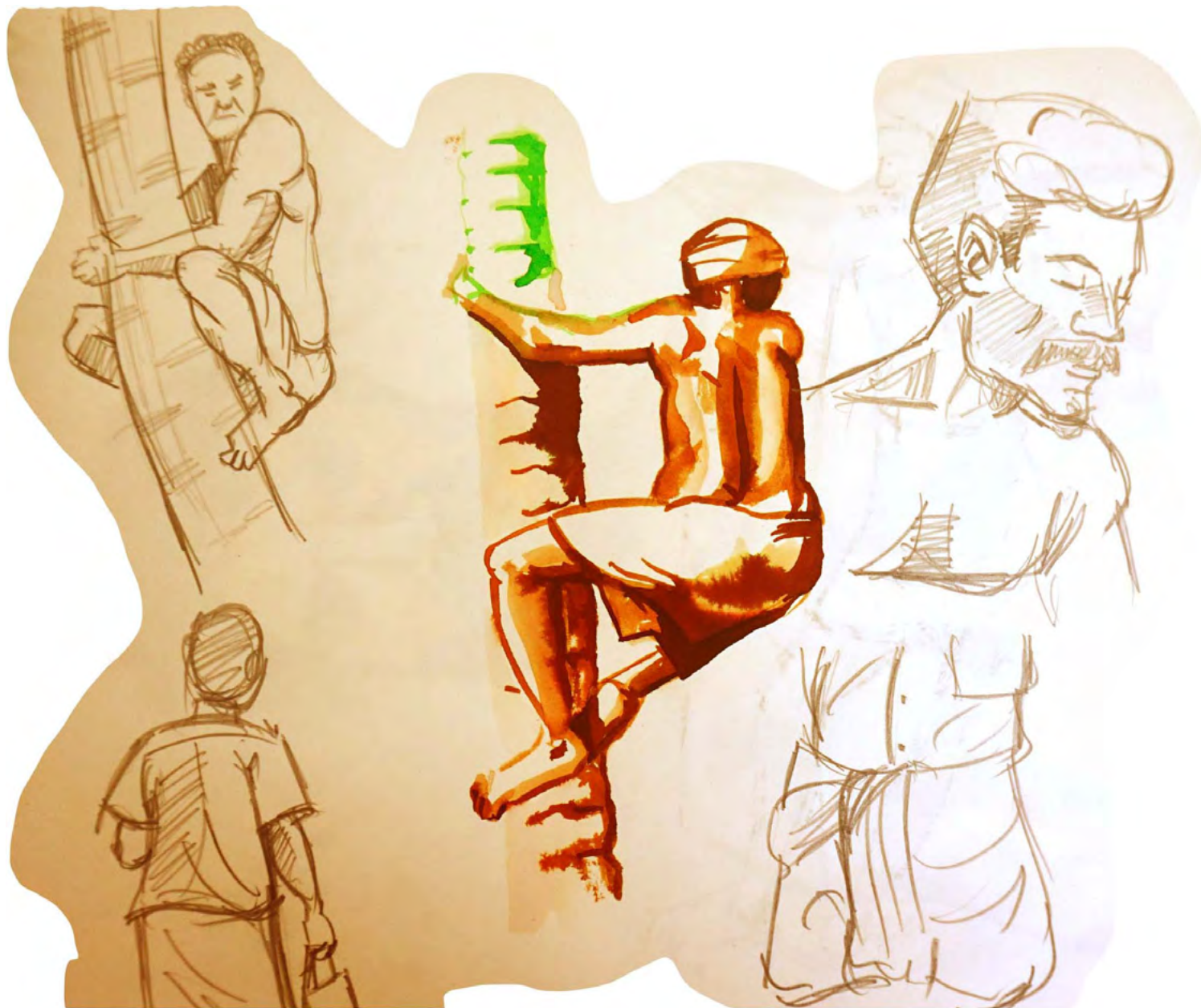
To Study costume and body language people's in Kerala





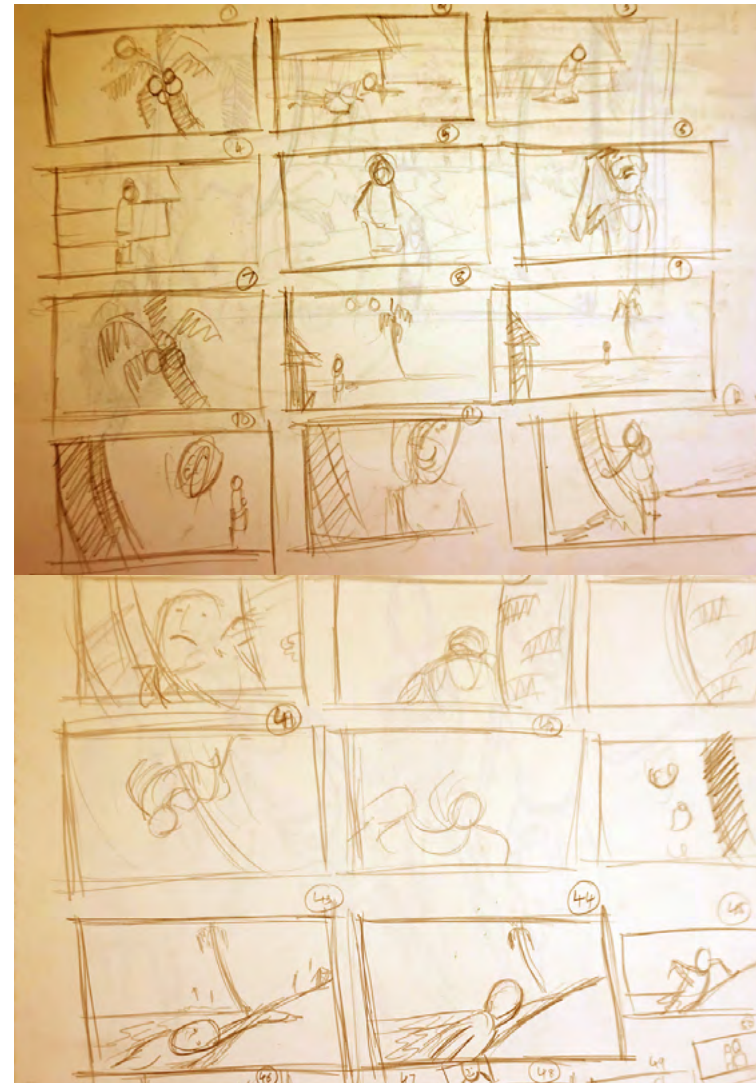
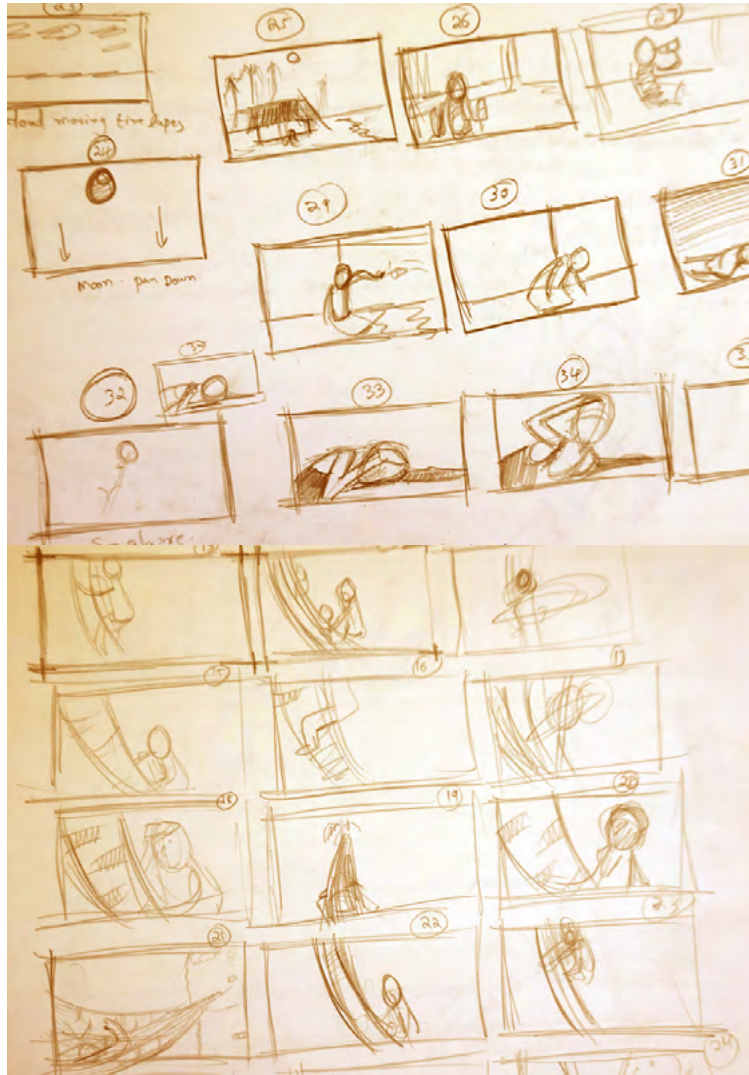


Experiment sketches with water color



QUICK THUMBNAILS AND CONCEPT SKETCH.

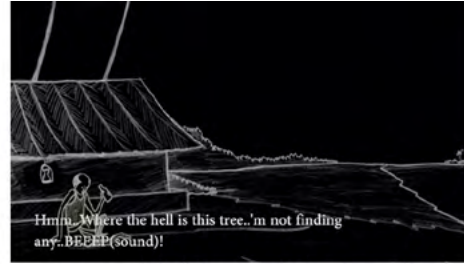
Getting started with visual script.



Detail Storyboard



A moonlit night(camera pan down)



a person drinking and singing alone



Hmm.. Where the hell is this tree.. 'm not finding any..BEEP(sound)!



looking at empty bottle



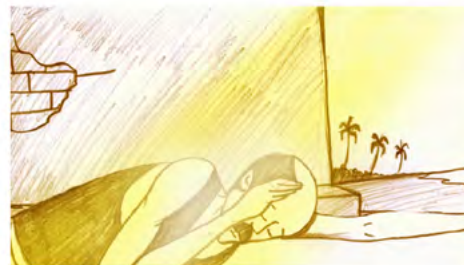
he throwing bottle



he falls down



next morning



sunlight hitting face



Vasu wakes up



morning birds are flying



he looking at coconut palm



running towards coconut palm



looking at top of coconut palm



he found golden coconuts



laughing



come closer to tree



started climbing





climbing the tree



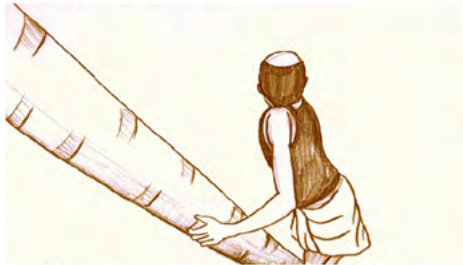
climbing the tree



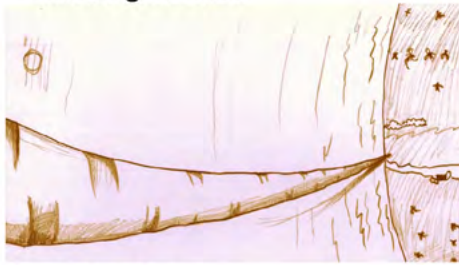
looking upwards



the tree is growing near by sun



looking downwards



he climbed a lot



turn back



turn back



vasu is getting angry



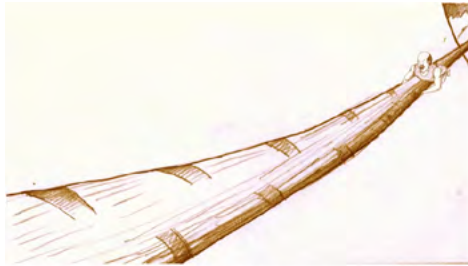
vasu is getting angry



started running on tree



started running on tree



again started climbing



he is very tired



again looking upwards



tree is reaching more height



eagle is flying



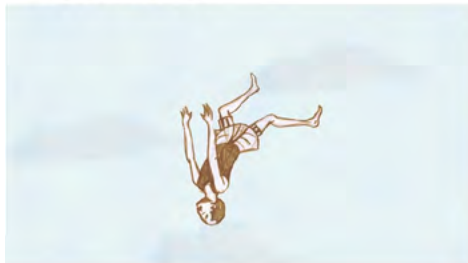
lost his grip



falls down



falls down



he is on riverbank



wakes up



he is looking same tree



tree is normal height



a hand is coming towards him



a hand is coming towards him



vicar looking at vasu



vasu standing up



vasu standing up



vasu standing up



vasu hugging vicar

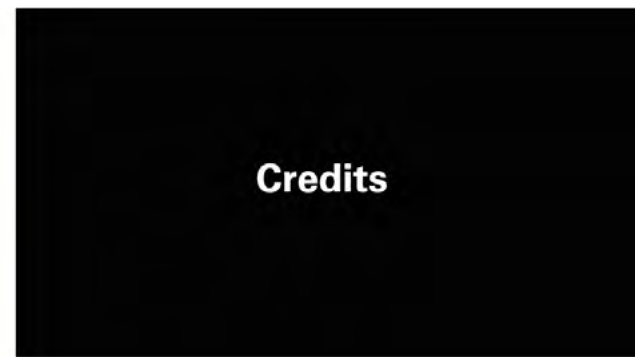


vicar is smiling



vasu is crying





ROUGH EDIT

I drew the storyboard on A5 sheets of paper and lay them down on the floor to get an overview of the story. It really helped me understand the entire structure of the story during the storyboarding process. It gave me the freedom to add and remove the frame as I liked.



CHARACTER DESCRIPTION



VASU

Vasu was an adopted son of the church. He is a 30 years old man with masculine figure. After high school education, he left from the church and became coconut palm climber in that village. He was the only person who continued with this profession which eventually increased his demand for the work. Even the rich people in the village required his service because coconut harvesting is not a matter of profit it's matter of safety also. They were not willing to risk their life and they knew that coconut tree climbing is a tedious task. So everyone wanted his service. This made him a haughty and greedy person. His only vice was his greed, his need to be wealthy in a short span of time. It lead him to thievery and other bad choices.



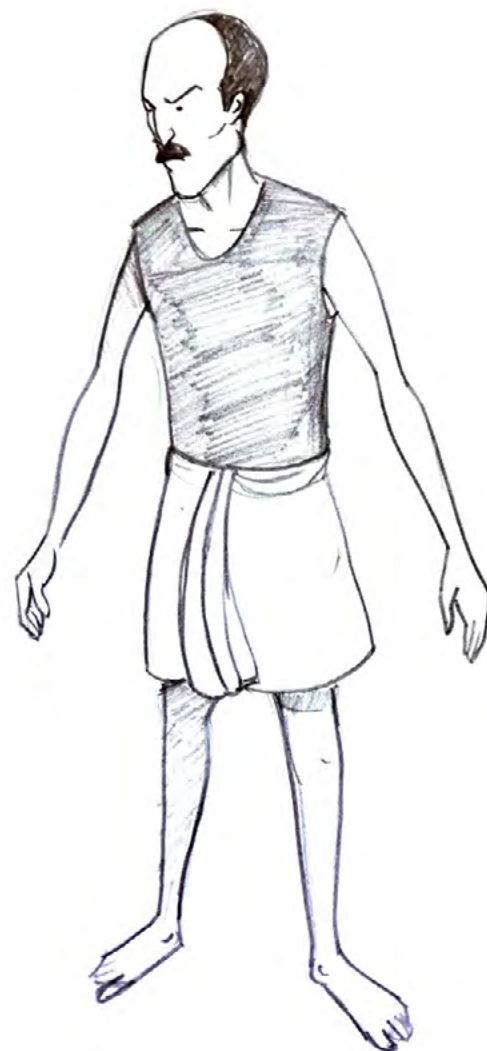
VICAR

Vicar is a Powerful character in the movie. His age is around 60 years. He is a Wise and respected person in the village. Vasu was trained under him. Villagers always approach him for solving their problems. But somehow he failed to correct the bad activities of his adopted son Vasu. The complaints from others about Vasu always make Vicar of church sad. Vicar appears only for a couple of occasions in the movie.

CHARACTER DESIGN

Facial expressions

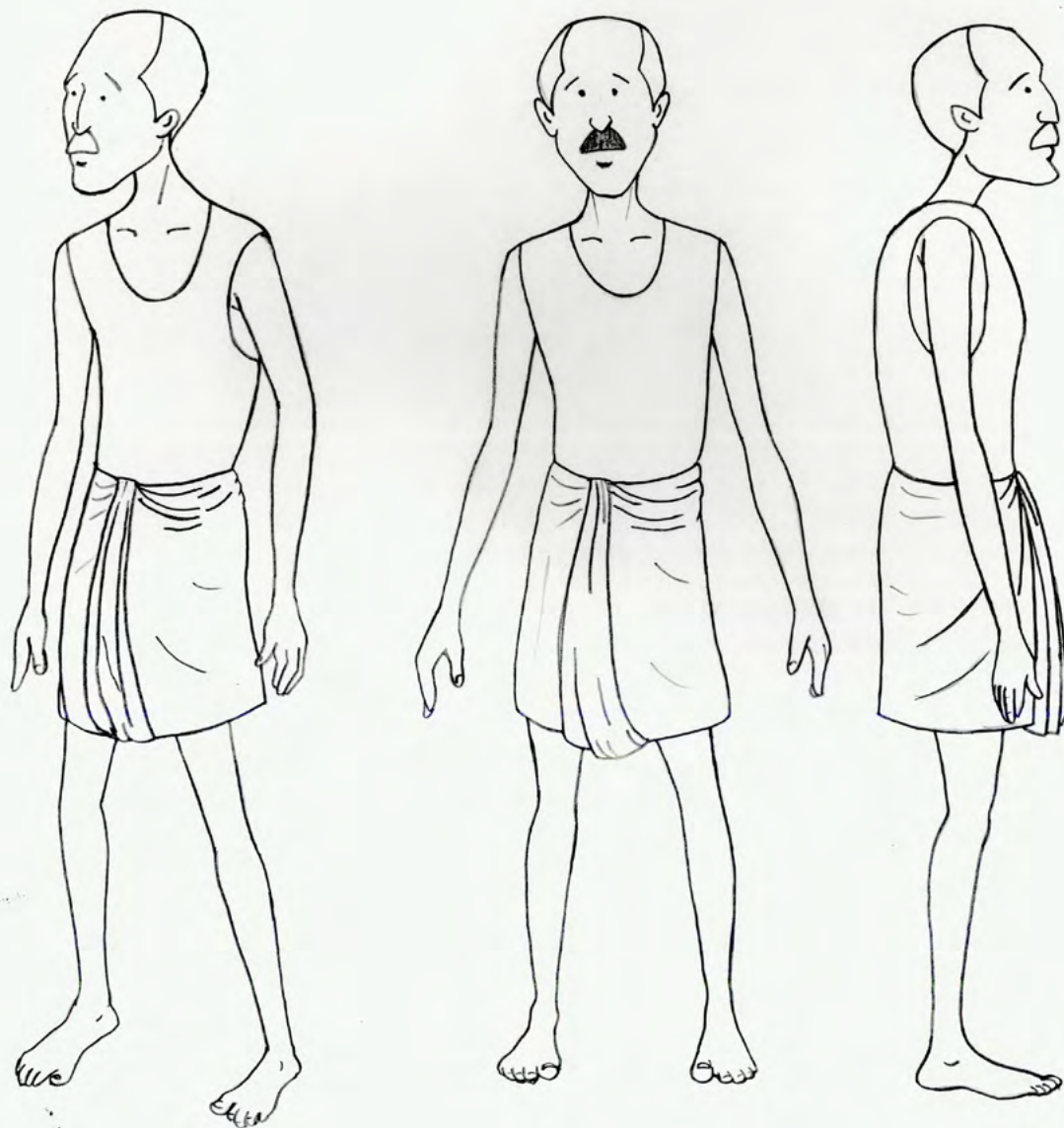




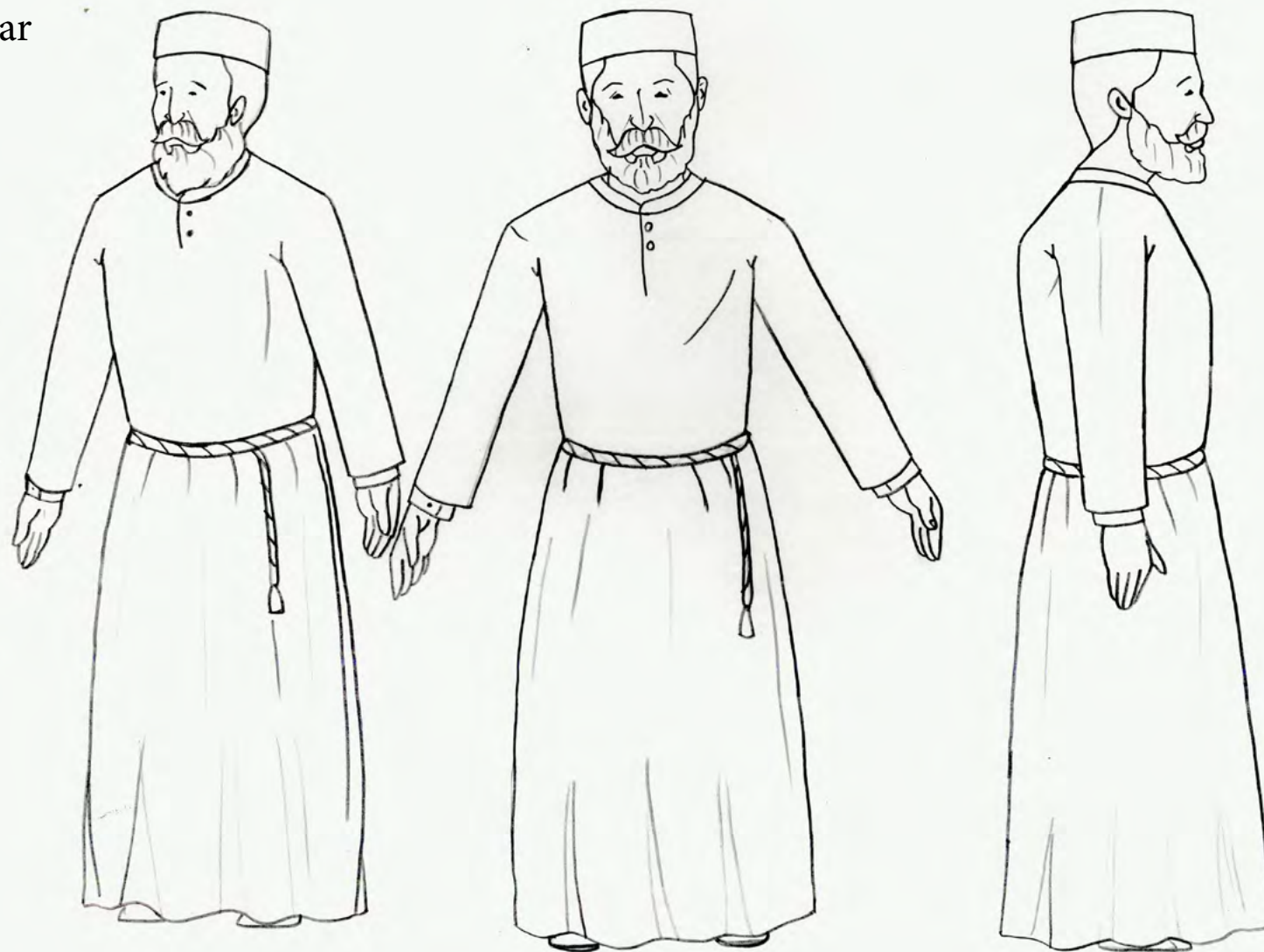


FINAL CHARACTER MODEL SHEET

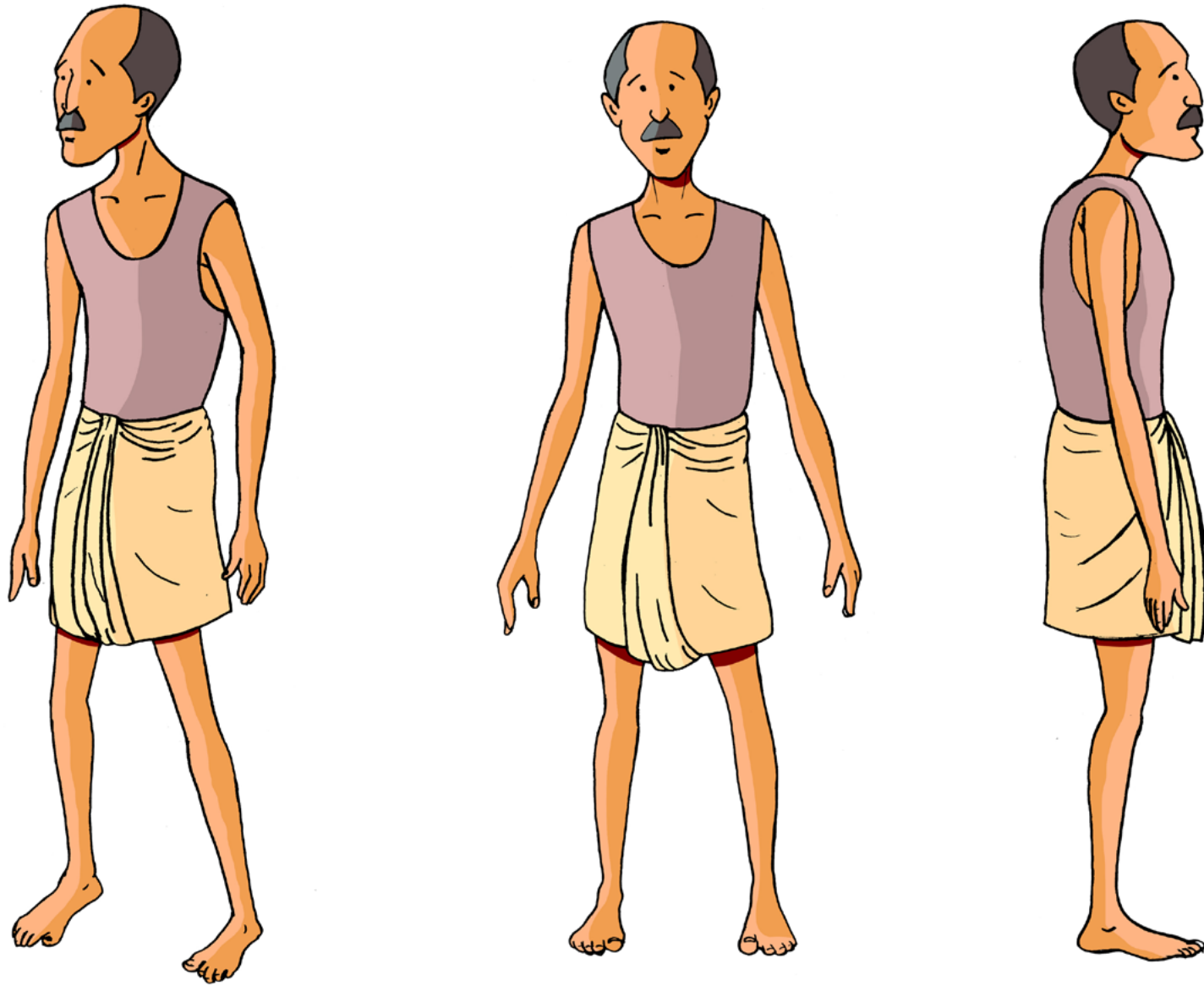
Vasu

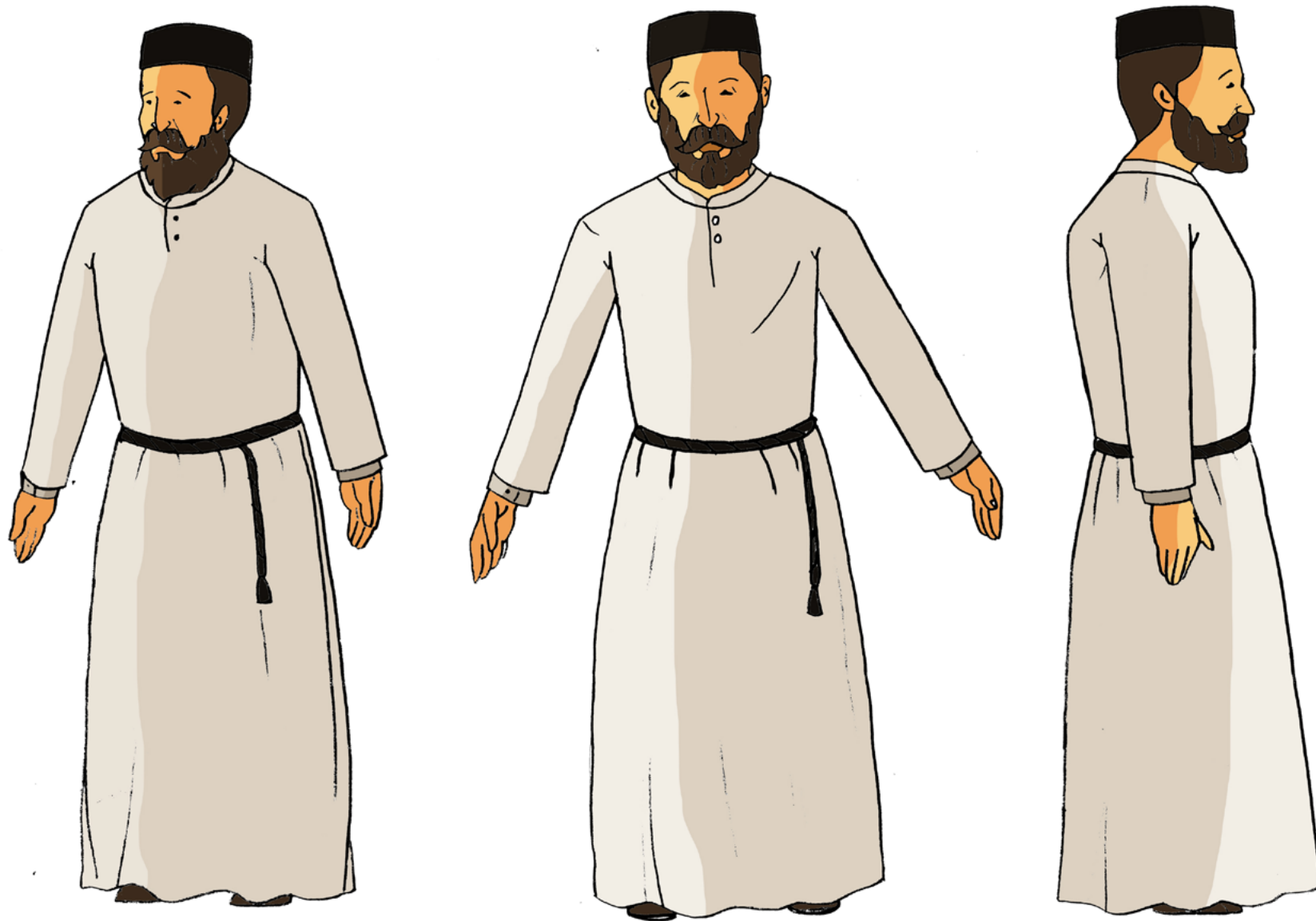


Vicar



Final look and feel





ENVIORMENTAL DESIGN WITH CHARACTER

Initial look and feel



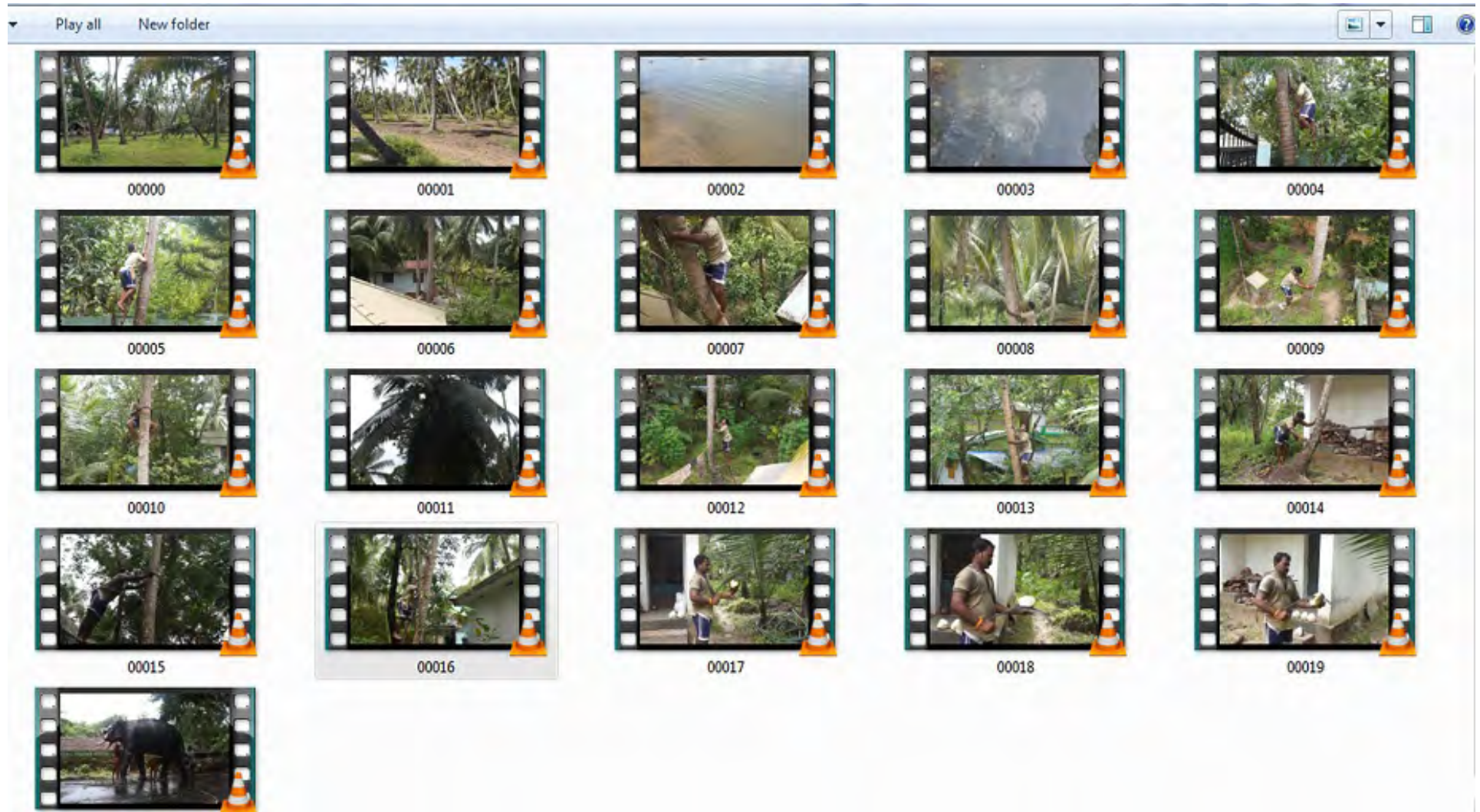
Final character with background



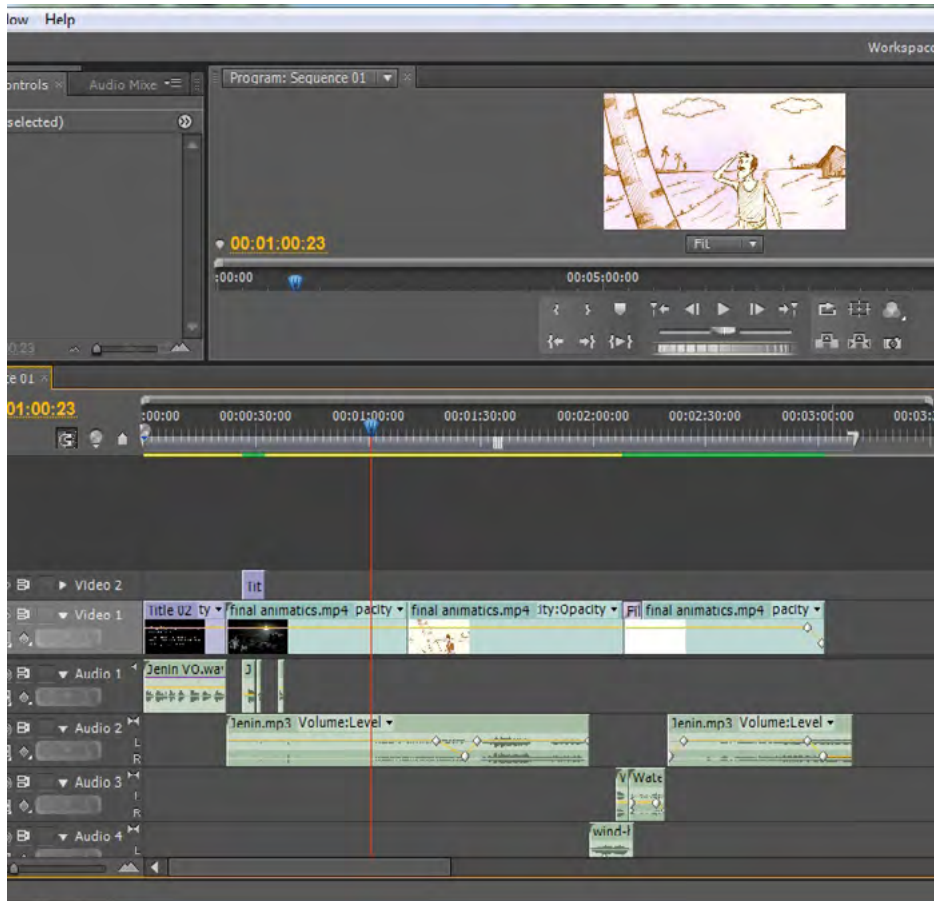
Final character with background (Vicar)



REFERENCE VIDEO FOR ANIMATION



ANIMATIC SOUND



KERALA VANCHI PATTU

(Kuttanadan Punchayile)

Vanchi pattu (boat song) is very much related to Kerala culture. It's a traditional old song in Kerala. The purpose of this theme music is to make the feel of Kerala's traditions.

THE PIANO GUYS(Musical Group)

Beethoven's 5 Secrets - OneRepublic

I am taking this music as the reference which I want to create for the movie. The end scene really wants different moods of sad and enlightenment which will mostly depend on instruments like piano and violin. I found that this music have full potential for the reference.

SOUND DESIGN

The sound design depends on ambience noise to create the environment of an Indian village. To give the essence of Indian-ness I need to research on sounds of Indian birds and animals.

CONCLUSION

Throughout the movie our protagonist searches for the treasure and it brought a tough time for him. But after long days of search for the treasure, the movie ends with his enlightenment.

The golden coconut stands for greed as well as enlightenment. Like an epiphany, our protagonist understands his condition and his moral values. I would like to conclude by saying that, each individual will have their good and bad attitude, but it depends on us to see the good parts in all of us and forgive us and them.

REFERENCE

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By, Rev. Geo. Fyler townsend, M.A

2, Title: Old Greek Folk Stories Told Anew
Author: Josephine Preston Peabody

3, Prosepine and Midas
Author: Mary Shelley

4, Manorama TELL ME WHY, MYTHOLOGY

5, BIBLE stories
a, Babel tower
b, Father and two sons.
c, Noah's Ark and the Flood

6, Jataka Kathakal (malayalam)

7, Nandanam (2002 Feature Film, Malayalam)

8, Amen (2013 Feature Film, Malayalam)

9, Background Study.

1, History of Malabar Independent Syrian Church, Thozhiyur,
2, Vettuva caste in Kerala.

For color scheme

<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/28077197648393556/>

For Music

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mJ_fkW5j-t0

For Music

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RZHevKIgsYY>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dKVpec2l510>

For Sound

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XGjpyQnTwQg>

For ambience sound

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZaMMGbVsKDw>

Other references

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https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8b_VgQqGr0c