

Gitanjali

“Where the mind is without fear...”

A Short Animation on Rabindranath Tagore's Poem - “Where the Mind is
Without Fear”

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Approval Sheet

The project II titled “**A short animation film on Rabindranath Tagore’s poem - Where the Mind is Without Fear**” by Ketki Saxena is approved in partial fulfillment of the requirement for M.Des. Degree in Animation.

Guide

External Examiner

Internal Examiner

Chairman

Acknowledgement

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I am thankful to all the people at IDC who have helped me to fulfil the requirement for my project by lending their support and facilities all the time.

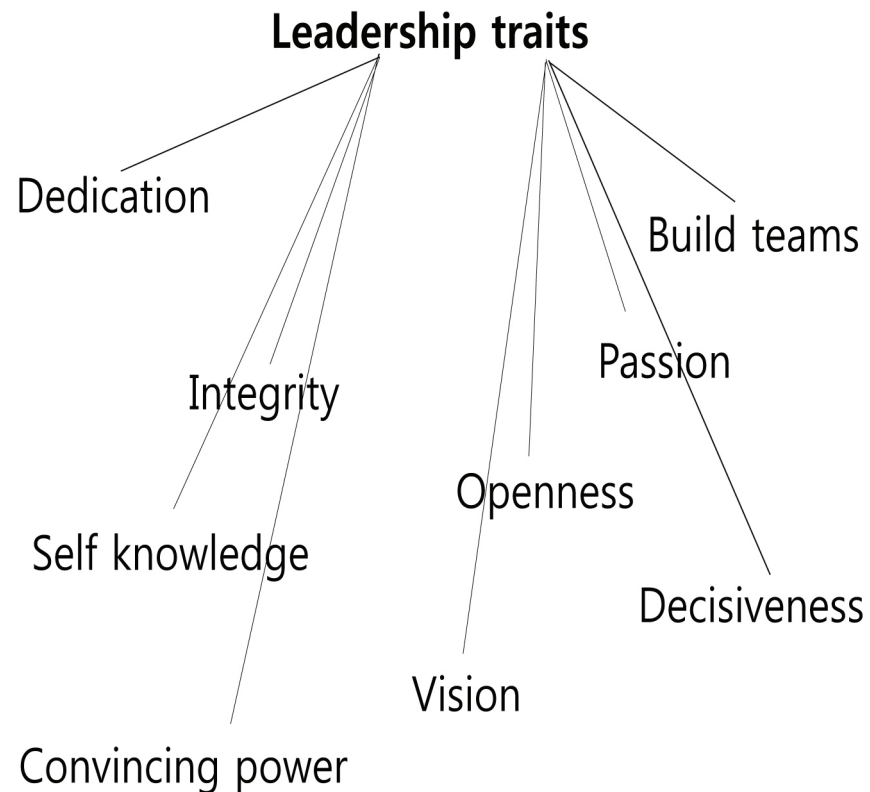
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Chitto jetha bhayashunyo (Where the mind is without fear) Is one of the most inspiring poem by Rabindranath Tagore before India's independence where he talks of his views of how the new awakened india should be as a free nation. And to think of it today! It's a big question in front of us. This contrasting image is what the film brings forth. **A short film in classical animation exploring the other side of the poem.** The law-makers are the law-breakers. Terror has grasped people. The common people are afraid to speak up. Discrimination of all sorts still exists in the society The younger generations don't give a damn on most matters. And an extremely disgusting habit that we have cultivated of staying indifferent to situations in the society. These are few pitfalls that I have tried to show against the poem so that one can make out what are we missing in being a truly free nation.

Introduction

For this project i wanted to make a film on leaders and leadership. What makes a good leader and what is it that a good leader wants to achieve. My research on various leaders got me acquainted with the great and inspirational work of Rabindranath Tagore. His poetry “where the mind is without fear”, was very inspiring for me and became the basis of my film. The vision that he has for the nation, through the poem tells the true meaning of freedom. This provoked me to elaborate the same thought through this film. The pitfalls that restricts an individual to know and enjoy freedom. The contrasting imagery between Tagore’s idea of a free nation and the sad commentary on the way we have progressed as a nation is what the film brings forth.



Who is a leader?

They motivate and inspire, they change the way we work, live and see the world and our existence in the world. To know as to how people in different situation surpassed their weakness and emerged as a winner I started my research. As I worked to capture the stories of the leaders. Inspired leadership, it seems, is not about big things. In fact, it turns out that the leaders featured here often found greatness in the smallest things, in the essential human stuff such as discipline, patience, truth, creativity, and fairness.

I read about various leaders to understand the leadership traits -

Political leaders - Hitler, Gandhi, Abdul Kalam

Philosopher - Shankar Acharya

Social - Ambedkar

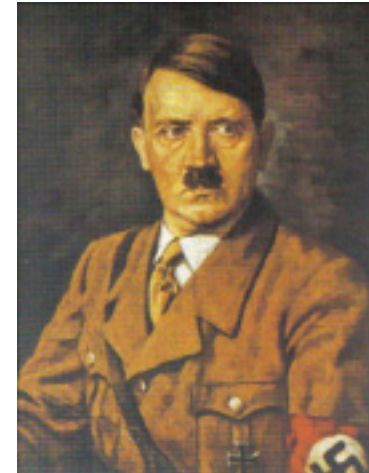
Science & education - Amartya Sen, Rabindranath Tagore

Development and reconstruction - JRD TATA, Dhirubhai Ambani

Styles of Leadership

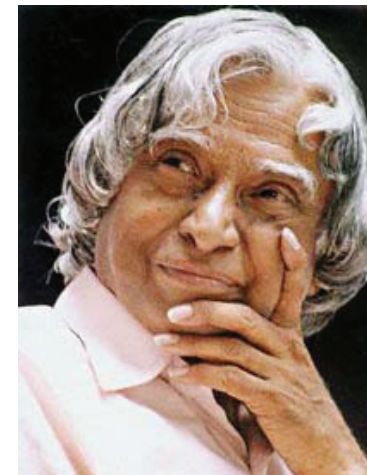
Autocratic

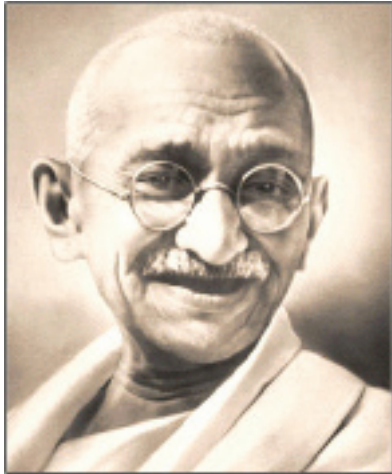
- Manager retains as much power and decision making authority as possible
- Does not consult staff, nor allowed to give any input
- Staff expected to obey orders without receiving any
- Explanations.
- Structured set of rewards and punishments
- Rely on threats and punishment to influence staff
- Autocratic leaders: Like Adolf Hitler



Democratic

- Also known as participative style.
- Encourages the group to be a part of the decision making
- Keeps the group informed about everything that affects their work and shares decision making and problem solving responsibilities.
- democratic leader - Abdul Kalam





Transformational

- Make change happen in:
Self,
Others,
Groups, and
Organizations
- Charisma a special leadership style commonly associated with transformational leadership; extremely powerful, extremely hard to teach



Multicultural

- Sometimes created by the people, as per their needs, creation of super heroes.
- Also drives for innovation by leveraging multicultural differences in an atmosphere of understanding and mutual respect.

Concept 1

Animation with the Narrative of

Who can be a leader?

Who am I?

Where am I going?

Narrative style

Introducing various leaders. who can be a leader? and highlighting leadership qualities through

Mythological leader ram known for his principles Bureaucratic Leader

Hitler Orator, convincing power - Autocratic Leadership Style

Gandhi “be the change that you want to see in the world”

Multi cultured heroes and fictional superheroes that every person wants to be like them fight their own fears and help everyone equally showing them a new direction.

There are many “leaders”, to make a difference. But they might be spending too much time self-marketing and not enough time researching, building bridges by taking an interest in someone.....in true leadership situations, listening comes before arm-waving”.

But do I want to look up to someone all the time? To be led by someone else and just react to the situations that they show? I keep wondering whom to follow? Do I even know where am I going by following? and leave all the responsibility on someone else the responsibilities that I should be taking.- my responsibility to lead myself.

Concept 2

How does a leader emerge? by choice and situation

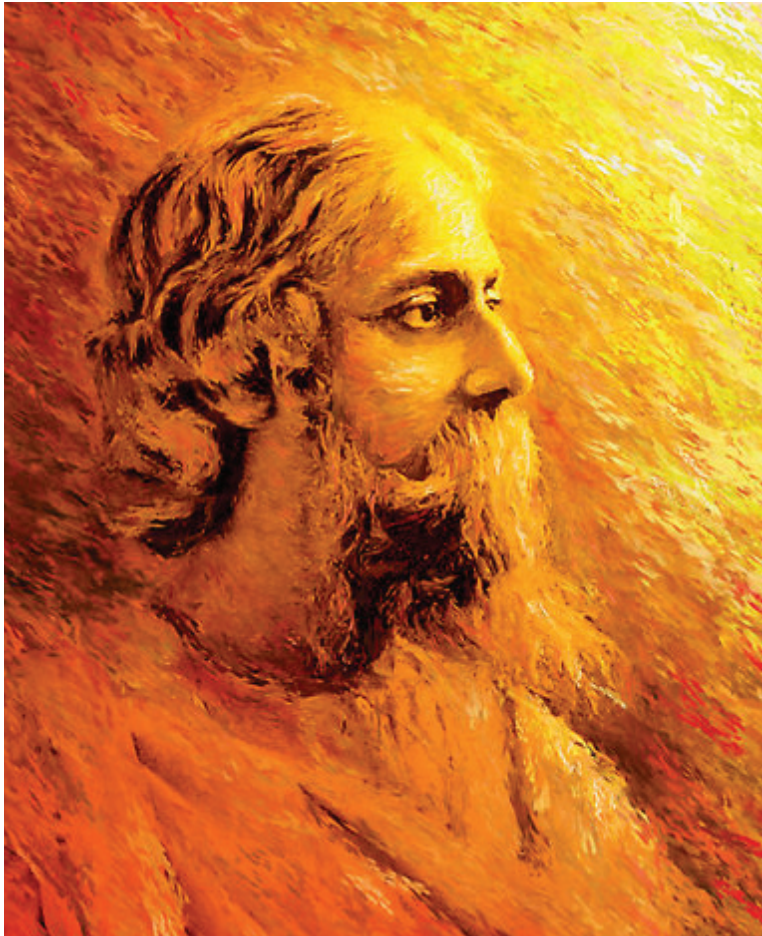
A man (character- small built, silent personality, middle class family, youngest at home, working as a clerk in r.t.o office)

This man in his daily life routine sees a lot of corruption and mismanagement happening in the society, and people around him seldom complaining “no one does anything for the society, who is going to come and help us out some day”. Everytime that there is a problem like an accident due to bad roads or no water supply because of broken pipes etc. he hears people complaining but do nothing nor does he do anything about it. Once there is a chaotic situation where he is also a part of it again sees people just cribbing when he cant help but stand up and fight against the situation and emerges out to be a leader for his surprise where he realizes that there is always one person with him who can lead a way out and that’s no other than himself.

Final Concept

Visual representation through animation film of the poem
Where The Mind is Without Fear - by Ravindranath Tagore

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;
Where knowledge is free;
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow
domestic walls;
Where words come out from the depth of truth;
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;
Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the
dreary desert sand of dead habit;
Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening thought
and action--
Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.



Introduction to Rabindranath Tagore

Rabindranath Tagore is a towering figure in literature of India and Bengal. His poetry as well as his novels, short stories and essays are widely known and read, and the songs he composed reverberates around the eastern part of India and the whole of Bangladesh. Tagore's presence has been really impressive as his tradition flourished in India and Bangladesh. Also in rest of the world, the enthusiasm with which his work was accepted was quite remarkable. (Gitanjali, a selection of his poetry for which he was awarded the Noble Prize in Literature in 1913, was published in English translation in London in March of that year, and had been reprinted ten times by November, when the Award was announced.)

Tagore was not only an immensely versatile poet; he was also a great short story writer, novelist, playwright, essayist, and composer of songs, a talented painter as well as an educationalist. Most of his work was written at Santiniketan (Abode of Peace), the small town that grew around the school he founded in Bengal in 1901. He conceived there an imaginative and innovative system of education which became very popular and was adopted by many western countries. Through his writings and his influence on students and teachers, he was able to use the school as a base from which he could take a major part in India's social, political, and cultural movements.

Tagore's outlook was persistently non-sectarian, and his writings (round about two hundred books) show the influence of different parts on Indian cultural background and also the rest of the world. The coincidence of the fiftieth anniversary of Indian independence with the publication of a

selection of Tagore's letters by Cambridge University Press 3, brought Tagore's ideas and reflections to the fore, which makes it important to examine what kind of leadership in thought and understanding he provided in the Indian subcontinent in the first half of this century

Reasoning in Freedom

For Tagore it was of the highest importance that people be able to live, and reason, in freedom. His attitudes toward politics and culture, nationalism and internationalism, tradition and modernity, can all be seen in the light of this belief. Nothing, perhaps, expresses his values as clearly as this poem in Gitanjali: Where the mind is without fear.

Amartya Sen (1998 Laureate in Economics) writes about Rabindranath Tagore interpreting his poem -

- Rabindranath's qualified support for nationalist movements and his opposition to the unfreedom of alien rule came from this commitment. So did his reservations about patriotism, which, he argued, can limit both the freedom to engage ideas from outside "narrow domestic walls" and the freedom also to support the causes of people in other countries. Rabindranath's passion for freedom underlies his firm opposition to unreasoned traditionalism, which makes one a prisoner of the past (lost, as he put it, in "the dreary desert sand of dead habit").

Tagore and India

How would Tagore have viewed the India of today? Would he see progress there, or wasted opportunities, perhaps even a betrayal of its promise? And, on a wider subject, how would he react to the spread of cultural separatism in the contemporary world?

Some of the ideas he tried to present were directly political. He had practical, plainly expressed views about nationalism, war and peace, cross-cultural education, freedom of the mind, the importance of rational criticism, the need for openness, and so on.

Tagore were to see the India of today, more than half a century after independence, nothing perhaps would shock him so much as the continued illiteracy of the masses. He would see this as a total betrayal of what the nationalist leaders had promised during the struggle for independence

Final Concept and exploration

1. Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high.

Terrorism in India has grown to a great extent in the last two decades. The law-makers are the law-breakers. Terror has grasped people. Almost every region has been a target of terror. Fear not just of terrorism but murder, theft, rape cases.



2. Where knowledge is free

The Constitution of India advocates free and compulsory education of children below the age of 14. So why is more than half the population in India illiterate? Is ignorance really a bliss or is it the limitations of our resources?



3. Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls;

Spread of cultural separatism has been the major threat to our freedom. Racism, gender discrimination etc still persist in the society. When today we call ourselves modern then how dose these discriminations still persist in this society.



4. Where words come out from the depth of truth

More than half a century after independence, the reckoning of what India had or had not achieved in this half century is a subject of considerable interest? One sees this as a total betrayal of what the politician promise during every election.

Present Railways Minister had to quit as Bihar chief minister after being indicted in a huge fodder scam.

5. Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection

India is considered to be a very religious country and it is still believed that the religion is the basis of Indian life, thoughts and actions. And the irony is that if one would say that any particular indian is honest to the core, rather than rule. The most disgusting aspect of the widespread corruption is the fact that it is not anymore confined to politicians or the government alone. It is prevalent amongst every section of the society at every level.

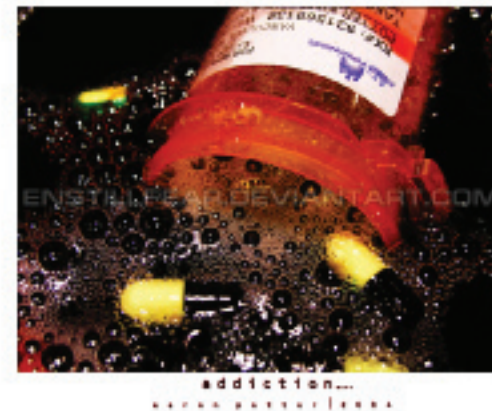


**6. Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit;
Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening thought and action–**

The younger generations don't give a damn on most matters. Going away from the land is the option a lot of people choose to get rid of their frustration.. or maybe they call it chasing their dreams. I really don't know. Some stay indifereent and leave things to destiny. .. just as we do when we throw

our daily garbage out on the roadside and keep it for others to clean. If not, we stay indifferent to it. Its an extremely disgusting habit we have cultivated.

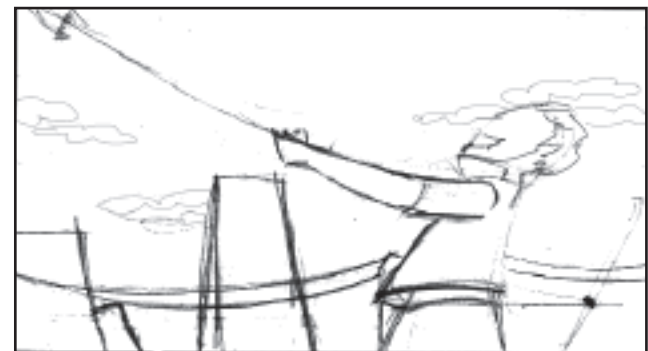
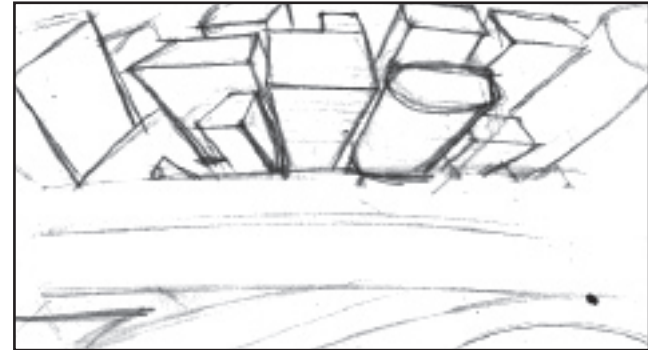
Youth
getting addicted without even knowing about their addiction.
There are cases of kids drinking and driving. Alcohol is not difficult for kids to get. Over 50% of eighth graders said it was fairly easy or very easy to obtain alcohol. Very often we get to hear the news of police raid -'Police net underage drinkers in raid on Mulund pub' etc.

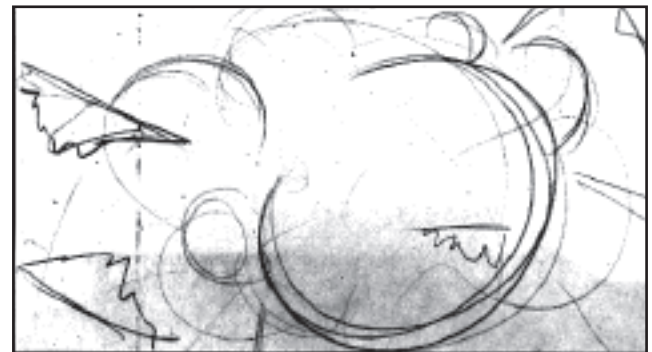
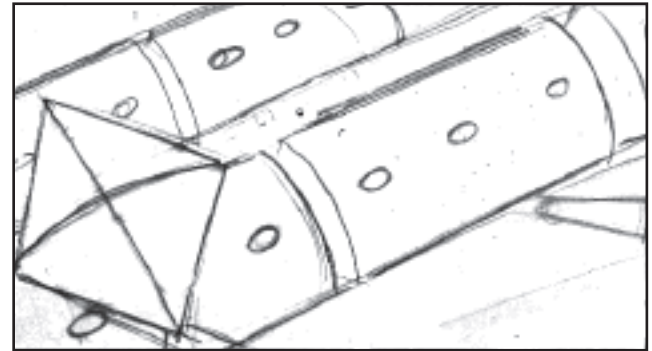
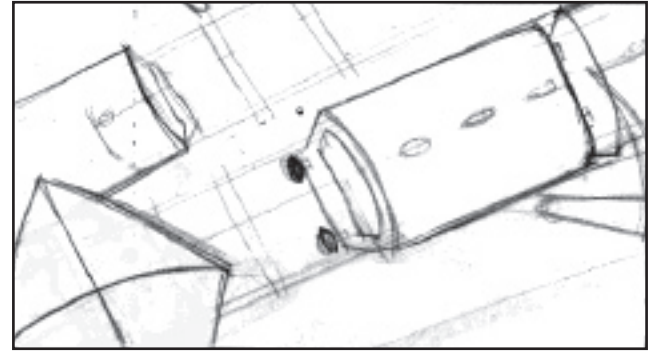


Sc1

Showing the city of Mumbai from the birds eye view (kite running along with the camera) with high towers at one side, local trains and slums at the other.
Cut to a boy running along the railway line flying a kite (playing)
Cut to camera top view showing the kite in the free sky just above the train tracks,
Below two trains cross by and there is a sudden bomb blast.

Sc 1



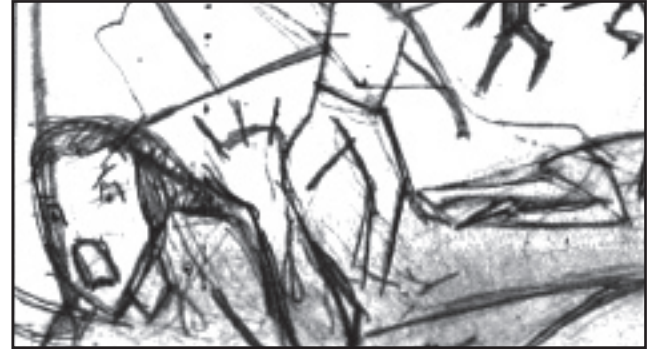


Sc2

Starting with the narration of the poem “where the mind is without fear and the head is held high”

Video - the smoke of the blast dithers away and a man falls down hurt and a scene of riot behind in bg (there is a riot happening in the city). A stone hits the camera and the camera gets tilted and unfocused. Fights and fire burning the city, a lady running away is caught hold off by a man who physically abuses her.

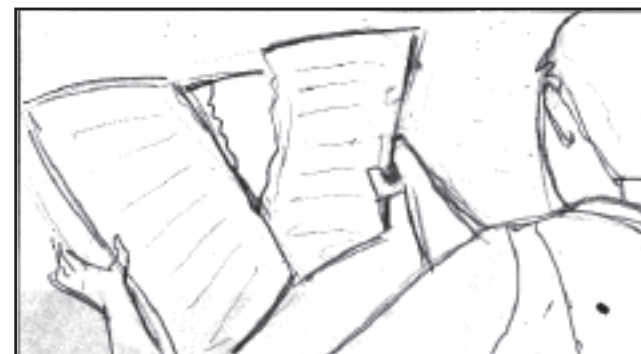




Sc3

Narration - Where knowledge is free

Video - Close up of hands opening a book, turning a page and tearing it off which is rolled into a cone. Camera zooms out a kid selling nuts in the paper cone to a rich man in a car. The car races ahead as the signal is green, zooming on the hand of the kid holding the coin.



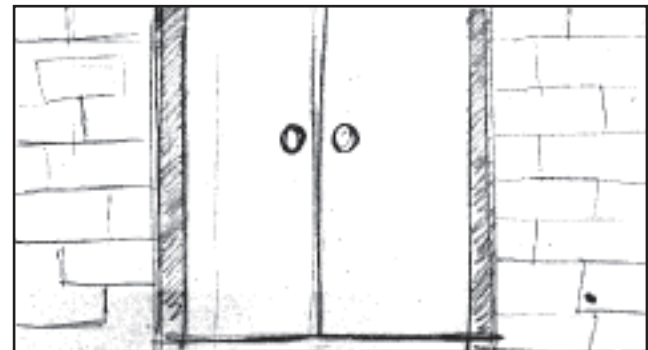


Sc 4

Sc4

Narrative - Where the world has not been broken into narrow domestic walls.
 Video : A girl watching her fellow guy friends outside the window. One of the boys call her out to play. She gets really happy
 Cut to long shot back view of the girl, showing through the door of her house and straight ahead the window where she is standing. The girl turns and is happily running towards the door (camera) and before she can go out the door a man comes and shuts the door not allowing her to go out.





Sc5

Narration - “Where words come out from the depth of truth”.

Video - Camera turns towards the street where there are 2 posters put up of two different politicians opposite to each other and the faces of the politicians on the poster are shouting out in anger towards each other.

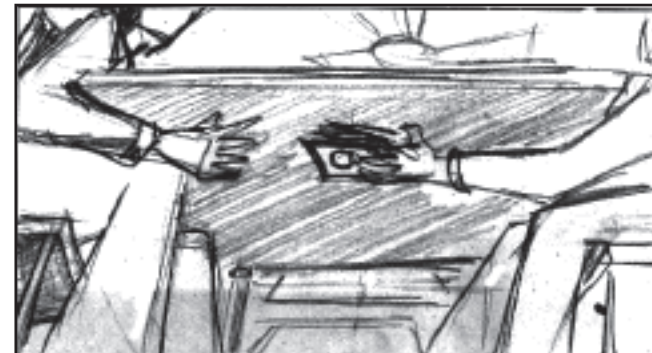
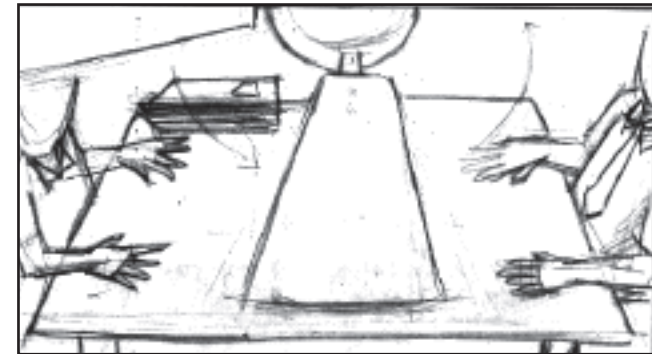


Sc6

Narrative - “Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection”

Video - Top view of an office through the moving fan, seen two people sitting at the office table opposite each other.

Cut to worms eye view Below the table where one hand stretches to offer bribery of a bundle of notes and the other hand stretches towards it grasping the money.

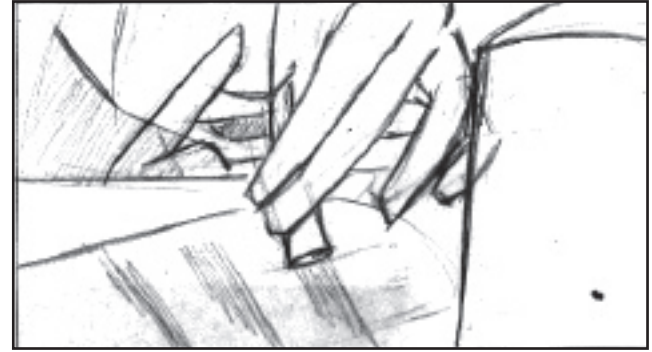


Sc7

Narrative - “Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habits, where the mind is.....actions”

Video - Close up of a mouth smoking a cigarette zooming out to a group of young guys and girl drinking and smoking. Camera pans left a bottle kept on the table and extreme close up of a person snorting (drugs) who turns back towards the wall and sits down in depression, the table top showing injections and alcohol bottles. Zooming in to the person’s face who is in a suicidal state. Face merges with the background and fade out.

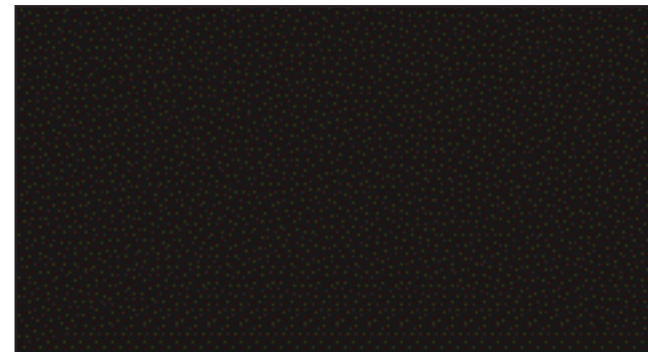
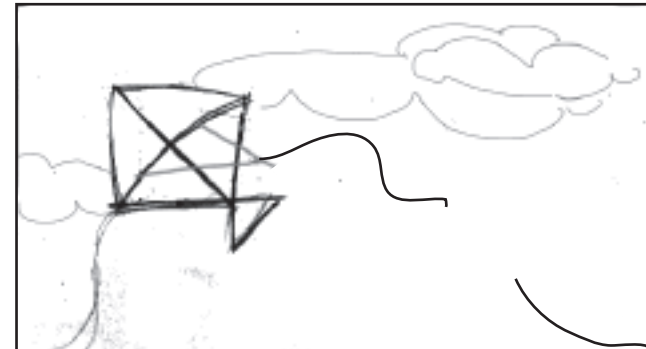




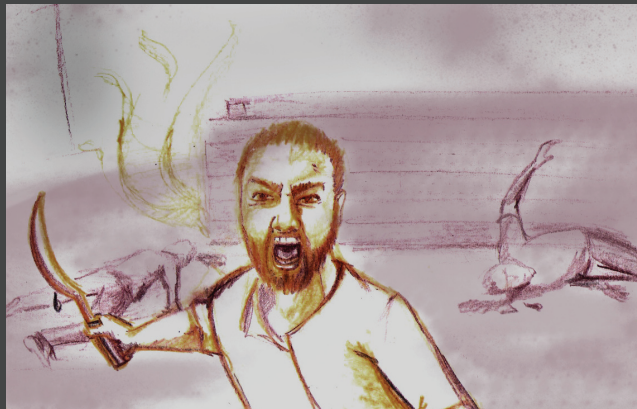
Sc8

Narrative - “Into that heaven of freedom, my father, let my country awake”

Video - Fade in clear bright sky with a kite flying high. the thread of the kite breaks making it go haywire . Followed by titles and Portrait of Tagore.



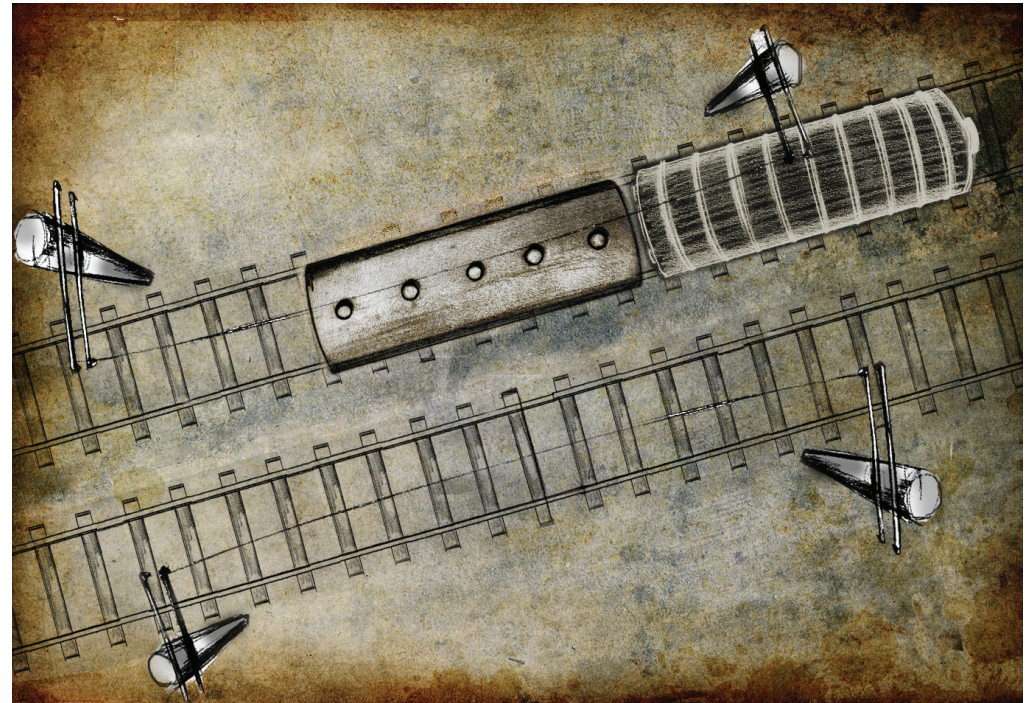


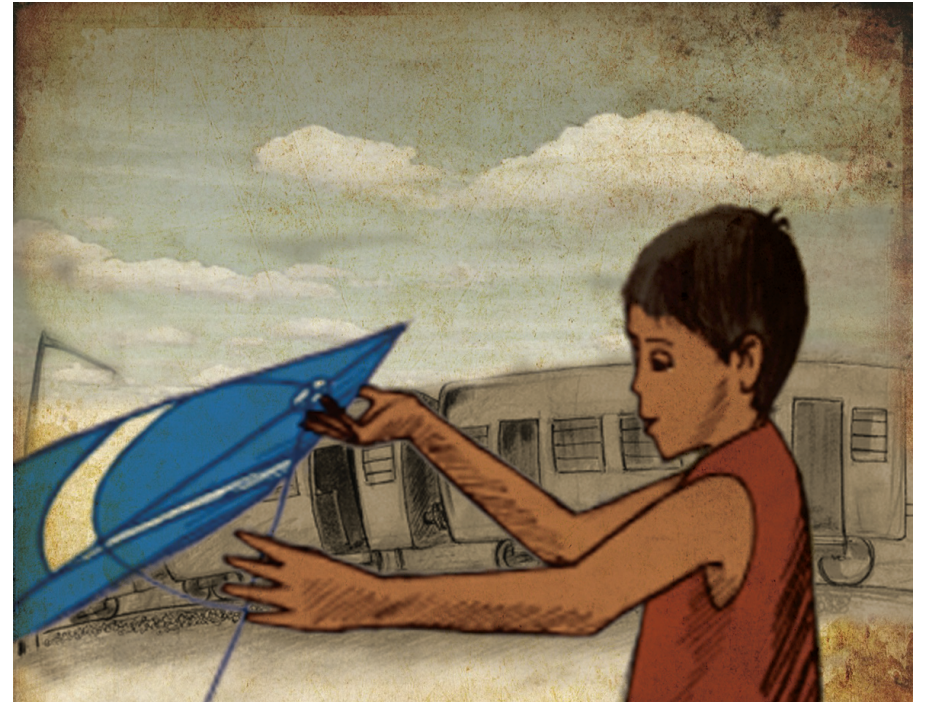
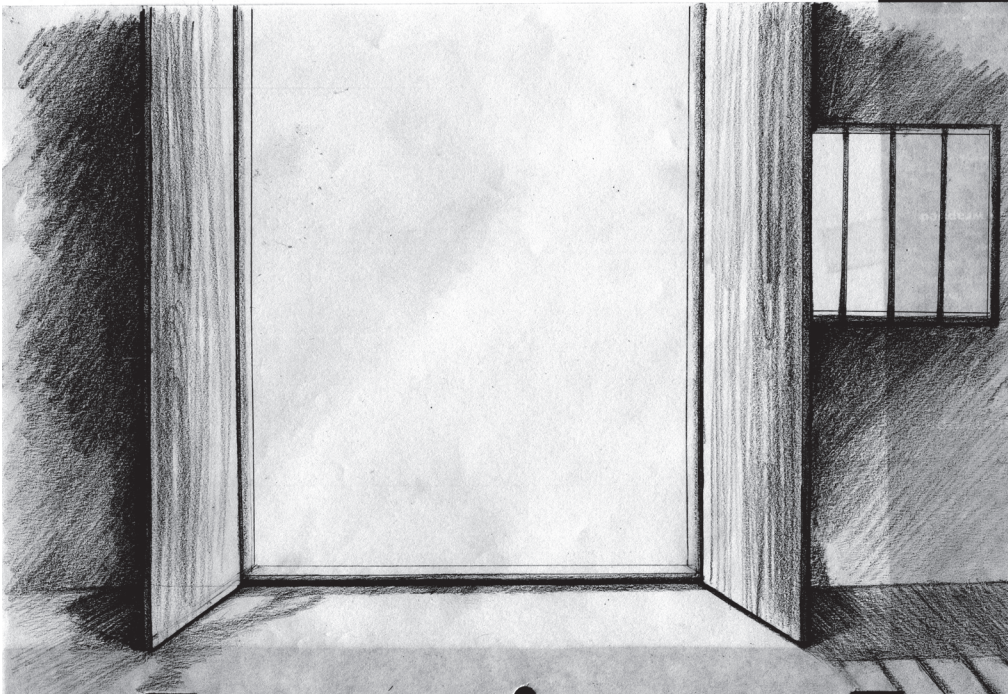




Blending rough sketches with a touch of realistic computer generated backgrouds and textures. Texture of old worn out papers add noise to the imagery. Using classical animation to enhance the storyline for which i spent maximum time on light box. Softwares used are - Animo: cleanups, ink and paint. Photoshop and After Effects: Compositing. CoolEdit Pro: Sound editing. Adobe Premier Pro: Final Editing







An issue that troubles me all the time is that people hesitate to take responsibility and at the same time are also complaining about the discomfort that they are facing all the time. This has also been a part of me and we limit our choices and let things work. But I learned that if we limit our choices to what seems possible or reasonable, we disconnect ourselves from what we truly want and all that is left is a compromise.

This project has been a very good learning experience for me, to increase my knowledge and be more aware of the society that we are living in. In animation i tried to explore different styles and as a film it is an experiment of a different style of narrative pattern where the visuals are exactly contrasting to the narration forming conflict in the mind of the viewers as well; which is the final goal of the film.

Books

- 7 Habits of highly effective people
- 50 great leaders of the twentieth century in india

Films

- Gandhi
- Five steps to tyranny
- Adolf Hitler
- Fourth world war

Web

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/8107/chanakya.html>
<http://www.pbs.org/thestoryofindia/timeline/1/>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rabindranath_Tagore
<http://speakerloksabha.gov.in/Speech/Speechescurrent.asp>
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