

Animation Design, Degree Project-Stage 2

DEVI

a short animation film
on exploration of narrative

Project Report

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Approval sheet

The project-III titled... “Devi” by Sameer K Jena is approved in partial fulfillment of the requirement for a M.Des Degree in Animation

Guide

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Acknowledgement

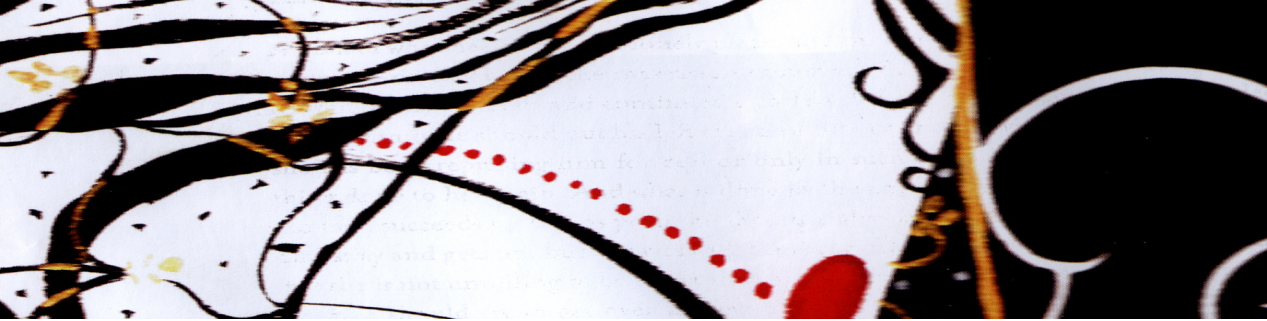
I sincerely thank my project guide Prof. Nina Sabnani for directing me throughout my project and for being a constant source of inspiration. Her feedback and comments were very insightful and it was indeed a valuable learning experience for me.

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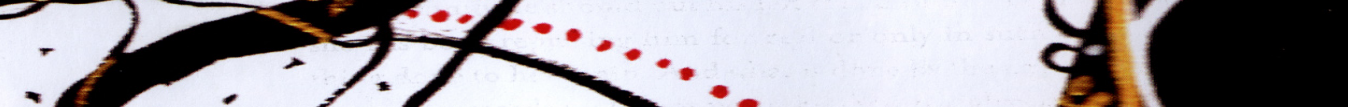
My family has been very encouraging and supportive during the course of this project.



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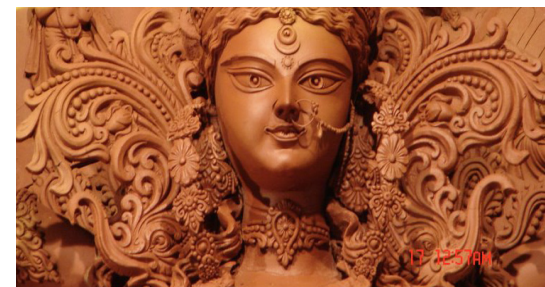
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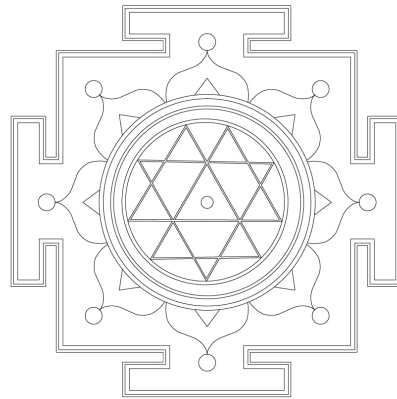




Introduction

Goddess Durga represents a united front of all divine forces against the negative forces of evil and wickedness. The Gods in heaven decided to create an all powerful being to kill the demon king Mahishasur who was ready to attack them. At that very moment a stream of lightning dazzled forth from Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh and it turned into a beautiful, magnificent woman with the hands. Then all the Gods furnished her with their special weapons. The image of Durga, the eternal mother destroying the demon, Mahishasur, is symbol of victory of good over evil.





Synopsis

Durga is the most splendid manifestation of Devi. Virginal and sublime, containing within her the power of all the gods, she is the invincible power of nature who triumphs over those who seek to subjugate her.

The image of Durga reminds us that nature is the ultimate authority. No matter how hard man tries, he cannot triumph over nature. Eventually, everyone has to bow before the will of nature.

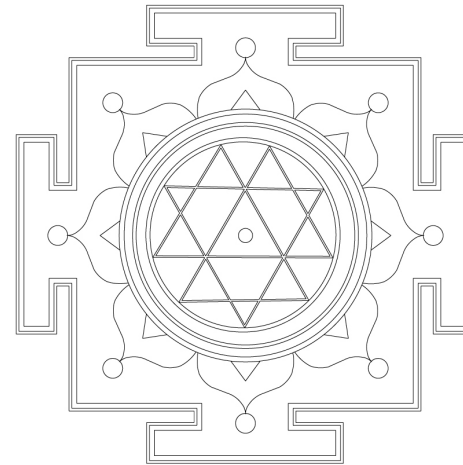
The ability to accept and appreciate every manifestation of Devi is a sign of enlightenment. Hence, to Devi does everyone offer the salute.

Through the mythological story of the creation of Devi Durga and her victory over the demon Mahishasura, I have tried to show the importance of the female spirit and form. I wish to recreate the realisation of the immense power and forbearance of women and the vital part they play in the society.

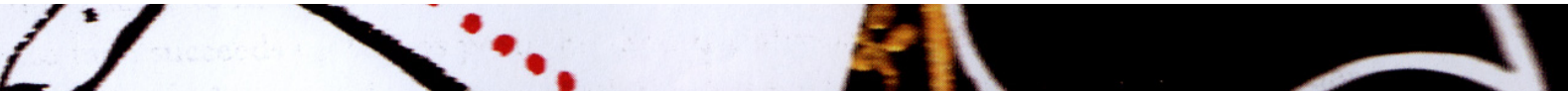
*Yaa devi sarvabhuteshu maatrirupena sansthitah
Yaa devi sarvabhuteshu shaktirupena sansthitah
Yaa devi sarvabhuteshu shaantirupena sansthitah
Namastasyaih namastasyaih namastasyaih namo namah*

“O goddess of the universe, visualizing you the
embodiment of motherhood, power and peace,

I salute you, salute you, salute you.”



Approach



Inspiration



Visiting the Durgapuja festival pandals at Kolkata (West Bengal) and Cuttack (Orissa), I was greatly fascinated by the magical spirit the festival generated. The 10 day celebration of the almighty female form is a spectacle to watch and evokes a sense of respect and awe for Devi Durga and the female spirit.

The festival is a visual treat with rich colours and forms flashing in their full glory. Every pandal is unique and depicts Shakti through various themes, colours, and Devi Durga's form and expressions. The idols of Devi Durga express the sheer power of the female form, their calmness and the protection they extend from evil forces.

Small skits, narratives and music add up to the visual spectacle. Evil in today's time is shown as terrorism, crime, social problems and ugly politics; and Devi Shakti is shown as the annihilator of these problems and vices.



Pandals of Bengal and Orissa



The spirit and fervour with which the women celebrate the festival is unparalleled. The joy and pride that is seen in celebrating the female goddess and its victory over evil depicts the strength of women and makes one realize their significance in our day to day lives.

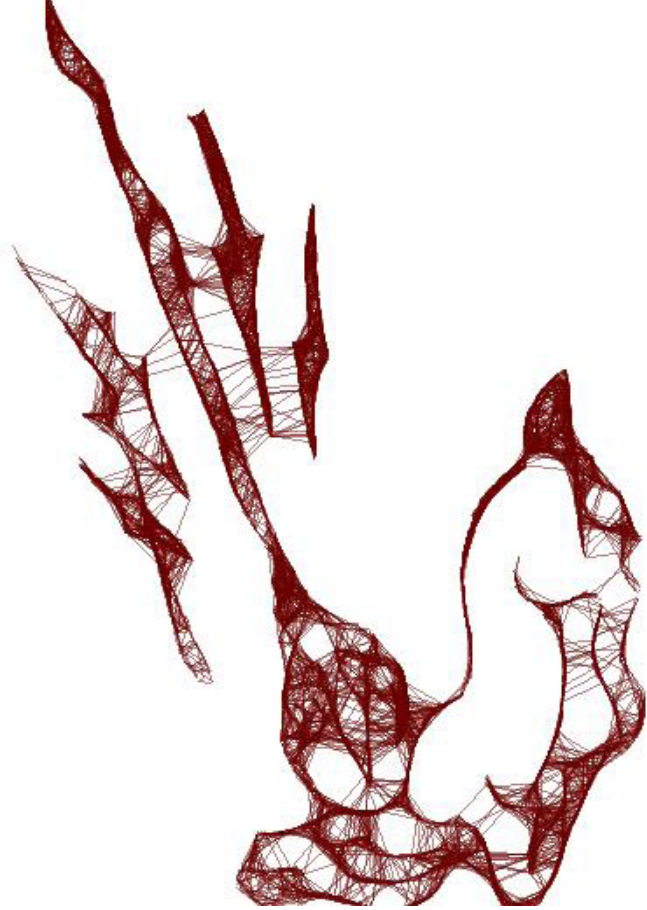
This true celebration of the female power 'Shakti', its richness and magnanimity inspired me to take this up as my final degree project. These mythical characters find a special place in our hearts and get stamped in our memory and their appeal spans across all ages and societies. It was with this idea that I chose a mythological story to convey my reverence for the female power.

Pandals of Bengal and Orissa

Inspiration



Pandals of Bengal and Orissa



Character Description

Devi is depicted as both alluring and horrifying. She is Lakshmi, the goddess of fortune as well as Alakshmi, the goddess of misfortune. She is the radiant Gauri and the Sullen Kali. As the goddess transforms herself, the devotee comes to term with the many aspects of the world and learns to be less judgemental.

The image of Durga standing astride a lion, holding weapons in her many arms, impaling buffalo-demon make a magnificent sight. The goddess looks serene even though she is performing a violent act. There is blood on the floor, but the goddess is bedecked in bridal finery, smiling benignly at her devotees.

The **Buffalo-demon** could be viewed as the personification of man's desire to dominate the world. He is the demon of ambition, arrogance and audacity who goes about trying to tame nature.





Review of Literature

Mythology of Durga Puja

According to Hindu mythology a demon named Mahishasura, earned the favor of Lord Brahma after a long and hard penance. Lord Brahma, impressed with his devotion, blessed him that no man or deity would be able to kill him and that only a woman can kill him.

Mahishasur was very pleased with this boon as he thought that a woman can never defeat him. Arrogant Mahishasura started his reign of terror over the Universe and people were killed mercilessly. He even attacked the abode of the gods and conquered the heavens.

The Defeat Of Gods

After their defeat and humiliation at the hands of Mahishasur, the gods took refuge under Lord Brahma, who took them to Lord Shiva and Lord Vishnu. The only solution left was the creation of a woman who possess the ultimate power to fight and defeat Mahishasur. Pure energy blazed forth from Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva - the trinity forming the pure energy of Godhood, all concentrating at one point that took the form of Goddess Durga.

Culmination Of Energies

Her face reflected the light of Shiva, her ten arms were from Lord Vishnu, her feet were from Lord Brahma, the tresses were formed from the light of Yama, the god of death and the two breasts were formed from the light of Somanath, the Moon God, the waist from the light of Indra, the king of gods, the legs and thighs from the light of Varun, the god of oceans and hips from the light of Bhoodev (Earth), the toes from the light of Surya (Sun God), fingers of the hand from the light of the Vasus, the children of Goddess river Ganga and nose from the light of Kuber, the keeper of wealth for the Gods. The teeth were formed from the light of Prajapati, the lord of creatures, the Triad of her eyes was born from the light of Agni, the Fire God, the eyebrows from the two Sandhyas, ie, sunrise and sunset, the ears from the light of Vayu, the god of Wind. Thus from the energy of these gods, as well as from many other gods, was formed the goddess Durga.





Significance of Durga Puja

During Durga Puja, God in the form of the Divine Mother is worshiped in Her various forms as Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati. Though the Goddess is one, She is represented and worshiped in three different aspects. On the first three nights of the festival, Durga is worshiped. On the following three, Lakshmi and then Saraswati Devi on the last three nights. The following tenth day is called Vijayadasami. Vijaya means “victory”, the victory over one’s own minds that can come only when these three: Durga, Lakshmi, and Saraswati are worshiped.

Meaning Of Durga

Durga is perhaps the most widely worshiped deity of Shakti. Maa Durga’s divine characterization include entire Devibhagavatham is dedicated to her. Durga means one who is difficult to approach. However since she is the mother of universe she is the personification of tender love, wealth, power, beauty and all virtues.

Implications Of The Idol

The complete image of Goddess Durga represent destruction of evil and protection of good and reflects the point that in order to become divine one should keep one’s animal instincts under control. Thus, by worshiping Durga the idea of ruthless destruction is invoked to annihilate all the desires and unfold divinity.

Its Connotation

In Bengal, Goddess Durga is worshiped for nine days. In South India, an altar decorated with a stepped platform and filled with small images of gods, animals, birds, and other beings, animate and inanimate, is worshiped for nine days. This altar is known as the Kolu. People re-dedicate themselves to their profession. On this day, a child also begins to learn the alphabet in a ceremony known as aksarabhyasa. This day marks the beginning of any type of learning. One offers gifts to one’s teachers, seeks their blessings, and prays for success in one’s new endeavors.



Power Of Weapons

The gods then gifted the goddess with their weapons and other divine objects to help her in her battle with the demon, Mahishasura. Lord Shiva gave her a trident while Lord Vishnu gave her a disc. Varuna, gave her a conch and noose, and Agni gave her a spear. From Vayu, she received arrows. Indra, gave her a thunderbolt, and the gift of his white-skinned elephant Airavata was a bell. From Yama, she received a sword and shield and from Vishwakarma (god of Architecture), an axe and armor. The god of mountains, Himavat gifted her with jewels and a lion to ride on. Durga was also given many other precious and magical gifts, new clothing, and a garland of immortal lotuses for her head and breasts.

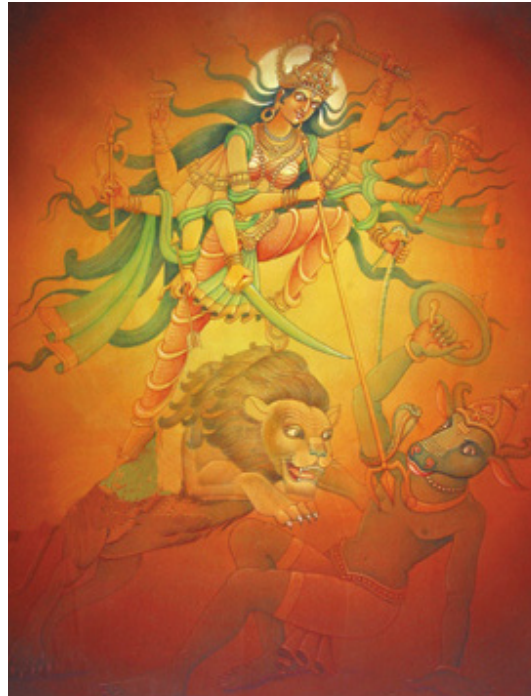
The beautiful Durga, bedecked in jewels and golden armor and equipped with the fearsome weaponry of the gods, was ready to engage in battle with the fierce and cruel Mahishasura. Mahishasura and his demon allies found their attention drawn from heaven to Earth, as Durga's power moved its way towards heaven. Though confident of their power and control in heaven, the demons could not help being awestruck.

The Battlefield

As Mahishasura's armies were struck down effortlessly by Durga, it became obvious to him that he was not as secure in heaven as he had thought. No demon could fight her and win. Her breath would replenish her armies - bringing back to life all of her soldiers who fell. The demons were in chaos and were easily defeated and captured. Mahishasura was shocked and enraged by the disastrous events on the battlefield. He took on the form of a demonic buffalo, and charged at the divine soldiers of Durga, goring and killing many and lashing out with his whip-like tail. Durga's lion pounced on the demon-buffalo and engaged him in a battle. While he was thus engaged, Durga threw her noose around his neck.

Mahishasura then assumed the form of a lion and when Durga beheaded the lion, Mahishasura escaped in the form of a man who was immediately face to face with a volley of arrows from Durga. The demon escaped yet again and then having assumed the form of a huge elephant, battered Durga's lion with a tusk. With her sword Durga hacked the tusk into pieces.





The Victory

The demon reverted once more to the form of the wild buffalo. He hid himself in the mountains from where he hurled boulders at Durga with his horns. Durga drank the divine nectar, the gift of Kuber. She then pounced on Mahishasura, pushing him to the ground with her left leg. She grasped his head in one hand, pierced him with her sharp trident held in another, and with yet another of her ten hands she wielded her bright sword, beheading him. At last he fell dead, and the scattered surviving remnants of his once invincible army fled in terror.



The story associate with Navratri and Durga puja which is found in the Markandeya Purana. The chapters 81-93 in the Markandeya Purana talks about the slaying of demon Mahishasura or Mahisha by Durga and it is referred as Devimahatmya and is recited during the navaratri on Durga puja. It symbolised the victory of good over evil.



In Hinduism, the goddess Durga (the inaccessible or the invincible) one who can redeem in situations of utmost distress. Durga is a form of Devi, the supremely radiant goddess, a superheroine depicted as having 10 arms, riding a lion or a tiger, carrying weapons (including a Lotus flower), maintaining a meditative smile, and practicing mudras, or symbolic hand gestures.

An embodiment of creative feminine force (Shakti), Durga exists in a state of *svatantrya* (dependence on the universe and nothing else i.e self sufficiency) and fierce compassion. Durga is considered by Hindus to be an aspect of Kali, and the mother of Ganesha, and Kartikeya. She is thus considered the fiercer, demon-fighting form of Shiva's wife, goddess Parvati. Durga manifests fearlessness and patience, and never loses her sense of humor, even during spiritual battles of epic proportion.

THE LEGEND:

The word Shakti, means divine feminine force, and Durga is the warrior aspect of the Divine Mother. Other incarnations include Annapurna and Karunamayi (*karuna*= kindness). Durga's darker aspect Kali is represented as the consort of god Shiva, on whose body she is often seen standing.

Durga's form is blindingly bright, as a radiant goddess (devi), with three lotus-like eyes, ten powerful hands, lush hair with beautiful curls, a red-golden glow from her skin and a quarter moon on her forehead. She wears a shiny attire emitting fierce rays. Her ornaments were carved beautifully of gold, with ocean pearls and precious stones embedded in it.

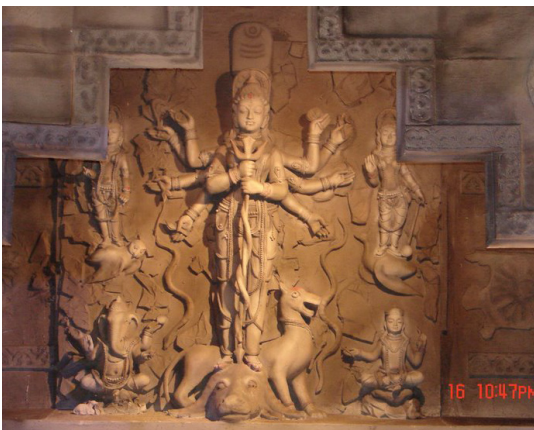




Goddess Durga is the mother of the universe and believed to be the power behind the work of creation, prevention, and destruction of the world. Since time immemorial she has been worshiped as the supreme power of the supreme being and has been mentioned in many scriptures- Yajur Veda, Vajasaneyi Samhita and Taittareya Brahman.

Meaning of Durga:

The word “Durga” in sanskrit means a fort, or a place which is difficult to overrun. Another meaning of “Durga” is “Durgatinashini”, which literally translates in to “ the one who eliminates sufferings” . Thus, Hindus believe that Goddess Durga protects her devotees from the evils of the world and at the same time removes their miseries.



Many Forms of Durga

There are many incarnations of Durga: Kali, Bhagvati, Bhavani, Lalita, Gauri, Kandalini, Java, Rajeswari.

Durga incarnated as the united power of all divine beings, who offered her the required physical attributes and weapons to kill the demon “Mahishasur”. Her nine appellations are Skondamata, kasumanda, Shailaputri, Kaalratri, Brahmachari, Maha Gauri, Katyayani, Chadraghanta and Siddhidatri.

Durga's Many Arms

Durga is depicted as having eight or ten hands. These represent eight quadrants or ten directions in Hinduism. This suggests that she protects the devotees from all directions.



Durga's Three Eyes

Like Shiva, Mother Durga is also referred to as "*Triyambake*" meaning the three eyed Goddess. The left eye represents desire (the moon), the right eye represents action (the sun), and the central eye knowledge (fire).

Durga's Many Weapons

- The **conch shell** in Durga's hand symbolizes the '*Pranava*' or the mystic word 'Om', which indicates her holding on to God in the form of sound.
- The **bow and arrow** represent energy. By holding both the bow and arrows in one hand "Mother Durga" is indicating her control over both aspects of energy- potential and kinetic.
- The **thunderbolt** signifies firmness. The thunderbolt that can break anything against which it strikes, without being affected itself.
- The **lotus** in Durga's hand is not fully bloomed, It symbolizing certainty of success but not finality. The lotus in Sanskrit is called "*pankaja*" which means born of mud. Thus, lotus stands for the continuous evolution of the spiritual quality of devotees amidst the worldly mud of lust and greed.

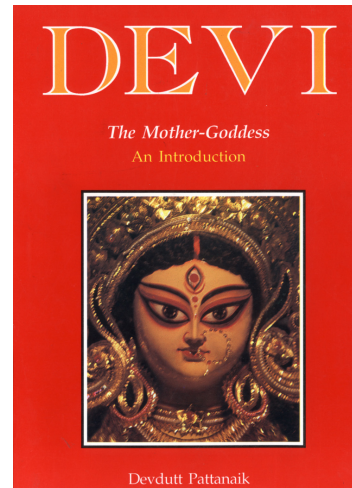
-The "**Sudarshan-Chakra**" or beautiful discus, which spins around the index finger of the Goddess, while not touching it, signifies that the entire world is subservient to the will of Durga and is at her command. She uses this unfailing weapon to destroy evil and produce an environment conducive to the growth of righteousness.

-The **sword** that Durga holds in one of her hands symbolizes knowledge, which has the sharpness of a sword. Knowledge which is free from all doubts, is symbolized by the shine of the world.

-Durga's **trident** or "trishul" is a symbol of three qualities- *satwa* (inactivity), *rajas* (activity) and *tamas* (non-activity)- and she is remover of all three types of miseries.

Durga's Vehicle- the Lion

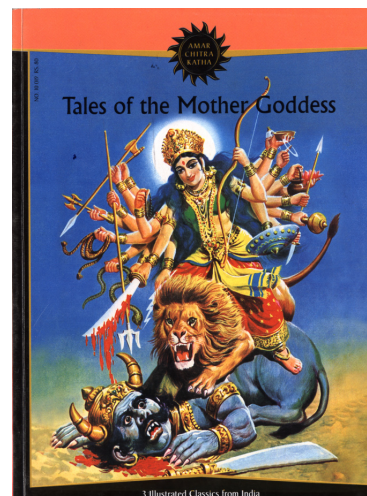
The lion represents power, will and determination. Mother Durga riding the lion symbolises her mastery over all these qualities. This suggests to the devotee that one has to possess all these qualities to get over the demon of ego.



The book explores differences in rituals through imagery and narrative tradition. Pictures and stories of Hindu gods and goddesses reflect how Hindus perceive life. The book brings together the tales associated with the myriad manifestations of Devi, weaving through it Shakta philosophy and Hindu worldviews. It discusses rituals, beliefs and customs that express Shakta culture and the relationship between goddesses' worship and woman's position in society.

The book is bringing together tales of Adi-Maya-Shakti, Lakshmi, Saraswati, Parvati, Kali, Durga as well as several village-goddesses such as Kanyakumari, Vaishnav-devi, Bahucharmata and heroines such as Anasuya, Arundhati and Savitri.

Highlights include lucid explanations and a pictorial key to numerous symbols associated with Shakta customs and Tantrik rituals.



Shakti, the female principle, activated Shiva and is therefore worshipped as Durga, the personification of universal energy. The worship of Durga can be traced to the mother worship of the ancient pre-Aryan cults.



This book elucidates various aspects about Divine energy such as meaning of the word Shakti, the creation of Divine Energies and the types based on the mission and with respect to deities such as Parvati, Lakshmi, etc. It also provides information on Yoginis, Matrukas, energies in the form of rivers, their mission, the meaning of the science of Tantra, the differences between the Vedas (*Nigam*) and the Tantra texts (*Agam*), the Shakta darshans (holy texts), the seats of Divine Energy etc. The book also discusses the various types of worshippers of the Divine Energy.

determination, energy, indignation, restlessness, fury, perspiration, trembling, horripilation, choking voice....”

Bharata’s mention of demonic characters such as rakshasas and danavas begs a question, and he replies to it himself, saying that “in the case of others, too, this sentiments may arise”; but, as far as the rakshasas are concerned, “it is to be understood as their special function....” “they are naturally furious, for they have many arms, many mouths, standing and unkempt hairs of brown colour, and prodigious physical frames of black complexion. Whatever they attempt, be it their speech, movement of limbs or any other efforts, is by nature furious.”



RAUDRA: THE FURIOUS SENTIMENT

THE FURIOUS SENTIMENT arises from the enduring emotional state of anger (*krosha*). In his discussion of it, Bharata traces its origin to “rakshasas, danavas and haughty men,” and states that “it is caused by fights.” The determinants that give rise to it include “rape, abuse, insult, untrue allegations, exorcising, threatening, revengefulness, jealousy and the like”; its actions consist of “beating, breaking, crushing, fighting, drawing of blood and similar other deeds.” The consequents through which *krodha* is expressed include “red eyes, knitting of eyebrows, defiance, biting of the lips, movement of the cheeks, pressing one hand with the other and the like.” The complementary emotional states associated with the arousal of this sentiment, Bharata says, are “presence of mind,

Elaborating, Bharata classifies anger in to five categories: “Anger caused by enemies, superior persons, lovers, servants and feigned anger.” Each can be differently expressed, in the context of a theatrical performance.

Anger against control by the enemy with knitting of eyebrows, fierce look, bitten lips, hands clasping each other, and with threatening arms, shoulder and chest. Anger against the beloved woman is to be expressed by a very slightly movement of the body, by shedding tears, and knitting eyebrows and with sidelong glances and throbbing lips.



VIRA: THE HEROIC SENTIMENT

Vira, with its mood of energy, does not necessarily use an enemy or adversary as its taking-off point. While the gestures may sometimes be the same in Vira as they are renderings of anger, energy is directed not necessarily against a given adversary or opponent, but informs the very person of a hero.



FIRMNESS, PATIENCE, DETERMINATION, HEROISM

Vira, the heroic, arises from the enduring emotional state of energy (utsaha) and is conceived as relating to superior persons. The determinants spoken of in its context are “absence of sadness, power, patience, heroism...”. Its expression on the stage is, in addition, through consequents such as “steadiness, munificence, boldness... and the like.” Other consequents mentioned are “firmness... charity, diplomacy.”

The complementary emotional states that go with the moods (bhavas) of energy are “contentment, judgement, pride, agitation, energy, determination of purpose, indignation, remembrance, horripilation...”

Four different varieties of the heroic sentiments: the heroic of liberality, of duty, of war, and of benevolence.

The distinction between the furious and the heroic is subtle and not always easy to grasp as sees much that is common between them, the essential excitant in both cases being an adversary, and the gestures expressing them being very similar.



THE GODDESS SUBDUES THE DEMON MAHISHASURAAUDRA

From narratives of the great conflict between the vast hordes of the demons and the great goddess Shakti, who represents the concentrated energy of the gods, the killing of the powerful buffalo-demon Mahinshasura. It is as if great and energetic deed sums up Shakti's essential nature.

Mahishasura's death does not come as the climax of Shakti's valorous acts in battle; he is killed fairly early on, according to that great and spiritual text, the Devi Mahatmya of the Markandeya Purana. But he seems to embody great and undisciplined power that stays beyond the pale of cosmic law.

The killing of Mahishasura takes many forms at different periods and in different regions of India.



- The goddess virtually crush him to death, pressing down on his spine with her bare hands.
- The goddess presses him down with her leg while impaling him with her trident as she lifts his hindquarters by the tail.
- Demon (Mahishasura) emerging in his human form from the neck of the buffalo, after its decapitation, while the severed head lies on the earth below.
- The goddess is simply shown triumphant, standing on the demon's head or resting one raised leg on the recumbent body.

CHRONICLES OF DURGA

There are three different narratives which have the mention of Shakti, in its various forms, appearing to the rescue of the Gods. The name Durga actually is the signifier for 'Durgati Nashini', the destroyer of evil.

Story-1

Madhu and Kaithabh, the two mighty demons who sprung from the wax of bhagwan Vishnu, became extremely powerful and started troubling Brahma. Lord Vishnu came to the rescue and fought with them till five thousand years. However, he later realised that these demons had the boon of Icchamrutyu (death at one's own will) from Yoga Nidra, one of the various forms of Maha Kali, Shakti. Vishnu then asked for her help as he was tired of fighting these demons.

Devi Yoga Nidra asked Vishnu to continue fighting and promised him that she shall elude the two demons by her glance full of Maya.

Lord Vishnu then fought with them and as soon as they were distracted into Maya, he surrendered and asked them for a boon. Trapped in Maya, not conscious of Vishnu's tactic, they asked Vishnu to express his wish. Vishnu said that he wished that the two die of his hands. Thus, Vishnu could kill the demons by Shakti's help.

Story-2

Another instance of Shakti helping the Gods is during Ramayana. Lord Ram, the exiled king of Ayodhya, was in distress over his wife Sita being abducted by Ravan, the mighty king of Lanka. He prayed for long to Durga to help him conquer the armies of Ravan. Durga didn't appear until Ram raised his bow and arrow to kill himself. On appearing, Durga stopped Ram from hurting himself and assured him of Nature helping him in his conquest. She granted him of her blessing behind all his weapons and anything that came between him and Sita.

Story-3

The third narrative is the creation of Devi Durga and the destruction of Mahishasur, which has been taken up as the central idea for this project.

The buffalo-demon Mahisha stomped across the three worlds, kicking up dust, polluting earth and sea.

Neither Indra, king of gods, nor Kumara, commander of celestial armies, could stop him. The gods turned to the cosmic guardian Vishnu for help. Vishnu confronted Mahisha, first as Narasimha, the main lion, and then as Varahah, the boar, but each time he failed to subdue the demon.

Finally, Shiva, the supreme ascetic, disturbed by the pandemonium, opened his third eye and unleashed the fire of doom. But alas, even this dreaded missile, capable of destroying the three worlds, could not arrest Mahisha's march.

"Nothing can stop Mahisha now: he will soon control the universe and make Nature dance with his tune," said Brahma, the creator.

"It will never be so; Nature can never be conquered." So saying, Brahma's divine strength, his *shakti*, emerged out of his body in the form of goddess **Brahmi**. She rode a swan and held books of wisdom in her hands.

Simultaneously, the *saktis* of other gods emerged taking female forms.

From Indra, rose **Indrani** bearing a thunderbolt, riding an elephant; from Kumara, rose **Kaumari** holding a lance, riding a peacock; from Vishnu, rose **Vaishnavi** on an Narasimha, came Narasimhi, a raging lioness; from Varaha, came the sharp-tusked sow **Varahi**; from Shiva, came **Shivani** riding a bull bearing a trident.

The seven *shaktis*, unrestrained by the bodies of the gods, were fearsome beings- the unbridled, untamed, restless energies of the cosmos. They rose in to the sky and merged with each other in a blinding light. The sound of conches, drums and bells filled the air.

With bated breath, the gods watched the spectacle unfolding before their eyes from the heavenly light rose a beautiful goddess: seductive yet serene, material yet forbidding

"I am **Durga**- the inaccessible one," replied the goddess. "I am **Prakriti**, the substance that gives form and identity to all things. I am **Shakti**, the power that enables all creatures to exist, to feel, think, act and react. I am Maya, the delusion that makes life alluring yet elusive."

The gods saluted the great goddess and gave their weapons. Then, mounting a lion, Durga prepared for battle.

A great battle commenced. Mountains shook, oceans trembled, clouds scattered across the sky, as the buffalo-demon attacked Durga. He rushed towards her, sometimes as a buffalo, sometimes as a lion, sometimes as an elephant. The goddess broke the buffalo's horns with her mace, sheared the lion's mane with her lance, cut the elephant's trunk with her sword.

Weapon after weapon, she hurled at the buffalo-demon, but each time he managed to rise up undefeated.

Realising that her weapons had no effect on Mahisha, Durga threw them aside, dismounted, and with her bare hands sprang upon Mahisha's back; with her tender feet she kicked his head.

The demon- immune to the weapons of all the gods- fell senseless at the touch of Durga's feet.

Durga then raised her trident and plunged it into the buffalo-demon's heart.

DURGA YANTRA MANDAL

There are 3 ways of Upasana (systematic practice of a prescribed method of worship for pleasing and winning the attention of the deity): Mantra, Tantra and Sunya.

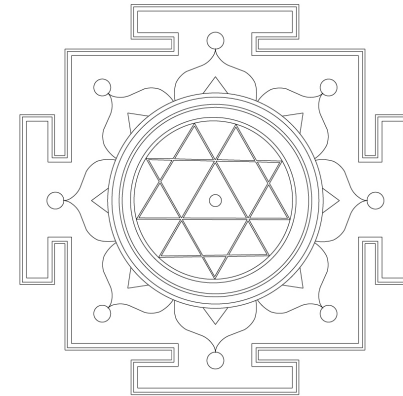
Sunya upasana is done having a Kalash to appease the deity. Mantra and Tantra upasana consist of Idol worship and a yagnya kund to worship the deity.

The durga yantra mandal used during upasana has many significant elements.

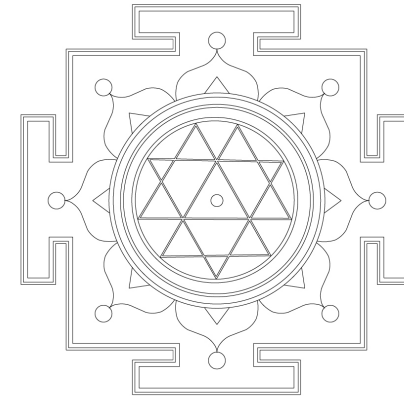
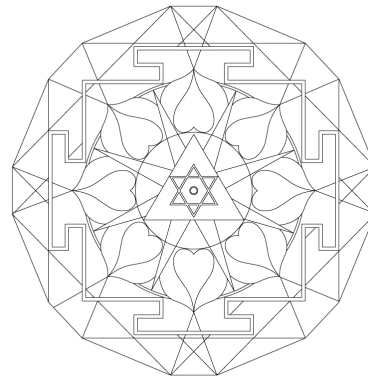
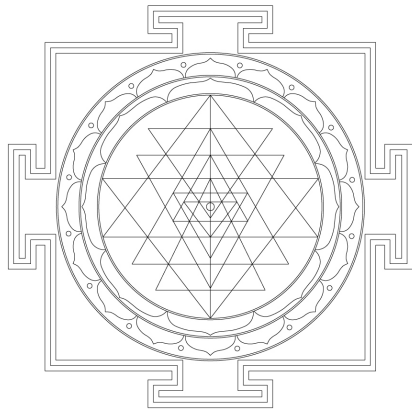
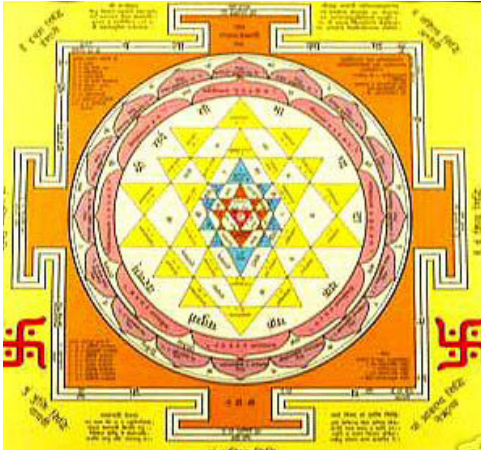
The eight petals in a yantra signify the *astha aishwarya* (wealth), viz. *Shakti*, power, *Adhipatya*, sovereignty, *Upanivesha*, inhabiting the earth with living beings, *Vibhava*, exalted position, *Dhana*, material wealth, *Badappana*, supremacy, *Sarvashakti matta*, omnipotence and *Sarva vyapakata*, omnipresence.

The ten petals signify the 10 directions in Hinduism viz. *Purva* (East), *Pashchim* (West), *Uttar* (North), *Dakshin* (South), *Isanya* (North-East), *Agneya* (South-East), *Vayavya* (North-West), *Nairuttya* (South-West), *Urdhva* (Up) and *Atha* (Down).

The outer 16 petals signify the 5 *Karmendriya* (for active expression), 5 *Gyanendriya* (cognitive senses), 5 *pran* (lives) and 1 *mann* (soul).



Durga Yantra Mandal



Initial Concepts

Keeping the central idea same, various ways to depict a story were thought upon:

Concept 1

Contemporary situations and characters in global politics: like Osama Bin Laden and the forces fighting terrorism. The three forces of Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh, who create Devi Durga, could be symbolised by three global leaders fighting terrorism.

The result would be the culmination of a powerful entity in the female form that destroys the evil forces.

Concept 2

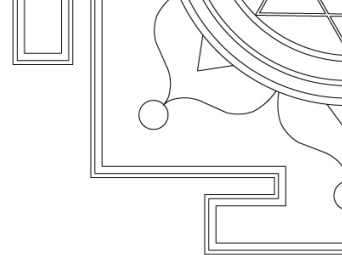
Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh try to create an all powerful female with various powers. Each one adds some attribute from his side and various forms are generated. Through a process that goes through much iteration, a final form gets created.

Concept 3

An abstract representation of the storyline through visuals, music and narrative: the characters could be abstracted in form, by using colours and various materials. The fight sequences could be shown by light and sound effects with materials scattering everywhere.

Concept 4

An uncontrolled biological experiment leads to a deadly virus that increases its potency by destroying human lives and acquires animal like forms. Three scientists decide to tackle this catastrophe; they take the characteristics of forbearance and inner strength from the female body type and create a biological being superior in immune systems and with lethal destructive capabilities and powers to replicate.



Final Concept

|| Om-Brahmane-namah ||

|| Om-Brahmane-namah ||

|| Om-Brahmane-namah ||

Mahishasur has been doing extreme penance to appease Lord Brahma.

His determination is unshakeable, his concentration imperturbable, his vision a mystery.

The chants reach swargalok to Lord Brahma and he appears before Mahishasur.

“Rise up Mahishasur, your penance has compelled me to appear here. What is it that you desire? I honour you with a vardaan; ask for anything that you may need”.

“O Lord Brahma! My penance has paid; you are here. I desire eternal life. I wish to live forever.”

“Every being born on earth has to die. There is no escape. Ask for something else.”

“I wish I never die. Give me so many powers that no man should be able to defeat me. If I die, it may be at the hands of a woman. Women ! The weaklings ! Ha Ha Ha.”

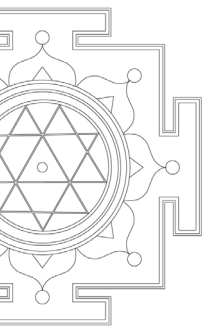
“Tathastu”, Brahma disappears.

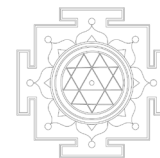
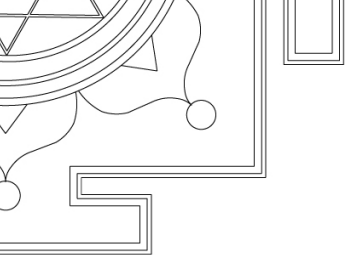
Mahishasur starts growing bigger and stronger. His powers become unparalleled.

“Ha Ha Ha. I shall rule the world ! No one can kill me. I’m the master of the universe.”

He orders his army of asurs to attack and defeat the Gods and conquer heaven. The Gods lose their homes and power to the enormous army of Mahishasur. Destruction continues...

“Trahemaam ! Trahemaam !”



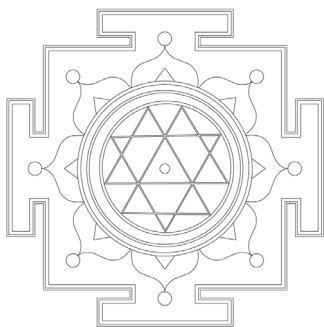


The Gods come running to Lord Shiv, “Trahemaam, Trahemaam. O Lord Shiv, save us. Mahishasur has spread destruction everywhere. He will destroy heaven soon. Save us O Lord. Trahemaam! “

Lord Brahma, Vishnu and Shiv (Mahesh) decide to solve this problem. They think of many ways to kill Mahishasur. All the ways turn out futile as no man could kill him. They then realise that only a woman could kill Mahishasur.

Now they think of creating a woman so powerful that the entire evil forces will tremble by the mere name of her. She would be undefeatable.

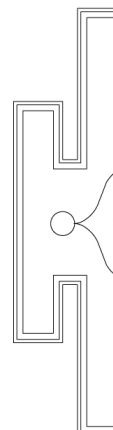
Each one of Lord Shiv, Vishnu and Brahma start giving their attributes to the new feminine creation. Lord Shiv gives the light and the trident, Lord Vishnu, the ten arms and the sudarshan chakra and Lord Brahma gives his 3 faces. Many forms come and go and the Gods go on giving their attributes and thus Durga rises.



With three lotus like eyes, 10 arms and all her body as an amalgamation of good virtues and power of the Gods, Durga is all powerful, radiant and a personification of tender love, wealth, power, beauty, and all virtues.

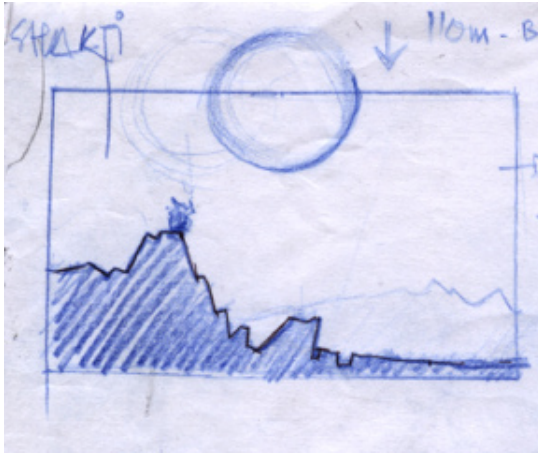
In the battlefield, the asur sena start trembling and fleeing away at the mere sight of Durga. Durga is furious in the battlefield and kills Mahisasura (who is trying to mislead Durga by changing his form) with her trident and sword.

Durga, the shakti wins over pride and evil.



Story Board





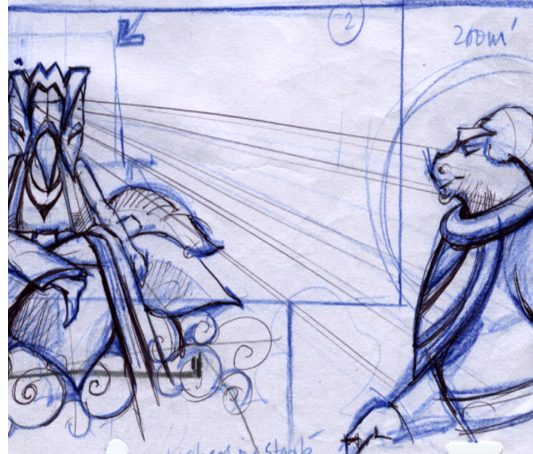
NIGHT, moonlight
Camera moves with the moon and mahishasur
appears

Sound: wind with Om Brahmane namah(voice
over)



NIGHT, moonlight
leaves are flying
Camera zooms to the mahishasur

Sound: wind with Om Brahmane namah(voice
over)

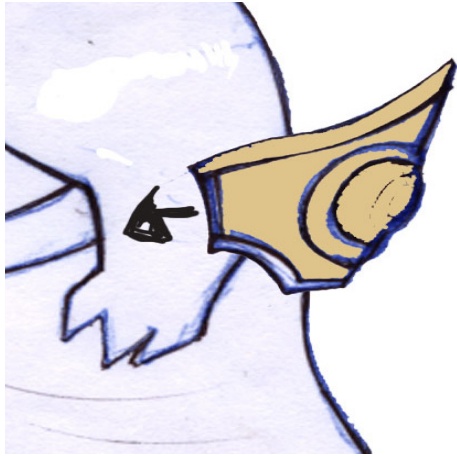


DAY, bluish-red sky
Brahma appears before Mahishasur
Sound: Om Brahmane namah(voice over)

	Om-Brahmane-namah	
	Om-Brahmane-namah	
	Om-Brahmane-namah	

Mahishasur has been doing extreme penance to
appease Lord Brahma.

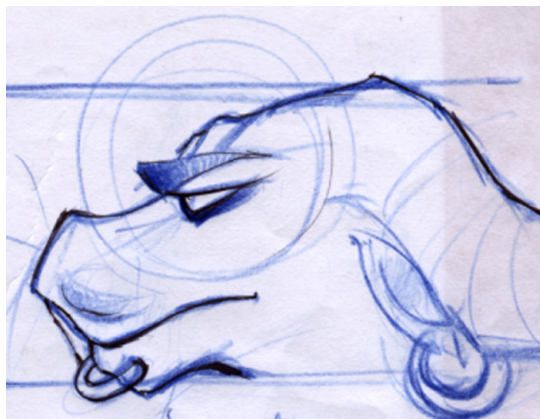




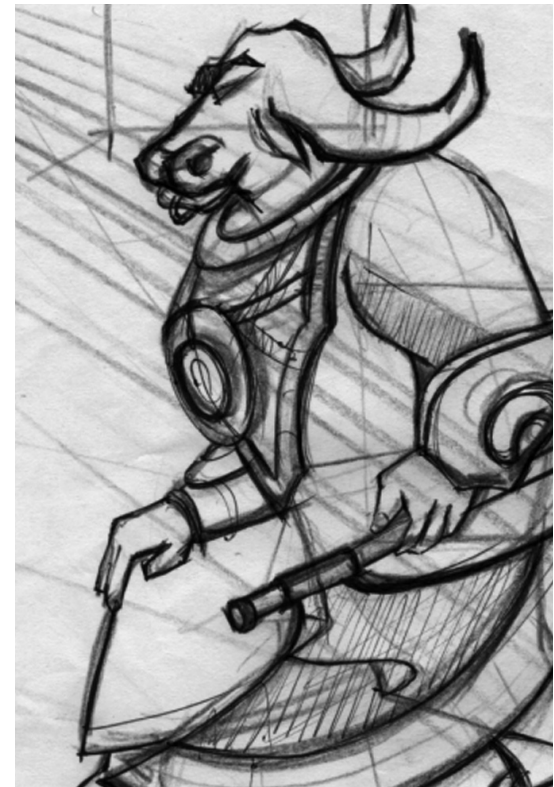
Camera pans over the body of Mahishasur starting with the hand then moving over to the chest and finally to the face. At each point we see the corresponding armour parts attaching to his body.



The camera focuses on his eye which glows red with anger



The camera zooms out to show Mahishasur's full body

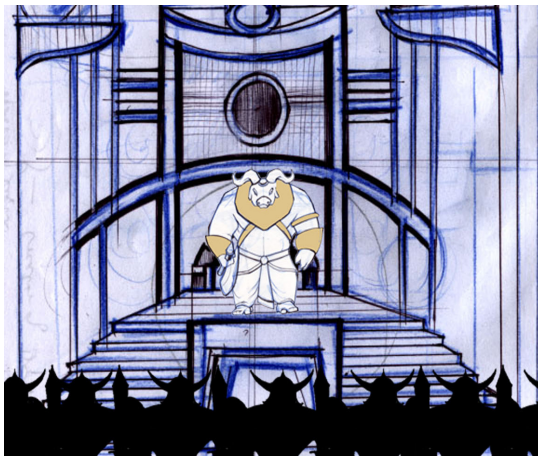




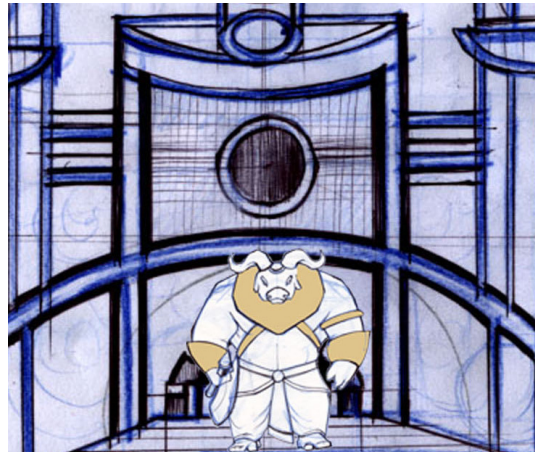
camera now focuses on his face as he laughs under the intoxication of his newly acquired power.



camera cuts to a shot of Mahishasur's palace.

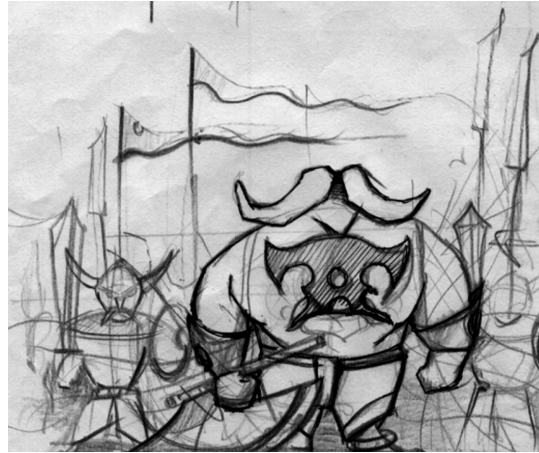


camera cuts to the inside of the palace where we see Mahishasur on his throne and his soldiers shouting and energetically waving their weapons.

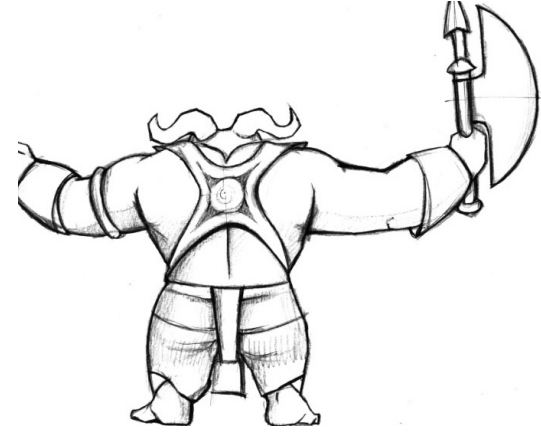


camera zooms in to Mahishasur's face

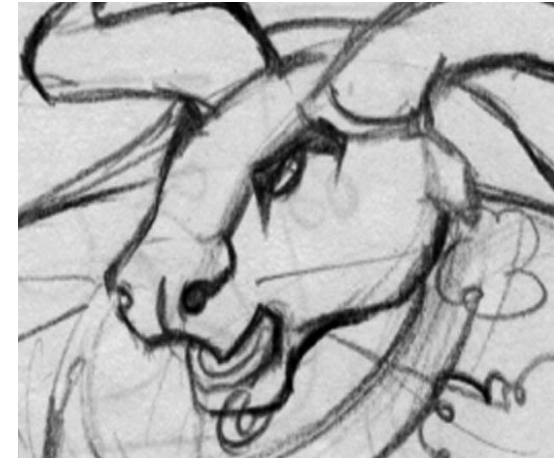


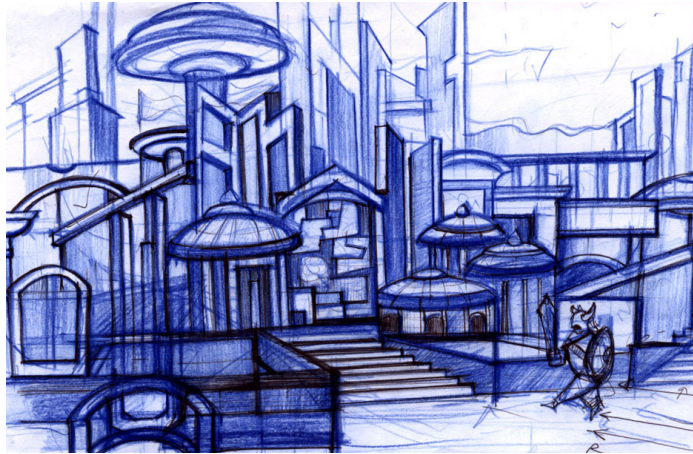


camera cuts to the battlefield where Mahishasur's army is cheering as Mahishasur grandly walks in to the frame, stands with his back to the camera and raises his hands to acknowledge his soldiers.

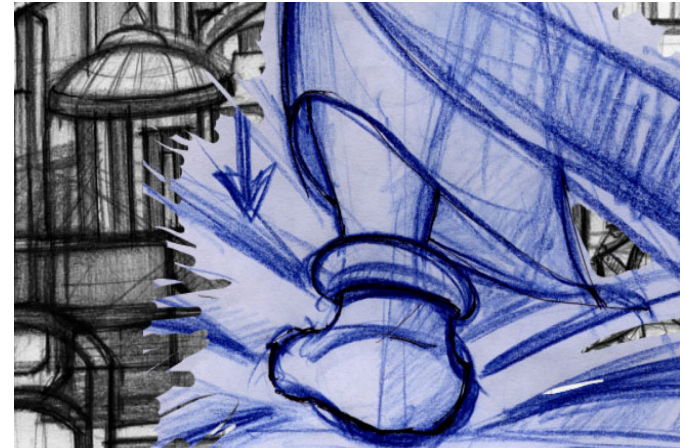


Camera cuts to Mahishasur's face as he roars

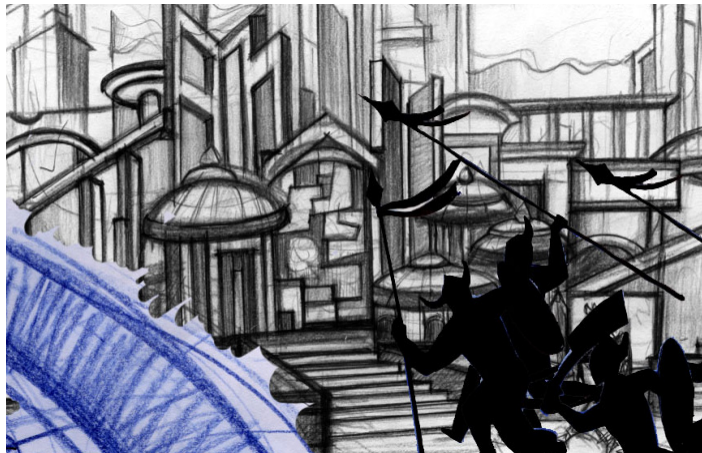




Camera cuts to the palace of the gods. Camera pans across the palace from a distance and we see a peaceful environment



camera pans to a low angle and Mahishasur's foot stomps in to the frame.



camera pans to screen right and Mahishasur's army marches in to the frame from right.



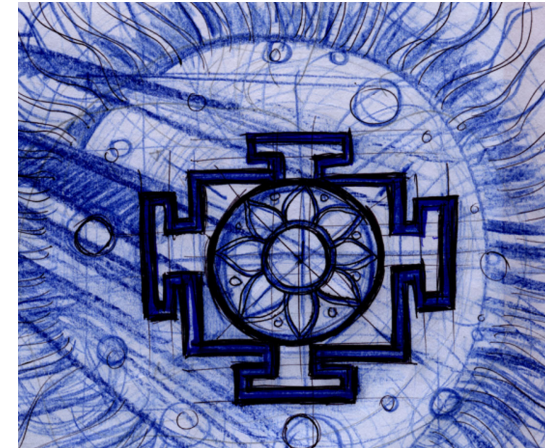
camera cuts to a frame where we see Mahishasur's army marching forward with Mahishasur looming large in the background.



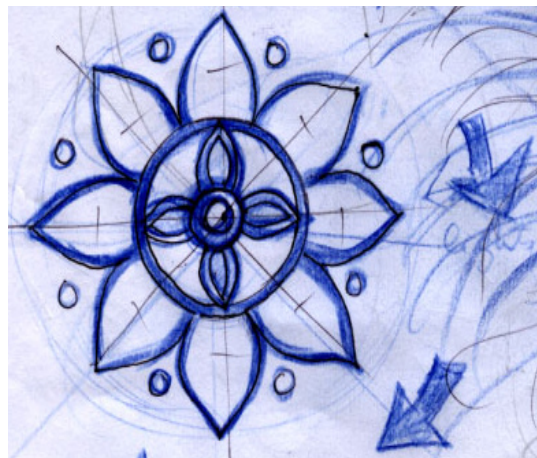
camera zooms out and we see the scene in the crystal ball of Brahma, Bishnu and Maheswar.



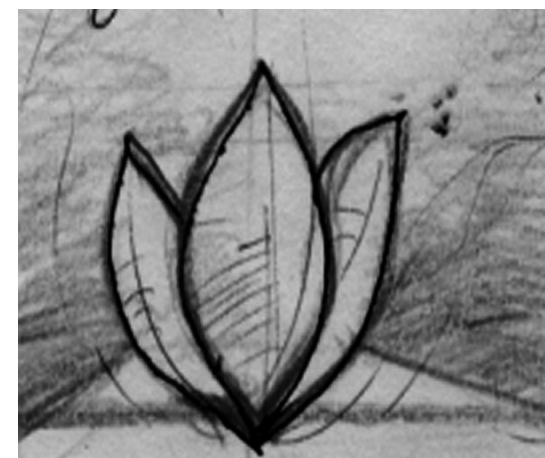
camera cuts to the scene where we see Brahma, Bishnu and Mahesh discussing and then divine light emanates from their forehead.



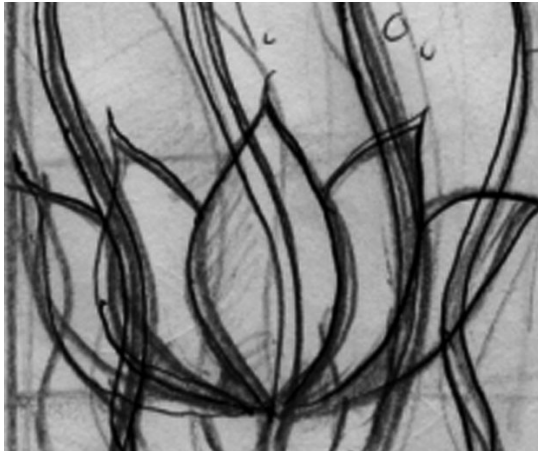
camera cuts to the spot where the divine lights meet to form a mandal.



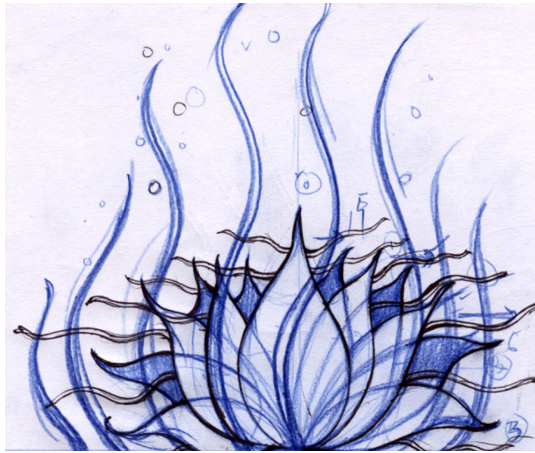
camera zooms in to the mandal on the lotus petals which start rotating.



camera pans to the ground level as the lotus protrudes out of the mandal.



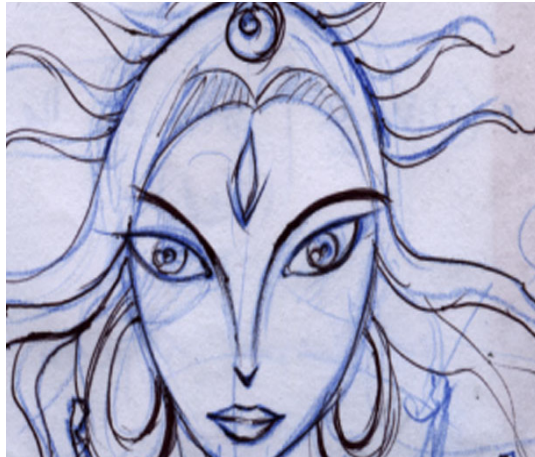
camera holds its position as the lotus blooms and develops. Divine energy begins to envelope the lotus.



camera zooms out and we see the fully blossomed lotus amidst the radiating energy.

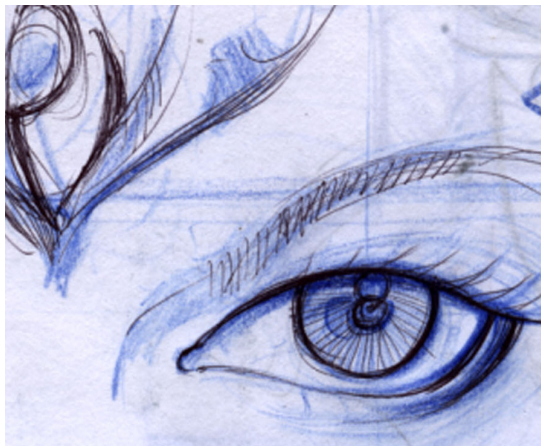


smoke fills up the frame and when it dissipates we see the closeup of Durga's face.

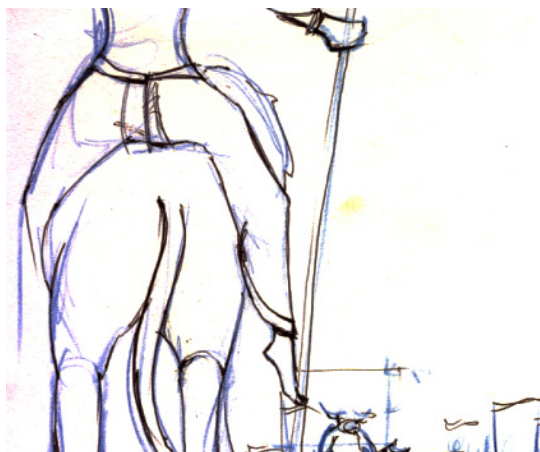


Durga opens her eyes

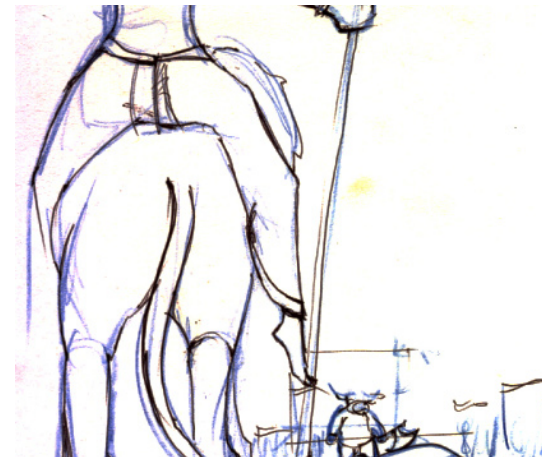
Camera zooms out to show whole of Durga's form. Her two arms multiply to form ten arms and every arm holds a divine weapon given as a boon from Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh.



camera cuts to the closeup of Durga's eye.



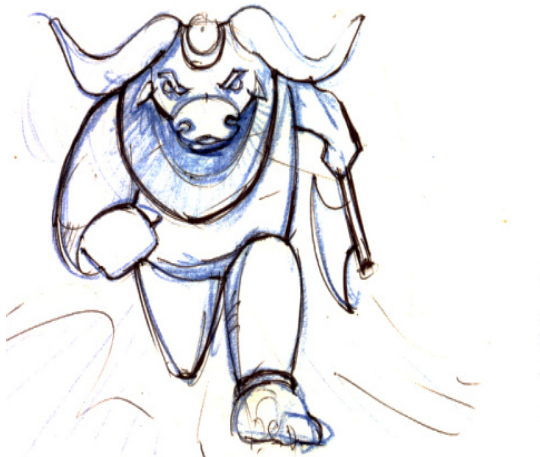
camera cuts to the battle field. In the foreground Durga is in focus mounted on her lion. In the background Mahishasur and his army can be seen out of focus.



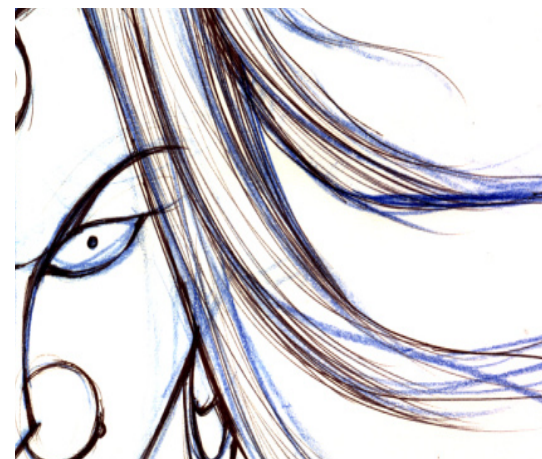
In the same frame camera changes focus to Mahishasur and his army.



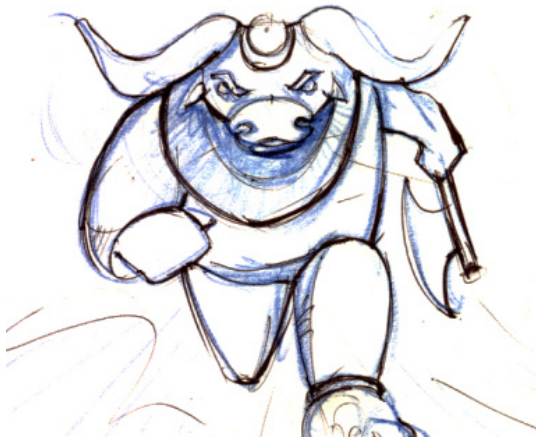
camera swiftly zooms in to Mahishasur's face.



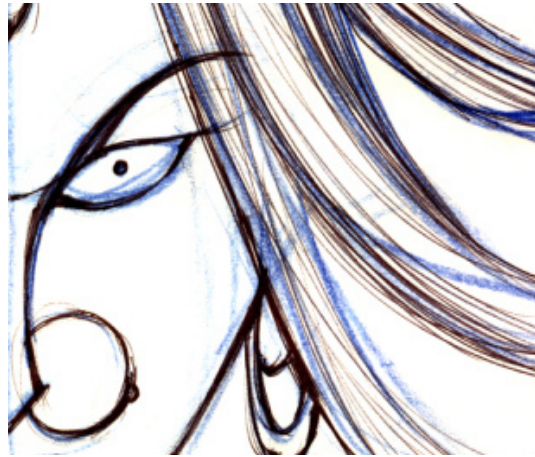
camera cuts to show Mahishasur running and charging towards Durga.



camera cuts to Durga's face and we see rage buildup in her expression.



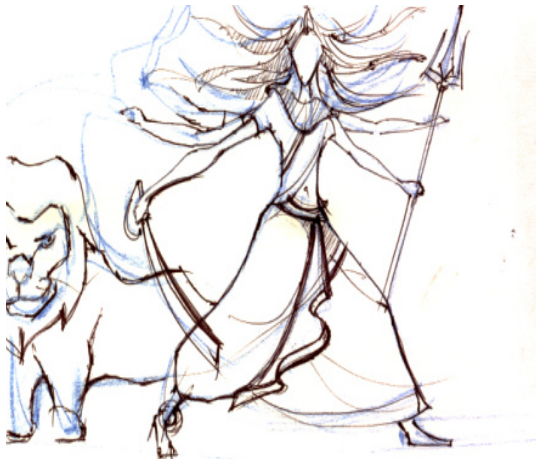
camera cuts back to the charging Mahishasur, at higher zoom level than before.



camera cuts to a closer shot of Durga's angry face.



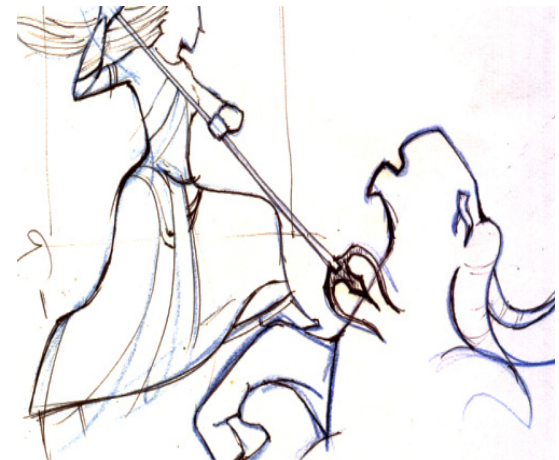
camera cuts to an angular shot of the charging Mahishasur as he magically transforms in to a buffalo.



camera cuts to Durga who we see is standing in an aggressive attacking stance.



camera cuts to the scene where we see Durga's lion and the buffalo charge at each other and collide in the mid air.



camera then shows Durga thrust her trident in to the fallen buffalo to slay the monster.



camera zooms out as this frame freezes in to a photograph and the calender containing this photo comes in to view.

Background music with shlok

*“Yaa devi sarvabhuteshu maatrirupena sansthitah
Yaa devi sarvabhuteshu shaktirupena sansthitah
Yaa devi sarvabhuteshu shaantirupena sansthitah
Namastasyaih namastasyaih namastasyaih namo namah”*

Credits

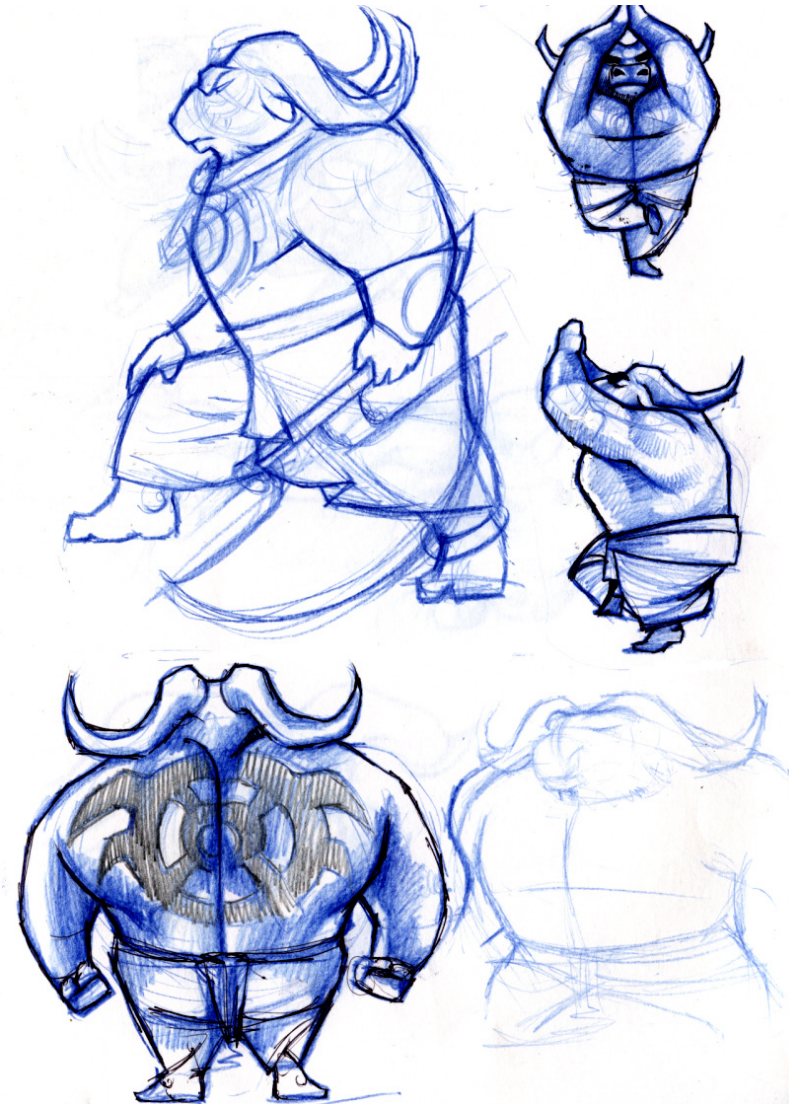
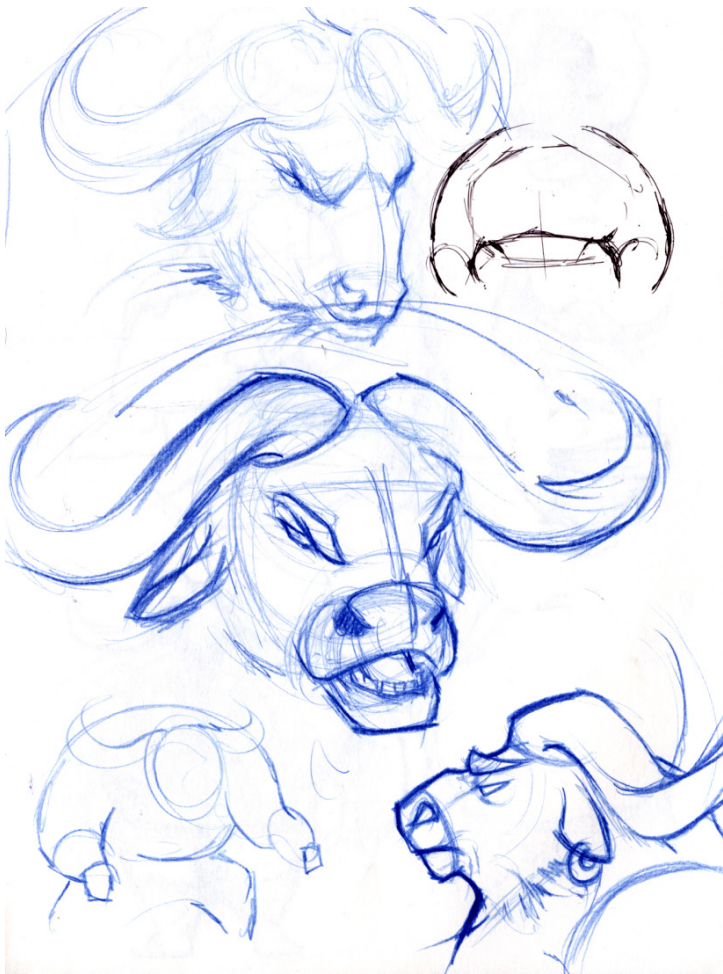
Film by Sameer K Jena

IDC

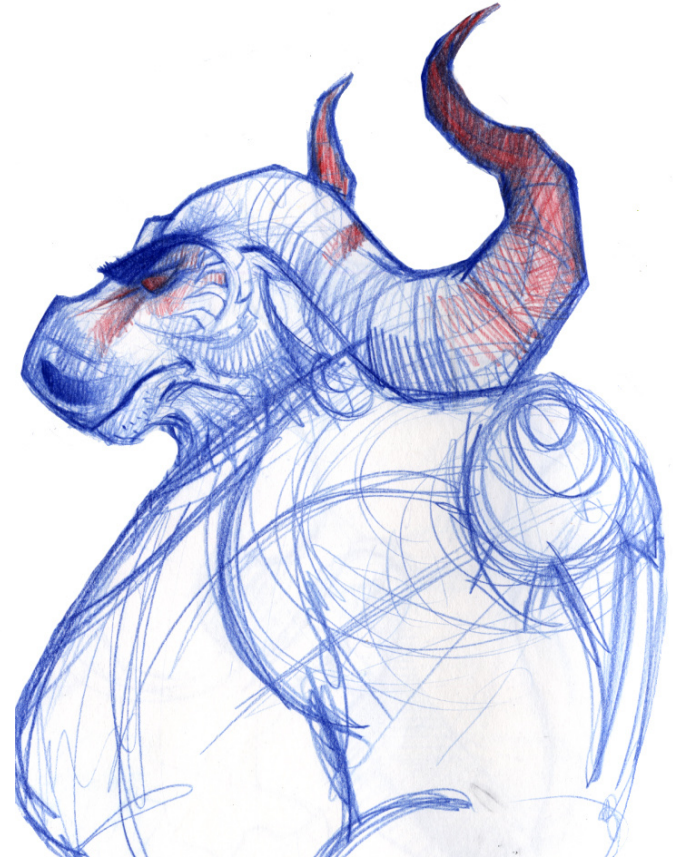
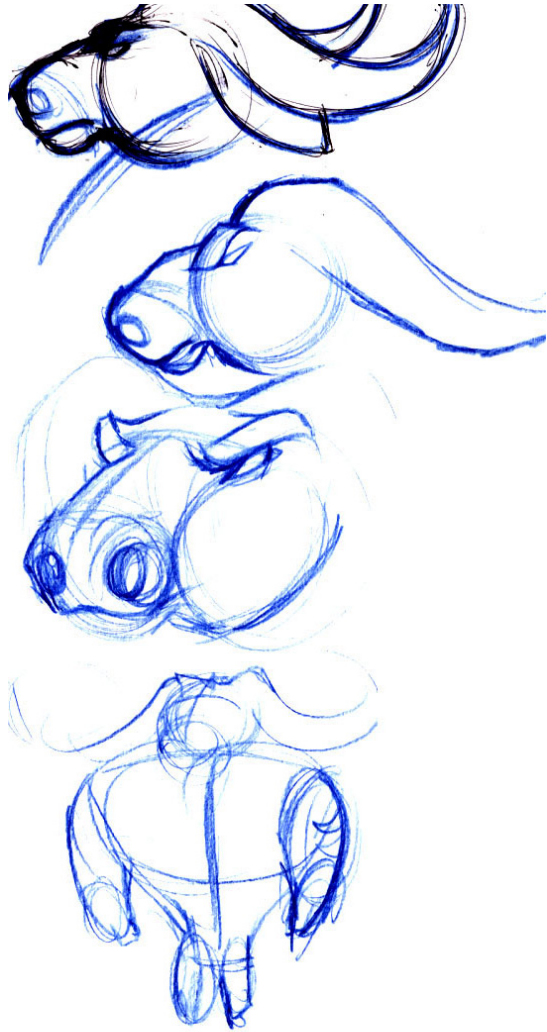
2009

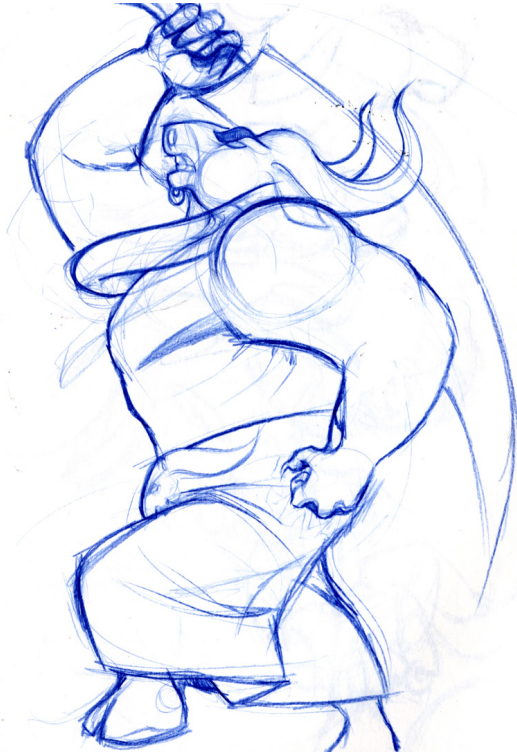
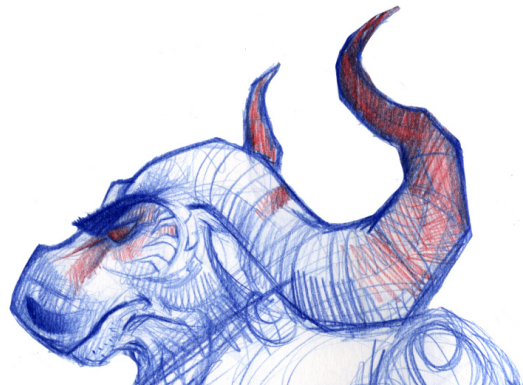
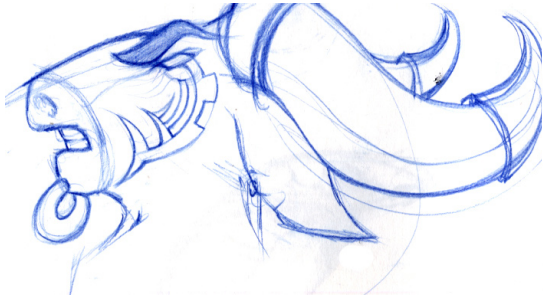
Character Design



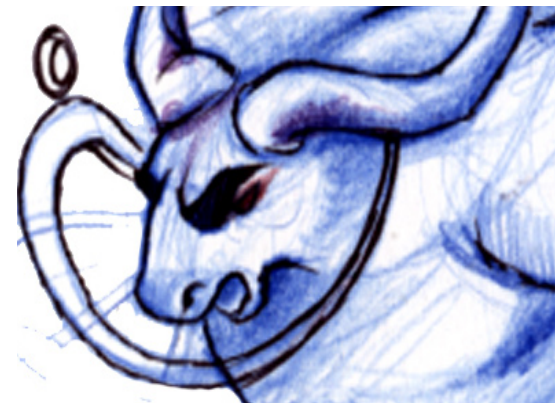
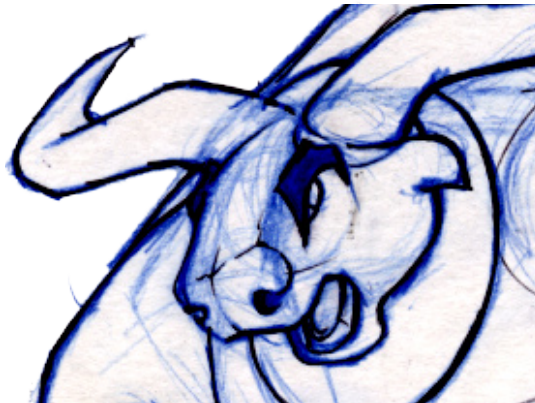


Mahishasur





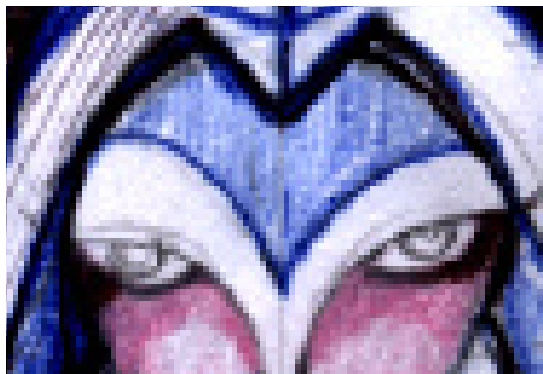
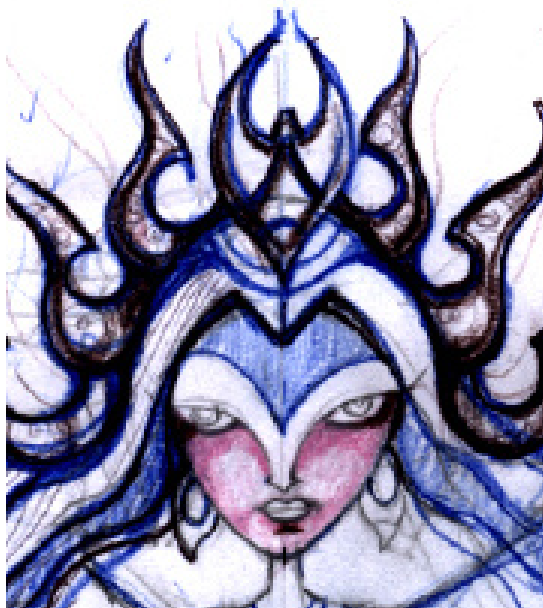
Mahishasur



Mahishasur



Durga





Durga



Asura



Lion



Shiva



Brahma



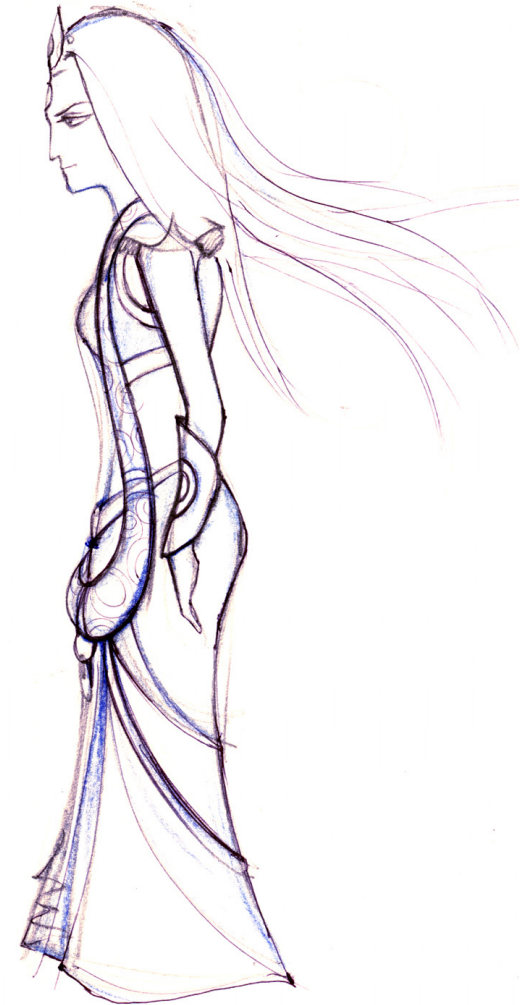
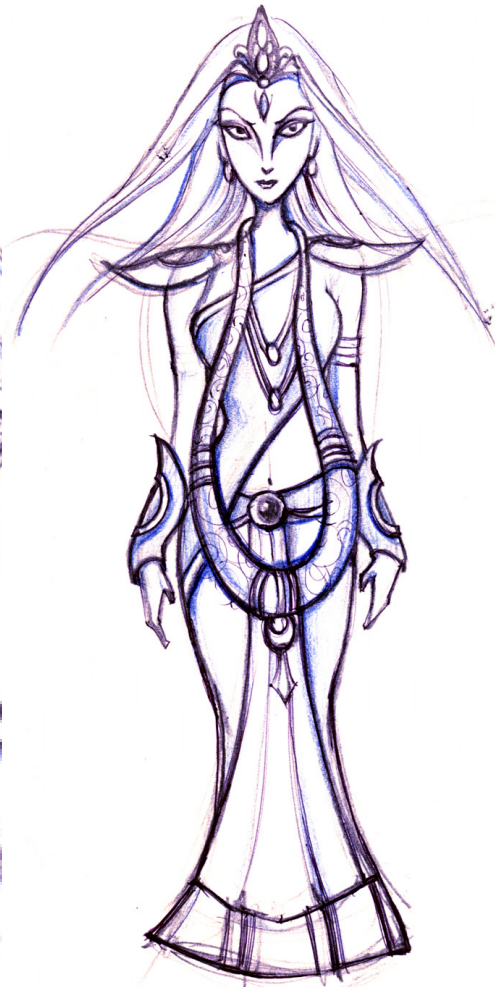
Bishnu



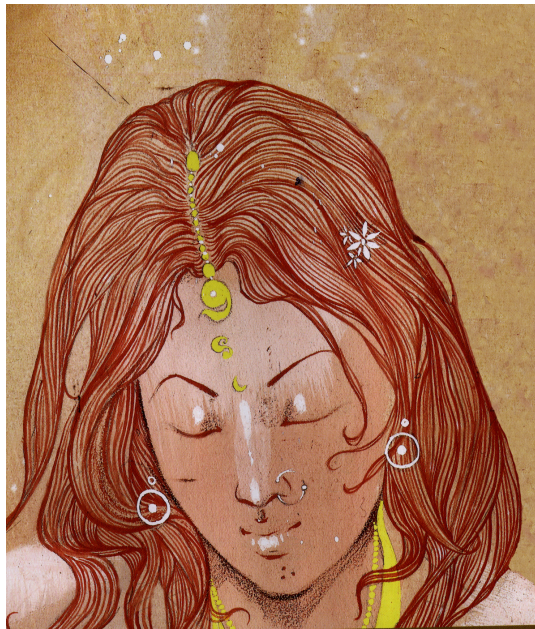
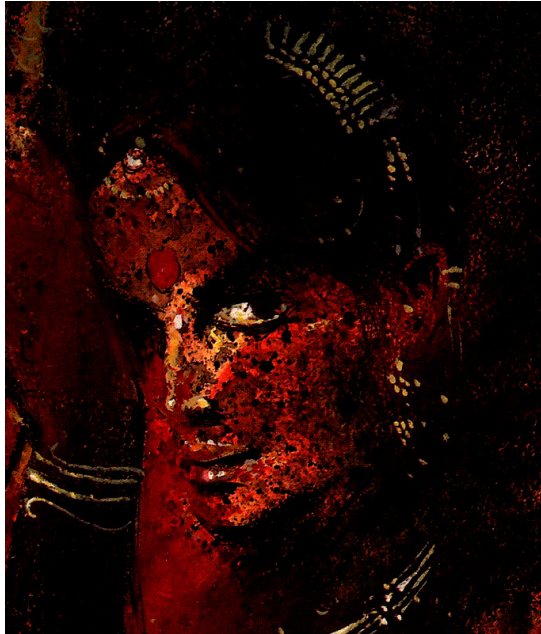


Mahishasur

MODEL SHEET



Visual Reference



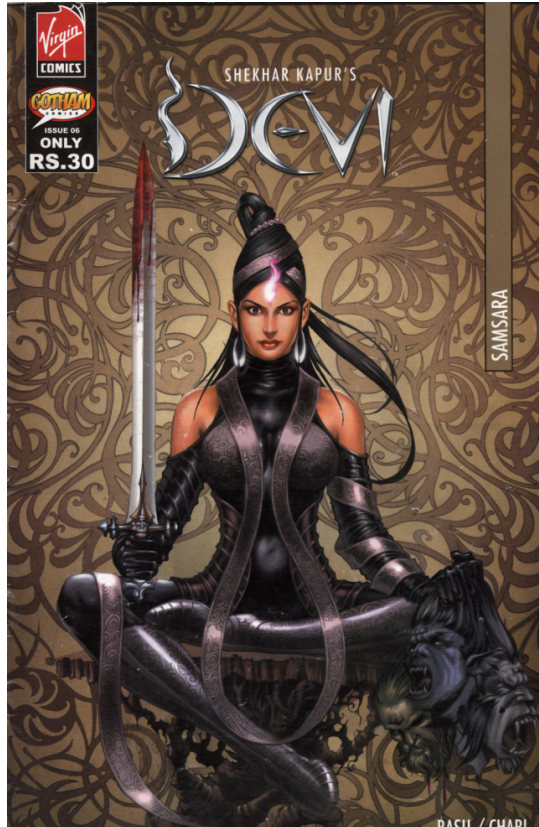
Visual Reference

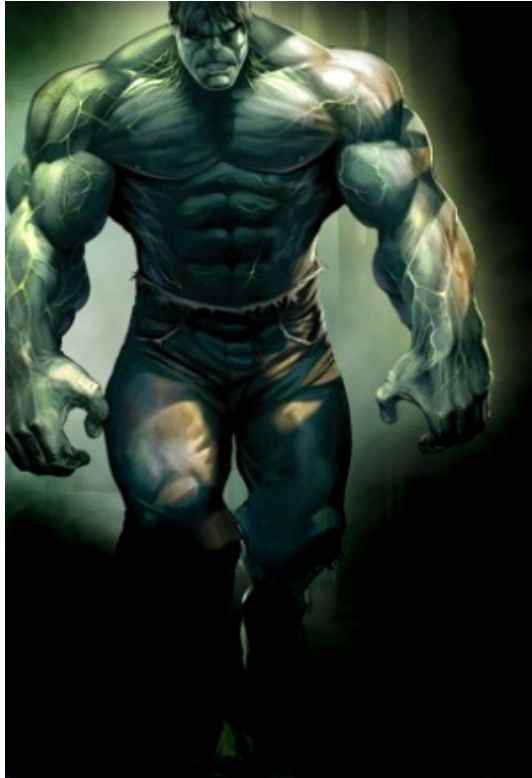


The film contains Indian mythological characters and a war scenario, and hence to establish a connect, references have been taken from various sources.

For Devi Durga (form and appearance) references have been taken from Indian style illustrations, Ajanta & Elorra cave paintings, female form sculptures from various temples.

Visual Reference





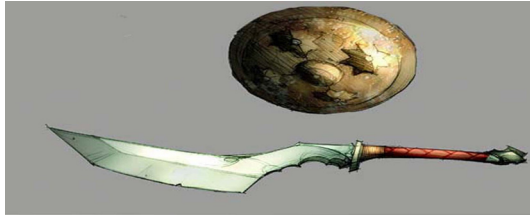
For Mahishasur (his different forms and attributes) references have been taken from western caricatures from various movies and concept art.



Visual Reference



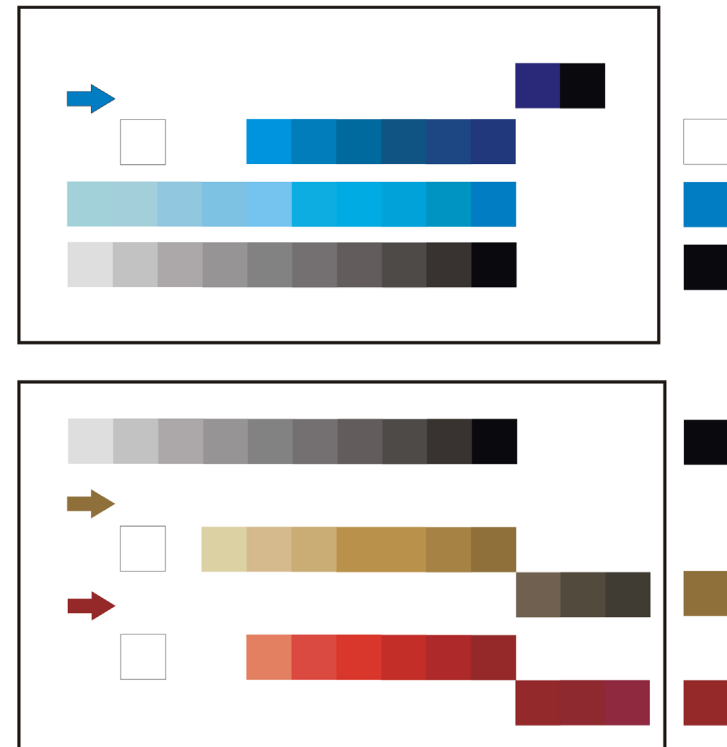
The art direction is a visualisation of huge spaces, expanse of land and mountains and elements like palaces. The scale of the landscape and interiors has been made so to depict the enormity of the characters and the environment.



COLOUR PALETTE

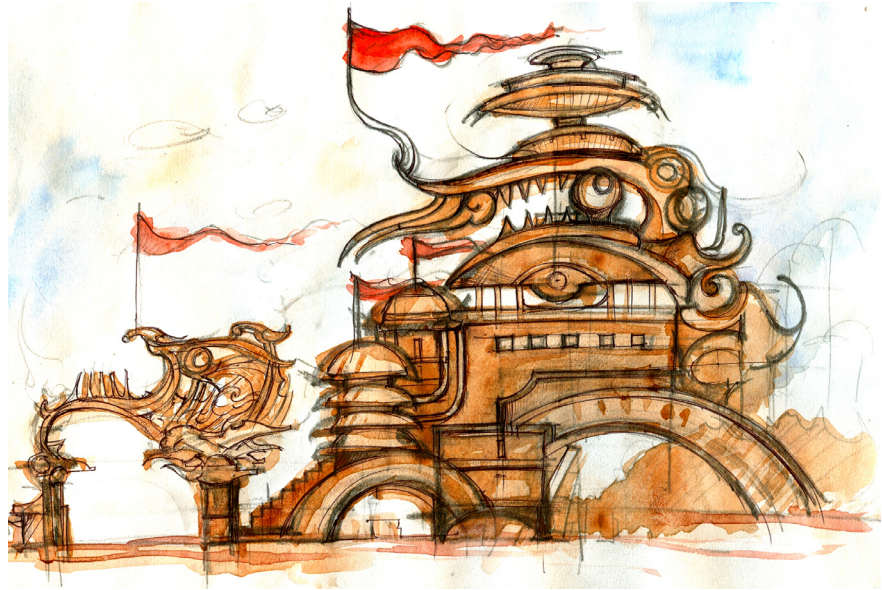


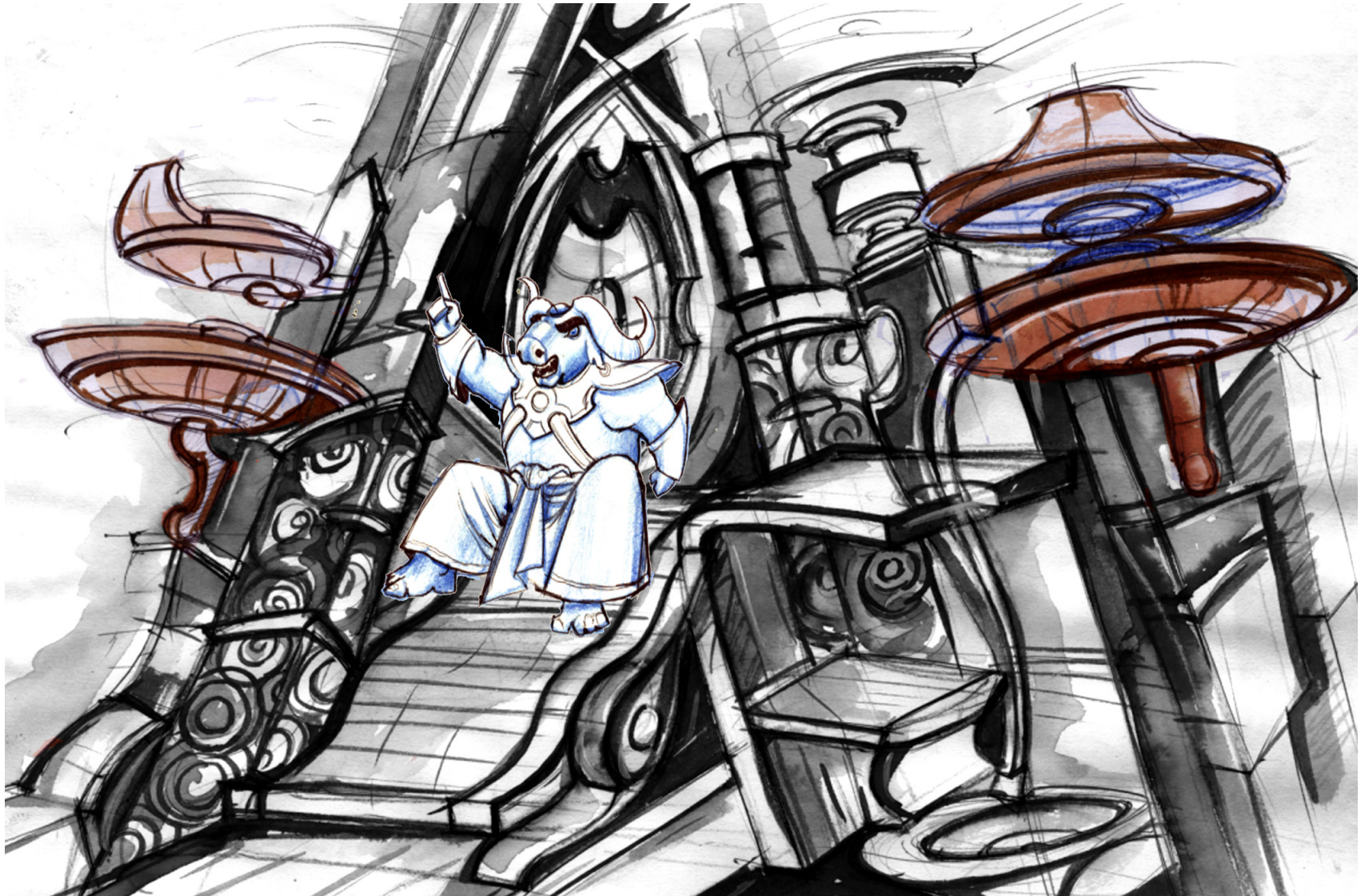
The general colour scheme of the film is gradations blue and grey. The depths and shadows have been shown by the use of dark greys with blue. Highlights like the environment, mood and action have been created by gradations of red, yellow and brown. Instances include jewellery, expressions of characters and the war scenes.

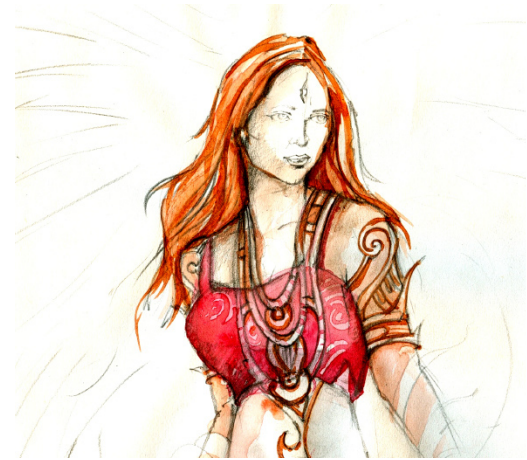
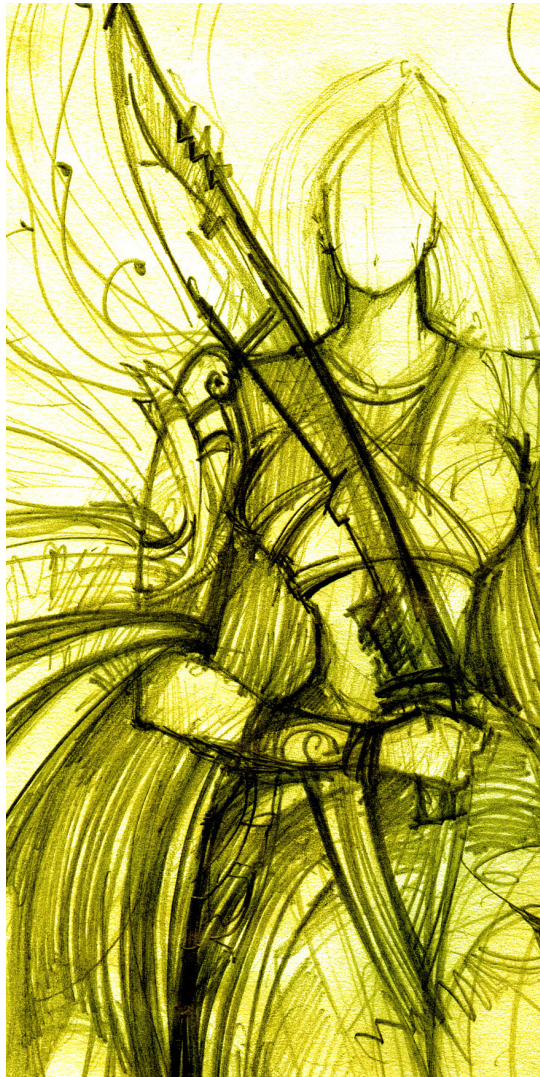
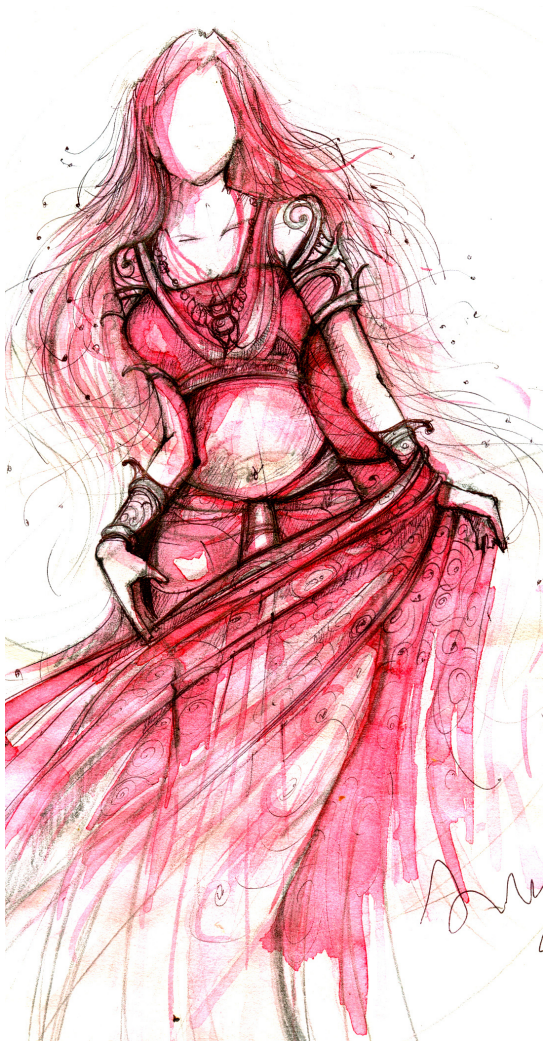


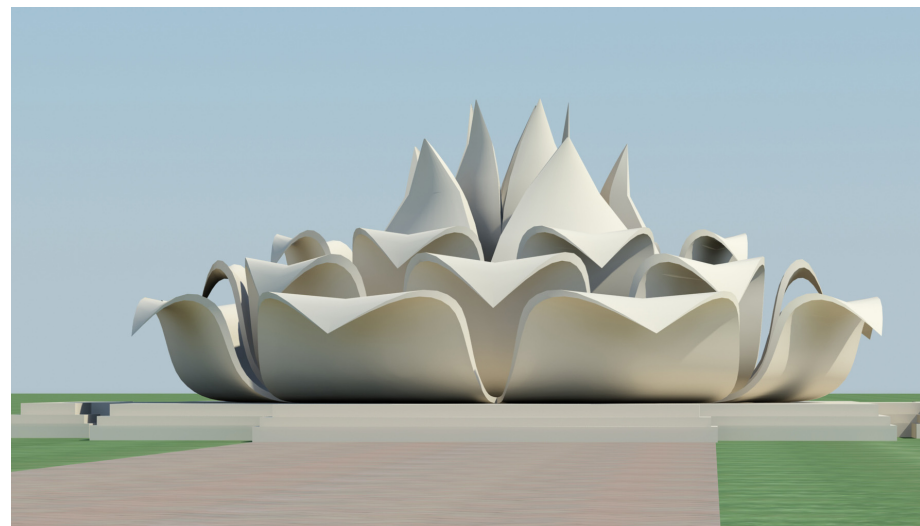
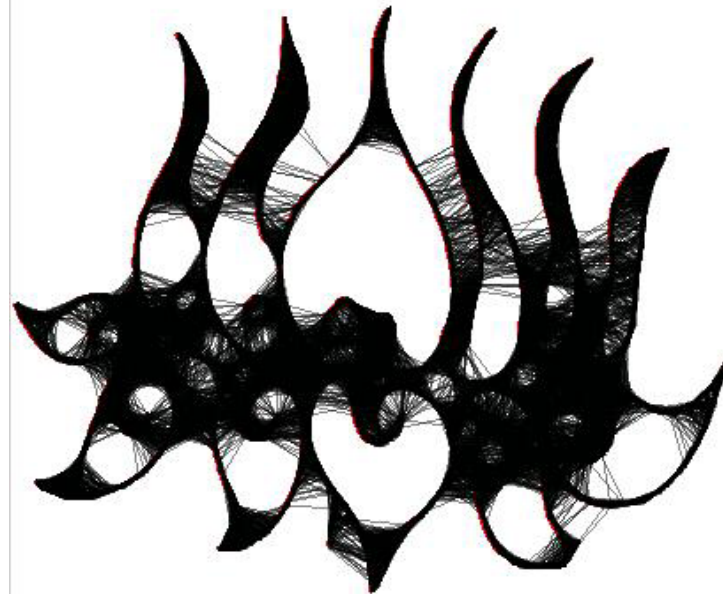
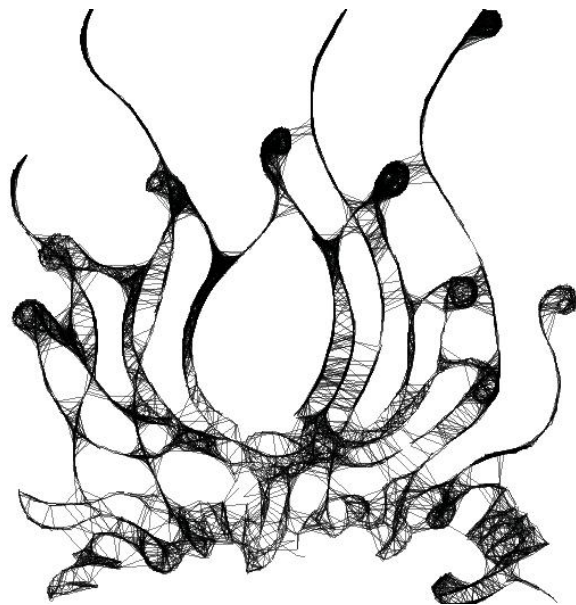
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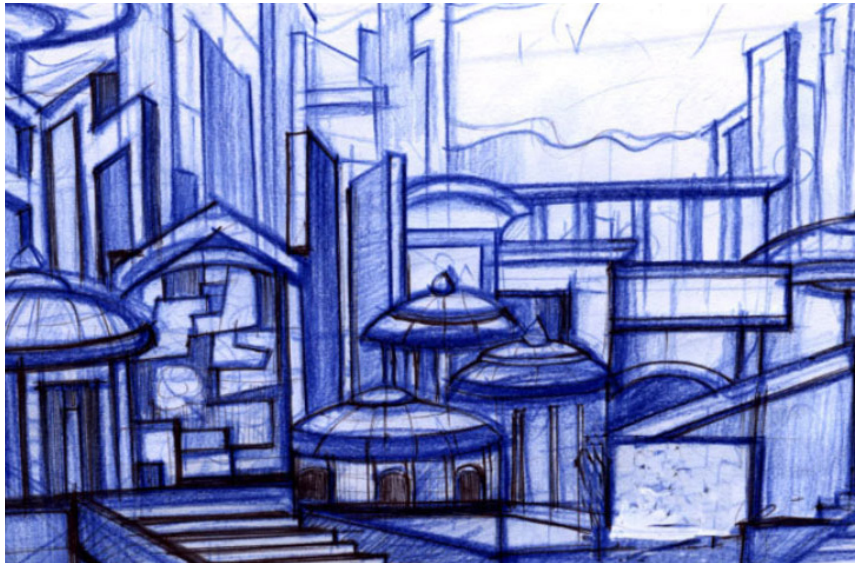
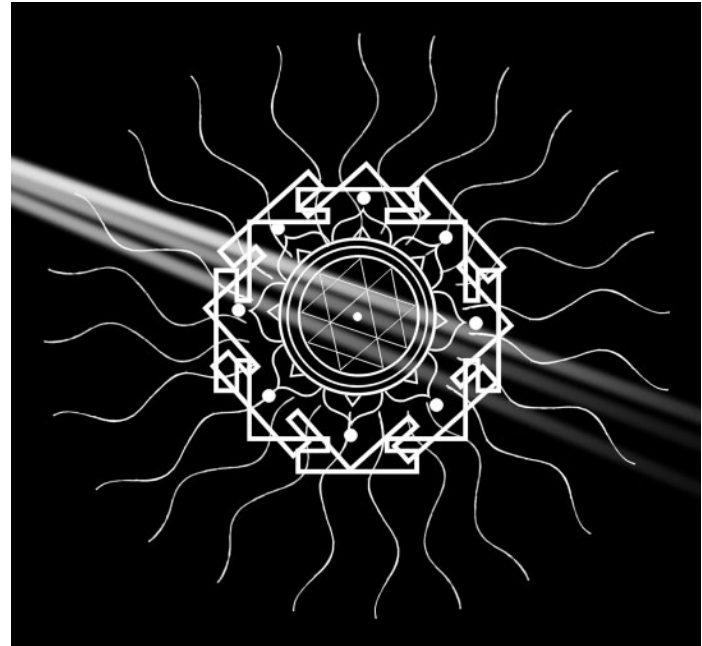
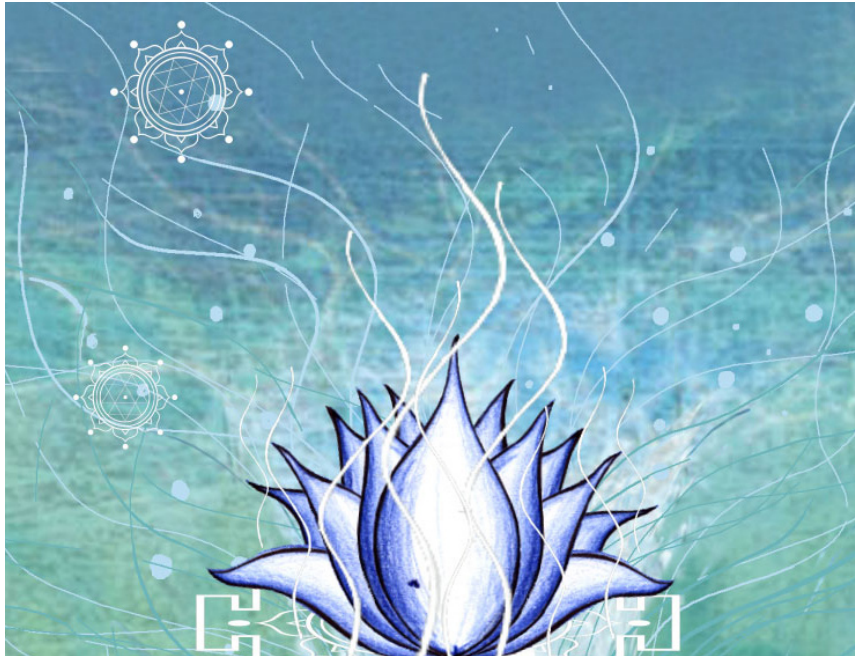


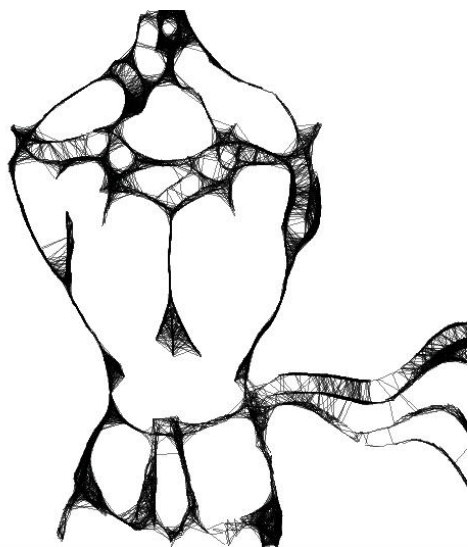


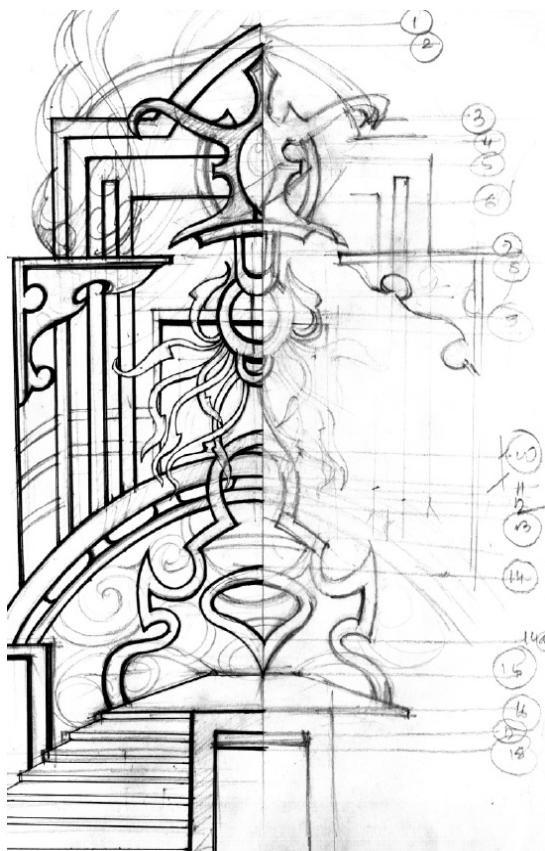












TREATMENT AND TECHNIQUES

The overall environment in the film is mythical. Use of blue and grey shades for the background is done to bring about this quality. Highlighting is achieved by using bright colour shades like red and yellow. War scenes in the film have been effected by adding fog and haze to the environment.

The animation technique used is Cel animation and its effect can be noted in the emphasis given to the characters in the foreground.

As per the situations in the film, long shots to extreme close ups have been used. For the war scenes, fast cuts have been used and depth of field has been used to highlight required elements in particular shots.

Compositing has been done using Adobe After Effects and editing using Adobe Premier.

SOUND AND MUSIC

Various free sounds are used to depict the war scenes in the movie. To enhance the effect of war, various weapon sounds have been used. Background music used gives the feeling of an epic tale and helps bring out the mythical and divine character of the film.

Voice over has been used just at the beginning and end part of the film where mantra and shlok have been used.

Sound editing is done using Cool Edit Pro.

CONCLUSION

I wanted to show the superior qualities of females and why mythology calls the female form as Shakti. Through the research that was done, I came to know about the different forms, attributes and history of Devi Durga. I came to understand a lot about the visual language depicted through colours, gestures, form and the various metaphors for power used in creating Durga.

It was an attempt at exploring the deep rooted mythology in our society and its corresponding interpretations in the modern world. Also, I had a chance to reflect upon the current condition where the entire social structure is slowly changing towards equal rights and opportunities for both men and women.



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