



Industrial Design Centre  
Indian Institute of technology

# The Floating Seed

Project II Report

December 2014

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Degree Project

Animation Film Design

IDC

Project Advisor: Prof. Shilpa Ranade

## Declaration

I hereby declare that the project work done in relation to my graduation film and submitted as a written report to the Industrial Design Centre, IIT Bombay is a record of the original work done by me under the guidance of Prof. Shilpa Ranade. Unless otherwise stated, the contents of this report in the form of text and images are entirely my own. The views expressed in the document as part of the written submission of the project are my own and do not necessarily represent the views of Industrial Design Centre, IIT Bombay.

  
Sreelekha S  
December 2014

## Approval

The Report Committee for Animation Design, Industrial Design Centre, IIT Bombay  
Certifies that this is the approved version of the following report on:

**Floating seed**

By

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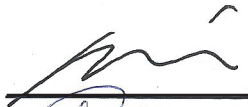


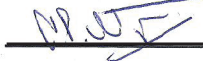
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## Acknowledgment

I would like to express my gratitude to Prof. Shilpa Ranade for giving me an opportunity to work under her and for her invaluable guidance, support and inspiration all throughout the development process of my film.

I would like to extend my gratitude to my friends for their support.

I am grateful for my family, who are my guiding force.

My sincere gratitude to the almighty for the blessings.

Sreelekha S  
December 2014



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*"Zen is not a religion, not a creed. Zen is not a quest, an inquiry; it is non-philosophical. The fundamental of zen approach is that all is as it should be nothing is missing. This very moment everything is perfect."*

**OSHO**

## Introduction

"The secret of health for both mind and body is not to mourn for the past, not to worry about the future, or not to anticipate troubles, but to live in the present moment wisely and earnestly." Buddha

With ages the man kind is moving towards the fast world. We are witnessing the mechanical way of lifestyle where the years goes like months, the month goes like days and the days like minutes. Between past and future there is present and most of us live either in past or in future. It is high time we needs to reemphasize our age old practices to enjoy and to know the purpose of life.

The best amongst old practices are "The Zen" - the path of paradox. An attempt is made to make the viewer to realize the value of consciousness. To be mindful, to be in the present, to be an extravert, to develop calm ness with in and to visualize the silence around us.

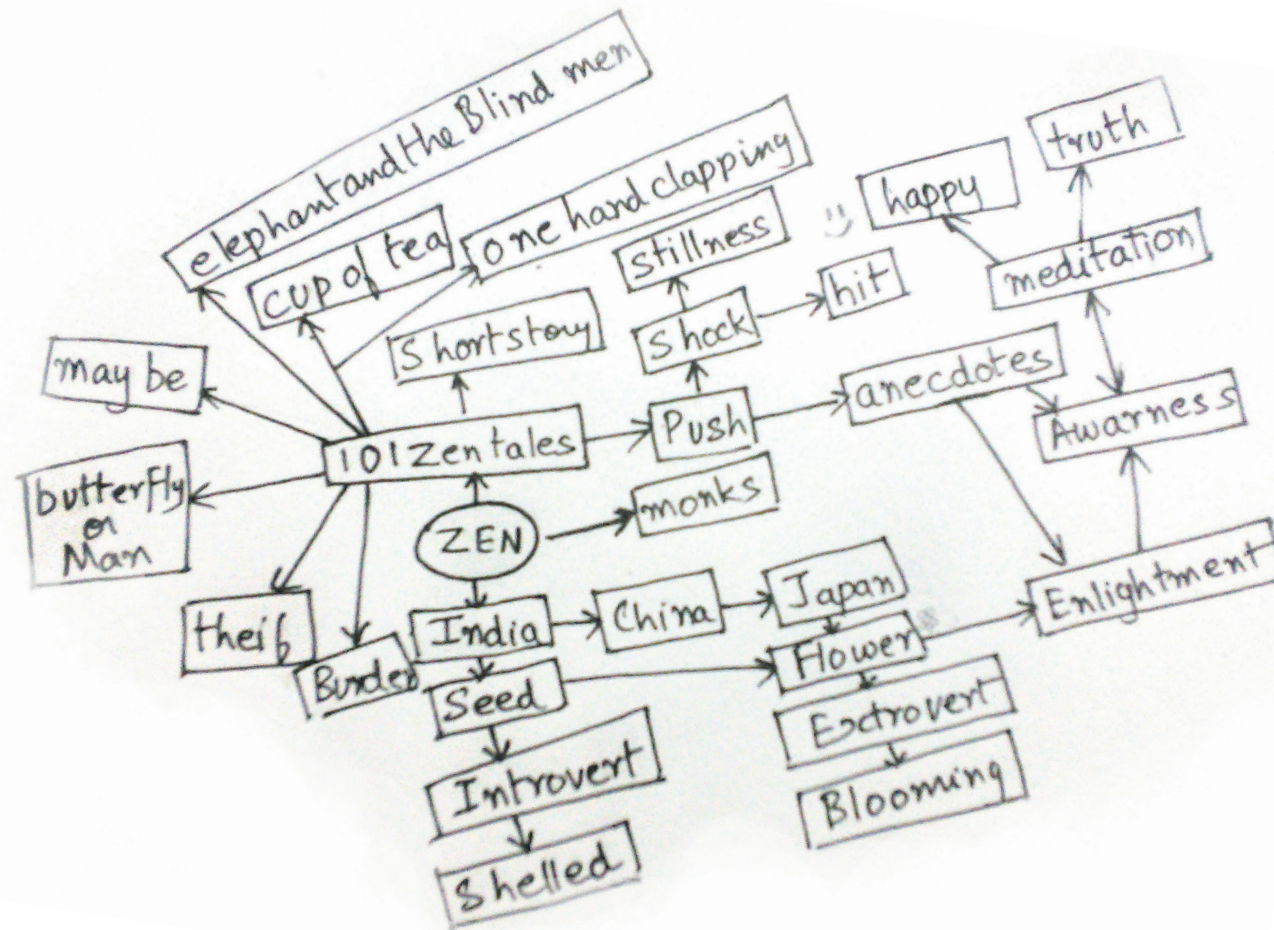
*"Zen born in India, grew in china and blossomed in Japan.  
Seed in India, soil in China and blossomed in Japan."*

*"When the word Dhyan reaches china it become ch'an, when ch'an reached japan it became Zen. "*

Research

## Mind mapping-Finalizing the messages

From the books referred Zen, Its History And Teachings – Osho, Zen Garden - Subroto Bagchi, One Hand Clapping a collection of zen stories, The Way of Zen - Alan Watts, Zen Shorts - Jon J Muth, the chain of messages mapped are as under.



From the first stage mapping seed -flowering and enlightenment were selected.

A seed is an introverted phenomenon, it is centripetal- the energy is moving inward. A seed is an absolute island, isolated, caved in. a seed is a loneliest, most isolated thing in the world.

The flower is moving outward. The flower releases its fragrance to this outer world.

Enlightenment - there is no need to seek and search. It is not an achievement, it is recognition, hence enlightenment reflects through laughter.

The second stage of mapping was carried out to get more messages to decide the best.

The messages finalized are; living in the present, mindful, blooming of consciousness.

## **Research for development of the story**

From the selected words from the mind map the following Zen Related Stories to live in the present moment were studied.

### **Real Miracle**

When Bankei was preaching at Ryumon temple, a Shinshu priest, who believed in salvation through the repetition of the name of the Buddha of Love, was jealous of his large audience and wanted to debate with him.

Bankei was in the midst of a talk when the priest appeared but the fellow made such a disturbance that Bankei stopped his discourse and asked about the noise.

‘The founder of our sect,’ boasted the priest, ‘had such miraculous powers that he held a brush in his hand on one bank of the river, his attendant held up a paper on the other bank, and the teacher wrote the holy name of Amida through the air.

Can you do such a wonderful thing?’

Bankei replied lightly: ‘Perhaps your fox can perform that trick, but that is not the manner of Zen. My miracle is that when I feel hungry I eat, and when I feel thirsty I drink.’

### **Archery**

After winning several archery contests, the young and rather boastful champion challenged a Zen master who was renowned for his skill as an archer. The young man demonstrated remarkable technical proficiency when he hit a distant bull's eye on his first try, and then split that arrow with his second shot. "There," he said to the old man, "see if you can match that!" Undisturbed, the master did not draw his bow, but rather motioned for the young archer to follow him up the mountain.

Curious about the old fellow's intentions, the champion followed him high into the mountain until they reached a deep chasm spanned by a rather flimsy and shaky log. Calmly stepping out onto the middle of the unsteady and certainly perilous bridge, the old master picked a faraway tree as a target, drew his bow, and fired a clean, direct hit. "Now it is your turn," he said as he gracefully stepped back onto the safe ground.

Staring with terror into the seemingly bottomless and beckoning ABYSS, the young man could not force himself to step out onto the log, no less shoot at a target. "You have much skill with your bow," the master said, sensing his challenger's predicament, "but you have little skill with the mind that lets loose the shot."

### **One Hand Clapping-The Sound of One Hand**

The masts of Kennin temple was Mokurai, Silent Thunder. He had

a little protégé named Toyo who was only twelve years old. Toyo saw the old disciples visit the master's room each morning and evening to receive instruction in sanzen or personal guidance in which they were given koans to stop mind-wandering.

Toro wished to do sanzen also.

'Wait a while,' said Mokurai. 'You are too young.'

But the child insisted, so the teacher finally consented.

In the evening little Toyo went at the proper time to the threshold of Mokurai's sanzen room. He struck the gong to announce his presence, bowed respectfully three times outside the door, and went to sit before the master in respectful silence.

'You can hear the sound of two hands when they clap together,' said Mokurai. 'Now show me the sound of one hand.'

Toyo bowed and went to his room to consider this problem. From his window he could hear the music of the geishas.

'Ah, I have it!' he proclaimed.

The next evening, when his teacher asked him to illustrate the sound of one hand, Toyo began to play the music of the geishas.



'No, no,' said Mokurai. That will never do. That is not the sound of one hand. You've not got it at all.'

Thinking that such music might interrupt, Toyo moved his abode to a quiet place. He meditated again. 'What can the sound of one hand be?' He happened to hear some water dripping. 'I have it,' imagined Toyo.

When he next appeared before his teacher, Toyo imitated dripping water.

'What is that?' asked Mokurai. That is the sound of dripping water, but not the sound of one hand. Try again.'

In vain Toyo meditated to hear the sound of one hand. He heard the sighing of the wind. But the sound was rejected.

He heard the cry of an owl. This also was refused. The sound of one hand was not the locusts.

For more than ten times Toyo visited Mokurai with different sounds. All were wrong. For almost a year he pondered what the sound of one hand might be.

At last little Toyo entered true meditation and transcended all sounds. 'I could collect no more,' he explained later. 'so I reached the soundless sound.'

Toyo had realized the sound of one hand.

### **The Burden**

Tanzan and Ekido were once traveling together down a muddy road. A heavy rain was still falling.

Coming around a bend, they met a lovely girl in a silk kimono and sash, unable to cross the intersection.

'Come on, girl,' said Tanzan at once. Lifting her in his arms, he carried her over the mud.

Ekido did not speak again until that night when they reached a lodging temple. Then he no longer could restrain himself.

'We monks don't go near females.' He told Tanzan, especially not young and lovely ones. It is dangerous. Why did you do

that?'

'I left the girl there,' said Tanzan. 'Are you still carrying her?'

**From the above Zen Stories I came up with five stories with relevance to the zen messages shortlisted and with further exploration the final story was decided.**

## **Research for the Character Development**

Archery is the closest Zen activity and narrating the story with an archer practicing archery found to be the apt storyline.

Study on archery, the shape and size of bow and arrow used, how the archer carries and handle the bow and arrow, his body language, the place and the surroundings of an archer, the landscape, the nature of floating seed, how it disperse and how it floats are studied in detail so as to illustrate to its original in the project envisaged.

*“The future of humanity will go closer to the approach of Zen, because the meeting of east and west is possible only through something like Zen, which is earthly and yet unearthly”.*

*OSHO*

## Story Development

Zen is like a telegram- the more condensed the meaning, the more striking. The more spread the meaning, the less impressive. Zen believes in the essentials. It is a condensed and crystalized teaching, but a person must be prepared for it. The only preparation is meditative awareness.

Zen is just small anecdotes.

With elaborate research on Zen shorts and Zen stories, the messages were short listed and the initial stories were developed on the messages shortlisted.

### **Story 1 - Enlightenment**

A man sitting in a garden was trying to meditate to attain enlightenment. With his thoughts on the past and the future he was not able to focus, adding to that a fly was distracting him with its sound and flying, sitting around his face and finally trying to enter his ear.

When the fly try to enter his ear, he was at total shock and that moment he could realizes that his mind was clear and he could visualize enlightenment and he started to laugh with joy.

The story was dropped as it doesn't convey multiple messages.

### **Story 2- Mindfulness and the seed**

A man sitting in a park, full of plants with beautiful flowers and

ponds, thinking about bad and worst events of the past. All in his mind are worries and burden that he is carrying within himself and he was not able to enjoy the beauty of his surroundings. The sounds of birds, the fragrance of flowers, the touch of wind. A seed dropping from the tree hits the head of the man that put his thoughts still, clear and push him towards thinking of the seed- "The Present". To be extravert unlike the seed which is introvert, loneliest, caved in, and most isolated thing in the world.

The story was also dropped, though it conveys multiple messages, as the story doesn't had more visuals to illustrate.

### **Story 3 - God and Silence**

A young man meets a master as he wants to become a disciple so as to find God and Silence. The master dragged him into a river and plunged his head under the water. After holding him for a while, in-spite of his struggling, the master pulled him out and asked him what he wants when his head was under the water. The man replied "Air".

The master asked him to come back when he wants God and Silence as much as Air.

The young man returned home thinking what master said. He saw an old man carrying heavy weights and he started working

with him in planting trees and cleaning the garden. He started living with nature in the process experiencing the Zen and he became happy, the silence was pervading him.

Now the master visit the young man and ask him to join as his disciple. The young man answered that he had found the presence of God and silence.

The master smiled at him.

The story was also dropped though it had enough story line and message, as there was search for better appropriate message.

#### **Story 4 – Living in the present and mindful**

In a dense forest a monk with his only pupil was practicing meditation and the archery. Thinking about what master was meditating upon, the pupil in-spite of regular practice was not able to hit the target and got frustrated.

The days went on like every day, the master meditate and the pupil practice, but was not hitting the target.

Every time he pulls the sting of the arrow he was thinking about how painful his hands were feeling, how his legs were cramping and how the birds and butterflies distract his concentration. On the eventful day the pupil practicing archery saw a tiger is coming

close to his master who is meditating. Without thinking he targeted his arrow over a fruit just above the master's head. The arrow hits the fruit and the master comes out of his meditation and the tiger ran away.

The master laughed at the pupil and said, he had finally attained mind fullness and was in "the present".

The story was also dropped though the message "living in the present and mindfulness" are more appropriate, as storyline is not more effective.

#### **Story 5 - Silence and mindfulness**

The bear-archer, the tortoise- the master and the monkey - the pupil were together practicing their respective arts in a dense forest.

The bear practicing archery fails to hit the target as his mind was on the fishes splashing in the stream next to it. The bear dreaming of gliding with the fish and enjoying eating them.

The master tortoise meditating and monitoring the bear archery. The monkey, the pupil approaches the master for learning the art of silence and the master ask the monkey to find answer for one hand clapping.

The monkey tries and come out with the sound surrounds him

as the sound of one hand clapping. The master rejects series of his answers. The monkey tries all his ways to find the answer for one hand clapping. He hangs on the tree with his tail, he stand on with one leg, jumping, meditating, but without any answer.

The bear dreaming of fish and practicing archery.

On the eventful day the tortoise meditating, the bear could see a snake going near to his master. The bear without thinking, aims and hit the fruit that hangs just above the snake and the falling fruit hit on the hood of the snake. The master comes out of meditation and smile at the bear the success of being present and mindful.

The monkey returns back to master and says with all his attempts he couldn't find nothing with one hand clapping. The master says there is the answer in the monkey's reply that he could find nothing but silence from one hand clapping.

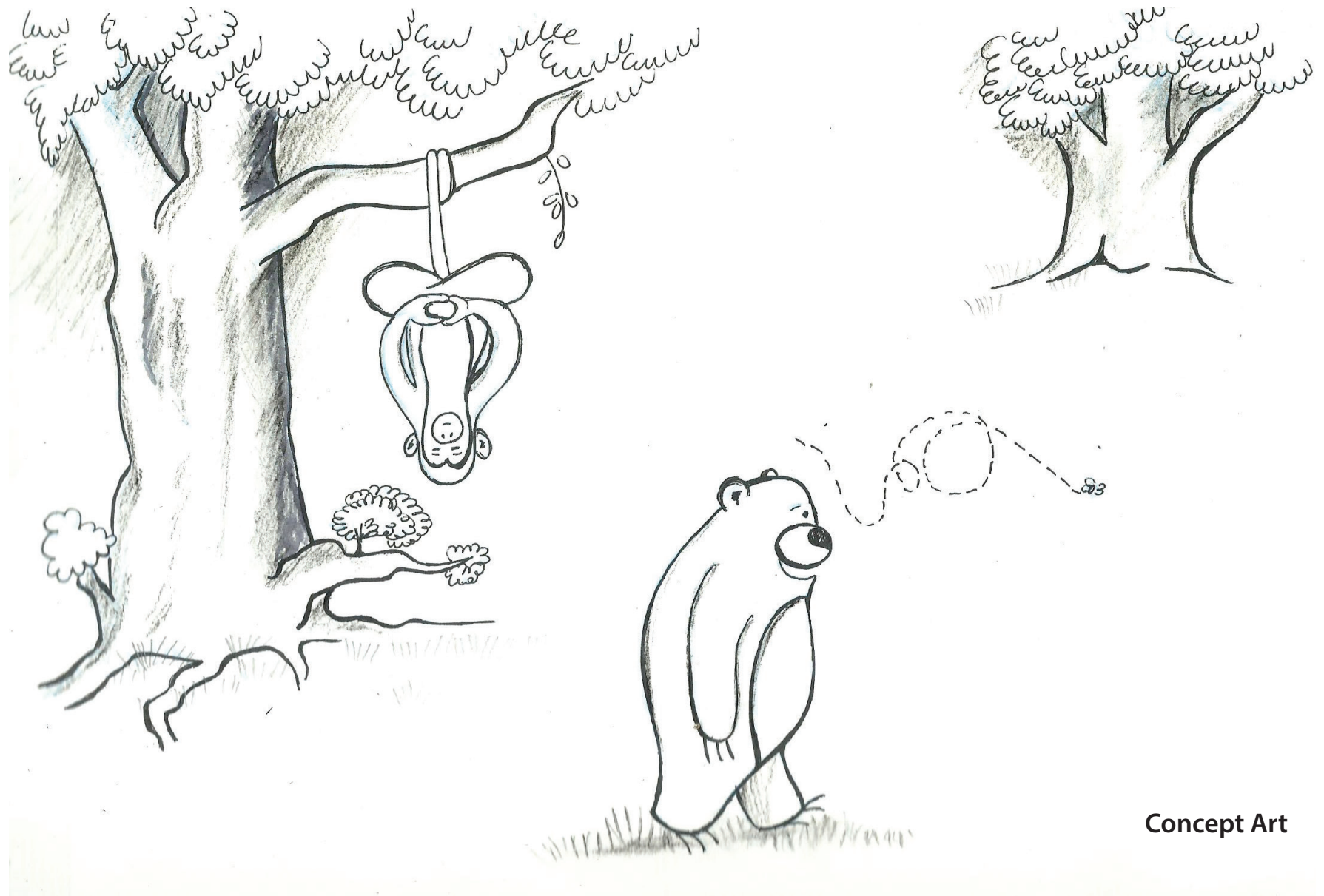
The bear could hit most of the attempts the target and the monkey could visualize the silence within and around.

The master peacefully meditates.

**Though this story was illustrated in the stage two presentation the story was also dropped as the story line was not very effective.**

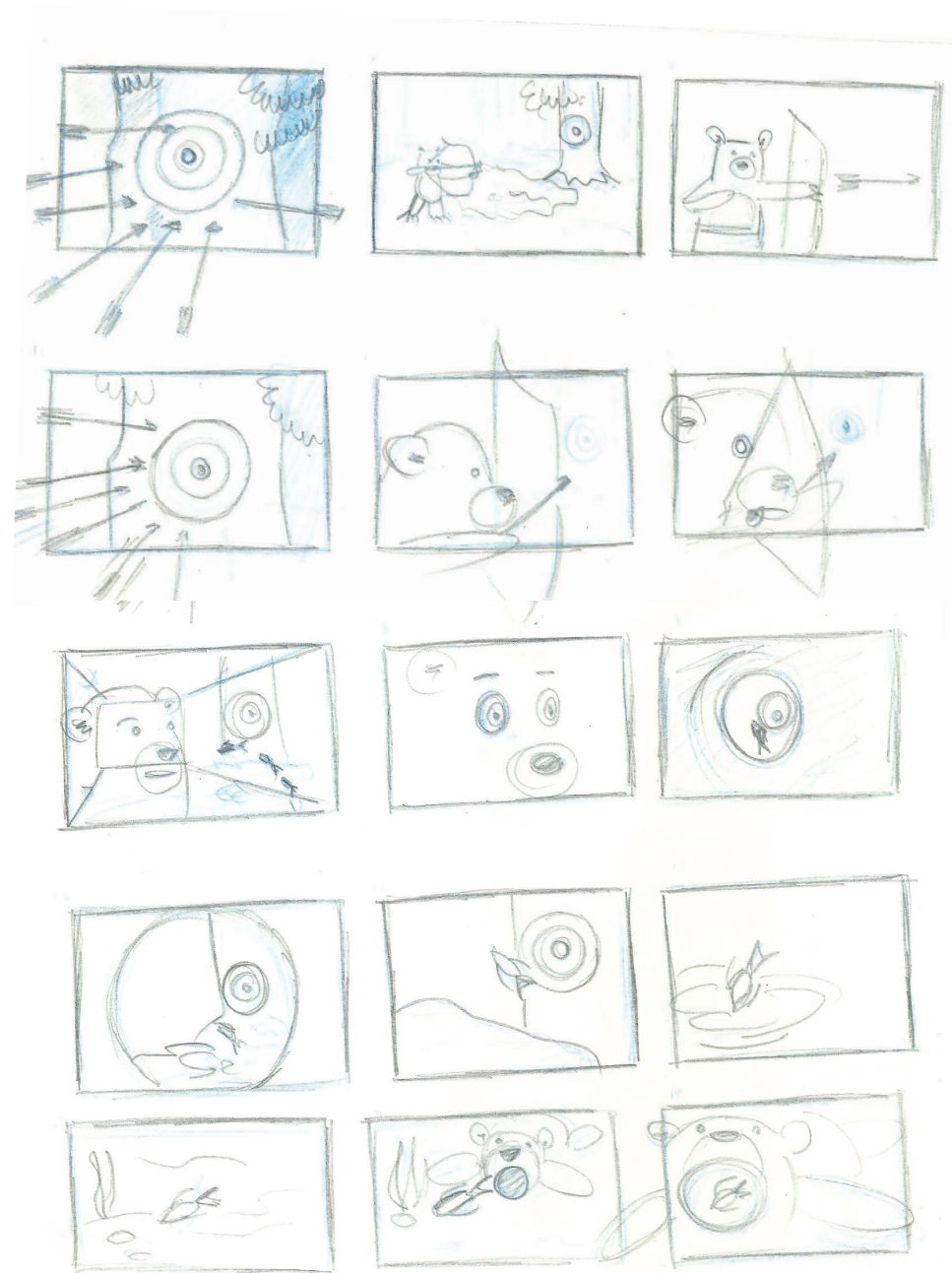
### Character Sketch done for story 5



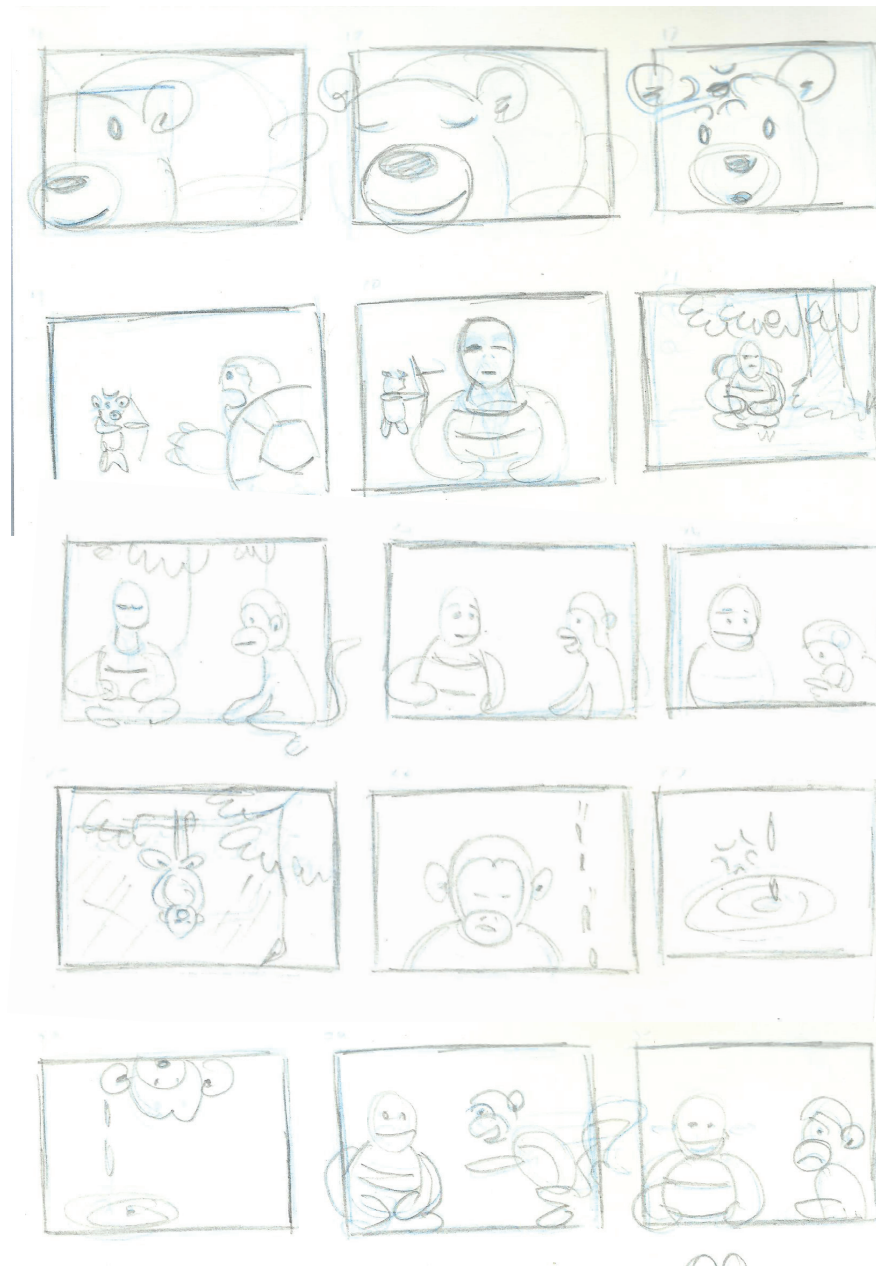


Concept Art





Story Thumbnail



Story Thumbnail

*“When an archer is shooting for nothing, he has all his skills  
If he shoots for a brass buckle, he is already nervous  
If he shoots for a prize of gold, he goes blind or sees two targets  
He is out of his mind  
His skills has not changed but the prize divides him  
He cares  
He thinks more of winning then of shooting  
And the need to win drains him of power”*

*Chuang Tzu*

## Final Story

The most effective Zen messages finalized for story development were - seed - flowering and enlightenment, living in the present, mindful, blooming of consciousness.

### **The Floating Seed**

It is a story of an archer practicing art of archery.

An archer was living in a hillock and daily he comes down from the hillock and practices archery at the main land. Daily the practices continues but he fails to hit the target. The archer couldn't find the reasons for his failure.

On the eventful day when he was coming down from the hillock he accidentally hit a rock on the path and stumble down on the ground. When he get up a floating seed, land on his hand and a flash of thought comes to his mind, like that seed his consciousness are introverted and he realizes that he was not living in the moment, and not doing things mindful.

Suddenly he could feel the beauty of his surroundings, he could hear the sound of breeze, he could sense the fragrance of flowers, and he could see the beauty of flowers, water fall, fishes splashing on the stream.

As he enjoys the journey he reaches his practicing field. He feels total calmness within himself and the surroundings and he just

aim the target with calm deep breath and the arrow shoots out like a lightning and hit the target.

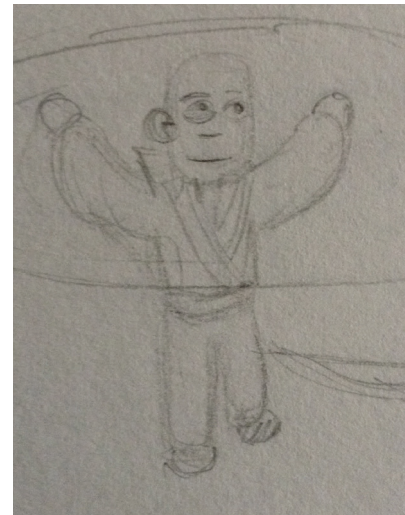
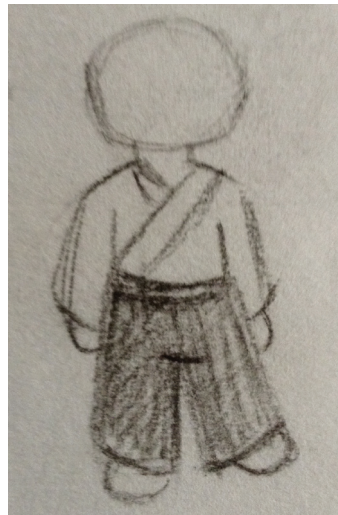
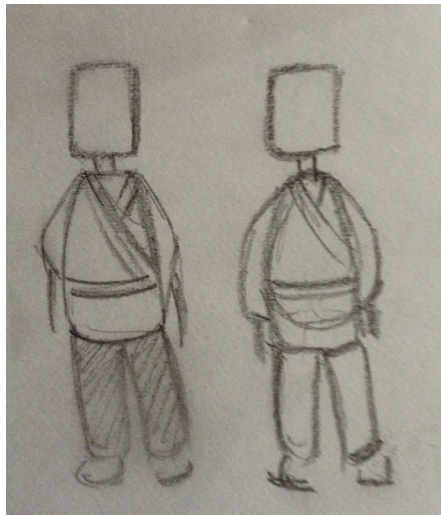
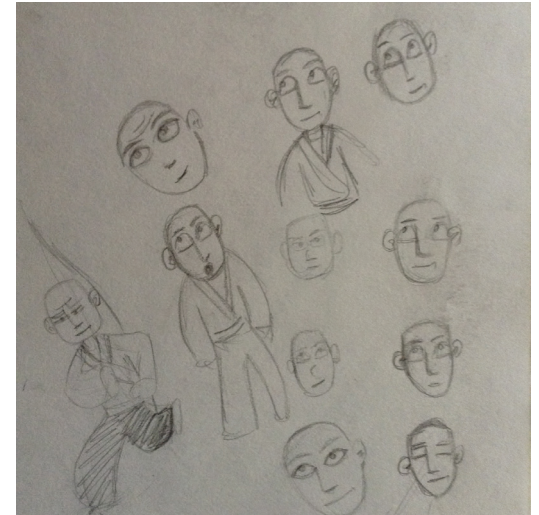
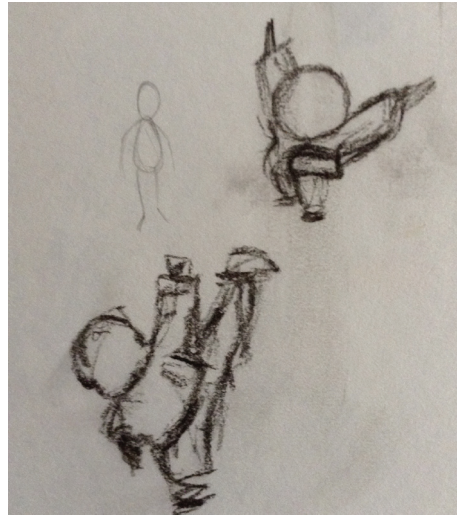
The archer could feel the flowering of his consciousness. His skill of archery.

The story had good scope for visual narratives and it conveys multiple and vital message of living in present.

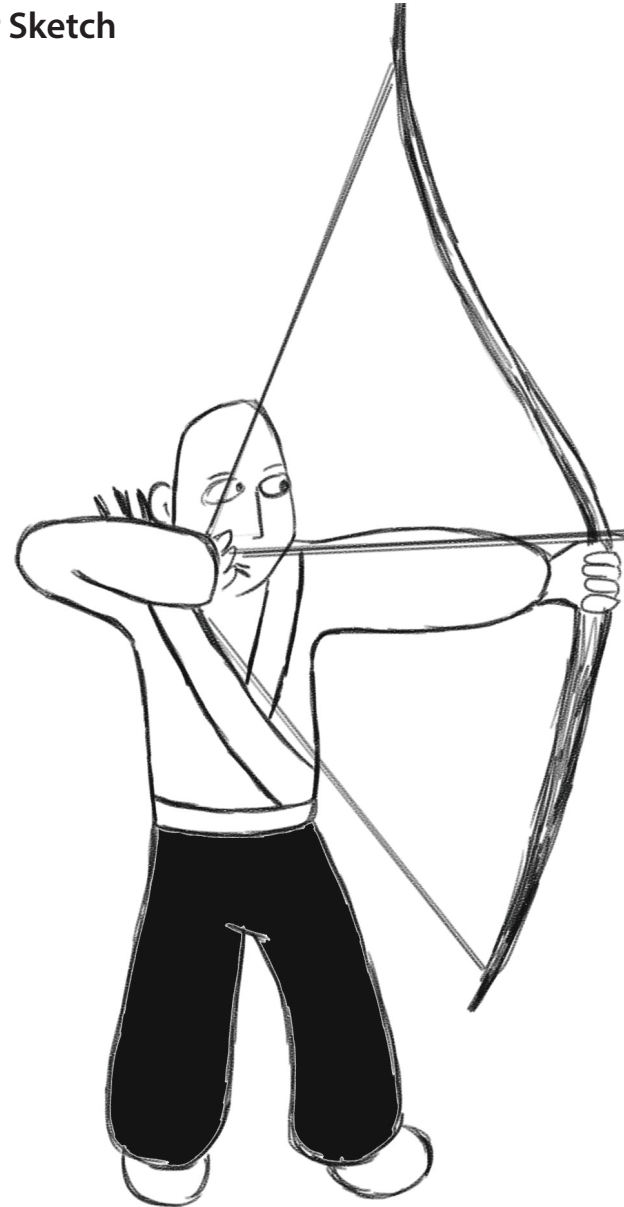




## Rough Character Exploration

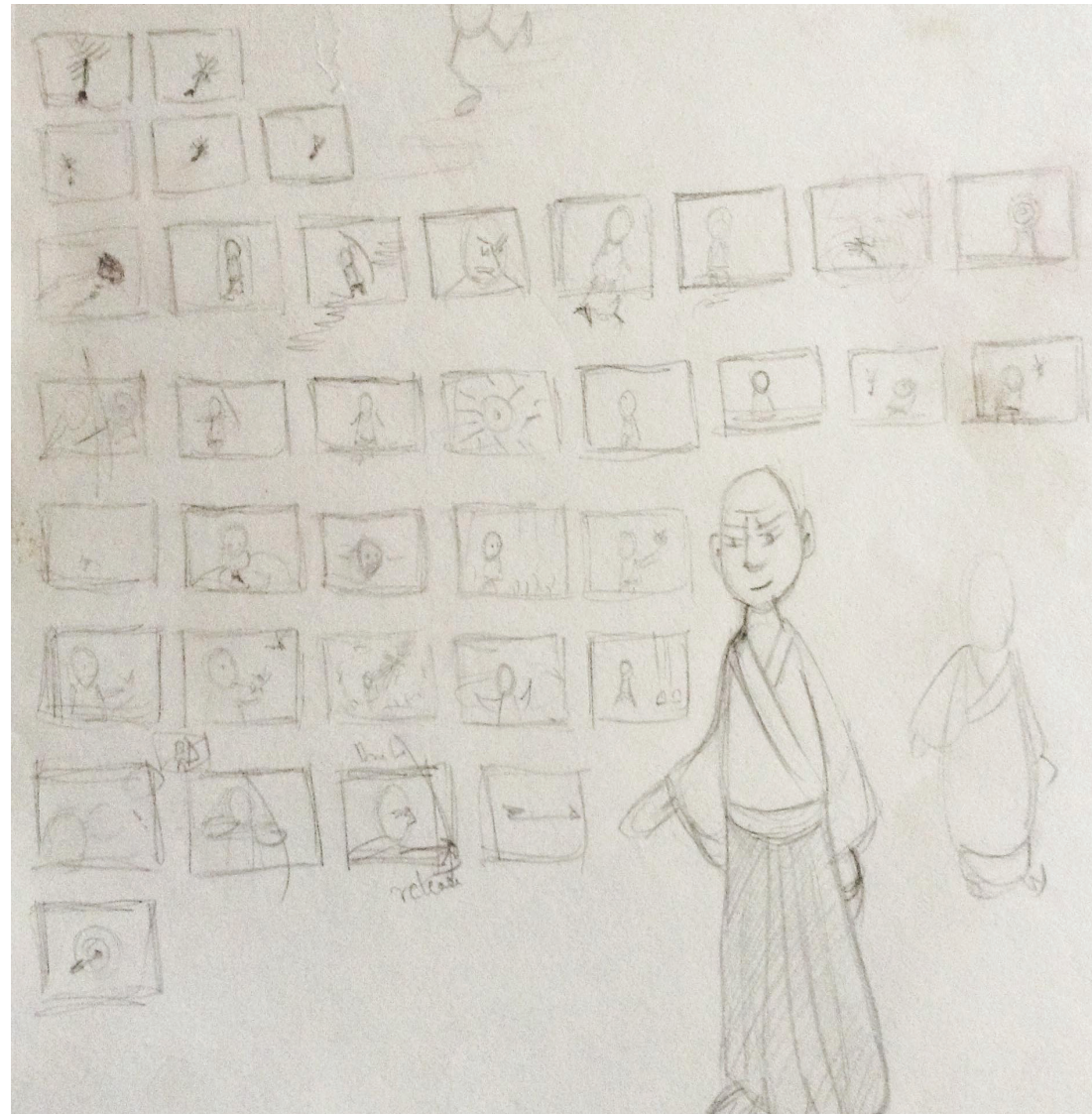


## Main Character Sketch



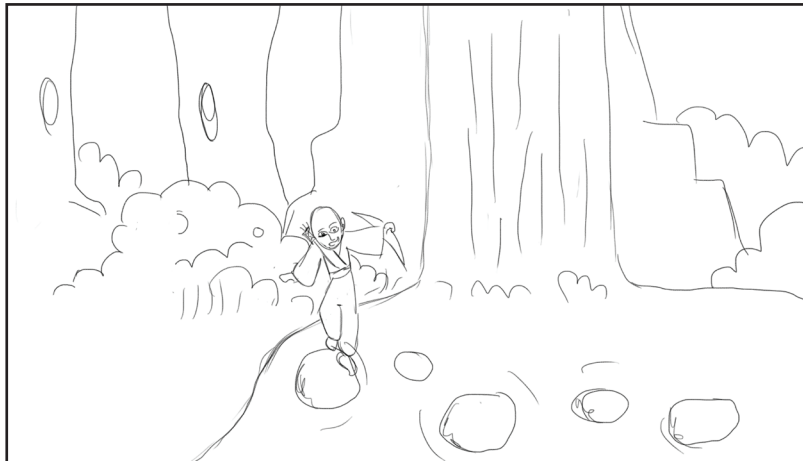


## Story Thumbnail

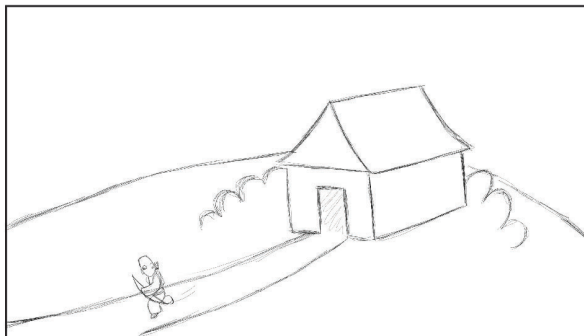
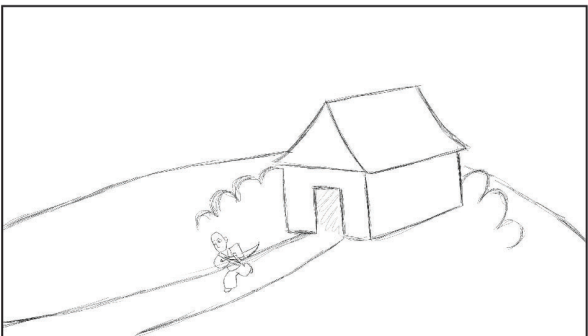
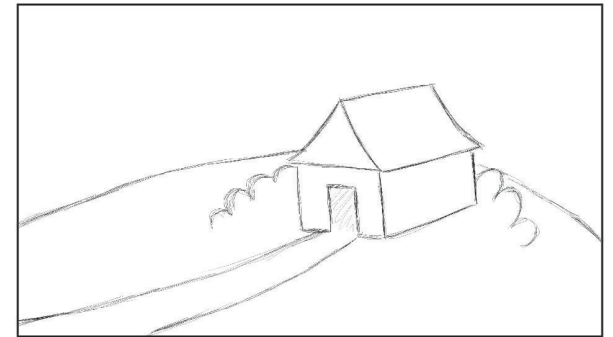
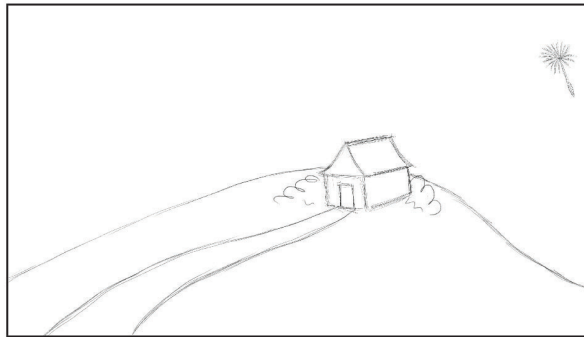
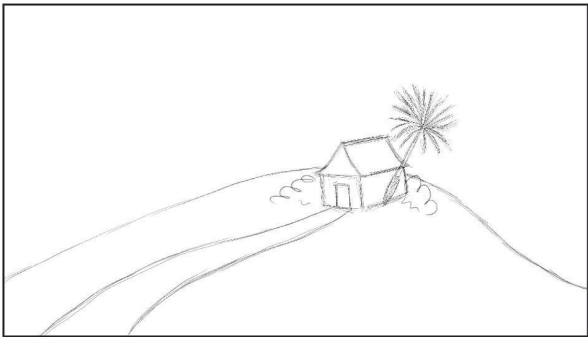
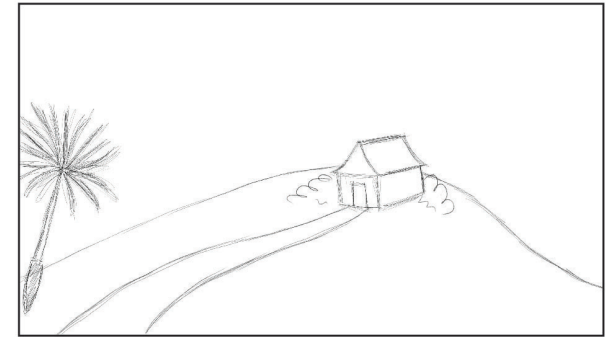




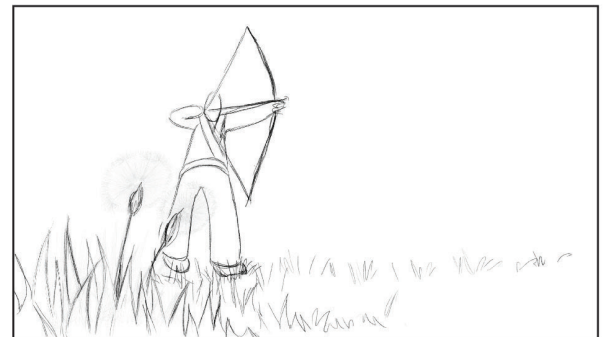
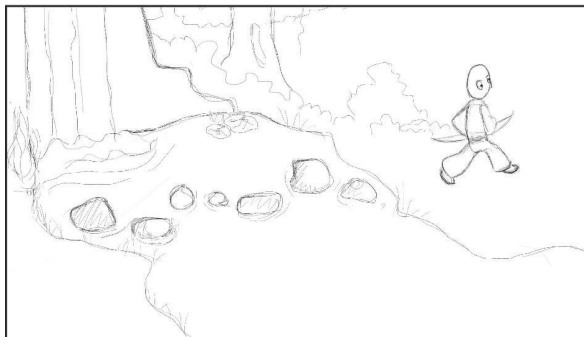
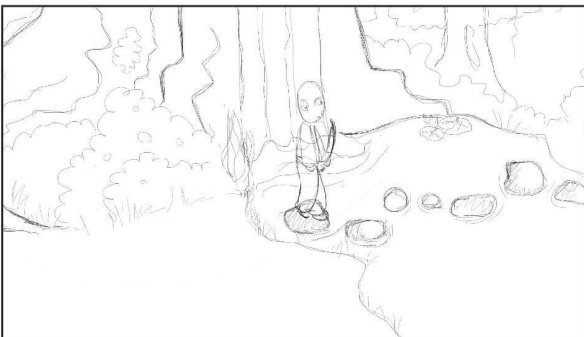
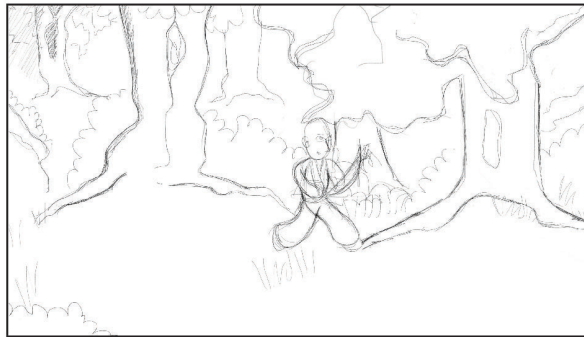
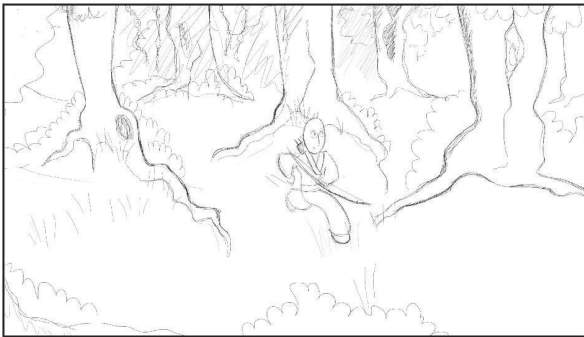
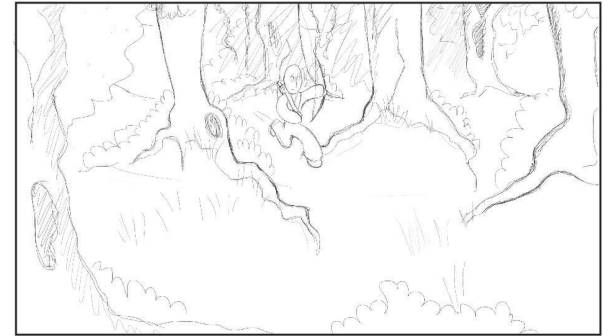
## Rough Visual Style



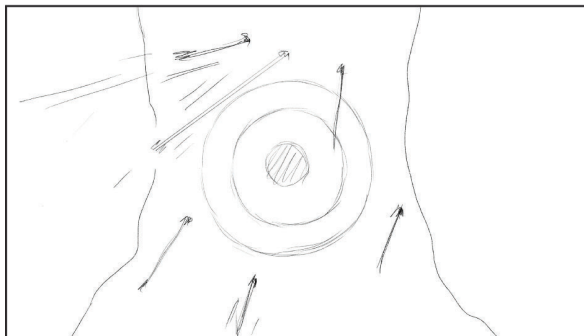
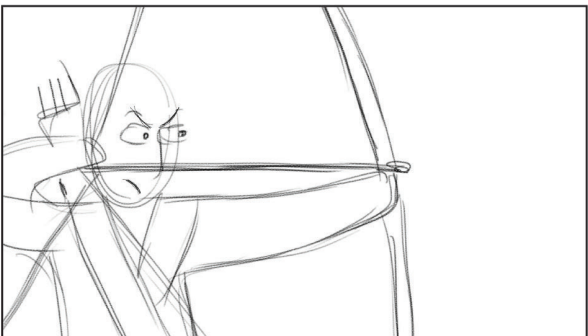
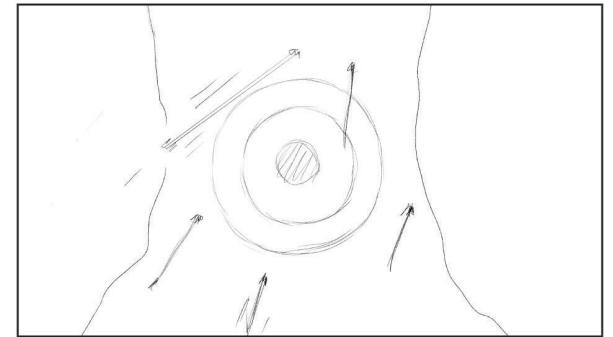
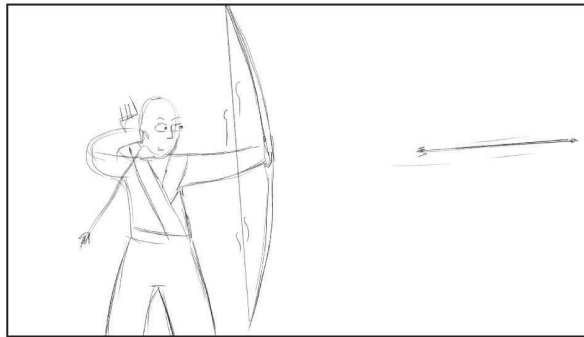
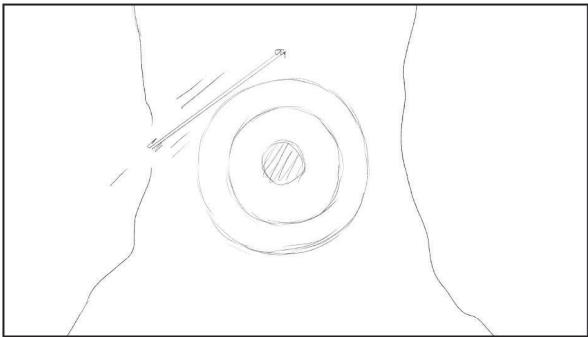
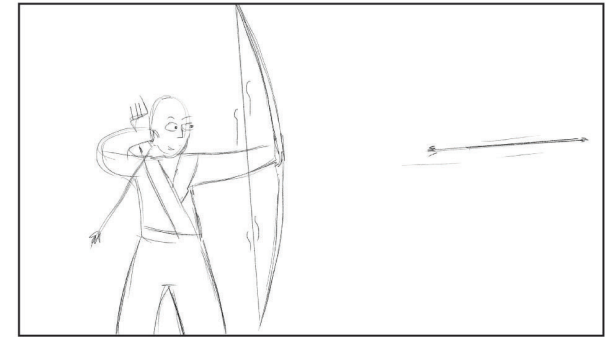
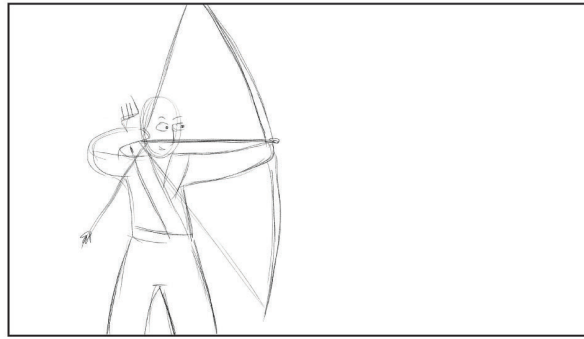
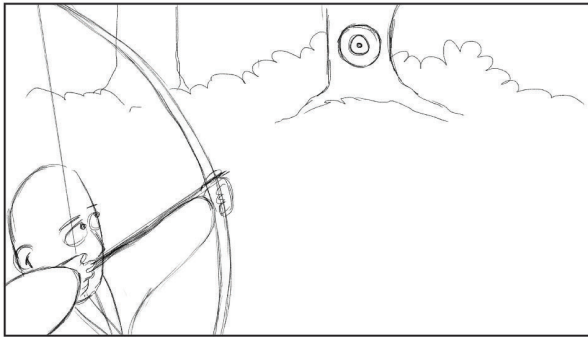
## Story Board



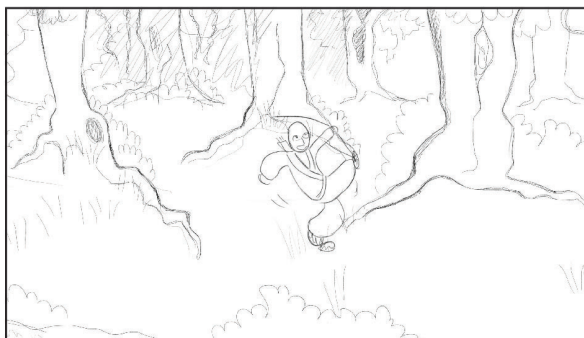
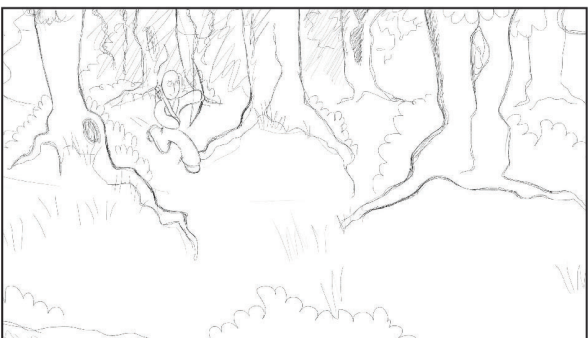
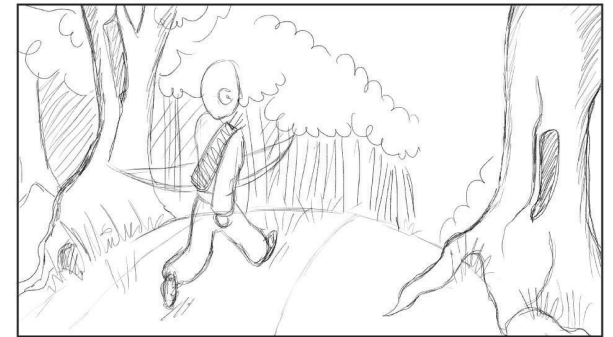
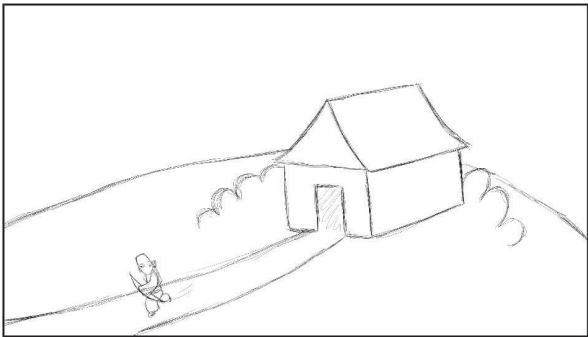
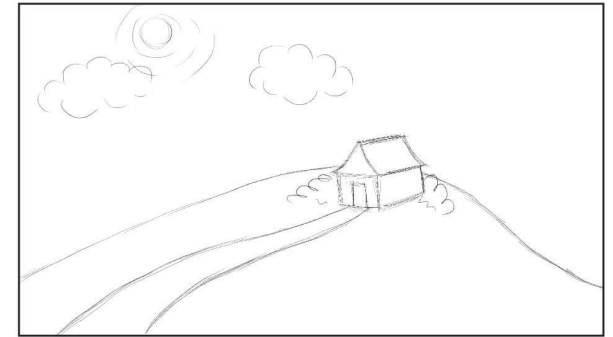
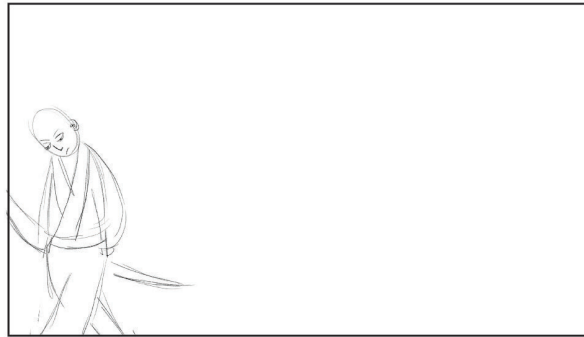
## Story Board



## Story Board

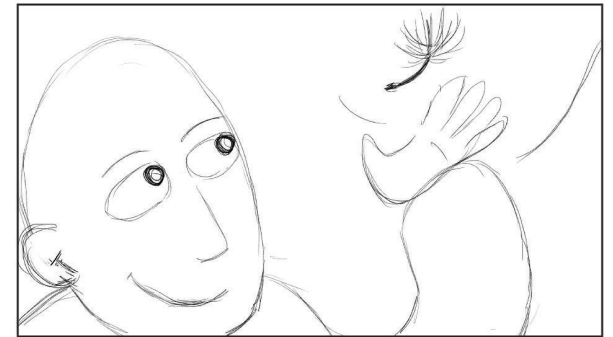
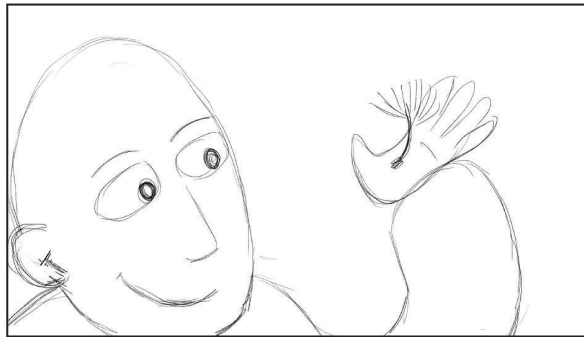


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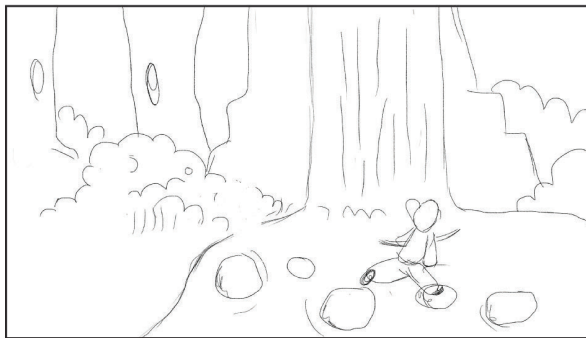
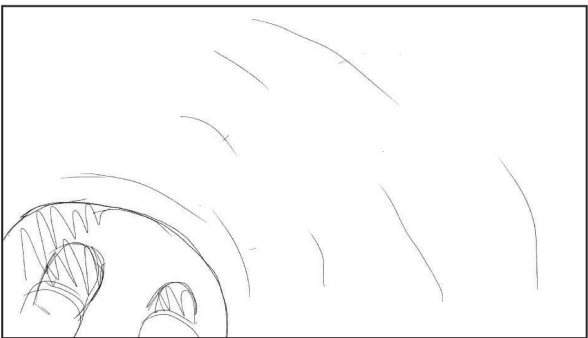
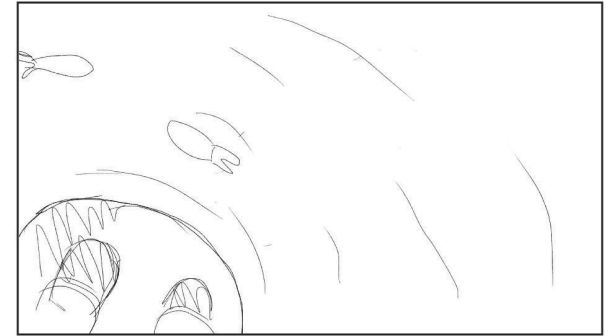
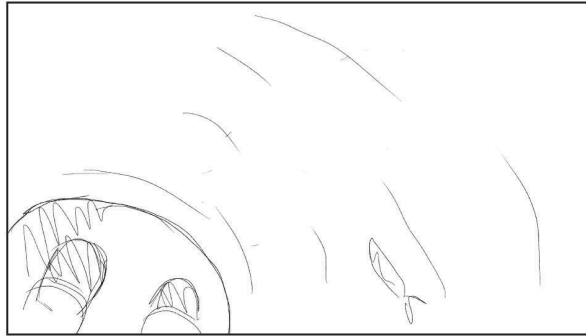
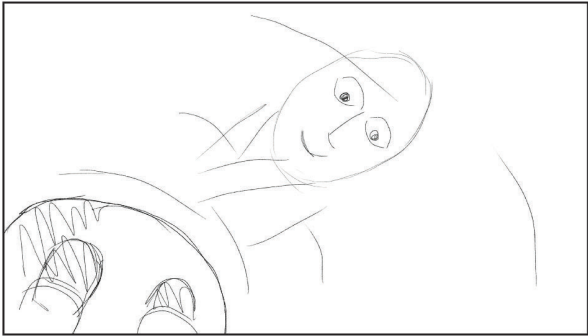
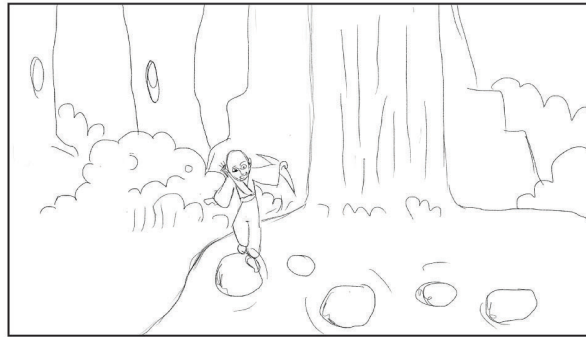




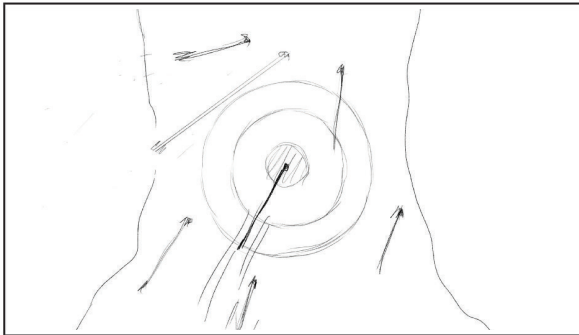
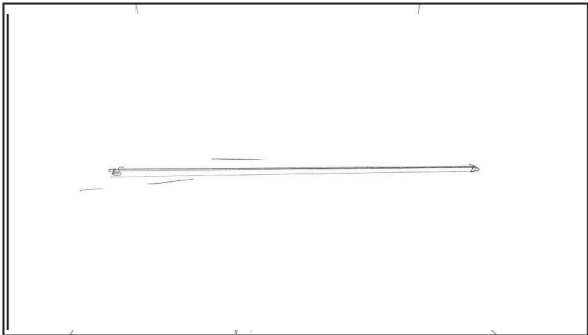
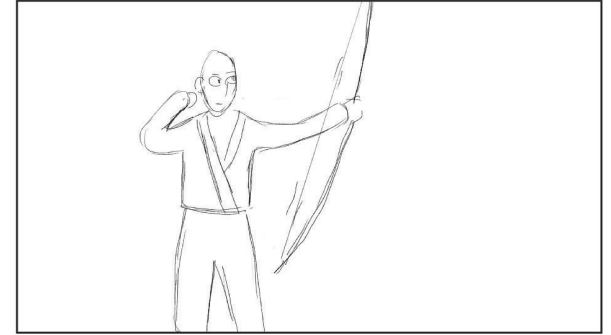
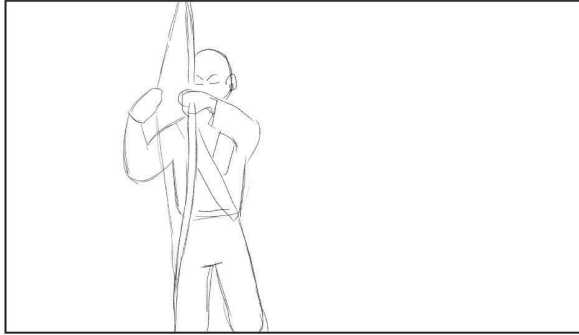
## Story Board



## Story Board



## Story Board





Work Ahead

I will be further working on the visual style and background to make an animation film. I will be working on the visual enhancement of the story, the colour aesthetics.

I have also been experimenting with the animatic and the sound for the film.

The native sound track, the trailer and posters for the film to enhance the viewer's delight will be worked on.

## References

**Books referred:**

Zen, Its History And Teachings - Osho  
Zen Garden - Subroto Bagchi  
One Hand Clapping a collection of zen stories  
The Way of Zen - Alan Watts  
Zen Shorts - Jon J Muth

**Youtube links**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G9uBtnuxjwU> Zen | Life of Master Dogen  
<http://vimeo.com/86930632> Yoga Noga Reyoga  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DDW9AyxajAI> Ten Bulls of Zen in Animation  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z5TsLr0BP30> Kung fu Panda - today is a gift, that is why it is called a present  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uXHIXTmWNRI> chop wood carrying water  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MJRYpp\\_y52M](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MJRYpp_y52M) Karate Kid being Still  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EU7vKitN4Ro> life is right now - Jon Kabat Zin on mindfulness  
You can heal life - louise hay video  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y5w3\\_7j65Kc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y5w3_7j65Kc) peaceful warrior movie

**Stories**

<http://users.rider.edu/~suler/zenstory/wantgod.html> wanting god  
<http://global.sotozen-net.or.jp/eng/library/stories/book9.html> two moon storie  
<http://global.sotozen-net.or.jp/eng/library/stories/index.html> zen short stories  
Osho - Miracle of ordinariness  
Osho - real miracle  
You can heal life - louise hay video  
<http://www.zentails.com/links.htm> zen stories website  
[http://rum1.aarch.dk/uploads/media/Eugen\\_Herrigel-Zen\\_in\\_the\\_Art\\_of\\_Archery\\_01.pdf](http://rum1.aarch.dk/uploads/media/Eugen_Herrigel-Zen_in_the_Art_of_Archery_01.pdf)  
<http://www.myrkothum.com/what-is-the-present-moment/>

*“The future of humanity will go closer to the approach of Zen, because the meeting of east and west is possible only through something like Zen, which is earthly and yet unearthly”.*

**OSHO**