

G R O W

Green Red Orange White

a film

Visual Communication

Project II

Guide

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Submitted by

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Contents

1) Introduction	_____	1
2) About the film	_____	2
3) Footages and Shooting	_____	3
4) Approach	_____	4
5) Structure	_____	5
6) Story Board	_____	6
7) Visual elements and meaning	_____	20
8) Editing	_____	22
9) Film Name	_____	23
10) Snap shots	_____	24
12) Conclusion	_____	34
13) Acknowledgement	_____	35
13) References	_____	36

Approval Sheet

The project entitled 'G.R.O.W - Green Red orange White' is approved for the partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of 'Master of Design' in Visual Communication

Guide

Chairperson

Internal Examiner

External examiner

Date

Shooting and footages

Most of the initial shootings were coverages of events like the bomb blast site, processions and rallies. Later few interviews associated with black Monday were taken.

The collected footages include

The Blast site on the day of the blast and interviews with the eyewitnesses.

Follow-ups on the next day in hospitals and the victims houses.

Then the media was monitored, to select effective stories to make a film out of it.

The reactions to the blast like the meetings by the various political parties, anti- terrorism group, secular activities and the ganesh festival, which gained special attention after the blast.

In the mid way of the project when the film took a docu- fiction approach, script and story board was developed for the staged sequences and shot later.

Introduction

The theme behind the film revolved initially around weapons of mass destruction and technology getting into wrong hands. The bomb blast that took place at Zaveri Bazaar and gateway of India on 25th August 2003 made me to focus the film on the blast and portray the mindless destruction of human lives and properties.

I started collecting footages related to black Monday (blast on 25th august). With some 6 hours of raw footage consisting of the footages on the day of the bomb blast, interviews with the eyewitnesses, victims and their relatives, various forms of reactions that happened after the blast and the few secular activities in the city, I was faced with a major task of editing them and making a short film out of it. I also saw the potentials of making a full-length documentary with the collected footages on the construction of communalism in India, which require more time and research. After repeated watching of the footages and reading about the communal terrorism, I decided to have the film, focus on themes like religious misconceptions and extremism, co-existence of love and hate in a cosmopolitan setup.

The film doesn't essentially focus on the black Monday, but the reason behind it - the hate constructed over a mirage of misconceptions. Riots and terrorist attacks are just the outbursts of the hate.

I also tried out possibilities of fiction to substantiate the real life footages to portray reality in a better manner. The film has real life footages and staged sequences weaved together through out.

About the Film

The film doesn't fall in any strict typologies of documentary or fiction. It is a docu-fiction, the fiction is interwoven with reality to bring out the message in totality. The documentary footages of the blast and the interviews depict the reality with direct meaning associated with it. The fiction sequences don't establish a direct link with the real life footages. They carry meaning that is implied or they generate meaning. The analogies are crypted in the fiction sequences.

The real life footages are made into a visual montage with few dialogues in between. The parts of the interviews that just communicate the message are weaved among this montage of visuals. Usage of recurring visuals like the sun, the faces of kids through out the film embed the concept of reality and desire for the return of peace subtly.

The film is my views of reality. The approach and structure of the film are discussed in detail in the storyboard.

Approach

With the footages in hand, I had 3 options to proceed with. One was to take a personal story associated with Black Monday and discuss the whole issue related to communal hatred through that personal story.

Second option was to make a music video using a song as narrative.

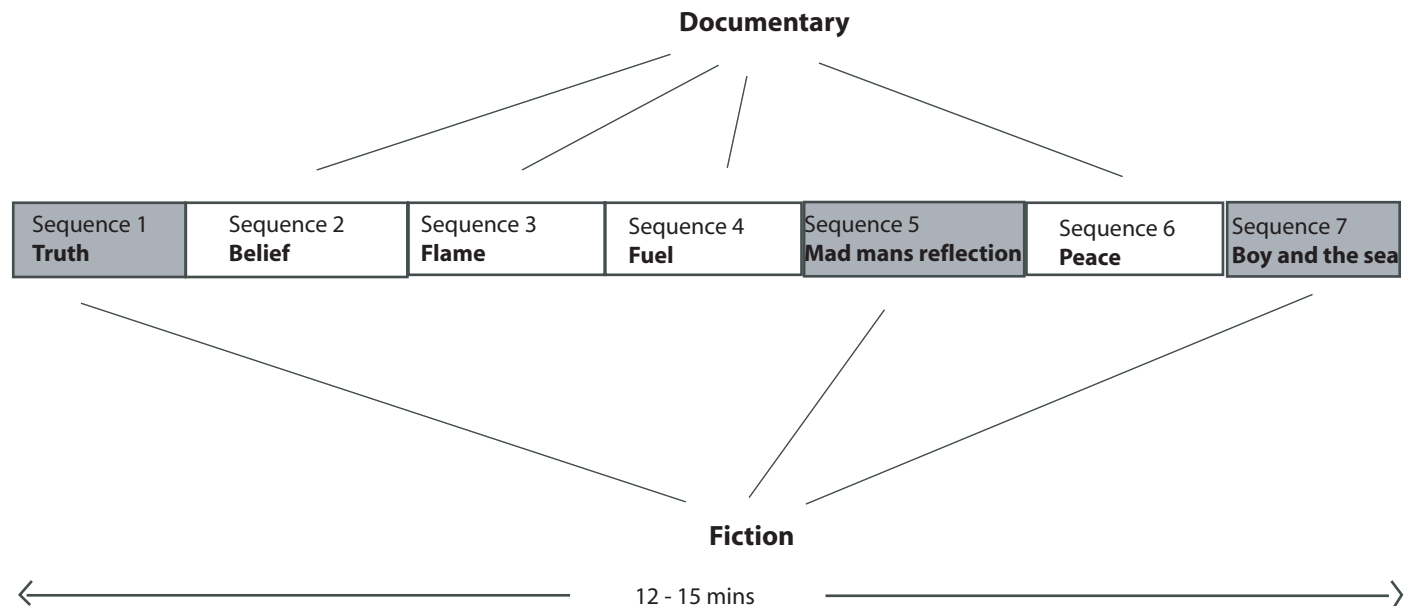
Third option was a docu fiction, which gave me an option to combine fiction and reality. Film space is divided into two different spaces, interwoven through out the film - documentary space and fiction space. Documentary space includes the real life sequences and the montage of real life footages. fiction includes the staged sequence which supplements the real life footages to bring out the message in the film.

Structure

The film space is divided into two distinct spaces consisting of real life footages and staged sequences alternating in the film. The staged sequences give the associated meaning for the following real life sequences.

The whole film is divided into seven sequences and presented as separate chapters in the film.

1. Sequence 1 - truth
2. Sequence 2 - belief
3. Sequence 3 - Flame
4. Sequence 4 - FUEL
5. Sequence 5 - Mad mans reflection
6. Sequence 6 - Peace
7. Sequence 7 - boy and the ocean



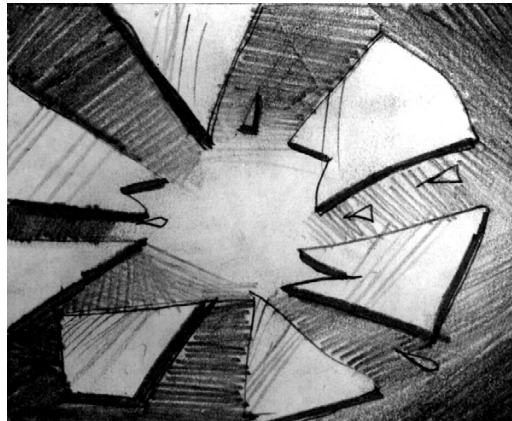
Story Board

The film consists of 7 chapters. The sequence and shot breakdowns are discussed in the story board

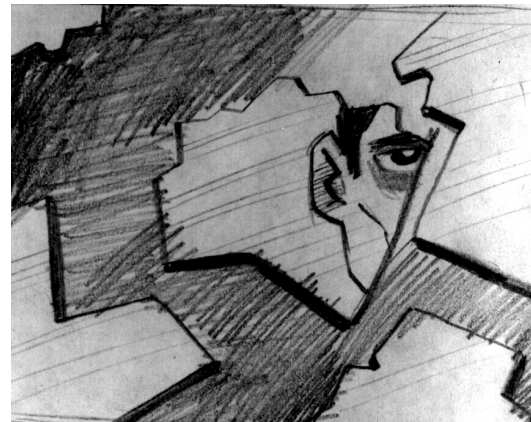
A close up shot of a stone hitting a mirror and the mirror breaking.
-the pieces fall down.... Each has a separate image
-camera zooms to one piece of the mirror
-The broken mirror is the a story teller.



the film starts with a stone hitting a mirror



the glass shatters and the pieces are shown



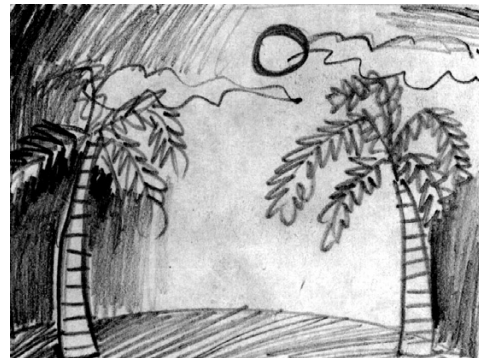
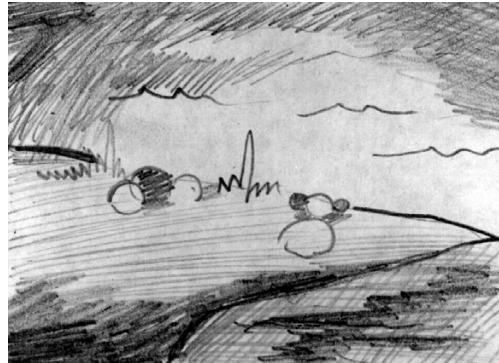
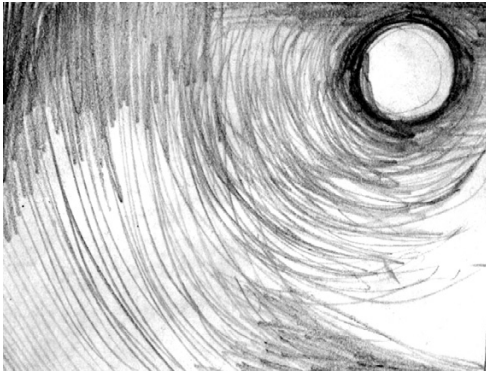
a mans eye's reflection is shown on the mirror

fade to black

Story Board

Sequence 1

There is a sound of a bomb blast behind with a slug. The shot opens with a bright sun right in front of the camera and water is shown.



And two palm trees appear on the frame.



Long shot of two people staring at the sky - a slow zoom

time lapse of the sun slowly moving down

Truth

"No human being would ever discover an absolute truth about the universe and therefore any opinion formed by an individual could be just as good or valid as any other opinion."

-Socrates"

This quote of Socrates is what exactly I wanted to show in this particular sequence. Especially related to the religious extremism resulting in terrorism. Fight over different belief systems and created meanings

These shots give a brief visual description of creation.

The sound you hear is a big bang and then a star (sun) is shown and then a few trees are shown and then an intelligent life form. Then the created starts thinking about the creation and starts fighting over their creator/ GOD.

Story Board

Sequence 3

Flame

the sequence begins with the sounds of the pigeons



walkthrough the pigeon



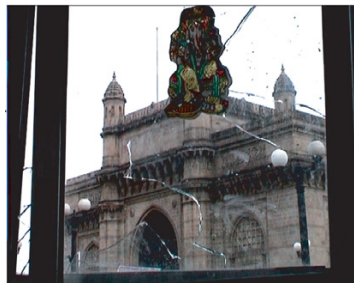
Goldie describing the blast



pigeons around a corpse



1 minute
montage of
blast site



a person says "I don't know why all these are happening"

This sequence establishes the horror of the terrorism.

The camera moves in a low angle through the pigeons and finally shows the Gateway, with a background track of Goldie (a body painter, who witnessed the blast) describing the blast. The camera remains in the Gateway for few seconds. And the pigeons are shown again. The frame dissolves into a kid scaring away pigeons. And a dead body kept on the sides

The symbol of peace and the cruelty of terrorism in a single frame.

The visuals of broken glasses, barricades, slippers scattered, blasted cars and shattered windows are used to establish the horror of the blast.

Story Board

Sequence 2

Belief



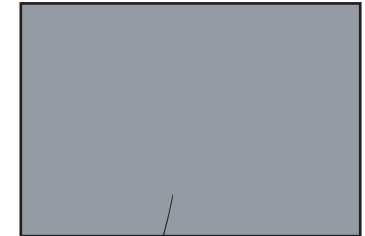
low angle shot of
aarthi



Ganesha's photo
escorted



close up of
ganesha's face



a tv interview
-"its our mandir,
not only me, my next 7 generations will
go to jail if needed"

First Documentary sequence of the film establishes the total belief and faith over the Religion.

The sequence starts with a group of people beating the drums really hard. The people's total self-submission to the religion is brought out through the sequence of shots from the festivals.

Story Board

Sequence4

Fuel



The sequence starts with a person on the stage saying slogans like "All muslims are not terrorists but all terrorists are muslims" and "kill musharaf, we'll bury him in Bombay"

intercut to a man, sleeping peacefully with a monkey on his side

two sadhus standing with placards saying 'hang the terrorists' (Background score of vandhe matharam)

A Person saying 'go back and block the road, so that no traffic enters our area'
People dancing for a religious music
Slowly fades away

This sequence depicts the irony and paradox in the society by showing a sequence of contrasting visuals. It establishes the capitalization of people's beliefs for malafide intentions.

Story Board

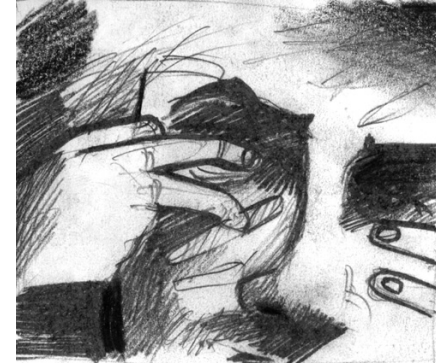
Sequence 5



The sequence starts with a long shot of a guy standing on the hill



The frame dissolves in the close up from the same point of view



The man applies a red war paint on his face



Shot of a mirror reflecting the light



pan to the shot of him walking towards the mirror

Mad mans Reflection

A man trying to hit his image in the mirror is the analogy I employed to show human killing human in pursuit of religion, patriotism and other abstract ideas.

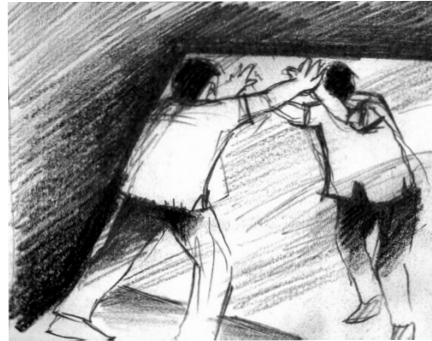
Judiciary says that some one is innocent till proven guilty. But because of the unjustified misconceptions people are seen guilty till proven innocent. This generates hate as default.

Story Board

Sequences



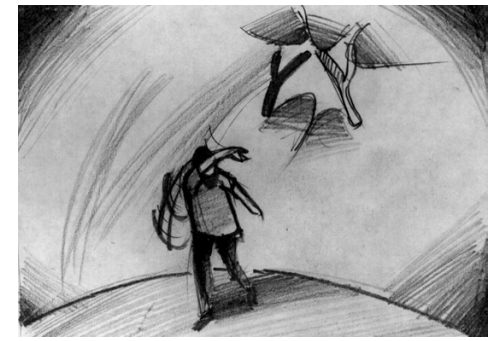
He passes the mirror



He tries to push the mirror down



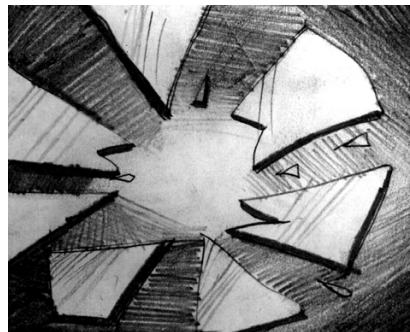
He tries hitting the mirror with some twigs.



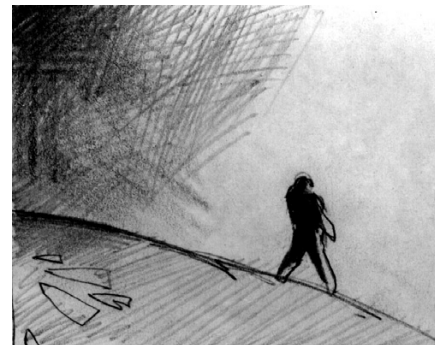
He sees the image also hitting him back (shot of the person throwing from the mirror which pans to the real man with hands forward)



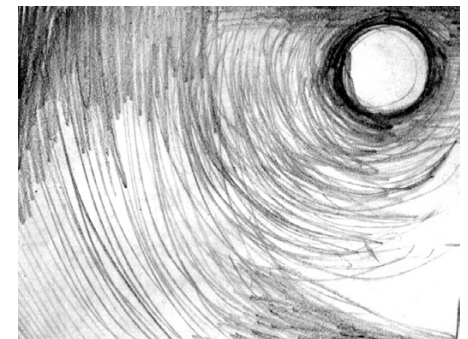
He repeats throwing twigs on the mirror



finally he Takes a huge stone and hits the mirror and a slow mo shot of a mirror falling down



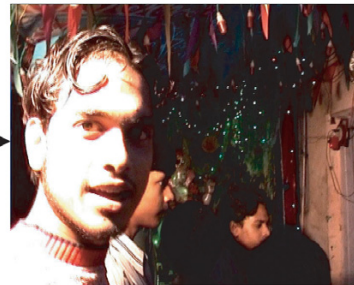
He walks back



the camera pans back to the sun

Story Board

Sequence 6



Peace

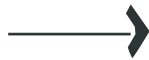
This chapter has inserts from the interviews of Jadav family (blast victims), Ram Rahim mitr mandal and the memorial activity conducted by anti- terrorism

Ram-Rahim Mitr Mandal is a multi communal social group started by 3 kids immediately after the 1993 serial blast and communal riots. It was started as a play activity. It gained social importance after the communal riots and the growing hatred. Their view points on communal hatred and talk on the mandal portrays their innocent intentions.

Story Board

Sequence 6

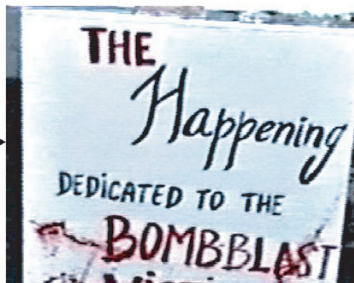
Peace



Followed by the film portraying the love existing in the innocent minds, the film shows the secular activities and the peace rallies that took place in the city. The sequence of anti-terrorism group lighting candles one month after the blast in gateway of India, in memory of the blast victims. The shot inter cuts with four Muslim beggars chanting and walking past the memorial banner of the black Monday victims....The sequence fades out and their deep voice 'Allah will save us all'



The shot begins with two muslim children watching the memorial banner and they run hearing the voice of the beggars. Camera pans to the beggars, who walk straight towards the camera and pass the banner looking at it. The sound of the sea alone is heard at the background.



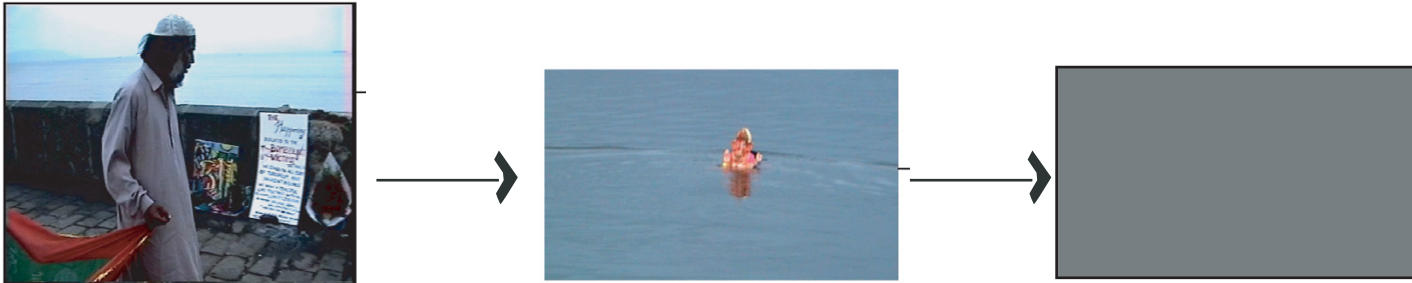
'allah will save us all' - fade to black

This sequence also shows the street kids playing on the side of the peace rally, trying to communicate the Hard reality - there are more things to do rather than fighting for religion and belief systems.

Story Board

Sequence 6

Peace



The shot begins with two muslim children watching the memorial banner and they run hearing the voice of the beggars. Camera pans to the beggars, who walk straight towards the camera and pass the banner looking at it. The sound of the sea alone is heard at the background.

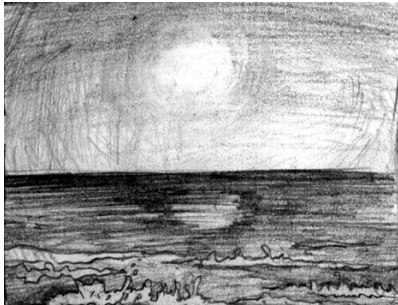
'allah will save us all' - fade to black

This sequence also shows the street kids playing on the side of the peace rally, trying to communicate the Hard reality - there are more things to do rather than fighting for religion and belief systems.

Story Board

Sequence 7

Boy and the Sea



the sequence opens with
sun in the frame



waves reaching the shore
and receding



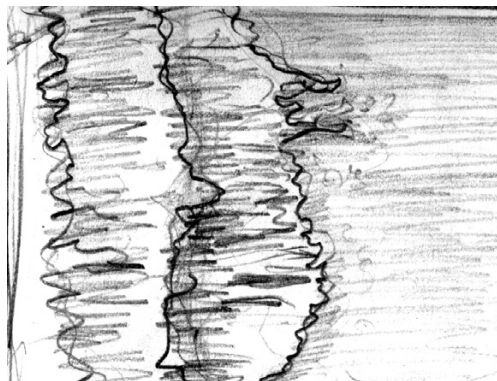
boy walks in the frame



he runs along the sea



stares at the sea



waves reaching the shore
and receding

The final sequence of the film shows a kid trying to build a sand castle, despite the sea wave coming and destroying it repeatedly.

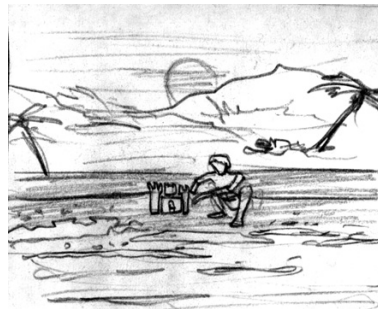
There is a huge ocean in front of the insignificant kid. It destroys the hope of the kid building the castle. But the kid continues building the castle with hope.

Story Board

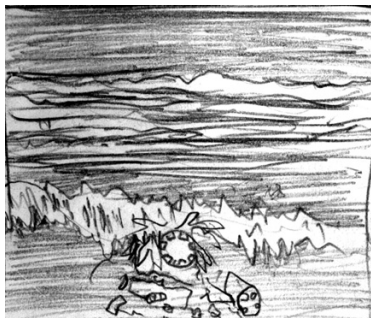
Sequence 7



the kid building a sand castle



waves coming and destroying them



Alternating shots of the kid constructing and waves destroying the castle



the film ends with the kid continuing to build the castle

Boy and the Sea

The camera points at the sun. The sun becomes the O of GROW. Fades to Dedicated to the never ending human madness

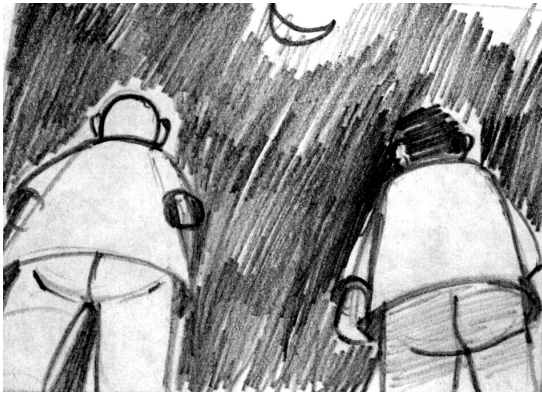
Title rolls.

The furious nature of the ocean is established the way it is treated. Inter cut with the images of wars in the history as a symbol of the never-ending human madness and the life going on in Mumbai inspite of the frequent blasts in the city. The film ending with the kids hope of having a stable sand castle against the mammoth sea in front of it. The sequence could even relate to The desire for return of peace against the ocean of hate deep rooted in the society and the prime movers and leaders fueling it.

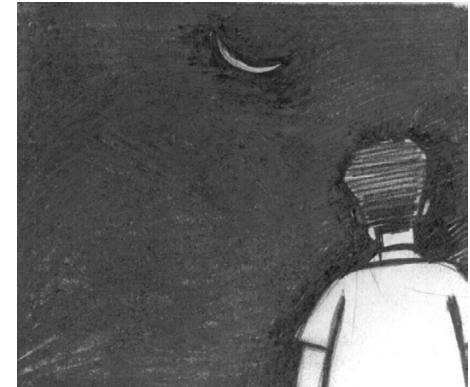
Story Board

Sequence 1

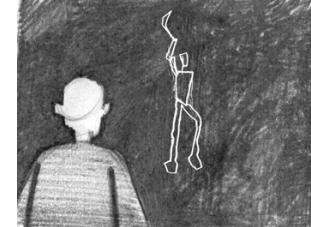
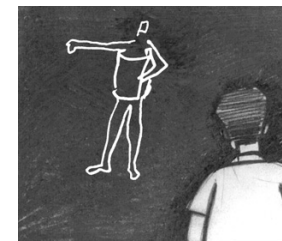
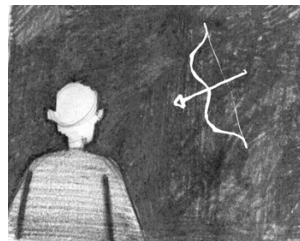
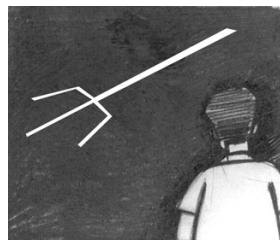
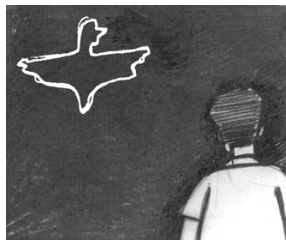
Truth



Close up - low angle slow zoom of them.



Then two people are shown separately facing the sky.



With few inter cuts of the same frame, you see the patterns that each see out of the stars. After the rapid cuts of their perceived patterns with increasing tempo...the frame slowly dissolves to slug

I wanted to relate the cosmos to the absolute truth or God and people fighting in the name of God. It's all perceived by us sitting on a piece of floating rock in this infinite universe. Fundamentally it's the same.

Story Board

Sequence 2

Belief



Title appears
Music of hard drum
starts



some people hitting the
drums hard



Shot of a crowd
shouting



flags waving in the air



flags waving in the air



a kid clapping the
hands



'iam proud to be a
hindu' - a young girl



drum beat continues

First Documentary sequence of the film establishes the total belief and faith over the Religion.

The sequence starts with a group of people beating the drums really hard. The people's total self-submission to the religion is brought out through the sequence of shots from the festivals.

The hard drums, vigorous chants and wild dance. Bringing out the irony by the alternating contrasting shots.

Editing

Digital video was used for the whole shoot. Final cut pro software in Macintosh platform was used to capture and edit the collected footages. Color correction was done. Tone and saturation for different sequences were decided after the rough cut was made.

Some footages that were taken while covering an event like a rally or a procession could not be used in the film, because of the lack of editing space in the footage. Good footage with visual appeal and meaning were sorted and after working out the structure of the film, the rough cut was made.

Different editing techniques were explored (structure and editing patterns are discussed in the story board) and cuts and transitions were worked out. For the different sequences the background sound were selected to enhance the mood or emotion of the sequence communicating the message more clearly. Sound tracks from albums and some captured ambience sounds were used as background scores, along with the dialogues by the people who were interviewed. Titling and sub titling were done in the end.

Usage of Visual Elements and meaning

In the final scene, The kid wears the white dress as a symbol of peace. Pigeons are also shown in the sequence. The kid represents the innocence and hope, where as the furious ocean represents the deep-rooted hate in the society. The continuous destruction of the child's hope of building the sand castle represents the ever lasting human madness of war and the child's activity represents the hope and love that keeps the wheel running despite this wide spread hate

Usage of Visual Elements and meaning

Images of Pigeons and children are used through out the film, as a desire for the return of peace. Contrasting visuals are used in succession in some places to bring out the irony of the situation.

In the staged shots, visual elements like costume, lighting and props are used to enhance the subtle meaning of the scene.

In the star sequence fire is used for night lighting, to bring out the vigor.

The two characters wear red and green T-Shirts represent the two opposing religious forces.

The blast sound in the beginning symbolizes the big bang and showing sun, water, trees and humans in sequence implies the evolution in the consecutive 5 shots. The created conscience fights for the created meanings, which is one and the same.

The stars are used a symbol for cosmic reality and constellations for the perceived meaning and the rapid inter cuts which establishes the fight over the perceived meaning/ belief systems.

The frame ends with the close up shots of the two people with fire inside the frame.

In the mirror sequence, the character is dressed in red and he has a war paint to portray the basic human instinct of violence and revenge. The mirror represents his image.

Film name

I decided to name the film as 'GROW', as it has a direct meaning of Grow above the misconceptions and also when expanded it gives

Green Red Orange and White

Green and Orange representing the two opposing religious forces of the country.

Red implying the friction and resultant violence

White is the films desire for the return of peace.

Snap Shots

from the film



Snap Shots

from the film



Snap Shots

from the film



Snap Shots

from the film



Snap Shots

from the film



Snap Shots

from the film



Snap Shots

from the film



Snap Shots

from the film



Snap Shots

from the film



Snap Shots

from the film



Conclusion

The nature of these issues are not what they actually are portrayed by the media. The enquiry into the issue was turning to be an deep abyss. With my opinions and standpoint in the film changing over the time as I went deep into the subject. Superficial theories and surface level conclusions got shattered when the inner truths unfolded. That's when I decided to leave the film open-ended. I think The purpose of the film is the film itself.

I would see this film as a personal documentation . The process helped me in formulating my own do's and don'ts of film making.

Acknowledgement

I thank Prof. Shilpa Ranade for her support and guidance through out the project.

I thank Ken, Ranjith, Anand, Anirud, Kums and George for their contribution and encouragement.

Works of anand patwardhan, Tarkovski, carl sagan, frijtof capra and wachowski brothers gave food to my thought while I was working on this project.

I thanks IDC and its people for its support.

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Cosmic perspectives - Carl sagan

Cosmopolitanism and forgiveness - Jacques derrida

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