

'Kaakkapponnu'

(The Pseudo Gold)

**Submitted in Partial fulfillment of the requirements
Of the degree of
Master in Design
by**

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Animation Film Design

Mdes. , IDC, IIT Bombay

'Kaakkapponnu'- 'The Pseudo Gold'

Retelling a Jataka Tale in Kerala Context

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I sincerely extend my deep gratitude to my guide Prof. Sumant Rao for his
guidance and support throughout the project
I thank Prof. Phani Tetali, Prof. Nina Sabnani, Prof. Shilpa Ranade
Prof. Sudesh Balan and Prof Jayesh for their support
I thank all my teachers, friends at IDC and my family for supporting and
encouraging my project

CONTENTS

Acknowledgments.....	4
Introduction.....	7
Original Story.....	8
Stories.....	9
Final Story.....	12
Sketches during Ideation.....	13
Referense from other films.....	17
Story Board.....	20
Initial Colour Treatment.....	26
Character research.....	27
Inspirations.....	28
Character Design.....	29
Photo Reference.....	32
Colour Treatment.....	34
Bg and Character.....	36
Bg with Characters.....	37
Improvements after p2 presenatation.....	38
Animation process	40
BG creation.....	41
Colouring process.....	43
Reference for animation.....	45
Compositing.....	46
Final animation with Music.....	47
Stills from final Movie.....	48
Conclusion.....	49
Sample Movie poster.....	50
References.....	51

INTRODUCTION

Jataka stories are the stories of Buddha in his previous life as Bodhisatva. Buddha recited these stories to his disciples to teach the rights and wrongs of the human life. Many stories are seen in other stories like Panchatantra and Aesop fables. The Jataka stories are a method of teaching Buddhists the lessons of karma, samsara and dharma. Jataka tales are a huge source of wisdom. They have had a profound influence in literature not only in India, but across the world. Human life may change according to the technology. But the human values are the same. So these stories are very relevant today. Especially for children.

After reading around hundreds of Jataka Tales, I have selected one story, The story of the Golden Swan. I have heard the Aesop's version of this story from my childhood. But the Golden Swan story was slightly different in terms of the ending. Unlike in Aesop fable, in the Jataka Tale the swan is not been killed. I found a possibility there to expand the story.

This was the starting point. From there onwards I have been working on different story versions. Initially the idea was to compare the life of a fisherman and a duck and how it changes by introducing a golden egg. After a series of discussion with my guide, my story went through different phases. Initially all of my stories were becoming very complex and losing the simplicity, which the original Jataka story had. After few meetings with Sumant sir I found out a story which was convincing for both of us. With his suggestions I could introduce a bit of my place's history. Also it helped me to fix my location for the story.



ORIGINAL JATAKA STORY

THE GOLDEN SWAN

Once, the Buddha was born as a virtuous house-holder in Varanasi. He worked hard to maintain his small family of a wife and three daughters. After his death he was reborn as a golden swan with the consciousness of his former existence

One day, being overwhelmed with the memory of the family of his previous birth, he visited them in his old house in Varanasi. There, he introduced himself and informed them of his previous life's relationship. Later, before saying good-bye, he offered them one golden feather and advised them to sell it in the market to overcome their poverty

Since then he was a regular visitor to his old family; and upon every visit he offered them one golden feather. With the proceeds of the feathers, soon the family overcame its poverty

The mother of the daughters was, however, greedy and cruel. She wanted to be much richer in much less time. So, one day, she advised her daughters to pluck out all the feathers of the bird upon his next visit and become rich in no time. The daughters strongly opposed her malicious intention and warned her to refrain from any cruel act, which could pain their benefactor

Next time, when the bird visited the family, the wife coaxed him to come near her. When he hopped on her lap, she seized him violently and plucked out his feathers. But to her surprise and disappointment what she could pluck was just the ordinary feathers. This was because the bird's feathers were to change into ordinary ones when plucked against his wish

The poor bird in his great agony tried hard to fly but could not. The woman then threw him away into an abandoned barrel. When his daughters saw him groaning in severe pain they gave him necessary first aid and took care of him until his fresh wings once again grew. He then flew again. But this time when he flew he never came back again

STORY 1

Changing the climax of the existing story. In the climax the duck left with the normal feathers. So nobody pays attention to him. They avoided him so much that the duck decided to leave the home. One night he leaves the home and reaches a place where there he meets .so many other ducks. They too were once had golden feathers. It is a symbol for Old age homes

STORY 2

The story deals with a fat wealthy man trying to jump over a huge wall. The wall is actually protecting the pile of gold treasure. The man can see the tip of that treasure from a distance. He tried many ways to overcome the wall. But he fails. At last he started searching for some hole or crack in the wall to pass through. Finally he found one small crack. But the crack was so small that only a rat can pass through that. He struggles a lot to reduce his body and finally becomes a thin rat. The rat goes into the crack and reaches near to the treasure. But he was very weak and wanted to eat something. But there were only gold, pearls and diamonds. Out of hunger the rat tries to bite everything he saw around. During this by accident he swallows a gold coin and it got stuck in his neck. With fear he started running around. By noticing this an eagle catches the rat. The eagle went to the mountain top and started eating its prey. But something .got stuck in eagles throat. Eagle choked and spitted that golden coin from his throat. The gold coin fell into the dark pit of the vally

STORY 3

There was a farmer in a Kerala village. He was making a good living hood out of his farm work. . The new agriculture year has started. He planted many underground vegetables in his farm.He wanted to make more money from these crops. He approached a Manthravaathi(The man who do blackmagic). This manthravaathi said he has to conduct different types of rituals to be prosperous. To conduct these rituals, Vellimoonga (The barn Owl) is an essential asset. So the farmer started looking for these birds. He finds many of them and .during the ritual all the Barn Owls were killed

Months passed. This is the time for cropping the vegetables. The farmer eagerly waiting for this moment. But when he pulled the underground vegetable leaves, there was no vegetables. He pulled all the plants. But there was no vegetable. He cursed the Manthravaathi. But he seem to be thoughtful what will be the reason. All the vegetables are missing. This is strange.It never happened before. While he .was thinking, a small mouse comes and bites on his foot

STORY 4

There was a group of ducks living near to a lake side. It was the monsoon time.One day a duck laid a golden egg. It was shining like a small sun. All the duck including the one who laid the egg, was surprised. They have never seen anything like this in their life. Like all other ducks, this duck also sat on the egg,expecting her little duckling.All the other eggs get hatched but not this golden egg. She waited .for long. Long days have passed. But nothing happened. Finally with disappointment she throws that egg into the lake

With the monsoon rain, the egg reaches the sea. In the sea there was one fisher man ,whose boat was already filled with lots of fish, trying to catch more fishes. He throws his net again. This time along with fish he finds this golden egg!! He was surprised and with overjoy he rowed towards the seashore. He was afraid of someone noticing the golden egg. So he covers it with his lungie. He forgot about the fishes .in the boat. The fishes in the boat are eaten by the crows, dogs, cats and eagles

He reaches home and shows it to his wife and children. They were happy too. That night in his dream he saw, he is getting lots of golden eggs from the sea. He couldn't sleep properly. Without thinking much he rushed to the sea. Somehow wife saw him running and tries to .stop him. But he didn't listen to her.He reached far away in the sea. It started raining heavily. Finally the monster waves swallowed him .Morning. On the seashore family awaits for his return

.At the same time, the duck is looking at other ducklings playing, on the lakeshore

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That time a young fisherman was fishing. He found this golden egg in his net. He took that egg and when he reached home he gave that golden egg to his old father. Father was very old and weak. He walk with the support of the stick. Father was a greedy man. Seeing this golden egg, he grabbed that and kept it for himself. He always carried that golden egg wherever he goes. Next day onwards father asked the son to catch more golden eggs. He compelled him to go to the far away sea again and again. Even Though son caught a big shark, father scolded him for not looking for the golden .egg. The son became very sad about his father's behaviour

Day by day father became suspicious about everyone. He thought that someone might steal the golden egg from him. So he always stayed at his .room

One night. Father was in his room. He heard some noise. Someone is coming towards him. Conscious father took his stick and tried to attack the .shadow. But unfortunately the stick fell on the lamp and the fire started spreading all over the hut. The whole hut became a heap of ashes

In the morning people saw two completely burned bodies. They recognize them. Father and son. They found son's mala made of shell. Father was .still holding that golden egg tightly in his palm

Same time on the lake shore, the duck is waiting for an another egg to be hatched. She is looking at the egg. With a sad face she goes out of the frame. That time a crack appears on the

FINAL STORY

The story happening in a Kerala coastal area near Beypore , Calicut. There was a young fisherman living with his mother. They are happily living in their hut. Everyday he goes for fishing with his fellow fishermen. They used to come with lots of fishes from the sea. With that they were happily living their life

One day the youngman gets a gold coin from one of the fishes he caught. He had heard about the history of the Beypore coasts and its trade with the western countries. The huge ships called ' Uru' used to carry the gold and precious stones from the West to this coast for trade. By getting this gold coin the youngman started dreaming about a treasure which is hidden in under water. But his mother warned him also reminded him about his father's death. His father was drowned in the sea while searching for this gold. But he disobeyed his mother

Slowly he lost interest in fishing with his fellows and rather than fishing for food, he started looking for the gold coin inside the fish. He was looking for an opportunity to go to the sea alone

Monsoon has started. It was raining heavily. After sometime the rain has stopped for a while. The old people knew, it was just momentary. The rain will start soon. But blind by the treasure, the youngman goes to the sea with his small boat. As soon as he reached the far away sea, the rain starts again and finally he drowns in the water

People are eagerly waiting in the shore. His mother is crying. Next day morning his body reached the shore. He was not dead. But his legs were badly injured. He couldn't move for a long period of time

In the last scene, he is sitting on a rock with his fishing rod. The oldman he used to talk with(from him only he heard the story of Gold) is also with him. It was the time of ' Chakara' . The fishing boats are coming with lots of fishes. The fisher women are running towards them to collect fishes. When the youngman looks behind him, he sees his mother too is going slowly towards the fishermen to collect fish. With disappointment and sadness the youngman cries . That time the sun was setting. The golden sparkles were there on the sea water

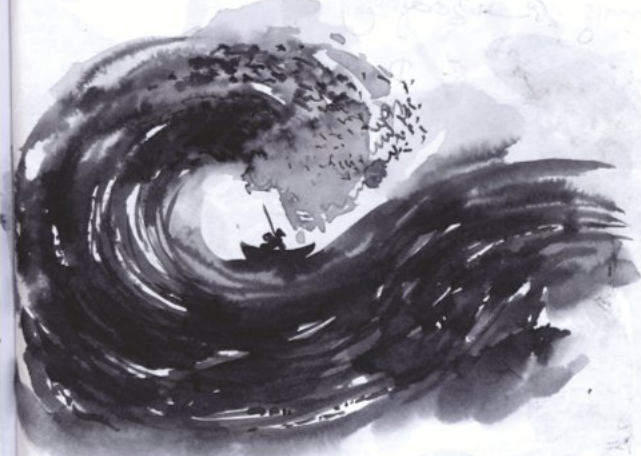
SKETCHES DURING IDEATION



An old Cherokee told his grandson,
 "My son, there is a battle between
 two wolves inside us all.
 One is Evil. It is anger, jealousy,
 greed, resentment, inferiority,
 lies and ego. The other is Good.
 It is joy, peace, love, hope,
 humility, kindness, empathy, and
 faith."
 The boy thought about it
 and asked, "Grandfather, which
 wolf wins?"
 "The old man quietly replied,
 The one you feed." Unknown -

മകൻ മകൻ പിറ്റേക്കാലം...
 ഒരു പേരുകാരൻ
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അയ്യർ ഗുണമേന്മയുള്ളത് അങ്ങനെയ
 അയ്യർ അത് തൊട്ടിലിൽ വെച്ച്
 മേൽവിലാക്കുന്നു. മിസ്സർ പേർട്ടിൽ
 നടത്താമെന്നത് ഒരുകൂട്ടം പല തൊട്ടിലുകൾ
 കൂടാതെ.



മുട്ടലയ്ക്ക് മകനാണ്
 ആ തിരിയലത്തെ
 പിടിച്ചുനൽകുന്നത്.
 അതിന്റെ പലർ
 മിറി പോയ്ക്കുപോയപ്പോൾ
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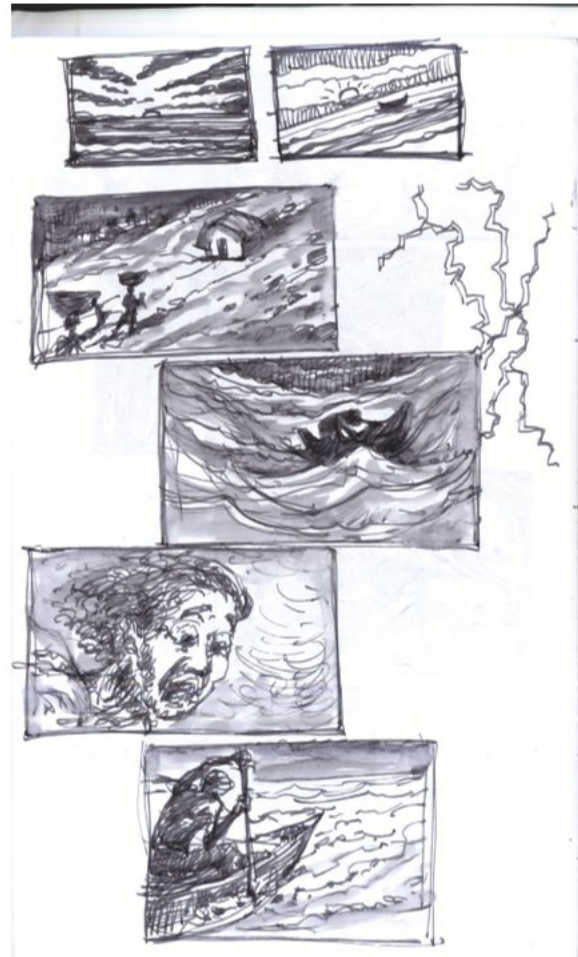




Documentary Story.
Shob Gyanadiga's Story.

A black and white illustration of a fisherman in a small boat. The fisherman is wearing a turban and a striped garment, and is holding a long pole. A large fish is visible in the water. The background is a simple, light-colored wash.

1. 16

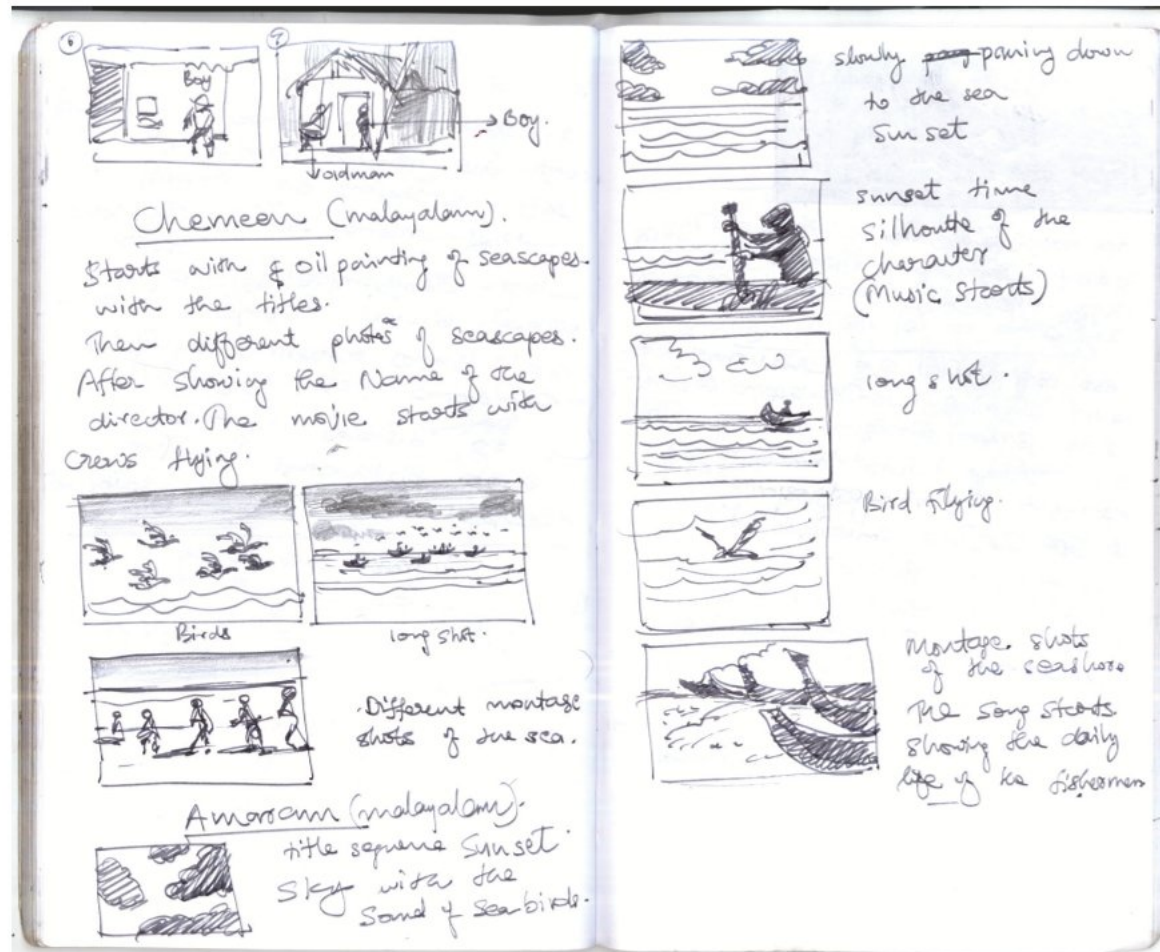


REFERENCE FROM OTHER FILMS .from ' Oldman and the Sea

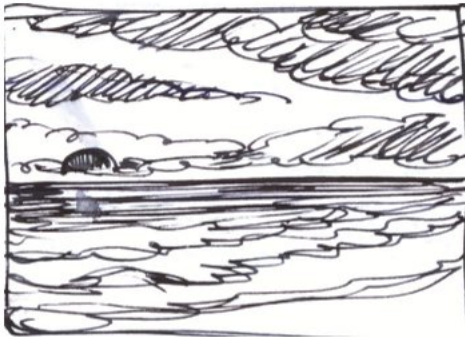
I have studied some of the existing masterpiece movies which deals with fishermen community. One of them is .animation short film and other two are malayalam feature lenth live action movies

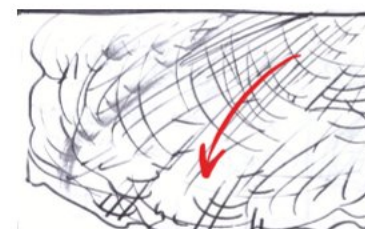
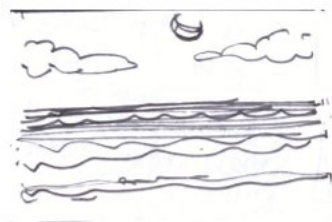


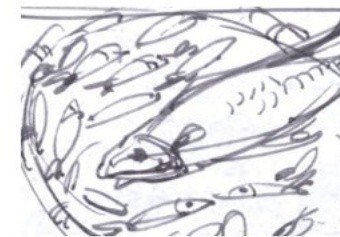
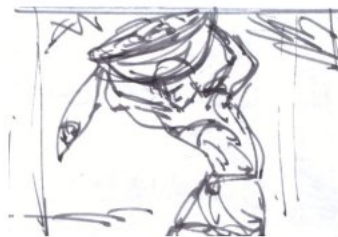
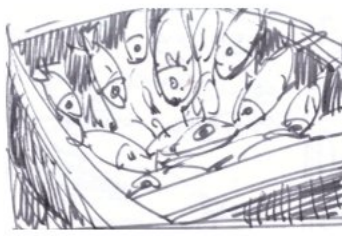
From Malayalam movies 'Chemmeen' and 'Amaram'

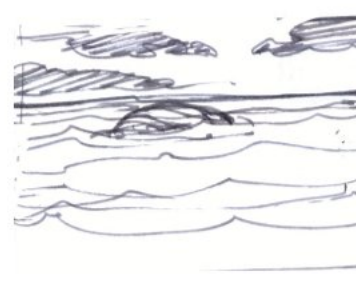
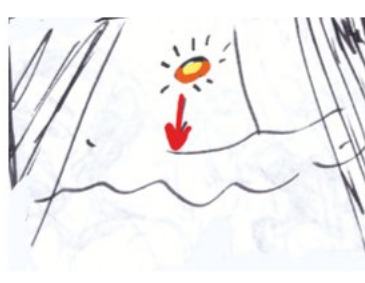
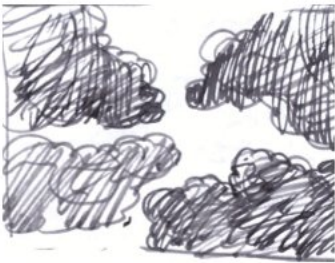
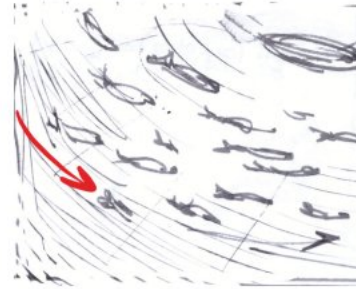
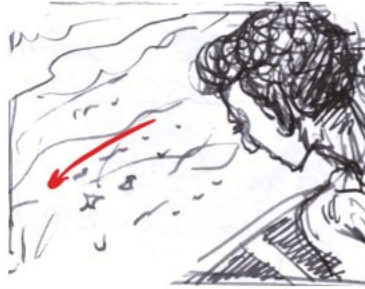


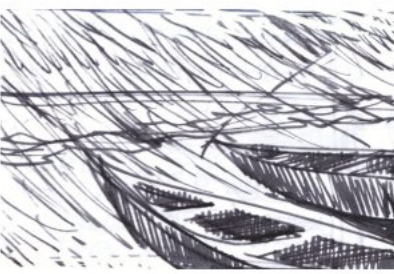
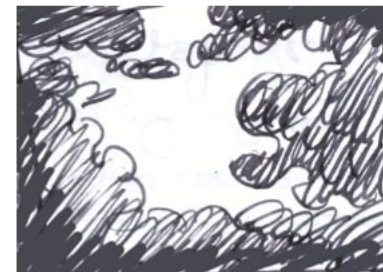
STORY BOARD

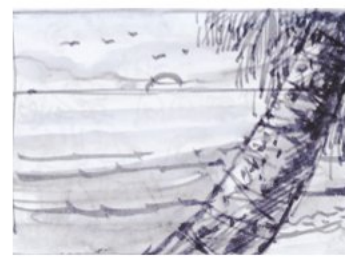
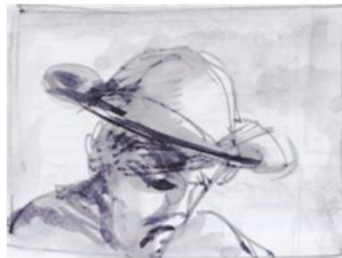
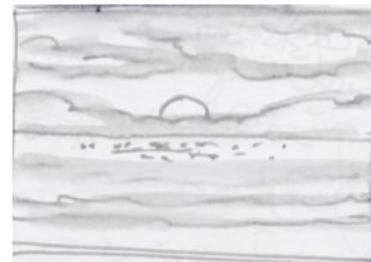
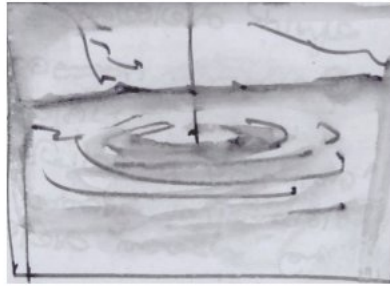
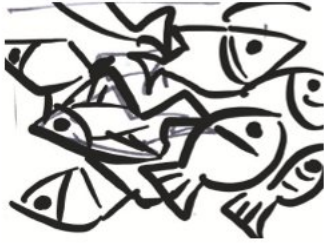












END

INITIAL COLOUR TREATMENT



CHARACTER RESEARCH

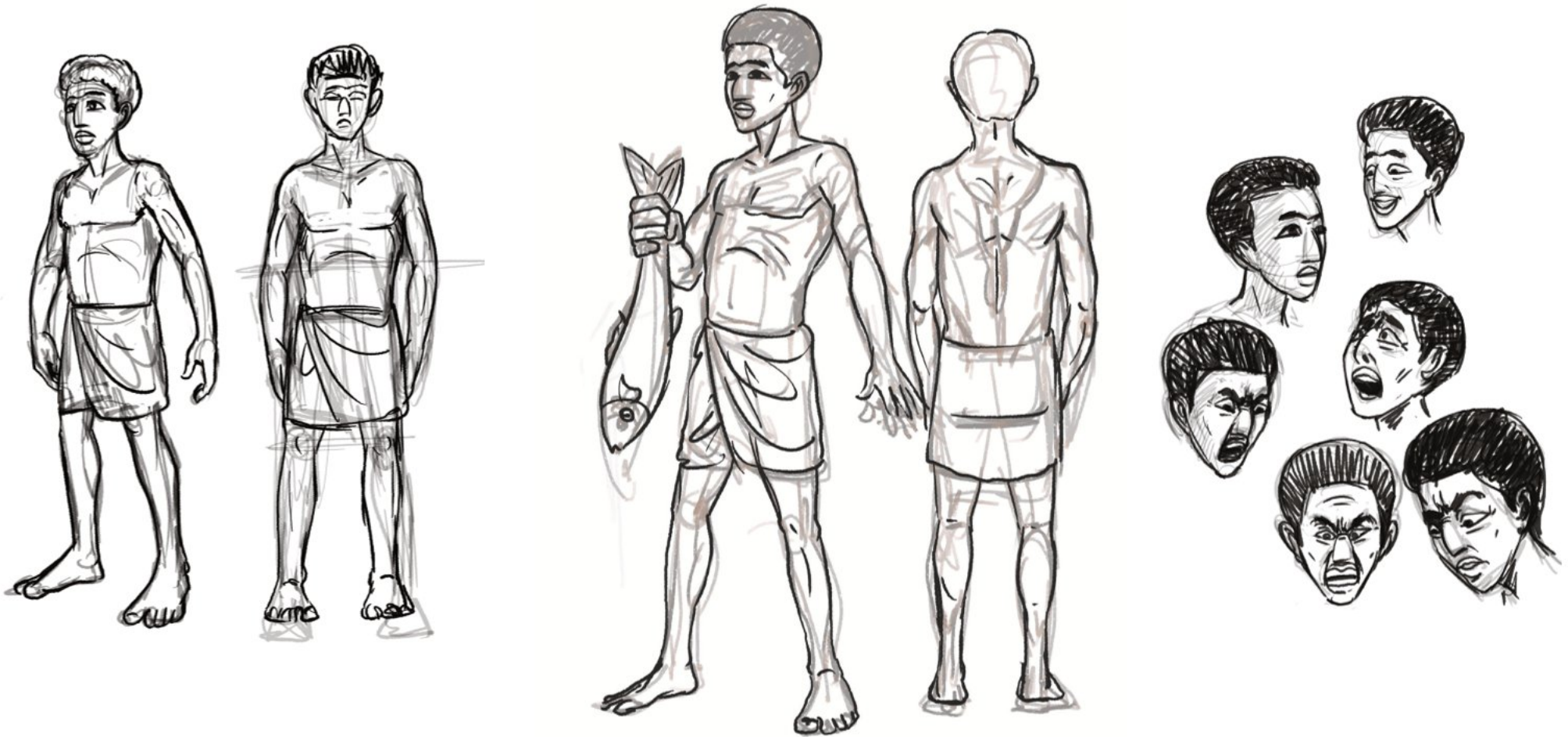


INSPIRATIONS



CHARACTER SKETCHES

Youngman





Amma

Oldman



Photo reference

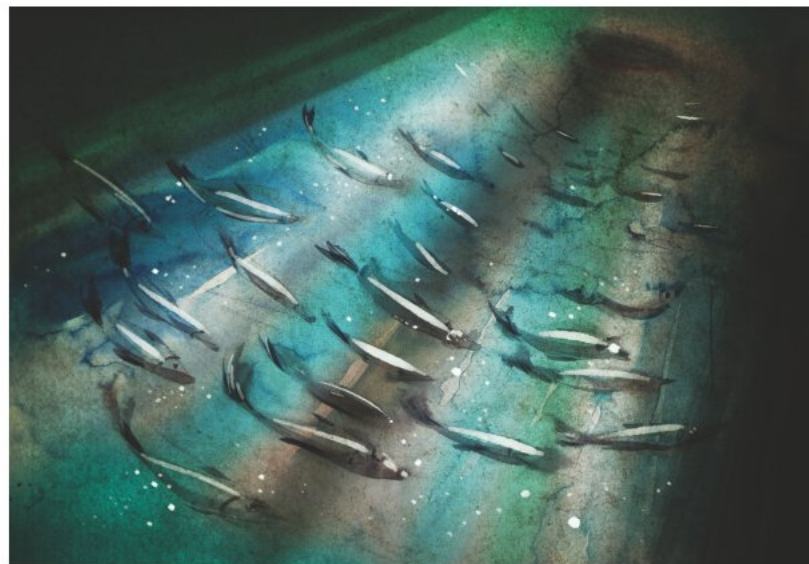
Location- Beypore coast, Calicut,
Kerala





COLOUR TREATMENT





FINAL BG & CHARACTER



FINAL BG WITH
CHARACTERS



Improvements after P2 presentation

According to the feedbacks I got from the Jury members I have done improvisations on Animatic. Main suggestion was to make a happy ending. The existing ending was too linear and predictable. While improving the ending, I have changed some of the structure of the story, including the beginning

New Story

Evening . Sunset. Kochettan and the youngman sitting on an ' Uru'. Kochettan has his bag and the youngman has his basket full of fishes beside them. Kochettan notices a grasshopper on this Youngman's fishbasket. As per a saying in Kerala Kochettan says, " Hey boy, you are going to be rich soon". Boy doesn't give any attention to that . Further during their conversation the boy got to know about the old tradition foreign ships and the gold trade happened between Kerala and foreign countries. It is almost going to be night soon. The boy leaves Kochettan and goes to his home

The boy and the mother is very happy, because it was a good catch . He basket full of small fishes and a big one. He asks the mother to cook fast and leaves . to take bath. When cutting the big fish mother finds a Goldcoin inside that fish belly. But instead of being happy mother seems worried. Because she knew that this coin will make her son greedy and may be she will lose her son, like she lost her husband But before she could hide it the boy sees the coin and takes it with him. He didn't listen to his mother and walks out the hut. He sat on the sand dunes and dreams about the treasure under the sea. In that dream he saw the old foreign ship sunk in the big waves and the treasure has been collected under water

Next day onwards, he was not that energetic as he used to be. He always thinks about the treasure and whenever he goes for fishing he looks at the sparkles on the sea water

.His fellow fishrermen also noticed his characteor change

The monsoon rain started. Nobody goes for fishing that time. But this boy sees a grasshopper inside his hut and decided to go. The mother tries to stop him, but he is already started his journey. At the base of the sea he finds the treasure!!Full of gold and precious stones . He even finds a golden crown and wears it. He collected the treasure inside his fishing net and started swimming upwards. But, the net breaks and all the gold starts .coming down

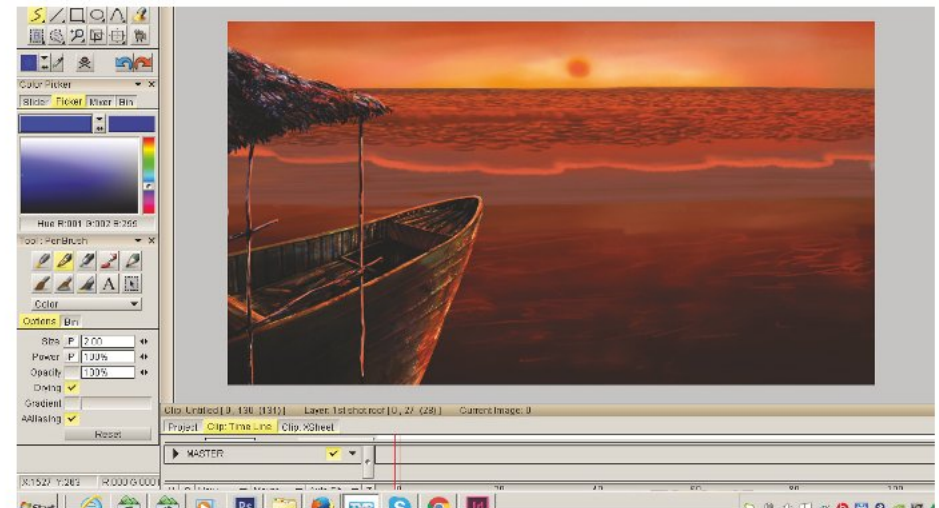
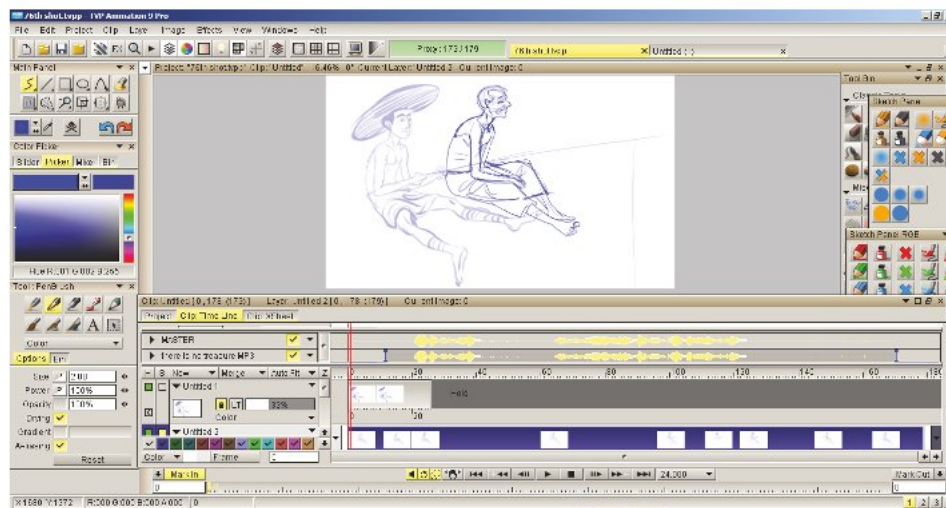
Suddenly he hears his mother calling him

He opened his eyes. He sees him self lying on his bed, inside his hut. Neibhours and other fishermen are standing around his bed and mother is crying. Some of them were saying things like, Is he mad or something to go to sea at this time.The boy looks outside through his window and finds . .his boat broken in the accident

After some days. It was a morning time. The boy is not fully recovered from the injuries. But he is fine now. He is sitting with Kochettan on the shore. Kochettan says to the boy that, there is no such treasure in the sea. But after a silence the boy said to Kochettan that , 'There is a treasure under the sea. Kochettan looks at boy's face with wonder. Suddenly he hears the voices of fishermen far away from the sea, saying that ' Chakara' .has arrived. Now with a happy face Kochettan also realising that what was the treasure this boy talking about
.END

Animation Process

I have chosen the TV paint to animate my movie. This software allowed me to achieve the treatment for the movie, which was more texture and volume based, rather than lines. This software offers various kind of brushes and smudging tools, which helped me to achieve the desired effect. I wanted a semi realistic style for the animation



BG creation

.For the back grounds, I do the base color on paper with water color and scan it. After this give details in either Photoshop or TV paint software





Colouring process



Out line



Base Colour



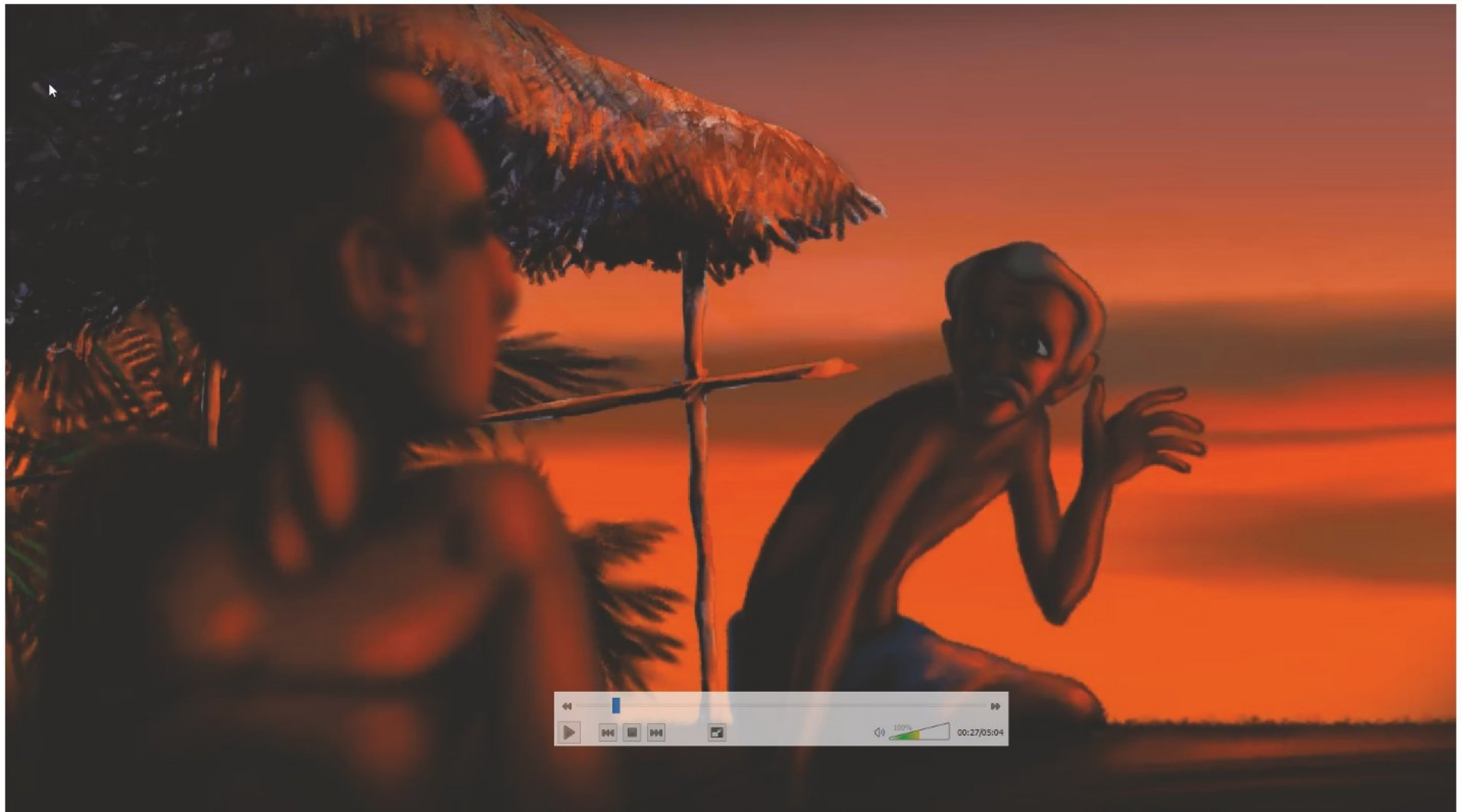
Shade



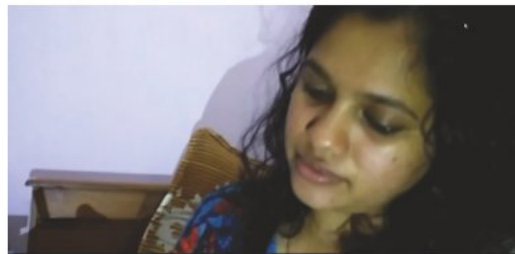
Mid tone



Details & High lights

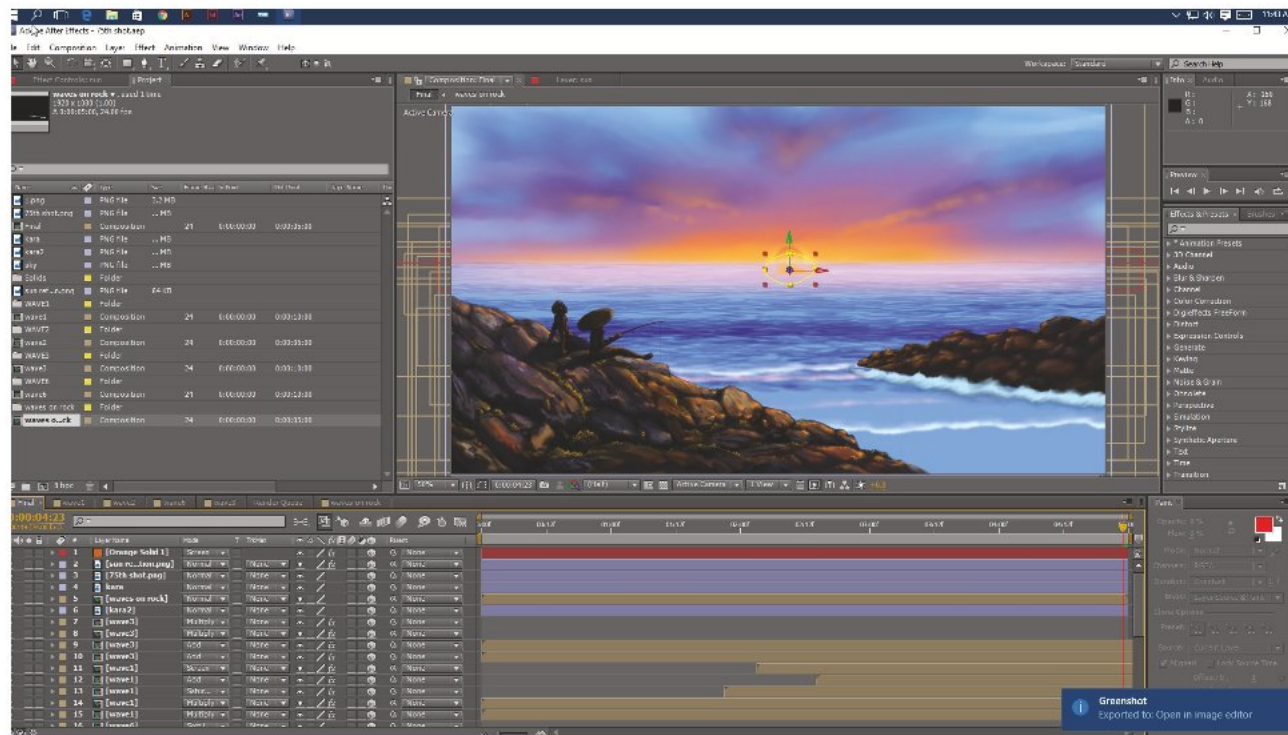


Video reference for Animation



Compositing

After the animation done in TV paint, I had exported PNG images. Then the final compositing was done in Adobe After Effects. This software is really helped me to merge the character and the Backgrounds together. Also helped me to apply different effects and small animation in the .backgrounds

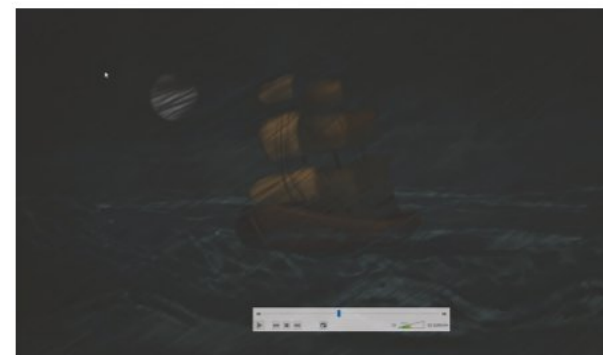
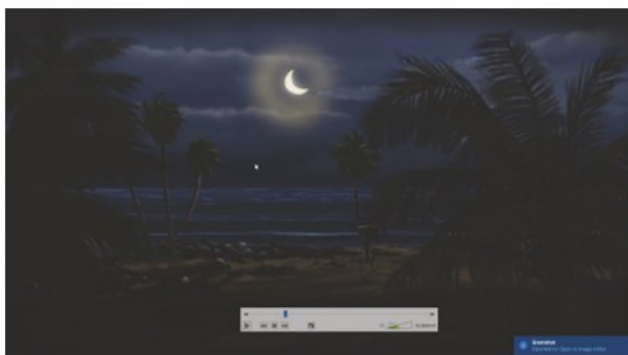
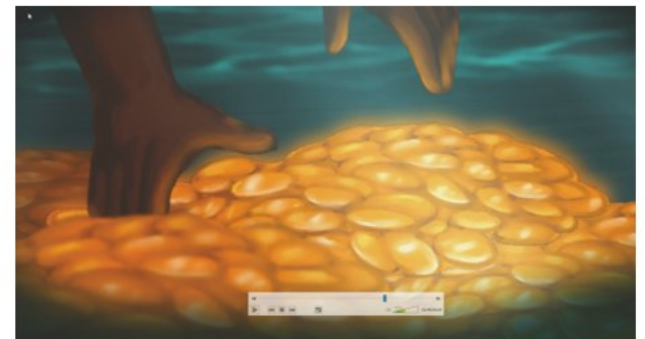
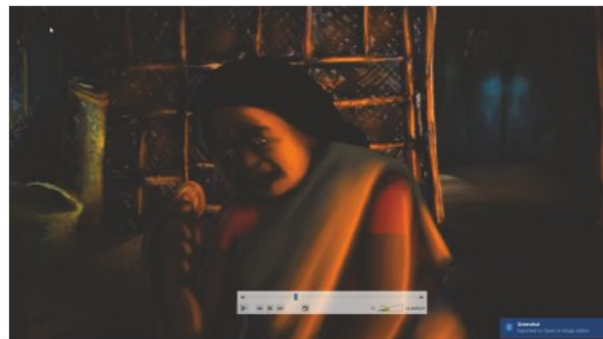
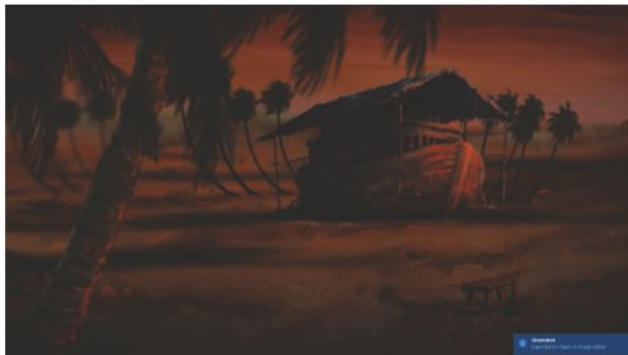
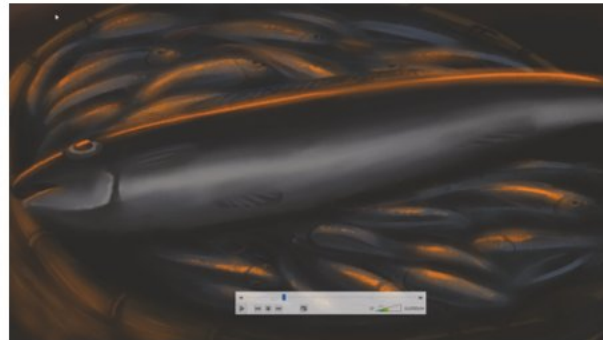
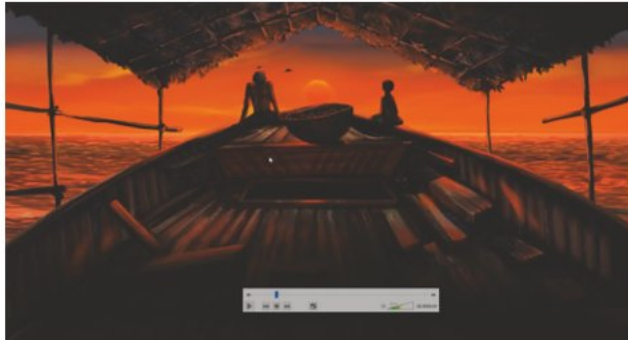


Final Animation with Sound

After compositing in after effects, I have used Adobe Premiere to match the visuals with music and sounds .My friends Patrick, Nikhil and. Dani helped me for the male voices in the movie. For the female voice Jayesh sir(IDC) helped me a lot. He took the responsibility to record his mother's voice for me. I am very thank ful to him. For the music I have approached a professional Musician from Kerala



Stills from final Movie



Conclusion

For me it was a wonderful journey from a Jataka Tale to something which is much more personal to my place and me. There were many changes happened during the development of the story and the animation process. But finally it all add to the .final outcome. Eventhough there were very busy schedules, I was enjoying all

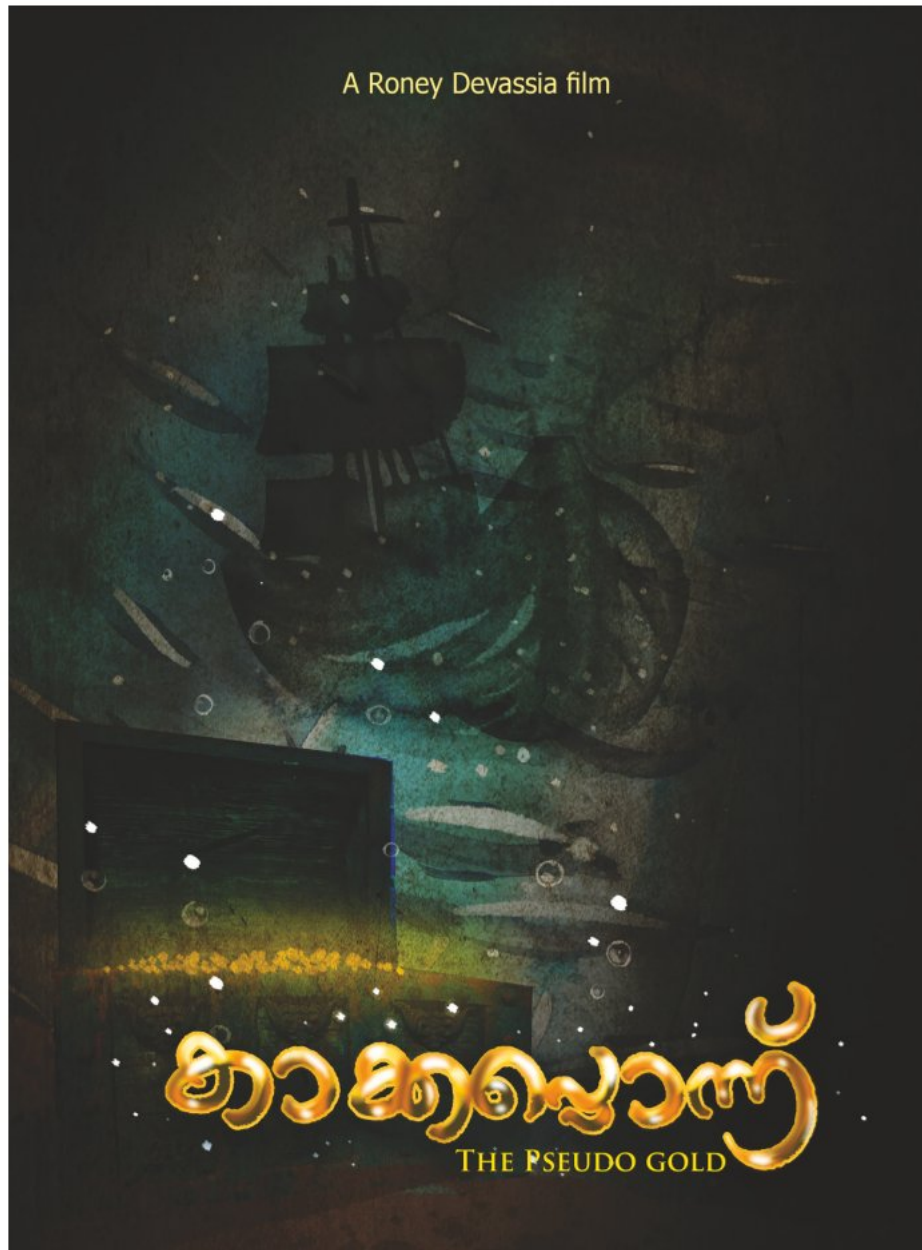
I am very thankful to my guide Prof. Sumant Rao for his immense support. He did'nt interfere to my process much. But whenever I approached him, he helped me with full support. Also IDC provided me a calm and peaceful environment to work

My movie talks about the human greed. My challenge was to make a movie on this negative aspect of human nature and still make it a positive movie. I don't know how much I have succeeded , but for me the process itself was a great learning

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SAMPLE POSTER



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