Design Course
Visual Syntactics 5 - Viewpoints
Understanding Visual Language
by
Prof. Ravi Poovaiah
IDC, IIT Bombay

Source:
https://www.dsource.in/course/visual-syntactics-5-viewpoints

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Introduction

"The kind of information one can convey about a situation or object by means of a sign depends on the contextual conditions of that sign. When one changes one's point of view (physically) with regard to an object or situation, different features are perceived, while features perceived earlier appear in a changed spatial position or disappear altogether. The order in which features are perceived becomes a significant aspect in the representation of a situation taking place in time".
By Thomas Ockerse, Hans van Dijk; Semiotics and Graphic Design Education, Visible Language, Volume 13th, Number 4

Notes:
• The frame in a visual representation can be **compared to looking through a window** (assume you're a peeping tom, travelling in a spaceship or being able to be present at any place - **omnipresence**).

• By framing one is **making choices in composition** of information - and it's also a means of cutting out information.

• Formal variations (in terms of position, size, shape and aspect ratio) of the frame of reference directly influence the semantic content of what is framed. **Hierarchy, importance, selectivity, dominance, nearness, closeness, relation** etc are some of the semantic characteristics, which can be influenced by the frame of reference.

• Think of the relation the frame of reference has to our vision and perception of the world around us.

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Frame of Reference

Topic: Frame of Reference and Viewpoints
Keywords: Semiotic, Syntactic, Semantic, Pragmatic, Frame of reference, Synchronic, Diachronic
Learning: Visual framing in context to hierarchy and semantic characteristics, Visual Substitution

We are looking at events that are snaps/frozen in time as well as those that happen across time.

Definitions:
Diachronistic - all that takes place in the course of time
Synchronistic - all that happens at the same time

Exposure for Inspiration:
• **Books:** Japanese children's books: on 'Nikita', 'Hidden animals', 'Viewpoints', 'Nostrils', 'Shit'
• **Film Analysis:** Heureux Anniversaire (Happy Anniversary) by Andre Burea
• **Feature Film:** Roshomon by Akira Kurosawa

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Design Exercise

Task 1: Story Writing
Create a short story:- an interesting and original story based on characters - animals, other living beings, ghosts, objects, etc. may be real or imagined.

The story is **meant for children**
- and it should be a story that they want to hear again and again
• Write the story in about 10 sentences.
Output: A printout on an A4 size paper.

Task2: Illustrating/representing the Story
Make a storyboard (i.e., a set of five sequential images or keyframes like you find in comic books) of five visuals (10cm x 10cm) (each to represent a specific event) that document five important points in time (diachronic) from your story.

General Notes:
- Try toward creating visuals with interesting viewpoints. The images may be in colour or in black and white.
- Represent using any media according to your own level of skill (could be illustrations or photos).
- Draw it on small 10cm x 10cm cards (exact dimension and exact square).
- The exercise should be drawn extremely neatly.

Task 3 - Semiotic substitution of representations
You already have a storyboard of five visuals (like comic strips) of your chosen story. Each frame represents a specific event, which documents five continuous points in time (diachronic). The representations that you have done are in the realistic mode.
Develop 3 alternative sets for each of these visuals using different points of view by considering the following variations:

A - as variations of **syntactic substitution**
-Substitute the forms or shapes of the elements in your visual with other objects that have similar shape and form

B - as variations of **semantic substitution**
-Substitute the meaning/content/information of each of your visuals with other similar images that have similar meaning or content

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C - as variations of **pragmatic substitution**
-Substitute each of your visuals with another visual - by changing the media or method of representation

Exposure for Inspiration:
• Animation Films: Balance, 'Musicians', 'Faces' and 'My Car' by Pixar
• Documentary Film: 'Baraka' by Ron Fricke
• Feature Film: 'Kid' or 'Modern Times' by Charlie Chaplin
• Feature Film: 'Rear Window' by Hitchcock

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Viewpoints - Examples

Story - 1

Story - 2

Story - 3

Story - 4

Story - 5

Story - 6

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Story - 7

Story - 8

Story - 9

Story - 10

Story - 11

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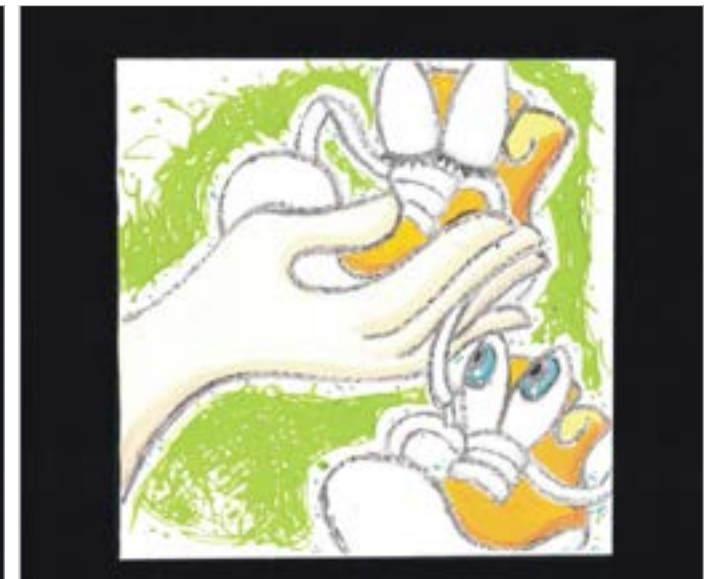Understanding Visual Language
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Story - 1

Designing story Viewpoint and storyboard
Story

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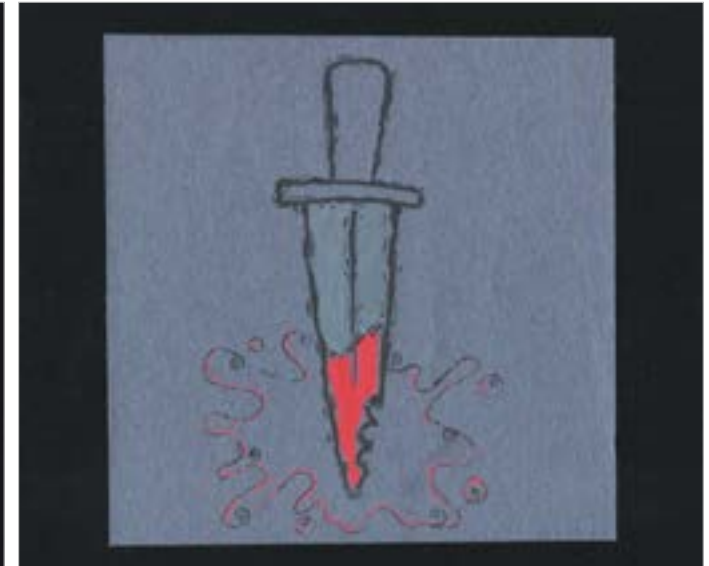## Visual Syntactics 5 - Viewpoints
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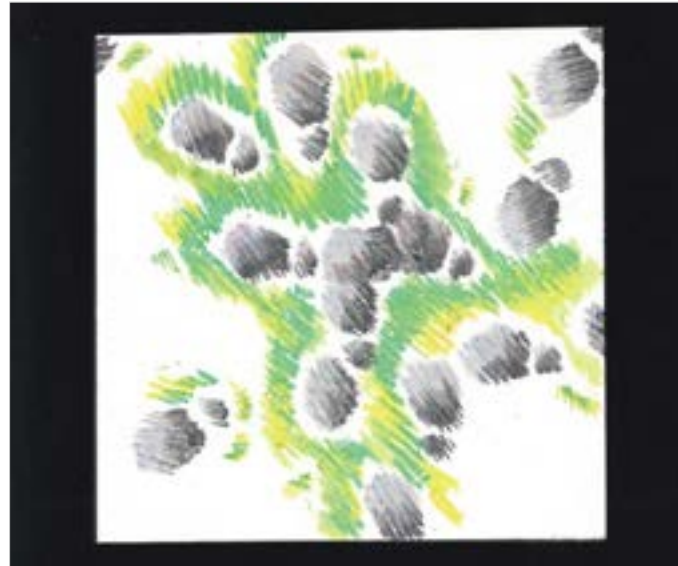by
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Story - 2

Story

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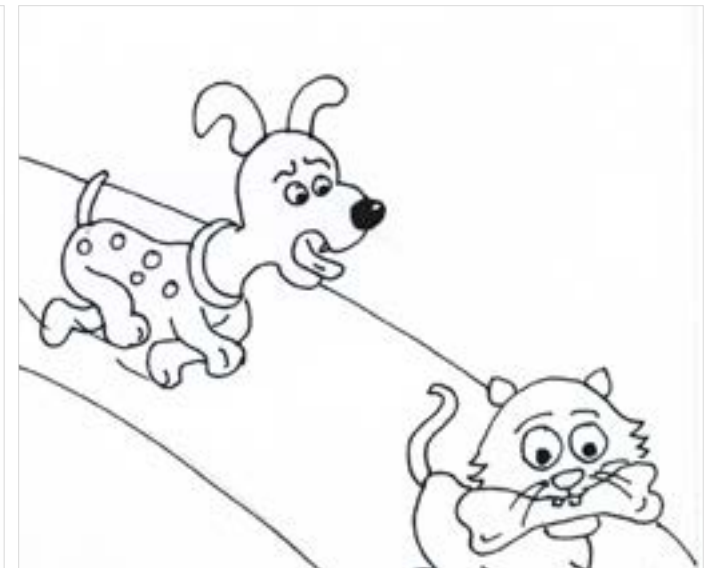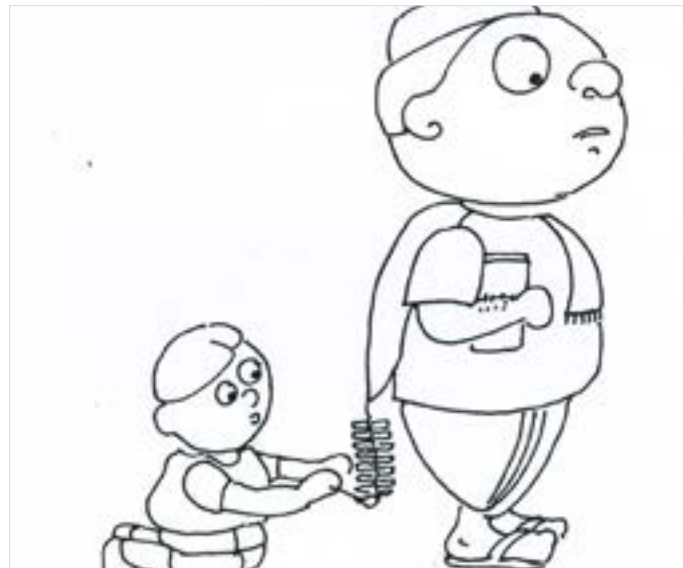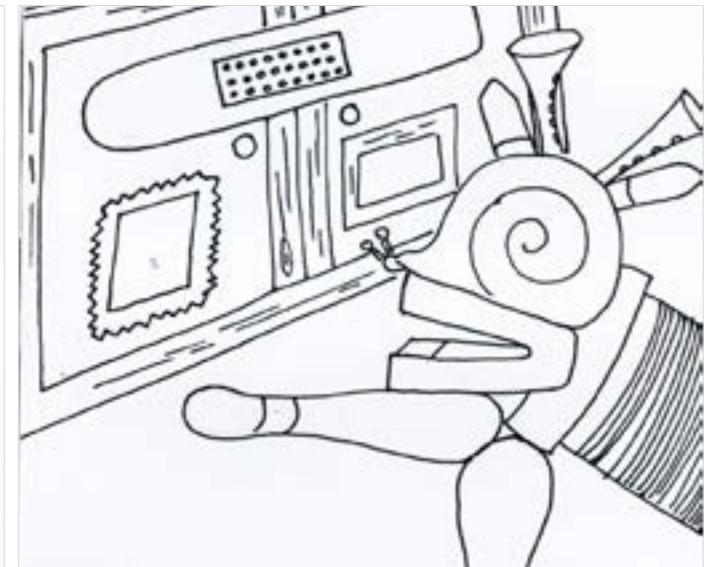by
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Sole by **Ketaki Haldipurkar** M.Des student at IDC, IIT Bombay

Once upon a time in IIT, lived a bored pair of sports shoes. And like every other pair of shoes on campus, they had only one thing to do – to walk day in and day out – walk up the street, walk down the road, climb up the stairs, stroll in the corridor. They were so tired that they didn't feel sporty anymore.

They would walk on a Monday, a Tuesday, a Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and on a Sunday. Infact they would walk not once, not twice, not thrice, not four times, no not even five but six times a day.

And then suddenly one day lefty's sole just tears apart. The right shoe takes him to the shoe doctor – the cobbler. The cobbler says, "Stay in my workshop today, you'll both need a new sole right away."

Now with fresh new soles in place, they remembered that they could race, jump, skip, run, twirl and trip and make walking a fun game.

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Story - 3

Story

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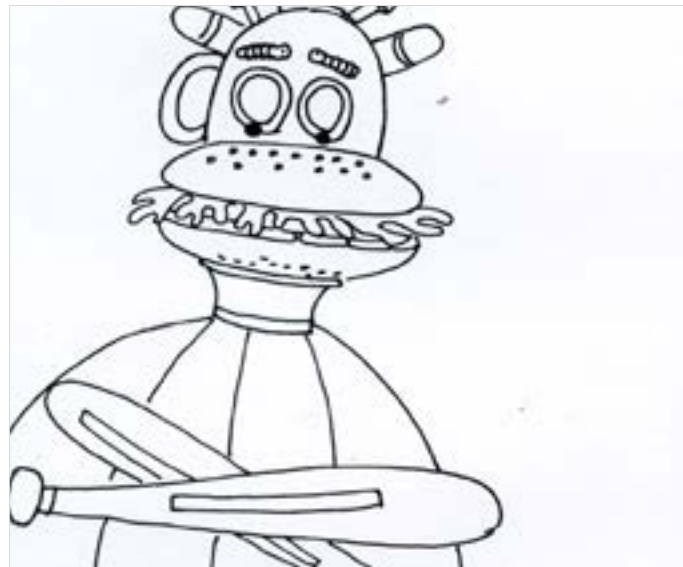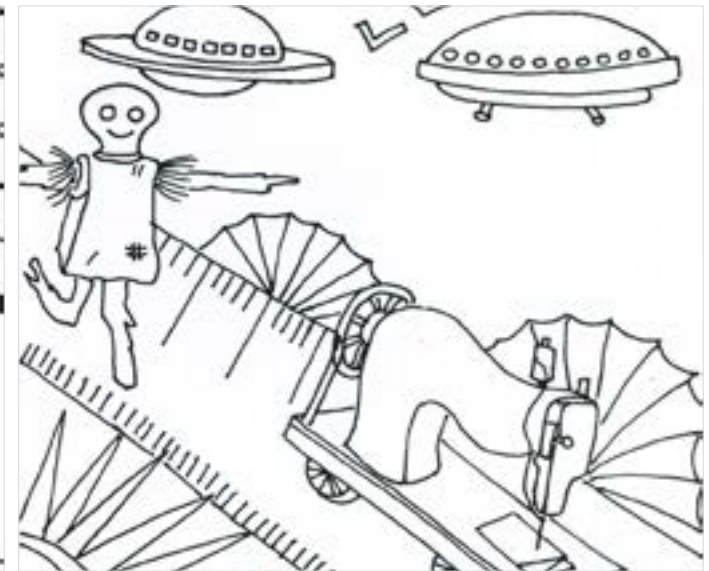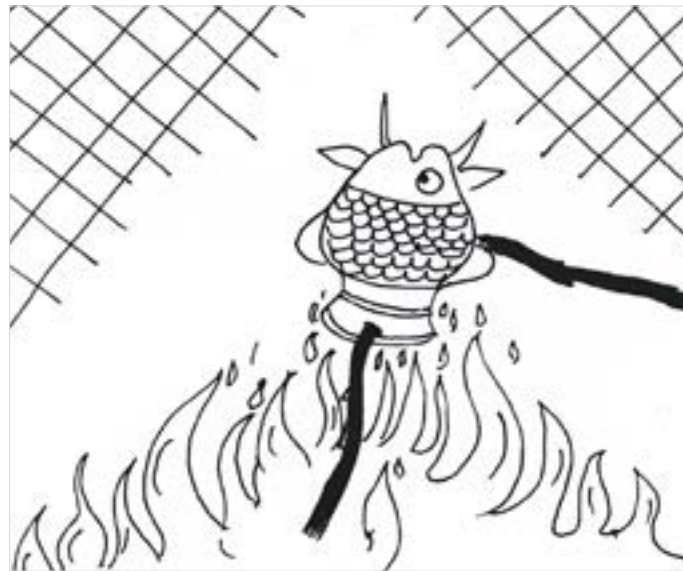## Visual Syntactics 5 - Viewpoints
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The Unstoppable Cow by **Pooja Vanjari** M.Des student at IDC, IIT Bombay

Dhanno the cow lived near the IIT campus and sneaked into the campus everyday to eat the lush green grass and beautiful flowers.

The watchman always ran behind her and sometimes even hit her but Dhanno never stopped her naughtiness; therefore one day the watchman beat her beastly.

Dhanno was angry and decided to take revenge. She was very happy to know that 15th June was coming.

Then on 15th June, the examination day, she created chaos by sneaking into the main building and eating up all the papers with roll numbers and seating arrangements on them.

The watchman ran after her and she ran to save her life so that she could tease the watchman again.

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Story - 4

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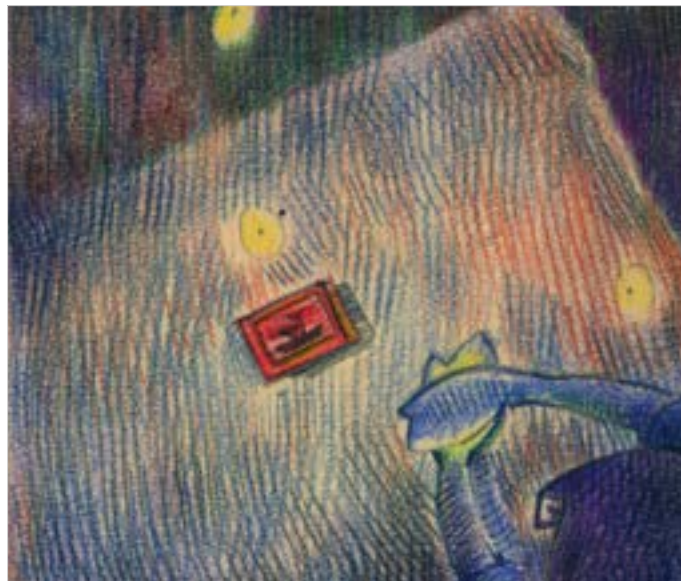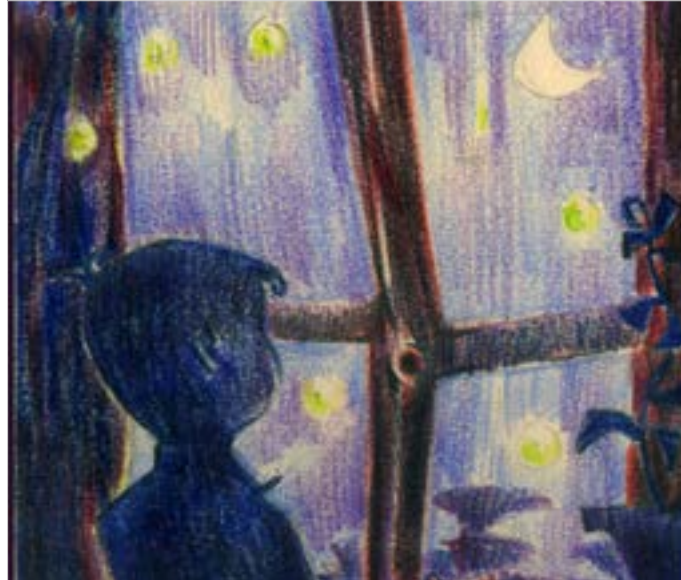## Visual Syntactics 5 - Viewpoints
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Be on time by **Pradipta Das Sarkar** M.Des student at IDC, IIT Bombay

Two friends Sam and John got admission in a very good college. They used to stay in hostel sharing the same room. Both of them were very good roommates. Both taking care of each other. However, both of them have different ways of life. Sam was much more disciplined, obedient and a good student while John was just the opposite. Although he used to fare well in his studies his life lacked discipline and obedience. He was very fond of playing chess and over time, developed a very bad habit of forgetting everything else while playing chess. One night it happened that Sam was studying in his room alone while John was busy playing Sam completed his homework on time and realised that it was high time to go to bed as there was a very important class early next morning. As he was a very good friend to John he realized that he should ask John to come up and sleep. With this intention, he went downstairs. John was busy playing and was very much involved in it. After several calls from Sam he fell irritated and shouted at him. He told Sam that he is well aware of the class timings and will be right on time even if he goes to bed very late. Failing to convince John, Sam walked up to the room and went to bed. John came very late.

The very next morning Sam was right on time for the class whereas when John woke up he was already 15 minutes late. Realizing what a blunder he had done John rushed towards the class and when he reached the doors of his class he was running about half an hour late. He asked his teacher for permission to enter the class. Seeing John coming late, the teacher became furious and shoutingly asked John to get out. John realized that he had nothing to say for himself.

Silently went out of the class. On his way, he saw Sam was mocking him in order to make him realize what would have been very correct to accept Sam's calls.

Standing alone in the corridor, John was very sad and felt ashamed of himself. He realized how much it is essential to be punctual and disciplined in life. In other words, he realized the importance of time and acknowledged the fact that everything must be done at its appropriate time. Time is the most precious thing in life.

People should be punctual, failing short of which will make one fall behind. Be on time, all the time.

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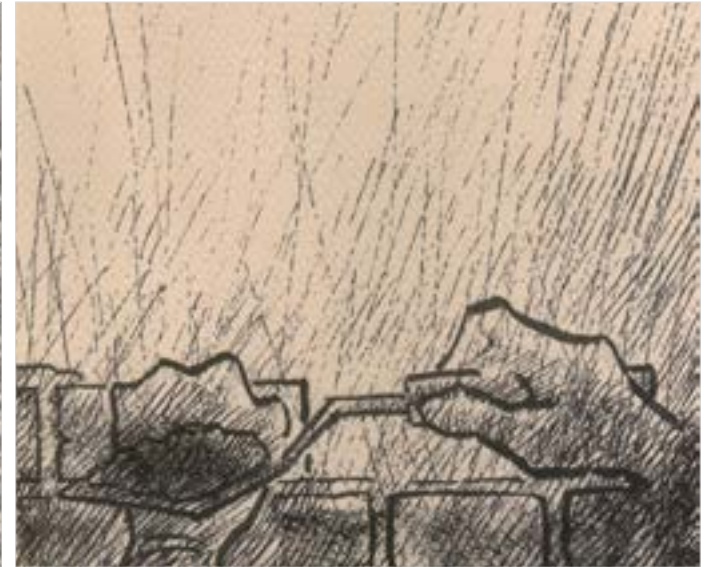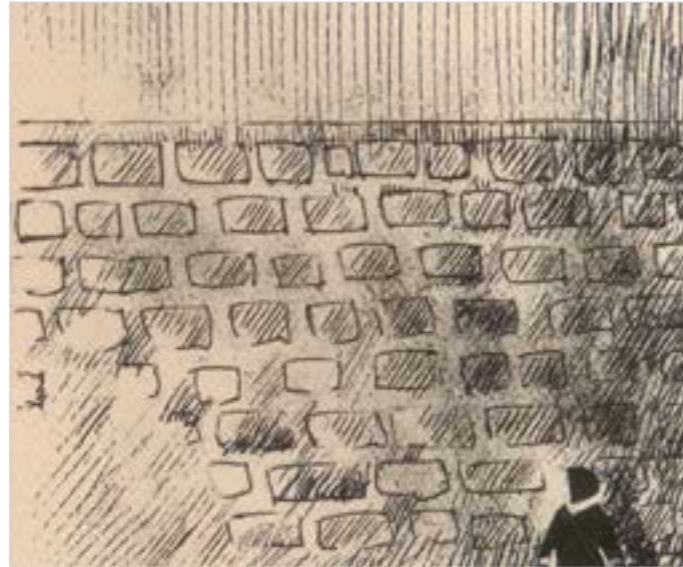## Visual Syntactics 5 - Viewpoints
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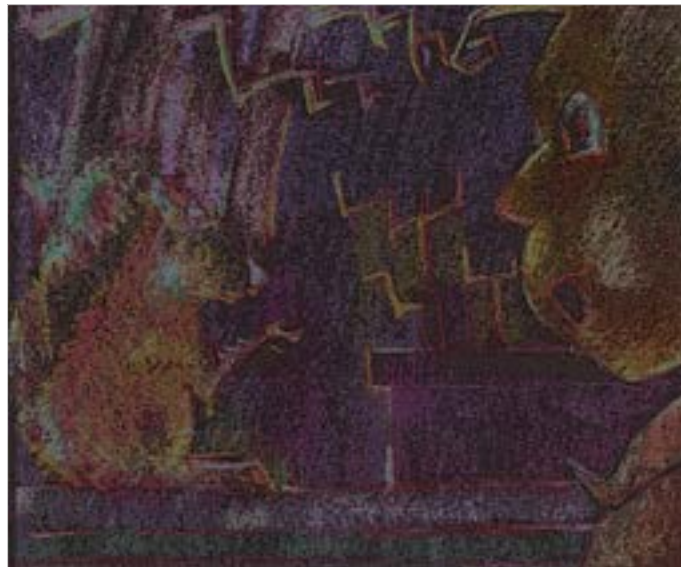by
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Binu and Fireflies by **Avijit Sengupta** M.Des student at IDC, IIT Bombay

Once upon a time, there was a small boy Binu who used to live with his father in a big green university area. Every night Binu used to watch the starry sky, dark trees and fireflies floating under the dark sky. He used to wonder about those twinkling stars and their colours.

Binu sets free all those fireflies he captured and now you can again find fireflies floating under the dark night sky.

One day the gardener uncle told Binu that all those stars are made up of hundreds and thousands of fireflies stored together.

The squirrel told him that fireflies carry messages of need from tree to tree, ground to clouds. So since Binu started capturing them no message of need passed from trees to trees, ground to clouds.

Binu wants to make a star of his own. So he started catching fireflies and collecting them inside a matchbox.

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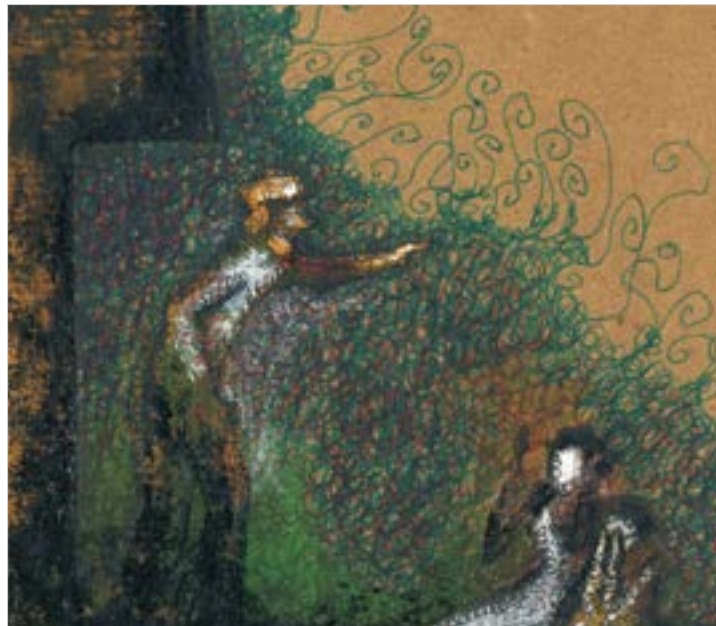## Visual Syntactics 5 - Viewpoints
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Story - 6

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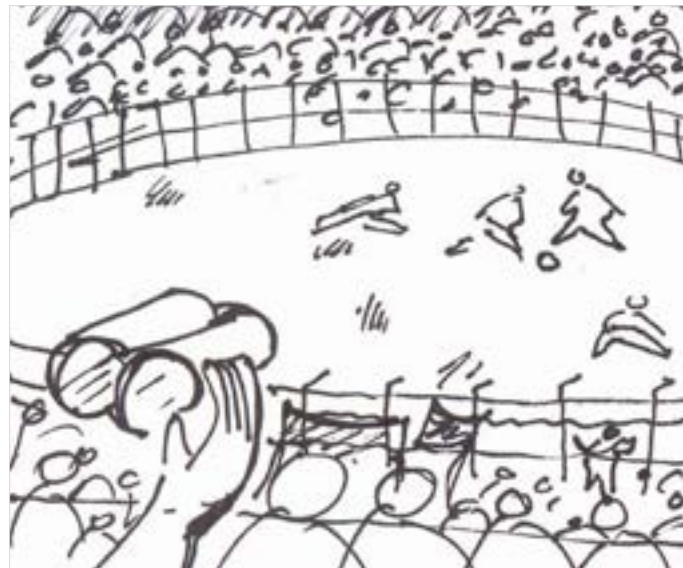by
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The Christmas Gift by **Chinmayee Samant** M.Des student at IDC, IIT Bombay

There was a boy named John. He lived with his mother. One day his cruel uncle took away their house. John and his mother now wander for food and live in a broken cottage.

On Christmas Eve, John was sitting at the window and looking at the stars when he saw Santa Claus's sledge! The sledge accidentally hit a star and Santa fell down near John's cottage.

John quickly ran towards Santa and helped him put back his sledge. Santa patted his shoulder to thank him and gave him a tight hug. As John walked towards his house Santa bid him bye.

On his way back John saw a few gifts lying on the ground. John could have easily kept them with him. But instead, he quickly picked the gifts to return them to Santa Claus.

Santa Claus was pleased by his honesty. He gifted John all the gifts. As Santa rode back in his sledge he shouted' "Hoo Hoo!! The second gift you open is my special gift to you." When John told his mother this story she could not believe it. They started opening the gifts. As they opened the second one, there was magic - There stood a beautiful house in front of them! A special gift from Santa to John.

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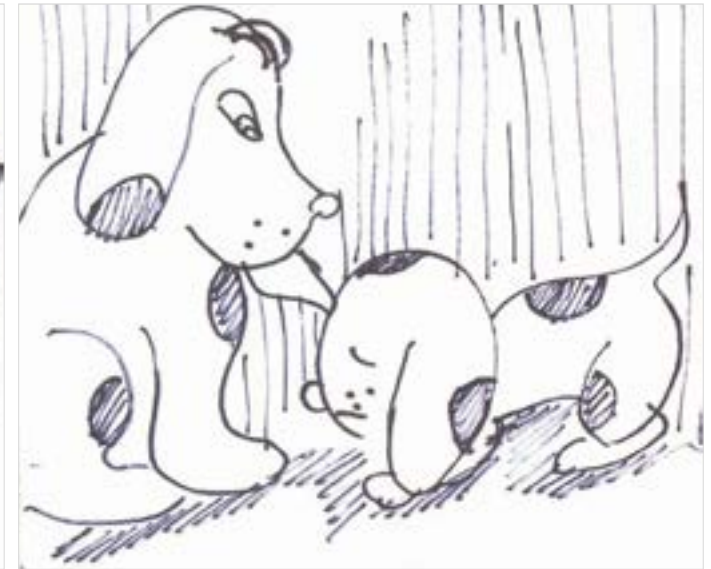# Visual Syntactics 5 - Viewpoints
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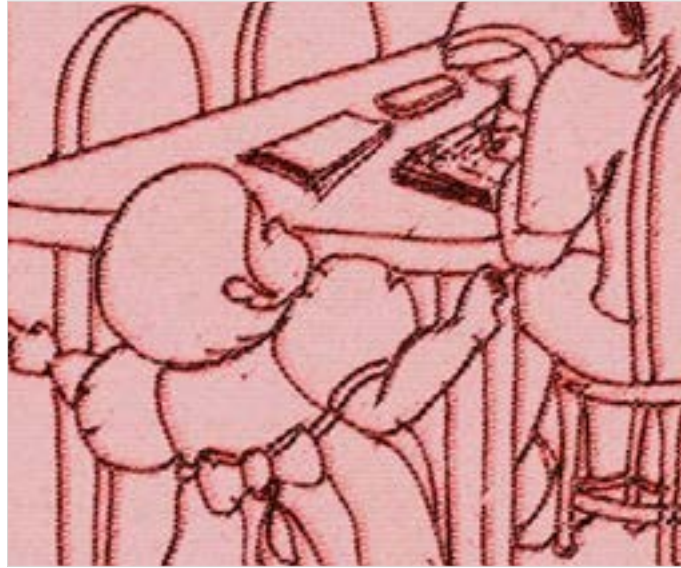## Visual Syntactics 5 - Viewpoints
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Fireflies by **Chitra Chandrashekhar** M.Des student at IDC, IIT Bombay

One evening Piku sat up on the window ledge and bent over to look at the excitement in her neighborhood park.

Just then her mother busy with her work, turned round to stop her, "Piku! Get down this moment!"

Seeing her mother busy, she ran to her sister for company

"Piku not now, I have a LOT of homework, ask mum to go with you." Said her sister after hearing Piku's story

Annoyed and disappointed she sat in front of her Papa. Seeing Piku he asked her what the matter was and said comfortingly. "Alright, I will take you along, let us see what's there in the park."

So, Dad took Piku along to the park to find kids around jumping and running with joy.

Little did he know that Piku, in her lifetime, too would be fortunate to glow with joy in the light of their new neighbours – The Fireflies!

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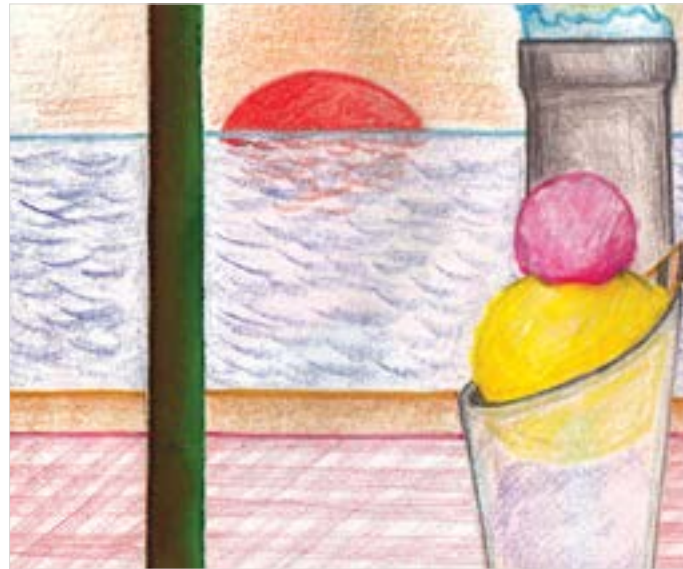## Visual Syntactics 5 - Viewpoints
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Story - 8

Designing story View point and story board
Story

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Story - 9

Story

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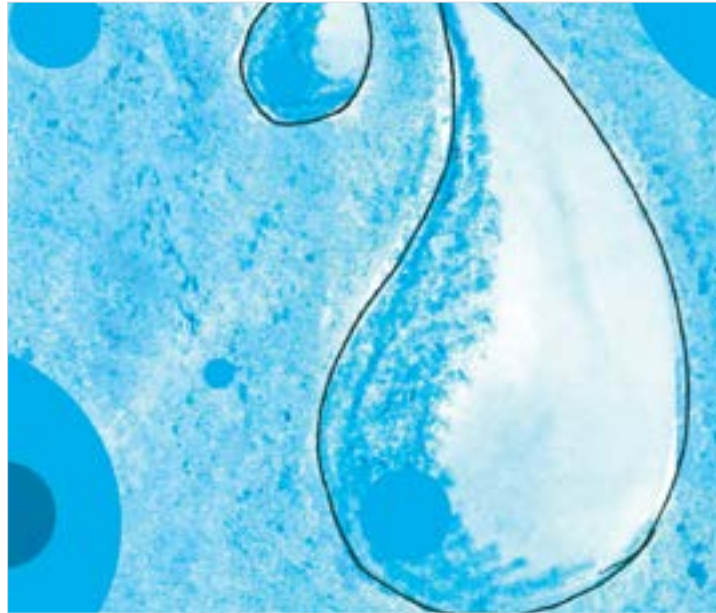Understanding Visual Language
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A Bubbly Sunday by **Geetanjali Barthwalz** M.Des student at IDC, IIT Bombay

Manu always loves playing with her teddy, one Sunday when she was washing the clothes of her teddy...

She knew her mistake of throwing detergent and washing the garden with fresh water.

She poured lots of detergent into the bucket and started playing with it......

A bull frog blrup captures her into the bubble but she frees her cleverly....

The Bubble captures all the garden elements....

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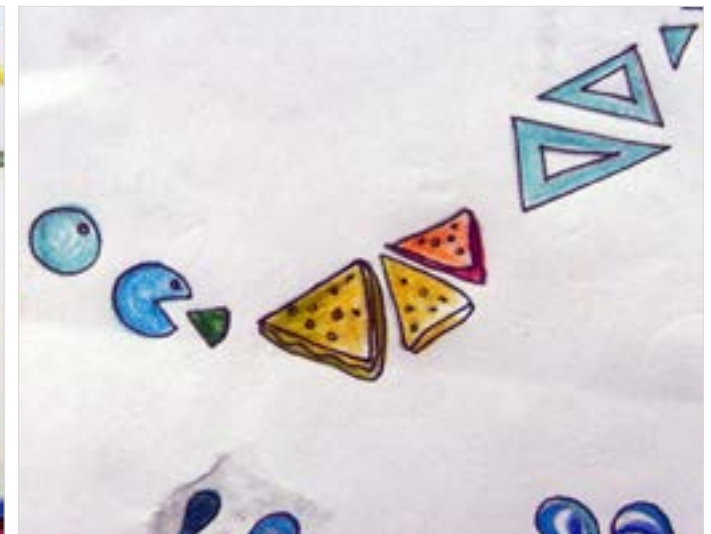by
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Story - 10

Designing story View point and story board
Story

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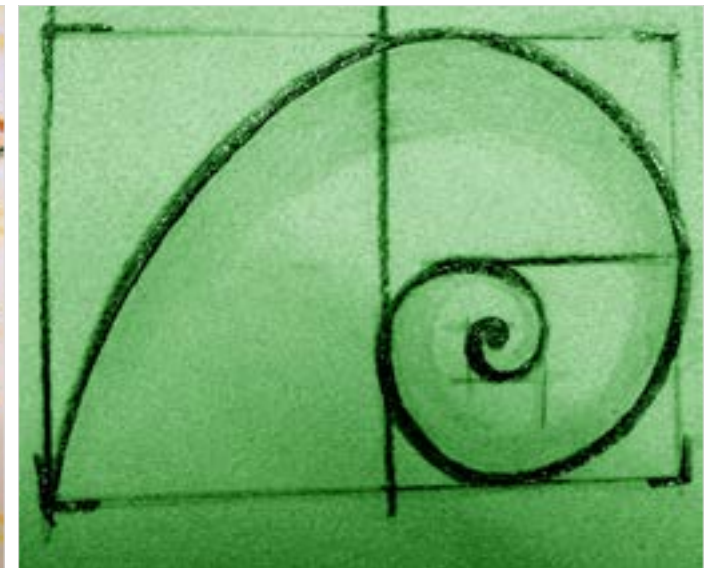## Visual Syntactics 5 - Viewpoints
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Story - 11

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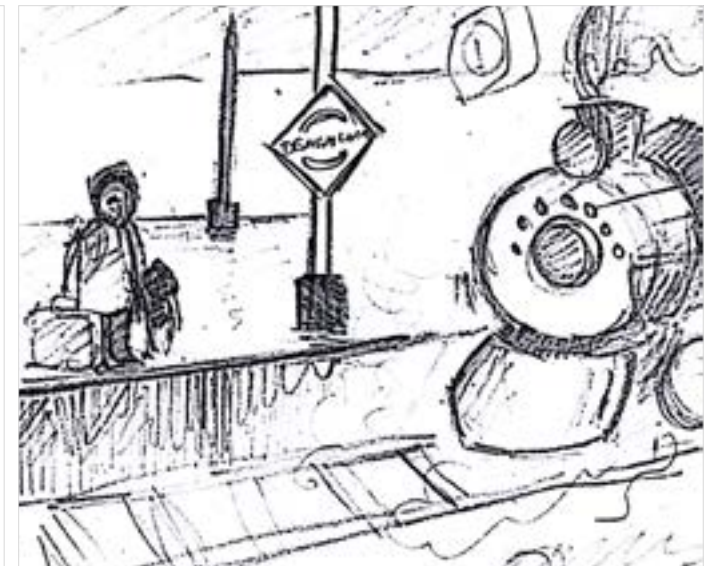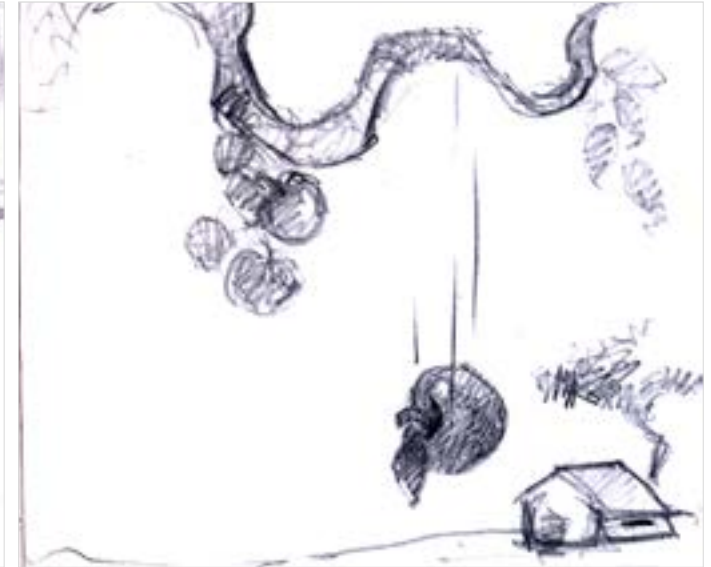by
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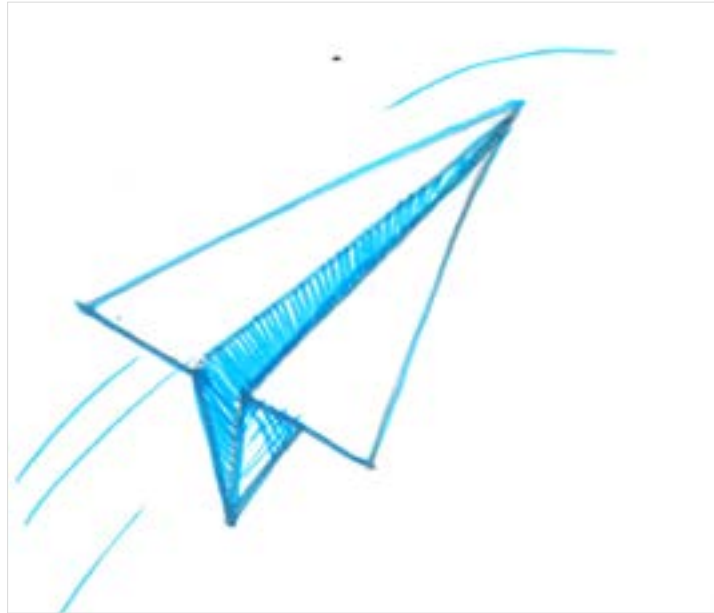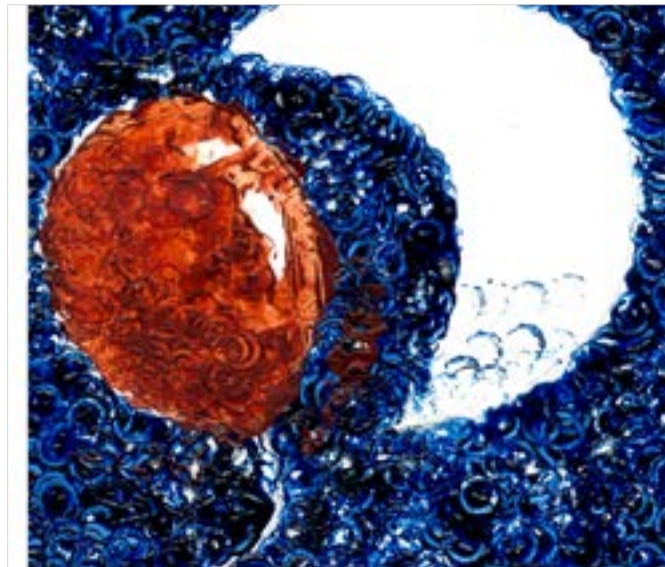by
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Little Bhatti by **Kumar Verma** M.Des student at IDC, IIT Bombay.

Committed in the morning to finish the night, Bhatti awake. Thrashed herself toward the door with her bicycle and other stuff Bhatti begins her journey. Actually last day her friend told her that stars were found on the other side of the planet. On her way, Bhatti bought two Balloons and made a knot with a Bicycle. Due to a loose knot one of the balloon released and stuck at the moon, only one left to lift her up in the sky. After cycling the whole day Bhatti reached on other side of the Planet to catch a star. Midway to the stars balloon blasts and Bhatti starts falling. Due to the wind torch light turned towards the moon and released that stuck balloon. Bhatti grabbed the thread and brought star with her. Then Bhatti hangs that star on the other side of the Planet hoping night will never happen again.

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Contact Details

This documentation for the course was done by Professor Ravi Poovaiah, faculty at IDC, IIT Bombay.

You can get in touch with him at ravi[at]iitb.ac.in

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