

‘Periya Piratti’ – an animation short film

Project by

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भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान हैदराबाद
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Department of Design

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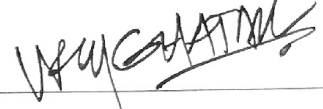
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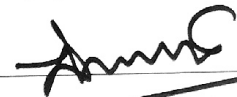
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Approval Sheet

This thesis entitled 'PERIYA PIRATTI'- an animation short film by Pravin J (MD17MDES11014) is approved for the degree of Master of design from IIT Hyderabad.



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Dedicated to

The Almighty God and my family

Abstract

Periya Piratti is an animation short film, based on a real incident. The story happened in the early 1980s at Nazareth, a small village in Tuticorin district, TamilNadu. Periya Piratti, a 40-year-old lady, suffers from Tuberculosis. Her husband, an alcoholic and her mother was old. So, the family mainly depends on her for everything. She has Six kids. The elder girl was a teenager, and the rest were less than ten years old. Unfortunately, her Tuberculosis got severed, and she went to death bed.

The story revolves around this incident, how her sickness impacts the family and the emotional state of the kids. Will Periya Piratti survive or not?

Many people have undergone hopeless situations in life. However, very few stands firm and overcome such situation. In this film, the filmmaker tried to impart hope to such hopeless people through this real-life incident which happened in his mother's life.

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Chapter 01

Introduction

1.1 Hand-drawn Animation:

The hand-drawn animation has its legacy. However, the exponential growth of 3D animation has made the animation giants like Disney, DreamWorks, Pixar, and many more studios, to think of working with hand-drawn animation. Steve Huelett¹ has stated the reason for this shift from 2D to 3D animation. He said [1],

“I've worked on CG features, and I've worked on hand-drawn features. And hand-drawn features are harder to make. Hand-drawn cartoons take a year to produce. Once you've produced sequences, it's hard to change the work. You have to go back and do everything over.

But with CG, you can animate the movie in three or four months, change things close to the release date. You can't do that in hand-drawn animation. If you find out the story doesn't work when you're two-thirds done, you're stuck. With CG, we change the story and rework sequences until late in the process.

It's close to live-action in that way. You can rework until late in the production. With hand-drawn animation, the plot, action and dialogue have to be locked down way earlier, or the picture won't get done in time for its release”.

These words gave many ideas on how the current animation industry works. Though the technology developed to the next level, the learning and the filmmaking experience with the hand-drawn animation is massive. The hand-drawn animation has more artistic freedom than 3D animation. Not everyone can draw the same way; this creates the uniqueness in the hand-drawn animation and creates individuality.

¹ Steve Huelett is a retired writer who worked in animation industry for four decades.

1.2 Origin of the story:

The filmmaker was born and brought up in a Christian family. Unlike every mother, right from his childhood days, his mother (Ananthi) not used to tell just stories but her real-life incidents as a story on how God changed her life. These stories impacted his life and gave hope to him in many of his tight and hopeless situations. One such incident was “how she accepted Jesus Christ into her life”. This incident had touched his heart.

The aspiration of the filmmaker to become an animator has to lead him to do this movie called “Periya Piratti”. The filmmaker anchored with the thought of making a strong story with the animation as a medium for his thesis project.

When the project guide Prof. Delwyn Remedios asked the filmmaker to come up with a good story for the thesis project work, he pitched this story to him. He was very much impressed with the story and gave a green signal to animate the same.

1.3 Objective:

The motive of this movie is to give hope to the hopeless. According to Proverbs² 25:11,

“The right word spoken at the right time is as beautiful as gold apples in a silver bowl”

Only the people who undergo such a hopeless scenario understands the importance of that single word or a small event of encouragement and hope which could change their lives forever. The filmmaker wants this movie to be of this kind.

Apart from this, the main objective of this animation project is to have,

- Proper application of animation principles,
- Improve in storytelling aspects, and
- Learn Cinematography techniques.

² Proverbs, an old testament book in the Holy Bible – New Century Version

Chapter 02

Pre-Production

2.1 Story and Scriptwriting:

The Story dated back in the early 1980s in a village called Nazareth [2], located in the Tuticorin district of TamilNadu State in India.

On one fine day, everything was going well in the family, the kids were playing, and the Periya Piratti and her mom (Avudaiammal) were doing household chores. Suddenly Periya Piratti started vomiting blood along with the cough. Her mom rushes to help her. On seeing her health condition, Avudaiammal requests her son-in-law to take her to the hospital, which is located in a town twenty-five miles away from that village. But he was fully drunk and not in a state to take his wife to the hospital. So Avudaiammal takes her to the hospital. Her condition was very severe that even during the bus travel she had a severe cough which disturbs the entire co-passengers. Finally, they reach the hospital and consults the doctor. The doctor reveals that Periya Piratti suffered from severe Tuberculosis and stated that her left lung was eroded entirely due to tuberculosis and because of which she cannot survive even two weeks (tuberculosis did not have any cure in those days). His words made Avudaiammal very sad, and they reach home. Avudaiammal reveals the Periya Piratti's illness to her elder daughter, Ananthi. Ananthi cannot believe this and broken to the core. The other kids were not matured enough to understand the mom's sickness. This news spread like a fire in the locality, and all the relatives, friends and neighbours pay their final visit. Ananthi again shattered and, Periya Piratti was breathing her last moments. The entire family was in sadness. One evening, when everyone slept very early, but the elder girl couldn't, so she was standing at the gate of the house and started thinking about the family. She was thinking to herself that what will happen to the family if her mother passes away. She was feeling insecure and thought no relatives and family friends came forward to take care of the family after her mother. The moment she was thinking this, she heard a voice from the church saying "For a brief moment I have deserted you, but with great compassion, I will gather you". She felt that someone talked to her, but she could not believe it. So, she said to herself that "if the same words are repeated for me again, then I will believe that God is there for me". To her surprise, the voice repeated. She felt a great peace in her heart when she heard those words again and gained the courage and hope that God will surely help her. So, she kneels

beside her mother and prays that “God, if you are true, the words that you spoke with me now is true, just give my mother back”. Days passed by, her mother was getting better every day and from that day Ananthi started her new belief on Lord Jesus Christ. Her mother lived for more than thirty years with just one lung without any trouble in breathing

The moment story looked solid, and the work was on the script on how to approach the narration and which perspective will suit the story well. So, five different approaches to the narration were carried out. They were,

- Third person narration
- Ananthi’s (the protagonist) point of narration
- Mom(Ananthi) - Son (Ananthi’s son) storytelling
- A story like a conversation between two friends and
- Regular conversation during that time

Among all these, the regular conversation worked out the best in carrying the emotions and weight of the story. So, the story was scripted in the same way.

2.2 Literature review:

2.2.1 Study for Scripting the movie:

To make the story strong, the filmmaker referred to many scripts of successful animated short films. Few notable short films are Myosis [3], Le Royaume [4], and Sonder [5].

2.2.1.1 Myosis: a movie by Emmanuel Asquier-Brassart et al.

Myosis is the constriction of the iris which decreases the diameter of the pupil. It is an unconscious phenomenon which can be triggered by an intense light, fear, or the effect of epiphany.

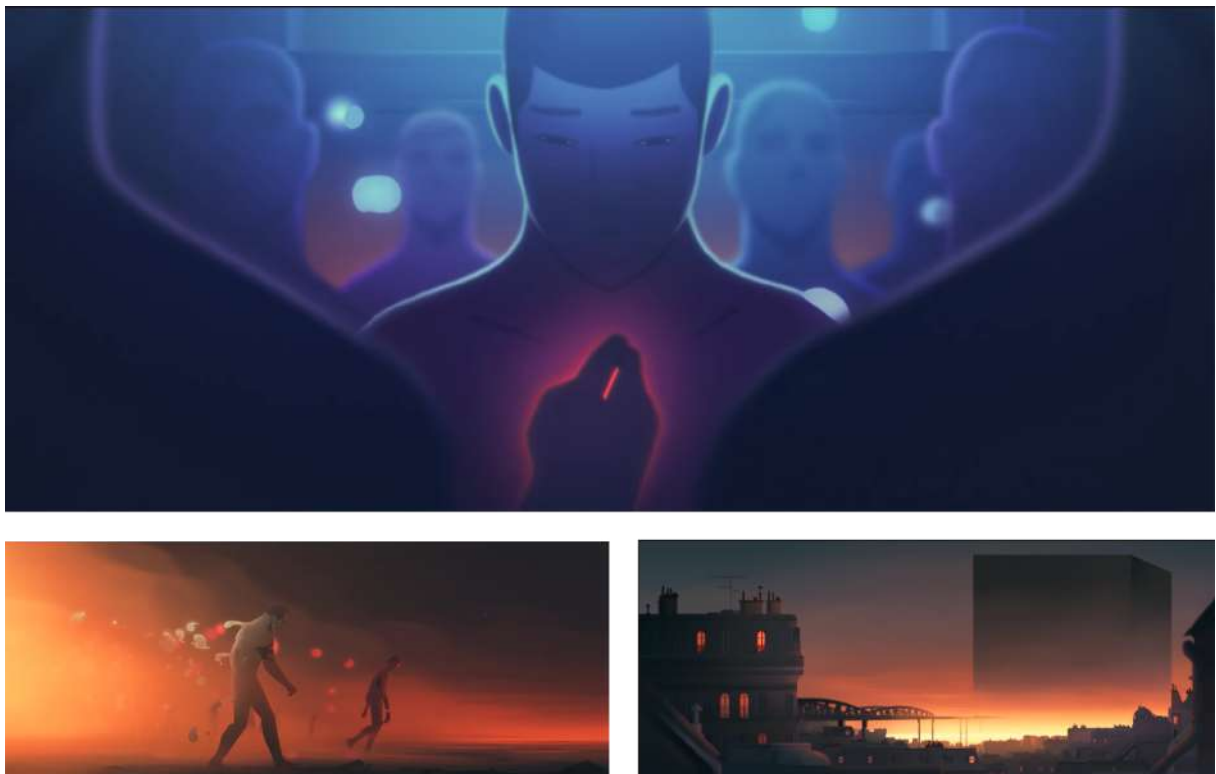


Figure 1 : Screenshots from the MYOSIS short film³

This movie conveys an existential love story, a lyrical tale of passion and the creative destruction sometimes necessary to stay in touch with it. The animation is stunning, but so is the overall art direction. Impeccable control of the palette combines with elegantly framed shots to create a powerful sequence of visuals

³ image source - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WImOE0Pwk3M>

2.2.1.2 Le Royaume: a movie by De Nuno Alves-Rodrigues and et al

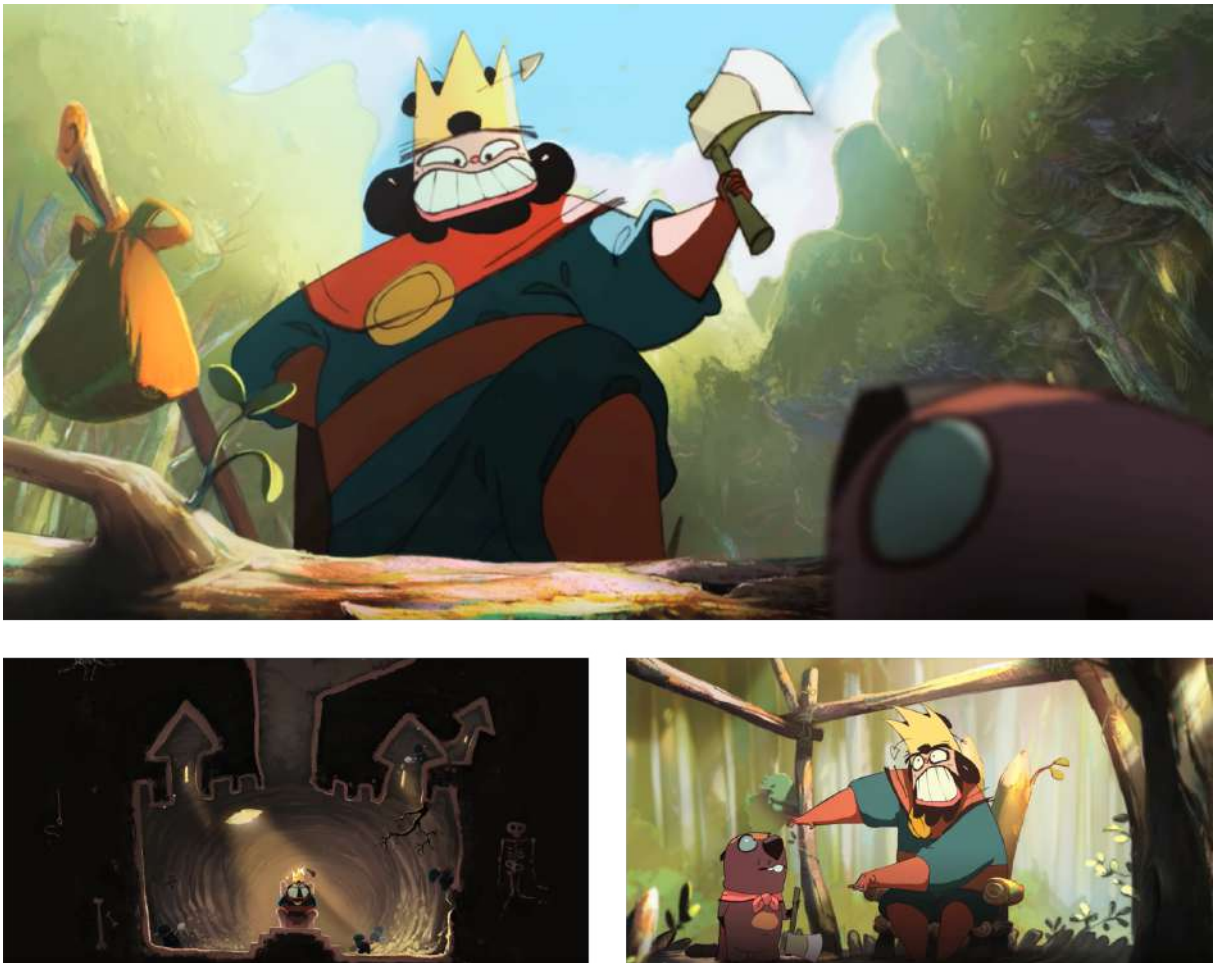


Figure 2: Screenshots from the movie LE ROYAUME⁴

The story is about a selfish king, who scour the earth for royal bring. But the castle he needs, greedy in heart, to hope to build a castle started. All it takes was a simple plan that turns to blight and worsens grand. And cycle repeat, mistakes were made, never to respect a friendly aid.

In the entire story, an element of suspense (why the king had an arrow in his crown) was maintained and revealed at the end of the movie, which seems very interesting and clever way to show the greediness of the king.

⁴ image source - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y6ZmMjMdrqs>

2.2.1.3 Sonder: a movie by Debjyoti Saha

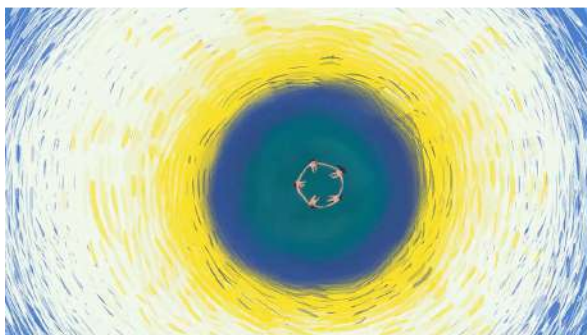


Figure 3: Screenshots from the movie SONDER⁵

'Sonder' means the realization that each random passer-by is living a life as vivid and complex as your own.

The man in the movie strives to become a successful artist but the realisation of his situation and financial crisis landed him in painting the vehicles. The deep desire of the person was strongly conveyed in this movie.

The Filmmaker observed the common features in these films and tried to apply the same in this movie "Periya Piratti". This study of the movie patterns in the storytelling leads to the famous Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey [6], [7].

⁵ image source - <https://vimeo.com/267867300>



Figure 4: Screenshot from the TEDed Video- What makes a Hero? by Matthew Winkler⁶

The filmmaker compared the events of his story with the hero's journey.

- **Status Quo:** Ananthi leads carefree and happy teenager life
- **Call to Adventure:** When Ananthi comes to know about her mom's sickness
- **Assistance:** Grandma consoles her during her breakdown
- **Departure:** Her mom's condition drags her into virtually leading the family.
- **Trials:** Taking care and managing her younger and immature siblings
- **Approach:** The last visit of neighbours and relatives breaks her heart to the core.
- **Crisis:** The family burden and hopeless in getting help
- **Treasure:** The voice from the church
- **Result:** Gains hope and courage and pray for a miracle
- **Return:** Comes out of sadness with a hopeful heart
- **New life:** Mom survives and her hope on God too
- **Resolution:** Starts a new life with God and stay bold and calm
- **Status Quo:** Back to a normal happy life with full of hope on God.

⁶ image source - <https://ed.ted.com/lessons/what-makes-a-hero-matthew-winkler>

2.2.2 Research on the Location and the Characters:

Nazareth [2] is now a town. Early Christian missionaries named it in memory of the city of Nazareth Israel, where Jesus Christ spent his early days. There is a 100+-year-old church (St. John's Cathedral) in the centre of the town. It has a tall tower with a flat top. The climate of Nazareth town is usually dry. A short rainy season exists but the weather, for the most part, is hot and humid. Palm trees and the Cashew trees hold the identities of this place. One can see them everywhere when they look around.

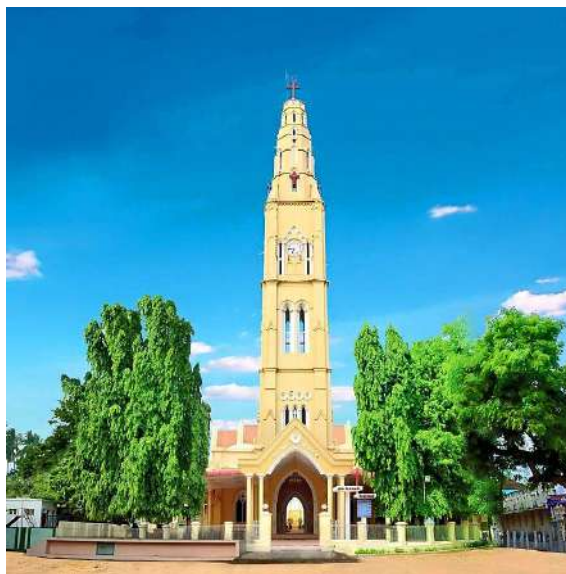


Figure 5: St. John's Cathedral, Nazareth⁷

“Theri Kaadu” is a mysterious red sand desert present in this place. The sand is rich in ilmenite and garnet [8], and this makes this place very unique. It is the only desert in TamilNadu, which makes this place more attractive. It runs across a few more nearby villages and makes its area big.

⁷ image source - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nazareth,_Tamil_Nadu



Figure 6: Red sand dunes of Theri Kaadu, Nazareth⁸

Since the story happened in the 1980s, the film-maker wanted to have clarity on how the location would look. But there is no clear image on how that place would be. So, the filmmaker gets the necessary details from his mother, Ananthi. Based on her description, he started collecting the images available during that period but of different locations in TamilNadu. The recent photographs also collected for the reference in order to compare and create the backgrounds for the animation. A fact is that there was no electricity in many houses during that time. Electricity was there only in the rich people's houses and in the community and public places. People used the rice mill's siren as an indicator to know the time. They had the habit of sleeping very early around seven or eight in the evening and wake up early in the morning. Their shelters were mostly made up of mud and covered with palm leaves and coconut leaves. Very few houses were made up of the burnt tiles on the roof.

⁸ image source - <https://www.top10khoj.com/hidden-tourist-spots-in-south-india/>



Figure 7: Recent Photographs of the house in Nazareth⁹

Like the same way, the character image references for the characters during that period were gathered. Luckily the filmmaker found out a family photograph which was ten years ahead of that period. These photographs helped in reducing the load in the process of character design. These photographs also gave a clear idea of how the characters looked, what kind of clothes do they wear, what kind of materials they used in their household works, and how their shelters would look.

⁹ image source - the filmmaker



Figure 8: Old family photo of Periya Piratti (10 years ahead of that period)¹⁰



Figure 9: Old photos of the same timeline of the different location¹¹

¹⁰ image source – the filmmaker

¹¹ image source - <http://121clicks.com/inspirations/50-old-and-vintage-madras-chennai-photos>

2.2.3 Visual References:

The story genre requires something very organic in the visual style. To get the right visual for the story, the filmmaker referred to many short animation films and even a few feature films. The observations made after watching these movies were, how they have designed the Characters that the movie requires and also the medium and style that they have used in creating the movie. The following are the movies which helped the filmmaker to have a better understanding of the visual treatment for this movie.

- A Gong [9]
- Good Morning Mumbai [10]
- Death of a Father [11]
- El Empleo [12]
- The Swallows of Kabul [13]
- Grave of the fireflies [14]
- KGF: Chapter 01 [15]
- Paradesi [16] and few of the above movies were discussed below.

2.2.3.1 A Gong:

A gong means Grandpa. It's a Taiwanese movie and the visuals of this movie defines the culture and place of that location. People of that region can easily recognise that the movie is from their culture. The movie was directed by Zozo Jhen et al [9].

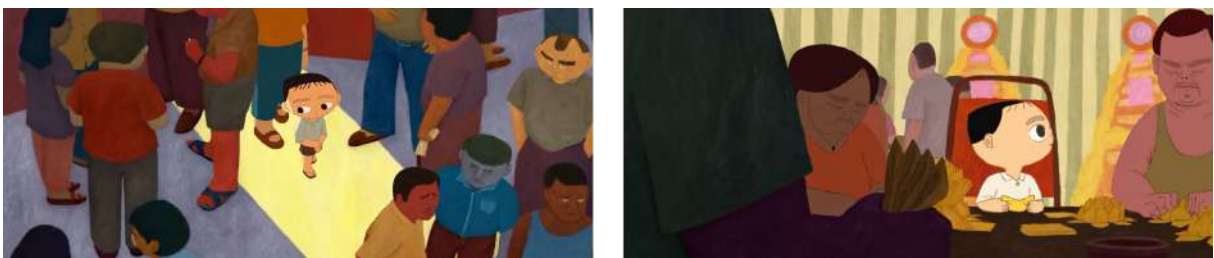


Figure 10: Screenshots from the movie A GONG¹²

The story is about a young boy who lost his grandfather who is the only relative for him. After his death, what are the emotions does the boy goes through was pictured emotionally in this movie. The animators have followed the oil pastel style for making this movie. The character design and the visual styles adopted were completely minimal, stylised, yet powerful enough to show the ethnicity, culture and emotions.

¹² image source - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G1pyiPculHY>



Figure 11: Color explorations of Grandfather's character¹³

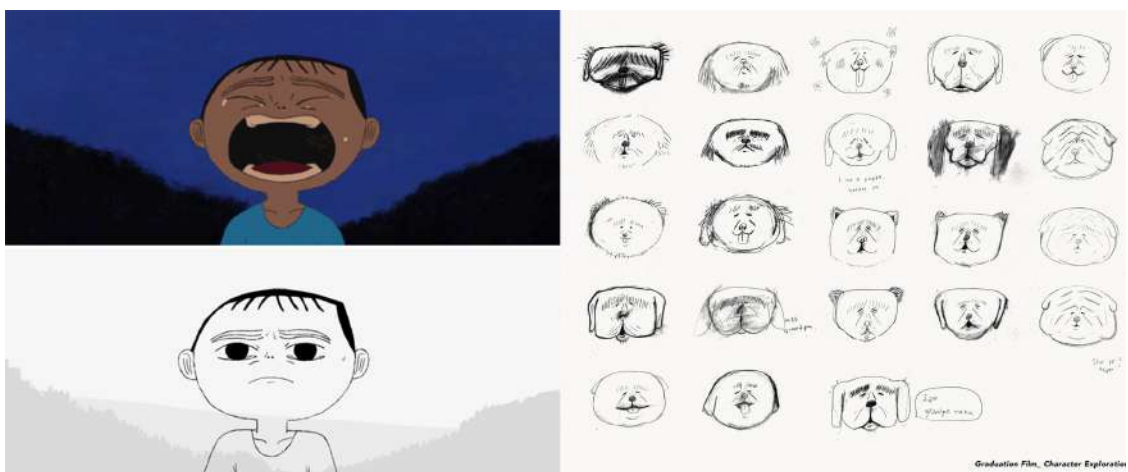


Figure 12: left side- Comparison of animatic with final movie, right side-Character explorations of dog's character¹³

¹³ image source - <https://agonganimatedshort.tumblr.com/>

2.2.3.2 Good Morning Mumbai:

Good Morning Mumbai [10] is an animation short film by Troy Vasanth and Rajesh Thakare. The story is about a slum tenant who sets out to do his morning duties and a series of unfortunate events that causes a barrier for the purpose he had set for. He finds a way out and accomplishes his goal which in turn seeds another problem for a different group of people. The film depicts the basic problems caused by urban growth such as lack of space and infrastructure, sanitation problems, Pollution, density and the inter relationship with each other.



Figure 13: A Screenshot from the movie GOOD MORNING MUMBAI¹⁴

This movie adopted the Caricature style for the character design. The directors tried to incorporate both the 2D and 3D animation style into this movie. The usage of colours, genre selected for this story and the representation of the Mumbai city made this movie very lively and remained true to the Mumbai slum culture.



Figure 14: A Screenshot from the movie GOOD MORNING MUMBAI

¹⁴ image source - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cTxJ6nekr_A

2.2.3.3 The Swallows of Kabul:

The Swallows of Kabul [13] is a French animated feature film directed by Zabou Breitman and Elea Gobe Mevellec. The story is based on the novel of same name by Yasmina Khadra. The movie was released at Cannes Film Festival 2019. The visual style adopted in this movie was outstanding. The characters were simple yet followed realism in the design. The watercolour was the medium of this movie. The Filmmaker of Periya Piratti got impressed by the trailer of this movie and planned to try same kind of look and feel in his movie.



Figure 15: Few scenes from the trailer¹⁵

Though the movie was not watched, the summary of the novel gave the idea of the story line. Set in Kabul under the rule of the Taliban, this extraordinary novel takes readers into the lives of two couples: Mohsen, who comes from a family of wealthy shopkeepers whom the Taliban has destroyed; Zunaira, his wife, exceedingly beautiful, who was once a brilliant teacher and is now no longer allowed to leave her home without an escort or covering her face. Intersecting their world is Atiq, a prison keeper, a man who has sincerely adopted the Taliban ideology and struggles to keep his faith, and his wife, Musarrat, who once rescued Atiq and is now dying of sickness and despair. Desperate, exhausted Mohsen wanders through Kabul when he is

¹⁵ image source - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e6zyQ7Ek_vk

surrounded by a crowd about to stone an adulterous woman. Numbed by the hysterical atmosphere and drawn into their rage, he too throws stones at the face of the condemned woman buried up to her waist. With this gesture, the lives of all four protagonists move toward their destinies [17].



Figure 16: Watercolor effect in the movie¹⁶

The entire mood of the movie was purely set by the character design and the watercolour medium. The Characters were designed little fluid with bold strokes. The usage of the lighting and composition of the scenes took this movie to next level.

2.2.3.4 Grave of the fireflies:

Grave of the fireflies [14] was one of the most emotional animation movies. It was directed by the famous Isao Takahata of Studio Ghibli. The story was about a young boy and his little sister struggle to survive in Japan during World War II. The impact after watching this movie remained even after four days of watching.

The storyline was excellent. The composition and the backgrounds made for this movie were stunning. They helped a lot as a reference in making this movie Periya Piratti. The minimal details in the characters and maximum details in backgrounds is one of the characteristics of all the Studio Ghibli's creations, which helped the animators in focusing more on the expressions and takes everyone into the movie.

¹⁶ image source - <https://www.catsuka.com/news/2017-05-03/les-hirondelles-de-kaboul-decouvrez-le-pilote-long-metrage-de-zabou-breitman-et-elea-gobbe-mevelllec>



Figure 17: Screenshots from the movie¹⁷



Figure 18: Rough sketch and the final shot in the movie^{18,17}

¹⁷ image source - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vldWhL5JQxg>

¹⁸ image source - https://ghibli.fandom.com/wiki/Grave_of_the_Fireflies/Gallery

2.3 Reviews and Discussions:

There were three project reviews during the entire course of the project work. In each review, the professors of Department of Design gave their opinions and corrections to be made, and all those changes rectified in the subsequent analyses.

2.3.1 Review 01:

On the first review, the initial character design, a rough storyboard, and animatic along with the scratch voiceover were shown.

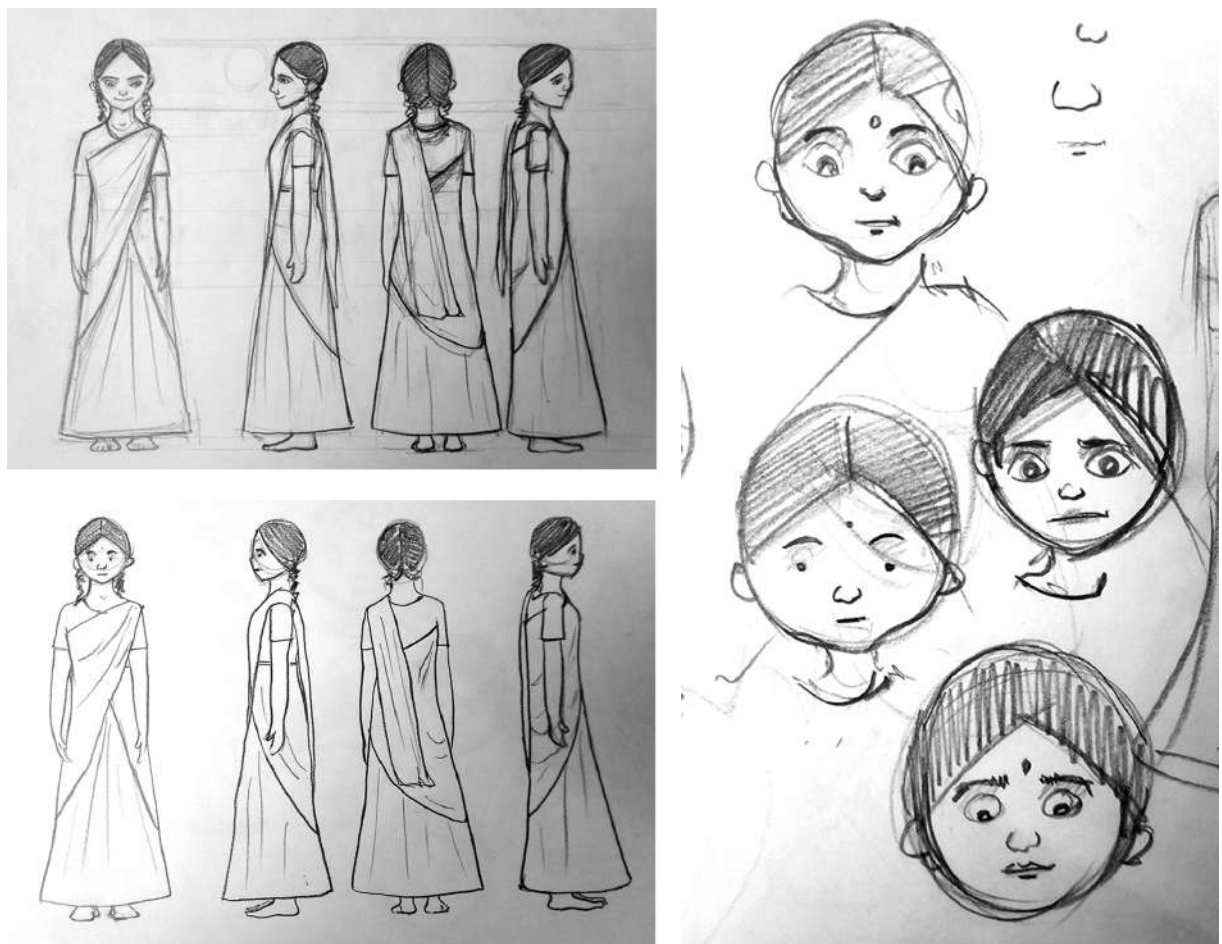


Figure 19: Character Explorations shown in review 01

The feedback given was to improvise the character design, work on the visual treatment, and also on the story climax. These were rectified and put up for the second review.

2.3.2 Review 02:

During the second review, the feedback given was to work more on the visual treatment of the film so that the film can carry the more organic feel of that locality, similar to ‘A Gong’ short film and the Characters were also asked to redesign because the characters had more details on them, which will be very hard to maintain consistency and animate in a short span.



Figure 20: Digitally painted scene, one of the explorations for the visual treatment

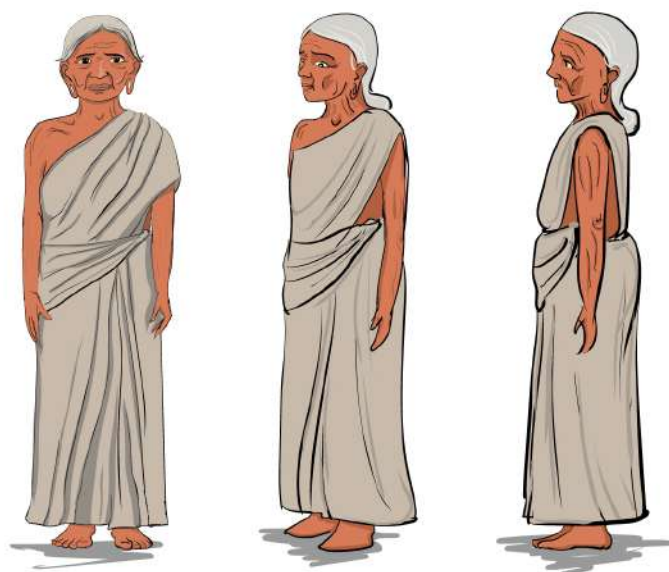


Figure 21: Rejected Character design of Grandmother

2.3.3 Review 03:

Then for the third review, the characters were redesigned carefully by keeping up the previous feedback in mind. The improved version of animatic was also shown. The feedback on the Character design was good but for the animatic it's not.

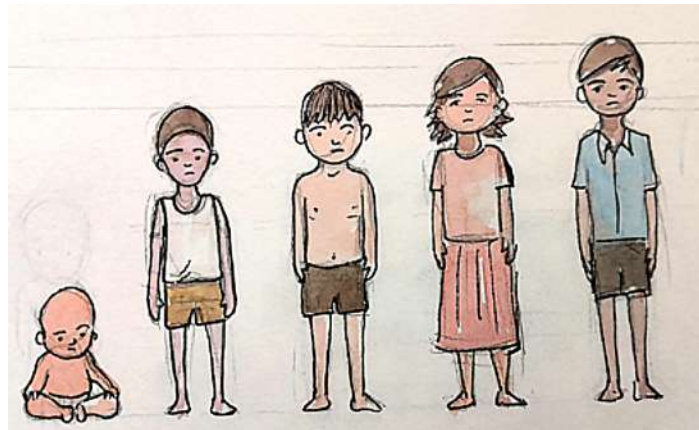


Figure 22: Character design of the sibling

The camera angles used in the animatic was mostly long shots and medium shots. But to convey the emotions in, the film the close-up shots and even extreme close up shots were suggested. Even the staging of the Characters, continuity of the shot during the conversation were poorly established. So, this required the redesign of the storyboarding with proper cinematography.

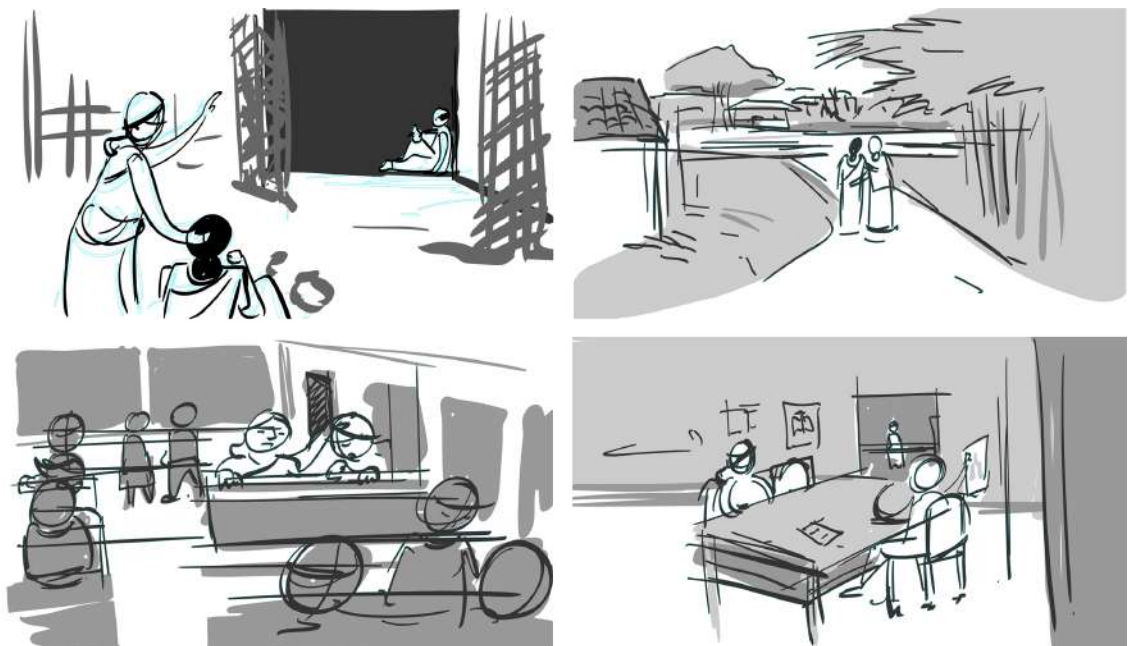


Figure 23: Poorly made scenes of the animatic

2.4 Improving required skills:

The Filmmaker wanted this movie to be a challenging one. So, he decided to approach this movie with the realistic character style and also the characters should look minimal and simple. But he was not good at drawing human anatomy. This weakness in anatomy made him spend a few weeks before the production of the movie in understanding and learning human anatomy. The hand-drawn animation required some high-level skills in the gesture drawing. So, the Filmmaker practised the gesture drawing to get the fluidity and mood of the pose in the sketching.

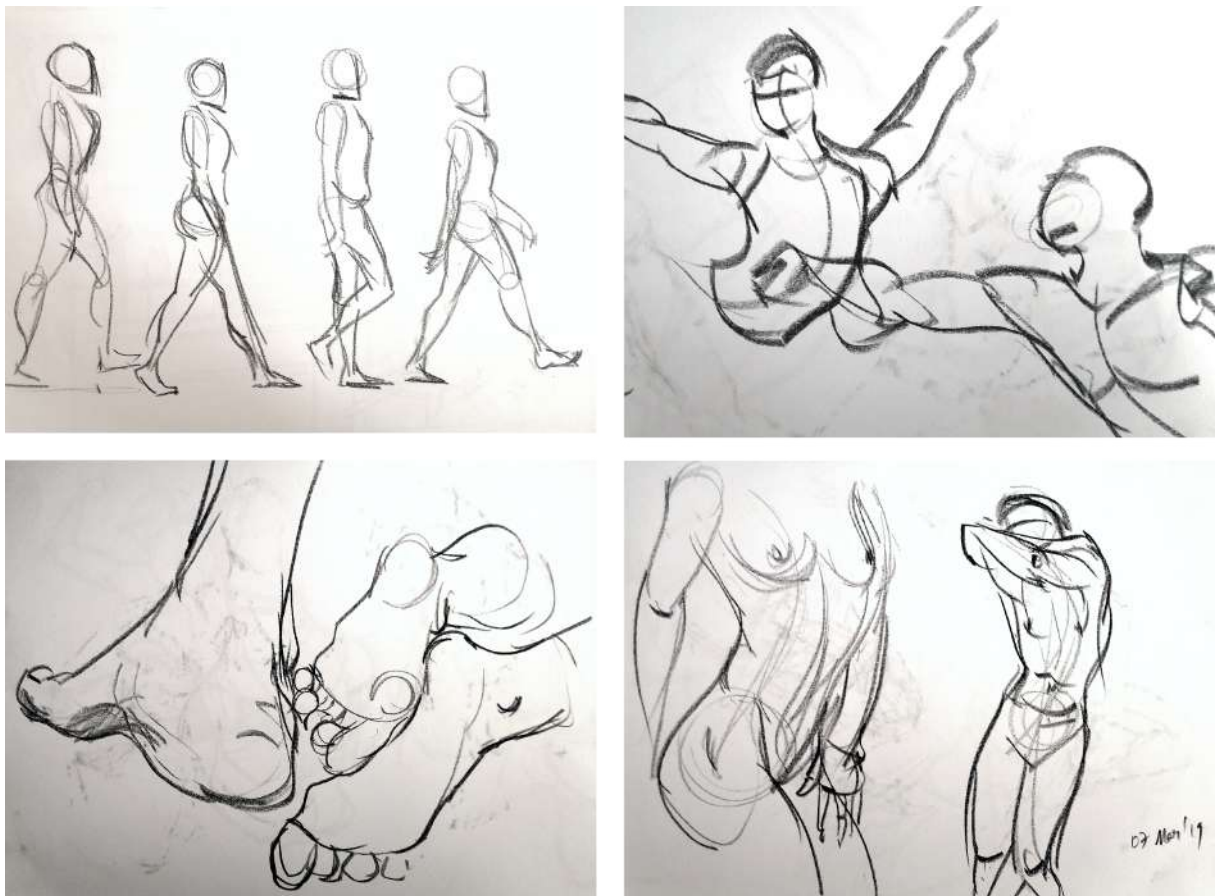


Figure 24: Sketches of Gesture and Anatomy study

An extra study on the compositions and characters of any movie was required in order to get an idea on how the animation movies were made and how the animators approached them.

2.5 Supplementary Study:

The Filmmaker did not have any experience in animating a movie this long. So, he wanted to know more about the making process. So, he decided to refer two books from two legendary animation studios. One is “The Art of Spirited Away” [18] from the great animator Miyazaki of famous Studio Ghibli, and the other one is “The Art of Croods” [19] by Dreamworks Animation. Both books are very contrast in nature. The former shows the Eastern style of animation, and the later shows the Western style of animation. It gave much knowledge of the movie-making process, how to design a Character, how to design backgrounds, lighting, shadows and colour choice. They also helped in arranging the composition of a scene.



Figure 25: Art style of *SPIRITED AWAY* movie and *CROODS* movie

It was vital to learn Cinematography techniques too. This technique can make the shot more dynamic and exciting. It is essential to know the importance of establishing a scene, fixing long shot, medium shot, close up shot, extreme close up shot and maintaining 180-rule in the movie making. At last, the transition techniques between the scenes observed with care in order to maintain proper continuity in the movie.



Figure 26: Image showing how to establish continuity for a conversation¹⁹

¹⁹ image source - <http://www.animatedspirit.com/book-review-the-five-cs-of-cinematography-part-1-camera-angles/>

2.6 Storyboard:

After rectifying all the feedback given during the project reviews, the entire storyboard got reworked. The knowledge gained during the supplementary study was massive. It helped in creating decent camera angles for the animation. The final storyboarding of the animation shown below,



MOM VOMITS BLOOD

④

EXT - CLOSE UP
SHOT
(ZOOM IN)



GRANDMA RUSHES TO MOM

⑤

(ZOOM-OUT)



GRANDMA ASKS DAD TO TAKE
HER TO HOSPITAL, BUT HE REFUSES

⑥

CUT SHOT

INSIDE HOME



GRANDMA TAKES MOM TO HOSPITAL

⑦

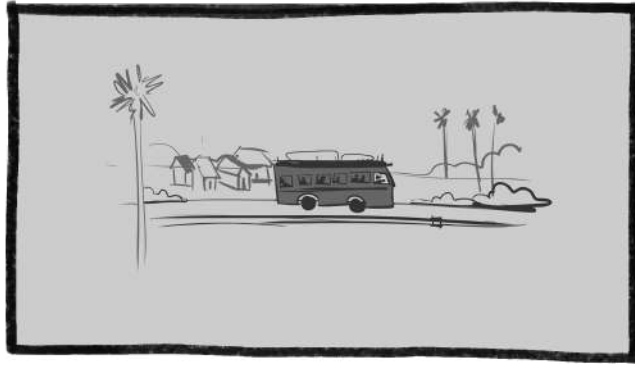
CUT /
OUTSIDE HOME



ON BUS

⑧

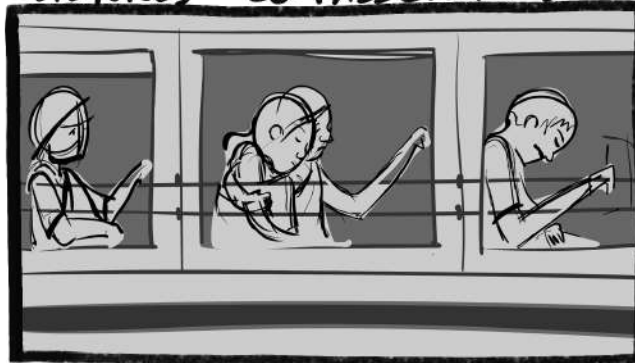
LONG SHOT



COUGHS CONTINUOUSLY WHICH
DISTURBS CO-PASSENGERS

⑨

ZOOM-IN
+
ADD WIGGLE
FOR BUS FX



DOCTOR EXAMINES HER REPORT

⑩

INSIDE
HOSPITAL
|
ADD BLUR TO
FG1 CHARACTER



DOCTOR'S SHOCKING REVEAL

⑪

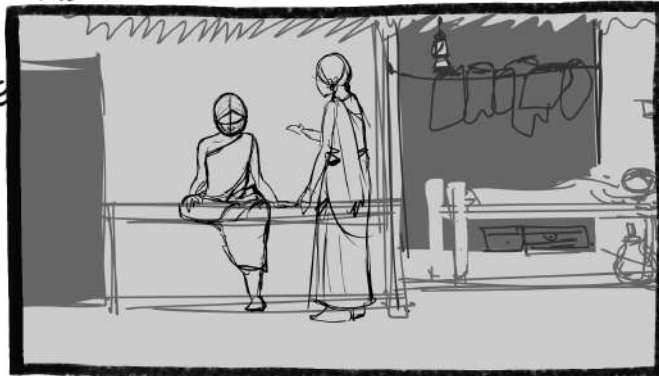
CHANGE
CAMERA ANGLE
BASED ON
DIALOGUES
[(180-Rule)
- keep in mind



GRANDMA IN SAD, GIRL ENQUIRES ABOUT MOM

⑫ HOSPITAL
FOCUS ON GRANDMA | CHANGE BG
HOME

INSIDE HOME



GRANDMA REVEALS THE TRUTH

⑬

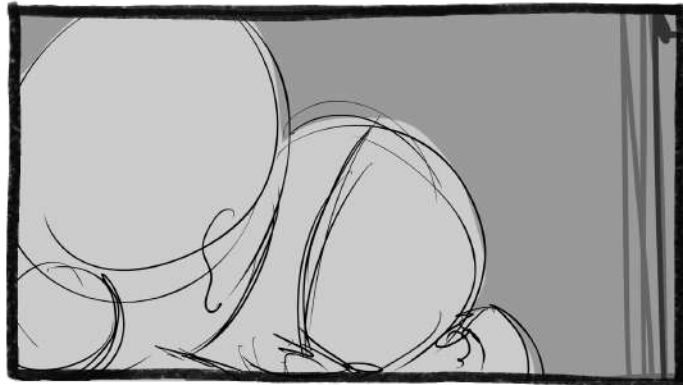
ZOOM-IN SHOT



GIRL WAS BROKEN

⑭

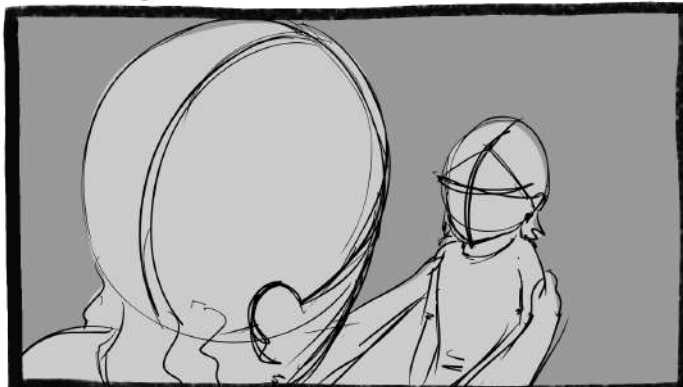
EXT.
CLOSE-UP SHOT
SHOULDER LVL
BG BLUR



SIBLINGS CALL GIRL TO PLAY
(IMMATURITY OF SIBLINGS)

⑮

FOCUS ON SMALL GIRL
|
PAN DOWN ALONG GIRL
BENDS DOWN



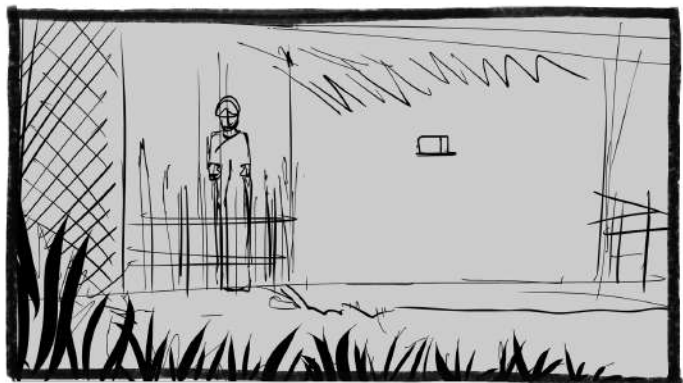
NEIGHBOURS PAYS LAST VISIT

①⑥ CUT SHOT + HYPERLAPSE OF THE VISITORS + DAY & NIGHT SCENE



THINKING OF MOM & CRYs

①⑦ CUT SHOT + NIGHT SCENE + OUTSIDE HOME



FEELING HELPLESS

①⑧ (ZOOM-IN)



SHE HEARS A VOICE & SEARCHES FOR IT

①⑨ CUT + ANGLE CHANGE



GAINS HOPE AFTER THE VOICE FROM CHURCH

20

CUT
+
BACK ANGLE



KNEELS DOWN NEAR MOM & PRAYS

21

CUT
+
CLOSE
UP
SHOT



PRAYS WHOLE-HEARTEDLY

22

ZOOM-IN
+
CLOSE-UP
SHOT



23

FADE
OUT
+
BLACK
SCREEN



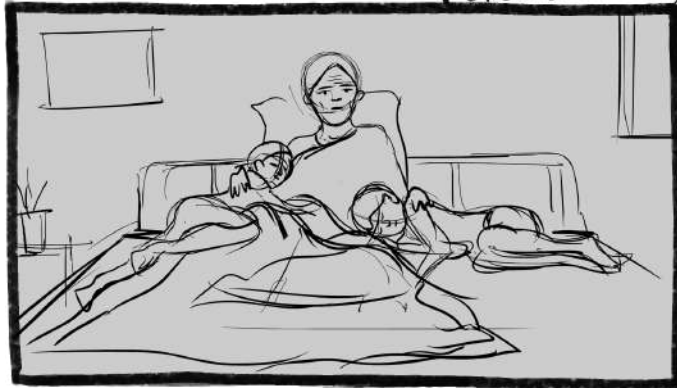
GIRL (GROWN OLD) OPENS DOOR TO
CHECK HER KIDS

(24)
FADE
OUT



KIDS ARE SLEEPING WITH MOM
(GROWN OLD)

(25)
CUT



CLOSES THE DOOR HAPPILY

(26)
CUT
BACK



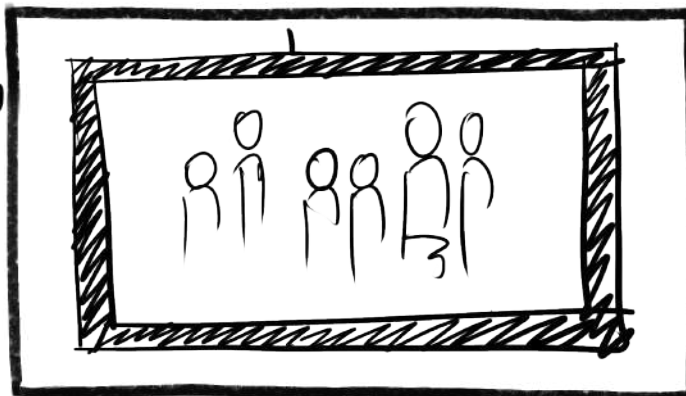
(27)



HAPPY FAMILY

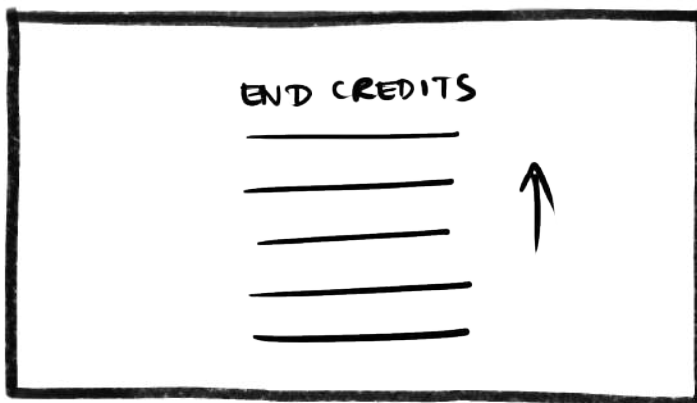
28

ZOOM IN
TO
PHOTO



29

PHOTO
MOVES UP
+
CREDITS
PLAYS
UP



Chapter 03

Production

3.1 Choosing Style and Medium:

The literature reviews and references did during the pre-production gave healthy basement for the production works. The production work started with the sketching of the characters in different styles. Initially, the Filmmaker thought of making realistic characters, but then they become very difficult while making the animation in such a short period. The details in the characters are removed in the consecutive phase of the iterations. The final characters looked minimalistic yet had matured and organic look and feel. Choosing the right medium for the animation became another concern while working. The backgrounds and the characters were planned to made digitally using Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Animate. But then the output of the digital background was not entirely convincing. So, the backgrounds were done hand painted. The watercolour was the medium chosen to do these works. Many experiments were done on the watercolour paper to get the right effect. Finally, the watercolour paper of 200gsm worked out the best among all. Hence all the backgrounds were done on the same paper and digitally scanned for the animation.



Figure 27: Watercolor background, left was done in cartridge sheet and right was with canson watercolor paper

The Characters were done digitally on the Adobe Animate because the output suited the character style very much and also the output file size was very less when compared to other software like TVPaint, Krita and Photoshop. Hence, they were done on the Adobe Animate.

3.2 Character design:

The main idea of the Character design was to keep it simple. Almost all the characters of this movie were extracted from the real-life family members. The story timeline was the early 1980s, but whereas the photos of the real family members found were around 1990s. The characters were designed five years younger than in the photo.



Figure 28: Photograph of real family members



Figure 29: Illustrated family members for the movie

3.2.1 Ananthi or Ananthammal:

Ananthi (the girl) is the protagonist of the movie. She is a teenager and the elder daughter of Periya Piratti. She grows upon seeing her family's severe scenarios, which makes her a tough and responsible girl. She just finished high school and waiting for higher education. Her primary work in the family is to look after the kids and doing small household needs. She is recognized by the round face and sandal colour half-saree dress.

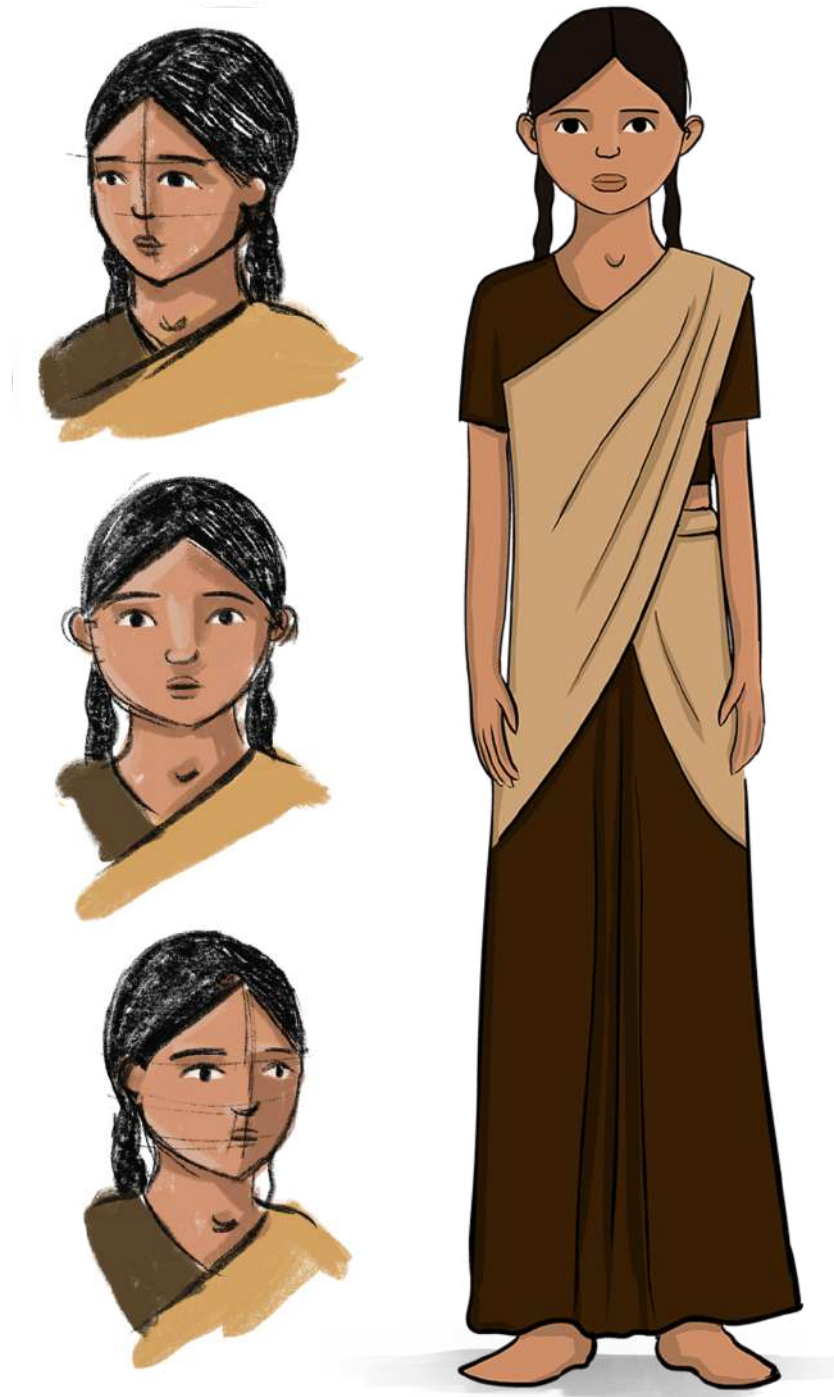


Figure 30: Final Character design of Ananthi

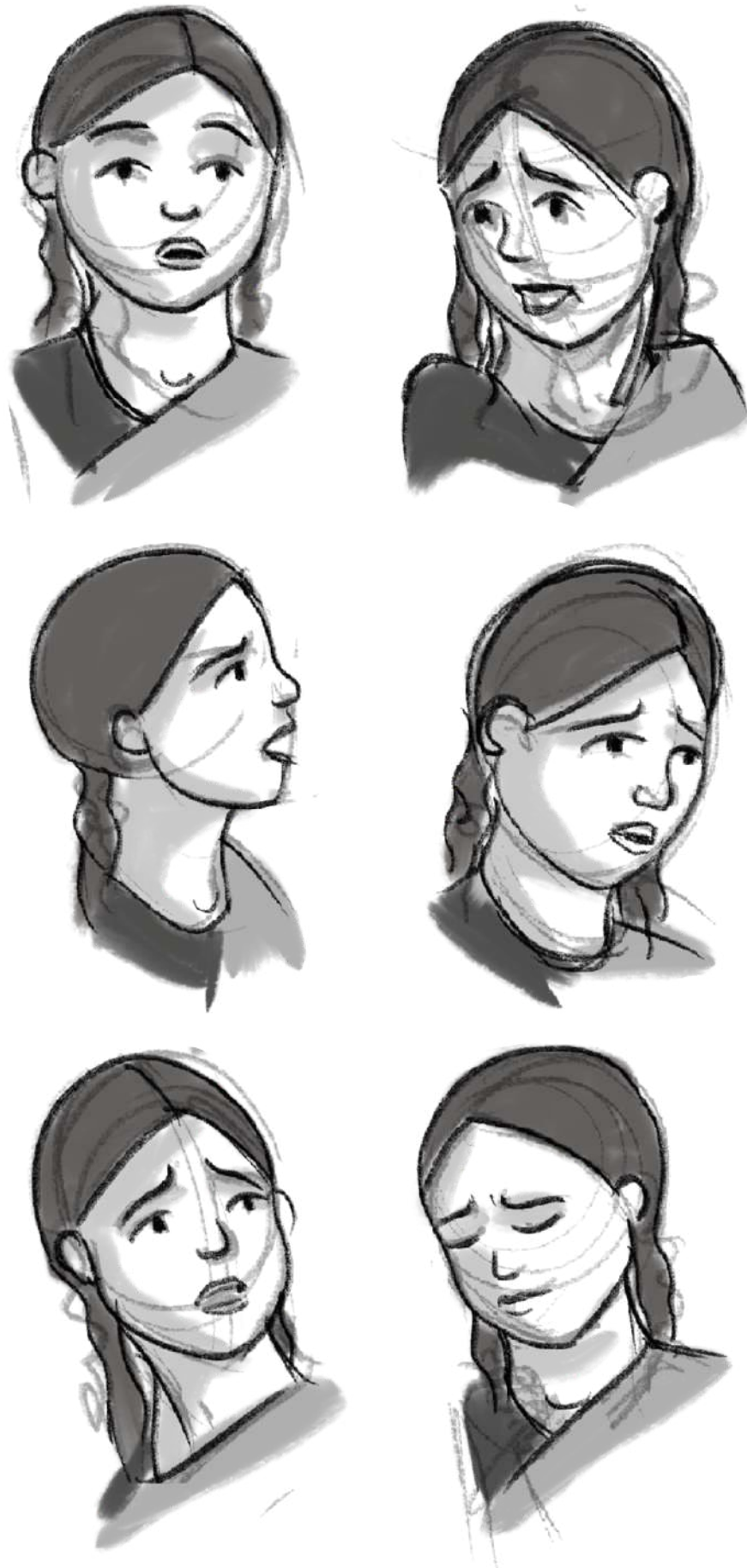


Figure 31: Character Ananthi - Expression sheet

3.2.2 Periya Piratti:

Periya Piratti (her mom) is the titular character of this movie. She is a 40 years old lady. She is the only daughter of Avudaiammal (grandma role in this movie). She is married to Daniel (husband) and has six kids. She works all for the family and takes care of everyone; in short words, she holds the entire family together. She suffers from severe Tuberculosis. The slightly elongated face with green saree recognises her.

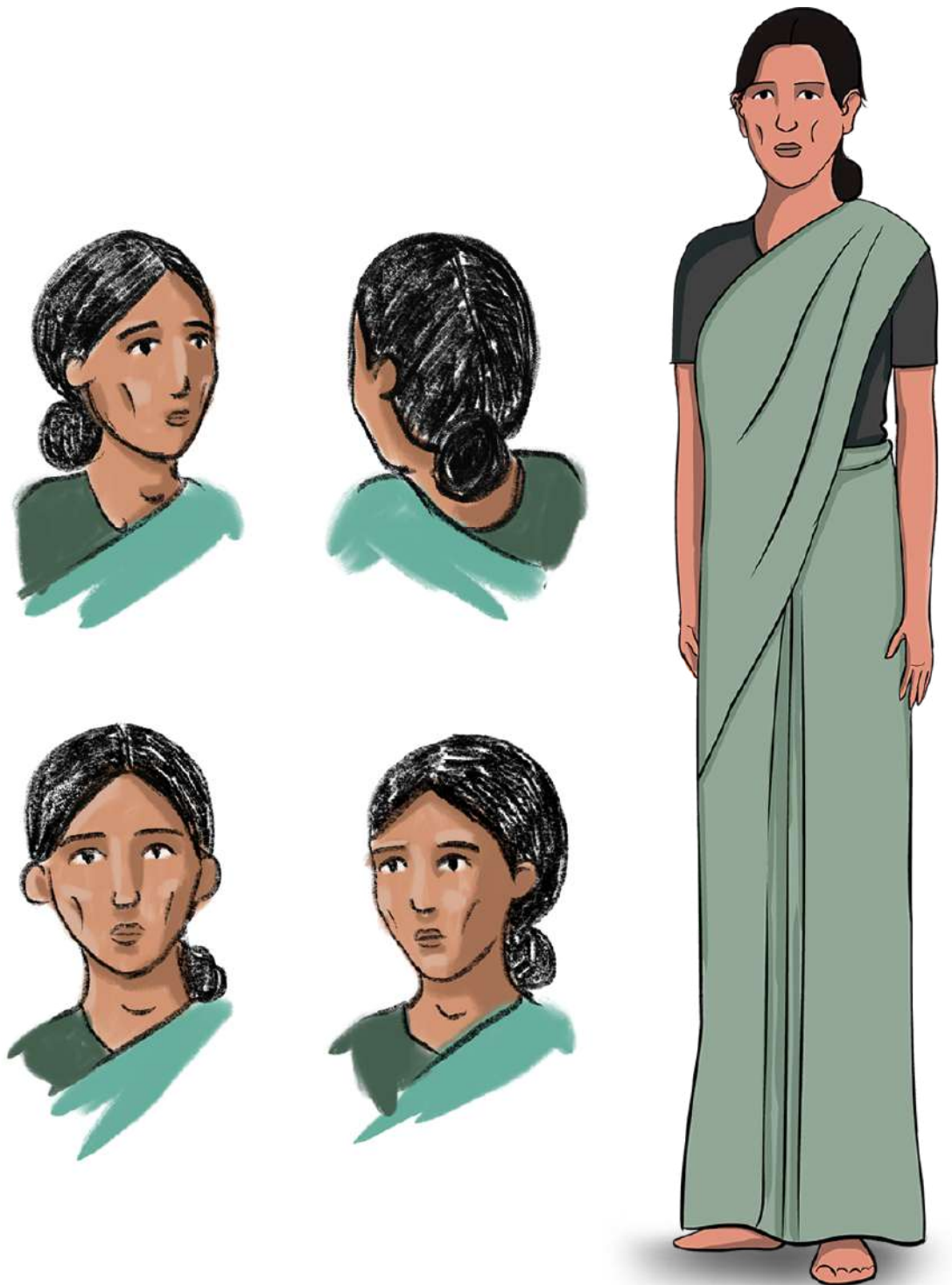


Figure 32: Final character design of Periya Piratti

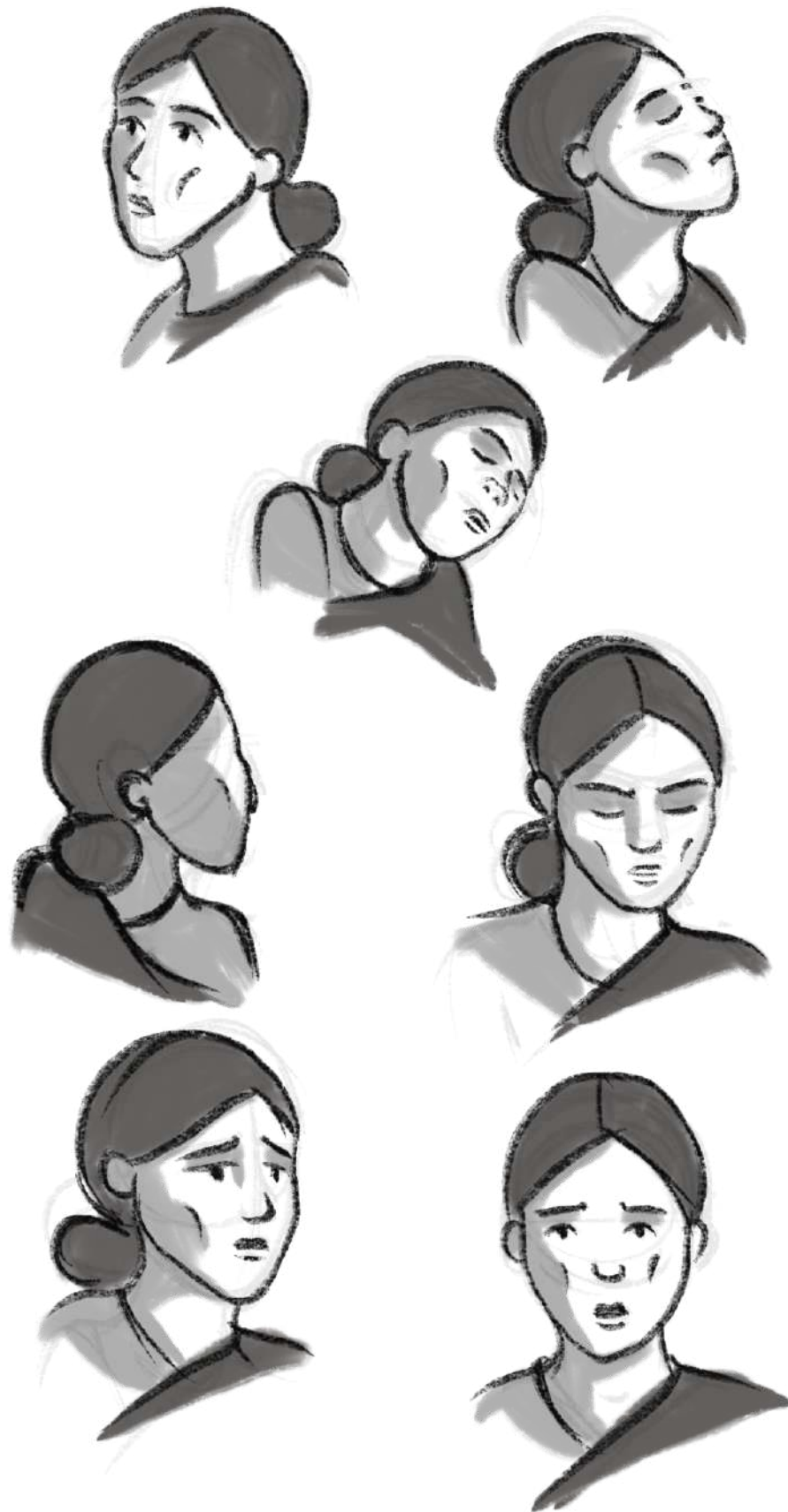


Figure 33: Expression sheet for Periya Piratti character

3.2.3 Avudaiammal:

Avudaiammal (her grandma), an older person of the house was around 70 years old. She was called as 'Paatti' (means grandma) in the movie by Ananthi. The grandma is kind, soft nature character and speaks tenderly. She is very active and hardworking village women who take care of the family whenever Periya Piratti (her daughter) cannot do so. The old face with long ears identifies her. The long ears are because of the heavy earrings that she used to wear. Women wearing a jacket for the saree became as a habit only in that time since she is an old lady, does not have an interest in fashion.

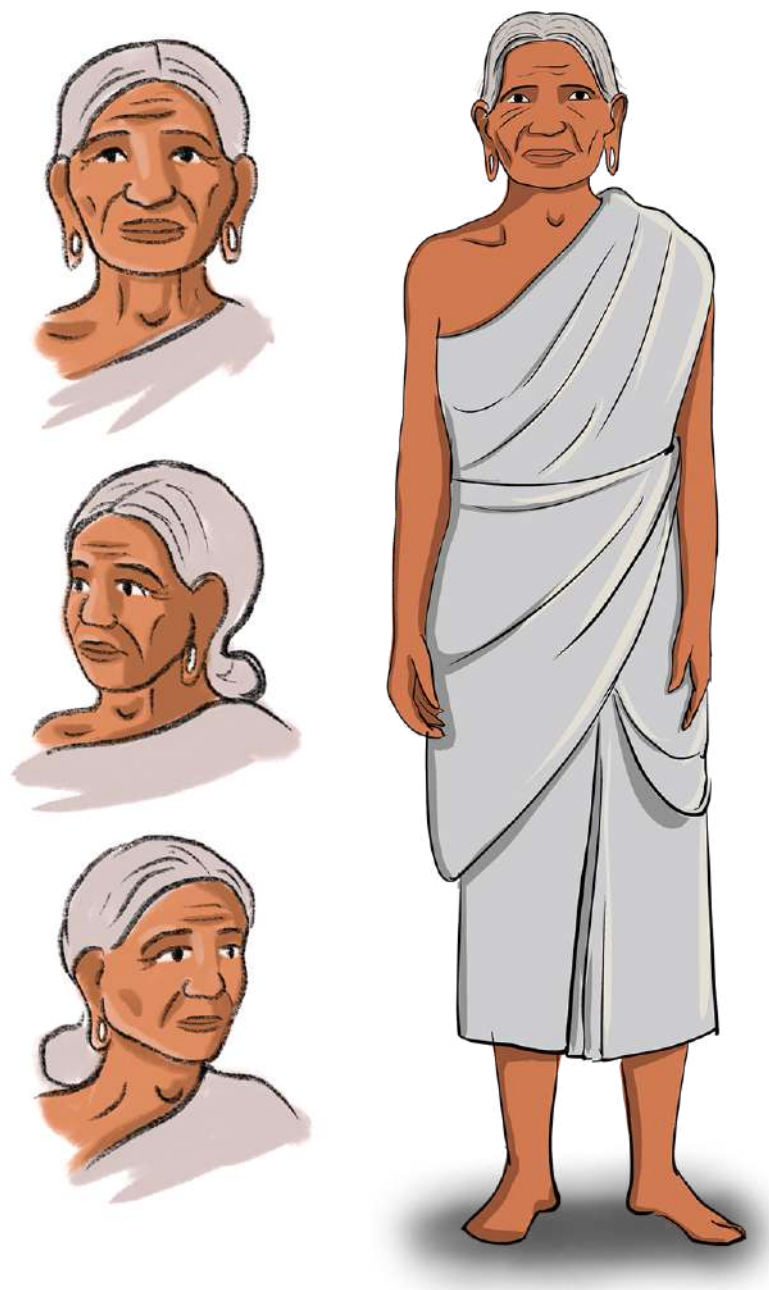


Figure 34: Final character design of Avudaiammal



Figure 35: Photograph vs Illustrated Character

3.2.4 Daniel:

Daniel (her dad) is a 50-year-old man who is a very irresponsible family man. He works very hard, but he spends all the money just for getting alcohol. He rarely visits the house because most of the time he spends the time in the wooden workshop, where he works, drinks and sleeps. He does not know what happens in the family. He is a bald and the shirtless guy just wearing a lungi.



Figure 36: Initial character design and final character design

3.2.5 Siblings:

Apart from Ananthi, Periya Piratti had four sons and a daughter, so totally six. All these kids were very young and age less than ten. They were playful, innocent and immature to understand the family's crisis. Their age difference between themselves will be around one or two years.

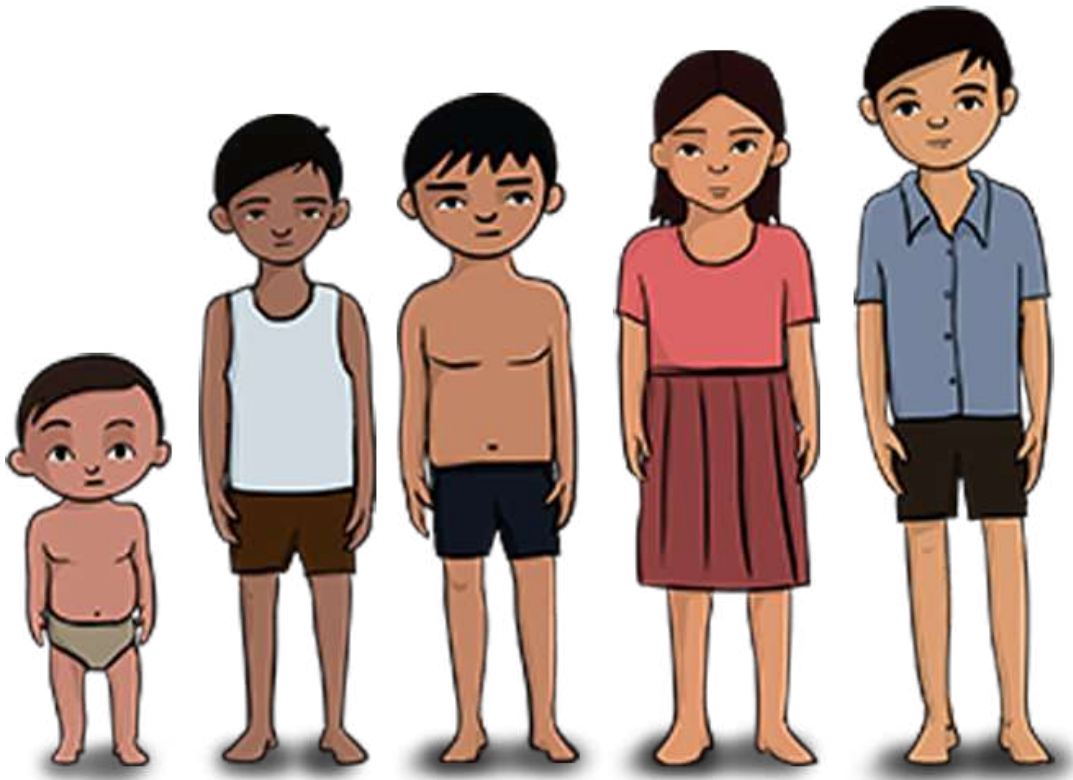


Figure 37: Siblings of Ananthi standing based on their age

3.3 Background design:

The background design seemed to be very easy in the initial stage. Once the Filmmaker started working on it, he found difficulties in composition, lighting and shadows and colours. An initial study on a few backgrounds done by the famous studios like Disney, Studio Ghibli, Pixar and DreamWorks was done. The story had both the night scenes and day scenes. Hence creating backgrounds became a challenging part. The colour values were also studied along with the composition to create depth in the required backgrounds for the movie. The Filmmaker tried his best in painting the backgrounds.

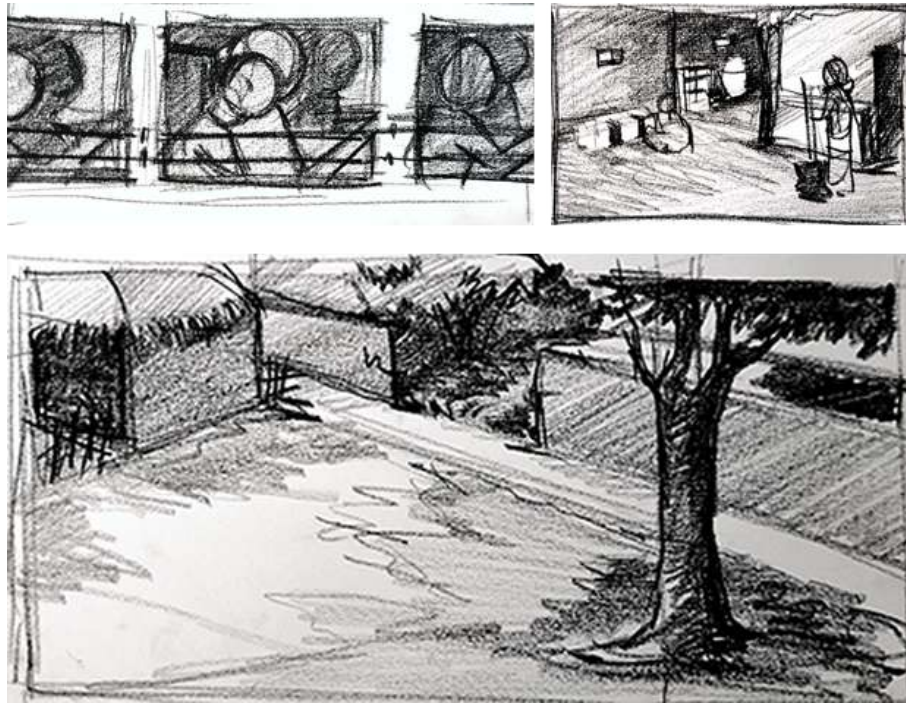


Figure 38: Value study and composition study for background design



Figure 39: images of color study of night scenes



Figure 40: Hand-painted backgrounds

3.4 Animation:

The real work started from here. The storyboarding of the movie, Character design and the model sheet along with the schedule was put up on the board. Everything was set to go. The first step the Filmmaker made was the animatic of the movie. The refined scratch voiceover was recorded and the timing, and the key poses were placed accordingly.

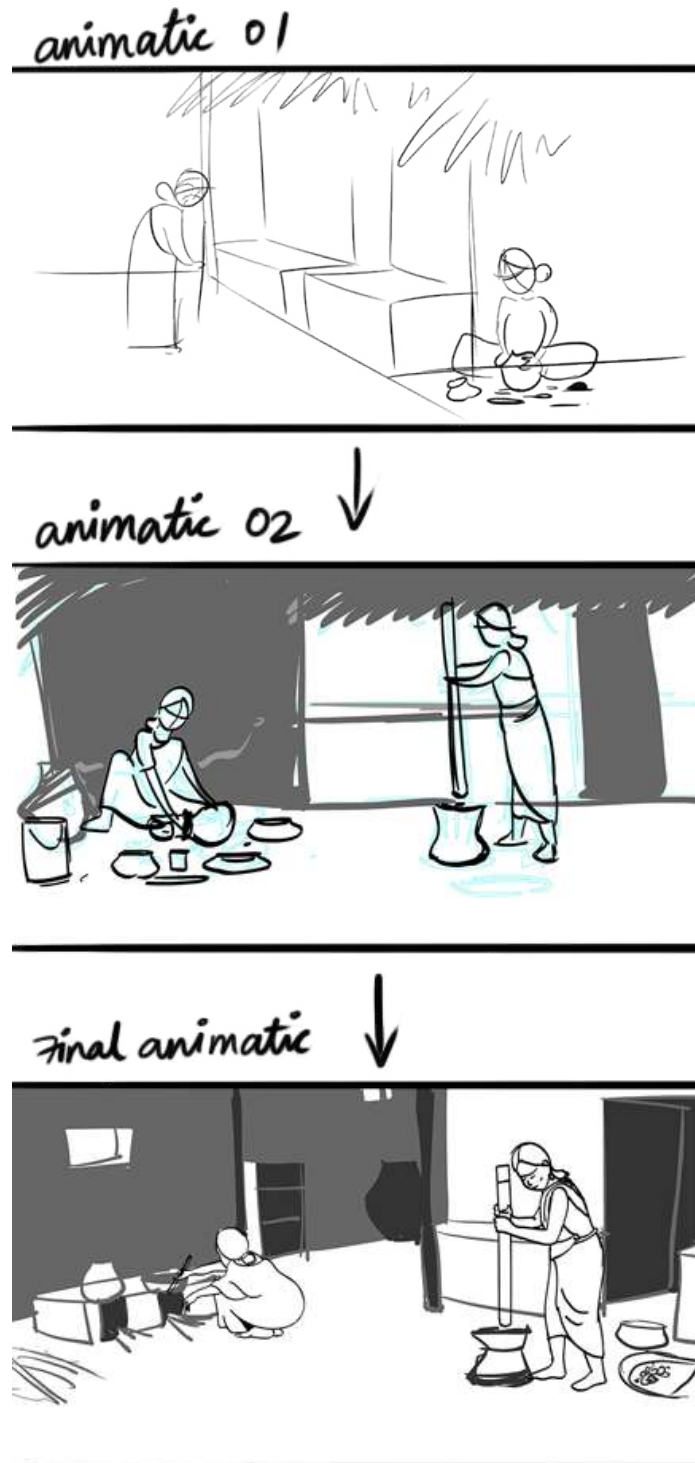


Figure 41: Scene progress during the course of animatic refinement after reviews

During the animation, there was a difficulty in getting the proper references for the movement. So, the Filmmaker acted out himself all the required shots and used that as the reference. After doing so, the critical observation from those references was the micro details in the movements. This observation helped a lot in the timing and the movement of the characters in the animation.

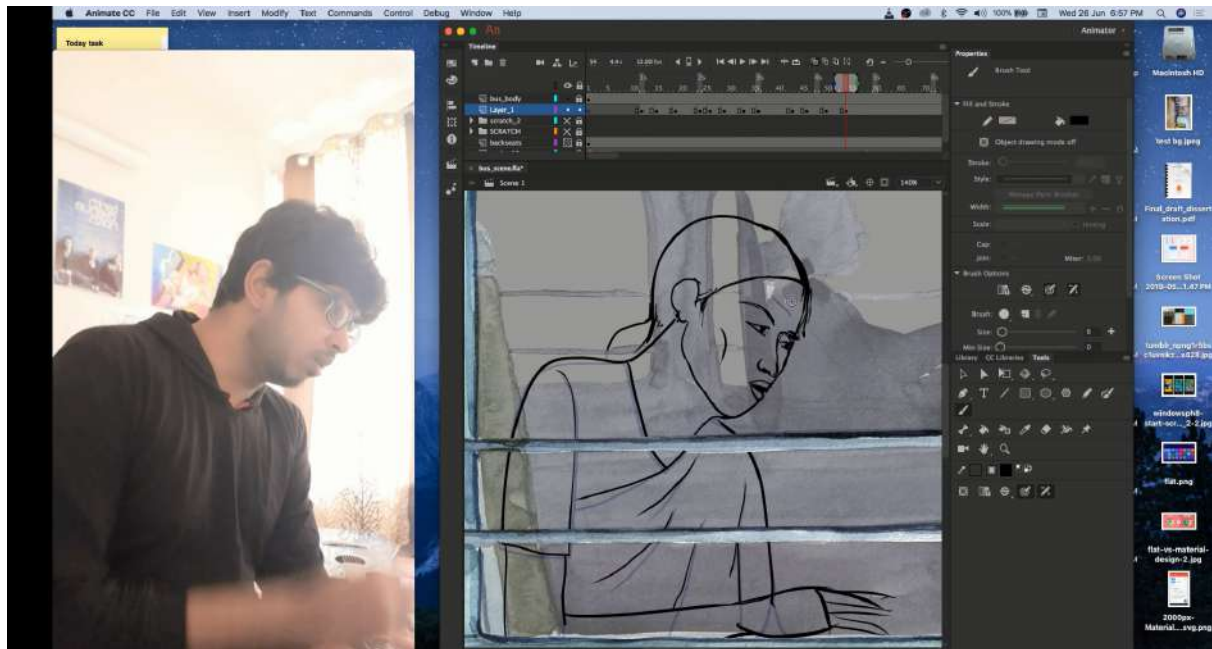


Figure 42: Animation using reference

Once all the keyframes were placed, the remaining frames were filled by pose to pose animation principle. The entire animation would take a long time to finish. Since the filmmaker had very little time for the animation before the final submission, the entire animation was planned to draw in two's. Instead of this, the frame rate of the animation was reduced to half i.e.12 fps, and the frames were filled by one's.

After completion of this, the characters were cleaned up to get the final outline version of the animation. All the anatomy and the expressions in the characters were also fixed in this process. Then the steps were taken to fill colours over the characters. The colours and the shadows were filled in separate layers so that if any changes required at later part can be done quickly. Every character was also drawn in a separate layer for the convenience and coloured in the same way. The entire animation in production took less time than the pre-production works and character design.

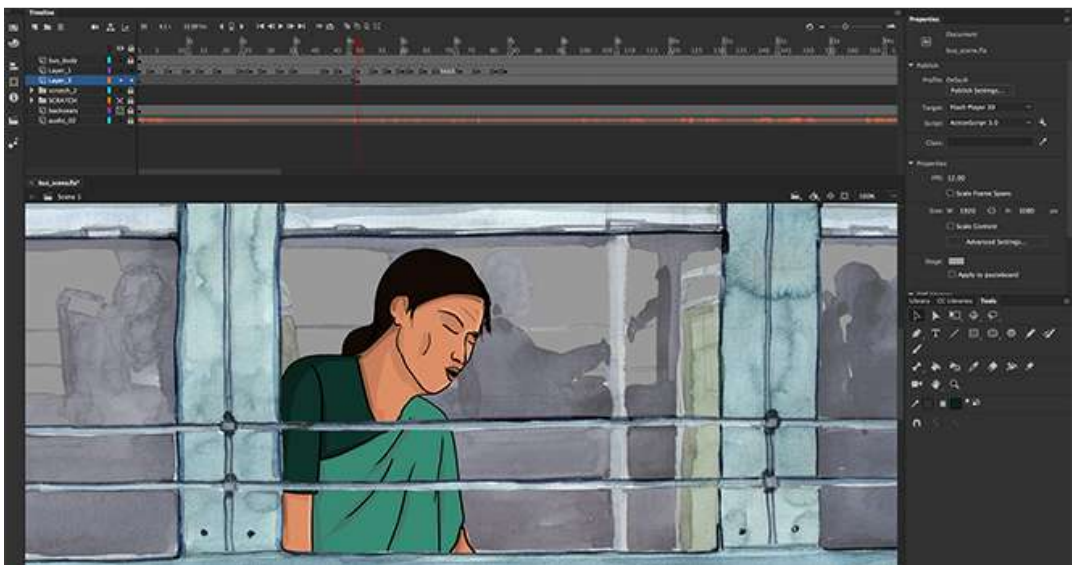
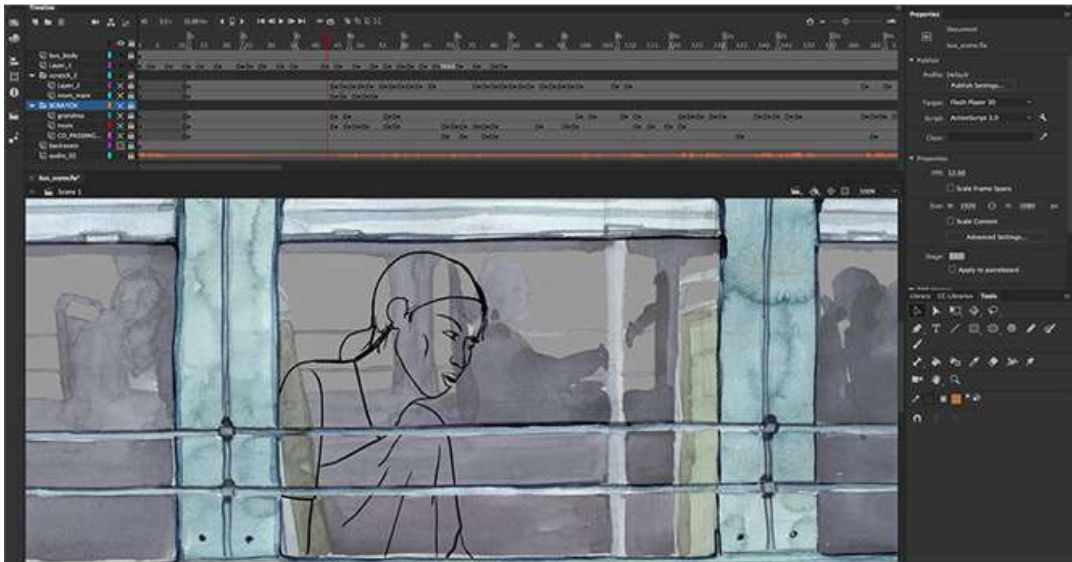


Figure 43: Scene progress from scratch stage to coloring stage

Chapter 04

Post-Production

4.1 Editing and Compositing:

The completed outline version of the animation was then taken into Adobe AfterEffects for the compositing. The backgrounds were also scanned and imported into the software. All the necessary effects, editing, masking and the colour corrections were made in the background and the animation. Most of the background editing was done in Adobe Photoshop and the animation in Adobe AfterEffects. This part of the animation is very crucial as they have the potential to uplift or degrade the quality of the movie. The entire animation is then appropriately textured to get rid of the vector style in the character animations. The texturing of the characters was done with the same texture of the paper, which is used for painting the backgrounds. The changes were made until the desired quality is achieved.

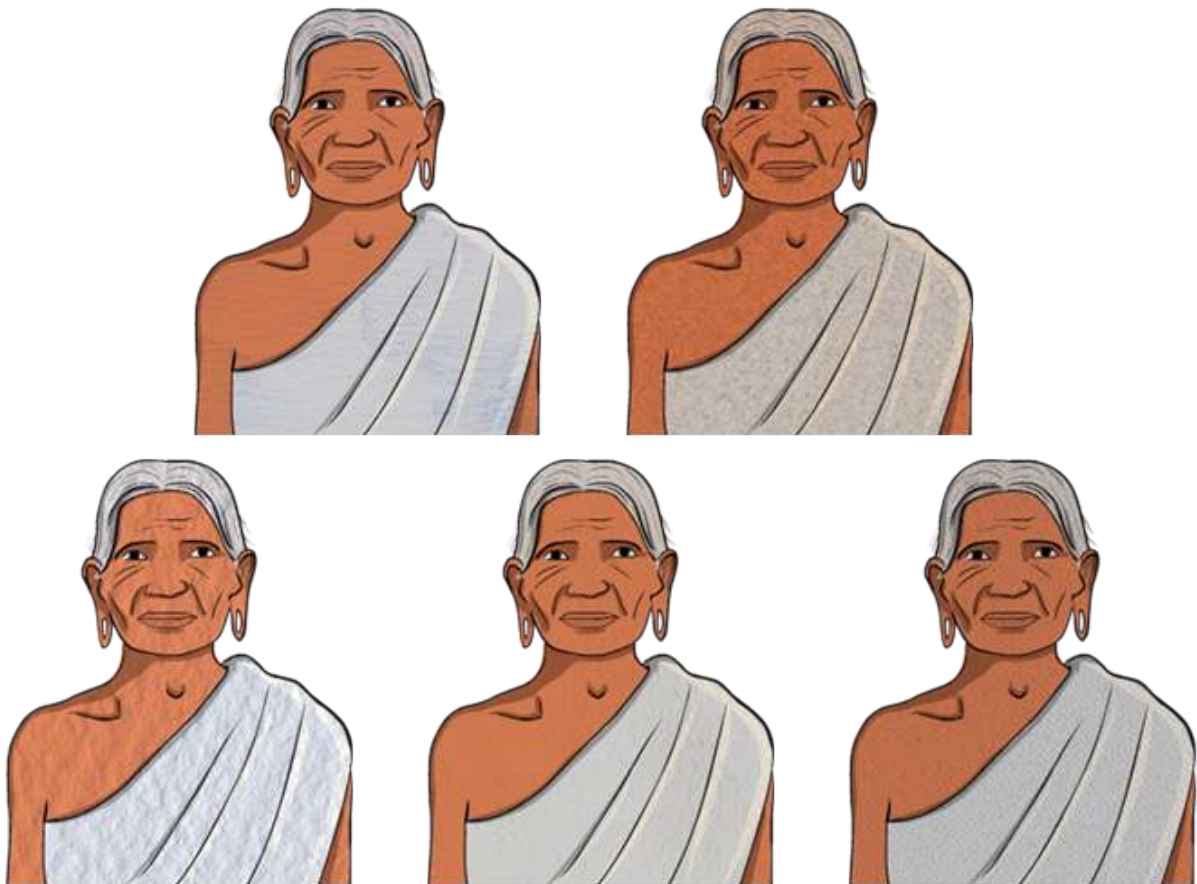


Figure 44: Texture explorations for the characters

The challenges faced during the compositing is the arrangement of the elements in the scenes. Few elements were missed during the production, so they were made in the later stage in Adobe Photoshop and placed in the scenes.

4.2 Voice-over:

The movie was done in the regional language “Tamil”. But the Filmmaker lived in Hyderabad for his studies where only a very few Tamil speaking people were present on the campus. So, choosing the right voice of the characters became complex. The scratch version of the voice over was done by Dhanalakshmi and the Filmmaker himself by altering the voice for kids, grandma and the girl. Even the pitch of the voice as also modulated using basic voice modulation applications, but they were not look promising for the characters. So, the Filmmaker decided to use his mother’s voice (Ananthi, who played the girl role in this movie) for the grandma. The reason behind this was that she knows better than anyone how her grandma would talk. Since she was in the home and the filmmaker did not have enough time to reach home for recording. So, the voices were recorded using a mobile recorder and collected. The voice had a lot of noises and blasts in the record. They were removed by using the Adobe Audition software to get the optimal quality of sound. Then for the girl’s voice, Jayashree gave her voice. She was not comfortable with the proper recording setup, so the Filmmaker gave her the freedom to record from her room using a mobile recorder. The same process was carried out to remove the unnecessary sounds and noises as before. Then the Filmmaker tried Bharath for the doctor’s voice, but the outcome was not as expected. So, the Filmmaker using his voice to dub for the doctor. Finally, after a great struggle, the Filmmaker completed the final voice track.

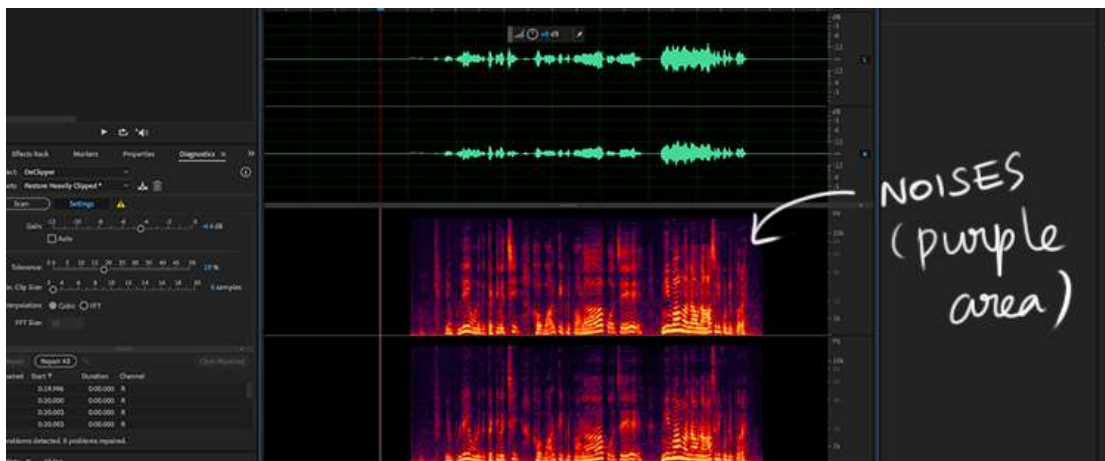


Figure 45: Image of the voice track with noises

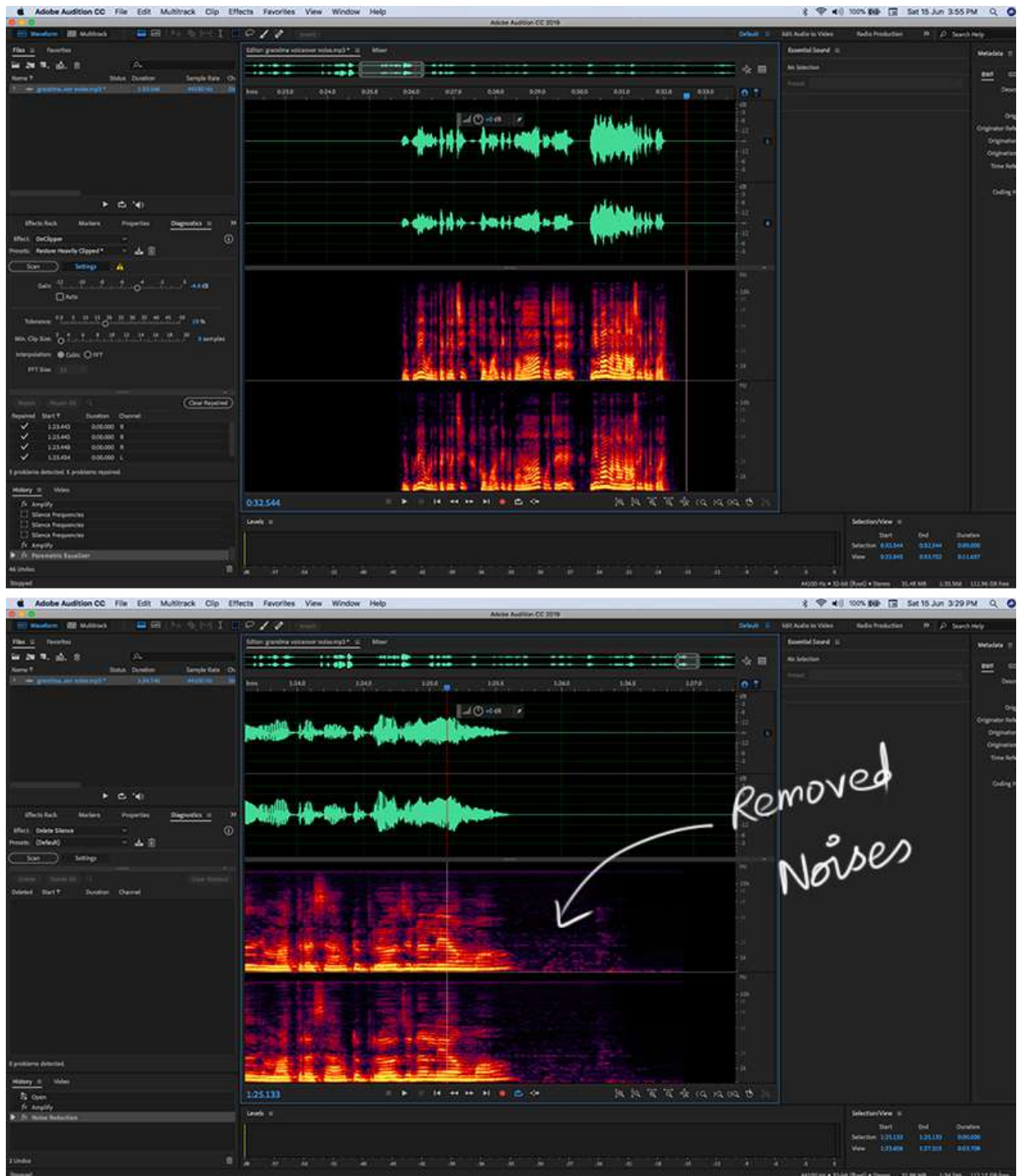


Figure 46: Images showing the progress in noise removal

The reward gained during this process was how important it is to get involved into the character while dubbing and the necessity of the professional recording setup, how it could have saved time in the editing of the voice tracks.

4.3 Sound design:

The sound design makes the movie to feel like it's real. For instance, a door is animated, but the feel of the door, in what material the door was made and the mood the character while interacting with that door and everything conveyed through the sound. This sound design gives the audience another perception of depth in the movie.

The choosing of the right sound for every detail in the movie was a little complex one, but this was also one of the exciting parts of the movie. The Synchronisation of the sound and the visual content of the movie matters the most. This synchronisation connects the audience takes them into the movie. The various sounds were collected from the internet by the Filmmaker. The sounds collected were mostly royalty free sounds available on the internet.

4.4 Music production:

Music can enhance the emotional side of the movie and also the storytelling part of the movie. It has a wide range of purpose in the movie [20]. The music quickly gives the audience perception of what genre the movie is. It creates a beautiful atmosphere for the movie. If the music is overdone, it spoils the mood of the audience. The Filmmaker was conscious of this.

The filmmaker knows a little in music, so he planned to make the music by himself for this movie. The advantage for the Filmmaker is that while animating the scenes, he visualised what kind of music will suit for that particular scene. He planned to keep the music subtly that it does not distract the audience. Few references were checked how the Indian music in the 1980s and the instruments dominating during that period, but he wanted to try the contemporary style of music. Once he had enough picture in mind, he started making the music for the movie, until then he worked on the technical part of the music production. The Arturia Minilab MK 2 (a midi controller and keyboard) was used in the music production. A lot of techniques, new daw software and recording methods were learned during this process.

4.5 Rendering:

The final output of the movie was assembled in Adobe Premiere Pro. The title introduction and the end credits were done in Adobe AfterEffects. Then all the animated layers, intro and end credits, music track, soundtracks and then voice over were placed accordingly, and the

rendering was made. The rendering took more than an hour, but the output obtained was quite satisfied.

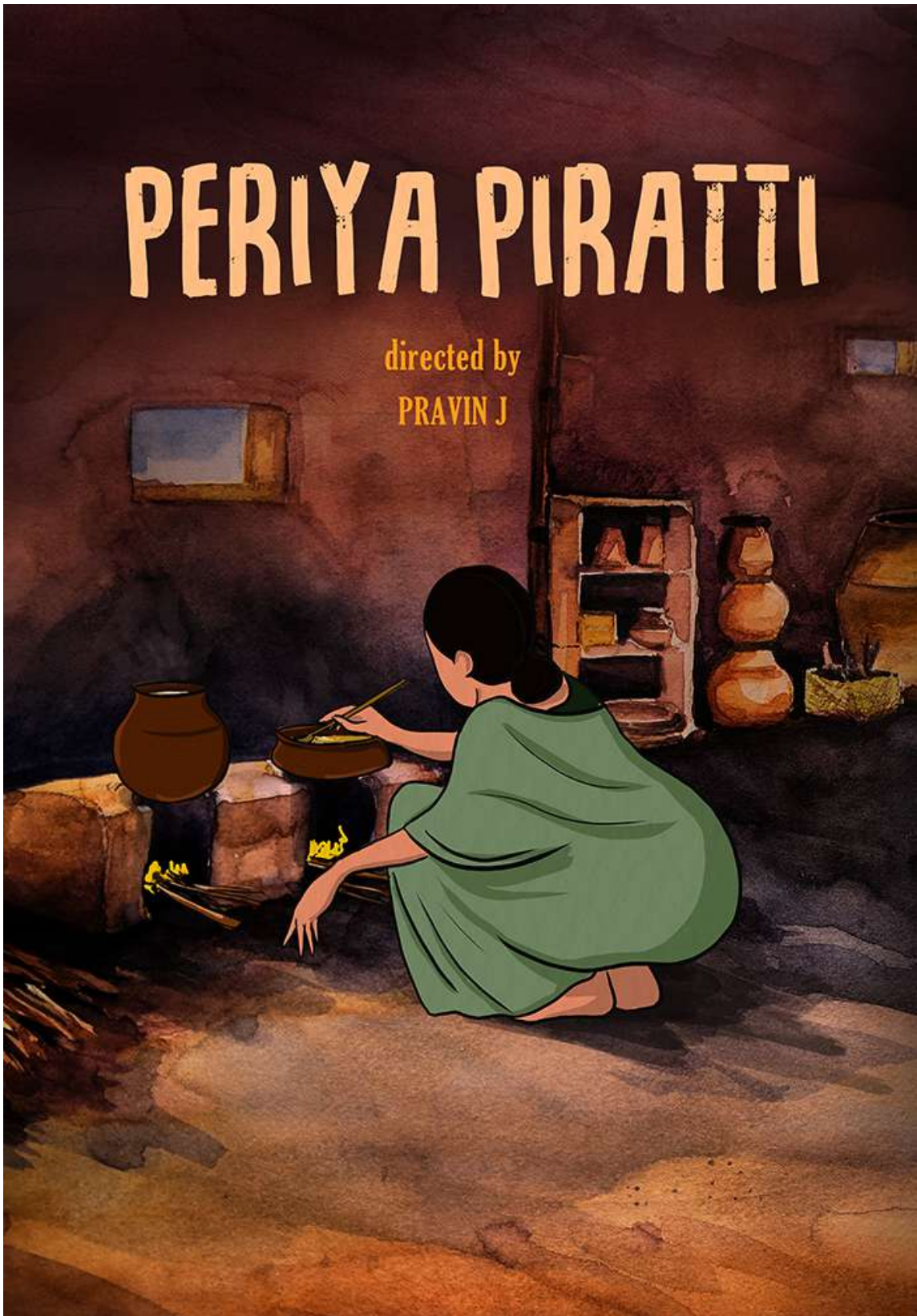


Figure 47: Image showing the final expected output of the movie

Chapter 05

Conclusion

The intention of this movie was to keep the story as it happened in real-life rather than making it more abstract. The real success of this movie was to embed 'the thought of hope in life' in the minds of the audience.

The Filmmaker never thought that making an animation movie will be this tough. During the entire movie making process, the Filmmaker learned how to stay with patience, endurance and calmness. The movie clearly showed the Filmmaker what areas need to be improved and lagging as an animator and also showed at what level the Filmmaker's current skills are. This movie helped him to explore new areas like Sound design, Music production, Cinematography and Storytelling. The most important thing that he learned was "Never underestimate the Time", which is very crucial for an animator in the industry. Finally, this movie gave the Filmmaker much confidence as a growing animator.

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