

Riyaz 3rd Session
22nd May – 28th May
Hoshangabad

Team: Atanu Roy, Chandramohan Kulkarni, Dileep Chinchalker, Mitali, Shashi Sablok,
Sushil Shukla, Swetha, Taposhi Goshal
Guest: Udyen Vajpei

The 3rd session covered process of illustration, character study and illustration, referencing and aesthetics and character sketch. All the faculty members presented their works too. Students presented book reviews and character sketches some of which were very well received. There was an outing to Adamgarh and Bachwada Dana.

22nd May

My view on illustration – Dileep Chinchalker

Dileep very humbly began his presentation with an introduction of how he entered the field of illustration. He presented the works that were exhibited under the title “Mediocrity – media creativity: A day in the life of Indian Middle Class”. The works were those he had made for an Indian newspaper.

He identified six important aspects of a good illustration and talked about those in the context of his own works. He said that sketches have to be taken towards illustration. The six aspects included the nuances of the text, the setting in which the story is taking place, characters of the story, narrative element in illustration, the visual perspective and angle of the illustrator, a logic in the background characters and establishing a relationship between the background of the illustration and the main characters in terms of composition.

His illustrations included mostly human characters and some animals. All the illustrations were detailed study of humans – physical features, body language, and social class were the highlighted aspects. There were a whole range of characters in various roles depicted in animated postures that made the picture come alive. The body language could speak a lot about the emotions and generate dialogue between characters. The illustrations demonstrated how detailed work of a background as well as mere suggestive elements could help create a setting of the story. It was interesting and impressive to see how a view through a small window in the house could establish the setting in which the story was taking place.

A story with illustration completes the story by adding aspects that are not spoken in the story but supports the story.

He shared that he had done much live sketching but the images would appear at his will. There were times when he could beckon his acquaintances to become models for him. But this is very limited and that needs to be taken care by observation and recollect from memory to sketch. He would also stand in front of the mirror and learn to illustrate looking at himself.

It was interesting that he used to study people in detailed sketches. It was fascinating to know that he would write letters to people around those illustrations and send it people.

Conversations on sketching – Chandramohan Kulkarni

It was an invitation for the students to share their experience of sketching and reflect upon their experience of the medium, paper, line quality and so on. He also asked them to reflect on the purpose of sketching.

On asking what the definition of a sketch could be, a student commented that the line in an illustration are more definite and that of a sketch are loose. In response, Chandramohan picked out 2 examples of illustration (one of his and other of Atanu's) and showed that they do not have definite lines, but are jagged and faded. He raised an important point by asking if there is a deliberate quality that one renders it with while making an illustration that makes it different from sketching.

According to another student, sketching is a way to study. Studying through sketching is important to make good illustration later. Illustration's sketch is basically ideas represented roughly and sketchily. He was also interested to know whether students truly enjoyed sketching as a process and everyone's response to it was that they positively enjoyed it. Some students had done a lot of sketching compared to others.

Each of the students expressed in detail, their responses the act of sketching – the triumphs and difficulties - and the faculty members were guiding them through their understanding of the purpose of sketching. They emphasized on the need to observe and observe not as an activity but naturally and at all times. They were asked observe forms and not get lost in the details while beginning to sketch. The detailing of the sketches and shading were the next steps and what was now needed was to focus on the line and expression through line.

There were questions around quality of line – what is a good line, confidence in line, 'flow' in the line and so on. All students expressed that their fear of sketching has reduced. During the conversation, concepts and ideas of proportion, observation, speed of sketching, memory sketching, sketching objects, purpose of shading, range of pencils and so on.

Daily Book Review: facilitated by Dileep Chinchalker

The students have to review a book that they have read during the library hour. Although the plan was that about four or five students would be asked to review each day, the students' demanded for all to be given a chance to present each of their views. So almost all students presented their take on the books.

The students presented it in different ways. Those which were agreed upon as "good reviews" by the students and faculty included those which spoke about the plot without revealing the entire story, concise, commented on the specialties of the book, observed the composition, continuity, use of space, design, relationship between text and illustration.

The students presented what they liked and did not like about the book. They were asked to look at the illustrations more objectively so that one can see beyond "I like" or "I don't like".

Liking or not is insufficient for a book review, one must be able to say why he or she likes it.

There was an interesting conversation around the use of white space. In one book, the use of large white spaces brought out a certain effect that was not necessarily the best use of it and another book had used the white space effectively to enhance the experience of vastness. So there was a

debunking of the idea that white space in itself is not good or bad but it needs to be looked at in the context of the illustration and the content and context of the text.

Picture books without words were appreciated for the amount of work that has gone into bring the story alive through illustrations alone.

23rd May

Music and line - an experience class by Chandramohan Kulkarni

Chandramohan wanted the students to open up and feel unrestrained with regard to drawing lines. The students were given a large sheet of paper and asked to use pencil to create lines based on how they experience the music being played in the background. It was an instrumental piece with santoor, tabla and flute.

The students quietly went about drawing lines according to the tempo of the song. Since each one's perception and processing is different, each one had their way of bringing it out in the form of lines. The rhythm of each one was very different even though everyone was listening to the same music. Some were performing more linearly than others, some were restricted in their movement with very small progressions at a time, for some lines flowed all over the paper in continuous streams, turned and twisted and some paused and broken. Some students who were found making drawings of objects and people and they were asked to try to not make any objects but just freely move the hand to experience the line freely without any pre-designed objective.

Some used multiple sheets and seemed to revel in the activity.

It clearly demonstrated how different each one's perception and processing of experiences is.

It felt as if line is something like a person's character - built over time, often changing but unique to one's experiences. It was overwhelming to see the visuals. There was life throbbing in some and some very still and coming into life only in some places and many variations of such.

It was good to know that all the students felt very good after doing this exercise and felt freer with their expression through line. Some expressed that the size of the sheet was a limitation and would have loved to do the same on a larger wall.

Illustrations for Chakmak

Students continued to work on the illustration task. Some have finalized their sketches and are working on making final drawings. Some are working on their sketches. The struggle with the students seem to be different for each one - from understanding the text to conceptualizing, composition and to then be able to make good drawings and then being able to choose the right medium and using that medium effectively.

Those who feel confident about their skills have also started looking into the aspects of layout. Those who are still tinkering with their concepts and sketching the same seem to want to get the image correct more than think about the layout.

The faculty members are mentoring the students in their difficulties. It was advised that they stick to being mentored by a single faculty for each illustration instead of being confused by getting mixed views from different faculty members.

The students were receiving timely feedback at every step from faculty and peers and had gotten into work-mode.

Daily Book Review

The session started by giving chance to those who did not review the books in the previous book review session.

There was extensive commentary on the quality of the illustration. In terms of the line, colour, drawing, composition, mood, visual appeal, harmony and so on. Some talked in terms of their likes and dislikes, but others went on to explain why a certain illustration works or doesn't. It was interesting to see students' defend their perspective irrespective of the opinions of faculty or fellow students.

It need not be that the students' do not have an opinion beyond their likes and dislikes but maybe they are not able to translate their visual opinions into words for the lack of certain vocabulary.

There was a brief exchange on whether outright moral commentary in a story is necessary. Some felt that children will learn values better through stories while some others wondered why are stories expected to do that.

There were also some who presented wordless books although they commented on the quality of illustration, what is the underlying logic in the wordless book could have been commented upon

There were some who spoke about both story and the illustration and how they complement each other as if they were not separate entities and that certainly made a difference to the way one looked at the book.

Dileep suggested that there are many different ways one could review a book and that is something each one can explore personally. In this context, he offered to present his review of a book in the coming session to show one of the possibilities.

24th May

Process of illustration: Taposhi Ghoshal

On observing how the students went about their illustration exercise, this session was planned by Taposhi. She wanted to give them some general guidelines regarding the process of illustration and also tell them about her personal way of going about it.

She personally would read the story and keep it aside and go about doing other things while the story continues to linger in the mind, triggering ideas. She reads the story again from the perspective of a reader and not an illustrator. There is a conscious attempt to understand the character of the story, For example, in the dacoit story by Sukumar Ray, the heightened suspense is the character of the story, and so one cannot just draw representative characters and leave it at that. The overall character of the illustration has to be in sync with the text. When one reads the story, there are many visuals that one imagines, all of them are casually sketched.

Different postures and composition of characters are sketched and from different angles / perspective. This exercise helps one understand their characters better too. These sketches also guide the layout and that too is worked out. Text is an important part of the layout and it cannot be

randomly placed anywhere. It has to be planned in relation with the illustration. She added that over time as one gains experience, all these processes happen simultaneously and organically. Since the illustrations are made with a purpose – to be published, it is very important to keep in mind the size of the book / magazine. The illustrator must also be aware of how much space is available for the illustration – single spread/ double spread and so on. One has to look at the illustration in totality with respect to the whole space. She went on to point out certain technical aspects that the illustrators had to bear before starting out to illustrate. The margin around the illustration is usually neglected by artist and for effective designing purposes, at least 2mm of space around the illustration if cropped must not affect the image.

Presentation of a Book Review: Dileep Chinchalker

Dileep presented his review on the book called India dei Villagi. The book is by an Italian traveler and a photographic record of his one year in India. The book review interestingly covered the process and the content of the book. He showed some of the photographs from the book. It also explored the relationship between him as the reader experiencing the writer's journey and his relationship with the book in his own life itself.

The review included quirky events associated with the book. He did not give technical information about the books but introduced it in a way that would incite interest among people to pick up the book. The review also focused on the relationship between him and the book, what his takeaway from the book was what was.

The intention was to expose one of the many ways in which a book review would be done.

The book review by the students was getting a bit monotonous in the way it was presented and the aspects that they spoke about and in order to demonstrate the point and purpose of book review, this session was undertaken.

Aesthetics: Udyen Vajpei

“In search of beauty we go to the garden even when beauty surrounds you all the time”

It is “understanding” that brings out the beauty in everything. According to Anandawardhan, there is nothing in this world which in itself has an *aloukik* (out of this world) dimension. It is the artist who brings out the *aloukik* aspect of the *loukik* (*material*) thing.

Since beauty is everywhere, art is a way to look at the beauty. Art helps to bring out the beauty in a form that is spontaneous and stunning. Art is not to make one happy or for a product for consumption or to cater to the happiness of the viewer. The artist brings out the *aloukik* in the freedom of her being and seeing the world and not from the affliction to impress people, it is in this seeing, not fed by external demands, that good art is created. In India for the longest period, there were no demands made towards the artists or writers regarding the content of the art.

What brings out the enjoyment in art is the being able to experience the *ras* even if it is not in accordance with our faith and disposition. Appreciating only those things which are familiar to us is limiting our experience of the *aloukik*. *Ras* is the taste that we enjoy when various elements of the art form come together to create something new and different from its constituent elements.

Bharat's *Natyashastra*'s theory on *Ras* was based on the art and theatre prevalent during his times. It was not that there was no *Ras* before Bharat's theory, it is just that he theorized about it. His *rasa* theory opened new doors for the art created after that were relooked vis-à-vis his theory. For example, Mahabharat is a compilation of open-ended tales. One of it is shakuntala's story. In the

natyashastra, he talks about forms of *abhinay* – *angik* (involving the body), *aaharik* (props), *vaachik* (words) and *saatvik* (mood / *bhaav*). So Kalidas's *shakuntala* introduced *anguta* as an experiment to use the *aaharik* aspect. With the introduction of this aspect, it takes a completely new twist and creates a new mood. According to the Ras theory formulated by Bharat, there is *yog* and *sayyog*. *Yog* is that which is obtained by addition and *Sayyog* is obtained by a combination. Ras is experienced by the *sayyog* of *sthaayi bhaav*, *sanchaari bhaav* / *Vyabachaari* and *anubhaav*, accidentally. It is not possible to deliberately, measure these and employ to bring out the *Ras*. An accidental coming together of these three things is what generates *Ras*.

Every *ras* has a *sthaiyi bhaav* associated with it. *Sthaiyi bhaav* is the core emotion or the ultimate emotion that needs to be achieved. 8 *ras* – *Karun* (compassion emerging from separation) *Shringar* (reunion, separation but only to meet again), *Veer* (valour), *Roudr* (fury), *Haasya* (humorous), *Bhibhats* (repugnance), *Adbhut* (amazing), *Bhay* (fear).

The associated *sthaiyi bhaav* transforms to bring out the experience of the *ras* and there is *aanand* (it is not just happiness, it is a moment that helps one connect with oneself) that develops within the one who comes in contact with it.

Abhinavgupta added one more – *shaant ras* (disconnected from *gyan* or from knowing).

Every writing is not dominated by one *ras*. It is made up of a sequence of *ras*, and they keep shifting. *Sanchari bhaav* is transient emotion. In any form of art, the difference in distance between the *sthaiyi bhaav* and *sanchari bhaav* is proportional to the power it transfers into the emotion being experienced. When one brings *hasya* in a poem which is essentially trying to arrive at *shringar*, the experience of *ras* is enhanced.

He gave examples from Homer's *Ulysses* and *Ritwik Ghatak's* film and *Chekov's* writing to elucidate the character of *Sanchaari bhaav* to reinforce the emotion.

Anubhaav (experiential) is placing certain material objects in the frame, by which, the intended *ras* is achieved. The objects and the way they are dealt with or exploited in the text or art brings out the emotions and this creates *Anubhaav*.

There are 3 kinds of pleasures – *aanand*. *Brahmanand* – extreme, magnificent, pleasure of deliverance. *Ratyanand* – momentary pleasure. *Rasaanand* – pleasure of the emotion. In the experience of any of the three kinds of *aanand*, the ego collapses. When you find something very beautiful, the self disappears after surrendering the ego. *Abhinavgupta* interprets *aanand* as that moment where the reader or audience becomes a universal witness and this is what is experienced when one experiences the *Ras*. All artificial boundaries disappear and one is in direct communion with that which attends to the most universal experiences.

He argued against the classification of *Bhakti* and *Vatsalya* as separate *Ras*. He contended that these were just shades of *Shringar* tending to *Rati bhaav*.

(Disclaimer: this is an insufficient and dreary summary of the talk. Please listen to the audio recording)

Character sketch: presentation by students

One of the assignment in the previous session was that the students had to write a character sketch of someone they know closely. These were read out aloud in the class. The exercise had enabled them to explore the various aspects of their character to bring forth the specialties of the person they were writing about.

Most students had written in Hindi and indeed written an interesting account of the person they were talking about. Characters chosen ranged from acquaintances from neighborhood, friends, family, strangers and so on. It included shopkeeper, a child from the neighborhood, a *jogi*, school bus driver, aunt, friend etc. The emotions running through their sketch was also varied – there was love, fear, admiration, compassion and so on.

The intimacy of the relationship between them and the character that they wrote about reflected in their writing. Some had written in great detail where others had a hazy sketch of their character. The sketchiness resulted because of the focus shifted from the character's experiences to the personal values and morals taking over.

Some of the accounts are very interesting and well written and audio recordings of the same are available. Half of the students had shared their writing on this day and the remaining were given a chance on another day.

Film: Charandas Chor

Charandas Chor (Charandas *the Thief*) is a 1975 children's film by noted director Shyam Benegal, based on the famous play by Habib Tanvir, which itself was an adaptation of a classical Rajasthani folktale by Vijaydan Detha. The film starred Smita Patil, Lalu Ram, Madanlal, and Habib Tanvir.

The film charts the tumultuous life of a petty thief, Charandas (Lalu Ram). Curiously he is a man of principles – an honest thief with a strong sense of integrity and professional efficiency. He makes four vows to his Guru. That he would never eat in a gold plate, never lead a procession that is in his honour, never become a king and never marry a princess, thinking all of them are far out possibilities for him. His guru adds a fifth one - never to tell a lie and sets him off on his life's journey which leads him to a kingdom, where the turn of events make him famous, and eventually he is offered the seat of political power which he has to refuse. Later, the local princess gets enchanted by him, and proposes to marry him.

This is when his refusal costs him his life. As he is put to death, he illustrates the inherent paradox in human existence, where truthful existence becomes an impossibility, for the truthful and the accidentally truthful, alike.

25th May

Interaction with Swaha

Swaha from Tata Trusts was here on an official visit. The students briefly introduced themselves and Swaha was introduced by Sushil as the head of Parag initiatives under which Riyaaz functions. She asked them to talk about their favourite books and why they like it or not. Finding out that most students did not pay attention to the name of the illustrators was a bit disappointing considering that they were all growing to become professional illustrators. She also asked them what their reason for joining the programme was and what they intend to do. She also asked them about the challenges that they face in the course. One of it was the understanding of text classes which deals with a lot of social issues and the students don't have that kind of an exposure. The kind of discipline demanded from illustration is different from that of fine arts and that was a take away for some students. One of the students felt that a lot of things had to be unlearned to move forward in thinking about illustration.

We have two folk art experts in the group and on being asked if it was difficult to understand the art language of the academy which is different from their style. One of them said he was not feeling difficult and feels like he is able to balance his own style and the western academic style that is taught in the academy. The other felt that he is able to work and he feels fine. Just by learning new ways, one doesn't discard or affect the folk style.

After this the faculty members along with Swaha had a meeting.

RK Laxman: Taposhi Ghoshal

Calcutta images was a book produced to commemorate 300 years since the inception of the city. It was commissioned to RK Laxman since they want an outsider's perspective of the image. He approached the book in a unique personal style.

There were many ways in which he looked at the city. He looked at the architecture, every day, popular places and so on.

The architecture of public buildings, houses, inside and outside of it has been captured in its elemental forms. When looking at his sketches, it is impossible to miss the architectural aspects captured in patterns, arches and doorways.

He also captured the changing phases of the city from dawn to dusk. The way the day passes by in the city is shown with tonal variations in light and the activities that are dominant during that particular time of the day. The sketches are all in pencil and that has been used to its fullest potential in terms of obtaining various qualities of line.

He sketched a lot of the life of the street life, markets, government offices, walls, parks. The sketches bring out the difference in each of their lives and contain the character of their life acutely within each picture. His lines capture the slowness and the fastness of the moment. The sketches are not perfect and may look incomplete, but the sketch is complete in bringing out the feel of the place very well.

The identity of the city is contained in certain typical characteristics of the city. In his sketches, he has explored the city widely and in great detail. He chose pencil because he wanted the medium to be a common object that was used commonly by common people. Before becoming a cartoonist, he was an illustrator. He illustrated for the stories of his brother RK Narayan.

Of all his works, Malgudi days was chosen because it's a place that doesn't exist in real like Calcutta but a completely fictional world that has been brought to life as if it exists in real.

Aspects of real world have been adopted to create a completely different place as realistically as possible but doesn't exist in real world as such. Malgudi is created from the two places in Bangalore (Malleswaram and Basavangudi) and it has been placed near the river *Sarayu*.

Understanding and adding certain historically and time specific elements in the illustration bring life to it. The character of the text – fictional story in a realistic setting – is reflected in the illustrations too.

She insisted that one of the most important things while building character is to believe in character. One has to strongly construct their character and believe in it strongly, or else it would result in a weak character – be it place or a person. Most of the successful characters like Tintin, Mowgli, etc. have been so because the creators believed in their characters and understood them inside out. To be a successful creator one has to go to the extent of having a voyeuristic inquisitiveness towards life and things around us to know and understand anything and everything. She briefly touched on the aspect of logic and illogical have to coexist and be balanced.

Logic and illogic have to be played with in creating illustrations because one is not always just making realistic images. The illogical also have a logic and it's important to enhance one's understanding of it.

Students' illustration task for Chakmak

There was a dynamic conversation on understanding the text and simplicity of illustration. While one faculty opined that one doesn't always have to dig to find the multiple layers in every text, there can be simple illustrations, another expressed that simplicity is the last leg of the journey of illustration. To which the response was that there are various grades of simplicity and when one is in the beginning phases, it is best to focus on bringing out meanings which are not necessarily there in the text.

Understanding the text and understanding what needs to be illustrated cannot be avoided and one needs to constantly think about it.

Some of the texts given to the students for illustration has been found to be difficult for understanding. It was a matter of concern that in the process of examining the many layers that a poem with a social message could have, the illustration process has gone for a toss.

One of the responses was that there are many understanding and everyone makes their own understanding based on their personal experiences and knowledge about the society. The strength of any creative art or literature it was argued, was in it being able to make space for multiple interpretations and hence multiple representations. Hence each artist would have their own way of illustrating. One must not underestimate the ability of children to understand just because they are children and diluting the illustration would not be the best way to look at it.

Visit to Adamgarh

About 5kms from the campus is Adamgarh. It is a historical site with huge boulders. These rock shelters are situated on the south of Narmada River. They contain paintings of Prehistoric period, done in red and white colours.

We spent about 2 hours in the place. It was a welcome break after being bent over drawing boards for 4 days straight. Students were sketching or simply soaking in the warmth and wind. It was a magnificent sight from the rocks to witness a frozen frame depicting the urbanization of green lands.

Most embraced the quietness and walked with themselves while some were seen to be reveling in the company of friends – a joy that's usually seen on the faces of children during summer holidays.

26th May

Display of works: Atanu Roy

It was certainly a fine start in the morning when Atanu Roy decided to surprise us with some of his original works. It was delightful to see the intricate detailing and the magical quality of each of those works.

He had about 10 works of art that he had created for various stories. The illustrations were of different mediums – pencils, water colour, acrylic etc.

The students were excited to see the original work up close and appreciative of the sheer craftsmanship in handling the tools to bring out certain minute detailing.

Character sketches by Chandramohan Kulkarni

He showed 2 of his works- one done for a book by Vyankatesh Madgolkar, a renowned Marathi writer and artist, another was a set of posters of famous writers of the world. This book *Maandeshi maanse* written by Vyankatesh Madgolkar was already illustrated by Dinanath Dalal in his particular style. The book is a compilation of characters from Vyankatesh Madgolkar's childhood.

He shared his experience of having feared to work on the story which was illustrated very well by Dalal 40 years ago but on the persuasion of his publishers, he decided to give it a try.

The illustrations were created using Photoshop since it was something new for him and he wanted to experiment. He also wanted to actively avoid being influenced by the illustrations by Dalal. He wanted to have his own style and illustrate. Illustrations were all that of human characters written about in the book. With each illustration, he described the characters and the reasons for depicting them that way.

Dalal's illustration captures the characters close-up whereas Chandramohan said he wanted to bring out the body language. It was difficult to classify the illustration into a sketch, drawing or a portrait, it was all of them and not just that at the same time. Since he was also the designer, he had a say in the composition and overall design and feel of the book which was to his advantage.

He said that every line and dot matters and that one should give serious thought to the work and not be casual about it. The illustrations where the body of a subject are not proportionate were so intentionally, to induce a certain kind of freeness of line. The lines are very freely used to bring out the character of the person. It was also important to take into account the time period of the book which will then give leads for the costume worn by the characters.

For this one might have to rely on many sources including films and theatre.

He also pointed out to accidents and sometimes they steer the work to look better and hence one needs to closely look at one's work.

The series of poster he had made of famous writers was also done on Photoshop. He was asked to make portraits. He studied the writings of the writers to bring out the character of the writer in their portraits. So with photographs as reference and adding the essence of their writing in their portraits he had created these. This series included portraits of Bertolt Brecht, Anton Pavlovitch Chekov, Kafka, Gabrielle Garcia Marquez, Elfriede Jelinek, Else Lasker Schuler, Judith Hermann, and Simone de Beauvoir among others.

The portraits were created using minimal colours on solid coloured background. There is not one single style in which these were rendered. Some were suggestive of the writer's image with very minimal lines but others were done with a lot more details.

The title – name of the writers - in the posters were as relevant as the illustration itself. It was different for each poster and those were very much thought out decision and to be able to make that decision it is important to know the writings.

In the course of showing this work, he emphasized on the need to be exposed to various art forms and to take up reading seriously. He considers it necessary to be well read and to read without discriminating subjects.

Using visual references: Dileep Chinchalker

Shakespeare's character Ophelia in the play Hamlet drowning in a lake John Miller's illustration of the same was the subject which was used to understand the role of visual referencing. Many artists other than John Millers had made painting on this very scene.

Ophelia goes to gather flowers, she is lost in thought and she has an accident and falls into the river. Even in the moment of drowning, she is lost in thought and doesn't realize that she is drowning. The study that has gone into making this painting has involved a lot of work.

The choice of the river, the model who would pose as Ophelia, particular flowers. Every choice made was a thought out one. He separately studied the flowers, the model's posture and so on. The effort that went into making such a painting was not without difficulties. The model chosen for Ophelia's study had to lay in a tub for many hours and for many days while John would study her, to the extent that she caught pneumonia. He also spent a bomb on the royal wear that Ophelia would be wearing. There was almost no limit to referencing to get the perfect image.

Many more paintings of John Millers were shared with the students. He described each of those paintings, giving details about what the painting was about. He was part of a pre-Raphaelite brotherhood along with two other artist tried to establish truths from imaginary stories. In his time, paintings of god's creation was wrong, it was alright to paint Jesus and Mary but not god's creation and his works created a lot of hullabaloo during his time.

This painting of Ophelia by John Millers is now a high priced art work – referencing pays.

After 120 years of making of the painting, Barbara Webb, a scholar from Essex surveyed her neighborhood and found out that the lake used for referencing by John was the one near Malden and wrote her research on this. It goes to say that this painting continues to hold interest of various people even now.

27th May

Character sketch: facilitated by Sushil Shukla and Dileep Chinchalker

Sushil read out his writing titled "Chowkidar". It was written based on the life of two security guards he knew personally. It was a meditative piece on the kind of engagement that the guard has with the world around him, his feelings and hopes. The style would weave in and out of realism and surrealism describing what he does through the night, the kind of thoughts that visit him and the chain of thoughts that lead one into another till dawn till he reaches home. It throws light on the significance he had for his role by detailing the responsibilities and how it was not easy or negligible. His hope that his children too will be learned chowkidars brings in the twist and plunges into a satirical comment on the way things are in our society.

He further went on to say that what struck him was the intense honesty, care and responsibility that the Chowkidar reflected. If he simply wrote that "he was extremely responsible" and left it at that, the gravity of the feeling would never come forth. So to establish it, acts of his which support the fact that he was honest and responsible have been brought in the text. Another quality was that of caring for everyone and everything without discriminating. The attitude of caring seeped into every aspect of their life. Of another guard, he said that he would work even after he had retired, one of profession he respected the most was that of a teacher and wished that his children should become teachers and he would suggest his friends that their children too should become teachers and to become teachers they could all study together since they had to go outside the village to get trained. He believed in being united and having company so that one could care for each other.

This spirit too is reflected in the writing where the chowkidar helps the ants. He suggested that one has to divulge the character in such detail that it must be possible to imagine what the possible responses, reactions and thought processes of that character would be in any given situation. When students expressed that it is a very demanding task to be able to do it in such detail, he was very encouraging and said that it was only a matter of consistently doing it and it would develop slowly. He spoke about the style of Vinod Kumar Shukla and Gabrielle Garcia Marquez who propose that there is nothing unreal, anything that we imagine in the moment of imagination since it has arrived becomes real because it exists.

He proposed a project where classics from children's literature in various Indian languages could be chosen and turned into picture story books for very young children. To create books of 16-20 pages by rewriting it from short stories is the task. He gave the example of such an attempt by Karen Haydock in working on poetry called *Akaal aur uske baad* by Nagarjun.

Sushil pointed that when one went sketching, there is a difference when one talks to the subject to understand whom one is sketching and when one knows very little about that person they are sketching.

Dileep presented his writing on his father Vishnu Chinchalker.

The account of his father as an artist, and his journey alongside him. The image of a liberal artist-father figure emerged from the exchanges he recollected to have had as a son with his father. The engagements in conversation on art Vishnu Chinchalker had with his fellow artist friends and himself would follow that he had a purpose beyond merely creating beautiful pieces of art. It was evident that he was engaged in the everyday activities with the zeal of an artist – in rearranging the house, tidying and decorating the spaces in the house and so on. He empathized with animals and people alike and behave very sensitively towards them. He was a teacher in school but apart from all the students he engaged with, the best student he prepared was himself.

Over time, inspired by Gandhi he journeyed away from academic fine art towards experiments with discarded materials and natural materials. He began to see art in the most ordinary objects of everyday- seeds and pods, spider web, flowers and leaves. It resulted in extraordinary artworks and was appreciated by everyone who happened to see it.

Dileep shared that character sketch emerges when we observe the person, their actions, think and wonder about the person's life. He demanded that the students' observation be so good that there must be many unforgettable characters on whom they must be able to write.

After hearing both Sushil and Dileep's character sketches, some students wanted to rewrite their character sketches. Taposhi suggested that it could also be character sketches of objects and not necessarily just people. Dileep narrated a brief but very interesting extempore about his bike – a very delightful account of the bike as if it were a real person.

The students who hadn't read their character sketches, read it out one after the other. We had finally heard everyone's writing. Each one written with such affection and attachment to the character they were addressing. After each one's presentation of their account, the students were asked what they thought about the writing thus creating a space for peer feedback. Interesting discussion ensued when there were differences and it was good to experience the openness to accept other people's views without having to immediately change one's position but just being receptive to alternate opinions.

From the feedback provided on the writing it was found that a certain minimum was essential to be said to create a powerful image of the character. The reason why this character is unforgettable

is the crux and that if nailed would make the character sketch stronger. Peculiarities of people with regard to their physical appearance and body habits were under explored in all the writings. It is not that it is always necessary but that was an area suggested to be looked into since each one has very unique features and habits. Continuity of There were certain ideas that the writer attributed to the character, some of which were biased towards a social oppression and it was argued that when we write, we have a responsibility to be aware and be sensitive towards building a better society. So one must be cognizant of the commentary and the stand one takes on such issues.

Continue to work

Students were asked to make drawings of the person they had written the character sketch on. Each of them were asked to make the character in at least twelve different angles. The faculty wanted the students to bring out the character's specialities that were in their writing. The illustration should be supporting the text in every possible way. The students were free to choose any medium that they were comfortable in. Apart from this students also got feedback on the proportion, composition and so on.

28th May

Visit to Bachwada Dana

Sushil proposed an undeniable offer for an outing to a village about 15kms away. This village primarily consists of fishermen and their families. This visit was planned in the context of talking about character study. It was hoped that students would converse with people living there and create a character sketch in words and image from the experience.

We left early morning around 6 am to the village. It was very close to the banks of river Narmada. The villagers welcomed us like they were expecting our arrival and knew us from before with utmost hospitality. There was a feeling of familiarity and everyone was welcomed by the residents there to their homes.

The students were scattered all over the place. Each one finding their niche to experience the village in their own way. There were conversations to understand their lifestyle, their everyday, social and cultural life. Some students also grabbed the opportunity to sketch the village – an experience that is so rarely available to them. A lot of them were busy gathering bottle gourds – some for seeds, some for the beautiful gourds.

After spending about two hours in the village everyone returned to the campus quite refreshed.

Presentation of illustrations : Chandramohan Kulkarni

He presented the illustrations he had created for Julius Caesar, Romeo and Juliet and Devdas. This was important considering that the focus of this session was character study. The three stories are set in diverse settings and that was visible in the illustrations. These being popular stories, most students were familiar with it.

He pointed out to the fact that there is a difference in illustrating for a story, a poem and a drama. Julius Caesar, Romeo and Juliet and Devdas were all plays and the illustrations too had to be of a

certain kind that would support the nature of the text. The illustrations hence were exaggerated and stylized accordingly.

The illustrations were all line drawings. The lines were inherently rhythmic and rendered the rhythm to the characters too. He said that studying objects closely has helped him to summon images from memory as and when required. The costumes of the roman were captured in the most minimal lines, the lines of the body were valuable in bringing out the body language although anatomical accuracy was not prioritised, but the overall illustration was not a compromise because the appeal of the illustration lay in the dynamics of the characters more than anatomical accuracy.

The lines in Romeo and Juliet, and Devdas were decorative - curvy, wavy and curly- creating a certain feel essential to the mood of those stories. It was impressive in capturing the most essential elements with the most minimal use of lines. It was an opportunity to learn how even the most essential detailing was done with very minimal lines. It was possible to see the wide range of different lines used in a single piece of work to achieve the desired quality in an illustration.

He said that it would have been more impactful to read the story alongside looking at illustrations. We could not have a discussion for lack of time.

Home Assignments

The students have been asked to continue to sketch objects, people, plants and animals. They have to review 2 books in the next session as usual. Completed works of illustration of their respective character sketch to be submitted in the next session. The students have to make a character sketch of the place they live in.