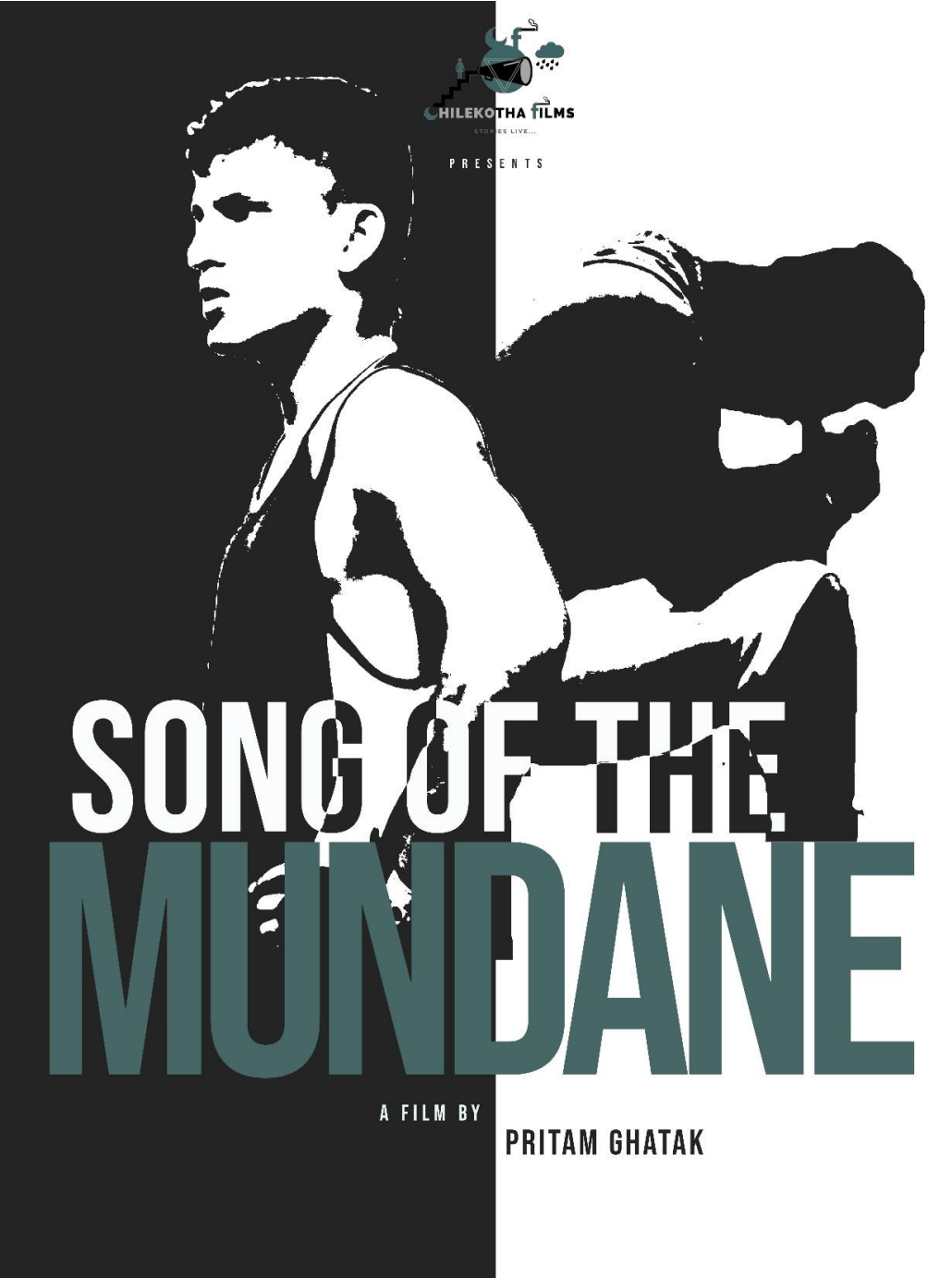




HILEKOTHA FILMS
STORIES LIVE...
PRESENTS



SONG OF THE MUNDANE

A FILM BY

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SONG OF THE MUNDANE



A self narrative journey into
the lives of two friends - one
boxer and the other dancer, born and
brought up in slums, where they strive
to reach their individual goals in life.





SONG OF THE MUNDANE



SYNOPSIS

(Overview of story, Main characters, plot points)

The film revolves around the lives of two friends – Vicky & Vikas, who are professional dancer and boxer respectively. Both of them have grown up in the same slum locality of Mumbai.

Individually they teach boxing and dancing as well. Vikas and his family has moved out of the slum area to an apartment in the outskirts of Mumbai but Vicky still resides in that slum locality and is bearing the responsibility to run the family almost single handedly. Through the film we explore their hopes and aspirations, the chemistry and relationship between the two protagonist and how one affects the other. Apart from these the aspect of importance of a teacher is also an important pillar of the film. The entire film is self-narrative in nature. We are also introduced to the boxing coach of Vikas – Mr. kale, who acts like a narrator in bits and parts. He not only gives us a background and introduction to Vikas, but also brings a philosophical angle in the storytelling by relating how boxing is closely related to life and what important life lessons we get to learn from the sport of boxing. In the beginning, there is an introduction to Vicky and his dance class – his struggle and wants.



SONG OF THE MUNDANE

SYNOPSIS

Next we are introduced to Vikas, his boxing training, his background and we see him winning a boxing competition while at the same time we come to know his own struggle and we are introduced to Mr. Kale, the boxing coach of Vikas. Then we are get to see the chemistry between Vicky and Vikas, their tense past and how they became good friends eventually. The film moves to show desperation of Vicky to move his family out of the slum area. We come to know about love interest of Vicky who belongs to a comparatively affluent family. Here we move more closely to his state of mind which will be achieved more visually. Then we see Vikas is guiding his students in a boxing competition. The characters talk about the importance of a teacher in society. After this we see that Vicky has bought his own apartment and we see various moments of a day when a hindu ritual is being carried out prior to starting to live in the new house. Finally we move to the concluding section where it gives a feeling to the audience that Vikas and Vicky are part of a huge multitude of ordinary people who are striving to find happiness and fulfillment by obtaining the basic necessities of life. The film ends with a positive feeling.

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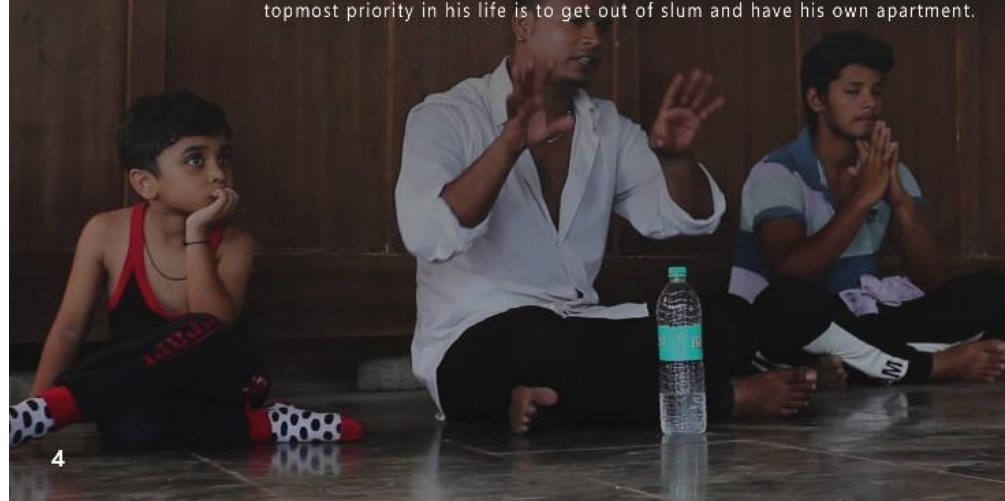
PROJECT DESCRIPTION (Story Structure, Artistic Approach, Visual Look, Feel)

The film is structured into following chapters :

Opening - Apparently we see vicky and vikas singing, having fun and having a friendly singing competition. But the audience can also notice that even though they are friends, they are of completely opposite personality, which does clash with each other in a very subtle manner, yet they don't burst into some apparent tussle.

Chapter 1 :

Introduction to Vicky and his own dance class where he teaches dancing to kids, young boys n girls and middle aged women. He opens about his aspiration, struggle and journey and we see glimpses of vicky as a dancer. His tenacity both as a teacher as well as a dancer is visible through various montages of his dance class. The character of Vicky takes shape through the dance class montages and also by the way he talks – his simplicity, determination and innocence is communicated to the audience. Then a point comes where while he is teaching in his dance class, his inner psychological monologue (dire need of money in his life) got better of him for a short period of time. There are contrasting visuals of an upper class restaurant and locality of Vicky. The individual shots are mostly long takes. This is like contradiction between want and reality in his life. Soon after this Vicky briefly tell that the topmost priority in his life is to get out of slum and have his own apartment.





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PROJECT DESCRIPTION (Story Structure, Artistic Approach, Visual Look, Feel)

Chapter 2 :

the story moves to vikas. We see an ongoing boxing tournament, a montage of boxers fighting and crowd and referee etc while at the same time we see vikas is practicing in the same premises with his boxing coach. He is supposed to fight in the final match, which is scheduled for the next day. The very next day vikas is preparing for his final match and there is voice over of his coach talking about vikas. Then we go to the place where vikas and other boxers undergo training with his coach. Calm paced Montage of training. Introduction to vikas – how he started boxing, his achievements and audience also get to know that Vikas has already moved out from the slum few years ago. Vikas talks about the importance of his coach. Short Introduction to boxing class of vikas where he teaches boxing. At some point probably towards the end of this chapter we go back to the boxing competition where we see vikas win the final after a tough fight. But it is not necessary that the final fight of vikas will be shown in a single flow, rather instead it could keep resurfacing at various strategic points of this chapter. Most of the talking in this chapter comes as voice over instead of sit down interviews, with spaces between consecutive lines whereas in visual we see boxing practice and other visuals.

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION (Story Structure, Artistic Approach, Visual Look, Feel)

Chapter 3:

The mood of this chapter is more of fun and ease. Vikas has come to Vicky's House and both of them having fun. Audience comes to know about their history, background, ups and downs and chemistry between the two in a fun and jovial manner. They share few incidents of past while through montage we get to see more about the locality, which blends into the next chapter.





SONG OF THE MUNDANE

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

(Story Structure, Artistic Approach, Visual Look, Feel)

Chapter 4:

Overall mood of this chapter is gloomy. Vicky is desperate to solve financial crisis of his family, he badly wants to move out of his slum locality. His state of mind is portrayed more by the use of visuals than by what he says. We see him trying extremely hard to teach a certain dance step to his students but they are taking unusually long time to learn it. Vicky feels irritated as a result. His frustration grows. This frustration forms a kind of collage with the desperation in his personal life. Pacing is relaxed and long duration shots.

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION (Story Structure, Artistic Approach, Visual Look, Feel)

Chapter 5:

Visuals of Vikas teaching boxing to his students. Life is close to boxing – this theme comes up in the film. Audience see Vikas trying his best to teach boxing to his students, so is Mr Kale (Boxing coach of vikas). This theme complements the previous chapter as well where we felt how Vicky is fighting against his circumstances. Voice over of Mr Kale mostly throughout this chapter with appreciable intervals in between. Pacing is relaxed. Shots are mostly of longer duration. No rapid or fast cutting at all till.



SONG OF THE MUNDANE



PROJECT DESCRIPTION (Story Structure, Artistic Approach, Visual Look, Feel)

Chapter 6 :

This is more of kind of Chapter 5B, a close continuation of the previous chapter.

This chapter has primarily three different subparts – 1) Vikas guiding his students during a boxing competition. He is shouting and supporting them and giving them constant motivation, during a fight and in between. 2) Vikas and Vicky together talk about importance of teacher in society. 3) Mr kale gives an emotional perspective towards what should be the role of a teacher, while doing so he breaks down into tears. Subparts 1 and 2 are cut between each other during this chapter. Subpart 3 comes only towards the end of the chapter. This chapter will be constructed as alternating of franticness of subpart of 1 and static nature of subpart 2 with subpart 3 punctuating the entire chapter.

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION (Story Structure, Artistic Approach, Visual Look, Feel)

Chapter 7:

We see that Vicky has managed to buy his own apartment. There is a Hindu ritual/custom or rather worship kind of thing, which is always carried out when someone steps into a new house. Without this ritual one cannot start living in that house. This chapter shows certain moments of that particular day when the ritual/custom/worship is being carried out at Vicky's new house. He is supremely happy and gay, so are his parents. Vicky is showing his house to guests and his own dance teacher with so much proudness and uncensored honesty and innocence. Certain visuals of the long and lengthy ritual are also present in that chapter and how Vicky and his entire family are doing everything with so much enthusiasm, happiness and seriousness. This is relatively fast paced compared to other chapters.



SONG OF THE MUNDANE



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

(Story Structure, Artistic Approach, Visual Look, Feel)

Closing:

This chapter has few subparts – 1) Voiceover mostly from Vikas where he talks about importance of dream, how Mumbai is a city of dream, that hard work always pays off, that persistence is key. Against these we see various visuals which are combination of Vicky and Vikas together as well as separately in pensive and contemplating mood, triumphant and happy moments of both of them, visuals of Mumbai, freeze frames etc. Towards the middle or end Vicky's teacher will talk about real meaning of success – that success is to be happy. 2) Visual of Vicky's dance class where all of them are standing in a particular order and reciting a Hindu chant which is dedicated to the God. The dance class for the day gets over and everyone disperses. One of the girl dancer incidentally tells me while I am holding the camera – "bye sir".

3) Diwali is a big festival in India where everyone plays with fireworks. We see people busy celebrating Diwali with lot of fireworks in a certain street of Mumbai and an old Man is playing music while he is standing in between all these fireworks – steady, calm and composed. A guy holds a firework in his hand and due to the excessive light of the firework the screen goes white and we fade to black. END of the film. These three subparts come in the above mentioned order.



SONG OF THE MUNDANE

TOPIC SUMMARY / MOTIVATION

(Why it is important, timely, relevant and why I am the best person to make this film)

I have always believed that each of our lives is a story waiting to be told and irrespective of how ordinary or inconsequential we are, there is a potentially great film hidden in all our lives. We can always put a camera in front of a person and follow him for a certain period of time and we will have a film, a great film – all the time and this is no exaggeration. Now why it doesn't happen so much? Our gaze is mostly bounded by some predefined norms. There is a higher ego inside us which prevent us to see beyond the shell / cocoon we live in. Even as filmmakers we go for what glitters from a distance. There is a natural disaster - let's go make a film, he was a big rockstar, let's make a film, he did that – let's make a film, she did this – let's make a film, they are so much oppressed – let's make a film. All these are fine, but too often the sense of purpose is too superficial. As a result there is always a sense of distance in the final outcome, there is everything in it but on the surface. Now someone told me, there is a guy in the neighborhood who goes to learn dancing, I ask did he won anything, the answer is no, did he do anything great, the answer is no. I decide there is a film which will never be made. Why? Because that boy has done nothing so called significant in his life, so there must be lot of things waiting to happen. He must be hopeful, anxious, at time depressed, at times contemplative - all these are internal events and a movie camera always feel complimented when asked to record internal events of a man, those silent monologues, hidden in nature as well as human being.

Treasure lies in the ordinary, the daily mundane nitty gritty.

SONG OF THE MUNDANE



TOPIC SUMMARY / MOTIVATION

(Why it is important, timely, relevant and why I am the best person to make this film)

So I prefer not to take up a voyage on the sea to discover a continent. I rather choose to explore my backyard to try to listen to the distant chant of the trees and inconsequential conversations of the birds which I never paid attention to, I want to know what happens in my backyard on a daily basis, this discovery and knowledge is more important for me. I have always admired the works of filmmakers who took upon the responsibility on themselves to celebrate humanity with a human touch. I have groomed and schooled myself watching their films. So one day when I took my camera out to a slum with an objective to click photographs, Vicky perhaps found me interesting and he came to me and we started having a conversation. He told me he is a dancer. I found him brutally honest, same time deceptive and most importantly when he smiles his eyes never smile, he is sad maybe I thought at that time. I proposed to make a film and he readily agreed. Soon he introduced me to Vikas. I found him immensely different from Vicky, diametrically opposite to each other, yet they are friends. Among all the differences, one thing that was common between them is I found both of them more wise than many of those who have a plethora of educational qualifications. I found them more humanistic. I felt fascinated and realized that this was waiting to be told. Soon one thing led to another. And here I am after spending close to 3 years in bits and parts with them; I am having 30 hours of evidence of their lives and emotions which are ready to be stitched into one single story.