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DES - project report

Hip-Hop Montage

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Declaration

I declare that this project report submission contains my own ideas and work, and if any pre-existing idea or work has been included, the original author(s) have been adequately cited and referenced. I also declare that I have adhered to all the principles of academic honesty and integrity and have not misinterpreted, fabricated or falsified any idea, data, or fact source in my submission. I understand that any violation of the above will be cause for disciplinary action by the institute and may evoke penal action from the sources.

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1. Introduction

This project explores the idea of the hip hop montage by extending it into the domain of infomercials in an attempt to enhance the appeal. The project will be aiming to use fast cutting to create pace and rhythm by analysing the method of hip hop montage used by directors like Darren Aronofsky and Edgar Wright.The project will be in the format of an infomercial (for a public transport) that aims to capture and recreate the chaos of the melee in a city like Mumbai, which on one hand can be chaotic but at the same time has an innate rhythm and soul. The montage was composed of found videos rather than using a story boarded narrative. This is with an aim to explore how the narrated audio can be enhanced and re-interpreted by the visuals on the screen to derive meaning from the edit.

2. Research and literature study

2.1. Secondary Data Collection

2.1.1 The Cutting edge documentary

Keywords : *Juxtaposition , Continuity , Montage , October revolution, Conflict and collision (evokes a response) , Editing is manipulation, Goddard , jump cuts (breathless), Bonnie and Clyde, easy rider. Mtv*

The cutting edge is a documentary detailing the evolution of film editing, a history of editing that spans from Edwin S Porter to Walter Murch. The style of editing showed generational and cultural variations that were exhibited over time along with the difference in the style of the contemporary schools of editing. D.W Griffith found he could hide the cut by cutting in between movements, this formed the foundations of classical film editing. This style is commonly accepted in narrative cinema because of the fluidity it offers to the cuts making it easier for the audience to follow the reality of the film on the screen. On the contrary the cuts in Soviet montages were very jarring and evident and thus making the audience very aware of the cuts.

The Matrix (1999)

 But the audience being aware of the cuts doesn't really mean they do not accept the reality of the cinema, This style of editing was usually used to show very extraordinary situations. Sergie Eisenstein used collision and contrast to evoke an emotional response in the viewer, while Pudovkin used juxtaposition and parallels to signify the inner workings of a character.

Even though the hip-hop montage can be considered to be a product of post classical film editing, with cuts that are short and rely on the rhythm to create sense. The challenge of the project is to translate the chaos of public transport through the use of montage while trying to make sense of the same chaos. Present day commercials and advertisements use the montage as a tool to increase the aesthetic appeal for the audience while ensuring the clarity with which the information is conveyed. This project follows a similar approach as the infomercial, however unlike the infomercial where the shots are planned and executed, the project t ries to push the medium of the montage by using footage out of a pre recorded collection.

2.1.2 Pi (1998) Darren Aronofsky

Key words : Paranoia , repetition, pattern , sound effects , musicality , sample , leitmotif , punctuation.

Pattern and rhythm is a central theme in 'Pi'. Using the sequence of the drug bottle , the director calls towards the enactment of paranoia and hallucinations . The pattern repeats itself multiple times throughout and trains the viewer like a leitmotif to expect scenes of paranoia that follow. As a quick

example :- when the test is set to be run , The protagonist calls out the time followed by some scientific jargon as if singing the verses in a poem. The sequence ends in the failure of the experiment and is followed by a sequence of opening the latches of the doors. However when the experiment renders a favourable


outcome the pattern is broken. The break in the pattern will seem loud to the audience and will grab their attention. Drawing from that the infomercial is split into different sections with timed pauses to emphasise the contradictions so that the information is conveyed with clarity.

 Aronofsky sought to explore the psyche of a character using the hip hop montage by using it as a leitmotif in the film to train the audience to preempt the paranoia. Edgar Wright had a very different approach where he uses hip hop montage to add to the innate timing in comedy to generate humour.

2.1.3 Shaun of the dead (2004) Edgar Wright

Keywords : Comedy , timing, disruption, routines, explainer.

Shaun of the dead, is a humorous spin on a zombie apocalypse, that generates most of its humour by subverting the expectation. The timed pauses felt as if it broke the flow of the edit but also to break the narrative in hopes of subverting expectations to generate humour. Shaun of the dead uses the same method with fast cutting to establish a routine and later breaks the pattern in a well timed way to generate humour. This sudden shift in the pattern makes the differences stand out even more pronounced. The comedic timing in the movie is bought out by the sudden cuts that establish a rapport between the characters that doesn't skip a beat.
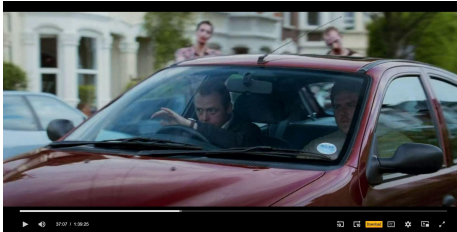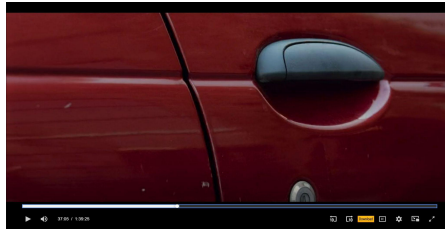
 The narration that loops and repeats is an effective way to create an interest in the viewer and that idea needs to be thought about even from the beginning stages of the project i.e. the script and structure of the story.

2.2 Sampling and hip-hop

Since the backbone of the entire montage is the rhythm and the sounds a very surface level study about the method of sampling was done. Sampling is used extensively by music producers to create new beats by chopping a part of an original recording and using them as the basic units of a new beat, mixing them with other beats to generate a new sound. The project uses a lot of recorded sounds of the city and the locals to not only add to the ambience but also timed with the rhythm and to anticipate transitions.

2.2 Primary data collection

The primary data for the edit was collected from the locations during the scouting process for the visuals and sounds. A mood board was created with photographs from different parts of Mumbai and not only the Local trains. A lot of information regarding the railways and ticket booking procedures are available from the M-indicator app where the live locations , timings and news related to the travel are updated in real time. Later on the captured footage were uploaded into the video library from where all the clips of the montage were chosen.

Link to the folder : DES'23_Rahul

(https://iitbacin-my.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/personal/216340012_iitb_ac_in/Ei6zMMnyq9lCgT8La02Kt6ABREHfcbolWzYIc3Ew6drwTw?e=ez8uaJ)

(Mood board from the explorations)

Analysis

The hip hop montage focuses on the rhythm to set the pace and mood of the edit. It is hence an ideal tool to express emotions like urgency, chaos paranoia and to an extent humour. When it comes to communicating information, it relies on a narration that also follows a rhythm and energy. Commercials like "Follow the frog" and " How to change cars forever" succeed in this respect. Ideally the structure of the rhythm is created and the visuals are cut to the rhythm. However it is the flow of the visuals and their marriage to subsequent layers of audio that sells the idea and makes it interesting.The sounds act as punctuations, as transitions and in some cases anticipations between scenes. The rhythm and pace is what controls the narrative and emotions. The footage can be recycled , does not need to necessarily follow continuity but needs to fit into a pattern that is recognizable. The extent of recognition and clarity of the information that can be imparted with the videos are what this project will be trying to explore. Hip hop montage sort of has similarities with the soviet montage theory , where the edits are sudden and jarring.

That being said, unlike the Soviet montage that uses contrast and collision to generate emotion Hip hop montages stitch shots together to create narrative. It sort of feels like a quilt stitched together using an array of fabrics. The pieces of visuals are stitched together using diegetic sounds that sometimes overpower the audio during transitions.

Concept

The desired output of the video will be an infomercial that will try to explain to a beginner how to navigate the local train network of Mumbai. Since it is an overwhelming experience in itself the video will be trying to produce a light hearted narration of the process and how it is difficult for someone who has been travelling for years . So the video will follow the lines of an explainer video , but will subvertantly be trying to be lighthearted.

Design

 The process of editing the video started with compiling the data collected from primary research, compilation of the data into a basic storyline or thread. The first iteration of the script was in the form of verses similar to a poem (Draft_0) as it had an innate rhythm and timing. The poem helped in setting a rhythm and pace from the initial ideation stage of the montage .Editing together the video with the poem as the reference using a basic beat for the timing and rhythm. Making the audio track using the found audio and creating a loop. Writing a detailed version of the script with the timing and visulas in mind, which was very close to the final audio (draft_1). Later the final script underwent iterations to change the wordings(draft_2), but the structure and timing remained the same.
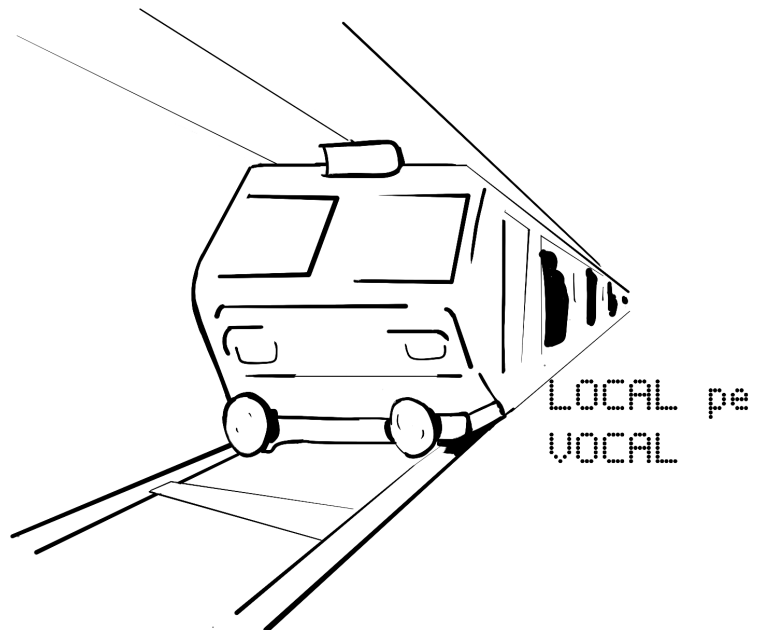
LOCAL pe
VOCAL

Local pe Vocal (Draft_0)

The sun rises late,

Mumbai rises early

Want to get from A to B

Easy.

Just find the nearest station

Auto ..!!!!

Bhaiyya ….kanjur…

Hold up,

(mental note)

Save money for vada pav

priorities.

Auto canceled.

Bus best aahe!

"Ye le ek chutta…

Ab Pudhe chala…"

……

Tickets at the counter

For a human touch

" ek Churchgate return"

Missed your coffee ?

Not in the mood for a conversation

Use the ATVM

Ooh…cool map

Running late ?

Lengthy queues?

Plan ahead …

Use UTS.

But wait …

You have to be

15 meters away from the station

Run back 500 mts .

Book tickets

Run 15 meters to the station,

Figure out your line

What Line ?

Central . western ,Harbour

The three main lines..

Trains come in twos

Fast and slow

Don't look now

. Here comes a train.

…….

(what in the wagon tragedy is this?)

Nope ,choose life

Alway choose life

Remind yourself to

Choose like

The next one maybe ?

Next one definitely

That's it …

Warm up, correct posture , ready the stance ,

Oh, and bags to the front.

Now we wait

First class, ladies , luggage , disabled

And here it is 2nd class

Target locked

Walk with it , walk faster

don't lose the target, (The handrail)

Jump on

Getting pushed…

PUSH BACK!!

"Tune dhakka kyu maara"

Add a tinge of vengeance.

Stay away from the door lane

But not too away from the door lane

Got to get off at Dadar.

Get a foothold at the doorside

Perfect !

Now it's just

Full body massage for 30 mins

…

Utarna hai kya ?

Dadar utarna ?

Utarne hai to aage jaa…

"Arrey bhai Utar raha hai na.."

No time to wait for train to stop ,

Land left feet first

Follow up with the right

Hope to not do a faceplant.

…….

Halfway there.

Bhaiyya ek Vadapav or chai

…….Pause to catch breath….

Change lines from central

To westen

Stairs , people ,

Stairs , dodge ,

Watch your step

Hmm.. Slow or fast ?

Go with the fast

Ooh is that a seat ?

Praise the lord.

Final stretch, spread your legs

Maybe adjust a bit

A bit more .

A little bit more

" bhai , nahi bhait sakte 6 log!!"

Last stop churchgate .

Right leg first

Follow with left.

Avoid faceplant

sabash!!

You just started your day with

15 million people in Mumbai. V

Local pe vocal (Draft_1)

Everyday, at every juncture people make choices. But It's still hard to believe that someone would choose this. (cut to Bharath in the train).

 You can always choose an auto, but the auto may not always choose you.(Bhaiyya Kanjur marg Jaatha hai kya ? ….Ha na) Finally ….Metre ticking. This apparatus runs faster than the rickshaw.. Idhar side pe rukh do bhaiyya , bus best aahe.

Horn!! Not much pudhe chala going on in the road right now.

Then, there's the most affordable means of transportation and full body massage in Mumbai. Take a ticket at the counter , have a human interaction. Still not in a mood to socialise , no worries take your time , use an ATVM. It even comes with a cool map. Still stuck in a queue ? so you download the UTS app. But you need to be 15 mts away from the platform! So you run 15 metres away from the platform , book your tickets in seclusion , run 15 mts back to the platform. Just in time to catch the train…?

On such occasions where you're running late and have to weigh your options…choose life, always choose life. Hmmm… waits for eternity ..still choosing life ?

I don't think you get a choice in this . That's it, I choose violence, when life pushes you you push back …harder…."Abhe kyoon Dhakka maar raha hai?" . Ignore the haters. You find a cozy spot to

settle in for the next few minutes until… (the noises of pushing) "Utarna hai kya ..Hai to aage jaa ..Kya train rukne ke baat hi utarta Kya ? , and just like that you choose to leap out of a running train.. Reward yourself (looks at a burger) , nah …ek Vada paaav de bhaiyya. Good choice . Ok Breaks done , Mumbai keeps moving 24x7 through the veins that carry the Junta in the Central, western, harbour all those lines that converge somewhere ,Thane , Kurla , Dadar, CST. Want to go fast , prefer going slow? Chill in an AC train , stretch your legs in first class or stick with second class the choices are numerous. This microcosm of the suburban railway network offers you just that …A choice.

Local pe vocal _ (Final Draft)

 Every day at every juncture, you are offered a choice. So if free will exists, why should you , yes you choose….this !
If not for the affordability , choose it for the free full body massage. It's always advised to keep a ticket handy before boarding. Is the ticket counter too old school ? Want to keep up with the times? Use an ATVM
Who needs human interaction ? choose a machine. Still stuck in the queue ? plan ahead and book unreserved tickets with UTS. Didn't plan ahead ? Let's rewind time, Retrace steps to a coordinate 15 minutes and 15 metres away from the track. Tickets booked just in time to catch the ….train ? With trains passing every 4 mins , it's highly advised to choose life.
" patience never guarantees the passing of an empty train"- random dude
Ready yourself , cause once you're in, you'll realise getting out is the hard part.
"Utarna hai kya ? Dadar utarna ? Kya train rukne ke baad hi utarta hai kya ?
And just like that you choose to leap out off a running train cause Mumbai never stops moving. Kept alive 24x7 through the junta flowing through its veins made up of the western, central , harbour and a couple more lines. This microcosm made of the Suburban railways is not just an option for the average commuter, it is their choice.

Audio sampling

The sounds of the Nashik dhol is widely heard during the festivity in Mumbai especially Ganesh chaturthi. A recording of a street performance was used in a loop to act as the beat track of the video. The beats were punctuated at intervals with the sounds from the railway station. Like an air

horn or the sound of the public announcing system. The audio collected from the beeping of the timer of a railway clock was used like a metronome. The sounds from the footage collected, instead of being thought of as noise was attempted to be strategically used.

Editing

The editing and the audio were a process that almost went hand in hand in hand , with the basic loop forming the skeletal structure of the edit. The videos with diegetic sounds were inserted at key points of punctuation while the spaces in between were filled with aesthetically selected videos that could instil a sense of time and space. The narration was finalised first and the video sort of formed around it. However there was a conscious attempt to make the narrated voiceover and the visuals mutually exclusive. This was achieved by taking away the use of a storyboard as a whole and arranging the pre recorded videos solely on the basis of what made sense at the editing table.
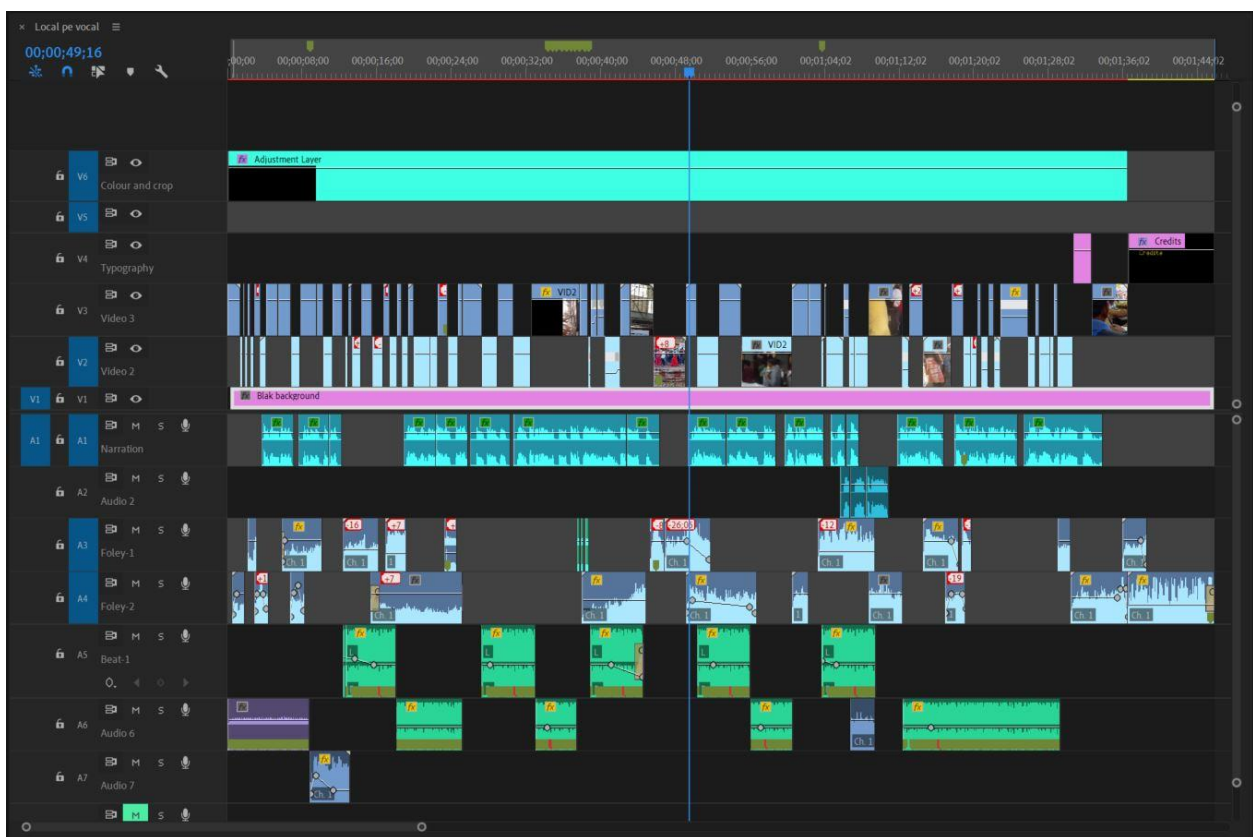
Post production

The post production includes colour grading to match the hues of a Mumbai sunset along with minimal typo animations that resemble the LED displays in the local trains.

Conclusion

"What they finally remember is not the editing, not the camerawork, not the performances, not even the story—it's how they felt."

— Walter Murch, In the Blink of an Eye: A Perspective on Film Editing

The medium of mass communication has undergone rapid change from cinema to tik tok. The fast paced editing style of the 90's influenced cultures as a whole , be it rock and roll or hip hop. Riding on the coat-tails of post classical editing , techniques like the hip -hop montage brought the medium of cinema into a format fit for shorter and more catchy formats like television. Every generational audience intuitively accepts the editing techniques that they grow up watching and push it a step forward . 90's and MTv influence on fast cutting and editing that was explosive is almost in the norm. This has shifted even further with the span of videos becoming smaller and the necessity to tell a story within a minute. Cinema is said to be a reflection of the society in which it was made, in that sense in a fast paced attention deprived society, the hip- hop montage is a technique that strips down the edit to the bare minimum required to communicate an idea.

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