

THE EUPHORIA OF DIGITAL CINEMA'S VELOCITY AND A RENAISSANCE OF SPECTATORSHIP IMPERIUM

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ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to outline the major reconfigurations and reconceptualizations of spectatorship during various moments (TV, video, Web 2.0, digitalization) while also trying to foreground the current model of information transmission (patched directly into consciousness) that has been activated to render a new spectatorial landscape in our times. The fissures in digital spectatorship and spectatorial embodiment itself are highlighted in this research paper, wherein I'll attempt to investigate several digital apparatuses and software that, in contrast to celluloid filmmaking, orchestrate an intimate, immediate, and interactive media framework. It's quite clear that in contemporary times, everything is ancillary to digital media technology, from production and post-production to exhibition and distribution. Furthermore, the oscillations of remediations after the advent of the digital revolution, characterized by a process in which new media define themselves with reference to older media, offering a debilitated connection with reality while concurrently highlighting this very capability, which sets up a framework to comprehend the tensions between transparency and opacity evident in several discourses of digital cinema, are highlighted in this paper. The transformations of the cinematic medium, which correspond to several debates about indexicality, alteration of cinema's texture, and the return of affective attractions as an array of digital sensations via galvanization, are adumbrated. Deep-fake image processing, CGI, and digital animation (rotoscoping, animetism, stop-motion, synthetic environments, compression glitches, and typographic) technologies, as well as how the sedimentation of divergent temporalities results in a digital simulation of cinematic elements, are explicated in this paper, wherein, finally, I shall also endeavor to classify the structural differences between big-media entertainment and small-screen entertainment whilst focusing on the metamorphosis of modes of perception, awareness, and experiences for a contemporary spectator.

Keywords: *Spectatorship, Digitalization, Digital Revolution, Medium-Metamorphosis, Interactive Media, Digital Apparatus, Spectatorial Embodiment, Re-Configurations, Medium, Indexicality, Affective Attractions, Digital Animation.*

"Digital cinema is haunted by a double logic: the striving for ever greater realism via a technology and interface that continually calls attention to the artifice of the medium."

-Nicholas Rombes

"I think it would be incredible if both options stayed alive for as long as possible. Chris [Nolan] called me when there was a campaign to help Kodak, and I did what I could with the relationships that I have because I think it's a great art form, and if it dies, something is going to be lost. It's not a pure replacement. I really took advantage of the film

'The Wrestler' and 'Black Swan,' which were both shot in 16mm, for the aesthetic of the grain. If you look at Matty's (cinematographer Matthew Libatique's) work on "Noah," we really worked with what the film stock could do for us. I think the art form changes and the story changes as the media changes.'

– Darren Aronofsky

Last Week, I came across a few new digital softwares online through which I decided to curate a small experiment, to write a T.V scene script about a Woody Allen-esque romantic comedy set in 2023 New York, in which a couple is arguing about how to consume media. Here are the results:

(Jake and Marianne are seated in two beige pushback recliners, and in front of them is a 90-inch 4K smart TV with Dolby digital surround sound and ambient speakers, which is kept surrounded by ambient speakers in an otherwise empty studio apartment).

INT. MARRIANE'S APARTMENT - 300 ASHLAND PLACE- 2ND DECEMBER 2022- 7 P.M

Marriane

(swiftly through a miniature hand-remote, skimming through several channels and programs)

What do you feel like watching?

Jake

(loquaciously goes on)

How about continuing *Severance* from Apple TV or some new Netflix original? We can watch South Park again, but wait, wait, wait. Kendrick has just uploaded a music video on YouTube for *Rich Spirit*.

Marriane

(Gestures, No with her head)

Jake

(even more promptly this time)

How about something indie from MUBI? Some classics from Criterion, maybe any new stand-ups from Prime, or something gritty on HBO Originals

Marriane

(enervated)

Let's just watch some reels.

This scene's script was rendered in less than 10 seconds by using an app called Otter.A.I., which utilizes real-time transcription to code any digital video. Following that, I pasted the transcription into a program called Jasper, which used artificial intelligence to convert this scene from Riverdale, a Netflix original show in which Betty and Jughead are debating how to spend their free time after solving a major crime mystery. Thereby, Jasper, A.I., employed an algorithm that generates a newfangled script adhering to OTT standards. So primarily, this experiment of mine conducted through these two software packages demonstrates that we are living in times when more than two dozen OTT platforms are offering round-the-clock programming, ranging from serial killer fiction shows to family comedy to animation to drama. The list doesn't end. While apps like Otter and Jasper are operating as assistance for writers to concoct homologous, ameliorative, and run-of-the-mill content catered to contemporary audiences, taking this AI revolution a step further is Chat GT, an AI chatbot that is being dubbed a potential Google killer by media pundits while also being dexterous at tasks such as data compilation, research analysis, fiction writing, and so on. It's so easy to get a script, and it's even easier to shoot one. If more of the same mediocre, same narrativized content is hovering over the web simultaneously, films like Sean Baker's *Tangerine (2015)*, Vishal Bhardwaj's *Fursat (2023)*, Steven Soderbergh's *Unsane (2018)*, and periodical Apple advertisements, which are also iPhone-shot films, demonstrate the efficiency of these new miniature digital apparatuses when utilized properly. Websites like YouTube, for distribution, prove it to be the best platform catering to money for old rope (the odious vloggers, asinine streamers, and video-podcasting pillocks on YouTube are testaments to the same).

Similarly, the scene described above is exactly the state of a contemporary spectator (as correctly penned by AI software) surrounded by a

plethora of content and images, which is why it's only James Cameron's *Avatar: The Way of Water* (2022) that can make me leave the comfort of my home and return back to the theaters. Subsequently, this paper explores the contemporaneous disconcerted digitized spectatorial anxiety and underscores the re-conceptualisation of what is cinema? What is TV? What's happening to the audio-visual apparatus? And what about an AI powered, inchoately galvanized medium that transforms the realm of the digital cinematic experience?

The internet has ruptured us. We're overwhelmed and emotionally exhausted, and our mouths are agape with incredulity as we're bombarded with sporadic information (especially misinformation and fake news). Notifications chime at all hours, and the scrolling over our precious devices never ends. We assuage ourselves through these devices—portals to our curated bubbles of content and community. Several media and film theorists have discussed how, by the turn of the millennium, there was an impending demise of the cinematic medium. While consecutively the obstreperously altering texture of cinema is a resultant of technologised media hybridisation and a “convergence culture” working as a legerdemain against the cinematic norm-axis.

In our times, the actual media has died, and an array of digital sensations has absorbed all media, making it perhaps not actually dead but merely a phantasmal form of its former self. In the realm of digitization, where images don't require the actual presence of the object they depict, abstruse (O's and 1's-pixel's processual logic) algorithms render them digitally. CGI, images from surveillance cameras, drones, satellites, and stereoscopic images (to create an immersive vision) are being assiduously incorporated as imagery in films these days, which substantially relocates the filmic experience. This protean reality (manufactured by dynamic technical images) that is consequently created on the screen sometimes overwhelms and defeats the contemporary spectator's sensibilities. Ambiguity, splintered reality, and copious ostensible artificiality has become the nature of the digital image,

confronting the spectator with a vacillating state of being from which they cannot egress. Digital images are also intricately rich while exhibiting details that are so much more than what a spectator can absorb (watch).

Such is the case with films like *Avatar*, *DC Comics*, and *The Marvel Universe*, wherein the fans (through a convergence culture) and their respective fandom forums are attempting to bridge the gaps between the richness of these cryptic, digitally rendered images. In this paper, I shall attempt to re-evaluate and redefine the term “medium” along with its concurrent spectatorship through the major media and film theorists' core arguments. This would reconcile a paradoxical duality consorting in the present proliferation of technical media in a frenzied unifying effect of digitisation wherein there's a primal blurring of traditional media boundaries at the core of digital.

Simultaneously, through an analysis of several mediated inscriptions of media boffins this paper addresses the issues rendered by moving images after their reallocation from a traditional cinema theater to its contemporary mode, which is proselytizing the traditional cinema goer to become a binge watcher of ersatz content that significantly brings about a multi-sensory praxis of reflexivity along with a cybernetic haptic and spatial perception of images. There is most importantly a network of convergence culture substratum which binds the old narratives and visual conventions with a scrupulous conduit of digital media aesthetics manifested in Tv shows such as *Mr. Robot*(2015) , *Black Mirror*(2011), *Succession*(2019) feature films like *Everything Everywhere all at Once* (2022), *Black Panther*(2022), *Mad Max Fury Road*,(2015),*Oppenheimer* (2023) and Video- Games cum interactive T.V shows such as *The Last of Us* (2023), and *Fallout* (2022).

THE IMPINGEMENT OF THE TELE-VISUAL MEDIUM

The term “post-cinema” emerged in the mid-20th century, and suddenly all debates baked cold deserts

around medium-specificity, which became ad nauseam. Cinema professor Anna MacArthy, while revisiting the whole history of cinema, starts with the moment of television's arrival in America in the 1940s and how, through the tele-visual medium, a surge of multiple temporal structures was generated within which the technology traveled, as she annotates in her seminal book *Ambient Television*. She writes, "Television is understood as a particular form or mediation of inscriptions, speech, and images, while it's also a rhetorical toy in numerous acts of writing and representing the modern." The mirabile dictu ingress of TV transforms our relationship to space and, simultaneously, by extension, to cinema. While home space began to transform, it converged into a mini-public space. TV responded through tight family programming, and a subsequent transformation of the living room took place. McCarthy quotes Martin Heidegger's *The Thing*, in which he states that it (T.V.) causes "the abolition of every possibility of remoteness" and how humans can't accurately gauge the accurate sense of spatiality (which is a sensory way in which we apprehend the space), a sensory thing. The tectonics of the tele-visual medium render a spatial imagination, which is an enmeshment of multiple screens tethering different information that includes the sense of several modes of programming: indexical moments, news, entertainment shows, cultural shows, etc. Martin Heidegger in his discussion of *The Thing* adumbrated this bit that the indexical force of liveliness functions as a cytosure translating the perceived temporal simultaneity into a desultory of spatial collapse. This ideology of liveness is not only about a live performance in space, but also about a synergy of aleatory effects. TV reconstitutes the relationship between the notions of place and space that are brought through live transmission or pre-recorded material, just as it does with the notion of time. Through this framework, McCarthy delineates how vision and perception get reconstituted, which includes a spatial transformation from site (vision) to site (physicality of sight). The description of television by Frederick Jameson as a mode of "surrealism without the unconscious" and Weber's argument about

television as a "spatial and semiotic framework to outline ongoing crises in a dominant organizing logic, relating signs to things and signs to each other" serve as templates even for our current TV programming. The hybrid technological forms of screen and network are enmeshed, while there's an efficacious dialectical superstructure functioning between "global generality" and "local specificity" that's embodied by the televisual medium.

TV has become a central element of post-globalized life at home, and this medium reorganizes space and time pertinaciously, but one should also observe the vertiginously trite and standard materiality of the machine (the TV set) itself, functioning as a piece of furniture and an aesthetic choice at your place. Anna McCarthy discusses the ontological and geographical notions of an occupied space in a televisual site-specific video installation (Rio-Video Wall) in Atlanta by Dara Birnbaum, which addressed gender biases and mass media through an intersection of video art and television. A video wall of 25 monitors (each 27") was created and was originally part of the Rio shopping mall complex in the fourth ward, diagonally arranged in a square matrix of five by five. This complex welter of interactive live images was then manipulated in order to draw attention to the domain of mediatised spaces such as this shopping mall, while the entire TV matrix unit is placed as a floating wall, providing the pedestrian with views from both the back and front. Two sets of images are fed into these 25 monitors. Firstly, the broadcast news serves as a visual representation (a direct feed from broadcast CNN news). Now this visual representation is splintered through a keyhole, which displays Atlanta's landscape in pre-recorded video footage. Georgia's indigenous natural landscape is captured in sets corresponding to the four seasons, and furthermore, this footage is keyed into the visual news information through pedestrians' activity (their bodies crossing in front of a live camera). The unusual outline of the pedestrian's body converges into the keyhole, allowing this hole to be pierced into the news, which is then replaced by pre-recorded (natural) footage. This ever-changing influx

of imagery, which never repeats itself in any permutation or combination, demonstrates a shift in perception into a multi-sensory milieu of postmodern, transgenre schizophrenic world that undermines the notion of coherent unification while also staging a mapped sensory transformation from live video footage to pre-recorded Georgian landscape and finally with the surveillance camera's body outlines. The idea of a citizen's security, being in a space (occupying a space), and experiencing your imagery coming back and forth while interacting with you at a particular time (the notion of being) are a few of the larger issues being addressed by this closed-circuited televisual video-installation.

In 2021, *Wanda Vision*, the first MCU (Marvel) and Disney + sitcom about superheroes

creates a retro joy wherein each episode is a skillfully curated masterpiece - from script, to delivery, lighting, cinematography, aspect ratio, mise-en-scene, performance style, all orchestrating a parody of classic sitcoms ranging from 1950's (*The Dick Van Dyke Show, I love Lucy*) to 60's (*Bewitched and Dream of Jeannie Vibe*) and then to the 70's and beyond (*Brady Bunch, Malcolm in the middle, Happy Endings, The office, Modern family*) before bursting into the digital zone of marvel cinematic universe i.e., in the present. This show exhibits the black-and-white TV format, the arrival of color, odes to retro advertisements, and the embracement of digital storytelling formats. Wanda Vision, along with thousands of other shows floating over the digital distribution platforms, are a marker of how far the television medium has reached since its arrival.



Fig.1: Wanda and Vision composed in a black and white template (50's American TV) used in the first two episodes of the show.

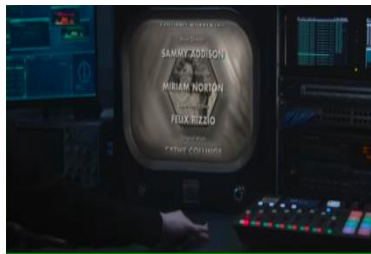


Figure 2: Noticeable shift in aspect ratio from the world of spells to the digital present, where government agents are tracking these superheroes.



Fig.3: An illustration of transition devices used in the show, throwing an ode to the yesteryears.



Fig.4 : Episode 4, showcasing the coming of color on televisual programmes.



Fig. 5: Amalgamation of digital and 1970s television programming through Marvel Universe's technology.



Fig. 6: Evocation of past and present metamorphosed to find final answers during the climax of the show.

THE SURREPTITIOUS SURGE OF THE VIDEOTAPES

Similarly, the second moment is about videotapes that deconstructed global film discourse and how this pre-recorded video reframed the premises and promises of motion picture spectatorship. These notions are addressed by Caitlyn Benson Abbott in her book, *Killer Tapes and Shattered Screens*. She examines a genealogy of post-cinematic spectatorship in horror movies, thrillers, B-genres, and emerging digital horror. Sean Sexton Cunningham's 1980 film *Friday the 13th* is the first part of this slasher horror genre franchise, which went on to seven sequels under the same template with more or less a few changes. This film is used by Benson in the opening section of her books to mark the beginning of a surreptitious surge of videotape distribution, which furthermore ruptured the spectatorship alignment pronounced previously by the motion pictures, as the film, through its opening sequence, plays out a visual assault on its viewers in which a shattered glass air-dashes right into the spectator's gaze as the Friday the 13th title card emerges to collide and splinter through the glass. The material changes brought about by this film, as well as the end of the 1980s, when the lowly video cassette posed a challenge to cinema by redesigning spectatorship rules that corresponded to the mutual imbrications of platforms and spectators, are referenced while Benson charts her arguments through a trajectory corresponding to the apparatus theory, but *Friday the 13th* coquettes with Metz's theory of primary identification, in which a spectator identifies the all-seeing gaze of the camera with himself or herself.

She also orchestrates a symbiotic relationship between VHS video and horror, in which analog video is rendered as a horror site. She describes the video as evoking the uncanny and destabilizing the logic of the cinematic apparatus in the midst of the format wars prevalent in their competition. These format wars were converted into

narrative production, which can be carefully examined in films like Michel Gondry's *Be Kind, Rewind* (2008). Because "video appears in so many stories and conventions, it can appear ubiquitous—or invisible." These format wars created video subjects that changed perception and thus film spectatorship, just as you couldn't control the programming or time bracket in the televisual spectrum, but here video carried another stratum of affect that transforms the sensory regime while interacting with this contraband material. During the last three decades, images of video technology and video cultures have appeared in movies like Aneesh Chaganty's *Searching* (2018), Levan Gabriadze's *Unfriended* (2015), David Cronenberg's *Sex Lies and Videotape* (1989), Stephen Susco's *Unfriended: Dark Web trailer*, and Daniel Goldhaber's *Cam* (2018), which orchestrate the narrative development through a contemplated role of medium and platform. Working on the same beat, Ashim Alluwallia's *Miss Lovely* (2014) utilizes the video-cassette aesthetics to structure this film unconventionally while simultaneously referencing the Ramsay brothers' horror cinema, porn, and the horror genre brackets of the 1970s and 80s in India. In an age of multiplatform distribution, moviegoers' attention is constantly flipped. Benson goes on to describe another aspect of video as "representation," in which the camera captures the right thing at the right place and right time, which is, surprisingly, how video enters political discourse.

Malcolm X (1992) is Spike Lee's cinematic study of the African American political figure. This profound civil rights biopic is still an extremely relevant piece of art in our times, where the daemon of racism still augments and grows ferociously. In the opening sequence of the film, Lee uses footage of the Rodney King incident that finally converges into the letter "X" rising from the flames of a burning American flag. In the second half of the film, the Kennedy assassination video is employed again to render an archive effect intermittently cut between speeches of Malcolm X (played by the exceptional Denzel Washington). Footage of police brutality and

real events is also inserted in several other sequences. These sequences from the film highlight the arguments above while simultaneously explaining how video footage is utilized and exhibited in the cinematic medium. These events framed and composed on video through its several modes of distribution—exhibition and chance encounter frameworks—pose a question of resolution and how video has the power of memory while it can also retain information. Another connecting thread for a video inscription example would be David Lynch’s *Twin Peaks* (1990), which changed television history for good through its surrealist, beguiling Lynchian mystery box of whodunnit. In the show, when Laura Palmer, the teenage prom queen, disappears and a home video of her

emerges, the video herein becomes the only site where she’s visible, and the narrative proceeds to solve this investigation led by the idiosyncratic FBI special agent, Dale Cooper. The reflection of the bike in Laura’s eyes becomes another kind of evidence and a clue deciphered through this same video. The structural configuration of the video tapes and how video can’t handle magnetic fields were manifested in *Be Kind Rewind* (2003), where the video, itself, is the protagonist of the film and envisages plot points through the mechanics of video and its subsequent threat of destruction. Surreptitious multimedia messaging service scandals and political sting operations, which emerged with the introduction of video, are also areas where the impact of this moment was felt.



Fig. 7: A still from the opening sequence of *Malcolm X*, visually depicting the Rodney King incident through found footage.



Fig. 8: Final still from the opening sequence of the film, wherein old media (Rodney King footage) is converted into a burning X made from the American flag.



Fig. 9: Another example of police brutality juxtaposed with Malcolm X's speech, exhibited through a TV screen.



Fig. 10: Kennedy's assassination is replayed in the film through black-and-white, found footage.



Fig.11- An illustration of Malcolm X's real footage played at the end of the film



Fig. 12: Another example of police brutality in Harlem streets to evoke the archive effect in the film.

As Laura Mulvey explains in her article *Passing Time: Reflections on the Old and New*, the old celluloid medium gave way to the new and digital, and cinema's meta-narrative was unfolding during the decline of modernism and the collapse of socialism. She emphasizes that, in avant-garde films, cinema's reliance on the still frame not only made its materiality visible but also worked negatively against the alliance between the illusion of movement and the mass of narrative film. But now with DVDs or videotape, this structure is broken down, wherein new temporalities are unleashed with the examination of unexpected detailing. The experience of cinematic time with a branched temporal framework occurs when one can stop the frame, fast forward it, or rewind it. Since the video was released, drawing on Benson's framework of video spectatorship in private spaces, three orders of cinematic play have been released: a) not going to the cinema; b) revisiting older cinema through new technology, which allows you to move from the idea of old and new; and c) the construction of a "pensive spectator" to tackle the image differently, deciphering the role of inscriptions and resulting in a transformation of film and spectatorship that wasn't there earlier. Mulvey categorizes that, within a pensive spectator, there exists a mode of delayed aesthetics, which is not spectacular viewing. It allows you to become pensive through a cycle of old and new, which doesn't make the old obsolete. However, this new format allows you to take on the older temporal orders received via modern technology and inhabit these two orders of time. This lies in contrast to Anna McCarthy's notion of ambient TV through its permeated omnipresence. Mulvey writes that maybe the hope of the 20th century won't fade and will be revisited in multiple forms, and film can function as an archive of hope and change. It's important to note that this concept of the pensive spectator is unlike Anne Friedberg's concept of the time tourist, as the latter is linked to a postmodern experience in the contemporary world.

Patricio Guzman, after leaving his country for 23 years, comes back to screen *Battle of Chile*,

his seminal documentary series illustrating the events of September 11, 1973, in order to remove the historical amnesia curated within the younger Chilean generation. *Chile, Obstinate Memory (1997)* the third installment of the series, which depicts the controlled grief, trauma, and remembrance of the Chilean battle during the turbulent times of Salvador Allende and Augusto Pinochet, is an important reminder of how cinema intertwined with political aesthetics of pulverized digitalization is a hallmark of contemporary filmmaking. After the screening, the young people are in a state of shock. The cinematographer of the film is shot, and his death is captured by the camera, and that moment is there. Guzman brings the footage back to Chile as a video and screens it there; Chile has an obstinate memory. Classically, this is what Mulvey is talking about: a century of "hope revisited through new technology." In this film and through this exhibition mode, one can observe how several spectators engage with memories of the past and how archival footage interacts to create new spectatorial experiences rendered through the materiality of the footage and a return to the memory of the past. Something similar was transpired in India this year with BBC's much controversial docuseries on Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi- *India: the Modi Question* which examines the 2002 sectarian violence in Gujarat, never ending Kashmir Violence and apocryphal CAA-NRC laws which explicitly demonstrates and delineates the trajectory of violence and a creation of hindu-right wing demagogue who's been at play with events since the beginning of his tenure through archival footage which trepidates the viewer about the current govt. rather than painting a maudlin template of Indian Muslims in the state. For a prime minister who refuses to be interviewed by any channel whatsoever, this film (with an amalgamation of Modi's recalcitrant on-camera appearances) plays an important role in taking Laura Mulvey's assertions about 20th-century cinematic hope.

GENESIS OF THE DIGITAL MEDIUM AND A TURNING POINT IN SPECTATORSHIP

The arrival of digital media aesthetics and the internet (www) interface in pursuit of spectatorship harmonization and its concurrent transformations is now referred to as the third point in the odyssey of the cinematic medium, campaigning not to become decrepit. A cold medley anatomisation of a dysfunctional family running the world's biggest family media conglomerate trying to venture into the digital sphinx, HBO's *Succession* (2020) created by Jesse Armstrong is almost a Seinfeldian attempt to frame the corporate-elite in a tragic-satire template that ferments an idiosyncratic batter to bake a modern -melodramatic dysfunctional family croissant which represents the third moment stated above. Films such as *Paparazzi* (Paul Abascal, 2004), Richard Linklater's *A Scanner Darkly* (2006), Steven Spielberg's *Minority Report* (2002), Christopher Nolan's *The Dark Knight* (2008), Kathryn Bigelow's *Strange Days* (1995), Oliver Stone's *Snowden* (2016), and Tony Scott's *Enemy of the State* (1998) present a pessimistic view of the struggle to hold on to the real in the face of institutionalized oppression affixed to a digitally networked structure.

Marshall McLuhan, the Canadian communication theorist, writes that "the medium is the message" in his seminal book *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, in which he elegantly predicts the onset of the Internet and how media is a hypodermic needle wherein digital permeates through its technological transformations. With every technology we use, he explains, the contents of one medium are always other media. By illustrating the example of electric light, he calls it a medium without a message. Marshall McLuhan's tetrad, composed of "enhancement, obsolescence, retrieval, and reversal," functions as a structure for analyzing and examining media via its historical significance and contemporaneous digital trichotillomania, including tenets of the medium itself. He notes that with every state-of-the-art

technology, new extensions will persuade you to think about what you can communicate as content; this structures a bogus theory of content and forms a situation where you think there is content but there really isn't—the whole release cycle of Hindi cinema this year is a testament to that. For McLuhan, the medium acts as a provocation, and the medium shapes the way we can generate content as well. The medium is the message, and it's an anti-representational argument that works on the notion of a pure coherent state where the representational form will change depending on the medium. In his essay, he emphasizes the importance of paying attention to how content is presented to you and which form of technology is used, as well as challenging the entire concept of binary. That is a dialectic critique of dualism—there is a real and a way to represent it—but, contrary to this, he claims that we are inside a reality that can only provide a partial fragmentary account, not the entire picture, because we lack a "transcendental aerial vantage point from which to render the entire territory and subsequent territoriality." This is extremely consequential for understanding the deracinated and multifarious spectatorial positioning of the digital age. Finally, he predicts the amputation and extension of human physiology through technology (as represented by Apple VR headsets, miniature air pods, digital watches, subtitles providing sunglasses, and mobile phones).

As previously discussed, post-cinema occurs as a rupture that sparks off sutured continuities with the arrival of digital. In the post-celluloid era, the question is whether cinema should be linked to apparatus and photo-celluloid, or if it is a set of conventions that can be reflected on other mediums as well. Lev Manovich's forays into new media theory indicate that cinema is returning to curating film as an indexical form and animation. He writes about how, in the twenty-first century, digital has allowed a return to painterly forms, and it becomes the art of indexing, of special effects, and the entire form undergoes a metamorphosis, and cinema becomes a realism-generating machine of the twenty-first century. Hayao Miyazaki, the greatest

animator of our time, uses hand-painted frames for his Studio Ghibli films (*Ocean Waves (1993)*, *Spirited Away (2001)*, and *Castle in the Sky (1986)*), which are then animated in the world of Walt Disney and Marvel digital aesthetics. While reading John Belton's article, "*If film is dead, what is cinema?*" He investigates the deterioration of indexicality and how, in the digital realm, "a photographic image's existential bond with its referent is severed, where it's just information contained in 0s and 1s." It's

again essential to align a spectatorship formation in these binary-coded visual images, wherein digital artists orchestrate an apparently "pro-filmic" scene configuration composed of bits and bytes, while the sublittoral capabilities of digital artists and software render a punctilious existence to the non-existent referent. This argument can also be aligned with Manovich's return to the "painterly form" and how the schematics of post-production tools generate images.



Fig. 13: A still from *Spirited Away (2001)*, which is one of Miyazaki's hand painted fantasies.



Fig. 14: A still from *Akira (1988)*, a Japanese animation, set in a futuristic Neo-Tokyo that changed the game for animation reception in the world.

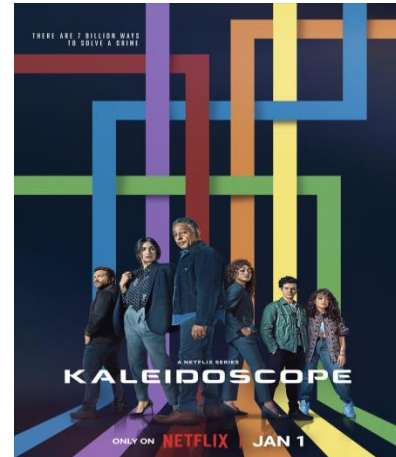


Fig. 15: Poster of Netflix's upcoming TV shows, depicting several color schemes through which each viewer can view their version and series of events.



Fig. 16: A still from *Love, Death+Robots(2021)* a Netflix show which is created entirely by using real-time animation in Unreal Engine software.



Fig. 17: An illustration from the interactive video game *The Last of Us (2012)*, which is converted into a drama series starring Pedro Pascal (on the left).



Fig. 18: A still from Dibaker Banerjee's *Love, Sex aur Dhokha (2010)*, depicting the interface of digital horror through surveillance camera footage.

Furthermore, Manovich limits the mechanics of production and pre-production in favor of the dominance of post-production and rendering material through editing tenets, wherein reworking, recarving, layering, and cavorting special effects all change the notion of "pro-filmic." The film *24-frames (2017)* by Abbas Kiarostami adheres to this argument, where he brings photography and filmmaking together and sets out to rebuild visual moments that occur either right before or after an image is taken. He curates a template of twenty-four still images, most of which are unembellished landscapes occupied by birds and wildlife, which are then digitally animated within their own compositional framework to render a 4.5-minute vignette that becomes a corollary of sui generis encapsulations of movement, time, and perception. In one of the frames, the smoke starts in the middle of the frame, and the snow appears to come here. At this point, there is a confluence of digital and memory. For Manovich, live action is one of many elements that comprise cinema, but it is only one half; the other half is the "live space that is central to cinema's imagination" and is transformed through editing in this film. He writes that the art of indexing has passed, that the painterly aesthetic has returned, that the film denotes the generated perspective, which is in a complex state, and that he shows the staging of film-making. This can also be observed in Dziga Vertov's *Man with the Movie Camera*, which was quite an interesting impetus to Manovich's work and is considered one of the most prominent "database films" of the 20th century. Manovich also states that avant-garde techniques are materialized in computers and re-emerge as Ctrl C, Ctrl X, and Ctrl P commands, which are the most elementary functions one can perform on digital data as compared to the antediluvian editing techniques of analogue. Manovich continues to frame indexicality in the world of 3-D imaging and CGI, where the illusion of dynamic reality that cinema offers can be reversed. Locating the central argument of the paper, i.e., spectatorship, through the box of interactive media and digital content, which again extends and elongates the realm of spectatorship.

- *Black Mirror: Bandersnatch (2018)* directed by David Slade is an interactive digital film which offers the spectator a chance to choose what the peripatetic protagonist Stefan does. Will he eat breakfast or indulge in substance abuse? The spectatorial agency is enmeshed with the obsequiousness of the narrative plot.
- Steven Soderbergh's HBO originals series *Mosaic (2021)* in which the spectator can choose a peculiar POV from within the narrative world while having an option of returning back to the start and revisiting the whole thing from a fresh perspective. While Ben Simms' Netflix originals *Escape the Undertaker (2021)* is an interactive profligacy of genre mix (digital horror, WWE action) wherein new WWE stars follow spectator's prompts in order to survive the spectral apparitions in Mark William Claway' (a.k.a. undertaker's) spooky mansion. This show was specially curated for the Halloween time, something which is exponentially increasing as a warble genre in itself i.e. the Holiday/ Festival movie.
- Analogously, *Netflix Originals'* new psychological heist thriller *Kaleidoscope (2020)* is an eight-episodic (each responding to specific color and time changes) show that can be watched in any order and can have different permutations and combinations of endings, depending on the final color chart of each viewer, respectively.

Finally, Manovich summarizes digital film as follows: "live action material + painting + image processing + composting + 2-D computer animation and 3-D computer animation." So as discussed above, there's an unassailable odyssey within the medium inscriptions through transformations wherein a transition is marked from kino-eye to kino-brush, rendering cinema a specific form of painting over time.

To further complicate the realm of spectatorship, consider David Rodowick's article *Incredible shrinking medium*, which attempts to define the visual culture of the twenty-first century, in which digital media aesthetics have hurtled and concocted a technological structure. *The Matrix* (Lana and Lilly Wachowski), *Dark City* (Alex Proyas, 1998), *13th Floor: Josep Rusnak*, and *Existenz* (David Cronenberg), all of which explored the concept of a digitally rendered simulation that seamlessly and invisibly replaces the solid, messy, and analogue worlds.

The technological framework matured effectively and was hyphenated into a dodecahedron of digital aesthetics nexus that transposed the contemporaneous world, which, according to Neo in *The Matrix (1999)* was too smelly. The premise and major conflict in these narratives emerge from the resistance between digital and analogue and its subsequent divide, which becomes the cynosure of these films, emphasizing the battle of cinema for its very own aesthetic survival. Simultaneously, an allegorical superstructure is formulated by the opprobrium of analogue machines through digital simulation that ameliorates the visual and auditory prestidigitation, at which point the cinematic medium scuffles for a trail of reassertion and redefinition against the representative digital cybernetic technology, which threatens to overwhelm it. These narratives incorporate gaming aesthetics, while their implicit and explicit referencing adds a form of abnegation of the atavistic cinematic world while figuratively embodying a compendium of digital aesthetics over an analogue epitaph.

The current favorite TV show on global television right now is *The Last of Us (2023)*, an action-adventure video game developed by Naughty Dog and Sony that has been adapted by HBO as a modern-day horror series set in a post-apocalyptic world (the mushroom apocalypse) that, like the interactive game, poses moral questions about the motivations for violence, revenge, and "digging two graves," a game phrase. It expands on digital cinema debates while also establishing a template for

content expansion by utilizing the original game's visual and plot minutiae and applying digital cinema aesthetics to them. Cinema these days merely functions as an image of aesthetic experience, a revamped jejune of spectacles, while the televisual medium, through a process of product differential sets, encompasses the role of a popular mass medium, where spectatorial behavioral concepts such as binge watching and marathon viewing are induced.

The world of animation commercially started out with *Toy Story's* and *Bug's lives*, which have come full circle if one watches Netflix's original *Bojack Horseman*. Ranging from themes such as traumatic childhood, celebrity culture, addiction, alcoholism, self-hatred, and so on and so forth, this show tackles the toughest topics with a Kouign Amann of hot takes (provocative and timely commentary), which have become extremely popular in the times of Tik-Tok and Instagram. The show's protagonist is a talking horse, while there are several other anthropomorphized animals coexisting with humans in Hollywood. On the other end of the spectrum is *Love, Death, and Robots (2019)*, an NSFW VFX animated anthology that takes a fresh approach to short-form storytelling. This world of the unknown orchestrated in a trans-genre format was created to unravel a world of industrial robots, humanoid robots, Bunraku theater puppets, A.I. (yogurt), stuffed animals, prosthetic hands, and healthy humans. This show brilliantly utilizes the 3-D gaming animation along with hand-painted in order to collate a fresh perspective in animation curated for adults, especially something being discussed throughout this paper.

Rodowick writes in his essay that the moving image is everywhere and that cinema is a set of conventions through which the medium plays out; this is similar to Belton's argument, which discusses an exhibitor's context and that the "cinematic" is connected to the theatrical form before attacking the way in which apparatus theory limits it with the confines of gaze. Rodowick further evokes the multi-stage form of cinema and explains it through Nansen Goodman's "allographic and autographic forms."

According to Rodowick, film is an ontologically unstable form that actually constitutes its true power, whereas virtuality is inherent in cinema and every film-watching experience is unique, linking Mulvey's pensive spectator and MCarthy's ambient TV spectator here within the framework of repetition and difference as the divergent combinations which can exist for the same. *Riverdale*, *Office*, and *Friends* are a few shows that can become part of the ambient TV structure, whereas shows like *Twin Peaks*, *The Sopranos*, *The Wire*, *True Detective*, and *Mindhunter* all elicit affective engagement from the viewer.

This new transformation is instilled with digital paranoia, as Catilyn Benson attests, and correspondingly, Rodowick, who has concerns about the difficulty of capturing duration on digital. The threshold of digital aesthetics waited long enough in order to prioritize motion over duration, but films of Dogme-95 like Lars von Trier's *The Idiots (1998)*, *Dancer in the Dark (2000)*, and Thomas Vinterberg's *The Celebration (1998)* produce that adroit affect through these very aesthetics. Rodowick hopes that maybe the cinema will recharge and reinvent Tom Gunning's argument about spectacle, which will draw the audience back to the theater, something that *Avatar II* aspires to achieve. Films such as Danny Boyle's *Slumdog Millionaire*, Shane Karut's *Upstream Color*, and Christopher Nolan's *Tenet*, *Dunkirk*, and *Inception* foreshadow major shifts in the infrastructure of cinematography with digital, as well as how the body's relationship to capture changes and how the realm of realism changes with this new camera technology. The sound advancements in the digital cinematic world are a significant factor in changing the complete look and feel (industry jargon) of a film, wherein techniques like ADR (automated dialogue replacement), multi-layered ambient soundscapes, hyper-realist folly work, "worldizing," digital voice recorders, and ground-breaking sound editing software are employed. Films such as *The HurtLocker (2008)* by Kathryn Bigelow, *Mad Max: Fury Road (2015)* by George Miller, *SoundMetal (2019)* by Darius Marder, *Luxo Jr. (1986)*

by John Lasseter, and *Brokeback Mountain (2005)* by Ang Lee adhere to the above-discussed point.

The cinema now has a kinetic imagination and a fractured yet inexorable relationship with the 20th century. Bringing back Catilyn Benson's arguments about the use of apparatus theory to align spectatorship in the realm of video, Belton also suggests that you can't completely eliminate indexicality and that "if a digital film is shown in a large theater, it's a cinematic experience, so it's related to theatrical exhibition," something similar to what MUBI does with MUBI Go, where they screen independent movies in PVR auditoriums with 270-degree viewing panels.

This can be understood through Anne Friedberg's article, *The End of Cinema* wherein she explicates how cinema has been metamorphosed by, encapsulated in, and subsequently cataloged in the new digital media technological landscape that surrounds it. For her, these meteoric changes in cinematic apparatus have dissipated the layer of cinema and its presence in this process of multi-mediatization with its subsequent projections on computers, TVs, I pads, and smartphones. According to her, "cinema has lost its identity as a medium; its medium specificity has been transformed into binary computational data, which has become the display and delivery formats," while film has become a storage medium (videotapes, CDs, and SD cards). Whereas Belton suggests that through exhibitions like MUBI GO, where the logic of theatricality is changed and a relationship is formed between infrastructure and aesthetics, and through apparatus theory, we can stabilize the idea of cinema as a technology, he also highlights that innovations and tech in the apparatus of cinema can simultaneously destabilize its identity. To protect it also we can only rely on the apparatus theory (film-spectator and screen) as modifications in the "technical machinery of the apparatus generate changes in its psychological, social, and ideological function."

This incertitude of concrete spectatorship is further addressed by Friedrich Kittler, who once wrote that "we are subjects of gadgets and instruments of data processing." This trail of thought

is illustrated in his 1986 book *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter*. Dubbed the Derrida of the digital age, Kilter writes that machines will annihilate us, but instead that we are flimflammed to judge ourselves as digital virtuosi of our technological bailiwick. Kitler further says that it's only with storage media that you can have a "conversation with the dead." It's not a symbolic transformation, but a symbolic translation of what you're seeing into the written text that is formulated by a hallucinatory relationship with the written text. The storage medium records it like a sensation. This point is consistent with Catilyn Benson's previously discussed argument, as Kitler also notes that found footage carries narratives from the past, whereas Benson attributes the genre of digital horror when found footage is used (films such as *The Blair Witch Project*, *Love, Sex, Aur Dhoka*, and *Ragini MMS* attest to this). He wrote that the rise of the gramophone and film made the ear and the eye autonomous. For him, the written text carried a sense of authority, and further, he noted that the hardware of media technology is important. Finally, he categorizes media as a multi-sensorium form. In Spike Jonze's *Her* (2013), a postmodern pastoral is orchestrated with digital apparatuses. The film is about a man (Joaquin Phoenix) who dates his operating system (Scarlett Johansson), and the digital affairs are as sensual—and heartbreaking—as the real thing. *Her* (2013) is about a new configuration of body and identity in the new multimedia sensorium. Here in the film, the unanchored voice of Scarlett Johansson is deliberately expressive, and it forms a connected medium that, according to Kitler, cannot be separated from the sensorium. The experience of amputation and extension: Joaquin Phoenix's gear is connected to the operating system, and when it crashes, everything changes, along with the storage

media. Like Henry Jenkins, Kitler was interested in media as a collective—a sense of connected media. The transformation of memory into time and storage media also takes place, which stores time and allows the temporal space to speak with the future. Finally, I'd like to discuss Haneke's affective visual texture of social media—live streaming, instant messaging, and YouTube supercuts—that evokes digital horror. The film unfolds in brusque, circuitous scenes, amongst which reside a series of digital video recordings captured by abstruse and recondite beings. Simultaneously, this film exhibits an absence of context and an absence of exposition, leaving it up to the spectators to ferret out the cryptic subtextual themes inhabiting the lacunae of the film's proliferated digital materiality. Haneke's satanic soap opera of pure sociopathy among Europe's haute bourgeoisie is completely reliant on its audience for a steadfast meaning-making process. The Instagram-live videos, surveillance recordings (VHS tapes) played on TV, changing aspect ratio (oscillating between mobile phone interface and wide-screen digital camera), live-video, and Facebook chats create a multi-media structure in the film that at times evokes digital horror and at others works as a clue or hint for the spectator to decipher the political, social, and familial philosophies that this film embeds within itself. Websites of home video companies like Criterion Collection, which gather world cinema and publish it in 4K blu-ray resolutions through a restoration process, have revolutionized the home video format for ever functioning as a collector's item as well as an embellishing cinematic experience with all the separate add-ons. These curated disks include impeccably sharp restored footage accompanied by dedicated epigrammatic commentary for films of all sorts and genres.



Fig. 19: A still from Michael Haneke's *Happy End* (2017) depicting surveillance camera footage of mining for house-construction while there is a refugee crisis taking place in the country.



Fig. 20: Extension of the real estate developer Anne (Isabelle Hupert) to her mobile phone and its connectivity with her car.



Fig. 21: The interface of a popular social media app, Snapchat, which is utilized to showcase Haneke's off-screen violence and gore.

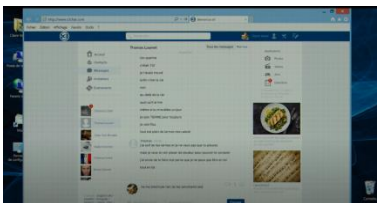


Figure 22: Another example of a social media interface, this time from Facebook, demonstrating spectatorial anxieties and dark web play.



Fig. 23: Footage of Anne captured secretly from a phone using Snapchat's interface.



Fig.24- A still from the end sequences of the film wherein the assisted suicide of depressed father Georges (Hean-Loius Trintignant) is captured again through a mobile phone interface, marking another change in aspect ratio.

ANALYSIS OF THE AVATAR FRANCHISE AND ITS DIGITAL APPARATUS

Now that I've explored several terrains of spectatorial frameworks embedded in a variety of different moments (TV, video, and digital), I shall move on to a film that encapsulates the spirit of big media entertainment in all its forms, mediums, and content. James Cameron's digital sagas, *Avatar* (2009) and *Avatar: The Way of Water* (2022), are one such anthology that, despite the dominance of digital distribution, mighty programming, and round-the-clock event-based film releases, can compel the contemporary spectator to rush back into the theaters from the comfort of their homes for a value-for-buck experience, as OTT platforms charge significantly less than a movie-going experience. It's the post-pandemic spectatorial embodiment that is in constant resistance with; the notion of consuming big media entertainment on a panoramic 80-foot screen. *Avatar*, when it came out, revolutionized the VFX world and also became the highest-grossing movie in the world. Its sequel, which was released 14 days back in 2022, after 13 years since it was released, is an immersive, three-hour-long visual spectacle of a film. It manages to build a world of advanced CGI, water simulations, character animation work, a fusion of computer generated characters interacting with live action performances, and underwater motion capture. James Cameron and his cinematography team created novel camera systems that could work underwater and capture gamic, mobile, and 3-D images. Based on recently released behind-the-scenes footage, reels on Instagram, and incessant interviews with the cast and crew of the film. It can be stated that this is the only film in the history of filmmaking that has been shot completely underwater, using cutting-edge technology that expands and elevates the alternatives in the movie-making world.

This 3-D cinema camera was developed by Light Storm Entertainment, and after examining the camera held by James Cameron on the rig, it can be

noticed that it is tethered with a unique lens configuration where one lens is looking straight ahead but another is poking out of the bottom of the mat-box. This 3-D camera is actually composed of two Sony Venice cameras, which naturally record two separate images, but the lens configuration makes it one. This is the most advanced mode of 3-D printing technology, capable of producing prints in 8K resolution. In his recent interview, Cameron said, "We experience the world through a stereoscopic system, a visual system." "When you see stereo, it gives you an enhanced sense, and it triggers a little region in the brain that makes you feel like you're really there." This type of imagery, computer graphics in their most painterly form, is now possible thanks to editing and a significant upgrade to the medium's apparatus, which can now blast Dolby digital spatial surround sound with 3-D visuals projected on three splintered 270-degree screens. Through such aesthetics, the filmmakers want to take their audience to the audio-visually curated world of Pandora, and they want us to live and breathe it for the duration of the film in that dark theater. The absolutely breathtaking world of *Avatar* beholds an incredibly vast 3-D landscape, captured through the 3D beam splitter camera composed of two cinema Sony F9-50 cameras. The choreography of image-based face motion graphics, in which movements for CGI characters are captured by placing small cameras under the actor's head and recording the actor's face, has been examined and observed through YouTube's Behind the Scenes material. This complicated mechanism can only be viewed in a digital software solution (a kind of video game) wherein a virtual camera comes in and emulates a physical camera and can be operated similarly as one. This amalgamation of several media forms (VFX, 3-D imaging, spatial surround sound, animation, cinema, software, hardware advancements, and exhibition spaces) to view this technological wonder of cinema history is an example of certain arguments discussed in this presentation. But here I must address another framework for this film's analysis: that is, *Avatar* and numerous other big media entertainment films are merely a reconfiguration of Gunning's spectacle

through digital media technology, and films like these don't rely heavily on the narrative but rather

on the play of attractions and immersion they tend to create.



Fig. 25: Illustration of the mechanics of a new 3-D camera designed by James Cameron's cinematography team.



Figures 26(a) and 26(b) show a software system designed specifically for Avatar, in which real-time animation is recorded and executed via a gaming platform.



Fig. 27: An illustration of Kate Winslet as Ronal, an underwater goddess in Pandora. The image depicts the shooting style of underwater scenes in the film.



Fig. 28: An illustration of digital apparatus and techniques for camera and sound in the film Avatar 2.

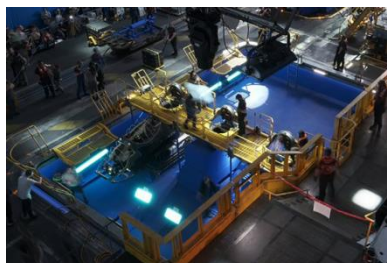


Fig. 29: Construction of huge tanks and sets for the shooting of the film, which was 60 percent underwater.



Fig. 30: An illustration of real-time shooting that finally gets rendered into the animated, immersive world of Pandora.

This is where I'd like to draw on Henry Jenkins' convergence culture and how the film experience has become multimedia, as seen in *Avatar*. The analysis of a movie like *Avatar* comes from the perspective of a fan, a spectatorial position (participatory culture) in which the fan has some power in relation to media culture, which has

progressed from ambient TV to pensive spectator to now being fully immersed in Cameron's world. The concept of Jenkins Transmedia is in alliance with Rodowick's take on new digital tech, Kitley's connected media, and Manovich's digital film, which all correspond to Laura Mulvey's assertion of old and new configurations transmuted to render digitized

aesthetics of their own. Through strange peregrinations, the framework of cinema is now privileging the spectator and trying to bring him or her back to the smell of popcorn and the theater.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I'd like to quote Elliot (Rami Malek) from *Robot (2015)*, a hacker drama, in the TV show's episode 1.0. *Hellofriend*

Krista Gordon: What is it about society that disappoints you so much?

*Elliot: [tense music] "Oh, I don't know. Is it that we collectively thought Steve Jobs was a great man when we knew he made billions off the backs of children? Or maybe it's that it feels like all our heroes are counterfeit. The entire world is a big hoax. Spamming with our running commentary of bullsh*t masquerading as insight and our social media faking as intimacy. Or is it that we voted for this? Not with our rigged elections, but with our things, our property, and our money. I'm not saying anything new. We all know why we do this—not because Hunger Games books make us happy but because we want to be sedated. because it's painful not to pretend, because we're cowards. F*** society."*

This famous rant of Elliot (Rami Malek) from *Mr. Robot (2015)* clearly conveys the spectatorial anxieties that have been accumulated in ourselves through the odyssey of changing moments as discussed in the paper. Whereas new digital devices and software, such as IMAX's 38-pound digital 3-D camera or Disney's new A.I. system called FRAN, which is a de-aging program displaying hyper-realistic results, mean that, unlike in Scorsese's *The Irishman*, Robert de Niro will now be able to play a 30-year-old or even a 20-year-old flawlessly, even in 3-D. The entire game of performance (acting) in cinema has changed from analogue to digital, with Marvel Studios now blending the performances of real live actors with digital technology to bring characters like Hulk (Mark Ruffalo) or Thanos (Josh Brolin) to life, as well as Keanu Reeves' Johnny Silverhand in the upcoming Xbox game *Cyberpunk*

2077. Skillfully crafted visual effects, which were previously accomplished using analogue apparatus in transformation scenes such as *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (1931)*, are now accomplished using shortcut keys on the Da Vinci or Premier Pro (editing software) interface. The referencing of old media is now not just limited to documentaries, but as illustrated in the paper, major motion pictures like *Malcolm X* and numerous others use found footage to drive forward a genre like "biopic." While watching the teaser for Greta Gerwig's much-anticipated *Barbie*, which re-designs Stanley Kubrick's famous rotating match-cut from *2001: A Space Odyssey*, it becomes clear how movies reference each other so dramatically while reworking other media techniques and content. While big media entertainment owes its success to the galvanization of spectacles in films like *Jurassic World*, *Marvel Universe*, *Star Wars*, *Avatar*, *Fast and Furious*, *Frozen*, *Incredibles*, *Lord of the Rings*, and even *Brahmastra*, it shows the reliance on digital technologies and apparatus to curate a new world, inviting the spectator to enter that world and be immersed in it. While small media entertainment like *Homemade* on Netflix, reaction videos on YouTube, and interactive shows like *Man vs. Wild with Ranveer Singh* are continuously emerging. Animation, which started with *Toy Story* and Disney, has reached a whole new dimension with shows like *South Park*, *Trailer Park Boys: The Animated Series*, *Big Mouth*, and *Rick and Morty*, which signifies the evolution of adult animated entertainment. Nowadays, one can watch and consume content on their phones, tablets, iPads, laptops, smart TVs, and so on and so forth, but it's only a few event-based and spectacle-driven films that persuade the viewer to visit the big screen. Through Instagram cinephilia and reels dropping constantly on our phones, we are constantly interacting with film material and revisiting older formats in a newer one. We've all seen Hugh Jackman's sound-recording (dubbing) video, in which he performs fiercely for his film *Wolverine*. Currently trending on social media platforms is a video of Leonardo De Caprio's (The Messenger of Peace) 2014 UN climate summit opening, which is edited using IIElevenLabs's AI

voice cloning technology to render a video of him saying the same speech but in the voices of Kim Kardarshian, Joe Biden, Robert Downey Jr., and Bill Gates as a part of their AI voice conversion demo. This is just one example of what is to come on the digital aesthetics journey in the coming days. Content like this has become the fodder of social media algorithms, which, through extension, are transplanted into our brains and even consciousness. Small talks start with discussion of memes and end with which TV show you're catching up with these days. A spectator is privileged by both small and big media entertainment, while the tight, narrative film has become a handful. It's the right moment for the cinematic medium in the wake of this AI revolution to adjust the slippages between the detailing of these above-discussed debates; otherwise, cinema will be like a sneakerhead wearing MSCHF Big Red Boots.

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