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Pausing dramatic tension within contemporary action cinema: the relationship between time slicing/slow motion and suspenseful situations in action feature films through praxis lead research

Goncalves, Raymond Carlos McClure

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Abstract:

Time slicing is a film-based visual effect that refers to an enhanced simulation of time at variable speeds by creating the illusion of frozen or slowly progressing motion in time; it is most commonly digitally manipulated. This report will research and analyse how it can be utilized to amplify dramatic tension, or suspenseful situations in contemporary action films through theories, technology and various filming techniques.

The theoretical methodology in this report is a historical account of the technology and process in the evolution of time manipulation within photography and film leading up to time slicing. Some Film theory is included in this report in a more conceptual manner as to why time slicing or slow motion is used in suspenseful situations, particularly in the action film genre. The report also demonstrates how the high standards of time slicing in feature films can be similarly achieved on a budget which will be demonstrated through a practical component that will compare a real time versus a time sliced scenario. While it would be preferable to use a full 360-degree array of cameras, the technology involved in time slicing has not yet reached a point where it is economically accessible to a student film maker and most local industries, which is why the focus of the research paper analyses a shorter array of cameras that is just enough to capture a time slice effect.

The results will then be assessed based on dramatic tension/suspense to see if they equate to the theories of montage and mise en scène discussed in the research report. As a case study, the report will then compare a scene from *The Matrix* to that of a scene produced as part of the practical component in order to draw conclusions on quality and the possibilities of a lower budget set-up.