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MA Motion Graphics

**“A Phenomenology of Reciprocal sensation in the moving body
experience of mobile phone films” - Gavin Wilson
review**

What is the author's main argument?

As I understand it, the main argument in this text is that films recorded by mobile phones offer a special tangibility to the experience of the viewer. Generally the camera is not an object we consider part of the film, it's job is essentially to frame the story but to be an invisible method of production. In the case of phone films there is a more direct link between the film-maker, phone and audience because nearly everyone has the experience of using the camera on a phone to record something or communicate, we can relate to the physical limitations holding a phone camera entails and the attributes it bestows on whatever film we might be making. For instance our phone films are likely either going to be shaky, or completely still and they're going to be filmed from within arms reach, at its highest the camera is at a vertical arms length, maybe over a crowd and usually the lowest angles about 1 meter or waist height. So although there is currently no concrete features of mobile phone films and the above limitations can be augmented with tripods and selfie sticks etc; there is still a definite leaning towards *some* unique characteristics. The author also argues that the rise of phone films democratises film making by making it much more accessible, which I definitely agree with.

How does the author's argument relate to your practice/
discipline? Give examples where appropriate.

Motion graphics is often purely generated on a computer, and this has been largely my experience of the discipline. However there have been times when my phone camera was indispensable to a project, last year I made a video on exploring a new city by bike, which I filmed on my phone while riding. The result was unstable/shaky footage that I feel quite well represents the physical sensation of riding a bike. At the time I thought the project would be helped by a GoPro or similar action camera but in retrospect I can see that's not really true, the super wide angle lenses massively distort the physical landscape around you and in built stabilisation makes a bumpy experience look smooth. Ask any mountain biker and they'll tell you that gopro footage is great, but also a very poor representation of terrain and experience.

How could you develop some of the authors ideas through
your own design/research?

I'd like to probe the limitations of phone films in different contexts to try and narrow down what might be the start of a single overarching aesthetic of phone films, which the author says has not yet emerged. So far I've done a phone film by bicycle, which augmented the normal physical limitations of the phone camera. I'd like to try complete a similar project to the one I did last year, but try do it several times with several different augmentations like changing the mode of transport or adding the use of a selfie stick. In

doing this I'd hope to find commonalities between each film that reveal a little bit of what the core attributes of phone films are.