

This soundscape activity is going to give you an experience of a typical afternoon in the hustling streets of Mumbai. I live on the 18th floor of an apartment building in a suburb called Versova. One may think that staying at a higher floor would mean that there would be less sound, but in reality sound travels up through the building and you can hear everything. Since I could not go out of the house I walked around in my balcony which faces the ocean and right under is the main street, this is what I could hear. As soon as stepped out from the sound proof widows and into the balcony, the first thing I could hear is the constant sounds of the waves crashing against the beach and then it pulling itself back into the ocean. I noticed that the wave had an metrical rhythm as there was a constant repetition in the pattern of the sounds. The pitch of the waves was a medium pitch but leaning towards the lower side. As soon as the waves hit the beach the timbre is something like a roar of the surf, and when it pulls back in it sounds fuzzy.

Since it is Mumbai after the calm of the sound of waves comes the hustling and bustling of the city with 18.7 million. Along with the waves what I could hear is the constant honking of cars, motorcycles, trucks, tuk-tuks. The pitch for all of these vehicles was very diverse, for example, the trucks had the lowest pitch. Their honks just sounded heavy. The tuk-tuks and the motorcycles had a relatively high-pitched horn. The pattern I noticed was polyrhythmic as there were several simultaneous recurrences of all these rhythms coming from different vehicles. The one word that would describe the timbre of these sounds would be harsh. The loudest sound of them all was the constant rumbling of the tuk-tuk exhaust; it has a very distinguished rambling sound that anyone from Mumbai can relate to and identify as tuk-tuks are an essential part of the city and there are just everywhere you look. The sound has a

metrical rhythm because all of the exhausts sound the same, the sound has a medium pitch, and I would describe the timbre to be like a constant buzz in your ear.

When I started to listen closely I could hear the sub-layer to all these sounds, it was the sound of construction workers talking and trying to work together, they said things like “udhar se maal uthaleh” (*translation-pick it up from there*), “waha se wazan de” (*translation-put more weight from there*) and “maar maar maar aur zorse” (*translation- hit hit hit even harder*) the workers had a very rough and deep voice and their pitch was low. On the other hand playing soccer on the field across the street were small kids and all they were screaming was “pass pass pass” “pass the ball” “GOAL!” you could hear the excitement in their voice and since they were young their voices were high pitched, and the timbre can be described as raspy. Amongst the human noises there were also other sounds from dogs and birds, every 5 to 6 minutes there is a sound of the stray dogs under the building barking at cars passing by they would have a very low pitch and rash sound. To contrast that there was the sounds of the birds chirping as the sun was setting in a very smooth melodic tune, the sound of the birds came and went as they would fly by it was a free rhythm which had a very high pitch and a very calming sound. The sound which had the highest pitch was the sound of rusty old brakes from water trucks transporting water, it was a very loud sound and it was probably the weight of the water tanker the truck was carrying, this was again free rhythm because it only occurred once however there were 2 or 3 different trucks during the 15 minutes that must have braked hard to produce the loud screeching sound of the brakes. The timbre of this sound would definitely be brassy. During the 15 minutes, for about 3 or 4 minutes I heard something similar to the postal workers “work music” example, there is a metal fabrication shop across the street and I could hear this metric rhythm of these two hammers banging on a

sheet of metal one after the other and with the sound of the waves and the traffic continuously in the background it sounded like an musical ensemble.