March 30th, 2010

A Visualization of Urban Collective Memory

I am currently working with Jason Hsu, organizer of TEDx Taipei, and Edward Shen, recent MIT Media Lab graduate, on a data visualization project aiming to document urban memory in Taipei. The project began with a dialog Jason and I started at TEDActive in Palm Springs earlier this year. Jason recently wrote a blog article comparing my earlier work Pastiche with Jonathan Harris’ We Feel Fine. As the project progresses, I will continue to post updates here. Below is a proposal that captures my initial thoughts on issues the visualization might seek to address.

“Memories are often linked to places. Through data visualization, I am proposing to explore the connection points between collective memory and their geographic context, relative to the city of Taipei. Collective memory could unfold as a time-based narrative, constantly changing yet always representing a continuum. Places are mapped to the memories they correspond to, in the process resulting in a new kind of city geography in which the urban landscape is reframed through narrative. In this new representation of Taipei, places will exist in the proximity of other places, related not through geography but through shared thematic associations. As it unfolds, the landscape could reveal new points of intersection and invert our expected view of the city.

The piece will utilize existing social platforms, such as Twitter or Plurk, to gather geocoded written statements that will be added to a growing database of city memories. The resulting visualization will continue to grow in specificity and complexity as more data is added to the system.”

Below are a selection of data visualization projects that seemed relevant for our process.
Emotion Mapping (Christian Nold)

Pastiche (Christian Marc Schmidt and Ivan Safrin)
form follows behavior

http://www.formfollowsbehavior.com/2010/03/30/a-visualization-of...

Digg Labs Big Spy (Stamen)

Twitter visualization of Obama's inauguration day

i feel like i know what i'm doing from experience and i have a feeling that whatever i can't remember before had something to do with being transported on a train by the aliens with most everyone getting killed

41 mins ago / from someone
We Feel Fine (Jonathan Harris)

History Flow (Martin Wattenberg)

(form follows behavior

http://www.formfollowsbehavior.com/2010/03/30/a-visualization-of...
Cabspotting (Stamen)

posted by Christian Marc Schmidt and tagged information, invisiblecities, mapping, narrative, urbanism, visualization

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related posts

- Invisible Cities (http://www.formfollowsbehavior.com/2011/01/30/invisible-cities/)
- City Memory Visualization update (2) (http://www.formfollowsbehavior.com/2010/06/28/city-memory-visualization-update-2/)
- City Memory Visualization update (http://www.formfollowsbehavior.com/2010/06/06/city-memory-visualization-update/)
- City archetypes (http://www.formfollowsbehavior.com/2011/07/10/city-archetypes/)
- Metacities (http://www.formfollowsbehavior.com/2011/02/06/metacities/)
- Mapping — symbolism or realism? (http://www.formfollowsbehavior.com/2008/11/11/mapping%e2%80%94symbolism-or-realism/)
- The hypothesis in visualization (http://www.formfollowsbehavior.com/2007/10/06/the-hypothesis-in-visualization/)
- Metacities (http://www.formfollowsbehavior.com/2011/07/10/mapping-invisiblecities/)

twitter (http://twitter.com/cms )

- No public Twitter messages.

elsewhere (http://delicious.com/christianmarcschmidt)

- Visualizing a Changing Region, Block by Block (http://www.urbanresearchmaps.org/comparinator/pluralitymap.html) : Interactive Maps Show Racial Change in Major U.S. Cities
- One Bay Area (http://maps.onebayarea.org/travel_housing/#mode=wTnW&time=AM&dir=from&xyz=12.00/37.7631/-122.4191&origin=2017+mission+st&max_time=30&max_price=4200000&min_price=90000) : New Stamen project visualizing housing prices and travel times in the Bay Area.
- Flowing City (http://flowingcity.com) : Visualizing the city of flows and the metadata city
- A Week on Foursquare (WSJ) (http://graphicsweb.wsj.com/documents/FOURSQUAREWEEK1104/) : 1,500,000,000,000 check-ins per hour

topics


links

- aaaaarg (http://a.aaaarg.org)
- city of sound (http://www.cityofsound.com)
- flowing data (http://flowingdata.com)
- information aesthetics (http://infosthetics.com)
- serial consign (http://serialconsign.com)
- strange maps (http://strangemaps.wordpress.com)