Storytelling with Mapping: KnightLab StoryMap

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ENGL 4710:
Capstone: Literature & the Visual Arts
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Fall 2020

Northeastern University
NULab for Texts, Maps, and Networks

Feel free to ask questions at any point during the presentation!

Workshop Agenda

- Learn about StoryMap as a mode of conveying data and content
- Best practices and questions to consider before creating your StoryMap
- Steps for using Knight Lab's StoryMap
- StoryMap editing demo
- Steps for editing and hosting your own images

Slides, handouts, and data available at

http://bit.ly/diti-fall2020-boeckeler2

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Examples Using Space/Maps to Tell Stories

Theodora and Her Attendants offers an analysis of the key visual cues in this mosaic and connects these with historical and cultural contexts

The Garden of Earthly Delights – Hieronymus Bosch discusses and interprets details from the Bosch painting

Game of Thrones – Arya's Journey uses an image of Westeros to trace and tell the story of Arya's journey (note, this contains spoilers for the book series; note also that the videos are not currently working)

Southern Literary Trail links the locations that inspired the works of prominent Southern authors

Midwest Time Machine traces geographic biographies of several individuals from Midwest history

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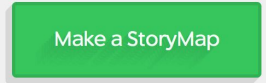
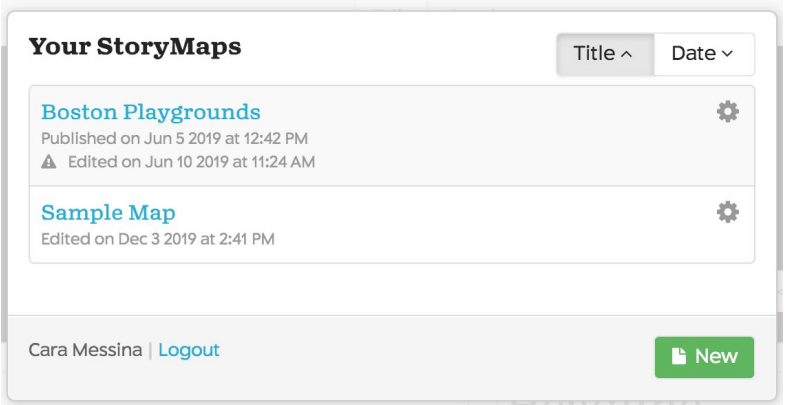
Create a StoryMap

- Go to https://storymap.knightlab.com/
- Click “Make a StoryMap” 

- Either create a new account or sign in through Google
- Once you’re signed in,
  click “New Map” (once you have created your map, it will be there for you to work on)
- Name your project



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Your StoryMap

Overall options (like changing map layout)

Save often!

Preview your slides

Preview the geographic points in all of your slides

Title and content of your text box

Check out and add new slides here

Uploading photos or other media! Document what you upload

Color of the text box background

Feel free to ask questions at any point during the presentation!

Slides, or map markers

Each slide is a different marker point on your map/image. Each slide contains:

- Title and text. The text box reads basic HTML.
- A background image/color.
- A map marker, which can be placed using Google Maps locations or by placing the marker manually.
- Media: images, videos, and sound files can be uploaded. Since only *one* media file can be uploaded per slide, you can use the text box's HTML to integrate an image or another media type.

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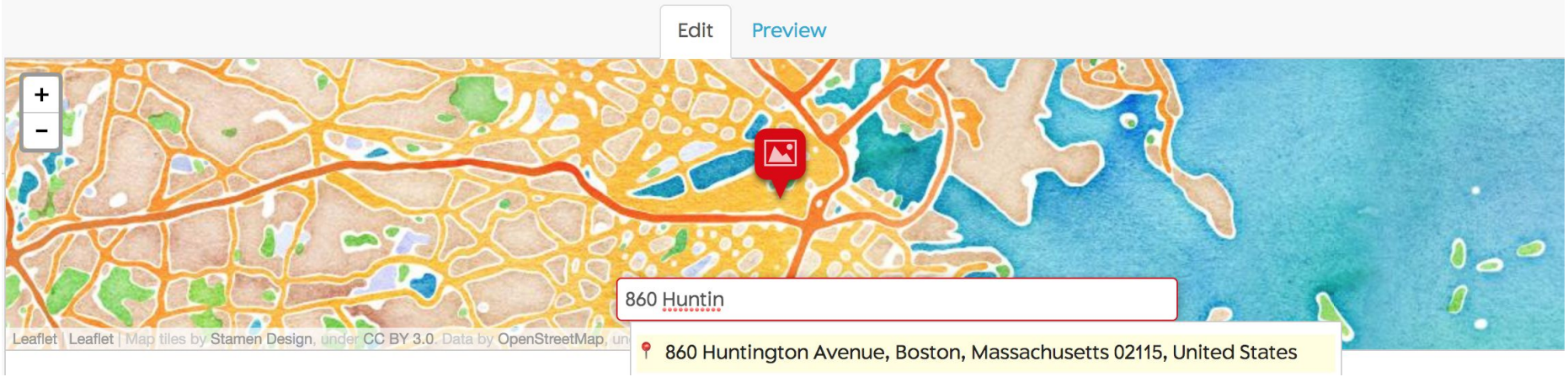
Add A Location



KnightLab StoryMap uses **Google Maps** to locate addresses

StoryMap, however, does **not** always recognize place names; you might need to know the **address** or location of particular structures

If you cannot find the address of a location, you can **drag and drop the map markers** to the specific location

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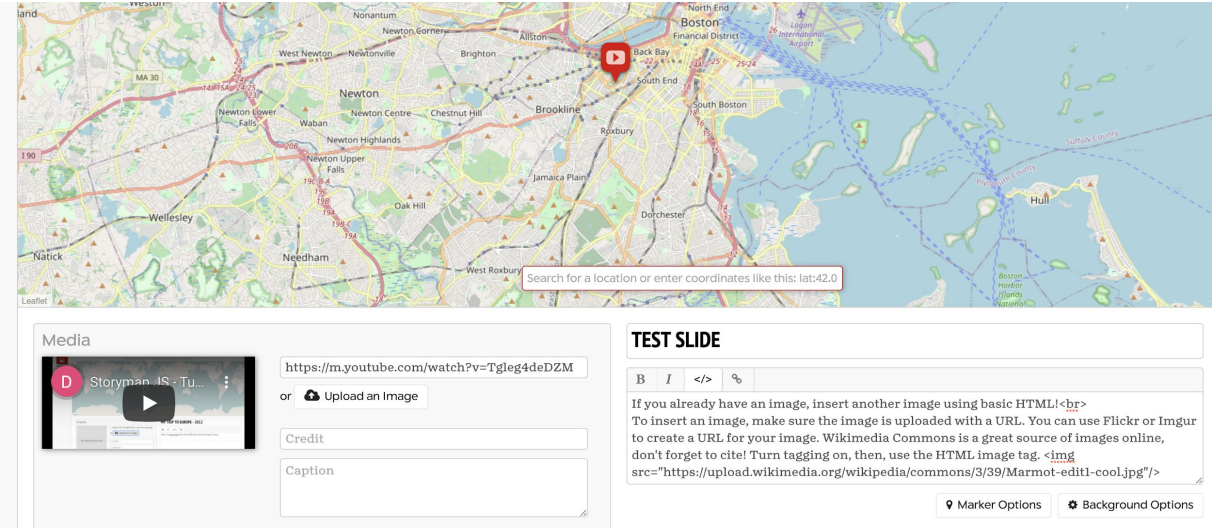
Add Media and Images in Text



If you have an image or a video in the “media” section, but want to include an image in the **text**, you can! The text box reads basic HTML.

1. Click the </> button (turn on HTML)
2. Get a URL of your image. Wikimedia Commons is a great source of images. Make sure to use the embed file code—don’t forget to cite!
3. Use the HTML <img src="URL"/> tag to insert the image.
4. Check the “Preview” to see the image

Use “media” to upload files. You can upload an image or put a **URL** of an image OR a video (like a YouTube video). If you want to include your own video, you will first have to upload it to YouTube and copy that link.

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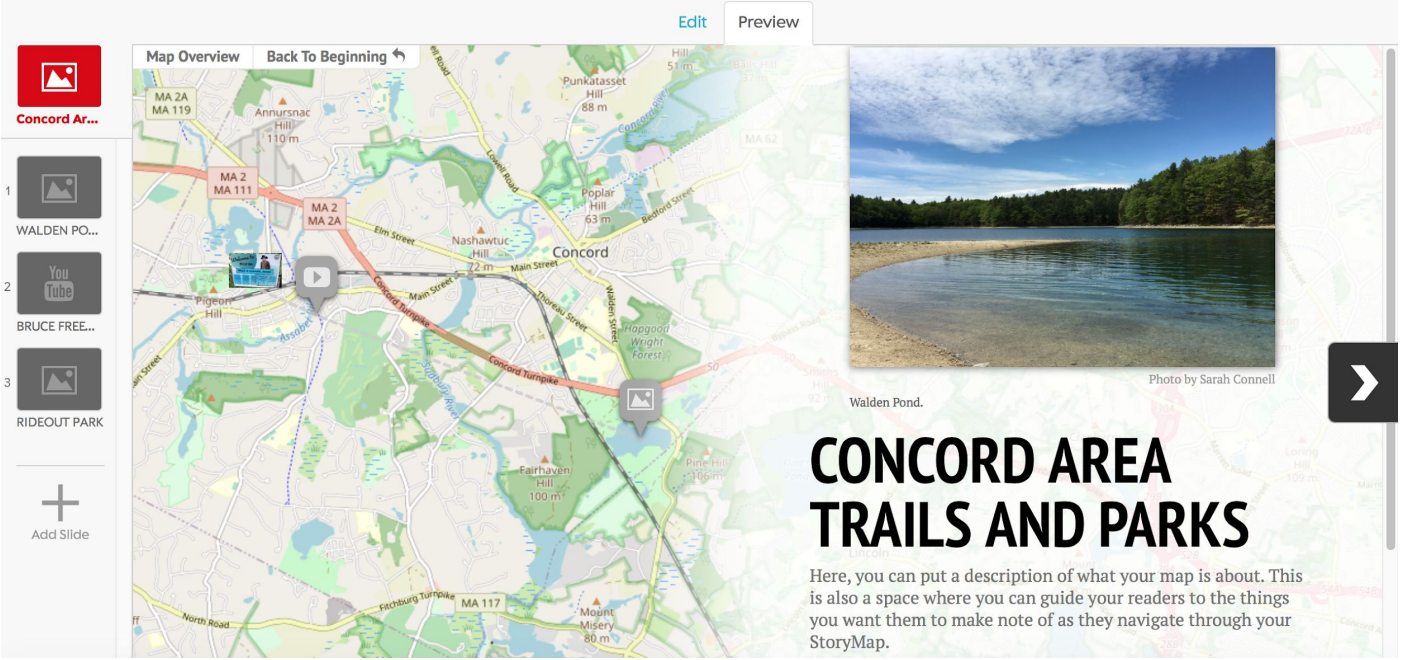
StoryMap Demo



—Demo Map Link

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Gigapixel: preparing the image

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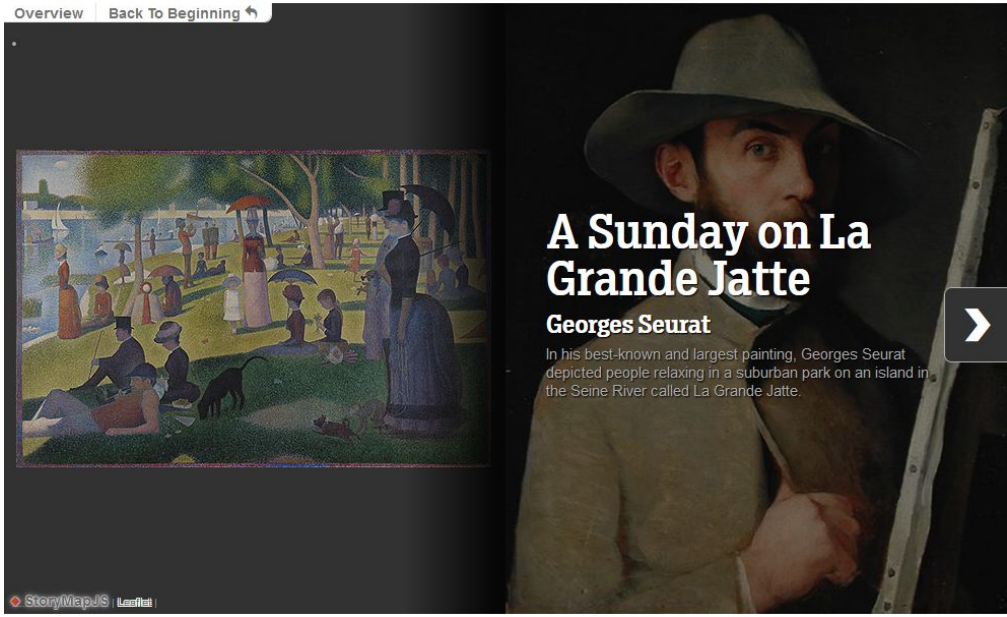
StoryMap Gigapixel

- In Knight Lab's StoryMap, you can also treat images like maps even when they do not have geocoordinates
- The process here requires several extra steps and usage of other programs:
  - Photoshop, or the Zoomify app to process the image and break it down into tiles
    - Photoshop can also be accessed through NU's virtual machine
  - GitHub to host the tiles
- The key requirement is to find a **sufficiently large image** (at least 3000x2000 px)
- **Don't forget to specify the source, and check if the licence allows you to use that file!**



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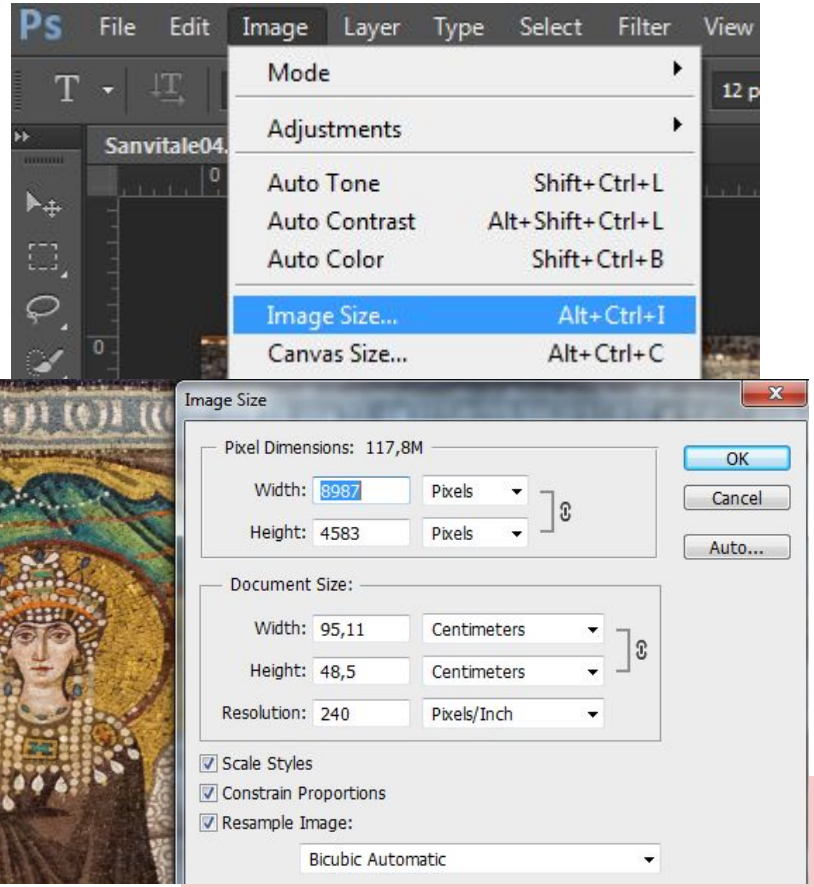
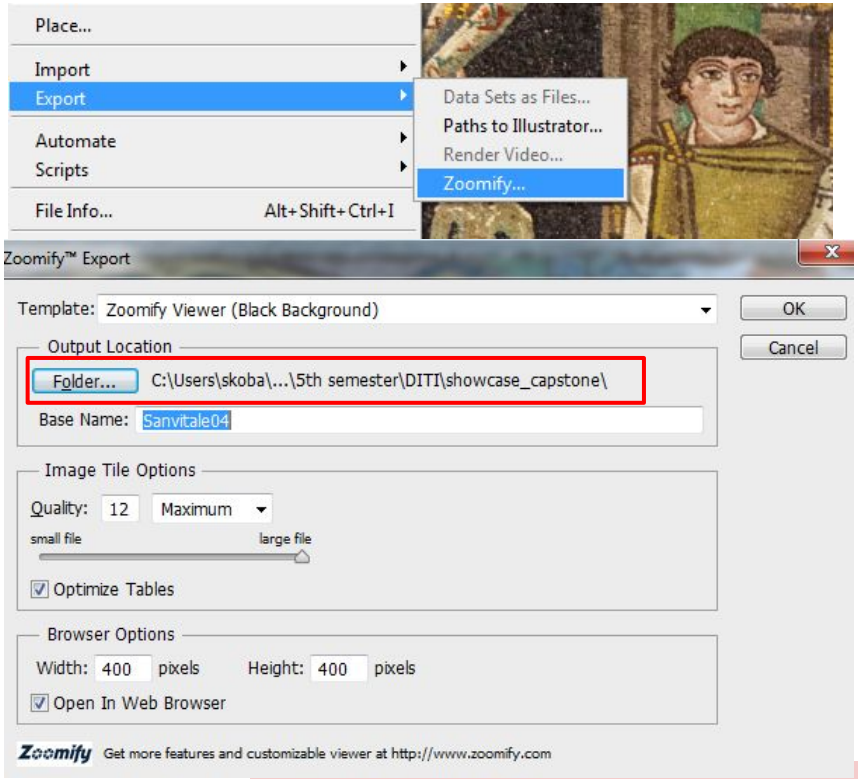
Processing the image: zoomifying

1. After choosing the image, save it on your computer and check its size
2. We need to "zoomify" pictures, which can be done in Photoshop or in the Zoomify app
3. First we will go through the Photoshop options
4. Open the image in Photoshop (**File>Open**)
5. Under **Image>Image Size**, confirm that the dimensions in Photoshop are the same as in the properties of the image



Zoomifying in Photoshop

1. **File>Export>Zoomify**
2. Make sure that you have selected the folder where you want to store the tiles (“Output location”)
3. It takes a few seconds for the program to export the image as tiles
4. After doing this, we can move on to hosting the image
5. But before that let’s run through other options for zoomifying: alternative access to Photoshop, and the Zoomify app



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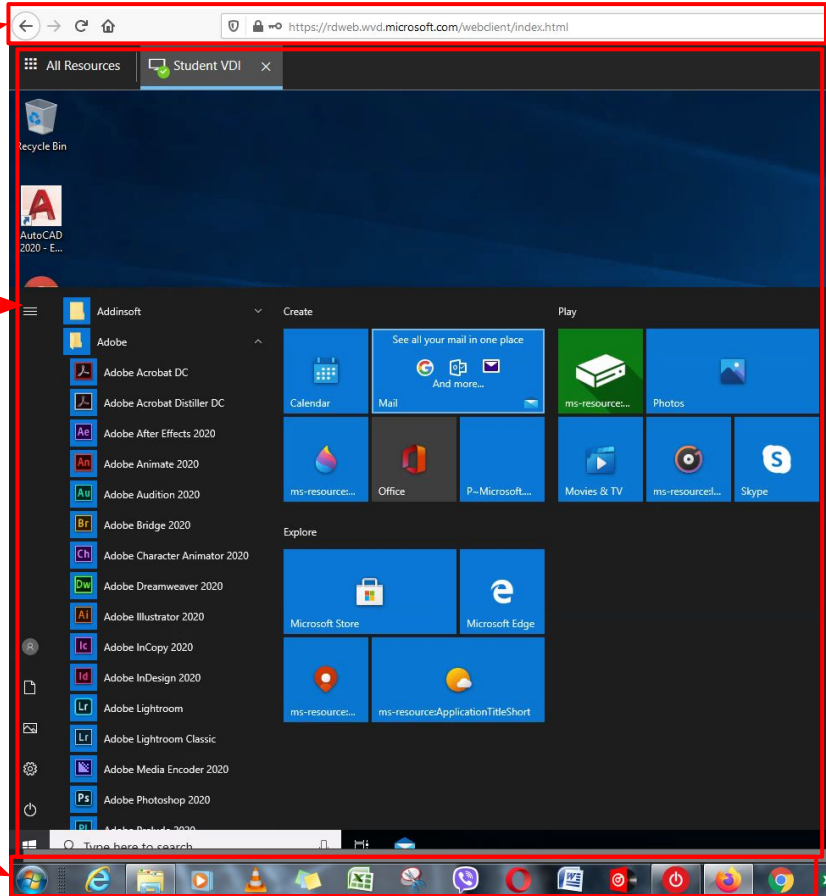
Accessing Photoshop through VDI

- VDI - Windows Virtual Desktop - the link: https://rdweb.wvd.microsoft.com/webclient/index.html
  - More on this service is here
- You can think of this as if you are controlling the other computer from your own computer
- Once you access the virtual desktop, you can use Photoshop there
  - **Start > Adobe > Adobe Photoshop**
- Once you zoomify the image, upload it on your drive

My actual computer

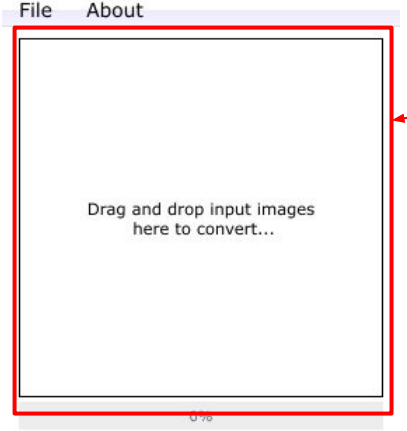
VDI accessed through my browser



My actual computer

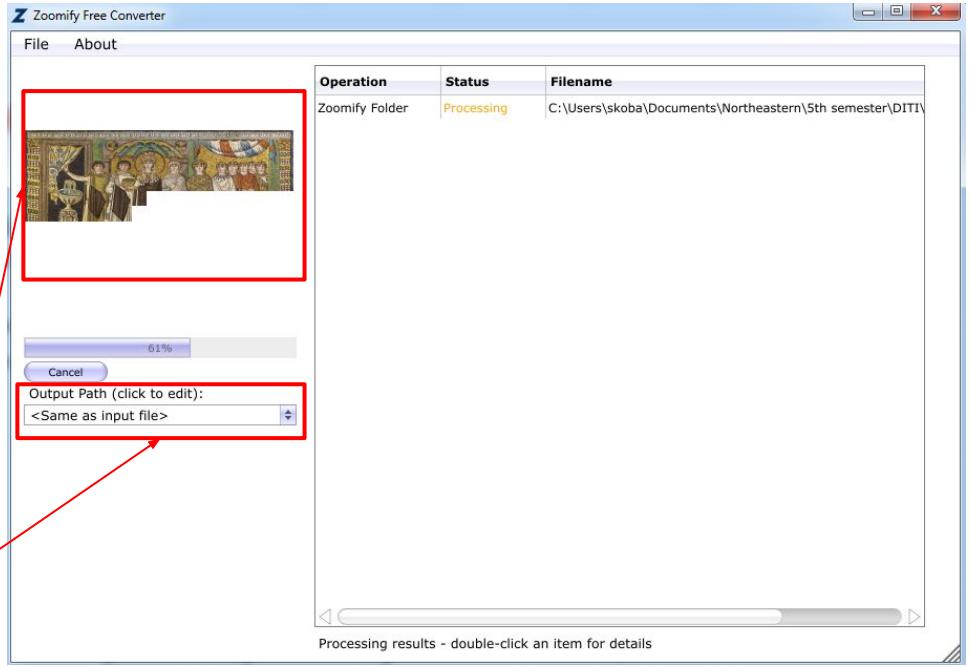
Zoomifying with the zoomify app

- Suggested by Knight Lab, available from the StoryMap website and on this link
- Download the Zoomify Free Converter on the link above and install it



1. Drag and drop your image (the image will appear in that window)

2. Select the output folder ("same as input file" is the default)



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Gigapixel: hosting the image

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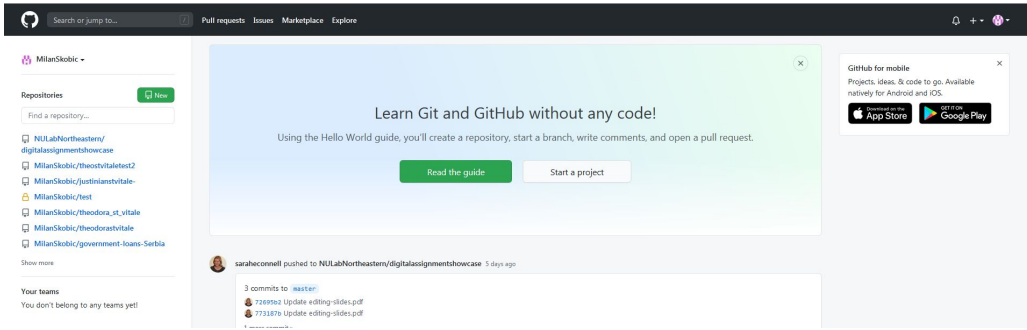
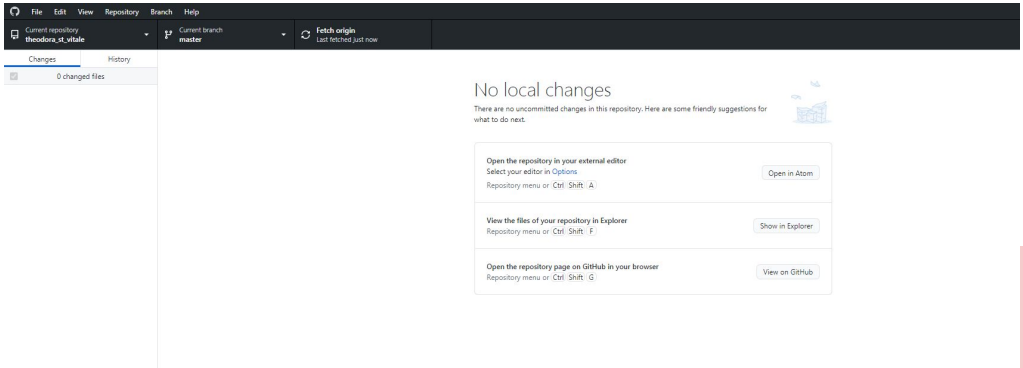
Setting up GitHub and GitHub desktop

- GitHub is a hosting platform for **version control** and **collaborative software development**
  - The idea is to enable people to work on the same project
  - We use it for its hosting services
- Create a free account on GitHub on this link
- Download GitHub desktop on this link
- Here we will show how to use GitHub and GitHub desktop for hosting
  - If you want to avoid downloading the program, it is possible, but more tedious, to use only the browser (info on that in the handout)

1. GitHub (in browser)

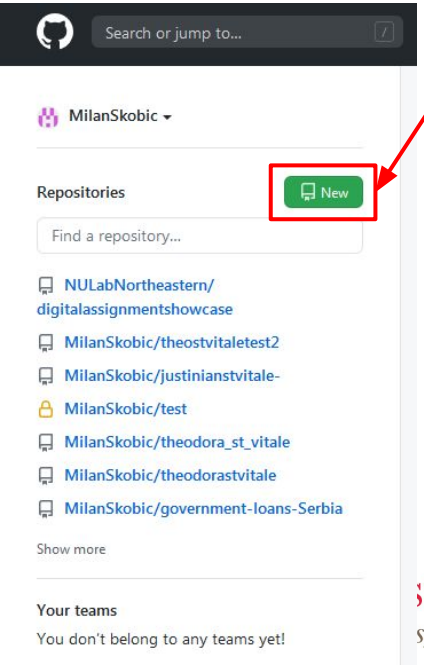


2. GitHub desktop

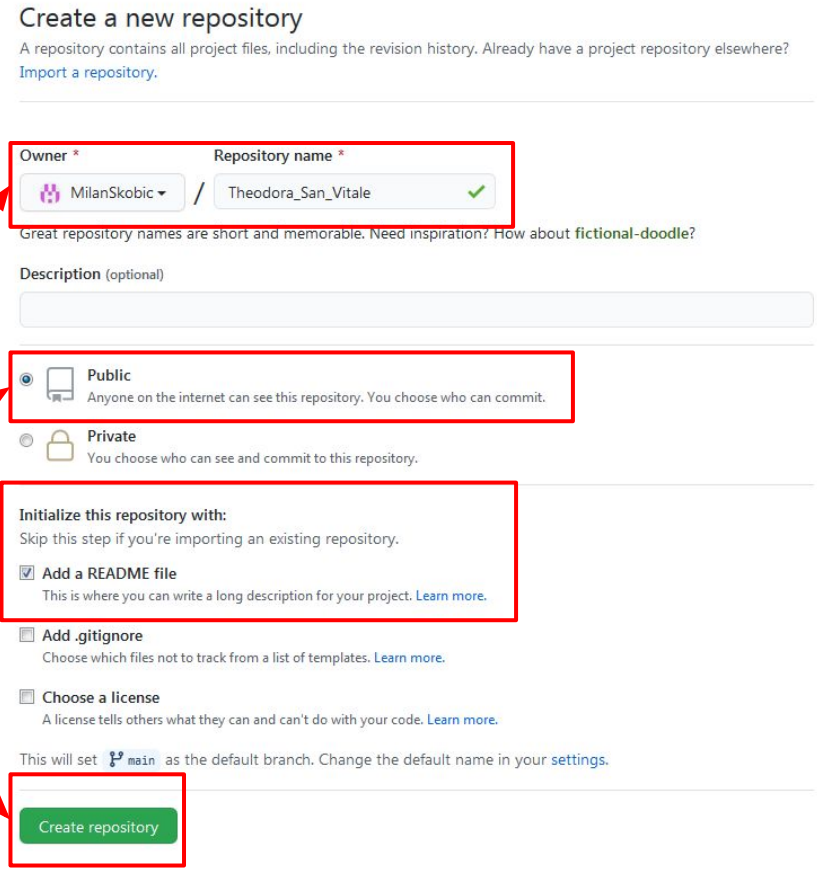


Creating a repository: GitHub website

Repository: the directory, storage space, or folder, where the project lives: this is where we will store our tiles

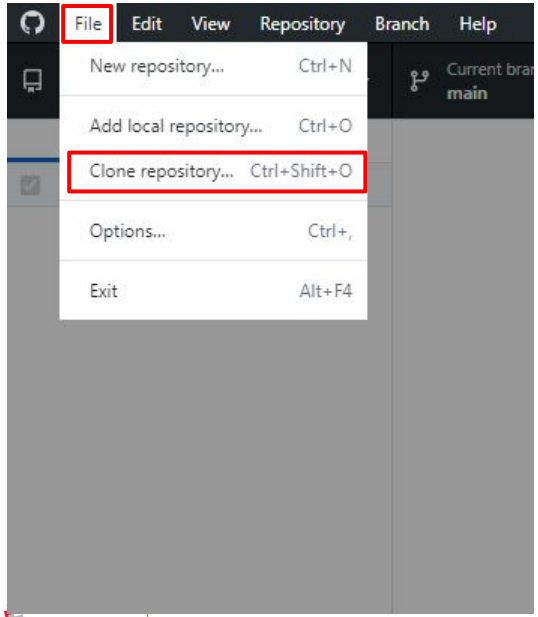


1. Create the new repository by clicking on the "**New**" button
2. Name your repository
3. Make sure it is set to Public
4. There can be no empty folders, so check the README box
5. You can create your repository now

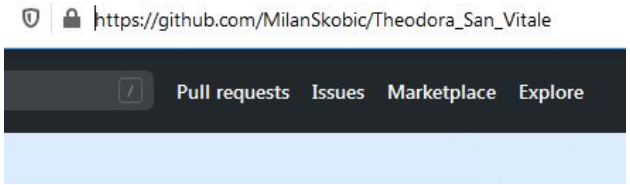


Cloning the repository to your computer

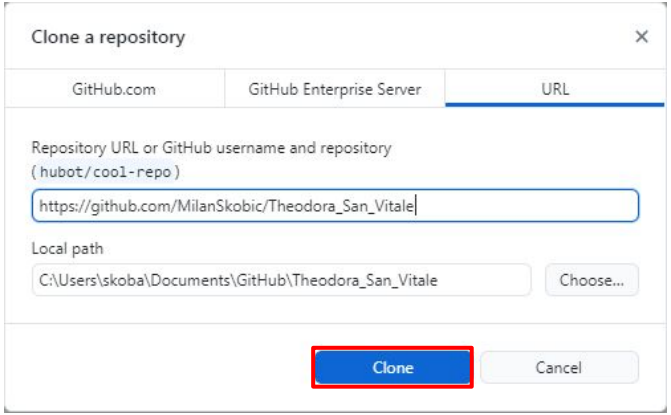
1. Open GitHub Desktop, go to **File**, then to **Clone repository**



2. Copy the link of your repository from the browser



3. Copy the link of your repository and click on **Clone**: now you have a copy of the repository on your computer



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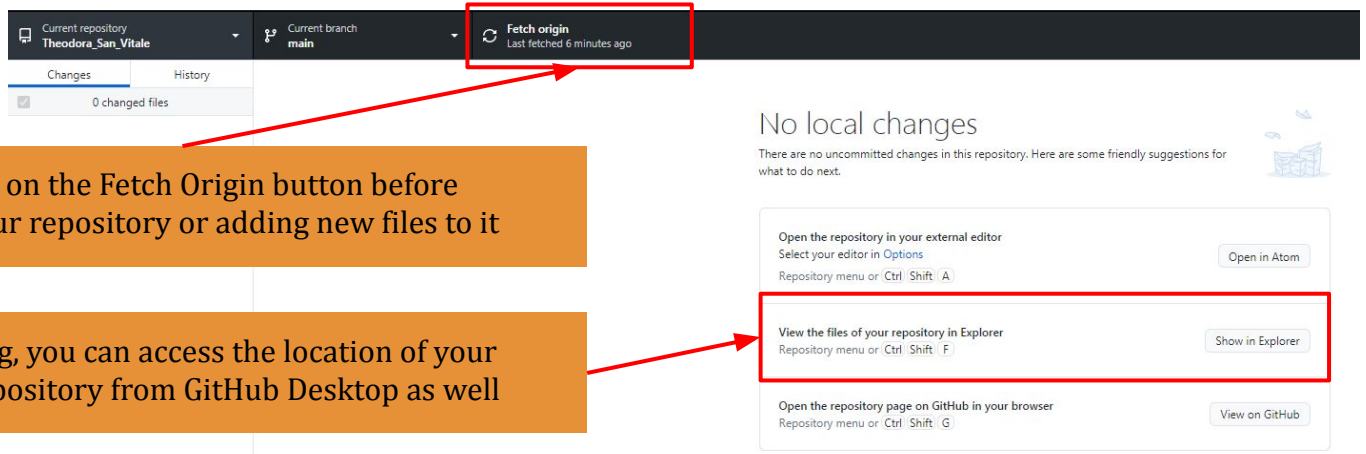
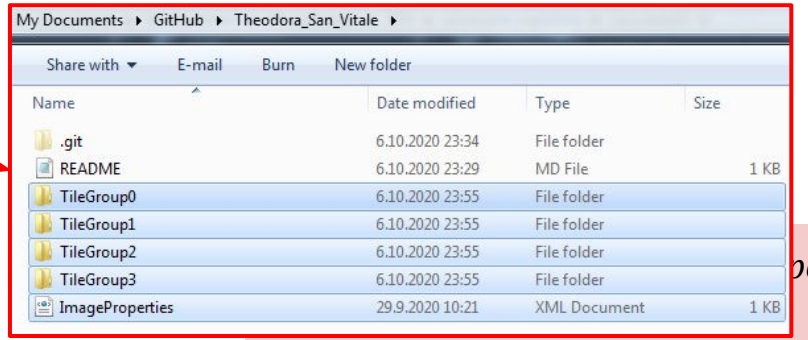
Adding the image folder to the repository



1. **Always** click on the Fetch Origin button before working on your repository or adding new files to it

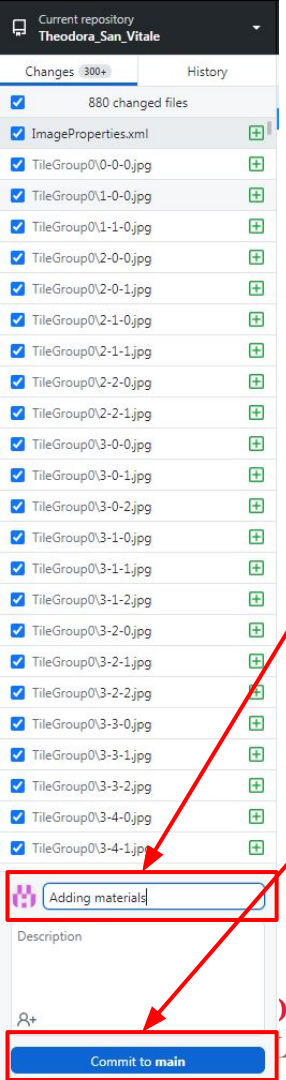
2. After fetching, you can access the location of your clone of the repository from GitHub Desktop as well

3. Now you can simply copy and paste the tile folders into this repository



Committing and Pushing

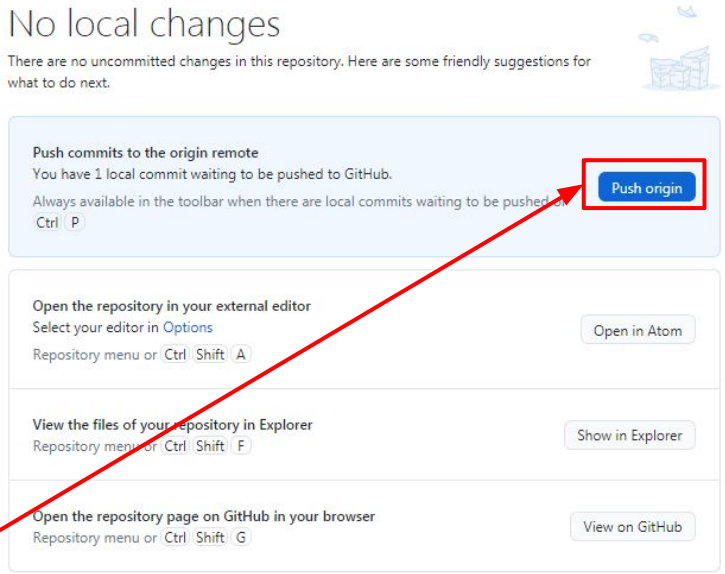
After copying the folders, you can see to the left what will happen in GitHub Desktop: it is showing the changes being made to your repository



1. Add a short summary of your changes (GitHub offers a default that sometimes works)

2. Click on **Commit to main**. This takes a few seconds

3. On the main page, you will see **Push origin**: by clicking on it, you are publishing your changes to the repository online



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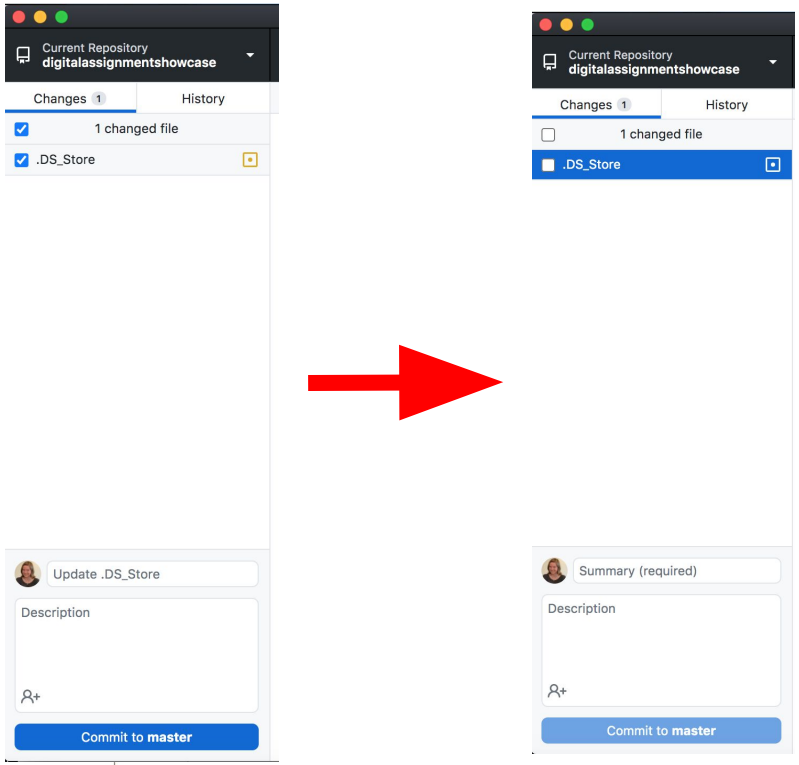
Special note for Mac users



Sometimes, you will see files that are called ".DS_Store" in your list of changed files

If you see any of these, un-select them. **You do not want to add these files to your repository.**

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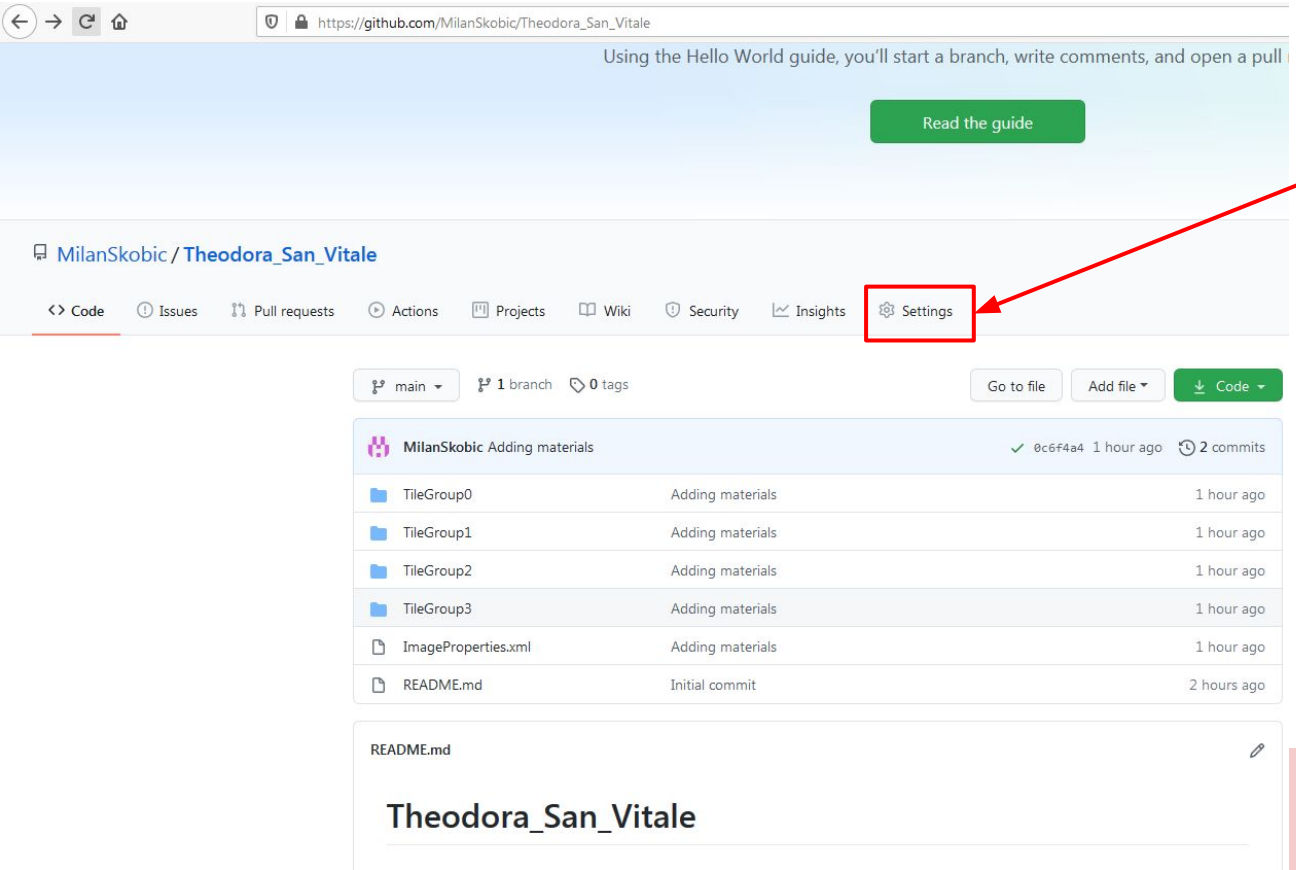
Back to browser: getting the link

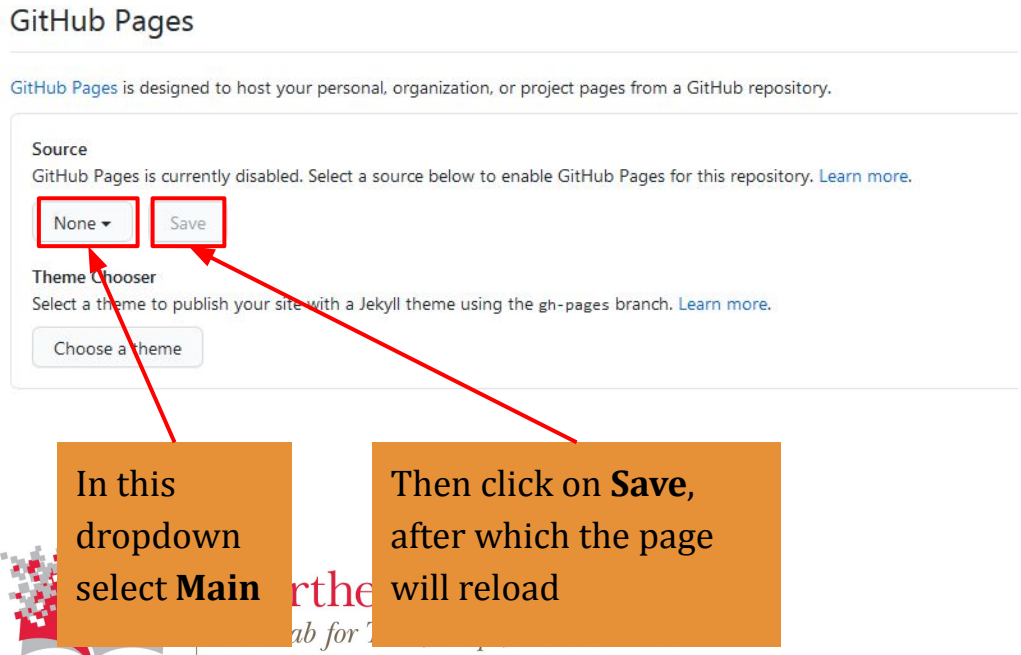


After you get back to the browser, you can go to your repository and then go to **Settings**

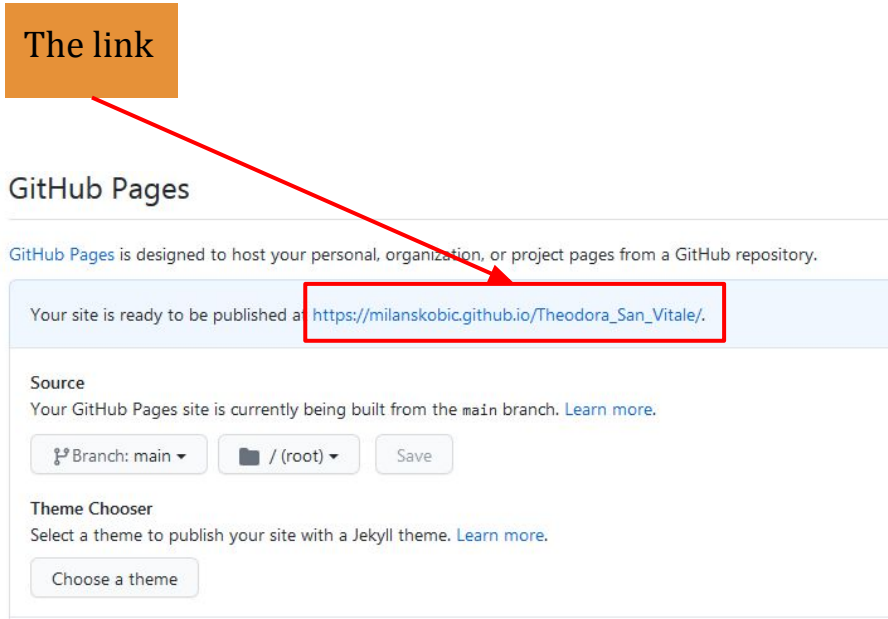
Feel free to ask questions at any point during the presentation!

Getting the link

When in the **Settings** tab, scroll down to **GitHub Pages**

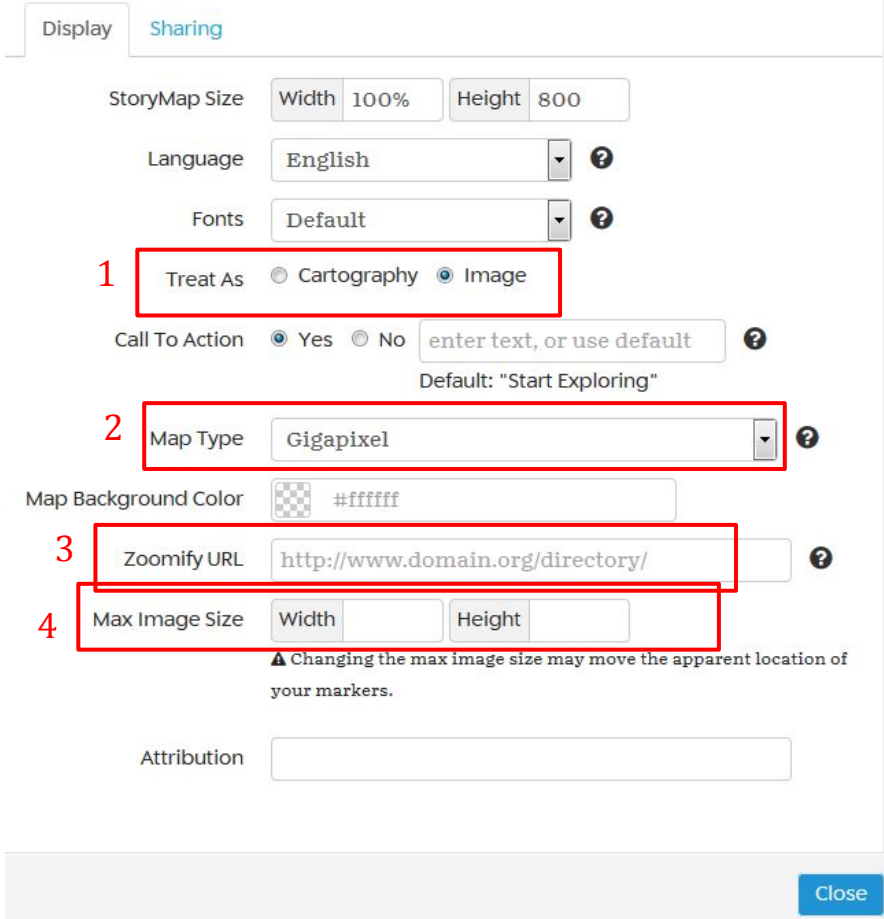


When the page refreshes, you can scroll down again and copy the link you will use in the StoryMap



Back to the StoryMap

1. Once you have opened the new StoryMap, go to **Options** towards the top left corner of the window
2. Check **Image** in the **Treat As** options (1), select **Gigapixel** as the **Map Type** (2), copy your **GitHub link** into the **Zoomify URL** window (3), and finally insert the width and height of the image in pixels in the **Max Image Size** windows (4)
3. From there on, you are in full creative control over the StoryMap



during the presentation!

Preparation for the next session

Feel free to ask questions at any point during the presentation!

Preparation for in-class workshop

- Finalize your selection of the image you want to use as your base layer
- Identify the points you want to mark on that image
- Draft the descriptions you want to use for each point
- Gather any additional media items you want to include
- Download GitHub Desktop (if you are able to; if not, you can use the web version)
- Sign up for a GitHub account

Feel free to ask questions at any point during the presentation!

Thank you!

If you have any questions, contact us at **nulab.info@gmail.com**

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Slides, handouts, and data available at: **http://bit.ly/diti-fall2020-boeckeler2**

Schedule an appointment with us! **https://calendly.com/diti-nu**

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