**Visualizing the Crisis. Tracking the Unfolding Global Financial Crisis**

Towards the end of 2015, a handful of financial experts began to warn of an imminent global crisis. Long threads on specialized blogs were rarely picked up by mainstream media outlets. Similar to what happened in 2008, it seemed that the vast majority of commentators were failing to recognize the symptoms of the looming disaster. Perhaps nobody was able to see them: the ways in which market dynamics are visualized have never improved despite the recurrent crises that have occurred over the past century. Given the increasing importance of economical data and the financial landscape over our lives, this 2016 Information Design Lab was established as an ongoing, real-time data-visualisation workshop with the intention to track, explain and provide context to this evolving crisis.

The students were divided into seven groups, each of them covering a specific and relevant topic: Central Banking, Employment, Energy, EU Debt Crisis, Gold, Real Estate and the Tech Bubble. Their task was to understand these issues through investigating patterns, data, forecasts and news stories, so they could track the shifts in the financial global landscape from the perspective of these particular areas. They produced a double-sided A3 bulletin every week summarising particular subtopics in their area, using data visualisation and illustration to progressively monitor the news as they evolve—and provide a broader socio-political context to the data. All of the information was gathered and edited between February and June 2016.

These bulletins are collected for this publication. A digital interface that deconstructs the complete archive of information into a series of essential, succinct reports is available at visualizingthecrisis.github.io. Each paragraph, visualisation, graph, quote and summary from all the bulletins has been broken into component atoms, defined through a set of 64 keywords ranging from geography, resources, demographics and financial definitions, which can be displayed and printed on-demand.

You are invited to discover yourself the complex relationships between African import trades, Canadian housing shortages, European renewable energy, unemployment rates amongst Millennials and many other combinations that make up the modern financial world—and see if a crisis is near or, maybe, what we call crisis is just a lack of clear information.

Marco Ferrari, Ivor Williams