WHITNEY BIENNIAL
1973 - 2014

Jia Zhang CS171 Process Book Milestone 1

Timeline & Table of Contents

Initial knowledge of that data was incorrect, and I was unable to extract a word tree structure from menu descriptions. This was confirmed by the feedback I received later. During this time, I went to see the Whitney Biennial and was struck by how great its history is. After finding no accessible records of artists participating in the exhibition online, I changed the project to making Whitney Biennial data both accessible and understandable.

~~Initial Proposal~~ (Not Final Project)

Background and Motivation
I work in a research group where our goal is to make collective portraits of aspects of life in the city. As a group, we are producing maps designed in ways to help people understand small things about their city. A large part of this broader research is communicating by visualizing publically available data. My interests are in datasets that are rich places for data analysis but whose primary objective is to provide a service. Some examples of these are google streetview images, google business, 311 call centers, ebay, craigslist, and menupages.

Project Objectives.
For this project, I would like to build a visual navigation to menupages where the food item, not the restaurant or cuisine is used as the starting point of a user's inquiry. I will build an interactive wordtree of all the menu items in all the restaurants for a city. The user coming to this visualization will type in a starting word, such as "salad", or "chicken" and the visualization will construct for them a word tree of the items before this word(usually how it is cooked, ethnicity, descriptors), and after this word(usually what it comes with, etc). The user then click to travel along a certain path until the choices he/she has made eliminates all restaurants except for a few.

Data
I will be taking data from the menupages site, this data includes the locations of the restaurants as well as menu in html format. The project will
List of restaurants for Cambridge
http://boston.menupages.com/restaurants/cambridge/all-neighborhoods/all-cuisines/
Sample individual menu
http://boston.menupages.com/restaurants/1369-coffee-house-2/menu

Data Processing
Although the menu data will have the same format, and will be simple to clean, the data processing portion will be the most labor intensive. I plan to construct traversable word trees from the menu items for each city. A example of a word tree implemented by Jason Davis in D3 and can be seen here: http://www.jasondavies.com/wordtree/?source=obama.inauguration.2013.txt&prefix=We

Visualization.
I would like to display the data in 2 ways. The main interface, the wordtree will be a simple search box for the starting point which will generate a word tree that is navigatable. A second interface will be summary infographics across cities, anecdotal graphics of how restaurants prepare foods. Below are some examples of wordtrees generated from data I scraped from Menupages.
Must-Have Features and Optional Features
Must-Have: Search and display interactive tree.
Optional: A geographical map feature to this for which the user can filter using location. Voronoi maps generated by the user's selections.

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New Proposal

Introduction

The 77th Whitney Biennial 2014 opened on March 7th. The Biennial, held every 2 years at the Whitney Museum of American Art has been a significant event for art professionals and the public alike since its inaugural exhibition in 1932.

Although not an artist, visiting museums such as the Whitney have been important experiences for me. The biennials are especially important because of its accessibility to the non-expert audience, past biennials were gathering of work that proven often in retrospect to be thoughtful zeitgeists of the years they represented.

A quick internet search revealed however that records of Whitney artist before 2000 are not easily accessible. A list of participating artists on wikipedia only date back to 2000 as well. The motivation for this project lies in the belief that information about the exhibitions should not only be made readily accessible, but could potentially yield interesting insights as well.

This lack of digitized, verified, and accessible data sits in sharp contrast to the vast trove of editorial writing about the exhibitions available on the internet. It is likely that this lack is more than a simple oversight. It could point to how we want exhibitions to be remembered, as impressions cast in the appropriate context and guided by expertise rather than lists and charts.

In conducting this project, I have chosen an oppositional approach, a quantitative one tabulating the locations, artists, materials, and dimensions of an artwork as a layer of data divorced from its intentions of production and exhibition.

New Proposal

Project Objectives

The goal of the project is to digitize, make easily accessible, and pro-
vide summarizing insights into the who, what, when, and where or the
Whitney artists and their works. The resulting visualizations will act as
entry points to detailed qualitative data about the exhibitions.

Data

The data comes from several sources, recent exhibitions between 2000
and 2014 are online in the form of different websites. These are signifi-
cantly easier to format, although between 2000 and 2006, sites were
built with Flash, making automated scraping more difficult.
Records before 2000 are kept in the form of scanned pdfs of exhibition
catalogues and books. I made a request for this data from a friend in
the curatorial department. The records are incomplete, and supplement-
ed by physical catalogues from Amazon as well as the Rotch library.

Data Processing

The data for recent exhibitions are taken directly from the exhibition
websites using Python.
The older catalogue data is taken from OCR of scanned pages and
verified manually.

Visualization

Visualization will have 3 main views: map view of artists place of birth
and place of work, calendar view of ages of artists at the time of their
participation in the exhibition, and finally, a chart of the frequency of
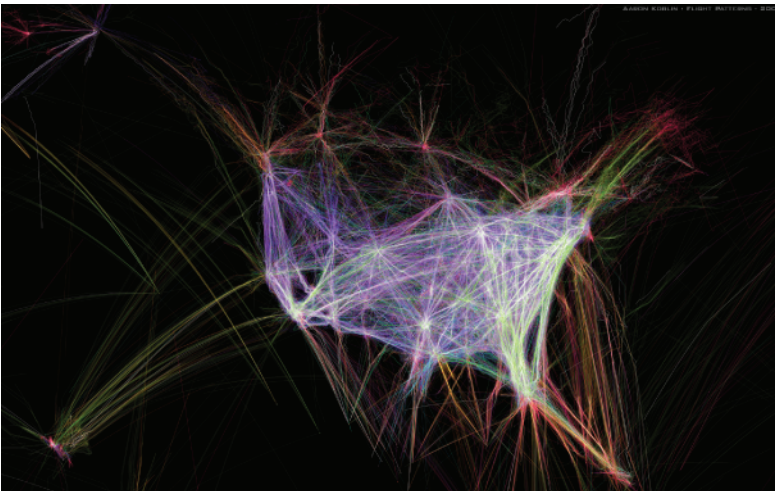materials found in the artworks each year.

New Proposal

Schedule

References

Flight Simulations & Flight Traffic

www.theguardian.com
Flight patterns by Aaron Koblin
http://cdn.wfp.org/data/globe/#2006&TD
http://www.tnoda.com/blog/2014-04-02

References

Calendar Grids

Optogenetic

http://neuralengr.com/asifr/journals/
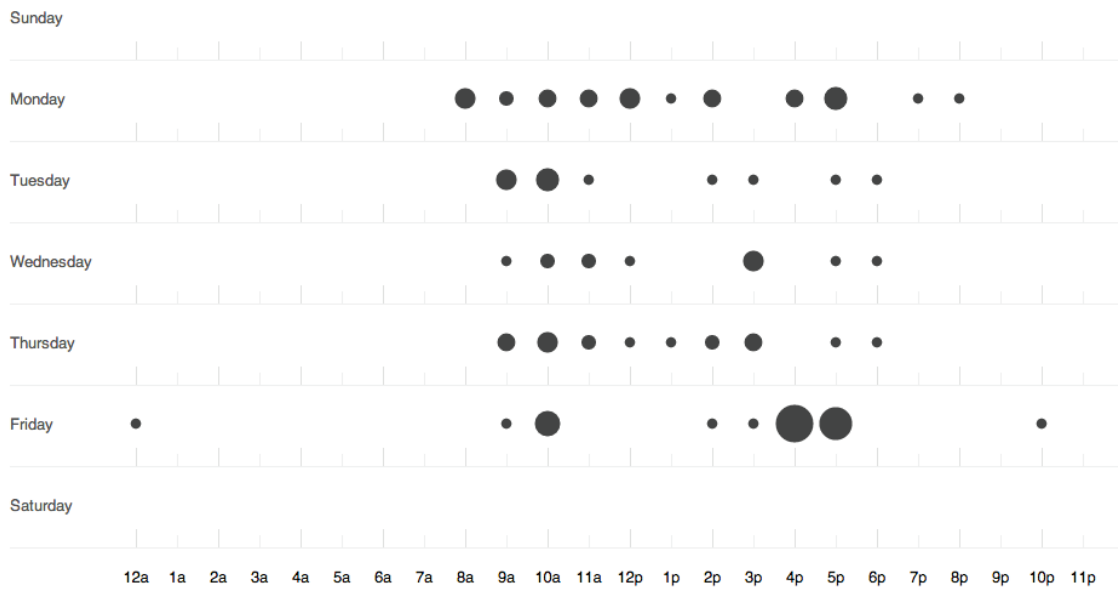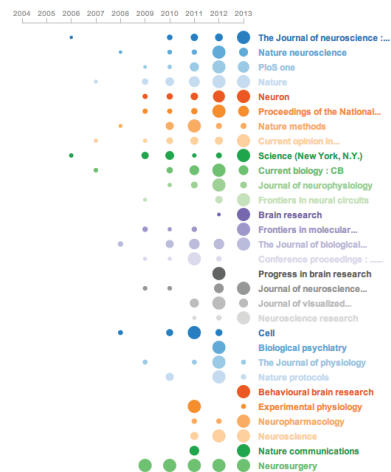
Design Studio Feedback

Feedback From
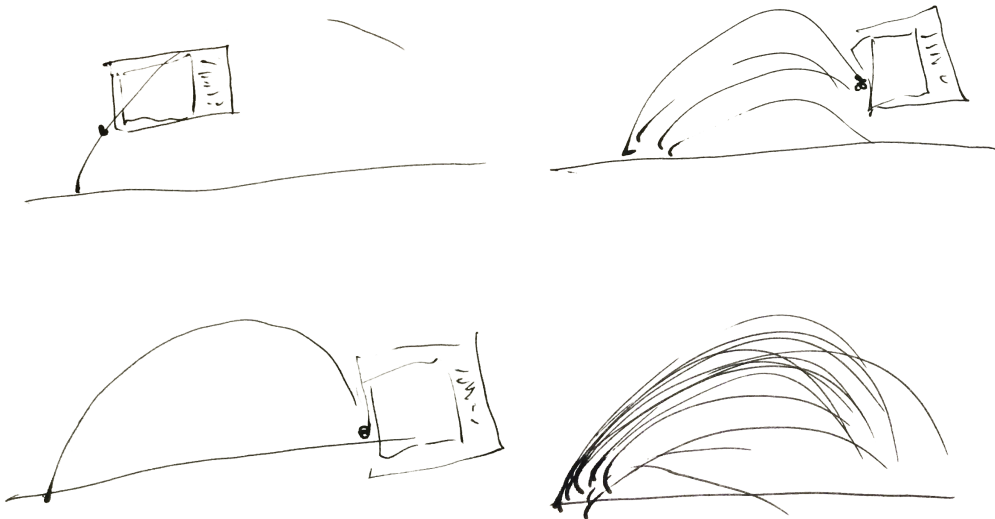John Morrison - Property Value Data for Major Cities

Suggested References
Periscopic Gun Death Visualization's wineglass style storytelling
Color analysis of movie posters over time

Layout Suggestions
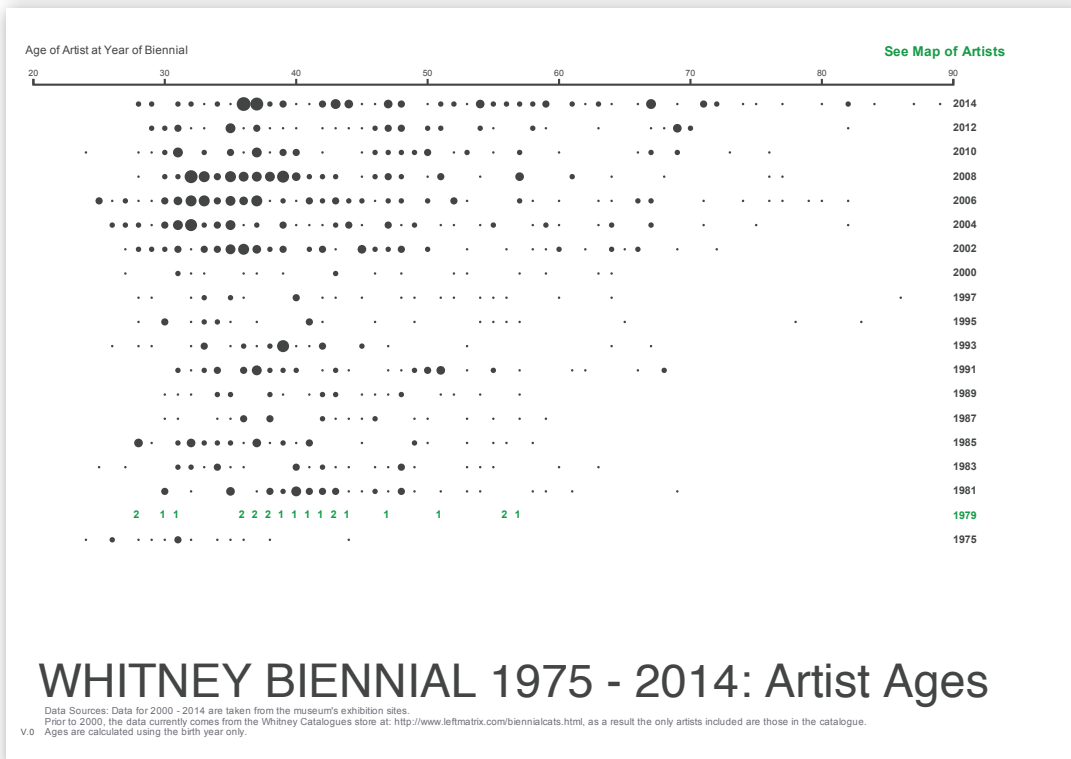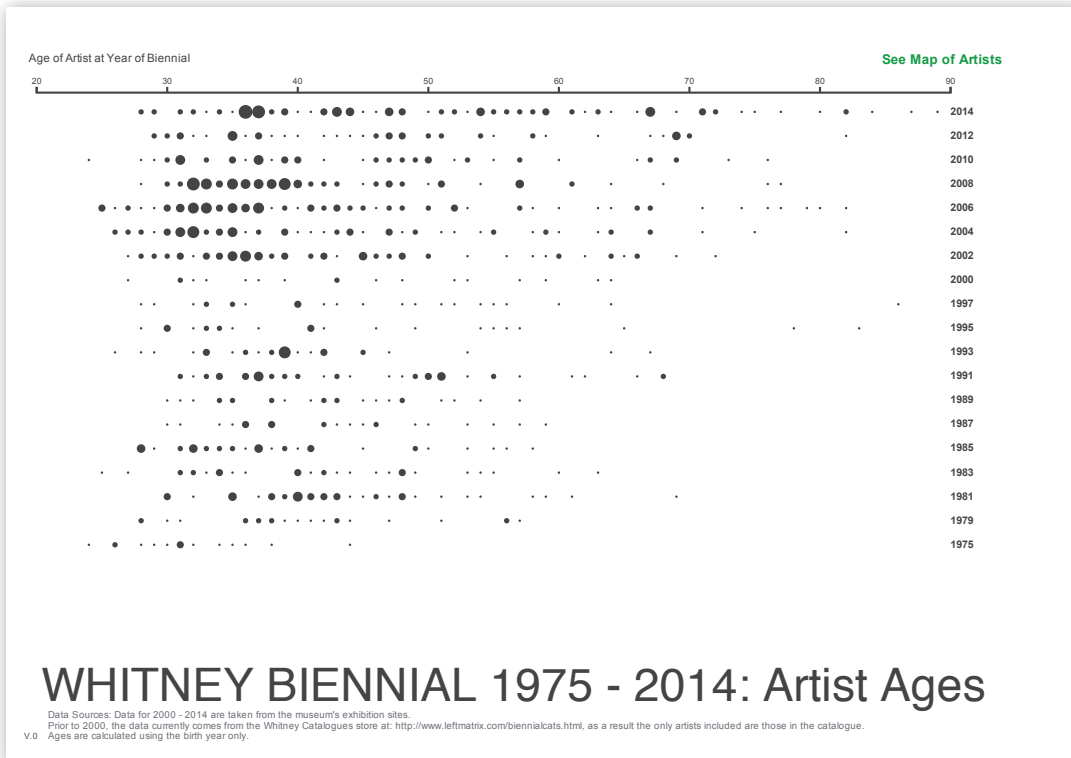Make arcs on maps transparent to see accumulation when data is
aggregated.

Make highlighted year opaque.

Show artwork if possible in a separate window

Milestone 1

Calendar view of artist ages at time of exhibition.

Age of Artist at Year of Biennial   See Map of Artists

WHITNEY BIENNIAL 1975 - 2014: Artist Ages

Data Sources: Data for 2000 - 2014 are taken from the museum's exhibition sites.
Prior to 2000, the data currently comes from the Whitney Catalogues store at: http://www.leftmatrix.com/biennialcats.html, as a result the only artists included are those in the catalogue.
V.0   Ages are calculated using the birth year only.

Age of Artist at Year of Biennial   See Map of Artists

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Milestone 1

Map view of artist ages at time of exhibition.