WHITNEY BIENNIAL 1973 - 2014

Jia Zhang CS171 Process Book Milestone 1

Timeline & Table of Contents

My initial knowledge of the 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 Whitney Museum of American Art's 77th Biennial Exhibition opened on March 7th, 2014. Held every two years by the Whitney, the Biennial has been a significant event for both professionals in the arts and for the public since their inaugural exhibition of 1932.

Visiting museums such as the Whitney have been important experiences for me. The biennials have been of particular value because of their level of accessibility to people who, like me, are not fluent in the language of contemporary art. The whitney biennial has provided gatherings of works that have proven (often in retrospect) to be thoughtful representations of their zeitgeists.

A quick internet search revealed however that records of the artists represented in the Whitney Biennial before 2000 are not easily accessible. A list of participating artists on Wikipedia also only date back to 2000. The motivation for this project lies in the belief that information about these 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 their curatorial contexts and guided by expert voices 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 provide 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 significantly 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 supplemented 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

4.8 Title Submission
Design Layouts and CSS of Views

4.10 Milestone 1
Complete Views
Digitize All Data
Updated Process Book

4.14 Project Review
Complete Data Verification
Update Views to Include Data

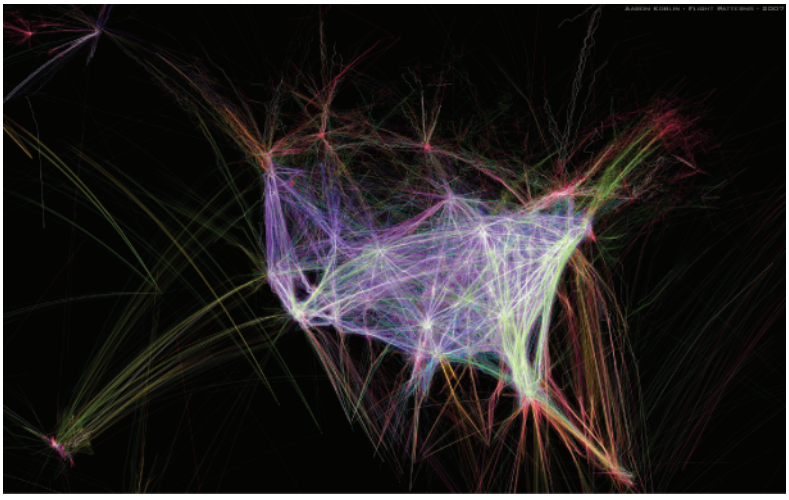
4.21 Complete Revisions

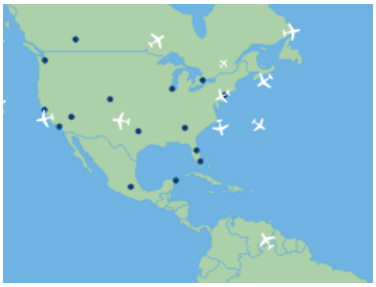
4.28 Complete Website, Video

5.1 Projects Due

References

Flight Simulations & Flight Traffic

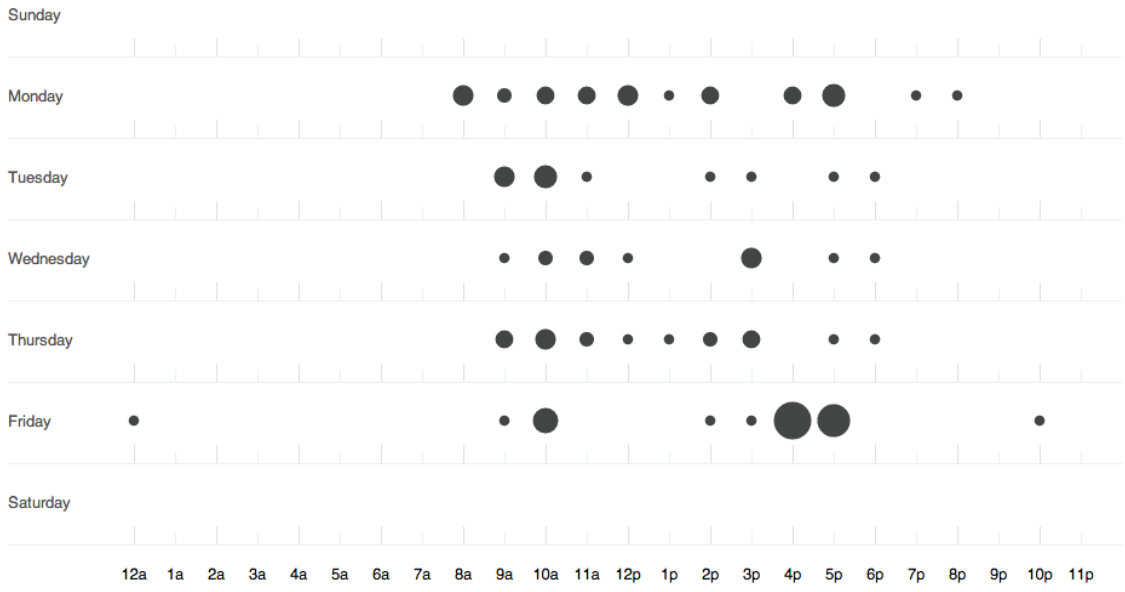




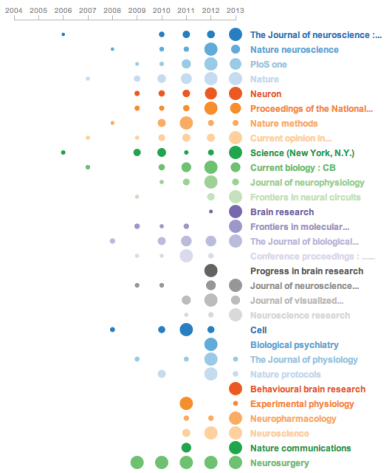
www.theguardian.com
Flight patterns by Aaron Koblin
http://cdn.wfp.org/data/globe/#2006&TD
http://www.tnoda.com/blog/2014-04-02

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

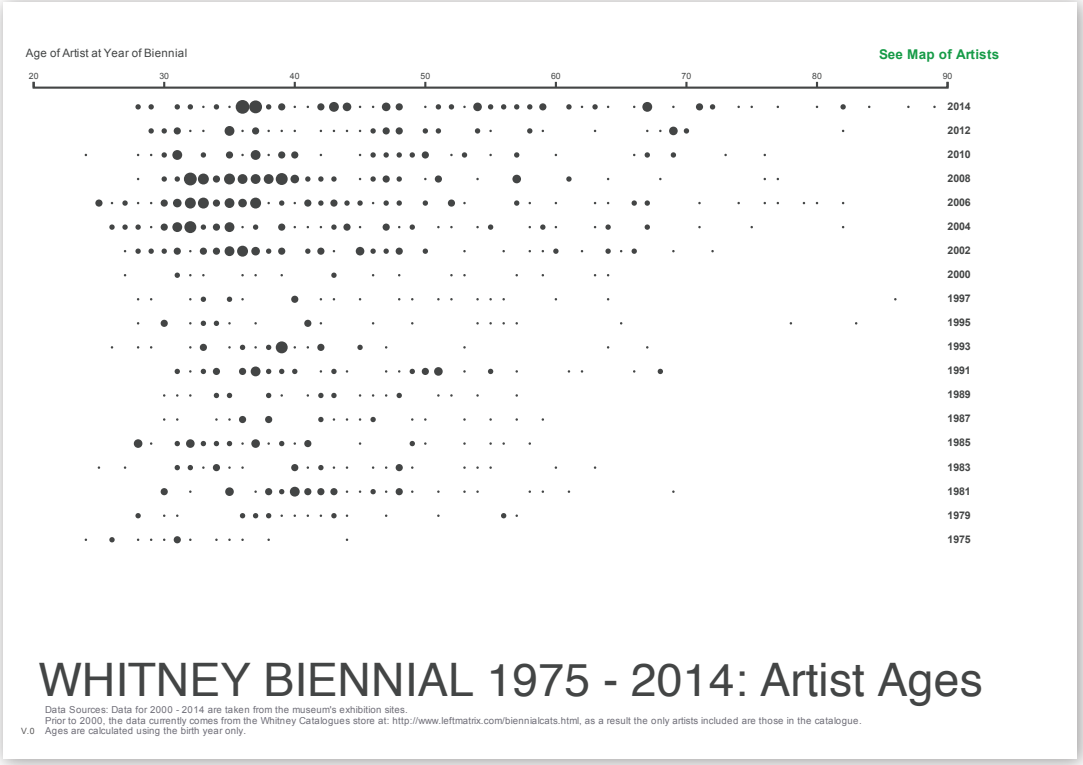
Layout Suggestions
Make arcs on maps transparent to see accumulation when data is aggregated.

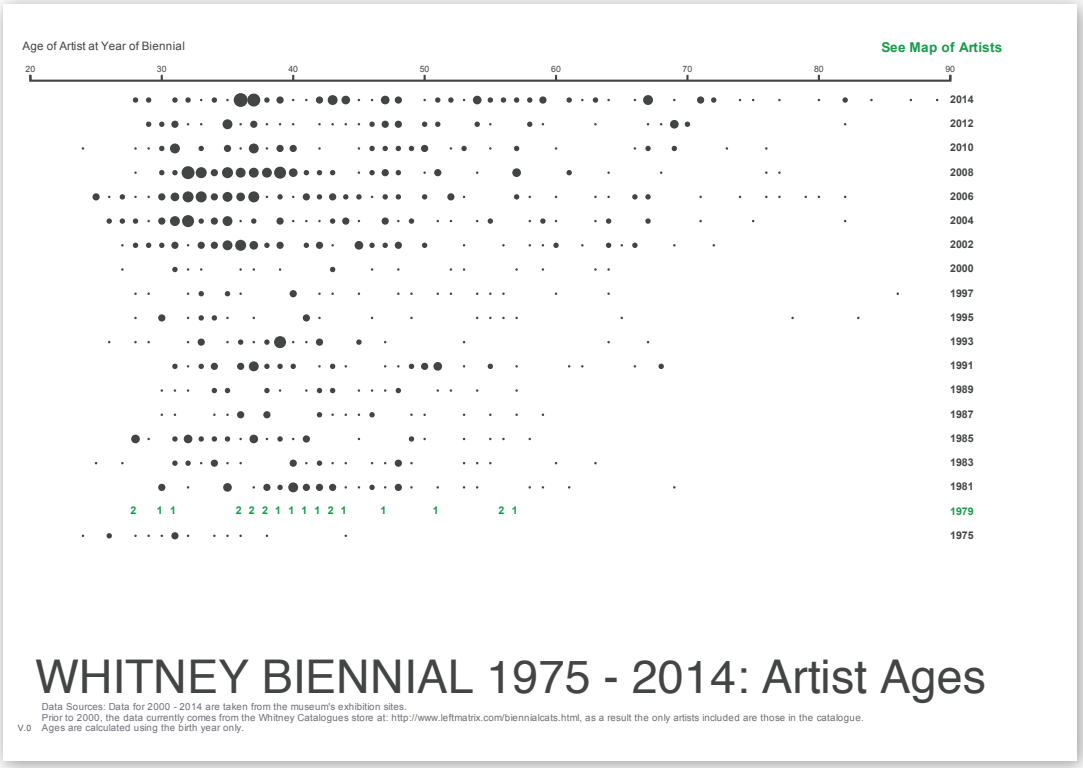
Make highlighted year opaque.

Show artwork if possible in a separate window

Milestone 1

Calendar view of artist ages at time of exhibition.





Milestone 1

Map view of artist ages at time of exhibition.