THE WORLD – A LIST OF ITEMS
Reality, Media, Data, Database
Summer 2011

WORLD
database

Frieder Nake

01 | 5/12/19 April / 25 May 2011

Outline

The course will start from a chapter in Lev Manovich's well-known textbook, *The Language of New Media* (MIT Press 2001, pp. 218-236. You find the text on the web). This will set the stage for the difference and similarity relations between reality and media on one hand, and how they are transformed into data and databases on the other. This study will constitute one approach to our topic: the technical and algorithmic. The other approach is the poetic and interpretative: it leads to the narrative. We are caught between the great fantasies and expectations of the narration and the ubiquitous settings of so-called facts in data collections. The tension between the two constitutes a new social dialectics yet to be fathomed.

A second part of the course will be dedicated to relations between conceptual and computational art. We study basic texts of both movements and identify their place in art and media history. In a third part, we consider principles of databases: their structures and interfaces. We do this concretely in two kinds of case studies. One is drawn from the compArt daDA database; the other one is the Hyper:Inventar (Hyper:Inventory) of Bremen-based Gesamtkünstler Mike Weisser. These case studies will generate a bouquet of options for credit work, both directed and independent, and both on design and research issues.

There will be brief introductions to the two concrete databases. We will meet Mike Weisser, and our research and design work may be seen as an opportunity to contribute to his upcoming exhibitions in Bonn 2 Sept to 16 Dec, 2011), Bremen (1 Jan to 30 June, 2012), and at ZKM (fall 2012). Similar opportunities will be offered by compArt | Center of Excellence Digital Art.

Conditions for credit

You may get credit if

- you regularly and actively participate in our meetings,

- you work on your specific term project. Its topic will be determined in the context of the compArt database or Weisser's Hyper:Inventory. Topics will be defined after presentations of these contexts. Your work will generate practical results, an oral presentation (30 minutes), and a short written essay (6 pages). Details will be determined as we go along.

In the case of the compArt database Digital Art you should think of your task as „Improving the quality of daDA". This may be done by creating new entries, filling formally existing entries, linking entries, improving and correcting contents of entries. You could write a few „articles". These are entries in the form of essays on important aspects of computational art. You could read a book (or several) and extract from it as much as possible to put into data entries, connections, statements. You could select a regional topic that you do research on in any form.

We will, in any case, draw up a short agreement about topic, expected results, and form of your contribution.

The world – a list of items | Summer 2011 | for M.A. & M.Sc. Digital Media | others welcome
4 SWS | 6 ECTS | Module M-105 (research in media design) or independent study
Tuesday from 14:00 to 17:30 | HfK room 03.09.100 | starts 5 April 2011
Frieder Nake | nake@informatik.uni-bremen.de | phone 218 3525 | www.agis.informatik.uni-bremen.de

Preliminary table of meetings

(the list will be updated once we know better)

Date	General Topic
5 Apr	Introduction. What is the world? First assignment. Organizational matters
12 Apr	The Manovich text. Discussion of first assignment
19 Apr	The project compArt on early digital art, its database, interfaces, approach. First ideas on term projects
26 Apr	Fact, statement, proposition, data, sign. Wittgenstein: Tractatus
3 May	Data, data types, data structures, data base
10 May	Mike Weisser's Hyper:Inventory. Meeting the artist, defining term projects
17 May	A look at database in general. Discussing and determining term projects
24 May	Agreements for independent studies, in detail
31 May	**Meeting at the university! Linzer Str. 9a, room 3000. daDA database**
7 June	Visiting two shows at Weserburg: Chronische Fluxitis & Double Rotation
14 June	Review session on term projects. FN to live a bit earlier
21 June	
28 June	
5 July	
10 July	from 10 to 18. One day's workshop to conclude and finish the course