



Sudden City
CCA Advanced Architecture Studio
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Fall 2007

Phase One: Building the City

Week One: Inventory

What have we got?

Taking stock at Wal★Mart (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wal-Mart>) is a big deal; after all, it's the largest private employer in the world, and the country's biggest retailer. But with RFID tags, it's all done perpetually (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RFID>), and without any visual inspection. Better still, it knows where everything is to be found, and how it's categorized. It knows how long it's been there. And when linked with credit card records, it knows who bought what, and maybe where it all went.

In taking stock of the city, we have greater challenges, because we need to detect the detectors in a sense. This will rely on either tripping those detectors (using a wifi enabled device for instance), research skills or legwork and visual observation.

Process

We begin with a sweep of the city, developing research skills by aggressively hunting down every form of ubiquitous computing that can be found in the city today; and then making first steps to document it.

You are the scanner now, and you output your scan to a medium of your own design. As your readings in Virilio indicate, perception of the city and visual representation of the city have both changed due to the proliferation of ubiquitous computing (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ubiquitous_computing).

This week:

1. **FOCUSED SEARCH.** Work together with your partner, targeting the site(s) of your subject ("movement," "commerce," etc.) and rigorously documenting it in photographs, video, on a map, and in other ways you find suitable.
2. Note location, dimension, frequency (is it every 100 meters? At only one location in the city?)
3. For Wednesday, have your first documentation available to view after the library visit.
4. For Friday, work together with your partner – have first efforts to model your subject, to scale, within the city. How do you indicate its reach? Does it have a radius? Is it momentary? Perpetual? Is it likely to vanish from the landscape soon? Is it interconnected, as a network? Develop *numerous* models of one site or node, trying out different materials and ways of manipulating materials to give your subject a spatial presence. This is an abstract phenomenon; it has no physical presence, but you are to give it one.
5. Also on Friday, have your first sketches of your own *map* of this subject. Use your visit to the Prelinger Library as inspiration for ways of mapping nonphysical phenomena in the city. Note below some key differences between the collective model and your own maps.

Also this week:

- **SHARED FINDINGS.** *Wherever you go, document every instance of ubiquitous computing that you encounter*, indoors or out; whether or not it contributes to your own subject. This is part of the collective knowledge base.
- Carry a map and mark it always
- Document with digital photos and digital video (borrow equipment from the media center)
- If you want, you can start experimenting with ways to present these as a map of the city; upload them to a site like flickr and tag them if you like; or just sort them for discussion now
- Right now, what matters is quantity: as exhaustive and far reaching a search as possible

Parallel to the required work: A Note on the Blog

Share your findings here.

This is the first repository of all content, all documentation, along with all initial thoughts and responses to what you see around town. This is raw content, where formatting is not an option and your input is limited to images and text only.

Take advantage of these limitations by uploading all that you get, sorting always by category, placing your posts in response to other posts, and otherwise creating relationships in the content.

Looking ahead

This phase of the semester – Building the City – is divided into 4 weekly periods. They are as follows.

1. Inventory – Starting your data collection and methods of representation
2. Build – Building the physical model base, and starting to input your findings
3. Map – Starting your mapped representations online
4. Finish – Devoted to finishing both the collective model and your own webpages

Model vs. Webpages

For the purposes of our class, model and drawing serve different roles and you should notice specific characteristics.

The 3D Model It will never be complete It will be unprecedented It will relate to city contours and to itself internally It will be subjective, but multiply	The Webpages They will be abstracted from one another They will be abstracted from the physical basemap They will include text, photo, video, and movement They will be subjective, but singly
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