

## Collection Project

5-week workshop using the collection  
of the Museum of Arts and Design  
September 4, 2007

The Museum of Arts and Design has a unique and diverse collection of objects in ceramic, glass, fiber, metal and wood, with a curatorial approach centered around making. The goal of this four-week workshop will be to create an interpretative data visualization project from a cross-section of the collection, reflective of a personal point of view. The project will introduce you to a process involving the creative use of data, from research and data gathering, to data mapping and expression. At the end of the workshop, you will be asked to present your project to visiting critics from the museum.

As source material, you will be given a limited amount of information for every object in the collection, including photographs and several data fields (including the name of the artist, the materials used, the year of acquisition, etc).

### Assignment 1: Research & Data Gathering (due by week 3)

- (a) Begin by studying the collection overall. Make a selection of objects that you find interesting. Select as many objects as you want (but select at least 20). Look for a system in your selection. What makes each piece unique?
- (b) Next, create a list of at least 10 interpretive categories for each piece. Categories can either be physical attributes, conceptual categories, or personal value statements. Categories can and should overlap, but try not to think about the points of overlap as you are creating these lists: remain focused on each object individually.
- (c) Research and gather links between your selected objects from the collection and other, external resources. For instance, you might look for information on the artist, the material or technique, or for conceptual analogies in other areas of art and design, or more generally. Collect these materials and append them to the objects they relate to.
- (d) Create a template for displaying the information of each piece, along with your description, your interpretive categories, and the external links. Each object should be represented individually and in equivalence to every other object. The template should uniquely reflect the kind of content it conveys. Think about the medium, as well as the form of expression, whether it is printed, screen-based or sculptural. Differentiate the original information you received from the interpretive information you added later.
- (e) Group your collection according to its attributes. Select an organizational system by which to present all pieces to the class, and think about why you chose it and its significance to your collection of objects.

Expressing Information  
Interactive Telecommunications Program  
NYU Tisch School of the Arts, Fall 2007  
Christian Marc Schmidt  
anything@christianmarcschmidt.com

[www.christianmarcschmidt.com/NYU07](http://www.christianmarcschmidt.com/NYU07)

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#### **Assignment 2: Data Mapping & Expression** (due by week 4)

Determine a dynamic field upon which to situate your collection. Consider its dimensions, framing, scale, and its graphic representation. Think about the expressive qualities of the field and what it reveals about your collection, as well as when, where and how it will be experienced. Consider all relevant aspects of the experience, such as site-specificity, interactivity, motion, sequence, scale, feedback, and visible affordances. Keep in mind that you are interpreting your collection—what is the message or benefit you are providing the viewer?

Begin by creating a storyboard of the experience. Then, represent the field and its expression in a dynamic or interactive medium of your choice.

#### **Assignment 3: Project Presentation** (due by week 6)

In preparation for the final review, you will create a working prototype of the experience. Create a screen-based presentation of your project, and be prepared to demonstrate the prototype in front of the class and visiting critics from the museum.