

Rupture

David Green (ca)

Ryerson University
Instructor, New Media Option
davgreen@davgreen.com

Our memories are fragmented and incomplete. We create narratives to bridge the gaps between actual remembered occurrences and imperfect memories. Sometimes the narratives constructed distort and replace the memories that we originally had, and knew to be true, or at least relatively true. On a national scale, these narratives can lead to the creation of myths and fables, a process both creative and destructive. (Said, 2002, 245) On a personal level, these narratives leave us with a mash of overlapping truth and fiction.

Within a geological metaphor, this mash could be visualized by a series of overlapping tectonic plates, constantly moving in slightly different directions, and abrading against each other. A process that resembles the fragmentation and fracturing the earth undergoes during the occurrence of the natural processes we call earthquakes. The earth, as it undergoes the stresses of the constant movement of the underlying mantle leaves traces (memories) of its past. It is a trace of violence, of disruption, *Rupture* creates a digital record of these disruptions. On the screen, a map of the world slowly emerges, displaying the records of earthquakes that



Fig. 1: Earthquakes over the last 47 years.

have occurred during my lifespan. Each earthquake appears on the screen as a glowing spot of light, the devastation of material trauma converted into something ephemeral and star-like. [Fig. 1]

This project is available on a mobile computer (iPhone) which is always connected to a data network. It draws on the piece as a space of personal

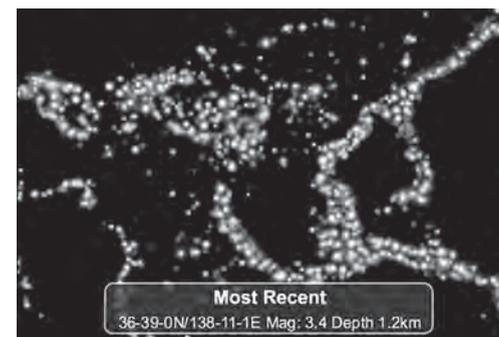


Fig. 2: Screenshot of the app running on the iPhone.

interaction, where the large scale processes of the earth can be translated into the space of the iPhone: intimate, and scaled to the size of the human hand. In this intimate setting, the viewer will be invited to share a small snippet of their own memory (perhaps triggered by something I wrote) that will be incorporated into this overall piece. [Fig. 2]

Interacting with the visualization of the earthquakes, will allow the user to recover a collection of memory fragments (audio, images, video). Each earthquake will contain, instead of displacement and metamorphosis, a memory I have from the same year. Whether or not the memory is a true representation of events as they happened would be impossible for anyone to tell – myself included. All memories are subject to an editing process – as we determine the shape of the past, things we believe to be true (or want, or need to be true) are incorporated into stories of our lives. With the earthquakes that occur early on in my life, the written memories will be the most suspect – perhaps the result of things I have been told happened, perhaps things that did happen but not at precisely that time. The trace of the earthquake becomes a site – in the archeological sense – an (im)perfect record of my past. A record that can only be interpreted and can never be complete. As the work grows, my own recollections become only a fragment of the entire collection and will become a site of a global collection of small fragmentary stories that simultaneously reveal and obscure meaning. History becomes unclear, jumbled, and it becomes the impossible job of the archaeologist (or geologist) to sift through fragments and glean a complete narrative.

Rupture (mobile edition) is important in that it takes my very personal work and opens it up to participation by a larger community. Anyone with an iPhone will be able to take part and by taking part, they will help build a cache of memories and stories encompassing the past 47 years of my life and the Earth.

References

- Said, Edward "Invention, Memory, and Place" in Mitchell, W. J. T. (2002). Landscape and power. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.