Visualizing Los Angeles Data through Art & Craft

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Abstract

Craftivism is a creative activity that offers opportunities for political and social engagement. This micro-seminar will introduce you to a brief history of craftivism as a starting point for a collective art project that will explore Los Angeles data and cultural spaces. At the end of the micro-seminar everyone will have an embroidered map that will contain meaningful places chosen and created by all participants. In addition, a companion digital project will provide a space for dialogue and participatory mapping.

Day: 1 We will introduce the practice of “craftivism” and explore it through examples of work from different artists and groups. To provide context for a shared project that we will work on collectively during day 2, we will learn more about cultural data in Los Angeles, including data from USC Libraries, and how to visualize it using open source tools/software. Themes and issues that we will focus on will include gentrification and sustainability. At the end of this session you will be asked to identify several places in Los Angeles that you would like to visit or would recommend for others to visit and why.

Day 2: This day will feature a hands-on activity where you will learn the basics of embroidery. You will embroider the locations that you chose to a fabric map of Los Angeles. This process will be collaborative - each person will add their chosen locations to their fabric and then pass it along to another student and so forth - at the end of the session your fabric will have everyone’s locations embroidered onto it. During the process we will facilitate an active and reflective conversation using our digital map to talk about data, art, and Los Angeles. Learning outcomes: You will learn about craftivism and how to apply it’s guiding principles to issues that you care about You will learn about cultural data and how to use it in research You will learn more about tools and software that can help you create digital maps and visualize data You will learn basic embroidery methods

Faculty Biography
Andy Rutkowski is currently USC Libraries’ Visualization Specialist. In this role he is responsible for supporting, developing, and advocating for visualization services and resources for the USC
academic community. His current research includes a digital mapping project that is focused on the Green Book in Los Angeles. Stacy R. Williams is the Head of the Helen Topping Architecture and Fine Arts Library. She is the subject librarian for Architecture, Art History, and Fine Arts. She received her MLIS from Queens College, City University of New York and her BA from New York University.