Eight Stories High, Comically Lo-Res, Visible for Twenty Miles: Spiraling Maps Atop Salesforce Tower

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Abstract:

Since its Lisbon premiere in April 2022, I've given thirty-plus North American performances of *A Synesthete's Atlas*. Using *Carto-OSC*, my assemblage of crowd-sourced geographic data, open source software, a touch surface, and several thousand lines of JavaScript, I manipulate projected digital maps in collaboration with improvising musicians as a form of expanded cinema. However, *Carto-OSC* began life not as a performance platform but as a rapid prototyping tool for designing static and animated web maps. Throughout February 2024 my ten-minute, single-channel video, *If Map #5*, looped on the eight story tall display that crowns San Francisco's Salesforce Tower, the second tallest building west of the Mississippi River.

Figure 1. *If Map #5* spiraling atop Salesforce Tower. In the background, San Francisco, the Golden Gate, and the Pacific Ocean.

My work seeks to repurpose the perceptual inquiries of structural filmmakers, experimental animators, the Light and Space movement, and visual poetry as new possibilities in the realm of digital cartography. In this paper I will discuss how these influences intersect with my investigations into perceptual pleasure and fatigue, geographies of the natural

and built environment, and subverting the presumed objectivity and authority of maps. In particular I will highlight the challenges of designing for a determinedly low resolution yet enormous display that is witnessed by hundreds of thousands of people every evening.

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