

Responsive Mobile Environments

Investigation III – Remembrance

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Love Locks

Conceptual Design:

Inspired by the locks already on the bridge and its connection/significance to other sites around the world (ex. Paris), we decided to create a device that would enhance the experience of someone walking along such a bridge and help to really involve them in the memories that were once there and have now been marked. We wanted to create something that would envelop pedestrians and help feel as if they were themselves in the scenes of love of the couples who originally tied the locks. To augment this feeling and help people remember the love that has now been symbolized right in front of them, we created Love Locks that would provide an auditory experience for people walking the bridge to hear voices of these past couples and feel a deeper connection with them, as well as a visual connection through the glowing of the locks at night to almost light up the night with their love.

Prototype:

We decided to create a rough prototype of one of these locks and how they may look and function. We created a prototype that used electronics to light up, record sound, and play it back with the push of a button, as well as connected online using the Particle interface built into the lock prototype. A rough mockup of the lock's configuration can be seen in the photo below.

Precedents:

We took deep inspiration from the significance of these locks around the world and how much they are almost a universal symbol. We also took inspiration from the Fenestra project we read about in class, which was a new form of remembrance that took inspiration from Japanese memorials, to implement the idea of movement triggering a memorabilia to be displayed. We were also inspired/looked at Pan-Anthem, an interactive sound installation where hundreds of national anthems are poised to play upon the approach of the viewer, creating a barrage of sound similar to the barrage of voices from different locks once one is activated.

Process:

We went through many iterations in our design. Originally, we envisioned a lock that was simply motion-sensitive and would play the recorded sounds when someone passed, so the entire bridge would play then if one person walked the entire span. We refined the idea to be more sensory sensitive by limiting the experience to an anniversary, such as the day, month, or year. We then took this a step further by

deciding to create an interconnected web/network that were linked by year and activated by touch and motion of those in the same year. We also took feedback into how the locks responds to time with the “breakup” feature of the lock unlocking if the couple has broken up so the symbol of the bad relationship is no longer there and sharing of their past special moment is stopped.

Open Questions and Challenges:

A big question that this question raises is what level of interaction is right for people to truly help remember events such as love, and to help them feel a part of other’s memories. Another question/challenge we had were the exact real-world implications/logistics of the project, such as brought up during the review: are they dispensed and bought, or rather already placed and ready to receive input? This simply raises a thought to keep in mind with the final project on how flushed out/what degree of resolution projects have. Another question/thought raised by the discussion during the crit feeds off the idea of this being a built system, and potentially playing with the idea of such a system being implemented in sites around the world and potentially being interconnected, so the network of the locks on one bridge envisioned currently is even more connected on a larger scale. This however bring a huge other role of issues and challenges with it, but the project (we feel) can be a good platform for actual developments to be made in real life if chosen.

Reflection:

Looking back on the project, we are all happy with what we turned out conceptually/idea-wise. We do feel though that the resolution of a physical artifact/prototype was not as resolved as we wanted it to be. This project did help us to think deeper into real implications and logistics of the things that we imagine/think of, which is important for moving forward. Potentially, it would have been interesting if we had a working prototype or two and had a chance to actually install them on the bridge to see how interactions or enhances or lessened, and then to take those findings to further polish the design. We also feel that the interactivity virtually needs more thinking out, and simply think time would have helped with that.

