

# sensory mapping



These sensors are yours to map.

## A Graphic Language for the Senses

In this project you will help create a language to visualize a person's sensory experience.

Your senses are a very complex hardware system. They combine very fine sensors that are permanently measuring brightness, color, sound, temperature, pressure, pain, taste, smells, and much more.

This system works so well and so fast that it's almost impossible to notice it – and yet it is the basis of your whole perception of the world.

We will look into the functioning of the human senses and then use our combined design skills to create an experimental language to describe a few familiar events that are especially rich in sensory input.

The result will be a graph (printed, digital or three-dimensional) mapping the different senses over time and giving fresh insight in the way we interact with the world around us.

## Participate

Are you interested in information design, maps, symbols and notation systems?

Do you want to reflect on interaction design from a broad (and sometimes poetic) perspective?

Do you enjoy being in the physical world?,

Then make some time for this project and spend a few weeks paying attention to your sensory experiences.

## Tuesday 26 October

- Short presentation on the five main human senses
- Discussing sensory-related design and art projects.
- Explanation about the week's goal
- First work session: creating a vocabulary to describe sensory 'indents' over time.

## Tuesday 2 November

- Reviewing /selecting / grouping the elements created
- Second work session: designing timelines mapping the five senses

## Tuesday 9 November

- Reviewing the timelines created
- Third work session: preparing the final designs
- Presentation

Participants are encouraged to work on their projects between the three main sessions.



Rogério Lira is a Brazilian-born designer living and working in Amsterdam since 1995.

With a background in fine arts and broadcast media (MTV Brasil, Channel V Hong Kong, VPRO, NPS), Rogério obtained his MA degree at the Sandberg Institute in 1999. Since then moved increasingly toward a cross-media practice in which design serves as a tool for social participation and investigation.

The Graphic Language for the Senses is his ongoing research project. The long-term aim is to develop applications for use in (mental) health care.

# sensory mapping



These sensors are yours to map.

## Questions

---

- When is an event especially rich in sensory input?
- What shapes, colors, symbols can best represent each of the senses?
- What is the difference between visual language and visual dialect?
- How can you differentiate intensity (e.g. a strong smell) from valence (eg. a pleasant of unpleasant smell)?

## Links

---

Information is beautiful  
<http://www.informationisbeautiful.net/>

---

Journalism in the Age of Data  
<http://datajournalism.stanford.edu/index.html>

---

We Feel Fine  
<http://www.wefeelfine.org/>

## Browsing and Reading

---

*Edward Tufte*  
• Envisioning Information  
• Visual Explanations  
• Beautiful Evidence

---

*Diane Ackerman*  
A Natural History of the Senses

---

*Max Bruinsma and Ed Annink*  
Lovely Language: Words Divide, Images Unite

---

*Janet Abrams and Peter Hall (editors)*  
Else/Where: Mapping  
New Cartographies of Networks and Territories

---

*Caroline A. Jones (editor)*  
Sensorium: Embodied Experience, Technology and Contemporary Art