Stimulating Cultural Awareness in Collaborative Virtual Environments

Dieter Merkl

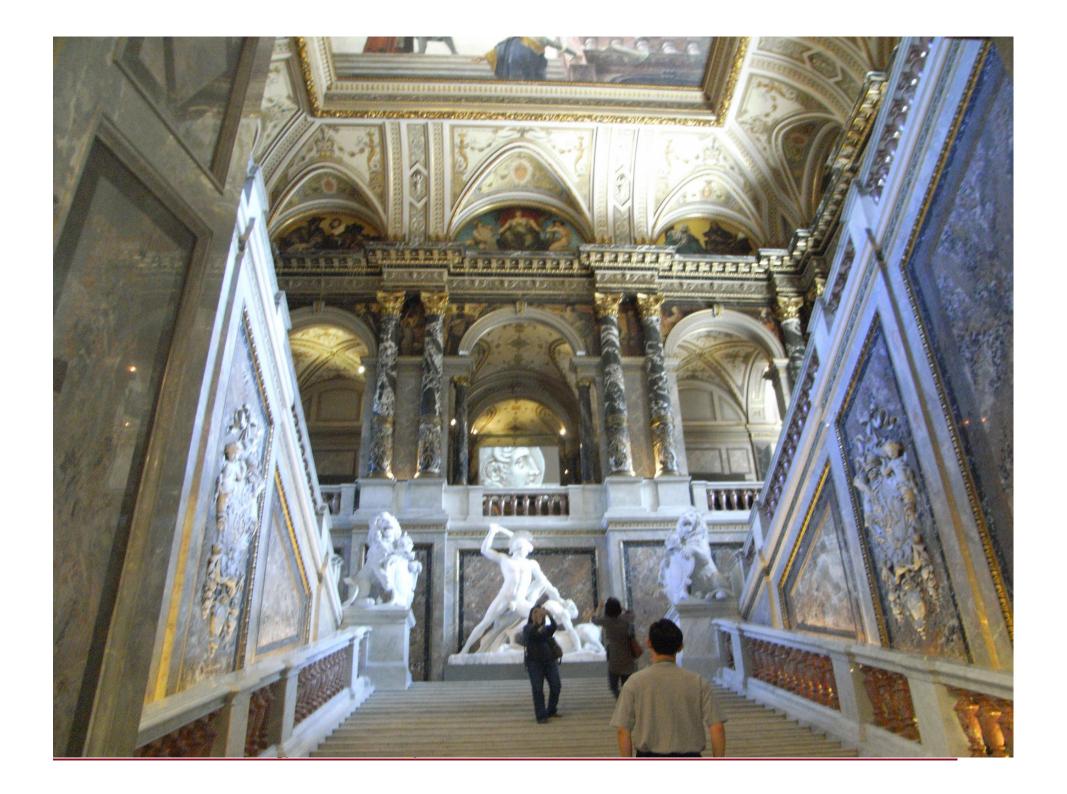
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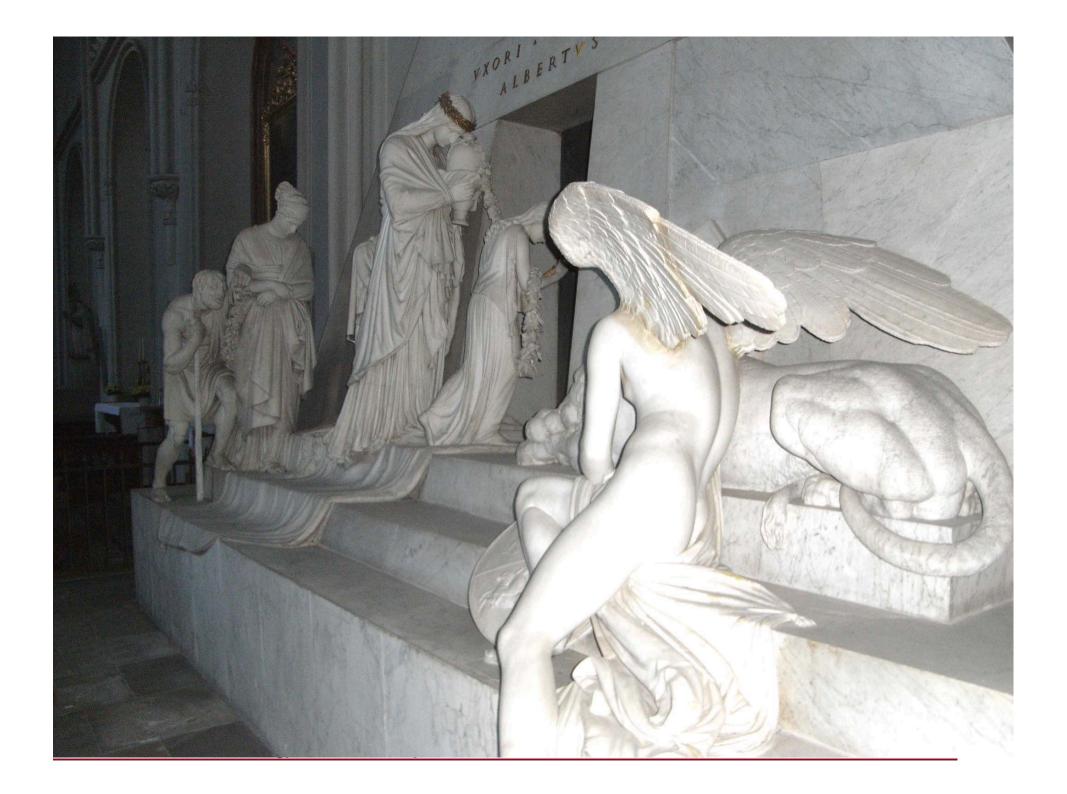
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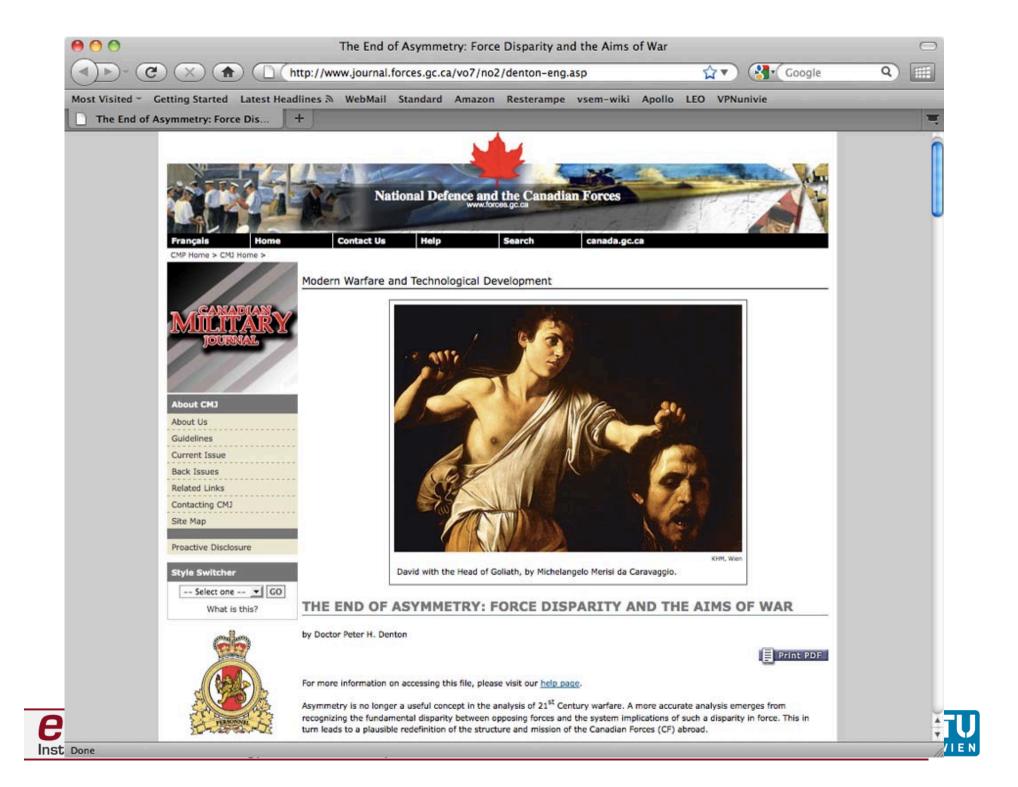






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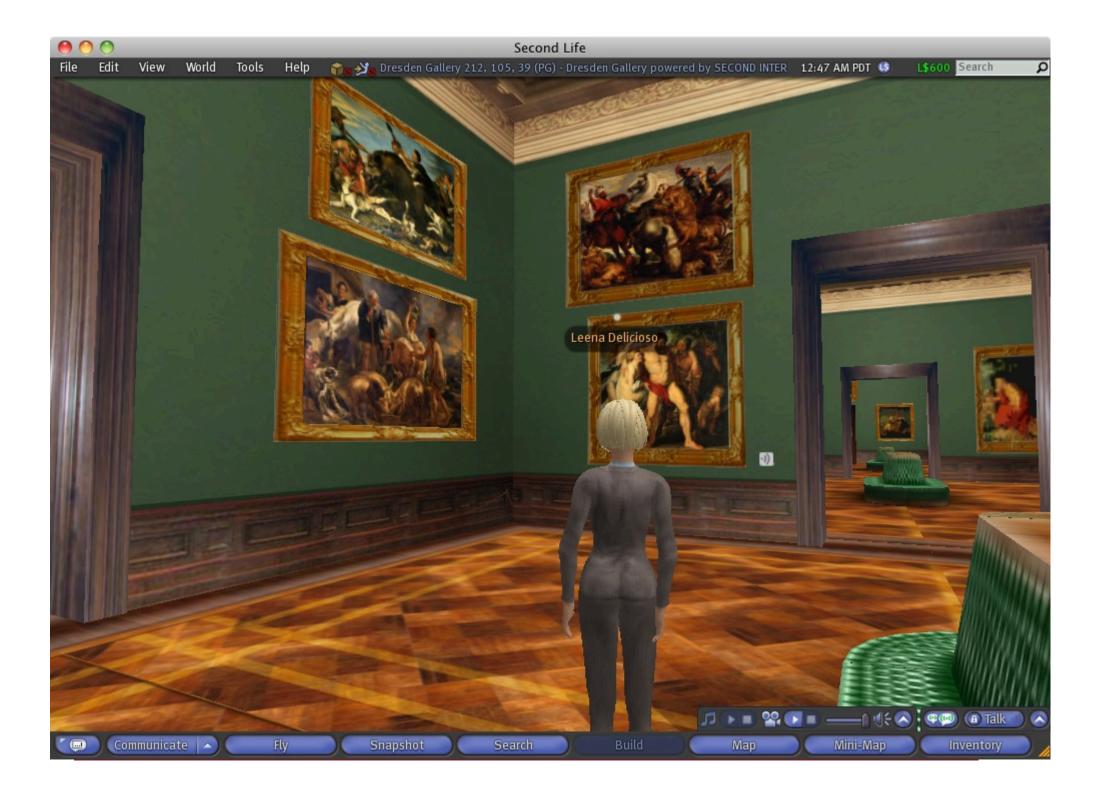
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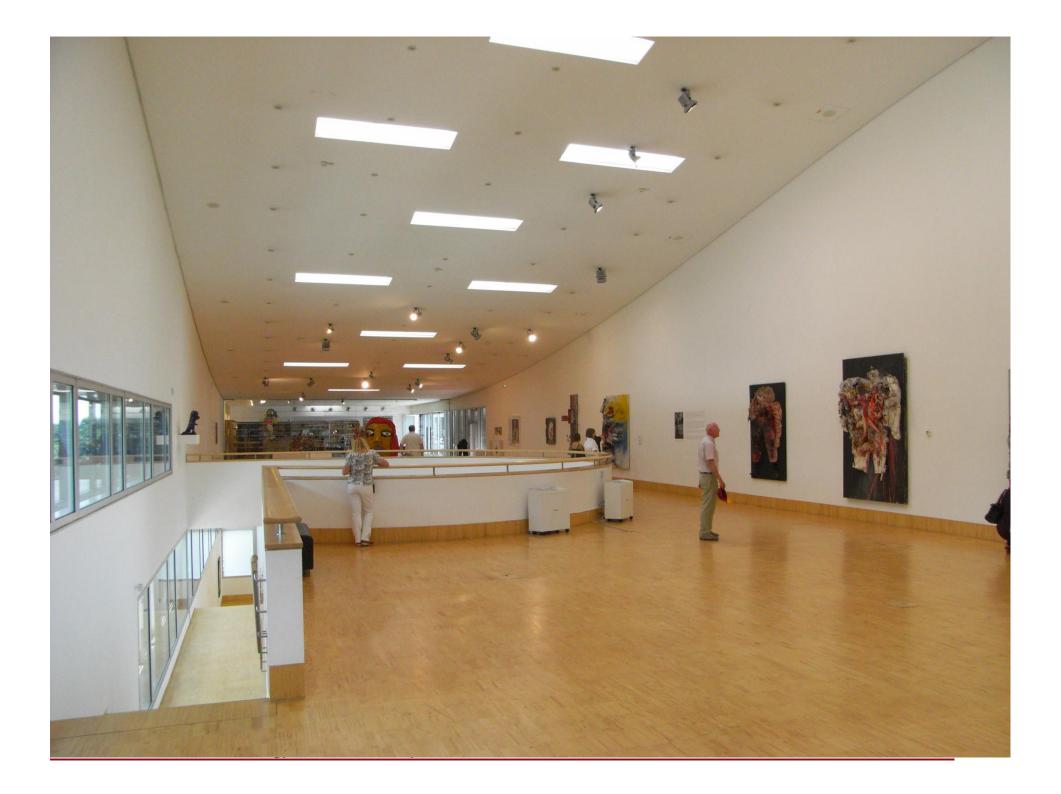


































General Observation

- Dominant narrative in art presentation in museums is time chronology
- Sometimes extended with geographical aspects
- Seeing artworks of the same topic requires walking between different rooms
- Seeing artworks of the same topic helps in identifying iconographic detail
- Seeing artworks of the same topic helps in understanding iconographic tradition and the expectation of the viewer

The Goal

- Provide an environment for studying art history
- Allow the visitor to explore the environment along various narratives
- Involve the visitor in collaborative description of the artworks
- Continuously expand the collection of artworks
- Enrich the environment with information from various Web sources
- Eventually: Provide the central entry point for exploring art history on the Web

Explore Art History from a Network of Relations

- Relations in tradition, influence, style and technique
- Relations between people (teacher/student, patrons, collaborators, etc.)
- Relations in reception of artworks
- Geographical influences ("Dutch Light" …)
- General historical influences (wars, different reigns etc.)
- User-generated associative relations



Relations as Virtual Museum Layouts

- Use existing semantic relationships;
- Organize them to form narratives; and
- Use them as basis for automatic graph layouts

Data Source Web Gallery of Art: www.wga.hu

- Provides information on
 - ~17,000 artworks
 - ~2,200 artist
- Structured information
- Free form text
- Images

Data Source Web Gallery of Art: www.wga.hu



- Giotto
- b. 1267, Vespigano
- d. 1337, Firenze
- Adoration of the Magi
- **1304-06**
- Fresco, 200 x 185 cm
- Capella Scrovegni, Padua

With camels and gifts the three kings have followed the comet along the narrow rocky path to the stable at Bethlehem. On the fresco, this stable really does seem to be the end of the road. The oldest king has taken off his crown, and kneels before the baby Jesus. All present watch what is happening quietly and reverently. Only one vividly depicted secondary figure, the camel driver, prefers to attend to his animals. Giotto uses this contrast to increase the effect of the main scene.

Data Source Controlled Vocabularies

- Getty Union List of Artist Names (ULAN)
 Structured vocabulary of artist names and biographical information
- Getty Arts & Architecture Thesaurus (AAT)
 Structured vocabulary of concepts relating to the fine arts, architecture and decorative arts
- Getty Thesaurus of Geographic Names (TGN)
 Structured vocabulary of geographic names for indexing art and architecture

Additional Data Source OpenCalais: www.opencalais.com

- A Thomson Reuters initiative
- Launched in January 2008
- Processes unstructured text and returns RDF triples identifying
- Entities
- Facts
- Events

WGA text -> OpenCalais

Documents indicate the this tondo may have originally belonged to Lorenzo de' Medici, ruler of Florence and patron of Renaissance artists. Following the three kings a splendid procession, symbolizing all the races of mankind, waits to pay homage to the new-born Christ. The peacock is a symbol of Resurrection. Some scholars believe that Fra Angelico laid out the composition and painted the Virgin and Child and at least some of the figures at the upper right; then his associate and fellow monk Fra Filippo Lippi completed the work.

- Christian Art
- Visual Arts
- Lorenzo de' Medici
- Florence
- House of Medici
- Italian Renaissance Painting
- Fra Angelico
- Dominicans
- Painting
- Italian Renaissance



Additional Data Source Flickr: www.flickr.com

- Search for name of artist and title of artwork
- Extract tags associated with the artwork



- Fra
- Angelico
- Filippo
- adoration
- magi
- **1440**
- peacock
- lippi
- http://www.flickr.com/photos/ maulleigh/4242163076/









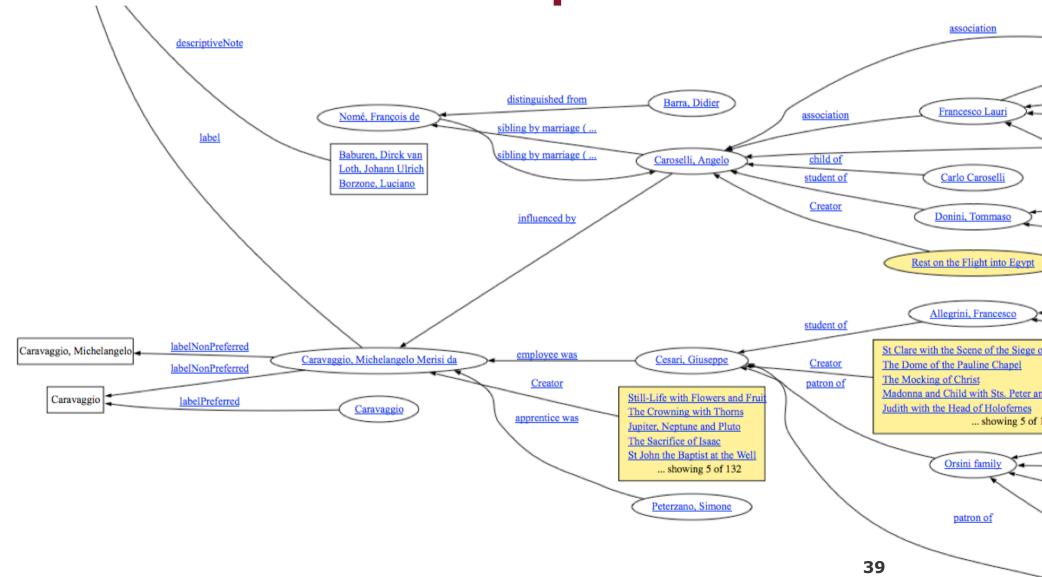
System Architecture

Unity Game Engine ClioPatria Server OpenCalais WGA **ULAN** Flickr AAT **TGN**

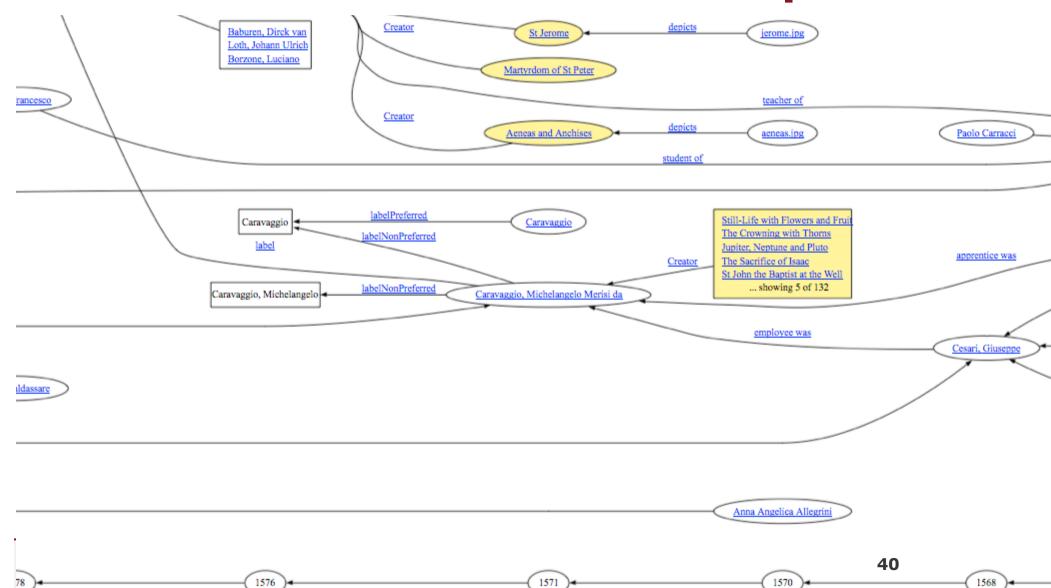
The ClioPatria semantic search web-server

- http://e-culture.multimedian.nl
- First prize: Semantic Web Challenge,
 5th International Semantic Web Conference,
 Athens, Georgia, USA, 2006.
- Available under the GPL-2 license.

Search Graph ...



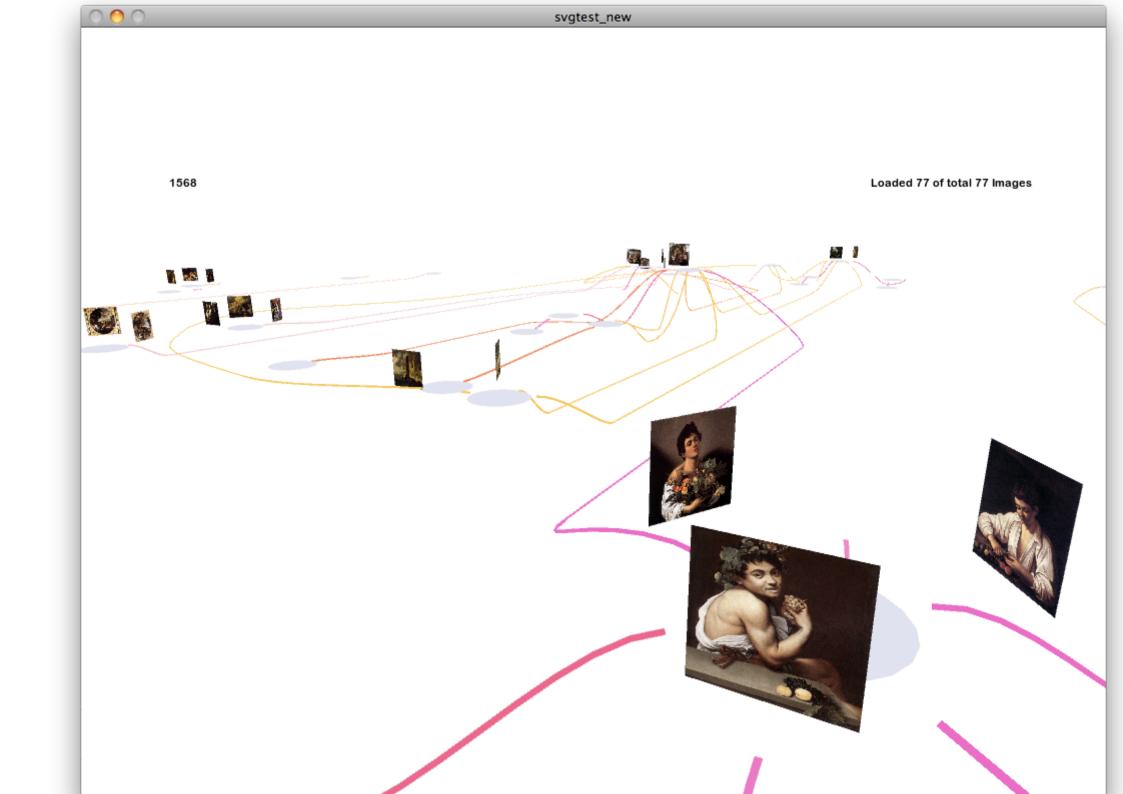
... Becomes a Timeline Graph

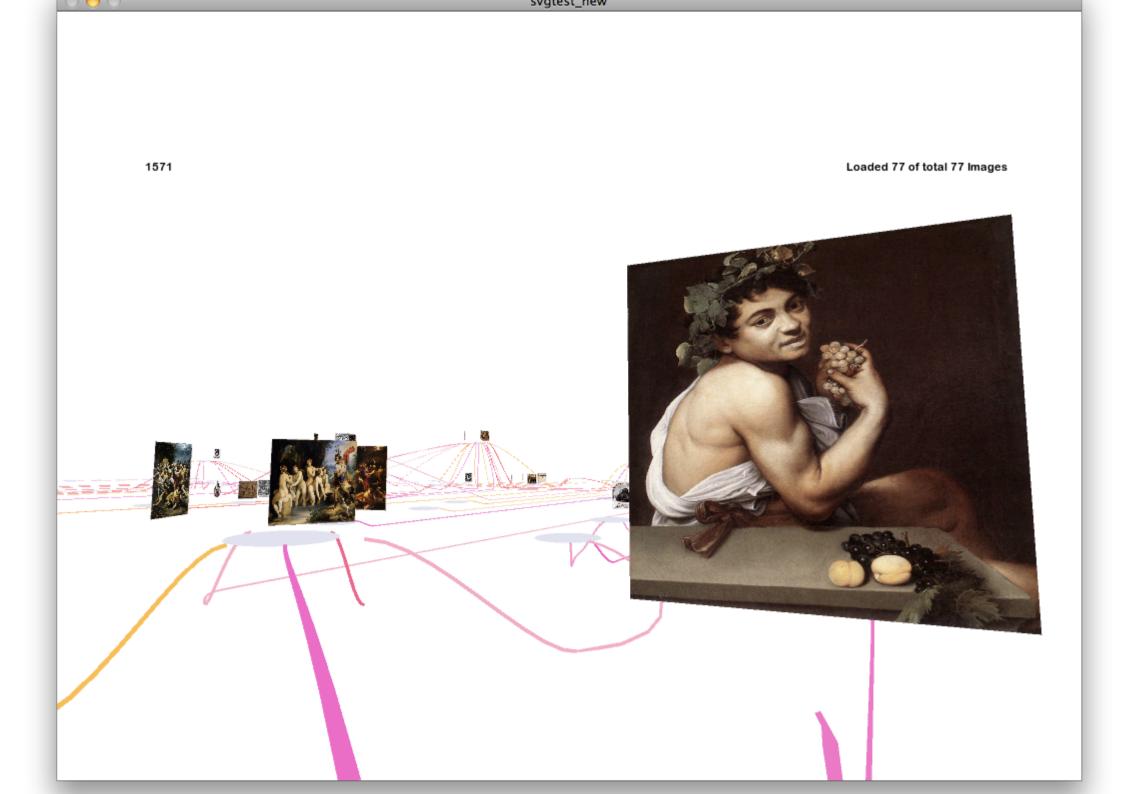


Current Demonstrator

- Translate the timeline graph into a 3D representation
- Use additional dimension to represent "influence"
- Code rank of artist node as height value
- Show relations as differently colored curves
- Show images and related metadata







Next Steps

- Dynamic Graph Drawing
- Multi-User Visualization
- Integration of Information from the Web, Flickr, OpenCalais, Twitter, Youtube
- Additional (semantic) datasources like
 Freebase and DBpedia



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