

In Transit

A long-term visual investigation looking into the nature of travelling by bus in London

Overview

The drawing project I have been working on reflects on the time and experience of travelling by public transport, especially buses. This is a significant, daily occurrence for most Londoners, seen as a necessity, even a chore.

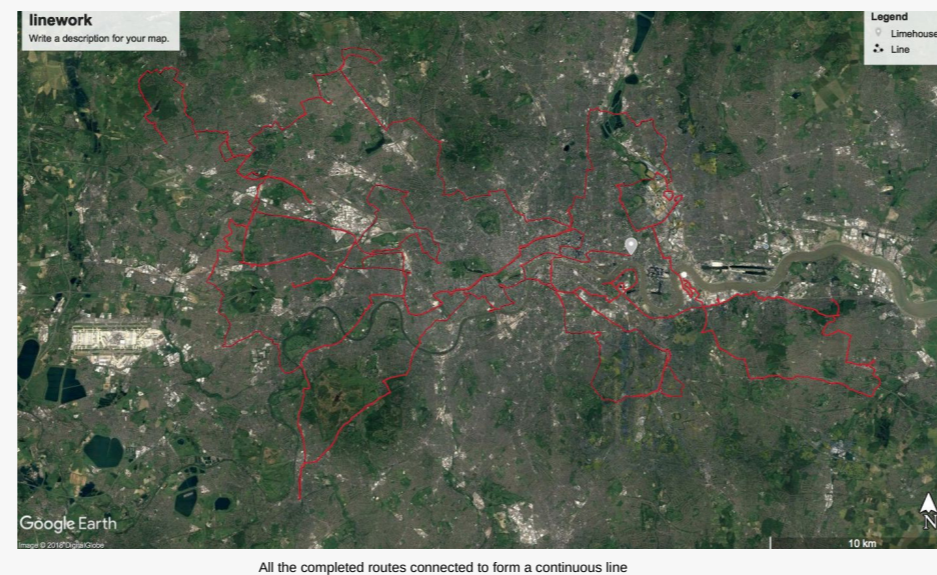
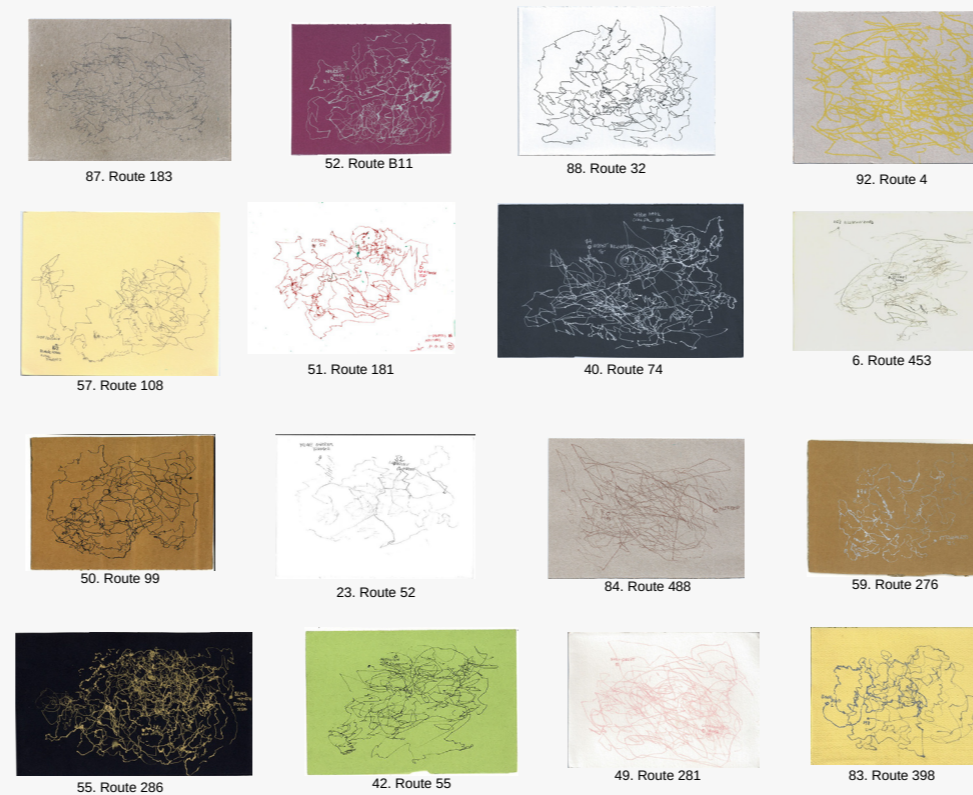
Public transport is a very physical form of a social network, connecting people and places, although the actual act of travel is a lonely experience. All bus journeys seem the same, yet they represent a large chunk of time of our day that never comes back. Because of these qualities, it is a unique platform providing opportunity to think about the here and now. In this project, I magnify this part of our life and focus in on the unrepeatable, ephemeral nature of these everyday journeys as a practice of mindfulness.

Background

The idea grew from a mail-art project started with a friend from Budapest in 2016. Then, looking at London post cards, and the double-deckers, I thought that as a theme they embody the idea of journey and of course, they are iconic features of London. Sitting on the actual vehicle it came to me that I can draw the movement itself, creating direct images of the travel and the bus, based on somatic information.

The drawings included in this presentation are random examples, therefore first number indicates the place in the series, the second refers the bus route.
The real-life size of each piece is approximately A5.

Terezia Abraham, 18.01.2019. London



This is a rather adventurous process, as I never know where the next bus-ride will take me. I have to go with the flow and I would like to invite the viewer to enjoy the visual results of this long-haul investigation. To see the whole series of the movement maps, please visit www.tereziaabraham.com

Method

During the assignment, I take on the role of the lonely passenger to honour the time and effort that goes into daily commute. I follow a string of unplanned routes, getting on and off at arbitrary stops, taking the first bus that arrives.

My method explores the possibilities of kinetic art; as the pencil/pen follows the movement of the vehicle on the paper, the line drawings become abstract (self)portraits of bus routes, incorporating information regarding the motion and the length of the travel. The bus itself takes part in the process as an actual drawing machine, as I facilitate the birth of the line drawing to create so-called movement maps. To highlight the unique nature of these journeys I use different types of leftover paper, and accidentally choose the drawing tools at each ride to enhance the character of the experience.

Further aims

Subsequently I am connecting each of these routes on the map of London to achieve a continuous line as a summary of all the smaller drawings and to see whether the nature of the line-work of the small drawings would be reciprocated on the large piece - as leaves reflect the tree itself. This acts as an experiment with the highly organised system that is TFL, to see how playful I can get going by their rules and using their services.

I have completed around a hundred of drawings already, and planning to create up to 416 pieces as this is the result if the total of the 673 bus routes is divided with 1.618. This will give me enough material to be able to create the large-scale drawing.