CONCEPTION

I initially had trouble grasping the general concept of “hypertext narrative”. It was only after reading over and over “The Garden of Forking Paths” that I started to understand it and generate ideas for the first assignment. My first idea was to literally create a story via a maze.

The idea was that the correct path of the maze represented a story from point A to point B. The viewer could mentally figure out the maze, and every wrong turn would create a digression from the main story, ultimately leading away from point B. The viewer would be able to click on the X’s and a pop-up caption would tell them that the main character of the story died (or something so that the main plot of the story is not achieved).

However, I couldn’t do this idea because my technical knowledge of Javascript didn’t allow me to carry this plan out.

So then came idea #2, which was to just literally do a collaborative exquisite corpse as shown in class. I gathered some of my friends and made one:

However, I didn’t really like the way it turned out (which is probably against the entire idea behind exquisite corpses anyway). And I didn’t want to simply put an image on my website and be done. I wanted to challenge myself with this first assignment.

This is how the idea for my current project came about. I wanted to take the idea of an exquisite corpse but make it so that rather than me, the artist, not knowing what to expect, the viewer would be the one surprised.
PLAN

My plan for this was that, as seen in the sketch below, I would create 3 or 4 whole images (either by drawing myself or by pulling from online), and each image would be split into 3 parts. The viewer would only be able to see one whole image at a time, but be able to toggle between the different parts of the different images so that each time, a new image would be put together.

The only obstacle to making this happen would be the technical coding and coming up with an idea for what these images would be (and perhaps what each new image is meant to represent).

EXECUTION

Having absolutely zero experience with Javascript, I actually wasn’t too worried about the coding. Just as many people who code do, I copied and pasted from online (htmlgoodies: http://www.htmlgoodies.com/legacy/beyond/javascript/slideshowcode.html). I wanted a very simple slideshow style image with left and right arrows that would allow the viewer to click through the next image parts. After searching for about a day for a simple enough Javascript code that would allow me to do this, I came across this code and it had everything I needed (and I tweaked and got rid of other parts of the code that I didn’t need). It finally worked and I needed 3 different slideshows stacked on top of each other, so I just copied and pasted the code 3 times, and this seemed to work when I used random pictures (as a test).
I then found 3 different images of a vertical mirrored skyline with different backgrounds and split those images to create my piece. I had a difficult time thinking of what to actual use as my visual now that I had gotten the technical aspect out of the way. I didn’t have time to hand-draw 3 different images that would all share the same edge lines (so as to make them all look like exquisite corpses), so I resorted to using images from online (that I conveniently found while scrolling through tumblr).

By clicking on the side arrows, the viewer can mix 3 different skylines in the same image. In this way, the message could be that from afar, all city skylines (and in extension the cities general feel) are all fairly similar.

**ISSUES**

I did run into some problems once I preloaded all the images. The toggling through of different pictures worked fine when I just used sample pictures, but when I used my skyline pictures, once the arrows were clicked through thrice, all the images would reset to the third bottom portion of each of the pictures. So the top and middle portions would just show the third portion of each respective image. I later figured out that in the code, the last Javascript in the `<head>` tag was for the 3\(^\text{rd}\) slideshow (with the 3\(^\text{rd}\) pictures). I have yet to figure out how to fix this.