An Interactive Lyrical Location Reference Map

Background

Listeners of music often connect most strongly to songs through their lyrical content. Lyrics can tell a story, engender deep emotion, or allow a listener insight into the artist’s particular state. One important way lyrics convey their message is through references to real-world locations. For example, songwriters make reference to locations in their childhood as a way to share their history with listeners or mention widely known landmarks as metaphors.

A way of mapping these lyrical references to their real-world location would allow users to explore the cultural landscape of their surroundings in a new way, as well as visualize their favorite artist’s lyrics geographically. This would be of great interest to casual music fans, diehard fanatics, and would possibly even help researchers.

Project Description

With the importance of lyrics and the locations in them in mind, I plan to create a website with an interactive map on which users can view and create markings in locations with lyrical location references. Each of the markings should contain the lyric itself as well as information about the song title, artist, album, genre, year, and perhaps (depending on copyright/availability)
the album art and a preview of the song. Users should be able to add entries to the map as well as view the entries in an interesting way (e.g. by filtering map by artist, genre, year, etc.).

Beyond the interesting uses such a site would have, this project will give me the opportunity to try out and learn new software frameworks. At each step in the process, I will weigh different options, select from the countless possible technologies, and continue to gain experience as a developer.

Below is a summary of basic desired web features:

- Create publicly available website with interactive map with markings showing locations.
- Give users the ability to filter markings by artist, genre, etc.
- Give users the ability (possibly through logging into an account) to add lyrical references to the map, vote on good references, etc.
- Give users the ability to request edit/deletion of wrong/harmful references.

Beyond these basic desired features, below are advanced features that may or may not be possible on implement depending on availability of suitable resources and time constraints:

- Include snippets or links to full songs legally using Spotify/Apple Music/ other API.
- Implement an API for access to lyric reference data / generally expose lyric location reference dataset for others to build on in the future.

Approach

My preliminary plan to accomplish the above goals is as follows:
• First, research and select from available web hosting, database, and map APIs/technologies/services to determine the best solution for my project.

• Create a specification for a basic version of the site that can be built upon.

• Build out a preliminary version of the site with the most basic features.

• After ensuring basic version is up to standard, begin adding more features to flesh out user experience and overall site design.

• Throughout development, perform tests and get feedback from others to improve the design, performance, and user experience of the project.

• Invite others to use the site and pay attention to how the system responds to public use.

• Fix errors/bugs as necessary.

• Write final report, discussing what problems and challenges I encountered and how my project ended up differing from my initial proposal.

With this plan in mind, here are the **deliverables** for the project for each stage of development:

• Specification for the site, laying out the major pieces of the site and how they should work together.

• Completed basic version of site.

• Completed final version of site.

• Completed final report.