MOBILE CREATION
Documenting Inspiration in a Fast-Paced World

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Problem Domain

We are working in the space of mobile creation. We are specifically targeting creatives of all types who are looking to document inspiration when they're out in the real world away from their desks, studios, or other creative workspaces.

Initial Point of View

Our initial POV last week last week:

We met… an entrepreneur who finds inspiration organically.

We were amazed to discover… that he believes that context is a huge part of an idea and accordingly has to record a lot.

We wonder if this means… he has a hard time staying excited about an idea when he's out of context that led to it.

It would be game-changing if… he could create in the moment, while the idea is still fresh.

We gathered this point of view from Ankit Shah, the creator of Tea with Strangers. From our interview with him, we discovered that Ankit needed a way of recording moments of

inspiration digitally so that he could share those thoughts and go back to them later after categorization.

Additional Needfinding Results

We decided to expand the scope of the people we interviewed to include different types of artists and creators. Harrison is a digital music producer and composer in New York City. Cathlyn is a social media personality who rose to fame when her Vine channel went viral. We continued to use Ankit as one of our creatives we would focus on, as his problem in documenting inspiration aligned with our focus for this project.

Revised POVs/HMWs

Ankit S.

POV is the same as above.

How might we...

Create "moments" of inspiration in his creative workspace?

Leverage his surroundings to enable him to be creative?

Build him a toolkit to carry with him to create on the go?

Introduce him to communities that inspire him while he is working?

Remove the need for inspiration to be creative?

Make creative work more mobile and natural, like email?

Enable him to keep ideas "fresh" longer?

Help him sustain excitement about new ideas?

Create a platform where he can document his scribbles and doodle and categorize the,?

Foster an environment in which ideas are easily solidified into plans?

How might we make creative work more mobile and natural, like email?

Parse writing and sketch it

Ability to pull up color swatches based on language

Parse sound and transcribe it to notes

Palette creator based on pictures

Automatic font generator for photos

Ability to automatically pull inspiring features out of photos

Color and fonts generated based on music

Random chord/color/word generator

Carry mobile 3D printers

Scan surrounding and recreate virtual reality space

Harrison H.

We met... a DJ who prefers to write instrumentation before lyrics.

We were amazed to discover... he tries to memorize his tunes because singing them into a voice memo is too embarrassing.

We wonder if this means... it's very important that each step of a process is professional and production quality.

It would be game-changing if... he was able to be proud of each stage of his work.

How might we...

Streamline his process so that each step is professional?

Celebrate the rough drafts that come with crafting something great?

Teach him not to fear failure?

Free him from concern about what others think?

Build tools that make each step of the process beautiful?

Make his intermediate work the most rewarding work to reflect upon?

Introduce him to communities that value incomplete work?

Encourage audiences to listen to and value incomplete music?

Give him a platform to share and be proud of the work that is incomplete?

Leverage his fear of embarrassment to improve his work?

Give him a platform to share and be proud of the work that is incomplete?

Artists-only social application

Archives of rough drafts of great work

Constant life video stream

Community service that promote "rough" content

App that forces artists to record something rough daily and post

Instruments/Recording sets that broadcast everything that he does

System that stores "progressions" of the same work

Create music platform that only lets you work on a piece for ten minutes

Improv concerts

Private paparazzi everywhere

Cathlyn J.

We met... an avid social media user with over 250 thousand Vine followers.

We were amazed to discover... that she spends orders of magnitude more time on sponsored/professional content vs personal.

We wonder if this means... she values her professional and paid work more than her creative and spontaneous.

It would be game-changing if... she was empowered to have creative direction and freedom in professional content.

How might we...

Free her from commercial obligations?

Use her creativity and short development cycles as an opportunity for sponsorship?

Make her professional process about authenticity rather than polish?

Remove the pressure to produce "professional" content?

Leverage professional sources to improve her creativity?

Celebrate her creative work more than her sponsored work?

Connect her with sponsors who value her personality of work?

Provide her with tools to create professional content more easily?

Enable her to be her own sponsor?

Encourage her community to demand more authentic and organic work?

Provide her with tools to create professional content more easily?

Artificial intelligence to edit videos

High quality mobile camera

"Video Filters"

Audio filters

Gyroscope app that works in tandem with camera to keep level

Better phone flash

Self-editing editing program

Computer vision to scan videos and make sure it fulfills sponsorship requirements

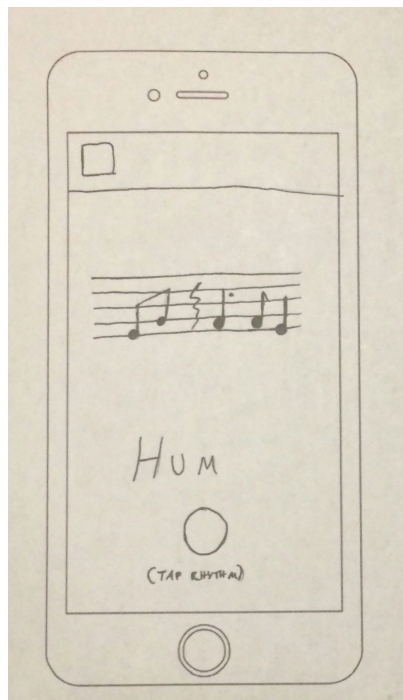Sharing for videos to enable professionals to edit while she is filming

Experience Prototypes

We prototyped our designs on paper by sketching our interfaces on iPhone templates. We tested them with several friends, mentors, and people we had interviewed.
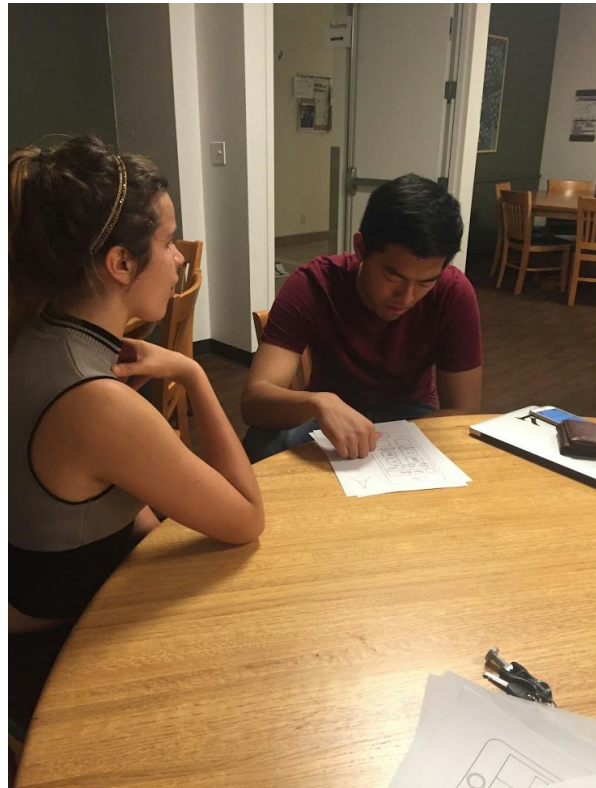
Prototype 1: Hum

Our first prototype was inspired by Harrison's struggles as an artist. We designed an application where a user could hum a tune and tap out a beat on an iPhone screen and it would be transcribed into sheet music with an attached mp3 file of the hummed tune. This would be ideal for musical composers or producers that find inspiration on the go and don't have Ableton Live ready at this fingertips. We made an assumption that musicians wanted something more professional to document inspiration on, wherever it may strike.

In our user testing, people overall really liked the concept of this idea. Dennis recommended that we learn more about the process of musical composition in order to make this

application best for composers and music producers. He mentioned that he used to record random voice memos when he wanted to document a beat or rap he thought of, but would have liked something designed for that purpose. He also noted that it would be important to let the user record the beat first and then the melody, since that is how much of music is composed. Michael also identified with this problem, as he has been playing guitar for 13 years. He wanted to know more about how these random recording within the app would be saved and documented so that they could be accessed from other software such as Abelton Live or GarageBand. Transcription of lyrics was not as much of a "want" as we expected, and most people prefered just having rhythm and melody transcription that included the ability to comment about the location, people you were with, or situation that you drew the inspiration for the tune from. Dennis and Michael supported our assumption that musicians want a tool to record melodic and rhythmic inspiration on-the-go in a way that captures a more complete form of the idea.

Prototype 2: Version Control/Feedback for Creativity

This application was inspired by Harrison's desire to share his unfinished music when it is in production mode in order to get feedback. This was also drawn from Cathlyn's desire to gain user feedback as well before her content is spread to hundreds of thousands of users. We essentially designed a version control-like platform for creatives that allows for other artists/creatives to comment feedback during the creation process.
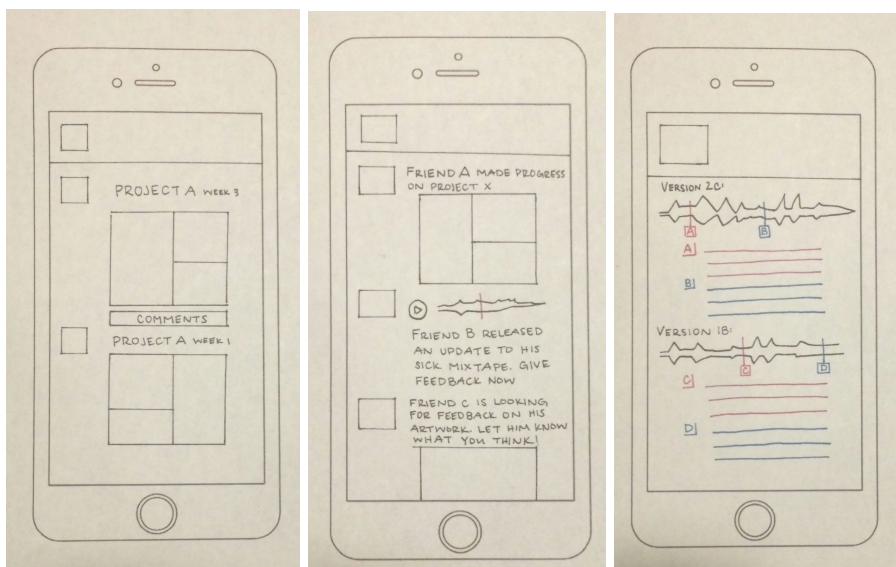
Dennis had strong feelings about this application idea. He said that "art is binary. It's either finished or it's not" and that he didn't think that true artists needed feedback during the creative process. He felt that "music is not A/B testing," but could see applications for the app in other creative contexts. He felt that music was about one's own expression and not about what other people want the music to become. Michael liked this design because he felt that it could help people who were amateurs and just getting started in music. He would like integration with music production software to make it super easy for producers to quickly post a few different bass lines they were thinking of and quickly garner feedback from other artists and music lovers.
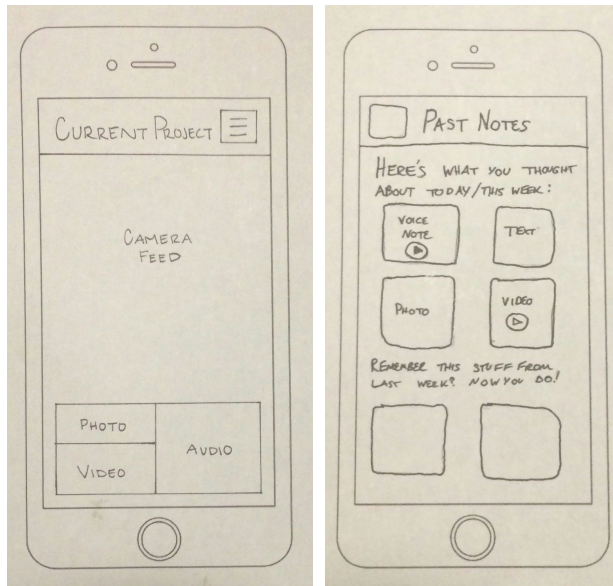
Sabrina had similar feelings to Dennis, contradicting our assumption that people would want their creative process to be exposed and shared. "This exposes an artist's vulnerability, and I'm not sure they would be comfortable with doing that." However, Sabrina did suggest that it could be a good tool for those who are trying to generate likes and followers for music, but less so for physically tangible arts. Even still, Sabrina felt that "since everyone has a different taste, if someone doesn't like something it's not necessarily bad." From a user's perspective, Sabrina's view did not support our assumption that general friends would want to give feedback on process. "I don't care if someone made progress. I don't want to continuously hear the demo they're working on and the three different versions." In addition, she felt like it took away from the personal aspect of artistic expression. "It's nice knowing that it was a personal project and not something that was solicited by a hundred people to get their taste - that's homogenizing it."

Prototype 3: Organic Idea Documentation

This app idea was drawn from Ankit's need to document inspiration as it comes in a way that captures the full context of the thought or idea. We designed an app that is a platform for documenting memories, thoughts, and ideas, and allows for a chronological time view of all logged "momentos" and allows for users to decide when they will be reminded of the idea—time-based, activity-based, or location-based.

Michael noted that there already exists a lot of software like this. One aspect he did like was the overview screen where you could see memories over the past week or so. He

also liked the idea of getting a push notification to return back to idea so that it doesn't get lost in the abyss. Dennis definitely identified with the problem and said his phone is full of random notes that he has jotted down over time, but he wished he had better categorization of them or context for how he thought of them. He noted that smart reminders would really make this application stand out. If you could get reminders for notes from the past that are relevant specifically for today or that relate to the current note you're typing out, Dennis thought that it would be "dope."

From Sabrina's perspective, this app idea would be incredibly useful for anthropological field work, even more so than personal creative efforts. Sabrina supported our assumption that people would want to look back on thoughts and content that they had stored in the past. "I always say I will go back and read my notes, but I often don't. I check my e-mail every day though, so this would be a great fit for my daily schedule." However, she also noted that being able to control the frequency of reminders (e.g. weekly or biweekly), would be crucial, so that her previous thoughts don't distract her from what's at hand. The multimedia nature of it would also be preferable to simply holding a notebook. "I carry around a notebook with me all the time in the field, and I'm also taking photos at the same time, but I never link up the two. Having an interface where I could back, say , to last July and seeing what I saw and thought would be great."

Takeaways

Even though going into the user testing we felt that we had very disparate prototypes, we found a lot of overlap and other users for the apps we designed. The version control for music production app could have many applications for other creatives—such as graphic designers, photographers, painters, dancers, and caPlligraphers. The prototype that we

feel was the best in achieving a desired solution was the note-taking app that could have applications with all forms of artists and people who find inspiration out in the world.