Assignment 2
POVS and Experience Prototypes

Introduction

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We are a team of Stanford students in the arts and culture studio.

Problem Domain

We chose to narrow our research within the studio theme of **Arts and Culture** into how people **experience** and **share music**. Music listening habits have seen a drastic transition in the past decade with the influx of streaming services and we wanted to see how young adults are handling the change. Specifically, we delved into how people *explore* new music, *organize* music within playlists and folders, *associate* music with mood, locations, or locations, *share* music with friends, and the general significance of music in the lives of diverse listeners.

Preliminary POV

We met people who consider music a big part of their life. We were amazed to realize how hard it is to discover a common ground in music tastes between even a small group of people. It would be game changing if a solution could be designed to bring people together by revealing music of shared tastes.

Additional Needfinding Results

We met with four more individuals. Our goal was to select a more diverse group of people with respect to both background and experiences with music. We have summarized some of the key findings from our next wave of exploration.

Clarissa Carter

We met Clarissa, a musician and avid music listener. Clarissa spent this past summer working at the Warner Music Group and considers music to be an integral part of her life. Despite her outward confidence with music, she said that she is reluctant to share her some of her music with other people. She is worried that people will judge her for her music taste and see it as a reflection of her character. When we dug a little deeper, we found that Clarissa loves to share her personal music, but only with her really close friends. She is worried that people who don't know her that well will judge her for her music tastes. Clarissa also explained that when she plays music for other people, she tries to "take the subset of everyone's tastes" before choosing a song.

Aviva Fallas

We met Aviva, a lover of musical theater, and an extreme user: she listens to podcasts more than she does music. She also feels very nervous anytime she is playing music for others, and will actively refuse to take the aux. When I inquired about her playlists, she had some decidedly unconventional songs, including "adult lullabies", which she found soothing. If she had to play music in the car, she said there is a high likelihood that one of these songs would come on.

Cameron Burton

We met with Cam, a native of Jamaica and a member of a fraternity. He is extremely engaged with music, and actively takes a part in music selection. He refuses to make playlists, and will hand-select songs from his library when on aux. He doesn't trust the queue, and will literally stand by his phone the entire time he is playing music at a party so he can always be ready to put on the perfect song.

Bella Wilcox

We met Bella, a DJ and a music curator. Bella spends a significant portion of each day listening to music with other people as she completes schoolwork, hangs out with friends, and completes jobs in the co-op that she lives in on campus. However, Bella's favorite part of listening to music involves finding music for herself and groups of people that will inspire. As a DJ, she reads the "vibe" in the room to give people what they want to hear. As a friend, she listens to queer fem R&B, taking inspiration from artists that she respects and pushing herself to discover new ones. She believes that a person's favorite artist says a lot about their music taste and personality.

Revised POVs and HMW statements

POV 1

We met Clarissa, a musician and avid music listener. We were surprised to find out that despite her intentional curation of music, is reluctant to share it with others for fear of judgement. It would be game changing to make her comfortable when sharing her music.

POV 1's HMW

- **HMW take the guilty out of guilty pleasure**
- **HMW help her create a playlist that she knows everyone will like**
- HMW enable her to find a balance between playing popular songs and music discovery
- HMW let her know what music other people are listening to
- HMW make others have positive reactions to all music they haven't heard before

- HMW make her feel like her more "personal" music is less "weird"
- HMW connect her to others who are listening to the same music
- HMW strengthen relationships she has with people in the room
- HMW equip her to share with less fear of judgement
- HMW make a space where everyone felt equal in putting new music out there
- HMW give her more opportunities to share "weird" music
- HMW let her know current tastes in the room

POV 2

We met Aviva, who is surrounded by people with extremely strong music tastes. We were surprised to find out that she trusts other people's song choices more than her own. It would be game changing to help her define a musical identity so that she can contribute to shared music experiences.

POV 2's HMW

- **HMW we show her other people have 'whack' tastes too**
- **HMW give her the tools to define her music taste**
- **HMW give her specific songs/artists that she can confidently share with people**
- HMW make her want to share her music tastes with others
- HMW make others want to listen to her music
- HMW create a vibe that makes it safer to share her niche music taste
- HMW enable her to curate more mainstream music without compromising her tastes
- HMW allow her to make podcasts a viable social alternative to music
- HMW create a way to learn some of the more nuanced components of music discovery
- HMW give her confidence in the music that she likes
- HMW help her understand her friends' music tastes better so she's confident talking about it with them
- HMW help her learn from her friends' music tastes

POV 3

We met Bella, a DJ who makes music a significant part of her life. We were surprised to realize that she already understands how to experience and share music with her close circle, yet is unsure how to do the same with a wider range of people. It would be game changing to generalize this intimacy across all acquaintances.

POV 3's HMW

- **HMW capture some of the nuanced details of what builds the shared musical connection**
- **HMW let her know the music taste of somebody she just met**
- HMW connect her to others through a shared music experience
- HMW give Bella insights into the music tastes of larger groups of people she's with/performing for
- HMW quantify what makes the shared music between her friends so powerful
- HMW build familiarity between acquaintances that mimics close friends more strongly
- HMW make the DJ experience more intimate for larger group
- HMW make a distributed way to select music among a group of listeners
- HMW make her confidence when curating music easier to adapt to less intimate environments

Top HMW, Solutions, and Experience Prototypes

1. How might we... help people assess the common vibe in a room

"In a room of strangers, I usually defer to someone who knows the room" - Cam Burton '21

"When I'm DJing, I try to pick the next song based on the energy level and vibe of the crowd" - Bella Wilcox '19

Solution

Poll people in a room to asses their mood and energy level before picking a song.

Assumption

People will find it much easier to pick a song for a group of people when they have explicit details about the vibe of the room.

Experience Prototype

For this experience prototype, we wanted to see how people selected songs differently when they knew the mood and energy level of other people in the room. We took two volunteers into a room and asked one of them to pick a song that she thought all of us in the room would like. Then, we had everyone in the room write down one word to describe their mood and their energy level from one to ten on a sticky note and pass it to the next person choosing a song. We discussed the individuals' thought processes after the fact.

During the debrief, we found that the first person tried to pick a song that, generally, a lot of people enjoy. She selected from a group of top forty songs rather than anything from a more personal playlist.

Conversely, the person who had more insight into the vibe of the room selected a song from his own personal playlist. None of us had heard it before, but he thought that all of us would like it because almost everyone wrote 'relaxed' or something similar to describe their mood. The knowledge of the vibe gave him the confidence to select his own music.

2. How might we   ... facilitate finding common ground in music taste

"I tend to just go through Spotify and queue music that I like and I think other people will also like..." - Clarissa Carter '19

"If I knew their favorite artist I could figure a lot about their music taste…" - Bella Wilcox '19

Solution

Let the user know the intersection of music tastes in a group of people.

Assumption

When a person knows what songs and artists the group all enjoys , they will feel more comfortable playing music for the group.

Experience Prototype

We wanted to simulate an intimate setting where a group of people are forced to make a decision of what music to play. We ultimately decided on a car ride, and put participants into two different scenarios.

Scenario 1: We will give the participants three minutes to discuss their music tastes before getting into the car. We encouraged the participants to figure out what artists and songs that everyone enjoyed listening to. From there, we will put them in a car and have them select 4-6 songs to listen to (not all the way through, maybe first 30s). After the experience, we have them debrief individually of how the songs made them feel.

Scenario 2: We have the participants pick music without having any previous conversation, and see how the process goes for selecting the music. Debrief after to see what were the main takeaways.

Honestly, this experience prototype did not work as we expected it to. People in scenario two just ended up talking about their music tastes in the car and unprompted rather than outside and prompted like scenario one. Because of this, we saw little difference between the two scenarios. If we had additional time, we would have loved to design and test a new experience prototype for this solution.

3. How might we… take the *guilty* out of guilty pleasures

"I have some songs I love that are very personal to me and I don't want people to be like 'oh, why is she listening to that song." - Clarissa Carter '19

Solution Assumption

Have all people share their guilty pleasure songs anonymously. Collect them and play them in a room.

Assumption

People will feel more comfortable playing their personal music with a group of people when the fear of judgement is mitigated.

Experience Prototype

We are interested in finding methods that remove some of the anxiety that a person may feel when listening to a song with a group of people that they really like but a worried the group will judge them for. We have a hypothesis that anonymity will help alleviate the guilt associated with liking certain songs.

We therefore had a large group of people submit a song that they viewed as a "guilty pleasure" and would normally not play in a room with a larger group of people. We then played the submitted songs for the group and observed reactions.

We found that about half of the songs played elicited a very positive reaction. Multiple please smiled saying "oh I love that song" among other things. These "guilty pleasures" became just "pleasures" for the entire group, and for those songs that most people didn't know, there were no negative comments... but I guess you could say there were some awkward moments.

Key Takeaways/New Assumptions

We discovered a great deal this week. One aspect we really gained some insight into was how people responded to the perceived emotions of others in the room. One of the most compelling examples of this came from our first experience prototype, where participants afterwards told us how important understanding the feelings of others in the room was. We also observed the dichotomy between how people think others will view their more personal music and how others actually do react. There is more acceptance and excitement around more personal songs than people think.

Both of these insights seems to stem back to the idea that when there is more certainty about others in the room, people feel more comfortable sharing and listening to music that they actually like. Our guess is that it does not take much to build a sense of closeness with others, and that it only takes a little push to give people the comfort to share music in a more intimate space.