# **FUNCTIONALITY**

Our app is a redesigned version of www.[deviantart.com](http://www.deviantart.com) which is an arts sharing website. It realizes art sharing by allowing users to create an account, upload pictures of art, view other users’ art, like other users’ art, and follow other users. We put great efforts into making the arts sharing experience on devianart as enjoyable as possible by radically changing the current interaction model.

# **Prototype**

**Overview**

We adopted paper prototype method to do our low fidelity evaluation. To do this we have three essential ‘views’ in the prototype, the first is the browsing few which is the big sheet of paper with rectangles drawn out and some sticky tabs. We limited the number of inter actable parts to simplify the prototype. The second view is the queue view, which is placed over top of the browsing view as it acts as the sidebar and the header where the search information is displayed. Our final piece is the viewing area for art. This can be changed to work for the queue view or for viewing a single piece by adding or removing the left and right arrows. When in single view, the largest of the coloured paper pieces is placed in the white space about the artist information; when in queue view, the pieces of coloured paper are laid out to have a domino effect, with the smaller pieces lying beneath a larger one to show the other pieces next or back in the queue. We used the coloured paper to represent drawings that the user could browse for.

**Reflections**

We had an initial meeting to discuss the design, and each of us came to the meeting with different scribble sketches of individual ideas. We presented our own ideas the other teammates one by one by explaining our sketches and answering questions about them. After all ideas were demonstrated, we discussed each one’s pros and cons. There were roughly 8 main concepts tossed around. After around two hours of discussion we combined ideas from multiple approaches and determined that our design would involve a queue sidebar that different works could be added to and removed from, the question was how would the art be added. Two main concepts were talked about:

1. The “Bubble Up” approach. The works on the main browsing screen would not remain static for a user to scroll through, and instead new art thumbnails would constantly be animating up in a revolving view. The user would pick works to add to the queue by clicking on the thumbnail, which would “pop” the “bubble” and add it to the queue, removing the thumbnail from the revolving view. [Put figure here]
2. A more simple approach. Each thumbnail in the main browsing screen would have a “+” button on it that, when clicked, would add that piece to the view and change the button to a “-”. [Put figure here]

The second approach was chosen, as the first was deemed too difficult to pursue and potentially irritating to the user. Once that was chosen a full design for all screens based on the concept and scribble sketches was drawn out on a whiteboard by one member, while the other teammates pitched in with feedback. [Put figure here]. From there the prototype was created...

We decided on a fairly limited scope for the prototype, focusing on the main tasks of adding art to a browsing queue, and viewing the art after, or viewing it in single mode. There were several screens discussed and designed that were not implemented in the prototype. One was a history screen that was determined to be similar enough to the main browsing screen that it was unnecessary to prototype. [FIGURE]. Another was a more advanced search option that was decidedly out of the scope we determined.

**Usability Inspection**

## We went with the Heuristic Evaluation method for our usability inspection, because it is what our members are the most familiar with, works well with a group of our size, and is holistic. A Heuristic Evaluation, using heuristic guidelines to evaluate the usability of strict paths through the product, fit well with the scope of our prototype. As well, the initial individual approach of a heuristic evaluation fit more with our schedules at the time than a group inspection like the Formal Usability Inspection.

## **Task**

× View artwork in single view

× Add artwork to queue, remove art from queue, and view art queue

**Method**

The inspection was conducted individually by all four teammates, as 3-5 people are recommended for a heuristic evaluation. Two major tasks were identified as being the most basic or most important in terms of user experience for the site. Then we each set aside about an hour and walked through both tasks individually using the paper prototype while referencing the ten heuristic evaluation. We tried our best to approach the task as a first time user and to be very picky so that any potential flaw could be captured. We each wrote up the usability issues we discovered, and then came together to discuss them as a group. We amalgamated the remarks into a list and ranked them by severity.There were several items that were less issues and more discussion topics, but we left them in our combined evaluation with the severity of 0 so that we would have a record of the items discussed. To determine the severity we talked over what we each thought it was, and then decided on it as a group.

**Results of inspection**

* There is no way of tracking what works in the queue that you have already viewed if you leave the queue and return to browsing view.
* The close button (“X”) in the art viewing screens is not that visible, and may lead users to believe that we are just closing certain sections of the view, not all of it.
* There is no way to transition from Queue View to Single View if one wants to focus more on a specific piece.
* The “add to favorites” and “remove from queue” buttons are on top of the thumbnails in the Browsing View, but to the side of the thumbnails in the Queue List, making for an inconsistent appearance.
* The Queue List is taking up a lot of space that could be better used.
* There is no option for clearing all works out of the queue, which could lead to a potentially frustrating user experience.
* Some section titles such as “Also liked” and “Other works” have meanings that are not immediately obvious
* In Browsing View, if a work was added to the queue it does not pop out, and should be more obvious.
* The arrows to move to different works in the Queue View may be extraneous and unnecessary.
* An empty queue is potentially confusing, and should instead inspire users to add to it.
* A user is not able to remove art from queue while in Queue View. This would be helpful if a user is looking through other art as a reference, and decided there were a few they were done with and wanted to remove
* A user who has no interest in the Queue List should be able to collapse it.

**Redesign**

Going through our different tasks helped to inform us of how different users may go through the system, which in turn led our redesign conversation. Going over our amalgamated evaluation list, we highlighted several things we will need to modify or add in the Medium Fidelity stage.

* We will add a way of indicating which works have already been viewed in the current queue if the user goes back to browsing mode by adjusting the thumbnail.
* The close “X” button in Single View/Queue View will be moved to make it more obviously associated with the whole overlay, and more visible.
* The Queue List section will be reorganized so that the thumbnails of queued works will match how the thumbnails are displayed in the other sections.
* A “Clear All” option will be added to the Queue List.
* Many small text changes to make the intent of different sections more obvious, ie. “Other works” to “Artist’s other works” .
* The thumbnail, or the “add to queue” and “remove from queue” buttons on a thumbnail, will be modified as to be more obvious at a glance if a work was already added to the queue.
* The browsing view will be paginated, and need some indicator of this pagination.
* When the Queue List is empty we will add a message encouraging users to add to it.
* Proportions and spacing will change in the Individual View or Queue View to better highlight main piece shown.
* We will add a way to remove art from the queue when in Queue View.
* Information as to what the Queue List is will be added as help documentation in some non-obtrusive way, for users who don’t understand it.

Appendix:

Amalgamated Heuristics - Formal