

AnyType: Provoking Reflection and Exploration with Aesthetic Interaction

I read “AnyType: Provoking Reflection and Exploration with Aesthetic Interaction” by Kimiko Ryokai and Laura Davendorf. AnyType is a mobile application that creates typefaces from the things in our environment. The current design of the application includes five stages—capture where a camera captures a picture, typeface generation and composition, the video mode, the history view and finally the editing stage. The mobile application has been tested on a total of sixteen people with varying degrees of art experience, and it has been used by both non-artists and artists in order to create art. People also use to reflect on other’s art and critique it. It has also been tested on a long-term on a total of ten people. The application helped many of these artists “see” like an artist and helped them interact in a new way with their environment. It helped users create personalized messages, a means of self-reflection and artistic enrichment. Overall, this paper serves to expand the literature of “defamiliarization”. It shows that “defamiliarization can be more than a strategy for expanding design possibilities but also one that allows people to creatively express themselves in the context of communication.” This will reshape how designers and engineers design the initial stages of their products.

This paper introduced to aesthetics of interaction, a growing field within Human computer interaction research, which strives for designers to go beyond usability and usefulness and explore aesthetic sensibilities while creating a product. One of the confusing aspects of this paper was how the typeface was generated and composed. It focused more on the user and not on how the media is generated. Overall, it was an interesting read and introduced a new product quite well.