Assignment 1

Telling stories using your photos on social media

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DESIGN DESCRIPTION

When I first read the project requirement of designing an interface to tell stories using photos on social media, I thought of what are some of the existing way people communicate through photos. My conclusion fell onto having a comic strip or collage style of presentation. The target platform is the iPad due to its responsive screen and its focus on user experience. As such, I designed touch elements in my screens to communicate a sense of manipulatability. At the same time, I provided feedback of the user's action through the interface by responding according to their gestures and interaction with the interface. I got some interface ideas from the app "Paper" by 53 and some random pictures from Yahoo! News.

An intention that I had was to have the editor to reflect upon life stories. One way that I did that was to constrained the editor to pick and choose the few photos to be able to fit into one page. This is because I believe that real life stories are not told in one long continuous story, but rather as a series of chapters, thus the pages. If I were to allow the editor to place all the photos into one page, this sense of "series of chapters" will be lost. Also, I used the books in analogy to life, where there is a closing of a chapter and opening of another chapter, there is a closing of the book and opening of another book. Another way that I did that was to have the editor to choose the path the story would take. This is because life does not usually flow linearly, with random events happening in between. In a book, it is usually read linearly, sequentially from page to page, top to bottom. In this case I would rather the editor to choose the path that the reader would take, to allow for such flexibility.

Editor Interface
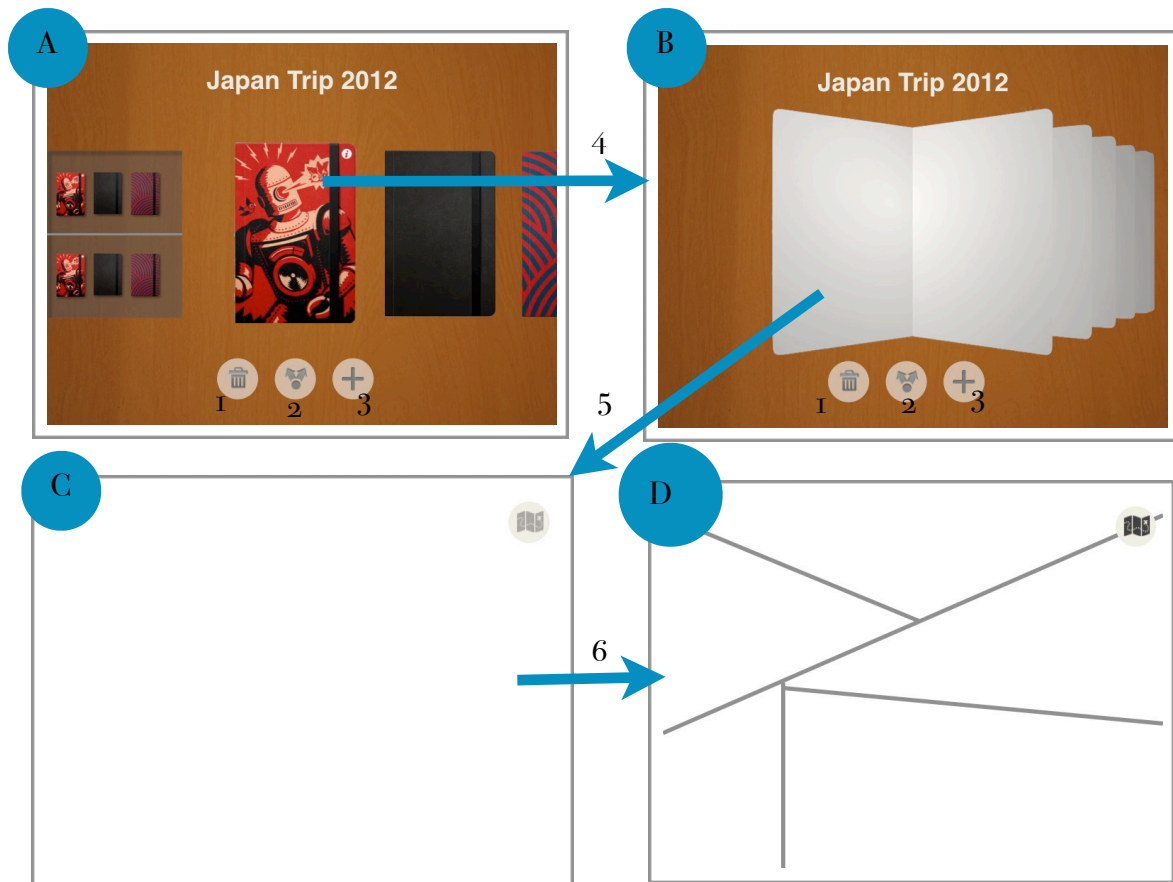
Interactions and Screens

A: Book shelf. Here, you see the collection of books that you have collected. Swipe to the the right to go to screen H, swipe to the left to select the other book. On the top is the title of the currently selected book.

    1: Delete. Delete the currently selected book.

    2: Share. Share with some of your friends on social media.

    3: Add. Add new book.

    4: Tapping on book goes to screen B.

B: Open book. Swipe left and right to see the other pages of the book.

    5: Tap on the currently opened page to open the page and begin editing. Pinch to close the book to return to this page from any screen other than screens E and G.

C: Blank page.

    6: Tap and drag on the screen to form the sections of the page. As you drag, guiding lines will show what are the lines that will be drawn.

D: Divided blank page. Tap on a section to add photo to that section.
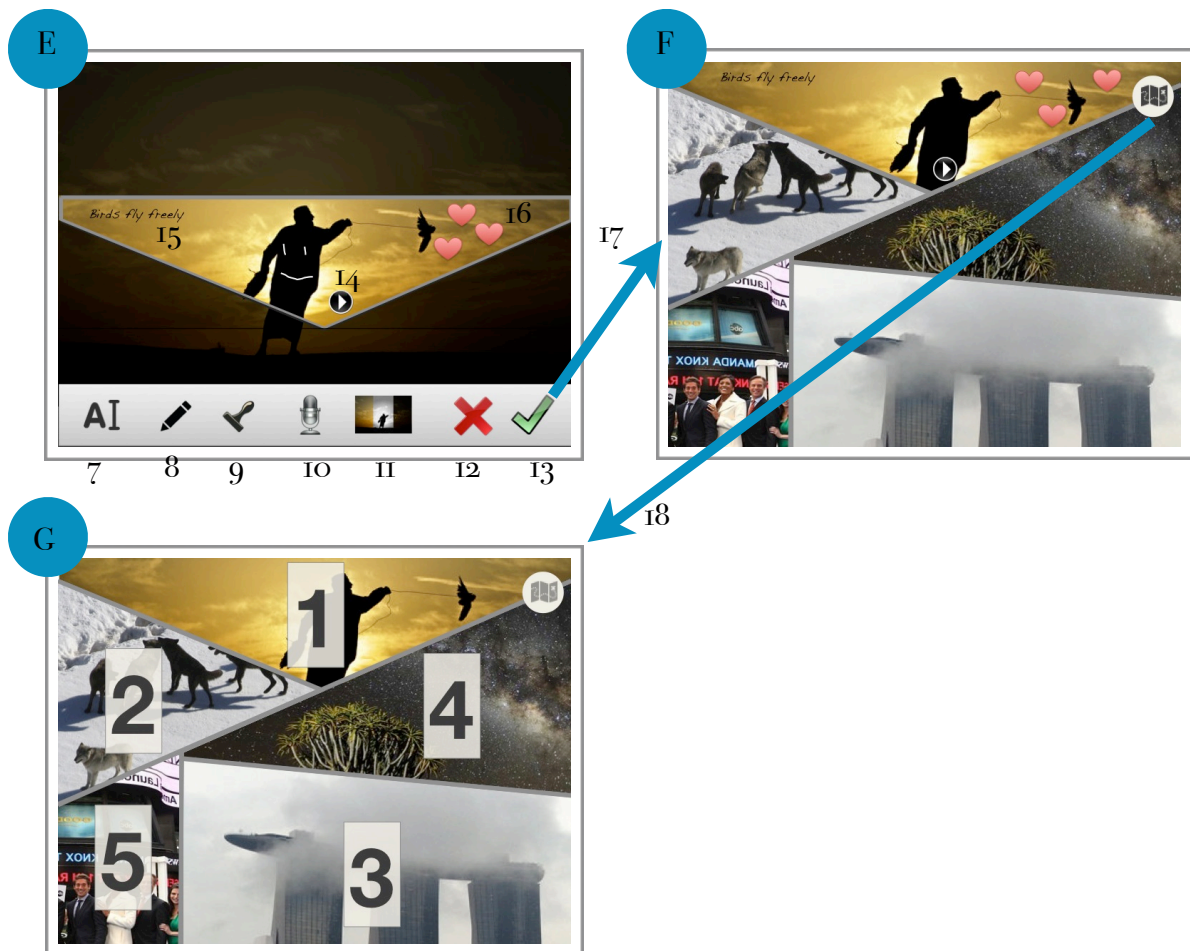
Interactions and Screens

E: Edit Photo. The cropped area is the shape of the section that the photo will be in.

7 - Insert text (15) onto the photo. 8 - Pen tool. Allows editor to draw on the photo. 9 - Insert stamps (e.g. the heart shape 16) on the photo. 10 - Insert voice (14) onto the photo. 11 - Adds filter onto the photo. 12 - Cancels all edit on the photo. 13 - Finish editing and add all edits onto the photo.

17: Once the photo is done editing, it will look like screen F.

F: Divided completed page, once all the photos are added. Tap on the photo to edit the photo and go to screen E.

18: Tapping on the path button allows the editor to enter the path in.

G: Path completed page. Once the path button is pressed, as the editor taps the photo, the number will be added in increasing order, according to the path set by the editor.

Reader Interface
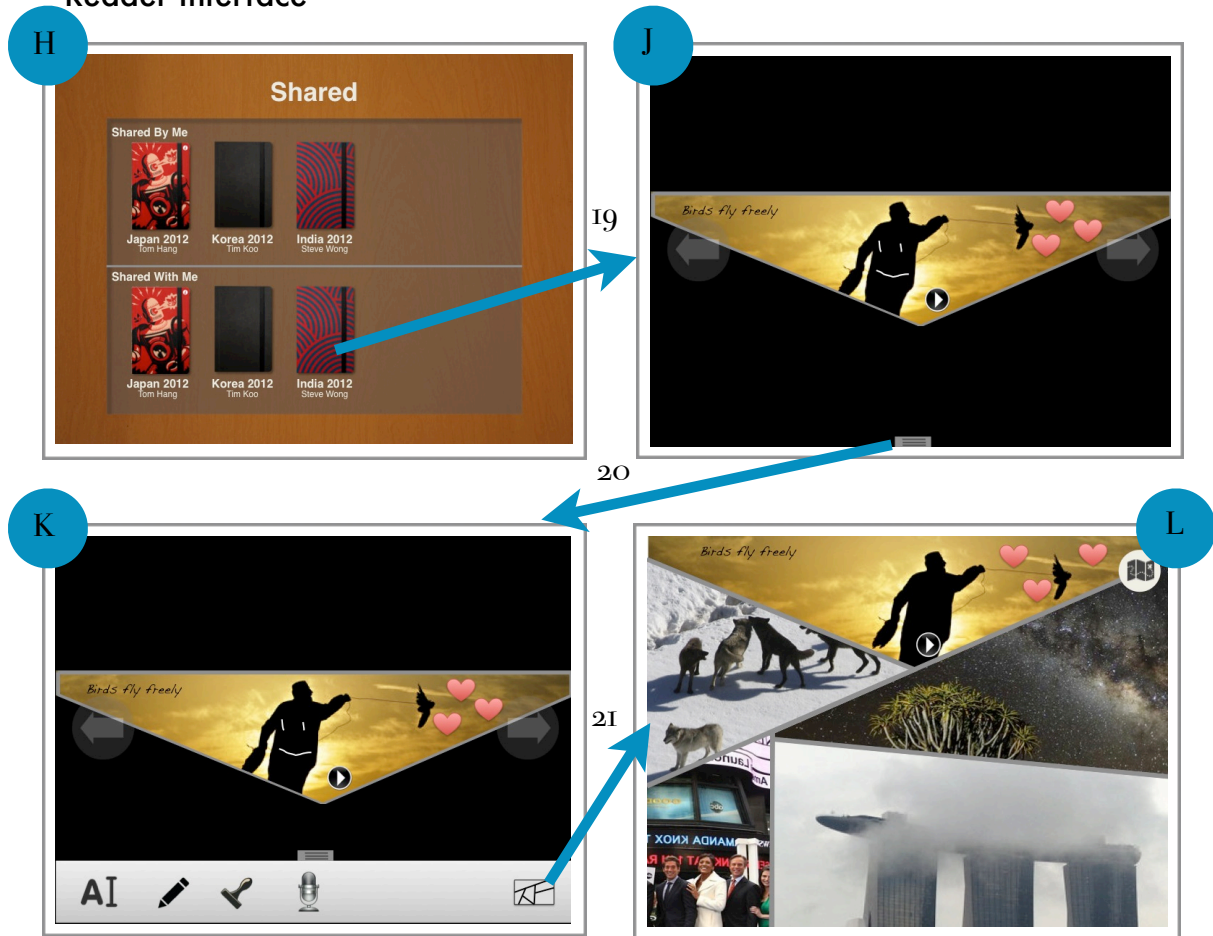
Interactions and Screens

H: Shared screen. This screen shows the books that are shared with the viewer and what screens are shared by the viewer. This is accessed by swiping right from screen A.

19: Tapping on the book opens to screen J, allowing the viewer to view the individual screen.

J: Individual photos. Tapping the left and right side of the screen or swiping allows viewers to go to the next or previous photo.

20: Pull up the tab to show the tool menu. This allows the viewers to interact with the photos.

K: Individual photos with tool menu. Viewers are able to insert text, doodles, stamps or audio onto the picture. These annotations will be sent to the editor as well.

21: Tapping this will allow the viewer to see the overview of the page.

*at any point, pitching the screen will bring the viewer back to screen H.

REFLECTION

The lectures and readings helped me to view this assignment from a wider perspective. I had to decide if this assignment was going to be a tool, a game or an art. From this perspective, it helped me to create more ideas regarding the project. I could have this as purely either one of the three, or perhaps a combination. For this case, I decided that my application was to be a tool and an art. From the tools perspective, I thought about the purpose of sharing story, and what are some of the features I would require to fulfill those purpose. From the art perspective, I reflected on what a story means and what it means to share stories, the thinking and motivation behind sharing of stories. I thought of the normal mode of storytelling, whereby it is just a one way communication from the storyteller to the audience, and how I can change that to become interactive, to become a two way communication instead. With that in mind, I came up with the basic concept of having a flexible collage canvas with the editor being able to edit the photos and choose the path for the viewer.

During the in-class discussion, I was inspired to hear the feedbacks and the ideas of the rest of the people. I was inspired to change my idea into a game, but I thought it was too clunky and I was trying to achieve too many things. Initially, I was afraid to share my idea, afraid that they may steal my ideas or perhaps laugh at it. But as I shared, I realized that they had their own perspective of things, and it was worth it. Thus, I refined my idea and drafted out the screens on a piece of paper. While drafting the implementation, I thought about the affect and aesthetics readings that I have done and figure how I can include affect and aesthetics into my implementation. I was inspired by the design of the iOS application "Paper" by 53, and decided to take some design elements from there which I thought were very well implemented. At the same time, I kept in mind that affect was not just about information flow, but rather about interaction and situational base on individuals, and the four concepts of aesthetics from the reading while designing the interface.

I found this assignment aided my learning of the different design principles. On hindsight, I felt that though the requirements were the same for everybody, there were many different ways of implementing the same purpose. And each ways has its own perks and it was very interesting to see how I could combine the different ways to suit my assignment. This assignment also taught me to observe people in a very different way, on top of looking at how people interact through information flow such as body language and verbal cues, it taught me to observe how people communicate and interpret through the interfaces provided to them to each other. It was a very interesting assignment and I've learnt a lot through it.