**'Artly' Prototype Design Write-Up**
Sari Pagurek van Mossel

   The problem I aimed to tackle with my design was that there was no simple way for artists to share and sell their work online. All the common methods had some sort of constraint that would easily be a preventative obstacle for many artists; for example, to run a personal online store an artist would need public recognition for website traffic, or would be required to  mass produce their content to run a typical Etsy shop. To learn more about the problem space, I did online research about influencers on social media, and talked with several artists to get an idea of their needs. After reading many blogs about individuals' experiences with growing their content on the social media platform Instagram, a common obstacle that surfaced was the vast range of content on the platform. It's difficult for the average Instagram user to get views on their posts when the explore page is always full of many different kinds of content. Furthermore, the types of viewers on Instagram are not necessarily the people who are going to be customers (after all Instagram did not originate as an e-commerce platform). From the artists I spoke with, I concluded that not everyone who makes art and wants to sell their art is a full time artist, and thus a good solution must work for a variety of types of artists who make work on different production scales.

   Brainstorming solutions to this problem, I determined that there were features a good solution must include: accessibility and usability for people of different artistic backgrounds (professional to amateur, etc.), built-in e-commerce to allow for simple transactions, and an environment catered to the art world as opposed to a general content-sharing app or a classified/listings app. I sketched many layouts and design ideas for a potential art-sharing / selling app on paper, and mocked up my favourites in Figma, so that a test group could look at and test them out. I find Figma to be a great prototyping tool that allows me to send the preview mode to people of different ages and artistic backgrounds. I gathered information on the usability from many perspectives, addressing the following use cases: How would it be used by a professional artist vs someone who just wants to sell their paintings on the side? How intuitive was the app for someone who doesn't use social media compared to someone who does?

   User feedback contributed to the final design: 'Artly, Share Art, SmArtly'. The app consists of an explore page to discover new works, artists' profiles, a method of saving artworks for future viewings, a chat function to discuss and reach out to artists, and a built-in e-commerce section to make purchasing works easy and efficient. Since Artly is an app downloadable on a cellphone, it is accessible to the majority of people, and allows a smooth transition from taking a photo on your phone to posting it on the app. This in itself allows the app to be used by a wide range of individuals, and means that users' art postings can be as professional or non-professional as desired. The ability to create an account allows the user's information to be stored, making purchases quick and simple. It also allows the user to follow artists and save pieces they want to look at again later, making it easy for potential customers to browse and shop for art. Even downloading the app without the intention of buying or selling allows for the opportunity to explore the work of up-and-coming artists or get artistic inspiration for your own work.

   Reflecting on creating this design, the most challenging part was collecting user data. It became clear very quickly that what was intuitive and self-explanatory to me was not the case for others. I learned that collecting data from a large sample size is key to improving the design and making it work for as many people as possible. If I were to do the project again I would have even more people test the design. While I did my best with the time constraints I had and the people I had available to me who were willing to test out my interface, in an ideal world even more feedback would be preferable.