BAYMONT GALLERY APP
Case Study
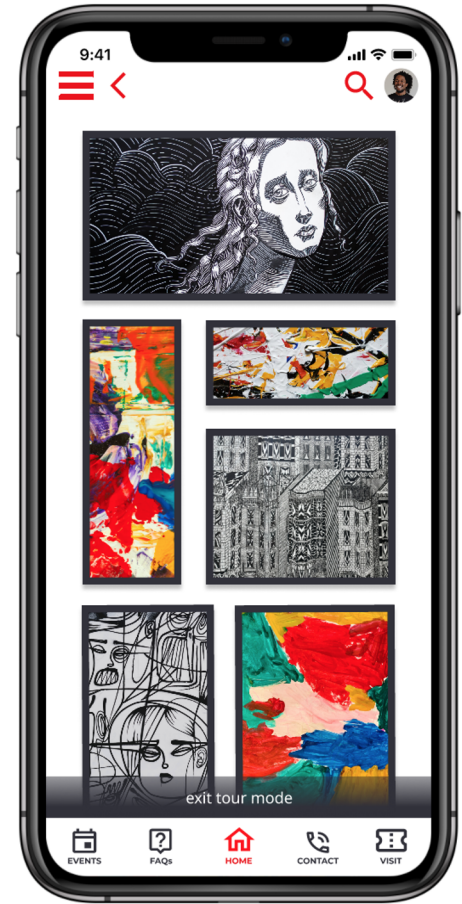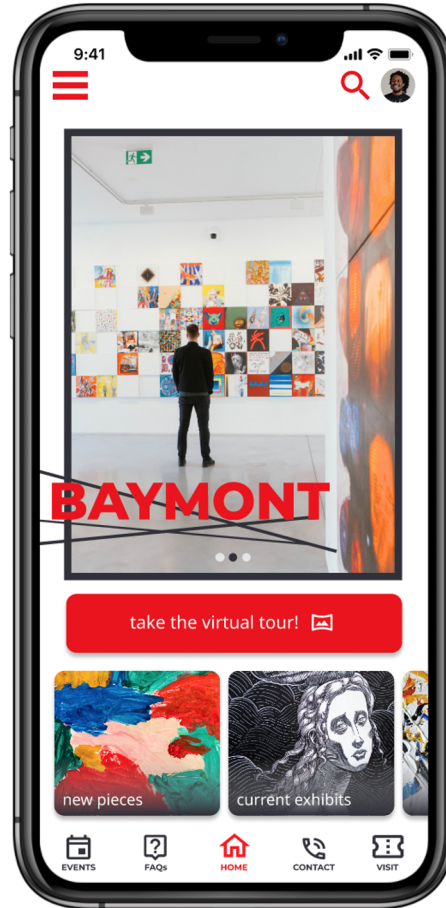
Arielle Schussler

Project overview

The product:

An app that provides gallery members, visitors, artists, and students a way of visiting and engaging with the gallery virtually.

Project duration:

May 2021

Project overview

The problem:

With COVID-19 changing the behaviors of art enthusiasts, gallery attendance is down. As guests are unable to physically visit the gallery, art pieces are not being viewed or sold at pre-COVID rates.

The goal:

To create a visually-appealing app that allows guests, members, students, educators, and families to continue to engage with art and the gallery—even if they can't visit in person—with a virtual tour.

Project overview

My role:

Designer

Responsibilities:

User research, wireframing, prototyping, testing, and iterating.

Understanding the user

- User research
- Personas
- Problem statements
- User journey maps

User research: summary

I conducted interviews with art enthusiasts and crafted empathy maps to better understand the intended users and their needs. Primary users of this app include busy art students, educators, parents, and art collectors—all of whom would love to visit the gallery but cannot (for one reason or another).

These individuals confirmed interest in engaging with the gallery virtually and shared that in addition to viewing pieces, staying aware of gallery events, and being able to purchase pieces virtually, they also want to learn about the art pieces and artists.

User research: pain points

1

Time

Many art collectors do not have the time to visit a gallery just to be disappointed by what's available.

2

Low-Quality Images

Students, enthusiasts, and collectors want high quality images of art pieces to study and appreciate.

3

Lack of Resources

Students and educators want to be able to easily learn about art pieces and artists without spending hours on research.

4

Lack of Connection

Many galleries don't provide curated offerings for the diverse needs of their visitors.

Persona: **Iman Azimi**

Problem statement:

Iman is a discerning C-suite exec that wants a way to view and purchase artwork from a gallery virtually because they are too busy to visit the gallery in person.

Iman Azimi

Age: 63
Education: MBA
Hometown: New York, NY
Family: Widower, 3 children
Occupation: C-Suite Exec

"Life is too short to waste on mediocre wine."

Goals
- Wants to know what is available before going in-person to purchase something.
- Wants to build their art collection.
- Wants to be known for having impeccable taste.
- Wants the next hot thing first.

Frustrations
- "Sometimes technology gets in the way. It should be simple to do simple things."
- "My eyes have to strain to read small text."
- "My time is valuable, and I don't like wasting it."

Iman is a busy business executive that enjoys the finer things in life—rare wines, four-star cuisine, and perfectly tailored fashion. Iman takes a great deal of pride in their appearance and their home. They have spent years cultivating an art collection and consider themselves able to discern the value of emerging artists before others do. Iman spends time exploring local gallery apps and websites frequently to ensure they never miss new exhibitions. It is important to them that gallery information is kept up to date and that they can find what they are looking for easily and quickly.

User journey map

Mapping Iman's user journey gave us greater insight into the needs of users and how they would engage virtual with the gallery.

Persona: Iman Azimi

Goal: To quickly and easily view and purchase current pieces on display at an art gallery.

ACTION	Find gallery's current art pieces	Navigate through the gallery's collection	Select a particular piece and gather further information	Purchase artwork	Retrieve artwork
TASK LIST	Tasks A. Search for gallery's website B. Find website C. Find current art pieces	Tasks A. Flow through each section of the gallery without skipping anything. B. Look at certain pieces again	Tasks A. Find a piece. B. Select it and zoom in to photo of piece C. Learn more about the artist, piece, and price.	Tasks A. Locate phone number to the gallery B. Request information about the price of a piece and its availability C. Purchase the piece	Tasks A. Drive to gallery B. Find parking C. Pay for piece D. Take the piece home
FEELING ADJECTIVE	Doesn't want to visit in person, so happy there is a virtual alternative. Frustrated that the website isn't very developed and finding the current piece selection isn't easy.	Dissatisfied at the selection of pieces—suspicious that the collection is incomplete/not up to date. Annoyed that the carousel of images forces them to go through the entire selection over again to find a previous piece they liked.	Excited to find a piece they like. Frustrated that information about purchasing the piece isn't available and that the informational font is small and hard to read.	Dislikes having to look through the site for the gallery's number and having to call for the price. Isn't comfortable providing card information over the phone, so will have to visit the gallery to purchase the piece.	Glad to have the piece, but would have preferred to have it shipped to them to avoid visiting in person.
IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES	Create an app so people can tour the entire gallery.	Develop virtual tour on the app so users can feel like they are not missing a single part of the gallery. Add a navigation tree and filters so users can search for exactly what they are looking for.	Develop a form overlay that includes pertinent piece information. Ensure information is displayed in high contrast way with options for users to stretch to zoom.	Add a call to action on the bottom of each piece so someone can make an offer or call the gallery without navigating away from the current screen. Allow for in-app purchases.	Offer shipping for in-app purchases.

Starting the design

- Paper wireframes
- Digital wireframes
- Low-fidelity prototype
- Usability studies

Paper wireframes

Taking a couple of minutes to sketch out paper wireframes helped me solidify the design. Sections of each of the below drafts were combined to craft the most user-friendly journey.
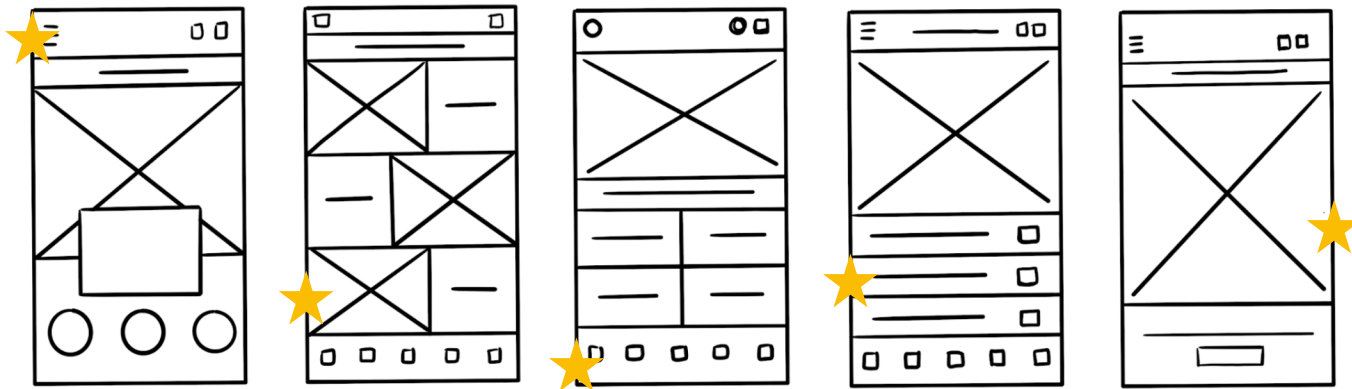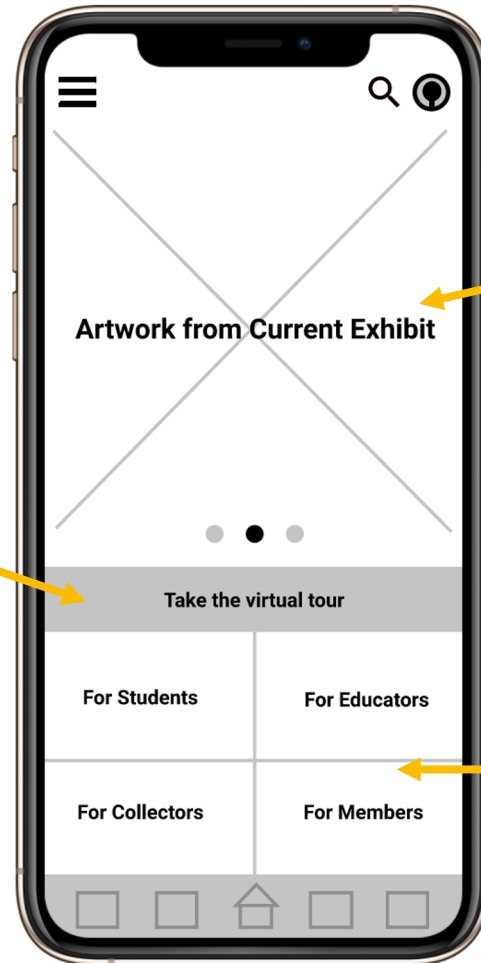
Digital wireframes

The design of the home screen focused on the virtual tour, the artwork, and curated user resources.

Large artwork to emphasize high-quality images.

Artwork from Current Exhibit

Virtual tour banner is highlighted to generate greater user interest.

Take the virtual tour

For Students

For Educators

For Collectors

For Members

Curated user resources to ensure each type of user can easily find what they're looking for.

Digital wireframes

Another very important focus of this design was emphasizing the virtual tour. The intention was to simulate the experience of visiting the gallery in person.
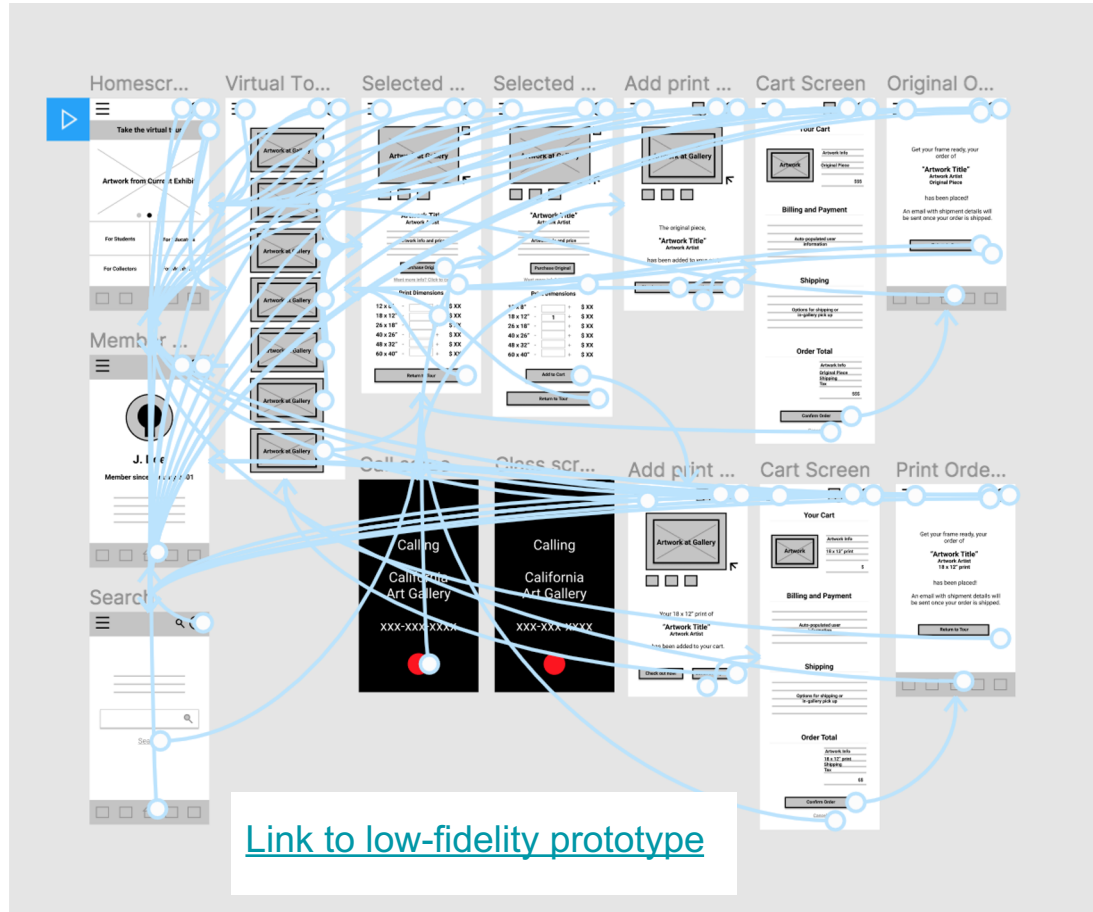
Multiple images on the screen at once to appear like a gallery wall.
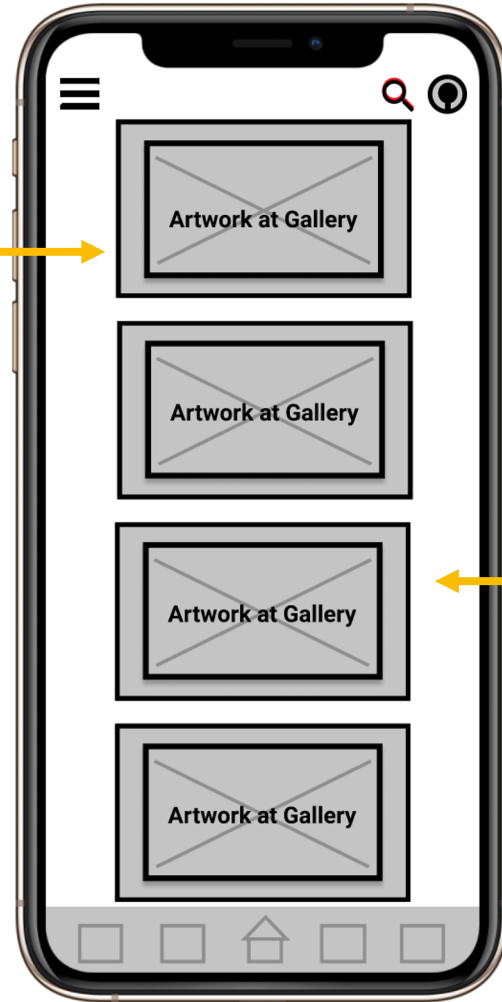
Frames around each image to appear like frames in a gallery.

Low-fidelity prototype

The first iteration of this design included options for users to place offers on original works and purchase prints.

[Link to low-fidelity prototype](#)

Usability study: parameters

Study type:

Moderated usability study

Location:

Over the phone; remote

Participants:

5 participants

Length:

30 minutes

Usability study: findings

1

Easy Navigation

Users need better cues for how to navigate the app—how to take the virtual tour, how to return to the home screen, how to back track, and what the difference is between purchasing prints and making an offer.

2

Legibility

Users feel more comfortable and confident interacting with an app when they can easily read the copy.

3

Education

Users want more than to just see the pieces—they want a way to learn more about the artworks and pieces

Refining the design

- Mockups
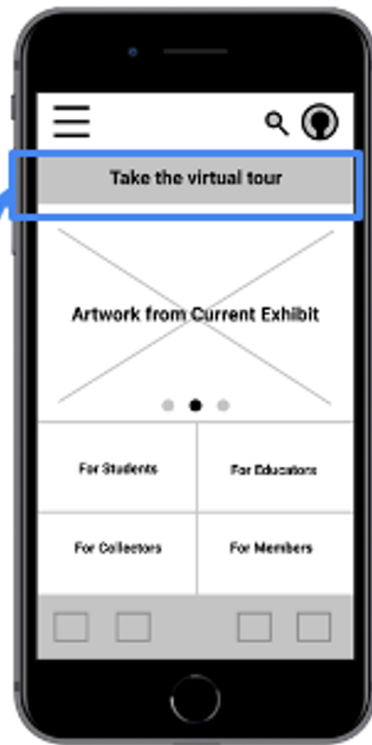- High-fidelity prototype
- Accessibility

Mockups

I moved the virtual tour banner away from the curated user journeys so the functionality of the banner is more clear and distinct from the curated user journeys.
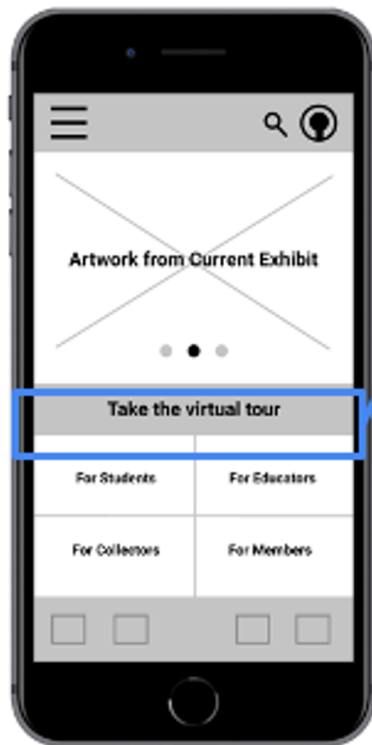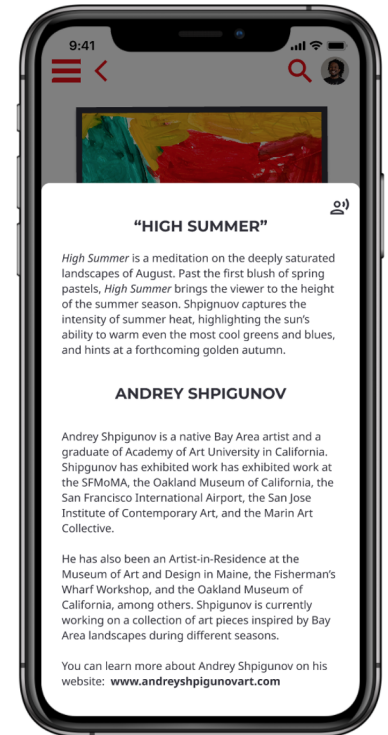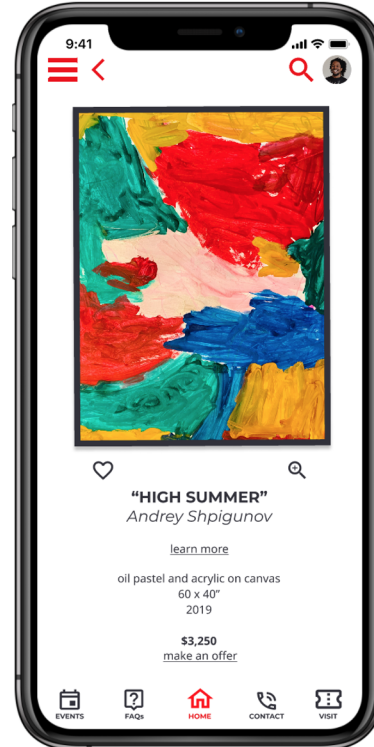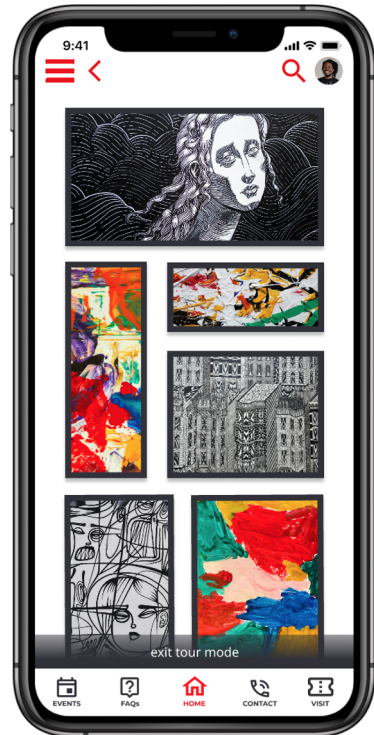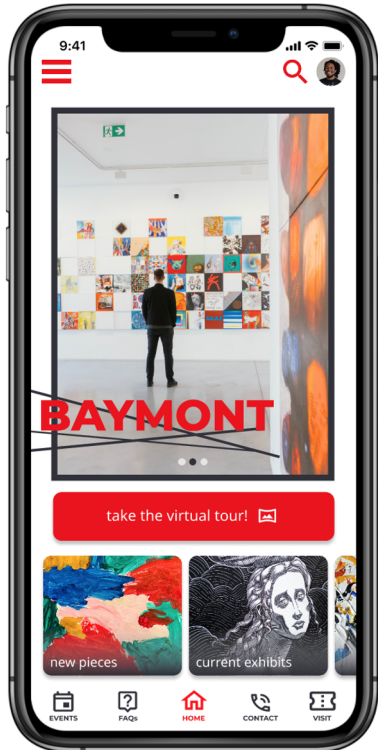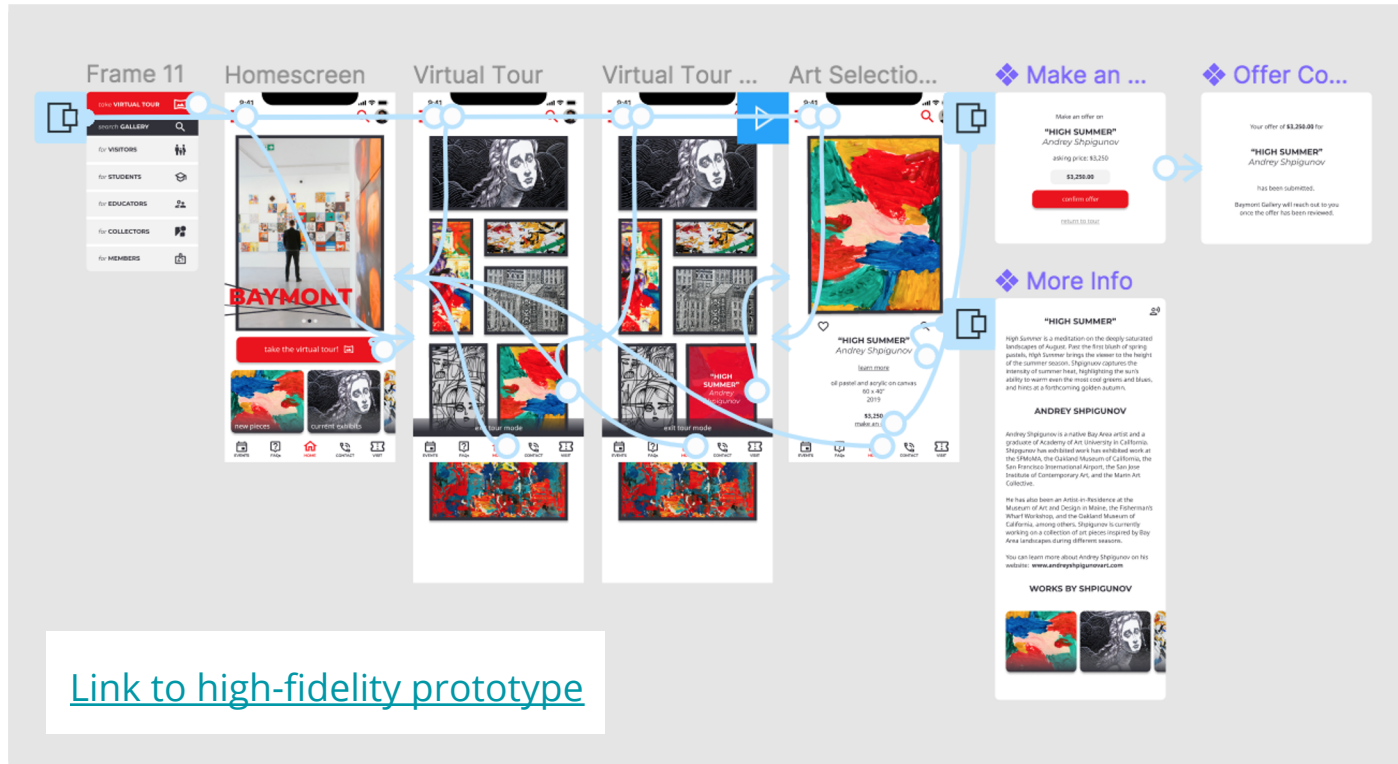
Mockups

I improved the functionality of the top sandwich on every screen to allow users to return home. I also generated more explicit buttons to return users to previous screens.

Mockups

High-fidelity prototype

[Link to high-fidelity prototype](#)

Accessibility considerations

1

Colors and type were cross-referenced with WCAG standards to ensure accessibility and optimal readability.

2

The option to have art piece information read aloud ensures that those with visual impairments are also able to access the same resources provided other users.

3

The zoom option for each art piece gives those with visual impairments the ability to better see the art pieces.

Going forward

- Takeaways
- Next steps

Takeaways

Impact:

This app provides art students, enthusiasts, educators, members, and art collectors curated and personal ways to staying engaged with the gallery when they are unable to visit in person.

What I learned:

I became more aware of what users really wanted and what would just be "nice to have." Thus, it was important to ensure that what users needed wasn't being rendered less effective by superfluous functionality.

Next steps

1

Conduct further usability studies to ensure that the app is addressing user pain points in an intuitive way.

2

Build out the curated user offerings so that each type of user has a wealth of resources to add to their experience of the gallery and its works.

3

Reintroduce the option to purchase art prints.

This functionality was removed as it confused users. Once it is tested further and no longer creates confusion, it should be reintroduced.

Let's connect!

Thank you for reviewing my Baymont Art Gallery App case study.
If you would like to get in touch, you can reach me through the methods below:

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Thank you!