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DSGN 360
15 March 2023
Project 2 - Case Study

Project Introduction

My project is titled Skiing in the Movies. As an avid skier, most of my thoughts are consumed by skiing. This interactive story project for my Western Washington University Design class was an opportunity to combine my passion for skiing and film. Growing up, my dad would quiz me on 102.5, the classic rock station, and recommend many movies he saw growing up, like 'On Her Majesty's Secret Service,' a classic James Bond film filmed on the Jungfrau Joch in Switzerland with a fantastic Bond escape on skis.

From mainstream movies like Downhill Racer (1969) and Molly Game (2017) to more obscure films like Apocalypse Snow (1983). I hope this interactive story keeps you as entertained as it kept me making it.

My interactive story site is presented chronologically from the oldest movies to the newest.

Research

Downhill Racer (1969)

Starring Robert Redford, Gene Hackman, and Camilla Sparv.

"Quietly cocky Robert Redford joins the U.S. ski team as a downhill racer and clashes with the team's coach, played by Gene Hackman. Lots of good skiing action leading to an exciting climax." -IMDb.

The skiing was performed by stunt-double's, although Redford is a good skier and owns Sundance ski area in Utah.

On Her Majesty's Secret Service (1969)

Starring George Lazenby, Diana Rigg, Telly Savalas, Bernard Lee, Gabriele Ferzetti, Ilse Steppat, with ski stunts by Luki Leitner and Vic Armstrong.

"James Bond woos a mob boss's daughter and goes undercover to uncover the true reason for Ernst Stavro Blofeld's allergy research in the Swiss Alps involving women from around the world".- IMDb.

This iconic ski scene starts with the famous panoramic view, Piz Gloria, located at the 2,970-meter Schiltorn, Bernese Oberland, Switzerland. The actual ski chase occurs in Saas-Fee, another Swiss ski area in the canton Wallis.

The image on the right shows how the director dangled the videographer from a helicopter to film the ski scenes. Modern equipment, such as drones going to such lengths to get the shot is mostly unnecessary.

The Spy Who Loved Me (1977)

Starring Roger Moore, Barbara Bach, Curt Jürgens, Richard Kiel, Caroline Munro with ski stunts by base jumper, Rick Sylvester.

"James Bond investigates the hijacking of British and Russian submarines carrying nuclear warheads, with the help of a K.G.B. agent whose lover he killed." - IMDb.

This ski escape resembles the one in On Her Majesty's Secret Service. Ski escapes become a common theme in a couple of Bond films. This ski escape was filmed at St. Moritz, Switzerland, and featured a ski jump performed by professional base jumper Rick Sylvester.

Apocalypse Snow (1983)

Directed by Didier Lafond

"Villainous monsieurs try to capture the hero snowboarder to steal the secrets of skiing." - IMDb.

The film is loosely based on Apocalypse Now in terms of the plot. The film is full of 80s nostalgia and creative energy. The amount of mono skiers in this movie is over the top.

G.N.A.R. (2011)

"Born in the minds of Robb and Scott Gaffney (who directed the film) and the iconic Shane McConkey, The Game of G.N.A.R. (Gaffney's Numerical Assessment of Radness) has become a legendary, cult-like part of ski culture all over the world, and this film is the reason why." - Forecast Ski.

After Shane McConkey's death, a movie was created to honor the game he and his friends created, called G.N.A.R. Gnar is short for gnarly and is a term often used by skiers, snowboarders, and surfers to describe how dangerous something is.

Molly's Game (2017)

Starring Jessica Chastain, Idris Elba, Kevin Coster, Michael Cera, Jeremy Strong, Chris O'Dowd, and Bill Camp

"The true story of Molly Bloom, an Olympic-class skier who ran the world's most exclusive high-stakes poker game and became an F.B.I. target." - IMDb.

The film exaggerates Molly's willingness to participate in an illegal gambling ring but captures the dramatic end of her skiing career and the following events.

xXx: The Return of Xander Cage (2017)

Starring Vin Diesel, Donnie Yen, Deepika Padukone, Kris Wu, Ruby Rose, Tony Jaa, Nina Dobrev, Toni Collette, and Samuel L. Jackson with ski stunts by LJ Strenion, Thayne Rich, and Karl Fostvedt.

"Xander Cage is left for dead after an incident, though he secretly returns to action for a new, tough assignment with his handler Augustus Gibbons." - IMDb

Like all movies with skiing in them, this movie required stunt double's. Of course, this movie uses special effects and a green screen, but not to perform the ski scene. Real skiers performed the jumps in the summer. They built jumps out of wood frames and threw them down. Powder Magazine has a great article (<https://www.powder.com/stories/welcome-to-the-jungle>) on it if you want to learn more about the behind-the-scenes.

Research

Competitors:

I don't have any competitors because I'm not selling anything. Still, there are similar websites that I drew inspiration from for my website. <https://kubrick.life/> is an interactive story website about one of my favorite movie directors, Stanley Kubrick.

Key to Dr. Strangelove's brilliance is the production design of Ken Adam. His brief was to create an underground chamber in the Pentagon, the War Room—a setting that didn't exist but had to look convincingly like a real military installation. Kubrick was insistent that the room had to have a steeply-sloped ceiling since he argued that a triangular construction would be more resistant to the shockwaves from a nuclear bomb. Adam, who had trained as an architect after serving as a pilot in WWII, took this idea and ran with it; Kubrick loved Adam's initial sketches so much that Adam—who had heard that Kubrick was incredibly difficult to please—was taken aback.



The Kubrick family, in the image above, from left to right: Stanley, Christiane, & their three children. A Life in Pictures.

1958

After divorcing his second wife year before, Kubrick married Christiane Harlan. They had three children.

1962



Word-list:

movies, skiing, history, spy films, James Bond, comedy, classics, extreme skiing, humor, chronology, brainstorm results, vintage, nostalgia, history, swiss style, graphic design, 60s, 70s, 80's, 2000s, 2010s.

Define

- target demographic statement: My primary audience are skiers, snowboarders and cinephiles from 24-70 years old. Most of the films on my website won't be recognizable to people of younger ages.
- goals of concept (example: inform, entertain, interact, instruct, persuade. Visual goals. Interaction goals. Usability goals.)
My goal is to evoke nostalgia in my audience and tell a story that many skiers and snowboarders can relate to from watching these movies during their childhood. It's something parents and their children can look at together and say "I watched that when I was a kid." And the kid will say "(dad) or (mom) you're old."
- strategy statement: The layout should have a smooth vertical scrolling user flow that arranges the movies in a chronological order with images that are layered in a way that gives them a 3d effect to make them come alive and show movement. Every image will be accompanied with a paragraph about the movie. For example the scene in the James Bond movie with Bond skiing off the cliff away from the explosion will have added effects to make the explosion pop out when the viewers scrolls over that movie.

My layout will only require the user to scroll and hover. There will be no buttons to click on, just effects that occur when the users scrolls and hovers over each row containing a movie and text.

Moodboard



Font Ideas

Ski Movies

Ski Movies

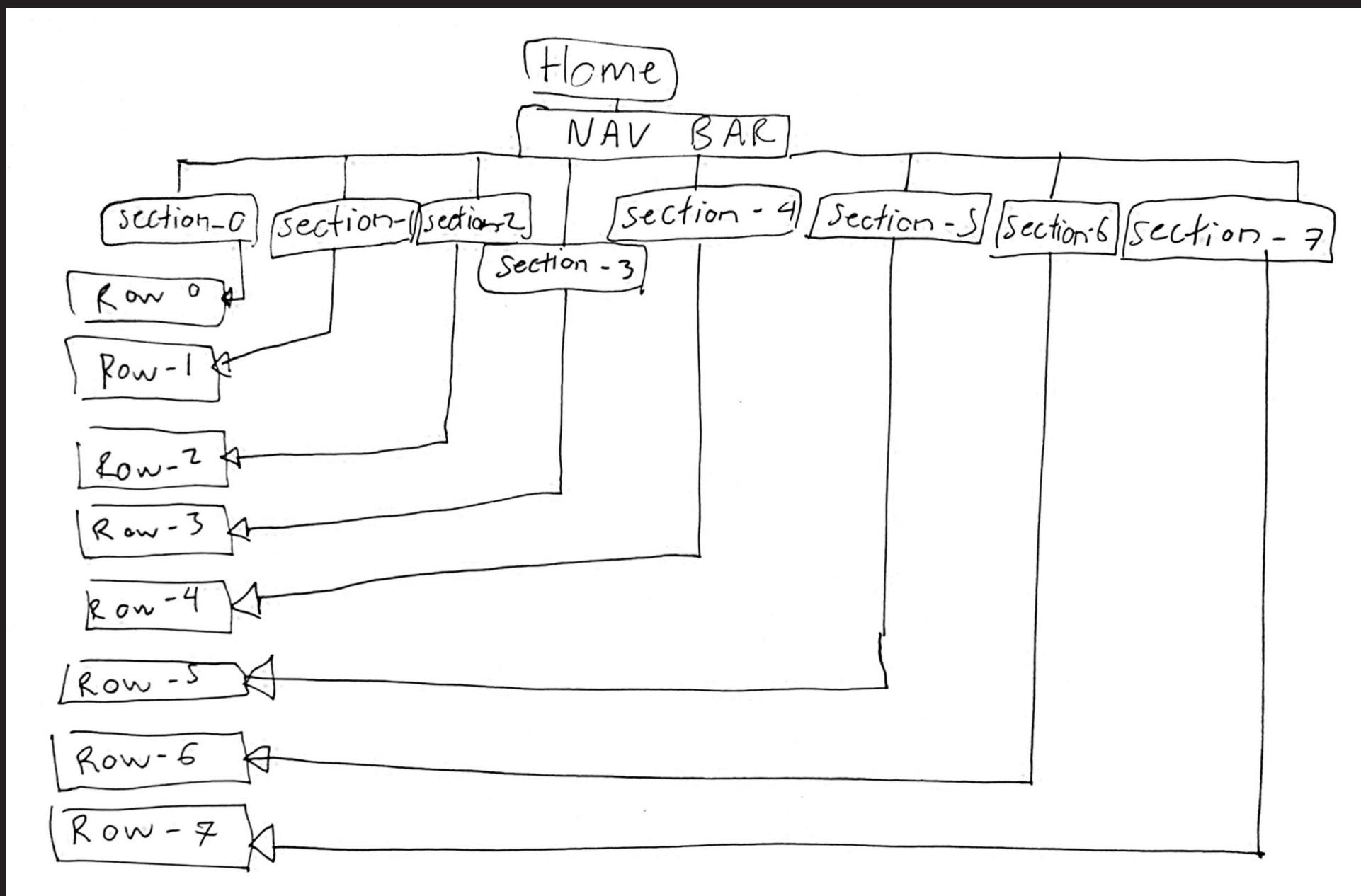
Ski Movies

Ski Movies

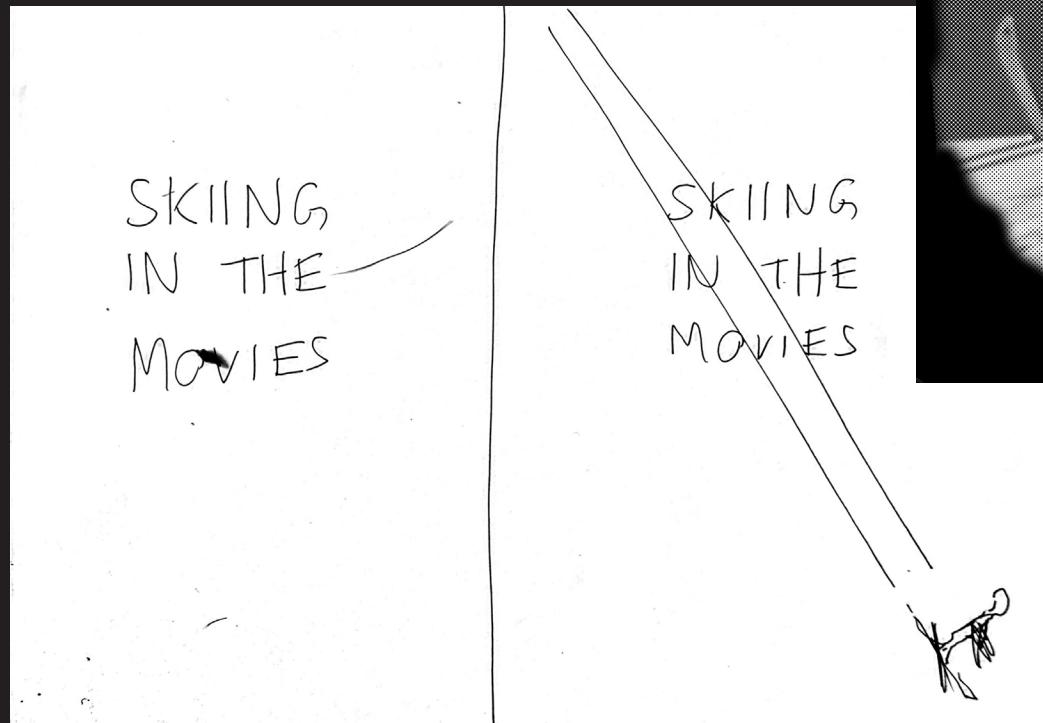


A screenshot from a movie intro I did in after effects, which I used to dictate the styling for my interactive story website.

Site-map/User flow



Wireframes

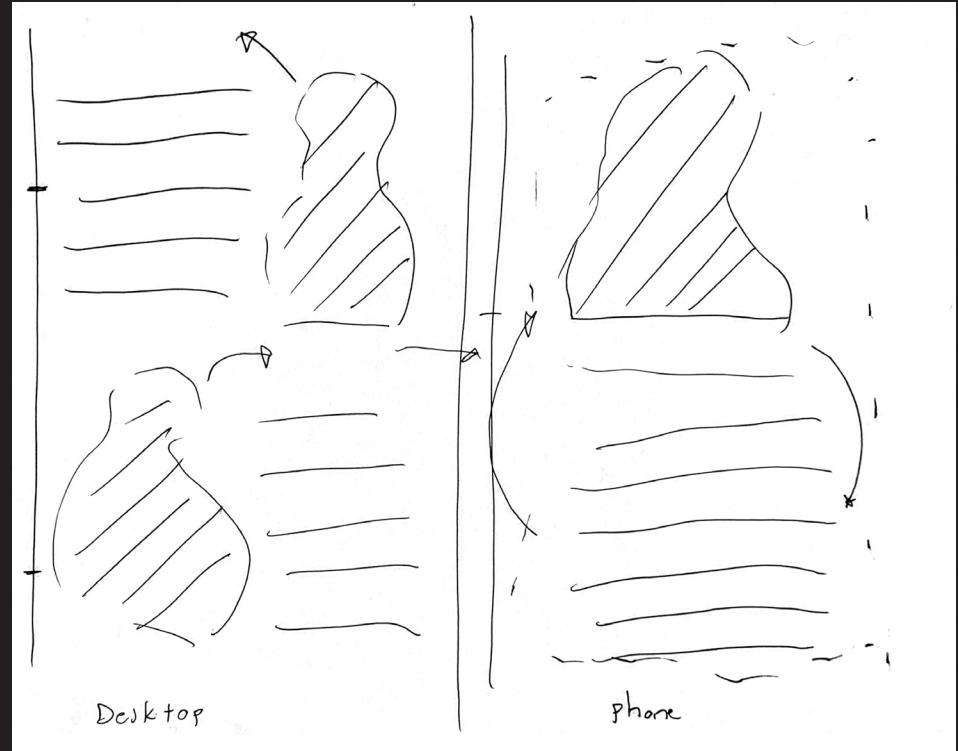
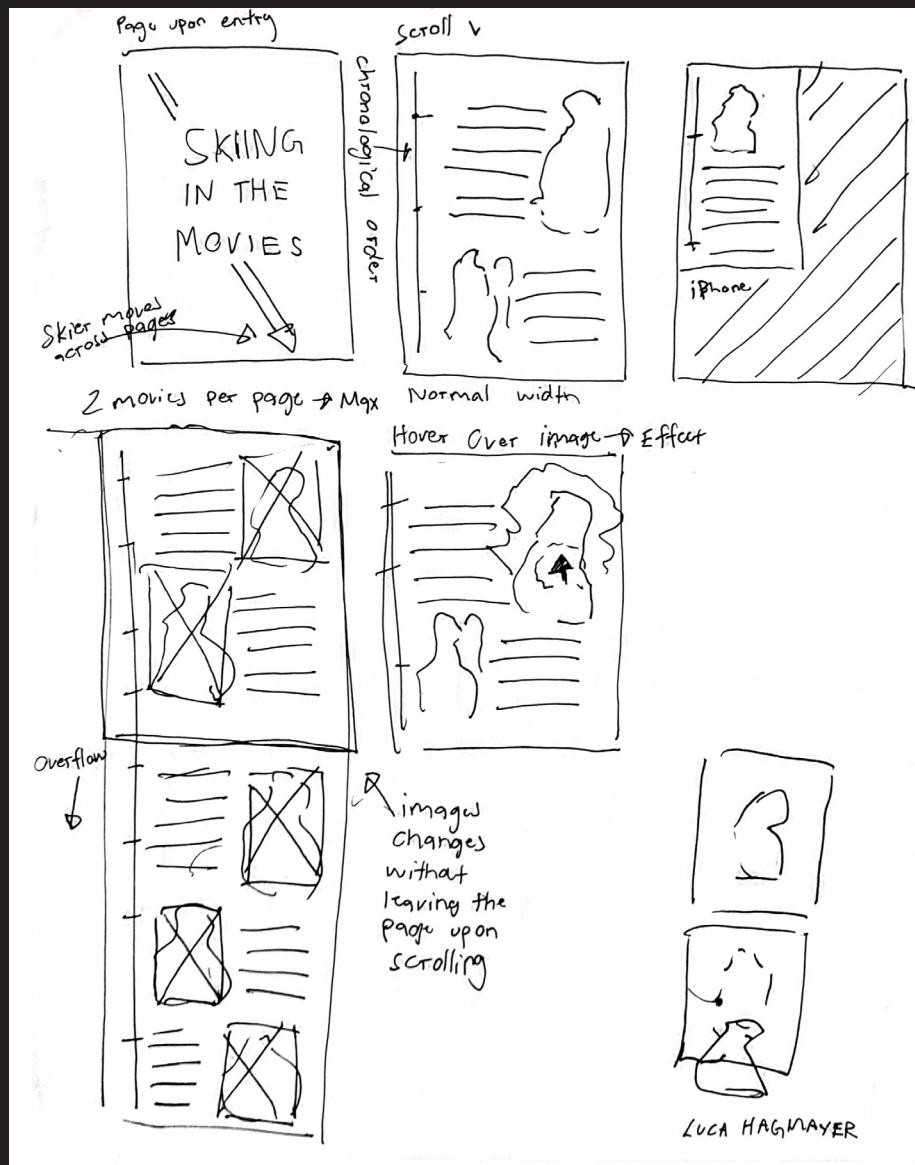


This sketch is my original wireframe for the home screen where a skier would ski over the title. But the idea proved too complex to code, so I opted for a background photo with overlayed text for the home page, which was still a challenge to code.



The improved home screen.

Wireframes



The left sketch portrays the wireframes for my interactive website. In the early stages of development, I was unaware of how complicated my structure would be to code. Once I began coding, I had to make drastic changes to the structures for the website to run smoothly.

The website is structured in rows containing the film title, year of release, two images portraying the film, and a paragraph of roughly 250 words describing the film.

The right image shows how I planned to shift the two columns within the row from two columns for desktop to one for mobile. I was able to keep a similar structure without sacrificing image and text legibility.

Protoype

Desktop



Smartphone



User-Testing

Users found my prototype simple and easy to understand

Website

Desktop



Challenges

The most challenging part of this project was to get the layout I had created in my prototype to work for my website. It was very challenging to get all the buttons on the navigation bar to fit within the margins for both my desktop and iPhone version of the website. I also did multiple iterations of row arrangements to find a way to get my two-column system for the desktop version to switch to a one-column design for the smartphone.

Smartphone



Solutions

The solution, as presented by my professor, Jason, was to make three individual columns containing the buttons that lead to each section of my interactive story.

Initially, my layout alternated, which side the image and image+text were on, but I decided to keep each row layout the same to create a smooth transition between desktop and mobile.

Credits

Downhill Racer

- <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0064253/>

On Her Majesty's Secret Service

- <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0064757/>
- <https://bamfstyle.com/2022/12/07/ohmss-13-ski-cougar/#:~:text=On%20Her%20Majesty's%20Secret%20Service%20was%20the%20first%20time%20we,Armstrong%20performing%20Bond's%20ski%20stunts.>
- <https://www.jamesbondlifestyle.com/product/piz-gloria-schilthorn-switzerland#:~:text=Many%20scenes%20were%20filmed%20at,Oberland%2C%20Switzerland%2C%20above%20M%C3%BCrren.>
- <https://www.purealpine.com/samoens/james-bond-ski-chase/>

The Spy Who Loved Me

- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rick_Sylvester#:~:text=Rick%20Sylvester%20\(born%20April%203,Loved%20Me%20in%20July%201976.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rick_Sylvester#:~:text=Rick%20Sylvester%20(born%20April%203,Loved%20Me%20in%20July%201976.)
- <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0076752/>

Apocalypse Snow

G.N.A.R.

- <https://forecastsnow.com/blogs/video/g-n-a-r-the-movie>
- <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2473526/>

Molly's Game

- <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt4209788/>

xXx: The Return of Xander Cage

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/XXX:_Return_of_Xander_Cage
- <https://www.powder.com/stories/welcome-to-the-jungle>