Arkansas Film & Actor Connections

Final Project Report

Prepared by: Shequila Sledge

University of Arkansas Little Rock

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Instructor: Bruce Bauer

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Abstract

The Arkansas Film & Actor Connections project is a web-based application developed as part of the Capstone II course at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. Its primary goal is to create a centralized, user-friendly platform that highlights films and actors connected to Arkansas, addressing the current challenge of scattered and incomplete information across multiple sources. The website was built using HTML5, CSS3, and JavaScript, hosted on GitHub Pages, and integrated with Google Analytics for engagement tracking. The design emphasizes simplicity, responsiveness, and visual appeal, ensuring accessibility across devices. The project followed a structured development process, including planning, design, development, content integration, and deployment phases. Key features include film and actor detail pages, a clean navigation system, and a responsive layout. Lessons learned include the importance of early planning, consistent design, and thorough documentation. This project demonstrates technical proficiency, problem-solving, and the ability to deliver a complete, professional product that can be expanded in the future to include dynamic content and advanced search capabilities.

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Organization

The Arkansas Film & Actor Connections website is a self-directed Capstone II project created by Shequila Sledge. Although this project does not have an external sponsor, it was designed to meet the academic standards of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock's Capstone sequence and demonstrate my ability to plan, develop, and deliver a complete web-based application.

The purpose of this project is to create a centralized, easy-to-use digital space that highlights films, actors, and cultural connections tied to Arkansas. While Arkansas has a meaningful presence in film history, information about these works is scattered across multiple websites, making it difficult for students, researchers, and film fans to explore the state's film heritage. This website aims to solve that issue by organizing film and actor information into a single, attractive, accessible platform.

My role included all planning, research, user interface design, coding, testing, and deployment. The project allowed me to combine creativity and technical skill while building something personally meaningful that connects back to my home state.

Analysis

Problem

Arkansas has played a significant role in American film history, either as a filming location, a birthplace for well-known actors, or as inspiration for the stories being told. However, there is no single website dedicated to highlighting Arkansas's contributions to the film industry. Anyone wanting to research Arkansas films must use several sources, such as IMDb, Wikipedia, blogs, news archives, and fan sites. This makes the process time-consuming, confusing, and incomplete.

In addition, many Arkansas actors do not have a centralized space where their careers and film connections are showcased together. Fans may know some titles, but there is no easy way to explore them all in one experience.

Current State

The current state of Arkansas film research is scattered and inconsistent:

- Users must visit multiple websites to gather film or actor details

- Many films connected to Arkansas are not properly categorized on major movie sites

- Information tends to be incomplete or spread out across different pages

- Casual users may not know which films even have Arkansas ties

- There is no curated space that highlights the state's cultural impact

- No dedicated platform visually organizes everything in a modern and engaging design

This leads to frustration, wasted time, and missed educational opportunities.

Future State

The ideal future state is a single, user-friendly, visually appealing website that:

- Lists Arkansas-connected films in one place

- Highlights actors with Arkansas roots

- Includes detailed film pages with summaries, years, cast, and connections

- Helps users explore Arkansas film culture easily

- Uses consistent colors, fonts, design, and navigation

- Works on laptops, tablets, and phones

- Includes Google Analytics to track engagement

- Can be expanded in the future with more films, actors, locations, or galleries

The Arkansas Film & Actor Connections website delivers this future state.

Options for Delivery

In considering how to build this website, I explored several options:

Option 1: Use WordPress or a pre-built theme

Pros: easy, fast, no coding needed

Cons: limited customization, slower loading, not a good demonstration of programming skills

Option 2: Build a database-driven site

Pros: scalable

Cons: more complex, requires backend hosting, beyond the Capstone II expectations

Option 3: Build a static website using HTML, CSS, and JavaScript

Pros: fast, simple, highly customizable, perfect for GitHub Pages

Cons: requires manual content updates

I selected Option 3 because it aligned with the assignment requirements and allowed me to demonstrate real front-end skills.

Tools Used

- HTML5 for structure

- CSS3 for styling and layout

- JavaScript for simple interactions

- GitHub Pages for free hosting and deployment

- Google Analytics for tracking visits

- Unsplash / royalty-free images for visuals

- VS Code as the development environment

This stack allowed me to build a clean, organized, stable site without unnecessary complexity.

Screens & UI Examples

Homepage Hero

   This screenshot shows the homepage hero banner, which welcomes the user and sets the tone for the site. The background image, bold typography, and simple message all work together to create a strong first impression.
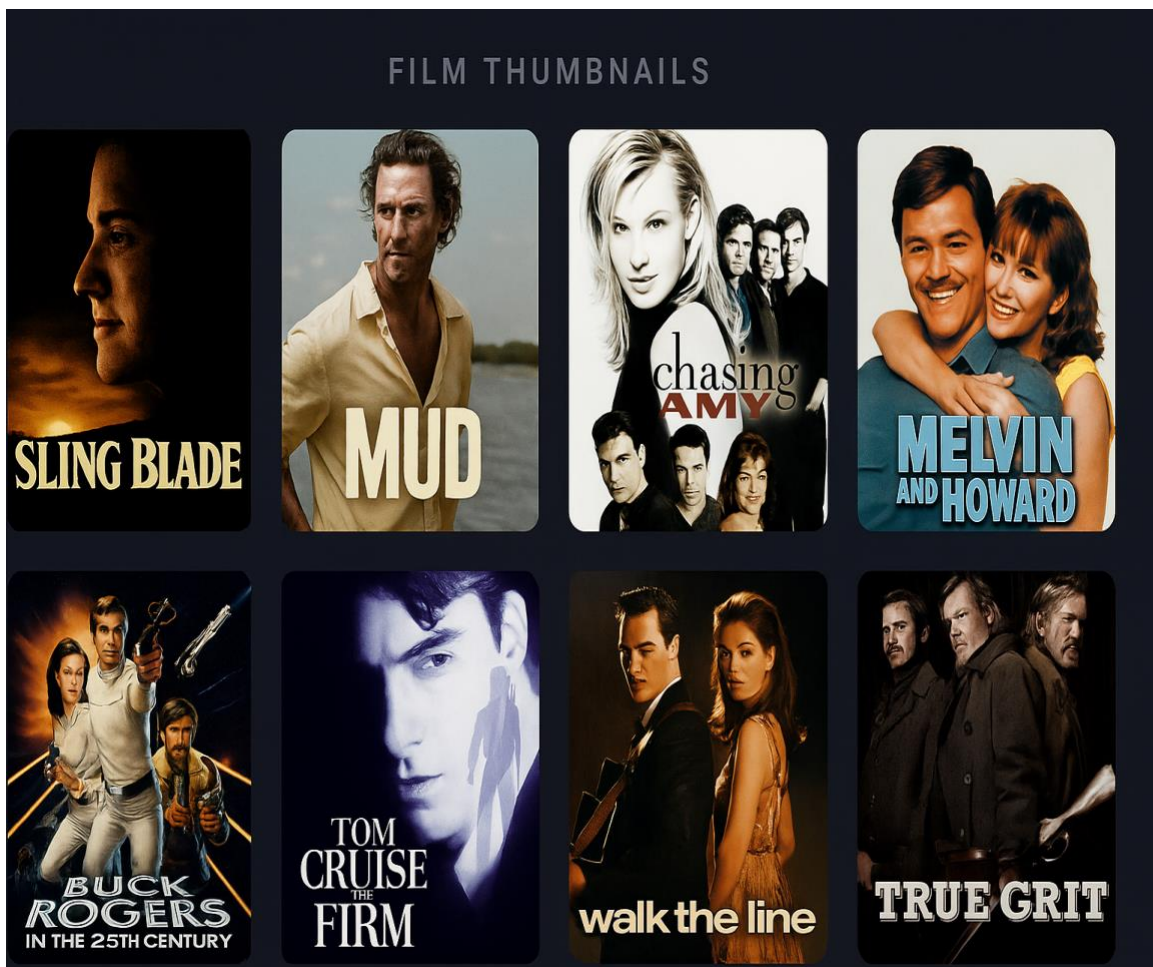
Poster Artwork

This section highlights poster artwork and branding. Using large, attractive visuals helps draw users into the site and encourages exploration.
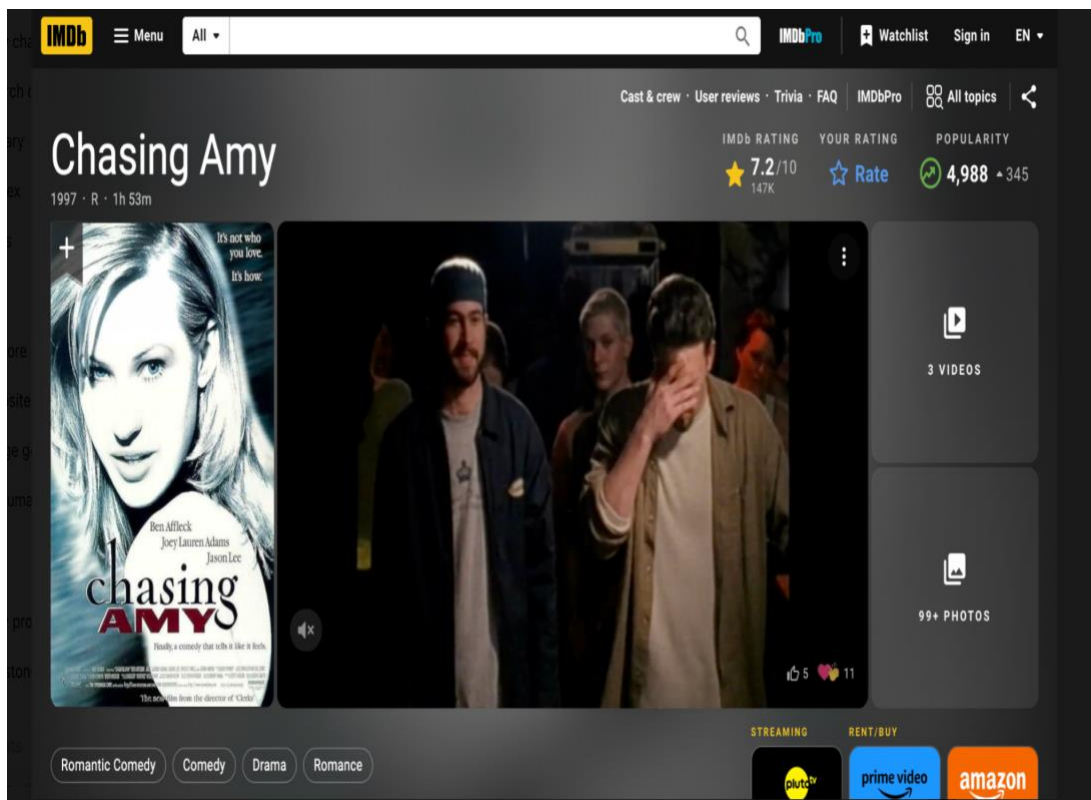
Film Thumbnails

The film grid layout makes it easy for users to browse movies and click into their details.

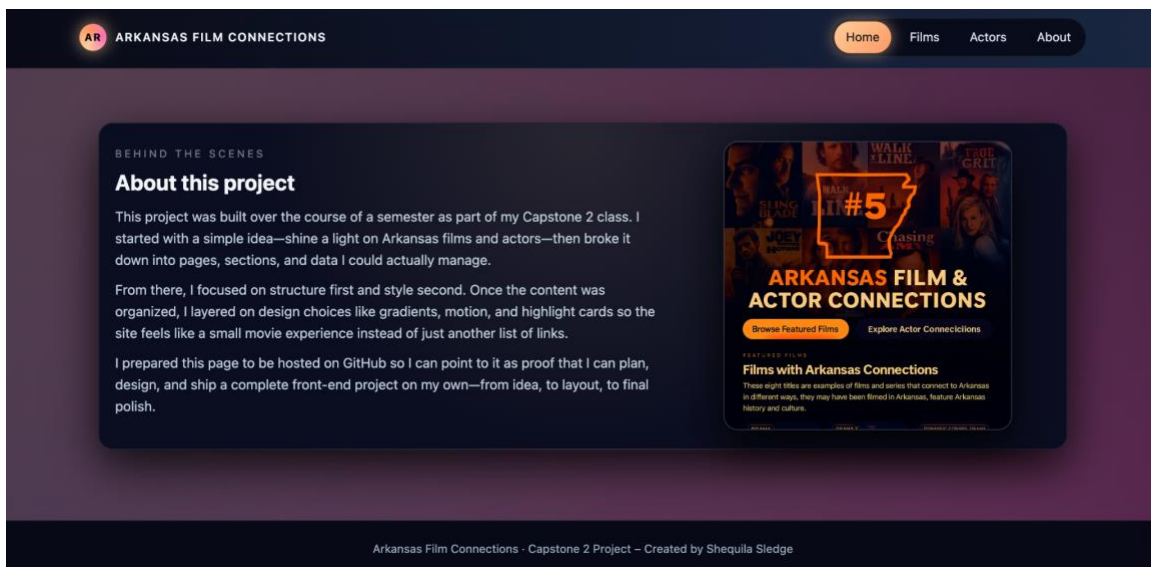Each film card includes an image, title, and connection to Arkansas.

IMDb Film Reference

Film detail pages provide the film's title, year, actors, Arkansas connection, a short summary, and visuals. This example shows accurate referencing of known films like Chasing Amy, which features Joey Lauren Adams from Arkansas.

Navigation & Footer

This screenshot shows the site's navigation bar and footer. The navigation is simple and consistent across all pages, helping users switch between films, actors, and the homepage. The footer includes credits and design information.
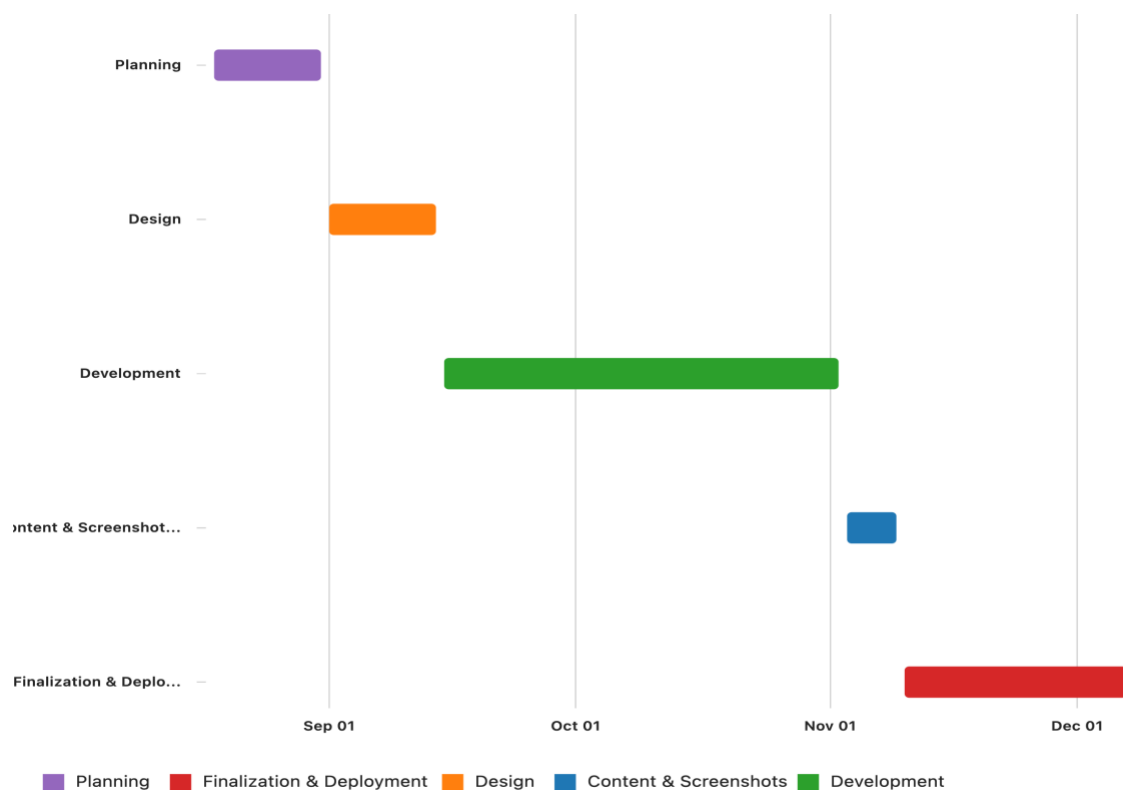

Project Planning

- Phase 1: Planning (Aug 18–Aug 31) – Defined project scope, researched Arkansas-related films and actors, and developed a site map and architecture.

- Phase 2: Design (Sep 1–Sep 14) – Created wireframes, selected color palettes and typography, and finalized the visual theme for consistency.

- Phase 3: Development (Sep 15–Nov 2) – Implemented HTML structure, applied CSS for layout and styling, integrated film and actor cards, and tested navigation across devices.

- Phase 4: Content Integration (Nov 3–Nov 9) – Added film descriptions, actor biographies, and visual assets; captured screenshots for documentation.

- Phase 5: Finalization & Deployment (Nov 10–Dec 7) – Conducted quality assurance, optimized spacing and alignment, connected Google Analytics, and deployed via GitHub Pages.
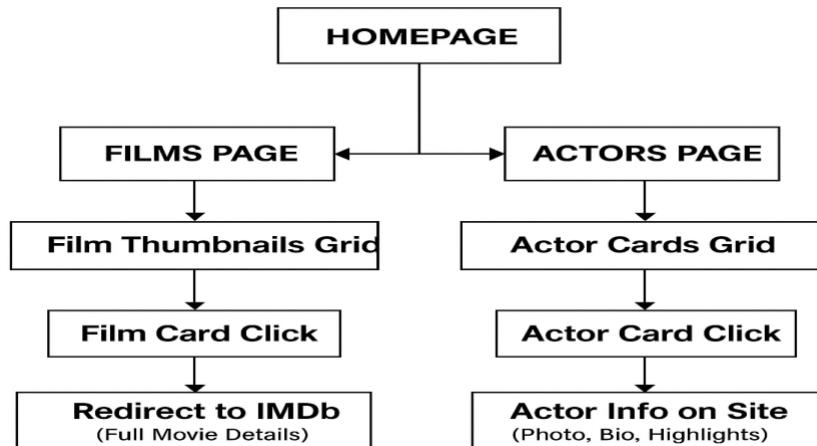
Project Planning: GANT CHART

Application Interface

This section shows the interface in detail.

User Flow Diagram

Homepage

The homepage is designed to pull the user in immediately with a bold hero image, a clear title, and simple navigation. The colors create contrast while still feeling clean and modern. The homepage also includes a featured films area that previews some of the most popular Arkansas connections.

Navigation

The navigation bar is intentionally simple: Home, Films, Actors, About. This keeps users from feeling overwhelmed and matches the layout expectations for a film-themed website.

<center>Films Page</center>

The Films page lists all eight Arkansas-connected films. Cards display an image, the film title, and a brief Arkansas connection. This layout helps users quickly scan and identify movies of interest.

<center>Film Detail Pages</center>

Each film has its own page that includes:

- Film image

- Title

- Release year

- Arkansas connection

- Actor information

- Short summary

This structure makes the site easy to expand later.

<center>Actors Page</center>

The Actor's page is where I highlight the people connected to Arkansas who have played a part in the films featured on my site. I designed it with a clean grid layout so it's easy to scroll through and recognize each actor by their picture and name. When someone clicks on an actor's card, it opens a page that gives more information about their background and their connection to Arkansas or the films they're known for. I kept the look and feel consistent with the rest of the website by using the same colors, fonts, and card style. My goal was to make the page simple to

understand and easy to navigate so users can learn more about local talent without feeling overwhelmed.

Responsive Design

One part of this project that I really focused on was making sure the website works well on different screen sizes. People browse the internet on everything now, phones, tablets, and laptops, so I didn't want the site to only look good on a computer. I used flexible layouts, readable font sizes, and sections that automatically stack when the screen gets smaller. This keeps the film cards, buttons, and images from getting cut off or pushed out of place. I tested the site on my phone and laptop to make sure the pages still felt clean and easy to scroll through. Even though the project is simple, making it responsive was important to me because it shows that I'm thinking about real users and how they actually view websites today.

Support & Integration

As I look toward the future, this website can grow in several meaningful ways because the foundation is simple and easy to maintain. I can continue adding new Arkansas-connected films and actors as I discover them, and updating the CSS would let me introduce cleaner animations or more modern design elements without changing how the site works. If I wanted to take the project further, I could integrate a real database, so the film and actor information loads dynamically instead of being hard-coded. Search tools or filtering options could also be added to help users quickly find specific genres, actors, or filming locations. Another major expansion could be a full section dedicated to Arkansas filming sites, which would give users a stronger sense of the state's

role in the movie industry. Because the site is built with a simple static structure, all of these improvements can be added over time without risking the stability of what I already created.

Lessons Learned

This project reinforced the importance of structured planning and consistent design principles. Initial attempts to build pages without a clear outline highlighted the need for detailed preparation. Maintaining uniformity in fonts, colors, and layouts ensured a professional and cohesive user experience. Additionally, hosting the site on GitHub Pages provided valuable insight into deployment processes. The experience improved my confidence in front-end development and taught me how to transform fragmented information into an organized, accessible format. Documenting the project emphasized the significance of clear communication in professional settings. Overall, this project demonstrated my ability to manage a complete development cycle, from concept to deployment, while applying best practices in design and usability.

Hours Worked

The project required approximately 232 hours over the course of the semester. Time was allocated across key phases as follows:

- Planning: 14 hours
- Design: 18 hours
- Development: 40 hours
- Content Integration: 20 hours

- Finalization & Deployment: 60 hours

- Testing & Quality Assurance: 30 hours

- Documentation & Report Writing: 60 hours

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