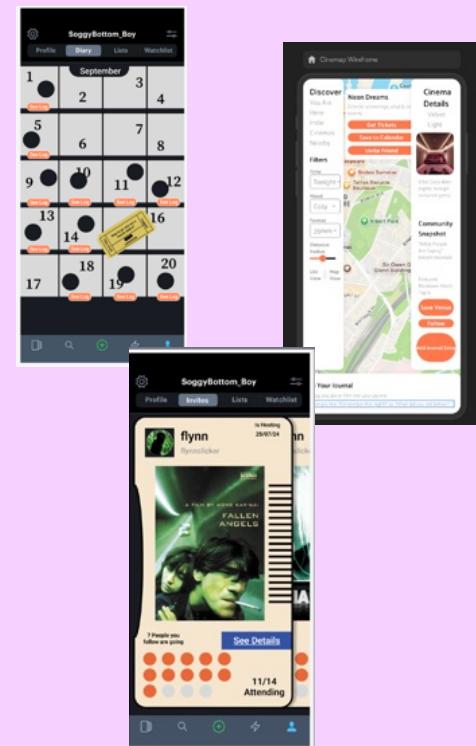


BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

In an era dominated by streaming algorithms, digital minimalism, and fragmented attention, the in-person cinema experience remains one of the few rituals capable of anchoring us in time. Yet even this experience which still today maintains a poetic, communal and ephemeral-fleeting feeling has become untethered from how we reflect and engage with film.

Letterboxd has become the definitive digital space for cinephiles to log, rate, and discuss films. However, its ecosystem remains largely detached from the in-person cinema experience the very heart of film culture. As streaming fatigue grows and third places vanish, the opportunity arises to re-integrate physical cinema-going into users' daily rituals and identity construction. Creating integrated experience's that feel delightful.

This capstone builds on earlier research and craft (IXXN 311, COMD 211, MDDN 242), where interaction design was leveraged to shape cinematic identity via digital gestures (e.g., flipcards, diary logging, calendar syncs). Now, the project evolves: how might Letterboxd bridge the gap between app and cinema to foster real-world community, ritual, and value?



OBJECTIVES

- Create a set of 3-5 tools/features that enhance the emotional and social potential of attending a film screening.
- Design a prototype that aligns with analog values → simplicity, tactility, reflection.
- Deliver a concept that can be adopted by independent cinemas and film festivals to raise audience engagement and brand value.
- Build Visual Skills and Prototyping Skills for Design of Digital Products and Physical Space
- Nuanced understanding (multi-variant) of the problem space as a bridge between personal and communal as well digital and physical
 - Demonstrate how design can serve slowness, not just speed → friction as a function not a flaw.

DESIGN VISION

“Make cinema feel personal again.”

Inspired by the emotional tactility of vintage ticketing, the ritual of commitment (calendar adds), and the social reinforcement of shared taste, this project aims to create a system where digital actions lead to real-life meaning and vice versa.

This project positions Letterboxd not just as a film log, but as the Strava for cinema: an app that builds cultural identity, community belonging, and third-place activity through experiential UX.

EMPATHY MAP VISUALISED FROM LARGE DATA SET BELOW

~~SAYS~~

'I forget what I felt by the time I'm home.'

'I'd rather go with people than go alone.'

'I feel like a film person when I go to the cinema,'
many options sometimes—it's overwhelming.'

Thinks Letterboxd is more of a record than an experience.

'I don't want to log something too soon—it won't be honest.'

~~FEELS~~

Wants curated suggestions, not infinite feeds.

Nostalgic when they see film stubs or invites.

Excited when a friend sends them a cinema invite.

Disengaged when logging feels like work

Goes with one or two people, not big groups.

Sometimes forgets to log films altogether.

Avoids opening the app right after the screening.

Thinks the app doesn't connect with the cinematic experience.

Trusted local venues to offer something special.

~~THINKS~~

~~DOES~~

TARGET AUDIENCE

- Primary: Cinephiles aged 18–40 who attend indie and repertory cinemas and use tools like Letterboxd to track and discuss films.
- Secondary: Independent cinema managers and cultural programmers seeking deeper engagement and sustained attendance.
- Tertiary: Festival curators, film clubs, and creative communities invested in slow media, analog culture, and shared emotional experience.

SCOPE

In Scope:

- Creating the prototype toolkit
- On-going Field research, interviews, and low-fi usability testing.
- Visual and conceptual design presentation.

Not in Scope:

- Full digital app development.
- Hardware manufacturing or custom fabrication.
- Major platform redesigns or integrations requiring API access.

TIMELINE

Week 1&2 – On-going fieldwork & interviews

Week 2&3 – Research synthesis (affinity + empathy mapping)

Week 3&4 – Concept sketching & idea validation

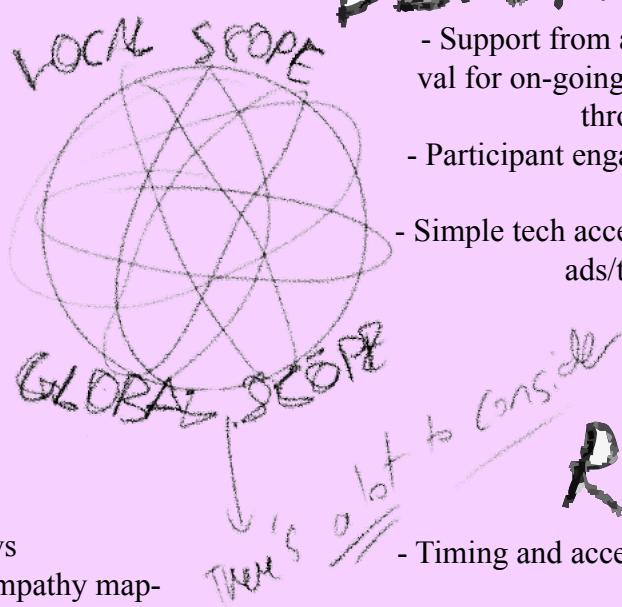
Week 4&5 – Prototype v1

Week 5&6 – Testing & refinement

Week 6&7 – Final design documentation & storytelling prep

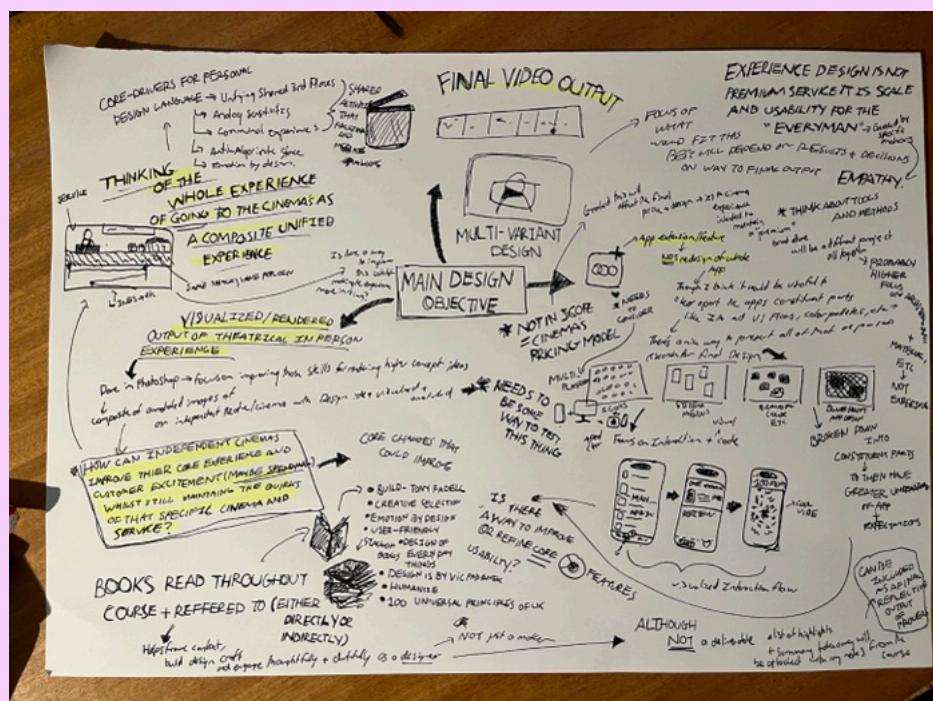
DEPENDENCIES

- Support from at least one cinema or festival for on-going user observation or testing throughout the design process.
- Participant engagement (cinema-goers and staff).
- Simple tech access (QR, Google Forms, iPads/tablets for kiosk prototype).



RISKS

- Timing and access limitations could impact testing.
- Emotional engagement may be hard to measure.
- Analog tools require careful UX restraint to avoid becoming gimmicks.
- Resource limitations (time, hardware, print materials).



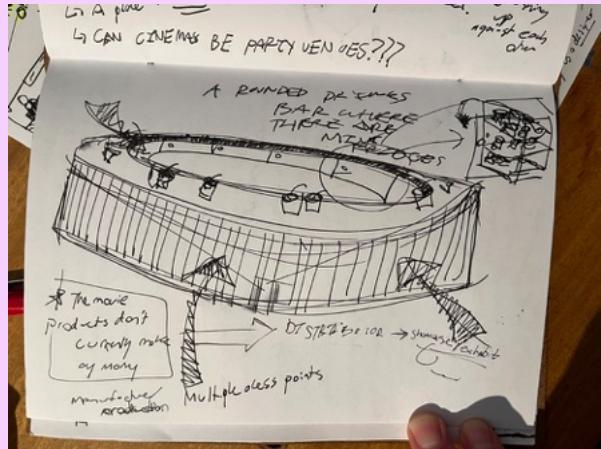
DISCOVERY & RESEARCH METHODS

Used or planned the following design methods:

- Field Observation
- Cultural Probes
- Empathy Mapping
- Persona Development
- Affinity Diagramming
- Journey Mapping
- UX Writing / Poetic Framing
- Low-fi Prototyping
- Modular Service Design Thinking

DELIVERABLES

- UX Journey Map (completed)
- Feature Wireframes + Key Screen Mockups
- System Interaction Map (App -> Cinema -> User)
- Conceptual Storyboards for Invite & Check-In Flow
- Final Presentation Deck with Narrative & Visual Assets



EVALUATION CRITERIA

- Clarity and originality of problem framing
- Integration of UX, psychology, and cultural insight
- Effectiveness of modular interaction design
- Emotional resonance and real-world viability
- Visual and experiential coherence

ETHICS

Seen -> like their cinema habits reflect who they are

Invited -> drawn into film-going through social rituals

Anchored -> emotionally grounded in the post-film moment

Connected -> part of a quiet, thoughtful film culture

THE BUILDING

BLOCKS

OF FEATURES
DESIGN

Post-Screening Diary Rituals

Film Night Kits

Taste-Based Profiles

Flipcard Invite System

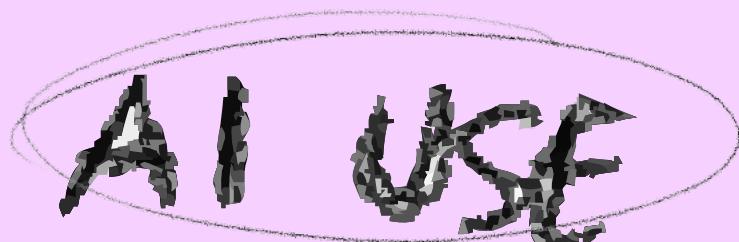
Calendar + Location Sync

Letterboxd Travel Pass

Third-Place Activators

USER IMPACT

- Reignites the ritualistic and social joy of going to the cinema
- Helps users feel and construct a proud, visible cinematic identity
- Strengthens local film communities (volume) and cultural participation (feeling)
- Long term goal beyond scope of project is it builds long-term loyalty to both Letterboxd and indie theaters



AI was used to help shape tone, clarify structure and spelling, and refine expression. All ideation, design direction, and research strategy are my own.