

· Have you identified a sub-question, theme, keyword, or concept to develop through practice?

Yes. Through my practice, I aim to explore the sub-question:

“How do audiences from different cultural backgrounds interpret the same narrative moment in films of the same subject but from different national cinemas?”

The key concept is “interpretation as a reflection of cultural identity”. My theme centres around audience interpretation of national cinema, using the figure of Mulan as a comparative lens.

· Does your practice test variables, how many?

Yes. The experiment tests one primary variable:

audience interpretation of character motivation in two culturally distinct versions of the same film subject (Mulan).

Although the variable seems singular, I approach it through three guiding questions posed to participants, in order to compare interpretative patterns and depth of reasoning across cultural groups.

· Can you link a variable to other research, practices, influences, experiences, or something you’ve read?

Yes. This variable is directly informed by research on cultural identity in national cinema, especially the idea that meaning is not fixed in film texts but constructed through audience decoding processes.

It also relates to theories such as Stuart Hall’s Encoding/Decoding, David Bordwell’s concept of interpretive communities, and my prior reflections on cultural completion. These inform my hypothesis that Chinese and non-Chinese audiences may interpret character motivations differently due to distinct cultural frameworks.

· Have you documented how these influences, experiences, or readings have shaped your thinking and evolved your practice?

Yes. In Week 3’s presentation, I applied this thinking by showing two film versions of Mulan created in different national contexts (China and the U.S.) and guiding audiences to reflect on a shared narrative moment: why Mulan joins the army. Their interpretations, influenced by memory, values, and cultural associations, helped shape the next phase of my inquiry. I also reflected on how immersive elements (3D, Dolby 5.1) might affect audience reception and emotional engagement.

· Have you experimented with design, for example, by creating visuals, sounds, or concept art?

Yes. I curated an immersive viewing environment using a multi-screen setup with naked-eye 3D and Dolby 5.1 sound to enhance sensory engagement. I intentionally placed the Chinese version of Mulan first, with more implicit narrative cues, to test whether immersive effects can assist in decoding culturally embedded messages. This experiment serves as a design prototype for the final exhibition version of my project.

· Have you identified what information you are gathering from the audience, how you will gather it, and what you hope to discover?

Yes. I am gathering qualitative responses to three key questions regarding Mulan's motivation for joining the army, and how audiences understood that motivation.

I want to identify what information they drew on — whether from within the film or from their own cultural memory — and how they rationalised their interpretations.

My goal is to uncover whether audience interpretations reveal consistent cultural identity traits, and whether differences between Chinese and non-Chinese viewers point to divergent decoding frameworks. This will help evaluate whether national cinema can be effectively analysed from the perspective of film form + audience interpretation, rather than production-side alone.