

THE MAGICIANS

CASE STUDY - LILLI RICHMOND



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PROJECT OVERVIEW

THE PROBLEM

Standard card decks are simple and mainly exist to play games. There isn't as much of a spotlight on specialty decks and all the reasons they could be bought or collected. The problem is that standard decks being the norm overshadow the unique value proposition of rare cards and the opportunity to create decks that stand out against others.

THE SOLUTION

The main goal of this project was to create a deck of playing cards that fans of *The Magicians* can resonate with through their love for the show. This should inspire potential customers to find a deck that appeals to their specific interests. Imagine the thrill of shuffling cards with the spirit of Brakebills and Fillory on each one. The design will create awareness and curiosity, igniting conversations about hidden worlds, and reminding everyone that magic is closer than you think.



RESEARCH



CUSTOMER PERSONAS

Personas represent the groups of potential customers and focus on finding out their needs, personality traits, and pain points. The five personas identified for this project are the fantasy lover, the card player, the collector, the reader, and the magician. Each persona helps provide the demographics of our audience and allowed me to better understand what motivates them and what struggles they face to better tailor the experience to their specific needs.

THE FANTASY LOVER

Age: 20-35

Devices Used: Phone, Laptop

Personality Traits: Imaginative, escapes reality, determined, and can easily adapt

Pain Points: Spends too much time making decisions, financial priorities, and specific interests in other areas

THE COLLECTOR

Age: 22-45

Devices Used: Phone, Tablet, Laptop

Personality Traits: Finds new interests quickly, enjoys reliving experiences

Pain Points: Struggles deciding what items to buy and other financial priorities

CUSTOMER PERSONAS

THE CARD PLAYER

Age: 35-55

Devices Used: Phone, Laptop

Personality Traits: Meets new people, competitive, logical, and cautious

Pain Points: Struggles to find new interests, life stressors, and sticks to what they know

THE READER

Age: 18-30

Devices Used: Phone, Tablet

Personality Traits: Enjoys alone time, introverted, trying new solo hobbies

Pain Points: Wants books that keep them interested, wants to try activities related to their specific interests

THE MAGICIAN

Age: 30-50

Devices Used: Phone, Tablet, Laptop

Personality Traits: Enjoys being on stage, outgoing, friendly

Pain Points: Not staying on task, sticking to traditional and standard card decks

CUSTOMER JOURNEY MAP

The customer journey map takes you through the steps customers could potentially take to buy this deck of cards. This helped see where we are able to reach our audience and identify where opportunities exist to provide additional resources or information to engage with *The Magicians* fan base.



PARTNERSHIP

RARE PLAYING CARDS

Rare Playing Cards is a company dedicated to showcasing one-of-a-kind card decks. They support and host the work of other companies and independent artists, providing a platform where specialized decks can be sold and purchased. This company is the best option for this card deck because it's made by an independent artist. This company is the best option for this card deck because it's made by an independent artist who needs a proper space to sell the product.



PARTNERSHIP ANALYSIS

PRODUCT

Special interest and high-quality playing cards designed specifically for niche topics

MARKET

Rare, special-interest and marked playing cards, prices vary from under \$10 to over \$200

AUDIENCE

Men and women ages 25-40, card players, readers, TV lovers, and collectors

ADVANTAGES

High-quality, specialty cards, hosts card designs by other companies and independent artists



DESIGN PROCESS

MOODBOARDS

ILLUSTRATION STYLE

At first, I imagined crisp lines and bold colors, a geometric style where every card was precise. Eventually, I realized those sharp edges felt out of place. *The Magicians* and their adventures deserved a touch more whimsy. Each card, hand-drawn, matches the style of the maps and scrolls from the series.

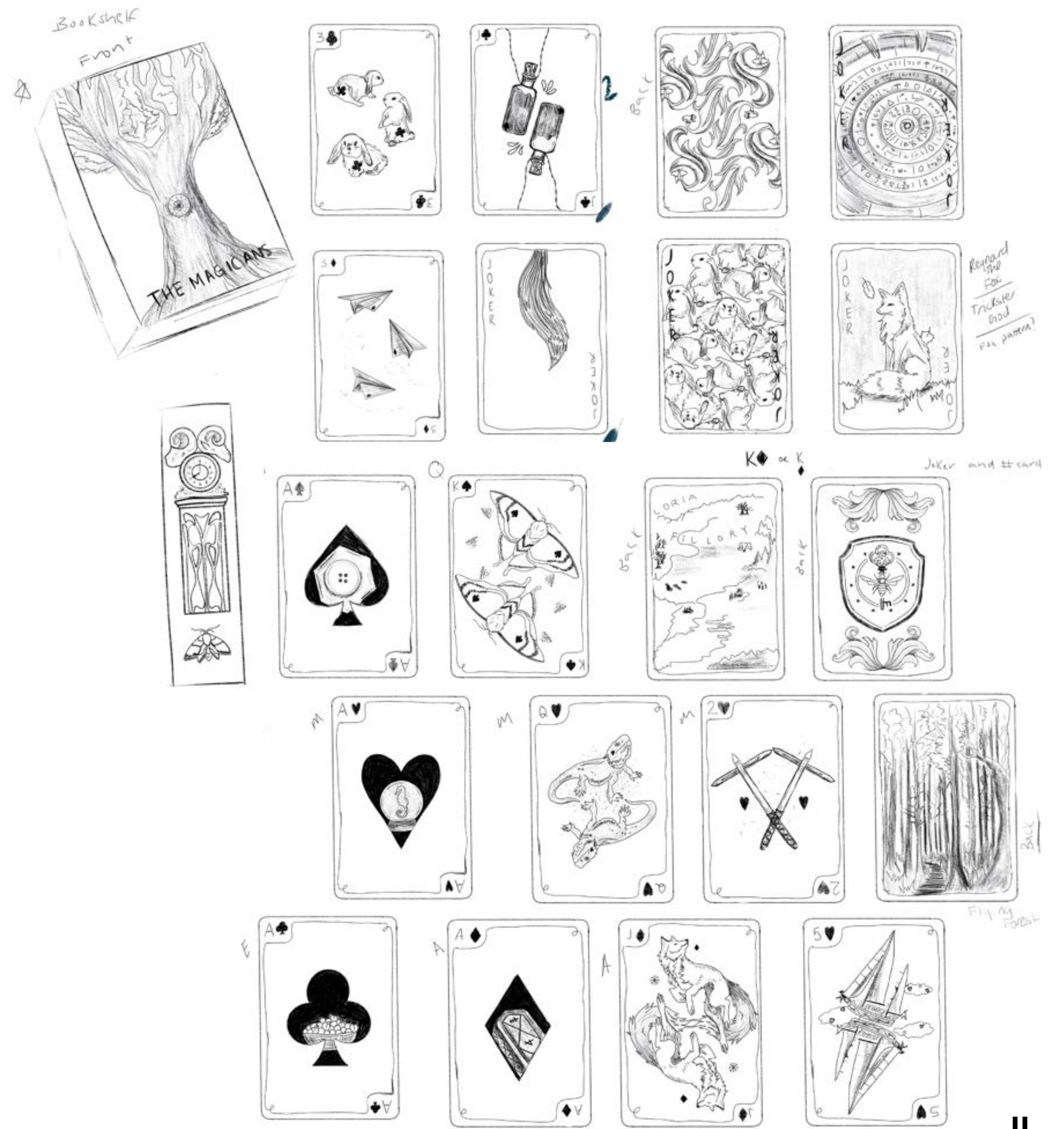
The goal of this design is to transport you, not only to Fillory, but to each quest our beloved characters have been on.



SKETCHES

CARD CONCEPTS

Once I mapped out which cards belonged to which character, I began sketching out the card faces. Each suit belongs to a main character and their whimsical story. The illustrations in a suit depict a piece of magic from the show that relates back to the specific character the suit is based on.



PLAYING CARDS

CARD DESIGN

Each card's face becomes a window into the lives of our favorite Brakebills students. They are meant to tell a story of the meaningful and magical experiences in the life of each character. The back of the four cards is inspired by a forest in the series that has significant meaning. The forest serves as a path to the person each character grows into and inspires users to go on the journey of change with them.



CHARACTER CARDS

THE LIFE OF FILLORY

All the cards in a suit are tied to the character they are based on. The characters these cards are inspired by are the kings and queens in the series. They are meant to give more information about the specific character and go into detail about who they are as a person.



CARD BOX

THE INVITATION TO MAGIC

On the front, the portal tree stands tall. Just like Eliot, Quentin, Alice, and Margo, you'll step through into a new world. Flip the box, and a glimpse of Fillory and Brakebills is inside. The wax seal is the Brakebills crest sealing the magic in and the plastic slip is there for the magicians that want to preserve it. The sides are home to the iconic Ember and Umber clock portal, a final reminder that you're only one step away from wonder.

This box is an invitation to unlock hidden worlds, to see magic in your hands, and to transport you to Fillory.



WAX SEAL

PASSING THE TEST

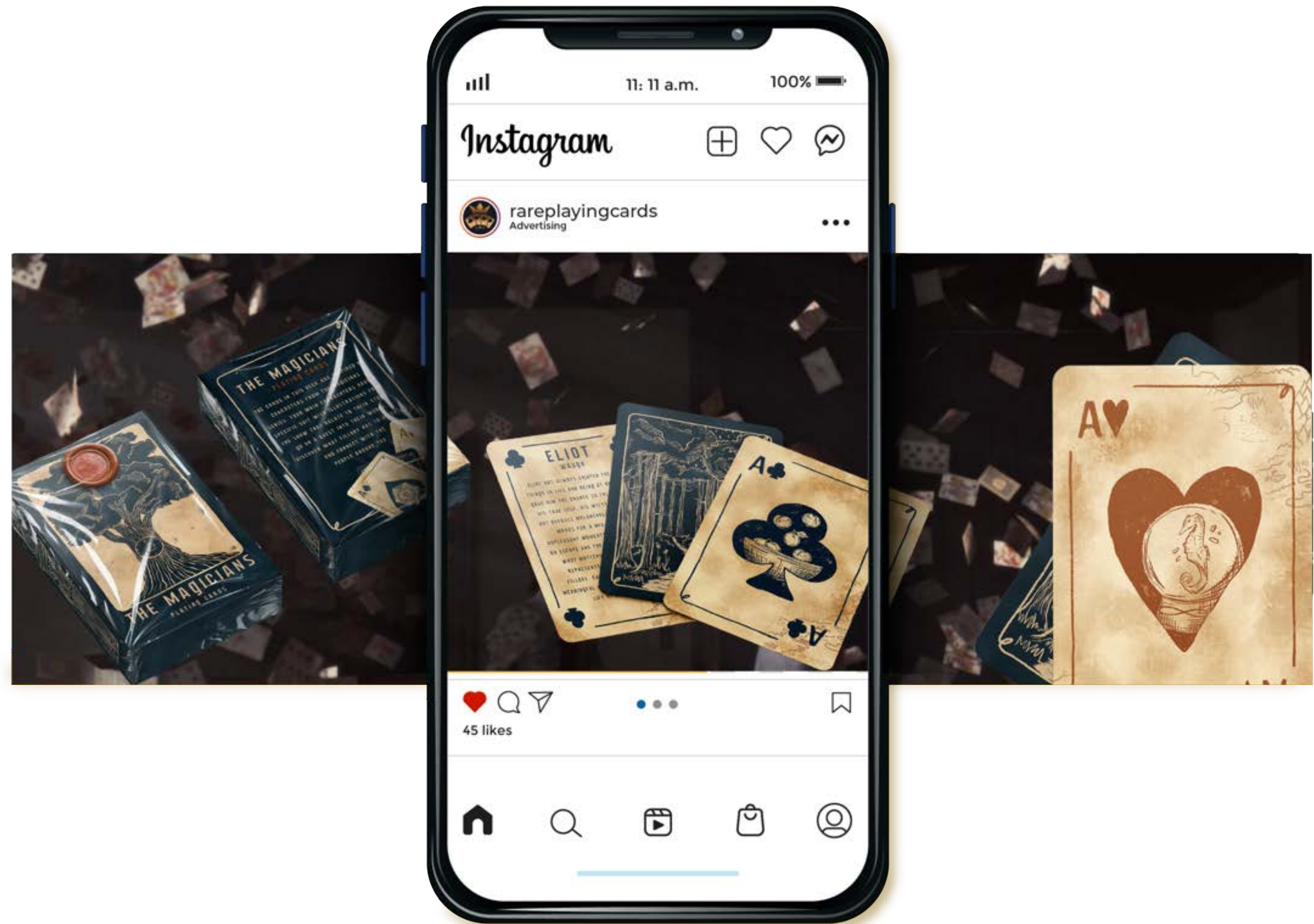
When you break this seal, it's not just a box you're opening, but a path to a different world. The wax seal is the Brakebills crest and pays tribute to the place that brought all of the characters together. The university plays such an important role in the lives of everyone and magic. In the beginning, the characters take an entrance exam to see if they are truly magicians. This seal represents that, a test not just of knowledge, but of wonder. The university logo as the wax seal is similar to the test magicians have to take before they can use magic.



SOCIAL MEDIA

INSTAGRAM POSTS

As a company that shows off the magic in every deck of cards, Rare Playing Cards regularly posts on Instagram. This platform serves best as it is photo-based content. This allows you to be immersed in the world of each deck and see the cards up close. Every photo is a portal into the series and breathes life into the stories of each character. Instagram offers a space to promote the deck using close-up photos, allowing users to see the quality of the deck. This platform is also home to our primary target audience.





PROJECT TAKEAWAYS

WHAT I LEARNED

During this project, I learned a lot about designing a deck of cards and all that should be considered while going through the process. I learned more about the research process for a deck and the different information you need to create a clear and cohesive design. I also learned how to mock up a wax seal and how to add a plastic slip on the cover of the box. This project helped improve my Photoshop and research skills, crucial skills for achieving the desired aesthetic of the deck. The experience of creating customer personas and a customer journey map was helpful to me. I found them to be very useful when considering what platform to use for social media and what the audience would best respond to.

The Magicians is a series I have loved from the beginning. I wanted to create a project that was inspired by something I'm passionate about. The journey the characters go on in the show is an escape, and this deck of cards should bring users on that journey. All the magic from the show is put onto each card.