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Architectural archetype and changes in the visual identity of the Pinacoteca since the 1990s

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Abstract: This paper is based on an investigation of the visual memory of the Pinacoteca art museum of the State of São Paulo. The objective of this paper is to understand the process of association of the visual image of the museum's edifice and its graphic signature in the 1990s. The paper utilized a research approach that included identifying and analyzing visual memories and interviewing designers who worked for the Pinacoteca during the 1990s. The conclusions point to a conjuncture of political, historical and structural factors that influenced the incorporation of the visual image of the building to the visual identity of the institution.

Keywords: Graphic memory; Art Museum; Graphic signature.

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1 Introduction

The oldest art museum in the state of São Paulo (Brazil) was founded in 1905 and was installed in one of the rooms of what was then the Liceu de Artes e Ofício [School for Arts and Crafts].

Pinacoteca's first thirty years were very disruptive in terms of management and infrastructure, including a change in buildings and the dispersion of part of its collection. The collection was primarily made up by donations of strictly academic works and was associated with the artistic criteria of the São Paulo bourgeoisie, setting the scene for low public visitation although it was the only art museum in the state. During this phase, the graphic signature[1] of the institution followed the stylistic tendencies of the age whose graphic material had been left to the printers operating in the city of São Paulo[2]. In 1944, the State acquired the building of the Liceu de Artes e Ofícios to accommodate the Pinacoteca and other institutions.

The 1940s to the 1980s encompasses a long period where the Pinacoteca's graphic signature was subordinate to various governmental agencies through the use of the national and state coat of arms and visually linking the institutional role as a cultural-museological instrument of the state and reinforcing its connection to its maintainer and eliminating the possibility of having its own visual identity[3]. This period coincides with the 1964 Brazilian civil-military coup and the interventions of the authoritarian and nationalistic dictatorial government in power until 1985 and demonstrates a clear preoccupation to link the Pinacoteca to the State secretariats and government agencies emphasizing the public nature of the museum as seen in the following materials.

1   The term "graphic signature" was adopted in this article in reference to the various visual configurations through which the Pinacoteca is identified in materials produced through mechanical or electronic printing processes over a period of more than one hundred years. The graphic signature comprises a name, either of a person, company (product/service), or institution involving or not schematic, pictorial or abstract elements in the way it is reproduced through graphic printing processes, providing the origin of the term. Such occurrences could, at specific times, be called a brand, visual identity, logo or a set involving a logo and an icon. It covers the universe of graphic arts, including professional graphic fields prior to the period of institutionalization of what is known today as design and what has become its professional field.

2   Piaia, Jade Samara, Pfützenreuter, Edson do Prado. "Identidade visual dos primeiros catálogos da Pinacoteca: relações históricas." Proceedings [Oral] of the 7th CIDI. Blucher Design Proceedings, no. 2, v. 2. São Paulo, Blucher (2015): 893-906

3   Piaia, Jade Samara, Pfützenreuter, Edson do Prado. "O uso do Brasão das Armas Nacionais nos catálogos da Pinacoteca na década de 1940." *Proceedings of the 12th P&D Design.* Blucher Design Proceedings, v. 9, no. 2. São Paulo: Blucher (2016): 356-368.

FIGURE 1. Catalog covers of the Pinacoteca: 1912, 1940 and 1950. Scanned originals. Source: Cedoc Archives/ Pinacoteca of São Paulo.

During the mid-1980s and 90s there was a clear political break in the museum's administration that allowed it to become increasingly more autonomous and is gradually reflected in the museum's visual identity. Issues in regards to the building's heritage conservation and the expansion of the museum to occupy the entire building, as well as the extensive architectural renovation and modernization of the building to house the museum by architect Paulo Mendes da Rocha reflect the identity of the Pinacoteca from the 1990s when the visual identity of the museum took on an iconic signage in reference to the building's architecture. In addition to consulting the Cedoc archives (Center for Documentation and Memory of the Pinacoteca), we interviewed two graphic designers who were important in developing the museum's visual identity: Rogério Lira, responsible for the Pinacoteca's graphic signature in 1990 and Carlos Perrone, who in 1998 created a project of visual identity and signage of the institution after the museum's great renovation project.

2 Methods adopted for graphic memory research

A case study was carried out of the Pinacoteca's graphic memory preserved by Cedoc that comprises printed graphic material dating from 1912[4]. This article studies material from the 1990s and includes a few pieces from the late 1980s with an emphasis on the graphic signature and its transformations.

4 Piaia, Jade Samara. *Graphic memory in art museums: Pinacoteca of the State of São Paulo.* Doctoral Thesis, University of Campinas, Institute of Arts, 2017.

The term "graphic memory" has been used more frequently over the last ten years and according to the researcher Farias[5], in Spanish and Latin American countries it is linked to a line of studies involving visual and ephemeral printed artifacts related to a local design identity.

In the Cedoc archive we identified the printing shops documented access and data collection according to Lima & Michelon[6], Aragão[7], Lima[8] and Wille[9]. The materials, documents and publications selected were inventoried, recorded and organized chronologically according to Tonini[10] and Salomon[11]. The graphic analyses, on which the results hereby presented were elaborated, focused on references such as Twyman[12] and Villas-Boas[13]. Designers Rogério Lira and Carlos Perrone were interviewed with scripts elaborated according to those proposed by Alberti[14].

5 Farias, Priscila Lena. "On graphic memory as a strategy for design history". *Proceedings of the 9th Conference of the* ICDHS, São Paulo: Blucher, (2014): 201-206.

6 Lima, Paula Garcia and Michelon, Francisca Ferreira. "As peças gráficas do Parque Souza Soares (Pelotas,1900-1930): algumas relações entre design e memória". *Proceedings of the 9th P&D Design.* São Paulo: Anhembi Morumbi, (2010): 1206-1216.

7 Aragão, Isabella et al. "Desenvolvimento de instrumento para analisar os atributos formais das descrições do produto e os logotipos das Imagens Comerciais de Pernambuco". *Proceedings of the 10th P&D Design.* São Luís: UFMA (2012): 1860-1869.

8 Lima, Paula Garcia et al. "Memória Gráfica de Pelotas: uma metodologia de análise". *Proceedings of the 10th P&D Design,* São Luís: UFMA (2012): 2226-2236.

9 Wille, Danielle Neugebauer et al. "Análise Gráfica dos Anúncios 'Elixir de Nogueira' publicados no 'Almanach de Pelotas' de 1913 a 1918". *Proceedings of the 9th P&D Design.* São Paulo, Anhembi Morumbi (2010): 1593-1598.

10 Tonini, Juliana Colli et al. "Desenvolvimento da 'Ficha de Coleta de Dados' para análise gráfica da revista Vida Capichaba". *Proceedings of the 9th P&D Design.* São Paulo: Anhembi Morumbi (2010): 2186-2191.

11 Salomon, Carlos Alexandre Xaviar, Gouveia, Anna Paula S. and Farias, Priscila Lena. "Fichas de pesquisa de campo para estudo da tipografia nominativa na arquitetura carioca". *InfoDesign* v.6, no.2 (2009): 7-15.

12 Twyman, Michael. "A schema for the study of graphic language". *Processing of visible language,* ed. Paul Kolers, Merald Wrolstad, and Herman Bouma (New York: Plenum Press, v.1, 1979), 117-150.

13 Villas-Boas, André. "Sobre Análise gráfica, ou Algumas estratégias didáticas para a difusão de um design crítico". *Arcos Design* no.5 (Dec. 2009): 2-17.

14 Alberti, Verena. *Manual de historia oral* (Rio de Janeiro: FGV, 2005).

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3 The visual representation of the Pinacoteca building

As to the material printed in reference to the 1990s, we found visual references to the museum's architecture. It was during this time that a graphic signature began to take form, particularly associated with Pinacoteca's architecture, as observed in various materials. It is believed that a change in reference may be related to prior events, such as the conservation of the building's heritage by Condephaat in 1982 requested during the Aracy Amaral administration and winning the right to use the entire building after the School for Belas Arts definitively left the premises in 1989 when the museum was managed by the artist Lourdes Cedran[15].

In June 1989, the Pinacoteca was condemned for safety issues due to the building's structural conditions by the Department of Real Estate Use Control (Contru), a municipal agency responsible for supervising building safety. The building's renovation project was approved to start in July 1989 and the building remained closed to exhibitions until November 1990 when the museum reopened under the direction of Maria Alice Milliet. Art workshops and classes, however, continued to take place in the Pinacoteca during the renovation[16].

Shortly before the renovation however, we found an institutional folder on conserving the Pinacoteca heritage dated 1982 with a black and white photograph of the building and an exhibit catalog that would already anticipate the tendency to visually associate the building to the museum. Published in 1986, the catalog *Pinacoteca Projeto - Contemporâneos* had on the cover a solarized monochromatic photographic image of the building's facade associated with the name of the Pinacoteca significantly highlighted.

15 Camargos, Marcia. "A Pinacoteca em Oito Tempos: Um Ensaio Histórico. Pinacoteca in Eight Stages: A Historical Essay". *Pinacoteca: a história da Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo.* ed. Araujo, M. M.; Camargos, M. (São Paulo: Artemeios, 2007), 35-136.

16 Camargos, Marcia. "*A Pinacoteca em Oito Tempos*", 35-136.

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FIGURE 2. Institutional folder *Tombamento Pinacoteca do Estado*, 1982. Condepaath. Exhibition catalog *Projeto – Contemporâneos*, 1986. Printed *Projeto para recatalogação do acervo*, 1990 - Secretaria de Estado da Cultura, Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo. Scanned originals. Source: Cedoc Collection / Pinacoteca of São Paulo.

The cover of a specific print dated 1990 denominated *Projeto para re-catalogação do acervo* [Project to re-catalogue the archive] presents an architectural visual element associated with the identification of the institution. This cover shows signs that the composition of the graphic material was made from a manual graphic paste-up process in which the graphic art was assembled through collages[17]. The base used the stationary of the State Secretary of Culture printed by the official printing office of the State of São Paulo (Imesp). The content was typed and an illustration based on a photographic image of the Pinacoteca's façade was attached. Within the context of the classificatory parameters of Charles S. Peirce[18], the image of the Pinacoteca building is considered an illustration because it presents similarity through visual qualities of the object of reference. From an original composition, it is possible that this particular material had been the museum's signature and whose visual similarity qualities allow it to be classified as an imagetic hypoicon[19] copied in xerography. This document is an important milestone in the attempt to link the image of the building's architecture to

17 ADG, ABC *da* ADG: *Glossário de termos e verbetes utilizados em design gráfico* (São Paulo: Associação dos Designers Gráficos, 1998).

18 Farias, Priscila Lena. "Imagens, diagramas e metáforas: uma contribuição da semiótica para o design da informação". *Proceedings of the* CIDI, 2003, v. 1. Recife, SBDI, (2003): 1-11.
Farias, Priscila Lena. "O conceito de diagrama na semiótica de Charles S. Peirce". Triades em Revista, v.1, 2008, 1-13.
Farias, Priscila and Queiroz, João. "Images, diagrams, and metaphors: hypoicons in the context of Peirce's sixty-six fold classification of signs". Semiotica, v.162, no. 1/4, 2006, 287-308.

19 Farias, Priscila Lena. *"Imagens, diagramas e metáforas"*. (2003) 1-11.

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the name of the museum which would reoccur in the graphic signatures of the Pinacoteca observed later.

During this time the Pinacoteca began to develop an identity in which its architecture gained fundamental importance. The institution presents itself to the public in a manner that is different than previously presented, being more individualized and differentiated from other museums while using its architecture in the graphic signature. The greatest achievement however, other than acquiring the space and the museum's visual identity, would be an even greater building renovation and the consequent transformation of the space to definitively welcome the art public.

4 The architectural image in the graphic signature of the Pinacoteca: Rogério Lira

In the early 1990s, a composition with a visual reference to the Pinacoteca edifice along with its name began to be used to sign graphic materials for exhibitions such as invitations, posters, and catalogs, while also appearing on letterhead and fax stationary. In the original design by Rogério Lira, the image reference of the building's facade was stylized, configuring the first visual element present in the signature of the museum whose qualities of visual similarity allow it to be classified as an imagetic hypoicon. Hired by the Pinacoteca's director Maria Alice Milliet, who assumed the position in 1989 and remained until 1992[20], Lira's mission was to create a new graphic signature for the institution.

Rogerio Lira received a bachelor's degree in fine arts in 1990. In the same year, he created the graphic signature of the Pinacoteca, as well as posters, catalogs and invitations for the exhibitions that would take place in the museum during that time. In addition to Pinacoteca, he worked for MTV Music Television in São Paulo with a focus on digital design. Today he holds a master's in design and is a professor and graphic designer in Amsterdam in the Netherlands.

In a Skype interview in November 2015, Lira discussed the work he developed for the Pinacoteca, the first of which was the graphic signature. Lira[21] mentions the fact that the client provided no briefing, but recalls a

20 Camargos, Marcia. "*A Pinacoteca em Oito Tempos*", 35-136.

21 Lira, Rogério. "Conhecendo o designer Rogério Lira, criador da primeira assinatura visual da Pinacoteca com um ícone arquitetônico." Interview by Jade Samara Piaia. On-line via Skype, November 3, 2015. Áudio, 0:48. Interview awarded for doctoral research "Graphic memory in art museums: Pinacoteca of the State of São Paulo" [not published].

very noble relationship between the client and designer when referring to the director Maria Alice Milliet.

The process of creating the project for the graphic signature of the Pinacoteca was described by Lira[22] and says that he worked with pen and ink from an expressive drawing of the building in low resolution, redesigning and editing the façade's drawing in an attempt to produce a high contrast graphic image. The spelling of the institution's name was designed to be understood and used as a logo, made in "photo letter", using Garamond font with vertical distortions, a common graphic resource at that time. The vertical form of the letters elevates the building of the Pinacoteca like pillars.

FIGURE 3. Designer Rogério Lira. Source: Lira[23]. Detail of the graphic signature of the Pinacoteca. From the poster by Rogério Lira of the temporary exhibition "Benedito Calixto - Memória Paulista". Original scanned. Source: Cedoc Collection/Pinacoteca of São Paulo.

The graphic signature created by Lira in 1990 for the Pinacoteca was the first evidence of a graphic project created as a design, in addition to being produced by a professional designer. Proposed as a logo and an image that worked together, the composition began to sign various institutional materials, such as its letterhead, catalogs, invitations, posters and leaflets of exhibitions.

According to Lira[24], no graphic signature manual was created, and the persons who would continue to carry out projects for the Pinacoteca did this organically. The distorted Garamond typeface has since been replaced in some applications by a similar typeface used in the same proportion.

22 Lira, Rogério. Interview.

23 Lira, Rogério. "Rogério Lira," Academia.edu, no date, https://ivanamamic.academia.edu/RogerioLira.

24 Lira, Rogério. Interview.

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Shortly after this first design, in 1992, Maria Alice Milliet would leave the post and the Pinacoteca underwent an extensive renovation of its physical space in order to receive grand international exhibitions[25]. Although brief, this phase was of great importance in reflecting on and understanding the institutional identity of the Pinacoteca and profoundly altered the way the institution identified itself in graphic materials from then on.

5 The long-standing visual identity of the Pinacoteca and its architectural image: Carlos Perrone

In the first half of the 1990s the Pinacoteca underwent an important architectural renovation. Designed by Paulo Mendes da Rocha and Eduardo Colonelli under the auspices of museum director Emanoel Araújo and initiated in 1992, the renovation project modified the building entrance, redesigned circulation flow and lighting of the museum and won the Latin American prize of Contemporary Architecture Mies Van der Rohe[26].

It was during this phase that the *Associação dos Amigos da Pinacoteca* was founded, a non-profit private organization to assist in fundraising and collaborate with museum initiatives[27] to ensure the preservation and conservation of the artistic archive and the promotion of the Pinacoteca as a reference center for civic, educational, artistic and cultural activities and research.

After the renovation during Emanoel Araújo's administration, the Pinacoteca achieved record breaking visitation levels and became a museum of national importance. The designer Carlos Perrone was invited by Araújo to develop the visual identity projects and signage for the Pinacoteca.

Carlos Perrone is an architect with a master's in communication. He carried out the post-renovation projects for the Pinacoteca in 1998. Today he is a university professor and graphic designer. In a personal interview, Perrone[28] told us a bit about how it was to develop a graphic project for the Pinacoteca.

When questioned on the briefing, he confirmed that there was no briefing provided by the client because it was not necessary. In this case, he was already very familiar with the components: "1: The architecture of Paulo

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25 Camargos, Márcia. "*A Pinacoteca em Oito Tempos*", 35-136.

26 Camargos, Márcia. "*A Pinacoteca em Oito Tempos*", 35-136.

27 Camargos, Márcia. "*A Pinacoteca em Oito Tempos*", 35-136.

28 Perrone, Carlos Eduardo Leite. "O designer Carlos Perrone e a criação da identidade mais duradoura da Pinacoteca." Interview by Jade Samara Piaia. Faculty of Fine Arts of Faap, December 1, 2014. Áudio, 1: 25. Interview awarded for doctoral research "Graphic memory in art museums: Pinacoteca of the State of São Paulo" [not published].

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Mendes da Rocha; 2: The Pinacoteca building; 3: The Pinacoteca collection; 4: The plans for the Pinacoteca; 5: Emanuel Araújo, his administration and what he wanted to achieve with the project of the new museum"[29]. Motivated and actively involved in the museum's renovation, Perrone[30] participated in the meetings for the renovation project and thereby acquired the information needed to carry out his work. More informally, without proper briefing documentation, the project guidelines were left to his understanding.

FIGURE 4. Designer Carlos Perrone. Source: Orbitato[31]. Graphic signature designed by Carlos Perrone in 1998 for the Pinacoteca. Source: Carlos Eduardo Perrone's personal collection, Logical Design (image sent by e-mail).

Perrone sought to eliminate the photographic (imagetic) character of the previous icon, proposing a more constructive and geometric design within the same reference to the façade explored by Lira. Perrone's technique used to work on the image of the Pinacoteca building was based on a technical drawing of the façade produced by the Ramos de Azevedo Architecture office, from which Perrone hand drew a large-scale drawing[32].

From the manual drawing Perrone moved to the computer to produce a high quality graphic reproduction that would allow vinyl reductions and cutouts to be used for signage. Perrone chose to continue using the Pinacoteca's façade, which figured as a diagram, or more specifically a diagrammatic hypoicon[33] as it structurally resembles the building's façade through the relationship between the parts of the drawing, being a classic

29 Perrone, Carlos. Interview.

30 Perrone, Carlos. Interview.

31 Orbitato. "Carlos Perrone: identidade e cotidiano," interview by Orbitato, no date, http://www.orbitato.com.br/en/index.php/todo-movimentos-sub/item/107-entrevista-com-carlos-perrone.

32 Perrone, Carlos. interview.

33 Farias, Priscila Lena. *"Imagens, diagramas e metáforas"*, 1-11.

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resource used for museum brands, noting that the museum was in fact innovative in its graphic signature, but in a formal manner. In the case of the Pinacoteca, the historical importance of the museum and its building were considered, and the administration's intention was to transform it into a great museum.

A detail in Perrone's drawing, which differs from Rogério Lira's, is that the change of the main entrance, where the staircase was suppressed to give way for a metal belvedere, provokes changes in the neoclassical architecture of the building reflecting in the icon designed just after the renovation.

The use of the font *Futura* was purposeful because it was the "oldest among the moderns", according to Perrone's own words[34]. The colors originally proposed for the design were "navy blue" and the text "dark wine".

Perrone[35] says it was not necessary to provide visual identity guidelines in this case, but rather a manual for signage. Producing a manual that provides guidelines and applications of elements of a visual identity system is a standard procedure by graphic designers. There are many distortions in the applications of the graphic signature developed by Perrone. At least three significant modifications were observed during the analyses: changing the color from navy blue to black in the drawing of the building's façade; adding the text "Estado de São Paulo" [State of São Paulo] under the Pinacoteca name in *Futura* font using both upper and lower case characters and disregarding the logo; a mirror of the façade design, modifying the peculiar forms in relation to the building and lightening the filling of parts of the drawing.

FIGURE 5. Detail of the Pinacoteca entrance with the three-dimensional letters designed by Carlos Perrone in 1998, photographed from the spectator's point of view. Image captured by the author, August 2015. Source: personal collection.

34 Perrone, Carlos. Interview.

35 Perrone, Carlos. Interview.

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Three-dimensional, boxed letters with sculptural characteristics were designed to signal the new entrance of the Pinacoteca. Because of the excessive height of the entrance and small area of the frontal setback, the letters were designed at a specific angle to facilitate public viewing upon entering the museum. Although the visual identity has been altered a few times up until today, the boxed letters designed by Perrone continue to sign the entrance of the museum below the front gable.

The Emanoel Araújo administration ended in 2002, having achieved strong, international recognition of the museum, being replaced by museologist Marcelo Mattos Araujo. The graphic signature designed by Perrone was used for almost the entire period of Marcelo Mattos Araujo's administration, but profoundly changed the Pinacoteca's visual identity shortly before leaving office in 2012 to assume the position of State Cultural Secretary, observing more changes over time. Without the loss of identity per se or the creation of a completely new signature, these changes altered the design and even the set with the full name of the museum which are problems that could have been avoided with visual identity guidelines. When questioned about the changes to the original graphic signature, Perrone calls them "misrepresentations", being concerned with the institutional brand management after its implementation, which in fact was not his responsibility.

All of the versions of the graphic signature originally designed by Perrone, including the original version and the recurring changes we observe after the second half of the 2000s, have been in use, as observed, from 1998 to 2011, totaling a period of 13 years. The altered versions, called "misrepresentations" by Perrone himself, can in fact be considered fruit of the original project, which, without visual identity guidelines to regulate the use and control of its applications, left open the potential for any type of interference and application of the graphic signature.

There were various contact points explored in applying this visual identity from the traditional institutional materials like documents and catalogs of the archives and catalogs, posters and invitations of exhibits to elements that represented the institution in internal signage and objects like mugs, key rings, pens, calendars, T-shirts, among other items for sale in the museum gift shop. The identity was also used in digital media on the website and in promotional e-mails.

In use over the longest period of time on a large number of contact points, this graphic signature definitely established a new phase for visual identity of the institution. Over the years, the museum grew and occupied the entire architectural structure of that building, which came to represent the symbolic strength of its identity. Having its own, fitting and definitive location

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for the important collection that it holds was represented and praised as the Pinacoteca's own identity.

6 Final considerations

Considering the projects where graphic memory is preserved, in the cases of the graphic signatures designed by Rogério Lira and Carlos Perrone, it is possible to affirm that in the 1990s there was a paradigm shift in the visual identity of the Pinacoteca. Boosted by the conservation of the building's heritage, internal changes in attitudes and management, greater participation by civil society, renovations of the space and significant expansion in the number of exhibitions and, consequently, an increase in public, the identity assumed in the 1990s became a necessary component to the institution.

The entire tradition of the Pinacoteca as a museum gained strength through transformations of the space and the new temporary exhibitions. The previous baggage was maintained, yet there was an opening for the new: modern and contemporary art was already part of the cultural circuit of the Pinacoteca, and affirming this was necessary. Rogério Lira's project in 1990 was of great importance in connecting the name of the Pinacoteca to the architectural imagetic reference, which was maintained and improved by Carlos Perrone.

The graphic signature designed by Perrone in 1998 during the Emanoel Araújo administration was the longest lasting–with a graphically well resolved logo-icon set of the entire 100-year graphic history of the Pinacoteca. Perrone demonstrated the museum's tradition without going back in time. He simplified the graphic design that represented the institution to a generation of admirers. The legacy of this identity can be seen until today [2022] in internal panels that tell the history of the institution, in products that remain in the museum gift shop and below the entrance gable in the name of the museum.

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