Visual Guidance: A Universal Wayfinding Symbol System Prototype for Art Museums

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Visual Guidance

A Universal Wayfinding Symbol System Prototype for Art Museums

Rui Ma

A Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Arts in Visual Communication Design

School of Design
College of Imaging Arts and Sciences
Rochester Institute of Technology

March 2015
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__________________________________________
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Abstract
Abstract

Wayfinding is very important for travelers. One example is, communicative symbol systems used at international airports. Art museums also need to employ visual guidance to help people effectively navigate the space.

This prototype project involved designing a universal wayfinding symbol system for art museums based on art movements and geographic regions. The objective of the project is to make wayfinding easier for international museum visitors using visual guidance. The subject was selected through research and discussion with the thesis advisors. The refinements were made based on feedback from diverse audience of users and students at Imagine RIT.

The project has two main sections: Symbol System and Applications. The symbol system prototype includes eight grid-system-based symbols, which are Rome, Greece, Asia, Egypt, Painting, Ceramic, 17th Century art and 18th Century art. The Applications include museum stores products, activities at exhibitions, physical museum wall wayfinding, and E-map application designs on mobile devices. The purpose is to help people remember and recognize the symbol system. This project is intended to benefit international museum visitors.

Keywords

Introduction
Situation Analysis

Information design is a bridge to connect designers and their audiences. The purpose of information design is to let audiences obtain information through visual graphic design. Museums are places to educate and entertain people through different exhibitions. Visitors come to museums with a wide range of motivations and expectations that can and do affect learning. In fact, in many ways, by the time a visitor arrives at the front door, the nature and quality of the visiting experience have already been determined to a large degree. Thus, the wayfinding design plays a very important role in visiting experience in museums, which affect visitors’ learning experience directly.

Museum audiences include people from all over the world. Sometimes visitors cannot find their ways through museums if they do not understand the local language. An international wayfinding symbol design system will help global visitors to museums obtain information effectively, even if they do not understand how to read the language. As a point of reference, there is an international wayfinding symbol system in each international airport. This functional design helps guide people of various ages and nationalities. A symbol system in art museums will also provide people with benefits. All art museums have similar exhibitions and collections based on art movements. Thus, to design a unified symbol set for art museums is possible. A simple and recognizable symbol design for each art period and physical location can help visitors easily navigate the museum exhibitions.

It is important for each category of museum to design its own visual unifying information design system. Visitors can then recognize the information easily when visiting the same category of museums. In addition, people would not need to understand a specific language if they are lost in a museum. The signage system will guide them to the right destinations. Furthermore, a recognized visual signage design system will also assist children in navigating the museum, especially when they get lost.
Problem Statement

For museums, one of the worst expectations an individual can have about a museum is “This is not for me,” and one of the worst experiences is a lack of motivation to visit. It is very important to provide people with right information and directions at the entrance of the museums and inside the museums. It will benefit the visitors’ learning and the visiting experience when people find that it is the right place to explore by a recognizable visual guide.

Information design provides a visual format to convey information and directions to various audiences. For example, the international airport symbol system design allows people to understand the information depicted, despite language or culture differences. It has become a non-text, cross-cultural symbol design for audiences of all ages and nationalities. Some museums have their own wayfinding symbol system, and some do not. However, currently there is not an existing universal symbol system for art museums based on the art movements. A visual wayfinding symbol design system is necessary for museums that have international audiences of various ages and cultures. This will help people seeking information and directions in a museum, regardless of the language they speak and read.

For this thesis project, an international wayfinding symbol design system and applications for art museums was created. The focus is on using symbols for art movements and geographic regions. A main symbol for each movement and region and sub-symbol for each category, like sculpture and paintings from 18th-century Rome, for example, was created. This study aims to find how the symbol system helps audiences to obtain information and directions. If there are symbols displayed on the wall in each room, people can leave directly when they enter a show room that has exhibitions they are not interested in. The research was based on known international art museums, which have international audiences and summarize the similarities and differences of them. The author chose the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City as her case study to apply the design and to conduct surveys and obtain feedback.

This thesis research aims to answer the following questions:

What collections (art movements and regions) do art museums have currently?
Will a wayfinding symbol design system for art movements and regions be effective in art museums?

Will the universal wayfinding symbol design system be effective for global audiences?

What is the recognition aspect of the symbols and applications in wayfinding design?

Is there a wayfinding symbol system design that will work for both children and adults in a museum?

Target Audience

This thesis project’s target audience is art museum visitors, especially international visitors. After visiting a number of art museums, the author’s research provided information that there is not many visual guidance (except texts) for visitors. International visitors might not understand the language in the museums and it is therefore sometimes difficult for them to find their destinations.

However, building a universal wayfinding symbol system for art museums would help solve this problem. The symbol system will benefit international museum visitors from different regions and age groups.
Research
Review of Literature

Wayfinding Handbook: Information Design for Public Places
David Gibson
February 4, 2009
Princeton Architectural Press; 1st edition
Intended Audience: The public

Review:
This book covers some tips for how to become a good wayfinding designer like stepping back and asking questions to yourself: “How does someone become a successful wayfinding designer? How are they trained, and where do they work? It helps to understand that wayfinding is a subject of environmental graphic design.” I think these are really helpful for writing my research. There are also examples of doing research in the book, such as conducting research on a certain early modern urban wayfinding design.

There are quotations express my thoughts as I want to do information design for cross-cultural people who might not share a language. There are also a lot of good design examples in the book.

Signage Design
Michelle Galindo
2012
Braun Publishing AG
Intended Audience: The public

Review:
This book has many strong examples from all over the world from which I received inspiration from. I like the very new designs the author collected. In addition, there are lots of designs in languages other than English, which interests me because I want to focus on cross-cultural information design. The book also reminded me that I need to think about information design and environmental graphic design together.
The Information Design Handbook
Jenn Visocky O’Grady
September 23, 2008
HOW Books
Intended Audience: The public

Review:
This is a great book that introduces relevant information and strong examples to people who are interested in information design and organizing information. This book explains how you can make your reports clear, easy and usable. The material also covers interactive design, which I am interested in. I want to design my thesis in both print and interactive formats.

Color design workbook:
A real-world guide to using color in graphic design
Adams Morioka
March 1, 2008
Rockport Publishers
Intended Audience: The public

Review:
This book teaches and explains the concepts behind colors. The book contains excellent examples to explain color theories. This is a really good book for people who want to utilize color in their works effectively. It is suitable for me because I want to use proper and meaningful color? concepts in my information design.
Designing Information:  
Human Factors and Common Sense in Information Design  
Joel Katz  
October 2, 2012  
Wiley; 1 edition  
Intended Audience: The public

Review:  
I like the signage and maps design sections in the book. The book offers a range of good design, examples and readings. I want to focus on wayfinding and map design in my thesis so I think this interesting book can help a lot. It shows how visual communication designers solve problems, which can lead me in the proper direction in regard to my thesis statement. And I also like the funny quotations in the book, which make the book appealing.

Visual Function:  
An Introduction to Information Design  
Paul Mijksenaar  
December 1, 1997  
Princeton Architectural Press  
Intended Audience: The public

Review:  
The book introduces the history and theory of information design. It does not go into depth on some topics but I still can learn a lot about information design concepts. There are some good examples in the book but I think the book is a little dated.
Symbol
Angus Hyland
May 23, 2011
Laurence King
Intended Audience: The public

Review:
This is a very cleanly designed and organized book. I like how it explains that a symbol should follow its theme although most of the symbols are related to brands’ logo design. I think there are similarities between creating symbols for wayfinding and logos. There are a lot of symbol examples in the book. And the symbols are divided into different categories. I think these will be really helpful for me to create a set of symbols in museums.

Decoding Design: Understanding and Using Symbols in Visual Communication
Maggie Macnab
February 4, 2008
HOW Books
Intended Audience: The public

Review:
This is a very good book that contains a lot of good examples, illustrations and photographs. The book has thought-provoking design ideas and thoughts that I was inspired by. It also shows how to use circles, squares and triangles in symbol design. I think these will help me to develop my symbols.
Information design
Pettersson Rune
2002
Intended Audience: The public

Review:
This book is an introduction to information design. It introduces information design from five parts: message design, text design, image design, graphic design, and cognition. It describes different principles and functions of each and how they work with each other in information design. From this book, I get a specific idea of what information design is, where to use it and how it works. However, I prefer to read texts that include visual examples that I can keep as reference.

Logo station:
A personal logo design application on multi-touch tablet devices
Lan Shi
MFAthesis, Rochester Institute of Technology
2012
Intended Audience: People who do not know how to design a logo

Review:
I really like the logo station thesis because it offers new ideas. It is the first text I read. I did not know how to start my thesis at first, and this thesis has a clear direction of how a thesis document should be constructed. I also want to do interactive design in my design, so I think this thesis will help me a lot.
A sense of place:  
Branding the Richardson Olmsted complex through architectural motif  
Lisa J. Mauro  
MFAthesis, Rochester Institute of Technology  
2011  
Intended Audience: The public

Review:  
This thesis introduces motif design and mark design. I think it is a very good text for how to design a motif. I get knowledge of making symbols from it but my focus is more information design, not mark design.

Look, cook, learn:  
A recipe for improved functionality in cooking design  
Anna Mizer  
MFAthesis, Rochester Institute of Technology  
2011  
Intended Audience: The public

Review:  
This is an information design thesis. I took it as a reference because we are in the same design area. I also viewed the design while reading the article. I like how the cooking process is shown in the book. It reflects one of the author’s concepts—learning. And it is very clear so readers can get information easily.
Identity and the Museum Visitor Experience
John H Falk
Left Coast Press
2009
Intended Audience: The public

Review:
This is a very useful book, as readers can see the operations of a museum from the visitor's point of view. The book explores the experience of the visitors in museums and the problems and challenges museums have. This is very helpful for my thesis topic.

Conclusion
All the sources helped me to find my topic. I think they are all useful, especially Logo Station by Lan Shi. It has something related to my study, because I also want to design an application for mobile devices.

Signage Design is also very helpful because I learned that information design is not only for visual effects but for navigation and information collecting also.

Therefore, I was trying to use a new view to analyze the problems. I think the statement also should solve problems. Thus, asking questions is a very important part during the study.
Research of Existing Symbols

The project was built based on the theory from the book *Symbol Signs Repro Art*. The universal symbol system in the book was designed with grid systems and surveys of symbol meanings, which provided inspiration and directions for brainstorming.

The first thought for this thesis project was to use symbols without any text displayed as the author’s wayfinding design. According to the design theory in this book, the challenge of the first thought was that people will not understand the symbol meanings and therefore would not recognize the symbol afterwards. Symbols have to be used in public with meaning explanatory text first as everyone has their own definition for the symbols. Thus, the design idea changed to use symbols with explanatory text for a while and then remove them when people have recognition of the symbols.

Additionally, the symbols in this reference are all based on a survey from design professionals and the target audiences. The survey can give direction in regard to users’ thoughts instead of designers’, which is helpful in exploring general public agreement of symbol meanings.
Research of Existing Museum Wayfinding

The research was conducted in museums in Rochester, New York, and Washington DC, in the United States.

In order to conduct the existing museum wayfinding design survey and analyze how to make the symbol system make a significant impact in wayfinding, the author visited several museums in Washington DC, such as the National Gallery of Art, the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden | Smithsonian, and Newseum.

The main method of the research was observing environment in the museums. Different museums have their own design as wayfinding but most of them use texts instead of graphics. There are similar research results from the museums in New York (Metropolitan Museum of Art, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, Museum of Arts and Design, etc.) and Rochester (Memorial Art Gallery). The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) has a effective symbol design as wayfinding with a crisp and modern style. As MoMA is a museum of modern art, they have different section divisions than my subject. However, the symbol system design and application are definitely useful as visual references.
Process
Museum categories have been identified on this case study.

After doing research and collecting information and suggestions from experts and professors, the scope of the project was narrowed down to one type – traditional art museums.

The first choice of subject was a contemporary art and design museum, which has both design and art works from different periods and different categories. For example, there could be a main category like Architecture Design, the sub-categories are Architecture Design from Germany, United States, United Kingdom, etc. However, with research from references on-line and in books, the author realized that the various developing art and design styles and trends are changing quickly. This finding shows that it is really challenging to use quantity-limited symbols to define the exhibitions in contemporary art and design museums.

The second choice of subject was a fictional design museum that shows design works from early ages to the present. After discussion with the author’s thesis advisors, it was determined that there is no research-based reference to build such a symbol system in a fictional design museum. The symbol system would not be strong enough.

After these considerations and a survey, the author found that every traditional art museum has similar sections of artworks, which are appropriate to symbolize the information. The sections can be divided in two: main sections and sub sections. According to art history and art movements, there are exhibitions from different regions and ages/periods and according to different types of artwork.

With a summary of the sections in the case study museums, a final sections list was concluded for the symbol system design.
A list of sections was used for the design project.
Design Considerations

Inspiration

The AIGA Symbol System at international airports was the inspiration for the project. The symbol system benefits travelers by providing them with directions in airports. Thus, a wayfinding symbol system will be useful and functional. The simplicity and straightforward nature of the universal airport symbols mean the wayfinding works very well and is easy for people to recognize after seeing them.

The book *Symbol Signs Repro Art* was the main reference for this thesis project, providing the author with many good directions and inspirations from symbol meanings to how to make the whole system united by using grids.
The concise explanation of the idea for the project is combining changeable symbols to fit exhibition symbols in different museums. Museums have their own exhibition displays, and the collection of symbols would give museums a flexible way to manage and design their exhibitions.

For example, a column represents Roman art, so the sketch below represents 17th-century Roman ceramics and painting. If the exhibition is Roman sculpture, the ceramic and painting frame in the symbol combination can be changed to a sculpture symbol.
Design Ideation
Sketches of design

Rome

Greece
Asia

Egypt
Design
Motifs from the art works of the collections

Rome

Greece
Asia

Egypt
E-Map Design Storyboard

Scroll down to the second floor

Tap the symbols, the map will show the route to the destinations from the current locations
Refinements

Refinements with narrowed-down sections for prototype and grid system
Final symbol set
Color set
Final Color Scheme

Colors were designed to fit their own sections and coordinate with each other in a same tone as a system.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color</th>
<th>RGBA</th>
<th>CMYK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Red</td>
<td>R: 217 G: 56 B: 56</td>
<td>C: 9 M: 93 Y: 31 K: 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>R: 240 G: 133 B: 51</td>
<td>C: 2 M: 58 Y: 92 K: 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>R: 99 G: 100 B: 102</td>
<td>C: 0 M: 0 Y: 0 K: 75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>R: 250 G: 245 B: 222</td>
<td>C: 2 M: 2 Y: 14 K: 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Typefaces

Neutraface 2 Text Book

```
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890
```

Neutraface 2 Text Bold

```
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890
```
Applications
The products for art museum stores. Purpose is providing people with familiarity of the symbols so that people will recognize the symbols.

Postcards
Buttons (Figure1)
Matching blocks (Figure2)
Decorations on walls (Figure3)

Postal Service

Stamp Activity
By going to the right exhibition room, children can get free stamps of the symbols.
Applications on museum walls and floors
E-map Design Application on Devices

Case study: Metropolitan Museum of Art

Screenshots from Demo video
Symbol Cards

Thesis Show
The purpose is to guide people in art museums, regardless of the language they speak and read — by using a visual guidance symbol system. The project contains a symbol design system that is necessary for a comprehensive grid system. This is a universal wayfinding symbol system design for art museums. 8 symbols were designed within a categories, and centuries. All of the symbols represent various regions, art periods, and cultures.

The symbol system is the main part of this thesis project. There are 8 symbols completed of a larger system of 15. By applying the AIGA symbol design strategy these solutions were designed to help people seeking information and directions in a museum, regardless of the language they speak and read.

Information design provides a visual format for interaction design. Through consistent use and repetition, people will recognize the symbols. The applications of the symbol system are refined symbols sketches, printed materials, signs and symbols, and professors’ survey feedback from classmates and art experts at Imagine RIT. Symbols presented for feedback were displayed in art museums with and without language recognition, and become an effective wayfinding system. By adopting the AIGA symbol design system for art museums, people will be able to recognize the symbols after multiple interactions. The applications help to strengthen visual exposure and recognition, and become an effective wayfinding system.
Thesis Show
Conclusion
Conclusion

Summary

Wayfinding Design in museums has very important possibilities for both local and international museum visitors, helping them to find their way efficiently and accurately. This study provided another method to convey directional information in art museums rather than only by text. People understand the information better with visual graphics, especially children who might not know all the words in a certain language.

The applications in the project showed different medias to which the symbol system could be applied in order to help people recognize the symbol system when they visit art museums.

Although this is a prototype project with only eight symbols and several applications, this thesis project still provided the importance of the symbol system for art museums Wayfinding Design through extensive research, analyzing, exploration and refinements. The results of this thesis could be used in different art museums around the world, providing different applications for international visitors.

Evaluation Survey

The author took part in ImagineRIT on May 3, 2014, at RIT James E. Booth Hall, and interviewed 17 people. The survey was focused on the selections of symbols by their meaning through visual graphics. The author got positive feedback and useful comments from adults and children. The author chose the options that most people selected and made refinements according to that feedback. The survey form and results are on page 106 and page 107.
Appendix
Symbol System in Museums
An International Wayfinding Symbol Design System and Applications for Art Museums

Rui Ma
Thesis Proposal for the Master of Fine Arts Degree
Rochester Institute of Technology
College of Imaging Arts and Sciences
School of Design
Visual Communication Design
Thesis Committee Approval

Chief Advisor Date
Nancy Ciolek
Associate Professor
Visual Communication Design

Associate Advisor Date
Bruce Ian Meader
Associate Professor
Visual Communication Design

Associate Advisor Date
Lorrie Frear
Associate Professor
Visual Communication Design

Associate Advisor Date
Chris Jackson
Associate Professor
Visual Communication Design
Situation Analysis

Information design is a bridge to connect designers and their audiences. The purpose of information design is letting audiences obtain information through visual graphic design. Museums are places to educate people through different exhibitions. However, some research shows that people cannot find their way around in museums in their own or foreign country. The audiences of museums are people from all over the world. Some people cannot find their ways in museums if they do not understand the local language, so an international wayfinding symbol system is necessary for the museums. An international wayfinding symbol design system will help global visitors in museums obtain information effectively, even if they do not understand how to read the language. For example, there is an existing international wayfinding symbol system in each international airport. This functional design helps guide people of various ages and nationalities that understand the symbol signs in the airports easily and know where to go. However, there is not a symbol design for art museums. All art museums have similar exhibitions and collections based on the art movements. Thus, to design a unified symbol set for art museums is possible. A simple symbol design for each art period and physical location area can help visitors easily navigate the museum exhibitions.

Each category of museum provides people with different knowledge and information. Thus, it is important for each category of museum to design their own visual unifying information design system. Visitors will recognize the information very easily when visiting the same category of museums. Besides, people do not need to understand a specific language if they are lost in a museum. The signage system will guide them to the right destinations if they recognize the symbols. Furthermore, a recognized visual signage design system will also assist children in navigating the museum, especially when they get lost.
Will an international wayfinding symbol design system effectively provide information and directions to global museums' visitors?

Information design is a visual format for people to obtain information and directions. For example, international airport symbol system design allows people to understand the symbols despite language or culture differences. It has become a non-text, cross-cultural symbol design for audiences of all ages and nationalities. Some museums have their own wayfinding symbol system, and some do not. However, currently there is not an existing international symbol system for art museums based on the art movements. A visual wayfinding symbol design system is necessary for a museum which has international audiences of different ages. This will help people seeking information and directions in a museum, regardless of the language they speak and read.

For my thesis, I will create an international wayfinding symbol design system and applications for art museums. The focus is on the symbols for art movements and geographic regions. There could be a main symbol for each movement and region and then sub-symbol for each category, like sculpture and paintings from 18c Rome, etc. I will study how the symbol system helps audiences to obtain information and directions. If there are symbols shown on the wall in each room, people can leave directly when they enter a show room that has exhibitions they are not interested in. I will collect research based on known international art museums, which are large enough to have international audiences and summarize the similarities and differences of them. I will choose the Memorial Art Gallery as my case study to apply the design and conduct some surveys and obtain feedback. In addition, I will design a motion graphics of the symbols to demonstrate the consistency and unification of the symbol set.

My thesis research aims to answer the following questions:
• What collections (art movements and regions) do art museums have currently?

• Will wayfinding symbols design for art movements and regions be effective in art museums?

• Will the international wayfinding symbol design system be effective for global audiences?

• Will the international wayfinding symbol design system be unified for all of one specific category of museum and will people recall the symbols’ meaning?

• What is the recognition aspect of the symbols and applications in wayfinding design?

• Is there a wayfinding symbol system design for both children and adults in a museum?

• Can an international wayfinding symbol design system be unified in motion graphics?
Review of Literature

Sources

- **Wayfinding Handbook:**
  Information Design for Public Places
  David Gibson
  February 4, 2009
  Princeton Architectural Press; 1st edition
  Intended Audience: The public

  Review:
  This book covers some tips for how to become a good wayfinding designer like stepping back and asking questions to yourself. “How does someone become a successful wayfinding designer? How are they trained, and where do they work? It helps to understand that wayfinding is a subject of environmental graphic design...” I think these are really helpful for writing a thesis proposal. There are also examples of doing research in the book, like we can do research on a certain early modern urban wayfinding design.

  “A wayfinding system links different people together, even if they do not share a common language or destination, by guiding all of them through the same space with a single system of communication.” This sentence express my thoughts. I want to do information design for cross-cultural people who might not share a same language. There are also a lot of good design examples in the book.

- **Signage Design**
  Michelle Galindo
  2012
  Braun Publishing AG
  Intended Audience: The public

  Review:
  This book has a brunch of awesome examples from all over the world. I got some inspirations from the wayfinding designs in the book. I like the very new designs she collected. In addition, there are lots of design in a different language than English, which attracts me a lot because I want to focus on cross-cultural information design. The book also reminded me that I need to think information design and environmental graphic design together.
• **The Information Design Handbook**  
  Jenn Visocky O’Grady  
  September 23, 2008  
  HOW Books  
  Intended Audience: The public

Review:  
This is a great book that introduce relevant information and good examples to the students who are interested in information design and organizing information. This book explains how you can make your reports clear, easy and usable. The material also cover the interactive design which I am interested in. I want to design my thesis in both print and interactive format.

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  Adams Morioka  
  March 1, 2008  
  Rockport Publishers  
  Intended Audience: The public

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This book teaches and explains to its audience about the concepts behind the colors. The book has a brunch of excellent examples to explain the color theories. This is a really good book for people who want to utilize the color to their works effectively. It is suitable for me because I want to use proper and meaningful concepts to my information design.
• **Designing Information:**
  Human Factors and Common Sense in Information Design
  Joel Katz
  October 2, 2012
  Wiley; 1 edition
  Intended Audience: The public

  Review:
  I like the signage and maps design sections in the book. It really has a broad types of good design, examples and readings. I want to focus on wayfinding and map design of my thesis so I think this interesting book can help a lot. It shows how visual communication design solve problems which can lead me a proper direction to my thesis statement. And I also like the funny quotations in the book, which makes the book attractive.

• **Visual Function:**
  An Introduction to Information Design
  Paul Mijksenaar
  December 1, 1997
  Princeton Architectural Press
  Intended Audience: The public

  Review:
  The book introduces the history and theory of information design. It does not go into depth on some topics but still can learn a lot about information design concepts. There are some examples in the book but I think the book is a little dated.
- **Symbol**
  Angus Hyland
  May 23, 2011
  Laurence King
  Intended Audience: The public

  Review:
  This is a very clean designed and organized book. I like how the book tells about a symbol should follow its theme although most of the symbols are related to brands’ logo design. I think there are similarities between creating symbols for wayfinding and logos. There are a lot of symbol examples in the book. And the symbols are divided into different categories. I think these are really helpful for me to create a set of symbols in museums.

- **Decoding Design: Understanding and Using Symbols in Visual Communication**
  Maggie MacNab
  February 4, 2008
  HOW Books
  Intended Audience: The public

  Review:
  This is a very good book that it contains a lot of good examples, illustrations and photographs. The book has thought-provoking design ideas and thoughts that I was inspired from it a lot. It also shows how to use the circles, squares and triangles in symbol design. I think these will help me to develop my symbols a lot.
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  Pettersson Rune  
  2002  
  Amsterdam; Philadelphia: John Benjamins Pub Co.  
  Intended Audience: The public  

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This book is an introduction of information design. It introduces information design from five parts: they are Message design, text design, image design, graphic design and cognition. It describes different principles and function of them and how they incorporate with each other in information design. From this book, I get a specific idea of what information design is, where to use it and how it works. However, I prefer to read a book include visual examples that I can keep as reference.

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  Lan Shi  
  MFAidiss, Rochester Institute of Technology  
  2012  
  Intended Audience: People who do not know how to design a logo  

Review:  
I really like the logo station article because it has its own new idea. It is the first article I read. I did not know how to start my thesis at first, this article has a clear direction of how thesis article should be. Besides, I also want to do interactive design in my design, so I think this article will help me a lot.
A sense of place: Branding the Richardson Olmsted complex through architectural motif
Lisa J. Mauro
MFA diss, Rochester Institute of Technology
2011
Intended Audience: The public

Review:
This article introduces the motif design and mark design. I think it is a very good article for how to design a motif. I get knowledge of making symbols from it but my focus is more information design not a mark design.

Look, cook, learn: A recipe for improved functionality in cooking design
Anna Mizer
MFA diss, Rochester Institute of Technology
2011
Intended Audience: The public

Review:
This is an information design thesis article. I took it as a reference because we are in the same design area. I also viewed the design while reading the article. I like how Anna show the cooking process in the book. It reflects one of her concepts—learning. And it is very clear that people can get the information easily.
• **Identity and the Museum Visitor Experience**
  John H Falk
  Left Coast Press
  2009
  Intended Audience: The public

  Review:
  This is a very useful book, you can see the operations of a museum from the visitors point of view. The book tells the experience of the visitors in museums and the problems and challenges the museums have. This is very helpful to my thesis topic.

**Conclusion**

• All the sources helped me to find my topic. I think they are all useful. Especially the Logo Station by Lan Shi. It has something related to my study, because I also want to design an application on mobile devices.

  The Signage Design is also very helpful that I learnt information design is not only for visual effects but for navigation and information collecting. I think the thesis statement should be something new and different.

  Therefore, I was trying to use a new view to analyse the problems. I think the statement also should solve problems. Thus, asking questions is a very important part during the study.
Design Ideation

Figure 1:
Symbols used in airports and other transportation hubs and at large international events
Figure 2:
The Minnesota Zoo symbol design by Lance Wyman
Figure 3:

Mexico Metro symbol design by Lance Wyman
Figure 4:
American Museum of Natural History symbol design
by Lance Wyman
Methodological Design

I am going to create an international symbol design system for wayfinding in art museums. I will especially focus on symbols for artworks based on art movements and regions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target Audience</th>
<th>The project is a symbol design for art museums that global audiences can understand, so the target audiences are international museums’ visitors from different age groups.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Approach</td>
<td>• Research the art movements and regions in international founded art museums. Travel around the art history museums in the east coast area in the United States.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Study and analyze how the wayfinding design works, what is needed to be improved in the museums.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Research what symbols for wayfinding are existing and not existing in the museums.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Create an international wayfinding symbol system and applications for art museums.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Design an evaluation form as survey to pick best rank symbols for each section as final pieces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Choose a museum in the United States as my case study. Apply the system and applications in the museum and collect feedback from surveys and questionnaires from museums’ facilities and visitors.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Improve the design in terms of the feedback.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Deliverables

• Symbol Design
• Information Design
• Wayfinding Design
• Motion Design
Implementation Strategies

First of all, I plan to travel different museums and do a lot of research before I start the project. I will implement my research and findings into a wayfinding symbol system design. An actual museum will be chosen as my case study and then I will conduct surveys and feedback from both the museum’s facilities and their visitors. In addition, I want to develop a motion graphic design for the symbol set to show the consistency of the symbols. I will use my graphic design skills to create symbols and the layout of the information design in Adobe Illustrator and InDesign. Motion design will be through After Effects.
Dissemination

I will distribute my research and findings by posting it on my blog, http://ruima.weebly.com

I will also leave printed copies with RIT Archives and the Visual Communication Design program as well as submit electronic copies to the RIT Archives, Digital Media Library, and ProQuest/UMI.

I may potentially submit my thesis research and project to design competitions and/or present in a public venue, such as a conference.
Evaluation Plan

The feedback will be both qualitative and quantitative. My feedback will be from actual museum’s visitors. I want to conduct the research from different places which have a lot museums and visitors.

The target museum might be the Memorial Art Gallery as it is close by. I want to gather feedback from different groups of visitors by conducting surveys and questionnaires. Then I will incorporate the feedback into my project development.
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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Survey: Existing Universal Wayfinding

Symbols used in airports and other transportation hubs and at large international events
Universal Symbols in Health Care Workbook
Selection of Museums for Case Study

There are a lot of different types of museums: children’s museums, history museums, art museums, design museums, natural history museums, and so on. The author chose art museums, which have art work that exemplify both universal cultures and personal style. The first selection was contemporary art and design museums as the thesis case study. After collecting information of categories in art and design museums, the research shows that it is difficult to symbolize each category because works in contemporary art and design museums are of various styles and trends.

After doing research and collecting suggestions from museum study experts, the author decided to take the traditional art museum as the thesis case study as it has more fixed categories of artwork. The author did the research and information gathering about the categories and wayfinding designs, based on the maps of two museums in the United States and two in France, on pages 83–97.
The French maps were from the author’s aunt who got them from museums in France.

The American maps were from the museums’ official websites.

Figure 1
INFORMATION

OPENING TIMES
10.00 am – 6.00 pm (Friday, 10.00 – 8.00 pm)
Closed on Tuesdays and official holidays.
Closure of the ticket office: 5.50 pm
Pre-closure of the museum: 5.30 pm

VISITORS WITH REDUCED MOBILITY
The permanent collection and temporary exhibitions are accessible to wheelchair users. Wheelchairs are available at the museum.
Access by 88-11 place des Terreaux.
Please call in advance: +33 (0)4 78 10 17 40

VISITORS WITH CHILDREN
Frontal baby-carriers and light pushchairs are available (to replace back-mounted carriers).

GROUP VISITS
For 30 or more people, please make a reservation.
Telephone: +33 (0)4 78 10 17 52
Email: ecole-educateurs-mn@musée-lyon.fr

TICKETS
On sale at the museum – valid all day.
Free admission, or reductions, for certain categories of visitors.
Ticket: permanent collection plus temporary exhibitions.
Season ticket for entry to all of Lyon’s municipal museums.
Holders of the CityPass (on sale at the Ticket Office) have free admission to the permanent collection and temporary exhibitions.

CLOAKROOM
There is no charge; bags, pushchairs and umbrellas must be checked in.

LIBRARY
The Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon (MBAL) library is now open to the public.
Telephone: +33 (0)4 78 28 12 45

Figure 2

BOOKSHOP AND BOUTIQUE
Reunion des Musées Nationaux

BOOKSHOP (free admission)
1st floor, same opening times as the museum
Telephone: +33 (0)4 78 29 66 15
Fax: +33 (0)4 78 50 99 75

CAFE-RESTAURANT
LES TERRASSES SAINT-PIERRE
Food and drinks are available throughout the day at St Paul St Pierre, situated between the bookshop and the latestFilion amphitheatre, overlooking the sculpture garden.
Free admission during the museum’s opening hours.
For reservations, call +33 (0)4 78 30 19 65

LES AMIS DU MUSÉE DES BEAUX-ARTS DE LYON
The aim of the association Les Amis du Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon is to support and publicise the museum and its activities. Members have free admission to the permanent collection and temporary exhibitions.
Telephone: +33 (0)4 78 59 23 38

MUSÉE DES BEAUX-ARTS DE LYON
20 place des Terreaux, 69001 Lyon
Telephone: +33 (0)4 78 28 12 45

84
THE COLLECTIONS

19th and 20th-Century Sculpture
Housed in the Chapel

Antiquities
Egyptian Antiquities
Near and Middle Eastern Antiquities
Greek Antiquities
Roman Antiquities

Sculpture and Objets d’Art
The Middle Ages
Islamic Art
The Coin and Medal Room
The Renaissance
Far Eastern Ceramics
Decorative Arts, 17th-20th centuries

Paintings
Primitives
Italian Renaissance Paintings
17th Century Italian, French, Flemish and Dutch Paintings
Paintings from the 18th Century and the First Half of the 19th Century
French Paintings from the Late 19th and Early 20th Centuries / The Jacqueline Didulescu Collection
20th Century Paintings

Temporary Exhibitions
The presentation of some works may be modified during special exhibitions or as a result of loans to other institutions.

Disability access
Public access
Information
Reception
Groups
Tickets
Dialoue
Bookshop
Boutique
Mimi folliard amphitheatre
Restaurant
Toilets (including facilities for people with reduced mobility)
Telephone
Stairs
Lift

The Museum of Fine Arts, with its 70 exhibition rooms, occupies a former Benedictine abbey dating from the 17th century. The building was entirely renovated between 1990 and 1996. The collection is divided up among five departments: Antiquities, Objets d’Art, Coin and Medal Rooms, Paintings, Graphic Arts, Sculpture. At the heart of the building there is a sculpture garden with a cloister running round it.

Cultural and Educational Activities
Guided visits, thematic visits, workshops, initiation and ongoing study workshops for young people, adults (individuals and groups), families and the general public.

Telephone: +33 (0)4 72 10 17 52
Fax: +33 (0)4 72 10 14 03
Email: musee-mbb@paris-moms.fr

Library and Documentation Department
The library has more than 40,000 text works on art history and criticism, catalogues, reviews and museum bulletins. The documentation department has academic literature on the works in the museum’s collection, and on artists from Europe.

17 pl. des Enfants
69090 Lyon
Telephone: +33 (0)4 72 10 17 44
Opening times: Wednesday – Friday: 2:00 – 5:45 pm

Works of art are unique and delicate.
They have survived for centuries and must be preserved for future generations. Touching, even
Figure 4
Figure 5
Figure 6
Figure 2
Figure 1
Sections in each museum were analyzed and summarized. For the thesis design, they were put into three groups: Main Section, Period/Century and Sub Section.

### Louvre Museum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Main Section</th>
<th>Period / Century</th>
<th>Sub Section</th>
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<td>Italian</td>
<td>11th–15th c./16th–19th c.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>13th–15th c./16–17/17–18</td>
<td>Painting</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Northern European</td>
<td>12th–16th c./16th–19th c.</td>
<td>Sculpture</td>
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<tr>
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<td>French</td>
<td>5th–18th c./18th–19th</td>
<td>Sculpture, Painting</td>
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<td>14–17/17th/18th/19th</td>
<td>Painting</td>
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<td>German</td>
<td>15th–16th/18th–19th</td>
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<td>15th/16th</td>
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<td>17th</td>
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<td>African</td>
<td>17th c./17–18/19/ Middle Ages</td>
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According to the information from the summary, a symbol list containing 22 sections was created for the design symbol sections.

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<td>Islamic</td>
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| TOTAL                               | 22         |
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Development of Museum Symbols

First & Second Attempt

According to the feedback from professors and classmates during midterm defense presentation, the outline symbols were invisible in very small applications. Thus, two formats of the symbols were designed to fit different media applications.

Final symbols with refinements
Survey: Usability Testing

After collecting feedback from art and museum experts, professors and classmates, the author took part in ImagineRIT on May 3, 2014, at RIT James E. Booth Hall, and interviewed 17 people. Users filled out the survey and gave comments and their suggestions on the symbol meanings.
Survey: Usability Testing
## Survey Results

### Symbols in art museums for wayfinding (Responses)

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<th>Reasons</th>
<th>2 Which symbol do you think is better for Greek collections in art museums?</th>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>3 Which symbol do you think is better for Egyptian collections in art museums?</th>
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Refinements After Feedback

The symbols on the right are the decided sections and visual directions based on feedback from the survey. The survey results showed people’s preferred symbol meanings for different sections.
Comparison of the symbols before and after feedback from design professionals, classmates and the survey.
Bibliography
Bibliography


