

Wes Anderson: The Archives

Amber Dunning

Backstage: Global Marketing Strategies for the Creative Sector

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Executive Summary

The Design Museum recently opened their exhibit, *Wes Anderson: The Archives* to the public. This exhibit features over 30 years worth of Wes Anderson's work, as well as personal archives that have never before been displayed in Britain. The current campaign relies on digital advertisements through social platforms, websites, film content, and immersive experiences throughout the museum inspired by the exhibit.

This paper provides an analysis of the Design Museum's current marketing campaign, a fieldwork log, audience profiles, and provides suggestions for a new marketing campaign and budget, with elements such as exclusive collectibles, city wide stylized advertising, and content collaborations. The goal of this new campaign is to increase ticket sales, encourage repeat visits, improve digital engagement, and elevate the brand perception of the Design Museum for audiences.

Intro

Founded in 1989 by Sir Terence Conran, The Design Museum is a "place in the UK where the design industry, education and the public come together to change the way people think about themselves and the future through the lens of design." (the Design Museum, NA). Located on Kensington High Street, the museum is situated in a cultural hub of community and art. Its focuses are on contemporary works meant for the public. You can purchase tickets in advance, become a member, donate, or visit the online shop through their website. The Design Museum's vision is that "Design enables this planet and its inhabitants to thrive", and their mission is stated "To be a global hub for the transformative potential of design" (Design Museum, NA). The values listed on their website are empathy, collaboration, curiosity, and impact, and the museum is committed to both design for a greener future, and equality, diversity, and inclusion. They support venue hire for a variety of events, offer a Master's program in Curating Contemporary Design in partnership with Kingston University, and hold courses and workshops for adults and young people.

On the 21st of November, the Design Museum opened the *Wes Anderson: The Archives* exhibit to the public. This exhibit features a retrospective archive of Anderson's cinematic work, as well as some of his more personal items, most of which is being displayed in Britain for the first time, and is the culmination of over three decades worth of filmmaking. The work showcased at the Design Museum includes items from every phase of film production, such as scripts and storyboards, wardrobe, props, set design, and music composition. The displays span from his earliest films to his most recent productions and collaborations. Amongst the films showcased are 'The Grand Budapest

Hotel', 'Fantastic Mr. Fox', and 'Asteroid City'. The exhibit will run until the 26th of July, 2026.

Fieldwork Log

I visited the Wes Anderson: The Archives exhibit at the Design Museum on November 25, around 1:00 pm. I was able to purchase tickets the day of attendance despite the museum being fairly busy, particularly the Wes Anderson exhibit. Ticketing was reasonably priced, but on the more pricey side. Adult tickets are £19.69, but there is a student discount for £14.77. Upon entering the museum, there is a concierge desk in the style of the Wes Anderson film *The Grand Budapest Hotel*. The exhibit is on the ground floor right by the front doors, so it is quite easy access for what is presumably one of their more popular exhibits. The exhibit itself was very well curated as every detail felt like it could be a part of a Wes Anderson set. For instance, the walls were painted bright red, the immersive aspects outside of the exhibit were set replicas, and the music that was played throughout the exhibit were songs featured on the soundtracks of his films.

The demographic of the attendees I observed ranged from young adults to elderly people of both genders. There were no children under the ages of 15 when I attended. The people in attendance seemed to move quite slowly throughout the exhibit as there was a lot to take in. The exhibit features everything from scripts and storyboards, music composition sheets, wardrobe and costumes, props, character puppets, behind the scenes photos, to short clips of films. At the very end, there is a screening room where four of Anderson's short films are shown (see figure 10). Once you exit the exhibit, there are two gift shops. One is a gift shop exclusive to the Wes Anderson exhibit, and only sells merchandise that is specifically for the exhibit. Once you exit that gift shop, there is the general museum gift shop, which also sells much of the Wes Anderson merchandise, so anyone can purchase these items even if they don't attend the exhibit.

Images Table

 A photograph of the entrance to the exhibit. The space is a large, well-lit hall with a polished floor. A red velvet rope is strung between gold stanchions, leading towards the exhibit area. In the background, there are large posters for 'WES ANDERSON THE ARCHIVES' and a person standing on a raised platform.	Figure 1. The entrance to the exhibit
 A photograph of a red wall display. On the left is a framed poster for the movie 'BOTTLE ROCKET'. To its right is a large white informational panel titled 'BOTTLE ROCKET FROM HOUSTON TO HOLLYWOOD' with detailed text. Below the poster is a small framed document.	Figure 2. About the Artist
 A photograph of a museum display for the movie 'Rushmore'. The display is set on a red carpeted stage with a red curtain background. It features several mannequins wearing different outfits, including a green suit and a blue suit. A large, stylized 'RUSHMORE' sign is prominently displayed in the foreground. Informational panels are visible on the floor.	Figure 3. Wardrobe from the movie Rushmore Example of the items curated

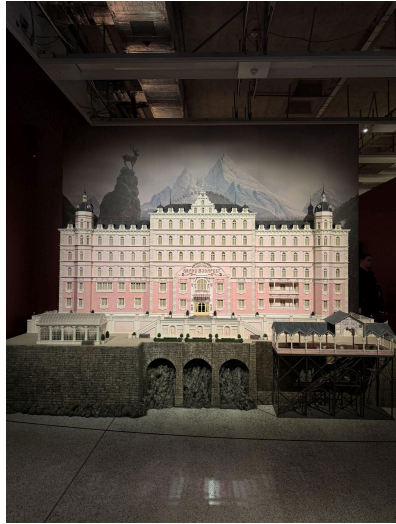


Figure 4.

Set scale of the Grand Budapest Hotel
Example of the items curated



Figure 5.

Photobooth opportunity and gift shop
Exit of the exhibit

Audience Profiling

Observations

While attending the exhibit, I observed quite a varied group of people who were also in attendance. They ranged from the ages of 20 to 70, male and female, were in attendance alone or with a friend and partner, and seemed to be invested in the arts, Wes Anderson, or just curious and more so aware of the exhibit due to their own membership with the museum. This audience is oriented to creativity and the arts, and value the details of the process, preferring exhibits and events that might highlight this aspect. They are culturally engaged, attending events and experiences such as films, concerts, and museums. This audience is socially motivated, hence why they attend

mostly with friends or partners. And lastly, this audience may be driven by their own nostalgia for Wes Anderson's work. They may feel an emotional connection to his films, such as *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, *Fantastic Mr. Fox*, or *Moonrise Kingdom*. I would describe this audience as design enthusiasts, Wes Anderson fans, cinephiles, and perhaps culture seeking participators.

Behavior and Motivations

This particular audience favors experiences that are curated, and visit about 5-15 events per year depending on their income. They stay up to date through social media platforms such as TikTok and Instagram, and follow artists, brand accounts, and accounts for their interests such as film accounts. The purchases they make at these events include food, merchandise, exhibition books, and memberships. They would be interested in seeing behind the scenes content of these exhibits, or artist and curator commentary. This audience is motivated by their own interests and connections to the art. For instance, a personal connection to Wes Anderson's films. They appreciate a design focused experience, as well as immersive events and opportunities. This could look like a photobooth, a pop up shop, or cafe and styled dining event. They are also motivated by their curiosity for new aesthetic inspiration, and exclusive access to items that feature a more behind the scenes aspect to art they appreciate, such as storyboards, scripts, and wardrobe design. As artists themselves, they appreciate seeing behind the scenes for inspiration from arts they admire.

A personas chart highlighting these components is attached down below.

Personas Chart

Categories	Persona 1	Persona 2
Age	20+	60+
Sex	Female	Male
Income	< 20,000	50,000 - 80,000
Class	Middle Class	Middle Class
Civil Status	Non-Married	Married
Education	High School / Bachelor's	Bachelor's / Master's
Career	Student / Creative	Retired
Loyalty	Visits occasionally	Has membership

	depending on exhibit	
Frequency of Museum Visits	1-2 times per month	2-3 times per month
Accompanied by	Friends	Alone or partner
Motivation	Curiosity, inspiration	Interest, activity
Cultural Interests	Film, production design, writing, popular culture, industry enthusiast	Art, design, film, museum curation
Hobbies	Art, fashion, filmmaking, design, visiting museums, attend the cinema, reading	Reading, film, visiting museums, attend the cinema
Attitude	Focused more on what aspects of the exhibit interest them, are drawn to their favorite film or production interest (writing, wardrobe, design)	Take their time moving throughout the exhibit, read every prompt and explanation
Spending Habits	Will spend on social events or outings but mindful of costs, receive student discounts for certain events such as museum tickets	Have more disposable income to spend on hobbies, the arts, museum tickets, going out, more financially stable
Media Use	More media literate, spend more time online. Instagram, TikTok	Less media literate, spend less time online. Facebook, Instagram

Macro Persona

Andy is 24 years old. She is London based, unmarried, and without children. She received a Bachelor's degree in graphic design and digital marketing, and works in the creative industries and design. Andy's interests include art, film and photography, and some of her hobbies involve drawing, music and attending events such as concerts and museums in her free time. She is middle class with a lower income as she is just starting out in her career. Her income ranges from about £20,000 to £30,000. This income means she isn't able to spend on social events or unnecessary items often, but as someone who is invested in the arts, she likes to attend social and art focused events when she can. The social platforms that Andy uses primarily are Instagram and

TikTok, and often finds out about social events and exhibits through these platforms and friends. In her free time, Andy likes to hang out with friends at a coffee shop, go to the cinema, or visit museums with exhibits that peak her interest. Andy would be placed in the explorer and creator archetype. Her overall persona would be the “aesthetic explorer”, as she is someone who is culturally curious, and seeks out visually immersive and creative experiences.

Campaign Evaluation

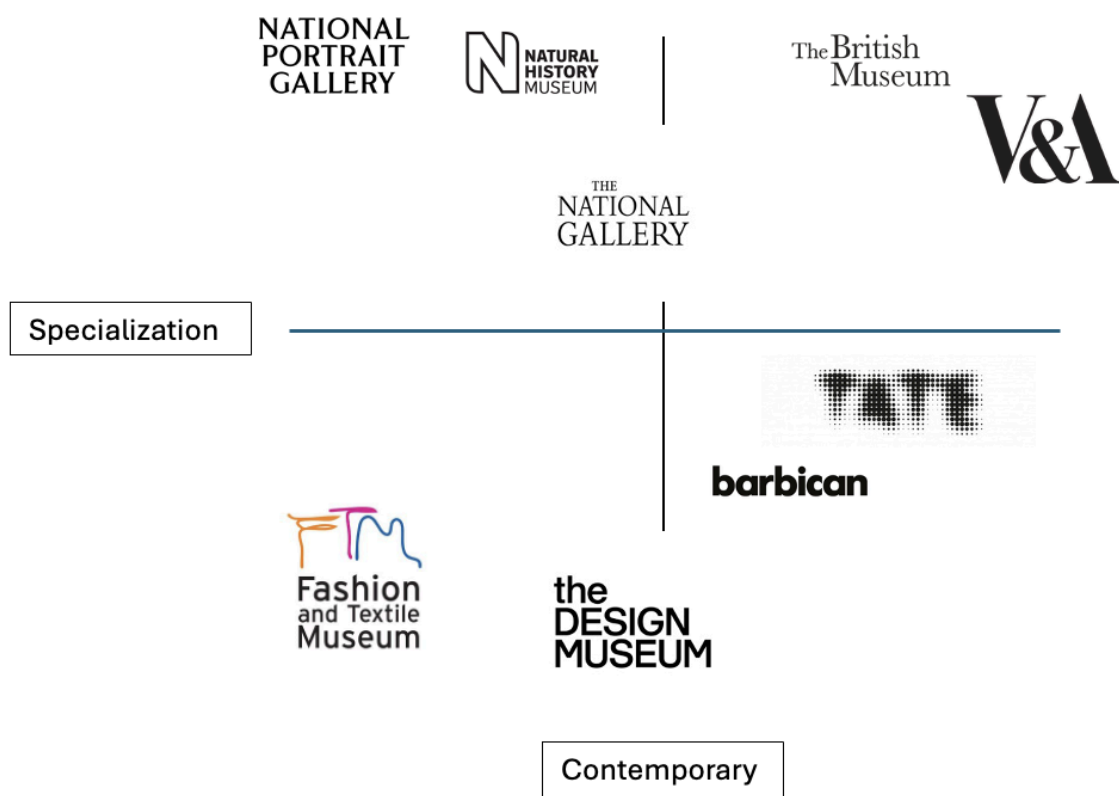
The Design Museum’s campaign for the Wes Anderson exhibit utilizes components such as immersive experiences, social engagement, member discounts, digital platforms such as social media and their website. At the exhibit, there are installations inspired by the film *The Grand Budapest Hotel* which are meant to immerse the attendees. These installations include a concierge, cafe, and photobooth (see figures 1 and 5). The museum has also partnered with Canva to create these installations. This is a strategic collaboration on their behalf, extending the campaign beyond the exhibit. On their instagram, their social platforms, they post images of Anderson’s work, and utilize their own hashtag, #WesAndersonTheArchives, so attendees may post about their experiences at the exhibit (see figure 13). Another thing the museum does is create workshops and masterclasses in relation to the exhibit (see figures 11 and 12). Some workshops they offer include making a needle felted animal, stop motion with clay for children, and sustainable prop making for children. Through this, they are able to involve a younger demographic, and draw attention back to the exhibit. The Design Museum leverages Wes Anderson’s popularity and fame amongst the art world, using his name, work, and signature style as key components to the marketing campaign. Because of this, they have a clear positioning strategy and known audience. They can lean into Anderson’s strong visual identity to tap into the existing market of his fanbase.

The Design Museum also leverages its membership option to position itself to have more long term traction outside of the Wes Anderson exhibit. They offer early member previews, events, and press releases, which in turn rewards those that are loyal to their museum, and encourages others who were not members before to become members if they wish to get special access. They received press and reviews through publications such as Wallpaper, Creative Review, and Campaign Live, which brought the exhibit more awareness to a broader audience.

Despite these initiatives, there are a few things that the campaign is missing, as well as some barriers to attendance. Other than the partnership with Canva, there are no collaborations or partnerships with other content creators or artists. This is a missed

opportunity to use these partners to further involve the film and art community. There is also a lack of advertisement outside of digital marketing, which I believe is limiting their audience demographic. If they were to display advertisements around the city, they would reach a more varied demographic, such as people who might not be familiar with Wes Anderson but are interested in the art and design style, or an older generation who might not be online, but are interested in film. There were a few older people at the exhibit already, but I believe these are people who might be members of the museum, and aware of what is being shown on a monthly basis. Some barriers to attendance may include ticket pricing, having to compete with other London events, and feeling as though the exhibit is too crowded depending on the time of day or how early in the exhibit release one attends.

Positioning Map



This map positions the Design Museum in relation to other London based museums within the creative sector, focusing on specialization and whether the museum showcases primarily contemporary works. I've chosen these two sectors due to the fact that these are how I would differentiate the Design Museum from any other

museum. Although the Design Museum is not the most particular about how specialized their work is, I would still say it is very specialized comparatively when considering other museums such as The British Museum, which displays a large variety of mediums and works from any time period. The museums that are most closely related to the Design Museum, and therefore its biggest competition, are the Barbican and Tate Modern. Both of these museums focus on contemporary works and design, and draw in similar audiences. I would also say that the Fashion and textile Museum is also a prevalent competition for the Design Museum. Although The Fashion and Textile Museum has a more niche and specific focus, they similarly focus on more contemporary works, and most likely draw in the same audience.

New Campaign Recommendations

The goal for the improved campaign is to increase ticket sales amongst a wider audience, encourage repeat visits amongst people who have already attended, improve digital engagement online, and elevate the brand perception of the Design Museum for audiences through the exhibit. I plan to do this through digital first storytelling, experiential touchpoints and aesthetic immersion, as well as collaboration.

City Advertisements

The first suggestion I would implement is advertisements throughout the city. Not only does this implement more ways to market, but allows for the museum to reach a wider audience. The main age range that social platform advertising reaches is people in their 20s to 40s. City advertisements however, can be seen by anyone from the ages of 20 to 70.

This can be done through stylized posters throughout the city and on public transportation such as buses and the tube. The Design Museum can implement a QR code on the posters that lead you to the Website for information and ticketing. These posters will be in the style of Wes Anderson's work, and will be instantly recognizable for lovers of his films, and might peak the interest of those who are not familiar with his work. These posters can also feature some of the props or iconic imagery that will be showcased in the exhibit.

Collaborations

Collaborations is another way that the museum can market the exhibit and reach a wide variety of people. If they were to collaborate with other London institutions such as the BFI for a Wes Anderson film marathon, then they could utilize the BFI's platform and reach their audience as well. Another collaboration I would suggest is doing a panel talk or discussion with the Fashion and Textile Museum on some of the wardrobe and

costume design from Wes' films. This again, allows for the Design Museum to utilize the Fashion and Textile Museum's niche specialization, reach their audience, and give press on some of the items that will be displayed at the exhibit.

Aesthetic Immersification and Experiential Touchpoints

The Design Museum already does an excellent job at creating aesthetic and immersive experiences for audiences. I would suggest some changes and improvements to the already existing events, as well as implementing one new event. The museum has featured an immersive lobby installation with a concierge in the style of *The Grand Budapest Hotel* (see figure 1), as well as a photobooth at the exit and gift shop (see figure 5). There is also a temporary Wes Anderson cafe within the museum serving food and drink that is Wes Anderson themed. This is an exclusive ticketed feature, and is not included in the exhibit. I believe it is important to emphasize this part of the marketing campaign, as it is stated in the Entertainment Marketing and Experiential Consumption article that "The execution aspect refers to the importance of the likeability and memorability of the corresponding experience." (Taylor and Francis, 2006). The successful execution of an immersive experience has the potential to create a more memorable and likeable experience. They could further immerse the exhibit attendees by dressing employees in the bell hop uniform inspired by *The Grand Budapest Hotel* to match the concierge aesthetic, provide props for photo opportunities at the photobooth, and create a space that is made for Instagram features and photos outside of the photobooth.

A new addition I would include is making the tickets collectible art. Whether physical or digital, the museum could implement the same movie poster style as the posters that are used to advertise around the city. Each ticket could feature a different film, and it is randomized which one purchasers receive. This allows for a more premium experience, and encourages repeat visits so that audiences may collect more of the art. This also creates word of mouth and another social aspect, as they may share the tickets they received online with others.

Digital Storytelling

Lastly, the Design Museum has the opportunity to advertise the exhibit through multiple digital components. For instance, creating videos of behind the scenes prop set up, short videos of meeting the curators and designers, and stop motion shorts featuring the puppets from the films, or a brief walk through of part of the exhibit to create excitement. All of this would be distributed through their social platforms. As I mentioned in the campaign evaluation, the museum already has a hashtag to encourage online engagement and participation. I believe this hashtag could be used more to their

advantage, by making it a challenge for audiences to encourage further engagement. #WesLondon is a tag for audiences to film their own Wes Anderson style content and share with the world. This could look like a content creator or collaborator filming a day in their life in London in this style, or someone who's attended the exhibit posting their experience under the tag. This is also a good opportunity for content creators to post their own Wes Anderson inspired work before the launch of the exhibit to generate intrigue and excitement, while leveraging Anderson's online visual following. The Design Museum can post weekly features on their social media accounts, to draw more attention to the hashtag. The hashtag may also promote more visual and aesthetic aspects to the exhibit, which is important for audience alignment. For example, Miranda Boorsma states in her work about integrating customer value and artistic objectives that "The adoption of a relational perspective on art implies that arts organizations are not only engaged in market exchange relationships with their customers, but are also involved in artistic exchange relationships." (Boorsma, 2006).

Budget

Considering the implementation of more comprehensive and involved aspects of marketing, I believe the monetary range for the new campaign should be approximately £150,000 to £300,000. This would cover paid event programming, experiential events, creator partnerships, paid digital and city advertisements, and press.

Allocation of the budget

Category	Share
Outdoor Advertisement	£35,000
Content Production	£30,000
Digital Marketing	£40,000
Experiential Events	£25,000
Press	£10,000

Campaign Plan

For the pre-launch to the exhibit, the Design Museum should start by building anticipation with teaser content, and release photos and videos online with props or content in the style of Wes Anderson. Collaborators or influencers begin the #Wes London challenge, creating content in the style of Wes Anderson to generate interest

and awareness. Outdoor Advertising will be installed. By time the launch happens, the museum will maximize press coverage, boosting awareness and attendance. There will be a press preview, and they can release an opening day film style trailer. To sustain interest half way through the exhibit's time in the museum, they can feature interviews with curators and designers, and do weekly reposts from #WesLondon. In the last month or so, to encourage repeat visits ticket urgency, posts can be made about last chance ticket sales and countdown style posts. Closing the campaign, a final PR push can be made, and a visitor roundup can be posted on social platforms.

Attached is the IMC action plan created for the new suggested campaign.

	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.
Outdoor Ads									
Content Prod.									
Digital Marketing									
Experiential									
Press									

Conclusion

Through analyzing the Design Museum's Wes Anderson: The Archives exhibit, as well as the audience personas for their brand, I have been able to better understand and create a new marketing campaign involving many components that are integral to a successful campaign, creating a long lasting impression on audiences.

Appendices



Figure 6.

Audience watching a short video clip from
a Wes Anderson film
Example of audience persona

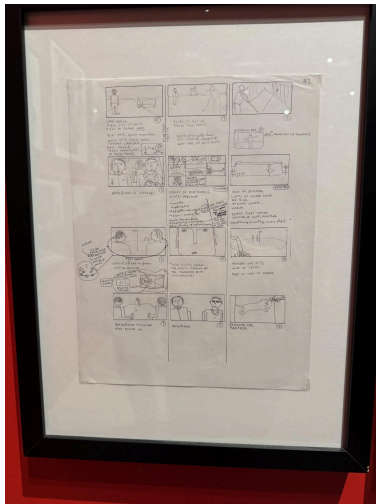


Figure 7.

Storyboard for one of Anderson's earliest
films
Example of items curated

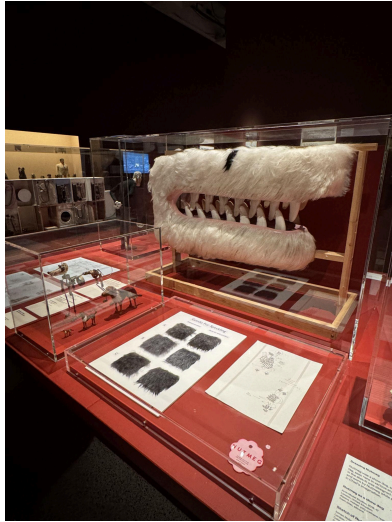


Figure 8.

Puppet development and props for the *Isle of Dogs* film
Example of items curated



Figure 9.

Music composition sheet paired with
behind the scenes photo for the *Fantastic
Mr. Fox* film
Example of items curated



Figure 10.

Programme for the showing of Anderson's short films at the end of the exhibit

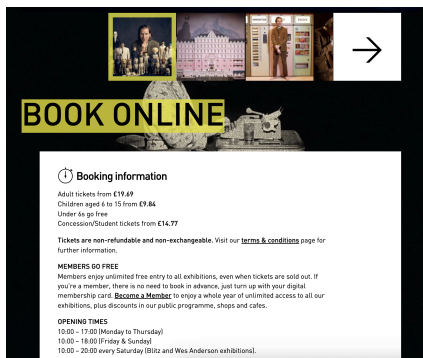


Figure 11.

The Design Museum's website landing page for buying tickets to the exhibit online

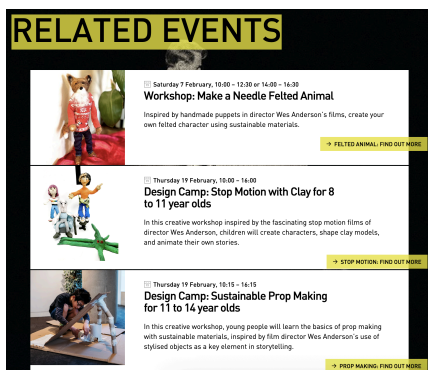


Figure 12.

The Design Museum's offerings of events related to the Wes Anderson exhibit online

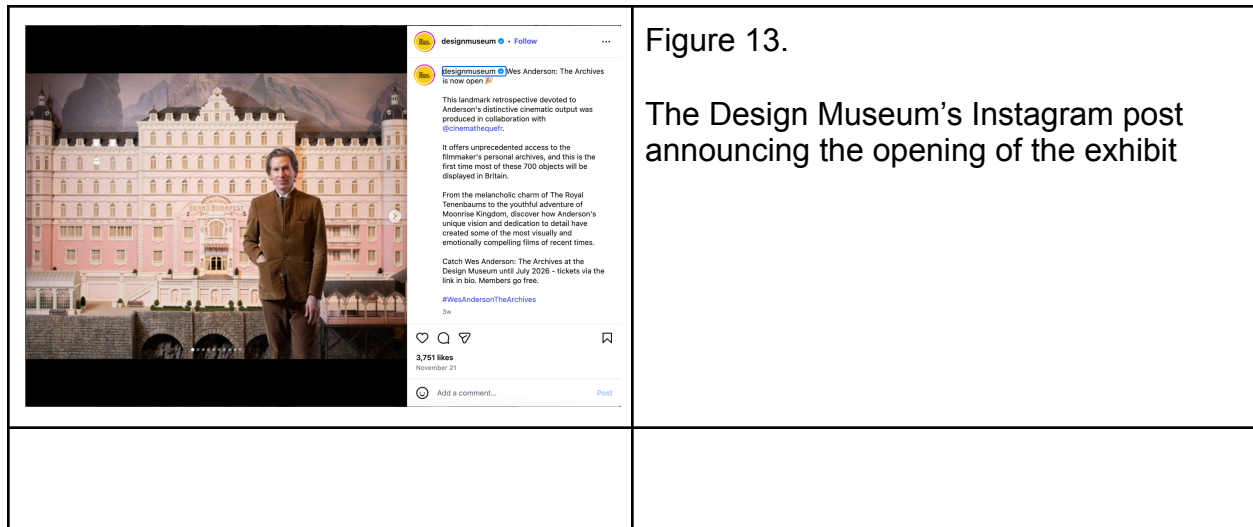


Figure 13.

The Design Museum's Instagram post announcing the opening of the exhibit

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