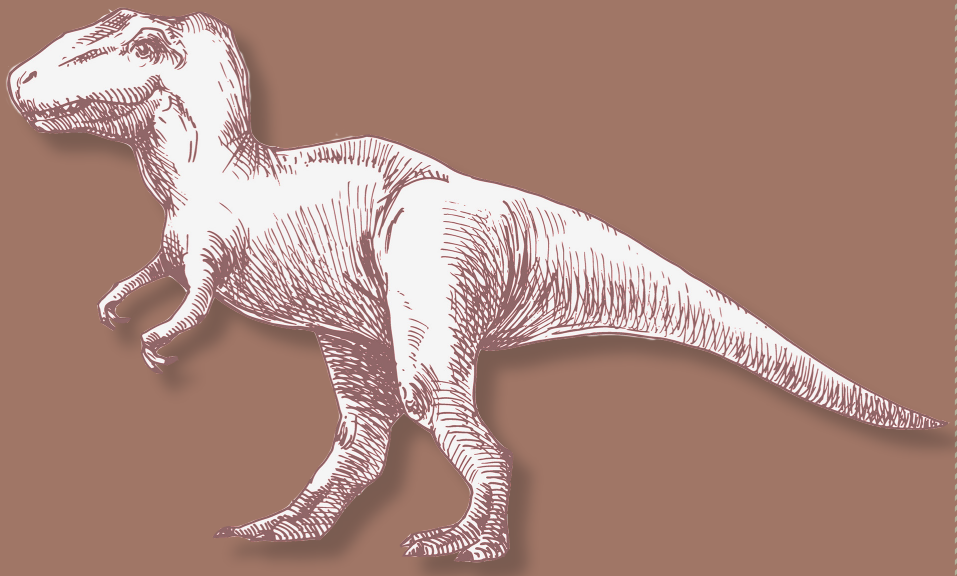
Tyrannosaurus Rex

The *Queen** of the Dinosaurs



By Miranda Rahn

Table Of Contents

My Story 4-5

The Unfortunate History of Zoos 6-7

History of Washington National Zoo 8-9

What is a Symbol Set? 10-11

Washington National Zoo Symbol Set 12-13

Process Work 14-15

Final Symbolform 16-17

Integration into WNZ Symbol Set 18-19

Works Cited 20-21

My Story

Hello there! The purpose of this book is to show you the process of me getting my own exhibit in the Washington National Zoo. I will show you all the research I did, and the design work done by the human I befriended to help me. So here is my story:

It all started when I realized dinosaurs aren't typically featured in zoos. I wanted to be recognized for my awesomeness. So I contacted the people over at the Washington National Zoo, made quite the convincing argument, showed them my vast knowledge and incredible features, and bam - I was in. Well, I did have to show them my teeth and give them a scare first, but it was mostly my research that did it. I recruited the help of a human to do the design work, but the rest was all me. In fact, I showed them this book to really make an impression. So stick around, learn about me and zoos, and look at all the work I have done.

Look at my stats!

T-Rex:



Height: 12 feet

Weight: 11,00 - 15,500 pounds

Habitat: Forests and near rivers

Region: Western United States area

Alive: 66 - 68 million years ago (Cretaceous period)

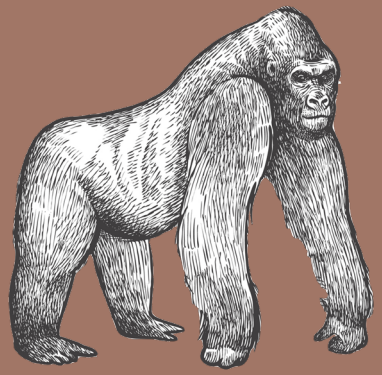
Predators: None

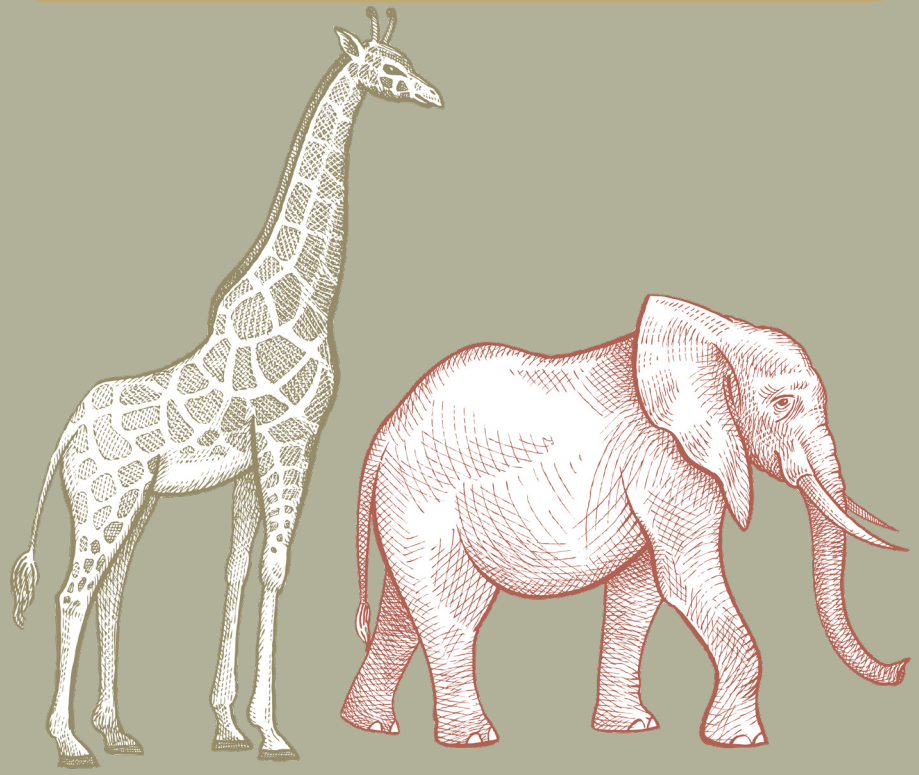
Diet: Meat eater

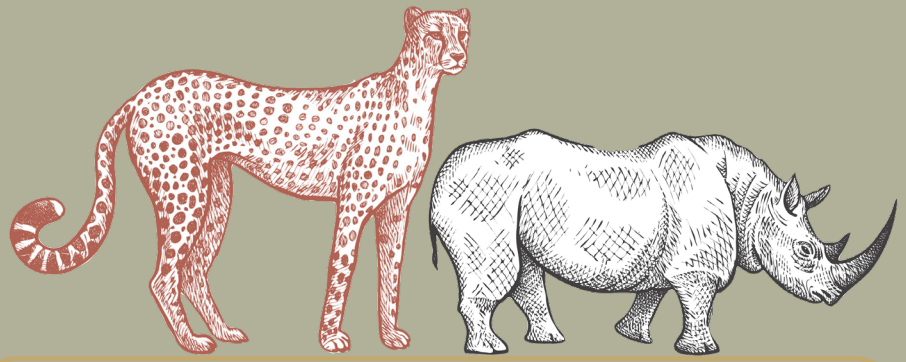
Physical Features: Tiny arms, long tail

Modern Relatives: Chickens

The *Unfortunate* History of Zoos

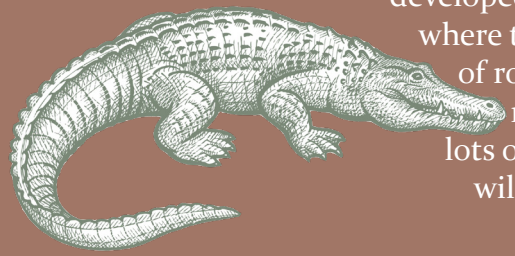






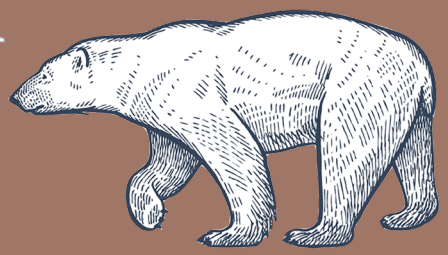
National Geographic defines a zoo as "a place where animals live in captivity and are put on display for people to view". The main purpose of many zoos is to provide people with entertainment using live animals. While modern zoos have come a long way, there are still many zoos that are not in the animal's best interest. An animal's enclosure in a zoo should very closely resemble their natural environment, leaving them with lots of room. Unfortunately, this was not always the standard.

Zoos first started as private exotic animal collections owned by wealthy people. These menageries date all the way back to 2500 BCE. Their main purpose was to show off these animals as if they were trophies. Animals were kept in small cages with no natural habit to surround them, and they sat in these cages all day while people looked at them. Zoos used to be very cruel, and some would argue that even today, zoos remain inhumane. Modern zoos developed over time to have science as the main purpose. They were used as a space for geologists to study animals.



In the US, zoos have mainly developed into large park spaces where the animals have plenty of room, are surrounded by natural habitat, and get lots of attention. A good zoo will know the limits of the animals.

History of Washington National Zoo







The Washington National Zoo first started as the National Museum's Department of Living Animals. It didn't become part of the Smithsonian until 1890. It originally started as a dream of William Temple Hornaday when he wanted a place to protect endangered species, specifically, bison. The zoo officially opened its door in 1891.

In the 1950s, the zoo turned its attention to animal care, when they hired their first veterinarian. About 10 years later, the zoo added the Conservation Research Center.
The zoo has dedicated its many years to protecting animals of all species.

Today, the Washington National Zoo has over 2,000 animals, of which are representing 400 species. Many conservationists work there to protect endangered species to get them out of danger. They continue to provide research and hospitality to all animals.

What is a Symbol Set?

To put it simply, a symbol set is just a set of symbols. To put it into fancier words: “Collections of symbols that cover a wide vocabulary are called a symbol set.” The purpose of a symbol set is to universally show what something says.

When brands put together a specific set of symbols, it is to create consistency throughout that branding. You will often see symbol sets used through zoos and parks to help people better understand what they are going to see, and where it is.

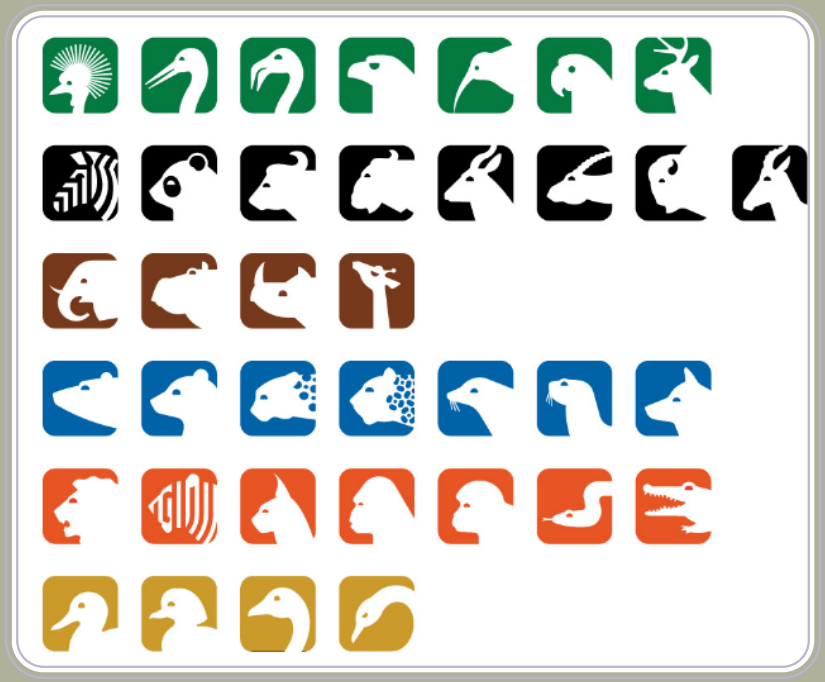


You might be thinking, those are just icons, but there is actually a difference between icons and symbols. Icons tend to show exactly what the thing is supposed to do, while symbols can be more abstract. For example, you have probably seen a gear symbol used to indicate settings. This is a symbol because it indicates the changing of the settings, but someone might not look at that and immediately think “settings”. On the other side, an icon would be something like an image of a laptop closing with an arrow going down. That shows exactly what is happening.

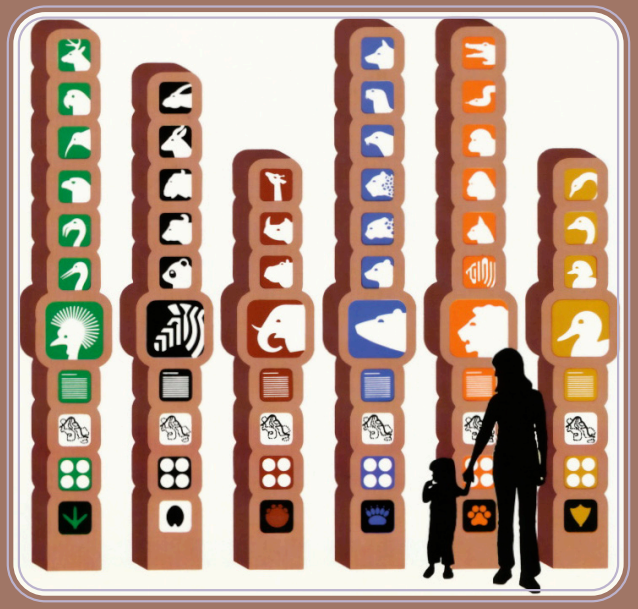
When brands put together a symbol set, it is consistent throughout the design so it looks like it all belongs together, and they are used to show a wide variety of things or functions.

This brings me to the best example and the whole reason for this project: the Washington National Zoo Symbol Set.

Washington National Zoo Symbol Set



The Washington National Zoo (aka the Smithsonian National Zoo) has a distinctive set of symbols they use throughout their walkways. The original concept was to create new way-finding signage when the park was first renovated to create room for more animals and exhibits. By way-finding signage, I mean the symbols that are along the walkways that show you where to go and what is on the path. The symbol set was designed by Wyman & Cannan, with each animal getting its own symbol and color category.



They put the groups of symbols on large totem poles on the pathway through the zoo, guiding the guests on the best path while going past all the major animal attractions. According to Cannan, the purpose was to allow the zoo to be split up, so you didn't have to do everything at once, and could follow the signs to what you wanted to see. Accompanying these symbols, large animal prints also follow the paths for you to follow along with.

Process Work

In order to get my symbol in the WNZ, I needed to work with a human to get the symbol just right. We started with some thumbnails, and then we refined from there, and then we did even more refining, and finally we arrived at the perfect symbol. So for now, let me show you what we came up with for the thumbnails.

Thumbnails



The human and I went through so many versions of my symbol. Sometimes when I look at these, I can't even see any differences! According to her, the eye shape was changed a few times, the thickness and length of the jaw was changed, the shape of the nose was changed, and how much of my neck was showing. There were even more than this, but this is just a taste.

Final Symbolform





It was down to the final two compositions. After countless hours and relentless feedback, it was time to combine the best of the two and make the final symbolform.



What we changed:

- We made the eye bigger, and it now matches the shape of the other animals in the symbol set
- The head is leaning back a bit
- The teeth are more uniform and less jagged
- We got rid of the nose because it didn't match very well

Integration Into WNZ Symbol Set



The moment we have all been waiting for...

My integration into the Washington National Zoo Symbol Set!

And that's it, folks.

Thank you for showing an interest in my journey!

And thank you for reading!

Works Cited

Information

Rutledge, Kim. “Zoo.” Education, 2022, https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/zoo/.

“History.” Smithsonian’s National Zoo, 28 Mar. 2023, https://nationalzoo.si.edu/about/history.

Widgit. “Intro to Symbols: Symbol Sets: Widgit.” Widgit Software, https://www.widgit.com

Cannan, Sean. National Zoo, http://billcannandesign.com/zoo.html.

Smithsonian Institution. “Tyrannosaurus Rex.” Smithsonian Institution, 15 Apr. 2023, https://www.si.edu

Wyman. “National Zoo Exhibit Icons & Wayfinding.” Lance Wyman, http://lancewyman.com.

Images

Vorona, Marina. “Engraving of African Animals.” Adobe Stock. https://stock.adobe.com

Zenina. “Beautiful Set With Cute Vector Dinosaur Illustrations.” Adobe Stock. https://stock.adobe.com

Spring 2023



Miranda Rahn