

Branding and Visual Identity for MO Museum

1. Challenge

Not every day, you get to create the face of the museum. Especially one that the whole country has eyes on. MO is a modern art museum in Vilnius, launched in October 2018. Viktoras & Danguolė Butkai opened it after they sold their lucrative biochemistry business. The couple has carefully collected amazing 5,000 pieces of the best modern Lithuanian art themselves and self-financed a building that was constructed by Studio Liebeskind. MO museum trusted Godspeed with creating all of its branding. From the name and logo to the little details. Mr. Butkus had a goal for MO to become self-sustaining after the opening. Hence the museum had to be welcoming and approachable to all. A challenge for us was to create a visual identity that would correspond to that.

2. Our Solution

We began with the name. It took a few months to find the right one. MO is short for 'modern' which captures the essence of this museum. It's also about 'more' – more people to see art and more engagement. Plus, MO is not only a museum. There's a cafe, a cinema, a shop and more at MO.

The architecture inspired the logotype. We synthesized many sharp angles of the building into a never-ending M. It's dynamic and moves in a way that emotions, caused by art, might sometimes move. We think a vigorous symbol is crucial for such a place that always changes. Plus, MO logotype can now be integrated into the many words the museum may use for communication.

We had to create a way that shows the system. It consists of two elements. The icons are relaxed. Their style conveys the mission of MO – art can be accessible to everyone. Artist Artiom Brančel created them and painted by hand. They're quirky and human. The other element is the names. Their neutral character contrasts the playful icons. The letters are slightly embossed. We think volume tends to attract the eye. The shadows complete the design.

We created quite a few communication tools, and we keep on doing that. From bags to jumpers, from membership cards to posters – even the smallest elements maintain the visual identity, which is dominated by the red color and dynamic composition of the logo. Red color helps items not to get lost in the museum. No excessive decorativeness is used. MO logo lives an expansive life at MO Shop. Collaborating artists have used it for their products in many cases. The visual identity has even been applied in MO Bistro, where the beer supplier adapted the style for its product.