

# Graphic design for creating a visual identity of Shiraz' Eram Botanical Garden

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## Abstract

Many Iranian gardens, especially those registered nationally and internationally, are full of pure Iranian art. One of the most beautiful gardens is Eram Botanical Garden. Available studies and visual evidence show no proper effort has been made for this garden to preserve and reproduce its visual heritage. Findings taken from motifs are shown in the form of logos and graphic images. The results of this study show that this garden, with a clear graphic identity based on its values and modern graphic designs, will increase the prosperity of Iranian art, and the development of tourism attracts and guides the audience.

## Keywords

Motif; graphic images; visual identity; Eram Botanical Garden

## Diseño gráfico para la creación de una identidad visual del Jardín Botánico Eram de Shiraz

### Abstracto

Muchos jardines iraníes, especialmente los registrados a nivel nacional e internacional, están llenos de puro arte iraní. Uno de los jardines más hermosos es el Jardín Botánico Eram. Estudios disponibles y evidencias visuales muestran que no se ha realizado ningún esfuerzo para que este jardín preserve y reproduzca su patrimonio visual. Los hallazgos tomados en los motivos muestran en la forma logotipos e imágenes gráficas. Los resultados de este estudio muestran que este jardín, con una clara identidad gráfica basado en sus valores y diseños gráficos modernos, aumentará la prosperidad del arte iraní, el desarrollo del turismo y la atracción y guía de la audiencia.

## Palabras clave

Motivo; imágenes gráficas; identidad visual; Jardín Botánico Eram

## Introduction

"Garden in Iranian culture and history is something far more beyond a collection of trees, flowers, and plants. The Persian garden is a unique combination of water, soil, plants, architecture, art, order, and arrangement with the song and flight of birds and the sound of water moving through the rows of trees, and a unique painting of colorful and fragrant flowers that caresses not only eyes and ears but also the human soul and the most pleasant kind of peace waves in it. Shiraz'Eram Botanical Garden, as one of the oldest Iranian gardens with about 900 years of history, has always been noticed and praised by historians and has attracted the opinion of historians considering that it has seen different periods of Shiraz history during the 9th century. Shiraz'Eram Botanical Garden is a multi-purpose garden that has all the historical-traditional, recreational-recreational, scientific-botanical aspects and recently a museum as a whole. And therefore, this garden is probably unique in our country. In addition, since Shiraz'Eram Botanical Garden is especially important from a botanical aspect, in this regard, the mission and role of this garden in promoting environmental culture and tourism activities, especially tourism in Shiraz, has become very important. Considering UNESCO and its global registration process under the title of "Iranian Garden on the UNESCO Table", the importance of this garden becomes more apparent.

"Many Iranian gardens, especially those registered nationally and internationally, are full of pure Iranian art. Shiraz also has many other gardens and orchards from ancient times, each of which has expressed the style of architecture and art of its time. Shiraz has more than two thousand old gardens, of which only some are still standing" (Kamali Sarvestani, 2005). Communication has been one of the basic human needs for a long time, and the best type of human communication is communication through the language of images and writing, because anyone with any language and any level of knowledge can understand a specific language and communicate through it. On the other hand, digital arts, which are mainly being extended by the development of graphics, although effective in the development of visual language and communication, sometimes causes forgetfulness and destruction of a country's culture and visual identity. In Iran, the matter of forgetting the Iranian identity and visual elements in various fields has reduced the visual nature. And considering that appropriate visual functions based on graphic design have not been performed in Shiraz'Eram Botanical Garden and the production of visual content based on Ira-

nian nature is one of the concerns that can play a significant role in identifying culture and art, creating visual identity.

Research on the use of metalwork's abstract motifs of Seljuk's period in the design of urban green space furniture has tried to make the people of Iran familiar with their culture, art, civilization, and identity by transferring these motifs to social life environments. And besides, these bring peace and create as much beauty as possible in urban spaces. This research evaluates Seljuk's metalwork motifs as elements and has used an abstract form in the design of green space furniture (Shaistefar, 2006).

In the mentioned research, the abstract and decorative motifs of Seljuk era's metalwork were used to create environmental graphics in urban spaces such as benches, trash cans, etc., and for a similar purpose, we conducted our research on one of the important historical buildings of Iran, called Eram Botanical Garden, whose initial plans were built in the Seljuk period and the main mansion was built in the Qajar period. And by using decorative motifs and crescents extracted from the main building, we created the graphic identity of this garden, with the difference that in our research we tried to create a visual identity for this historical garden itself, not an identity for using in urban environment. The reproduction and creation of contemporary visual patterns of Eram Botanical Garden are based on the principles and criteria of the contemporary graphic. The main purpose of this research is to determine and identify graphic design to create a visual identity for Eram Shiraz Botanical Garden. This research seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the process and position of the nature of the visual identity of Shiraz 'Eram Botanical Garden?
2. What are the graphic functions of the designs and drawings of the Shiraz'Eram Botanical Garden?
3. What are the graphic design and visual identity in different parts of the Shiraz'Eram Botanical Garden?

## Theoretical foundation

In a study entitled "A Creative Research Process for a Modern African Graphic Design Identity: The Case of the Ivory Coast", the author seeks to define a research method in graphic design that would result in a new graphic design with an African identity, (particularly an Ivorian identity). Based on the data collected, this research analyses the usage of elements from the culture of a country,



Figure 1. Front view of the main building of Shiraz' Eram Botanical Garden. Source: (Author).



Figure 2. Back view of the main building of Shiraz' Eram Botanical Garden. Source: (Author).

such as cultural concepts, graphic symbols, traditional colors, and others in modern graphic design (Yeo & Cao, 2021). Another study under the title of "Cultural Identity in Graphic Design" states that %95.2 of designers in Saudi Arabia claim that they apply cultural identity in creation of their designs,

and they use a variety of means to express this. (Wasmeh, 2019). In "Cultural Identity Crisis with-in Contemporary Graphic Design, Case Study: Lebanon" the author has expressed that visual representations of Lebanese culture are rich and diverse. Traditionally, Lebanese culture is a unique



mixture of the East and West. However, Westernization jeopardizes this cultural identity in contemporary Lebanese graphic design. Adjustments are necessary for design studies through the modernization of Lebanese visual culture within graphic contexts. The future existence of a Lebanese visual cultural identity is possible through changes in graphic design studies (Khoury M & Khoury T, 2017). The study "Representation of the National Identity of Iran in Graphic Design in the Age of Globalization" is an attempt to reveal the place of Iranian Graphic in the challenge between the national identity and the global culture, focusing on the most influencing event, namely Iran's biennial graphic (Maleki, Asadollahi & Shahrudi, 2016). In "The Nature of Iranian Visual Culture Represented Graphically", author expresses that the concept of Iranian visual identity and the way it is represented graphically (Javani, Khazaei & Kolahkaj, 2015).

The author of "The Importance of Environmental Graphic Identification in Historical Areas (a case study of Chaghazanbil World Heritage)" states that one of the fields of revitalizing culture and social identity is paying attention to the visual identity of environmental graphics and furniture of human habitat, which is a reflection of human behavior and actions. In the same way, it seems necessary to pay more attention to the native atmosphere of historical regions, as a symbol of the culture and civilization of a region or a nation (Turabi & Sodagar, 2014). In the study entitled "Reading the Discourse of the Narrator's Tile, the Narrator at the Entrance of Eram Garden in Shiraz", author read the tile narratives on the east side of the main building of Eram Garden (Attarzadeh & Etihad Mohkam, 2013). Through "Thematic Study and Classification of Murals in Shiraz Eram Garden", the nature and functions of each mural in the main building and the back of Eram Garden was examined and the important designs of this historic garden was emphasized (Shokouhian & Shirazi, 2010). "Cultural Symbols in Urban Views: Demonstration of Meaning, Sense of Identity & Spiritual Relief" was an attempt to investigate the communicative role of symbols and signs in ancient cities, and to discuss the philosophy and way of using these signs. And also to determine the implementation strategies to their usage in new cities (Karimian, 2009). A study entitled "Cultural Influences on the Design Process" describes the research approach, i.e. how to investigate cultural influences and their effects on the design process. For this, the characteristics to be investigated are derived from the literature on design and cultural studies. An empirical study will be carried out

to identify relevant cultural factors and determine their effects. Based on the results, guidelines for engineering designers and project leaders will be developed to deal with cultural influences (Gautam & Blessing, 2007). "Cultural Identity and Globalization: A Sociological study" it is concluded that there are changes that touch all members of society, and that identity in the contemporary world stems from the multiplicity of sources that increase day after day. It stems from location, gender, language, religion, ethnicity, social class, common culture, etc... and not accepting this, leads to many problems (El-Kassas, 2005).

Under the book title "Comprehensive visual identity design", visual identity is mentioned as a factor to expand the presence of organizations in various fields and increase competition between them (Sepehr, 2019). The book "Identity designed: The definitive Guide to Visual Branding" states that a designed identity is essential not only for designers but also for entrepreneurs who want to have a good business with a better understanding of how to design well (Airey, 2019). In "Book of Branding: A Guide to Creating a Brand Identity for Startups and Beyond" it is stated that for new businesses, start-ups and, etc. Visual identity is the heart of a brand strategy (Malinic, 2019). The study "Shifting Identities in Wu Bin's Album of the Twenty-Five Dharma-Gates of Perfect Wisdom" it is concluded that many of the current labels in Wu Bin's Hua lengyan ershiwu yuantong foxiang ce (Album of the twenty-five dharma-gates of perfect wisdom) are erroneous and proposes new identifications for these Buddhist sages (Lo, 2016). In "The Legend of Shiraz: Along with 900 Years of the Story of Eram Garden" is given a comprehensive description of the history and history of Bagh-e Eram and the architecture and structural details along with Iranian taste and art used in this building. Describing Sarvanaz (Eram's cypresses are called Sarvanaz) and examining the botanical status of Eram Garden, as well as telling the legends of Shiraz and events, incidents and narrations around this city, provides us with useful information about Shiraz and one of the most important gardens of this city, Eram Garden (Fardsarhangi, 2015). The author of "Symbol: The Reference Guide to Abstract and Figurative trademarks" states that symbols play a key role in almost all brand programs (Hyland & Bateman, 2014). In "Visual Communication of Semiotic Perspective" it is examined the role of the logo in the communication process and the concepts associated with it (Pahlavan, 2011). In a book entitled "An Introduction to the Analysis of Visual Elements in Logos: A Study of Visual Elements in Government



Logos, with an Approach to Semiotic Methods” the signs, different types of logos, their functions and elements is examined and the image is covered in government logos (Pahlavan, 2002). Writing a book entitled “A Primer of Visual Literacy”, the characteristics and content of a visual message, the basic elements of visual communication, a description of a visual message, and techniques and programs for visual communication is described (Dondis, 1974). In book “Primitive Culture: Research into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Art, and Custom”. Tylor’s ideology is best described in his most famous work, the two-volume Primitive Culture. The first volume, The Origins of Culture, deals with various aspects of ethnography, including social evolution, linguistics, and myth. The second volume, titled Religion in Primitive Culture, deals mainly with his interpretation of animism (Tylor, 1871).

### Methodology

Research method is one of the most important and basic issues in any research and it is a way to achieve the truth about the subject. Achieving the goal of the research will take place when the methodology is correct and the validity of research is based on its research method. The present research, creating the visual identity of Shiraz’ Eram Botanical Garden, with graphic design as applied research has been carried out. Research and the applied Methodology approach used to confer validity is the importance of the botanical garden of Eram and the capabilities of this garden, which has been neglected so far. The methods applied to create a desirable visual identity contain two interdependent parts that are done in two phases:

The first phase was a review and analysis. The method of data collection in this phase is documentary and field investigation with a historical approach and search in information sources, libraries and databases. Analyzing the main mansion in the middle of Eram Garden, asked about the process and position of the nature of the visual identity of Shiraz’ Eram Botanical Garden as a masterpiece of Qajar period. The themes and classification of wall paintings of the main mansion, were examined as carriers of spiritual and emotional values of culture and considered as creative base.

The second phase was an artistic exploration which was done by a digital technique. In this phase, the data from the previous phase was used as a basis for extracting motifs from the wall paintings of the main mansion as symbols of the art of Qajar period, and also applied historical and cultural identity in the creation of our designs. The



Figure 3. Pictures of a hunter and a lion on the roof of the main building of Shiraz’ Eram Botanical Garden. Source: (Author).



Figure 4. Crescents of the main building of Shiraz’ Eram Botanical Garden. Source: (Author).

motifs and crescents in the main mansion, the green color as a symbol of the greenery of the garden and the purple color as a symbol of the glory of Qajar kingdom became a visual basis for creating a graphic identity. Visual identity design such as logos, pictograms, and packaging, is an example of the ability to extract data and motifs that can form a valuable historical and cultural identity and essence. And in fact, Graphic Design is a generative lens through which to study historical identity. Graphic Design has played a key role in our understanding of the main identity of Eram Shiraz Botanical Garden. Culture and history, as a field of visual identity, have often been consciously or unconsciously incorporated into graphic design.

## Results

In this research, as well as analyzing to recognize the visual identity of Eram Botanical Garden, we tried to use the artistic aspects of this collection as an artistic tool to inform, advertise and express the aesthetic and artistic prominence of this collection, and in this regard understanding the most important aspect of identity in graphic design, which is the issue of logos, is essential. Understanding the logo and its functions and examining the existing examples, as familiarizing us with the nature of the logo is important from this perspective, which plays a key role in explaining the identity and expression of specific protrusions of a set and is effective in life and continuity of graphic nature. It is the basis for the formation of other graphic elements of a collection and in this study, as well as examining and analyzing the visual identity of Eram Botanical Garden and creating a logo around the values of this collection, it was used as a factor in expressing other graphic index elements.

### *What is the process and position of the nature of the visual identity of Shiraz 'Eram Botanical Garden?*

Findings on the first question showed that Shiraz'Eram Botanical Garden is one of the most beautiful and oldest Iranian gardens with about 900 years of historical background and has always been considered and praised as one of the most important historical monuments in Shiraz. This collection with special architecture, unique design and paintings, and various plant species well reflects the taste, art, and culture of Iranians, but according to visual evidence in this garden, a worthy effort to preserve and reproduce this visual heritage, has not been taken. The theme of "Visual Identity" is an attempt to preserve, develop and promote Iranian visual culture with a new approach and the application and re-creation of this culture, according to current conditions and special graphic expression.

As shown in (Figure 1) and (Figure 2), the main mansion in the middle of Eram Garden is considered the central core of this garden. This mansion faces east and has three floors, and in terms of architecture, painting, sculpture, tiling, and bedding is a masterpiece of industry and art of the Qajar period. This magnificent mansion with its crescents and porch depicts the process of its formation and has established its position as a powerful visual identity.

### *What are the graphic functions of the designs and drawings of Shiraz' Eram Botanical Garden?*

Findings on the second question showed that, undoubtedly, the sublime and full-fledged Iranian

art has always presented itself in unique architecture with plastering, mirror work, painting, and beautiful drawings, which show the taste and art of Iranian artists. Expresses art as an emotional resource. In different parts of Shiraz'Eram Botanical Garden, including the main building of this garden, many designs and drawings have various themes, and in a general classification, the murals of Shiraz'Eram Botanical Garden can be divided into three categories: 1. Mythology and antiquity 2. Story 3. Decoration and can be used as a useful tool to form the visual identity and graphic nature of the collection. Mythical themes, lions and suns, images of kings, hunting scenes, and hunting grounds are mentioned under mythological and ancient themes, an example of which can be seen (Figure 3).

Painting with story themes is another subject that has caused variety in the paintings of Eram Garden Mansion. These subjects, which are often taken from Quranic stories and masterpieces of Persian literature, contain stories from Nezami Ganjavi, Rumi's Masnavi, and Ferdowsi's Shahname. These stories and illustrations have a long history in Iranian art. The story of the court of Hazrat Suleiman is the subject of one of the largest paintings, which is depicted on a seven-color tile on the central crescent of Eram Garden. In this painting, Solomon and next to him the throne of Queen Belquis are seen in a semicircular combination of soldiers, crew, and animals. In the same crescent and the front of the mansion, just below this picture, there is another famous story in the form of a painting on a seven-color tile. The dominance of the story of Hazrat Yusuf and on the other hand the story of Shirin's bathing and Khosrow's passing is as beautiful as possible, with the predominance of warm colors as we see in all the paintings of this mansion, which is presented in figure 4.

However, all the murals in Eram Garden of Shiraz, both in terms of unusual locations (on high ceilings and high walls) and because of their small size in a background that is visible due to the usual distance of the audience, the subject is not visible. And it is not understood, it can be said that they have a decorative application. But in this division, attention is paid to the patterns that have a decorative aspect in any situation, and their semantic and conceptual application is not considered. With this explanation, the following division can be done: 1. Plant patterns 2. Geometric patterns 3. Patterns Animal and birds, examples of these motifs are presented in (Figure 5), (Figure 6) and (Figure 7) (Shokoohian & Shirazi, 2010).



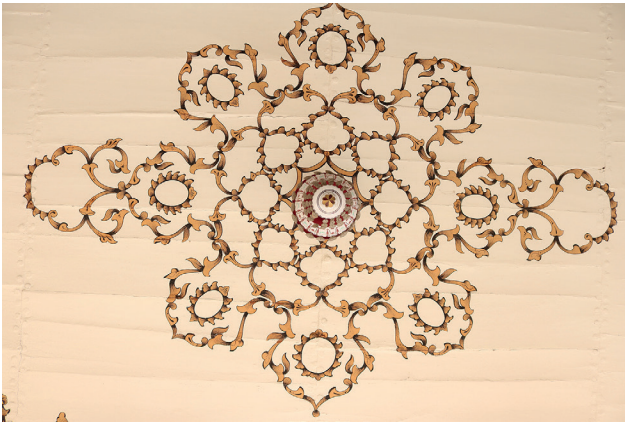


Figure 5. Decorative designs on the roof of the main building of Shiraz' Eram Botanical Garden. Source: (Author).



Figure 6. Decorative designs on the plastering of the roof of the bathroom of Shiraz' Eram Botanical Garden. Source: (Author).

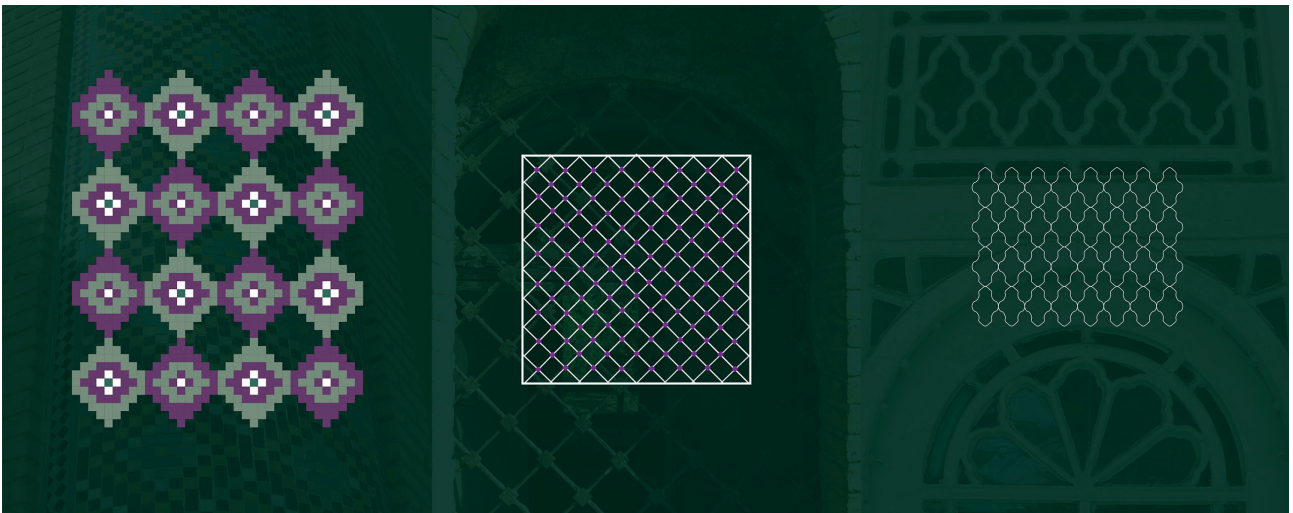


Figure 7. Sample of patterns extracted in Shiraz ' Eram Botanical Garden. Source: (Author).

*What are the graphic design and visual identity in different parts of the Shiraz 'Eram Botanical Garden?*

Findings on the third question showed that the most important aspect of identity in the graphic design of Shiraz'Eram Botanical Garden is the logo issue. This issue is important from this perspective, which plays an essential role in explaining the identity and expression of specific protrusions of a collection and is an effective factor in the life and continuity of the graphic nature and a basis for the formation of other graphic elements. Whereas No proper effort and good graphic design have been made for this collection. In this research, while examining and analyzing the visual identity of Eram Botanical Garden, we are trying to create a pattern of drawings and designs of the garden building in



Figure 8. Design of combined logo for Shiraz' Eram Botanical Garden. Source: (Author)





Figure 9. Pictogram design for Shiraz' Eram Botanical Garden. Source: (Author)



Figure 10. Packaging design using the designs in Shiraz' Eram Botanical Garden. Source: (Author)



Figure 11. Packaging design using the designs in Shiraz' Eram Botanical Garden. Source: (Author)

the form of a "logo" about the values of this collection, and as a factor in expression of other graphic index elements is used.

In (Figure 8), a combined logo is presented, which is designed based on (Figure 1), its image logo, and its Persian text logo has a form based on the crescents in its image logo. (Figure 8), (Figure 9) has been designed based on the general form of the integrated logo and its visual nature, and the selected main colors have been selected based on the functional and visual nature of this garden, because the sublime and full-fledged Iranian art Used in the architecture of this garden, it expresses the glory and grandeur of Iranian architecture, and it is the kind of magnificent Iranian royal palaces that evoke the meaningful and purposeful influence of Iranian architecture, so purple can be a good choice because this Color has always been considered as a rare color and a symbol of the kingdom and has had a lot of sanctity and spiritual values in different religions. The main tree of Eram Garden (*Cercis siliquastrum*), this color can be one of the colors in the color palette of this collection, and green color is a good representation of green in the heart of the land and It is very reminiscent of the lush trees in the Eram Botanical Garden.

Packaging design using the designs in the Shiraz' Eram Botanical Garden, which is presented in (Figure 10), (Figure 11) which is based on the designs in (Figure 7), and the revival of these forgotten designs, based on the new graphics, can play an important role in explaining these motifs in the mind of the audience.

## Conclusion

The main core of graphic design and creating a visual identity for a country is the tradition and national identity of that country, which carries spiritual values for that country. Therefore, in today's society, the issue of forgetting and destroying the culture and visual identity of countries is serious and important. Iranian tradition and identity are one of the things that Iranians have always been proud of, but it has been less discussed in contemporary graph-

ics. And the matter of forgetting Iranian identity and visual elements in various fields has led to the emergence of non-Iranian visual patterns. In general, the purpose of this study was to investigate the location and visual nature of Shiraz'Eram Botanical Garden and graphic works of paintings and drawings. It was the sublime and brilliant art of this collection and its usage to explain the graphic nature of this collection. And the production of visual content based on Iranian nature is one of the concerns of this research in identifying Iranian culture and art, which is done with the aim of designing visual identity, recreating and creating contemporary visual patterns of Shiraz'Eram Botanical Garden, based on graphic principles and criteria. The results of this study show the importance and position of visual identity design in Shiraz 'Eram Botanical Garden. The Shiraz 'Eram Botanical Garden is one of the most beautiful and oldest Iranian gardens with about 900 years of history and is always one of the most important the historical monuments of Shiraz have been discussed and praised. This collection with special architecture, unique designs and paintings, and various plant species well reflects the taste, art, and culture of Iran, but according to the visual evidence in this garden, a worthy effort to preserve and reproduce this visual heritage, has not been taken. Such a way that it does not even have a logo to show or pictograms

to guide visitors in different parts of this garden, and visitors find access to different parts by their efforts, not guide pictograms. Also, in the commercial parts of this garden, products such as Iranian drinks and Iranian art were offered for purchase without an identity package. In this research, we tried to use historical identity to create graphic identity. By examining the wall paintings and motifs of Eram Botanical Garden, we concluded that most of these motifs are decorative; for this reason, among the decorative motifs, we chose those that had more graphic ability to create a graphic visual identity (Figure 7). By examining and analyzing Eram Botanical Garden and extracting motifs from wall and crescent motifs in the main mansion, we designed a visual and written logo and a set of pictograms and commercial product packaging. Also, in this article, we concluded that by analyzing a historical work, how to use Iranian traditional motifs and identity to create a visual identity in modern graphic design so that by viewing it, traditional art and identity will be remembered. By designing a logo, we created a visual identity and a graphic symbol for this magnificent building. And by designing a set of pictograms, in addition to guiding the audience, we tried to introduce them to different parts of this garden. And by designing the packaging of Iranian products in this garden, let's create a traditional and national identity.

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