Children's literary museums as spaces for reading promotion: analyses of two case studies through the lenses of the reading response theory

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Summary

The field of reading promotion has expanded its area of influence during the last decades. In addition to schools and libraries, practitioners are exploring other arenas to develop their practices and generalize the habit of reading to further contexts. Museums are especially well-equipped to implement reading promotion programmes. Concretely, children's literary museums, whose collections and exhibitions are devoted to children's literature, provide a unique space to engage young people in literary activities through new pedagogical approaches. The present research explores the current landscape of children's literary museums and their role in reading promotion. The principal objective is to understand the purposes, strategies and outcomes these institutions have in relation to reading promotion for young audiences. The theory of reading responses adapted to children by Sipe (2000) serves as the lens for mapping the anticipated result from the visitors' engagement with the museums. Two case studies inform the analysis: the H. C. Andersen House Museum and the House Museum of Ratón Pérez. The methodology consists of filling out observational grids from relevant museum exhibition units and conducting interviews with key informers. The findings reveal that children's literary museums contain a vast potential to host effective reading promotion programmes. Their main assets to achieve this endeavour include their commitment towards disseminating a particular literary heritage for children, the immersive and interactive nature of the exhibitions and the participatory methods employed by the museum educators. These unique qualities evoke meaningful reading responses in children, including less common types such as intertextual, transparent and performative responses. The research conclusions aim to shed light on the potential of integrating children's literary museums into the radar of reading promotion studies. Further investigation is needed to comprehend the extent to which these institutions can contribute to developing a passion for reading in the population from a young age.

Keywords: *reading promotion, children's museums, literary museums, reading response theory, museums studies*

Los museos literarios infantiles como espacios de promoción de la lectura: análisis de dos estudios de caso a través de las lentes de la teoría de la respuesta lectora

Resumen

El campo de la promoción de la lectura ha ampliado su área de influencia durante las últimas décadas. Además de las escuelas y las bibliotecas, los profesionales están explorando otros ámbitos para desarrollar sus prácticas y generalizar el hábito de la lectura a otros contextos. Los museos están especialmente bien equipados para poner en marcha programas de fomento de la lectura. Concretamente, los museos literarios infantiles, cuyas colecciones y exposiciones están dedicadas a la literatura infantil, ofrecen un espacio único para implicar a los jóvenes en actividades literarias a través de nuevos enfoques pedagógicos. La presente investigación explora el panorama actual de los museos literarios infantiles y su papel en la promoción de la lectura. El objetivo principal es comprender los propósitos, estrategias y resultados que estas instituciones buscan en relación con la promoción de la lectura para el público joven. La teoría de las respuestas a la lectura adaptada a los niños por Sipe (2000) sirve de lente para trazar el resultado previsto de la interacción de los visitantes con los museos. Dos estudios de caso informan el análisis: la Casa Museo H. C. Andersen y la Casa Museo de Ratón Pérez. La metodología consiste en rellenar parillas de observación de las unidades expositivas relevantes de los museos y realizar entrevistas con informadores clave. Los resultados revelan que los museos literarios infantiles albergan un enorme potencial para desarrollar programas eficaces de promoción de la lectura. Sus principales bazas para lograr este objetivo incluyen su compromiso con la difusión de un patrimonio literario particular para los niños, la naturaleza inmersiva e interactiva de las exposiciones y los métodos participativos empleados por los educadores del museo. Estas cualidades únicas evocan respuestas de lectura significativas en los niños, incluidos tipos menos comunes como las respuestas intertextuales, transparentes y performativas. Las conclusiones de la investigación pretenden arrojar luz sobre el potencial de integrar los museos literarios infantiles en el radar de los estudios de fomento de la lectura. Es necesario seguir investigando para comprender hasta qué punto estas instituciones pueden contribuir a desarrollar la pasión por la lectura en la población desde una edad temprana.

Palabras clave: *fomento de la lectura, museos infantiles, museos literarios, teoría de la respuesta lectora, estudios museísticos*

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I.   Introduction

Reading promotion —a series of practices designed to instil the habit of reading among the population— currently undergoes a period of growth and development. The benefits of acquiring the habit of reading from an early age have been extensively documented (Brice Heath, 2012; Colomer, 2004; Hoyne and Egan, 2019). Among the factors that influence this process, research evidence often reveals the importance of reading for pleasure (Gilbert and Fister, 2011; Kavi et al., 2015). Precisely, reading promotion expands the mission of literacy programs by encouraging a sense of love and enjoyment for stories in the population beyond the academic acquisition of reading. Several authors, such as Guíñez and Martínez (2015), claim that the love for reading is a socially-constructed habit which is transmitted rather than taught. As a result, reading promotion activities must happen in multiple contexts to integrate reading into everyday life.

Museums stand out as relevant spaces in which to develop reading promotion programs. Their condition as public spaces guarantees community-oriented programs and measures to ensure accessibility and inclusion. Moreover, as disseminators of knowledge to large and diverse audiences, these institutions encourage pedagogical approaches that differ from the traditional structured classroom experience. Learning in museums emerges from informal and free-choice education, relying on playing, hands-on exploration and interactive technology (Falk and Dierking, 2000), which enables spontaneous social and participatory practices that improve literacy teaching and helps to develop a personal connection to texts. Thus, this institution has a privileged opportunity to promote reading in an inclusive and child-friendly environment.

During the last decade, there has been a flourishing of reading promotion activities in museum settings. For instance, in 2021, the Croatian Government implemented the Action Plan of the National Strategy to Promote Reading through a programme called *A Lion, an Elephant and an Occasional Bird: Stories at the Museum* set at the Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb. The project included workshops, storytelling sessions and guided tours of the museum through which the visitors became acquainted with oral literature from different cultures (Jelavić and Vrsalović, 2022). Several initiatives follow a similar procedure, where museums partner with other cultural and educational institutions (e.g., schools and libraries) to promote reading outside the curriculum and foster cooperation between literary agents. Moreover, a growing number of storytelling events and literary museums for children are emerging during the last decades. These centres celebrate reading and stories written for

children and young people. Some examples include Moat Brae, home of the National Centre for Children's Literature and Storytelling in Scotland since 2019, and Kinderboekenmuseum in the Netherlands, a specific exhibition for children's literature built in 2010 (van Lierop-Debrauwer, 2018).

Despite their current social and educational relevance, the role of museums in reading promotion has not received much attention from academia yet. In their extensive literature review on reading promotion covering international journal publications from 2000 to 2015, Gemma Lluch and Sandra Sánchez-García (2017) found that none of the 191 reviewed research papers mentioned museums as a setting where reading promotion occurred, as opposed to schools, libraries, universities, hospitals and even prisons. Recent articles showcase literacy programmes in the museums (Giles, 2021; Hamilton and Van Duinen, 2021; Yasukawa et al., 2013), which, although related to reading promotion practices, do not cover all of their dimensions.

The present dissertation aims to fill this research gap in children's literature and museum studies. Firstly, the current state of the art in reading promotion in general and the role of museums, in particular, is explored through a brief literature review. Then, the theoretical framework informs the exploration of children's literary museums as instances of the "museum reading promotion" paradigm. Finally, two case studies serve to examine the enactment of this practice and provide empirical data to complete the analysis. The museums under study are the H. C. Andersen House Museum in Odense, Denmark, and the House Museum of Ratón Pérez in Madrid, Spain.

II. Theoretical framework

a. Reading promotion foundations

Reading promotion is defined as a sociocultural intervention project that seeks to promote reflection, revaluation, transformation and construction of new reading practices to generate changes in people, their contexts and interactions (Álvarez-Zapata et al., 2009). Practitioners draw from different strategies and methods to direct attention to texts and create captivating experiences among their audiences, including dialogical practices, storytelling, and reading clubs (Lluch and Sánchez-García, 2017). The purpose is to promote the acquisition and

improvement of reading habits among the population to the point that those habits become integrated and stable during their lifetime.

This adherence can only be achieved by promoting reading in a plethora of spaces besides the school. Concretely, Elliott (2009) and Gladwin and Goulding (2012) warn about the need to promote reading as a leisure activity. Otherwise, the act of reading gets associated merely with its academic and informative function, disregarding its aesthetic, cultural, social and entertainment dimensions.

These multidimensional functions account for the importance of promoting reading among citizens. Of course, reading has educational benefits; it improves academic performance, sociolinguistic skills, learning motivation and critical and divergent thinking (Hoyne and Egan, 2019). However, frequent engagement with texts and stories also develops other psychological functions. For example, Guíñez and Martínez (2015) emphasise the role of reading in identity formation through identification with the characters. Reading also prompts questions about the world that lead to elaborating and modifying one's mental model of reality and, in turn, influences the development of social skills, such as empathy.

As the pleasure of reading is socially constructed and highly intertwined with literacy, educational agents (e.g. libraries and schools) play an essential role as mediators. De Naeghel and Van Keer (2013) found that the presence of a reading promotion specialist in the school positively affected students' motivation to read. Nonetheless, Huysmans et al. (2013) warn against overestimating the capacity of these institutions to promote reading for pleasure by themselves. Families and caregivers are also vital in mediating their children's love for reading. Concretely, parents exert more influence in determining children's frequency and attitude towards reading than schools and libraries during the early stages of childhood. As a result, reading promotion often leans towards collaborative approaches where a knowledgeable instructor involves families in the process.

These encounters between reading promoters and families can happen in many contexts. Teresa Colomer (2004) identifies libraries' children and youth departments as pioneers in the professionalisation of reading promotion. In the middle of the 20th century, librarians had the need to develop strategies to attract young readers to their specialised services. Colomer states that they resorted to informal practices that had proved successful among families in the past, such as storytelling sessions and book recommendations. However, the fact that they were dealing with 'inexpert' readers implied that some kind of reading instruction was needed too. Ultimately, they integrated academic practices into their programmes and learnt from the schools' perspective. As a result, both institutions developed

solid bonds and led the reading promotion movement. From 2000 to 2015, Gemma Lluch and Sandra Sánchez-García (2017) found that approximately 29% of the reading promotion programs were set in libraries and 23% in schools. In addition, 9% happened in digital spaces, 7% in universities, 7% in paediatrics services, 5% in family households and 2% in prisons. Since 2017, the field of reading promotion has evolved exponentially. Noticeably, it has developed in the digital world thanks to the digital boom and lockdown. In addition, more spaces that offer this kind of service have emerged.

As posed in the introduction, museums encompass ideal arenas to develop reading promotion programmes due to their educational and socialising nature. Despite the absence of detailed academic research on the role of museums in reading promotion, plenty of studies have examined their capacity to foster learning and, more specifically, literacy (Giles, 2020; Hamilton and Van Duinen, 2021; Yasukawa et al., 2013). Thus, museums have been serving as spaces for reading promotion for decades, but not long ago have they pursued this objective explicitly.

Notice to say that the field of reading promotion studies appeared relatively recently. In 2017, Lluch and Sánchez-García criticised the lack of scientific reliability in the field, where most articles were published in generalist instead of academic journals. Moreover, they pointed out that authors used to implement reading promotion programs without gathering a cohesive theoretical framework that informed their design. Nonetheless, theauthors expressed their enthusiasm about the future as the good results proved the need to continue promoting empirical research in the field to determine what constitutes the best reading promotion practices. Both state that current times are ''ripe for innovative reading promotion projects that go beyond the usual, traditional practices'' (Lluch and Sánchez-García, 2017, p. 12). Precisely, museums can harbour innovative approaches to reading promotion. The following section dives into the intricacies of this statement.

b. The museum as a space for reading promotion

1. A brief historical note on the evolution of museums

The International Council of Museums (ICOM, 2022) describes the *museum* as follows:

> A not-for-profit, permanent institution in the service of society that researches, collects, conserves, interprets and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage. Open to the public, accessible and inclusive, museums foster diversity and sustainability. They operate and communicate ethically, professionally and with the participation of communities, offering varied experiences for education, enjoyment, reflection and knowledge sharing (ICOM, 2022, para. 2).

This statement reinforces the social function of museums as disseminators of knowledge, which inherently entails educational actions towards society. In fact, the museum's potential to foster learning has been extensively researched (Anderson et al., 2002; Andre et al., 2017). However, the educational mission of museums has not always been addressed explicitly.

Historically, museums worked as archives that gathered and preserved human and natural heritage. Occasionally, those collections might open their doors to the public, whose role was to visit as passive witnesses. Fleming (2002) pinpoints the original exclusionary nature of museums, as only a selected group of people were allowed to enter them and engage with their collections. On the opposite side of the spectrum, libraries became beacons of open culture by transforming their archives into borrowable collections (Colomer, 2004).

Progressively, a democratisation process also reformed museums, expanding their audiences until most became non-profit institutions that sought to engage the total population. In the 1960s, the movement known as New Museology led to the transformation from static to dynamic and communitarian museums (Zubiaur, 2016). Inspired by ethnography, New Museology advocated for the social mission of museums over their traditional role as custodians of culture. Nowadays, most museums offer some type of educational measures, such as informative boards, audio guides and workshops, to ensure accessibility. Moreover, many museums make an effort to adjust their communication to the diverse needs of their visitors regarding their age, language, prior knowledge and abilities. This tendency crystallised in the creation of specific museums for children in 1899 with the inauguration of the Brooklyn Children's Museum.

Children's museums are conceived as spaces that promote play, exploration and interpersonal interaction (Shawcroft et al., 2022). *The Museums Journal*'s editor, Rebecca Shulman Herz (2017), traces the evolution of these museums and identifies two eras that help to understand the current children's museum scene. The first era (1899-the 1960s) encompassed collections and object-based exhibits (i.e., book collections, illustrations displays), which resembled the abovementioned archive stage when visitors had a passive role. The second era started in the 1990s after a paradigm change through which the

museum's core moved from objects to interaction. These second-wave museums encourage the active participation of visitors through play and interaction. Today, both approaches coexist in a continuum from display to interplay. Herz (2017) stresses that these approaches share many similarities despite their apparent differences. Both models pursue the missions of raising children's curiosity, promoting lifelong learning and encouraging visitors' engagement in the wider world. Moreover, Enseki (2007) states five outcomes that emerge from all kinds of children's museums: autonomous learning, participation and ownership, redefinition of expertise to encourage exploration, commitment to diversity and cultivating connectedness to communities. Thus, there is not a better museum approach but rather complementary models.

Nevertheless, over the years, some authors have expressed doubts about attaining such positive results in children's museums (Puchner et al., 2001; Vexler, 2000). The concerns revolve around the lack of empirical evidence of the claims about the museums' capacity to foster learning. Herz (2017) settles the debate by proposing that children's museums can have value, but this is not inherent to their existence; instead, it must be articulated, planned for and built through design. This study thence aims to unravel the resources, methodologies and strategies museums possess that can be incorporated into reading promotion and to shed light on the actual purposes, ongoing practices and anticipated outcomes in children's literary museums. For this purpose, the following section dissects some critical aspects of the functioning of museums.

2. Key concepts in museum studies

Museum studies have become a well-established academic and scientific discipline. Institutions such as ICOM and ICOFOM (ICO's International Committee for Museology) have developed numerous investigations to compile a coherent corpus that synthesises the main terminology of the field and provides museum professionals worldwide with a common language. In 1993 ICOFOM launched the *Museology Dictionary,* the result of years of museum study. *Museology* is hereby defined as the theoretical study of the museum. In contrast, *museography* is the practice of museology, which encompasses a set of techniques developed to carry out museum functions (e.g., conservation, restoration, security and exhibition). Both concepts fall under the umbrella term of *museum studies*.

One of the first distinctions established to analyse museums is differentiating the *container* from the *content (*Zubiaur, 2016). The container is the building, the architectural structure that contains the exhibitions. On the contrary, the content of a museum refers to its collections. Depending on the importance attributed to the building, museums can display two different approaches: one where the architectural project is the protagonist and precedes the museological program, and a more neutral approach where the space does not interfere with the displays. The latter option better fits the ideas of the New Museology movement, as the space is in the service of the content. Moreover, this approach often prioritises rehabilitating historical sites to host a museum collection over creating a new building. In these cases, Alderson (1975) reinforces the importance of keeping the original venue in terms of documentary, representative and aesthetic value.

The Statistics on Museums and Museographic Collections of the Spanish Ministry of Culture and Sports (2020) identify two types of museums according to their container: the *house-museum*, located in the birthplace or residence of a character, and the *site museum*, formed by putting certain historical assets (archaeological sites, monuments, in situ examples of the industrial past...) in the place where they were originally conceived to create a museum. According to ICOM (2022), the House-Museum and character museums correspond to the category of Historical-biographical museums. More recent criteria distinguish between other characteristics, such as on-site and virtual museums, the mobile museum or the didactic museum (Zubiaur, 2016), to which children's museums belong.

However, most museum typologies usually refer to the content to establish classificatory criteria. Luis Alonso Fernández (1988) provides an exhaustive synthesis of these typologies and classifies museums into six types:

- Art museums (i.e., archaeological, contemporary art, fine arts and decorative arts museums)
- General, specialised, monographic and mixed museums (i.e., cities-museums,open-air museums, museums gardens, reserves and natural parks ecomuseums)
- History museums (i.e., military and naval museums, biographical and folklore museums)
- Museums of Ethnology, Anthropology and popular arts
- Museums of Natural Sciences
- Scientific and industrial technology museums

Any museum usually includes four distinct spaces: public areas, private areas, service spaces and the object sector (Hernández, 1994). The *public areas* include the transitional

space from the outside world to the museum, such as the hall, counters, museum shop, and social areas (e.g., cafeteria). They often entail visitors' first contact with the museum and thus set the basis for the exhibition's tone. The *private areas* refer to the space reserved for the museum professionals, such as curators and managers, and usually remain closed to guests. Some museums include research and communications departments that also require their own space to investigate and disseminate their findings. The *service spaces* include complementary areas like libraries, workshops or labs. Finally, the *object sector* is the most extensive area, encompassing the objects in display and their complementary information (texts, maps, models, et cetera).

Organising a museum object sector requires special attention and care to ensure guests gain the most from the visit. Aurora León (1986) highlights different methods to organise the exhibition space, including vertical order (chronological order), horizontal order (divided by disciplines), symbolic order, thematic order and atmospheric order. Moreover, the circuit around the exhibition space can be open (visitors move freely) or close (visitors follow a pre-established path). The former case provides a visually attractive and empowering experience but risks leading to routine and tiredness, which is counterproductive to the assimilation of the content. On the other hand, close circuits offer more control to design a centralised museum experience in advance but restrict the visitors' freedom of movement. In this vein, the historical museologist Georges Henri Rivière (1993) insisted upon the importance of interior spaces' flexibility, modularity and extensibility as the basis of good practice in museum design. This petition accounts for the need to adapt museum spaces to rapid-changing technological innovations.

Regarding the elements that compound the exhibition space, Martín Bartolomé (1979) compiles a list of essential aspects to consider. First, the room, as the space containing a particular exhibition, must serve the displays. Furthermore, the backgrounds have to speak for themselves. The auxiliary elements help to achieve this by completing the exhibition. They can participate in the exhibition per se (e.g., bases, pedestals, shelves) or be decorative elements (e.g., lining, music, colours, lighting). Lighting and colours are especially important in museums, as they modify the atmosphere and space and draw attention to strategic points.

In addition, museums often display informative elements to complement the collections. Zubiaur (2016) states that the two fundamental principles in this matter are that the informative elements act as explanatory devices but do not take away the capacity of the display to express its own meaning and that the fatigue of visitors must be avoided. Thus, the placement of these elements has to be discreet and combine several systems to guarantee the

guests' attention. The information can be presented as an independent expositive unit by introducing a hypothesis at the beginning of the exhibition and a conclusion at the end. Another strategy is to include informative elements parallel to each object or partially in key points of the tour. Furthermore, technology has unlocked the possibility of introducing mobile informative elements that visitors carry with them and provide information about their location, such as audio guides.

The nature of the information provided varies depending on what qualities the museum practitioners want to highlight from the displays (e.g., chronology, composition, geographical precedence…). Moreover, this communication can take several modalities: textual (print boards, brochures), visual (maps, models, images), auditive (music, guides), and audiovisual (videos, games).

The museum design is intimately linked to the attainment of the educational goals of the institution. Factors such as the room distribution, the exhibition circuit, the display organisation or the atmosphere enhance the museum experience and subsequent learning. For instance, the location of an object at a higher height in a set indicates its prominence within the group, and lighting can be used to draw attention to specific components. Zubiaur (2016) claims that the average height of children should determine the assembly of objects, information and lighting to ensure that none of the exposed objects is located above their vision and out of their reach. Moreover, museum practitioners must consider the needs of other visitors and adjust the information to different audiences to ensure the accessibility of their education. For example, the informative elements should be available in multiple languages, channels (audio, textual) and formats (braille, dyslexic-friendly fonts) to offer an inclusive experience.

Additionally, museums sometimes create explicit pedagogical content for young visitors. It is the case of the didactic sheet, an informative paper that provides information and, at the same time it, proposes participatory activities with the museum objects for children. Moreover, the *dinamuseo* [dynamuseum] is a space especially set up to carry out activities that require the use of elements and materials that might interfere with the museum's normal functioning. In it, the children often engage in creative activities such as drawing or building miniatures in relation to the exhibition themes. Furthermore, some museums have their own learning and educational departments. Zubiaur (2016) identifies two types of museums in what he calls 'specifically educational museums': science and technique museums and children's museums.

3. Children's museums and their contributions to reading promotion

3. 1. A look into children's museums

The Association of Children's Museums (ACM, 2023, para. 1) defines the *children's museum* as ''a nonprofit educational and cultural institution committed to serving the needs and interests of children by providing exhibits and programs that stimulate curiosity and motivate learning''. As of today, ACM represents over 400 children's museums across the world. Children's museums have expanded exponentially during the past twenty years, becoming one of the fastest-growing cultural industries. In fact, between 2011 and 2013, there was a 135% increase in children's museum memberships (Parker, 2013). The ACM identifies that children's museums act in four dimensions: as local destinations, educational laboratories, community resources, and advocates for children.

As educational laboratories, children's museums are highly interrelated to early education. These museums provide children access to stimuli contextualised under a global meaning and specially curated for their age and skills, creating plenty of learning opportunities (Braswell, 2012). Moreover, the nature of children's museums as hybrid spaces offers plenty of opportunities to experiment with innovative teaching methods.

According to Zeichner (2010), *hybrid spaces* are places where academic knowledge and practitioner knowledge come together. These spaces facilitate unusual practices in traditional school settings, such as observation, experimentation and discovery (Henderson and Atencio, 2007). Likewise, children's museums involve voluntary, open-ended, nonlinear and hands-on experiences that promote self-constructed knowledge and autonomous learning, also known as inquiry-based learning (Giles, 2021). As there are usually no evaluations or requirements, learning can emerge from spontaneous behaviours, especially from play (Ucko, 1985). Museum spaces often support and encourage the construction of knowledge through play as a strategy to foster learning. Different stages of play are promoted depending on the developmental stage of the visitors, such as onlooker, solitary, parallel, associative or cooperative play (Van Hoorn et al., 2007). Significantly, these opportunities provide a unique environment that differs from other educational spaces, such as the classroom, and add an extra dimension to learning that enriches the overall experience.

For that reason, many researchers have studied the qualities of children's museums to foster innovative teaching and learning methods, leading to proposing collaborative models between schools and museums (Anderson et al., 2002). However, Vexler (2000) points out

that museums' educational value is not inherent but results from intentional planning. As a result, museums and other educational institutions must develop a shared organisation process to ensure their partnership works.

For this matter, the Museums, Libraries and Archives (MLA) Council informs that museum activities have a more significant impact on children when linked to the school curriculum, as the content is more familiar to them (Renaissance North East, 2008). Thus, museum professionals should be aware of how children's learning works in museums and integrate the curriculum into their educational programmes. Andre et al. (2017) advise museum practitioners to rely on teachers and instructors to learn about the curriculum and how to implement it within their specific environments to take advantage of their strengths and create experiences that are more conducive to significant learning.

Complementarily, Anderson et al. (2002) found that exhibits embedded in children's everyday contexts yield more significant learning outcomes than decontextualised exhibits. These familiar contexts serve visitors as a framework that can be easily retrieved from memory to apply in their learning. In particular, the authors say that stories are one of the most common mediums to connect the museum's content to the child's world. Hearing stories told by adults is a common practice in a child's everyday culture. Hence, this strategy will be readily identifiable for most children and help them establish links to their prior knowledge more easily. Indeed, in the sample for the study by Anderson et al. (2002), storytelling experiences were more frequently recalled and discussed by children after the museum visits, demonstrating their mediating role in acquired learning. Moreover, stories influenced other outcomes, such as the level of enjoyment.

In addition, teaching in museums often involves using surroundings to support the explanations. Museums serve as contexts for situated learning, which enables connecting abstract concepts to physical correlates. Callanan (2012) claims museums offer a more naturalistic environment than conventional classrooms. Therefore, through interaction-based approaches, the museum experience opens new ways to think about the curriculum and expands its connections to real life. Hackett et al. (2020) also notice that children experience museums through their bodies, and Christensen (2003) adds that children's knowledge emerges from interacting with a place through sensory experience and bodily memory, unlike adults, who rely more on abstract knowledge. Therefore, attending to children's movement and interaction with the museum's physical space, which shapes experience, is necessary to identify and understand the potential learning opportunities.

In contrast to other environments, museums usually invest a significant part of their funds in technology. Technology composes an integral part of their services and differentiates them from other educational institutions. As this asset is in service of the visitors' behaviour, its use promotes children's participation in their own learning and enhances educational practices by enabling direct interaction between the child and the museum material. Hall and Bannon (2005) suggest that museum technology encourages children to enquire about the exhibits and explore their questions through interaction. Mayfield (2005) mentions the implications of those potentially endless interactions to inspire creativity and imagination. In addition, using technology allows children to interact with other visitors.

Socialisation represents another critical aspect of learning in children's museums. As hybrid spaces, museums reunite many different individuals, such as patrons and practitioners, which are routinely present in the day-to-day activities of the museum. This presence incorporates a social dimension to learning through sharing and discussing with others. The figure of the mediator is vital to maximise the experience and guide children through the educational programs. Puchner et al. (2001) state that adult involvement is sometimes necessary to expand children's learning to higher levels.

Nonetheless, the nature of hybrid spaces opens new possibilities to reconsider the directionality of the pupil-instructor relationship. For instance, Hamilton and Van Duinen (2021) point out that the museum space prompts teachers to consider themselves as learners, which can position students as teachers in some contexts. This repositioning of pupils enhances their learning and reinforces their autonomy and participatory skills. Likewise, Nicola Wallis (2020) says that ''sustained engagement with cultural spaces such as museums promotes greater confidence and willingness to participate actively'' (p. 28).

In summary, children's museums aim to promote every learning domain (i.e., cognitive, socioemotional, communicative, physical and adaptive) (Bredenkamp and Coppel, 1997). Inquiry-based activities and guided instructions stimulate the cognitive dimension; relationships with mediators and peers provide socioemotional interaction as well as communicative practice; play and technology allow for physical exploration; and the connection to real life accounts for adaptive learning. Overall, museums offer a complete and stimulating learning experience that can improve children's attitudes towards education.

As for the content of the educational programs, most authors affirm that all knowledge disciplines can be taught in museums. For instance, there are a plethora of scientific children's museums whose primary purpose is to extend the science curriculum to

another context and promote the love for this discipline among children. Likewise, galleries often hold specific educational programmes to promote art among children.

However, there is a lack of research about the museum's educational experience in other fields of knowledge, such as literature. Stories are part of our cultural heritage and, therefore, can also belong to museums as "objects" on display. Precisely, *literary museums* are the centres that devote their exhibitions and collections to books and storytelling. Many literary museums involve children in their audiences and promote reading as a valuable art and cultural practice. Thus, there is an explicit purpose to promote literary education in museums currently ongoing that is not being addressed by the academic community.

3. 2. Literacy instruction in children's museums

The few academic articles exploring literary education in museums examine how these institutions develop linguistic skills in young visitors (Giles, 2021; Hamilton and Van Duinen, 2021; Yasukawa et al., 2013). This approach is grounded on the concept known as literacy. The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) defines *literacy* as ''an individual's capacity to understand, use and reflect on written texts, in order to achieve one's goals, to develop one's knowledge and potential and to participate in society'' (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2006, p. 46). Despite the epistemic overlaps, literacy does not correspond to reading promotion.

Teresa Colomer (2004) identifies the difference as a tension between *teaching* and *promoting* reading. The former implies an instructive approach to reading, which is conceptualised as a skill to decode the meaning of texts. On the other hand, the latter provides a broader definition of reading as an art with aesthetic value, a leisure activity and a tool towards social participation. Therefore, reading promotion encompasses literacy but expands its means to further realms. As a result, the present dissertation is mainly grounded on the broader concept of reading promotion.

However, it is also helpful to understand the role of literacy within museums to understand how these institutions contribute to children's literary education experience. Literacy instruction stands as the first step to building a love for reading. Thus, museums can also advocate for reading promotion by providing a unique space for instruction during the early stages of the literacy journey. This philosophy inspired the Exploring Literacy through Museums (ELM) initiative launched by the North East Regional Museums Hub in 2008 as a

pilot project and expanded a year later due to its success (Renaissance North East, 2008). The project stimulated partnerships between museums, schools and children's services to comply with the Primary Framework for Literacy. The aim was to explore how a museum experience could inspire cross-curricular literacy teaching and raise pupils' attainment. At the end of the project, results showed that 75% of the participants improved their writing skills, and both museum and school educators noted the value of the partnership.

In fact, Yasukawa et al. (2013) establish a parallelism between the goals of New Literacy Studies (NLS) and New Museology. NLS emerged in the last decades of the past century to challenge the traditional conceptualisations of literacy as the individual acquisition of skills. On the contrary, NLS advocated for a new understanding of literacy as a social practice situated in a context and permeated by ideologies, which connects to the idea of situated meaning proposed by the New Museology movement:

> New Museology's resistance to separating the meaning of objects from how they are situated in their contexts, the questioning of what 'counts' as legitimate objects or exhibitions in a museum, and contemplation of the possibilities of a plurality of visitor experiences all resonate strongly with the ways in which NLS conceptualises literacy and numeracy as situated practices (Yasukawa et al., 2013, p. 90).

In NLS, *literacy events* are described as ''instances or occasions where uses of literacy plays a role'' (Baynham, 1995, p. 54). A literacy event can encompass reading or writing many different kinds of texts, including visuals such as images. Yasukawa et al. (2013) determine that, from an NLS perspective, ''visits to a museum exhibition can be viewed as a literacy event. From the point of entry into the museum and then to a specific exhibition space, visitors typically encounter texts and diagrams intended to guide their navigation through the exhibition'' (p. 91).

Museum exhibitions are literacy-rich environments; consequently, they constitute a literacy event on their own due to the multiple opportunities for visitors to interact with verbal and visual texts. In this vein, Yasukawa et al. (2013) conclude that ''visitors may engage with a range of texts including texts that constitute the exhibition objects themselves, those that convey information about the objects and those that instruct visitors about how the visitors are expected by the museum to navigate through the exhibition'' (p. 85). The authors thus identify three literacy events in museums: exhibitions, print content and instructions.

The first literacy event encompasses encounters with "texts that constitute the exhibition objects themselves," which refers to visitors' interactions with the museum displays. When the exhibition's core is a text (e.g., book, story, painting), visitors can use it to

practise their literacy skills. As museums offer a wide range of environments, children have more opportunities to test and experiment with their fledgling skills in multiple contexts. Moreover, literacy is enhanced by having first-hand experiences with texts. One of the foundations of the ELM project is that children's vocabularies develop when they encounter face to face the real thing. In fact, McVicker (2004) found that manipulating artefacts as a hands-on learning technique increased the students' phonemic awareness. A particular case where exhibitions showcase texts is the aforementioned literary museums, which have literature at the core of their displays. For this reason, these museums are exceptionally equipped to promote literacy skills among visitors. By providing a wide range of literary events, their museum exhibitions broaden children's command of literacy skills.

The second type of literacy event in a museum happens when visitors engage with printed information. Through exposure to different kinds of print, museum practitioners can create multiple environments where children practise their literacy skills. The Museum Inventory of Literacy Indicators (MILI) (Giles, 2021) evaluates the use of print in museums through four categories: the availability of books and other reading material; the provision of writing material; the presence of signs, labels and directions; and the effectiveness of print integration, which examines how these elements are integrated into the overall experience. In particular, Kassow (2006) mentions that the presence of environmental print provides early opportunities for children to make sense of their surroundings through words and images. Moreover, these signs enable children to locate the museum items by themselves, encouraging their sense of independence and exploratory learning behaviours.

Finally, the last type of literacy event is the instructions provided by the practitioners at the museum, both during the exhibition tours and other complementary activities (such as workshops or courses). Mediators are an inherent and fundamental part of the educational missions of museums. They act as literacy instructors, which Baynham (1995) defines as ''a person who makes his or her literacy skills available to others, on a formal or informal basis, for them to accomplish specific literacy purposes'' (pp. 59-60). Giles (2021) affirms that ''it is this scaffolded interaction with knowledgeable others that makes children's museum experiences dialogical as well as hands-on with abundant potential for language learning'' (pp. 3-4). The dialogical approach of museums promotes the development of speaking and listening skills in visitors, which are integral to literacy. Moreover, Weisberg et al. (2013) add that various aspects of play (i.e., the inherent social interaction, children's high level of engagement, forming symbolic relationships and the volume of language production) also contribute to improving language acquisition.

Ensuring the accessibility of instructions becomes especially relevant to museums due to their commitment to diversity. The ACM (2023) states that children's museums strive to build an inclusive community with all visitors, such as children with second language needs and children with disabilities. For that matter, Barton and Wolery (2010) highlight the need to structure interactions between instructors and pupils with disabilities. The role of literacy mediators is essential to adhere to the principles of NLS, as literacy events are regarded as collectively produced rather than individual events.

However, despite its social component, the NLS approach only covers part of the spectrum of reading promotion purposes. In the long term, a literary education involves many more dimensions other than literacy, such as developing one's aesthetic discernment, involvement in creative writing or knowledge of the most noted works in universal literature. The following section provides a detailed analysis of how museums can promote reading in a broader sense beyond academic and informative purposes.

3. 3. Reading promotion in children's museums

Museum educators now face the challenge of developing new reading promotion practices in the context of the museum experience. Prottas (2020) refers to the intention of promoting literature and reading as a "literary-linguistic" approach to museum education.

The paradigm change in museum education towards interaction and visitor participation made it possible to incorporate reading promotion activities in the agendas of children's museums. Prottas highlights that "in contrast to traditional exhibition spaces that focus on displaying objects, literary centres are primarily educational spaces, often with a heavy focus on media, educational tools, and game" (2020, p. 222). Second-wave museums encourage children's participation and engagement with their exhibitions and, in this way, update their approach to reading promotion by incorporating the child into their own educational process. Their innovative installations promote that children engage with literature through play and provide opportunities for them to experiment with language (Eakle and Dalesio, 2008).

In addition, Prottas' words reveal that physical collections are no longer the main asset of these installations. On the contrary, the Centre for Norwegian Language and Literature opted to detach its programs from the venues and offer site-unspecific activities (Sandsmark,

2020). The Centre develops educational programs directly in the children's contexts by touring the national schools. In 2018, their program *Read for Life* (Les for Livet) administered a literary workshop in 143 classrooms nationwide. The museum amplified its voice and reached other audiences by distancing these literary programs from the historical sites and artefacts. Moreover, the liberation from space constraints, time distance, and authorship dominance allowed students to relate more personally to the stories.

Several strategies support this movement towards a literary-linguistic approach to museum education. The first step entails tailoring the exhibition's design to children's needs. Exhibitions refer to the ensemble of museum spaces, objects on display and visitors' interaction. Yasukawa et al. (2013) define the children's experience of exhibitions as "a multi-modal communicative practice that is shaped by the spatial configurations of the objects in the exhibition, but as well as that, the children's movements within the space" (p. 92). Thus, capturing children's literary practices in museums would ideally involve capturing their spatial and temporal influences.

Interaction opposes other encounters children may have with literature (e.g., curricular literary education) as it is built upon play and participation. Sandsmark (2020) declares that museum educational programs achieve this effect because they are defined ''by the aim of encouraging different approaches to experience literature and language'' (p. 255). For this mission, the programs must emphasise the artistic and emotional aspects of the texts rather than their genre, author, time or motive. Prottas (2020) stresses that "rather than presenting literature within a historical or biographical framework, the educational programs focus on creativity and emotional connections to literature, unmooring literature from its time-specific framework" (p. 222). The methodology presented here consists of connecting the museum content to notions that are familiar to the audience. The Centre for Norwegian Language and Literature justifies this approach stating that "by narrowing literature to patterns, ideas, and emotions and addressing current cultural phenomena, new groups of young audiences can relate to the literature" (Sandsmark, 2020, p. 253).

Developing a sense of curiosity about language is essential to encourage the autonomous experimentation of children. In the words of Sandsmark (2020), ''there are no learning aims of the production, but there is an aim to inspire and motivate the audience to read and explore language'' (p. 256). This interest may lead children to explore the creation of their own expressive texts. As a result, interactive museums that encourage visitors to

engage in the meaning-making process also promote the love for stories through participation and creative expression (Eakle and Dalesio, 2008).

This perspective does not mean that interactive or site-unspecific museums should replace object-based museums. Sandsmark (2020) reinforces the benefits of both models and their need to coexist. Historical-biographical literary museums provide an opportunity to understand the past through literature, whereas literary-linguistic centres establish links between literature and the present. He compares the situation to the differences between a natural history museum and a science centre. Both models are necessary, but the second museum type approximates more to the aims of reading promotion.

The ultimate goal of reading promotion programmes in museums is to seek relevancy for young audiences. Relevancy can be tracked down into four types: relevance at the moment, relevance as a prism to history, relevance as the realisation of opportunities and relevance as practical use and growth (Otterholm and Tveit, 2010). For instance, a strategy to bring older texts closer to young readers is to seek relevance today as a prism to history. Thus, the themes become more recognisable and familiar to the children. To the concern that these approaches may erase learning about past pieces of literature, Sandsmark (2020) claims that, on the contrary, these approaches infuse older authors with new life. In his words, ''the beloved poet develops from a cliché in speeches and textbooks to a relevant poet for the audience'' (p. 260).

Therefore, these museums connect their exhibits with the audience by involving visitors in meaning-making processes. Hackett (2014) exposes that museums offer the advantage of combining language with several other meaning-making modes (e.g., talking, running), which resembles real-life experiences more accurately. Moreover, museum spaces integrate multiple communication modalities (sound, image, and video), enabling a richer learning experience. In addition, most modern museums are incorporating multisensorial aspects into their exhibitions. In this line, Hamilton and Van Duinen (2021) state that ''effective stories can be told through the written word, but telling a story through touch, sound, and sight encourages learners to experience it in multiple ways and results in learners making more connections with a story'' (p. 514).

Otterholm and Tveit (2010) argue that museum educators can act as intermediaries between literature and readers by actively creating activities that render literature —an intangible type of heritage— visible. For example, in a study by Hamilton and Duinen

(2021), a pupil had problems identifying examples of the literary figure personification in the assigned book. The museum educator resorted to the museum windows and said:

> I actually told them to look out the window over the river and the city, to pick an object, and to give it human characteristics. By the end of the discussion, the students had personified the river, the bridge, the buildings, and a rock in the middle of the river. As a result, I think my students developed a much deeper understanding of personification and could apply it to the book at a later time. (Hamilton and Duinen, 2021, p. 514-516)

In addition to visualising an abstract literary concept, this technique encouraged students to use their surroundings to inform the meaning-making and learning process.

Another current reading promotion strategy in museum education proposes a shifting focus from curriculum programming to acts of interpretation. Concretely, Nóra Nagy explores how to engage readers in literary analysis through museum exhibitions (as cited in Prottas, 2020). The author demonstrates that collaborating with literary experts, such as museum educators, can enrich students' comprehension of complex texts. Teacher-led discussions about the formation of literary canons and their potential counter-narratives may open the conversation about the history of literature and encourage critical thinking. For example, the study developed by Hamilton and Duinen (2021) exemplifies how teachers facilitated students' interactions with a museum exhibit to expand their understanding of a book they were reading at school. In the novel, the characters built boats out of reeds, a material that was unknown to the pupils. Instead of verbally explaining the meaning, the teacher was able to show the students real examples of it exhibited in the museum. In this way, students could better visualise and understand the text.

Additionally, literary museums for children's literature can pursue other essential goals in relation to children's literature aside from reading promotion, such as creating a sense of community around stories or teaching languages to migrant populations (Sadiq, 2018). However, such objectives overpass the scope of this study, which focuses on the role of museums as promoters of reading for youth audiences.

c. Reading response theory as a lens to study reading promotion

Readers-response theory aims to provide a generalised account of what happens when individuals engage in a reading process. The theory relies on the idea that readers make meaning by engaging with texts of all kinds (poems, novels, films, paintings). Drawing from Rosenblatt's (1978), Bleich's (1975), Iser's (1978) and Holland's (1975) arguments, Sipe (2000) modelled children's responses to picturebooks into five classes of literary understanding: analytical, intertextual, personal, transparent and performative. Different stances, actions, and functions characterise each category.

Analytical responses entail critical thinking and examination of a text. They involve a deep analysis of the author's literary devices and choices, such as the themes, symbols and structure. Through them, the reader aims to uncover the text's underlying meaning, motives, and implications. This type of response represents the most common among all, appearing in 73% of the cases studied by Sipe (2000).

Intertextual responses manifest through the association of a particular text with other texts or cultural references. As a result, these responses require some prior literary or cultural background. By relating different texts, readers build a network of interconnected meanings and enrich their reading experience.

Personal responses imply that readers relate a particular text to their own lives. They involve subjective emotional reactions boosted by personal connections to the events and themes of the text. These responses allow readers to have a more individualised reading experience and reflect on their values and beliefs.

Transparent responses encompass a symbolic merging between the reader and the text. The reader momentarily uses the text as their identity, and the limits between fiction and real life are blurred. These responses allow the reader to have a nearly first-hand experience of the events in the text.

Finally, performative texts allow children to manipulate and resignify a text for their own purposes. They encompass creative and multimodal forms of self-expression that arise from reading the text, such as dramatic representations, artwork, poetry or songs. This type of response encourages a more interactive and participatory reading experience that can enhance the reader's understanding and interpretation of the text.

Moreover, these five responses arise from three basic literary impulses: the hermeneutic impulse (the drive to understand the story and interpret it), the personalising impulse (to link the story to the self and the personal experience), and the aesthetic impulse

(either responding receptively to the story as a lived-through experience or using the story as the platform for one's own creative expression).

In this dissertation, the reading-response theory informs the analysis of the anticipated visitors' responses as they engage with the museum exhibitions, the print content and the instructions provided by mediators, which are conceptualised as literacy events. This typology allows to classify and describe in more detail how children may engage with literature in a museum setting. Moreover, it helps to gain a deeper understanding of what purposes children's literary museums seek in relation to reading promotion—whether it is a classical analytical response to stories or another kind of interaction— and what strategies museum educators implement to achieve their objectives.

d. Children's literary museums

The International Committee for Literary and Composers' Museums (ICLCM, 2019) defines the *literary museum* as "an institution focusing on preserving literature as cultural heritage. Those institutions acquire, preserve and communicate this literature through museographical codes, in order to promote knowledge about literature and its role in society" (para. 2).

The ICLCM (2019) classifies literary museums into four types depending on whether their exhibitions pay tribute to an author, a character, a specific genre of literature or a literary landscape. Author museums honour the heritage of a particular writer with the purpose of communicating their work to future generations and are often located in the author's former house. Museums devoted to a particular character or a series of them bring to life their fictional universe to immerse visitors in the story. Similarly, literary landscape museums recreate a story's world in order to evoke its characteristics in the visitors. Finally, museums devoted to a specific kind of literature take different forms, such as displaying a particular national literature, historical period or genre (e.g., comics, illustrated picturebooks), to showcase their identity.

In addition, literary museums can be divided according to their target audience. Those literary museums whose target audience is children and young people belong as well to the category of children's museums. These museums usually display different aspects of children's literature, similar to any literary museum. Thus, children's literary museums can also be devoted to children's literature authors, characters, genres and landscapes.

A substantial body of research about the literary museum devoted to children's literature is absent in academia. In 2011, Karen Nelson Hoyle, former curator of the Children's Literature Research Collections, drew attention to the importance of archives and collections of children's literature as institutions that provide a physical history of the field. She refers to the American Library Association (ALA) definition of *archives* as "a collection of library materials separated from the general collection because they are of a certain form, on a certain subject, of a certain period or geographical area, rare, fragile or valuable" (Young, 1983, p. 211). Hoyle enumerates names archives may receive, such as centres, institutes, societies or collections. Noticeably, the word "museum" is not included despite clear concept overlaps. So then, what is the children's literary museum?

A tentative conceptualisation might modify the ICLCM definition of the literary museum to specify its focus on children's literature. Thus, literary museums of children's literature could be defined as institutions that acquire, preserve and communicate children's literature in order to promote knowledge about it and its role in society. Therefore, the main difference compared to archives may reside in the communicative nature of literary museums and their subsequent social mission, not only as advocates of children's literature but also as promoters of reading. Precisely, Prottas (2020) points out the literary museum's ongoing evolution during the last decades. Historically, these museums focused on gathering and displaying book collections to highlight the authors' biography and literary achievements in their historical contexts, thus neglecting to establish connections to contemporary social concerns. In the words of Prottas (2020, p. 221), "Today this traditional model of the literary museum is changing, with new forms of display and programming challenging the fetichistic aura of authors as national heroes or models of pure genius". He adds that installations in major literary museums "have led to new strategies for displaying manuscripts in a manner that avoids treating them like religious cult objects [...], engaging visitors in conversations about the creative process and how literature relates to and is constructed from interactions with our world".

The renowned academic of children's literature, Helma van Lierop-Debrauwer (2018), addressed this issue in relation to the Kinderboekenmuseum [Children's Book Museum] in The Hague, the Netherlands. The author relates that the museum activities evidenced an "adult—top-down—perspective in that they were mainly aimed at improving children's knowledge about children's books and at using children's books in the service of language and reading education" (p. 116). From 2007 to 2010, the museum underwent a renovation

period encompassing a shift in its vision "to let children explore, experience, and develop stories and to stimulate interaction by having them play and read together" (p. 117).

The Kinderboekenmuseum is not the only example of a literary museum for children that adjusted their model to the new times. For instance, the H. C. Andersen House Museum in Odense, Denmark, was completely demolished and rebuilt in the period between 2015 and 2021. Similarly, the House Museum of the Ratón Pérez expanded its installations in 2012. This tendency demonstrates the concern about creating meaningful museum experiences for children and the cutting-edge application of technological innovations to the field.

Besides these examples, there are many more museums devoted to children's literature worldwide. In fact, some countries have joined the Netherlands in creating their own national centres for children's literature, such as Seven Stories, England's National Centre for Children's Books. These museums display different elements related to children's literature, including the art and life of prominent authors or specific universes and characters. Thus, they can be classified under the typology proposed by the ICLCM (2019): author museums, characters museums, generalist literary museums and landscape museums.

For the present dissertation, a comprehensive list of literary children's museums has been compiled. The intention is to illustrate the plurality of the current international system of children's literary museums and demonstrate its growing interest as a children's cultural institution. The list was organised following the aforementioned typology, although no examples of literary landscape museums for children were found. The information was collected through an informal search on the Internet based on keywords related to children's literature and museums. In addition, the location and description of the museum are provided for informative purposes. The final results are presented in the following Table 1.

Nonetheless, it should be noted that the criteria for classification are flexible, and on many occasions, there are overlaps between the categories. The current change in the museum paradigm explains that many children's literary museums are moving toward integrating two or more models into one. For instance, the museum Moat Brae stands as James Barrie's childhood house (author museum), the birthplace of Peter Pan (character museum) and Scotland's National Centre for Children's Literature (generalist literary museum).

Table 1. List of children's literary museums

Name of Museum	Location	Description
Author museums		These museums honour the heritage of a particular children's author (writer or illustrator) with the purpose of communicating their work to future generations. They are often located in the author's birthplace or former residence.
Roald Dahl Museum and Story Centre	United Kingdom	An interactive museum based in the village where the author lived and wrote most of his works.
Moat Brae	United Kingdom	Scotland's National Storytelling Centre. It is based in the village where James Barrie spent part of his childhood and potentially inspired his book, *Peter Pan*.
The world of Beatrix Potter	United Kingdom	Exhibition about the life and works of the children's books author and illustrator Beatrix Potter.
H. C. Andersen's House museum	Denmark	An interactive museum located next to Hans Christian Andersen's childhood home.
Grimmwelt Kassel	Germany	A multimedia museum devoted to the stories of the Grimm brothers.
Tomi Ungerer Museum	France	The museum celebrates the legacy of the author, including his children's books and illustrations.
The Amazing World of Dr. Seuss Museum	USA	The museum focuses on the stories, characters and illustrations of the iconic children's author.
The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art	USA	The museum focuses on the work of Eric Carle, but it also contains a gallery of picturebooks.
Lucy Maud Montgomery Birthplace	Canada	A house museum located in L. M. Montgomery's original birthplace.
Anno Mitsumasa Art Museum	Japan	A museum devoted to the art of the picturebooks illustrator Anno Mitsumasa.
Chihiro Art Museum	Japan	The museum displays the artwork of the children's illustrator Chihiro Iwasaki.

Character museums		These museums are devoted to a particular literary character, bringing to life its fictional universe to immerse visitors in the story.
Museum House of Ratón Pérez	Spain	A fictional house museum about the character Ratón Pérez created by Padre Luis Coloma.
National Leprechaun Museum of Ireland	Ireland	An immersive museum about the history of Irish folklore through the figure of the Leprechaun.
Muumimuseum	Finland	The museum focuses on the Moomin characters from the books created by Tove Jansson.
Nijntje Museum	Netherlands	A museum on Nijntje (Miffy in English) and other characters created by Dick Bruna.
Heididorf	Switzerland	The museum recreates the universe of Heidi, the character and book created by Johanna Spyri.
Struwwelpeter Museum	Germany	A museum about the children's character Struwwelpeter created by Heinrich Hoffman.
The Anne of Green Gables Museum	Canada	The museum focuses on Anne Shirley, the main character in the series by Lucy Maud Montgomery.
Generalist literary museums		These museums are devoted to a specific kind of literature and aim to showcase its personal identity. They can take different approaches, such as focusing on a particular national literature, historical period or genre (e.g., comics, picturebooks).
Seven Stories	United Kingdom	England's National Centre for Children's Books. An interactive space that brings stories to life.
Discover Children's Story Center	United Kingdom	Immersive and interactive storytelling space for children.
The Story Museum	United Kingdom	Interactive exhibitions that celebrate stories for children.
Junibacken	Sweden	A pioneering museum focused on children's literature, especially on the author Astrid Lindgren.
Kinderboekenmuseum [Children's Book Museum]	Netherlands	A haven that celebrates storytelling and literature for children and young adults.
Villa Verbeelding	Belgium	A wonderland that aims to foster a love for art and literature in children.

Comic Strip Center	Belgium	The museum homages the artistry and storytelling of comics and graphic novels.
Bilderbuchmuseum	Germany	The museum is devoted to the art and history of illustrated books.
Illustration of the Youth Museum	France	A museum that displays art and illustration for young readers.
Fairy House	Lithuania	The museum is devoted to fairytales and folklore from all around the world.
Fairy Tale Museum	Cyprus	A museum that celebrates universal folklore and mythology.
Sugar Hill Children's Museum of Art and Storytelling	USA	A specific centre for promoting literature and other related arts among children.
National Center for Children's Illustrated Literature	USA	A collection of American illustrations and illustrated books for the youth.
The Rabbit Hole	USA	An ongoing project to launch an immersive museum on children's literature.
Iwaki Museum of Picture Books for Children	Japan	The collection showcases the art of children's picturebooks.

e. Case studies

From the previous list, two children's literary museums were selected to form the case studies of this research project. The museums belong to two different classes proposed by the ICLCM (2019): a museum based on an author (H. C. Andersen's House Museum) and a museum based on a fictional character (House Museum of Ratón Pérez). The rationale for the selection is to understand the purposes these different types of museums pursue and compare their strategies to achieve them.

H. C. Andersen's House Museum is located in the original birthplace of Hans Christian Andersen at Odense, Denmark, where the acclaimed children's author lived from age 2 to 14. The original museum opened in 1908 as a classical writers' museum focusing on the life and works of Hans Christian Andersen. It exhibited his works and personal belongings. In 2015 the museum was rebuilt, culminating in the new opening in 2021. Besides the original recreation of the author's childhood house, the new installations bring his tales and life story alive through animations, interactive exhibits and peak technology. In addition, the museum includes a playground for young children called Ville Vau that offers a wide range of educational and cultural activities. In 2022, their Child and Education Department was awarded the European Museum Academy Prize for museum education.

La Casa Museo del Ratón Pérez (in English, House Museum of Ratón Pérez) recreates the fictional house of Ratón Pérez, the Spanish equivalent of the Tooth Fairy character. The tale was written by the author Luis Coloma in 1894 to entertain the infant king Alfonso XIII when he lost a tooth at the age of eight. Since then, the story of the little mouse that collects milk teeth in exchange for presents has been told around Hispanic households. The museum opened its doors in 2008 as a private initiative and then received official recognition as the original location of the mouse's home in the centre of Madrid. In 2012, the museum expanded its installations to communicate more details about the legendary tale.

III. Objectives and research questions

The present dissertation aims to answer several research questions related to the role of museums in reading promotion. The first research question addresses what purposes

children's literary museums pursue. The second question asks what kind of assets, resources and strategies these museums possess that can be implemented to achieve those goals and to advance and enhance the practice of reading promotion. Finally, another research question entails what outcomes these museums anticipate in relation to the reading responses of their visitors interacting with their exhibitions.

The main objective of the research project is:

- To shed light on the role of children's literary museums as an institution in the reading promotion system

For this matter, the following intermediate objectives are set:

- To identify the purposes that underpin the existence of children's literary museums
- To analyse the strategies, resources and spaces that children's literary museums use to promote reading and literature among young audiences
- To unveil the reading responses that museum educators intend to elicit in children through the museum installations and activities

IV. Methodology

a. Participants

As explained in the section devoted to the case studies, two museums participated in the research project: the H. C. Andersen's House Museum and the House Museum of Ratón Pérez. The sample comprises four employees, three from the Andersen Museum and one from the Pérez Museum. Of the three employees in the first museum, one belonged to the Child and Education department, another to the management team, and the last was a curator in the exhibition. The practitioner from the House Museum of Ratón Pérez worked in the museum's Communication department.

For privacy reasons, the participants' identities have been preserved by assigning each person a codename in relation to the order they appear in the text. The equivalence can be consulted in Table 2.

Table 2. Participants' codenames

Position	Codename
Head of the Child and Education department at the H. C. Andersen museum	Eva
Head of Development at the H. C. Andersen museum	Peter
Exhibition curator at the H. C. Andersen museum	Jens
Communication officer at the House Museum of Ratón Pérez	Ana

b. Procedure

The representatives of each museum were contacted online via email. The leading researcher informed them personally about the means and purposes of the research project and asked for their voluntary participation. Once they agreed, the museum representatives signed an authorization form to provide informed consent to participate in the project. After this process, the interviews were scheduled with each representative and, in the case of the Andersen museum, two other key informants were selected by the Head of the museum.

The interviews with the workers from the Andersen museum took place first. The lead researcher flew to Odense and conducted the in-person interviews at their offices. In the case of the Ratón Pérez museum, the interviewee decided to answer an online questionnaire due to agenda difficulties. Before every interview, the participant was given a printed document with one plain language statement, privacy notice and consent form to sign.

After the interviews with the museum practitioners, the leading researcher visited the museum exhibitions. In the case of the Andersen museum, the tour was personally provided by a curator (interviewee 3), and it was possible to take pictures. In the case of the Ratón Pérez museum, the tour was provided by a museum guide and was opened to the general public. As a result, it was not allowed to take pictures of the installations. Alternatively, a map is provided to illustrate the spaces in the analysis section.

c. Ethical implications

The School of Education Research Ethics Committee at the University of Glasgow approved the research project before its start. The approval process consisted of completing an

application form in the modality of Non-clinical research involving human participants/data. The form addressed potential ethical risks, justification of the research to be conducted, methodology and data collection, confidentiality and data handling, research monitoring, protection of vulnerable groups and assessment of health and safety, especially concerning lone fieldwork.

d. Instruments

The strategy for data collection articulates two complementary tools for data gathering: observations and interviews. Two research instruments are designed *ad-hoc* to collect information. In the first place, an observation grid is created to annotate information about the museum installations concerning their possibilities for reading promotion endeavours. The unit of analysis is specific rooms from each museum in the case study. The grid draws upon the theoretical framework in section 2 (*Key concepts in museum studies*) in order to codify and unveil the spatial parameters of different museum spaces. The observations provide insights into museums' strategies to promote reading and storytelling among children. The grid includes the following elements:

- An image of the space
- A brief description of the specific room
- A list of indicators to categorise the spatial distribution: architecture, type of circuit, exhibition elements (auxiliary, decorative, informative), presentation order, modularity and extensibility.
- A detailed section on print elements and their distribution
- Information about instructions and accessibility to diverse individuals
- Instrumental information about the social aspects of the visit, such as the number of participants, type of engagement and approximate time
- A question on the required senses to engage with the exhibit
- A section about interaction and expected reading responses
- Blank space for additional observations

The complete grid can be consulted in Appendix 1 for more detail.

Secondly, a semi-structured interview was written to gather information by contacting critical museum agents. The questions were grouped by themes (i.e., general museum information, educational programmes, reading promotion and state-of-the-art in children's

literary museums). The themes were adjusted to match the expertise of the interviewees depending on their role in the organisation. Their answers serve to gain a deeper understanding of the purposes underpinning the activity of children's literary museums and what assets the practitioners use to achieve them. An example of a standardised interview can be found in Appendix 2.

e. Data treatment and analysis

The information gathered from the observation in the museums' tours can be found in the six observation grids presented in the Analysis section. The content of the four interviews is fully transcribed and can be consulted in Appendix 3.

The empirical data collected from the observation grid and the interviews were analysed through qualitative methods. The theoretical framework presented in the first part of the dissertation informs the analysis. Concretely, the data is analysed by applying the lenses of reading response theory adapted to children's literature by Lawrence Sipe (2000) to the empirical data. Thus, observation from the museums serves to determine which reading responses each room was eliciting and why. This approach was combined with the responses from the key observers to decode what purposes each museum had concerning reading promotion and what resources and strategies were being implemented to achieve them.

V. Analysis

In this section, the research results are presented and commented on. An individualised analysis of the Andersen museum is first exposed and then followed by the Pérez museum analysis. Each museum is analysed through an observation grid and an interview. For the observational study, three relevant rooms or spatial units are selected in each museum.

a. H. C. Andersen House Museum observational analysis

1. Unit 1: *My Children* room

The room called *My Children* resembles the idea behind a classic object-based collection. Across a group of glass cabinets, various copies from the massive artistic production of Hans

Christian Andersen are displayed, from books and journals to drawings and paper cuttings. Each object is accompanied by an informative text showcasing its title and year of creation.
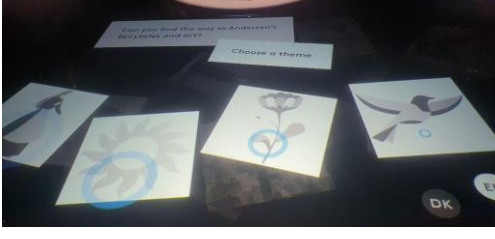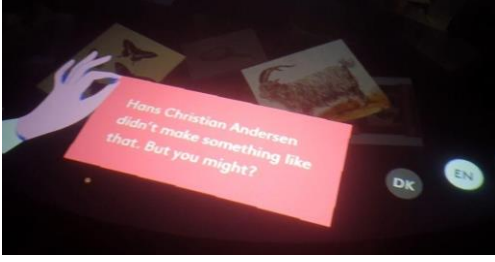
The disposition of the print materials using a parallel strategy reinforces the didactic intention of the room. The displayed objects are the core reason for this room to exist. Thus, each one receives its own panel informing the visitors about the specific details that explain its importance (e.g., the year of creation places the work in relation to the author's life).

Other spatial elements stress the importance of the objects and aim to attract the visitors' attention to them. For example, the lighting is dark in all of the room except for the display cabinets, which are also the only splash of colour. In addition, the presentation of the objects, attending to material reasons (i.e., paper cuttings, drawings, volumes), serves as well as an educational strategy to present information in an orderly way. The close circuit establishes a path that allows visitors to create connections between the objects, relate their origins, find common themes and assimilate the implications all of this has for Andersen's work. Thus, the space configuration provokes an intertextual reading response, encouraging visitors to relate different texts between them.

Furthermore, in this room, technology is also at the service of eliciting this response. The screens display an interactive game that prompts guests to select among different options, such as themes, characters and materials used by Andersen in his work. Combining these choices results in a recommendation of a piece of Andersen's production with the same elements. For example, selecting the flower and the pen may lead to a fragment of *The Snowdrop,* and choosing a girl and the scissors to a female paper cut. The screen game only provides the name of the recommended piece; hence visitors receive motivation to look upon the real story or artwork in the room and discover more about it. This activity can be repeated endlessly to create new combinations, activating the intertextual response in the user, who can discover new tales and artistic pieces by combining different elements.

This proposal is driven by the hermeneutic impulse because, through this interaction, children can gain a new understanding of Andersen's stories by decomposing them into thematic elements and loose associations. Moreover, if their selection does not draw any results from the database of Andersen's work, a message encourages them to create their own version (as seen in the last picture of the grid). In this way, intertextual learning is being extended to their own production.

Observation Grid 1 — H.C. Andersen's House Museum

My children room	
	Description: the room offers a glimpse into the massive production of the author during his lifetime. In a mix of archives and galleries, the exhibitors showcase examples of Andersen's paper cuttings, travel drawings, picturebook collages, diaries, notebooks, and other materials where the author wrote. In addition, there is an interactive spot where visitors can interact with a screen. This activity works as a test that asks visitors to choose between different options (e.g., scissors or pen; bird, flower, sun or lady) and, based on their answers, provides an example of an Andersen piece that includes those elements (e.g., a tale or a paper cut). If there are no examples available with the visitor choices, a message encourages the user to create it.
	Architecture (size, illumination, colours): medium size, dark illumination except for the display cabinets, dark colours **Circuit (open or close; free or fixed):** close circuit, free order

	Exhibition elements (shape, type, placement, height, free space): papers, paper cutting figures, notebooks, books, agendas, screens; regular height.
	    - **Auxiliary elements (pedestals, shelves, showcases):** glass cabinets
	    - **Decoratives (ambient music, textiles):** sound effects synchronised to interaction with the screen, objects (wastepaper basket)
	    - **Informative material:** printed texts with data about the title, year of production and description of the object
	 Presentation order (chronological, thematic, geographic, material, mixed): material (divided by type of work: drawing, fiction, paper cuttings…).
	 Modularity and extensibility (capacity to move, change and extend it): non modular, extensible

	Print elements (written, complementary, audiovisual, external): written information, audiovisual guides
	    Disposition (unit, partial, parallel, mobile, mix): unit and parallel
	    Integration with content (distance, placement, design): situated next to each object, in the corners, standard design

	Instructions (family, museum guide/educator, school, free-play, other): provided by the audio guide and print panels **Accessibility (functional diversity):** available in three languages (English, Danish, Mandarin Chinese), accessible for wheelchairs
	Participants (estimated number, age): around a class (20-30 people), from age seven and on **Individual or group engagement:** individual or in pairs **Visit time:** around 20 min, flexible time, can repeat
	Involved senses (sight, hearing, taste, smell, touch): sight, touch **Specifications:** screen touch
	Type of interaction (observation, exploration, construction/creation, analysis/reflection, expression, play, perform, socialising/sharing, experiment): construction/creation, expression, play, experiment **Reading responses (Sipe, 2000) (analytical, intertextual, personal, transparent, performative):** intertextual **Impulses (Sipe, 2000) (hermeneutic, personalising, aesthetic):** hermeneutic (understand and interpret a story)

2. **Unit 2:** *The Little Mermaid* **installation**

This installation belongs to the larger exhibition of The fairy tale world, which showcases scenes from twelve of the most well-known tales by Andersen. The space devoted to the tale of *The Little Mermaid* stands out for its peculiarity, which explains why it was chosen to be analysed among all the options.

The installation contains several interesting elements that interact to form a whole. On the periphery, seven frames in the shape of bubbles display illustrations from the tale. The audio guide narrates fragments of the story in relation to each image as complementary information. In the centre of the space, pillows in the shape of rocks form a circle under a window. The skylight is right under a pool of water outside the museum.

The space recreates the atmosphere of *The Little Mermaid* tale. The decorative elements (e.g., bubbles, seaweed, rocks) evoke the sea bottom, whereas the outside world is glimpsed through the skylight. This window is located under a pool, emphasising the perspective of being underwater and looking into the shore from afar. Moreover, visitors in the museum garden can be seen from the room when they peek into the pool, which adds realism to the experience.

The pillows invite visitors to sit down and reflect, as well as the soothing music, low light and cold colours. In contrast to other exhibitions, this space does not have much sensory stimulation. For example, the audio guide only reproduces the spare voices of some characters that long to discover the outside world. Altogether, the scenography and audio instructions invite children to reflect.

The installation serves the purpose of immersing the visitor in the point of view of the main character in the tale. Instead of telling her story, the space allows children to experience by themselves the perspective of being a mermaid that longs to belong to the outer world. Being in her position, children face her challenges, doubts and longings and tackle their own reactions to this situation first-hand. Thus, the room evokes a personal reading response through which children relate the tale to their own lives. In turn, this relates to the personalising impulse that allows children to link a story —*The Little Mermaid,* in this case— to their own lives, seek connections and differences and reflect on their perspectives.

Observation Grid 2 — H.C. Andersen's House Museum

The Little Mermaid installation	**Description:** the installation belongs to the section called The fairy tale world, where a single room is divided into twelve different spaces, each of which recreates a scene from one of the best-known fairy tales by the author. The one devoted to *The Little Mermaid* tale consists of a series of frames that illustrate the story and a circle of rocks that invite visitors to sit down and reflect while observing the outside world through the glass window on the ceiling as if they were underwater. The skylight is situated under a pool of water that visitors can also see from the outside of the museum.
	Architecture (size, illumination, colours): medium size, dark illumination (the only source of light is the window that displays the pool), dark colours **Circuit (open or close; free or fixed):** close room but communicated to other exhibits, fixed circulation (story order)
	Exhibition elements (shape, type, placement, height, free space): illustrations of the tale (by Sandra Rilova), placed at child height, circular order - **Auxiliary elements (pedestals, shelves, showcases):** soft seats emulating rocks, circular frames emulating bubbles, circular window - **Decoratives (ambient music, textiles):** 'morbid mermaid' music (by Louise Alenius), metal sticks around the frames as seaweed - **Informative material:** hearing guide (little mermaid story), synchronised with each frame **Presentation order (chronological, thematic, geographic, material, mixed):** chronological (story) **Modularity and extensibility (capacity to move, change and extend it):** capacity to move around, not extensible (fixed story presentation)
	Print elements (written, complementary, audiovisual, external): audiovisual (illustrations + audio narrative guide) **Disposition (unit, partial, parallel, mobile, mix):** parallel **Integration with content (distance, placement, design):** frames are near, surrounding the seating area, integrated through design
	Instructions (family, museum guide/educator, school, free-play, other): museum guide through audio or in person, possibly family or school **Accessibility (functional diversity):** different languages (Danish, English, Mandarin Chinese), accessible for wheelchairs
	Participants (estimated number, age): reduced number (2-3 people), from 5 years old on **Individual or group engagement:** individual **Visit time:** around 20 minutes, flexible time, can repeat
	Involved senses (sight, hearing, taste, smell, touch): sight, hearing **Specifications:** both senses are necessary to get the full experience
	Type of interaction (observation, exploration, construction/creation, analysis/reflection, expression, play, perform, socialising/sharing, experiment): analysis/reflection **Reading responses (Sipe, 2000) (analytical, intertextual, personal, transparent, performative):** personal **Impulses (Sipe, 2000) (hermeneutic, personalising, aesthetic):** personalizing (linking the story to the self)
	Observations: ''Looking close to the little pond on the ceiling, you can actually see the visitors outside through the water. And they can see you as well, very blurry. You really get the sense that the story is that the mermaid will come up and speak to you and ask you to sit for a while, and she will tell you a story about how when she was up there. She asks you about what you miss; what's important to you? And then you reflect, you sit here and think about what is important to you. At the same time, you listen to the story of the mermaid'' (Peter, Interview 3, Appendix 3).

3. Unit 3: Fairy Tale Land in Ville Vau

The Fairy Tale Land is a playground space composed of a series of buildings that recreate a city at scale for children. It belongs to Ville Vau, the special area of Andersen's museum dedicated to young visitors. The space recreates a miniature city with shops, castles, houses and other city elements, such as a river and a boat. In addition to the installations, there are numerous props and costumes inspired by Andersen's stories that visitors can use at their pleasure. There are no instructions, as it is a space for free play, and both children and adults can use it.

The space arrangement aims to produce performative reading responses in children. The variety of props and costumes allows children to perform a wide range of characters and situations. Moreover, their modularity and extensibility (as they can be moved around) increase the chances that children will use their imagination to create new scenarios.

The mix of real-life scenarios (with ordinary shops and houses) with fantastic elements (such as the animal and magical creatures costumes) also opens infinite possibilities for role play and performance. After going through the museum and learning about Andersen's tales, children can have a lived experience of those stories, test new approximations of them and get involved in perspective-taking games. Eva emphasizes that all these attributes emulate Andersen's writing style, which is characterized by its playfulness and spontaneity. Thus, the room aims to stimulate the aesthetic impulse in children, inviting them to use a story to express themselves creatively.

In addition to the Fairy Tale Land, Ville Vau includes other spaces that promote this philosophy. There is a theatre where children engage in drama lessons and a studio for arts and crafts or creative writing. Thus, they compose a dynamuseum, a dedicated area for activities that require their own space as they may interfere with the usual functioning of the museum. These activities are part of the Learning Universe in the Hans Christian Andersen House programme, developed and managed by the Children and Learning department at the museum. Again, the intention is to motivate performative responses in children by promoting their artistic self-expression.

Socialisation is also embraced and promoted in this space. There is enough space, objects and costumes for a whole classroom to play at the same time. Consequently, children embark on collaborative performances and cooperate to create new stories. Moreover, adults are welcome and can engage in the children's fantasy play. Therefore, the Fairy Tale Land provides an arena to perform different types of social relationships too.

Observation Grid 3 — H.C. Andersen's House Museum

<table>
<tr>
<td rowspan="9">Fairy Tale Land in Ville Vau

</td>
<td>Description: a sensory world inspired by elements from Hans Christian Andersen's life and tales. It consists of a range of play oases and rooms, each with its own theme, filled with exciting props and costumes to arrange and dress up in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture (size, illumination, colours): big room, cold and bright illumination (blue, purple, pink), neutral/ wood colours
Circuit (open or close; free or fixed): open, circular shape, free circulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibition elements (placement, height, free space): placed in a circle, accessible space to play
-     Auxiliary elements (pedestals, shelves, showcases): different types of buildings (houses, palaces, shops), real-life scale objects
-     Decoratives (ambient music, textiles): props (cloth toys of food, tools, animals), costumes, no music
-     Informative material: not visible
Presentation order (chronological, thematic, geographic, material, mixed): thematic (different spots in a town, such as a palace, the shops, the houses, the river)
Modularity and extensibility (capacity to move, change and extend it): fixed positions of the buildings, total modularity of the props and costumes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print elements (written, complementary, audiovisual, external): not present
        Disposition (unit, partial, parallel, mobile, mix): -
        Integration with content (distance, placement, design): -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructions (family, museum guide/educator, school, free-play, other): free play with mediator supervision
Accessibility (functional diversity): accessible for wheelchairs, other disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants (estimated number, age): approximately a whole class (30 children), ages from 3 to 12 years old
Individual or group engagement: individual and group
Time: free, approximately over an hour, flexible time, can repeat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involved senses (sight, hearing, taste, smell, touch): sight, touch
        Specifications: real-life scale props, cloth material, soft texture, neutral colours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of interaction (observation, exploration, construction/creation, analysis/reflection, expression, play, perform, socialising/sharing, experiment): exploration, creation, expression, play, perform, socialising
Reading responses (analytical, intertextual, personal, transparent, performative): performative
Impulses (Sipe, 2000): aesthetic impulse (responding receptively or using a story as a platform to express oneself)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations: Fairy Tale Land belongs to Ville Vau, an area of the museum directly devoted to children, what is known as a dynamuseum. Ville Vau includes a theatre and an art studio where different workshops occur (e.g., improvisational acting, arts and crafts…).</td>
</tr>
</table>

b. H. C. Andersen House Museum interview analysis

Three key informants from the Andersen Museum were interviewed. Their diverse occupations (Head of the Children and Learning department, Head of Development and exhibition curator) provided a complete account of the whole functioning of the museum.

The first interview looked at the educational dimension of the H. C. Andersen House. Eva was the former head of the Learning Universe in the museum but, after an integral reorganisation of the institution's organigram, became the leader of a new department focused on Children and Learning. From the beginning, she expressed how uncommon it is for a museum to create a department that directly addresses the needs of young visitors: ''Historically, unfortunately, teaching in museums has kind of been something you do pretty late in the process and maybe not put that much time into''. She adds that the team has faced resistance to their work methodology as ''people like archaeologists and historians are quite scared of our dialogic activities, where we are doing philosophy with children, and open-reflections and questions, where we let children tell us what they think''. In other words, transitioning from the traditional museum model resembling an archive to more interactive and participatory spaces brings friction between practitioners. Fortunately, Eva perceives a growing support movement towards children's culture and education in Denmark. For instance, she argues that the fact the department has received the European Museum Academy Award for museum education reflects validation towards their efforts.

Eva emphasises the importance of dialogic activities in the department's approach to working with children and adolescents. They advocate combining traditional knowledge transfer activities in which the museum mediator communicates information about Andersen and his work with dialogic teaching that incorporates the children's participation as well. An example of one standard mediated session in the museum has three parts. In the first one, the museum guide tells an Andersen tale. Then, the audience is involved in a mediated session of improvisational theatre inspired by the tale. Finally, participants have time for free play. Eva praises the team's ability to know when to use each approach: ''That is actually what I am most proud of and what I think is most important. We are very reflective on when to use what. And we are very explicit to the children''. Thus, the team relies on metacognitive instructions to make visitors participate in their own learning.

The use of this mixed methodology seeks to enhance the young visitor's skills, such as critical thinking, creativity and, especially, the capacity to navigate museums and other cultural institutions. In fact, Eva summarises their objectives in two goals, ''to be very

ambitious and to know a lot about our subject, but also to know just as much and be just as ambitious in terms of how the children feel when they meet the subject and how we present the subject to the children''. She adds that the ultimate objective is that every child leaves the museum with the feeling of being good at visiting museums because that cultural self-worth will be ''worth more in the long run as that will make them feel brave enough and confident to go seek other museums to learn more''.

At the same time, the practitioners do not lose sight of the main objective of the museum, which is to communicate the legacy of Hans Christian Andersen. The author's work and values are at the core of the activities and inspire the discussions that arise in the dialogic debates. For instance, Eva explains how the workshop around the tale *The Girl Who Stepped on the Bread* leads to different discussions depending on the interests of the audience; some children focus on the girl's vanity, others on her evilness or on the moral conundrum. In all cases, the themes are inspired by Andersen's text. Even in the art studio, the activities involve certain aspects of Andersen's work (e.g., starting a story inspired by ink stains).

As a result, literature is at the core of the activities. Children develop their literacy education at the same time they acquire the aforementioned transversal skills. Nonetheless, Eva specifies that reading is not a main activity in their programme. Actually, the team praise themselves on the fact that visitors' participation does not depend on their reading skills. On the contrary, their activities focus on infusing a love for stories beyond the written word. Thus, the engagement with literature follows another via. Oral storytelling sessions, dramatisation and play serve as mediators to conduct literary teaching in an innovative way and develop a passion for sharing and creating stories from a young age.

This perspective is actually more loyal to the spirit of Andersen's work. Eva mentions how Andersen offered different perspectives in his stories and preferred to open questions than to provide answers. The museum mediators use participatory methods so children can ''investigate different perspectives. We are not allowed to discuss which one was right after. We have just to let it stand there as Andersen did''. Similarly, they do not always tell visitors the end of a tale as a strategy to engage visitors. Hence, they keep Andersen's style alive, leaving readers hungry for more and sparking their curiosity to read more after the visit ''because they are only given a taste of the fairy tales from a different angle''. In Eva's words: ''If we raise a curious museum guest, I would say then that we have done our job''.

The second interviewee, the Head of Development at the museum, underscores this effort to emulate Andersen's spirit, saying that they are trying ''to make it a museum that relates the story *as* Hans Christian Andersen rather than relates the story *about* Hans

Christian Andersen''. This approach underpins the rebuilding the museum underwent from 2015 to the reopening in 2021. Peter explains that it was important for them ''to change the direction and scope of the museum from Andersen himself to Andersen's work. [...] So we broadened the scope from a classical museum, lecturing the visitors on Andersen and his life, and instead tried to take Andersen's narrative style of his playfulness and his polyphonic way of writing''. Peter emphasises that Andersen's stories are the heart of the museum, the reason why visitors fall in love with the author and come to visit the venue. Similarly, Jens, the third interviewee, claims that ''if you take away the universe and just make it about the author, then the reason people fell in love with that author has been taken away. At least that was our thing: you have to start with what people know and love, and then you can add all the things that they do not know''. Thus, the stories should be the main material for the exhibitions.

Thus, the museum strategy connects to the ideas of the New Museology movement and the ongoing shift from object-based literary museums to participatory and interactive centres. Jens, the exhibition curator, says that ''it is not about me as a curator telling you what is right and what you should believe but opening up a world where everything is true and false at the same time, and then you have to discover by yourself what is true for you [...]. The main premise is to bring the world alive in a way you cannot do by just using display cases and text. It has to be immersive, it has to be a place where you step into the fairytales, as in almost scenography''. In addition, Peter mentions how their example has inspired other literary museums, such as the team from the Grimmwelt Kassel museum in Germany, who recently visited them to learn about their journey.

Both Peter and Jens provide insightful cues about how this ideological shift materialised into a practical transformation. To begin with, Peter claims that ''the main tenets of the museum is an audio guide that, rather than giving a lecture, tells a story''. The literary nature of the museum is thus communicated to the visitors even from the auxiliary elements, to the point the audio guide script is written by different children's authors in each of the languages (e.g., Daniel Handler, the author of *A Series of Unfortunate Events*, wrote the English version).

The interviewees also explain how the process of bringing an immaterial heritage (Andersen's tales) into a physical space (the museum exhibitions) worked. According to Jens, the point is to create ''a space where the word itself does not carry the entire meaning, but it can stand alone through the images or the scenography''. Luckily, Peter assures that it is easy to adapt Andersen's work because ''his text is so theatrical that it lends itself well to be made into illustrations, animation, plays and also into these installations''. The first step was to

select twelve tales and identify a core value in each of them. For instance, *The Little Mermaid* installation is based on the feeling of longing; *The Emperor's New Clothes* is humorous, and *The Little Match Girl* is sad. Each installation unit aims to inspire different emotions and thought processes in the visitor, which reflects the wide range of emotions portrayed in Andersen's world. After deciding the core values, different international artists are asked to interpret their vision of the tale in a physical space.

When asked about the purpose of the adaptation of Andersen's stories into new media (i.e., physical installations), Peter explains that ''the idea is to open new ways of seeing Andersen's stories'', and Jens adds that the main thought process behind the museum was ''to create an experience that draws people to want to explore and discover the world by themselves''. The museum curator explains that the installations seek to make people question their beliefs and reframe their previous understanding of the stories, much in the same vein that Andersen aimed to surprise his readers. Eva stresses the importance of working within the exhibition saying their dogma is that ''every learning experience should only be possible in the museum; it cannot be possible to take the tour or activity and do it elsewhere''.

Overall, Peter summarises that the museum's purpose is ''to celebrate Andersen and his works to disseminate this piece of Danish culture to the world and to the Danish public''. He stresses the importance of acknowledging the diversity of the museum audience, from their different nationalities (e.g., providing information in several languages) to their age. According to Peter, children and their families (parents, caregivers, grandparents) compose most of the visitors, and consequently, they built the biggest space for them, Ville Vau.

c. House Museum of Ratón Pérez observational analysis

1. Unit 1: Audiovisual room

The audiovisual room is the first space in the House Museum of Ratón Pérez. A guide welcomes the group and asks them to sit at the grandstands while she explains the character's origin through a storytelling workshop. During the session, the guide interacts with the children and asks them questions in order to make sure they are engaging with the explanation. After that, an animated video reproduces the same story.

The space is clearly designed to hold viewings and storytelling sessions with medium-sized groups of families. There are no exhibition displays. Instead, all the resources

are informative elements, such as the video and the board panels that the guide uses to illustrate the storytelling. In addition, at the beginning of the tour, each person receives a brochure with information about the museum (as seen in the second picture of the grid).

Therefore, this space is designed to educate visitors on the original story of the character Pérez. Much emphasis is put on the tale, which is repeated twice through different modalities (oral and audiovisual narrations). This insistence on communicating the story to visitors demonstrates a didactic intention. The guided mediation elicits the hermeneutic impulse in the audience by engaging them in a story and motivating them to understand and interpret it. Consequently, the space seeks an analytical reading response from the audience.

2. **Unit 2: Pyramid room**
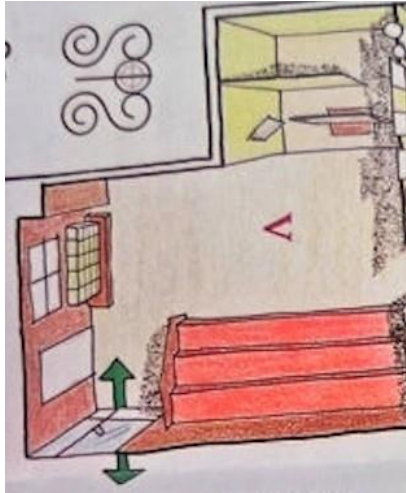
The room is designed to imitate a traditional object-based museum. Several glass cabinets showcase fictional objects related to Pérez, such as a letter written by the infant king to the mouse. Other cabinets exhibit real objects from the era when Coloma wrote the mouse book, such as old dental utensils or the author's manuscripts. Finally, there are informative banners that provide additional background about the story, including information about Madrid in that historical time and other similar traditions around the world, such as the Tooth Fairy in the UK or the *petit souris* in France.

The exhibition order is fixed, and the circuit is closed. The museum practitioner is in charge of guiding the guests through the room and providing oral explanations. Additionally, each display has its own informative label, following a parallel distribution.

However, the mediator does not draw much attention to the objects. Instead, she encourages children to search the tiny mouse doors around the museum walls. This strategy demonstrates an intention to entertain the visitors besides the didactic purpose of the room.
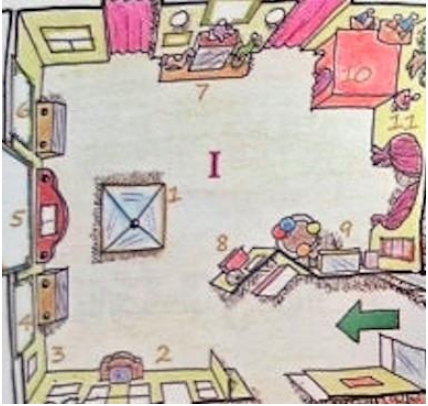
Nevertheless, the exhibition promotes an analysing reading response as children receive more information about the story of the mouse Pérez and its origins. As there are no points of interaction, the only behaviour available for children is to observe, thus activating the hermeneutic impulse that allows them to understand better and interpret the story. To a lesser extent, the information about other international myths could promote an intertextual reading response by establishing links between different stories. However, this element is not addressed during the tour, and its distribution at an elevated height impedes children from engaging with it.

Observation Grid 4 — House Museum of Ratón Pérez

Audiovisual room	**Description:** the audiovisual room welcomes visitors to the museum. First, through a storytelling workshop mediated by the museum guide and then through a video projection, children listen to the original story of the mouse Pérez and his family. The room has grandstands to sit down in groups, a TV and additional decoration, such as a mouse door.
	Architecture (size, illumination, colours): medium room, with small grandstands to sit down, bright illumination and colours **Circuit (open or close; free or fixed):** close circuit, fixed order

	Exhibition elements (shape, type, placement, height, free space): cardboard informative panels and narrative video telling the character story
	     - **Auxiliary elements (pedestals, shelves, showcases):** screen, grandstands, pedestal for the panels
	     - **Decoratives (ambient music, textiles):** mouse door in the ground, cheese objects, frames
	     - **Informative material:** informative guide and museum map
	 Presentation order (chronological, thematic, geographic, material, mixed): material (first oral explanation, then video)
	 Modularity and extensibility (capacity to move, change and extend it): capacity to move and extend explanations

	Print elements (written, complementary, audiovisual, external): written panels, audiovisual (video)
	     Disposition (unit, partial, parallel, mobile, mix): mobile
	     Integration with content (distance, placement, design): not integrated, own room, adherence to the museum character design and patterns

	Instructions (family, museum guide/educator, school, free-play, other): museum guide/educator, families join as visitors **Accessibility (functional diversity):** provided in Spanish, accessible for wheelchairs
	Participants (estimated number, age): maximum of 10, from 4 to 10 years old **Individual or group engagement:** group **Visit time:** 10 min, set time, cannot repeat
	Involved senses (sight, hearing, taste, smell, touch): sight, hearing **Specifications:** the story is told simultaneously through images, video and oral narration
Museum guide	**Type of interaction (observation, exploration, construction/creation, analysis/reflection, expression, play, perform, socialising/sharing, experiment):** observation, analysis/reflection, socialising/sharing **Reading responses (Sipe, 2000) (analytical, intertextual, personal, transparent, performative):** analytical **Impulses (Sipe, 2000) (hermeneutic, personalising, aesthetic):** hermeneutic (understand and interpret a story)

Observation Grid 5 — House Museum of Ratón Pérez

Pyramid room	**Description:** the room acts as a "miniature museum" where visitors can find displays of works of art, various books by the author Coloma, and emblematic symbols of Madrid. In addition, some scenes recreate the story of the mouse Pérez, such as the extraction of Bubi's tooth. Other cases display an exhibition of dental utensils of the time and the letter Bubi writes to the mouse. Moreover, there is information about similar traditions worldwide and a tree representing the fraternity between them all.
	Architecture (size, illumination, colours): medium size, bright illumination and colours **Circuit (open or close; free or fixed):** close circuit, fixed order

	Exhibition elements (shape, type, placement, height, free space): glass pyramid, big mirror, cabinets and shelves.
	  - **Auxiliary elements (pedestals, shelves, showcases):** shelves, glass cabinet, curtains
	  - **Decoratives (ambient music, textiles):** plenty of decoration (frames on the wall, mouse doors, images, letters, maps)
	  - **Informative material:** informative guide and map
	Presentation order (chronological, thematic, geographic, material, mixed): mixed
	Modularity and extensibility (capacity to move, change and extend it): non modular, static

	Print elements (written, complementary, audiovisual, external): decorative print elements
	    Disposition (unit, partial, parallel, mobile, mix): parallel
	    Integration with content (distance, placement, design): separated from main exhibition, located on walls, non-child-friendly height

	Instructions (family, museum guide/educator, school, free-play, other): provided by museum guide/educator, families as witnesses **Accessibility (functional diversity):** Spanish language, non accessible for wheelchairs
	Participants (estimated number, age): maximum of 10, from 4 to 10 years old **Individual or group engagement:** group **Visit time:** 5 min, set time, cannot repeat
	Involved senses (sight, hearing, taste, smell, touch): sight, touch **Specifications:** physical movement is involved (crawling)
Museum guide	**Type of interaction (observation, exploration, construction/creation, analysis/reflection, expression, play, perform, socialising/sharing, experiment):** observation **Reading responses (Sipe, 2000) (analytical, intertextual, personal, transparent, performative):** analytical **Impulses (Sipe, 2000) (hermeneutic, personalising, aesthetic):** hermeneutic (understand and interpret a story)

3. Unit 3: Pérez's House room

The last room of the museum is called the House because the main piece is a mock-up that recreates the home of the Pérez family. The display is made on a big scale so children can look inside the house and see the traces that family members left in each room. Around the room hang certificates of teeth of relevant characters and other decorative and informative elements. In addition, on one of the corners is a tunnel inside which there are window displays with the characters' statues.

The museum guide gathers the children around the house display to direct their attention to the inside. She continues by conducting a storytelling session about the family members, their personalities and their associated rooms. She also performs some sounds that emulate the movement of the mice and plays with lights, so it seems the family has been inside. After inspecting the house, the museum mediator brings the children to the corner and opens the curtain that hides the tunnel. Each child is invited to crawl through the tunnel like a mouse and encouraged to pay attention. Inside waits a surprise: sculptures of the characters. The second time the children crawl through the tunnel, the statues have changed their poses, creating the narrative that they are alive.

The first item in the room, the miniature house, evokes an analytical reading response as children learn more about secondary characters and their lifestyles. However, the tunnel part produces a transparent response because children act as the characters in the story. Just like mice, they crawl through a hole in the wall and interact with other story members. For a brief period of time, they merge their identity with the story.

d. House Museum of Ratón Pérez interview analysis

One key informant from the House Museum of Ratón Pérez participated in the study. Ana, who works as a Communications Officer, expresses that the museum's purpose is to reinforce universal values. More concretely, those embedded in the work by Luis Coloma, the author of the tale *Pérez the Mouse*.

Communicating Coloma's words to families was the rationale for creating the museum in 2008. In Ana's words, ''Our commitment is always to preserve the originality of the character created by Coloma, setting a line of personal ethics of discretion and fidelity to the character to safeguard it from marketing and to avoid invented frivolities''. The story of Pérez the mouse is well-known across most Hispanic houses and has been influenced

Observation Grid 6 — House Museum of Ratón Pérez

Pérez House room	**Description:** The House room includes the "little house" mock-up, a box of "Huntley and Palmers" biscuits where the mouse lives with his family leaving some traces that visitors can observe. Around the room hang scenes from the story, a tribute to Gloria Fuertes, allusions to the Little Prince and certificates of origin of teeth of relevant characters. In addition, on one of the corners is a tunnel covered by a curtain that hides window displays with the characters' statues.
	Architecture (size, illumination, colours): small size, bright illumination and colours **Circuit (open or close; free or fixed):** close circuit, fixed order

	Exhibition elements (shape, type, placement, height, free space): Pérez's house human-scale mock-up (biscuit box, miniature furniture, covered with a glass), placed in the centre of the room, children's height, little free space; tunnel with showcases of mice statues
	    - **Auxiliary elements (pedestals, shelves, showcases):** shelves, glass cabinet, curtains to cover tunnel
	    - **Decoratives (ambient music, textiles):** plenty of decoration (frames on the wall, figures of mouses, mouse doors)
	    - **Informative material:** informative guide and map
	Presentation order (chronological, thematic, geographic, material, mixed): thematic (house and characters)
	Modularity and extensibility (capacity to move, change and extend it): non modular or extensible

	Print elements (written, complementary, audiovisual, external): decorative print elements
	    Disposition (unit, partial, parallel, mobile, mix): parallel
	    Integration with content (distance, placement, design): separated from main exhibition, located on walls, non-child-friendly height

	Instructions (family, museum guide/educator, school, free-play, other): provided by museum guide/educator, families as witnesses **Accessibility (functional diversity):** Spanish language, non accessible for wheelchairs
	Participants (estimated number, age): maximum of 10, from 4 to 10 years old **Individual or group engagement:** group **Visit time:** 10 min, set time, can repeat
	Involved senses (sight, hearing, taste, smell, touch): sight, touch **Specifications:** physical movement is involved (crawling, walking)
	Type of interaction (observation, exploration, construction/creation, analysis/reflection, expression, play, perform, socialising/sharing, experiment): observation, exploration, perform **Reading responses (Sipe, 2000) (analytical, intertextual, personal, transparent, performative):** analytical and transparent **Impulses (Sipe, 2000) (hermeneutic, personalising, aesthetic):** hermeneutic (understand and interpret a story) and aesthetic

through time by different tendencies. However, few people know about the background of the legend and the life of his author. In the museum, they can gain deeper knowledge. Ana says that ''everyone is surprised to realise they did not know much about this illustrious and beloved character. The grown-ups come knowing precisely the same as the children: they know that he is a mouse who comes when the teeth fall out and leaves a little present, a little more. Now they will be able to answer when the children ask them about his work and history''.

In fact, the museum expanded its exhibition in 2012 to include more installations and information about the character. Ana explains that ''in response to the growing demand from our visitors and with more information and documentation available, the museum expanded its facilities intending to offer greater knowledge about Pérez, his origins and his family, as well as other relevant artists and illustrious writers who may have been related to him, thus expanding the cultural background of our visitors''. Thus, the literary education of the families is at the core of the museum's objectives.

This intention is reflected in the design of the museum spaces. First, visitors encounter an audiovisual room where a museum guide and a video narrate the character's real story. In addition, the mediator opens a dialogue with the children to ensure they follow the story. After this introduction, visitors pass to the Pyramid room, which emulates a museum about Coloma and his creation. Each cabinet displays different objects with complementary informative panels, reinforcing the importance of communicating this information to visitors. The next room recreates Pérez's office and displays more objects that expand his universe. Finally, the House room exhibits his house and other characters from his family. In addition, there is a tunnel that allows children to immerse themselves in the experience of being a mouse and knowing the characters. Ana expresses that ''in the House Museum, the visitor, just as a reader would do with the work, acquires a deep psychological connection with the characters and events that take place in the book and are exposed during the visit''.

Even though the usual procedure consists in guiding the visitors through the different exhibitions in a closed circuit, the museum offers complementary activities. For example, they may host workshops about dental hygiene in the audiovisual room and multicultural awareness for the school. In addition, their commitment to reading promotion is reflected in their original publications; the museum has its own imprint where they have launched several adaptations of the Pérez tale and another one Cervantes' *Quixote,* for children. The museum practitioners also collaborate with literary festivals, such as the annual Book Fair in Madrid.

Ana claims that the mediators use observation and storytelling as their educational strategies to engage children in the museum. They bring their attention to specific objects in the exhibition and use them to raise questions about matters such as justice, freedom or time. According to Ana, it is important for them that activities are fun at the same time as tools for the children's emotional and cognitive development. In her opinion, the gainings from experiencing Coloma's text from a different perspective include entertainment, enjoyment, questioning and critical thinking. The immersive experience stimulates these results: ''Here they live an immersive experience. They get to know the author and the characters. They can return to Coloma's time, empathise with Buby and even identify with Pérez. They get to get into the story'', which alludes to the transparent reading response elicited in the House room.

In conclusion, the House Museum of Ratón Pérez recreates the universe of this beloved character and allows children to experience it from a new perspective that enhances their reading experience. As Ana poses, it is a good option for a child's ''first time'' in a museum, as it is grounded in their prior knowledge (every child knows this character) and helps to ''awaken in them an interest in getting to know new museums and cultural spaces''.

VI. Discussion

The following discussion draws from the combination of the information retained from the theoretical framework, the observation grids and the interviews with key informers completed during the research project. The analysis is structured through the research questions to provide an orderly account of the role children's literary museums play in the reading promotion system.

Thus, the first step consists in identifying what purposes underpin the existence of children's literary museums. Three foundational reasons emerge from the data: education in museums, the value of children's culture and the dissemination of literary heritage.

All the sources show that education plays a fundamental role in any children's museum, and the key informers from the case studies corroborate this point is also true for children's literary museums. Eva and Ana agree on the pedagogic intentionality behind their museum programmes and activities with children. However, these didactic endeavours are pursued through innovative techniques that differ from other learning environments. Precisely, the immersive and multisensorial traits of museums allow for experiential learning to happen, which is often more meaningful and everlasting than textual learning. Eva signals

the importance of emotion to remember stories: ''when you are told the story, you do not remember it as well. You remember it if you have *been* the protagonist, immersed yourself in the emotions of the characters and gone through the same as they did''. The museum spaces show this philosophy by encouraging visitors to engage with the exhibitions through active behaviours, such as exploration, play and performance.

In addition, the inclusion of object-based exhibitions in both museums demonstrates there is also an intention to engage children in more analytical and traditional knowledge-transfer teaching. In this way, children acquire knowledge about the themes in theexhibition at the same time they enhance their skills, not only cognitive (e.g., critical thinking and reasoning) but also emotional (e.g., self-knowledge and empathy) and social (e.g., socialisation with peers and mediators). Again, Eva and Ana coincide in that, more than learning about the museum content, the ultimate goal is to develop these transferable skills in children to apply them to other contexts and become better at navigating cultural spaces and museums. As a consequence, children gain access to autonomous lifelong learning. These objectives match those of children's museums described by Hertz (2017): to raise children's curiosity, promote lifelong learning and engage with the wider world.

Tightly linked to education, the second purpose of a children's literary museum is to highlight and honour the importance of children's culture. The two studied museums display explicit strategies to reach a young audience. Opposing the resistance met by some traditional sectors in museography, these venues target children and base their exhibitions on their needs and capacities in mind. The installation's scale is made in accordance with children's height and size, and the informative elements are adjusted to their knowledge and developmental stage. Moreover, the mediators are specially trained to work with children and use participatory techniques, such as dialogic debate, to promote children's agency. Notice to say there is also an explicit intention to make the experience entertaining as well as educational. Eva stresses that this strategy is necessary to add extra value to their traditional service in order to attract young visitors and compete against other information channels that fight for their attention, such as social media and video games.

Finally, children's literary museums have the task of disseminating a specific literary heritage. In the case of the H. C. Andersen House Museum, the works of Andersen, whereas in the House Museum of Ratón Pérez, the story behind the mythological character and his author. Both museums display texts and books related to the authors and other print material, such as panels and guides. However, the main informative elements rely on other modalities; in the case of the Andersen museum, in an audio guide, and the Pérez museum, in a video and

the mediator's instructions. Therefore, children do not engage with literature through print elements in these museums. Instead, as hybrid spaces, the institutions use interactive approaches to introduce children to the stories.

Uncovering the intricacies of these approaches constitutes the second objective of the study: to identify which assets (spaces, strategies and resources) children's literary museums possess in order to promote reading and literature in innovative ways. The assets are examined as literacy events following the structure Yasukawa et al. (2013) provided: exhibitions, print content and instructions.

Firstly, the exhibitions are dissected into units to study their mechanisms. Overall, the findings from the observation grids reveal both museums opt to combine object-based and interactive exhibitions. According to Sandsmark (2020), this strategy brings the advantage of providing access to the past while also connecting to the present. Object-based spaces, such as the *My Children* room in the Andersen Museum and the Pyramid room in the Pérez museum, exhibit the physical literary heritage and can spark curiosity in children towards books and their materiality. However, the interactive exhibitions (e.g., the Fairy Tale land in the Andersen Museum and the House room in the Pérez museum) are closer to achieving the objectives of reading promotion as they make children construct their own learning process. Immersive spaces that engage multiple senses (e.g., *The Little Mermaid* installation and the tunnel in the House room, which play with hearing and touch, respectively) bring to life stories, characters and universes from the page. By rendering visible an intangible artform, children's literary museums infuse a new life to texts that otherwise may not grab children's attention. As proposed by Sandsmark (2020), when literature is narrowed down to its core patterns and emotions, children can better relate to it and perceive its relevance to their lives. Therefore, interactivity is the main asset museums possess to offer in the reading promotion ecosystem, as the experience opens new ways for children to think about the literary curriculum and expands its connections to real life. In addition, no other agent has the technological resources necessary to recreate these immersive worlds besides museums.

Aside from the exhibitions, the container is another asset these museums use to immerse visitors in literary scenarios. Both examples from the case study belong to the house-museum category: the Andersen museum is based on the birthplace of the author, and the Pérez museum recreates the residence of a fictional character. Moreover, in both cases, the physical location of the museum is essential to convey authenticity, as they are linked to Andersen's childhood town and the home address stated in the original Pérez tale. As posed by Alderson (1975), rehabilitating these historical sites adds value to the visitor's experience

in terms of preserving the documentary and aesthetic value of the original venues. In contrast to the approach proposed by the Centre for Norwegian Language and Literature that detaches the educational programs from the museum sites (Sandmark, 2020), the installations of the H. C. Andersen House Museum and the House Musem of Ratón Pérez are essential to delivering their value. In fact, Eva comments that the buildings in Andersen's museum helps to convey some ideas that permeate the author's work, such as the multiplicity of perspectives in every narrative. Their intriguing design enhances critical thinking and promotes the idea that ''there is always another way to see things than the one you are using''. Thus, the buildings also contribute to achieving the museum objectives.

Furthermore, dynamuseums spaces can promote another side of literary education: creative writing and artistic expression. For instance, the Fairy Tale land and Ville Vau in the Andersen museum allow children to experiment with literature from a unique perspective and create their interpretations of Andersen's tales. Eva summarises this approach by saying that while children play, they create stories; if someone wrote down their games, they would make fairy tales that people would enjoy reading. Such a personal engagement with fiction promotes the love for stories and shows that they can be told in very diverse media and formats besides print. In this way, children learn that literature is relevant to them as it can shed light on their own lives and experiences.

Additionally, other literacy events can help to promote the love for stories in young visitors. Regarding print content, the museums provide access to books that tell the stories that inspired the exhibitions, such as adaptations of Andersen's tales from all over the world. In the case of the Pérez museum, the team take this mission further by publishing their own books. However, reading as the act of engaging with a book is not a core activity in either of the museum tours. Instead, books are perceived as complementary elements to the visit.

Lastly, instructors are essential to spark children's interest in the literary aspects of the exhibitions. In this vein, the interviewees mention several strategies to spark visitors' interest in reading after the visit. For example, not telling the end of a story, focusing on isolated scenes or emphasising emotions can act as cues for children to dive further into the stories. Moreover, using participatory techniques to involve children in analysing stories allows them to connect the content to their previous knowledge. Drawing from Anderson et al.'s (2002) findings on the importance of familiarity in the museum learning experience, practitioners rely on stories as an effective medium to convey information, as children are used to them. Infact, Peter stresses the literary audio guide is the main tenet of the Andersen museum.

Besides children, museum practitioners also use strategies to incorporate families and caregivers in their activities. Ana reinforces that mutual understanding between both parties is vital, as adults are accomplices in the context of reading promotion. In this way, they can encourage their children's curiosity after the visit and expand the family's literary knowledge.

Ultimately, the last research question addresses which responses the museum practitioners anticipate and seek in their visitors. This point is where the museums from the case study differ the most. While the exhibitions at the Andersen museum arouse a wide variety of reading responses (e.g., intertextual, personalising and performative), the units examined from the Pérez museum showed a predominance of analytical responses. There are several hypotheses that may explain this discrepancy: cultural and national customs, the museum's size and resources, the nature of the literary heritage… Be as it may, this disparity demonstrates that there are multiple pathways to achieve the same goals.

On the one hand, the exhibitions at the Pérez museum seek to make children reflect on the character's story, origin and implications. As visitors have previous knowledge of the character, the intention is to expand their understanding of Pérez's world. In addition, they also become part of this universe by crawling like a mouse in his house, which stimulates a transparent response. Being located at the end of the visit, this activity allows children to experience first-hand the stories they have listened to, thus strengthening their learning.

On the other hand, each exhibition at the Andersen museum explicitly aims to elicit different responses from visitors. The object-based room called *My Children* promotes intertextual responses, *the Little Mermaid* installation promotes personalising responses and the Fairy Tale land, performative responses. As the visitors progress through the museum, the responses that are required from them to engage with the installations become more complex. Therefore, the circuit is designed in a scaffolded way. In a sense, the scheme follows that presented by instructors in the Ville Vau workshops: first, children are told a story, then they become characters of the tale and interpret it on their own, and lastly, they create their own stories through play and art. Thus, the whole visit stimulates different ways to engage with reading and provides a complete experience of the art of literature.

In the end, both museums share the intention to promote reading and literature in a broad sense. Their immersive approaches seek to engage children in aspects of literature that are often disregarded in academic contexts: the emotional, entertainment and aesthetic dimensions. Consequently, the promotion of traditional reading practices is substituted by alternative pathways to engage with literature, such as oral storytelling, performance or creative writing sessions.

VII. Conclusions

The analysis reveals that many purposes intertwine to justify the existence of children's literary museums. As a children's museum, these institutions hold an inherent educational duty towards young visitors. As a result, children's literary museums pursue pedagogical goals, such as the development of critical thought, the promotion of curiosity about the world and the achievement of pleasure for lifelong learning.

In addition, due to their joint nature as literary museums besides children's museums, the main objective of children's literary museums is to disseminate a particular piece of literary heritage among young audiences. Thus, these museums aim to transfer knowledge about the life and work of a specific author (e.g., Hans Christian Andersen), a character (e.g., Pérez the mouse) or a specific element of children's literature (e.g., the history of picturebooks). However, this literary education is not restricted to acquiring information about a specific work or author. Instead, the combination of the new approaches to museum studies and technological advances allows museum practitioners to transcend these classical educational methods and pursue further objectives, such as establishing personal connections with texts, reflecting on the use of literary devices or expressing oneself through creative disciplines.

This innovative way of communicating literary content to young audiences accounts for the capacity of children's literary museums to become key agents in the landscape of reading promotion. Museums can offer immersive and participatory approaches to literature, which help to engage children from a young age with reading. As revealed in the analysis, the spaces in children's literary museums evoke a wide range of reading responses that are harder to attain in traditional settings, such as transparent and performing responses. Moreover, first-hand contact with stories produces more meaningful and lasting learning experiences. Therefore, children's literary museums can broaden the cultural horizons of their young visitors by bringing to life the lessons portrayed in their literature and making children active agents in the literary system.

Nevertheless, these virtues do not cover the whole spectrum of effective reading promotion programmes. Some of the weaknesses of these institutions as reading promoters include the lack of time to conduct explicit literacy lessons to acquire linguistic and reading skills and the limited engagement with print content, especially physical books. Other institutions comply with these tasks, including schools, which develop literacy programmes

to develop good reading skills during childhood, and libraries, which offer access to large, borrowable collections of literary works for children in multiple formats.

As a result, the suggestion is not for children's literary museums to substitute traditional agents in reading promotion. As Colomer notes, ''The new agents can also contribute, and very effectively, to relieving teachers and librarians of the overwhelming overlapping of objectives that they currently suffer'' (2004, p. 10). Therefore, the goal should not be to pass responsibility between institutions but to analyse the objectives and responsibilities of each one in order to be able to assume them and collaborate better in this task. This research project provides evidence of the areas where children's literary museums can contribute and which of their assets are currently contributing positively to the advancement of reading promotion practices.

Suffice it to say that the present dissertation has limitations that advise cautiousness with the generalisation of the findings. The study sample focused on only two museums, out of which four employees were interviewed, and six spatial units were observed. Further studies may continue to study children's literary museums by conducting a case study based on any of the other children's literary museums presented in Table 1. Likewise, other projects could explore the role of children's literary museums in reading promotion by incorporating different research methods, such as empirical studies with visitors. Additionally, comparative studies could explore how children's reading responses produced by engaging with literature through print content (e.g., books) may differ from those elicited through immersive literary experiences (e.g., children's literary museums).

In conclusion, children's literary museums stand out as solvent agents in the reading promotion system. These institutions share multiple objectives with the reading promotion cause and thus could join forces with schools, libraries and families to improve the effectiveness of their practices. Moreover, museums possess unique assets that differentiate them from other agents and evoke powerful reading responses in their visitors. All in all, this evidence accounts for their relevance as agents of reading promotion and prompts scholars, museum practitioners, teachers and other key professionals to direct more attention to the role that children's literary museums play in reading promotion.

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Appendix 1 — Observation Grid

Title	Description:
[photos]	**Architecture (size, illumination, colours):** **Circuit (open or close; free or fixed):**

	Exhibition elements (shape, type, placement, height, free space):
	    - **Auxiliary elements (pedestals, shelves, showcases):**
	    - **Decoratives (ambient music, textiles):**
	    - **Informative material:**
	Presentation order (chronological, thematic, geographic, material, mixed):
	Modularity and extensibility (capacity to move, change and extend it):

	Print elements (written, complementary, audiovisual, external):
	    Disposition (unit, partial, parallel, mobile, mix):
	    Integration with content (distance, placement, design):

	Instructions (family, museum guide/educator, school, free-play, other): **Accessibility (functional diversity):**
	Participants (estimated number, age): **Individual or group engagement:** **Visit time:**
	Involved senses (sight, hearing, taste, smell, touch): **Specifications:**

	Type of interaction (observation, exploration, construction/creation, analysis/reflection, expression, play, perform, socialising/sharing, experiment):
	Reading responses (Sipe, 2000) (analytical, intertextual, personal, transparent, performative):
	Impulses (Sipe, 2000) (hermeneutic, personalising, aesthetic):
	    Hermeneutic (understand and interpret a story)
	    Personalising (link the story to the self)
	    Aesthetic (responding receptively or using a story as a platform to express oneself)

Appendix 2 — Interview

General questions about the museum's history and purpose

1. What was the initial purpose of the creation of the museum? How has it evolved through time?
2. What strategies have you implemented to materialise and achieve this goal?
3. Which stakeholders are involved in the everyday activity of the museum? What is the background of the team?

Educational experience

1. How relevant is the educational dimension in the museum's management? Do you conduct specific educational programmes?
2. How does the museum help visitors to connect the content to their previous life experience and knowledge?
3. How do you deal with and adjust to your different audiences? In relation to their age, prior knowledge of Andersen's work, precedence… Is there a target visitor?
4. What problems are provided for inquiry? And what means are provided to carry out this inquiry?
5. What resources are provided to support future action and learning after the visit?

Reading promotion

1. As a literary museum for children, do you find any challenges adapting a verbal form (i.e., a text) into a physical space? How do you recreate the textual characteristics in a different format?
2. How can the visitors interact with the original work? What do they gain from experiencing it from another perspective?
3. What kind of interactions do you aim to elicit in the visitors in the different rooms (playground, exhibitions, Andersen's house)? Is reading promotion among your objectives?
4. The museum's location in Odense, the author's birthplace, is crucial for the institution. There are walking tours, sculptures, and outdoor activities about Andersen all around the city. How do you manage to integrate the natural world with culture? What role does the museum play in developing the city's identity and community?

State of the art

1. How would you describe the current situation of the literary museum for children? Do you collaborate with other museums or childhood institutions?
2. What possibilities do you foresee in the near future for literary museums?
3. Would you like to add any relevant information we might have missed?

Appendix 3 — Transcribed interviews

1. Interview with the Head of Children and Learning in the H. C. Andersen House

Speaker 1: First of all, I would like you to introduce yourself. What's your role in the museum? What do you do, and what is your everyday activity?

Speaker 2 [Eva]: Yes. So my name is Eva, and now I am the head of Children and Learning in all of the museums in Odense. So that means the Hans Christian Andersen Museum, but also we have three other brands, the Carl Nilson, the Composer and an Open air museum and the Historical museum right over here, Mindavon. But until December last year, I was head of the Learning Universe in the Hans Christian Andersen House. So until recently, I only worked in the Hans Christian Andersen House and taught in the museum.

Speaker 1: And this department of Children and Learning was created this year.

Speaker 2: Yes, we had a reorganisation of the whole company. Before, there was something called Children and Learning, but it was like a small department in a more extensive department, and it was kind of an unofficial department. But the priorities are different now. And I think the administration really liked what was going on in the Children and Learning in H. C. Andersen's house. And they would kind of like to make that a priority in all of the museum loans.

Speaker 1: Why would you say that now is necessary and it is growing as a priority for the institution?

Speaker 2: We got a new director who just, in another way, sees the value of Children and Learning and seizes the value of children's culture and who thinks it is an important focus to look at how we welcome the children and how we make the children feel when they come here. It is kind of new to us that it is a priority. Before, it was just only a few of us who felt any passion in that area. And it was because historically, unfortunately, teaching in museums has kind of been something you do pretty late in the process and maybe not put that much time into. You make an exhibition for adults and for people who are already interested in the subject. And then, oh, yeah, okay, the school classes, we will do this (maybe a boring treasure hunt around the museum).

So one thing is just the new director and new administration who have different priorities. But also there is a movement, I think, in Denmark, where museums are focusing on children. There is so much competition now. Museums do not have the same role as they did before because before, they held the knowledge and the information. But children can find that now in, like, 16 seconds on their phone. So we still have to do something else for them to come here. We have to find another value, so there's also a more significant movement going on.

Speaker 1: I agree. I think that you are the role model and everybody's going to follow.

Speaker 2: But you should know that still in Scandinavia and still in Denmark, even though in some areas we're quite progressive when it comes to children's culture, there is also still a lot of resistance, especially in the museum world. We meet a lot of resistance in terms of wanting to have open activities.

Speaker 1: What kind of resistance have you noticed?

Speaker 2: Just that people like archaeologists and historians are quite scared of our dialogic part, of our dialogic activities, open activities, where we are doing philosophy with children and open-reflections and open questions, where we let children tell us what they think. So moving from the traditional museum that is like an archive, where they think your brain is empty, ours is full; now we will put some of our knowledge into.

Speaker 1: Do you use participatory culture techniques?

Speaker 2: Yes, we do. And we do actually have a lot of traditional knowledge transfer as well. We like that part of teaching as well. We just also like the dialogic parts of teaching. And we are actually very, very conscious about when we use what. That is actually what I am most proud of and what I think is most important. We are very reflective on when to use what. And we are very explicit to the children when they just come to us.

We start by saying: ''Okay, so today we are going to do maybe three things. I'm going to tell you a fairy tale, you will be my audience, and I will be the storyteller. And we will do some improvisational theatre. I will still be the storyteller, but I will need ideas from you. And in the end, you are going to play freely, and then you will be the expert because you know what kind of stories you will want to do in your play, and you have to tell me about it afterwards. Thus you will be the one with the knowledge''.

Speaker 1: So how will you summarise your goal, your purpose with this approach to children's culture and participation?

Speaker 2: Yes. Actually, in Children of Learning, we have quite a new strategy that defines two main goals. One goal is the subject, the knowledge that we have, the research that we have, and the curiosities that we have. That is one main goal: to be very ambitious and to know a lot about our subject. But also to know just as much and be just as ambitious in terms of how the children feel when they meet the subject and how we present the subject to the children. Our main ambition, and that's something that we are very explicit about, is that every child who leaves our museum leaves with the feeling of 'I did really great today, I was good, I got this museum thing, I'm good at this' because of course going to tell them a lot about Hans Christian Andersen in this case, but if they leave with a feeling of being good at visiting museums, with the cultural self-worth, that will be worth more in the long run because that will make them feel brave enough and confident to go seek other museums to learn more.

Speaker 1: What qualities would you say that a good visitor of a museum will develop? How would you describe the visitor that you are trying to achieve? So what qualities will they have to consider themselves a good visitor?

Speaker 2: Curious, wanting to broaden their own horizon and wanting to be curious to other people's horizons of knowledge and understanding. So we kind of say that we do not want to give them a lot of answers. We want to help them figure out what the right questions are for them. So if we raise a curious museum guest, I would say then we have done our job.

Speaker 1: What kind of problems do you create, or what kind of questions do you open in this space?

Speaker 2: Well, that's actually up to the children that come visit us, I would say. I can give you an example, and we can see if this answers your question. In one of the learning tours for bigger children, like 7th, 8th, 9th grade, they are first told an unknown and quite scary fairy tale called *The Girl Who Stepped on the Bread*. It is very horror gross, it is very scary. And I really like surprising them with that story because even 15-year-old boys are quite surprised, and it gives them another view of Andersen, and I like that.

Quite briefly, it is about a girl who is a bad person. When she was little, she picked the wings off flies because she liked to see them just crawl around. Long story short, she ends up in hell, and she ends up meeting all the flies, and they start to crawl inside her and eat her. She is still alive; she feels everything. And meanwhile, she can hear what people are saying about her up on Earth. And those are not very good things because she was a bad person. So she has to listen to what everyone has to say about her while getting eaten up. And then, actually, we stop the story. And then, we use a method called philosophical dialogue, which Peter Whirley developed in England. He is my idol. And we start by asking them if she should be allowed back up. Should she be allowed a second chance? And the children have to discuss it. And we are just the facilitators, so we do not have an opinion here, which is harder than you think, not to be allowed to have an opinion as an adult because you want to help them along. But as soon as you understand the method and see how much they start talking, when you, as the adult, for once, just shut up, then it is very fruitful. And then it depends because some of the children start talking about justice or punishment. Or should she have been taught differently? Is it even her responsibility, or is it her parents? And depending on where the discussion goes, we ask follow-up questions. We have to listen quite intensely to what the children's interests are here. Is it her vanity? Usually, they're quite interested in the fact that she is vain. Because they are also vain, they think: I am vain too, but not like this. Vanity is different depending on if it hurts anyone or does it just benefit me? So they are very interested in her being vain. We want it to be relevant for them. We want them to feel that the fairy tale is relevant for them to discuss. Sometimes we just discuss punishment and evil. And we have some weird discussions. Is Putin evil? Sometimes it is very political. Other times it is about what would this girl's Instagram look like if she lived today. So it is a very different discussion. They are also very interested in the fact that she can hear what other people are saying about her.

And so, ah, that's a very long answer. But the problems are often defined by the children themselves. But also, of course, we talk a lot about how Andersen worked. And so Andersen was very good at offering different perspectives without answering which one was the right one. So that is why now we want you to go into different perspectives in this fairy tale. So then they have to talk as if they were this bad girl, and then there is also a good girl in the story, and then we also have to talk like they were her and think and answer like they were her. So they have to investigate different perspectives, and we are not allowed to discuss which one was right after. We have to just let it stand there as Andersen did. So that is an example of how we open the subject up to them.

Speaker 1: It is really interesting. This fairy tale does not have an installation, uh, in the museum. Right?

Speaker 2: No, it is a storytelling workshop. All the mediators in the Learning Universe are trained a lot in professional storytelling.

Speaker 1: I remember one installation, *The Little Match Girl* story, where you have to press a button and then the story goes on. I remember it impacted me a lot because if you press it after the girl has died, it tells you something like: do you really want to see me die again? For me, it was surprising that you are actually making the children face and think about darker aspects of life.

Speaker 2: Yes. I am really glad that you mentioned that because I think it was quite important to Andersen that you can open every subject up to a child. The child is usually not the one with the problem if the subject is difficult. So that is actually something that we have a lot of focus on. We are not scared of opening up to anything. And also, when we do improvisational theatre, they have to choose their own parts. And they do say a lot of crazy things, like, of course, Trump and Putin, but also about serial killers: I am a serial killer, or I am a psychopath, and we just take it in as if it was a knight or a princess or a witchweed. We just take it all in. And we're not scared of anything because the children are not scared of anything. People who think that some subjects are bad for children, I feel like they have never heard children playing on their own because you can never introduce them to something that they have not talked about themselves in a much worse way. *The Little Matchgirl* is quite a good example of this in the museum and the thinking about not being afraid of the darker.

Speaker 1: And how do you adapt to different audiences regarding their age and their knowledge, their previous understanding of Andersen and their education level?

Speaker 2: We have very different learning tours depending on the age. So, of course, we do not discuss with kindergarten children whether it is okay to be eaten up by flies in hell. That is not for them. Even though they do say some crazy things sometimes when they go in. But that is not us introducing it to them. For the younger children, our methods are more based on crafting, play, storytelling, and actually also, philosophical dialogue. I think what characterises our methods is that they are very adjustable. But the subjects and the complexity of the tasks that they are given are different.

Speaker 1: And someone from the museum usually mediates the activities.

Speaker 2: Yes. Someone from the museum always mediates learning tours. It is a very big part of the tours that they meet someone who is very aware of how they are asking these questions and why? And how am I telling this story, and why? So that's in terms of teaching for schools.

Speaker 1: Do you have any programs with families?

Speaker 2: Yes, we do. We call them our free guests when they come with their family, grandparents, and friends. We have scheduled storytelling and improvisational workshops where also they can choose whatever they want to be. And we do have some serial killers with our Free Guests as well. And in our art studio, we have workshops where Free Guests can come. They are usually based on some kind of art that Andersen did, like paper cutting and this ink dot drawing. He did this thing where he just made a stain of ink, and he'd say, what does this look like? And it looks like a queen. And then he would base it on themes from the fairy tale. So, like, in *Thumbelina*, the swallow flies away with her, and then they make a theme about what your swallow would look like and where you would want it to take you. Kind of thing.

Speaker 1: And you mentioned that you tried to bring these tales to current days. So how do you manage to connect these old stories to their experience so they stay relevant to them?

Speaker 2: Yes, exactly. That is something that is very interesting to us because when a lot of museum people talk about how we have to make Andersen relevant, I am always thinking: he is relevant. We just have to show them his relevance. And even better, we have to make them decide where their relevance is in this because we should not be afraid that they do not feel his relevance; they should be defining it with us.

So like, again, with *The girl who Stepped on the Bread*, we chose this fairy tale because there is vanity and there is justice. And those are things that young people care about now. But we mostly just find some important themes in the fairy tales, and then we kind of see what interests them, and then we go with them and their interests.

Speaker 1: A quote on the museum website says, ''we have not had enough of Andersen as an artist. He is eternally relevant''. It was answering someone saying why to make an Andersen museum now, we have enough of him. I really like that. And it also said that the museum is based on his way of perceiving the world. So it is communicating as Andersen, not about Andersen.

Speaker 2: Yes, exactly *as* Andersen. And I think that Andersen was more about opening up questions, opening up worlds, opening up nature, for example. And not about like: this is the way you have to look at nature, this is the way you have to look at the world. It was more about opening up, and when is that not relevant? To open up with more questions.

Speaker 1: What would you say visitors gain from experiencing this other perspective of the tales instead of just reading them?

Speaker 2: Well, hopefully, they are curious, of course, about him. Because the museum does not give a lot of answers about Andersen. It may be asking more questions than it does answer. So my personal hope is that they are more curious about him. Our slogan is 'an author you thought you knew'. And hopefully, they go home with a feeling that there was more to him than I knew, and they want to read more because they are only given tastes of the fairy tales from a different angle or a curious angle. Also, in Andersen's spirit, they are just little things and maybe sometimes big things that make them look at the world and themselves a bit differently. It's a very fluffy ambition. That would be nice.
Hopefully, it will leave them a bit hungry. And actually, with *The girl who Stepped on the Bread* workshop, we also have that in a high school version. And here, the students are not even told the ending of the story. And they go, so when will we hear the end of the story? We say no, I am not going to tell the end of the story. That is not a part of the program, I'm afraid. So hopefully, a lot of them go home to find out what happens to this girl.

Speaker 1: Is that a strategy to inspire further learning after the museum?

Speaker 2: Yes, it is. But also, actually, in itself, that is kind of an *Andersenish* way, because he also sometimes leaves his reader a bit hungry, and he is also very explicit about it. I remember one of my favourite fairy tales, which is a weird little one called *Who Was the Happiest?* It is about a lot of roses on a bush. And we're told about what happens to this rose, what happens to this rose, and all the roses have different destinies. And then it ends with

''Who was the happiest? Well, you really have to find out. I have said enough''. And then he just ends the story. Like he is being playful and he is teasing, so I really like just to say: oh, you have to find out. I have said enough.

Speaker 1: How do you manage to adapt this bearable and textual material into an immersive experience? I guess this is by design technology. There are a lot of resources involved. But do you have any idea of how to make these things come alive and adapt them to another format?

Speaker 2: We do have this dogma that every learning tour and every experience should only be possible in the museum. So it can't be possible to take the activity and the tour and just do it in a gym or in a garden or something. So some of the tasks that the children get from us take inspiration from the exhibition, for example, find something that you like. Find something in the exhibition that does not get attention. How do they feel about not getting any of the attention? Something like that. So we always use the exhibition and our surroundings in the tours in different ways. It is site-specific.

And yeah, once again, we are just very explicit about what we tell the students, especially the older students. We tell them that even the museum is playing with perspective. So at one minute, you are looking out, and you are on the first 2nd floor, and then you walk down and down and down, and you look out, and you are still on the first floor. Or you are still above ground because there is a sunken garden. It is playing with perspective. There is always another way to see things than the one you are seeing. There is also this kind of confusion that you walk at one point when you are walking down, you look out, and there's a garden. So I am on the first floor. What? And then you go into the next exhibition, and you look up, and the first floor is suddenly upstairs. It keeps the guests alert. And we are very explicit with the students about it because I think that enhances critical thinking. This is our take on this, and this is what we wanted to do with this. This is not the only way to do it because that makes them think, do I even like this way? And, oh, that's a good idea, but maybe they should have done it this way. We draw them into our intentions behind the architecture and the material.

Speaker 1: So it is also meta in a way because you are talking about the museum and the exhibition.

Speaker 2: Exactly. Yeah. One of the tours is actually about them, giving suggestions as to what we should change in the exhibition. And they're really into that. And I think it's just a

part of maybe everyone, but especially children, like, oh, okay, you are asking me. Listen, this is what you have to do. And they're very enthusiastic about changing the museum. It is very fun.

Speaker 1: Now, I want to focus a bit more on the reading part. So, reading promotion, as a way of connecting children with books and other stories, would you say it is a core objective of the museum, and how do you pursue this?

Speaker 2: Yes. Well, actually, when you told me that it is about reading in the beginning, I was surprised because we actually take quite a big pride in the fact that it is not important how good of a reader you are. Actually, it is another rule that how good you are at drawing or reading or writing cannot be an issue with it. Your contributions have to be equal. That being said, we actually just do not focus on reading that much. We do focus on the love of stories and what stories can bring us. And when we tell a story and talk about it afterwards, we do reflect with the children. Just think about it: I told the same story to all of you, but you got 26 different stories out of it. Because what you tell me now tells me that there are a lot of different ways of seeing that. So not reading specifically, but what stories can do and the value of stories and the value of sharing stories. I would say that is quite interesting. We do not promote it like that for our free guests. We have books, they are able to read, and they use that a lot. So we do not have that focus on reading, only on stories and the value of stories, but if they are told or read, we do not go into that, actually.

Speaker 1: But it also is a literary education.

Speaker 2: Yes, exactly. And we talk a lot about the interpretation of stories. So a lot of the things that have to do with reading, like interpretation and retelling and finishing the story, but not like reading specifically.

Speaker 1: Now, focusing on the services that you have, I saw that you have performance School, art school, storytelling sessions, and The Universe of Learning. So do you want to expand on any of these services?

Speaker 2: The Universe of Learning is what I have been talking about, our teaching department. So that is the school and learning tours, every school visit. There is a regular tour as well, but we do not recommend it for schools. We recommend The Universe of Learning,

and we have eight different learning tours, so we recommend them. And in terms of our free time activities like performance school and storytelling school, it actually came out of a personal interest because we were very sad that we got a lot of feedback from the teachers where they say, ''Oh, he usually never participates like this. And I didn't think you would get her to do that''. And that's amazing. So we were sad that we just had them for two hours and then sent them away forever. We wanted to have longer sessions. So that is how it started, actually. We wanted to have the chance to see some children that could benefit from our way of teaching over time.

Speaker 1: So would you say the benefit of taking Universal Learning instead of the tour is that it is longer?

Speaker 2: Yeah, it is longer, and it is also, of course, for local children because, as it happens once a week, you have to live nearby. So we had a storytelling club for a very long time, which was a success. And it was just like, some people go play football in a football club, and some people could go practice storytelling with us. We had a storytelling club that lasted a semester, six months at a time.

Speaker 1: You also have a space called Ville Vau. How do you integrate this into the programme?

Speaker 2: The point of Villa Vau, I would say, is actually to inspire play because Andersen, as a writer, was very playful and very spontaneous. His stories sometimes take these weird turns, and the premise changes. And to us, that's very similar to playing. And so one of the things that we discuss a lot with the children is that everything that you play here now, you were actually making fairy tales. So if someone wrote down what you were playing today, I am sure it would be kind of a lovely fairy tale that people would find fun to read.
So when you play, it is very important because you create stories and you learn, and you explore. There is nothing you cannot explore if you are playing. And that is what Andersen did with his stories.

Everyone starts playing when they are there. And so we were all children once, and I think was it Andersen, or is it just a quote someone else said? But I think it is something like: the child is the father of the adult. You are a child first, and it is the child that makes the adult. So we were all made by a child. A child made us. I think that is the thing that Villa Vau can do. I say let people create their own stories.

Speaker 1: Would you give me some advice now that I am going to visit the museum with different lenses? What installations do you think are interesting to analyse?

Speaker 2: All of them are super interesting. Actually, it's a very small detail, maybe, and some people do not even find it. I think that is kind of magical in itself. But there is this little fairy tale called *The Snowdrop*. The snowdrop is like those little white flowers that come in the winter. Andersen writes about this snowdrop that cannot wait. It wants to become a flower. It wants to experience summer and the heat and the sun and the flowers and the children. So he describes it coming too early because it cannot wait for summer, and so it does not get to experience summer. It experiences winter instead, and that is not what it was hoping for. So it came too early. That is kind of the theme in the fairy tale. And so in the exhibition, there is this small hole, and you get to see the snowdrop, but it is not there because you, as a guest, came too early. I really like that small Andersenish detail. And that is a very good example of the fact that we do not tell the story one on one. It is not about the story. It is like you are living this story. I really love that you, as a guest, are too early to see the snowdrop. You missed it. And you just feel how the snowdrop felt when it missed summer.

Speaker 1: Would you say that emotion is important for learning?

Speaker 2: I would really say that. I think that if you read or listen to the story of *the Steadfast Tin Soldier,* you finish it with pictures and stuff in your mind. But if you are told the story and told the moral of the story, I do not think you remember it as well as if you felt like a character, like the troll, for example. If you have been the troll, if you have worn his fur and felt his anger, I think you remember it in another way. You have been the character, and you live what they have experienced. So when you read it later, you do not just hate the troll. You may feel that you get him a little bit because you were him before.

Speaker 1: Wow. That's amazing. So before finishing, would you like to say anything else that maybe I have missed?

Speaker 2: I do not know if it is relevant, but we did win the European Museum Academy. They give out an annual data award, which is for museum education. And we did win that. You can see the award is in the hall when you enter the museum. I think it's important to us

because, as I mentioned in the beginning, we did meet a lot of resistance to insisting on wanting open activities as well as knowledge transfer activities. And we still need a lot of resistance, but we feel more grounded now. We have validation.

Speaker 1: Thank you so much. I really learn a lot.

Speaker 2: I am glad. And, of course, if you do not mind, I would love to read your work.

2. Interview with the Head of Development at the H. C. Andersen House

Speaker 1: Thank you so much. First of all, I would like to let you introduce yourself. What's your role in the museum?

Speaker 2 [Peter]: I'm head of development at the Hans Christian Andersen House and Museum, and my job is to try to focus on the development of the house, the development of exhibitions, the dissemination, publications, and web dissemination about Hans Christian Andersen and his life and work. The overall goal is to celebrate Andersen and his works to disseminate this piece of Danish culture to the world and to the Danish public. One of the things that are very important to me and to us is acknowledging that Andersen's work is a piece of cultural heritage that has been passed down through generations from parents or grandparents to children, and we need to keep that cycle alive to maintain Andersen's legacy as an important part of Danish and international culture. So passing on the heritage is part of our mission.

Speaker 1: The museum has evolved through time. I learned that two years ago, this new site was created. So how has this purpose evolved through time, and how are you keeping it current to today's way of interacting and relating to culture?

Speaker 2: Yeah, the Hans Christian Andersen House and Museum opened in 1908, and most of the years of the museum, it was mostly a classical writers' museum focusing on the person Hans Christian Andersen and his life and mostly the exhibits were items from his life, his personal belongings or things related to his life. So when we decided to rebuild, rebuild and rebrand the Hans Christian Andersen house, which is the rebranding that culminated in 2021. It was important for us to change the direction, change the scope of the museum from Andersen himself to Andersen's work. Of course, the man himself is still important to us, but we think what stands out as something extraordinary is his works and his stories, and the stories are what make him well known and what makes people come here to visit, to experience or re-experience Andersen's work and see it in a new light. So we broadened the scope from a classical museum, lecturing the visitors on Andersen and his life, and instead tried to take Andersen's narrative style of his playfulness and his polyphonic way of writing a narrative in the way that in many of his stories, there are different perspectives, different characters have different views upon the world, and often they do not really correspond to each other, but instead, they are different characters remain in their own, entrenched in their

own worldview. And we are trying to take that into the museum as well. And so the main tenets of the museum is an audio guide that, rather than giving a lecture, tells a story, and it tells a story in different characters of different voices throughout the visit. And one of them is Andersen. He is not necessarily an objective truth teller, but rather, it is also hinted that Andersen also is constructing his own life and constructing as well as he is constructing the fairy tales. So we are trying to make it a museum that, as we say in Danish, relates the story as Hans Christian Andersen rather than relates the story about Hans Christian Andersen. So that is the idea. An important part of the Hans Christian Andersen Museum is that it is an international tourist attraction. About half the visitors come from abroad. And before Covid 19, especially Chinese tourists, for instance, were very attracted to the museum. Every Chinese schoolchild read the Hans Christian Andersen tales because Mao Zedong was very fond of Hans Christian Andersen. So it is an important part of the culture of many, many countries around the world. So when we made the new museum, we had to balance between different groups and different visitor types, as you can say. And we had a lot of international cultural tourists, adults going from one art museum or cultural heritage attraction to another, and very well-versed travellers. And they had to have a new perspective on Andersen that wasn't just as a children's writer, but as someone who had more to tell us also as adults at the same time as just a moment ago, we also have another very important visitor group, the parents with their children, young children, grandparents with their children. And so we would also like to give the children and children's play creativity and, as you say, a large part of the museum and therefore also a large part of the actual building site. So when you come over there, you will find that the highest and one of the most interesting architectural buildings is actually the Children's Learning Center, where Eva is Head.

Speaker 1: Yeah. I read that the purpose that you pursued was to create new encounters between visitors and the fairy tales. So I wonder, how do you manage to give life to these stories and transform oral and textual information into physical spaces? Were you involved in the design?

Speaker 2: Not personally, not at the time. But we have a collection of illustrations of Andersen's fairy tales, and it has more than 4000 pieces of artwork related to Andersen's work. So he is one of the most illustrated writers in the world because his stories and his narrative style are actually very much like a theatre. And he also wrote a lot of theatrical plays and was very interested personally in going to the theatre. So when he writes, it is often not as epic as you would think these fairy tales are. It is not, as you say, the long stories of

going out and then that happens and that happens. It is instead a series of scenes in a theatre like in a theatre play. So it is often thought out as a series of tableaus, more or less so. And that makes it somewhat easier to grasp the different fairy tales. Then we choose 12 of the most well-known and interesting fairy tales of his oeuvre to disseminate them. And each of them had a lot to say. We found a core value, a core notion of each fairy tale. For instance, The Little Mermaid. It was longing. The feeling of longing for something, for love or for recognition or whatever. And then we contacted different artists. We collaborated with British and Event Communications, which makes exhibitions all around the world, around Europe. And together, we found different artists that made renditions of the fairytale. What do you think of when you, for instance, *the Tinderbox*, you know, the soldier that has this tinderbox or matches that he can make a wish or make the dogs do whatever he wants. So that is about gaining power and using power. And then, we had one artist to interpret that. So the idea is not to have one uniform way of displaying the different fairy tales or different stories, but rather have different voices, different artists' impressions from different parts of the world making their take on this particular story.

Speaker 1: And what would you say is the benefit or what are visitors gaining from experiencing the stories from this point of view, this new format, compared to the traditional reading or telling of the stories?

Speaker 2: The idea is to open new ways of seeing Andersen's stories and reading his stories often in a particular setting. The idea was that you should remove the stories from a children's setting and rather have more thoughtful and more nuanced renditions of the stories. Some of them are quite sad and very sullen, but others are more playful and comical really. So yes, but you are pointing your fingers at something important because Andereon is text. But as I said, I think his text is so theatrical that it lends itself well to be made into illustrations, animation, plays and also into these installations.

Speaker 1: The location is really important for this museum because Andersen was born here, and his birthplace house is there. So how do you integrate the city and the history with the museum? And also nature is really important in the museum because you have the garden and Andersen's footsteps walk around the city. I was wondering how important the Andersen Museum is for the city's identity and for creating a sense of community in Odense.

Speaker 2: Yeah. It's very important to make it brief. In the museum scene, from the museum perspective, authenticity is critical to us. As I said, Andersen is a global brand, and we know there are theme parks in different parts of China being built at the moment. There have been some ideas for an Andersen exhibition in Copenhagen that is easier to reach for tourists coming into Copenhagen. Andersen, as opposed to Harry Potter or Astrid Lindgren's world, is out of copyright, which means everyone can make an Andersen museum or exhibition or whatever. And so, it is important for us to stress and maintain the authenticity of the place, meaning the house and, in broader terms, the city, and the authenticity of the objects, Andersen's personal objects such as manuscripts, letters, and all his paper cuttings. And the third important part is the knowledge that we have a close collaboration with the Hans Christian Andersen Center of the University of Southern Denmark, which is just 200m down the road. And stress also very much dissemination of publications and research into Andersen's life and work. So these are the three ground pillars of the museum here in Odense. So, of course, we show the objects in the museum, and the publications and research are also in the museum, but also online and in books and magazines and so on. But the authenticity of the place is right in the city.

So we have Christian Andersen's childhood home 500m in the other direction, so a second, very small museum, but visited by 40,000 people a year. And most of them are coming from Hans Christian Andersen's house, walking through the city, following in Andersen's footsteps to the childhood home. We have an audio guide along this footpath where you can both in a dramatised way but also in a very more lecturing or informative way take out different places that relate to Andersen's life (e.g., the place he went to school, where his mother worked, places that were important to him in his childhood memories). Then we have a lot of artworks in the city relating to different stories of Andersen and statues. And also it is a big part of the cultural life in Odense. We have an annual Hans Christian Andersen festival, which happens for a week in August, where plays, performances and dances, all different kinds of cultural events take place, all relating to Hans Christian Andersen. And we have an Andersen Foundation funded by the municipality that promotes Andersen culture in Odense and nationally. So it is a very important part of the tourist brand of Odense. For instance, we are very inspired by Stratford-upon-Avon, which is Shakespeare's hometown, and it is also very taking in how Shakespeare emanates from the city. We also have a partnership with different icon cities, cities relating to specific persons, writers or artists or whatever.

For instance, Mozart in Salzburg, Picasso in Malaga and Astrid Lindgren in Sweden and so on. And the second part, let's say the established interest in Andersen, the visual

interest. If you take on the other part of the question relating to the inhabitants of Odense, it has been sometimes problematic or at least double-headed in a sense, especially in the 1980s and 1990s Andersen culture was stagnated and seen as somewhat old-fashioned and reactive reactionary as opposed to the modern culture at the time. And in 2005, there was a bicentennial celebration of Andersen's 200-year birthday. And it did not end so well. It was seen as a mostly tourist promotion and very far from the Andersen that people knew. And so the rebranding and reconstruction of the museum that opened back in 2021 were also restarting a new project from disseminating Andersen and all these core values I just told you about in the exhibition, in the museum, were to rejuvenate and the dissemination of Hans Christian Andersen. Furthermore, the new museum is part of a larger reconstruction of the city centre. In the 1960s, a large road was built through the city centre as a rational way of urban planning, and that road, when it was finished, was very unpopular among the inhabitants. It was seen as a wound through the heart of the city.

And then, ten years ago, that street was closed and erased. And Hans Christian Andersen's house is in a garden, and the garden was very much cut down from the road. And then, when reopening or erasing the streets and rebuilding the city in place, the garden could be enlarged again to make it a whole, so to speak. And this urban transformation has been very popular. And the Hans Christian Andersen House, built by the international star architect Kengo Kuma, has provided the citizens with a sense of pride and joy that has made Hans Christian Andersen House and Hans Christian Andersen culture much more popular. And we are trying in that respect. As I said, we also, in Hans Christian Andersen's house, have been torn between being something for international tourists and being something for the local populace or for the region, for the nation. And we are very aware that we should not let this popular, positive sentiment in the population disintegrate by only focusing on international tourists. So we are trying to give something back to the city as much as possible. And one of the ideas is the garden. The garden is open to the public throughout the year. And also, we are trying to give back through different activities, taking writers to promote literature and culture.

Speaker 1: It is very interesting. Thank you. In a more general approach, how do you see the state of the literary museum in the world? What do you foresee in the future? What can it bring for the reading promotion or the conservation of culture? What advice would you give to other museums?

Speaker 2: I have seen a lot of writers' museums around the world, and I am sorry to say that most of them are quite boring. And that is because most of them have a foundation rooted as a memorial. For instance, the place they lived and then their desk and office have been preserved, and then people could come and visit and pay homage to something they already know. And it has its place, but I think the important thing is to promote the work and share the work and use the work is more important than the person really, because if you only focus on the person, people that come will already be well-versed in work and will come to see the person. And then they paid homage and then went home. And that's done. And I think more could be gained by engaging more with the work and re-actualizing, re-reinventing the ways of disseminating the work. Of course, it is easy to say when you have someone with a work that is so well known but also easy to make into installations because it is so theatrical. Long novels may perhaps be more difficult, but I think you need to engage them more in work. I know the Thomas Mann Museum in Lubeck is right now being remodelled, and so I am very interested to see what they come up with.

Of course, there is a range of museums that deal with these imaginative children's stories. In Sweden, you know, Astrid Lindgren's world is almost a theme park of theatres, bringing Pippi and Emil and all these characters from Lindgren's works to life. Also, in Kristiansand in Norway, they have Thorbjorn Egner. It is very well known in Norway and Denmark for some children's stories. Some of these children's stories go around the world, and some of them are more local, and others are well-known worldwide. The Moomin Museum in Finland is mainly based on drawings and stories. Yeah, there are a few of these, Grimbald as well. I have not been there, but I have heard good things about it.

Speaker 1: Thank you so much for your help. I think I have a lot of information that I can now analyse. I will send you the results if you want to read it.

3. Interview with the Exhibition curator at the H. C. Andersen House

Speaker 1: [After receiving the museum audio guide]. Who was in charge of writing the script?

Speaker 2 [Jens]: Each script is written by children's literature authors, a Danish author for the Danish audio guide and Daniel Handler for the English version. He is the author of *A Series of Unfortunate Events* with the pen name Daniel Handler. For our third language, Mandarin Chinese, we wanted to work with a Chinese author as well, but it was overdue for COVID. It was just too troublesome to conduct the interviews and then find the right author. So we ended up just having a Chinese translation of the English manuscript instead. But the German manuscript is written by Christina Monica, who writes youth literature, but also historical novels and dramas. All the manuscripts are different because the authors are different, but they still have the same basic premise. We outline that they have to talk about specific topics and specific themes, but they are different. So you can have a different experience if you speak different languages, Danish or English or Chinese or German. You can have different experiences walking through the house, and you will learn different things.

Speaker 1: It is also interesting that it is two people in the narration and not just one person.

Speaker 2: Andersen's universe is very much a universe that is full of voices. Because everyone, even the flowers in the garden, has a voice. The teapot has a voice. So everything that you meet in the museum has a voice that will tell you stories and give you different perspectives. Because the main thought process behind the museum was to create an experience that draws people to want to explore and discover the world by themselves. And Andersen cannot really be trusted always because he wrote three and a half autobiographies, and they are not entirely the same, as he is always playing with Who am I and Where am I from? He is not always completely truthful. He always made up a ton of excuses for himself. ''No, I couldn't find a woman because I was poor''. But he wasn't poor. He was quite wealthy. Then later, he would say, ''No, no, I'm a poet, and you cannot be a poet and happy; you have to be miserable. If I find love and become happy, then I cannot write anymore''. So he is always making excuses. And none of them is better or worse than the others. But some will be more true for one guest, and another excuse will be more true for another guest. So it is not about me as a curator telling you what is right and what you should believe but opening

up a world where everything is true and false at the same time, and then you have to discover by yourself, ''Oh, this is true for me, because I am like that as well. I am shy, or I am poor'' or whatever might be true for you.

Speaker 1: How do children react and interact with the rooms and the ideas behind them?

Speaker 2: Here, this part of the museum related to his life story may become somewhat difficult to comprehend because there is a lot going on. Children enjoy the second half more. But I think the interaction between them and the objects that speak is quite fun, they say things like ''the rope told me something''. That is very Andersen, in a way, that objects and everything around us will tell you stories and have their own reason to tell you stories.

The main premise is to bring the world alive in a way that you cannot do by just using display cases and text. It has to be immersive, it has to be a place where you step into the fairytales, and it comes very much as almost scenography, at least in the second part of the museum. That is also a way that Andersen works in the text; he loves to create scenes and then have people think, ''Oh, I know this scene, I know what will happen,'' but then something completely different happens. And then you are taking off centre, you are shaking them a little bit because they are not sure anymore, like ''I thought I knew what was going on, but something completely else is going on''. That meaning can cause you to want to explore, but it can also cause you to be a little hesitant, perhaps, and reframe. Some people reflect differently on the same experience. And then that is another part of why we have these big windows.

For example, the fairytale room has these large skylights to serve two purposes. One is to allow a lot of light to come in because light changes the atmosphere. So if you come like a day to day, it's quite light. The scary stories might be a little scary in the light, but if you come in the wintertime, where it is just dark and raining and windy, then things that would not have frightened you before will perhaps frighten you a little bit now. So something as simple as just having access to light and what is outside can change the inside tremendously. It can allow people to have a completely different experience walking through the house than they would otherwise have. And it also helps keep a connection to the real world because the Andersen world is not Narnia, where you have to travel through some magical closet, but it is our world. He writes about you and me; he writes about the tree in the garden. And we have to keep that connection. So in the museum, we walk almost on this borderline between the real world and his world. And when you are having fun playing in the various houses in the last part, you can still hear the rain or feel the sun through the skylight. So you still have this

connection to the real world outside. And the windows also show the garden, which allows for this atmospheric change because, during summer, the trees provide shade and filter sunlight, creating, again, a new atmosphere. Then in the wintertime, when it is bare, it is a completely different garden, so again the atmosphere changes. So it is really meant as a house where everything plays together. It is not just a house with an exhibition but an exhibition from which a house and a garden are born. And they are really connected as it is one place.

[Passing near a tree in a corridor]. For example, this tree is made the same way Andersen made his stories. If you find original manuscripts, they are quite often quite thick because he would start off with a blank piece of paper and then when he ran out of space (because he would change his stories until the very end, we have examples of how just minutes before being printed, he would be changing the text). So sometimes you have this manuscript where there are four or five pieces of paper glued on top of each other. It really looks like this patchwork, almost. And then you can peel them off. Or, with photography now, you can just take a really high-resolution image, and you can read what is below and see how the story changes. You can see how the fairytales just evolved very organically. And this tree is created in the same way. Take a look. It comes out from a concrete post at the bottom, and then it's made by a Brazilian artist called Malik Oliviera. It is not one tree, but it is tiny pieces of trees glued on another piece and another piece and another piece, so it is completely hollow. It consists of pieces of tiny slivers of wood from almost forty different trees. Around the museum, there are many little things, and everything will tell that story.

[Arriving at the Butterfly exhibition].

Speaker 2: So this is the love section. All the sections are, of course, related to Andersen, and this one is inspired by the fairytale of the butterfly in terms of cinematography. The butterfly spends his entire youth trying to find the right flower to settle down with, and the violet is a very beautiful flower. But as it flies over, it does not like the perfume too much. So he flies off to the daffodils, this weed that you see everywhere. And they are very cute and down to earth, symbolising this country girl that you could marry. But then the butterfly sees that the family is very large. It does not like that many in-laws, so it does not work. So it flies off again. And then suddenly, all the flowers are gone because fall is coming. And the butterfly is caught by this collector and put on an exhibition and sort of laments ''I never found love, but at least I found someone who admires me anyway''. And that was Andersen himself. He never found love, but he was admired for his stories. Each of the display cases will tell you different stories related to love. Again, all the stories relate to the longing for

love, the longing for family or what you want. Below is this forest of pockets where you can see quotes from his diaries, his journals, and his poetry, all relating to love, and we have translated them into a lot of different languages. Some are in Spanish, some are in Chinese, Japanese, English, and German.

Speaker 1: How do children react to this exhibition?

Speaker 2: I think they are more taken by the lights. I do not think they are necessarily so taken with the story. But yeah, they get the story of the butterfly, of it being very picky and a little silly. It is very relatable even to children. When you are eight, you will still do that. You like some people because of silly reasons, and others you will not like.

Speaker 1: So, would you say that through some symbols and stories, they better get the meaning?

Speaker 2: Yes, that was the whole point of the place, to create a space where the word itself does not carry the entire meaning, but it can stand alone through the images or the scenography.

[Walking through the museum corridor]

Speaker 2: As you descend on this walk, you get the story of Andersen. He tells the story himself. Then objects in the exhibition will contradict him and tell you something different.

Speaker 1: You are among the first museums to offer such an interactive approach to literature.

Speaker 2: Yes, it is still not that common to do. Actually, we did not do this until recently. We just opened two years ago, before we were a very classical museum as well. And if you go to the Brothers Grimm Museum in Germany, it is very much the same. But they were here not long ago, and I think they are looking into making some of the same as well.

You know, people read the Grimm stories or *Harry Potter* because they fall in love with the universe. If you take away the universe and just make it about the author, then the reason people fell in love with that author has been taken away. At least that was our thing: you have to start with what people know and love, and then you can add all the things that

they do not know. That is what we do in places like this. We can show a little bit of all the other things that you do not know. We add a little bit of unknown on top of all of the things that they already know. And people react like, ''Oh, my God, did he write so many things? Maybe I should try and read some of his travel logs, or maybe I should try and read his novels, or maybe I should actually look and make progress''. Or you can discover for yourself that you have something more in common with this man.

Speaker 1: How was the museum evolved to become what we see today?

Speaker 2: The old museum was also located here and was built in the 60s. The decision to tear that down was made in 2012, and at the same time, the idea of building a new place began. I think the design team, who are the ones who created the exhibitions, started in 2015 initially and then really took part through 2016 and 2017. And then, well, the building began at the beginning of 2018. And then we started building roughly after. I have seen it, and I have been a part of the whole process. When I arrived, much of the exhibition design was already quite advanced because the initial design and sketches for the exhibition were part of the architectural competition to build the museum. The architects who wanted to design the place had to understand what the exhibition mediation was in the museum. And if they could not speak the same language as we wanted to speak, then they could not win. It is a different approach because, quite often, you build a building, and then you make an exhibition that fits the building. We made a building that fits the exhibition. So it is different. It is turning the whole process upside down because we did not want to make a museum by an architect to Hans Christian Andersen; we wanted a place dedicated to Hans Christian Andersen made by an architect who could speak the same language and use the same sort of approach that Andersen did. The architectural competition came in as an open call, I think we had more than 500 calls from all over the world. And then, a group of five was chosen to work with for the second round, where they got a lot more in-depth material on what we wanted to have done and what story we wanted to tell and how to create a building not that was not intrusive to the area. We wanted to create a space also that was true to the area that we are in, which is the poor people's neighbourhood from the early 1800s. We could not create this monster in glass and steel but wanted to have something that would fit in and come from our old traditional Danish way of building which is half timber. You will see it in the street, where they mix brick, wood, and this timber on the frame. It sort of mimics the cross-sections that are in the buildings around us. What was also important for us was to create a space where —because we had this motor street almost cutting the city centre in half quite effectively—,

we wanted to create a place where people could just pass through and come in and sit and relax or just enjoy themselves for 10 minutes walking in the museum gardens. So it was very important for us that we had a very open garden space that was available every day all year. So there are no gates; people can just come in. And if you just have to pass through, then you can pass through. And if you want to come and sit and enjoy the garden, you can do that as well.

Speaker 1: Would you say it is finished, or are you planning to do more?

Speaker 2: The garden is a continuous work because it grows and dies, so it has to be kept. But it will change eventually. There are currently no plans for recreating corners of the garden. But the exhibition will change; we will do something in 2025. It will be 150 years since Andersen's death. So we will do something not to celebrate that but with some exhibitions and other events here in Denmark, but hopefully also in Europe.

[Entering the *Things* room]

Speaker 2: People usually are the only ones who can have the desire to want to do something but in Andersen's world, a pen can have a desire or a teapot can dream of becoming something else. But they are always limited to the fact that they are made of porcelain or a feather or bone. However, they have the same dreams and aspirations as us, and that is part of what Andersen does. If you read any stories, he will never tell you what to do. He is never judgmental, he never tells people what they are doing is wrong. But he will quite often hold up a mirror that we can reflect ourselves in. So he will make fun of us for being silly because we laugh at a pen being silly, but the pen is doing exactly what we were doing. And then, by realising that he is making fun of us, it is always very relatable just through the perspective of something that is quite often inanimate.

[In the Fairy Tale room]

Speaker 1: Which exhibition would you highlight?

Speaker 2: One of the simplest but actually most effective is *The Emperor's New Clothes*, where you stand there, dance, and have people tell you are wearing a dress. Then the ending in *The Little Matchgirl* is surprising. The girl tells you, ''You can stop now, I am dead

already''. We want that to happen because it is a very sad story, and sometimes you miss that, because you know that she will die, but you actually perhaps killed her by just having a story continuing.

Speaker 1: With some of the exhibitions, you are either impressed or happy or touched, but this one makes you question your own morals.

Speaker 2: Yeah, and there are a lot of people and parents that think, ''No, no, no, no, we do not like darkness. We do not like sad stories, we just want the happy ones''. But children really like dark and gloomy stories. The ones where things are a little scary.

Speaker 1: What can you tell us about *The Little Mermaid* exhibition?

Speaker 2: Looking close to the little pond on the ceiling, you can actually see the visitors outside through the water. And they can see you as well, very blurry. You really get the sense that the story is that the mermaid will come up and speak to you and ask you to sit for a while, and she will tell you a story about how when she was up there. She asks you about what you miss. What is important to you? And then you reflect, you sit here and think about what is important to you while you listen to the story of the mermaid.

Speaker 1: So each room has a different purpose. So this is reflective…

Speaker 2: Yes, this one is reflective [The Little Mermaid], that is very humorous [The Emperor's New Clothes]. The first one is obviously very sad [The Little Matchgirl]. The Tinderbox, which delivers new clothes, is also quite, quite fun, but it is also meant for people being able to laugh at each other because you stand on different sides of the mirror. Most of them are quite humorous, but it's a mix because Andersen's world is not just fun. It is often quite dark and sad. We mix; we have to mix.

Speaker 1: Technology is fundamental for the museum visit, as exhibitions are explained through the wireless audio guide. How did you incorporate technology into the museum?

Speaker 2: 10 years ago, if you did it, it was still very clunky and heavy. For it to work, it has to be smooth. Otherwise, it is just a bad experience. We still have issues sometimes with if people come into big loops, and they come almost at the end; we have 90 people walking

down the ramp at once. It is just too many for the system, and it becomes a little laggy. For this, we have to have our hosts, ''so if you start over there and maybe just visit this one first, things will work much smoother''. But yeah, it has already gotten a lot better. But it is a continuous process because if you try to do something that is new and not something that people are used to, and it does not work, then you get very easily set up for a lot of criticism. We use different levels of interaction because we do not want to have a sole focus on technology, so it has to be a mix of you interacting with technology and technology perhaps just showing you something and then very analogue, you experiencing something just by seeing or reading. Otherwise, it becomes difficult to create an experience that does not use the same tricks. Then they will be repetitive; it will be the same, just in a new scenography. We can know how much time people spend in each zone. For example, when people only spend five minutes, we ask ourselves why they only spend five minutes here. What can we do to make them spend 10 to 15 minutes or eight minutes or whatever they want? We can change one fairy tale to another fairy tale or close one session. Often we do the scenography without having to affect the entire space.

Speaker 1: So you use time as a measurement for engagement.

Speaker 2: Yes, to some extent. Some are very time-consuming, like the Dating show, because people want to try again and again. There are 48 different stories, so if you want to go through them all, it takes a long time. For some of them, we use time as an indicator. If we see perhaps that 50% spend two minutes in one section and ten in another, we have to analyse the first one and see if it is working.

[Going through Ville Vau]

Speaker 2: The museum ticket is free for children up to the age of 17, and Ville Vau is included. In this labyrinth space, people can sit and read. We have a collection of Andersen's stories in almost all possible languages that guests could not read yet, but now we are building an open library that visitors can also read from.

Behind that door, there is a stage, the theatre. And the scenery of the playground is made from Andersen's universe so that you can play different roles. We have guests from all over the world; before covid, 70% at least were international guests. So quite often, you would see children here who do not have the same language, but everyone knows how to play together even though they do not speak the same language. Each speaks their own language

(Chinese, Danish, German), but they play together. We have an in-house seamstress that creates each object and costume by hand. The costumes are in different sizes, so even the parents can engage in the games. Sometimes one person in the couple stays here to keep the children entertained while the other adult goes to see the museum. All the activities related to children happen here: performance school, arts and crafts, school tours… Most spend just two hours in the day, but some engage in the six months course.

4. Interview with the Communication Officer at the House Museum of Ratón Pérez

Speaker 1: Thank you for the interview. First of all, I would like to know more about the functioning of the museum and its aims and objectives. To begin with, what is your occupation at the House Museum of Pérez the Mouse?

Speaker 2 [Ana]: I am the communications Officer.

Speaker 1: We know that since 2012 the museum has expanded its facilities. How has this museum evolved from the small, initial museum to what it is today? Has its mission changed?

Speaker 2: The main purpose of the Casita-Museo [House Museum] from the beginning until today is to reinforce universal values. We try to sow good ideas, the same purpose that Coloma maintained: Sow in children the idea, even if they do not understand it; the years will decipher it in their understanding and make it blossom in their hearts. Our commitment is always to preserve the originality of the character created by Coloma, setting a line of personal ethics of discretion and fidelity to the character to safeguard it from marketing and to avoid invented frivolities. We are convinced that magic must be preserved. Human beings need illusion. Museums are places of learning and delight, also for children, and they contain large doses of culture and wisdom that can contribute directly to the education and critical capacity of our children. A visit to a museum may not be, apparently, the ideal form of entertainment for children or teenagers. The Casita-Museo is a good option for that "first time" in a museum; it enlarges the illusion and touches their heart, helping to awaken in the child an interest in getting to know new museums and cultural spaces. Moreover, adults rediscover their inner child, and everyone is surprised to realise that they did not know much about this illustrious and beloved character. The grown-ups come knowing precisely the same as the children: they know that he is a mouse who comes when the teeth fall out and leaves a little present, a little more. Now they will be able to answer when the children ask them about his work and history.

As for the 2012 enlargement, it is useful to put this in context. In June 2008, the Casita-Museo opened its doors to the public. Initially, it was a very small place, perhaps, then, the smallest museum in the world: "Small as its owner, big as his illusion". It arose as a private initiative, taking as a reference the data provided by Father Luis Coloma (and thanks to the information provided by Pérez himself). Coloma has left us a very important legacy in the form of his handwritten children's story *Ratón Pérez*, which he gave to the child King

Alfonso XIII in 1894, at the age of eight, on the occasion of the fall of one of his milk teeth. In it, he describes the meeting of the tooth fairy with the child king Bubi I and the surprising adventure they shared. Curiously, Bubi was the nickname by which the Austro-Hungarian Queen Regent Maria Christina of Habsburg affectionately called her son King Alfonso XIII. The handwritten work, with the dedication to H.M. and bound in green leather, is preserved in the vault of the Library of the Royal Palace in Madrid.

In May 2012, in response to the growing demand from our visitors and with more information and documentation available, the museum expanded its facilities with the aim of offering greater knowledge about Pérez, his origins and his family, as well as other relevant artists and illustrious writers who may have been related to him, thus expanding the cultural background of our visitors.

Speaker 1: What strategies were implemented to achieve this mission or purpose? How does each of the different rooms contribute?

Speaker 2: The current rooms have, even with the same common thread, different peculiarities. In the audiovisual room, storytelling and projection show the work of Luis Coloma and, in the case of school visits, to discover, through audiovisual animation, the importance of taking care of teeth as well as the approach to different cultures and traditions. Consequently, the adjoining room contains the "museum" block where we find works of art, various books by the author, scenes that recreate the story told by Coloma: the extraction of Bubi's tooth by the palace doctors with an exhibition of the utensils of the time and the moment when Bubi, with the help of his mother the queen, writes the letter to the tooth fairy. Here, a small corner of Madrid, a coat of arms, keys and emblematic symbols of the city. In addition, the hands of the writer, a bronze sculpture that is a tribute to the author and the presence of artists linked to the world of the tooth fairy and contemporary painters of Coloma with a tribute to all of them by introducing signs of Pérez in their own works. In this room, we learn about the beginning of the tradition, references to Plato, to the Lost Continent (Atlantis), and we take a look at the tree of Traditions that represents the fraternity between all of them. This and many other details give way to a magic tunnel that opens the doors to another room: the tooth fairy's office, where we see heraldic coats of arms, his bookshop, the logistic system to which he belongs, the different branches-factories spread all over the world, his fascination for astronomy, reading and music...

The next room would be the "little house" block, probably the most anticipated by the children. Here is a "Huntley and Palmers" biscuit box where he lives with his family. Big on the inside and small on the outside. In this room, observation is very important, and we could find traces of Mouse or his family... Around the room, scenes from the story, homage to Gloria Fuertes, an allusion to the Little Prince, Buby in real size, and certificates of origin of teeth of relevant characters in the evolution of mankind. Artists, scientists, and writers. Also, the official mailbox, the "tooth fairy's friends" showcase and his reading room, where he spends pleasant moments reading the letters sent to him by the children.

Speaker 1: What is the composition of the museum team, and what is their background?

Speaker 2: The team is mostly made up of young, dynamic and creative staff. Many of them are students of tourism. Their training is constant and adaptive.

Speaker 1: Since it is a children's museum, we would like to understand how educational, aesthetic, cultural and entertainment intentions interact in the constitution of the museum. What is the importance of educational work in the management of the museum? Do you carry out specific educational activities?

Speaker 2: We carry out extracurricular activities during school hours from Monday to Friday during school term time. On occasion, we have offered workshops on dental health and drawing and painting.

Speaker 1: What is the role of the family in the museum, how are they involved, and what is the role of schools?

Speaker 2: The family plays a fundamental role both in the visit and in the good development of Pérez's work. The family is Mouse's accomplice, the link between Perez and the children and the key to maintaining the tradition.

Speaker 1: In what ways are visitors guided to make connections between museum content and their prior knowledge and life experiences?

Speaker 2: The mouse Pérez is a universal character, known all over the world and without detractors. He is part of the childhood of each and every child at a key time, such as when they lose their milk teeth. They experience his closeness and presence, constituting a support

for them in a period of fears, intrigues and uncertainties; he brings them magic and generates great illusion. The visit takes place in a framework of illusion and discovery, which fosters self- confidence in children: they question, wonder, imagine and dream.

Speaker 1: How do you adjust to visitors' differences in terms of age, origin, language, etc.? Is there a particular type of visitor that your service targets?

Speaker 2: Our target public are families, so the visit is developed in a tone appropriate for any age, with rigorousness. We adapt to different ages in the case of school visits. The visits are in Spanish. Complementary information is available in English. Due to demand, we are currently adapting the visits to other languages. We are developing a circuit, highlighting the main areas of the museum with the provision of QR so that the visitor can go, simultaneously to the explanation of the guide (in Spanish), reading the explanation in English or French.

Speaker 1: What dilemmas are the children in the museum given to reflect on, and what means are they given to carry out this reflection?

Speaker 2: Through observation and listening, we raise issues during the visit. We invite them to imagine themselves immersed in the situation experienced by Buby, we reflect on humility and generosity and the equal approach to any person whatever their sociocultural situation through a scene told in the story "Buby's tooth" based on the play "Mouse Perez" by Luis Coloma in which Perez takes the little king with him to visit the home of a poor child, bringing him closer to the situation in which many families in his kingdom live, experiences different from his own. Dilemmas arise such as: In one of the rooms there is a crown with a "thinker" inside it. Underneath it is written: "A crown is, to a large extent, a prison for the person who holds it". (Here we can reflect that "all that glitters is not always gold" and that everything has its good things but also its complications. The crown, being king, could be a golden cage. We provide explanations such as the lack of freedom that Buby has, in this case, to carry out certain activities that for the rest of the humans are simple daily chores). How is it possible for Perez to visit so many homes in one night (thanks to his organisational skills, sense of responsibility, effort and the importance of having a team of correspondents of different races, cultures and abilities)? Why does the tooth fairy give so much importance to time? (In the museum you can see a corner full of clocks, for Perez time is very important and for all of us it should be "time is intractable and implacable. With time, the best thing to do is to be in its favour" we have to make the most of it, once time passes it is time wasted...

or time used). Why did Mouse consider it important for Buby, the child king, to accompany him to visit, specifically, the home of an economically deprived child? Well, Buby lived in a palace, received private education at home, hardly interacted with other children of his age, had all the economic facilities and all the privileges to be able to live, so that, in order to be able to reign, Pérez considered it essential for him to know first hand how the child they visited on the night of their meeting lived and in what conditions, a sample of the situation of many other families of the time. Moreover, Buby was shocked by the situation.)

Speaker 1: What tools are put at the service of extending the curiosity and learning of visitors at the end of the museum tour?

Speaker 2: For school visits, a programme of activities has been drawn up for before and after the visit so that, in addition to being a fun activity, it is a tool for the cognitive and socio-emotional development of the children.

Speaker 1: Finally, we would be interested to know more about the literary character of your museum, based on a fictional character. In what ways does the visitor interact with Father Coloma's original work?

Speaker 2: The visitor receives the content of Coloma's work as real and important and accords it veracity and respect. The visitor acts as listener and spectator, as receiver of values, illusions and knowledge. In the Casita-Museo, the visitor, just as a reader would do with the work, acquires a deep psychological connection with the characters and events that take place in the book and are exposed during the visit.

Speaker 1: What do visitors gain by experiencing the work from this other perspective?

Speaker 2: Here they live an immersive experience. They get to know the author, the characters. They can go back to Coloma's time, empathise with Buby and even identify with Pérez. They get to "get into the story". They experience discovery and enhance positive thinking. They gain in receptive mood and encourage questioning, debate and critical thinking. They also gain in entertainment, enjoyment and excitement.

Speaker 1: Have you encountered challenges adapting a verbal text to a physical space? How did you manage to recreate it in such a different medium?

Speaker 2: Being faithful to the work, the character and the facts. Without "deforming" the character, preserving to the maximum what Coloma created more than a century ago.

Speaker 1: In addition, you have also integrated a fictional character into reality. How do you combine both worlds, fiction and reality?

Speaker 2: He is a character present in our minds, in our memories, in our childhood, in our homes... For sure, he is present in any stage of our lives in one way or another. Therefore, the combination of "both worlds" is already a given. Coloma also gave to the mouse a family with whom he lived inside a biscuit box from the well-known English brand Huntley and Palmers, the first industrial biscuit manufacturer. This box in itself is an element of great historical curiosity, as plastic was not invented until the middle of the 20th century and it is said that the Huntley and Palmer's brass biscuit boxes were used by the English army because of their great capacity to keep the food in good condition. It is also said that missionaries in the Congo kept their precious Bibles in Huntley and Palmer's boxes to protect them from white ants, the term for termites. The tooth fairy lived happily with his wife, two daughters and a son in this biscuit box located in calle Arenal 8, where the Pastelería Prast was located, once again a real element within the fantasy story. Nowadays, a plaque in this Madrid street commemorates the residence of the illustrious character of Pérez the mouse, the only one granted to an imaginary character and which shares the honour with other commemorative plaques scattered around the city dedicated to characters of the stature of Andersen or Plácido Domingo, among others.

Speaker 1: What is the role of technology in bringing the Tooth Fairy story to life?

Speaker 2: Fundamental. Word of mouth is essential to maintain a tradition. Technology is a tool to speed up messages, a means to spread them and fundamental to reach everyone. Thanks to technology we have reached more homes, we have crossed borders and Pérez has become even more popular, just like Coloma's work.

Speaker 1: The location of the museum matches the address given by the author in the original story. What relevance does this verisimilitude have for the visitor's experience?

Speaker 2: This "coincidence" brings originality, legitimacy and distinction to the museum. It also brings history. It is therefore unique, singular and unrepeatable. It is a place of distinction and the visitor wants authenticity. The fact that the museum is built on the place indicated by Coloma as the residence of the tooth fairy is fundamental. It could not be anywhere else if we are talking about his home. In January 2003, the Madrid City Council, through the figure of its mayor José María Álvarez del Manzano, institutionalised this place as the residence of such an endearing character, unveiling a commemorative plaque in his honour, on the façade of the building. (The Plaque reads: Here lived inside a box of biscuits in the Prast confectionery, Ratón Pérez, according to the story that father Coloma wrote for the child king Alfonso XIII. This recognition was part of the "Memory of Madrid Plan", with which the City Council intended to pay tribute to representative characters in the history of the capital, this being the first one dedicated to a fictional character.)

Speaker 1: If we understand reading promotion as connecting stories with readers and contributing to their literary education, would you say this mission is included among your main objectives?

Speaker 2: It is clear that reading opens up the world, provides knowledge and fosters an interest in learning. It is so important for the Casita-Museo to motivate interest in reading and encourage it, that we work on our own titles, as a publishing house. Some of them are children's adaptations of Coloma's book. The latest addition to our collection is *RoeQUIJOTE*, an excellent recreation and summary of the masterpiece of Miguel de Cervantes and universal literature. An easy-to-read book that faithfully synthesises Cervantes' work, bringing together each of his characters and the most representative situations of such a majestic work, achieving a summarised but rigorous and solid vision.

Speaker 1: Despite being an ancient story, it has remained relevant for today's children. What is the explanation for understanding the universality of this tale?

Speaker 2: Much of the reach of Coloma's children's story is due to its masterful blending of fiction and reality. Let us remember that no other fictional character in our culture has achieved such a rooting capacity and connection with people as the tooth fairy, and parents'

concern for their children's teeth is practically as old as man himself. The most ancient cultures wanted their children to have teeth as strong and resistant as those of a mouse. Plato, in his dialogues Timaeus and Critias, already talked about this subject. Over the years there have been many reproductions, copies and versions of the mouse Pérez by Luis Coloma. The story was translated in Japan and also in England as *Perez the mouse* by Lady Moreton. Not all the adaptations have been successful.

Speaker 1: You mentioned that you were doing activities with the book fair, what does this collaboration consist of? Do you collaborate with other institutions?

Speaker 2: At the Fair, we participate with different bookshops' stands. We collaborate with different institutions. Currently, together with the National Centre for Research on Human Evolution (CENIEH), we are preparing the 10th Annual Milk Tooth Collection Campaign in order to have a reference collection of deciduous teeth for the different investigations carried out in the Dental Anthropology Group (GAD) of CENIEH. The main objective is to develop a comparative sample of milk teeth of world reference that will help to carry out important research in different fields such as palaeoanthropology, anthropology and forensics. In addition, we are also participating in the 11th edition of Madrid Otra Mirada-MOM of the Madrid City Council.

Speaker 1: Finally, how do you see the future of children's literary museums, what possibilities lie ahead and what recommendations would you give to your colleagues in the profession?

Speaker 2: The literary museum brings children closer to nature, history and literature as essential elements to recover the creativity lost through technological overdose, as well as to help develop essential personality attributes and the spiritual dimension necessary for the formation of every person. It provides experiences beyond reading, fostering restlessness and curiosity and broadening learning and knowledge.

Speaker 1: If you feel that any important aspect of his work has not been mentioned, please feel free to comment below.

Speaker 2: Many people believe that the tooth fairy was created by Luis Coloma at the end of the 19th century, but this is not the case: Coloma - who knew him well - described him,

identified his family and home, and revealed his location. Some of his works were best sellers in their time and had a great social impact, but undoubtedly one of his exceptional contributions to our literature was "Ratón Pérez", the genuine and inimitable rodent, giving written form to an oral tradition of much richness in our culture. There are some literary antecedents that recall the character, such as an 18th century French tale by the Baroness d'Aulnoy: La Bonne Petite Souris (The Good Little Mouse). It tells of a fairy who transforms into a mouse to help defeat an evil king, hides under her pillow and drops her teeth.

Perhaps the first appearance of Pérez as such in a book was in *La Hormiguita* by the writer Cecilia Böhl de Faber, who used the pseudonym Fernán Caballero. The writer was a close friend of Luis Coloma and it is said that she passed on her love of folk tales to him. Benito Pérez Galdós also mentions him in his novel *La de Bringas*. The figure of the tooth fairy has been transmitted orally in our culture for many years and it was Luis Coloma who documented it in written form in 1894, giving the character a unique history and identity. The first manuscript of Pérez that Luis Coloma gave to King Alfonso XIII is bound in green leather covers with a gold clasp and is kept in the vault of the Royal Palace. In 1902 it was first published together with other stories by Coloma, and in 1911 it was published as an independent story.