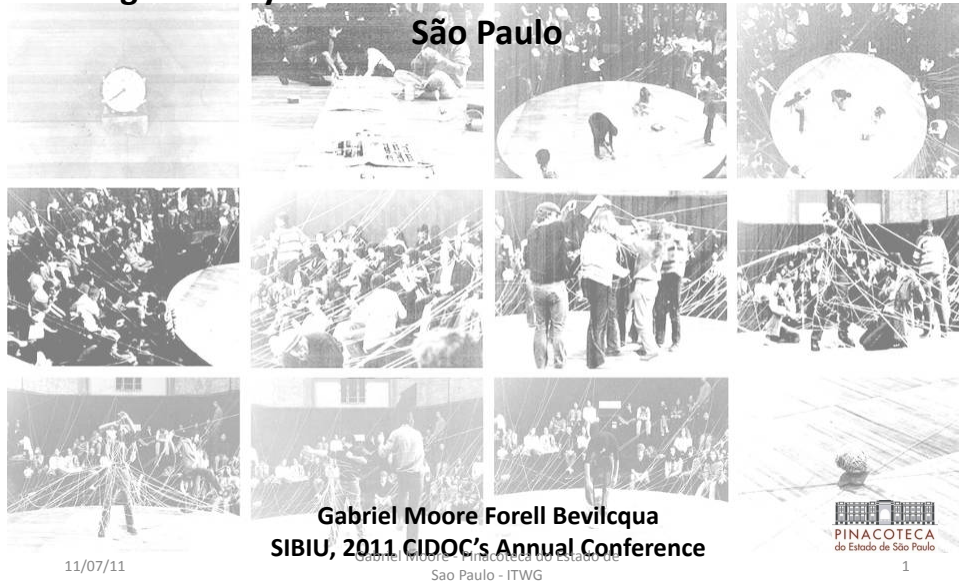


New perspectives on museum's information and knowledge management systems: the case of Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo



Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo: a very (very) brief introduction

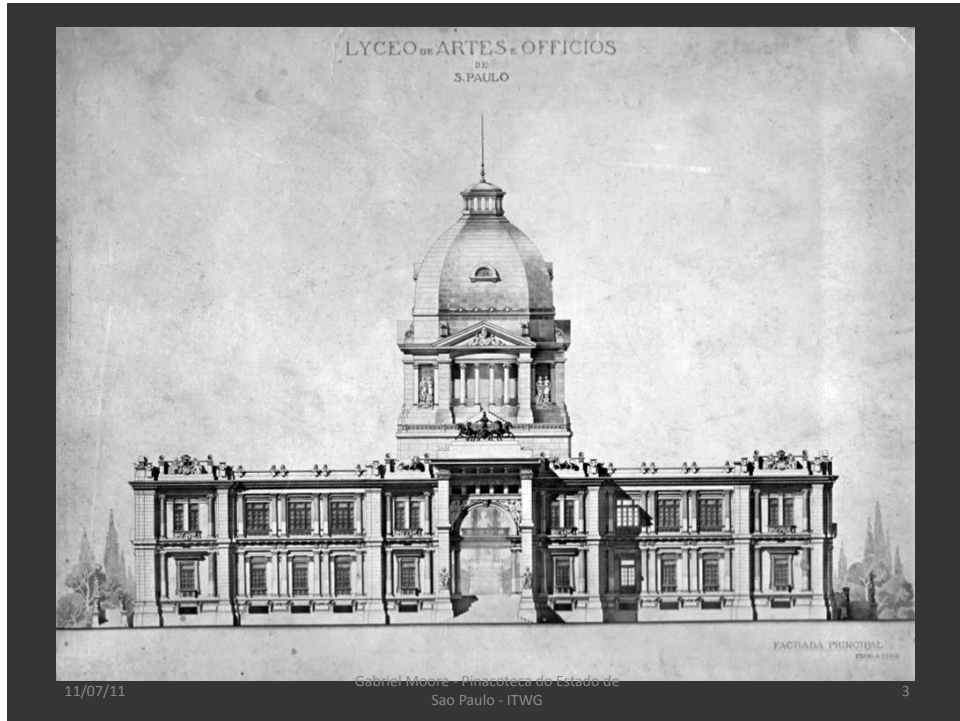
Founded in 1905, Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo (Art Gallery of the State of São Paulo in a free translation) is one of the most traditional and one of the oldest museums in São Paulo. With more than eight thousand works of art, its collection includes Brazilian artistic production from the eighteenth century to the present day. Traditionally known as a fine arts museum, the institution holds a very important art collection from the nineteenth century. The museum also organizes and houses innumerable exhibitions from Brazilian and International art.

São Paulo is the financial and economic center of Brazil and its biggest city with a population of over 11 million people. The city is also the capital of the State of São Paulo and home of some of the most important and active museums in the country. Three of them are represented in this conference.

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Since 2004 Pinacoteca do Estado administrate a second historical building both of then part of the architectonical heritage of the city of São Paulo. In this building known as Estação Pinacoteca do Estado is also the Memorial da Resistência (Resistance Memorial in a free translation) an institution created to work and interact with the memory and history of the building that was used as a prison and torture location during the military regime (1964-1985).

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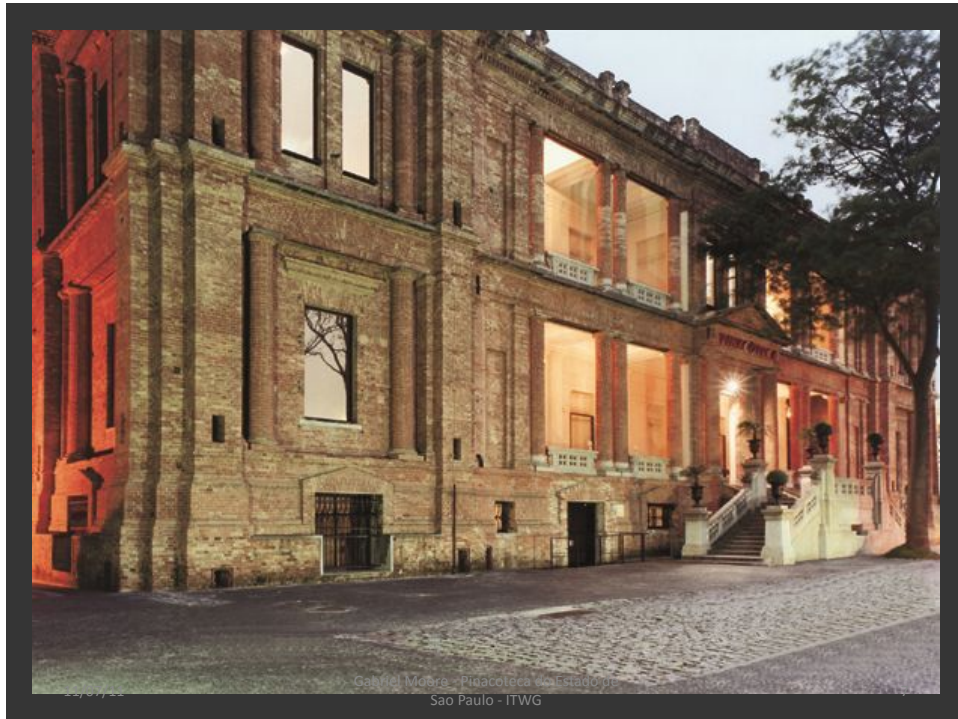
5



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6



The Center of Documentation and Memory (Cedoc) was created during the festivities of the museum centenary (2005). Its first objective was to reunite, organize, preserve and make accessible the museum archive which until then was dispersed between various departments of the institution. This objective was achieved totally in 2006 when the archives were open to the public fully organized with a specially created database that granted access to the vast documental heritage of the museum history and activities.

In 2007 the goals of the Cedoc were expanded and the department became responsible for collecting and managing other archives and documents collections qualified as important and relevant to the museum. With this the museum started an acquisition plan to collect original documents and archives for Brazilian art history research and as a complementary source to the documentation and investigation of its on art objects collection.



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8



In the same period the department was also asked to respond for the institutional records management activities. This new perspective gave a more complete dynamic to part of the archival lifecycle management and allowed to follow some records from their production by museum activities to its permanent deposit in the institutional archives and further reutilization by curators and researchers to generate new knowledge and new cultural activities. Until the end of September (2011) a renovation project of the storage areas of the museum archives will double its capacity and install a climate control system similar to the museum collection storage rooms (RH50% and T20°C).

2007/2008: production and release of the book *Pinacoteca do Estado: a history of the museum*.

2009: coorganization (MAC USP) of the *I International Seminar Museum Archives and Research* (November 9th and 10th) and creation of the Museum Archives and Research Working Group.



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2010: organization (Walter Wey Library) of the *I Seminar on Museum Information Services* (November 25th and 26th).

2011: organization (Museum Research and Curatorial Department) of the first two exhibitions focused on the Cedoc collections. / organization (Museum Archives and Research Working Group) of the *II International Seminar Museum Archives and Research* (November 15th and 16th).

The collections managed by the Center of Documentation and Memory are growing and from the only archival fund held in 2005 (the museum archive) now the department maintains fifteen archival groups and collections, from artist, curators and art historians' personal papers to research projects' archives and other private collections.





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15



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16

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Regarding the museum archive:

- the organization of the archive allows the museum to critically interact and deeply investigate their legacy and past (it's very strange that museums - a memory institution - usually take so long to realize the importance of this action;
- the obviously deep connection between the museum's trajectory and its own collection history makes the archive a unique resource of contextualized and highly qualified information for the objects' documentation;
- opening the archives for the society/community is a mandatory step in the contemporary search for public transparency.

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17



▪ Acquisition Collection Azevedo Marques, 1949
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18

An integrated perspective

From a multidisciplinary point of view museological institutions constitute themselves into a privileged space for discussions involving information and library science, museology and archival science. This is achieved by two factors mutually connected: the museum is one of the few organizations that has (to a greater or lesser extent depending on the type of the museum and its size) collections consisting of sets of objects / documents of three different natures (museological, archival and library material), and has extensive demands for organization and dissemination of information, both internal and external.

As an art museum Pinacoteca holds three collections of different nature. The first is the art collection which is the central core of the institution activities and research efforts. The other two born as resources developed to support these activities. A specialized library named Walter Wey Library after a former director of the museum that holds a vast collection of books, magazines and ephemera focused on Brazilian and international visual arts and the Cedoc.



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The problem

Usually the researchers interested in the museum holdings and cultural heritage point their initial questions to a person (an artist or a curator name), work of art (an object belonging to the collection or exhibited in the museum in the past) and/or to an event (an exhibition organized or housed by the museum).

Although in most of the cases the researcher doesn't care where (in which department our collection) he is going to find his answers he is usually forced to delivery then to three different databases (museum collection, library and archives). How could the museum simplify the access (both to internal and external researchers) to the collections and create a more dynamic environment to information recuperation and knowledge production?

Looking for a solution: first idea

Build equivalence structures for the principal fields of information of the three databases. Too complicated: huge differences identified in the selected methodologies for describing/cataloging models (example: some data fields like "title" could present the same label but the content/significance had different criteria).

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20



Second (and actual) idea/project

Developing a controlled vocabulary system for common content indexing:

1. organization and normalization of an artist name index (focused initially on those belonging to the museum collection - about 1,200 names);
2. same for an event/exhibitions index (focused initially on those organized by the museum - around 1,300 events);
3. same for a works of art index (focused initially on the museum collection - about eight thousand objects);
4. art related subjects index (second moment);
5. institutions name index (second moment);
6. same for places/geographical locations (second moment);

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21

7. development of a management system to administrate the application and actualization of the vocabularies behind the existing collections databases (museum collection, archives and library);
8. development of an integrated interface for collection's information recovery on the museum website.

Other related initiatives

- publication (website) of the complete bibliography of the museum;
- publication (website) of the illustrated chronology of the museum history;
- publication (website) of the museum's historical table of exhibitions with indexed documents (photographs, press-releases, letters, projects, etc);
- publication (website) of the series of museum collection's catalogues (1912-1986);
- publication (website) of a selection of rare catalogues from past exhibitions;
- publication (website) of the technical and scientific production of the museum staff/departments (scientific papers, articles, dissertations and presentations in congress, seminars and other events);
- continuation of the oral history recording program (staff, curators, artists and former employers, directors and board members).

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22

Conceptual reference: trying to define *Museum integrated collection management*

1. The perspective of the museum as an information service center where its various and innumerable users (public) can access answers for their research, investigation and informational needs towards the totality of the organization holdings (collection, collection documentation, library, archives and documentation centers) through an integrated system of data/information recovery independent from the holdings typology, applied methodologies or the several departments involved in their management. It's possible only through information technology systems as databases and Intranet and Internet tools allowing information crossing recovery and the creation of dynamic research reports offering to the interested various search and access possibilities to the institutional holdings in one information/communication interface. The application of such a system requires an integrated organizational policy for information production, circulation, use and dissemination.

2. Development of an integrated collection management system from an integrated organizational policy aiming for a more dynamic and productive interaction between the vast and diverse collections/holdings preserved by the museum and its main objectives as an institution of specialized knowledge production and dissemination. It is based on the creation and application of common and interrelated directives developed from collection management procedures: acquisition policies and programs, delineation of thematic fields of interest/content areas, methodologies (cataloging/description, identification, classification, work-flows, use, access, reproduction, circulation, documentation, search tools and conceptual definitions and boundaries, etc.).

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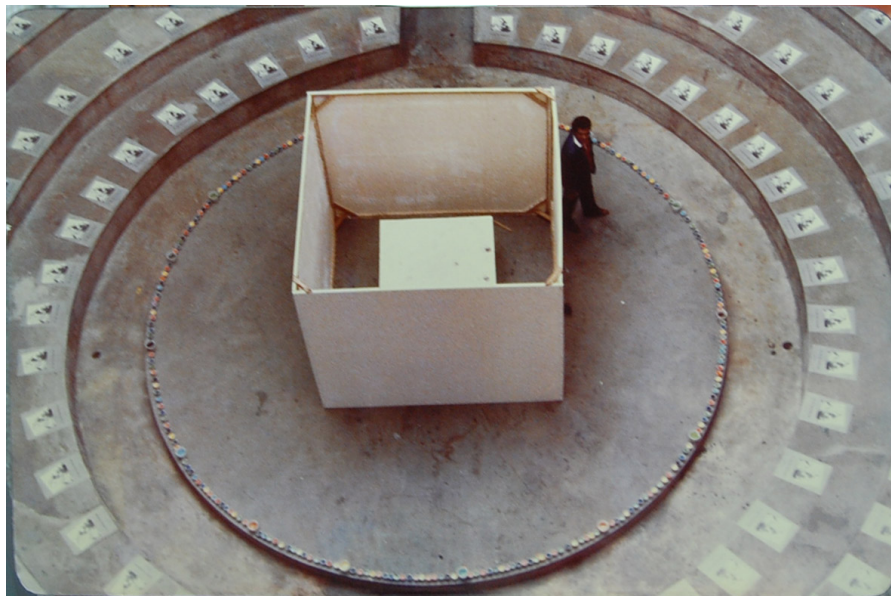
23

■ Research project Pinacoteca do Estado in performance: art as record and record as art

- *Sessão contínua: 45 revoluções por minuto, Lição de espanhol e Sistema errático internacional de correio artístico* [Continuous session: 45 revolutions per minute, Spanish lesson and International erratic system of artistic mail] (17/08/1978) - Ulises Carrión;
- *O artista e a criança* [The artist and the child] (21/12/1979) - Ivald Granato; *Foto-performance* [Photo-performance] (24/04/1980) - Loris Machado;
- *Modificações e apropriações de uma identidade autônoma* [Modifications and appropriations of an autonomous identity] (15/08/1980) - Gretta and Elvio Becheroni;
- *Per 4 per concerto* (26/08/1980) - José Roberto Aguilar;
- *O preço do dinheiro* [The price of money] (27/08/1980) - Gabriel Borba;
- *A costura do tempo* [Sewing of time] (28/08/1980) - Genilson Soares;
- *Meu romance com Andy Warhol* [My romance with Andy Warhol] (29/08/1980) - Ivald Granato;
- *Heather-Marie* (06/08/1981) - Linda Hartinian and the Mabou Mines Group Theater Co.;
- *Eu sou Venezuela* [I'm Venezuela] (04/05/1982) - Juan Loyola;
- *Espaço vermelho* [Red space] (22/06/1982) - Sandra Lancman;
- *A construção* [The construction] (15/12/1983) - Pon-kã Group (Paulo Yutaka, Hector Gonzalez, Graciela de Leonardis e Paulo Almeida);
- *Grafite efêmero I* [Ephemeral graffiti I] (16/10/1984) - Theo Werneck;
- *Defeitos cônicos* (10/07/1984) - Arnaldo Antunes, Gô e Adriano Freire;
- *Cripto-prismática* (05/12/1985) - Celina Fujii, Cláudio Cretti e Eliana Floriano;
- *Video teatro* [Video theater] (16, 17 e 19/12/1985) - Otávio Donaschi;
- *Grafite efêmero II* [Ephemeral graffiti II] (27/11/1986) - Theo Werneck.

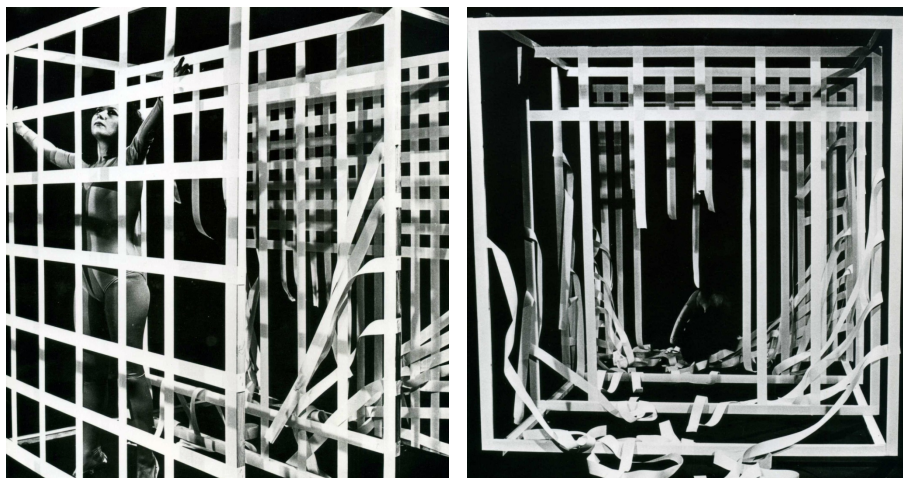
11/07/11

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▪ *Foto-performance [Photo-performance] (24/04/1980)* - Loris Machado
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25



▪ *Modificações e apropriações de uma identidade autônoma [Modifications and appropriations of an autonomous identity] (15/08/1980)* - Gretta and Elvio Becheroni

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26



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▪ *Per 4 per concerto* (26/08/1980) - José Roberto Aguilar 27



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▪ *A costura do tempo [Sewing of time]* (28/08/1980) - Genilson Soares

28



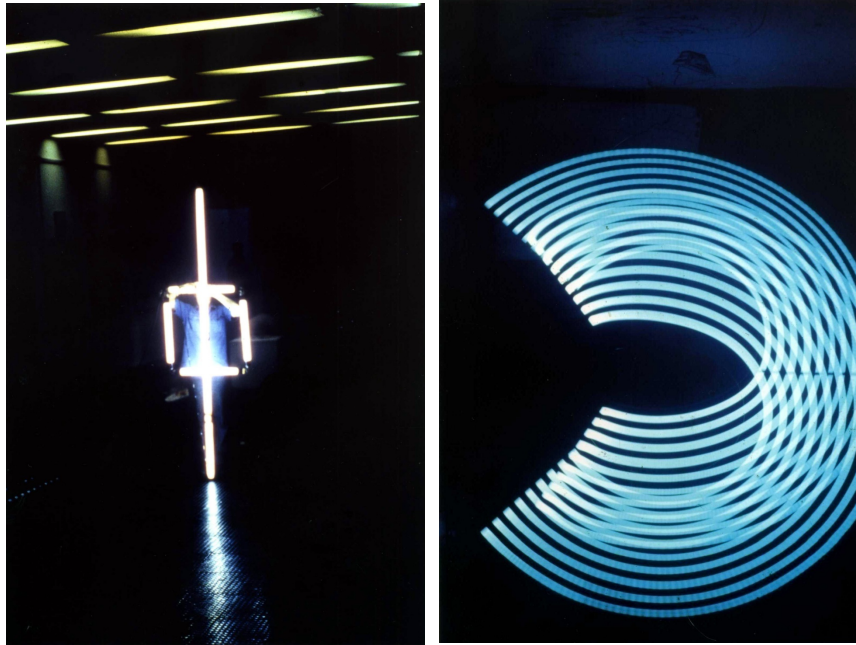
• *Meu romance com Andy Warhol* [*My romance with Andy Warhol*] (29/08/1980) - Ivaldo Granato
11/07/11 Sao Paulo - ITWG 29



11/07/11

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Vídeo teatro [*Video theater*] (16, 17 e
19/12/1985) - Otávio
Donasci 30



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• *Graffiti efêmero II [Ephemeral graffiti II]* (27/11/1986) - Theo Werneck

31

▪ Research project Pinacoteca do Estado in performance: art as record and record as art



One of the main achievements of this research was to provide information to a critical reassessment of the assumptions currently used by the museum to create tools and techniques for registration and preservation of some forms of contemporary art forms, pointing to a necessary interdisciplinary perspective for the development of new and more effective working methods.

11/07/11

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32

More questions and a few conclusions:

1. Integrated management system for museum collections: technical problems, conceptual boundaries, practicality and applicability.
2. Production, circulation and usage of information in the museum: from the internal user to the outsider researcher and the general public.
3. The museum as an information system and service: limitations due to the specificity of museum activities and advantages.
4. The collection documentation as a major museum information resource: conservation, access (internal and external researches), interrelations and boundaries with archival holdings and physical place (the curators/cataloguing office *versus* the archives/library).
5. Development of museum databases (conceptual and practical challenges): from a collection reference information tool to a complex integrated management system (document production, circulation and conservation control, workflows, multitask and interdisciplinary digital environments).
6. Contemporary challenges on museum documentation: from the object documentation to the activity/process registration.
7. The role of museum's libraries and archives: from information support to collaborative research on curatorial activities.
8. How to guarantee the preservation of dynamic and ephemeral artistic activities? The necessity of an integrated and interdisciplinary action/procedure, a hybrid strategy (the curator, the registrar, the archivist and the conservator).

11/07/11

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33



11/07/11

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34

Thank you very much for your attention and hope to see you in Rio 2013!

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