

\* NEW APPROACHES TO PACKAGING DESIGN \*

# BOXED & LABELLED TWO!

INGREDIENTS: BOTTLES, WINE, FOOD, COSMETICS,  
ELECTRONICS, BAGS, BOXES, LABELS, ETC

244 pages ✓ hardcover ✓ more than 320 projects ✓ researched around the world ✓ written in canada and germany ✓ edited in germany ✓



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Printed by Offsetdruckerei Gramlich, Pliezhausen

Made in Germany

Published by Gestalten, Berlin 2011

ISBN 978-3-89955-378-9

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Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek.

The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available online at <http://dnb.d-nb.de>.

None of the content in this book was published in exchange for payment by commercial parties or designers; Gestalten selected all included work based solely on its artistic merit.

This book was printed according to the internationally accepted ISO 14001 standards for environmental protection, which specify requirements for an environmental management system.

This book was printed on paper certified by the FSC®.



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SYLVAIN ALLARD

# PREFACE

**Watching my six-year-old son as he unpacked his birthday present the other day, it struck me how this simple event contained all the ingredients needed for a winning package design, but that it also represented many major environmental pitfalls. It was a highly emotional experience shaped by desire, restlessness, excitement, elation, emotion, joy, and possession. Packaging embodies such magic and fascination. Its central element is the pleasure of the conquest; all formal, functional, and aesthetic qualities cannot compete with this notion of the pleasure associated with the unpacking experience, which reaches its ultimate climax in the attainment of the object of desire. The excess of colored papers and ribbons, which exercised so much fascination and excitement only a few seconds earlier, lose all their appeal in an instant and are then thrown away in a pile of unwanted debris. Herein lies the very paradox of packaging; it is an accessory to a desire that once satiated transforms the package into superfluous waste that must be quickly disposed. How can we manage all the multi-matter trash?**



## UNPACKING

The vast majority of consumer products could not exist without a specific package. Like the skin of a banana, packaging is an integral and inseparable part of the product. So what then, is a good packaging design? In addition to its strict function of transporting a product from point A to point B, are there measurable qualities to assess the features of a winning design? Most of all, packaging design is a challenge because it must reconcile the expectations of many stakeholders. The producer wants the product delivered to its destination in the best possible condition for its preservation. As such, the evaluation will be based mainly on functional criteria. The merchant hopes that the brand will capture attention, stand out on the shelf, and ultimately purchased. And the consumer demands maximum service at a minimum price. Nevertheless, none of these criteria alone or even in combination will ensure the success of a brand. So what, then is the magic that will lead to the creation of icons such as the Heinz ketchup bottle or the Chanel No.5 bottle? Those that would claim to know the secret are very wise indeed, but at the very least we can say that design plays a central role in the equation.

## A COMMUNICATION MEDIA

Since the beginning of the industrial era, packaging has gradually replaced the retailer by establishing itself as the primary interface between the producer and the user. Completely embedded within the industry, it underwrites all aspects of the sale. It conditions, gathers, protects, seduces, values, informs, advises and assists the user from the shelf to the cash register, and finally to the consumption of the product itself. It is the ultimate tool of counter-service. Of all communications media packaging is among the most ubiquitous—it is able to establish a tacit relationship with the user thereby accompanying the user in their daily actions, from the most intimate to the most mundane.

But not all packages have the same direct relationship with the user. Some packaging components provide a purely functional role in the protection and organization to assist with delivery of the product. These secondary boxes and plastic wrappings whose function is to protect the product during transport do not have the same impact on the sale as does the packaging that directly interacts with users on the shelf. Often, there are additional boxes or structures that are designed to support the branded product—these too play a strategic role in the business of seduction because the opportunity to attract, charm, and convince the user lasts only a split second. Finally, there is another type of packaging that is part of the product itself and which assists the user in its application: soft drink bottles, tubes of toothpaste, and honey bears all become the medium through which brands deliver their product and their promise.

Given its strategic position in the consumer's life, packaging has become an almost perfect reflection of the consumer's lifestyle and values. Packaging speaks to us as consumers, to our desires, to our guilty pleasures, and to all the elements that comprise our humanity. It tells the story of a product in which we play the decisive role, particularly at the moment of purchase.

## LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT

It is a story of seduction between the product and the user. To appeal, packaging must deal with two contradictory principles; it must distinguish itself yet prove that it belongs to a class of recognizable products. If the packaging is too distinctive, it may be overlooked, but if it is too common, it may also go unnoticed. The art of seduction lies somewhere between these two absolutes. What governs the rules of seduction between people—namely beauty, elegance, distinction, humor, fun, intelligence, altruism, and envy—also prove effective as means to attracting the consumer. The package must have its own personality and tell an original story that must hold the attention of users and submerge them in a narrative, hence the importance of not always repeating the same tale.

However, the chameleon effect is observable in many product categories. If you go to the nearest supermarket and take a look at the display of regular fruit juice cartons, you will notice that within the same category of products, most brands tell more or less the same story. In terms of seduction codes, they all utilize the same type of illustrations showing juicy fruits in a whirlwind of saturated colors and fluid fonts. If by chance a brand emerges or changes its packaging shape, its competitors will be quick to follow. “Not very distinctive” you might say? Unfortunately, in such a context, the main criteria for creating distinction will often come down to the price.

## THE DESIGN EFFECT

How then can we reconcile the goals of visibility and the producer's profitability with the needs of the consumer? It is the task of the designer to consider how to establish a balanced relationship between these objectives that seem a priori to oppose one another. If the distinction of the brand is the central concern—particularly from a marketing point of view—then the product itself and the customer's expectations are often overlooked. The development of a brand must go beyond mere perception and aim towards the creation of a positive and practical experience for the user. In fact, a brand may very well stand out for all the wrong reasons. A package that is difficult to open, an oversized box or a fraudulent and idealized representation can have a devastating effect on the brand perception. In Canada organic eggs are sold in plastic containers whereas conventional eggs come in a recycled carton container. This is a nonsensical design decision is it not? The progressive health benefits are annulled by the environmental drawbacks of the packaging.

For the buyer, packaging is primarily a tool that provides the best service at a low cost. For an equivalent product, how can a specific brand transcend its primary function and offer that small difference, a piece of information or distinctive service that will make it sell? Increasingly conscious of diet, the environment, and other social issues, today's consumers are in search of truth. They demand more honesty and a coherent discourse rather than hype and pretension. In response to growing public awareness, a proliferation of health, environmental and social issue claims have flooded the market for many years now. These claims increasingly occupy a greater surface on the pack-



aging and encompass a range of issues such as organic and fair-trade certification, Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) certification, or if a paper product is approved by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) or to what extent the packaging itself is recyclable or made from recycled materials. These assertions are sometimes standardized, but more often than not they are unverifiable self-declarations. Such information has become so present that it will often overshadow the brand. While in some cases these claims may be credible, they can nevertheless provoke a kind of cynicism in consumers who find themselves lost in a sea of information. Saying too much is sometimes worse than saying nothing at all. Consumers are in search of truth and it is becoming increasingly risky to hand them half-truths or lies. Take for example the ongoing and questionable practice of downsizing in which product quantity is gradually reduced to keep pricing stable. It is a lie by omission. Customers who see through this scheme feel cheated and this practice can have a catastrophic consequence on the credibility of a brand. I am reminded of a biscuit producer who, after I had complimented him on the excellence of his packaging, replied: "Packaging can only ensure the first sale. If there is too much of a gap between the claim and the actual experience, then the story of seduction ends there."

In the end, the best way to create a winning package is not to design it for the consumer, but rather to design it for the user. If the consumer is the one who buys the package, it is the user who uses it. This distinction marks a critical nuance in establishing a dialogue with the client. It reflects a process in which the sale is not a singular goal, but rather one aspect in the overall commercial experience; an experience that includes both the purchase and use of the product as well as the eventual disposal of the product and its packaging. Too many packages are designed exclusively for the needs of the producer at the expense of the user. At the risk of being labeled an idealist, I think the notion of honesty or "truth of the brand" should be a founding principle for the sustainable development of future brands.

Good packaging is not simply a box that has been covered with branding. Rather, it is a much richer outcome that is the result of a collaboration between form, function, and message. Packaging design is a discipline whose process involves a series of decisions that often arise one from another. This interconnectivity requires that the different stakeholders become involved early on in the design process so that the chances of success are increased.

## INNOVATIONS

I teach to a new generation of young graphic designers who are passionate about packaging design because in it they see a tangible and contemporary form of communication, one which is closely connected to the consumptive lifestyle in which they have been raised. Critical and sometimes cynical towards consumer culture, they bring a more whimsical and humanist approach to the trade. In my view, a critical approach provides a strong basis for innovation. Before you can suggest new avenues in packaging design, you must be able to deconstruct old habits and preconceived ideas. For example, the fact that this new generation has been eco-conscience since childhood al-

lows them to almost intuitively integrate sustainable concepts into their designs. More than ever, these young designers are freely exploring various types of packaging. They feel increasingly free to borrow techniques and materials from other product sectors. Wine in cartons, milk in stand-up pouches, and spices in test tubes are only a few examples of this tendency to transpose methods and codes. These deviations open the way for innovations that through their originality or their functional relevance allows for the emergence of new ideas.

Historically, significant breakthroughs in packaging have always been intimately linked to technological innovations and to the discovery of new materials. The development of new plastics, for example, radically changed the practices of the 20th century and encouraged the proliferation of new formats and individual portions. More recently, environmental concerns have fostered a plethora of new materials and new methods for packaging. The arrival of bioplastics will certainly make its mark on the packaging industry and will significantly modify the management of waste. Likewise, research is underway to develop replacements for polystyrene based on spongy organic fungus-based life forms. In the coming years, packaging will also be marked by the development of nanotechnology which will, among other things, allow for better real-time quality control of perishable products. Although these technologies may in some cases increase the environmental footprint of certain packaging, they will nevertheless allow us to optimize the distribution of perishable products and reduce losses.

Design is a problem solving process. It is in situations that involve multiple constraints that we can appreciate most how design creativity can be put to use. Innovation often requires a questioning of current practices. Sometimes you have to question everything, and break out of the comfort zone in order to be able to explore new avenues.

Packaging design is currently a booming and popular subject. It is severely criticized by some and adored by others. It represents the best and worst of modern commerce. We live at a time in which the world produces more packaging than ever before, but the pressure to reduce our impact has never been greater. In a globalized market, brands are increasingly looking to revive historical and tribal cultures. Influences are arriving from all directions and graphic codes seem to have no boundaries. While globalization may be worrisome it allows for a remarkable exchange of new ideas and technologies in addition to new technical knowledge utilizing the Web, specialized social networks, and blogs.

The main theme of this book is creativity that is expressed through projects that push beyond preconceptions and clichés. It is an ode to daring and innovation in packaging design. The concepts shown here explore the boundaries of traditional packaging and propose new avenues for shape, material, function, and communication. Through the quality of work presented, this book brings packaging forward as a separate and distinct design discipline. In a world that is getting smaller and smaller, the challenges for tomorrow's packaging designer will be both exciting and complex. Will the new generation be able to find ways of fostering responsible values within commerce? Will the packages of the future preserve that magic for the six-year-old child without ransoming our planet's resources?



# FREE MINI STRAWBERRY MILKSHAKE WITH EVERY PURCHASE OF THE HANDBURGER ORIGINAL

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NOT VALID WITH OTHER PROMOTIONAL OFFERS. WHILE STOCKS LAST.  
WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO AMEND THE TERMS OF THE PROMOTION AT ANY TIME WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

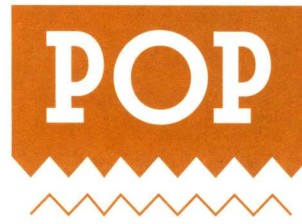


## MENU

THE HANDBURGER ORIGINAL	\$13.8
TEA-SMOKED DUCK BURGER	\$15.8
CHICKEN CAESAR BURGER	\$12.8
TANDOOR CHICKEN BURGER	\$13.8
PULLED PORK BURGER	\$11.8
PARMESAN PRIMAIOKE BURGER	\$17.8
BEER-BATTERED DORY BURGER	\$14.8
STUFFED PORTOBELLO BURGER	\$13.8
VEGETARIAN KAKIAGE BURGER	\$10.8
THE WORKS BURGER	\$16.8
EVERYTHING ELSE	
DRINKS AND DESSERTS	

ALL BURGERS SERVED WITH A CHOICE OF EITHER CHILLED STUFFED TOMATO OR STRAIGHT CUT FRIES.





The sixties rocked my childhood in North America and no packaging better reflects this period than the bottle of Mr. Bubble soap, which accompanied me in the bathroom and stood out from all the other brands by way of its comic and bright pink mascot. More than any other product, Mr. Bubble called to me, speaking directly to my childhood desires and imagination. It did not speak about what I had to do, but about what I wanted to do. It made a promise that bath time would no longer be an ordeal, but instead a party! I do not remember the feel or smell of it, but even when my mother reused the same bottle with a substituted cheaper soap, I could not tell the difference and in this way, Mr. Bubble had a permanent place in our bathroom for years. The packaging was the product and induced an experience of fun and humor. As I could not at the time read English, it took me several years to comprehend the meaning of the words “piggy bank” written on the Mr. Bubble bottle. Only then, did I discover the use for the coin slot on the lid: to give Mr. Bubble a second life as a piggy bank.

The pop style celebrates the package as object. Each surface and function contributes to the telling of a story, but also to the involvement of the user in the scenario. Its visual language speaks freely and outside of the preconceived codes of its time. It stands out by way of its unique and incomparable personality. Contrary to what our parents may have taught us, pop packaging invites to play with our food and to step outside of taboos and censorship. It is festive and exerts a fascination on the user.

By introducing a playful and simple message, pop packaging establishes a direct dialogue. The vibrant colors, the narrative graphic codes, the fun shapes of the containers, all characterize this approach. It celebrates the candor of the child we were and that we might still be. These packaging designs take on the shape of human forms or of everyday objects.

Here packaging is an interactive experience; the chocolate can be a computer keyboard or a Scrabble game; the box of tissues is a slice of fruit; the bottle becomes a sparkling fire extinguisher; the box is divided into a polyhedron set of blocks. The packaging is participatory. Sometimes it is a collectible and is the icon for an entire generation. The pop style in its relation to popular culture speaks about who we are. It brings us back to the here and now. It strives to be a reflection of our culture. It makes us smile and reminds us of our childhood pleasures when we visited the corner store for a treat. All these goodies, like the PEZ dispensers, are emblazoned with the faces of our heroes such as Batman, Buzz Light Year, and Wall-e. The small Bazooka Joe comics included with the chewing gum, candy necklaces, Popeye candy cigarettes, and Kinder eggs—all these packages go beyond the mere role of container and engage the user in a value-added experience. Sometimes the shape of the product itself contributes to its playfulness. *The Obamitas* chocolate cookies with their President Obama likeness or the penguin shaped *Birdy Juice Box*—invite us to transcend the banality of the products we consume. *The Deli Garage* products are also remarkable in the way they relate to the brand's theme in the form of bolts, screws, and glue tubes. With pop packaging, the brand is often fully embodied as packaging adopts a first-person narrative means of communication. Pop packaging expresses an assumed pleasure linked to the act of consumption, which it celebrates with unpretentious lightness.

Pop style packaging is the antithesis of elitism. It employs an unadorned and direct form of communication relating the product to the user. It is a vernacular “popular” approach, existing in the present tense, where its impact is most instantaneous and seductive. Its iconography and message are united in a universal language that speaks to us without camouflaging our guilty pleasures. It's about what we eat, what we use, and what we like.



## JDA INC. RETAIL READY DESIGN

- 1 Product: earBudeez Earbud Packaging, Client: Audiovox Accessories Corporation, Distribution: USA, 2009  
Bodie, Jay D., Skull Rojo, and Zoie Jane comprise the cast of the ear-Budeez collection. The colorful, silk-screened plastic clamshell packaging draws attention to the product as the earbuds double as the eyes of the youth culture-inspired characters.



## MUCCA

- 2 Product: La Condesa Matches, Client: The Icon Group, Distribution: USA, 2007  
Historical and contemporary cultural influences that are present in the vibrant Mexico City neighborhood of La Condesa are brought together by this packaging. Its typography reflects the tradition of hand-stenciled signage while a masked lucha libre wrestler meets those who open the matchbook with a grimace.

## NEOSBRAND

- 3 Product: Obamitas, self-initiated, Distribution: Europe, 2009

## STIR

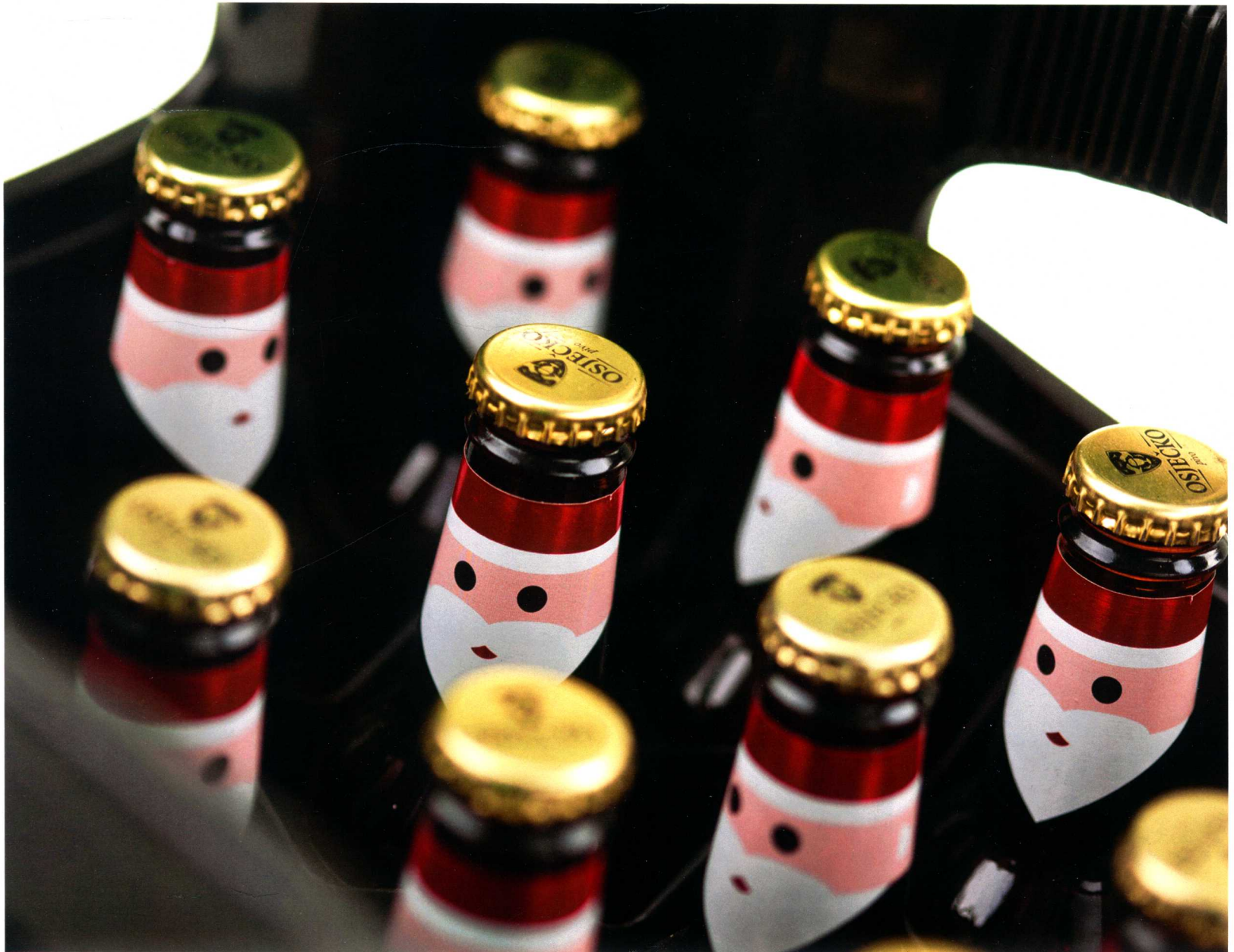
- 4 Product: Middle Brau, Client: Middlebrow Comics, Distribution: USA, 2010, Material: color printouts on heavy paper stock  
A clever play on words and an iconic logo were at the heart of the guerrilla promotional campaign for Middlebrow Comics. False fronts were placed on existing six-pack beer packaging in liquor store refrigerators.

## IGOR MANASTERIOTTI & MIA MARIC

- 5 Product: Beer of Osijek Winter Edition, Client: Osječka Pivovara (Osijek Brewery), Distribution: Croatia, 2010  
Changing the color of the front label from classic gold to Christmas red, along with the small intervention to the bottleneck label, brought holiday flair to the winter edition of this Croatian beer.



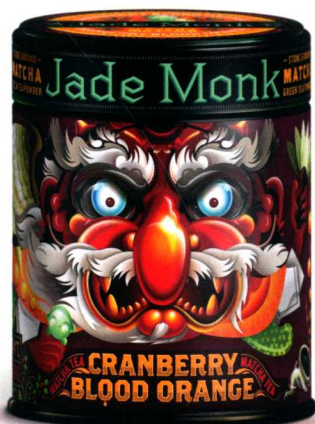
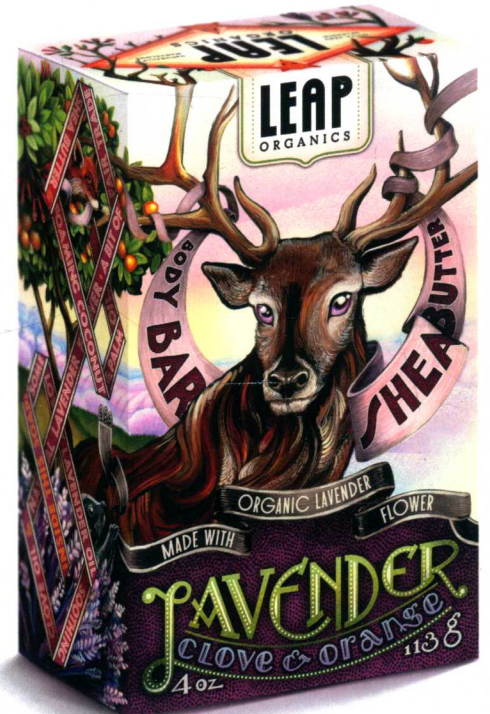
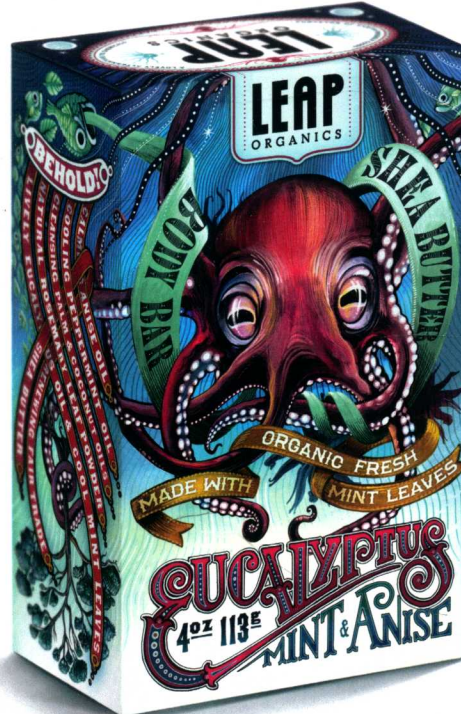
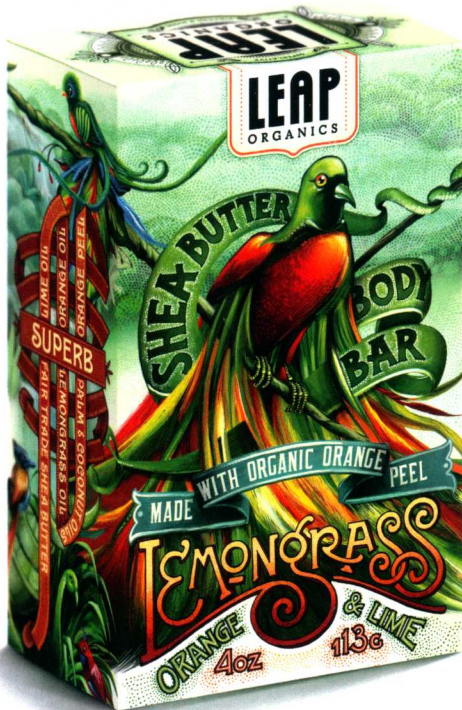
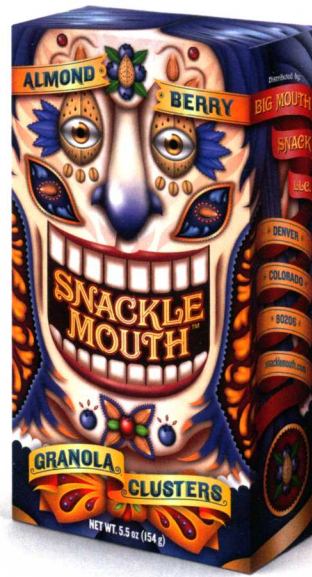
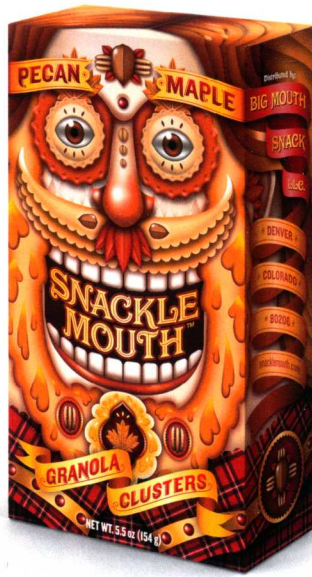






## MOXIE SOZO

- 1 Product: Snackle Mouth, Client: Big Mouth Snack Co., Distribution: USA, 2010
- 2 Product: Bar Soap, Client: LEAP Organics, Distribution: USA, 2009
- 3 Product: Matcha Green Tea, Client: Jade Monk Beverage Co., Distribution: USA, 2010







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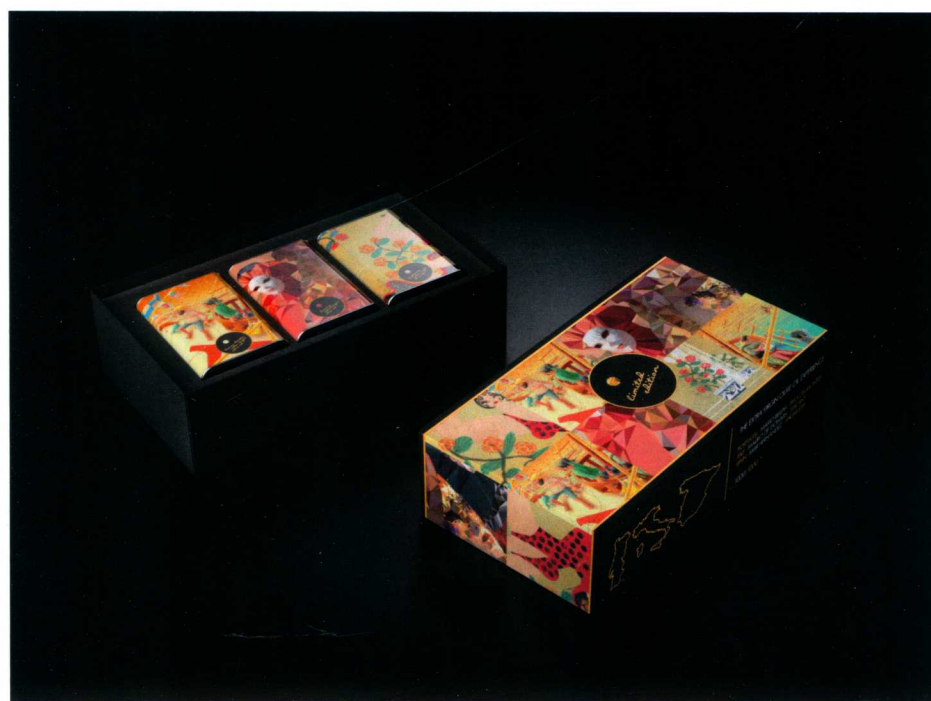
# ALBERTO CERRITEÑO

4 Product: INQ Mini Cellphone, Client: INQ, Distribution: Europe, 2009

## NTGJ

5 Product: The Olive Oil Experience Limited Edition, Client: Think Global Taste Local, Distribution: worldwide, 2011, Material: aluminum can and cardboard

The limited edition gift set of three types of olive oil from three different countries was conceived as an exceptional gift for those interested in the appreciation of fine food, culture, and art. Three young artists from each of the countries represented were invited to illustrate the collectible oil cans, depicting something that they love about their respective countries.



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