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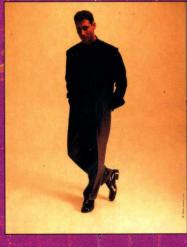
















No. 28

THE BEST AMERICAN PRINT ADVERTISING



THE BEST AMERICAN PRINT ADVERTISING

RETAIL REPORTING COPORATION 302 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY

US Ad Review, No. 28, October 1998

Publisher: John Burr

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Editorial Assistant: Tom Burr Research Manager: Jane Kellner

Research: Georgina Villacorta, Laura Barron

Submissions: Send to Judy Shepard, US AD REVIEW,

302 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10001, Artwork cannot be returned.

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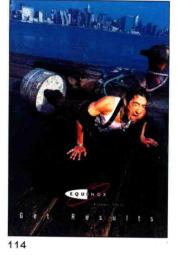
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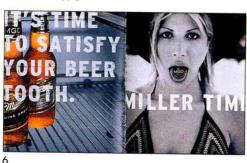


RIGOR MORTIS.

PUBLIC



94



4 OUT OF 5

ON THE COVER:

Top row: Harrah's, 126; Toyota, 26 Middle row: Michael Page, 164; Polaroid, 39; Hershey, 62 Bottom row: Savane, 87; Osborne & Little, 45



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FORGET EQUALITY.



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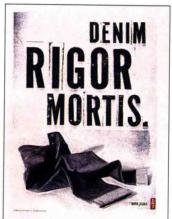
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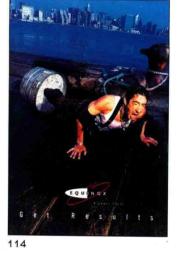
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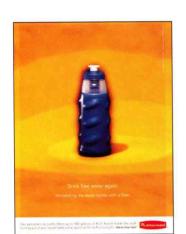
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INTRODUCTION

Not sure what crises loom as you read this, but while writing, the stock market bounces wildly, Iran and Afghanistan rattle their scimitars (as their crescenty sabers once were known) and the President resides in limbo-insky. Is recession in the offing? Mid-East War? President Gore? Or, more to the point, sliced and slivered corporate ad budgets? No answers here.

What then, you ask, about ad creative? Oh-KAY, now we're talkin'. Here's a look at this quarter's more interesting work. What is trend? What is timeless?

Trend: Mega vs. Micro. The stock market veers in two directions, with large cap (um, "big") companies dramatically outpacing small. Yet one in ten Americans, by one statistic that gets passed around, works from home or is self-employed. The banks and the oncesplit Bells merge larger and largerwhile the feds threaten to anti-trust the Microsoftopoly. Advertising agencies swell up, driven by globalization, capitalization, and the need to serve their ever-gianter clients. Yet even as the ad world balloons, it divides. Smaller boutiques glean more assignments from mega-clients. Media accounts continue their unbundling from creative.

No, these are not new developments. They are, it seems to me, reflections of a major, long term realignment going on between big and small business. And it is showing up, too, in ad creative.

It used to be that you could tell, or at least guess somewhat reliably, what work came from the giant agencies; what came from tiny shops. No more. Oneand two-man outfits, even virtual, freelance agencies-graphically enabled by the Macintosh-turn out work that is easily as "professional" looking as any from Madison Avenue's heyday. The fascinating corollary? Take a glance through this US Ad Review. Call them rough, plain, unpolished or intentionally low budget-you'll see example after example of big, sophisticated advertisers now striving to produce work (good work; this is a style judgement, not a value judgement) that looks as if it came from the garage.

Ok, I'm exaggerating. US Ad Review is

a snapshot, not a textbook, and no trend is ever crystal clear, but consider the following: Smirnoff (12 A,B): pencil-drawn lifestyle. Mercedes (24 A): cheesy stock photo. Toyota (26-27): flat color, clip art and line drawings. Procter & Gamble Scope (72 C): no bottle, no lifestyle, just plain type and bubbles. Lee Dungarees (92 D): (I can't explain this one; just look). Amtrak (134): kid-style letters and drawing. Micron Electronics (146-147): all-type, horsey and loud. Barnes & Noble (152 A,B): more kid-drawings. Hotmail (153 F): toy props. LA Cellular (156): municipal-chic.

Are there counter-examples? Superslick art/production knockouts? Sure, but not many. Salem's die-cut, green ball inserts (14 A,B)? Puh-*lease*. Annie Leibovitz' Gund-frogs (51 D)? Sorry. I'll spot you Hermes (96), Nike (108 A), 3Com (148), Iridium (158 A), and GTE (155). And that's stretching.

To my eye, the more interesting parallel trend is that, not only are big advertisers quieting down the production values, some are venturing into the wacky conceptual territory that once was undisputed "little guy" territory: Miller Lite and Miller MGD (6, 7, 9 A,B). Camel (19 D,F). Ore-Ida potatoes (57). Levi (94-95). ABC (121 E). It's almost as if Coke CEO Douglas Ivester reviewed Virgin's arm wrestling challenge (71 E) (check out the body copy, both paragraphs; it's a kick), laughed, and said, "alright, you're on." These are mega-million dollar advertisers acting like riverboat gamblers with nothing to lose. Cool.

Then there's the timeless—ad craftsmanship worth savoring simply because it is simply good. Here are my favorites.

Best subtle execution of what could have been a horsey, gimmick photo: Cougar (24 C).

Smartest copy tie-in to some cross-promotional marketing-driven event that has nothing whatsoever to do with the product: Lexus (28 C), American Express (168 B).

Best Product-as-design-element: Canned Food's can (58 A), Thoroughbred Racing's jockey shirts (117 E,F).

Most involving, colorful advertising for insipid, colorless product: Domino Sugar (58 C), Morton Salt (58 D). Runner-up: Miracle Whip (60 A).

Whoa. A concept: Maxwell House Decaf (66 C), Money (122 A,B).

Coolest photo: Mountain Dew (69 C). Plainest photo that I nevertheless can't take my eyes off: Sony (36 C).

Most improved: ABC Carpet and Home (44 A,B). And—sorry—most not-as-good-as-the-campaign-it-supposedly-continues: Jockey (90 B). This underwear campaign started out full of sexy fun. Why doesn't it work for hosiery?

Warmest, real-est, pleasing-est advertising for dull household products: Kenmore (47), Rubbermaid (52).

Best See-and-*not*-say: A threeway. Schick (76 B), Carefree Gum (77 D), Cannondale (113 D).

Coolest type after the client killed what the art director really wanted: Salon Selectives (78 B,C).

Best tag for best offer/positioning: Rite Aid (116 D), "Buy it. Hate it. Return it."

Most inscrutable: MTV (118).

Most irrefutable proof that if ever I was the target, those days are past: (see above).

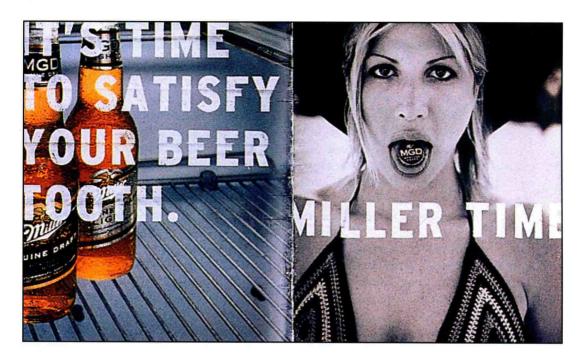
Best three sentence headline: Williamsburg (132 A).

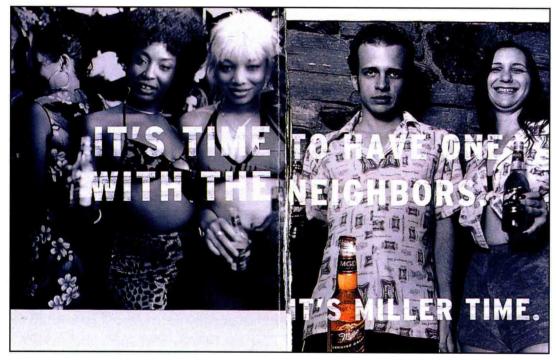
Best visual puns: Spree (137 D,E).

And finally, advertising's most rarefied category, Best recognition by both advertiser and agency that, despite the fact that it writes the meal ticket for just about everyone you spend nine-tenths of your waking hours with, and however wonderful it may actually be, the product is not even close to being the most important thing in your targets' lives, but then again, hey, it's a part, and hey, they just maybe should buy it after all: Pfaltzgraff (43 C).

That's this quarter's awards. As always, I invite you to nominate your own. And as evidence of the utter fickleness of it all, I invite you also to seek out a surprising mini-theme that strikes me as the polar opposite of the previous, hallowed award. Trend? Coincidence? Reflection of a societal Oval Office Overload? I count six products in this issue that are positioned as "better than sex." How many do you spot? How many would you agree with?

—Dan Barron





Smiling people are ad camera fodder. Show someone happy with your product, goes ad rule # 1, and everyone will want some. If the models look rich and happy, call the photo aspirational. Gorgeous and happy? Call it beauty. Not too rich, not too thin either, still happy though? Call it lifestyle. But whatever you do, line those actors up and for pete's sake, keep 'em smilin' for the camera.

The rule has worked so well for so long that it's hard to notice how lame it's gotten. What kind of incompetent ad guy would stand up and say, 'uh, gee George, I don't think we can pull off a lifestyle campaign'? Sure, they're just actors, getting paid for posin'. Sure, all those *other* companies' ads look phoney. But the public still laps it up, right?

"Lifestyle," objects Wieden & Kennedy AD Jeff Williamson, "is *so* hard to do. Almost impossible. You can smell a set-up a mile away."

ou can smell a set-up a mile away." He calls these spreads "fashion ads for beer." Whatever. Point is, they're happy people drinking Miller Genuine Draft—and Williamson made the brew's middle name his mission. As much as can be said of any photo shot for advertising, these shots are genuine.

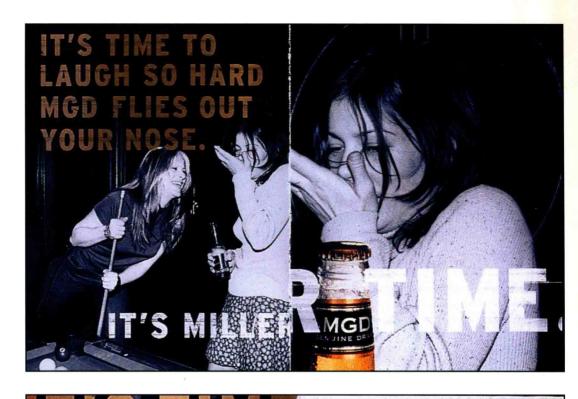
Some of the steps he took were more graphic than photographic. The layouts are purposely "off," both individually and in relation to each other. Type is actually designed to look correct on a spread about 30% larger than final, which is then arbitrarily *cropped* (not reduced) down to cram onto a smaller

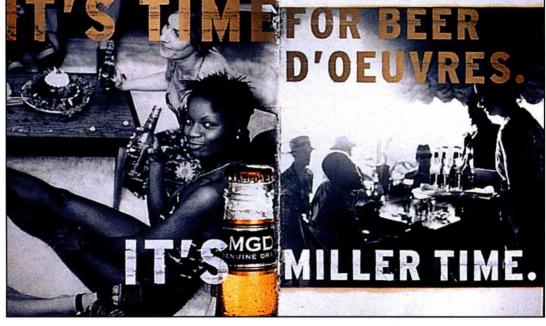
page. The idea behind it, Williamson says, is "this is one big, honkin' beer." Further, the campaign "grid," usually rigidly adhered to, to define a "look," is intentionally altered from ad to ad, even from left page to right—"staggered," as Williamson says. "Anything to keep it fresh, not too planned."

Next, Williamson altered the near universal practice of assigning a campaign to one photographer—an aid, usually, to logistics, budget and to uniformity. Williamson hired four. The campaign was shot in several locations on several coasts.

But the key, of course, is the photos themselves. "What Mel(odie McDaniels) and Terry (Richardson) are so good at," Williamson says, "—also Michel (Haddi), though I haven't worked with him as much—is taking pictures that look like you threw a party and some friend was walking around with a camera, shooting." Which is basically what they did.

Instead of the usual casting call, Melodie Mc-





Daniels rented out a home in South Central L.A., one with a backyard pool, and threw a big, summer, all day, all night, par-tee. Miller Drafts on the house. "It's body language, eye contact," Williamson says. "It's almost impossible unless you've got friends who know each other and know how to have a good time, doing what they do. Everything you see is honest. 'Neighbors,' I really fought hard for that photo. Yeah, he looks kind of nervous, but I've seen pictures I've taken at parties and some people just look that way. Nobody shows that in advertising.

"Nothing was planned," he emphasizes—and confirms later when he tells of the rolls of otherwise excellent film, scrapped because it showed beer in quarts and 40's—"implies over-consumption" say the lawyers; "if only I'd known," moans Williamson. It's not the easiest way to shoot advertising. And it practically requires that headlines be written to match existing photos, which is likewise not the easiest, or most conceptual, way to write. 'Time to laugh,' shot in Lucy's Bar in New York's East Village, is another photo you can't exactly pose.

'Beer tooth,' though, is different. That one was written and comped up in advance. Strangely, this writer finds it the most unselfconscious (and unselfconsciously sexy) photo of all.

Readers, a quick quiz: where do you think it was shot? Could have been anywhere, right? Williamson traveled from Portland to Coney Island for it. "What

a day," he recalls. "People were around. We were just out there. Playing the games, on the rides, having fun with the barkers. I just saw her as someone I would like to go out with. She was a blast. At one point, I just told her to stick the cap on her tongue. She's not a supermodel. She's better than a supermodel. I think she's accessible. You could see her drinking Miller and sticking the cap on her tongue. She's real. She's hot. She knows how to have a good time."

And it shows.—db

AD: Jeff Williams

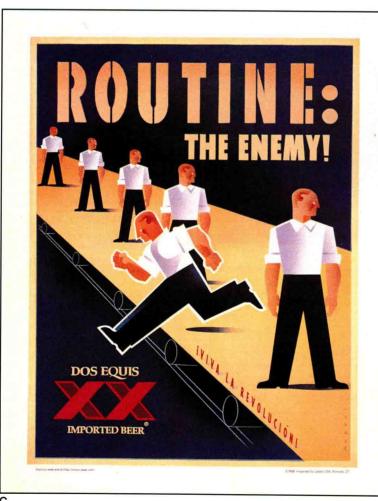
CWs: Jeff Kling, Ned McNeilage

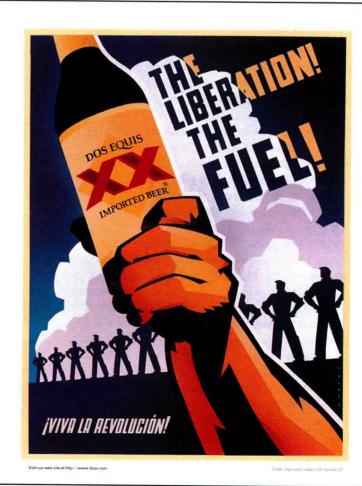
Photogs: **Melodie McDaniels** (beer d'oeuvres, neighbors), **Michel Haddi** (beer tooth), **Terry Richardson** (laugh so hard)

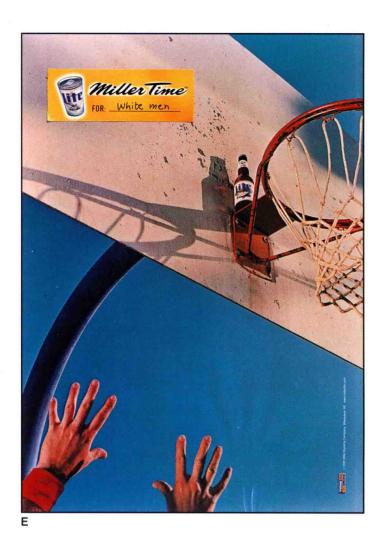
Designers: Alicia Johnson, Hal Woolverton Agency: Wieden & Kennedy, Portland Client: Philip Morris, Miller Genuine Draft

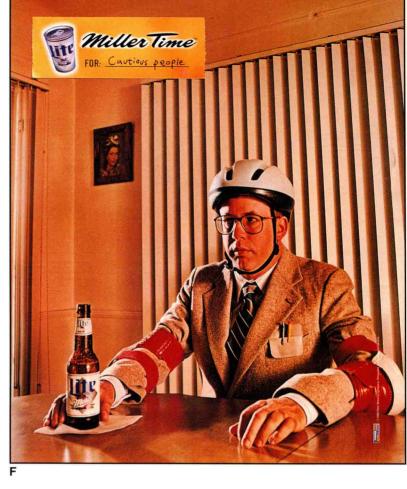


В









Δ

Agency: Leap Partnership, Chicago, IL

CD: Joe Sciarrotta AD: Jim Larmon

Client: Anheuser-Busch/Michelob

В

Agency: Mad Dogs & Englishmen, New York, NY

CD: Dave Cook

AD: Darren Lim, Michelle Edens

CW: Deacon Webster

Client: Blue Moon Brewing Co.

C, D

Agency: **Ammirati Puris Lintas**, New York, NY Group Head: **Tom Nelson**, **Mark Johnson**

AD: Andrew Golomb CW: Larry Goldstein

Illus.: Bobby Woods, Paul Rogers

Client: Labatt USA

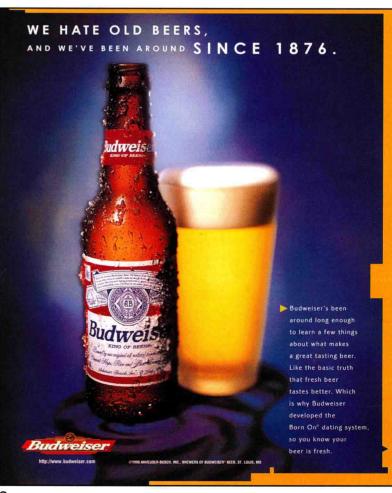
E, F

Agency: Fallon McElligott, Minneapolis, MN

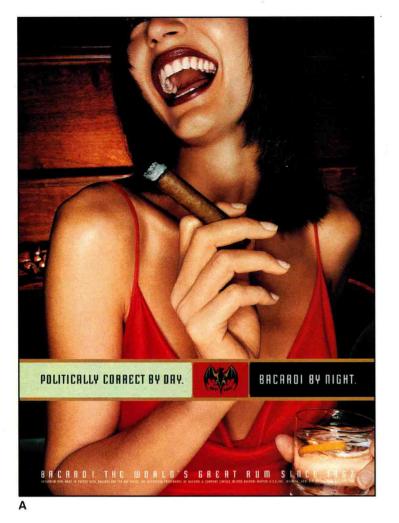
CD: Bill Westbrook
AD: Paul Malmstrom
CW: Linus Karlsson
Photo: Moshe Brakha
Client: Miller Brewing Co.

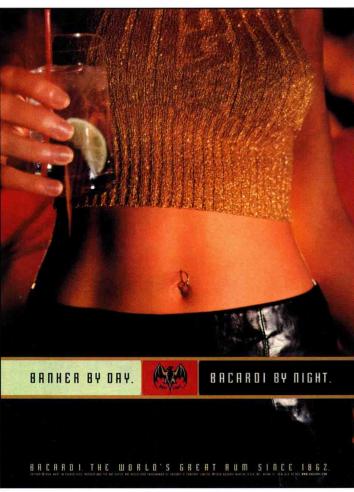
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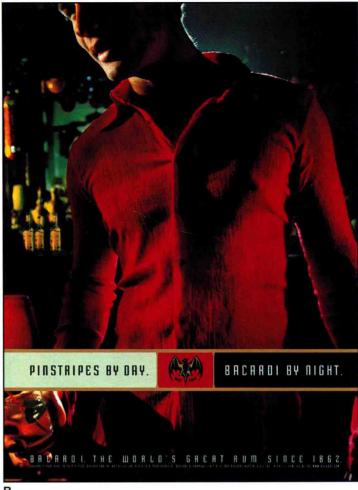
Client: Budweiser/Anheuser-Busch



10 • BEER/WINE/LIQUOR







В

A-C

Agency: Ammirati Puris Lintas, New York, NY

CD: Mark Johnson, Tom Nelson

AD: Beth Kosuk CW: Brian English

Photo: Jeff Riedel, Peter Robathan

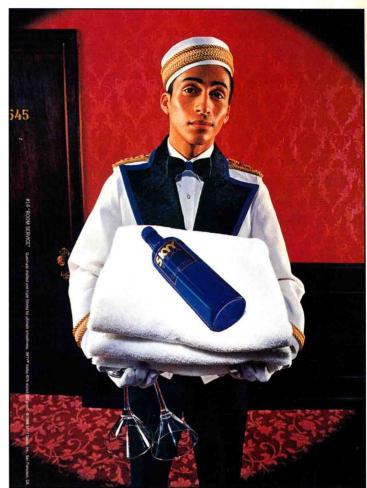
Client: Bacardi

D-G

Agency: Lambesis, Del Mar, CA CD/AD: Chad Farmer

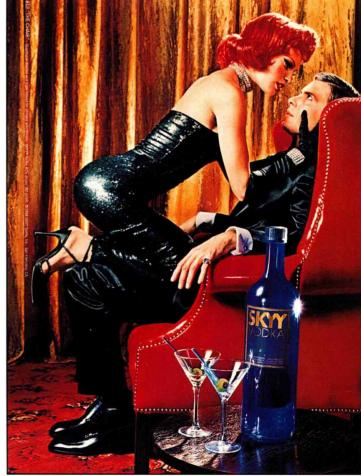
CW/ACD: Mark Lewman Photo: Moshe Brakha Client: Skyy Spirits



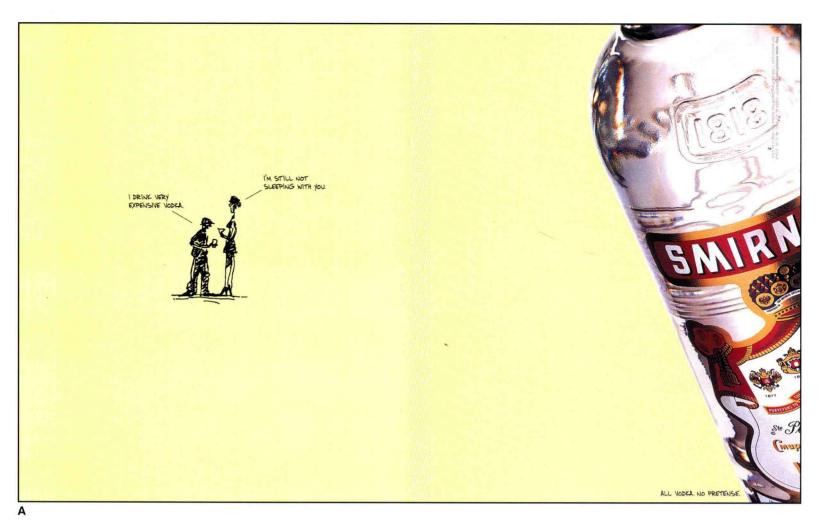


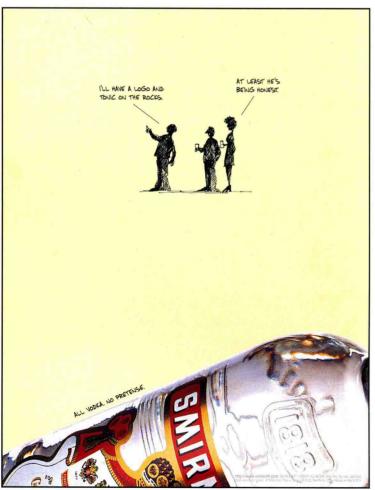
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F





A. B

Agency: Lowe & Partners/SMS, New York, NY

Chief Creative Officer: Lee Garfinkel

ECD: Gary Goldsmith ECD/AD: Earl Cavanah Group Head/CW: Seth Fried

Photo: Craig Cutler

Client: Heublein, Inc./Smirnoff

С

Agency: TBWA Chiat/Day, New York, NY Exec. CD: Eric McClellan

Exec. CD: Eric McClellan
CD: Scott Carlson
AD: Chris Van Oosterhout

CW: Mark Girand Illus: Icon

Client: Chivas Regal

D-F

Agency: Margeotes/Fertitta + Partners, New York, NY

CD/AD: Arnie Arlow Illus.: Leonid Gore

Client: Carillon Importers/Stolichnaya