

“Coke Side of Life” Art & Music Aluminum Contour Bottle Series

Visual Artists from China

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All participating music artists are provided courtesy of Ultra Records (www.ultrarecords.com).

WANG XU – “Happiness”

Wang Xu, of Guangzhou, is among the most-important graphic designers in China. He set up his own design firm in 1995 and four years later engaged in an international alliance with Australia’s Emery Studio. Wang Xu is a member of the professional design association AIGA, the type directors club NYTDC, the art directors club NYADC, and Alliance Graphique Internationale (AGI).

Artist’s vision for “Happiness” bottle design: “The Haha mirror shows happiness you can see,” Xu says. “Hahaha is the sound of someone laughing, full of happiness. In the Haha mirror, you will find numerous selves with different personalities. You can discover, create and grab the happiness with your imagination. When you hold a bottle of Coke and realize that it is actually a Haha mirror, you will laugh with happiness because I am within you and you are within me. The Haha mirror will connect you to me and take us together to Beijing in the summer of 2008.”

JIANG HUA – “Individual Perseverance”

Jiang Hua, who was born in Zhoushan and is based in Ningbo, is an internationally recognized designer, curator and teacher who focuses on the study of Chinese type design. Jiang Hua and Pan Qin initiated and curated the Ningbo International Poster Biennial, which has been held four times since 1999. The Biennial event has served as a bridge connecting Chinese graphic design with the world. Jiang’s design work, interviews and essays are found in numerous international design magazines. In 2006, he became one of the youngest members of Alliance Graphique Internationale (AGI).

Artist’s vision for “Individual Perseverance” bottle design: For Individual Perseverance, Jiang Hua wrapped around the bottle a horizontal pattern that is a stylized version of the characters signifying Coca-Cola in Chinese. “People in China might be able to guess its meaning,” he says, “and the geometric pattern also reminds the user of the organic shape of the Coke bottle...The concept was driven by several key words – dream, happiness, youth, passion and desire – to show a young China and all the memories about passion and youth and drive.”

XIAO XUE – “Global Harmony”

Xiao Xue is an award-winning graphic designer from Beijing whose works are often found in Chinese publications and on Web sites specializing in design. He also has been featured in galleries abroad, including an exhibition of modern Chinese poster design in Germany. Xue captured a silver medal at the Fifth CCII International Trademark Design Meeting, sponsored by the Capital Corporation Image Institution. He was born in Liaoning, in Northeast China.

Artist’s vision for “Global Harmony” bottle design: For Global Harmony, Xue wanted to express the idea of balance so central to Chinese philosophy. “This design communicates harmony through an imaginative form made up of different elements that coexist – black and white, soft and hard, animal and plants, old and new,” he says. “This reflects my belief that in the future we will all – people, nature, the earth – live harmoniously as one.”

XIN JING – “Healthy World”

Xin Jing was born in Qingdao and came to Beijing to study at the prestigious Central Academy of Fine Arts (CAFA), where she earned a post-graduate degree. She has participated in projects including the 2002 CAFA New Resources Design Festival, the Yi Zhong publication series of artist interviews, the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games identity and environmental design, the 2008 Olympic Games stamp design, and the CAFA Jiashen Design Scene.

Artist’s vision for “Healthy World” bottle design: “Water is a valuable resource that we all depend on. I wanted to communicate the relationship between water and life as I saw it as a child playing in a pond,” Jing says. “I realized there is life in even the

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smallest drop of water, and my design shows these bubbles of my childhood imagination coming to life. I gave them personality and movement, as if they are the messengers between life and water, between different creatures. Through my design, I want to pass this little piece of happiness to everyone."

CHEN SHAOHUA – "Active Optimism"

Born in Zhejiang and working in Shenzhen, Chen Shaohua has been one of China's best-known graphic designers for decades. His design of the emblem for Beijing's application to host the 2008 Olympic Games enhanced the city's successful bid. Among his other iconic works are designs for stamps that are issued nationally and memorable posters for design events in the 1990s.

Artist's vision for "Active Optimism" bottle design: "Nothing visual can fully represent the multi-faceted meanings of happiness," Chen says, "but I turned to popular text messaging and my blog to ask young Chinese people, What words say happiness to you? I then placed the words in the mouth of the laughing Bodhisattva – a traditionally happy Chinese symbol. The combination shows the ideas of active optimism, both young and old."

JOYN VISCOM – "Peace on Earth"

Born in Gui Yang, designer and curator Jian Jiang has published the independent Plugzine magazine and is dedicated to contemporary visual culture exchange and design projects. In 2005, he started the Beijing-based firm Joyn Viscom. As curators, Jian Jiang and partner Ou Ning piloted "Get It Louder," an exhibition representing the strong influence of youth culture and independent visual art on graphic design in China. The Joyn Viscom design team for the special Coca-Cola aluminum contour bottle featured Jian Jiang, Weestar, and Meng Ke.

Artists' vision for "Peace on Earth" bottle design: To conceptualize Peace on Earth, Joyn Viscom looked to a traditionally Chinese symbol, the lotus flower. Since "lotus" and "peace/harmony" have the same pronunciation in Chinese, Jian Jiang explained, the lotus symbolizes world peace as well as friendship. It also signifies holiness, truth, kindness and beauty in Chinese culture and Chinese folk art. In the bottle design (described by Jian as "Peace = Lotus + Bottle"), red balloons and white birds morph from origami airplanes to symbolize the message of peace. Meanwhile, four children in white are sending the message of peace to people all over the world.

MEWE – "Uplifting Moments"

Central Academy of Fine Arts graduates Liu Zhi-zhi, Guang Yu, and He Jun are the three members of MeWe, a Beijing design collective. Their experimental yet logically minded projects in the field of culture are highly acclaimed. Emblematic of China's latest wave of contemporary, young graphic designers, MeWe is among the hottest design groups in the country today.

Artists' vision for "Uplifting Moments" bottle design: MeWe used a surprising visual metaphor – gemstones – as the basis for Uplifting Moments. "To those of us who were born in the 70s," the group explains, "the most-enjoyable moment in our memory was when we opened a bottle of cold Coke. As small children, we imagined an icy Coca-Cola as a fascinating and precious gemstone. Now, we are trying to put that memory and imagination back into the bottle. With the gemstone design, when the Coca-Cola logo faces you, you discover the word 'happy' – very simple and straightforward, the direct representation of an uplifting moment."

MILKXHAKE – "Human Collaboration"

Milkxhake is a young, Hong Kong-based design unit co-founded in 2002 by graphic designer Javin Mo and interactive designer Wilson Tang. The "x" in Milkxhake alludes to the team's continuous idea mixing (x) and multiplying (x). The twosome believes that authentic design mixed with the essence of a good idea can make changes to our surroundings and perceptions of life. The Milkxhake motto: "Mix it a better world."

Artists' vision for "Human Collaboration" bottle design: Of their Human Collaboration concept, the designers say, "This simple design is called Share Love, and it's about passing on happiness. Coming from all over the world, yet sharing the same sky, we start everything with a loving heart, so that our world will be even more beautiful...Because there is love, we can share happiness with each other."

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