

INTRODUCTION

When I created my first hybrid logo in 2019, I had no idea where it would lead. It was the design equivalent of doodling: just a bit of fun. A playful way to interact with legendary brands on my own terms. But one wayward logo led to another, and *Brand Mutation* was born. Iconic visual identities meshed and merged, past and present collided and – through a series of tongue-in-cheek and seditious experiments – a whole new army of logos sprang to life. And better still: they had something to say. Only not with words.

And therein lies the essence of all good graphic design and branding: communicating ideas, identities and values in purely visual terms. I'm a graphic designer. It's what I do for a living. You could even say that I'm obsessed with logos. I'm fascinated by the eye-catching symbols that have stood the test of time; the signs that are as recognisable today as they were a century ago – just think of Union Match or Coca Cola. I see colours, typefaces, lines and proportions, I think about the brand history but, ultimately, at the end of the day, the power of these trademarks is illusive and eternal. And as a result, they are the benchmarks to which all designers aspire.

But like everyone else in the world, I'm also a consumer. And logos are everywhere. From clothes to groceries, we all purchase products that we recognise, that we trust, or which reflect our identity. How many of us always buy the same brand? Guilty as charged. I've been wearing Adidas Stan Smith trainers forever and always reach for Côte d'Or in the supermarket. I'm sure you have your favourite brands too.

But *Brand Mutation* – my personal foray into an alternative visual universe – has got me thinking. What intrigues me the most about logos, and branding in general, is the contradictory nature of the transaction. But as Olivier Tjon points out on page 54, branding is also a form of tribalism. In the age of hyper-individualism, therefore, are brand choices less about differentiation and more about finding ourselves? By cutting and splicing complementary or contradictory images, by shaking things up and looking at the company DNA afresh, I strive to disrupt the status quo. A brand's identity is a hard-won thing. Logos are fiercely protected, cherished, promoted and contested (both literally and figuratively). But here, in the creative realm of *Brand Mutation*, the rules are made to be broken.

This book, which started life as an exhibition at the Yugen kombucha brewery in Ghent in 2019, is akin to a creative laboratory: the place where logos break free of their corporate chains and are allowed to tell a completely different story.

Wim Vandersleyen

When the first **Penguin** paperbacks were published in 1935, plastic was a new invention. Who could have predicted that it would engulf the world in just under a century? The planet is groaning under the weight of non-bio-degradable polymers. Tangles of discarded carrier bags, bottles, fishing nets, cannisters and junk swirl around the oceans, turning them into giant plastic soups.

Microplastics – which come from clothing fibres, car tyres, cosmetics and many other sources – have been found across the entire planet, from the summit of Mount Everest to the deepest oceans. Our entire ecosystem is under threat. There's so much plastic in the sea today ... that even the beloved Penguin logo is affected!



Target Brand is known throughout the world. Often eaten for pleasure rather than necessity nowadays, the history of corned beef is closely linked to poverty and war. The development of commercial canning in the nineteenth century revolutionised the food industry and brought inexpensive, portable and long-lasting products to the masses.

Corned beef was a nutritious staple for those who couldn't afford fresh meat. From the American Civil War to the First World War, this indispensable ration has fed countless soldiers. A century later and there's another ground-breaking meat product on the horizon: cultured beef. And just like its historic counterpart, it's also hailed as a panacea for contemporary ills. In this case: how to feed billions of people, end food insecurity and protect the planet.

Cultured meat is grown from animal stem cells in a bioreactor. It eliminates the need to raise and farm animals for food, which has certain ethical and environmental advantages. Will one type of meat replace the other? Only time will tell ...





BASKET CASE



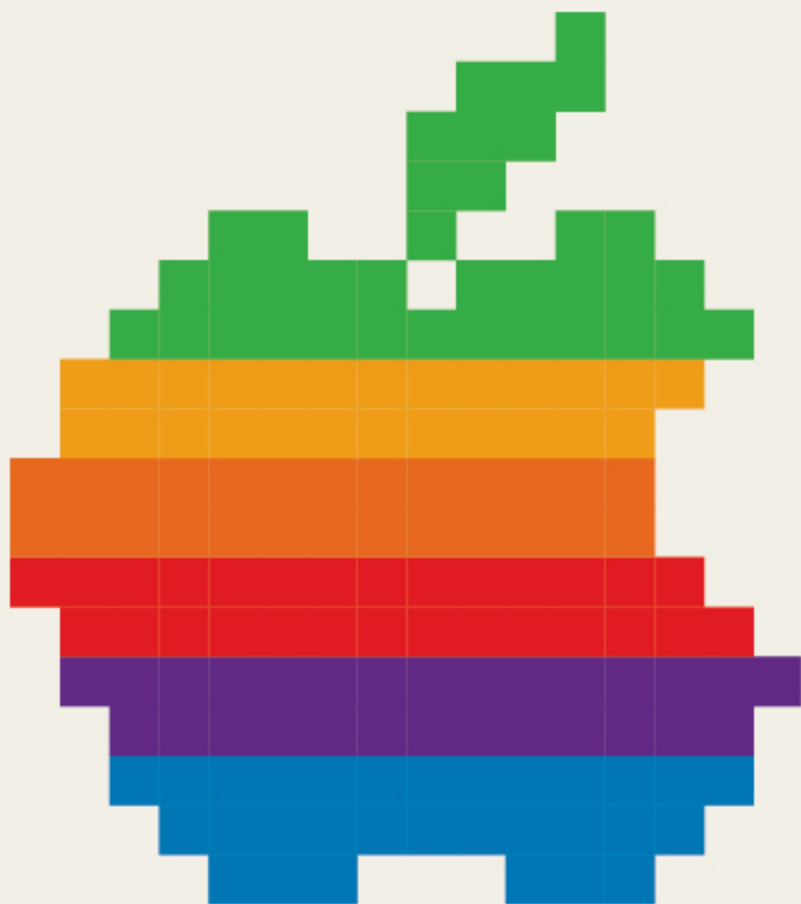
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PARADOX- ICAL PAIRINGS

UTOPIA OR DYSTOPIA?



WILD LIFE



THE BITE

BERN

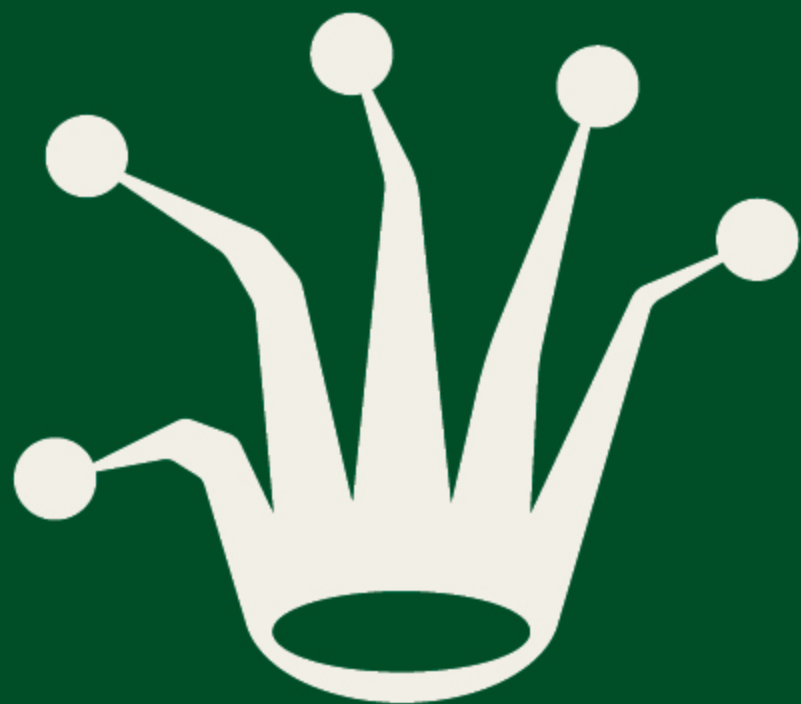


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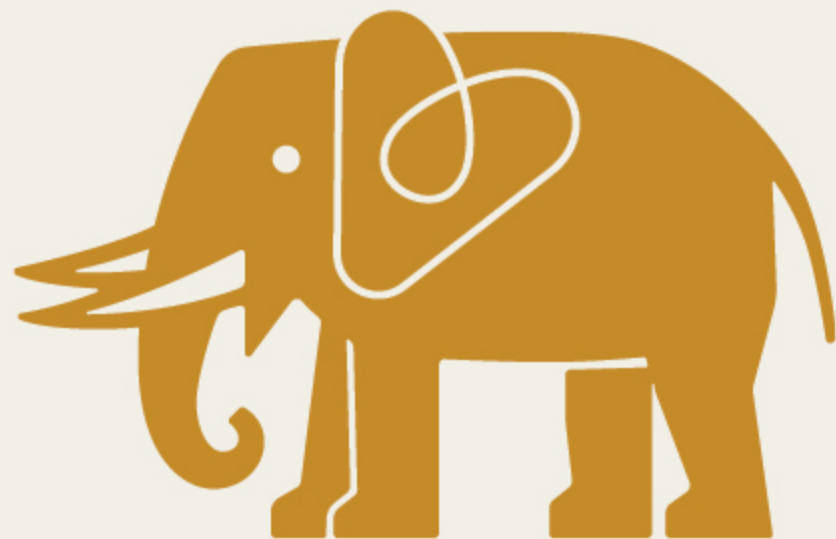
**IF LOGOS
TOOK
A HOLIDAY**

**HOW WOULD
THEY
SPEND IT?**





RELAX ROLEX



THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM