

VISIBILITY

Case Study –

Formavision

Sebastien Agneessens
Chief Creative Officer, CEO

Experiential design / creative services agency using art to build brand community

Creating leadership for emerging “brand curator” focusing on Manhattan’s “downtown” art / design world.

Select Media Coverage by Goal:

Position Art as a Marketing Tool

Advertising Age – ...Art Now Seen as Marketing Tool
TrendZ – Artful Branding
AdPulp – Fine Art is Fine for Brand Building
Global Design Report (GDR)– The Culture of Commerce

Building Leadership

I.D. – Best in Show, Design’s New Breed Curators
No. 77 – Formavision Reinvisions Brand Relevance
Emerge – Interview with Sebastien Agneessens
Contagious – Most Contagious of 2007 – Formavision
IDN – Igniting Retail Desire
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BB Bulletin – Future Places, Nothing Lasts Forever
Designer – Formavision Fashions ...Creative Directions
Hits Paper – Interview with Sebastien Agneessens
WesthouseMoon – Interview with Sebastien Agneessens

Project Publicity - Various

Creativity – Coke’s New World of Op Art
How – Refreshing Design
GDR Creative Intelligence – New World of Coca-Cola
Dexinger – Formavision...New World of Coca-Cola
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Capella – How to Cook DoCoMoDake
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Sugartown – World's Cutest Japanese Mushrooms
TrendZ – Brand Roots, DoCoMo Pops up in New York
WGNS – Fun with Funghi
Advertising Age – Peace and Pulp at Girbaud
Creativity – Creative and Live
Creativity – Diesel's Satanic Exhale
Soma – Diesel Denim Gallery
ZooZoom – Construct Four

Advertising has been seen as art, now art used as marketing tool

THE WORLDS OF ART and brands have commingled with varying degrees of ease for as long as there've been tortured souls and store shelves. As Lee Clow has pointed out, "Toulouse-Lautrec was an ad guy."

Is advertising art? You could argue the question indefinitely—unless of course, as seems to be the case more frequently today, there's, like, a gallery and paintings and stuff involved.

Fashion and sneaker companies are the most obvious modern patrons of artists these days, but many larger marketers have turned to them to create or build on a brand vision. Toyota has harnessed an array of contemporary artists for the past few years not just to create ad messages for its youthful Scion brand but to make art out of the vehicles themselves—earlier this year the company enlisted artists including David Choe to interpret the Scion xB. More recently, Scion, with agency Attik, created the "Want2BSquare" project, which in-

cluded gallery shows featuring the square-themed art of several artists.

Last fall, a less-likely suspect, Lexus, launched its 460 sedan with the Lexus 460 Degrees Gallery, a showroom featuring the art of Arne Quinze, Pasquel Sisto and Miranda Lichtenstein. The exhibit traveled to New York, L.A., Miami and Chicago.

So when advertising is literally art, what does that make the art? We turn for guidance to the man who has established an aesthetically pleasing foothold at the intersection of marketing and art, Sebastien Agneessens, founder of Formavision. Agneessens curated the Lexus 460 show as well as last year's Starbucks Salon, a music lounge and gallery the marketer fronted in New York. He's worked with brands like Diesel (on the brand's ongoing Denim Galleries) and Marithe & Francois Girbaud and recently published his first book, "Remastered," in which 55 classic works of art are reinterpreted by a new

generation of artists.

"Today brands need to connect to people on an emotional or intellectual level," Agneessens says. "Speaking about what you have to sell is necessary, but not enough. Brands need to state who they are, share their values and build their culture so they can be understood in qualitative terms."

Fair enough, but why are more mainstream brands letting artists speak on their behalf? "The art market has become so popular that everybody is turning into a collector," says Agneessens. "Look at how many art magazines there are today. It is partly because of the appeal of investing in art, but the visual references that a lot of art uses today are close to pop culture, or even sensationalism. So people can easily relate or react to it."

Agneessens, a gallery owner with an M.B.A. and a background in marketing at companies such as L'Oréal and Chanel, launched Formavision in 2002 when brands began to seek him out to curate their

TERESSA IEZZI



art adventures.

His latest project: a collaboration with a group of artists to create permanent installations for the New World of Coca-Cola, set to open next month in Atlanta.

Agneessens takes an active role in the creative process, collaborating with brands on the vision for art projects as well as artists. "Ironically enough," he says, "I personally prefer to work on branded art projects than for galleries. Of course, there is the constraint of being close to the brand value in the content you generate, but if you select the right artist, this should come naturally."

Does all of this mean the distinction between fine art and consumer culture is blurring? Not exactly, says Agneessens. "Rather, the frontiers between fine and pop culture are vanishing."

Teressa Iezzi is the editor of Creativity magazine and AdCritic.com. E-mail your big ideas to her at ticzzi@crain.com.

communicator chose not to practice what he surely would have preached to clients, but decided instead to wing it. In other words, the ad guy didn't think he needed PR.

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WEAVER: JUST SAY NO TO ALL-NIGHTERS

Last week I logged 71 hours. And while I found myself at the office over the weekend, I never once pulled an all-nighter, nor did anyone I was working with. Why? I simply do not believe in them. All-nighters, in my opinion, burn out your staff. All-nighters are when the most mistakes are made. Pull all-nighters repeatedly and you'll soon have employees who are missing work because of health issues or are just in plain need of sleep and sanity. When you have employees who are constantly grinding away and chained to their office chairs, you can kiss high levels of creative thinking goodbye.

Ad Age - April 07

Trendz™

ARTFUL BRANDING

Diesel is well known for pushing the boundaries of consumer marketing. The label is doing it again with its Diesel Denim Galleries (www.Diesel.com/~denimgallery), concept stores positioned between retail spaces and galleries, and which invite contemporary artists to develop site-specific installations. With locations in New York City, Tokyo and Osaka, the Diesel Denim Galleries present themselves as art custodians, providing an enriched retail experience with the aim of establishing more meaningful relationships with consumers. The galleries present bimonthly art exhibitions together with limited-edition denim products.

Diesel works with specialists like New York-based Sebastien Agneessens who in 2002 founded Formavision, a boutique curating agency that collaborates with contemporary artists and studios on a mission to design, develop and produce innovative and original art campaigns that capture the imagination, reinforce the brand vision and resonate on an emotional level. Each campaign tells a story unique to the brand it serves.

"At a time when consumers are increasingly informed, independent-minded and aesthetically sophisticated, brands are challenged to assume the role of cultural curators in order to inspire meaningful—and culturally relevant—dialogue within their customer communities," the agency notes.

"Each [Formavision] campaign invokes creativity, authenticity and self-expression to create a cultural infrastructure within which target market influencers experience the brand's values and aspirations. We build further value into our campaigns by translating creative content into sponsored magazines, display window campaigns, catalogs, limited edition products, online galleries, permanent installations and traveling exhibitions to major cities such as New York City, Los Angeles, London, Paris, Berlin, and Tokyo."

Since its launch, Formavision has curated and produced numerous gallery exhibitions and international art campaigns for brands such as Diesel, Mavi Jeans and Sharp Electronics, and Agneessens regularly curates projects for Diesel, Marithe+Francois Girbaud, Coca-Cola, Sharp, Starbucks and Converse.

The Diesel Denim Gallery in New York City is currently showing "CORNUCOPIA", featuring works by Belgian painter Ellen Depoorter and installations by engineer and architect Jeroen de Schrijver. The show runs until April 15. ■



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Fine Art Is Fine For Brand Building



On [Ad Age's](#) behalf, Teresa Iezzi, the editor of Creativity magazine spoke to Sebastien Agneessens, founder of [Formavision](#) about the use of fine art in advertising.

Agneessens, a gallery owner with an M.B.A. and a background in marketing at companies such as L'Oreal and Chanel, launched Formavision in 2002 when brands began to seek him out to curate their art adventures.

Agneessens curated the [Lexus 460](#) show as well as last year's [Starbucks Salon](#), a music lounge and gallery the marketer fronted in New York. He's worked with brands like Diesel and Marithe & Francois Girbaud and recently published his first book, "Remastered," in which 55 classic works of art are reinterpreted by a new generation of artists.

"Today brands need to connect to people on an emotional or intellectual level," Agneessens says. "Speaking about what you have to sell is necessary,

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The Culture of Commerce

Brand curation and the art of communication

by **Sebastien Agneessens**

in conversation with editor **Lucy Johnston**



Sebastien Agneessens is a New York-based curator and founder of Formavision, a boutique that aims to expose contemporary art and design to a broader audience than its insiders. He curates and produces art projects for Diesel, Lexus, Coca-Cola, Sharp, Starbucks and Converse. He graduated from Bordeaux University, France, and received an MBA from SDA Bocconi, Milan. He was a marketing executive for Armani in Madrid and for Chanel in New York before he opened The Point, a gallery showcasing multimedia installations and collaborations with artists. In January 2007, German publisher Die Gestalten Verlag internationally released his first book, *Remastered*.

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At a time when consumers are increasingly informed, independent-minded and aesthetically sophisticated, brands are challenged to assume the role of cultural curators in order to inspire meaningful – and culturally relevant – dialogue within their customer communities.

Lucy: What was the thinking behind Formavision?

Sebastien: The desire to create Formavision came from my observation of a serious gap between branded communication campaigns and consumers' interests. I was also greatly influenced by the concept of emotional branding developed by Marc Gobé of Desgrippes Gobé, and I wanted to explore its artistic and design connotations. To me, art and design are the epitome of intellect and emotion, which is why the marriage of branding and art seemed like a natural *mélange*. That is the business explanation.

Now this wouldn't have worked without my sincere interest in art and design, and my earlier experience of working hand in hand with artists to develop exhibitions. Before I founded Formavision, I had set up a gallery called The Point with two partners, where we developed installations. Since nothing was for sale, I decided to look for sponsors to finance our shows, and after a few successful episodes, Diesel contacted me to curate and produce their own art programme. And so Formavision was born.

Lucy: So how would you define Formavision's mission and relationship with brands?

Sebastien: Formavision is a brand curating boutique that collaborates with contemporary artists and creative studios to design, develop and produce original art campaigns that resonate with consumers on an emotional level. People are increasingly informed, independent-minded and aesthetically sophisticated so brands have to generate a culturally relevant dialogue within their customer communities and show in every communication effort that they bring genuine added value.

Each campaign we create tells a story distinct to the brand it serves, reinforcing the brand vision and harnessing creativity, authenticity and self-expression to create a cultural infrastructure. Consumers, especially target market influencers, experience the brand's values and aspirations through that infrastructure.

“To me, art and design are the epitome of intellect and emotion, which is why the marriage of branding and art seemed like a natural *mélange*.”

Lucy: How do you define these target market influencers?

Sebastien: I think that most of our projects speak to the creative community as it is defined in Richard Florida's *The Rise of the Creative Class*. Estimated at some 40 million Americans, this creative community lives and works pretty much like artists and scientists traditionally have. They are independent in their choices, personal tastes and relationships and in their use of time, and appear to be major influencers of society. This large community is composed of many subgroups which can be targeted individually, but it is generally the whole creative class that we target through our projects.

Lucy: How do you view your role as 'curator'?

Sebastien: Every curator has a different approach. I see myself as a catalyst of creative projects, encouraging artists and designers, and working closely with them to develop installations. These differ from traditional brand campaigns or advertising in that we don't mix the products and the art in our installations. We evoke the values of a brand through our installations, and then directly showcase the product in a different environment. Our initial motivation is to maintain our artistic integrity, and our style is to deliver strong messages in an elegant way.

“Today brands must find ways to infiltrate the fragmented media; and mostly this can be done through entertainment and culture. Brands now create their own media content, through sponsored concerts, exhibitions, documentaries, films, books and environmental efforts. Through this effort, they bring culture to the world.”

Case study

Starbucks Salon_ Striking a chord with the local community

Location_ New York

Date_ 2006

Positioning the brand in a culturally sensitive light and combining a coffee house with a gallery and performance space, this temporary, touring venue brought together free live music, book and poetry readings and an art exhibition, with an emphasis on showcasing local talent. In a survey by *Time Out New York* 68% of respondents said the project made a positive contribution to New York.



Lucy: How you approach ‘evoking the values of a brand’?

Sebastien: The most critical part is to forget the corporate background that the brand might come from. Your thought process should be confined to the role that the brand plays in our lives – either its current role, or the ideal role – and then play with that. For instance, when Lexus launched the new LS460, they wanted to convey the fact that the car offered a seamless driving experience. For me, a seamless driving experience is when you don’t realise that you’re driving any more. Which is why we created Light and Speed, a show based on the travel of the mind, and invited artists whose work expressed that concept.

We took the same approach for Starbucks. We didn’t want the show to speak about coffee, but rather about the culture of coffee shops and the fact that Starbucks produce music, books and films, and are a true force in contemporary culture.

Lucy: What is the motivation behind brands incorporating culture and art into commerce?

Sebastien: When you look at the evolution of media today, you notice that people are increasingly able to edit the information they are exposed to, whether it is online, on TiVo, iTunes, YouTube, or wherever. This means that brands must find ways to infiltrate these fragmented media; and mostly this can be done through entertainment and culture.

So this is why you see a whole series of cultural efforts coming from brands, which now create their own media content, through sponsored concerts, exhibitions, documentaries, films, books and environmental efforts. Brands need to positively contribute to our lives to be listened to and adopted – and they can do this through delivering culture in an engaging and provocative manner. We were lucky to work with Diesel as our first client because they do all of the above, and always experiment in several creative areas, most of the time with great success.

Lucy: Where did these ‘cultural efforts’ from brands start emerging?

Sebastien: I think it all started with the fashion world. Aside from the Diesel Denim Gallery, I could list the Prada Foundation, the series of art projects of agnès b in their Paris gallery (Galerie du Jour) and their related publications, the Guggenheim Hugo Boss Prize, and the Espace Louis Vuitton in Paris. I also personally love Swarovski’s concept Crystal Palace, for which numerous editions of design sculptures, integrating the brand’s crystals, have been produced and sold to collectors over the years.

But today this goes further than fashion. In the automotive industry Volkswagen opened Hotel Fox in 2005, commissioning around 21 artists to design the 61 guestrooms, and Ferrari are developing a gigantic museum in Abu Dhabi. And Starbucks are obviously doing a great job with their label Hear Music; after signing Bob Dylan, they released the new Paul McCartney album, *Memory Almost Full*, in May. They have become a genuine, strong voice in music distribution.

Lucy: Do you think consumers respond particularly positively to brands that incorporate cultural and artistic references?

Sebastien: When we worked on the Starbucks Salon in SoHo in New York, we thought that we were really taking our concept to the extreme. We were walking on thin ice because Starbucks are a global brand sometimes portrayed as a threat to local communities and local culture. That’s why we decided to work mainly with local musicians, artists and designers, and to push them to contribute new work and original performances to the Salon. Then *Time Out New York* did a survey of the Salon, which found that 68% of the visitors interviewed thought that it was a positive contribution to New York, so we were reassured.

We have also noticed that whenever we have installations at the Denim Gallery, footfall in the store generally doubles. This is particularly notable when our installations take over part of the street or the storefront.

But when brands initiate cultural efforts, people do sometimes feel threatened by the involvement of commerce with the creative disciplines. Brands must realise that if the content is not relevant, or is too branded, the public will walk away from it and it may actually give the brand negative publicity.



Case study

Diesel Denim Gallery_ Installations with a proven popular appeal

Location_ New York & Japan

Date_ Ongoing

Formavision has curated an ongoing series of exhibitions for the Diesel Denim Gallery – a branded concept store that combines retail with art gallery space. The art installation Cornucopia (above) incorporated a reflective tunnel and paintings by architect Jeroen de Schrijver and painter Ellen Depoorter, while the earlier Moscum installation (below) covered part of the retail area with a strange scummy substance. Store footfall doubles when these installations are in situ.

Lucy: What form does the 'cultural content' that you produce generally take?

Sebastien: We started with multimedia installations, or 'experiential environments', and this is why Formavision are usually associated with large-scale work. While this represents the base of our work and what differentiates us, we also work on books, packaging projects and graphic design. However, even when dealing with two-dimensional design projects, our work remains highly physical.

It is very important that form follows concept. Once your content is generated, the idea is to maximise the return on investment by applying it to as many media as possible so that it is exposed to a wide audience. Brands, through this effort, create cultural content that would not otherwise exist. They bring culture to the world.

Let's take the example of the Aquos project that we created for the launch of Sharp's LCD screens. Each artist was asked to generate a video and an installation for a gallery we opened for three months in New York. The video animations were aired in the gallery, on a dedicated website, on various TV programmes and on several web portals and DVD magazines. The installations were featured in books, magazines and newspapers. We interviewed the artists and created a documentary about the project, produced collectable prints and so on.

Another example of our non-installation work is a personal project we did called *Remastered*, a book published earlier this year, for which we invited 55 artists to reinterpret the Great Masters of western painting. Several brands proposed their involvement but, for a change, I decided to do something on a personal level. We wanted the project to be a comment about customisation and remixing, which is a very important trend in contemporary culture and can be observed across industry and media.

"For our project *Remastered*, we wanted to create a comment about customisation and remixing, which is a very important trend in contemporary culture and can be observed across industry and media."



Case study

Lexus 460 Degrees_ Art and culture meet automobile

Location_ New York, Los Angeles, Miami & Chicago

Date_ 2006/07

Entitled Light and Speed, this touring show to launch the Lexus LS460 linked the automotive industry with the sensory worlds of art and culture, to respond to the car's positioning as a seamless driving experience. The gallery hosted an exhibition of the exploratory work of commissioned artists, alongside gala events, seminars, samplings and presentations by complementary luxury brands.

Lucy: Do you think that brands will increasingly need to become culturally integrated in order to maintain a consumer audience?

Sebastien: The brand of the future is the leader of a community of people who believe the brand in question can improve their individual lives and the lives of community members. Because of the fragmentation of the media, brands need to be involved in a number of cultural projects if they hope to be visible. This is especially true for brands that target the creative community. Diesel are, for me, a fine example. Their success is largely due to their communications strategy: ads that state a strong message relevant to our lives, plus a myriad of initiatives in music, film, art, design, fashion, graphic design, video animation... and more recently a dating blog. They definitely know how to involve their customer base.

I think that our period will be remembered as a time when brands played a major role in our lives. Artists didn't wait for brands to commission them to convey this message. Look at Andy Warhol's silk-screens of Campbell's Soup cans or Coke bottles back in the early 60s. He was simply the precursor of what is happening widely now.

Throughout history, art has been used to glorify the people in power. Once it was the Church, kings and emperors, governments. But now that power is decentralised and some brands have become wealthier than countries, it is they who have the power to contribute to culture, and more specifically to art. With the rise of this phenomenon, corporate values and visions are playing a growing part in artistic commissions. In this context, curators play a crucial role in delivering a constructive and culturally relevant message for both the brands and their audiences.



Case study

Sharp_ Celebrating colour and technology

Location_ New York

Date_ 2004/05

The concept of this show was to react to the Sharp TV campaign, 'More to See' by Wieden+Kennedy, which was based on the intrigue surrounding the coded 15th-century Voynich manuscript. Japanese artist Kenzo Minami took this as inspiration for a multimedia exhibition, curated by Formavision, to celebrate the true colour and greater detail of Sharp's Aquos liquid crystal display television.

Case study

Converse_ Artful launch of basketball shoe

Location_ New York

Date_ 2005

This exhibition celebrated the launch of a limited edition shoe by basketball player Dwyane Wade. The large mural by French artist Stéphane Manel captured the 'fierce instincts' of Wade's playing style and translated his movements into 2D: fully integrating brand and art. To accompany the launch, Formavision also designed a shoe gallery tracing the history of footwear manufacturer Converse.



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Best in Show

Introducing design's new breed of curators. Unbound by museums but linked to commerce, they scarcely resemble their art-world contemporaries and work almost nothing like each other. They can be retailers, agents, architects, promoters, or all-purpose Svengalis. Here are three of the finest.

Portrait by Mark Mahaney



Sebastien Agneessens.1973

/Sebastien Agneessens

"I call myself a curator because otherwise people wouldn't know what to call me," admits Sebastien Agneessens, the 33-year-old impresario who's behind some of the most bizarre brand extensions in recent memory. (In 2006, he convinced Starbucks to outfit its pop-up salon with furniture by the Belgian interiors firm Quinze & Milan.) "But it's not a very precise definition. Curators show existing work. I mostly collaborate to create new work," he says.

In 2002, Agneessens founded the boutique consulting company Formavision. Since then, he's moved around downtown New York like a dapper French yenta, creating unlikely unions between brands in need of an image rehab and niche designers who could use the exposure. For the past 18 months, he's collaborated with Marithé + François Girbaud, a fashion house whose reputation in America, at least, was built on its success as a purveyor of 1980s designer denim. Agneessens conceived "Construkt" as a series of exhibitions and designer editions that would bring to light some of Girbaud's lesser-known innovations; last year, to highlight the label's pioneering use of temperature-regulating ceramic fibers, he enlisted New York designer Dror Benshetrit to produce a collection of sculptural jewelry made from fur dipped in porcelain and fired in a kiln.

Agneessens's work lies somewhere between curating and branding. As an MBA who left a marketing position at Chanel to open a gallery, he's equipped to mediate between the two worlds, whether that means working with Japan's Kenzo Minami to create CNC-milled sculptures for Sharp Aquos or asking the Australian metalworkers Korban/Flaubert, among others, to design installations for New York's Diesel Denim Gallery, Agneessens's first and most loyal client. "More and more brands are trying to be involved in art, but they need a curator to be relevant," he says. "And they have bigger budgets than museums, so you can really do amazing stuff."

Currently, Agneessens is working with Koan-Jeff Baysa, a New York-based doctor, to co-curate a series of self-regenerating sculptures that will incorporate plant life and travel the world from greenhouse to greenhouse. Vegetation as art? "I know a curator is supposed to rationally explain his decisions," he says, "but most of the time I can only articulate my choices once the project is done." — JILL SINGER



above For "Automatic," a 2007 installation at New York's Diesel Denim Gallery, Agneessens asked Sydney-based artists Korban/Flaubert to explore organic growth patterns found in nature.

left In 2006, Agneessens worked with Starbucks to create a salon-style space in New York's Soho, outfitting the lounge with foam seating by Quinze & Milan.

right Lepage and designer Tobias Wong's Wrong Store, a retail experiment that provoked desire through denial: The shop was always closed.





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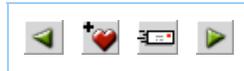
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FORMAVISION / Interview With Sebastien Agneessens



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FORMAVISION

H.P : www.formavision.info

Interview by arata sasaki

NYに2003年Sebastien Agneessensによって創立されたアートマネジメントエージェンシー [FORMAVISION]。日本では馴染みが薄いですが主にアートイベントのマネジメント業務を行う所謂キュレーターという職業だ。Sebastien Agneessensは過去アルマーニに勤務しておりデザイナーとしても注目される人物だったがキュレーターという道を選んだ面白い遍歴を持つ人物。実直で誠実な人柄。今年(2007年)9月にはシンガポールで開催されるENGAGE2007(<http://www.engage2007.com/>), バルセロナで開催されるFUTURE FORUM 2007(http://www.designhotels.com/future_forum_2007/overview)にスピー

カーとして参加予定。

Hitspaper : FORMAVISIONの歴史について教えてください。

Sebastien : Formavisionは私がキュレーターとして活動するプロジェクトの為にスタジオです。フランスとイタリアの実務研修をした後、2~3年程スペインにアルマーニで働いていました、それから1999年にニューヨークへ引っ越して来たんです。ニューヨークに移ったことはインターネットブームが起こった時期であり私にとっても大きな変化でした。その当時毎日新しい経験の連続でそれがニューヨークに留まっている大きな要因ですね。その頃はデザイナーとして働いていてシャネルのデザインを行っていましたね、、、同時に2人の友人(スイスのペインターとフランスの建築家)とLower East Sideにギャラリーを開いていました。日中シャネルの仕事して夜ギャラリーの仕事をしてと二重に生活していたのですが。日に日に夜にギャラリーが忙しくなり良い機会でしたのでそちらに全力を注ぐことにしたんです。

私達はアートを売り物にしないインスタレーションを展開していて、その為にそこに融資するお金を探さなければならぬ苦しい状況でしたね。その為に2~3社サポートする企業を探したのですが、ディーゼルがその支援を引き受けてくれてそのきっかけで2003年9月にFormavisionという企業を立ち上げることが出来たの幸いでした。

Formavisionは現在ではコココーラやスターバックス、シャープ、レクサスのようなブランドのアートプログラムをプロデュースしています。

私達はインスタレーションの方が有名かと思いますがブックなどのデザインも行っています。今私達の世代の多くのデザイナーやアーティストArne Quinze, Kenzo Minami, Stephen Burks, Dror Benshetrit, Jerszy Seymour, WK Interact, Faileなどとコラボレーションしています。

Hitspaper : Could you tell us formavision's history?

Sebastien : Formavision is basically a studio I created for the projects I curate. I moved to New York in 1999, after business studies in France and Italy, and a few years working for Armani in Spain. Moving to New York was a big change for me, especially in 1999, in the frenetic rhythm of the Internet boom. There used to be something new everyday, and it convinced me to stay in New York. I managed to find a job for Chanel in store design, and simultaneously opened a gallery located in the Lower East Side with two friends of mine - a Swiss painter and a French architect. I was working for Chanel in the day, and for the gallery at night. Slowly but surely, my nightlife became more busy than my day life, so I decide to focus on it.

We were doing mainly art installations in our gallery, with nothing for sale, so had to find a way to finance the show. I managed to find sponsorship from a few companies for the shows we had, and at some point, Diesel proposed me to become their curator. This is when I created Formavision. It was in September 2003.

Now Formavision is a curating agency that produces art programs for brands such as Coke, Starbucks, Sharp, Lexus etc. Small agency, big clients. I guess we are mainly famous for our installation work, but we are also involved in books and design work. We work with many different designers and artists of our generation, such as Arne Quinze, Kenzo Minami, Stephen Burks, Dror Benshetrit, Jerszy Seymour, WK Interact, Faile.



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Hitspaper : 07 DIESEL DENIM GALLERYについて教えてください。

Sebastien : 私達はニューヨークでスタジオを開いた直後にDiesel Denim Galleryプロジェクトに参加しました。それはアートと小売店をミックスさせた様なギャラリーです。しかしそのスペースは非常に変わっていますが前衛的な施設になっていると思います。逆に何故ディーゼルがそれを承認しているか不思議な位ですね、、、！

私達は国際的なアーティストと一緒に働いて新しいショッピングを模索しています。07年のプログラムではシドニーからKorban Flaubert、ベルギーからJeroen de SchrijverとEllen Depoorter、フランスからはQuistreber兄弟を招聘しました。

Hitspaper : Could you tell us "07 DIESEL DENIM GALLERY"?

Sebastien : We have been working on the Diesel Denim Gallery concept in New York since the beginning.

It is a gallery store that mixes art and retail.

But I must say that the installations that we curate there are very ambitious and eccentric for a retail space, and I often wonder how we manage to get them approved by Diesel!

We usually take over the whole space, creating every time a new shopping experience, working with many international artists, and for instance in the 07 program, we have been working with Korban Flaubert from Sydney, Jeroen de Schrijver and Ellen Depoorter from Belgium, and the Quistrebert brothers from France.



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Hitspaper : 仕事を通じて表現したいことを教えてください。

Sebastien : キュレーターとして私の役割りはアーティストと協力して新しいコンテンツを創造することです。私達の作品は例え毎回異なるアーティストとのコラボレーションでも一貫したスタイルが見えると思います。その中で私達は印象的な方法で繊細さと詩的なメッセージをそこに表現しようとしています。しかしながら通常はブランドの価値観をアートプロジェクトとして表現することにありますね。

Hitspaper : What are you trying to express through your work?

Sebastien : My role as a curator is to collaborate with artists on new content.

And even though we always work with different artists, I think that our own style is visible.

We try to deliver subtle and poetic messages in a striking way.

But more generally, what we try to do throughout all our commissions with brands is translate the brand values into art projects.



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Hitspaper : 経験を通じて発見・認識したことを教えてください。

Sebastien : 私達のプロジェクトの成否はクライアントの展望と共にあるでしょうね。

それは言い換えるとクライアントに素晴らしい展望がなければ良いプロジェクトは難しいということです。そして自分自身を信じる事、それが道を開きますし、インスピレーションと創造性を生み出します。

Hitspaper : What have you discovered or gained through your experiences?

Sebastien : I have discovered that our projects are only as good as our clients.

In other words, if our clients don't have the vision, then we will not be able to do good projects for them.

That it takes courage to experiment, but that risk and experimentation pay off because they set you apart from the mass.

That you should believe in yourself, because it is the only thing you really have.

That it is inspiration and creativity that keep me going.



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Hitspaper : クリエーターにとって最も重要な要素は何だと思えますか？

Sebastien : そうですね、、、様々なケースがあると思うのですが、私の場合本能の力、俗に謂う第六感にあると思えますね。

その力は各々のプロジェクトにどの様なアーティストが合うのかそして彼らの力をどの様に導き出せるか教えてくれます。

しかし最も重要なことは創造的プロセスは大部分が潜在意識によって齎されることを信じていることです。

時々自分自身のアイデアでさえ自分のものではない感覚に襲われてしまうのですが創造性は自身とシンク(同期)していなければならないと思っています。

それは正しく"NEW AGE"と呼ばれるものです。

Hitspaper : What do you think is the most important elements for creator?

Sebastien : Well, I think it's different for everyone, but for me, I think that my strength lies in my instinct, some kind of sixth sense.

It allows me to feel which artists I can work with and how I can provoke and guide them.

But most importantly, I believe that in my case, the creative process is almost subconscious.

Sometimes, I feel that my ideas are not even my ideas, but that instead they are delivered to me in some kind of subliminal way.

I believe that to be creative, I have to be in sync with myself.

I know, it's very "new age"...



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Hitspaper : あなたもスタジオの環境について教えてください。

Sebastien : 私のスタジオはチャイナタウンにあって古いインダストリアビルディングの一角の5階にあります。3階には売春宿があり4階にはタコ部屋があります。

私達の階はとても静かですね、、、床は木で天井窓がついていてニューヨークでも理想的な屋根裏部屋ですよ。机の上にはプラスチックの恐竜があって1本のコココーラと携帯電話、黒いテープ、駐車違反切符がありますね。私の本Remasteredもあります。55人のアーティストに参加してもらった作品です。日本でも見つけられると思います。

それからグラフィックデザインエージェンシーとインテリアデザインスタジオとシェアしています。

このフロアには合計で20人くらいいますがですがアメリカ人は3人だけです。さすがニューヨークですね！

Hitspaper : Please talk about the environment around your studio?

Sebastien : My studio is in Chinatown, next to Soho, on the 5th floor of an old industrial building.

On the third floor there is a bordello and on the fourth floor a Chinese sweatshop.

Our floor is much more quiet, with an old wooden floor and floor to ceiling windows, very much what you would expect from a New York loft.

Inside it is full of artworks, Apple computers, and contemporary design furniture.

On my desk there is a plastic dinosaur, a glass bottle of Coke filled with water, a cell phone, some rolls of black tape and a parking ticket.

There is also a stack of my books, Remastered, for which I invited 55 artists to commission the masters of western painting.

You should be able to find it in Japan.

We share the office with a graphic design agency and an interior design studio.

We are about 20 people in total, but only 3 Americans. Hey, it's New York!



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Hitspaper : 最近のプロジェクトを教えてください。

Sebastien : 予定されているプロジェクトは一杯ありますね、、、ただ現在はアートバーゼルマイアミビーチの "Vito Acconci "というプロジェクトに全力を尽くしています。そのプロジェクトではバイオミクリーを題材としたコンテポラリーデザイナーを起用して面白い彫刻をプロデュースしています。

Hitspaper : Please tell us about current project?

Sebastien : We have a lot of projects coming up next, but the ones I am mostly excited by are an outdoor design pavilion with Vito Acconci for Art Basel Miami Beach, and are starting to create and produce a line of design sculptures by contemporary designers based on bio-mimicry.



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Hitspaper : 今後の予定を教えてください。

Sebastien : 近い将来ではマーサーホテルでコカコーラを友人と一緒に飲みますね、、、おそらく15分程。1ヵ月後にはシンガポールで開催されるENGAGE2007(<http://www.engage2007.com/>)とバルセロナで開催されるFUTURE FORUM 2007(http://www.designhotels.com/future_forum_2007/overview)にスピーカーとして参加します。

3ヵ月後にはドコモまたはスターバックスのプロジェクトに為に来日します。それが家族の為にクリスマスプレゼントになるでしょうね。

来年にはマイアミとロサンゼルス、アブダビにある不動産のプロジェクトの為にインスタレーションを企画しています。

長い目でみれば長くて白い顎髭を蓄えた老人になっていてアートとデザインについてぶつぶつ何かと言っているでしょうね。

Hitspaper : Please tell us formavision's future vision?

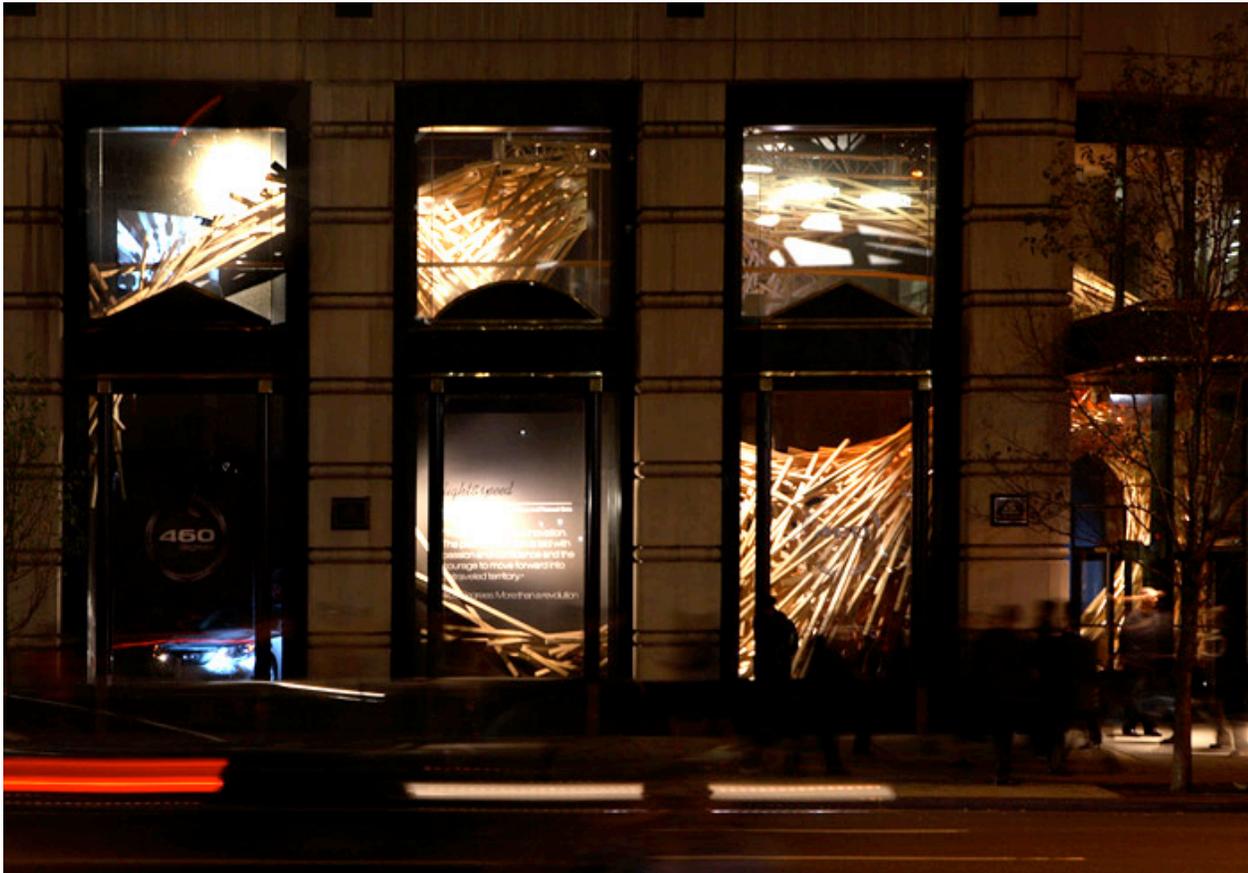
Sebastien : In my immediate future, I see a drink with a friend of mine at the Mercer Hotel in Soho. Probably a Jack and Coke.Maybe two.That's in 15 minutes actually.

In my one-month future, I see a conference in Singapore (<http://www.engage2007.com/>) and the next day in Barcelona (http://www.designhotels.com/future_forum_2007/overview).

In the next three months, I see a trip to Japan for Docomo or Starbucks, and then presents to my family for Christmas.

Next year I see more and more installations for real estate projects in Miami, Los Angeles and Abu Dhabi.

In the long run, I see an old man with a long white beard still mumbling about art and design.



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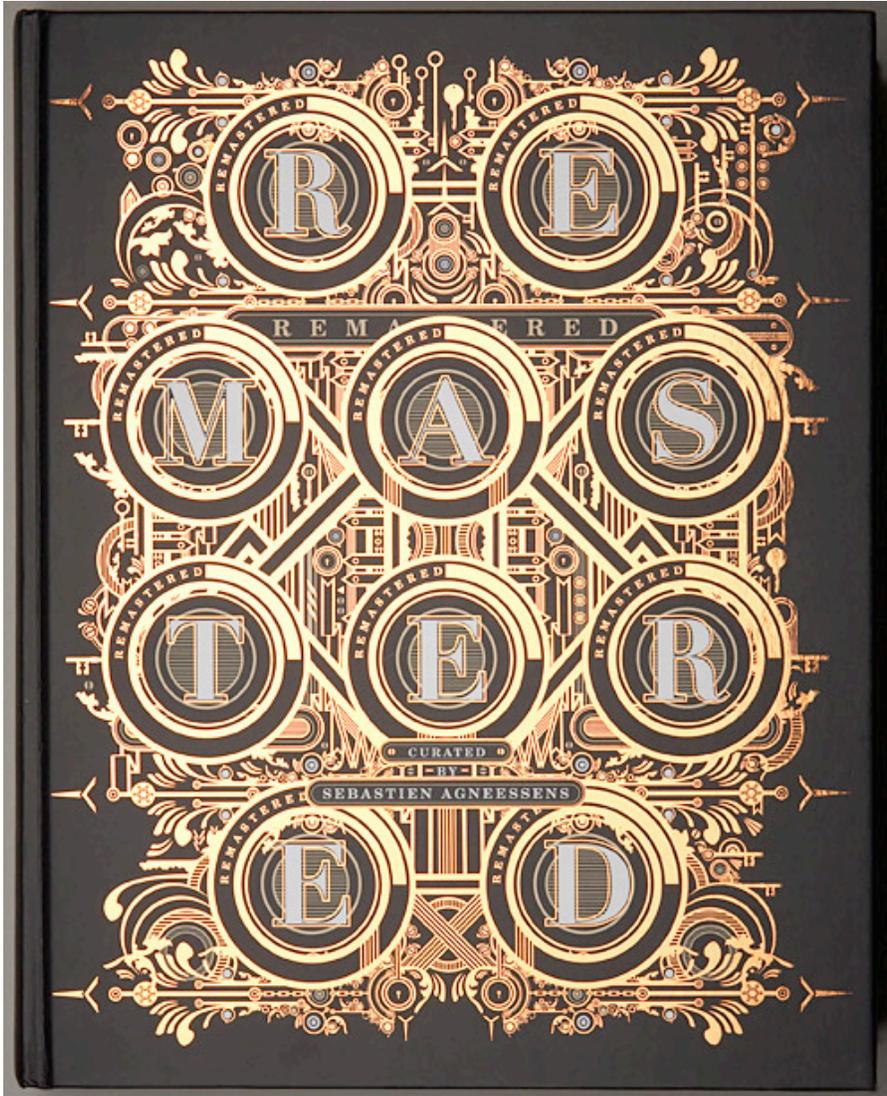
Hitspaper : 最後に日本人に向けてメッセージをお願いできますか？

Sebastien : 日本の皆さん。私はもうすぐあなた達に会えることを約束します。

Hitspaper : in conclusion ,can I have the message from you to japanese people??

Sebastien : Japon mon amour, c'est promis, je passe te voir tres bientot.

Sebastien



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Sunday, 17 February 2008 | Levent OZLER

Curating Studio Formavision Fashions New Creative Directions

Collaborations with Marithe+Francois Girbaud, Edun and Diesel Strengthen the Agency's Expertise in Fashion-based Projects

Since 2003 [Formavision](#) has been successfully integrating the work of leading artists and designers with commercial culture. The agency, which counts brands such as Coca-Cola, Sharp and Lexus as clients, now brings its curatorial expertise to the fashion world with projects including creative direction for campaigns, showroom design and fashion presentations.



Nocturne: Edun's Fall/Winter 08 Collection

In true [EDUN](#) fashion, this season's collection blends themes of nature and nightfall taking inspiration from Nocturnes, instrumental compositions inspired by the night and written most famously during the Romantic period by composers such as John Field, Frederic Chopin and Gabriel Fauré. More of a fashion installation than a traditional runway show, the event will take place at the historic Desmond Tutu Center in Chelsea on February 12th under the format of a live, lyrical and photographic presentation.

Influenced both by the work of 18th century French photographer Nadar and by early photographic techniques used to crystallize spirits on photos and daguerreotypes, Formavision's creative director Sebastien Agneessens has created a paranormal universe for EDUN's collection where each element of the campaign evokes the memory of nature lost. Endangered flowers and plants from Africa are captured in

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photography and complemented by a sound installation featuring poet and performer Saul Williams.

EDUN is a socially conscious clothing company launched in Spring 2005 by Ali Hewson and Bono.

The company's mission is to create beautiful clothing, while fostering sustainable employment in developing areas of the world in particular Africa.

EDUN has a tradition of involving artists in their projects, with past participations from the Citizens Band, Ernesto Caivano and Cecily Brown.



Le Jean De Marithé+Francois Girbaud New York Showroom

Formavision's collaboration with French fashion designers Marithé+Francois Girbaud began in 2005 with the [Construkt](#) design series, which invites contemporary designers such as Dror Benshetrit and WK Interact to experiment with new manufacturing processes used by the Girbaud label, thus creating limited-edition design sculptures and objets d'art.

Three years later, Girbaud has commissioned Formavision to create its 2,000 square-foot showroom in New York's fashion district for their new label, representing Formavision's first foray into interior design.



With a contemporary take on a traditional Parisian environment, Formavision used interior photographs of a 19th century Parisian hôtel particulier and reproduced them



National Park Service Gets Long-awaited Destination Center at the Blue Ridge Parkway



House of Concepts Design Academy Eindhoven



Bright Architectural Illumination and Light Installations



Arabesque Graphic Design from the Arab World and Persia



Fragiles Pcelain, Glass and Ceramics



Utrecht Manifest 2nd Biennale for Social Design Was a Great Success

Design Events



Collaborators UK Design for Performance



Design Workshop Internship 2008



Multiple Choice From Sample to Product



Emerging Architecture



Co-Evolution Danish / Chinese Collaboration on Sustainable Urban Development in China



Walk This Way



Density Fields by Oyler-Wu Collaborative



Design Isamu Kenmochi and Isamu Noguchi



Sex in Design Design in Sex



Savannah Film Festival Accepting Submissions for 2008 Festival



Der Bilderklub



75 Years of Architecture at MoMA

at-scale on the walls of the new showroom. The showroom reacts to Le Jean De Marithé+Francois Girbaud's upcoming photo campaign shot this winter in Paris by Ryan McGinley, the youngest photographer ever have a solo show at the Whitney Museum of American Art.



Legend Installation At The New Museum

On January 20th Formavision engaged the Manhattan skyline with a site-specific light installation for the New Museum's top-floor. Commissioned once again by French design duo [Marithé+Francois Girbaud](#) for the North American launch of their new jeans collection LEGEND, the event featured nine bi-chromatic LED towers wrapping around the Sky Room's window-lined terrace.

Reminiscent of epic science fiction movies like 2001: A Space Odyssey as well as the chimerical adornments present on LEGEND jeans, the light monoliths flashed programmed bursts that evoked a sense of language or futuristic code.

LEGEND, Marithé+Francois Girbaud's new, high-end jeans line, focuses on details tracing back through the history of the brand. As scientists of textiles, Marithé and Francois focus on innovative treatments, finishes and production processes, making each jean unique.

Diesel Wall New York

After successful editions in Toronto, Copenhagen, Milan and Beijing, the [Diesel Wall Project](#) is set to have its New York debut. Located on 17th Street and 7th Avenue next to the new Diesel US headquarters, the Diesel Wall project will select one artwork from open call submissions to reproduce in very large-scale and be seen by thousands of people a day. Besides New York, Diesel walls will pop-up in Barcelona (Spain), Manchester (UK) and Zurich (Switzerland).

To inaugurate the New York edition, Diesel's curating partner Formavision has invited French illustrators [Antoine & Manuel](#) to create their first outdoor mural in the US.

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FUTURE PLACES

NOTHING LASTS FOREVER

THE ART OF FAIR, EXHIBITION AND EVENT DESIGN

Lukas Feireiss Thierry van Dort, Quinze & Milan Archive

Some buildings are created only for the moment. Much too short, in our opinion. Lukas Feireiss is an expert in the field of temporary architecture. Here, he presents the genre's most spectacular constructions and their creators.

A breathtaking structure made of countless wooden beams winds around and penetrates a multi-storey building. A flooded warehouse is transformed into a kaleidoscopic spectacle beneath an artificial roof of stars that appears to transcend itself, and a fast food restaurant is refitted as an autonomous guerrilla unit as part of a spatial installation.

Celebrating the temporary

These different examples provide a snapshot of the creative diversity and expressivity of contemporary, space defining practices in the field of fair, exhibition and event design. What they have in common is a creative approach on the part of various international market-leading corporations active in different sectors. The spectrum ranges from a luxury car-maker to an electronics company, from a fashion label to a fast food chain. They are emblematic of the growing shift towards spatial-expressive marketing strategies when it comes to the establishment of corporate identities. It's not the visually communicated advertising message that stands in the foreground but the three-dimensional manifestation of this message in

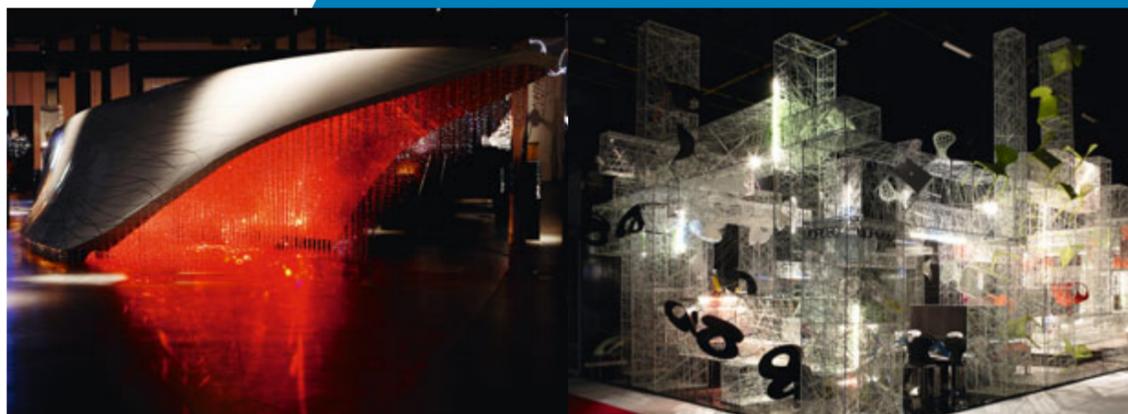
the form of one-of-a-kind spatial experiences that sometimes exist for no longer than a few days or a few hours. The incorporation of space in one-night stands of global branding. Fleeting and intense. Corporate affairs that live for the passion of the moment. In their poetic intensity, these works are at the same time representative of the richness of ideas when it comes to the creation of spaces that play with advertising, art and architecture.

Strike a pose

Imagine a tornado ripping through a lumberyard. A swarm of bees gracefully yet threateningly forming around a honeycomb. The blurred forms of the landscape when you look out of the car window. The passion for speed and a fascination for the elegance of overwhelming natural forces are found in all the works of Belgian designer and artist Arne Quinze. Also in the installation Timegate, which strikingly 'storms' an entire house in Miami Beach – a project organised for the launch of the new 460 Lexus by Sebastien Agneessens's New York Boutique Curating Agency Formavision.

[This installation burned 2006 in the course of the Burning Man festival in Nevada, USA](#)





With a similar elementary elegance, a sculptural wave created by New York's Tronic Studio washes through the main hall of this year's Wired Next-Fest, turning the 2,000 m³ Water Pavilion, the headquarters of the main sponsor Hitachi, into a place of liquid dynamism. The phenomenal, blue-coloured CNC sculpture is based on the circulatory patterns of flowing water. A branding video, also created by Jesse Seppi and Vivian Rosenthal's Tronic studio, was projected onto an extra-large screen in the immediate vicinity of the Hitachi wave, and conveyed the powerful impression of entire worlds of water being formed from desert sand.

In an epic event for Hugo Boss, Etienne Russo's Villa Eugenie also managed to transform Berlin's Postbahnhof into an enchanting liquid environment for one night. An open warehouse flooded with water and illuminated by countless changing, coloured lights transformed the catwalk into a sensual spectacle that appeared to eliminate the boundaries between up and down, inside and outside. Everything is illuminated. In a game with images of vanity, models presented the new clothes on the reflective mirror of the water's dark surface. All is vanity. A temporary garden is created: sand covers the floor, and the buffet is served on melting blocks of ice. Everything is transitory. Even fashion.

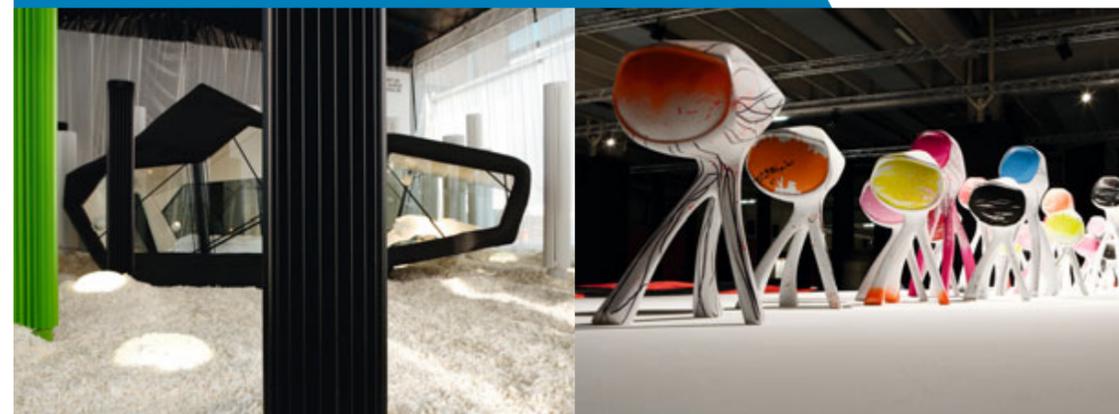
The provocative, radical works of the American artist Tom Sachs offer a totally different kind of access to global markets. A critical ricochet within the context of international advertising strategies: a Prada concentration camp and toilet, a Chanel guillotine and chainsaw, and a mobile McDonald's unit. The latter is part of his expansive installation "Nutsy's" and reads like

an ironic plea for the formation of alternative economies, in which imitation goods profit from the brand pressure of mass consumption. Hamburgers instead of handbags. McDonalds instead of Prada and Vuitton. In a parody of entrepreneurialism – from drive-in to do-it-yourself McD's – Sachs plays with the leitmotifs of global consumer culture.

Step into the arena

But all of the discussed works represent only a fraction of the inexhaustible reserves of imagination and ingenuity when it comes to the intervention and expansion of space through advertising strategies. Appetizers at the grand feast of international branding. The kaleidoscopic spectrum of works is typical of the current, creative resourcefulness in the extension of spatial possibilities within the context of advertising. Space is consciously deployed as a forerunner of interaction and experience. Architecture serves as a communicative medium that speaks and touches people.

At the same time it's clear that the creation of space and spatial experiences is no longer the job of architecture alone. More and more, it's an emotional matter, in which various creatives express their impulse for uniqueness through spatial structures. In some way, architects are stripped off their traditional sovereignty in the formal design of space. But it is precisely this collapse of conventional forms in the constructed environment that offers a unique opportunity to discover new, fascinating worlds, to rethink economic, architectonic and ideological boundaries and to recognize the socio-political structures which fence us in, define and demarcate us. ★



Left & Right:
Not all installa-
tions created
by Designer Arne
Quinze and his
team fell prey
to the fire.



WHAT'S IN STORE VISUAL MERCHANDISING

VM View: Sebastien Agneessens of Formavision

CLAIRE F HAMILTON, WGSN 24.03.08

Launched in 2003, Formavision is a curatorial agency that links brands with artists. Founder, curator and creative director Sebastien Agneessens talks to WGSN about recent projects.

How often do projects start from scratch?

Most often we start our projects from scratch, or at least from a very basic brief. For instance, when we worked with Edun, they approached us simply with the look and the name of their new [autumn/winter 2008] collection, "Nocturne". To me, Nocturne meant different things: **Chopin, the Romantic period, melancholy, and also the period of the birth of photography.**



"Nocturne" installation for Edun at Desmond Tutu Center, New York

Back in the late nineteenth century, there were a lot of experiments with photography to make spirits appear on prints through double exposures and other techniques. I thought that this could be a good inspiration for Edun, but instead of spirits, we decided to make endangered African flowers appear.

You know, Edun, is a lot about helping Africa, about fairtrade and organic fabrics. So speaking about **the idea of a vanishing nature seemed appropriate.**



Desmond Tutu Center, New York

Image from Edun "Nocturne" collection autumn/winter 2008

Image from "Nocturne" installation

Are there particular media, materials or methods of presentation that you find particularly interesting right now?

Most of our work so far has been multimedia installations, usually called **"experiential environments"** by the advertising industry. But in the

Sebastien Agneessens

Founder, curator and creative director



Formavision

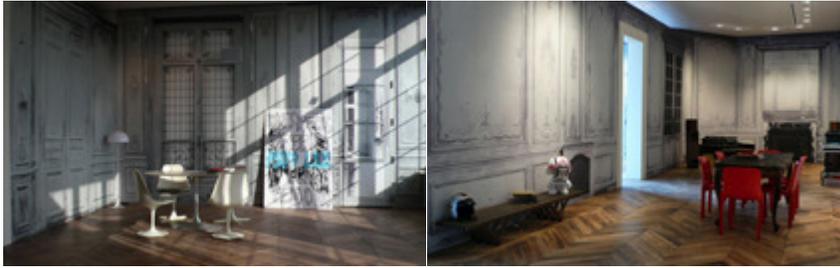
392 Broadway

New York, NY

Tel: +1 (212) 431 1120

formavision.info

past few years, we have also naturally evolved towards general creative direction, applied to fashion shows, showroom design and photography.



New York showroom of Marithé + François Girbaud

It's actually interesting that both Marithé & François Girbaud and Edun called us roughly at the same time to manage the creative direction of their spaces and campaigns.

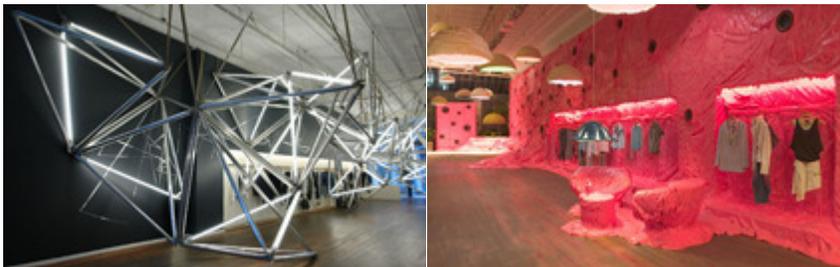
More than a particular medium, I think that what's interesting now is how brands are driven to collaborate with artists in order to inspire, and establish an emotional or intellectual exchange with people.

The facts that the new campaign of Girbaud is shot by Ryan McGinley and that we presented Edun's collection in an exhibition format indicate that brands are now really receptive to the art world.

What artists interest you right now - ones that you haven't already worked with?

Recently I have been inspired by the large-scale light installations of **Olafur Eliasson**, the biomorphic designs of **Ross Lovegrove** and the video work of **Encyclopedia Pictura**.

It's interesting to note that **all these artists somehow work with nature at the core of their works**, which is a very relevant topic today, and I believe will be for the next few decades.



Diesel Denim Gallery in New York, installations by Formavision

Is it a challenge to avoid losing the sophistication of an artist's idea when it is employed for commercial use?

It can be a challenge, especially when dealing with clients whose worlds revolve too much around the brand they work for. But usually, the decision to work with us is motivated by the desire of expressing the brand in a more emotional, poetic, and inspirational way.

There is a lot to say about the recent marriage of brands and art. Not all of these projects are good, the quality of the work really depends on all parties involved, in particular the curator/creative director who has to make sure that the project is relevant for the artist, the brand, and of course the people who are going to see it.



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Formavision

IdN v15n6: Retail Desire p36-37



Since Formavision began in 2003, it has curated and produced some 50 art projects and acclaimed international art campaigns for leading brands such as Diesel, Coca-Cola, Lexus, Starbucks, Marithe+Francois Girbaud, Converse, Docomo and Sharp Electronics.

自 2003 年開張以來，Formavision 已經組織和製作過大約 50 個藝術專案，並為 Diesel、Coca-Cola、Lexus、Starbucks、Marithe+Francois Girbaud、Converse、Docomo 和 Sharp Electronics 等頂級品牌的國際藝術活動提供過支援。

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ABOUT IDN



IDNWORLD

IdN magazine is an international publication for creative people on a mission to amplify and unify the design community in Asia-Pacific and other parts of the world. It is devoted to bringing designers from around the globe together to communicate with, learn from and inspire one another. It has truly become what the initials of its title proclaim it to be: an international designers' network.

IdN—主要發行IdN雜誌及IdNPRO書。IdN雜誌創刊於1992，為雙月刊雜誌，共4個版本，包括中文及英文2種語言，在世界各地銷售。十五年



來, IdN透過出版發行, 將設計及創意媒體工作者連系, 並將其作品帶到國際舞台, 為人認識。

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"Bendito Machine #2" by Jossie Malis
"Love the Ball" by Peepshow for Nike Joga World Cup
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"I think that a recipe for success in these branded art projects is to trigger collaborations between artists and brands who have the same style, values and cultural references."

「我認為品牌藝術專案的成功要訣就是引發那些有著相同風格、價值觀和文化特點的藝術家和品牌之間的合作。」

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<http://www.formavision.info/>

POSTED BY IDNWORLD AT 1:35 AM





CONTAGIOUS

MOST CONTAGIOUS / 2007



14 / MOST CONTAGIOUS / BRANDED DESTINATIONS /

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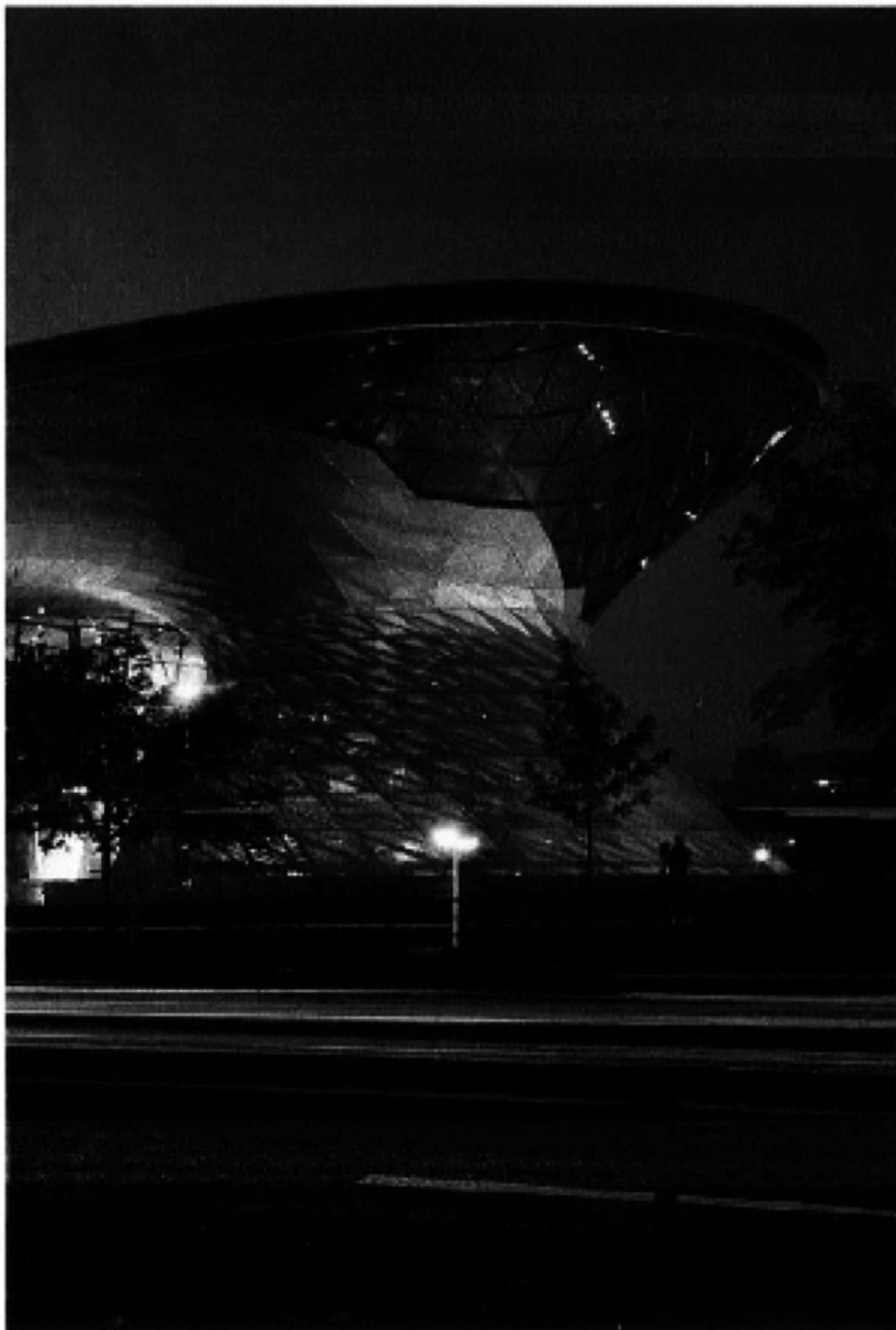
New World of Coke /

As one of the world's best-loved brands, **Coke** has the potential to be a defining influence in the developing realm of Branded Destinations. In 2007, Coca-Cola replaced its 17-year old Atlanta museum with a brand-spanking '**New World Of Coke**'. Conceived as a physical manifestation of Coke 're-discovering its mojo', the soft drinks behemoth approached New York-based **Formavision** to curate several installations featuring artworks, video, interactive stations and other tools to transform some of its spaces into experiential and interactive environments. Other attractions included a unique 4D film, as well as a spoof documentary featuring interviews with animated Coca-Cola workers for which real employees were interviewed and their responses used as voiceovers.

Featured in *Contagious* 13.

BMW Welt /

Out of all the architectural interpretations of a branded destination in 2007, we would be inclined to suggest that the **BMW Welt** building (right) is possibly the most visually arresting. The design was created by Austrian architects **COOP HIMMELB(L)AU** and features a cloud-type roof suspended by 11 pendulum supports. The result acts as a beacon on the Munich cityscape and attracting neighbours, visitors and customers to come and immerse themselves in the brand experience. Other car brands got in on the action too – the **Citroën C42** building on the Champ-Élysees is fronted by an impressive glass latticework exterior showcasing soaring chevrons in a bold assertion of the brand's identity. **Ferrari** has frankly astronomic plans for their \$40 billion branded Gulf Island off Abu Dhabi and **Porsche** have released designs of a luxurious residential tower and office block to be built in Business Bay, Dubai (see *Contagious* 12 for more details).





Duly impressed by the [Starbucks Salon](#) initiative that wrapped up last week in NYC, *EMERGE* wanted to learn a bit more about how that project took shape, so we reached out to an old friend, **Sebastien Agneessens**, of [Formavision](#), who was one of the folks who helped mold the Salon idea into the eclectic and engaging experiment in experiential lifestyle branding for the coffee brand people love to love and love to hate in equal measure. Here is a brief interview with Mr. Agneessens:

Could you introduce yourself and describe your work with Formavision in terms of who you've been working with and what you have coming up?

I am a curator based in NYC, and founder of curating agency **Formavision**. Through my curatorial practice, I work with various brands, which allows me to develop ambitious and eclectic projects with the artists and designers that I like. I started a bit by accident, with my gallery The Point, in the Lower East Side back in 2000. Since most of my exhibitions were installations and had nothing for sale, I had to find a way to fund them, which naturally came through sponsorship. [Diesel](#) called me up to curate their exhibitions at the **Denim Gallery** [on Greene Street, just doors down from the Salon], which I have been directing since then. The way I work is a bit particular compared to other curators, since I remain deeply involved in the creative and production processes, and always commission new work.

Anyway, to make it short, through Formavision I have curated the **Aquos Project** for [Sharp](#), the **Denim Gallery** for [Diesel](#), the **Starbucks Salon** for [Starbucks](#), **Construkt** for [Girbaud](#) among other things, and am now also developing projects for **Coca-Cola** and **Toyota**.

I also curate independent projects, such as gallery shows and [Remastered](#), for which I have invited 55 artists to revisit the masters of Western Painting. The Remastered book will be released this Fall internationally.

How did you become involved with Starbucks Salon?

I became involved in the Starbucks Salon through [Genart](#), who gave birth to the Starbucks Salon concept at the last Sundance Festival. Back then, the Salon was basically a series of concerts hosted in an existing cafe. Genart called me up to take on the creative direction of the space. This project was a bit particular for me since I not only curated the art, some of the performance, but also designed the space. And suddenly, most of my clients want me to design a space for them! Seriously, it's very unexpected. When that happens, I take interior design as a way to extend my interest in art installations. I met **Adam Gerard**, Genart's founder, two weeks after I moved to New York back in 1999, and I guess that I was at the back of his mind when he thought of who to develop the Starbucks Salon with.

Who else was involved in determining the creative direction for the Salon?

Well you have three different areas here. For the performers, we were four members: **Catherine Burns** ([The Moth](#)), **Jesse Ashlock** ([RES Media](#)), **Carmine Pietri-Diaz** ([Nuyorican Poets Cafe](#)) and myself in a jury headed by Genart's programming director. For the art installation and exhibition, this was basically my call. And for the interior design, we collaborated with the Starbucks design team in Seattle. The look and feel of the promotional campaign, including the website, was developed by ad agency [Wieden+Kennedy](#).

What were some of the criteria you considered when crafting not just the programming but the overall feel of this highly unconventional marketing program with Starbucks

The fact that brands are participating in contemporary culture is now a given. Starbucks produces

The Synthesizer

The man behind Formavision reinvisions brand relevance

words | tamara warren

Sebastien Agneessens stands in front of the store, observing the cosmopolitan crowd on Wooster Street at the flagship Marithé + François Girbaud shop in Soho, New York City. He is observing quietly off to the side, away from the clamor of clinking glasses and buzzing swirl of French and English, before going back inside to mingle. Patrons are lined up out the door to investigate the latest installation in the CONSTRUKT series—a chic annual event featuring in-store installations by original artists. For this series, *Moment of Impact*, Belgian architect Jeroen De Schrijver created towering, 7-foot tall cardboard sculptures. The commissioned work is a commentary on explosive moments, citing volcanic eruption and the violent impact of two bodies as the context. But the theme is twofold; the work also reflects on the Girbaud *Non Surgical Lift* patented technology for their current collection. Champagne flows early in the evening as the store morphs into a festive gallery setting featuring the latest Girbaud designs and a mishmash cast of art and fashion patrons; Agneessens can relax after the opening, his latest exhibition.

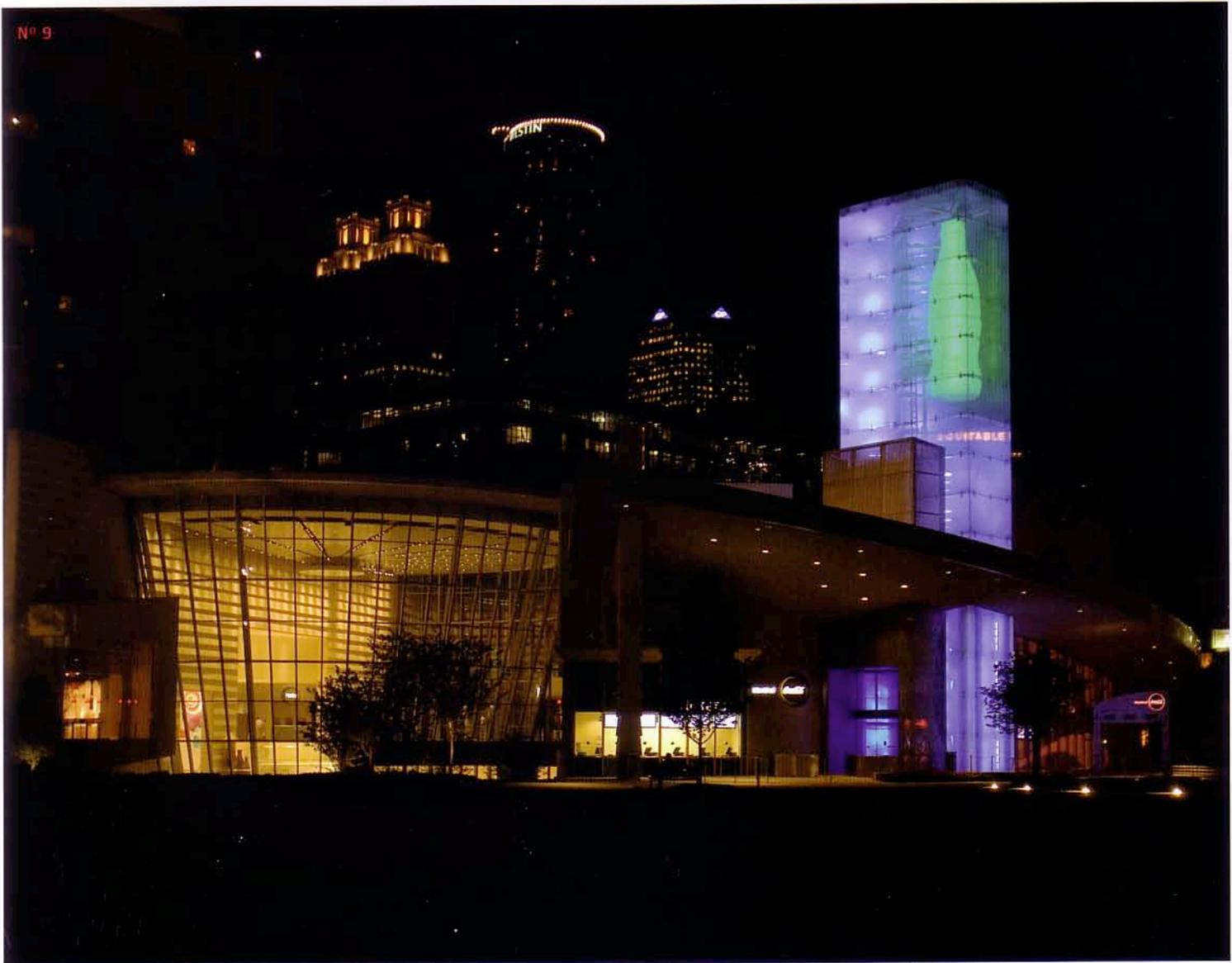
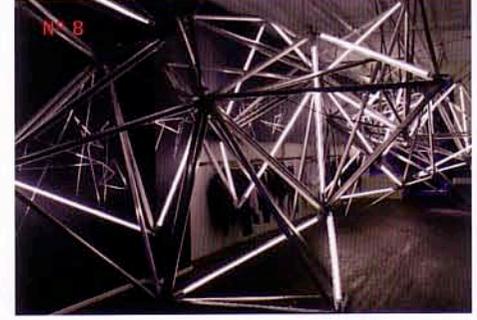
Through his agency, Formavision, Agneessens has curated installations for Coca-Cola, Lexus, Starbucks and Diesel, pairing visual artists, architects and designers with corporations. "We translate the essence of the brand with designers and artists," he explains. "Traditional advertising isn't effective. It makes more sense for brands to create cultural content. That's what I do—produce

and curate art shows, projects for different brands."

If art is a reflection of the surrounding world, then French-born Agneessens is at the cusp of an emerging movement. "I believe that brands are an important part of contemporary culture. In the beginning of the twenty-first century, brands became the main force, like the church was the main force and commissioned great pieces during the Renaissance. Today, it's the brands that are driving contemporary culture."

With a marketing background, Agneessens transitioned into art from a successful career in the perfume and cosmetics industry, working for Armani and Chanel. "When I arrived in New York, I met many people in art and design, and I understood that New York was center of the art world." With a partner, he opened the exhibition space The Point; it wasn't long before curious corporations sought him out. "Girbaud was the first one to call me," he says. "Having brands sponsor artists enables new work to be made. To produce the work, you need money to do it."

In collaboration with corporations, he sees added value not afforded by art galleries. "The dynamics of the project are different from the gallery world, where there's always this commercial aspect. In the branding world, you just



N° 1 Moment of impact study, CONSTRUKT series, Marithé + François Girbaud by Jeroen De Schrijver **N° 2** Kaleidoscope mural, The New World of Coca-Cola
N° 3 & N° 4 Details from the book Remastered by Sebastien Agneessens **N° 5** Light and Speed Lexus 460 Degrees gallery Sculptures by Arne Quinze / Photo studies by Miranda Lichtenstein **N° 6** The Dream of the Fisherman's Wife The Diesel Denim Gallery **N° 7** Mo'Scum The Diesel Denim Gallery **N° 8** Automatic The Diesel Denim Gallery **N° 9** The New World of Coca-Cola building

VISIBILITY

Case Study –

Formavision

Sebastien Agneessens
Chief Creative Officer, CEO

Select Media Coverage by Goal:

Project Publicity – Various

Creativity – Coke's New World of Op Art
How – Refreshing Design
GDR Creative Intelligence – New World of Coca-Cola
Dexinger – Formavision...New World of Coca-Cola
I.D. – Reebok Flash Store Opens
Contagious Ideas – Reebok Pop-Up
Capella – How to Cook DoCoMoDake
Freshness – NTT DoCoMo Presents DoCoMoDake
Hustler of Culture – How to Cook DoCoMMoDake
Sugartown – World's Cutest Japanese Mushrooms
TrendZ – Brand Roots, DoCoMo Pops up in New York
WGNS – Fun with Funghi
Advertising Age – Peace and Pulp at Girbaud
Creativity – Creative and Live
Creativity – Diesel's Satanic Exhale
Soma – Diesel Denim Gallery
ZooZoom – Construct Four

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CONSTRUKT 4

The CONSTRUKT series, curated by Sebastien Agneessens, celebrates the decade-long tradition of fashion and fabric innovations of Marithé and François Girbaud. In celebration of their spring/summer collections Girbaud presents the fourth installation in the CONSTRUKT series, 'The Hanging Gardens of Pulp'. The collaboration opens with a gala artist reception at the SoHo flagship boutique, 47 Wooster Street, and continues through May 2007. [Kelley Quan]

+ Konstrukt

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Diesel's Satanic Exhale

"Shades From the Breath of Hell" at New York's Denim Gallery.

BY: TERRY KATTEMAN PUBLISHED: SEP 19, 2007

[EMAIL](#) | [PRINT](#) | [+](#)

The latest art installation at Diesel's **Denim Gallery** in SoHo celebrates the fall season, and maybe the Fall of Man, with a multimedia installation by the French brothers Michael and Florian Quistrebert, a darkly artsy duo who have been building a signature graphic style together for the past five years. The exhibition notes liken the space to a surreal film set featuring "various tableaux inspired by rock, folk culture and neo-Romanticism. Menacing ghost figures and eerie lighting enhance the artists' interpretation of their paranoid mythology."



The scene, which incorporates incongruous elements from life on the prairie, includes a haunted cabin, a sculpture of a ferocious grizzly bear (seen below), and some unsettling Halloween-appropriate posters, but of course it's got nothing to do with the Diesel fall line per se, though it makes a nice fit with certain elements of the company's vibe, according to the show's curator, Sebastien Agneessens of **Formavision**.



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RESOURCES

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- [Director Product Management, ROO Media Group](#)

EVENT: No Spot Short Film Festival

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EVENT: IDEA Conference

Thursday • November 15 • NYC

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GUIDE: Ad and Design School

Creativity's Third Annual Guide to Ad Design Schools, a showcase of eight schools highlighting some of the best work being produced by advertising and design students today.

GUIDE: Image Portfolio

Check out the Second Annual Image Portfolio Guide, an exhibit of the portfolios of participating stock houses showing examples of the images they offer plus summaries of their total product & service offerings.

"I've been in touch with the Quistrebort brothers for about a year," says the French-born Agneessens, who's been curating Diesel shows for several years. "Their work always lies at the intersection of horror films, evil forces and rock culture. I knew I was on the right track with them when I saw the new Diesel fragrance campaign, 'Fuel for Life,' whose story is also very dark—it speaks about an illegal fragrance to use with caution, which takes you to the unknown. It unveils a universe similar to 'Shades From the Breath of Hell.' "



Though the Diesel "Fuel for Life" site may exude a smidgen of their goth-baroque flavor, the Quistrebort brothers had nothing to do with it, nor do they have a site of their own. But they do have a French art book that goes by the peculiarly disquieting title of *Fried Face Stories*. The show, at 68 Greene St., will be up through Nov. 13.

To discuss this article, visit the [Creativity Forums](#).



TV Cadbury: Gorilla

Agency: Fallon, London
Client: Cadbury Dairy Milk
Director: Juan Cabral



TV On Creativity: Alex Bogusky, Episode 3



TV XBOX 360: Museum

Agency: T.A.G.
Client: XBOX 360
Director: Rupert Sanders



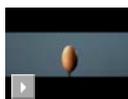
TV Nike: Leave Nothing

Agency: Wieden + Kennedy, Portland
Client: Nike
Director: Michael Mann



PD Nike: The Greatest Team You've Never Heard Of

Agency: Wieden + Kennedy, Portland
Client: Nike



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Agency: AMV BBDO
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Featuring five years of curatorial and creative projects [FORMAVISION](#) is now live.

Over fifty art and design installations by international artists are featured for brands such as Diesel, Sharp, Marithé+Francois Girbaud, Lexus, Coca-Cola, Starbucks and Docomo. Key projects are presented by guest speakers such as Robert Klanten (Die Gestalten Verlag), Monica Khemsurov (I.D. Magazine), Francois Girbaud (Marithé+Francois Girbaud) and Paul Laster (Arkrush & Art Asia Pacific). Created by curator and creative director Sebastien Agneessens, Formavision is a curating agency that collaborates with artists and studios to design, develop and produce innovative and original art campaigns that capture the imagination, reinforce the brand vision, and resonate on an emotional level. Each campaign tells a story unique to the brand it serves.

AdvertisingAge®

Peace and Pulp at Girbaud

By Terry Kattleman

Published: July 05, 2007



The fourth edition of Marithé François Girbaud's quarterly [Construkt](#) series of retail/design projects debuted in New York at Girbaud's SoHo flagship boutique last month, with an artwork oddly titled "The Hanging Gardens of Pulp." Curated by Sebastien Agneessens of [Formavision](#) and produced by Reflex Advertising, the work is a site-specific installation by British artist [Zoe Bradley](#), commissioned by Girbaud. Its garden theme ties into the company's involvement with Seeds of Peace, a nonprofit "dedicated to empowering young leaders from regions of conflict with the leadership skills required to advance reconciliation and coexistence," as explained at [SeedsofPeace.org](#).

WHAT'S IN STORE VISUAL MERCHANDISING

VM News: October

AMANDA CARR , CLAIRE F HAMILTON, WGSN 05.11.07

WGSN checks out visual merchandising happenings around the globe for October, including pop-up funghi in New York, niche merchandising in Seoul and a celebration of Georgian architecture in Bath.

Fun with funghi

Japanese mobile phone company **NTT DoCoMo** held a one week pop-up exhibition-cum-boutique in New York's SoHo, featuring the company's mascot mushrooms, **Docomodake** (now instantly recognised in Japan where they are popular symbols of happiness) to promote sales of phone accessories. Although the company does not currently have a mobile phone to sell in the US, the accessories are being introduced to promote the brand.

For the exhibition, various Japanese artists created work based on the funghi characters, including paintings, sculpture, jewellery pieces and photographs, all stylishly executed in the temporary space. The Docomodake accessories include plush toy mushroom phone screen cleaners, phone straps (35 million have been produced so far in Japan) umbrellas and hats.



Docomodake feature as art, toys and sculpture in the pop-up exhibition space for NTT DoCoMo in New York

North meets South in Milan

At **Spazio Rossana Orlandi** in Milan, trend forecaster Li Edelkoort curated an in-store exhibition, *North meets South*, which investigated the **aesthetic links between Scandinavian and African design**. The origin of these pieces - furniture, rugs, ceramics, textiles, tools and toys - is not always discernible to the naked eye, thus inspiring surprising questions about the roots of humanity and the DNA of design.

VM News in brief

Fun with Funghi

- Japanese communications company NTT DoCoMo introduces its mushroom-themed accessory collection to New York
- A pop-up exhibition space in SoHo featured funghi-inspired work from assorted Japanese artists
- The mushroom characters are called Docomodake, and accessories include plush toy screen cleaners, phone straps and umbrellas

<http://docomodake.net>

North meets South in Milan

- Exhibition in Spazio Rossana Orlandi in Milan that investigates the aesthetic links between Scandinavia and Africa
- Displays of products from both countries were combined in merchandising features throughout the store
- Collection was curated by trend forecaster Li Edelkoort

Rosanna Orlandi
Via M Bandello 14
Milan

Jigsaw in Bath

- Jigsaw relocates its store in Bath to a Georgian post office with Victorian heritage
- The brand prefers architecturally interesting buildings for its stores and reinforces the heritage through internal merchandising and fixture design
- The in-store merchandising reinforces the strong local

Extending Brand Roots: DoCoMo pops up in New York

EXPERIENTIAL MARKETING

DoCoMo Telecom is proving that effective branding is about capturing consumers' imagination and delivering unique experiences at the point of purchase. The Japanese telecommunications company made a good move when it introduced its Docomodake mushroom-like mascots back in 2005. It was to promote the launch of a new mobile telephone service that allowed unused monthly time to be carried over or shared among family members. The mushroom "family" supported the company's pitch, namely that DoCoMo was the only mobile operator offering the service—in Japanese, "dake" means both "only" and "mushroom".

The campaign took a life of its own, with the smiling Docomodake becoming so popular that they began popping up everywhere in Japan, in the form of mobile phone accessories, phone game or picture book heroes, stuffed toys and more. The branding tactic worked so well that DoCoMo is using it to penetrate markets overseas.

This month, DoCoMo is tackling the US market with a pop-up boutique and exhibition in New York City's funky SoHo neighborhood.

Dubbed "How to Cook Docomodake" and produced by retail experiential marketing expert Formavision (www.Formavision.info), the campaign takes place October 19 through 28. It features 16 up-and-coming Japanese painters, fashion designers, illustrators and artists who will express their interpretations of mushroom culture.

Following an afternoon press briefing on October 18, DoCoMo opened the space where the renowned artists would unveil their works. In addition to the exhibit, open to the public from 11 a.m. until 7 p.m. daily, Docomodake theme products, such as T-shirts, umbrellas, dolls, caps and dresses, will also be available for sale in the boutique.

This kind of marketing strategy works because it helps the DoCoMo brand stand out in a market that is known for hitting consumers repeatedly with fee packages, limited-time promotions, product launches, advertising campaigns and contests.

The same is true of store openings in shopping centers. New stores set up shop in malls so frequently that, unless you are dealing with a retail

brand that is new to the market, the excitement of the opening wears off rapidly.

When you plan a proper opening and include elements that will intrigue consumers—not to mention the media—you have a much better chance of making the experience memorable enough for shoppers to get the urge to come back to the mall and visit the new shop.

Keeping in mind that retail teams are often working right up to the day of the launch, it can be difficult to access the new shop ahead of time to host an event. However, taking inspiration from DoCoMo, a mall marketer could work with the new retail tenant and use empty in-line space or a portion of the common area to run a pop-up boutique well before the opening.

There, shoppers would get a preview of the new shop as well as a chance to meet with the store manager and some of the staff. It would also be an opportunity for the store to potentially recruit additional employees.

Events like these can turn "Store ABC No. 178" into "My Favorite ABC Store" in the minds of consumers. And that's the first step to building loyalty for the shop and the mall that houses it. ■



sugartown

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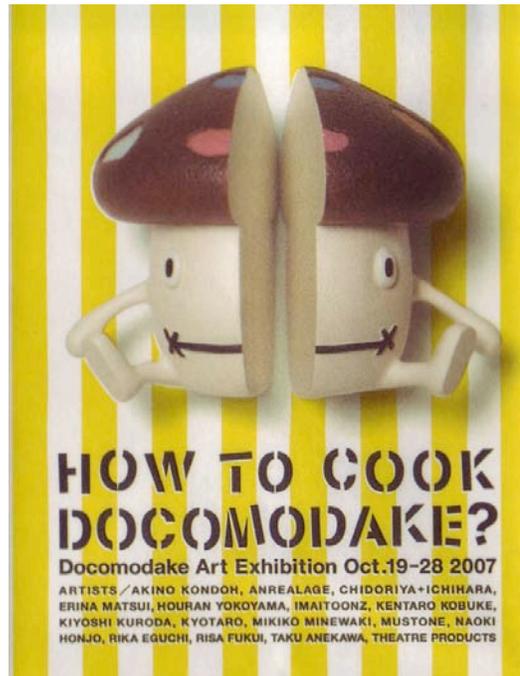
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* I guest DJ here with the boys every so often *

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OCTOBER 25, 2007

How to Cook the World's Cutest Japanese Mushroom?



Okay FIRST OFF -- [Go to SUGARTOWN tonight -- I'm spinning!](#) It will be funnnn (all the info is in that link & in the post below this one).

Yesterday I met a friend for lunch at Tiny's in the L.E.S then we wandered around the rainy streets of Nolita, bitching about how we couldn't afford any of the ridiculously overpriced items at the fancy boutiques blah blah blah, we stumbled upon a bright yellow storefront bearing the words: [HOW TO COOK DOCOMODAKE?](#)

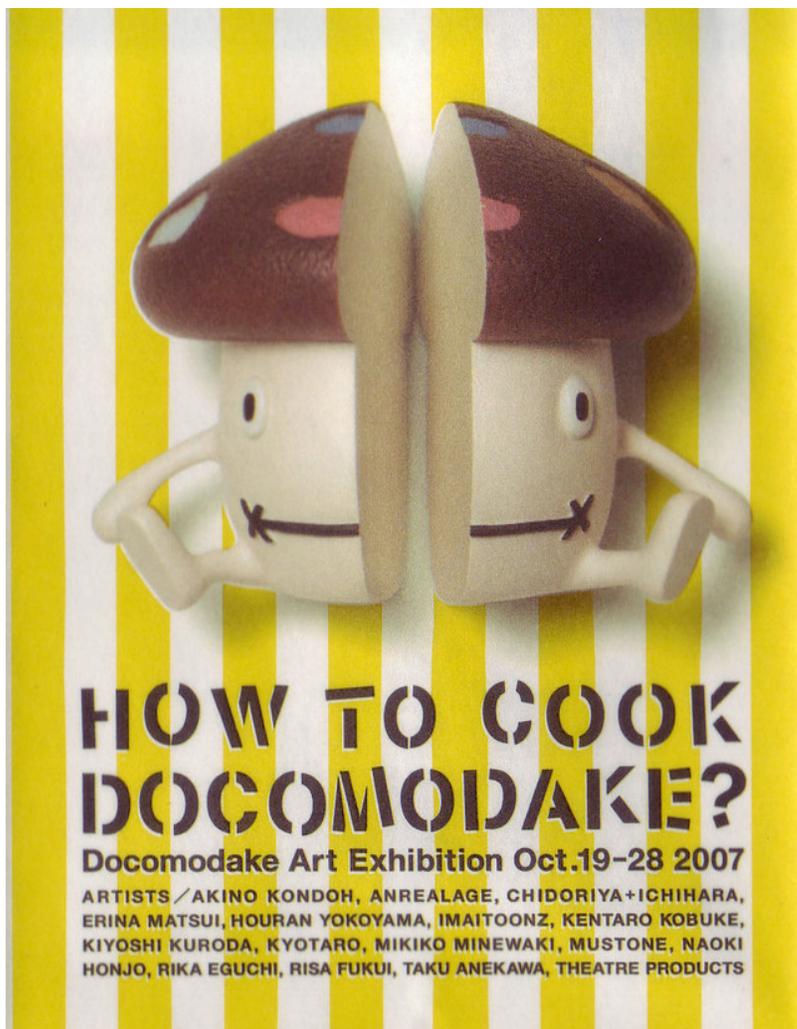
We decided to go inside & were greeted by this gigantic pile of plush mushrooms! I'm a big fan of Japanese characters, so this was happy surprise. The staff explained that the pile of plushies were all of the products available for this adorable Japanese mushroom character named Docomodake! (More about the exhibit & Docomodake [HERE.](#))



The exhibit featured several young Japanese artists who interpreted Docomodake in their own style. It was really fun. I posted a few pictures of the ones I thought were especially neat. **Try to catch it asap because it**

« NYC - "Rust Belt" (10/19/07 - 11/25/07) | Main | LA - "Dark Side of the Moon" (10/19/07 - 12/09/07) »

NYC - "HOW TO COOK DOCOMODAKE" (10/19/07 - 10/28/07)



Move Over Hello Kitty – Here Comes Japan’s Next Hot Character
NTT DoCoMo’s Mushroom Characters Appear in New York City Art Exhibition

More about the exhibition and artists here
http://docomodake.net/art/e_index.html

DoCoMo mushrooms ("Docomodake"), a family of mascots in the likeness of mushrooms and one of Japan’s leading corporate characters, are set to become the nation's best-tasting mascots in an art exhibition entitled, "How to Cook Docomodake."

The unlikely company mascots were introduced in 2005 when NTT DoCoMo launched a service allowing unused monthly time to be carried over or shared among family members. The mushroom family was conceived to emphasize that DoCoMo was the only mobile operator offering the service, because in Japanese dake means both "only" and "mushroom."

Today the smiling mascots have literally mushroomed into ubiquitous symbols

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- Kurt on It Doesn't Pay to Make Play.
- tracie laymon on Souris by Wyatt.
- Ada on LA - "Overlook the Undergrowth" (10/12/07 - 11/02/07)
- kim on links for 2007-10-12
- jimmy! on Queens - "Yue Minjun and the Symbolic Smile" (10/14/07 - 01/06/08)

- mila reynaud on LA - Levinhurst Concert (10/11/07)
- Vidalia on LA - Levinhurst Concert (10/11/07)
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Oct 17 [NTT DoCoMo Presents: How To Cook DoCoMoDake?](#)

<p>Date: October 19(Fri.) to 28(Sun.), 2007</p> <p>Venue: 201 Mulberry St., New York, NY 10012</p> <p>Time: 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. (An Opening party will be held on October 19th from 6p.m. Drinks and Snacks will be provided. Live performance will also be displayed. Also, Press admission will be from 4p.m. to 6p.m.)</p> <p>Admission: Free</p> <p>Sponsor: Team "Docomodake addict"</p> <p>http://docomodake.net/art</p>	 <p>HOW TO COOK DOCOMODAKE? Docomodake Art Exhibition Oct.19-28 2007 ARTISTS / AKINO KONDOH, ANREALAGE, CHIDORIYA+ICHIHARA, ERINA MATSUI, HOURAN YOKOYAMA, IMAITOONZ, KENTARO KOBUKE, KIYOSHI KURODA, KYOTARO, MIKIKO MINEWAKI, MUSTONE, NAOKI HONJO, RIKI EGUCHI, RISA FUKUI, TAKU ANEKAWA, THEATRE PRODUCTS</p>
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[NTT DoCoMo](#) Presents: How To Cook DoCoMoDake?

Created as part of 2005 advertising campaign for Japanese wireless giant [NTT DoCoMo](#), the mushroom-like caricatures [DoCoMoDake](#) swiftly became the must-have accessories. In addition to the 35 million DoCoMoDake cellphone straps sold, the characters are also available as plush figures, capsule toys, digital wallpaper, and etc... The DoCoMoDake family also grew, from the original 3 to now 8, extend to 3 “generations” of grandparents, parents, and children.

To introduce this cellphone-centric caricatures to the rest of the world, NTT DoCoMo created an unique exhibition - How To Cook DoCoMoDake? The humorous exhibit will feature some of the most talented, up and coming Japanese artists, and their interpretations of this popular mushroom family. The event starts this

How to cook docomodake? October 19 to 28, 201 Mulberry Street, New York

New York's trendiest entered the world of Japanese popular culture recently, at an event called 'How to cook a Docomodake.' For the uninitiated, Docomodake is a corporate mascot character of a Japanese mobile phone company, symbolising family ties.

The phone company allows unused monthly time to be shared among family members, so to convey this idea of family sharing, DoCoMo designed a family of mushroom characters, as in Japanese 'dake' means both 'only' and 'mushroom.'

A total of 16 up-and-coming Japanese artists reinterpreted or 'cooked' these little mushrooms according to their respective media, which ranged from fashion to photography, from cartoons to jewellery.

Among those who took part was Kiyoshi Kuroda, an illustrator and art director known for his advertising and magazine work. The winner of Japan's Good Design Award in 2005, he is regularly involved in exhibitions both in Japan and overseas.

Representing the world of fashion was Theatre Products, whose philosophy is that clothes and their creation must be dramatic. Their striking designs have also attracted praise from the areas of art and architecture. As well as Kunihiko Morinaga who won the highest award in the avant-garde division of the new designer contest in New York in 2005. In the same year he showcased his designs at the Main Observatory of Tokyo Tower. He has an indirect approach and believes 'God is in the details.'

Artists at the event ranged media as diverse and unusual as paper-cutting. Risa Fukui uses this to show delicate expressions



and realistic representations, and her work has been used for a Reebok shoe promotion and stage costumes.

Also interpreting (or cooking) was the better known Imaitoonz, thanks to launching his career by animating for MTV Japan's Top of Japan program. He has been involved in ads and made music videos with his work shown at film festivals around the world.

Other artists who took part in this quirky fungi-family event include photographer Naoki Honjo, (currently shooting Tokyo's fast-changing cityscape from the sky) and Mikiko Minewaki - who produces jewellery from ordinary goods because she says 'good shapes are hidden in familiar arteicles.'

And two other women artists giving their input included Kyotaro,

originally a cartoonist, she has added painting, animation, comics, ads and music to her list of skills and she is due to hold a private exhibition in New York in 2008.

And also Akino Kondo who won herself the Grand Prix for her animation of a rhythmically dancing girl. Her delicately drawn women have attracted many fans both in Japan and around the world, and last month she held a private exhibition at the Taché-Lévy Gallery in Brussels.

The company says it has 'entrusted' these contemporary artists to take forward its message, and they may well be glad to have their names associated with such a craze, as the company is intending to make this an international brand with toys and accessories to follow.



Japan's most quirky and unusual up-and-coming artists were given the chance to take forward the telephone company's message, using the fungi family as their inspiration.

For more information please contact info@capellamagazine.com

Contagious ideas : spreading innovation between Paris and London (marketing, communication, media, creation)

01 décembre 2008

Pop-Up Reebok



Rev up the Delorian, Doc, it's time to go back to the eighties with Reebok. The British sportswear company has opened its first ever pop-up store which captures the spirit of the 80s more than a Deely-Boppered roller skater sporting a Rara skirt and a batwing top.

Called Reebok Flash, the store is located in a 3,000 square-foot gallery space on the Bowery in New York. It features limited edition sneakers and exclusive apparel collections. The range includes the distinctive and colourful work of Rolland Berry, as well as input from design guru John Maeda.

Experiential agency Formavision developed the store that takes its inspiration from Vorticism, an English arts movement from the early twentieth century noted for its dynamic interpretation of Cubist and Futurist principles.

www.formavision.info

Sebastien Agneessens, Formavision's creative director and founder, comments: 'We wanted to create a destination underground space that creates a buzz among fashion hipsters. We also want to attract partners so we can use the space as an epicentre for cultural events. For instance magazines like [interior design title] ID are using it to launch its '40 under 40' issue, and some indie record labels also plan to use it.'

Oh, and in amongst the packed cultural itinerary and visual references to Flash Dance and Thriller, there will also be a few pairs of shoes on display. Reebok Flash is re-launching several popular lines from the 1980s, including the Pump and Freestyle series.

Agneessens adds: 'Our intent is make people feel they are stepping into a poster rather than a store.' Formavision has a history of creating pop-up shops for the likes of Starbucks, DoCoMo and Sharp.

Pop-up shops have been used by a range of brands, often by those which already have a strong retail presence. The Gap Concept Store is a pop-up shop opposite one Gap's flagship NY store on Fifth Avenue at 54th Street in Manhattan. As it wasn't an orthodox Gap store, the apparel goliath partnered Collette in September, enabling the French designer lifestyle boutique to make its US debut. The cleaning brand method also used a pop up store in SoHo, New York, in May-June 2008 to swap traditional, chemical-based cleaning products for more colourful, sweeter smelling method ones.

www.methodhome.com

If you happen to be in Soho in London anytime over the next few weeks, check out the Barnardo's pop up shop on Broadwick Street. Selling vintage shoes donated by the likes of model Twiggy and actress Dame Helen Mirren, the shop's

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Reebok Flash Store Opens in NYC

November 20, 2008
by Monica Khemsurov



November 20, 2008. Last night, New York's **Reebok Flash pop-up store** opened on a not-so-quiet strip of the Bowery, with cacophonous interior graphics by **Sebastien Agneessens** and his team at Formavision. If it looks inspired by '80s pop, it is, but there's a more obscure design reference in play here—the patterns are modeled after the British Royal Navy's perspective-bending dazzle camouflage, applied to ships during World War I to obscure their speed and direction and thus confuse the enemy (Jeff Koons employed the technique this summer for some yacht paintings he did for billionaire art collector Dakis Joannou, [see here](#)). Reebok may be hoping the trick can ward off not just boats but brands (*cough* Nike...). 169 Bowery Street, open Tuesday to Sunday, 11AM to 7PM, Through December 15. www.formavision.info



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Formavision Develops Permanent Installations for the New World of Coca-Cola



For the conception of the New World of Coca-Cola, which opened in the Center of Atlanta in June 2007, [Formavision](#) was commissioned by the Coca-Cola Company to design and curate the exhibition content in two strategic areas of the facility: the central hub and the sampling lab.



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For the hub, Formavision created a large-scale mural in collaboration with New York design studio Plus et Plus, representing a lively and abstract projection of the earth. Formavision and [Plus et Plus](#) took inspiration from the cartographic legacies of Galileo and Copernicus to re-imagine a map, introducing op-art elements and positive words in various international alphabets. The mural symbolizes the optimistic outlook of the Coca-Cola Company on the world.

The collaboration between Coca-Cola and Formavision went further as Formavision was retained to design the sampling lab, "Taste It!," where people of all ages are invited to sample some of the 400 brands of soft drinks that the Coca-Cola Company produces and distributes around the world. For this room, Formavision collaborated with French illustrators [Antoine & Manuel](#), who created a story based on the cycle of fresh water with a series of murals and videos, developed in collaboration with New York-based digital media studio [Tronic](#).



Formavision is Sebastien Agneessens' curating agency that collaborates with contemporary artists and design studios in the design, development and production of innovative, original art campaigns that capture the imagination, reinforce brand vision, and resonate on an emotional level. Each campaign tells a story unique to the brand it serves. Formavision has produced numerous art and design projects for brands such as Diesel, Lexus, Sharp and Starbucks.

Formavision's founder Sebastien Agneessens declared at the opening that "this project has been particularly important for the agency because of its scale and of its permanent nature," adding that "this the first time that so many people are going to physically see one of our installations."

The nearly \$100 million museum is the latest attraction in the tourism and development boom of Georgia's capital city, following the September birth of Zoo Atlanta's new panda, the High Museum of Art's unique exhibit of works from the Louvre and the late 2005 opening of the Georgia Aquarium. It is making a new epicenter for tourism in Atlanta and will draw an estimated crowd of 1.5 million visitors a year.

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BrandPlay

The New World of Coca-Cola

Location_ 284 Centennial Olympic Park Drive, Atlanta, US

Date_ May 2007

Design & curation_ Formavision

Store design_ Pompei AD

Website_ www.woccatlanta.com

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This new venue, replacing the previous museum, has been created to tell the complete story of the brand and showcase how people around the world have connected with its products for over 120 years. The active experience includes three theatres, a bottling line, a popular culture exhibit showing artwork by Andy Warhol and a tasting lab. Visitors can also play interactive games, send digital postcards, create their own pop art and contribute their Coca-Cola memories to a living exhibit.



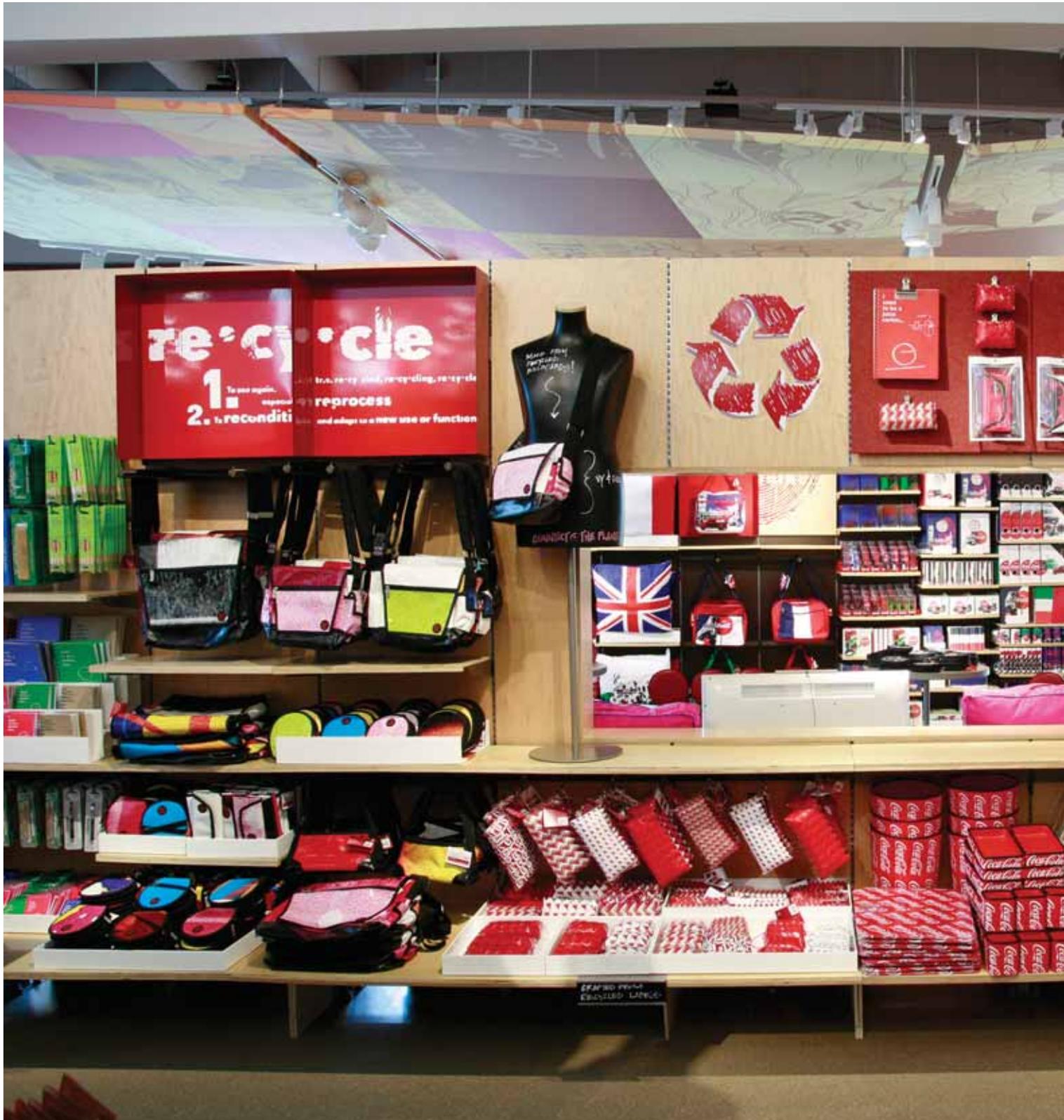


The focal point of the venue is the hub, a central open plan area that acts as the transition between the individual themed exhibits. A large Op-art inspired mural, created by Formavision in collaboration with design studio Plus et Plus, represents a world map and integrates positive words in various international alphabets to symbolise the optimistic world view of the brand.



The sampling lab, Taste It!, is a key attraction, offering visitors the chance to try over 70 of the company's beverage products. A bar area offers tastings of the 'drink of the week', while a wide range of exotic beverages, including juices, teas and sports drinks, can be sampled at island stations representing the five continents. A sixth station serves all the Coke-based drink varieties. Each totem features an eight-screen video installation, created by Tronic Studio, displaying footage about the 400 soft drinks that the company distributes around the world. A wall mural, inspired by the cycle of fresh water, is by Antoine+Manuel.





The final space, the store, resists the conventional exit retail experience, with an emphasis on unexpected merchandise and recycled goods such as CD cases made from old Coke billboards. The store design focuses on environmental concerns and the creative management of crowd flows - essential since the museum expects to draw crowds of 1.5 million a year.

One of the nation's few 'green' certified buildings, the whole venue was conceived with environmental impact in mind and aims to convey the message that the company is a responsible corporate citizen. Incorporating the latest advances in environmentally friendly design and operation, features include floors of recycled rubber matting, bamboo and carpet made from recycled PET bottles. The cups used in the sampling lab are made from 100% compostable cornstarch, with all waste from this area automatically recycled.



HOW

TYPOGRAPHY

February 2008

BEHIND THE DESIGN

REFRESHING DESIGN

With 62,000 square feet of guest areas, Atlanta's New World of Coca-Cola is approximately twice the size of the previous World of Coca-Cola. To bring life to this massive space, the brand giant turned to New York City-based Formavision to design two important areas: the Hub, a central gathering place on the first floor, and Taste It!, a sampling room on the second floor.

For the Hub, Formavision created a large-scale mural in collaboration with New York design studio Plus et Plus. "We were inspired by Victor Vasarely's Op art work," explains Formavision creative director Sebastien Agneessens. "We decided to create an abstract map of the world using various shapes and alphabets, and playing with the curvature of the walls."

For Taste It!, the firm partnered with French illustrators Antoine & Manuel "to create a story based on the cycle of water, on the source of taste and on the universal character of the Coca-Cola Company," Agneessens says.

PROJECT

New World of Coca-Cola

FIRM

Formavision, New York City;
www.formavision.info

CLIENT

Coca-Cola

TIMELINE

Nine months

SOFTWARE

Adobe Illustrator, Autodesk
3ds Max, Adobe After Effects

CREATIVE TEAM

Sebastien Agneessens, curator/
creative director; Chris
Hoover, production director;
Shinya Nakamura, studio
director/head of painting
crew; Plus et Plus, design for
the Hub; Antoine & Manuel,
illustration for the Taste It!
room; Tronic Studio, videos
for the Taste It! room



Coke's New World of Op Art

A happiness map factory in Atlanta.

BY: TERRY KATLEMAN PUBLISHED: AUG 8, 2007

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For Atlanta's New World of Coca-Cola—the recently opened tourist attraction that succeeds the World of Coca-Cola, which made its debut in 1990 and closed in April—the New York-based curating agency **Formavision** supplied some globally fizzy art. The central space of Coke's New World, called The Hub, features a large-scale mural created in a collaboration with design studio **Plus et Plus**, which, according to Formavision founder Sebastien Agneessens, is an abstract projection of the earth, inspired in part by the cartography of Galileo and Copernicus. If this map-like connection seems less than apparent at first glance, Agneessens notes that The Hub is "all curves, which made it an interesting challenge. We decided to play with this constraint by integrating some Op Art qualities into the work, very much in the style of Victor Vasarely," the late Op pioneer.



Installations: Coke's New World of Op Art | [Full View](#) »

"Then we thought about what kind of shapes we could play with to make it relevant for Coke." This being, after all, the "I'd like to teach the world to sing . . ." corporation, "we came up with words, which then became words in different alphabets." After further experimentation, the words became a map, and "the curvature of the walls recalled the multiple techniques used in map projections, which consist of transforming the globe into a flat surface," Agneessens explains. "We used our own projection method, which is mostly poetic and abstract, but when you tell people that what they're looking at is a map, they totally see it and they're able to place their country on the map." The overall effect of the design, he adds, is an expression of Coke's fundamental optimism.

In addition, Formavision designed Coke's glowingly futuristic Taste It! product sampling lab, where some 70 brands are available for the sipping at a series of geographically arranged tasting stations. This room features a collaboration with French illustrators **Antoine & Manuel**, whose pop-schematics-style murals, and videos (the latter developed with digital media studio Tronic) present an anything but dry narrative of the planet's water cycle.

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