

ZINK

Miracles of MODERN DESIGN

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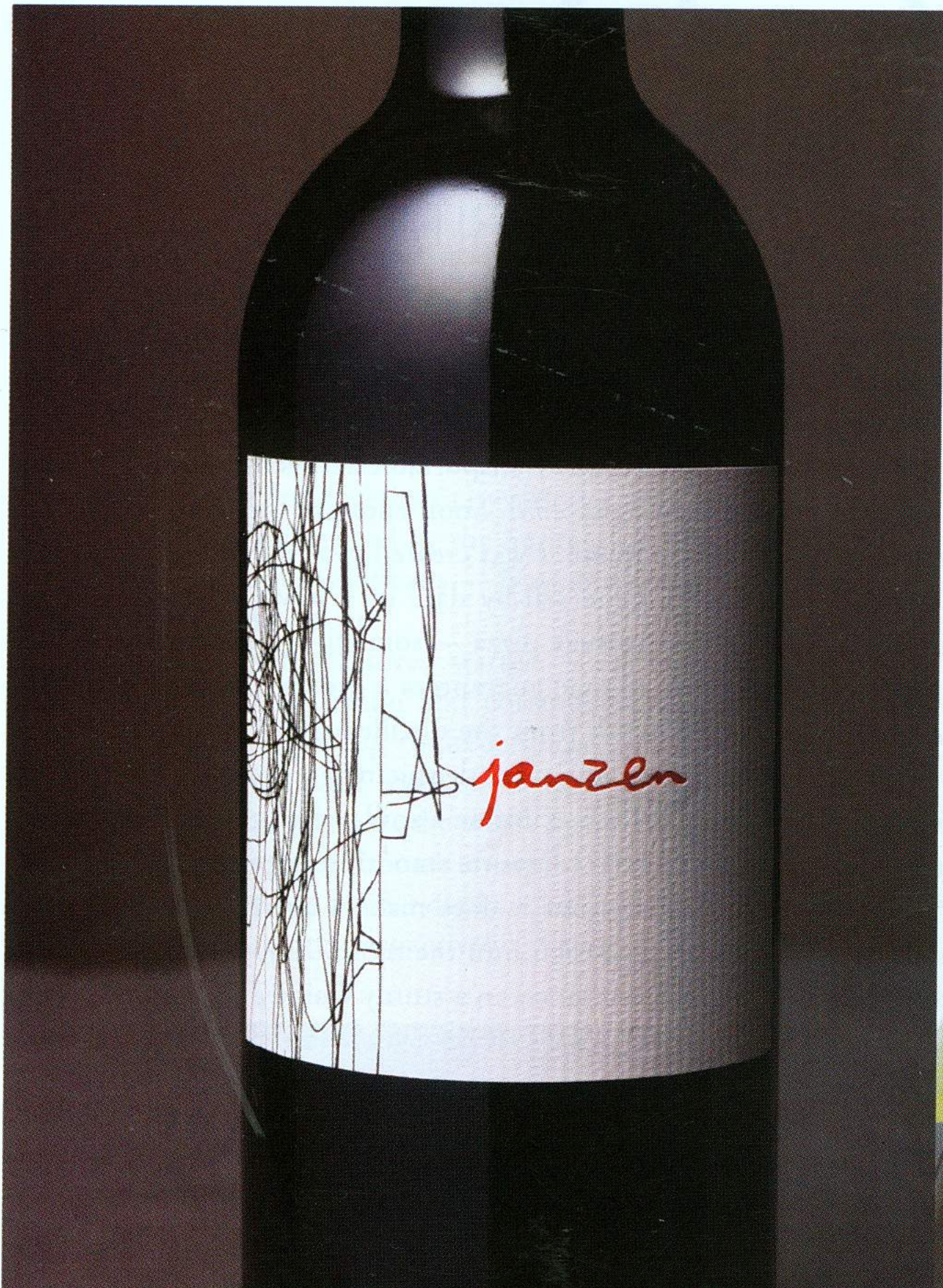
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LABEL- CONSCIOUS WINES

IF YOU'RE THE TYPE TO JUDGE A BOTTLE BY ITS LABEL, CHECK OUT THE LATEST IN STYLISH WINE DESIGN.

Visually standing apart from an ocean of other vino is essential in today's world of wine, but it isn't a new thing. In the 1940s, Baron Philippe de Rothschild, the owner of the eminent Château Mouton Rothschild in Bordeaux, decided to commission famous artists to create images for the wine's label. Artists have since included Jean Hugo, Salvador Dalí, Andy Warhol and Francis Bacon, among others. Another iconic brand that is instantly recognized by its design is Perrier-Jouët. At the turn of the 20th century, Perrier-Jouët heir Henri Gallice hired art nouveau artist Emile Gallé to decorate the vessel for their champagne. The delicate floral design was abandoned through two world wars and then rediscovered in the 1960s and used to package the house's vintage cuvée, which we all know as the Fleur de Champagne.

To become an iconic brand, according to David Schuemann, owner and creative director of CF Napa, a design and strategic branding company based in California, you have to achieve three things. "First of all the packaging must attract the consumer, then the wine's quality should be reinforced when that person drinks the wine; finally, the consumer has to remember that wine." He adds, "Even I have trouble remembering which wine I had with dinner last night at a restaurant. Creative design can lead you back."

"We're being asked to come up with really unique designs. A lot of labels that we're creating also have a third-dimensional element.

Labels are getting very tactile," says Schuemann. Case in point is the Bex Riesling. The bottle wears a brilliant label of embossed ribbed textures, depicting a bright clean font against a metallic-lime backdrop that truly stands apart from other German Riesling labels, which can be overkill with wine jargon. The designer enthuses, "We liked the idea of German perfectionism and were inspired by our love for German sports cars, as well as the clean design of the Bauhaus movement. This was a really fun one to work on."

Schuemann also worked on a label that we find positively haunting: Old Ghost, produced by Klinker Brick Winery in Lodi, California. The winery hired the firm to come up with something elegant that would also hint at the quality of the wine inside. The inspiration here ended up being the vines themselves. "The wine is made from 120-year-old vines and they're getting exceptional juice out of them. We modeled the image after a head-pruned vine, and there's a lot going on here to make it look like a blind-embossed image," explains Schuemann.

As fans of labels that are works of art in themselves, we're thankful that the trend for furry animals and crude innuendo is tapering off and has given way to classier depictions. "There is still a demand for fun, irreverent labels, but they're becoming more sophisticated and memorable." And our wine shelves are looking all the more better for it. **PAMELADEVI GOVINDA**