

NOT THE REGULAR YUMMY
TREAT... TASTE, THE
DIFFERENCE.

The lovely chocolate of the well known chain Australian Homemade is doing very well in the United States, Asia and Europe. But who would have expected that it started with two tiny stores in the Netherlands? So a leading Dutch newspaper wrote in a full page article about the 'Foreign Affairs of Dutch Design' on July 10th 2005. Reviewing the travelling exhibition with the same name that featured the work of 90 Dutch designers. Showing that Dutch design is not only of cultural value but is doing well on the international commercial market and contributes to the quality and viability of companies and other organisations. The travelling exhibition was an initiative of the Association of Dutch Designers (BNO) and the Premsele Foundation, supported by the EVD, the Agency for International Business and Cooperation (part of the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs).

- Australian Homemade has an authentic, natural image. The product is regarded as cool. What started with two shops in the Netherlands has grown into a worldwide franchise formula with over 75 stores in Europe, the United States and Asia. The blueprint for Australian Homemade (from packaging to interior) was conceived by Boy Bastiaens in 1995. In 2000, Concrete Architectural Associations adjusted the interior concept, creating a broader model that allowed for expansion towards the franchise market. KesselsKramer made postcards and campaigns....-

Thus the text on the display panel that accompanied the Australian Homemade packaging designs, logo and interior photographs during the travels of the Foreign Affairs of Dutch Design exhibition to London, Berlin, Kaapstad and other cities.

Exactly 10 years earlier, in 1995, Boy Bastiaens was commissioned by entrepreneur Rini Korst to develop the comprehensive visual branding identity program for Australian Homemade. Regarding the set-up of a number of shops based around ice cream products and chocolates without artificial colors, artificial flavors, artificial emulators, stabilizers and additives. And following the 'profits with principles' business philosophy by supporting Aboriginal projects with a part of the turnover.

'It was an extraordinary choice at that time, to commission a single designer and not an agency for a project like this. However, the biggest challenge and greatest potential arose from the fact that the project was not programmed at all and with only the name Australian Homemade set, everything for the start-up venture, had to be invented from scratch.

Korst had the recipe licence, from a Belgian ice cream maker, who learned the ice cream making trade from his aunt in the outback of Australia in 1972, as the story went.'

Remembers Boy Bastiaens who works across the fields of graphic design, art direction, illustration, packaging, product design and interactive media.

Designing as an independent multi-disciplinary consultant for public and private clients on a variety of national and international projects.





The project kicked off in 1995 with the design of the logo. As a symbol of a company, a logo is visual communication at its most basic - the purest form of graphic design. Being the primary identifier, it is the single most important element in a total corporate identity program. When properly designed it conveys value, authenticity and consistently evokes recognition.

As there simply was no budget for advertising of any kind, the packaging had to be enticing and a visit to an Australian Homemade shop had to be so surprising as that people would talk about it and 'advertise' the Australian Homemade experience.

In the design of the ice cups all the generic food imagery of ingredients (nuts, chocolate, fruit, cream e.g.) plus the obvious Australian clichés (boomerangs, kangaroo's) were deliberately left out. Inspired by the amazing visual language of early Aboriginal stone carvings, motifs were

designed to distinguish the variety in available tastes. The adaptation of the logo took a prominent and active place in every single category. Turning the packaging designs into elegant pieces of work which rapidly caught attention and interest. And got them awarded by the ADCN (Dutch Art Directors Club) in 1997 and selected for the long list of the Rotterdam Design Prize in the same year.

In the chocolate packaging case an effort was also made to steer away from the standard red colored ribbon / hi-gloss boxes. And looking for the unusual by doing things differently. Greyboard is made from waste paper. It feels recycled, it is strong, flexible and cheap. Bastiaens decided to use this basic material for his premium packaging. A matt lamination prevented the inside of the box from fat traces and becoming too smudgy when filled with chocolates. It also gave the outside of the pack an unusual appearance as the lamination takes on all the

imperfections in the surface of the board. Besides this, a matt lamination also adds a level of tactile quality to the box. The very simple, but highly distinctive packaging design was completed with the Australian Homemade logo silkscreened in white on the lid of the pack and generic product info on the lid's back. A wide variety of motifs, indicating different tastes, were printed with carotene on square shaped chocolates and the jewel like pieces established a strong contrast between content and packaging. This was also enforced by the sealed heavy quality aluminium wrap that spelled just the line 'absolutely pure!'.

Confectionery and ice cream manufacturing used to be traditional trades with their own standard vocabulary of design clichés. Australian's fresh approach was not restricted to packaging only but covered, as early 'brand experience' project, also the interior design concepting of the stores.





Built up with a material palette of stainless steel, glass, concrete and natural wood, the Australian Homemade interior concept combines an eclectic mix of different styles in a harmonious way. Addressing the idea of design as a language and primarily being about communication it comes close to a well told story that brings in a sense of relationships and atmosphere. With a background in traditional illustration, Bastiaens' working tool was the drawing. Ranging from visuals that explained and outlined the conceptual idea of the interior, to digital model sheets that accurately prepared two and three dimensional designs for prototyping and manufacturing.

Like for example the glass fronted stainless steel cabinet that displayed the ice cups. Based upon a vernacular trophies and award case that displayed records of victory and achievements for athletic feats. The press forming of the Australian Homemade logo on both storage doors is exemplary for the ubiquitous branding of the entire stainless steel freeze equipment with the corporate symbol.

Quite contradictory to this industrial look, was the authentic motif that was painted out like a huge tapestry on the concrete floor. And as a matter of fact, grey concrete walls looked also very different in these days from what one might expect in an average ice cream salon.

The Australian Homemade interior had only one thing in common with a traditional ice cream store - the counter. But even this design element featured a significant and ground breaking detail, that went against all rules of the traditional ice cream salon - it did not show the ice cream at all. An intriguing design detail that actually has a very simple and obvious reason. The 'absolutely pure' ice cream is manufactured without the use of artificial coloring, which visually differentiates the product from all other ice creams by looking quite pale.

Both basic counter design and its elegant solution of a 'hidden' ice cream section underneath stainless steel cupboards, must be credited to Dutch architect Wouter van der Schans. Who was involved in the project for taking care of the pilot stores technical implementations. The later counter version, modified, adjusted and redesigned for the franchise market to this day captures the original 'hidden ice cream' section.

In 2004 Japanese publisher PIE BOOKS launched 'Food Shop Graphics', interior and graphic applications of food and drink retailers. A publication with 80 high profile japanese contributions like Bape Cafe!? (yes, both exclamation mark and question-mark are part of the brand name) and Kyo Hayashiya, specialized in Kyoto teas. Australian Homemade was carefully selected as one of the 40 international distinctive concepts. Detailed outlined in the book with photographs of the store interiors, chocolate and ice cream packaging.

Within a very short time span, between 1995 and 1997, the blueprint for the comprehensive brand identity (from logo - to packaging - to interior concept) was conceived by Boy Bastiaens. Even now, almost 15 years later, with a majority of original design elements in use the concept still looks fresh.