

LAST OBSTACLE TO ENJOYMENT | Fizzing sounds

In the beginning was the cork: a cylindrical piece of bark which was used to seal bottles. This invention has survived for several centuries, until the present day. The crown cork was invented in 1892.

For decades the crown cork was a round piece of metal which would be squeezed onto the top of the bottle. To begin with, it had 24 cusps, which later became only 21. The actual sealing effect was achieved by using an inner cork lining, at least!

In 1960 plastic was beginning to take the world by storm. Soon even the cork lining had vanished from the crown cork. The term ‚crown cork‘ did not change. Ever since its beginnings this piece of innovative sealing has been ruthlessly bent, using bottle openers. It is happening millions of times per second all over the world. In spite of this cruel treatment, the brave crown cork will still make a vivid and joyous sound, only to be discarded carelessly in the end.

The crown cork.

We walk past it every day, or we even flatten it onto the pavement. Hardly anyone is aware of actually kicking an art form with one's feet. The variety is simply stunning, due to the vast product range. Be it soft drinks or beer, mineral water or soda pop, the cap is taking care of all those wonderfully vivid fizzy drinks for us. A crown cork is a display of colours, typography, and concepts in its own right. The wide range of richly illustrated graphic design often turns these round pieces of metal into small works of art. It only takes one frivolous gesture to turn them into the waste of modernity.

„No way!“

Berlin artist/recyclist Joerg Kitzing has taken the art of seals out of their past. Using creative means, he demonstrates that these often overlooked and hardly ever respected canvases have always been historically up-to-date and consistently seminal, in the course of their own history.

There are five diverse depictions which evoke reminiscences to different art movements. All of these art movements were about moving simple objects away from the perceptual ignorance of daily life into a distinct world of clarity. The panorama on display does actually appear to be a homage to the diversity and changes of life itself. This is all the more astonishing as the central object remains the same: the very common crown cork. An object everyone knows. It presents us with a whole pictorial universe but due to its ubiquity it is denied the attention it deserves.

1 | The rare originals, a strange encounter with the past! Many a collector might go insane over this. Even in this first picture: „For the Originals“, the hundreds of exhibits, carefully framed in a passepartout behind glass, do not take on an explicitly historicizing role. The aim is to put the focus on the aspect of designs. Even in the 19th century, almost without parallel, Coca-Cola managed to build a bridge between art and commerce, both regarding the design of the logo and the bottle.

2 | „For the Designers“, the second picture in the series, presents no less than $19 \times 28 = 532$ different Coca-Cola crown corks from all over the world and from all eras. The development of the appealing graphic design seems surprisingly varied and constant at the same time. Maybe those letters, curled up like fresh waves, are so engraved into our brains that we just cannot grasp the design's variable quality while the opened bottle is happily fizzing away. The optical stimulus of a product on offer will always affect the consumer on a more subconscious level. Only later, or even much later, the past will be archived in collections and put into a new and quite attractive perspective. It is only then that the stylish sequences of a product's presence and the aesthetics of a varying design will be seen for what they are worth.

3 | „For the Green Bottles“, the image at the centre of the Pentychon, is a homage almost speaking for itself. Ever since Dadaism, artists have periodically put

a special focus on the particularity of the every day. They turned the banale into something extraordinary, they transformed it into something special. In the 60s the Nouveau Réalisme was emerging in France. The artists put on display what common daily life had to offer. Pop Art arose almost overnight in the USA. Joerg Kitzing demonstrates that something is obviously missing from the history of Pop Art, though. While there has not been a single new Coca-Cola bottle without a crown cork on top for an entire century, the cork would not exist without the bottle. Printing the paraphrase „For the Green Bottles“ onto a metal plate is a truly apt completion of a Pop Art icon from the year 1962.

4 | The fourth piece of art has a visual instant directness and in terms of content it aims for realism. „For the Diversity of Life“ brings forth another reality and truth. It is a collage of overlapping pictures in which a wide variety of different crown corks apparently try to push each other aside. One might think it was an interpretation of chaos. It is absolutely fine to see it that way. There is no negative intention behind it. This is an illustration of the multitude of human potential and - as a dynamic interaction - it also symbolises the ever developing chances of social existence. One thing is for certain: social interaction in modern society is always tumultuous and can never be fully regulated. Apart from the impact of the collage itself, the picture resembles just that: freedom and variety, no standing in line - the rich diversity of life.

5 | The fifth and last picture is an original „Ready Made“, without fully embodying its tradition. At the end of the 1920s, Marcel Duchamp was the first one to use selected finds in order to reveal the quality of reality. He mostly did this without much artistic interference. This isn't the case here. Nevertheless, all objects on display can also be found in real life. In the image, which has been scaled up to such an extent that it will keep the viewer from realising it is the graphic art of a crown cork, we find the crop of the silhouette of the world-famous typography, closer to a light shadow of

it, actually. By combining these two pictorial elements, it becomes clear how intensively a design can decorate a whole century. The end of its success is not even in sight. The best future of a history obviously seems to live within a trend-setting past.

And let us never forget ... those fizzing sounds.

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