

INSTITUTE OF CURRENT WORLD AFFAIRS

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Lembah Keramat
Ulu Kelang, Selangor
Malaysia
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BEB-14

The Shape of Desire

Mr. Peter Bird Martin
Institute of Current World Affairs
Wheelock House
4 West Wheelock Street
Hanover, NH 03755

Dear Peter,

Advertising has been called a science, a medium of communication employing a rigorous system of statistics, demography and other objective research methods to determine campaign rationales and marketing strategies. Advertising has also been termed an art, infused with the vocabularies and methodologies of art and design, the social sciences and psychology. Advertising is both, a craft, an inexact discipline that melds analysis with intuition, information with innuendo, fact with imagination, all to convince an audience that this product, this candidate, this idea, is the right choice. Advertising is the business of persuasion.

Southeast Asia has proved receptive to this type of persuasion. Every member of the five-nation ASEAN coalition (Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines) has a multi-million dollar advertising industry. So does Hong Kong. With relative political stability, economic health and a growing middle class, the region is seen as one of the most potentially profitable in the world. Agencies range from tiny, one-room paste-up shops that bill a few thousand dollars a year to the glittering international chains like J. Walter Thompson and Ogilvy and Mather, each with hundreds of offices world-wide, thousands of employees and international billings that run into the billions. With the proliferation of agencies and the increasing sophistication of local marketing techniques and technologies, advertising has become a cultural and economic force to reckon with.

Western agencies dominate the Southeast Asian advertising market. Leo Burnett (referred to in the trade simply as Burnett), Ted Bates (Bates), McCann-Erickson (McCann), SSC&B:Lintas (Lintas), Ogilvy and Mather (O&M), Young and Rubicam (Y&R) and the venerable J. Walter Thompson (Thompson, or JWT), all have offices throughout the region. Dentsu of Japan, the number one agency in the world (a rating based on billings, some \$3 billion in 1981) is also represented. Though staffed by locals, the majority of these agencies still have foreign managers and creative directors. Some local agencies have also followed suit. Thus, Westerners and Western ideas of marketing and creative expression play a decisive and continuing role in the growth and direction of the regional advertising industry.

New multi-nationals enter this fray monthly, part of a worldwide expansion of advertising out of the USA, Europe and Japan and into Latin America, Africa and Asia.

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America, which represented three-quarters of the world's advertising in 1950, now accounts for only half. The percentage keeps dropping. Some extrapolators expect a 200% increase in non-American advertising expenditures by 1990--\$167 billion versus \$55 billion today (US advertising expenditures are expected to rise from today's \$55 billion to a mere \$147 billion during the same period). Anxious to cash in on this potential international goldmine, the multi-nationals have peppered the globe with branch offices. Dentsu is typical of this trend: 41 offices in 11 countries. Young and Rubicam has an even wider spread: 126 offices in 34 countries. Other agencies are not far behind. Though corporate philosophies differ, the belief underlying this expansion is shared by all: despite surface cultural differences, people everywhere are pretty much the same. Or as Tony Perone, the American creative director of Lintas Hong Kong puts it: "If a housewife from Burma got together with a housewife from Connecticut, they might be speaking different languages but they would be talking the same ideas." Thus, with slight modifications in language, nuance and idiom, both can be persuaded in much the same way.

Proponents of persuasion argue that advertising is an essential, integral component of a consumer society. Advertising informs as it persuades. Though admittedly, much effort and money are spent on ads that tout one brand over another, many also introduce new products, services and ideas. This, say the ad agencies, is a Good Thing. Interpublic, parent company of the Lintas, McCann and Marschalk Campbell-Ewald chains is understandably adamant in support of the business. A promotional pamphlet declares:

Advertising is inevitably linked with rising standards of living. Advertising helps to bring about such rising standards and continues to participate in the growth of consumer economies it has helped to spur. Indeed, the extent of advertising is one approximate measurement of the economic development of a nation, or a region.

David Ogilvy, founder of O&M and one of the doyens of the trade mounts an even more forceful defense:

If you disapprove of social mobility, creature comforts and foreign travel you are right to blame advertising for encouraging such wickedness. If you dislike affluent society, you are right to blame advertising for inciting the masses to pursue it... If you are this kind of Puritan, I cannot reason with you. I can only call you a psychic masochist...I make no apology for inciting the working class to desire less Spartan lives.

Though Ogilvy's colleagues and competitors tend to share these sentiments, critics do not see advertising in such a rosy light. Citing examples of exaggeration (what Ogilvy himself criticizes as 'flatulent puffery'), false promises and the subliminal verbal and visual messages that have been documented in past Western ads, opponents maintain that advertising is not merely a business of persuasion, but of manipulation. This is a matter of some concern to Southeast Asian governments. Inciting the masses is all very well, but when those masses are illiterate, poor or unsophisticated the results can be disastrous. Experiences in other developing regions lends credence to these fears. In Africa, for example, advertising convinced peasant mothers to switch from breastfeeding to infant formulas, though they had neither the income nor the knowledge

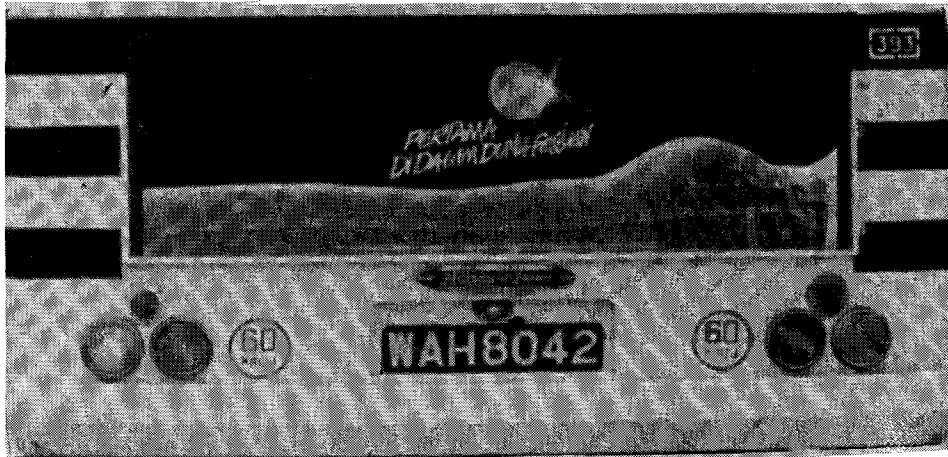
of modern hygiene sufficient for the task. Babies subjected to this dangerous regimen of watered-down formula (a week's supply stretched to last a month) and improperly sterilized bottles soon sickened and died. Soft drink-fed "Fanta babies" (after the Coca-Cola-produced drink of the same name) didn't fare much better. In both cases, the advertising was effective, but the audience was ill-equipped to deal with the product. (Not all campaigns in the developing world have had such notorious results, however. Advertising has been employed to introduce tse-tse fly eradication techniques in Africa, encourage contraception in Thailand and stimulate blood donations in Hong Kong, with largely beneficial effects.)

Moreover, advertising perpetuates cultural stereotypes. Most countries now have their own versions of Western advertising characters: the housewife despairing for a better cup of coffee, a whiter, brighter wash, or cleaner floors; the macho, beer-drinking worker; urbanized, hip children. Such characters are effective marketing tools, identifiable reflections of the society at large (albeit stilted ones), or what members of that society aspire to be. Governments, however, concerned with national unity, patriotism, traditional values and cultural integrity, take issue with such role models, preferring moral, hardworking, conscientious, law-abiding ideal types. It is here that governments and ad agencies most often differ, especially in Southeast Asia: governments view the media as a propaganda vehicle, an inciter of the masses, a nation-building tool; ad agencies, conversely see the media as a marketing vehicle and a profit-building tool. Both try to persuade, but to different ends. Though Southeast Asian governments appreciate the revenue advertising generates (after all, without it, few could offer programming that the public would be willing to watch), most have enacted regulations to insure that the media does not contravene the party line.

Malaysia has one of the strictest advertising codes in the region and a board of censors to back it up. In this plural society of Malays, Chinese and Indians, ads must sell products within delicate parameters, slandering or type-casting no race, offending no religion, belittling no language. Subliminal advertising is forbidden as is exaggeration or appeals to fear or superstition. Mindful of the African experience, the advertising code also has a provision prohibiting ads that imply artificial formulas are preferred over breast feeding.

The ad code is particularly concerned with the moral values advertisements impart, particularly on TV. Code regulations describe how male, female and child models should act, what types of clothing they can wear; what parts of the body can be exposed (armpits, for example, are taboo, a challenge for deodorant advertisements). Jeans, a symbol of the West, are similarly prohibited, except in print and radio advertisements. Cigarette and liquor advertisements are confined to print and cinema). Many pages are devoted to the effect of ads on children and how child-oriented ads should be designed. Additionally, ads are required to reflect Malaysian culture, which in the local context means Malay (as opposed to Indian or Chinese) culture, and also reflect the multi-racial character of the population. In keeping with the code's moral tone, a recently promulgated regulation requests advertisers to include a "second message" that communicates the principles of the Rukunegara, Malaysia's national pledge. Bahasa Malaysia is also stressed as the medium of ad communication though Chinese and Indian vernacular dialects are allowed.

Other regulations require that ads be locally-made, with locally-shot film footage, local models, local technicians and local, or resident foreign, creative personnel. Imported foreign expertise or footage is allowed only under



1. An ad for a local jeans manufacturer, F.U.'s, tacked to the rear of a Malaysian bus. The copy reads: "first in the world of fashion."

special circumstances, More importantly from the profits standpoint, foreign agencies, like all foreign firms operating in Malaysia, must be 30% bumiputra-owned (Malays and other indigenous races are designated bumiputras, "sons of the soil!"); up to 40% non-bumiputra (Chinese, Indian or Eurasian) ownership is also encouraged. Agencies that comply with these requirements are given preferential media bookings.

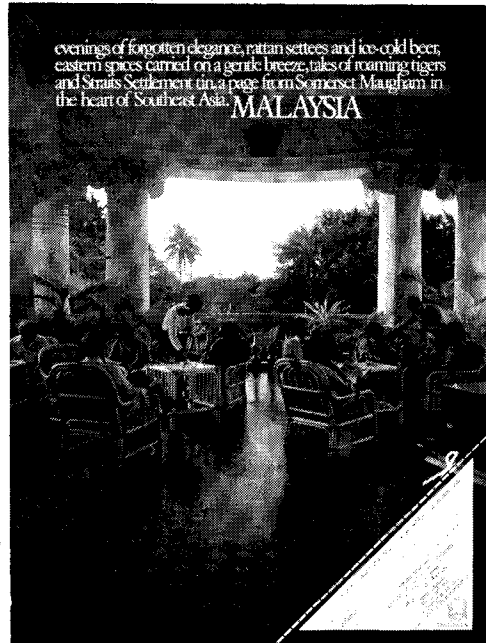
Though advertising agencies chafe under this battery of regulations, they have managed to produce some of the most sophisticated advertising in the region, and even chalked up a few Cleos, the industry Oscar. So advanced is the state of the art that FINAS (Film Nasional), the national film development authority, has even considered sponsoring seminars or workshops in hopes of transferring technology and expertise to the local film industry.

Indonesian advertising, though perhaps fifteen years behind Malaysia's industry, has no dearth of regulation. Indonesian advertising regulations are similarly restrictive to insure that advertisements conform to national religious, cultural and political policies. In concordance with the government's attempts to assimilate Indonesia's Chinese minority, Chinese-language advertising is forbidden, nor are Chinese ideograms allowed in any advertising context- even for decoration. Foreign periodicals with such advertising are confiscated, banned or censored.

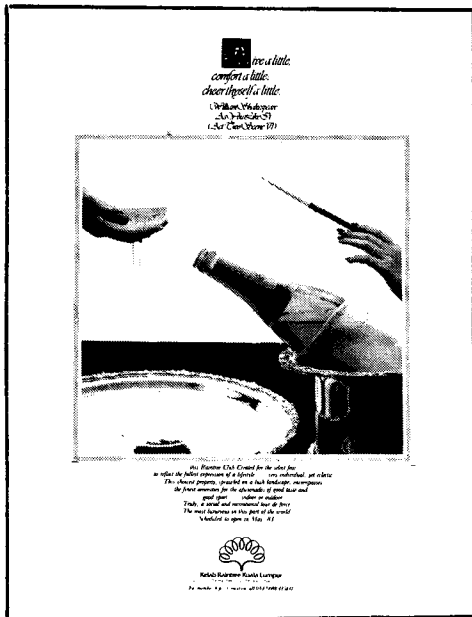
In 1982, the Indonesian government banned TV advertisements, in part a response to pressure from Islamic political groups, who complained that the ads were disseminating immoral values and were adversely influencing the rural population. The results were unexpected. According to Grace Atkinson, managing director of Thompson Jakarta, the ban funneled money formerly spent on TV advertising into radio and print ads, squeezing many small, local advertisers out of the media and eventually, out of business. Jakarta ad agencies are expecting a reversal of the ban this year, possibly reinstating advertising on a new channel, beamed only to Jakarta and other urban areas.



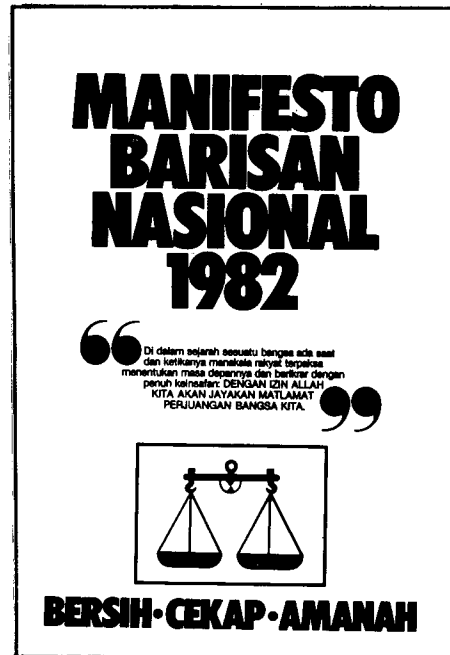
2. Selling sex. Aristocrat mattresses ran this ad for a few months last year in Malaysian newspapers. Adverse public reaction finally forced the company to withdraw the ad though it is still used in poster form at house furnishing shows.



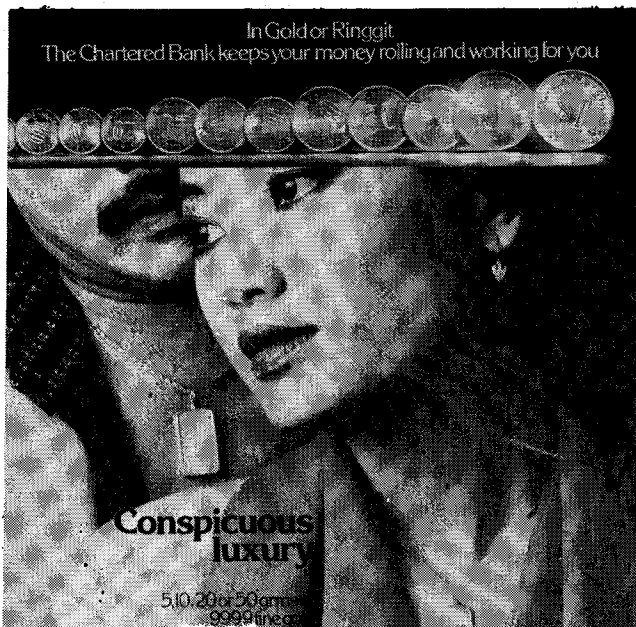
3. Selling the Exotic East. This ad, by Thompson Kuala Lumpur for the Tourist Development Corporation, is for overseas consumption.



4. Selling status. The soon-to-open Raintree Club of Kuala Lumpur is being marketed by Johan Design Associates (Malaysia's top local agency and design house) as the most exclusive and luxurious of Malaysia's many exclusive and luxurious clubs.



5. Selling the status quo. Barisan Nasional has been Malaysia's ruling party since Independence in 1957. This full-page newspaper ad was part of a 1982 pre-election media blitz that drowned the under-financed voices of the opposition. Barisan Nasional won easily.



6. Capitalizing on gold's long standing cultural significance and current investment potential, many of Malaysia's banks are selling ingot jewellery in 5-50 gram bars. This ad tells it like it is: "conspicuous luxury." The ingots are selling like hotcakes.

Hong Kong probably has the biggest volume of money spent per capita, with strong retail advertising. In Malaysia, the structure of the market is broader, more comparable to the United Kingdom or America. Unlike Hong Kong or Singapore, Malaysia is not a city-state. You're dealing with rural areas, provincial towns, a more ordinary lifestyle and thus a more conventional scope of advertising than in Singapore or Hong Kong.

As for the sophistication of the Malaysian industry, Grayson, in concert with other members of the Malaysian advertising establishment, believes that Malaysia's history of marketing-oriented companies is largely responsible:

Malaysia has been the base for a lot of manufacturing companies, like Beecham's, breweries, that sort of thing. Thailand is not that developed anyway, and is culturally so tightly-knit, thus it really hasn't had much foreign intervention in advertising. Indonesia is too fractured as a country for anyone to get it together and the income level there is so low, overall, the middle class is so tiny, that it is difficult to develop effective advertising. Hong Kong and Singapore are highly developed and technically one can achieve more in those two places, but the market is not as sophisticated; by this I mean not as complex or broadly developed.

Regulations in other Southeast Asian nations are less stringent. In Singapore, for example, agencies have few restrictions on the importation of personnel, models or footage. Thus, Singapore audiences are treated to local productions and an international smorgasbord of ads from Australia, America and Europe (audiences across the causeway in Malaysia's Johore state get the same treat). Such imports, though undoubtedly cheaper than locally-produced ads, are stocked with Caucasian models and foreign accents, of dubious relevance for the local population of Chinese, Malays and Indians, except for some residual Anglophile prestige value. Philippine advertising is also one of the relatively less-regulated Southeast Asian industries.

No one advertising industry is typical of Southeast Asia; each is a response to the peculiarities of the local market. Says David Grayson, creative director of Thompson, Kuala Lumpur:

Peter Frey, of Lintas Kuala Lumpur, agrees, but also feels the insistence on local technology and personnel has helped the industry develop faster than its counterparts elsewhere in the region (not all of Malaysia's advertising managers and creative directors would agree). Additionally, Frey believes that, in television advertising, Malaysia's continued reliance on film, rather than video, has aided the development of local advertising:

In Hong Kong they have access to the latest video facilities and thus, can produce a film for, say, 10,000 Malaysian dollars. You couldn't even have a pre-production meeting in Malaysia for that amount of money. This means they don't have to run the films for very long. The advertising tends to be not as strategic as it could be. Malaysia does not have access to this advanced video technology. Celluloid is expensive so films are planned carefully. The concepts and technical quality are high.

Despite Malaysia's plural population, few ads have an overtly ethnic appeal, as only a very limited number of products are ever marketed exclusively to a single ethnic group. Says David Grayson:

One seldom does it by demographics, one does it by psychographics. What you must work out is, one, does the audience have the money to buy the product (which is demographics) and two, what are their attitudes (which is psychographics). You look for people with particular attitudes if you want to sell them something, rather than race. Afterwards there may be a racial skew. If you're trying to sell someone a motorcar, for example, they have to be earning a certain amount of money to even consider such a purchase. They're more likely to be urban than rural, because the cities are where most of the wealth is concentrated. Then you look for the attitude of mind. If your car is economical and hasn't got a lot of style, that throws up the Chinese audience immediately because that is their attitude. They see it as a totally functional item. If the car has a bit more style and is slightly racy, the selling can be skewed more towards the Malay.

Thompson's 1982 Toyota campaign, winner of the Malaysian Advertising Association's Grand Prix Award does emphasize ethnicity, in this case martial arts, but is skewed towards no particular Malaysian race. Different Japanese martial art forms like jujitsu and kendo are used to emphasize various Toyota car functions: handling, power, etc. Silat, a Malay martial art, was added at the insistence of the Censor Board. All are definite eye-catchers in this martial art-conscious society (kung fu films are very popular among the Chinese and both Malay and Indian movies have their own, similar fight scenes, complete with karate chops, roundhouse kicks and superhuman leaps). By describing function in this metaphorical manner the ads insure attention from a wide slice of the Malaysian racial mix.

Another Thompson campaign, though not ethnic in design, has a very obvious group appeal. Ads for Fraser and Neave's Zappel soft drink are quite pointedly directed at Malaysia's fashion-conscious, trend-setting urban youth. Directed by

Nancy Hollander, an American resident in Australia, the cinema and TV ads are composed of tightly edited images of "pan-Asian" kids on escalators, in record stores and various other urban scenes, set to a catchy, disco-inspired tune. Three versions, in English, Chinese and Malay, insure proper multi-racial coverage. Marketing for other F&N soft drinks is directed at other target audiences, other "attitudes of mind."

Those few campaigns that cater to a particular "attitude of mind" via ethnicity have proved quite effective in garnering a larger product market share. Lintas' 1981 Lipton Tea campaign, designed to capture the Malay slice of the market, was extraordinarily successful. Directed by Tony Perone, then creative director at Lintas KL, the TV and print ad series employs Mahmood June, a Malay actor well known for his evil character roles in Malay movies and bangsawan (traditional Malay drama). Says Perone:

At the end of the ad he threatens viewers who do not drink Lipton Tea. The Malays, who identified with him, thought this was hilarious, but others misunderstood the whole thing. It took almost two years for the public to realize that there was not anything sinister in it. And it did amazing things for Lipton.

That non-Malays should have found Mahmood's threats (he opens the first of the three-commercial series shaking his fist, screaming, "Aku musnahkan kau!" I'll pulverize you!) somewhat disturbing is not surprising given the segmented nature of the Malaysian performing arts and media. Mahmood is a famous dramatic personality, but few non-Malays ever choose to see Malay films, much less bangsawan. Similarly, few Malays are willing to spend an evening at a Cantonese kung fu film, unless Bruce Lee is the star (Indian Hindustani melodramas, however, provide the inspiration for much popular Malay film and thus, do have a Malay following). Thus, for the Chinese or Indian non-initiate, Mahmood was not just an actor playing a role, but a deranged Malay, threatening their lives. With the race riots of 1969 still fresh in many Malaysian minds, no wonder it took two years and three Mahmood June testimonials before non-Malays understood that, yes, he was just acting.

Yet another Perone brainchild was the 1982 Veuve Martin cognac campaign. Perone returned to Kuala Lumpur from his present Hong Kong posting especially to design this campaign, directed at a Malaysian Chinese target audience (since Muslim Malays are forbidden to drink liquor and Indians, though drinkers, make up such a small slice of the market, most liquor advertisements are made with the Chinese in mind), emphasizing the richness of Chinese culture. Opening with an auspicious red-and-black shot of the Chinese yin-yang symbol, the campaign's cinema ad is



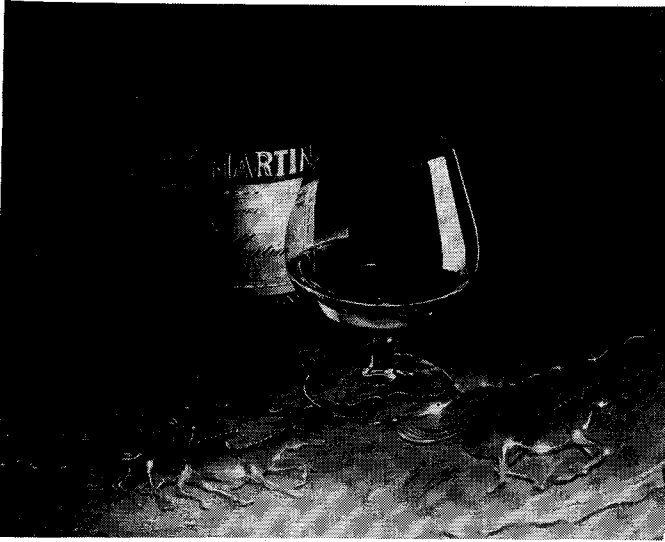
Jad, yang wajaq
dunyo mudi. Ado
igono, dekap memek
menang sap. Sedap sedap
sedap sedap sedap atau bla
saka ber'alah. Saka muna
sem Lipton. Rasa o betul betul
sedap. Bawa betul betul
saka pur teras sedap.
Kata orang Lipton may'ni
a sebur duno. Tap saka lai

Signature



Lipton. teh yang betul-betul sedap.

9. Mahmood June and Lipton Tea.



10. Artwork for Remy Martin magazine ad.

glass on a table carved, inlaid or painted with the requisite animal. Budget constraints, however, reduced the series to a single ad, a table carved with horses, the Remy bottle, a cognac snifter and a Chinese proverb: "one lone steed streaks ahead, a shining star leaving the others behind by far" (a horse proverb was chosen to reinforce Remy Martin's Chinese name, in Mandarin, Ren Ma Piau, "Man-Horse Brand," a reference to the product symbol, a centaur. Previous Remy campaigns have also associated cognac with horses. Other brands have their own visual markers). Whether this campaign will increase the Remy Martin share of the cognac market is unknown, as the campaign was only recently initiated. Initial indicators, however, have been favorable.

Culture always tends to play a disproportionate role in Chinese-oriented visual communication (see BEB-1 and BEB-13). At least the Chinese insist it does. Even with Westernized Chinese clients, design, color and orientation must often correspond with traditional Chinese beliefs and customs. Such concerns, however, are not always consistent, and one sometimes wonders just how important these subliminal communication markers are. Henry Steiner, an internationally renowned American graphic designer, based in Hong Kong, explains:

Once, my package design for bread was criticized by the client who said that the black and white checked tablecloth pattern which formed a background would be seen by Hong Kong consumers as being unlucky. This was on a Saturday morning and he was wearing a black and white houndstooth checked sportscoat. When I pointed out that the suggested pattern strongly resembled that of his jacket, he said, 'Oh, but I'm only wearing this because I'm going to the races.'

How often is one told that 'We Chinese believe blue means death' by gentlemen wearing cerulean or cobalt neckties. Still, I would probably never use white ideographs on a blue ground in deference to Chinese sensitivity, unless a shock message dictated that combination. I have often found that going along with Chinese stylisms and local colour has given my work a refreshing cross-fertilization; the introduction of some baroque exotica into a restrained layout has resulted in some of my more successful designs.

structured around a series of kung fu moves and quick cuts to their animal namesakes: the crane, the tiger, the snake, the dragon. The kung fu master who performs the routine wins, appropriately enough, a golden yin-yang plaque and then retires to a restaurant with his chums for a few rounds of Remy Martin. The dragon, a potent symbol of Chinese culture, was omitted at the insistence of the Censor Board, who felt the ad was "too Chinese." The kung fu routine was also shortened. In the original campaign concept, a series of print ads were to carry on the animal theme; each displayed a Remy bottle and

Design also plays an important role in Thailand, a society where rank and position are reflected in page layouts. Dean Barrett, publisher of Thai International Airways Sawasdee in-flight magazine has had to accommodate local Thai sensitivities on numerous occasions. When Barrett wanted to use a cover photos of the Buddha, for example, the masthead was run at the bottom of the cover, rather than at the top, in deference to this auspicious image (in Thai culture, the head is sacred and the feet profane; thus placing the masthead, or any image, over the Buddha would be a form of sacrilege). Palace permission was required to run the masthead over another cover-photo, this of the king and queen. One international newsmagazine, recalls Barrett, was apparently unaware of these priorities and ran an article on Thailand with photos in exactly the wrong order: the Prime Minister's photo at the top, the king next and a Buddhist monk at the bottom. Though the magazine was designed in New York, the Thais were outraged. Barrett's firm, Hong Kong Publishing, is, as the name suggests, based in Hong Kong; Sawasdee is an English language magazine for international consumption. Designers working in Thailand for an exclusively Thai audience must be even more sensitive to local cultural priorities.

In Malaysia, probably the most successful ethnic advertising appeal to appear to date is Enterprise Communication's 1982 Amanah Saham Nasional TV and print advertising campaign. A semi-government shareholder's trust exclusively for bumiputras, Amanah Saham Nasional is selling shares for one dollar each until 1990, when the government's New Economic Policy expires and the shares will be subjected to the vicissitudes of the open market. As Amanah Saham Nasional itself only invests in proven, blue-chip firms, ASN shares are, as the non-Malays grumble, a virtual giveaway. As with other aspects of the New Economic Policy, the object is to eventually gain (or as the ads say, "regain") a 30% bumiputra stake in the Malaysian economy.

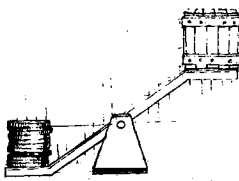
The ASN campaign is the handiwork of Nyak Azahar Ali, an Enterprise copywriter temporarily elevated to creative director for the occasion. In this type of campaign, with an ethnically-select audience, it was thought essential by the agency to use a Malay creative director. Such an individual would not have to learn the nuances of Malay culture; they would be a part of him.

"Langkah Bijak Menuju Masa Depan," A Wise Step Towards the Future, was Azahar's choice for the ASN tagline; it became the governing concept of the campaign. Ads were divided into tactical and thematic categories. Tactical ads spelled out the benefits of ASN: how to invest, dividends, cost, risks, etc. Thematic ads were more psychological, appealing to the emotions. Explains Azahar:

If we look only at the economic benefits of Amanah Saham Nasional, it will not sell, especially to the Malays. They are a conservative people, and suspicious of innovation. But they are easily moved by emotion. They are a very artistic and sensitive people. We had to use culture to reach them.

Thus ASN thematic ads employed Koranic quotes and Malay pepatah, proverbs, as headlines, a first in Malaysian advertising. Radio ads were based on traditional nashid and changong tunes. TV ads depicted common village scenes: a rubber tapper selling his wares and chatting with his companions ; women preparing a bride for a wedding; a young man spending his first paycheck. The TV ads were tightly cut, slickly produced and very believable, a far cry from the stilted melodramas that characterize so much Malay film and TV work. Still, the commercials

Skim Pelaburan yang pasti menguntungkan




Skim Amanah Saham Nasional ialah suatu skim pelaburan yang membuka peluang untuk Bumiputera menyertai berbagai kegiatan ekonomi negara. Dengan Pelaburan RM1000, anda akan menguntungkan

atus layak melabur sehingga 550,000. Dengan keteguhan dan adanya syarikat-syarikat yang menguntungkan didalam Skim Amanah Saham Nasional ia menjamin setiap ringgit pelaburan anda akan menguntungkan

Langkah bijak menuju masa depan

Melabur dengan



Amanah Saham Nasional
Ke Arah Kesejahteraan

"Tuhan tidak akan mengubah nasib sesuatu bangsa itu selagi mereka tidak berusaha mengubahnya"

Apul K. Anwar Ar Ra'd



Ubat-ku sedarlah kita bongkokkan suatu skema untuk bangsa kesungguh-sungguh dan berfikir dengan kecekapan serta yang baik. Kita kemudiannya lakukan sesuatu di negara.

Kita perlu mengubah dan menubuhkan sesuatu yang lebih baik. Ini skema yang baik untuk kita. Kita kemudiannya lakukan. Kita perlu ada pemetaan yang strategik dan teratur. Kita kemudiannya lakukan.

sukarlah untuk kita mengubah keadaan kita sekarang. Oleh itu... Melabur dengan Amanah Saham Nasional.

Adalah menjadi dasar skema skema ini untuk memperkayakan modal berniaga oleh syarikat-syarikat besar dan kecil. Jadi bila syarikat melabur untung, dibahagi-bahagikan lah keuntungan itu kepada pelabur.

Langkah bijak menuju masa depan

Melabur dengan



Amanah Saham Nasional
Ke Arah Kesejahteraan

Ayah! Apa itu Dividen dan Bonus?



Dividen dan bonus ialah keuntungan dari melabur. Wang yang kita labur dan simpan sebenarnya telah dijadikan modal berniaga oleh syarikat-syarikat besar dan kecil. Jadi bila syarikat melabur untung, dibahagi-bahagikan lah keuntungan itu kepada pelabur.

pelabur dalam bentuk dividen dan bonus. Top-tinggi tabung dividen diberi dan bonus pula dari masa ke-masa bergantung kepada keuntungan syarikat. Oleh itu kita tidak boleh belanga ikut saja hati sahaja, kita mesti simpan wang dan melabur. Kita juga yang akan senang di masa depan.

Langkah bijak menuju masa depan

Melabur dengan



Amanah Saham Nasional
Ke Arah Kesejahteraan

11. An ASN tactical ad. The headline reads: "an Investment Scheme that will bring assured profits."

12. A thematic ad. The headline reads: "God will not change the luck of a people if they are not willing to work to change themselves." This phrase is in fact sentence 11, surah Ar Ra'd from the Koran.

13. A thematic ad. The headline reads: "Father! What is a Dividend and a Bonus?" a continuation of the father-son theme from the popular "Hussein's Story" ASN TV ad.

resemble nothing so much as highly-polished miniature versions of the popular "Drama Minggu Ini" (Drama This Week) series, a milieu familiar to most Malay viewers.

The wedding ad even utilizes latah, an unconscious reaction to fright or shock, common in Malaysia, that can range from an uncontrollable string of curses or nonsense phrases like "Ohmakmisayang" (roughly translatable as "oh my beloved mother) to dramatic acting.* Often, the latah-prone will pick up a word or phrase or conversation and repeat it. Thus, in the ad, as the women converse about investing in Amanah Saham, a tray is knocked over and the resulting noise shocks a woman into a latah that starts where the conversation left off: "Tambah-tambah-

*Originally identified by anthropologists as "arctic hysteria" but subsequently found to be extant in many cultures, latah (the Malay term for the affliction) has been described by dramaturgist and critic Krishan Jit as:

...an ineffable state of being...usually benign and temporary... triggered by a sudden and/or unexpected loss of equilibrium...an abrupt gesture or action can set off a latah-prone individual or group. Once in flow and if sustained by a goading agent or agents, can release embarrassing out-of-the ordinary behavior; an individual in latah might become obscene in language or action or both and some even begin to perform dramatic roles.

tambahtambantambah" (grow, grow, grow, grow, grow). Touches like these have endeared the ASN ads to the Malaysian public, so much so that a Malaysian Chinese man from Kelantan state wrote in saying that, although he knew the commercials weren't meant for him, the ASN ads were his favorite TV program.

The tangible results of the ASN campaign have been equally endearing: the target goal of one million shares was long ago surpassed. By the end of 1982, 1.08 million shares had already been sold. 80% of the shareholders were rural Malays. As frosting, the Amanah Saham campaign won an unprecedented three gold medals from the Malaysian Advertising Association. A watershed in Malaysian advertising, the ASN campaign contravenes the conventional wisdom that ads directed at rural folk must be simple, direct and uncomplicated. The ASN ads are direct, but they are also sophisticated and culturally realistic, Western marketing techniques successfully married with cultural nuance, the product of local expertise.

The ASN TV series, the Remy Martin cinema commercial and the Lipton TV testimonials are the centerpieces of their respective campaigns, supported by print and/or radio advertising. Employing the most persuasive of media tools, TV (or in the case of Remy Martin, the less ubiquitous cinema screen), the ads rely on one of the most persuasive of artistic forms, drama, to make their point. Infused with cultural cues, the ads each communicate a powerful message.

Drama is hardly new to commercials; Western ad agencies have been making dramatic commercials, with dramatic success, for years. But the commercials discussed here are different, each linking local culture with drama to create a multi-leveled, ethnically-specific communication that leaps beyond run-of-the-mill Western transplants. Though the markets here are narrowly defined (Malay or Chinese) the techniques could be used to sell diapers, dishes or that better cup of coffee. Azahar Ali is even now turning his cultural talents to selling soap.

Each of these ads tells a story. In the Remy Martin ad it is a narrative of athletic prowess and Chinese cultural knowledge linked to the appreciation of a product, cognac. The ASN commercials are dramas of conversion, enlightenment, the initiation of ordinary Malay folk into the gnostic world of the New Idea. Even the Lipton testimonials are revelatory stories of sorts, for here, a personification of Malay culture, Mahmood June, discloses his dependence on a product, Lipton Tea, to make it through the day. Such plotlines provide the surface messages; impact and persuasive power are insured by the plethora of cultural details that pervade each tale: colors, gestures, music, linguistic nuances, settings, clothing, even facial expressions, all reinforce the superficial communication of each ad. Writes Martin Esslin in his article, Aristotle and the Advertisers:

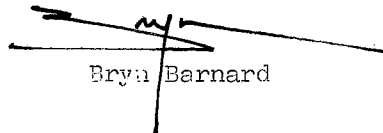
Of all the art forms only drama can communicate such an immense amount of information on so many levels simultaneously within the span of a few seconds. That all this has to be taken in instantaneously, moreover, ensures that most of the impact will be subliminal-tremendously suggestive while hardly ever rising to the level of full consciousness. It is this which explains the great effectiveness of the TV commercial and the inevitability of its increasing employment of dramatic techniques. Drama does not simply translate the abstract idea into concrete terms. It literally incarnates the abstract message by bringing it to life in a human personality and a human situation. Thus it activates powerful subconscious drives

and the deep animal magnetisms which dominate the lives of men and women who are always interested in and attracted by other human beings, their looks, their charm, their mystery.

Imagistic ads like Thompson's Zappel commercial take subliminal impact to the limit, reducing story to a barely discernable skeleton and packing each second with rapid-fire visuals set to music. Here, intangibles like mood, feeling, fashion, emotion, these are the message.

While these examples are Malaysian, they were not developed in isolation. Though Malaysia is the cutting edge of Southeast Asian advertising the rest of the region is catching up fast; development and concomitant urbanization, consumerism and sophistication are making sure of that. The vanguard of advertising agencies established throughout Southeast Asia to catalyze and profit from these changes must themselves change to remain relevant. Pat solutions, successful in the colonial and post-colonial eras often no longer work, nor do campaigns transplanted from the industrialized West necessarily provide the appropriate answers. People may be the same everywhere, but today's developing Southeast Asia is not today's (or yesterday's) America, Europe or Japan. Perhaps tomorrow's pat solutions will come not from the established agencies of New York, London and Tokyo, but from Kuala Lumpur, Manila and Bangkok. It may be the West's turn to visit, learn and take the new ideas home.

Sincerely,



Bryan Barnard

I

Mahmood June I
Television; Malay

14.

Commercial opens with closeup shot of Mahmood's face in semi darkness. As he leans forward and yells, "I'll pulverize you!" lightning flashes. He breaks off, smiles and chuckles. "I'm just rehearsing," he says, and puts on his reading glasses. Camera pulls back and we see that Mahmood is in his own living room, script in hand. It is raining outside. A stand lamp is beside his chair and in the foreground a side-table with a teapot, a cup and saucer and a packet of Lipton tea. Mahmood pours himself some tea, saying, "But without tea, I can't go on. I have been drinking tea for years, but only Lipton, mind you." Mahmood drinks from his cup, and lightning flashes again. Thunder rolls. "Ah," he says, "feels good. Now that's the special quality of Lipton. Do you know Lipton is famous throughout the world? But between you and me, I couldn't care less. I drink Lipton because it tastes really good. If you want a really good tea, you do as I say." lightning flashes and thunder rolls over Mahmood's evil laugh. Cut to teapot and tagline

Mahmood June II
Television; Malay

15.

Commercial opens with a closeup of clashing Malay keris knives. Camera then pulls back to establish Mahmood June and another actor in traditional Malay costumes engaged in a keris fight. Silat (Malay martial art) manoeuvres are used as the two men circle one another. Camera moves in on Mahmood as he takes a step forward with his keris ready and menacing, his face mean and formidable. He cries, "I'll pulverize you!" Camera cuts to frightened females, cowering against the wall. Scene returns to the fight. Mahmood, about to attack, pulls his keris from its sheath, but the handle comes off in his hands, as sound effects reach

II



II

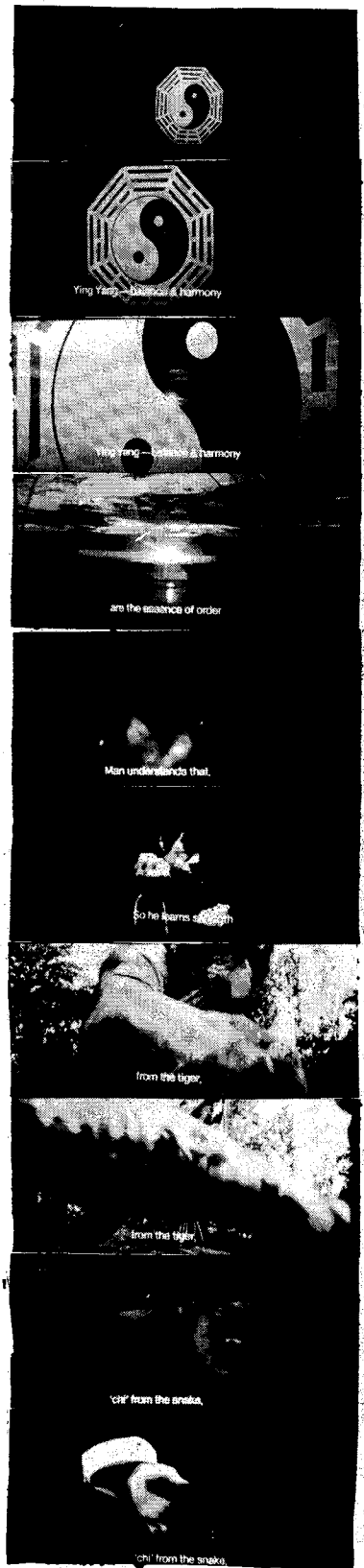
Mahmood June II (continued)

a crescendo. Camera cuts to a director and film crew. Director calls, "Cut! Let's have a drink. A tea-girl brings teapot, cups and a packet of Lipton tea. Tea is poured and camera cuts to Mahmood, sipping his tea in obvious enjoyment. He says, "Ahhh, that feels good. It's Lipton you know. I insisted on it. Camera cuts to the director, who says, "And so should you. Lipton really tastes great." The camera switches back to Mahmood, who says, "That's why Lipton is famous all over the world. It costs a little more, but for me, without Lipton I can't go on." Director comes back into frame and says, "Okay Mahmood, back to the set." Camera cuts to a shot of the Lipton tea packet, teapot and cups on tray, with actors reenacting the fight scene in the background. Camera zooms in for closeup of the tea items; the tagline, superimposed over the scene, appears: Lipton Teh yang betul-betul sedap (A really good tea).

Remy Martin
Cinema Mandarin

16.

The ad opens with a shot of a yin-yang symbol, in red&black. The camera zooms in and the narrative, in Mandarin, begins. Superimposed English subtitles follow. The narrator explains that, "yin-yang-balance and harmony-are the essence of order." Scene changes to a sunrise over water. "Man understands that. So he learns strength form the tiger," The scene cuts to a kung fu master, then to a tiger, then to the master, back to the tiger and again to the master. "...chi from the snake," The scene cuts to a snake crawling up a branch and then cuts to the master making an analogous movement."...and grace from the crane." Again, the scene cuts to an animal shot, this time of a crane profile, then back to the master, a return to the crane and finally back to the master, who we now see is



Remy Martin (continued)

on a stage. He bows to the applause of the audience. The camera zooms in on the awards table, with a golden yin-yang plaque. As the camera pulls back, a judge walks up to the stage and hands the kung fu master the prize. The crowd applauds vigorously. The scene then changes to the master's dressing room, where his chums congratulate him on his successful effort. The scene then switches to a restaurant, possibly a multi-course Chinese dinner. Quick cuts establish the venue, the atmosphere and the clientele (many of the audience members are now participating in the dinner with obvious enjoyment). The kung fu master, who has offered to pay for drinks, orders a bottle of Remy Martin. He and his comrades toast as the narration explains that "a man with taste, knowledge will appreciate Remy Martin." The narration then goes on to explain the special attributes of Remy Martin VSOP cognac, "made exclusively from selected grapes grown only in the two best areas of the cognac district of France. The camera cuts to a close-up of a glass of cognac with ice cubes being swirled, as Chinese drums roll in the background. The closing shot is a still life of a Remy Martin bottle, two glasses and the superimposed phrase (in Chinese ideograms): "Remy Martin, the right choice."



Amanah Saham Nasional; Hussein's Story
Television Malay 17.

The commercial opens with a middle-distance shot of a motorcycle coming into a village and then stopping at a latex shop. The scene changes to the shop interior where a load of latex, the produce of Hussein, a Malay rubber small-holder, is being weighed. One of Hussein's neighbors appears as Hussein is paid by the shopkeeper for his produce. "You made quite a bit there, 'Sin?" inquires the neighbor. "Yes," says Hussein. They go outside the shop to a table and sit down. "Is that your son, 'Sin?" asks the neighbor. "Yes," says Hussein, obviously not one to engage in unnecessary conversation." If you take good care of him," advises the neighbor, "there's a chance for him to attend university; his future is bright." At that moment we see an Amanah Saham Nasional van pull up. "Where are you going?" asks Hussein. "To add to my investment," says the neighbor. "If we have money we must use it wisely. If we invest a lot, our profit will be big as well." The neighbor goes off to the ASN van. Hussein sits, clutching his money. The camera turns to the son, who asks, "Aren't you investing dad?" Hussein, startled by the question, looks down at his expectant child. Hussein takes his son by the shoulders and says, "Yes. You must study hard so that you can get into university. I will invest and keep investing for our future." The two run hand in hand to the ASN van. The scene is reduced, boxed, and the tagline and ASN logo appear.



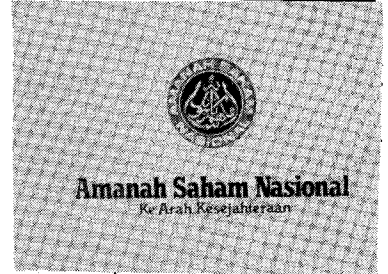
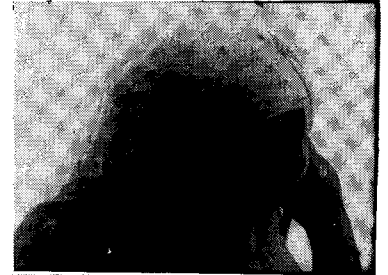
Langkah Bijak Menuju Masa Depan



Amanah Saham Nasional
Ke Arah Kesejahteraan

Amanah Saham Nasional; Wedding
Television; Malay 18.

The commercial opens with a close-up shot of a Malay wedding gift tray. On it we see a gift item ornately decorated. The camera pulls back to show other trays laid out on a satin bedspread and finally a complete bridal chamber where friends and relatives are admiring the gifts and the bride is being made up by the Mak Andam (traditionally the Mak Andam attends to a bride's make-up, wedding dress, ornamentation and the collection of traditional wedding fees). As the camera pulls back the Mak Andam can be heard saying, "When I was a bride, my gifts were not this pretty." Another woman adds, "Kids now are fortunate. Good times..." The camera cuts to another woman, who says, "When times are good we must take care. To become a wife is a big responsibility." The camera shifts to the bride, being made up by the Mak Andam. "Listen to that," says the Mak Andam to the bride. The camera shifts to another woman who admires the "bunga hantaran," a traditional dowry in the form of paper money folded, origami-style, into flowers. "What are you going to do with this money?" she asks. "I'm going to invest," says the bride. The women discuss the merits of investment as the Mak Andam applies the bride's make-up. As they discuss, one of the crowd picks up a gift handbag. Somehow it slips and falls, startling everyone, and sending the Mak Andam into latah. The women continue their discussion, smiling at the Mak Andam's antics, until another sentence sets her into latah again. All laugh and smile and the bride reaches into her jewellery box. The camera zooms in to see underneath the ornaments, an ASN investment book. The frames freezes, the picture is reduced, boxed, and the tagline and ASN logo appear.





Amanah Saham Nasional; Youth
Television; Malay 19.

As the commercial opens, Yusuf, a clerk, is receiving his first salary from an accounts clerk. The camera cuts to money changing hands and then pulls back to clerk giving advice to Yusuf on how to spend his money. Yusuf appears receptive to the admonishment to be careful with that first salary. The scene shifts to Yusuf walking along a row of shop-houses, looking for things to buy. He looks at shirts, tries on shoes and eventually ends up in a clothing store, where he is fitted for a new pair of pants. The scene shifts to Yusuf's home, where he stands in front of his mirror, trying out his new outfit. Yusuf sits down at his rickety writing table and switches on his radio. An ASN announcement comes over the airwaves: "Bumiputras 18 years and over are qualified to invest. With \$10 you can get one hundred unit shares. The more you invest, the bigger your return." Throughout the announcement the scenes cut to construction workers, an agricultural assistant, a gas station attendant and electronic factory workers, all young, with their first salaries. The scene dissolves to Yusuf, heading for the ASN queue. He meets a friend, explains the benefits of ASN and they both line up to invest their \$10. The scene of the ASN queue is reduced, boxed and underscored by the tag and logo.



Amanah Saham Nasional
Ke Arah Kejayaan



The 1982 Advertising Awards



The best campaign for automotive and allied products.

The best institutional / corporate campaign.
The best consumer promotion.



The best campaign for consumer packaged goods.
The best campaign for durables.

The best radio campaign.
The best TV / Cinema campaign.



The best campaign for public service advertising.
The best campaign for retail advertising.

The best magazine campaign.
The best newspaper campaign.



The best campaign for fashion advertising.

The best outdoor poster / billboard.



The best campaign for banking and finance advertising.

The best P.O.S. material.



The best campaign for technological / industrial advertising.

The best packaging.
The best print material (annual reports/calendars/brochures)

The best campaign for food and beverage advertising.

The best use of typography
The best use of still photography.



The Grand Prix Award



List of Illustrations

1. F.U.'s bus advertisement; BEB.
2. Aristocrat mattresses poster; BEB.
3. TDC magazine advertisement; courtesy PTM Thompson Advertising, Kuala Lumpur.
4. Kelab Raintree magazine advertisement; from Time, Southeast Asian edition.
5. Barisan Nasional newspaper advertisement. From the New Straits Times.
6. The Chartered Bank newspaper advertisement; New Straits Times.
7. Toyota magazine advertisements; courtesy PTM Thompson Advertising, Kuala Lumpur.
8. Zappel poster close-ups; courtesy PTM Thompson Advertising, Kuala Lumpur.
9. Lipton Tea magazine advertisement; courtesy SSC&B:Lintas Advertising, Kuala Lumpur.
10. Remy Martin magazine and newspaper advertisement artwork; BEB.
- 11.-13. Amanah Saham Nasional advertisements; courtesy Enterprise Communications, Kuala Lumpur.
- 14.-15. Lipton Tea TV commercial; courtesy SSC&B:Lintas Advertising, Kuala Lumpur.
16. Remy Martin cinema commercial; courtesy SSC&B:Lintas Advertising, Kuala Lumpur.
- 17.-19. Amanah Saham Nasional TV commercials; courtesy Enterprise Communications, Kuala Lumpur.
20. 1982 "6a's" Advertising Awards brochure page; McCann-Erickson Advertising, Kuala Lumpur.

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