

Tony Auston, owner and creative director of Auston Design Group in California runs a boutique design firm specialising in branding for the wine industry. He wrote about 10 stances on wine positioning in American publication, *Wine Business Monthly* in August 2008. Auston categorised labels into one of these positions: Traditional, Heritage, More is More, Boutique, Demystifying Wine, New World, Provoking Curiosity, Story Telling, Understated Elegance, and Contemporary.

Briefly, his 'Kama Sutra' of brand positions is below:

- Traditional: represents the oldest, most common and safest positioning
- Heritage: reflects the lineage and/or longevity of a brand
- More is more: increases the perceived value of a brand by appearing to over-deliver
- Boutique: evokes the look and feel of a small, limited production producer
- Demystifying wine: presenting wine as a mass-consumer beverage
- New World: represents nearly any look other than that of traditional European brands
- Provoking curiosity: inviting inquiry by an innate need to know
- Story-telling: evoking the story behind the brand
- Understated elegance: reflecting the highest quality through a minimalist approach to design
- Contemporary: presenting the perception of advanced winemaking practices through an alliance with cutting-edge thinking in art and design.

*Grapegrower & Winemaker* spoke with several designers and marketing professionals to gauge their view of brand positions and label designs most relevant to Australian producers.

*Grapegrower & Winemaker* thanks Diana Jaquillard, Barbara Harkness and Steve Goodman for their time and discussions that have helped shape this feature on 'Building brands' in recent months.

In the article below, award-winning designer, Diana Jaquillard of Adelaide firm Graphic Language Design, writes her perspective on the personality of Australian wine label designs.

## Designing labels with personality



**Diana Jaquillard**  
Graphic Language Design  
Adelaide

The architecture of a brand may take a number of stances, such as Traditional, Heritage, Contemporary Chic, Boutique or Story-telling as well as other categories. This can apply to all pricepoints, but lower pricepoints may do this to a less sophisticated degree and with less expense in the printing of the labels and the other packaging nuances.

Some of these stances, such as Traditional or Heritage may appeal most to the established male wine connoisseur, whereas the Contemporary Chic, Storytelling or Boutique styles may appeal to those who are youthful or more adventurous. Women have been identified as the largest purchasers of wine, and also as the market segment that is influenced to purchase most strongly by the label design.

A beautifully proportioned bottle and elegant closure contributes strongly to the perception of quality but can add significant cost to the product's unit cost, so must be able to be recouped in the sale of the item. To the converse, sometimes wine companies try to over-deliver on premium visual perception but with lower quality wine, but then the wine quality can disappoint the customer, resulting in no repeat purchases.

But if you're a newcomer, which attitude or stance will your company take with the design of labels and corporate identity? This may depend on how your wine is marketed. For example, if you mainly sell your wine from a boutique outlet such as a cellar door, it is just as important to have branding consistency as if sold in large outlets, so that your products verify that they have clearly originated from the same branding source.

You can have ranges with consistent branding but different personalities sitting under one brand, and this stance can be taken for wines at different pricepoints or for different export markets.

If simply marketing domestic brands at different pricepoints, it is desirable to keep common elements, such as a consistent company logo and label styling to reinforce the brand, even though other design elements can vary. However, if you sell to a variety of export markets, your company may develop labels with totally different brands and stances to appeal to the specific target market or demographic.

Unlike some products that are quickly discarded or put away, wines are often displayed for quite long periods of time before they are consumed, either on the table during a meal, or displayed in the home until the purchaser decides the time has come to enjoy that particular bottle, so there is a great opportunity to insinuate your branding message at leisure when it is in the eye of the consumer. The investment in good and thoughtfully targeted design rationale reaps rewards in any market.

If you are an established business, consider reviewing your labels and packaging. In difficult economies and competitive environments, it has been proven that those who spend money on product development and branding improvements have more chance of success than those who do nothing.

To summarise on stances to be taken with your labels, if developing a new brand, we recommend careful research so that you have a clear idea of where you want your product to sit in the market. Identify the demographic target and have a label designed professionally, with focus groups commenting during development if possible. The competition is such that if your label is drawn up quickly at the dinner table over a casual glass of wine, the brand will have similar longevity!

Over the next pages, I present a few approaches to labelling and branding, all different but successful in their markets.

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**Traditional**

**Lavina Estate Wines**

Lavina Estate Wines is a relatively new brand based in McLaren Vale. The principal, Sam Daw has long and multi-faceted experience within the industry, and focuses on strong, elegant and consistent branding with a perception of longevity for his labels.

The branding strategy is carried over a number of different price points as illustrated, differentiated by the embellishments and layout of the labels, the closures and the bottles used. We have designed this traditional-looking brand to be successful and acceptable to numerous markets and demographics, so therefore it has an elegant conservative appearance, and is not quirky in any way. This timeless look which will not be influenced by fashion trends has the potential to continue with only minor and cost-effective evolution in the future. The wine business operates as a boutique outlet from a cellar door, and has a division with a strong export focus to Asia.

Lavina Estate labels: The matte gold band tastefully denotes the premium range wines, whilst the crisp black bottom band identifies the mid range.

**Heritage**

**Henschke Wines**

Henschke's wine labels are based upon their heritage, which not all wine brands can possess. They carry consistent branding across all of their labels. The Henschke family is one of the longest-established and respected wine names in the Barossa Valley. Illustrated here, the revered Hill of Grace is the pinnacle of their red wines. Early Hill of Grace labels were a simple typeset black on white as shown, with no fancy fonts or curlicues, nor the bright colours of the early Mount Edelstone, which was designed by Wytt Morro, who also designed the labels for Orlando Barossa Pearl, Wolf Blass, Woodleys, Mildara and Stonyfell (including the classic Metala).

From the 1970 vintage onwards in Cyril Henschke's day, the elegant basic black label shown has been used, after Henschke relatives, Ina and Ross Luck suggested reversing the white to black. Ross designed the logo, which tells a story. The deer icon has been used since the North Rhine days when wine was produced under the P.A. Henschke label and deer roamed around the family's winery. The initials C & H stand for Cyril Henschke and the chateau/winery is depicted with vines leading up to it. The crown of excellence has been embellished from three points to five, perhaps for better balance! Some minor evolution has occurred, such as altering the gloss label to matte, some font alterations, but generally it has been subtly developed.



Henschke Hill of Grace label design evolution: L-R: The 1961 version with a white background, and current layout on the right with a black background.

This priceless heritage factor has worked in combination with time, hard work and quality wines, to bestow the brand with a strong recognition factor and desirability.

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Philippe Guigal, General Manager & Winemaker, Guigal, France

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Ana Suria, Winemaker, Pago de Tharsys, Spain

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Gianfranco Repellino, Technical Director, Giordano, Italy



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Robert Foley, Winemaker,  
Robert Foley Vineyards, USA

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Ron Laughton, Winemaker, Jasper Hill, Australia

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Alfonso Larrain, President,  
Concha y Toro, Chile

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Ray Edwards, Liquor Manager,  
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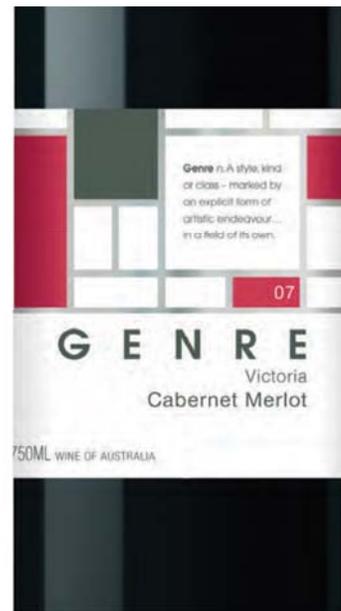


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**Contemporary Chic**

**Genre**

The Genre label is a Buyer's Own Brand produced by Zilzie Wines. It is marketed in a liquor retail chain in NSW and Queensland and according to its happy owner, "It has been walking off the shelf"! We designed the label to be contemporary and appeal to consumers that like to try something new, modern, fresh and with an intellectual, artistic approach. Words on the front of the label add story to the philosophy, describing Genre as: 'A style, kind or class – marked by an explicit form of artistic endeavour... in a field of its own'. This refers to the winemaker's creation of this genre (or selection) of wines, likening it to creations of artistic genres, i.e. works of art. The name Genre alludes to the fact that the wine contained within is a very particular type, which will be of high quality, and artistically made by a winemaker with great discernment and class. This label has attracted the purchaser willing to try a new brand, and elicited repeat purchases.



Genre label design: One mid-price range with four varietals in this striking contemporary range.



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## Boutique

# Hahndorf Hill Winery

Hahndorf Hill Winery is a successful boutique winery in the truest sense. The cellar door offers wine tasting, a fine-food restaurant, gourmet produce, wine education classes, wonderful views and even two adorable wine dogs! They attract customers of every legal age group. It also presents an excellent point of difference with its varietal offering. As well as tried and true varieties such as Shiraz and Sauvignon Blanc, it offers the experience of Trollinger, Lemberger and Pinot Grigio. The winery has also imported Grüner Veltliner cuttings and the first vintage will be ready in 2010. Their labels portray an ancient ghost gum on the property, which we have hand-illustrated. Marc and Larry feel that by using this iconic tree, it symbolises and establishes the winery's sense of place as essentially Australian, expresses their philosophies and ties with nature and naturalness and relates to their development of biodynamic and environmentally friendly practices.

The label also refers to the landscape of the surrounding area and the famous local artist, Sir Hans Heysen. Sir Hans once said that when the early-morning frost began to thaw, "everything becomes bathed in the most mysterious and fascinating atmosphere." In effect, Hahndorf Hill Winery's labels are very personal, appropriate and echo the aims and ambitions of the industrious owners of the brand.



A selection of images of Hahndorf Hill Winery: The gums and misty Heysen landscape that inspired the labels and typify the area. The boutique cellar door. The labels featuring the iconic gum tree. On the left, the mid-range labels, to the right, the premium range.

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L-R: Mollydooker's 'Enchanted Path' and 'Carnival of Love's labels have been designed so that when you put them together they create one complete image. 'Two Left Feet': Two views of the appealing one-part front/back label.



**Story-telling**

**Mollydooker - The Lefty Series**

'Mollydooker' is Australian slang for left-hander. The series of five 'Lefty' wine labels are retro, playful and personalised to tell a story about the left-handed winemaking couple behind the Mollydooker brand, Sarah and Sparky Marquis. The wines have been designed to stand out on the shelf with their colourful illustrations and have been very successful domestically as well as in the USA market, which loves fun and is less traditional than markets such as the UK. The wines retail at around \$25 in Australia and represent good value for money. Other markets are UK, Germany, Denmark, Indonesia, Hong Kong, Singapore and Canada. The information on the back labels is written sideways, so you need to pick up the bottle and turn it to read it.

Sarah Marquis says: "We have found our consumers love these aspects of our labels, and also like the fact that we have put a tear off tab (WineFind TM) on our back labels, which has our logo, wine name, vintage and website address – everything needed to be able to find the wine again".

'Two Left Feet' features a retro illustration of Sparky and Sarah dancing. Sparky is stepping on Sarah's toes, illustrating their dancing ability which adds a fun and personal story to the Mollydooker brand.

*Diana Jaquillard is the owner and art director of Graphic Language Design, based in Adelaide, South Australia. Her awarded boutique design firm specialises in all aspects of design and branding for the wine industry. For further information, contact Diana Jaquillard at Graphic Language Design, First Floor, 181 Halifax Street, Adelaide, South Australia 5000, T: +61 8 8232 3577, F: +61 8 8232 3566, M: +61 0 419 853 328, email: info@gl.design.com.au or visit www.gl.design.com.au*

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**Jacob's Creek 'Best Marketed Wine'**

Jacob's Creek has won the 2008 'Best Marketed Wine' for the second year in a row at the 15th annual Australian Liquor Industry Awards 2008 held at the Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre, Darling Harbour, in October.

Jacob's Creek has formed two exciting partnerships this summer: as exclusive wine partner of Baz Luhrmann's epic film Australia, and as official wine supplier of Australia's biggest sporting event, the 2009 Australian Open Tennis Grand Slam.

Jacob's Creek is the number one bottled wine brand in Australia including its sparkling and still wines and is the world's best known wine brand, according to Wine Intelligence's Vintrac research, released in Australia and the UK in August 2007.