

THE COLOUR OF MONEY

How Madison Avenue gave birth to a brighter, better world

Whenever there's an interview with an old school British rocker, you'll find one unifying theme: an obsession with America. For the likes of Paul McCartney in Liverpool and Graham Nash in Manchester, the new world, with its music, its colour, its unbridled optimism - was about as different to the grey drudgery of austerity Britain as you could get. And looking at magazine ads from the period between the 1950s and '70s it's easy to see why they felt this way.



Suddenly a delightful Continental Custom is sweeping America!

It's vermouth as a straight drink... and men and women who instinctively choose the best things reach for Martini & Rossi - the finest vermouth in the world.

Whether they champion tall drinks, whether they're sippers or ice drinkers, Martini & Rossi vermouth offers something for each of them - as a delightful dry aperitif or a sweet drink to follow dinner.

Chilled... with soda... or 'on the rocks', the quality of Martini & Rossi is most apparent. Alone in the glass, it reveals the subtleties of expert blending - the combining of vintage wine with the infusion of more than 30 varieties of herbs - all in strict accordance with a secret formula, unchanged and unimpaired for generations. • *Rosoff Importers, Ltd., N.Y.*



MARTINI & ROSSI
IMPORTED VERMOUTH
DRIEST OR EXTRA DRY

Whether they were promoting vodka, cars or even textiles, the hard-drinking copywriters and designers of the time revolutionised the advertising industry, employing new techniques in graphics, art, photography and literature to construct pieces of work that went way beyond the original remit of selling stuff. Like much of what would dominate late-20th Century culture, their works were the perfect synthesis between art and commerce.

A new book, *Mid-Century Ads: Advertising From The Mad Men Era* details the very best that these Madison Avenue mavericks created, from a quite beautiful spot for (of all things) aluminum roofing, to Volkswagon's legendary, and truly revolutionary, "Think Small" ad. Often featuring a Don Draper-type sipping an expensive alcoholic drink or taking his family for the day out in a gigantic Pontiac or Chrysler, these ads offered a glimpse of an ideal life, and one that felt achievable - well, certainly to those affluent enough to buy that car and drink that scotch.

The people who created these works lived a life every bit as reckless and exciting as the rock stars who would go on to dominate the cultural agenda of the age. And like The Beatles, Stones and Byrds, their work lives on - perhaps more relevant now than ever before, if only to see what we've lost. ♦

Mid Century Ads: Advertising From The Mad Men Era is published by Taschen, priced £34.99. www.taschen.com

