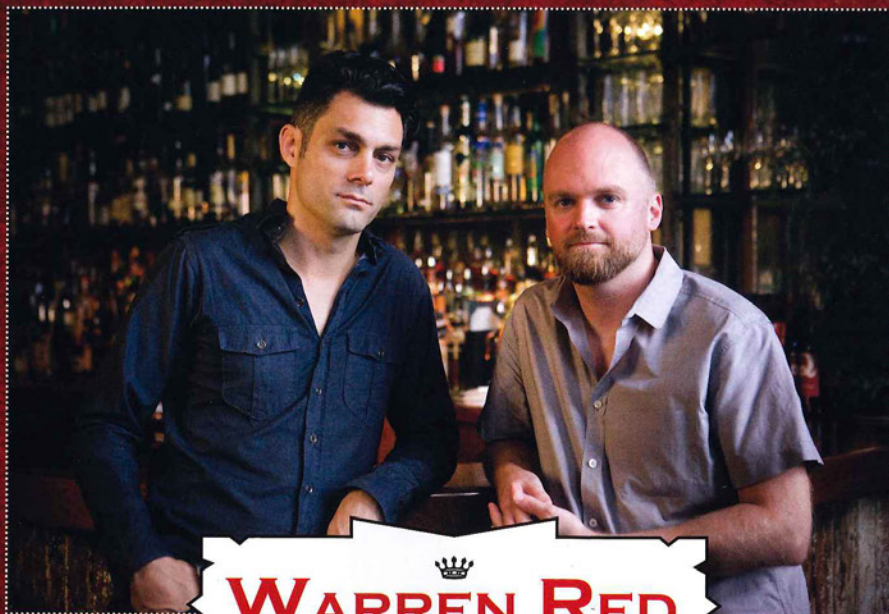




CIRCULATION: 60,000

MAY 2013

THE LOCALS SPIRITED BUSINESS



WARREN RED

by Christopher Osburn

Dieter Cartwright and
Jonathan McElroy,
Warren Red.

Warren Red isn't the name of a flashy mixologist or even a brand ambassador. Warren Red is an architecture, interior design and branding company based in New York City. The company's two main principals are creative director Jonathan McElroy and architect and interior designer Dieter Cartwright. "Jonathan and I both left Zeffdesign in 2009 to pursue separate ventures, but came together when a collaboration between branding and interior design presented itself in the form of the Pilsener Haus & Biergarten, in Hoboken," says Cartwright. "That year wasn't the best of years to start a company, but we did, and have put an incredible amount of energy into creating our clients' brands." Last year saw the completion of three bar projects within the space of six months.

Warren Red does more than branding and designing for bars, though. They are the main designer for the Manhattan Cocktail Classic. "The Classic is a festival, conference and party rolled into one, celebrating cocktail culture," says Cartwright. "It's a melting pot of brands, industry specialists and the general public, and has a great variety of activities and experiences catering to all levels of interests."

The Manhattan Cocktail Classic has been produced by Bamboo, a drinks strategy agency, for the past three years. "Through an old colleague from my time at the Met Bar in London I was introduced to Simon Weston, principal of Manhattan Cocktail Classic's operational partner, Bamboo London." Bamboo brought in Warren Red to design one of the events at 2010's gala. "The event was for Diageo in that magical glass-domed space in the NYPL, the Bartos Forum. We were very impressed by the festival's motivations, as our branding and interior design projects are almost exclusively in hospitality."

They made a proposal to its founder Lesley Townsend Duval that they become involved in bringing the Classic's branding to a whole new level. "Our goal was to be a brand custodian for The Classic, providing support throughout the festival's evolution." Once the logo and identity system was designed, they created a kit of parts and templates. These were to be used for the various collateral required, such as the prospectus, menus, cover pages and brochures. "We also provided the full stationary package. The festival has many sponsors and media partners, so all this collateral was supported with a brand manual so that various third parties could implement the identity system as simply as possible."



CONTINUED



Then, it was time to design the website and create an ad campaign for print and online. "Every so often a new piece was required, or a new button for the website, and we were often managing many of the external vendors and partners, as it related to the branding, to take as much pressure off our client as possible leading up to the big event."

The guys at Warren Red wanted the MCC's visual identity to embrace the "essential festival-like atmosphere" as well as mesh with today's bar, restaurant and fine beverages industry. "We looked to Victorian-era posters for inspiration, as we were attracted to the way they composed a great number of elements on a single page. We found a great richness in the style elements of that era, the flourishes and embellishments used to divide space and give structure. These ideas were especially useful as we moved from the logo design into the website, as the festival's online presence is complex - there is a lot of information to navigate."

Cartwright says that the one word that stood out in Lesley's creative brief was "Salty". "So we had a lot of fun creating the whimsical buttons, which allowed us to introduce a slightly theatrical element." They were very careful, though, not to go too far down the Victorian path, because they were creating a platform which had to give voice to many different brands. "So we gave the identity a certain crispness or sharpness to bring it into the here and now."

2012 was a very busy year for Warren Red. They completed work on Demi Monde in New York's Financial District the same month as last year's MCC. "September saw the opening of Pouring Ribbons in the East Village, followed by Jeepney, a Filipino gastro pub, also in the East Village the following month."

Watch out for much more on the horizon from Warren Red. They are involved in the opening of a new bar opening in Brooklyn Heights in the spring as well as a boutique hotel project in Central America.