Described herein is a drinking vessel which incorporates a seismic or impact-actuated sound generating circuit which produces a “Clink” sound that emulates the sound made by a glass, crystal, or ceramic drinking vessel making contact with a hard surface such as another drinking vessel during a toast. As actuation switch, is located on or in the vessel which is responsive to seismic or impact-type events.
NOVELTY DRINKING VESSEL WITH IMPACT ACTIVATED SOUND EFFECTS

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates to a drinking vessel having an impact-activated sound system operative for producing a sound emulating the "Click" sound associated with that of a glass, crystal or ceramic drinking vessel making contact with a hard surface or another drinking vessel such as in a toast; more particularly a drinking vessel capable of holding a beverage during use and of being able to produce desired sound effects. Such drinking vessels are useful where plastic or polymer drinking vessels are used instead of glass, crystal or ceramic as they would provide an authentic "Click" sound that is associated with using glass, crystal or ceramic drinking vessels.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] At social gatherings and celebrations, beverages are often drunk from vessels constructed of materials other than glass, crystal or ceramic (such as plastics or polymers) as these materials are popular for a number of reasons including but not limited to their cost effectiveness, ease of cleaning, disposal, recycling, and safety. A drawback to drinking vessels of this type is that, they lack the ability to produce authentic sounds associated with drinking vessels constructed of glass, crystal or ceramic such as the characteristic "Click" heard when a glass, crystal, or ceramic drinking vessel makes contact with a hard surface such as another drinking vessel during a toast.

[0003] Inexpensive, sound-generating circuits are well known and have been made available for use in many different types of novelty items, such as children’s toys, eating utensils and greeting cards (see: U.S. Pat. Nos. 6,695,669, 4,765,465 and 4,611,262 for example). The sound generating circuits give the item the capability of being a “sound generating” novelty item. The sound-generating circuits may produce a spoken phrase, musical melody, or sound effects.

[0004] Seismic and impact-activated switches are well known (U.S. Pat. Nos. 4,528,559 and 4,180,808 for example) and have been incorporated into many different types of items such as children’s toys (see: U.S. Pat. No. 4,551,114, for example). Such switches are able to sense a seismic or impact-type even and activate or deactivate electric circuitry to which, it is attached.

[0005] U.S. Pat. No. 5,536,196 issued to Sterberg on Jul. 16, 1996 discloses a drinking vessel with sound effects, specifically a beer mug which produces a “bursting” sound when the vessel is placed down onto a support surface having a plunger-type contact switch. U.S. Pat. No. 4,765,465 issued to Yamada et al on Aug. 23, 1988 disclosing a ceramic cup having a sound-generating circuit at the bottom to produce a melody when the cup is lifted up from a surface for example.

DESCRIPTION

[0006] Provided herein are novel drinking vessels that comprise components which hold fluids and emit sounds. The production of sound is triggered by the impact of said drinking vessels on a hard surface. The drinking vessel may be comprised of a sound element affixed to said vessel or integrated into the structure of said vessel for example in the stem of a glass or handle of a mug or base of the drinking vessel.

[0007] It is an object of an embodiment of the present invention to provide an improved drinking experience when using a drinking vessel made of materials incapable of providing the audible sounds generally associated with drinking vessels that are made of glass, crystal or ceramic when said drinking vessel impacts a hard surface such as another drinking vessel during a toast. Drinking vessels made of plastics and polymers lack the acoustic ability to produce sounds characteristic to drinking vessels made of glass, crystal or ceramic materials for example. The present invention would enhance the experience of utilizing non-glass, non-crystal or non-ceramic drinking vessels by providing an authentic “Click” sound effect that is commonly associated with the toasting of drinking vessels made of glass, crystal or ceramic material. The present invention presides the desired sound-generating circuit with an actuation means combined with a drinking vessel. The sound-generating circuitry may include a battery, speaker, amplifier, and sound chip which store a pre-recorded sound that is played upon activation of the circuit. The actuation means may include an impact or seismic responsive switch that upon an impact energizes the sound-generating circuitry.

[0008] The sound generating circuitry may be affixed to or integrated into the drinking vessel in any appropriate location including but not limited to a handle, stem or any suitable location. Drinking vessels may be constructed with sound generating circuitry molded directly into said drinking vessel or constructed to accept sound generating circuitry following production of said drinking vessels.

[0009] In one embodiment of the present invention the switch is a piezoelectric transducer that senses impact or seismic events and activates the sound generating circuitry.

[0010] In another embodiment of the present invention the switch is a sealed mercury switch that senses impact or seismic event and activates the sound generating circuitry.

[0011] In another embodiment of the present invention the switch is any appropriate switching mechanism that is capable of sensing impact or seismic events.

[0012] In a preferred embodiment of the present invention the pre-recorded sound is a “Click” sound commonly associated with a drinking vessel constructed of glass, crystal or ceramic material (for example) making contact with a hard surface.

[0013] The entirety of each patent, patent application, publication and document referenced herein hereby is incorporated by reference. Citation of the above patents, patent applications, publications and documents is not an admission that any of the foregoing is pertinent prior art, nor does it constitute any admission as to the contents or date of these publications or documents.

[0014] Modifications may be made to the foregoing without departing from the basic aspects of the invention. Although the invention has been described in substantial detail with reference to one or more specific embodiments, those of ordinary skill in the art will recognize that changes may be made to the embodiments specifically disclosed in this application, yet these modifications and improvements are within the scope and spirit of the invention.

[0015] The invention illustratively described herein suitably may be practiced in the absence of any elements not specifically disclosed herein. Thus, for example, in each instance herein any of the terms “comprising,” “consisting essentially of,” and “consisting of” may be replaced with either of the other terms. The terms and expressions which have been employed are used as terms of description and not of limitation, and use of such terms and expressions do not exclude any equivalents of features shown and described or portions thereof, and various modifications are possible within the scope of the invention claimed. The terms “a” or “an” can refer to one of or a plurality of the elements it
modifies (e.g., "a drinking vessel can mean one or more drinking vessel" unless it is contextually clear either one of the elements or more than one of the elements is described. The term “about” as used herein refers to a value sometimes within 10% of the underlying parameter (i.e., plus or minus 10%), a value sometimes within 5% of the underlying parameter (i.e., plus or minus 5%), a value sometimes within 2.5% of the underlying parameter (i.e., plus or minus 2.5%), or a value sometimes within 1% of the underlying parameter (i.e., plus or minus 1%), and sometimes refers to the parameter with no variation. For example, a weight of “about 100 grams” can include weights between 90 grams and 110 grams. Thus, it should be understood that although the present invention has been specifically disclosed by representative embodiments and optional features, modification and variation of the concepts herein disclosed may be resorted to by those skilled in the art, and such modifications and variations are considered within the scope of this invention. [0016] Embodiments of the invention are set forth in the claims which follow.

What is claimed is:

1. A drinking vessel comprising:
(a) a vessel with a top portion having an open mouth for receiving and dispensing fluid;
(b) a base at the bottom of said vessel;
(c) a sound-generating circuit affixed to or integrated in said vessel;
(d) as impact responsive switching means having “on” and “off” states electrically connected to a power source to actuate said circuit for producing a sound when activated to the “on” state;
(e) timing means within said circuit for discontinuing the operation of said sound-generating means after a maximum time limit;
(f) means within said circuit to reset, said timing means once said circuit is de-energized by said switch means; and
(g) said impact responsive switch means being biased in the “off” state and triggered to the “on” state by a seismic event, wherein the sound-generating means produce sound only when said vessel is subjected to a seismic or impact-type event.

2. The drinking vessel of claim 1, wherein said sound is a “Clink” sound.

3. The drinking vessel of claim 1, wherein said sound is a recorded message.

4. The drinking vessel as in either claim 2 or claim 3 wherein said sound generating circuit is affixed or integrated to the base of said drinking vessel.

5. A drinking vessel as in claim 2 or claim 3 further comprising a handle.

6. The drinking vessel as in claim 5 wherein said sound generating circuit is integrated or affixed into the handle of said drinking vessel.

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