

Gildan
The Next Generation
Spot: The Next Generation



HELLO.

Let me preface the following by saying my father was a very respected and successful MD. Who would unabashedly roll into the kitchen each morning in his underwear. Including black socks and wingtips. I'm relatively sure my childhood experience isn't what pushed me to carve out a career apart from the medical field. But who knows. Point is, in the spirit of your creative we're making a study of today's millennials in comparison and contrast, to their dads. And I think it's quietly brilliant and insightful. Because you're honoring dads while simultaneously revealing today's son's are their own person. Now that's a very cool insight. That we'll present visually by crafting each film / story in both DU (Dad's underwear) and SU (son's underwear) coverage. We'll create honest portraiture moments that present each dad with a touch of heroic honor. Then elegantly pivot off a product showcase moment to reveal the son - in his own underwear. And without falling prey to cliché or lazy satire, allow the moment to speak for itself with mild irony and contemporary humor. Humor that reveals to some extent, every son lives in the shadow of his father. But thanks to Gildan, they no longer have to live in their dad's underwear.

NARRATIVE APPROACH

Structurally, these are very tight. I love the device of using heroic portraiture shots to disclose banal moments in a way that makes them funny. But without defaulting to obvious comedy. My instincts say we could have a lot of fun with that juxtaposition shooting these on phantom. Really, the films mimic very concise, one look, detail rich, story complete, stills. Like the print ad campaign, everything we need to know about either the dad or the son is right there, in frame. And they're in their underwear. Now that's not a satirical nod or goofy, lowbrow comedy. It's just the truth. Some guys 60+ dad is standing in the living room looking out the window in his (not so) tighty whities.

We're simply celebrating this by making it a quietly awesome event. Phantom will make these opening frame(s) frozen moments that capture the viewer's eye. Then instead of pulling out (we can shoot it both ways, of course) we'll very slowly push in on the dad. Then we're taking the most banal and potentially awkward of moments (flashback to young Peter Darby Miller watching his dad pour his morning coffee in the aforementioned outfit) and honoring the awkward while elevating it to heroic.

Let's find one small movement - it could be the baseball in mid-air as it slowly begins to descend in frame - that indicates to the viewer this isn't a still. This is real time. Or at least real time slowed down. But it's a real person, in a real environment, who's really in his underwear. If we craft these frames with that kind of attention and care they won't feel 'comedic'. But man will they ever be funny and full of unanticipated juxtaposition and very dry, smart humor. And while the viewer is getting his head around the dad-shot we'll segue into a really seamless sequence that shows how comfortable and good-looking these Gildan's are.

Which we'll reveal in an equally tongue in cheek way as we see them being pulled up towards the Man Zone right before we cut away to...a proud, cool, handsome millennial. In his Gildan's. Or jeans, low slung so we see the Gildan brand name. It's an equally contemporary portraiture shot. A visual bookend that nods to the dad without replicating the moment exactly. That way we make the visual point and underscore the message these sons are their own men. And they have their own underwear and those underwear are called Gildan. Love it. It not only makes Gildan contemporary, moves it forward - it gives Millennials ownership of the brand.

TONE

There's nothing funny about these. Not in the cliché, 'seen it already' advertising way. But in the hip, insightful, social commentary as smart comedy way, these are quietly hysterical. These moments will never - literally - lose sight of the fact we are seeing old dudes in saggy shorts. But instead of masking the moment behind broad comedy, we're taking it head on. Wow, dangerous analogy. Anyway, the humor works because we're not hiding it. Just the opposite. We're putting it in front of people full screen. Maybe in Phantom. Deliriously beautiful, poetic 1000 FPS of your dad. In his skivvies. Regardless of the fact I'm actually laughing while I write this I just want to circle back to what's important here - the funny in these is a result of celebrating them like just a normal moment. The dads and the millennials aren't doing anything 'funny'. These aren't spoofing real life, they're highlighting it with wry acceptance. They're saying, 'This is your dad, in his underwear. And this is you, in yours. See the difference? Of course you do because you own who you are and your Gildan's are proof positive of that'. Good thing we don't have to say all that, it would take too long. But fortunately we have these films which are brilliantly wordless, very cool facsimiles of exactly that guided by a really badass VO. Trust me, people are going to remember this work. Not to mention they'll be laughing out loud and googling where to buy Gildans.

CAST+PERFORMANCE

Indulge me for a second - Forest Whitaker, Walter White, Louis CK are the dads in these. Good guys, real people. And they all have their own kind of gravitas, right? Before Walter White was the #1 cooker in Albuquerque he was just a middle aged guy in a gas mask and underwear. But you know what? He wasn't apologizing to anyone. That's how I see our dads - like mine actually, they're still full of pride and command your attention. They're not sad and we're not embarrassed for them. Because they're not embarrassed about who they are. We're giving them hero portraits - let's have our talent stand equally tall and embody quiet conviction

about who they are. Then, 1. These moments will be real and funny but equally importantly, 2. It will make sense when we see their sons - who also embody their own sense of self conviction. Apple doesn't fall far from the tree kind of thing. Except when it comes to how they house their south of the border area. Now, about the 'boys. Donald Glover - series creator of Atlanta. Great looking, self possessed young man. Oozes integrity, confidence, millennial conviction in his capacity to know himself and keep his ideals close. If he was Forest Whitaker's son in the Rite Of Passage spot, we'd be so dead center in terms of our casting for who these millennial sons are. They have a sense of empowerment and intelligent confidence. So we need to be sure we hit that casting target accurately - we can't just cast three clean cut, good looking kids. They need to get our eye. Make us notice them. These guys have their version of their dad's swag. Their own sense of style. Let's be vigilant and true to who they are so we do them justice and in turn, they nod, 'Yeah, Gildan's...got it'.

THE NEXT GENERATION

You guys wrote these, they're brilliant and you don't need me to walk you back through every line. I'd rather make some overall remarks then talk about some of the key beats I think we want to pay attention to. Let's use Rite Of Passage as our template.

We open back a bit, see a 60's dad in his living room, staring out the bay window, first cup of morning coffee in hand. He's a man of seasoned calm and a kind, but confident sense of self. He could be a corporate executive. Or a tradesman. Though what he does is a distant second to who he is: we can feel the quality of his character. He wears his integrity on his sleeve and his hard won values on his...well wherever you would wear ideals on your clothes. If you were wearing them. Which our dad is not. He's in his underwear. Old school skivvies with worn out elastic and overstretched leg holes. The camera pushes in slowly, bringing him into closer focus and charging this frozen moment with quiet heroism. And for a moment we're just a bit relieved this is a still portrait, not a real person.

Until he lifts his coffee cup for a sip. Wow. This. Is. Really happening.

As we continue to push in - weird bonus - this man turns to look directly at us. Now it's heroic and awkward. So we cut. And see an awesome new pair of all Gildan underwear, held by a pair of hands. The cotton's so natural we can breathe easier just looking at it. The elastic waistband's full of vibrancy. We see the hands begin to pull up the underwear, see the legs inside them and realize, oh, um, these are being put on. While we watch. Okay, this is about to get interesting. And it does, fast. This dad is pulling these new, comfy underwear on. And we're going North with him. To the Man Zone. Until we cut at the last minute.

And see a proud young man in his home. Modern, tasteful. He's standing at his bay window, coffee in hand. And he's wearing the Gildan underwear we just saw. We can see a trace of his father's strong jaw line. Same quality of character. Integrity. In this young man we see the very qualities we just saw in his dad. What we don't see, is his dad's underwear. Nope. We see the brand that's taking a new generation forward. With comfort, fresh elastic and a new outlook on life. And roomy leg openings. We see, Gildan.

AVO: Gildan. The next generation of underwear.

VO

Very important. Is it an intelligent, seasoned calm of savvy knowing, like Morgan Freeman? High I.Q. with a touch of questioning insight, Jon Hamm? Is it a father, speaking to his son? My feeling is like the campaign, let's catch people off guard. The voiceover is measured and respectful, articulate. But it's also passing the torch, imparting wisdom. And I think we can have it sound informed and sober, without taking itself too seriously. But because we'll be looking at guys in underwear it can't feel comedic. We need the juxtaposition of hearing an honest delivery of the line:

He taught you to respect others. And to respect yourself. While watching a dad stare out the window, drinking coffee. In his John Henry's.

PRINT CAMPAIGN

I did the print campaign for Shawshank Redemption. I'm not saying that to impress you, I'm saying it because nobody was skewing to go see a prison film. We came up with a solid print campaign that spoke to the heart and grit of that movie, told in one shot. And it made a difference. The print side of this is every bit as important, its integral, I know you get that. I'd give it the same respect as the films. But shoot it on Hasselblad, not 4K. Create a true, strong print look captured with confident photography in a composition that makes it a strong stand alone piece that ties to the broadcast work. Did I mention I executed the print campaign for Shawshank...?

FINALLY

If at any point while reading this treatment you thought, 'Wow, this guy's really taking this seriously'. Thank you, I am. I think it's such a smart piece of work. It speaks to people in an intelligent way but never takes itself too seriously, or loses touch with its aim: to inspire people to wear Gildan. Having said that, I wrote this on my laptop at my desk. In my underwear. So while I truly believe this creative is top shelf smart, I also think it's rooted in a wonderful truth: we humans are funny people for whom the past and our underwear, bear equal weight in how we move forward in life. Let's bring our craft, a great cast and a little serendipity to your already brilliant ideas. And make some films that celebrate dads, sons, the past, present and most importantly, an all cotton brief with a non-binding waistband. Really appreciate the call, talk soon.

