

Humana
Director's Treatment
Spot: Birthday



INTRO

Planning for the future - its human nature. And what we do. We look at where we are in life. Consider where we want to go. Then make a plan to get there. The irony of course is we never make room for the "what if's" and the unexpected. As in "what if I get sick". And a future I hadn't imagined supersedes the one I'm trying to prepare for.

For me, this campaign is an answer to just that - the unforeseen and unanticipated. It is a clear-eyed, thoughtful communication that reminds us we need to care for ourselves now, so our later is exactly how we imaged it. It's Humana saying, let's partner up. You figure out what it is you want, and we'll make sure your health now, allows you to be the person you want to be, in the future you want.

So for me, there's only one way to present these films – with realism, honesty and a provocative spirit of possibility. Let's tell these moments with unflinching truthfulness. And style. Give them an atheistic and technique that's every bit as compelling as the people, situations and messaging. And remind our audience that it's human and – important - to plan for what we want. So let's make Humana a part of our life now, so we can live the day-to-day life we want, later.

VISUAL STYLE - CAMERA TECHNIQUE

These films should be photographic – the compositions should present each moment with simple, beautiful realism. But it's also important that we bring the audience into that moment when the character stops – Scorsese does this with technique. He freezes a moment, suspends it in time, without breaking narrative. That's what we want to do – suspend the present moment as a way to integrate the audience emotionally and visually with the character and, the message. Also, I'd absolutely shoot sections of this in slow motion.

I suggest we shoot on 4k - and full frame so you can do the post zoom in or out digitally. Then, even if you shoot the wide, you frame up for the close up. You will have all the information on the image so you can move in or out. So for example, if we start up close with her - the camera moves in...the image freezes - then we can just move the camera away. Then when you return at the end of the spot - we start the shot earlier than where we froze - and adjust the actor's performance slightly different - as this is a different emotion, and in fact a moment in time. If we shoot with 2 cameras you can then cut between the two perspectives of the same moment.

I also think the color should be very designed. We want the campaign to have its own distinctive look and vibe that best tells each story – and gives Humana a style and visual attitude they can own going forward. There's a certain kind of elegance so you can focus on the person and really pay attention to the VO. So the frame needs to be very spare. Then colors can become richer and rounder in the future. When we start out it's stripped and monochromatic and by the end, after seeing the future it's a little more enhanced. I see the color design in 3 distinct stages:

Stage 1:

A very modern, monochromatic almost design of the shots. The shots have a graphic elegance.

Stage 2:

A more saturated look. More along the lines of *Eternal Sunshine Of The Spotless Mind*.

Stage 3:

When we go back to the beginning - this look now should be a mix of the two worlds. It's not as monochromatic as earlier and not as saturated as the middle 'flash forward' section - but a world in between those two.

I would also like to design the color palette of the sets, giving everything a refined naturalism and elegance, but still allow for blocks of color that pop out and capture the eye.

Ref: [Viviane Sassen](#)

ART DIRECTION

To start, the frame is more monochromatic – the opening feeling is about work, working out, achieving. So let's introduce color in the 'flash forward' – a bright, colorful Happy Birthday banner, the different color icings on the cake, a big splash of color from 25 inflated balloons, swaying around by the wall.

BIRTHDAY

We're close on the face of an older man, in his 70's. He breathes hard. Sweat beads his forehead. His head moves forward in frame, then back again. We pull back – reveal he's working out on a rowing machine in his basement gym.

VO: It's a good thing that for the last 15 years you've partnered with Humana and looked after your health...

THE FILM STOPS – and we hold on his image, suspended in mid action.

VO: ...because in 5 days, 10 hours and 2 minutes you are going to be 67.

We cut to him walking up the stairs to his home. End of the day, briefcase in one hand his coat in the other. He's humming to himself, relaxed after long day at work.

VO: And on that very day you are going to walk into a room where 17 people will be waiting.

We cut inside the house - see see a man and his wife crouched down, hiding behind a chair trying not to giggle. People are everywhere, sardined in and around the living room, dining room, one guy in a tie is schrootched down behind a big Fichus plant.

VO: 4 of them will be under the table. 10 of them will crouch behind the sofas, and 3...and a half ...of them will squeeze behind a curtain.

The light's go off, and everyone goes pin drop quiet.

VO: In the dark.

The man walks to the front door, slings his jacket over a chair and flips the light switch on.

PEOPLE: Surprise! (Silent)

VO: But only one of them will make a lifelong dream come true. His wife gives him a pair of boots with two tickets to Alaska inside. Cut back to the man rowing.

SUPER: Great things are ahead of you when your health is ready for it.

VO: At Humana we have a Medicare Advantage plan that works for you today and for many, many, many...many years to come.

LOGO: Humana ANNCR: Start with healthy.

THE TONE

For me this campaign represents practical themes of self-awareness, support and empowerment. And tonally, that needs to be reflected in the film. We are watching people who possess a real vitality of life and commitment to their future. At the same time we need to present Humana as a supportive partner. A company capable of helping people make smart informed decisions now, so they can live the future they want. Clearly there is a powerful genuine, sense of inspiration and personal capability in each film. These people are in full command of their lives, living with a commitment to the present. At the same time it's importance to see that Humana can be an ally in the decisions you make now. And help you put into place a healthcare strategy that will support you to live the life you want, later.

THE CHARACTERS

Because these films are so personal and the message intimate, it's important that our audience connects with these people. They can't feel like actors miming their way through moments – each person we see needs to have a really touchable, genuine sense of personality. Having said that I think it's important we find little character touches and work with them to create a narrative arc in each moment.

The older gentleman in BIRTHDAY is a great little study. I'm always keen on creating wonderful portraits of older people that show their vitality and spirit. It could be interesting if we start close on him at first. We see he is maybe not struggling, but exerting himself and we don't know why so it gives us a little bit of story intrigue. Then we pull back and see he's staying in shape. As a couple, let's make their story feels equally honest. Let's not forget the voiceover. It's an additional and equally important character. This voice both leads us along and connects us to what we see. It's going to create a lot of tone so it should have a cinematic texture and style in the way the voice teases us along from one moment to the next.

THE LOCATIONS

We should really strive to make every location as authentic and American as possible. By "American", we're simply saying genuine with real texture in every setting we see. The basement gym where the older gentleman works out is a bit Spartan, but not rundown. There can be weights on the floor behind him, or a towel on a weight bench next to him. Let's take every opportunity to populate the frames with little touches that say these are authentic spaces where real people come.

THE END

What a fantastic distillation of ideas - and a true offer of partnership, from Humana.

I am truly excited to help you launch this campaign.