

## **LOCATIONS**

Fashion is a universal language. We will find equally universal locations. I imagine staging our cast in colorful, whimsical environments that reflect their distinctive individuality. These spaces must feel like the natural extension of their sense of style and personalities.

In terms of expediency, we would have a studio day with stunning, graphic sets. We would be able to move quickly and efficiently from one space to another as we capture these energizing snapshots.

Our locations themselves should feel fashionable. These are cool, clean, bright spaces where people can relax and just be themselves. There is no need to “pose” here. These are the sorts of venues that people see as their second home.

I would like to also blur the lines between the studio and the locations by bringing some of our set elements or walls from our mini onstage sets to location. This would add some unexpected color to scenes, as well as building on the overall continuity of the campaign.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA & LOCATIONS**

One additional thought, regarding the social media element of the campaign would be to film our cast in their regular haunts. Where is that coffee shop where Maxx-Mellow likes to write? Where do our fashion maven and her life-long friends congregate? In this manner we would expand upon and deepen that sense that our cast is comfortable with who they are and what they wear.

## **CINEMATOGRAPHY & LIGHTING**

For an authentic and cinematic look, I want to utilize as much natural light as possible. This means simple set ups, which is less distracting to our talent and also allows us to be light on our feet. The grading is naturally low contrast with a quiet background palette that elevates the colorful clothing.

The cinematography is not overly polished or cold, but it is beautiful and rather intimate. A hand held camera lends an organic sense of presence to the shots, as if the camera moves amongst the talent instead of simply observing. The camera is sensitive and responsive to the motions of our talent. This isn't just thrown together, it's beautifully composed, and there's a flow to the edit to make sense of the perfect rhythm of our vignettes.

## **THE FASHION**

The TJ Maxx fashions are and will always be our star. We have to choose a set of Maxx-isms whose singular figures and lifestyles reflect the brand. We want to select players who have an authentic, genuine interest in fashion. Their natural fashion instincts are a bit more bold and daring than most. They are in tune with currents trends and know almost instinctively what will suit them.

Working within the parameters set by our client's specific needs, I want to set up an open dialogue between our stylist and our cast very early on. Functioning collaboratively, they would be able to establish style sketches that reflect our cast's unique fashion sense. Let's imagine that our cast takes the time to put together simple fashion vision boards, or even more simply, send our stylist smartphone pics of themselves in the outfits that they feel best reflect their personalities. These images would serve as a launching pad for our stylist to put together individual "fashion profiles" for each player.

Our stylist would then have a blueprint from which to pull TJ Maxx fashions. Our ultimate goal is for our cast to come across as the real people that they are. They should have an opportunity to make the fashion their own. They must never feel like models or actors in a commercial fashion show. Instead, we have to strive for our cast to feel deeply invested in and comfortable with our final TJ Maxx clothing selections.

Clearly our client's goals will play the ultimate definitive factor in our clothing selections. I truly believe however that if our talent feels fully invested in what they are wearing, having a sense that they literally own these clothes, what will pop on screen will be their genuine pleasure at being seen and photographed in these fashions. This greater degree of emotional authenticity and connection to the clothing will certainly dovetail with our client's overall desires.

## **GOING BEYOND THE SURFACE**

I am very excited about this notion of exploring more in-depth relationships with our real people through a social media digital campaign. This additive element has an extended range of benefits, far beyond what we initially discussed on the call.

Similar to having our cast deeply engaged in selecting their own wardrobe, our social media/digital and BTS element will also serve to deepen our cast's sense of personal investment in the project. Let's imagine that each of the Maxx-isms has a pre-existing social media presence on Facebook, Instagram, etc. I'm not talking about thousands of followers mind you, more like their immediate circle of close friends and associates. Our cast would have the unique opportunity to instantly share their experience of the campaign with what could amount to thousands of their combined friends.

Let's even open up a discussion about having our real people interact with each other on topics close to their hearts. What if we had themes? Let's say "Challenging Perceptions of Me" as one. Here I would pair up our older fashion maven with our plus-size woman to hear what they both have to say about how they actively challenge societal perceptions and expectations.

Another theme could be "What I Know Now that I Wish I Knew Then." I would love to hear what advice our 65+ woman would impart to 19 year-old musician about life and making wise choices in one's youth.

Yes of course, we would do individual case studies and follow our cast concurrently throughout the casting process, etc. But let's not limit ourselves. Let's keep asking ourselves how to best mine the potential of these diverse minds and life experiences.

his own words, “If there’s something that just...rings inside my body. When I get chills, I know I’m doing something right.”

## **DANCER – LIL BUCK**

Growing up in Memphis, Charles “Lil Buck” Riley, never thought that his distinctive style of dance, jookin’, would lead to a collaboration with Yo-Yo Ma that would reach over three million Youtube hits. Whether a regular Cirque du Soleil performer with Michael Jackson’s One, or touring with Madonna, Lil Buck has become an international style ambassador.

## **OUR MAXX-ISMS**

*Please note: As I mentioned earlier, please see the people that I mention below as more archetypical examples of the sorts of characters that we would want to discover in our casting process.*

### **STYLE ICON - IRIS APFEL**

*“Color can raise the dead”*

*Iris Apfel*

Recently named at 91 as one of the “Best Dressed Over 50s,” Iris Apfel has done it all. Her body of work ranges from White House design work for virtually every U.S. President from Truman to Clinton, to haggling with Harlem street vendors for the best possible deal on bracelets. She sees getting dressed as much like jazz, an improvised art.

### **GAY, MODEL & ACTRESS – RUBY ROSE**

Multi-hyphenate and genderfluid Ruby Rose has been turning heads since she was a tween. This Australian Glamour Awards Woman of the Year has become both fashion icon and inspiring role model to tweens, teens and early-20s who refuse to be locked into a single gender identity. She proves the not only is true beauty generated from the inside, out, but that it can be quite changeling as well.

### **DESIGNER & ACTOR - WARIS AHLUWALIA**

The House of Waris, Ahluwalia’s design studio brings the ambience of ancient Eastern Kingdom’s into the modern fashion realm. When Waris is not spearheading efforts to raise relief funds for the victims of the 2008 Mumbai terrorist attacks, he is playing distinctive roles in films such as Wes Anderson’s “The Life Aquatic”, and “The Grand Budapest Hotel.” With his varied, diverse interests, Waris has elevated the notion of being a Renaissance Man to a new level.

### **CHOREOGRAPHER – RYAN HEFFINGTON**

Sia’s hit song “Chandelier’s” video was defined by Ryan Heffington’s VMA-Award winning choreography. He is someone who choreographs viscerally. In

persona to see if she could even top it. I can easily see a Soul Train dance line spontaneously occurring.

In addition, similar to my H&M Christmas spot, I would want to take a few moments to bring everyone together to film a collage-style family portrait. This would not be a static snapshot, rather something moving and dynamic. Perhaps we would go handheld, as we collected everyone take to picture, then watch as they giggle and jostle around, finding the best final positioning out of the excited chaos.

## **PERFORMANCE**

I also like the idea of leveraging the energy in our diverse group of people by filming them together although they aren't necessarily seen in the frame or scene together at the same time. This will build a fun and positive energy between the performers that will translate to the screen.

Here are some basic approaches to cull the best bits of collective chemistry from our players:

### **GOING BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE WARDROBE FITTING:**

Particularly when shooting fashion, I've always enjoyed witnessing how the talent interacts with each other as they try on the clothes and explore different looks. Let's put on some upbeat jazz tunes and capture these natural interactions by shooting behind-the-scenes footage. Imagine taking in the spontaneous reactions of other cast members to one particular talent's wardrobe options.

What if we encouraged some of our Maxx-isms to bring in their own instruments, artwork, or personal hobbies to the fitting session? Sharing these personal joys in a show and tell atmosphere would provide an excellent icebreaker.

### **A FESTIVE, JOYOUS ATMOSPHERE ON OUR SHOOT DAYS**

I always like to break down the barriers between the various parts of the production machine. Though clearly, I will be firmly at the helm, I am perfectly comfortable with creating more of a festive atmosphere on set. Let's say we have a production assistant who also DJ's on the weekends. He or she could take requests from the client, agency, talent, crew, etc.

What if our Maxx-Electric person brings their instrument in for a spontaneous lunchtime jam session with some members of the crew who are also musicians? What about some backstage Karaoke?

In terms of how we structure the shoot days, I would veer away from the rote schedule of having staggered calls with everyone coming in for their set time on camera. Rather, I would have everyone come in for the whole day. Remember they have already made friends at the wardrobe fitting. Now we get to see Chapter Two of their growing relationships evolve.

I would love to see a young kid performing some hip, modern dance moves for everyone. He would then turn the dance floor over to maybe or Maxx-Eclectic

## **CASTING FASCINATING CHARACTERS**

Our cast must reflect the incredible diversity that is America. They should be varied both in terms of ethnicity as well as ages, reflecting a cross-section of society.

As I mentioned in the call, I think we should look to casting both in New York and Los Angeles. New York tends to have a greater range of singular, somewhat eclectic personalities. These must be style conscious people of all ages, shapes and sizes that we might find anywhere from on the pages of street fashion blogs to Paris, Milan or New York Fashion Weeks.

We could even throw our net even further to tertiary cities such as Austin or New Orleans. Here too, we are likely to find characters with a standout sense of personal fashion.

Should we move forward, I would have our casting director read the upcoming character profiles in my storytelling section as a source of inspiration for the sorts of characters that we are seeking.

project from beginning to end. To feel as though the campaign is a true reflection of themselves. This will accelerate and excite the spot's tone.

The key step I would take to this accomplish deeper sense of personal investment would be to immediately set up a dialogue between our players and our wardrobe stylist. These interactions would also be considerate of our client's specific needs and preferences. Nevertheless, unlike most films where the stylist does the shopping, picks out several options and then during the fitting we reach a general consensus, for our project, I would like to see our characters and our stylist working collaboratively.

In essence, the one thing that our final cast will have in common is that they are all people that are comfortable in their own skin, regardless of their age or stage in life. How we will be able to communicate this fact on screen will be by having them and our audience feel like their outfits are truly something they would wear, because it is.

Very early on, they will have engaged in "style sketch" discussions with our stylist. Our stylist would then function as part personal shopper, part executer of our joint vision as client, agency and director. It is this multi-faceted juncture that I believe will cause our Maxx-isms to virtually explode on screen.

Starting on the next page, you will find my director's treatment in greater detail. I have enclosed as many visual references as possible, in order to best express my ideas.

You also will find that I have selected certain, iconic real people as placeholder casting templates. Clearly, these people may not be accessible to us for a variety of reasons. Nevertheless, please see these examples as a general tone and context for the sort of people I envision us discovering during our casting process.

Of course, nothing in this treatment is etched in granite. Please see these initial notes as yet another aspect of our ongoing creative discourse.

Please let's reconnect soon,

## INTRODUCTION

Casting finding these great characters/ quirky that's what's going to come across on the film.

First of all, thank you for this second chance to share some love for TJ Maxx and inviting me to pitch and for our interesting and informative briefing call.

I love working with singular, standout characters whose life forces just seem to jump off the screen. These are the sorts of people who have always found unique ways to express themselves. Their way of living becomes a work of art in and of itself. Their creativity extends far past they way they dress, into what I would call a moment-to-moment joie de vivre.

Very few things phase them, taking all in stride, they make the absolute best of all circumstances. When they look back on their lives, what they see is a mosaic of personal passions. Looking to future, they envision an infinite quilt expanding to the horizon's vanishing point. Each square is a valued life experience that will not only enrich their lives, but that of those around them.

This TJ Maxx campaign celebrates the unique style of these sorts of real people. It centers on a series of charismatic, colorful people that I would say are more fashion conscious than the average. Their sense of fashion works in tandem with their singular personalities and often serves as a source of inspiration for all those around them.

Shooting fashion is also a deep passion of mine. Because we don't have to adhere to a set narrative, it allows us the freedom to be far more visually playful. This creative liberty is incredibly exciting, especially when, as in our case, we are taking a more holistic approach to casting and storytelling. Although actual screen time in the TV spot may be limited to two to three second vignettes, we are going far beyond that with the help of social media content to delve deeper within these personalities, both in front and behind the scenes.

After our call, my mind virtually kicked into overdrive thinking about how to bring these very graphic characters to life. What came to mind is that we have to present our Maxx-isms as fully engaged, three-dimensional people. Our social media and behind-the-scenes component will do a great amount to accomplish this goal.

I wanted to take this multi-dimensionality to an even higher level however, adding a layer of "*oophmf*" if you will, by bringing our diverse cast of characters more directly into the filmmaking process. I realized that our talent's interaction with the wardrobe was the key. I want them to feel personally invested in the