

SHARED PLATE

A TREATMENT BY TOM BARBOR-MIGHT

Coca-Cola jetBlue ROGUE 



A man with glasses and a dark jacket stands in the center of an airport terminal. He has headphones around his neck and a bag slung over his shoulder. A large yellow arrow points from the left towards him. The background shows airport gates A112 and A101, a store named 'Lifestyle Woodland', and other travelers. The floor is a blue and grey patterned carpet.

HELLO, MY NAME IS TOM
AND I SPEND A LOT OF TIME AT AIRPORTS...

The background image shows an airport terminal with large windows. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow. Silhouettes of people are visible, some sitting in airport chairs, others standing. An airplane is visible in the sky through the windows. The overall mood is quiet and contemplative.

INTRODUCTION

... JetBlue and Coke's, Shared Plate, campaign's aspiration to connect people at the airport really resonates with me. At a terminal, we all sit in our little bubbles ignoring one another, headphones on; head buried in Candy Crush. It's a missed opportunity. A potentially amazing social mix, which is completely wasted. I really like the idea of changing this dynamic and creating a space where people can mix and have a conversation. I think it will be fascinating to watch worlds collide, both the people and the cuisines.

The way you've framed this connection around a meal is really smart. In every single culture, in every corner of the world, people eat together. It's how us humans connect. This connection and social mixing is neatly mirrored by the bespoke fusion cuisine. Food, after all, is mixed up with identity – it's who we are and where we come from – it's one of the things that define us. So this parity between disparate cuisines being blended and new friendships being forged, is something I really want to bring out in how I'd direct 'Shared Plate'. I'd want to celebrate the differences and similarities between people from all over the US and the world. It's fusion filmmaking.

Another focus for me would be documentary authenticity. I am captivated by documentary's remarkable ability to reach audiences in the most direct and moving of ways. The authenticity of the unscripted line and the elegance of the unrehearsed phrase can bring a profound dignity and realism to a campaign, a realism that is not easily dismissed or ignored. So for me, authenticity would be at the very core of my approach – so no cheating and casting frustrated actors from those 'Real people who want to be on TV' websites!

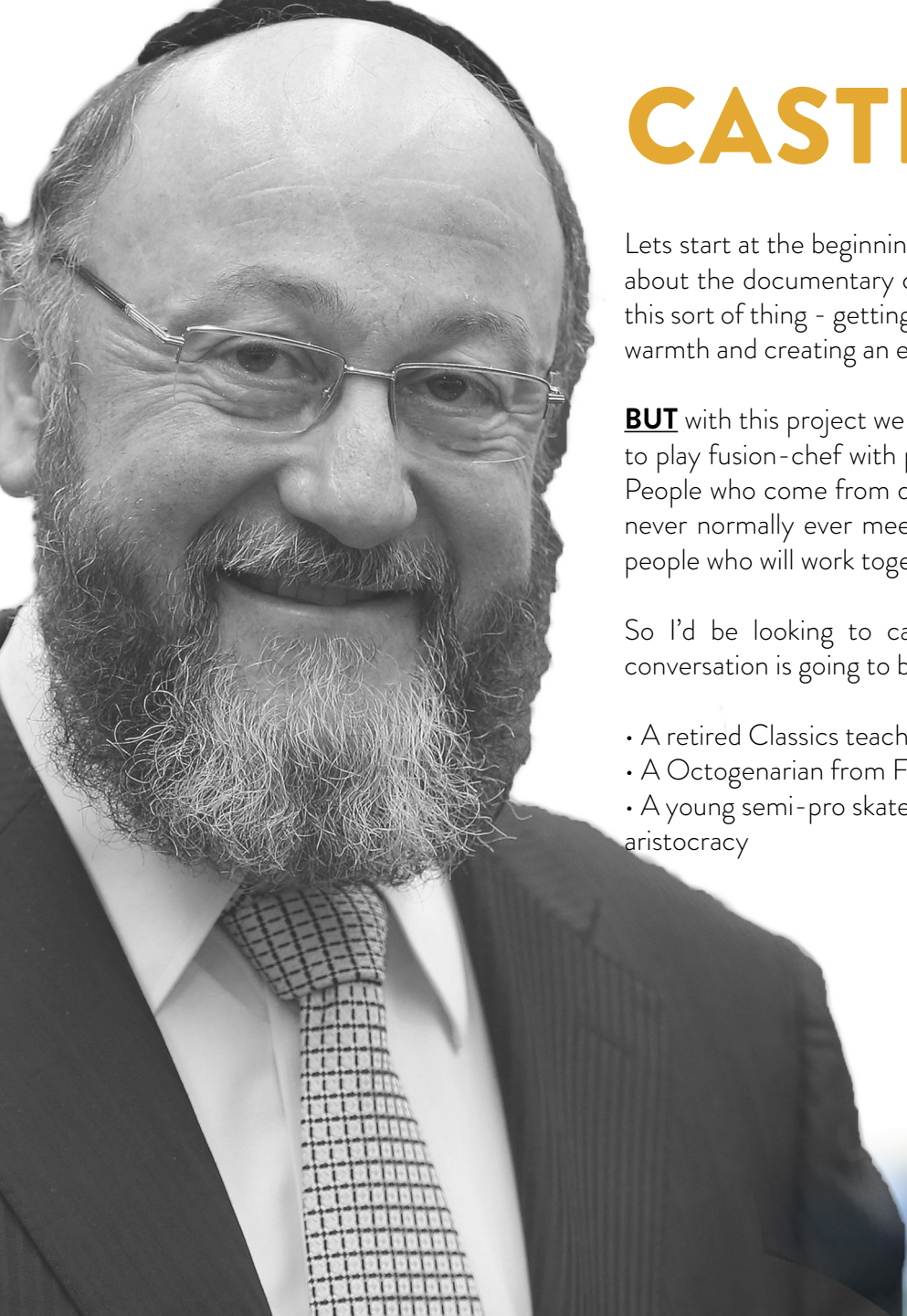


However, there is a danger here too. It would be disastrous if the film comes across as overly earnest and pompous. I think without wit and charm, it's very easy for this sort of work to slip into pretention. Another foundation of my approach would be humour... It's got to be funny. So as well as wanting to celebrate the fusion of people and cuisines, I'd be looking to stir in some warm, natural comedy by casting people who we laugh with and focusing on comic timing in the edit. If we can make our audience chuckle then we'll create something that will truly engage, entertain and connect with audiences.

Over the next few pages I am going to lay out how I'd approach directing this campaign. Like a chef I am going to prepare my 'ingredients' and then bring them all together into the 'main course' or the outline of narrative.



PART 1: THE RAW INGREDIENTS



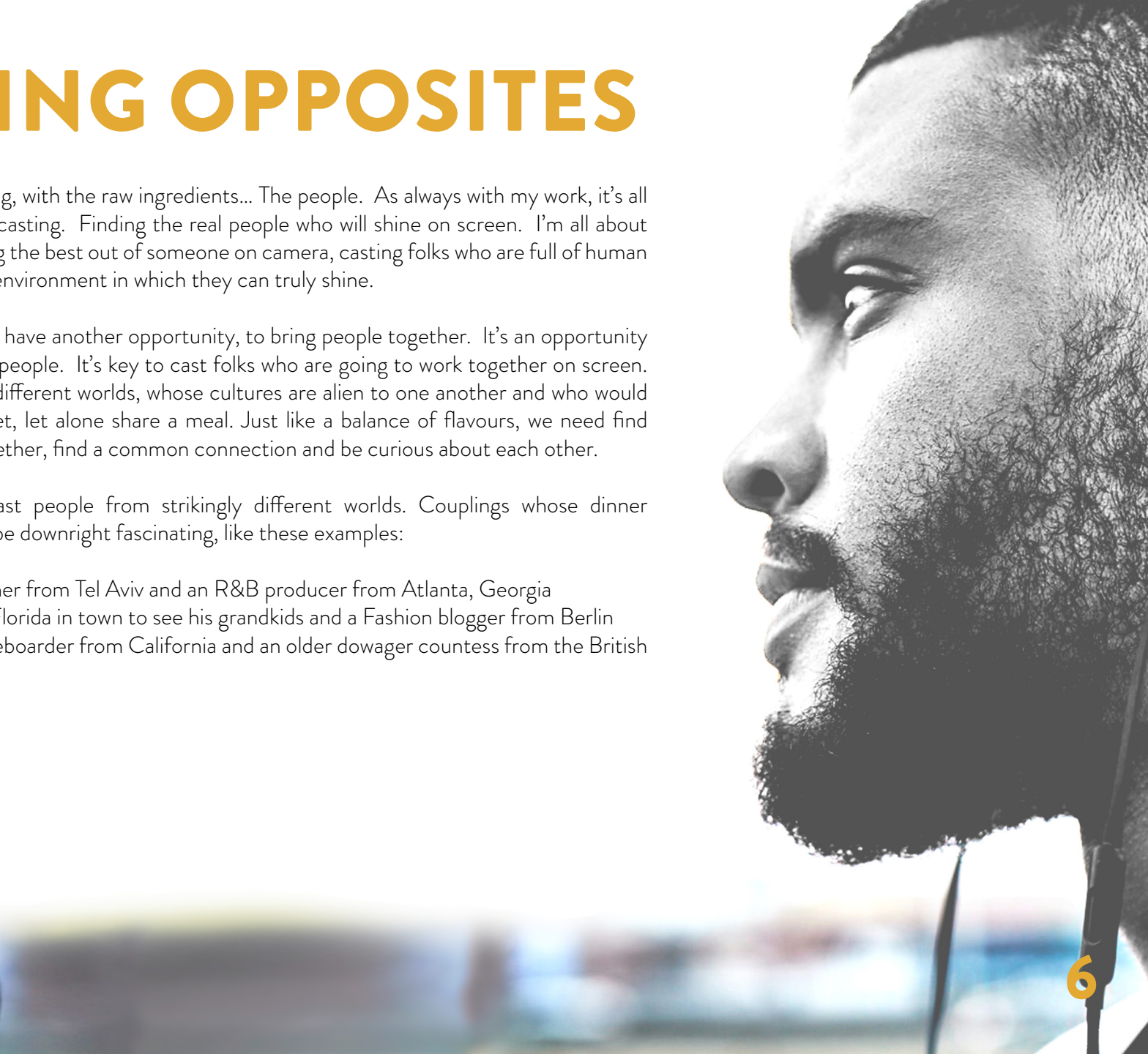
CASTING OPPOSITES

Lets start at the beginning, with the raw ingredients... The people. As always with my work, it's all about the documentary casting. Finding the real people who will shine on screen. I'm all about this sort of thing - getting the best out of someone on camera, casting folks who are full of human warmth and creating an environment in which they can truly shine.

BUT with this project we have another opportunity, to bring people together. It's an opportunity to play fusion-chef with people. It's key to cast folks who are going to work together on screen. People who come from different worlds, whose cultures are alien to one another and who would never normally ever meet, let alone share a meal. Just like a balance of flavours, we need find people who will work together, find a common connection and be curious about each other.

So I'd be looking to cast people from strikingly different worlds. Couplings whose dinner conversation is going to be downright fascinating, like these examples:

- A retired Classics teacher from Tel Aviv and an R&B producer from Atlanta, Georgia
- A Octogenarian from Florida in town to see his grandkids and a Fashion blogger from Berlin
- A young semi-pro skateboarder from California and an older dowager countess from the British aristocracy



My point is I'd want to be ambitious. There is temptation when making documentaries to confuse 'real' people with 'conventional' people – to look for boring folks because somehow 'boring' is real. But it's not, real life is always more eccentric, moving and downright surprising than anything you can possibly make-up. Just think about the people you meet every day - the quirky old lady with a good sense of humour at your local convenience store or the absurdly handsome barista at your favourite coffee spot. Or that offbeat teaching assistant who is so amazing with your kids. Truly incredible, idiosyncratic and wonderful people surround us all the time, so let's be bold and cast them. Let's find the people that are going to surprise and delight our audience. People you simply can't stop watching.

The contrast between the people is where a lot of the natural comedy I spoke about in the introduction is going to come from. The collision of cultures and personalities is rich territory for gentle, warm humour. However, it's also important to stress that I would not cast to create conflict. I don't see this like a reality TV show, where they deliberately cast people who are going to argue together on camera. Also, I don't want it to seem contrived – like we have gone out to find the most 'dramatic' contrasts we can. If we do this I think our audiences, highly tuned 'bullshit' detectors will be activated. Instead I'd want to cast organic, fascinating and surprising couplings who will be curious about one another. There is a genuine social mix of people at an airport so we can find truly different people, from different walks of life and bring them together over a Shared Plate.

Broadly I'd be looking for mix of age, gender and ethnicity but not to the point where we compromise the stories. I'd choose the character over the demographic every time. Warm, fun people with open faces that are full of character.

** This example may of course, present issues surrounding kosher food so please treat it only as an illustrative example. In reality will find extraordinary and authentic pairings from that arise naturally from our casting process.*



PASSIONATE ABOUT FOOD

As I said in my introduction, food is about identity. The Wiener schnitzel, the Chole Bhature and even my own native fish and chips, help define our national characters. So one of my casting goals would be to find people who are passionate about their country's cuisine. People who will be naturally fascinated and delighted by our chef creating a fusion feast, tailored just for them.



Luis Morales
@kickstart73

traveling to Savannah, Georgia from
JetBlue JFK fb.me/98021LFdS

BUT HOW DO WE ACTUALLY DO IT?

I know what your thinking – “It’s all very well to write about casting like this but how would he and his team actually go about finding these amazing people?” Well first of all I’d want to work with real travellers. People who are really traveling to or through NYC. I’d want to avoid completely engineering the cast by flying people in specifically and exclusively for the shoot. Being authentic is important and I’d want to be ambitious and set the target of casting real travellers. These could of course be frequent flyers though, as that would be authentic too. Being rigorous like this will aid the realism in the film and also mean that our audience’s bullshit detectors won’t go off. I find that too much construction invalidates the magic of documentary. It’s about taking it to the line but not crossing it.

To find these people, we’d employ a raft of techniques. The key is to spread our net as wide as possible. There are no short cuts in casting; so we’d do the work and connect with and Skype-interview a large array of potential people. We’d principally do this through social media. Using a mix of old fashioned ‘searching’ and adapting advertising algorithms to find the best multicultural cross-section of people who are coming through the great melting pot of JFK.

You also have to be creative with where you look. Find fascinating forums, reaching out to food-bloggers and NYC travel tips on Facebook. It’s about coming at it from unusual angles, tapping into different types of people who might be flying to or from events - conferences, retreats, magic conventions, comedy festivals, food festivals, thanksgiving, religious holidays, craft & trade fairs, parades, music gigs, fashion shows, marathons, sporting events. The list is endless and endlessly entertaining.

I’d also be keen to explore ways that we might be able to utilise Jet Blue’s social handles, their frequent flyers and True Blue database. This would, of course, be done with the appropriate level of privacy and respect.

Our casting methodology would, of course, evolve. If we were awarded the job one of the first things I would want to understand is what sort of out reach is appropriate for Mullen Lowe and of course Coke and Jet Blue.

Richard Giannotti
Red Eye flights back to the east
Halloween Weekend, had to we
#Mosaic @JetBlue

AS A PROOF ON CONCEPT I'VE DECIDED TO ACTUALLY DO IT

so we've spent a little time looking for fascinating people who REALLY HAVE BEEN flying too or from New York in the last week or so.



This is John Loneragan [@JohnLoneraganWC6]. John is from Cork in Ireland. He's a professional Irish dancer. In fact he's so good he's a six times Irish Dance World Champion! He's currently touring with Riverdance, which means he travels a lot and is often coming through New York...



John Loneragan
@JohnLoneraganWC6

Follow



Taking a little trip to New York today, on my own. Let's hope I survive 🙏 #NYC
[#CityWhereDreamsAreMadeOf](#) [#Excited](#)

3:27 AM



... and this is Corey Woods [@CoreyWoods_]. Corey is from LA and is the founder and CEO of YEROC [iyeroc.com] is eye-ware fashion label. Corey is in New York this week to support his partner who's a publicist and is hosting a launch event in town. I'd be interested to eves-drop on the dinner conversation of a fashion insider and one of the worlds best Irish Dancer.



Corey Woods
@CoreyWoods_

Follow



I will be flying into New York tomorrow to sponsor my love's [@mariedriven](#) loveandhiphopofficial...
[instagram.com/p/Ba1-5D0D5w3/](https://www.instagram.com/p/Ba1-5D0D5w3/)

BUT

Maybe Corey and John are a bit too 'media'? So maybe throw Vic Yeh in too the mix.



Vic is a student, studying Physics at UCLA. Vic is all about science and computing and is coming to the East Coast too attend a conference.



Vic Yeh
@vicohyeh

Follow



Just booked flight to the east coast for 12/18-1/3. Will be wandering around places in NYC/Boston/Philly/RI/NJ. Lmk if you'll be in the area

2:17 PM - 29 Oct 2017

Maybe they'd bond over a pairing of West Coast tacos with a Guinness sauce?

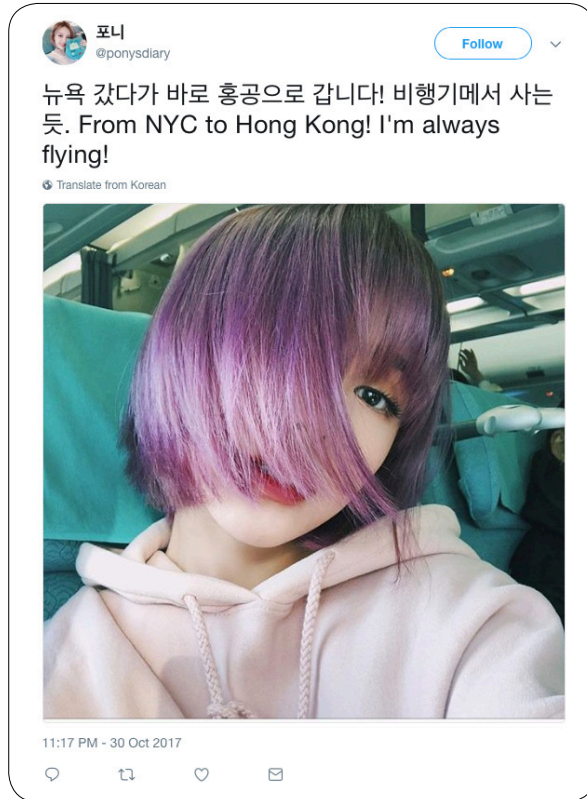
OR WHAT ABOUT THESE GUYS?



This is 'Pony' [@ponysdiary]. She's make-up artist and You-Tuber from South Korea. She's just been in New York on a job.



And what if she'd had dinner with Jason Morrison from Virginia Beach. Jason is a Catholic Youth Minister and Philosophy graduate who is "obsessed" with his VW Beetle so much so that his twitter handle is @Beetlebaum73.

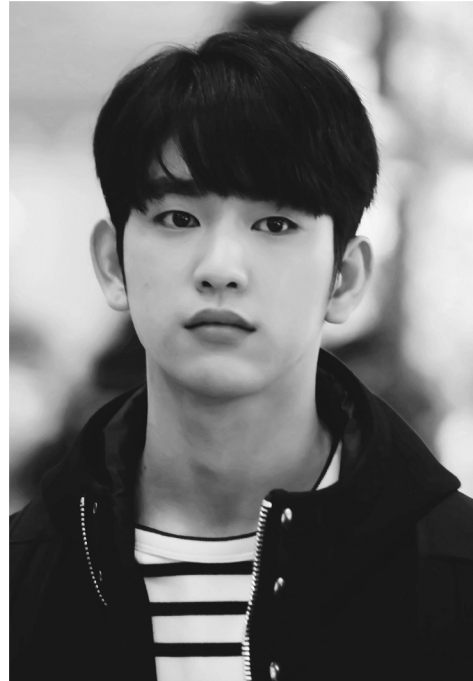


Could be fascinating to hear what Pony and Jason had to say to each other over a fusion of Korean and Southern cooking. Anyway, these illustrations come from only a briefest bit of research. With a deep dive we would generate many fascinating possibilities and then the real skill would be to pre-interview potential characters and then match people together to create a truly special alchemy on screen. Part of my process is always to generate a casting shortlist and present it back to the agency and clients to ensure our cast are appropriate for the brands. We'd choose the final cast together.

MULTIPLE CAST

Another key element in successful casting is to have several couples we're happy with and look to only feature a few in the final film. To ensure we get the best possible material, I would recommend shooting as many different couples as we can possibly cram into our shoot window – aiming to only feature one main couple in the film. This way we have the luxury of choosing the absolute strongest diners in the edit suite. Coverage is a way to ensure against the unknowns inherent in the documentary form.

Additionally we may well need to fly people in early or extend their trips. One of the things I do as a director is insist on hanging out with the cast ahead of the shoot. Good documentary is about trust - and you need to know your subjects. You can't do this over a rushed coffee at the catering truck. Prep and trust is everything.



CASTING THE CHEF

But of course, we aren't just casting our diners; we are also casting the chef. I think the preliminary work that's been done on the chefs is great. Fusion cuisine seems exactly the right way to go. The food creations need to be spectacular. Our casting methodology of pre-casting the diners will facilitate the food creations, as our chef can prepare and research the dishes ahead of the shoot.

I'd see the role of the chef as just that - The Chef. I wouldn't want to turn them into the host and have them talk to camera. They and their food are characters in this drama not presenters. I'd conduct interviews with them, while they cook, to capture them in their natural environment and distil some of the drama and magic that happens in a busy kitchen. They'd explain their dishes as they make them. Telling us about the fusion, the inspiration and also what they're naming their new creations. He or she will be passionate, real, characterful - and clearly super experienced. Nothing - no ingredient, utensil or cooking environment is going to phase this chef. They could cook up a bespoke feast in the back of a burrito van or on a log fire... They're the real deal.





CREATING THE RESTAURANT

But it's not just about the casting. Another key aspect of what I do is to create an environment in which our cast can shine. With this project we will get to actually create a space - the 'Shared Plate' restaurant at T5. There are two concerns with this... One is that it needs to look good on camera - and two, that it needs to feel 100% like a restaurant and not a film set. We have real people coming to dinner so we need them to feel relaxed, forget about the cameras and enjoy in engaging in a real conversation. Part of this is ensuring that there are other diners eating too, adding scale to the event and creating the right atmosphere.

I wouldn't want to try and remove the space from the airport. Most airport restaurants try and create the illusion that you are not in a terminal. I'd do the opposite - let the DNA of the airport invade every frame. We might stage it so that it over-looks a busy walkway or with departures board in the deep focus. I like the idea of staging the restaurant at an actual gate. The photo on this page is of an actual Gate area at T5 that is potentially available to us. Imagine our diners framed against that window with a backdrop of planes taking off behind them. We could have a lot of fun using the iconography of the airport in our restaurant - Would we even construct tables from traditional airport benches or use an arrivals board as signage? Or maybe each of our guests is greeted at the restaurant by a maître d' holding one of those name boards that car services hold up at arrivals? I'd work with the production designer with camera angles in mind, to ensure that there is always something beautiful to shoot through or frame with.

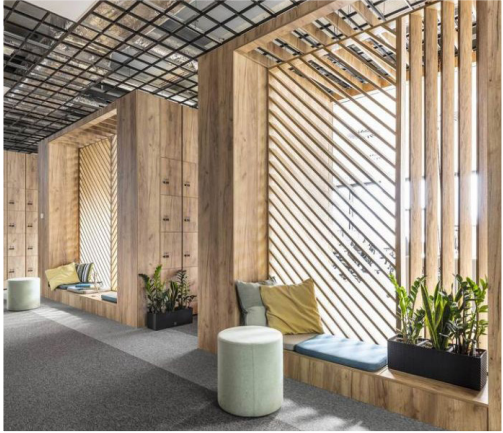
However, despite this I would want the space to feel intimate and special. A warm hub in the heart of the airport serving food that feels premium – a little fine dining – the sort of space where special conversations can take place. To achieve the intimacy, I'll look to creatively use floating partitions to limit the space. Make it smaller, more human. So that our diners feel like they are stepping into a rarefied, sanctified environment. The lighting will add to this effect. We'll hang coolie shades and lighting fixing above the tables to bring a warm, softer light to the restaurant which will contrast to the more clinical feel of the larger airport. I'd limit the covers to around 12 tables and dress those tables with linen, centrepieces and beautiful silverware, to achieve a relaxed fine-dinning vibe. Not your full-on up-tight Michelin starred experience with endless cutlery that you're not sure what to do with, but a special meal nonetheless – a relaxed but gourmet dining experience, where you can put your elbows on the table without worrying that you're doing the wrong thing. Finally, I would reflect this smart but relaxed aesthetic in the costume of the wait staff. Servers should wear simple white shirts and the maître d', a suit.

On the following page I've included an art department board to illustrate the look I'd like to achieve. Of course, the design template will grow after the scout and I look forward to working with the creative team and art-department to evolve these ideas more fully, so that it looks unquestionably like it's the real deal.

Ultimately, the essence of my approach is the playfully and inventive use of the iconography of the airport while simultaneously creating a comfortable, intimate and stylish restaurant that will nurture natural and relaxed conversation.



ART DEPARTMENT REFS



Reference for floating partitions. To help make the space feel intimate.

Reference for runway backdrop.

Reference for table setting and dressing.



Reference for intimate practical lighting

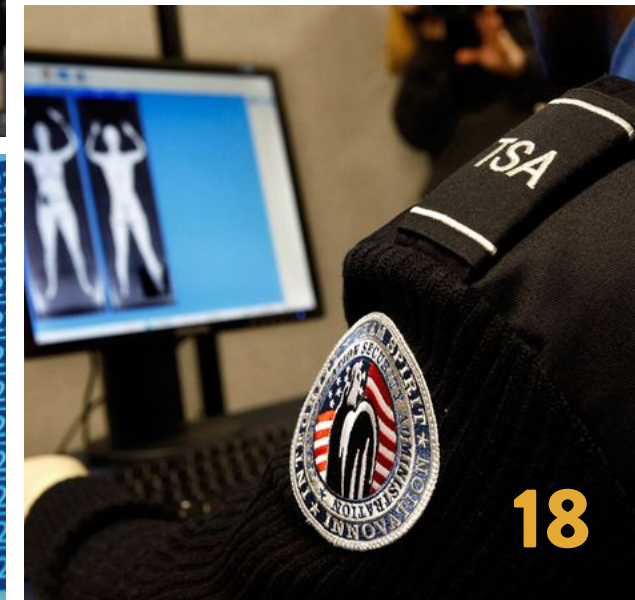
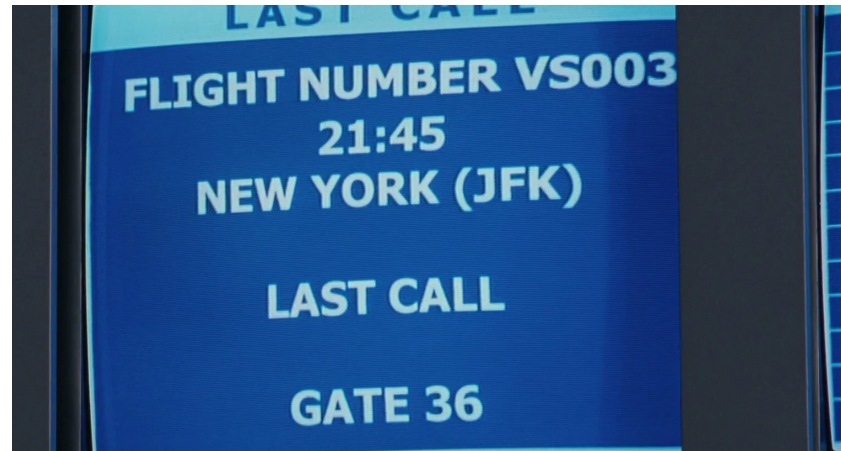
OPENING SEQUENCE

I'll return to this in more detail when we get to the outline but I wanted to briefly mention how I'd open the film, set the scene and grab our audience from the first frame. If we are going to subvert the normal airport experience, it's crucial that establish it properly. So I'd open the film with a playful and humorous montage that establishes how disconnected and unfriendly airports normally are. I'd use quirky composition, observed details and rhythmical cutting to establish the airport. As an edit reference check out this scene from Jason Reitman's 2009 film, *Up In The Air*: [CLICK HERE](#)

My sequence would of course be more focused – and realistic - but there is a lot to admire in the playful tone and rhythm of this sequence. It's a cool way to establish our environment and demonstrate the 'introverted disconnection' that 'Shared Plate' intends to change.

Now of course we won't have George Clooney - or anyone else for that matter - doing a voice over, but I feel we should have voices telling us about the airport experience. These would come from short interviews with genuine travellers. They would briefly appear on screen and intercut quickly. A chorus of voices, coming to together, to tell us the same point – 'Airports are impersonal'. Shot in multiple locations around the airport these would be playful and humorous interviews. Very short and very precise - sometimes only a word or two. I'd want to film them in unconventional locations from moving walkways, to the back of those transfer buggies, from shoe-shine stands to those massage chairs you see at the gates. I'd envisage it being cute and charming. A fun and instantly engaging way to start the film.

As a reference of the intercutting style and use of unconventional framing to aid humour check out one of my previous films 'Welcome To Boring' for Unilever. [CLICK HERE](#)



CINEMATOGRAPHY / CAMERA TECHNIQUES

Documentary doesn't have to mean unconsidered camera work. Through vivid cinematography and gripping actuality we'll be able to capture a cinematic aesthetic that'll serve our story-telling and entice our audience.



RULE 1. BE CINEMATIC

One of the big challenges is to make T5 cinematic. Using a mix of playful compositions, subtle lens choices and strategic lighting we can tell a dramatic and cinematic visual story. I want to pitch this where my work like Boring and Bring Me Sunshine sits. Real life with a cinematic edge. Beautiful documentary. This will involve using cine-lenses, not being afraid of depth of field and not shooting everything handheld. I suggest we potentially shoot anamorphic to get that premium cine-feel. Even if we crop for 16:9 [so that we don't get the black bars] we still get the benefits of the way the lenses handle focus and depth.

RULE 2. VISUAL JUXTAPOSITION



In 'Creating the Restaurant' section above I mentioned that we are creating two spaces in our film. The intimate restaurant and the normal, impersonal airport. I'd want to visually reinforce the separation between these spaces. Through lighting and grading I'd paint a cool, clinical feel in the airport contrasting with the intimate and warm space of the restaurant. These would be subtle touches but would reinforce the story and the intervention that JetBlue and Coke are making.

This is a really subtle touch but after our characters have dined together and go back into the airport I'd subtly shift the grade and making the airport warmer. Visually showing how we've changed the experience for our characters.

RULE 3. LONG LENSES OVER DINNER

It's essential to me that the dinner conversation feels unequivocally natural. I would actually shoot the entire service. I'd want to interfere as little as possible - although I will be armed with all sorts of suggestions for our diners like taking selfies together and talking about their food culture etc.

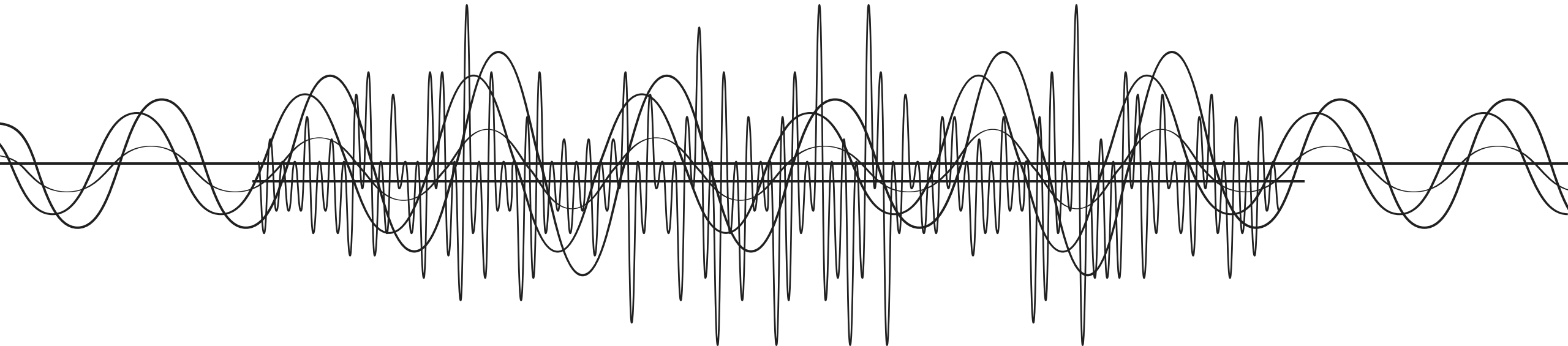
But how do two real people going to have a natural conversation with cameras pointed at them? Long lens photography is a technique I frequently employ in my work. It's amazing how if your camera is far back people forget about it and feel unobserved. By using radio mics and telephoto lenses our diners will feel like we aren't there. Using some of the other dark arts of documentary (like remote-records to make it look like your camera-operators aren't even rolling), I can guarantee an authentic natural conversation. This is coupled with the fact that long lenses give a beautifully shallow depth of field that achieves a cinematic, realist look. I would also roll at least two cameras on this scene as there is no going back to pick up the perfect reaction shot.

SOUND

As the camera work is cinematic so too will be the sound design. I'd want the design to give the sense of an immersive reality, taking the audience to the heart of the action by hearing all the details. We want to hear the crackle of oil in the pan, the snap of a fresh vegetable, and the grind of pepper. Close-up, diegetic sound that heightens the reality and engagement for the audience.

Music wise, I'd see the score as subtle - quickly directing our audience to the key emotions. We'll use sympathetic scene-music that illustrates the characters and their journeys. It'll underpin the emotion and the dramatic arc and impact of each scene. I hate scoring for background - I like to tell the story with the music. This means music cues and shifts in tempo, instrumentation and compositional style.

Check out this example of my work as an example: [CLICK HERE](#)



THE FOOD & DRINK.

I'd like to return to the cinematography for a moment to talk about how we feature the food and Coca-Cola itself.

THE FOOD

Shooting food is always such a struggle because as the audience can't actually taste it - so you have to make it look delicious but also in our case it needs to look real. We can't cut away to a lit studio. The food needs to be part of the story, delicious but natural to the scene. I have had a lot of experience doing this on a campaign for the European supermarket chain Lidl. We wanted to preserve the naturalism but make the food / product look fantastic. It's about finding motivations to cut to the close-up so it doesn't feel like a 'pack' shot.

Check out a couple of examples of those spot as a reference: [CLICK HERE](#) & [CLICK HERE](#)

I see the food as a character in this campaign. I know we're not selling it as a product but it is the metaphor at the heart of the creative. Fusion food, fusing people. For this reason, I want to reinforce this by using the cooking and the blending of the ingredients, as a further allegory for our two strangers finding a connection. I'll do this by cutting away to the food being cooked throughout our diners' conversation. As the meal comes together, so too does their friendship. As a reference for what I mean, check out this clip from the TV comedy 'The Trip': [CLICK HERE](#)

I'd see our food prep scenes as a bit more precise and rhythmical than this but I like the way 'The Trip' makes the food an integral part of the conversation.



BRINGING COKE INTO THE SCENE

The key to featuring Coke in our film is to keep its inclusion as being completely natural and organic to the scene. The audience will respond really well to the product if it feels right in the environment – a natural part of the dinner. At present I am not sure if there is a particular Coke product we're featuring but I'd suggest using a glass bottle and a half tumbler glass with ice if possible. One of the servers would open the bottle and pour half into the glass at the table with the diners. He'd then leave the bottle with the customer for them to top-up when they wanted. This is how beverages are poured at fine dining restaurants and it'll feel real to our scene but crucially gives us a moment with the product and its packaging.

The nice thing is that during in a meal service, they always start you off with drinks, ensuring that this moment won't be crowded by the food. In a similar way, as we'd cut to the ingredients being prepared, I'd cut to big close up of the Coke cap popping and then the pouring moment. Fast cut, close-up sequences like this are very stylish and move our story on quickly. If used well they are like visual grammar and help us transition between scenes and conversations without ever feeling like awkward product placement.





**PART 2:
THE MAIN COURSE**

Now that I've outlined the various ingredients, it's time to present you with the main course – the outline itself. I am usually a little reticent to write the narrative at this stage as obviously it's speculative until real cast become attached. I also like to do more development with the creative team. However, I feel with this project it's important to explore the structure - but please do see this as illustrative – just a serving suggestion and very much work-in-progress. It's something that I look forward to collaborating on further with you.



BEAT 1. THE WAY IT USUALLY IS.

We open on a fast, kinetic montage of life at the airport, illustrated by close up details and observed moments. The editing is fast paced, quick and rhythmical. An x-ray machine beeps, a laptop is retrieved from a tray, a late passenger runs to a gate, a boarding pass checked, a passport stamped, two people sit as far apart as possible from one another in an empty waiting area. Elsewhere, another bench is full of people but they all stare down at their smartphones. The airport feels like an anti-social space full of solitary individuals. Our palette is cool and clinical. This is classic story telling; we are establishing 'the problem' [the disconnected travel experience] – the problem we are going to see solved in our film.

Under this opening montage we begin to hear peoples' voices. We cut to meet them in beautifully composed, symmetrical interview frames. They are all travellers, passing through the airport. The interview frame feels a little bit more like portraiture than conventional documentary. We see each person in his or her environment. One person is interviewed while having their shoes shined; another is seated on a bench talking to us, while a fellow traveller reads his newspaper. There is a sense that the interviewees are part of the montage – they are our 'narrators' telling us how airports are lonely. We feel like we've caught them mid-transit through T5. They are a diverse mix, from different countries and all over the US. However, they all tell us the same thing, 'Airports can be a drag'.

"Airports are such stressful places, all those machines beeping at you," says a lady from Minnesota wearing an Iron Maiden t-shirt. "Everyone's in such a hurry" says a man with a Nigerian accent. "Rushing around, ignoring one another" a man from Amsterdam carrying a skateboard picks-up - and "nobody ever saying hi or how-do-you do," concludes a lady from South Carolina who wearing pink nail polish. "Would I describe the airport as a friendly place?" muses an eight-year-old kid holding her mums hand. We cut quickly around all our interviewees who all answer this question – quickly, firmly and unanimously... "NO!"

We cut to a shot that is slowly tracking into one of those 'GATES 57-84 THIS WAY' signs but instead it reads 'IT DOESN'T NEED TO BE LIKE THIS' [we'll achieve this through visual effects]. We cut to an arrivals board. Next to a random JetBlue flight, where the 'GO TO GATE' instruction would normally flash, the words 'FOOD CAN BRING US TOGETHER' blip on and off instead. These inventive and playful text cards are the 'turn' moment in our story. Now we reveal the solution – something truly different.

Arrivals

Destination

HONG KONG

AUCKLAND

HONG KONG

IT DOESNT

NEED TO BE

LIKE THIS

AUCKLAND

AUCKLAND



BEAT 2. THE POP-UP.

We start to see a restaurant being set-up. We begin by seeing details. Tablecloths are laid, chairs straightened and silverware meticulously laid out. We cut wider to reveal that it's the JetBlue & Coke pop-up restaurant – 'Shared Plate'. It feels like an informal fine-dinning experience – family style. It's right in the middle of the airport but it's somehow softer than its surroundings. The light is warmer. It's a more intimate space; a more human space.

We cut to a hob bursting into blue flame. Beautiful, vibrant and fresh ingredients are chopped, grated and mixed in a series of close-ups bursting with colour. We are now in a busy, bustling kitchen preparing for service. We meet our hero chef who is also preparing to create his or her fusion masterpiece. *"This is 'Shared Plate' our pop-up at terminal 5 at JFK,"* the chef tells us, going onto explain that it's a restaurant with a catch. You have to eat with a complete stranger. There no menus, instead the chef will create a unique dish based on the home towns of each diner. *"This is an experiment in true fusion cooking... people and food"* the chef concludes... then adds, *"There are a few combination I am dreading though. I mean what am I going to do if I get Chicago and Naples? Pizza wrapped in Pizza?"* The chef tells us all this while cooking. There is a sense of urgency – the chaos of the kitchen behind him.



BEAT 3. MEET THE DINERS.

We see a plane touching down. Over the sky bridge comes Marcus. He's smart, clutching designer luggage, Beats headphones thrown around his neck, manicured facial hair – he's already checking his emails. He's relaxed and confident. We learn more as we interview him on one of those moving walkways. Again it's a playful, unconventional set-up and one that brings him ever closer to the restaurant. He tells us that he's from Atlanta, he's a music producer and he's in town for business. He's traveling by himself so *"Sure I'm up for having a dinner with a random stranger... how bad can it be?"* As if to answer this question we cut to ingredients being tossed in a hot pan. These cuts to the kitchen are like grammar in the film. Full stops and commas that help us transition between scenes and move the story along.

Marcus arrives at 'Shared Plate' and finds the *maître d'* waiting for him, holding a board with his name on it. Marcus is tickled by this and chuckles, as he is lead to his table. *"Nice touch!"* he says as they pass by other diners. When they arrive at the table, Marcus finds that he is the first to arrive. The *maître d'* informs him that his dinner guest *"Mr Masalha, will be joining you in just a little while"*. Marcus looks surprised. *"Masalha, where's that name from... India... Bangladesh?"*

As if to answer Marcus, we cut to a departures board. A flight to Tel Aviv, Israel has just started checking in. We hard cut to meet Moshe Masalha who is checking in. He's in his late middle age, dressed very conventionally and wearing the traditional yarmulke. He's a retired teacher over in New York visiting family. He still has the slightly stern air of headmaster. He's at the airport to fly home. He can't wait to get back as he's been missing the food! He seems a bit stern and tells us that the food better be good at this place. There is suddenly a sense of jeopardy. As we cut to see more food preparation in the kitchen, the audience wonders how on earth these two men from utterly different worlds are going to possibly get along. Could this all be a terrible idea?

BEAT 4. THEY MEET.

Moshe arrives at 'Shared Plate' to find the maître d holding his name board. He looks un-amused and simply says *"I am Moshe but you spelled it wrong"* the maître d apologises and leads him to Marcus and his table. We capture Marcus's slightly nervous expression as he glimpses a man he'd never normally even meet let alone have dinner with, advancing towards him. He stands to shake his hand. Moshe looks uncomfortable as he views this stranger through his thick spectacles. Both men seem a little wary and there's a funny and awkward pause where we wonder if this is going to actually work. We hold for a beat and then cut to close-ups of a Coke bottle being opened and poured into an ice cold glass. The ice crackles as it begins to thaw a little as the Coke fizzes around it. Our diners begin to thaw too.

At this point we hand over to reality of course but no doubt, at first 'Moshe' and 'Marcus's' meeting might be awkward. There is gentle humour to be wrung out of this awkwardness and small talk. However, the arrival of the food and drink will give them a talking point and a shared experience to bond over. We cut back to the kitchen where our chef is plating up a 'Southern fried falafel' and 'gefilte fish grits' (*it'll be something much better than this of course - not something made up by a director in a treatment!*). Our chef briefly introduces his creation to us explaining how he was inspired by both Marcus and Moshe's culinary cultures. He loves the hominess of Southern cooking and the fresh uncompromising flavours of the Middle East. He's tried to bring both to bear in this dish.

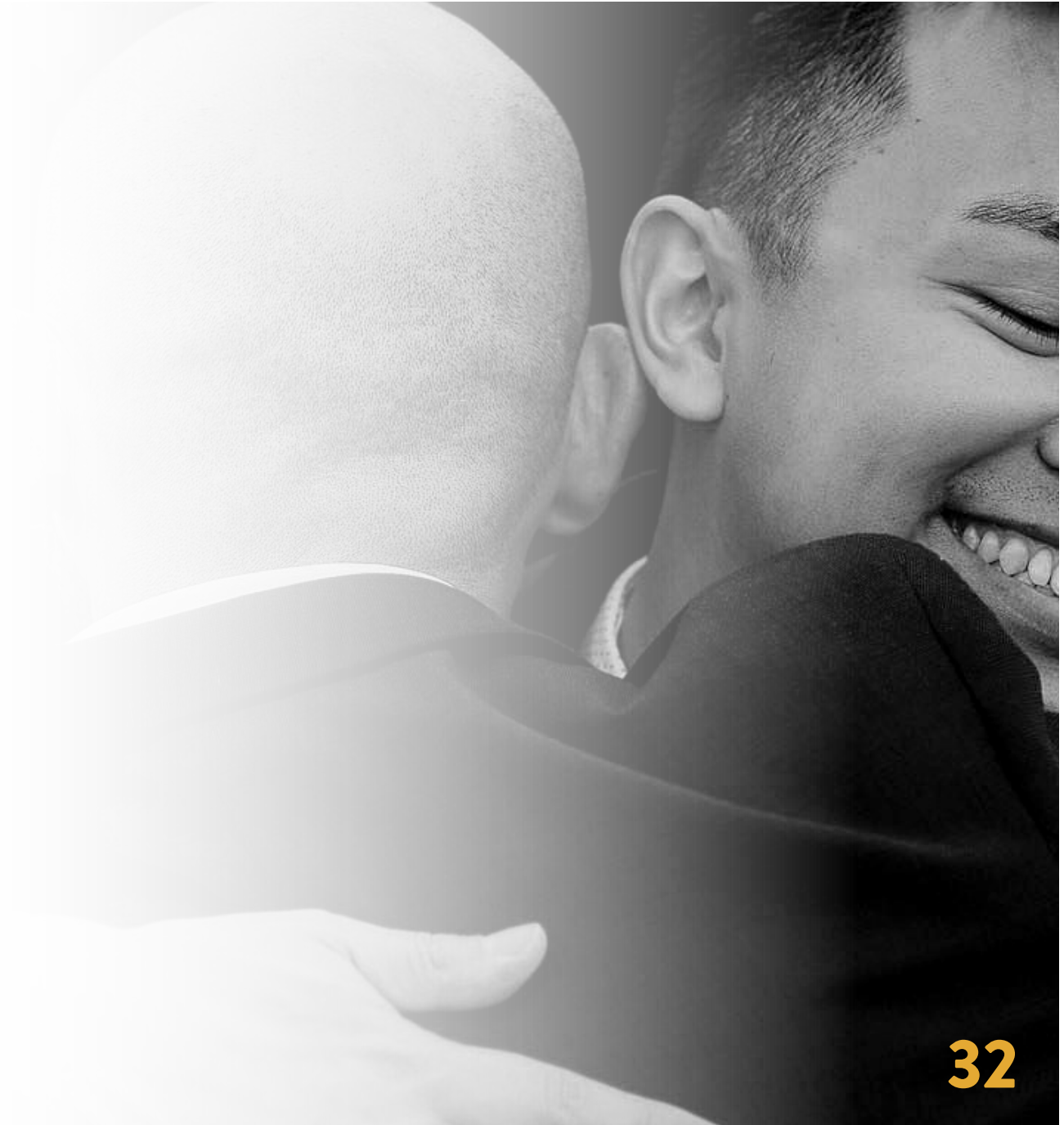
Back at the table the dish is served - and Marcus and Moshe look at it a little suspiciously. They know they both like Coke, but this is a whole different deal... We cut to reveal it in all its glory as the two men with a 'what have we got to lose' shrug, prepare to dive in. It actually looks delicious. Moshe goes first and after a moment's pause he nods his head and proclaims that *'it's remarkably good!'*



BEAT 5. FRIENDSHIPS ARE FORMED.

Breaking bread is another turn point in our story. The food brings our strangers together and they are soon laughing and sharing pictures of their families with one another. The food is delicious; they are clearly enjoying every bite. We cut around a few other tables as equally remarkable creations are presented to other diners and we suddenly realise that this is bigger experiment – what JetBlue and Coke have achieved here has real scale - a whole restaurant full of ‘stranger diners’ are all enjoying personalised dishes and becoming friends. We glimpse the other dishes, which are amazing and inventive, and we see lots of smiles and new friendships forming. We catch a line or two of happy conversation hearing lots of different accents and seeing lots of clashing couples enjoying hanging out together.

We return to our lead cast and find that Moshe is trying to teach Marcus, the Hebrew for ‘*What’s the haps*’. The two men laugh together. From the sidelines we spot our chef looking on happily at the success of their social experiment, before shouting to his kitchen to start plating up the desserts. Delicious and fantastical looking deserts are placed in front of our diners. Under this we hear Moshe and Marcus reflecting on their experience. They tell us that this is the most fun they’ve ever had at an airport and reflect on what they’ve learnt from one another and how sharing a meal has brought them together.



A large airplane is flying in the sky, viewed from below. In the foreground, there is a dark, curved fence made of metal mesh. A dark car is parked on the ground in front of the fence. The background is a hazy, overcast sky.

BEAT 6. CLOSE.

Too soon it's all over - and in the kitchen plates are being cleaned away and pots washed. Moshe needs to go, otherwise he will miss his flight. The two men shake hands and then embrace before Moshe hurries as fast as his legs will take him to catch his plane. It seems like he's cut it pretty fine. We follow both of them as they go their separate ways. Moshe runs to his gate and Marcus gets into a cab. Under this we hear some final bites from the pair describing how food is how we communicate, it's how we share and how we connect. There is a gentle pathos to watching them go their separate ways but one that keeps us in the scene long enough to reflect on this moment of genuine connection that JetBlue and Coke have created. Then in the cab, Marcus's phone pings. On the screen are the words '*made it!*'. They swapped digits - it's from Moshe. Marcus smiles. His cab accelerates away towards the lights of midtown and Moshe's plane lifts into the air.

Cut to logo.



Baggage Claim

**Thanks For Taking The
Time To Read This!**

Tom, London, 2017