



Intro

I'm humbled to be asked back. It's always a pleasure to work with you so thanks for getting my take on this bold, ambitious new project.

I've lived in Venice Beach for the last 10 years, so it's been the backdrop, and playground, for some of the best years of my life. From the world-famous skate park to my favourite little restaurant at the end of Windward Circle, I couldn't be more excited to share the place I love with yourselves, Leni and our audience.

What follows are my thoughts on how to push the existing creative even further to create a spot with an artful simplicity, raw elegance, and an unexpected, yet lived-in look that feels culturally relevant and true to Leni.

Approach and Tone

Like our locations, everything in this spot is about balancing the commercial with the authentic. Taking natural, personal moments with Leni and her array of Fila sneakers and building them into real places in a way that feels fun and playful. We're capturing a candid day in the life of a normal 16-year-old as she hangs out with friends around Venice.

This honesty is crucial to making Leni feel approachable and creating an emotional relationship with our audience, retaining their attention through immersion rather than flash or gimmicks. But to achieve this the scenes need to feel like they are unfolding in an unstaged and unexpected way.

The POV shot feels like the perfect way to do this, capturing Leni and these moments with the intimacy of a friend, boyfriend, or girlfriend. Or perhaps moving between all three. That said, I'd step away from the idea of using an operator with a helmet camera, which feels somewhat gimmicky, and achieve the same level of intimacy by having it feel as though it is shot by a friend. This will give us greater visual scope and allow us cast Leni in the context of her unique surroundings.

The new Calvin Klein spot: <https://smugglersite.com/global/commercials/rubberband/calvin-klein-the-language-of-calvin> is a useful reference for some of my thinking here. I want to bring the same subtle intimacy to this film. An elasticity of pace and rhythm which combines a poppy, youthful energy with quieter, more expansive scenes that allow us to pause, take a breath, and consider. Something that isn't trying too hard, but which appeals to the caring and considered outlook of our youth.

Ultimately, we're looking to create a fun, empowering film that embraces the weird but still feels authentic and intimate. A spot that is undeniably Gen-Z, not by trying to emulate their expectations, but rather speaking their language.

Look

We'll weave together a poetic collage of micro-moments and vignettes that speak to Leni and her fashion style, but also give this spot a filmic, textural, and almost daydream-like quality. It's real life, but with a somewhat impressionistic look. A visceral convergence of visual honesty that feels defiantly of the moment.

Using a hybrid of planned and articulated camera movements with a more vérité, naturalistic approach, we'll be able to capture those intimate moments that feel authentic to Leni and the environments she is interacting with. We'll also combine a range of techniques and styles to play with tone, from super cinematic shots to more handheld and off-the-cuff shots, or switching POVs as we become the phone itself. Essentially, our camera work will drive the rhythm of the film, eschewing elevated shots in favour of a look that edges closer to something raw and lo-fi.

This isn't influencers filming and photographing one another, so we can diversify the visual concept of the spot by switching between multiple POV viewpoints. This will elicit a range of performances from Leni as her behaviour and reactions change depending on who is behind the camera. But whoever that is it's important that Leni is leading the action to ensure the spot has that instinctive, reactive feel.

The POV angle perhaps doesn't always have to be so quite literal, gimmicky, or feel like UGC and we should aim for greater visual scope to capture a variety of shots that go beyond the typical combination of shoe, face, shoe, face, shoe, face and focuses in on those tiny details and nuances that elevate this beyond your average fashion film.

This variety is also crucial to finding inventive transitions in and out of moments that focus on the sneaker. Playing with the organic ways they enter and exit the frame, move through scenes, or find match cuts with similar actions. Given our schedule, we'll deploy a hand-picked team as our second unit to pick up these product shots while we focus on talent.

And rather than shoot this with a POV camera, let's go with a large format camera and some long lenses that match the cinematic ambitions of the campaign and are capable of achieving a crisp look. We'll also include some mixed media, in the form of actual iPhone POV footage using specific rigs, to infuse moments with that authenticity we're looking for.

Product

Whether it's the red, black, and white thick-soles, the black and gold grip soles, the white and blue ridged soles, or the grey, black, and peach three-tones, let's capture these sneakers in all their glory. And in a way that, like our film, feels fun and playful, yet subtle.

We'll let Leni decide the three or four pairs of sneakers she wants to model and how she wants to model them, but below are a few suggestions of some product shots:

- Leni dribbles the ball which bounces between her sneakers.
- Leni jumps for the dunk and getting some air.
- Leni sits on the shoulders of a guy, while her legs and sneakers dangle over his chest.
- Leni sits on the hoop with her legs dangling over the edge?
- Leni stands confidently with one foot resting on top of a basketball.
- Leni grips the basketball hoop with her hands while the rest of her body, including her legs and feet, hang.
- Leni in profile as she pushes off the ground with one foot.
- Then Leni glides along on a skateboard.
- Leni's feet lift off the ground as she goes to serve.
- Leni scurries across the court for a shot.
- Leni sits sideways in the raised umpire's chair on a tennis court. Her feet/sneakers dangle over the edge.
- Leni stands on a lifeguard tower with her feet perched over the edge.
- A dollop of red sauce falls between her sneakers.
- Leni sits cross-legged with her feet/sneakers tucked under her knees in a flower warehouse.
- Leni speeds past on a scooter. The sneakers on her outstretched legs.
- Sneakers trail behind her scooter.

Performance

Leni is at the centre of this spot. She'll embody its tone and carry each of the scenes, so everything she does should feel cool, confident, and convey that she is comfortable with her surroundings. Like she is part of the Venice community. I'll work closely with Leni to get a sense of her personality and idiosyncrasies, so we can mould and sculpt the scenes to suit her instincts and allow her to really show her true self.

Music

A spot like this will travel off the back of its song. And that song will determine the style, energy, and tone of the film. It needs to be unexpected, yet work with the narrative and tonal elasticity of the film while working in synergy with Leni and her movement.

I'll work with Leni to get a better sense of what music she listens to, as well as the music that people might not think she listens to. Somewhere in the middle of these influences, we'll find a sound that gives insight to the many shades of her personality.

Narrative

We open on a close-up of a phone as a Facetime video loads to reveal Leni. We push in through the screen into...

Leni's world, following her POV as she plays 2 vs. 2 with some friends on a basketball court. She dribbles, fakes, then goes again and leaps off the ground - giving us a glimpse of her sneakers - as she dunks the ball through the hoop. How? We pull out to reveal her sitting on the shoulders of her friend. He crouches down and eases her off so she is left hanging on the hoop with her outstretched arms, begging "Who's going to get me down here?" Those dangling legs land on...

...a skateboard as Leni glides along the bowl of a skate park. She pushes off the ground with her sneaker, bobbing and weaving around other skaters on skateboards, longboards, and rollerblades. Out of frame and into...

.... a tennis court as she hits a few balls with friends. The beach and lifeguard tower visible in the background. She smashes a serve but misses the return ball with a frustrated grunt. We hear a "quiet please." Then cut to a stern Leni sitting sideways in a raised umpire's chair with her feet/sneakers dangling over the edge. The on-court Leni shakes her head in disbelief, then starts playing guitar on her tennis racket and singing. Her teammates and opponents bombard her with tennis balls which we match cut with the sun in the sky as...

...Leni stands at the lifeguard tower looking out to sea. She should be assessing the danger, but her attention is caught by a group of girls walking past eating burgers. She watches them take a bite and we find ourselves in...

...a burger cafe like Hinanos or The Window with Leni and her friends. She excitedly bites into the burger and a bit of red sauce drips out from the other side, missing the table and landing in between her sneakers as we match cut to...

...roses resting on the lap of a contemplative Leni as she sits on the floor of a warehouse, tapping her foot while listening to music. We take in the vibrant, diverse shades of colour as we transition to a...

...low-angle shot of the beach at magic hour as Leni zooms past the palm trees lining the road on an e-path scooter. Unbridled joy etched on her face. She stretches out her legs and we see that she is dragging a trail of sneakers - tied together by their laces - behind her scooter as she drives off into the sunset.

Locations

Fortunately, we don't need to take our audience through a touristy highlights reel of Venice Beach. But we'll strike a balance between a few well-known spots - like the Venice Beach sign and skatepark - then tuck into some lesser-known local spots.

These lived-in locations, with their varied and vibrant personalities, will operate as another character in our story. Their different textures accentuated by the shifting tones and hues in the sky as we follow the sun and chase the light while depicting the teeming underbelly of Venice's diverse subcultures.

Here are some thoughts on what we've got so far:

Basketball Court/Skate Park/Tennis Court/Lifeguard Tower

The basketball court, skate park, and tennis court (which is our signature visual) are all located in the same location, but I think it's possible to distinguish the spaces by focusing in on the small moments and detailed textures of each while carrying the energy of one into another.

The basketball court offers up the chance for some dynamic imagery <https://www.beautyscene.net/editorial/alice-metza-cosmopolitan-germany/>, while the skate park has a sense of freedom and hypnotism to it as skaters flow between and past one another in what feels like a dance of call and response.

In the case of the tennis court, we're currently exploring some alternative locations in Marina Del Ray or Santa Monica with a visual splendour that matches our cinematic ambition. One possibility is to erect a green screen on one side of the tennis court and comp in a plate with a beach background and lifeguard tower as if the court was on sand, then add a few deck chairs to the court to create an elevated scene in an otherwise real-world setting. Something like [THIS](#).

Burger cafe (Hinanos or The Window) or taco place

This is the chance to capture fashionable talent at a less fashionable location, grounding Leni in the lives our audiences but also contrasting the light, colours, textures and tones of our exteriors with a rustic, stripped-back interior.

Flower Warehouse (Unlikely Florist)

This is a flower warehouse that I know well and belongs to a friend, so we'll have special access. It's an outdoor location with bounced light and allows us a contemplative moment in a slower, less busy setting.

Venice Beach

The golden glow of magic hour illuminates the scene as we take in the road and palm trees whooshing past from a low-angled shot on a scooter with Leni. Using a Prosumer 360-degree camera to capture the ever-changing sights and sounds that surround her. We'll attach two camera rigs, to the sneakers and the ground, to best capture them trailing behind.

Style

Every outfit in this film is on point. Perfectly styled, beautifully shot. Prominent in each frame and centred around the dramatic action. They're the highlight of the film. But it's not just about making the shoes look great because they're "the product". It's more important than that. Style maketh Leni and Leni maketh style. She's considered. She follows designers, models, and influencers on Instagram. She knows the best shops in LA. Is always on trend. People gawp at her sense of style. Friends never get bored of complimenting her. And she never takes it for granted. Her clothes really are a window into her character.

These clothes need to look amazing because Leni does. If she walked past you having brunch at Great White you'd forget to chew for a second. It's that effortless versatility which is what Leni's about. That's what modern day Venice is about. And that's what Deichmann's is about.

Edit and Pace

Given the target market and product, there is a tendency to go for a faster cut. But we'll counter that urge and strike a balance between slower, introspective moments that vary the tempo and texture of the edit.

The variety will also be felt in the visuals, with each shot and scene refreshing the look with a new visual and different framing that elevates the spontaneity of the moment and personality of the performance.

Transitions

Movement will be a key driver of these transitions between scenes, whether through match cuts, following the motion of the camera as it whips to one side, or through our shoes that wipe the frame completely. Rather than overly technical, visually complex transitions, our priority here will be natural movement that, like the best stories, feel motivated by our protagonist: Leni.