



## Intro

Having just spent the last few days at Glastonbury music festival, both as a performer and a fan, I couldn't be more in tune with the core idea at the heart of this campaign - that when our heart says "YES" to something, it just feels right.

Like the music we listen to, the clothes we buy trigger an emotional response and evoke a visible expression in all of us, whether we're conscious of it or not.

Our job is to capture those emotional responses and their synchronicity with the clothes our characters wear, the environments they inhabit, and the people they share these moments with.

What I love about the combination of language and references in this brief is that they provide me with the perfect foundations to think creatively. And what follows are my thoughts on how best to realise the potential of these spots with a campaign that encourages our audience to listen to their heart as they pick the best and leave the rest, buying only the things their heart says yes to.

## Approach

I love the idea of trying to capture the inexplicable, often ephemeral, experience of intuition and instinct. When it comes to fashion and personal style, that's about knowing when something looks right. And when it comes to this campaign, it's about knowing what 'YES' feels like.

Thinking about how best to capture this on camera and motivate people to only purchase the items they truly love has led me down some really interesting creative paths, specifically around visual harmony, symmetry, intuition, and synchronicity, which I'd love to explore through a series of striking and playful vignettes.

Synchronicity feels like 'a wink from the universe'. A moment of meaningful coincidence that has a way of joining your inner and outer experience, where you, and the world around you, work in creative symbiosis. Finding that synchronicity requires our audience, and our characters, to tap into their natural intuition and **see the world as an extension of themselves.**

But how our characters and the audience feel will be determined by how the clothes and environments look. So across each of these films, we'll find playful and surreal connections between the styling and production design, between the model and the environment, ensuring that the movement of the talent and the camera work in tandem.

We have the opportunity to work with a range of unusual and exciting textures, so I'd love to play on the idea of synesthesia - when you experience one of your senses through another - to create unexpected combinations of colour, texture, and sound, and bring them together in an eccentric style and aesthetic. For example, what does wool sound like? What do edges feel like? What does the perception of shiny textures do to our brain chemistry and how does this affect us physically? How can we convey these physiological ideas in movement and create beautiful bursts of sensory harmony in bold, colourful, and unexpected fashion vignettes. This challenge excites me.

To enhance and elevate the mood of each scene, we'll use sound design to create a playful yet discordant contrast at first, then end each vignette on the 'YES' moment as the sounds come together in total harmony; a consistent motif across all of the films. To achieve this, we'll use a synthesised organ or choral sound for our 'bing' moment, to convey a feeling of harmonious joy and create a bespoke sound signature that feels unique to Zalando.

## Look and Feel/Cinematography

Authenticity is at the core of my visual approach to these films. This means clean, colourful, and appealing high-quality moving images that are shot on digital rather than 16mm or 35mm film, eschewing gimmicky fish-eye lenses, a grainy aesthetic, image distortion, or a mixed media aesthetic. Instead, our shots will pop thanks to the beautiful coherence between our cast, their styling, the location, and its art direction.

We'll capture this with playful, inventive camera movement that elevates certain elements - like rotating with the disco ball - but also focuses on our various products and ensures that they're highly recognisable throughout. That said, when we're focusing on the product we'll ensure that each frame retains a sense of authenticity and doesn't detract from the playful tone or subtle, unique humour, striking the perfect balance between a sales campaign with a fashion feel.

And given that the campaign will be launched in autumn, we'll shape both natural and practical light to create a look that feels reminiscent of fall and shows our clothing in the season they're intended for.

A few DoPs that I've worked with before and think would be perfect for this visual approach are:

Olan Collardy

- <https://www.olancollardy.com>

Luke C. Harper

- <https://www.lukecharper.com>

Diana Olifirova

- <https://www.dianaolifirova.com>

# Transitions

As our stories unfold, we'll use the camera to link each scene and sequence and make sure that our love pieces are the connecting element, showing us who these people are and what they love.

This will be done mainly through match cuts but also a few normal cuts, as we transition between our characters and specific objects or between edges, textures, and patterns of clothes to give the film a tactile, sensory feel.

While some stories may read a bit longer than your typical 15", this will give us the chance to capture extra material that we can play with in the edit and use for the SoMe Purposes. And to ensure we hit those 15", we'll use the match cuts to find the simplest, fastest, and clearest transitions that allow us to adjust the pace of each story or cut superfluous moments - without requiring a ton of VFX or post-production - giving our films time to breathe.

## 'Heart Says Yes' Moment

The 'heart says yes moment' is the climax of each film. The point at which our character sees themselves and feels that rush of love for their look. While the 'bing' sound effect will help to accentuate this moment and its impact on the audience, we should also consider the visual tools available to us, such as a close-up or briefly slowing the pace of the vignette and holding on our characters' expressions to really capture their emotion and those subtle moments of humour that are never too obvious or over the top but leave the audience with a smile on their face.

# Scripts

## Cyber Week

### 1. 1x15" - Yes to Edges

We're CLOSE-UP TRACKING the sleek, smooth, shiny edges of a pair of pointy shoes as they CLICK-CLACK rhythmically along the street, across a striped zebra crossing. Then we DOLLY OUT to reveal a PERSON WITH REAL EDGE in a casual but considered outfit. Creased denim edges bunched around their knees. The angled shoulders of his blazer. The edges on the frames of their sunglasses as we push in and MATCH CUT to...  
...the edges of another pair of sunglasses with bright, bold square frames. With a TRACKING SHOT we reveal a WOMAN carrying these sunglasses and gently running her hand along the edges as she walks amidst a group of friends. We MATCH-CUT to...  
...a CLOSE-UP on the edges of a diamanté /crystal stuck to a MAN's left-corner canine. Then we DOLLY OUT to reveal him wearing a casual fitting suit with his arms crossed, creating a series of right angles, standing underneath beautiful geometric, colourful architecture. He beams at us with a big toothy grin, looking and feeling the part as he revels in his 'heart says yes' moment and our joyful BING sound.

**Showing edges:**

**Heart says yes**

Logo

**Get Cyber Week Deals up to 75% off**

## **Showing edges:**

Heart says yes

*Focus: Edges in the production design and styling*

*Camera movement: Track and dolly, French new wave, linear and right angles*

*Sound design: Up tempo DIY, post-punk, angular and cool*

## **2. ALT: Yes to Curves**

A curvy WOMAN - in a stylish, body-hugging polka dot dress - strides confidently towards us. The abstract sound of CORN POPPING with each step she takes as she passes through a circular doorway and with a smooth curved transition we MATCH CUT to...

...a man lying back on a curved chaise longue in a modern apartment. Beneath one of the sleeves of his crew neck t-shirt is a circle/ring tattoo around his forearm. We follow the tattoo with a CIRCULAR CAMERA MOVEMENT and MATCH CUT to...

...a tunnel hoop earring fastened to the ear of a PERSON MOVING FLUIDLY as they step through a curved doorway and into an open bar area clutching a closed half-round bag in their hand. They notice the bag's resemblance to the curved half-moon glinting in the sky and is struck by the synchronicity of the moment as our BING cuts through the sound of FIREWORKS going off in the distance.

## **Capturing curves/circles:**

Heart says yes

Logo

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*Focus: Curves in production design and styling.*

*Camera movement: Smooth curved transitions, circular camera movement, spinning between shots, moving through circles and doorways.*

*Sound design: Popcorn, fireworks, bubblewrap*

## **3. 1x15" - Yes to Flowing**

We open on a YOUNG WOMAN wrapped up warm in an oversized cosy blue knitted wool jumper with a floral pattern on the front. An AMBIENT PADDED SYNTH LOOP builds as she walks down the street, swinging her child joyfully in the air with her partner on the other side. We follow the swing with a FLOWING STEADICAM as the wind catches the jumper and we MATCH-CUT to...

... a tasteful floral print head scarf blowing in the wind and PULL OUT to reveal the wearer standing in a florist with a friend. The calming sound of nature creates a cool moment of space.

They marvel at the vivid, distinctive flower arrangements surrounding them. The violet glow of hooded bluebells. The dazzling yellow of smiling sunflowers. The intricate, overlapping petals of deep red roses.

She takes in the sights and scents and pulls a petal from a flower in her hand, cutting to a top shot of a petal falling on the face of a young person smiling, lying in the vivid green

grass. At one with nature as our SYNTH comes in. His heart swells, a blissful smile spreads across his face, marking his 'heart says yes' moment with our joyful BING.

### **Feeling the Flow?:**

#### **Heart says yes**

Logo

#### **Get Cyber Week Deals up to 75% off**

*Focus: Something that moves and catches the wind for transitions*

*Camera movement: Flowing Steadicam, wind machine to catch fabrics in street*

*Sound design: Ambient pads, synths, suspended chords*

### 4. 1x15" - Yes to Reflect

A MAN walks towards us in a sparkly blazer and multicoloured sequin t-shirt with shifting gradients. The light hits his t-shirt and creates a SHIMMERING sound as we MATCH CUT from the kaleidoscopic rainbow reflection to...

...a sequin purse clutched in the hand of a WOMAN as she crosses the street. The tiny reflective sequins glitter in the sunlight and SYNTHETIC BELLS RING as we MATCH CUT to...

...a disco ball hanging from the interior mirror of a retro car being driven by a YOUNG WOMAN while 80s-style music plays on the radio. As the light from outside hits the multifaceted panels covering the rotating sphere it casts a complex, moving light display across the interior of the car, reflecting off the faces and bodies of our young woman and her friends in the passenger and back seat.

The young woman glances down at her hands wrapped around the steering wheel and catches sight of her glinting shiny fingernails, smiling with satisfaction as they look and she feels part of the dancing light show while our choral/synth BING fills hers and our ears.

### **Time to reflect:**

#### **Heart says yes**

Logo

#### **Cyber Week Deals up to 75% off**

*Focus: Textures that reflect light, playing with reflections here is cool, this ties in well to symmetry, quantum entanglement, synchronicity.*

*Camera: Use reflections in camera, and a camera filter like a kaleidoscope for a transition, multiverse style.*

*Sound design: Shimmering textures, synthetic bells, 80s style.*

### 5. 1x 15 - Yes to Details

We're CLOSE UP on the open zip of a jacket. As a MAN does the zip up we pull out to a WIDE of him standing in a colourful retro style cafe. The blinds behind him draw up in unison and the talent smiles.

An up-tempo beat starts up and drives forward as we ZOOM back into the buckle on his belt and MATCH CUT to...

...a WOMAN who finishes buckling up her dress as the curtains behind her automatically open and the morning sun beams through the windows. She checks her reflection. She's missing something. Then she notices the low-hanging winter morning sun glinting on a gold necklace resting on her vanity. She picks it up, then fastens it around her neck and smiles with a gentle nod. Our BING marks the heart says yes moment as her outfit is complete.

All about texture/Finding your style:

**Heart says yes**

Logo

**Cyber Week Deals up to 75% off**

*Focus: The Zips, The Buckles*

*Camera: Remote Zoom, Linear Movements.*

*Sound Design: Technical, Driving, Up Tempo.*

## **Singles Day**

1x 15" Live Fast Leave Young or All About the Gains

THE 15" AD YT + TT Live Fast,

Leave Young

We're in the beautifully designed art deco bathroom of a nightclub as the muted beats and bass filter in from the dance floor. A YOUNG WOMAN looks into the mirror as she fixes her lipstick. The bathroom door opens as someone enters and the multicoloured strobe lighting bursts in and reflects off the mirror. Reminded of what she is missing, the young woman heads for the bathroom door but as she opens it...

### **Self-love made me do it**

...we match-cut to the front door of her flat as she enters her comfy, lived-in living room. She throws off her jacket and falls directly onto the couch, resting her face on a pillow as she closes her eyes and a relaxed smile spreads across her face.

**Get Singles' Day discounts on things you truly want in life.**

## **Casting and Performance**

For me, these films are all about performance so I'd like to work with movement director Ted Rogers who I teamed up with on 2 Gucci Films and Mae Muller video 'Better Days'. Together we'll capture the amplified, yet authentic emotions and expressions of our talent and complement them with subtle, quirky, character-driven humour that doesn't feel forced or staged.

This starts with casting in the same way that fashion starts with Zalando, so we should be on the lookout for unique, socially active, and culturally relevant talent. Talent that is as diverse and inclusive when it comes to race, age, gender, sexuality, and body type (without

being tokenistic) as the Gen Z and millennial audiences who buy Zalando clothes because they will respond to the spot on a deeper level if they see themselves and the current zeitgeist represented in the Zalando brand.

Ultimately, it's about identifying the natural charisma that all of our distinctive talent have and playing with that as the focus. While I appreciate that a lot of the main talent has already been selected, we might benefit from widening the search when it comes to the rest of our cast and maybe give some gentle instructions for a self-tape that encourages them to improvise and show off their natural eccentricity like a movement direction in a 10-second clip.

And once we've got our talent, let's ask them to pick out their favourite item of clothing, tell us how it makes them feel, show us how it makes them want to move. Ask them if it had a taste, what would that taste be? If it could speak, what would it sound like? If it had a scent, what would it smell like? Encouraging them to be as abstract as they like. Then have them tell us a stand-out memory they had wearing that item of clothing!

## **Styling, Locations, and Set Design**

The clothes and their styling, which will be provided by the client, are of course the starting point. The locus from which we take inspiration for the surrounding environment and the way it's dressed. Like everything else, it will be inspired by the autumn season which will give us the opportunity to play with a range of different textures, layers and forms.

I'm really excited about bringing each of these different elements together. Experimenting with the different ways they inform and interact, complement and contrast with one another. Combined with the camera movement, they are crucial to capturing the visual synchronicity of our different stories as well as their playful, humorous tone.

And once in production, we should also remain open to the opportunities that natural or practical lighting offers up, or the different ways in which our cast interact with the environment - giving us the chance to see each scene with fresh eyes and reframe it in a way that feels more original.

Some ideas for potential collaborators in space include:

Production Designer - Clarissa D'Arcimoles

<http://www.clarisse-darcimoles.com>

&

A Set Designer and Artist with amazing taste and experience - Mckinlochstudio

<https://www.instagram.com/mckinlochstudio/>

## **Sound and Music**

The combination of sound design and music is such an important part of how I work and how I'll approach these films. As I write and develop the creative for these ideas, I'm listening to music and curating a soundtrack of atmospheres and textures that evokes the tone and mood we're aiming for. This will allow for an ongoing conversation about musical

and sound design elements that can be carefully crafted and reshaped based on changes that occur along the way, making sure that both work in synergy with the action on screen, rather than feeling like an ill-fitting afterthought.

For the 'heart says yes' bing sound that links all of our different films, it would be cool to find a unique sound that is consistent across each of the spots - like a synthesised organ or choral sound - that feels euphoric but also has that contemporary fashion feel which is totally unique to Zalando.

**I look forward to working with you!**

**Tom**