

Buck Spotters



Thank you for the opportunity to present my ideas. There are so many fun layers to your concept that I could not express it all only in storyboards.



BUCK SPOTTERS :30 TV 5.20

The Pennsylvania Lottery

MarcUSA

Animal

Director: Michael Killen

DRY AND DEADPAN



As in many great stories, the actors are the anchors to build upon. Some actors can handle dry humor while some get lost. A skilled performer understands the space between the words have just as much weight as the script. It's incredibly satisfying to watch two people own the timing and play with the rhythm of the script.

If you've been at an audition with me, I like to pay attention to and work with body position, physical timing and breathing. The perfectly placed head turn, exhale or shoulder slump can be a key part of a scene. I'm very focused on the subtlety in expression.

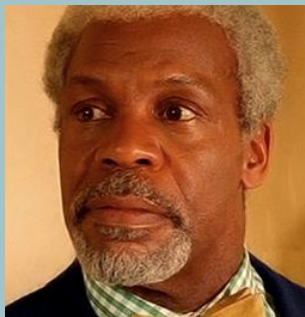
CASTING

While making the boards, I went through the exercise of what I thought would play well, but of course this will be a case of who performs it best in the audition. There's always a chance somebody creates something 180 degrees from expectations.

JIM could be older and heavier and inspired by Bill Murray, Jeff Bridges or Danny Glover. I'm thinking as a personality influence - not necessarily as old as shown here. The characters they play have an amazing innate wisdom with a hint of "I don't care anymore."

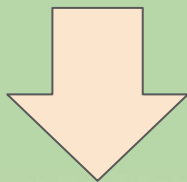
SAM could be smaller and more particular based on a Jason Schwartzman, Dev Patel or Ben Stiller. He believes in keeping details in check and has the proper attire for all occasions. To win a scratch-off would be amazing, because he doesn't come from money, he just likes to appear that he does.

The size difference between the two will be fun if it works out that way.

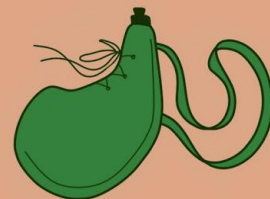
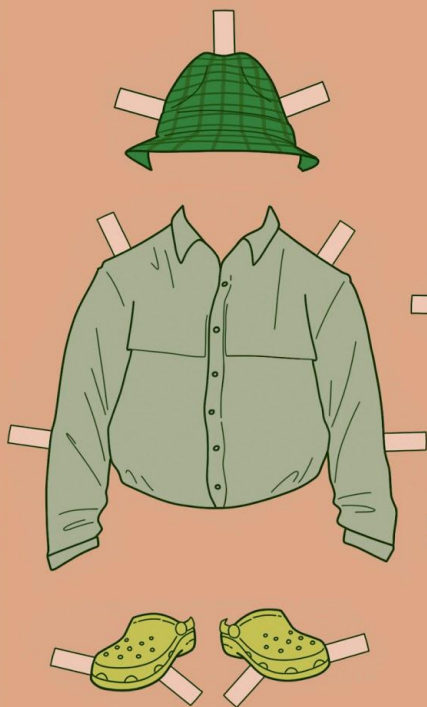


WARDROBE

We want the wardrobe to add to a Wes Anderson vibe, without looking contrived. One of the most enjoyable parts of this experience will be deciding what to throw onto these guys. I hated to limit the options on what the characters might wear, so I decided to have a little extra fun in this category.

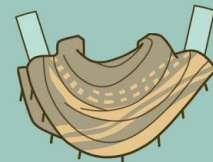
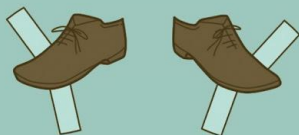


JIM is a man of few words and comfortable pants. Throwing clothes out is not in his moral fabric. It takes Jim a while to trust a new shirt, but once he does, they're committed partners.



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SAM takes his wardrobe seriously. He understands and honors the historical function of outfits. A hunter's cap with ear flaps is no joke to him, they originated in Russia and called the Ushanka hat as a practical solution to the cold.



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THE PLACE

The location shouldn't be challenging to find in Pennsylvania. We're pretty good at woods with plenty of opportunities close to city centers that can double as the great outdoors.

I've been picturing a forest area that's on the edge of a clearing in order to link the woods and a meadow.

It's as if the guys are part of a larger group who camp in the forest as a club or weekend warriors. The night before these two were probably at an awkward fake frontier ritual around the campfire.



THE LOOK OF STUFF

There are a few elements outside the the actors and the wardrobe that can make the spot special.

The script wants this story be to told in a controlled but surprising style. It's a twist in reality that's asking to be unique and push expectations.

To carry that torch, all art direction decisions should be narrowed to an era, a color palette or a character choice. The objects should feel timeless and substantial. It's a subtle way to add weight to the story and setting by not being temporary.



THE TICKET SHOTS

Based on the surprise fake deer ending, I thought it would be fun to run with that and use other wildlife decoys to present the tickets. In the storyboards I used a squirrel as the host. I toyed with using an owl with the squirrel, but it became a little confusing to go to one and then the other. Still intrigued by the owl though.

Keeping with the outward bound theme, I thought weathered wooden painted signs would fit the idea that this is a camp with a history reaching back into the 1960's.





THE LAST BUCK

Although I've spent the majority of my career making animals appear to talk realistically, I'm excited by the idea of making *our* buck talk in a puppeted, non-realistic way, adding to the comedic timing. We can do this live on set, with a very basic hand rig or explore options in post where we can audition several looks.

DELIBERATE

I love how the script sets up with the idea that these are two very intent men describing what they see as if we're in a normal world. When it skews, they react reserved as if nothing is peculiar at all.

With a deliberate shooting style, we'll be in sync with where we need to be for each small glance. The story will lead the camera. The movement, if any, will be pointed and calculated, creating beats to be slid into place in the edit and tweaked to build the unexpected tempo of small sharp moments.





SAFETY

If you look over my boards, I have it set up to where we have two choices to keep the talent 6 feet apart. First, we can block them apart and it will work. The second way will be to shoot the main shots as a lock down and build each other's lines and composite them in post. You'll see in the boards I have Sam stepping forward part way through the spot, which works as a device that will allow us to simply comp them together. An extra benefit would be that you can use takes from different parts of the actors' performances.

This is such a great and unique world that your team created with so many delightful details to explore. I'm dying to put on my pith helmet and discover it with you.





thank you.