



Methodist

TREATMENT BY MATT OGENS



Being a leader in medicine means much more than simply “practicing.” It means pioneering innovative new treatments, as opposed to simply keeping up with the status quo. For a patient, that can be the difference between accepting a life of paralysis... and learning to stand up and walk again. It can even be the difference between life and death.

This difference between “leading” and “practicing” is a perfect way to distinguish the Methodist Hospital group... and a perfect way to tell the stories of this campaign. We want to confidently lead the way in a new direction. All of these spots make a statement. My goal is to tell each story with a smart blend of bold, stylish visuals, and emotional moments of genuine humanity.



CONCEPT

Our approach is all about confidence. We're not beating around the bush here... we're presenting the truth in a way that's honest, direct, and self-assured. In this regard, it certainly helps that Methodist truly is a leader and innovator in the medical field. The spots don't need to try too hard or "sell" anything. We're communicating undeniable truths, and trusting in the power of the stories. The end card of each spot is the perfect punctuation to an honest message.

Our stories will deliver powerful and genuine emotions. Watching a man in a wheelchair stand up and take his first tentative steps, with the help of a new technology, is an unforgettable experience. Let's capture the reality of this moment... the anticipation of waiting, the awe of seeing it happen, the relief that it actually worked. We'll draw the audience into the world and create a connection with the characters.

To capture a tone of emotional honesty, we want to strike a balance with every element of the film. When we see an amputee recovering, we can use music to enhance the feeling of the scene, without being sappy or trite. Our shots will bring us in close to see the genuine moment of hope on his face, without making it feel forced. My filmmaking approach is about finding truth in human moments and creating a genuine emotional connection.

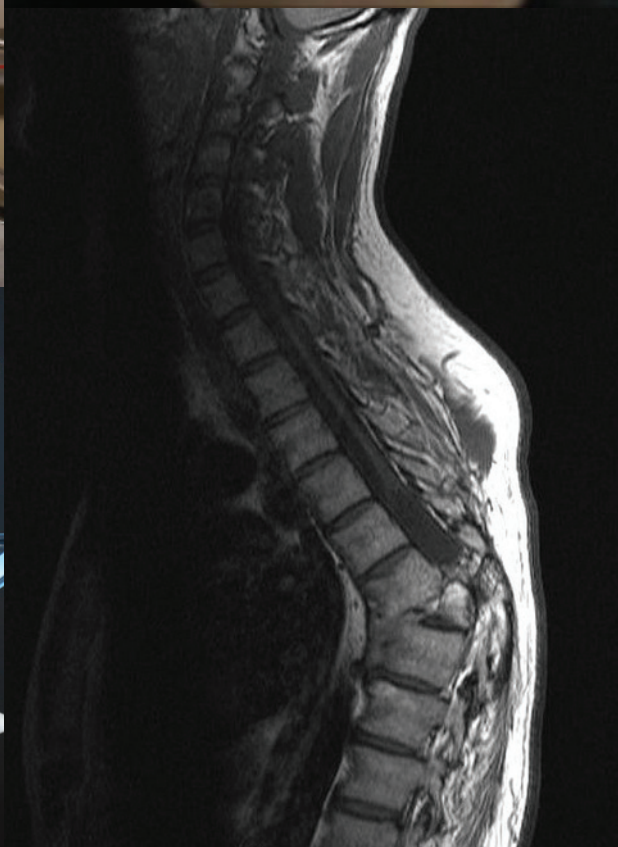
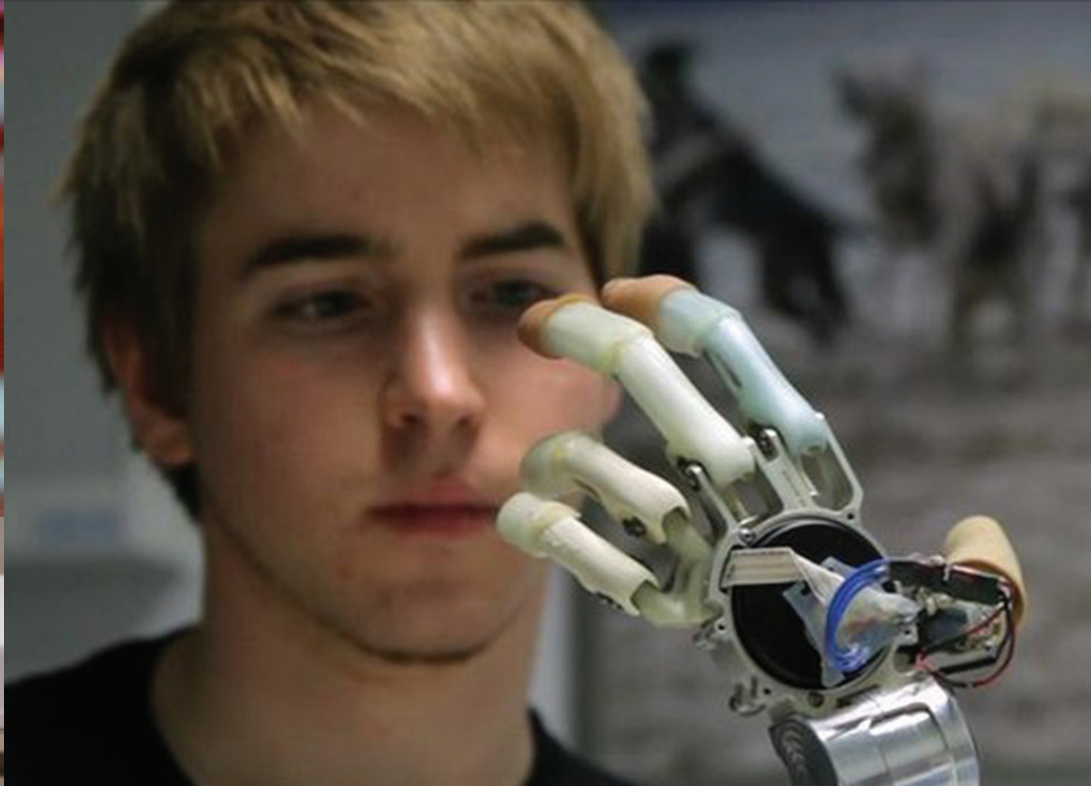
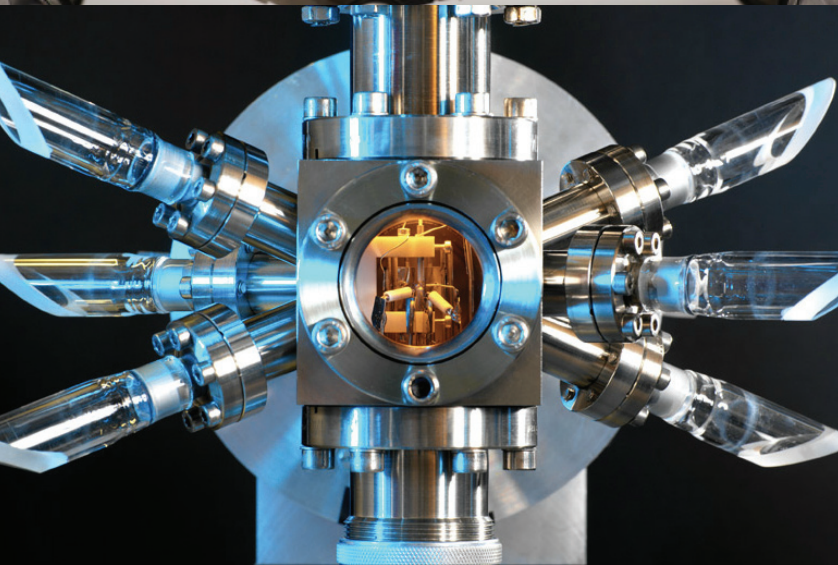
IMAGE

Our visuals will tell each story with a sense of style, a unique and bold look– but at the same time, they should never feel overly stylized. I'll capture an authentic sense of what it's like to be there in these scenes... to witness the life-changing moment when a patient gets the results of a PET scan. A bit of organic camera movement can subtly draw us into the experience of our characters. At the same time, the compositions will be gorgeous, with a sense of elegance and beauty in every frame.

Our goal is to show both advanced medical technology and the patients it serves. In "Heart," for example, we might put a GoPro on one of the robot's arms to capture a cool shot of the machine in action. But we also want to balance that with a close-up of the patient waking up after surgery, grateful for his successful operation.

These scripts are full of opportunities for amazing images. We'll have the chance to see beautiful underwater environments as we watch a starfish and an octopus regrow their missing limbs, with a cool time-lapse effect. And when we see the process that unfolds in "Isotope," we'll film the high-tech scanning with images that show the unique shapes and colors of the PET machine in action.





The lighting will add a sense of beauty to every scene, but still feel natural and real. Let's gravitate toward warm tones, and look for opportunities to introduce hints of sunshine that are organic to the world. As we meet the amputee patient in "Starfish," he may be sitting beside a window, with the curtains beside him glowing with late-day golden hour sunshine, and fluttering softly in the breeze.

You also brought up the possibility of shooting black-and-white versus color. Ultimately, it will be about doing what feels right for the storytelling, and I'm open to either approach. There are some really beautiful images— like the starfish, octopus, and salamander in "Amputee"— which could certainly be heightened by capturing vibrant color. On the other hand, black-and-white could be great for stunning portraits of our moments of humanity. I will work together with a great D.P. and collaborate with the whole team to find a visual approach that best serves these stories.

CASTING & PERFORMANCE

It will be vitally important to capture honest moments of humanity. Since we're working with real patients and doctors, our spots will feature a diverse mix of real faces... the patients and medical professional you'd actually encounter in a Methodist hospital. There's an authenticity that you'll be able to see instantly. We just need to make them comfortable enough to be themselves on camera, and then capture genuine moments.

I have extensive experience in both narrative and documentary filmmaking, so I have a strong sense for how to get a great performance— whether someone is a trained actor or not. To me, it's all about honesty. I like to start a dialogue with our performers and genuinely listen to them, as opposed to just "Stand there, say this line." I give them an opportunity to bring their own truth. Often the best performance moments come from a unique idea or instinctive response. I'll create an environment where those wonderful surprises can happen.

The situation you talked about with the patient in "Rex" is a perfect example. We're filming a real patient, whose life has been changed by an incredible new technology. He's already had the experience of taking his first steps with the help of the device. My goal will be to make him feel relaxed and confident enough that he can tap into the memory of that incredible moment. The power of that experience will come through in a way that feels honest and real and raw.



REX

The moment this spot portrays is truly beautiful. There's something primal and astonishing about watching a paralyzed patient finally get to walk again. We'll tell the story with an elegant simplicity. Let's make our audience feel the awe of being present for a revolutionary moment in medicine... and a transformative moment in one man's life.





To bring us into this story, we might use a slow dolly move. At first, we see the room as a whole... the patient seated in his wheelchair, the doctors carefully monitoring the result, the family members watching closely. We slowly move in and around to see the patient, Eugene Alford, revealing his face and drawing us into his expression— the mixture of hope and fear etched on his features, as he slowly begins to stand...

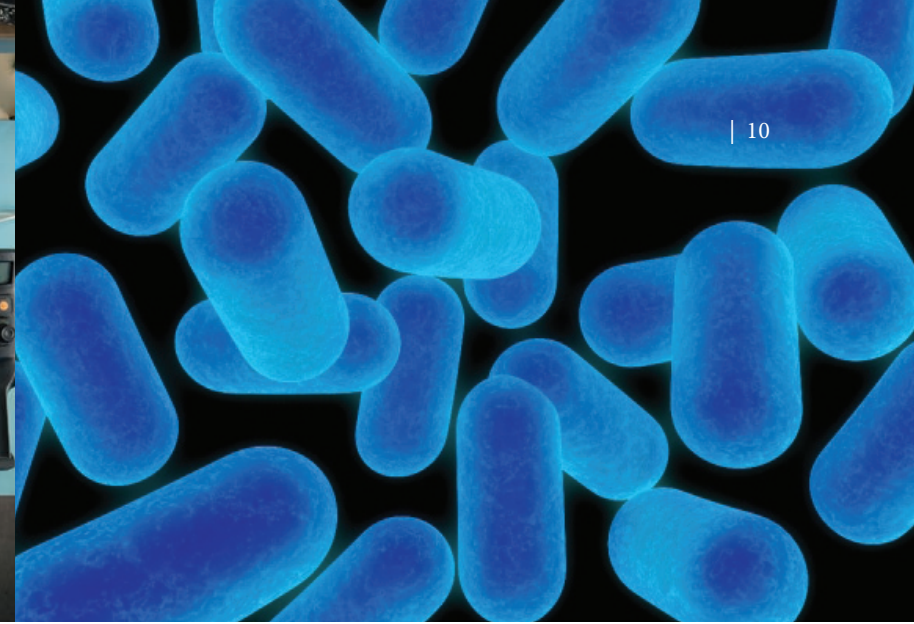
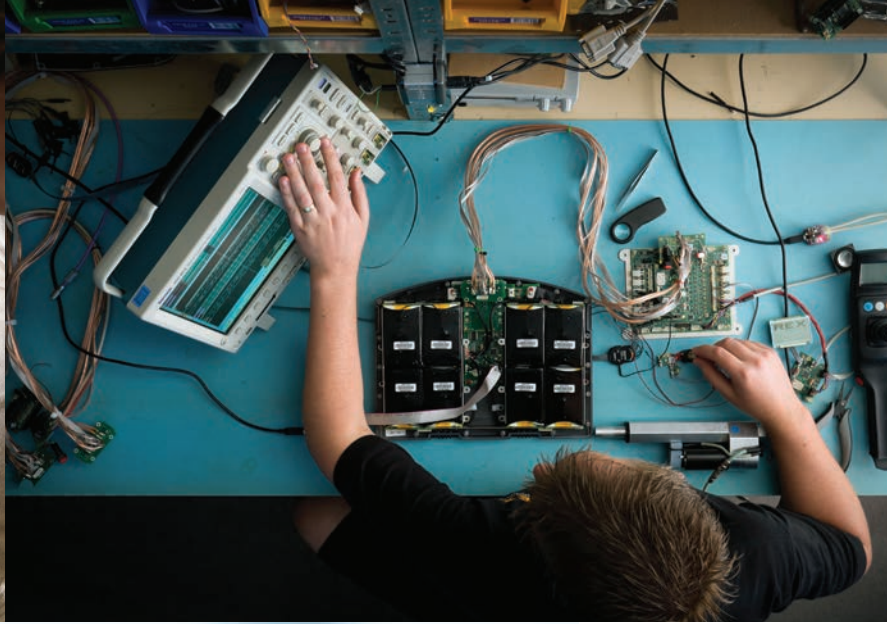
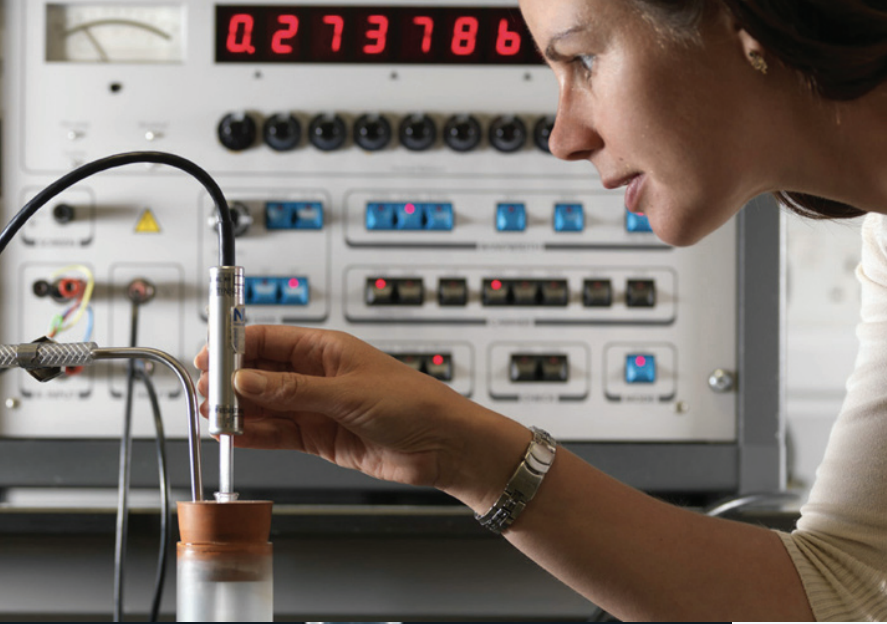
We'll see him test his weight, tentatively at first, then rising up, finding his balance, perhaps wavering for a second. It's not easy to walk for the first time in years... but he has faith in the process. As the V.O. explains that he is controlling the device through brain function, we'll show the intricacies of the machinery itself, as it helps him stabilize and gain his footing. It's an incredible combination of humanity and technology.

As he gains his feet, there's a sense of triumph. Capturing this moment in a delicate, understated way will ultimately convey the greatest emotional resonance. We'll see reactions of all our characters in the room. A family member might put her hand over her mouth in speechless awe. The doctors look on, confident and proud. And we see the eyes of the patient himself, registering the success... and twinkling with a newfound hope.

ISOTOPE

With this spot, we may not yet know all the details of the visuals that we're able to capture, but ultimately it's all about the story we're telling. We'll show how a cutting-edge laboratory process is creating isotopes that can be used in early Alzheimer's detection... and we want to show how this process connects the research arm of Methodist with changing the lives of real patients.





This spot is a great opportunity for us to see the scientists who do the work that makes this imaging possible. We might meet a man and woman in lab coats, intently focused on the high-tech process of creating these isotopes. Perhaps they exchange a congratulatory glance as they get the successful result that they've been hoping for.

We could also see the moment where they pass off the isotopes to the doctor who will ultimately implement them in the PET scan, demonstrating that there's a chain of medical professionals at work here, each one lending their skills and knowledge at the right stage. We could continue this process all the way through the patient who is receiving the PET scan, and their family members waiting for the results of the test.

The visuals of the isotopes and PET scan itself offer a chance to capture beautiful imagery— even if we don't know exactly what we'll see. We can adapt to the process, and find the most interesting visuals. For example, if the PET results are displayed on a coarse-grained monitor, it might not be the most attractive image. But if we turn the camera around, and capture the scene through a reflection on the eyeglasses of the scientist who is reading the results, we can create a more visually dynamic image. It's all about making the most of the resources available.

HEART

As the story begins, we want to create a sense of mystery. At first, we only see tight shots of the robot, and can't quite tell what it is... Fine motors spin, metallic joints articulate in odd ways, and the whole machine moves with an oddly beautiful precision. A perfect dance of technology.





We might reveal the patient from the perspective of the machine. By attaching the camera to one of the arms, our POV arcs through the air, before aligning with the exposed torso of a man on the operating table. There's a sense of the vulnerability of his skin under the cool lights of the O.R... but we see that the machine is perfectly in control as it dips down to begin the procedure.

Once we've established the power of the technology, we begin to reveal the humanity of the situation. We see the faces of the doctors overseeing the operation— carefully checking readings and taking measurements, communicating with one another in hushed, focused tones. We might also see the face of the patient, peacefully sedated, giving a human face to the high-stakes operation.

We could even cut outside, to see his family members waiting in the hallway, anxious for news of his progress. Perhaps his wife does her best to reassure two teenage children, who are tapping their feet on the linoleum floor... Until the doctor emerges, and gives them a confident smile that immediately says it all.

At the end, we see the patient recovering, perhaps coming back to consciousness in the hospital room as his family is allowed back in to see him. His doctors are at his bedside, assuring him that everything went according to plan. He looks down at his chest, and we pan down to reveal that there is no scar. It's an incredible moment, and we'll register the gratitude and relief of the patient as he looks from his unmarred chest back up to his loving family.



AMPUTEE

This story is based on a fascinating and yet simple idea... if other creatures can regenerate their limbs, why can't we? It's a great jumping-off point for telling the story of an amputee, while infusing it with a sense of hope. We're dreaming big, but staying grounded in real science. The regenerative animals set up the idea, but ultimately the real story is about the patient and his emotional journey.



We begin the story underwater, with the octopus— an animal that’s instantly recognizable, yet beautiful and mysterious. The shot might be a reveal, so at first we see the center of the creature’s body, then pan to show that it’s missing a limb. As the time-lapse effect unfolds, we see its severed tentacle start to re-grow.

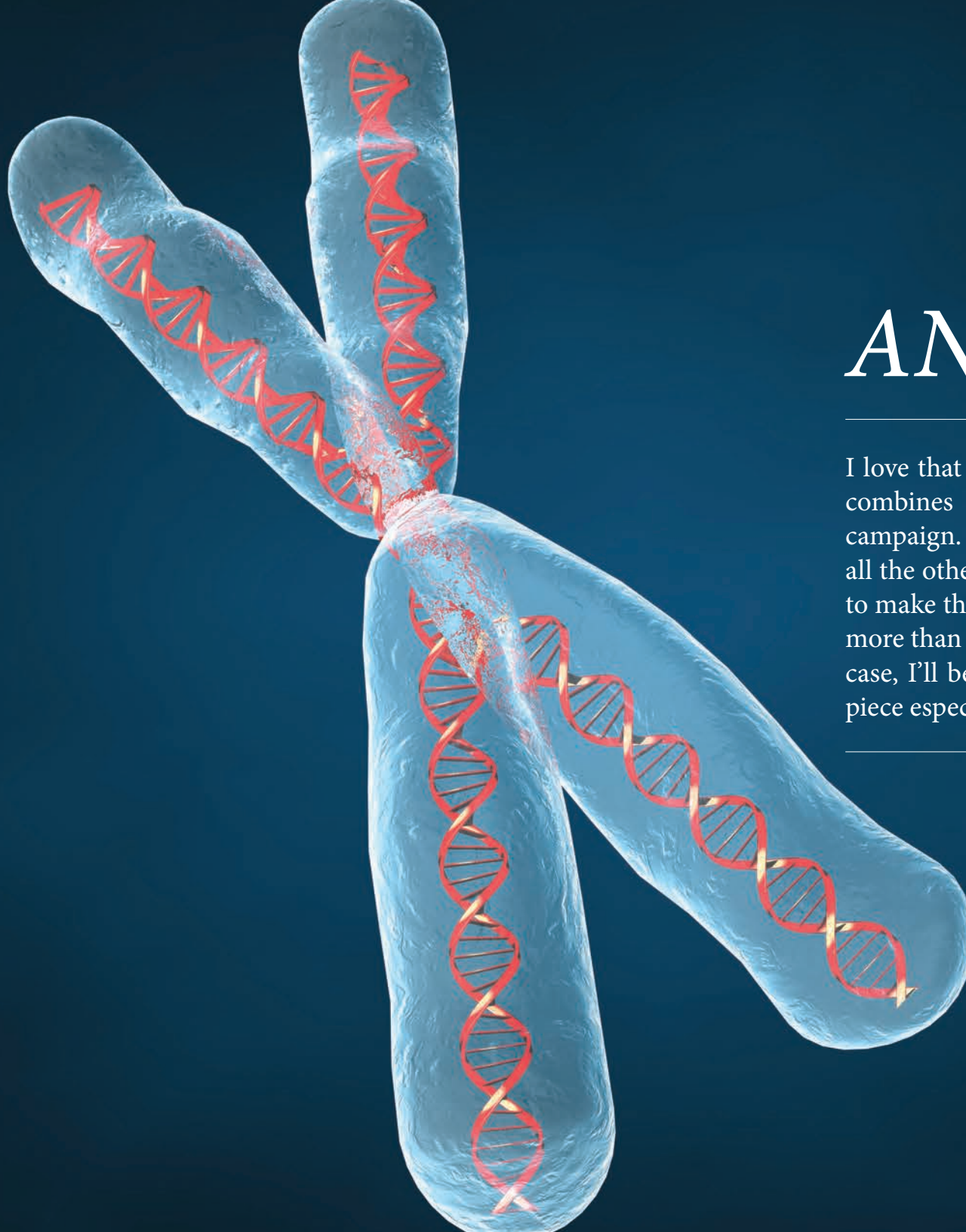
This time-lapse effect can link us fluidly into the next shot of the salamander, with its tail re-growing... and then connect fluidly back to an underwater environment for the shot of the starfish, regenerating a missing arm in the ocean. We want all of these creatures to look strong and healthy and vibrantly alive.

For the various animal shots, we could use stock footage, but we want to treat it so it feels of a piece with the rest of the story. We can source this footage but then color correct and treat it to create a consistent look. By adding a bit of subtle movement to each shot in post, we can match the speed and direction of camera movement, to link these shots together so they feel like part of a coherent whole.

The V.O. will provide a bridge from the starfish shot into our next scene in the hospital. We can use a similar visual transition to fluidly link these two shots. Perhaps a foreground element like a block of coral wipes frame in the underwater shot of the starfish... then we match cut to a tracking shot, moving at the exact same speed, as we cross through a doorway and come into the patient’s room.

As we meet the amputee, we get to the true emotional core of the story. He might be a young man who’s lost his arm, most likely from a war injury. He’s listening to a doctor who is explaining the exact nature of the clinical trial he’s about to undergo. His parents are there behind him, backing him up, both literally and emotionally.

We want this moment to feel completely natural, but also give a sense of the emotions that he’s experiencing. Perhaps we can see that the doctor senses his patient’s anxiety, and is leaning in, fully engaged, showing him, “I’ll be here for you.” The patient listens intently and nods. We can see that he’s carefully managing his expectations, but underneath the rational level, he’s feeling a surge of real hope— perhaps for the first time in a long while.



ANTHEM

I love that we'll have the chance to create an anthem spot that combines together beautiful moments from throughout the campaign. Since the plan is to use footage from the shoots of all the other spots, I'll be sure to capture the moments we need to make the anthem incredible. My approach is always to shoot more than we need, so we have options in the edit room. In this case, I'll be sure to get extra coverage that serves this anthem piece especially.



In particular, we want to be certain to get hero shots that tell each story in a concise and cinematic way. In the “Rex” spot, for example, we might have a slow, dramatic camera movement that reveals Dr. Alford as he starts to take his first steps with the help of the device. For the anthem, we’ll want to be certain that we have a wide master that shows this amazing moment from a beautiful angle, along with coverage of details like Dr. Alford’s feet first finding purchase on the ground. We need shots that can tell each spot’s essential story as concisely as possible.

I’ll bring this same level of awareness to each of our shoots, so we always find a moment of humanity that will really pop in the anthem. It might be a shot of our patient receiving the PET scan in “Isotope,” that captures her emotions... A shot of the doctors diligently overseeing the robot as it performs surgery in “Heart”... Or a shot of our amputee consulting with his physician in “Amputee.” We want to draw beautiful, cinematic moments from each individual story to paint a portrait of Methodist Hospital Group as a whole.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Thanks for sending this project my way. It's exactly the kind of work that I'm drawn to— a perfect mix of gorgeous visuals, engaging characters, and honest emotional storytelling. It's an opportunity to show how Methodist hospitals are leading in their field, with a campaign that's equally bold and confident. I look forward to continuing the conversation as the project evolves.

Best,
Matt Ogens

