



Brief's Top Ten Hot Spots of 2020

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As 2020 finally gives us all a break and comes to an end, it's time to take a look back and reflect.

The below spots were largely produced during the pandemic, and they reveal exactly how creative people were able to get during this incredibly trying year. Several of them were produced remotely and with social-distancing and other pandemic protocols in place. A few of them get political, which is to be expected in this strange and contentious presidential election year. Others take on the pandemic directly and give people a moment of respite from 2020's constant environment of fear and anxiety.

The pandemic may have stifled our ability to go out into the world but if anything, it only inspired people to get more innovative.

Below are the top-ten most-viewed Hot Spots that ran on Brief in 2020:

10) The Corgis Are Coming in CNN's 'The Windsors'

In creative agency Loyalkaspar's :15 tease for CNN's The Windsors: Inside the Royal Dynasty, a squad of five adorable pups make their way from private jet to red carpet.

9) Universal Kids Invites Kids to Camp Play S'more

Last summer NBC Universal's Universal Kids partnered with Long Island City, NY-based creative agency Block & Tackle to transform its air into Camp Play S'more.

The package incorporates a mixed-media look, including hand-made stickers, line illustrations and real-life props. The team also augmented live-action elements with digital animation techniques to give the whole package a "crafts at summer camp" feel.

8) 'War of the Worlds' Comes to AMC Premiere

AMC and AlterEgo captured all the fear and tension of AMC's limited series, War of the Worlds, in this spot promoting both the series and the service it's on, AMC Premiere.

7) Oxygen Goes Dark for '12 Days of Serial Killers'

It was all creepy serial killers all the time as Oxygen rolled out its "12 Darks Days of Serial Killers" event in April with back-to-back premieres of two new original specials.

6) FX on Hulu Frames Up Its Fearless Brand Ahead of Launch

With an assist from Hollywood-based creative agency, Buddha Jones, FX took its Fearless brand and amped it up a few notches in its launch campaign for FX on Hulu.

5) Northern Lights Salutes New York with 'New York Strong'

The concept for this spot is simple-pair Gov. Andrew Cuomo's words with images of New York City-but the ultimate effect is powerful.

4) For CNN, It's a Matter of Trust

For this brand spot, CNN used beautiful black and white images set to an instrumental cover of Billy Joel's "A Matter of Trust."

"This project started last winter but quickly became derailed by the pandemic and the ever changing political environment," said CNN in an email. "Through its many iterations, Billy Joel's 'A Matter of Trust' remained a constant. This version's stripped-down instrumentals set against the black and white images create space to pause and reflect on this year's chaotic news cycles, and offer hope for how we can grow better together from these unprecedented times."

3) AlterEgo Uses Stark Photography to Tell Story of ID's 'Southern Gothic'

To introduce Investigation Discovery's latest true-crime series, Southern Gothic, Silver Spring, Md.-based AlterEgo developed a specific look based on tintype photography.

Each frame of the spot is crystal clear but the palette is a bit washed out. Creating that look required AlterEgo to layer textures in Adobe Photoshop.

The sound edit also invokes the American South, while the title treatment uses tall, distressed letters intended to evoke the South's towering and spindly loblolly pines.

2) Donkey, Elephant Stay Six Feet Apart in Political Promo

CNN used the simple and recognizable look of a newspaper political cartoon to tell the story of a grumpy donkey and elephant-long-standing symbols of the Democratic and Republican parties-who come together while staying six feet apart.

The :15 spot-which CNN created with the help of Fig, House Special and Th3rd Sound-promoted the network's coverage of last summer's virtual political conventions.

1) Reactions to Nat Geo's 'Pop Goes the Vet' Are Priceless

Instead of doing the typical clip-based promo, Nat Geo had the genius idea to instead show viewers' reaction to its show, Pop Goes the Vet, which features vets popping, draining and removing growths from their animal patients. The piece is additionally smart because it was shot during the pandemic, so it managed to create something wildly creative during probably the most restricted

time in production history.

Nat Geo partnered with Trick and Mortar, formerly Fogo, to produce the spot and cast it with a local improvisational comedy troupe.

To be clear, while we love and admire this spot, we're still never watching this show.