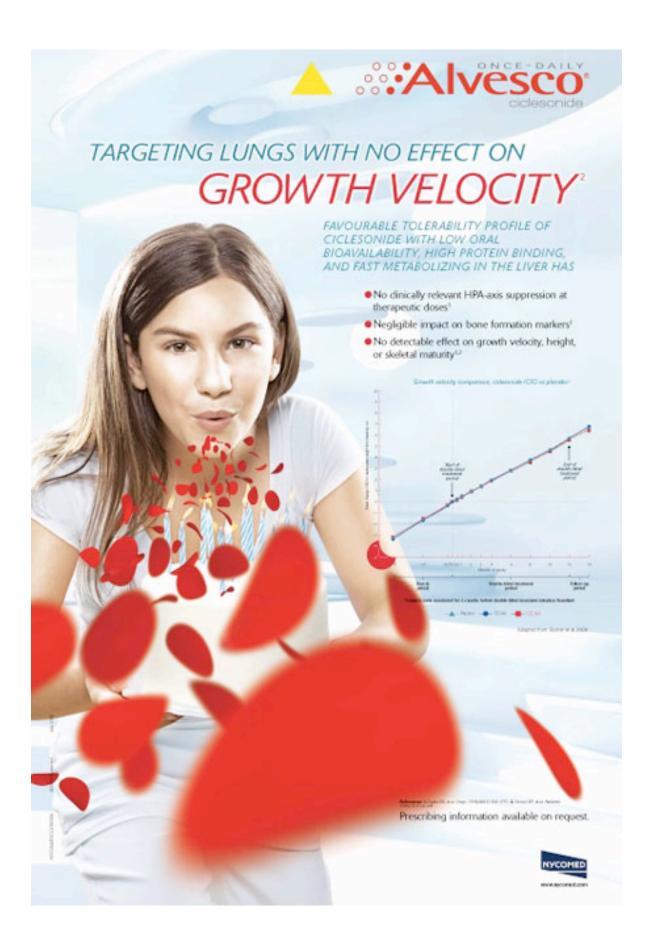
Kfir Ziv Makes Birthdays a Piece of Cake

NOVEMBER 11, 2010 By Barbara Goldman



Recently photographer Kfir Ziv's photography took center stage in Saatchi & Saatchi Healthcare's new Alvesco advertisement shoot. Alvesco is a drug that helps prevent and control asthma symptoms by reducing inflammation in the air passages. Saatchi & Saatchi needed a photographer who could do a highly technical shot and also be able to capture a sense of energy and personality to the ad.

Ziv's work emphasizes the scientific discipline of crisp still life, bringing objects to life with a sense of energy, which turned out to be perfect for this project. Discipline is not unfamiliar to Ziv, as he was born in Israel and served in the military as head photographer of the IDF (Israel Defense Forces). After completing his military service, he came to New York to continue and further develop his mastery of photography. His work has focused on cosmetics, fine jewelry, accessories and beverages.

This was Ziv's first time working with Saatchi & Saatchi Healthcare and the client Altana Alvesco and came to the project through a recommendation from Sr. Art Buyer Maria Marrocchino. His scientific and technical precision, discipline and enthusiasm were the exact requirements she needed for this very difficult shot for Alvesco.

The concept behind the campaign was that with this asthma medication you can easily blow out the candles on your birthday cake. The client wanted very bright lighting and a very crisp image with strong rim light from both sides and with candles lit on the birthday cake. The model, 12-year-old Amy Virello, from the Abrams Artists Agency was very professional and managed to do a lot of exhalations without moving anything on the cake. This helped Ziv to keep his lighting exactly the way he needed it. As he likes to joke about the shoot, "I must say that to stand with a cake and lit candle for so long, it's not a piece of cake."

But Ziv and his crew also came well prepared. He made a sketch of how to spread the candles on the cakes to catch everything the first time without using and wasting too many cakes. He did some tests with a regular plate, put the candle on it for practice for the model to be sure that the distance from the candles to her face was realistic.

With the help of his producer Nikki Unger-Fink, he was able to find the right kind of cake. Believe it or not it, was surprisingly difficult to get a simple cake with white icing, and his producer Unger-Fink was able to find a bakery that could make three different-sized cakes to adjust and get the most correct proportions between the hand, face and candles.

In addition to these technical challenges, Ziv also needed the talents of hair and makeup stylist Sherry Rothstein, since shooting any action always causes hair to move.

Ziv used the Canon 5D MARK II with a 100mm 2.8 lens, four 2400 Profoto packs, a Beauty dish was his main light and two small Chimeras coming from the side for rim light at a stop and a half brighter then the main light. He also used an over-the top light for the model's hair and white cards around the subject, making the light a bit softer on the shadows.

After many hours and one melted cake, Ziv got his shot and a very satisfied client. "Working with Kfir is like working with a controlled explosion of energy. The man is full of talent, vision and enthusiasm, but at the same time he's disciplined and scientific," says Sean Collins, VP, Associate Creative Dir.: "We needed a highly technical shot of a vivacious young woman. Kfir approached the shoot like his still life's, with meticulous attention paid to lighting and composition, but what was magical about this shot was even with all the technical guard rails, Kfir got us a dynamic shot that was spontaneous and full of personality. With Kfir you get the best of both worlds!"

Ziv relied on great teamwork from his crew and assistants, Alex Bastin and Gil Vaknin, and his wardrobe stylist Sonia Gal. All worked together, providing ideas and options to the client. The images are now being used in brochures, on the Web and by the Alvesco sales force for promotion to doctors and pharmacists.

Granted, the Alvesco ad shoot was no piece of cake but then on the other hand you have to say Ziv and the client got their cake and got to eat it too.

See more of Kfir Ziv's vibrant energy and work at his site www.kfirziv.com.

Altana Alvesco- Saatch & Saatchi Healthcare Maria Marrocchino, Sr. Art Buyer Sean Collins, VP/Associate Creative Dir. Kieran Corrigan, Associate Creative Dir. Nikki Unger-Fink, Producer, Sherry Rothstein, Hair & Make-Up Sonia Gallo (Styling) and Amy Virello (Model at Abrams Artists)