



Heathrow

"Wonderers"

Director's Treatment

Richard Bullock



Airports

I know them well. As do many I suppose. But they've been gateways for me throughout my life. I started traveling relatively late and it was always huge distances coming from Australia. I roamed from Australia to South Africa then UK, US and the Netherlands. Then more recently down to Africa and across to Australia. In between there's been hundreds of flights for work and play. I've always seen the airport as a place of pure anticipation and excitement. I sit and wonder myself at the weird names of towns I've never heard of. See traditional garb I didn't know existed. Watch a hovering team of Muslim women in black with their faces concealed and Harrods bags in their hands. I wonder about the West African family meeting their relatives at the arrival hall and see the joy on their faces. I wonder how they'll cope in this strange new cold country.



Wonderers

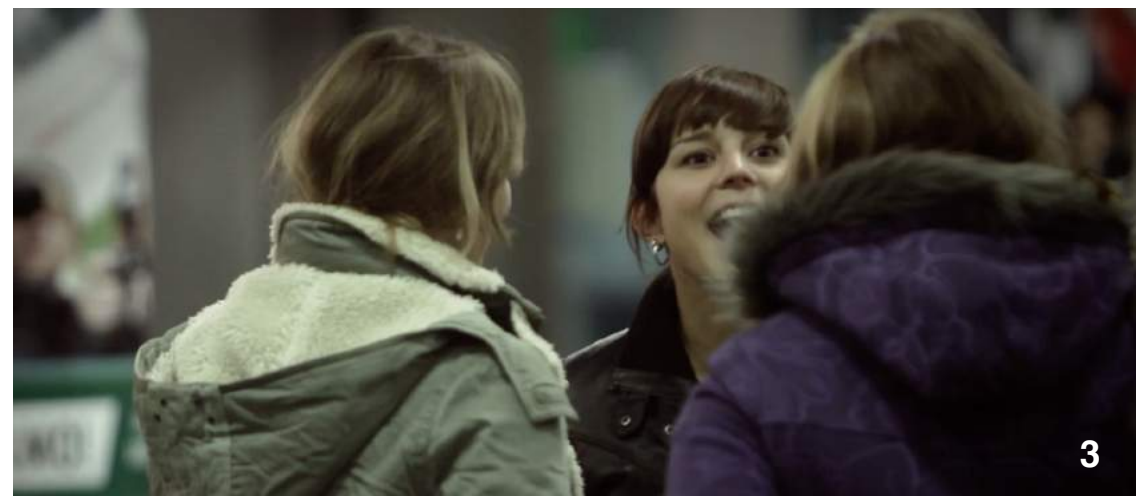
My brain keeps reading this as 'wanderers.' Maybe it's a happy accident. Something to play with in the wording of your writing. We are Wonderers who are also Wanderers. Oops I've diverged from the set path already.

The airport is definitely a concentrated melting pot of diversity and emotion. A sort of little chicane where all the international travellers to a country must squeeze through. And in doing so people who would otherwise never have shared such close proximity are forced to do so.

It also tends to not respond to normal patterns of time. Those passing through it are on a myriad of time zones in an environment that doesn't really follow the notions of night and day. The Solari boards are like slot machines for lucky travellers spinning up random destinations.

There are groups of uniformed military men returning to old battlefields; teenagers in matching tracksuits off for the first adventure of their life; retired couples making a long awaited expedition; snowbound partygoers; tropical island escapees; reuniting lovers; and permanent immigrants and emigrants. Each with a story from the smallest to perhaps the biggest trip of their lives.

People are laughing and people are crying and some people are laughing-crying.



Authenticity

I like the idea of having planted individuals who move through the airport. Even people who instigate some interaction with unsuspecting travellers. They can make small talk or offer assistance to people who need a hand with their bags. Anything that can create a natural moment of closeness.



Scenes

We see a helium heart balloon floating tethered by a string above a crowd of people. A shot from the second floor into a huge wide open area. A young couple run from opposite sides of the hall. They meet in the middle and the balloon is forgotten and floats skyward.

We see an African woman wrap her baby on her back in the traditional way. A young western girl helps her. Close ups of exotic passports going across the desk.

A person standing at a crossroads between gates going symmetrically left and right. They look at their ticket.

A person standing in front of a wall of lonely planet travel books in the newsagent.

A child runs low under the bars at the gate to get to his grandparents.

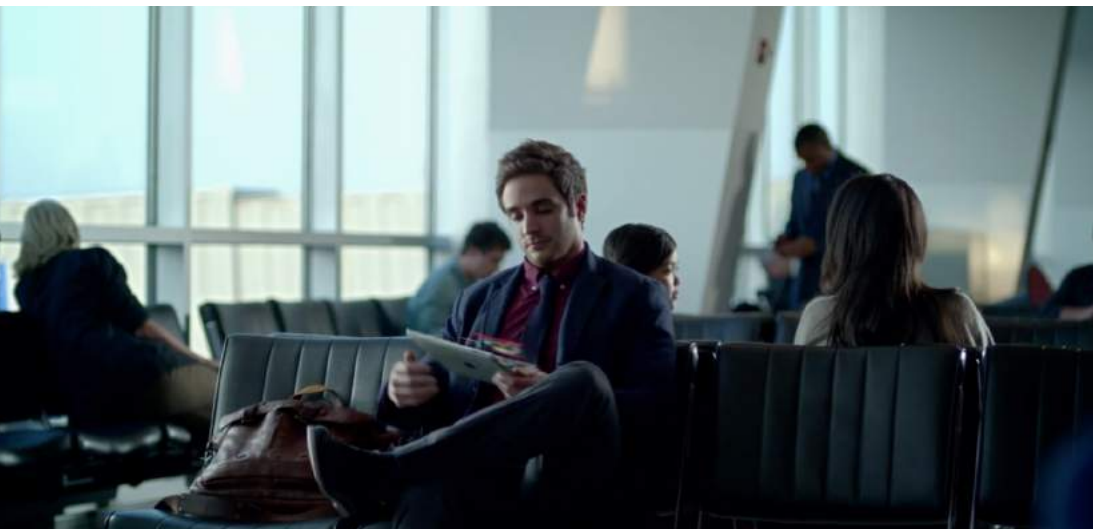


Someone is running late to get to the gate. Another traveler runs after them with their dropped passport in their hand.

Locked off shot side on as two nuns fly along on the travelator. A pause and then two traditional Indian women glide through frame.

Indicators of places they've travelled might also be interesting. Someone returning from a beach holiday with clear strap marks. A man carrying a wooden giraffe. A cowboy hat or Bo Derek braids from a S.E Asian trip.

With all these observations I am imagining using a long lens to pick up the moments through the crowd. I'd like the camera to represent an individual who is travelling through the airport and making all these observations while the voice-over represents their own wondering about the things they are seeing. This way the viewer will have a much stronger connection with the notions presented in the film. The goal of it should be that repeatedly the viewer should nod in agreement at the scenarios we show. They have to emotionally connect with them as well as accept them as authentic representations of life in the airport.



Cameras & Crew

Although I would put a mic on our 'plants' I wouldn't be running around the airport with a huge crew swinging a boom above our heads. I'd rather use two cameramen working together sometimes and independently at others. They should be able to move alone if they want and pick off moments at a distance. For the partially set up shots we might then use wider angle lenses to get the grand scale of Heathrow. I'd suggest using Alexa Minis or Sony A7s 11.



It's a Sign

I think I'd like to shoot all the signage and information of the airport as well. All these arrows and words tell a story. They give the arrivee their first taste of the culture of the country they are entering. They will be useful in the edit for explaining some of the visuals we witness. Signs like arrival and departure are the obvious ones but there are also other cultural symbols, prayer rooms, baby changing etc that tell their own story of diversity and/or acceptance.





New Angles

It would be good to find some new angles for this. Such as being on the other side of the glass looking up from the tarmac. There are some cool machines down there and vehicles etc that are different. I understand it's difficult to do this sometimes but it'd be worth a try.

I think the airport is also made for symmetrical shots using the architectural lines. Although the moments can be meaningful and emotional I still think the overall film should feel somewhat poetic and texturally rich.

Using a combination of partially set-up moments with a small crew we'd have the best chance of finding the magic in this script.

