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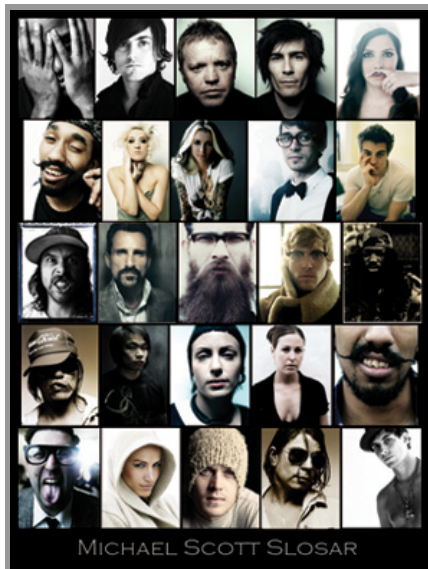
Promos I Kept: Ilona Siller

The DRAFTFCB art buyer says she's happy to meet in person with any photographer whose self-promotion shows their commitment to their craft.

June 11, 2010

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By Jacqueline Tobin



© MICHAEL SCOTT SLOSAR

Portrait, music and lifestyle photographer Michael Scott Slosar mailed his promo card with 25 portraits in a brown lunch sack stamped with "Let's do lunch" on the exterior. He sent the piece to about 75-100 contacts that he had been in touch with via portfolio meetings or e-mails.

Photo Gallery

PDN: Before we get started, let's just touch quickly on Richmond, Virginia, photographer Casey Templeton's lunchbox promotion, which you talked about in our June issue (See "Casey Templeton Boxed Up," <http://bit.ly/ckOnis>). You said it "stopped you in your tracks." Why? What kept a box full of stuff from being hokey or gimmicky?

Ilona Siller: The amount of humor and attention to detail that went into that piece really blew my mind. Nothing was overlooked and every piece belonged exactly where it was supposed to be. I even met with him when he came to New York, even though it was my day off. I look up to anyone who is this passionate about their craft and does everything, including a promo, in a way that will be remembered.

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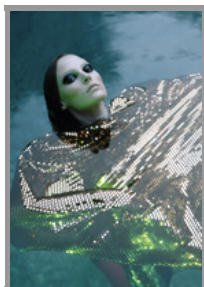


On a recent trip to the United Kingdom, Olympus Visionary Gary Crallé compensated for bad weather with creativity and art filters. [More >>](#)

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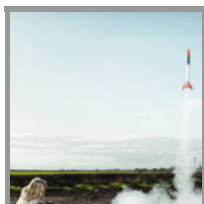


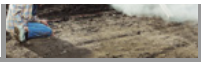
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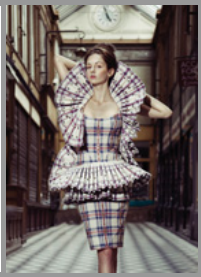
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PDN: Who else has had that kind of impact on you?

IS: Food photographer [Miha Matei](#). I called her to tell her I loved her work after she sent me a fantastic promo piece that was literally a mug with hot chocolate mix and several of her images. The other one is [Michael Scott Slosar](#). His piece came as a "Guest Check" that said "Let's do lunch" on one side and roughly 25 portraits on the other. I loved that was able to see the general style of his work displayed in many photographs on one sheet of paper.

PDN: Had you worked with Miha before?

IS: No, not before I got her piece but I have hired her since then. When I really like something I ask the person to come in. For me a piece has to evoke a feeling so you won't forget the person who shot it. It wasn't a gimmick like "Here's a pen" or "here's a notepad" ...it's something that is associated with her and when you meet her, she's exactly how she presents herself in the promo: like a warm cup of cocoa. All together it's a great thing.

I've been at this agency for five years and work on a lot of healthcare campaigns as well as the [U.S. government] Census account and Nivea. The job I ended up hiring Miha for had nothing to do with food but I knew she'd still do a great job. The feeling we wanted conveyed on the job was the same one that she brought to her promo piece: warmth and authenticity.

PDN: Talk about the second piece you mentioned above, Michael Scott Slosar's "Let's do lunch" promotion. . . .

IS: I haven't met him but I should. I don't know why I haven't. What I loved about his piece—and his is an example of the cheap (in a good way) method of sending a promo—is that it had an element that really stood out: the guest check. You see that lying on your desk and think "Why do I have a bill from a restaurant on my desk?" and then you turn it over and what I love about it is there are 25 different portraits and they each have the same feeling. He really stands out as an individual photographer with a style. I don't even need to see anymore. I've probably not met with him because this pretty much presents everything I need to see so if a job came up I'd give him a call. The work is amazing yet quite simple in its presentation. Remember folks, you don't need to spend an arm and a leg on self promotion.

PDN: Any other advice?

IS: If you send a promotion by e-mail, Google the company first, see what accounts they work on, mention you would be great for, let's say, the Avon account because you do beauty, then put three photographs at the end of the e-mail that are related to the Avon account. The chances really of me working on something and you sending me an e-mail exactly at that time when I'm looking at photographers is very slim. But if you send an e-mail blast or a card about a specific account or campaign, I might put it aside or put it in my folder on the computer.

What I really love is to meet photographers in person. That's my favorite part of the job.

Let's face it, some photographers will try to kiss up to me but I'm thinking, "Are you freaking kidding me? I'm sitting in the office all day long and you are traveling all over the world and shooting amazing photos and you are kissing up to me?" To me, meeting brilliant people with tons of stories and amazing work is the best part.



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We proudly present the winners of the 2010 PDN Photo Annual.



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