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Creative: Best of November

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NEW YORK It's not often that you turn on the TV and see a commercial with a John Lennon song followed by a commercial with a Rolling Stones song—with a little Peter Frampton thrown in somewhere else on the dial. I guess, above all, November (in the ad world) was all about music.

First things first: The Sony Bravia commercial with the multi-color Play-Doh CGI rabbits is just beautiful. Big production. Big budget. Big director. Big city. Big bunny. Big music (the Rolling Stones' "She's a Rainbow"). Maybe its big size makes me miss and like even more Sony's "Balls" commercial, in which thousands of balls bounce through the streets of San Francisco—a simple spot with a very big idea.

Speaking of big ideas, the Converse work shows you don't need much more than a camera, a girl playing guitar and three chords to celebrate your brand. What a fantastic insight. It made me really jealous. It's a rare example of creative that wouldn't work for any brand but the one it was made for. Not to mention it was pretty funny to watch a little girl playing an acoustic guitar right before watching a Geico commercial featuring Frampton, also playing the guitar.

I must say, the Geico spot, in which a woman tells the story of her car accident while sitting at her kitchen table, with Frampton in the background, is not my favorite. But I can't stop myself from laughing every time I watch a Geico commercial because I imagine the fun the creative team had writing it and picking the celebrity. I also must say, though, that I can't believe they haven't used Ricardo Montalban yet—that one would make a good holiday commercial.

A real holiday commercial I liked? The Starbucks spot in which a window washer working on his hanging platform is offered a cup of coffee by two penguins throwing a party inside their apartment. I love the music and the animation, but most of all, I really like the concept of "Pass the cheer." It opens doors (and windows) to a very solid, integrated campaign.

Another commercial that grabbed my attention was "Train" for Nike Jordan, featuring Carmelo Anthony of the Denver Nuggets and the sound of a train. Very few brands use music and sound effects as well as Nike. In case you forgot, Nike also used "I'm So Pretty" in a spot starring Maria Sharapova, "Chariots of Fire" with runners barefoot on the beach and "Before," where an orchestra tunes up as athletes warm up. But back to November's spot. Everything looks great—although I wish they didn't show that train after the logo.

Well, the Apple campaign is still great. Every new commercial is as good as the previous one. In this one, "PC" asks that people not give up on Vista, admitting in an aside that he himself has. I'm a big fan of ads that use nothing but the truth to sell. What's funny, though, is that Apple uses the truth to un-sell its competitor. And let's be honest, PCs are really great at creating un-selling points for themselves.

Maybe the holiday cheer is getting to me and I'm being too nice and all, but I thought November had a very good round of work. Let's see what's coming up in the new year.