

## The Best Work You May Never See: Ken Arlidge Directs A Breathtaking Spot For Campbell-Ewald L.A.

**Type:** Screenwork

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July 18, 2008, Robert Goldrich --- Though the state of healthcare is cause for concern and a hot-button issue on the political campaign trail, this image spot for Kaiser Permanente Hawaii is a breath of fresh air—literally and figuratively—as directed and shot by Ken Arlidge of *Aero Film*, Santa Monica, for *Campbell-Ewald*, Los Angeles.



We open on a young boy seated on a doctor's examination table. A stethoscope is pressed against the lad's bare chest as he inhales and exhales a couple of times. The breaths take on a life of their own and soon deep, full-of-life human breaths underscore and drive us from one slice of Hawaiian life to another.

We see the Honolulu skyline, scuba divers doing their thing, a man warmly hugging an older woman—perhaps his mom—football players doing calisthenics in a large stadium, hula dancers on a hill, a chorus performing under the direction of its conductor, martial artists being put through their paces by a wise old mentor, youngsters playing t-ball, surfboarders in the drink, a rural church, and a worker in the field being doused by a trademark Hawaiian shower.

This collage of activity continues to be propelled forward by the sound of the human breath, culminating in a scene which a doctor now holds a stethoscope to the bare chest of an elderly man seated on an examination table. The senior citizen inhales and exhales, providing a segue to a voiceover which relates, "Sharing the breath of life." An end tag features the Kaiser Permanente logo accompanied by the insurer's now well established campaign slogan, "Thrive."

### Breaking from tradition

Titled "Breath," this spot is in line with the Campbell-Ewald creative strategy for Kaiser Permanente throughout the country which is to "stay away from traditional healthcare advertising," said agency associate creative director/copywriter Neville Anderson. The inspiration for this particular concept, he explained, was the root definition of the word "aloha" which for devout Hawaiian natives historically means to "share breath."

This sharing is simpatico with Kaiser Permanente's philosophy reflected in "an approach to medicine which is to build a personal relationship with Kaiser members," continued Anderson. "In the process of looking for the best way to convey that, I ran across the often overlooked meaning of 'aloha' in my research. It was just a natural fit."

Further enhancing that custom fit is that the breaths heard in the soundtrack are patterned after the rhythms of ancient Hawaiian music. "The breathing rhythms are very much in tempo and beat with Polynesian drum rhythms," noted Anderson. "That contributes greatly to the Hawaiian spirit of the commercial and helps to reinforce Kaiser Permanente as being part of the Hawaiian community."

Campbell-Ewald gravitated to *Nylon Studios*, Sydney, to create and produce the soundtrack. Simon Lister and Scott Langley of Nylon served as sound designer and composer, respectively, on "Breath." Lister additionally was audio mixer on the commercial, which has earned inclusion in *SHOOT's* latest quarterly Top Ten Tracks Chart. (The full Music Chart appears in this issue.)

The concept for "Breath" also entailed the bookends of beginning the commercial with a boy and ending it with an elderly man. Though the youngster and the mature man are not intended to be the same person, these generations at opposite ends of the continuum convey the message that Kaiser Permanente Hawaii is there for whatever phase of life its patients are in, with a focus on preventative medicine, noted Anderson.

### Straight Aero

Arlidge directed and shot the spot. His Aero Film support team was headed by executive producer Skip Short. Leroy Jenkins of Honolulu-based production services house Production Partners was production manager/producer.

Anderson noted that Campbell-Ewald has a comfort level with Aero Film based on past collaborations and in this case the fact that the production company happens to be well connected in Hawaii. Aero, he said, brought Honolulu's Jenkins into the mix and he proved to be a key facilitator of the project.

The creative team at Campbell-Ewald consisted of executive creative director Deborah Karnowsky who served as creative director on the job, associate creative director/copywriter Anderson, associate creative director/art director Mike Conboy and producer John Haggerty. Barnett Kiel of Aero Post, Santa Monica, edited "Breath."

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