DYLAN KAHN
PRODUCTION DESIGNER

2026 ADG AWARDS CONSIDERATION

ICONOCLAST



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ART DIRECTORS GUILD

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THE CALL

Every year, the biggest brands do all they can to steal the show at the Super Bowl. For those of us making the commercials, that can mean taking on some unusual challenges.

The call from Iconoclast came on a morning I'd set aside for a bike ride and lunch with an old friend. Pringles needed a man made from potato chips to co-star alongside Sabrina Carpenter, and there was about three weeks to create him.

At first, I assumed we could 3D print the piece and make a modular bolt-together body to allow us flexibility in positioning. But turned out the client wanted only real Pringles, with multiple versions that could break, crumble, and move. I was immediately excited and intimidated at the same time.

I cancelled my plans for lunch, got on the phone, and began researching how this could be achieved. Twenty-one days later, we were on set shooting with multiple men made from chips. We had dressed eight sets, built scenery, and done multiple days of rehearsal and testing.

That's one of the reasons I love working on commercials: the variety of challenges and the opportunity to work alongside so many talented people with such varied skills.

In the course of this project, we used multiple local vendors and shops and employed nearly 70 people in the art department. I'm very fortunate to work with people who trust me to take on these challenges and appreciative of those who help bring these things to life.

Those people all came together not just to create a story about a pop star and a man made of chips, but to support each other.

Some might think working in short format is a bit crazy. It can be, but it can also teach you about community.

I still haven't had the ride or lunch with my friend, but hopefully I will before the next Super Bowl.

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"PRINGLEO"

CREATING THE PERFECT MAN



The perfect man does not exist, but for Pringles and Sabrina Carpenter, one would need to be created—not just any man, but one made entirely from real Pringles potato crisps.

If you've ever had Pringles, you'll know just how delicate, thin, and crispy they are—not exactly a solid substrate or robust building material. So the first task was to find a partner who was willing to take on this challenge.

I immediately reached out to Craig Currie and his team at SCPS Unlimited, having worked with them before and knowing their ability to literally create what doesn't exist.

Craig and his team were excited by the engineering and design challenge, as well as the opportunity to create something so unusual, and began making samples after our first call together.

Together, we discussed and began prototyping several different approaches to making the crisps more durable, from vacuum-forming to coating them with latex by hand, while at the same time designing the look and the structures that would allow us to create a freestanding, repositionable body, as well as some breakaways for stunts called out in the scripts.

We planned to make 3 full bodies: one for standing, one for sitting and other positions, and one for stunt and breakaway use.

One of the first challenges was the most basic one, and that was to source 1,200,000 Pringles, as we estimated needing 10,000 per body.

In the end, each body contained thousands of real crisps that had been coated or modified and hand-placed by a team working nonstop, all in under 30 days.

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THE PERFECT MAN

PROCESS

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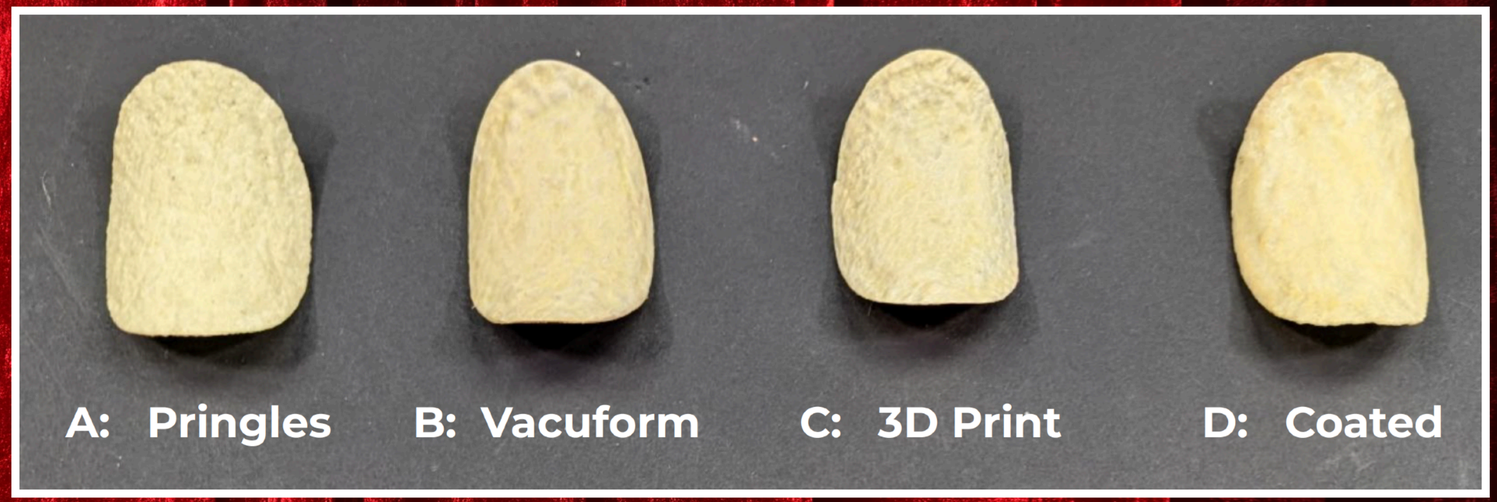
THE PERFECT MAN PROCESS

PREPARING THE CRISPS

We began prototyping several different approaches to make the crisps more durable.

We tried a combination of real coated chips, 3D-printed pieces, and vacuum-formed pieces, each for separate areas of the figure.

Ultimately, the bulk of the work was created with coated crisps. This required thousands of Pringles to be sprayed and hand-painted with a latex coating.









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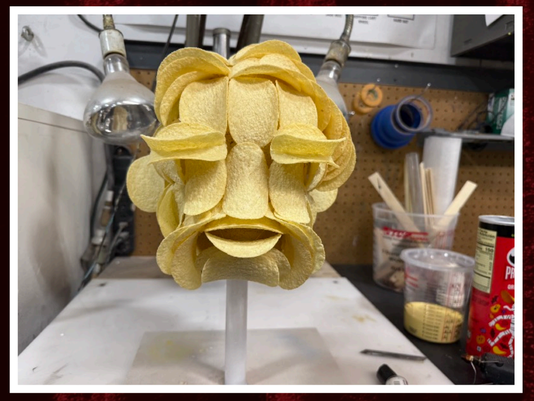
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THE PERFECT MAN PROCESS

THE FACE







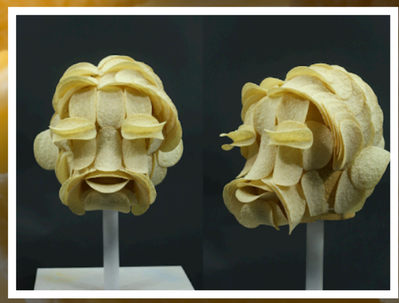
Part of the challenge was to give our man an expressive and friendly face of crisps. We explored variations on the eyes in the digital model, alongside practical sculpting of his face and expression.

We worked through several different iterations of the face before arriving at the final design.

The face itself required each coated chip to be meticulously hand-placed and glued into place.







SEVERAL DIFFERENT ITERATIONS OF THE FACE

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THE PERFECT MAN PROCESS

THE BODY

We started with 3D modeling for the scale of his body. Multiple body styles were presented to the clients while the build specs were being worked out in parallel in the shop.

We ultimately landed on a body close in size to Sabrina's, as seen on the right.









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THE PERFECT MAN PROCESS

THE BODY

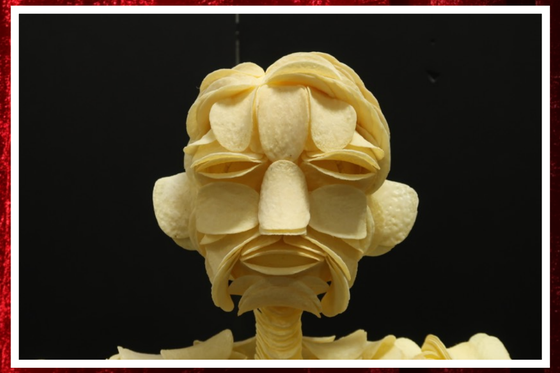






THE COMPLETED PRINGLEO

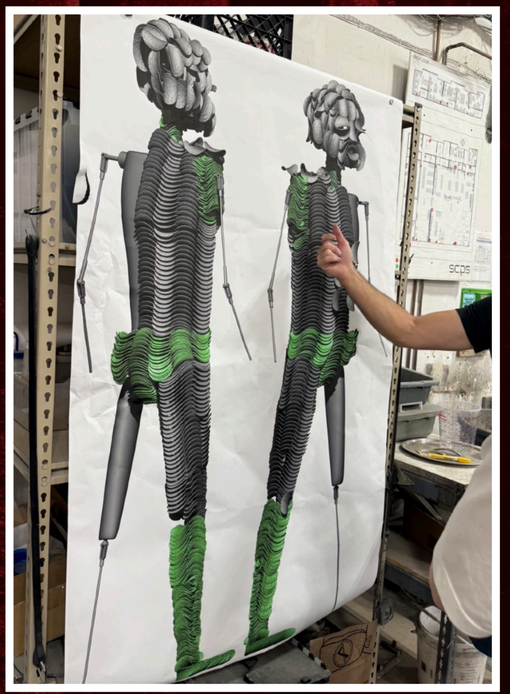




To allow us flexibility in the joints, we created interior metal armatures for the arms and legs. These were built from thin metal rods and ball joints at the shoulders, elbows, hips, and knees indicated in red below.

To allow Prigleo to be seated, the team created removable 3D-printed hip sections, indicated in green.





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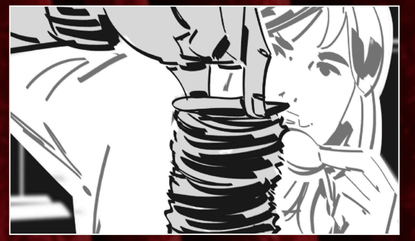
LOCATIONS & DRESSING

We scouted extensively to find the perfect house for Sabrina in LA. We decided to keep it minimal, adding touches of red and some soft, organic shapes to counter our chip man. Set decorator Gail Otter managed to balance that brilliantly.

We ultimately landed on a body close in size to Sabrina's, as seen on the right.











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HE LOVES ME, HE LOVES ME NOT, HE LOVES ME!



We were asked to create a flower with petals Sabrina could remove—again, using real Pringles.

Art director Alicia West had worked on a similar project and brought some great insight and imagination. She and I experimented with different configurations to create a shape that was vaguely floral. We then took this to Ashley Steeves and Lollipops to develop larger floral shapes.

We knew the crisps would need wood glue or latex for durability. In trying wood glue, we found the moisture created a natural curl. What initially seemed like a mistake gave us the organic bud shape that became the center of our flower—far better than we had planned or imagined.

My plan was to attach the petals to Styrofoam discs and create a paper stem. We cut grooves in the foam so the crisps could be pulled like petals.









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THE ROMANTIC DINNER DATE

In this vignette, we find our couple at a romantic dinner, sharing a dessert. When Sabrina leans in for a bite, Pringleo's arm simply falls off onto the table.

This was achieved via a cable release operated by a puppeteer under the table and another just off camera.

This was shot on location, where we redressed a bar as a more intimate, dimly lit, and moody restaurant.



ILLUSTRATION BY JAMIE RAMA



BREAKAWAY TEST

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THE SUNDAY DRIVE

In keeping with the Pringles branding, we sourced a vintage red Alfa Romeo convertible.

For the stunt sequence, a stunt driver in a Pringle-layered suit crashed into trash cans and drove over cones. Some foam-sided trash cans were built, but of course we crashed into many more, with minimal damage to our vehicle.

The scenes with Sabrina and Pringleo were shot using a process trailer. The roof and air-blast effects that remove his head were also done practically while the car was in motion.

This was one of the more challenging shots to achieve in camera, as it required quite a few choreographed elements to all work at once.







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KITE FLYING & BREAKAWAY

In this vignette, we see Sabrina and Pringleo flying a kite together, overlooking the city. This was shot near our house location at a construction site.

Since we were shooting on top of a hill on a windy day, we decided to go low-tech on this gag by creating an oversized menace arm that held the kite and the line to Pringleo's upper body.

He was cabled to a goalpost-mounted pulley to make sure we didn't pull in the wrong direction or damage him in the process. The rig was later painted out. As with all these gags, this was something we rehearsed in the shop ahead of time.

However, the location offered us a challenge: a steep hillside with fewer places to rig from. The puppeteering team had created a release at the waist to allow the effects team and set dressers to boom up with the kite and remove the upper torso in one move.







BREAKAWAY TEST

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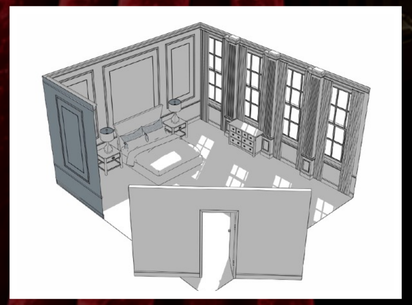
THE HOTEL BUILD
ON LOCATION



STORYBOARD FRAME



3D SET RENDER



MODEL VIEW

ILLUSTRATION BY JAMIE RAMA

Pringleo's hotel suite was built as a three-wall set on the second floor of the historic Clifton's Cafe in downtown Los Angeles. We utilized the existing windows for evening light and depth. We created our own double-sided walls to form both the room interior and an exterior entry.

Set decorator Gail Otter had custom drapery fabricated to frame the windows and control the light. We searched extensively for the right carpeting that would be a tonal complement to the trail of crisps leading to the bed.

Views from art director Alicia West's construction models show the layout of the walls and paneling. The models were also helpful in estimating the drapery and carpeting.

Due to the location's logistical limitations, the scenery had to be built in small sections and loaded in via two staircases,then assembled and repainted and finished in place. This had to take place as the drapery was being installed and set dressing close behind

The positioning of Pringleo here was something we had tested and planned for. The team fabricated a positionable set of arms and legs that was used only in this vignette.

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THE INEVITABLE BREAK UP



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THE START

In our final act, he meets Sabrina backstage after a show. They are rushed by fans thrilled to see her, and he is hit and falls to pieces.

This was something we added late in the process. To achieve this, we fabricated our final piece from sculpted foam that would be flexible and safe for our stunt performer to hit and land on. We then filled all the gaps with coated crisps that would explode as he fell.

Once he was on the ground, we dressed all the elements from the previous sets to create our man in pieces.





ILLUSTRATIONS BY JAMIE RAMA



THE END

When we cut back to our hero dismembered on the ground, it's a mix of real crisps, coated crisps, 3D-printed pieces, and glued sections.

We had done such a great job of matching the real, coated, and printed crisps that the challenge on set was to identify which crisps were coated and which were edible.

We end on Sabrina taking one last bittersweet but delicious bite.

Like so many Hollywood romances, it crumbled quickly.

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PRINGLES

ICONOCLAST

ART DIRECTORS GUILD

VANIA & MUGGIA - DIRECTORS

PAUL MEYERS ASC - DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

DYLAN KAHN - PRODUCTION DESIGNER

ALICIA B. WEST - ART DIRECTOR

MUNDO ENRIQUEZ - ART DIRECTOR

JAMIE RAMA - ILLUSTRATOR

GAIL OTTER - SET DECORATOR

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