

# COOKLYN

It's a cooking show!

## Logline

Shop. Drink. Cook. Awesome!

## Synopsis

**COOKLYN** is a half-hour cooking show, sort of. It's more like a bunch of drunks trying to make a cooking show. The cooking show thing is sort of a ruse to drink, travel, cook, explore, get into trouble, and just talk to normal people about food.

But a lot of the time normal people are dull, which is why God created movie stars. Each week our dysfunctional cast and crew will be joined by one of cinema's many Brooklyn derived luminaries, who can show us around the old neighborhood, guide us to the freshest mozzarella, and point out any brothels we may have missed.

No animals were harmed in the making of the pilot, except for the bunny we had slaughtered at a Halal live animal place. In the first episode you learn how to make rabbit risotto.

## Treatment

**COOKLYN** derives from our belief that cooking shows, while exceedingly popular, are largely aspirational – we like to watch them and imagine ourselves cooking like the people on TV do, but we never have or will. They're also really, really boring.

We think that the idea of a cooking show provides a great hook on which to hang any number of things: travelogue, explorations, man-on-the-street interviews. We take our eccentric cast and crew on a tour of the most diverse community in the United States – Brooklyn – on a quest to find and talk about food. But that's just to get in the door, because once you start talking about food you quickly find yourself talking about just about anything, and often end up talking about something more interesting. Like a dominatrix sex dungeon, for example.

A key element of **COOKLYN** is its amateurism. We've never made a TV show, and we don't really know how they're supposed to be made, but we have a camera and a computer, and figure if we pile in the car and drive around we'll eventually find something interesting.

Matt Rubendall is our host. Although he's an excellent chef, he works as a luthier, a builder of classical guitars. He has no broadcast experience whatsoever. He's an old friend of Bryan Wizemann, our director, and we kind of forced him to do this, and it shows. Bryan yells at Matt from off camera in vain attempts to coax him into delivering the kind of introductions and segues we've seen on TV. The whole crew actually harasses Matt from off-camera, especially as everyone gets drunker, and we'll continue to relentlessly antagonize him in future episodes. The interplay between Bryan and Matt becomes part of the charm of the enterprise. We've been surprised at how many people have responded to our pilot envious of the warmth of their relationship (although it consists almost entirely of cursing at each other). *AMERICAN CHOPPER* has come up as an analogue.

We're a bunch of struggling indie filmmakers, and we figure all that knowledge may someday turn out to mean more than lifelong crushing financial debt. In this case we hope it means a shared vocabulary with the luminaries of the independent film world, which is increasingly centered in Brooklyn. The list of actors and



filmmakers who either hail from or live in Brooklyn is overwhelming, and we want them all on our show. We want to pick them up in our ratty old car, drive them around to shop, drink with them, and cook for them. If they're handsome movie stars we'll use them to help us pick up women to take back to the kitchen. If they're beautiful movie stars no one else is invited. If they want to take us back to the old neighborhood and show us around, all the better. If they haven't been back in years maybe we can show them a thing or two. Most importantly, they probably have more money than us, so they can help pay for groceries. A typical episode of the show will have three main sections: shopping, drinking, and cooking.

## SHOPPING

First we shop for ingredients. Here is where we discover Brooklyn. Although there are various accountings, in our analysis Brooklyn has 14 distinct neighborhoods, and that's how many episodes we'd like to make. (It's worth noting here that all three principals have been residents of Brooklyn for at least a decade.) Each episode will feature a dish representative of the culture of its neighborhood: Italian food for Bensonhurst, Polish food for Greenpoint, cheeseburgers for Williamsburg, whatever. We will find local guides. It could be a friend who lives there, or a crazy old guy from the neighborhood who can get us in the social club, or (ideally) our celebrity guest, who grew up there and doesn't really remember where anything is anymore. We all pile into our 20 year old station wagon – Bryan drives, Matt rides shotgun, the cameraman and the guide sit in the backseat, and the sound guy rides in the back. In summer there is no air conditioning. In winter there is poor heat. The car doesn't always start. Everyone complains. It's all in the show.

Unless we grow up a lot before we get a TV contract, we'll probably all be making bad jokes based on the most obvious stereotypes of the culture of whatever neighborhood we're in. The whole episode may be structured around a bad joke. The whole season. This part's hard to talk about seriously, but it relies on the kind of humor you see on *SOUTH PARK* or *BORAT* – blatant ethnic stereotyping which serves to send up the presumptions behind the jokes more than the purported targets of them.

## DRINKING

After a tough morning of shopping we all need a drink, so we head to the bar. Not just any bar, but the Bait and Tackle, a neighborhood bar in RedHook where Matt's been hanging out for years. This place is like Cheers with hookers. The regulars are the kind of blue collar hipsters who blow glass for a living and can talk knowledgeably about the best way to cook quail. The bartender used to be a dominatrix. If we buy beer for everyone they all seem willing to sign releases, and Matt knows them all anyway. We hang out for a few hours in the afternoon, talk to whoever will talk to us and try to pick up girls. There's a golf video game in the back that we like a lot, and it's likely that for one episode or another we'll get caught up playing it and blow off the cooking part of the show entirely, because it's that kind of show.

This part of the show has been compared to *INSOMNIAC* or *FISHING WITH JOHN*.

## COOKING

Eventually, it's time to leave the bar and go cook, so we pile in the car and drive back to Matt's apartment and Matt cooks for us. Hopefully we've picked up women at the bar and we bring them back with us. We were shocked to find, having completed the pilot, that there's actually educational cooking content here. In the end, Matt's a very good cook, and it turns out he's pretty good at demystifying the process, if we can leave him alone for long enough to explain himself. If he can do it completely boxed, anyone can.



## Production

We intend to do this on the cheap, and extract the profits in the form of lavish salaries for ourselves. We really do intend to run around with a very small crew in a twenty year old station wagon and shoot whatever we come across. Too much of a production infrastructure will get in the way of what we're trying to do. That said, the loosely structured nature of the show will require an edit more akin to a documentary than a cooking show. Our team includes experienced documentary editors. In fact, all the elements, equipment and personnel are in place. We could shoot an episode tomorrow, if you're paying for it.

## Personnel

**Matt Rubendall** (Host, co-creator)

is a classical guitar maker and amateur chef with absolutely no broadcast experience.

**Bryan Wizemann** (Director, co-creator)

is a filmmaker whose independent feature *LOSING GROUND* was called "fascinating filmmaking that gets to the core of humanity" by Film Threat. He is the author of a collection of dramatic monologues, two stage plays, and five screenplays. He is a graduate of Cornell University in philosophy, and was part of Hunter's MFA program for the past three years. He is also the director and founder of Ballast Films, a small independent film production company in Brooklyn, New York.

**Mark Schwartzbard** (Camera, co-creator)

has shot 5 narrative features, 3 feature length docs, and a pile of shorts. He's also a filmmaker with a handful of award winning shorts to his credit, and he's worked extensively as a camera assistant on everything from Woody Allen to *BORAT*. He has a buddy who used to shoot a lot of stuff for the Food Network, and he visited him on the set once, so he knows what not to do.

**Brad Studstrup** (Editor)

cut Bryan Wizemann's nuanced feature film debut *LOSING GROUND*, Tom Noonan's cubist *WANG DANG* and Larry Levine's nervous *TERRITORY*. He also wrote/shot/directed/edited *ACHTUNG BABIES!* — a vérité documentary comedy about a young German father caring for his infant twins. When he's not editing, Studstrup teaches film editing in New York City. He is a graduate of the fiction writing program at Brown.

## Cast (Pilot)

The pilot features interviews with Alicia Goranson (the first "Becky" on TV's *ROSANNE*), Erin Norris (former dominatrix and lead in the film *ABC...MANHATTAN*), and Tracy Hartman (a local bartender and apparently, as we learn in the show, a budding professional porn actress).

