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|----------|--------------|------------|---|
| 00:00:00 | Music        | Transition | Gentle, trilling music with a steady drumbeat plays under the dialogue.   |
| 00:00:01 | Promo        | Promo      | <b>Speaker:</b> <i>Bullseye with Jesse Thorn</i> is a production of <a href="http://MaximumFun.org">MaximumFun.org</a> and is distributed by NPR.   |
| 00:00:12 | Music        | Transition | <i>[Music fades out.]</i><br>“Huddle Formation” from the album <i>Thunder, Lightning, Strike</i> by The Go! Team.   |
| 00:00:20 | Jesse Thorn  | Host       | It’s <i>Bullseye</i> . I’m Jesse Thorn. Next up this week: another fascinating New Yorker, John Wilson. Wilson is the host and creator of a new show that just premiered on HBO a couple months ago. It’s called <i>How To with John Wilson</i> . It is—and I don’t think I’m exaggerating here—one of the best shows to come out in the last year. And I have to say that I think it is my absolute favorite. <i>How To with John Wilson</i> centers around John, but you don’t ever actually see him on camera. He’s behind the camera for pretty much every frame. He takes you through his apartment, his neighborhood, around New York, sometimes points even further than that. Each episode of <i>How To</i> focuses technically on teaching you something. How to put up scaffolding or improve your memory or make the perfect risotto. But it is profoundly discursive. As John wanders down a street with his camera, you see whatever catches his eye: a weird smiling security robot at a grocery store. A guy sitting on a “walk, don’t walk” sign. Or, you know, there’s an extended shot of Kyle MacLachlan from <i>Twin Peaks</i> fussing with his metro card in a subway station. |
|          |              |            | It’s a really funny show. It’s also funny in a very unusual way. It’s beautiful and quiet and in between the bizarre goofy shots of New Yorkers on the street doing wild New Yorker stuff, he also finds touching human moments. Maybe all that description <i>[chuckling]</i> is not as clear as it could be. It’s a little bit hard to describe. But I’m hoping that you will take one thing away from all of it: watch <i>How To with John Wilson</i> . It is so good. Anyway. Let’s kick off my interview with John with a clip from the show. This comes from an episode called “How to Make Small Talk”.  |
| 00:02:12 | Sound Effect | Transition | Music swells and fades.   |
| 00:02:13 | Clip         | Clip       | <b>John Wilson (<i>How To with John Wilson</i>):</b> Uh, much like in real estate, location is everything when you’re making small talk. You could pose the same question in two different environments and receive wildly different answers. You could ask a question to a philosopher—  |
|          |              |            | <i>[Scene change.]</i>  |
|          |              |            | <b>John:</b> Do you think mankind is gonna make a comeback?   |
|          |              |            | <b>Speaker 1:</b> I hope so. Um. If we can survive the perils of climate change, inequality, and the fantastic weapons of destruction we’ve created for ourselves.  |
|          |              |            | <i>[Scene change.]</i>  |
|          |              |            | <b>John:</b> But that same question might get a much different answer at WrestleMania.  |

*[Scene change.]*

**John:** Do you think Mankind is gonna make a comeback?

**Speaker 2:** Nooo, not tonight! Fell off too many Hell in the Cells!

**John:** Oh, really?

**Speaker 2:** Yeah.

**John:** What about mankind in general?

**Speaker 2:** Oh, mankind like the whole world?  
Music swells and fades.

00:03:01 Sound Effect Transition

00:03:02 Jesse Host

*[Chuckling.]* John Wilson, welcome to *Bullseye*. I'm so happy to have you on the show. I love your show.

00:03:09 John Wilson Guest

Oh, yeah. Thanks for having me. This is some of the only socializing I've really been able to do. So, this is—that was a treat.

00:03:16 Jesse Host

I look forward to it every time. It's nice to talk to an adult.

*[John chuckles and agrees.]*

Other than my wife. I like talking to my wife. So, John, this is obviously—when you have a television show, it's a job. It can't possibly have been a fulltime job when you were making this kind of film before it was going into a television show. So, like, how much of your life did you dedicate to being out on the street with a camera? Um, a lot of it. Yeah. I mean, it's just kind of what I do naturally. You know, I would—I would work these jobs that I didn't really care about for money, during the day, but you know—I always liked jobs that would take me to different neighborhoods. So, you know, and that's one of—you know, that's what happens when you're kind of a freelancer. So, I would always be in different parts of the city and, you know, my—I would always just be filming everything I saw anyway. And, you know, if you shoot casually for long enough then—you know, I eventually got all this—I would have all this footage that I just wanted to do something with and I would just construct these little narratives and make these little memoir films out of the material, because I just—I needed to deposit them somewhere. You know. I just didn't want it to just sit on my hard drive.

00:03:48 John Guest

00:04:42 Jesse Host

Were you working film production jobs or were you just, you know—were you working casual labor or something?

00:04:49 John Guest

I was—I was—I mean, *[sighs]* one of my only kind of marketable skills that I had was as like a—you know—as like a camera operator or a video editor. But I only did stuff that I didn't really have to put my name on. You know. Like, in—you know, in the scaffolding episode, I mentioned a infomercial job that I had for a long time. That was just something—you know, that was a job where I could emotionally kind of vacate and really have no—you know. I didn't really care about the end product. I was just a technician really. And I—it wasn't a compromise for me. Which I get very touchy with. I—in my own twisted logic—you know, it's like I knew that this wasn't art, and I wasn't fooling myself into thinking it

was. And, you know, it paid enough for me to live in the city that inspired me, you know, the most.

00:05:47 Jesse Host When you are shooting footage, in this kind of system that you've developed over years, is there something that you are looking for? Or are you just waiting for something to go into frame?

00:06:02 John Guest I feel like I look for kind of moments that feel fleeting. I'm not really sure how to describe it. You know. The definition of what I'm chasing kind of changes every day and it just depends on my current obsession, I guess. You know. Like, I was obsessed with scaffolding for an entire summer. You know. I spent the entire summer underneath scaffolding just studying it and going to, you know, just trying to find the oldest ones or the prettiest ones and—you know, or the newest. And so, you know, that was my tunnel vision for a little while. But then, you know, I get into something else just as easily. So, I get really excited when I'm capturing something that is going to disappear very quickly. And there's like no shortage of that in New York City. Everything is disappearing all the time, in New York. You know. Whether it's the architecture or, you know—or even just an individual. You know, or someone doing a funny dance on the—you know—on the sidewalk.

This, like—these are all things that are, you know, very ephemeral and I feel like the best use of video, it's best used when it's kind of preserving something. And so much of what drives me to make these documentaries are—is kind of preservation. You know. 'Cause New York can be a tragic place, because it feels like it's—all your favorite stuff is constantly disappearing and being replaced with other things. But I just wanted to use this camera as a tool to kind of—to create a record. You know. 'Cause even if it fails as a memoir, at the very least it'll succeed just as raw footage of New York during a very special time.

00:07:56 Jesse Host Do you get a release from everybody that you shoot on the street?

00:08:00 John Guest A majority, almost all of them, yeah.

00:08:01 Jesse Host Wow!

00:08:02 John Guest But it—but it's, you know—it's a very delicate thing, because we have to shoot them—you know, I have to—I or the second unit have to shoot them doing whatever they're doing naturally without them noticing and then—and then field producers go up to them, explain what's going on, and ask them to sign a release. And yeah, like, 9 out of 10 times they do.

00:08:25 Jesse Host That's amazing. I mean, it's legal to photograph people in public places, 'cause they don't have the reasonable expectation of privacy.

00:08:32 John Guest Yeah, we can get away with not having a release, too. But we like to be pretty buttoned up, because it is—it is such a kind of a big platform.

00:08:41 Jesse Host It's amazing. It's amazing that people say yes. Did you shoot the shot of the woman putting the pigeon into the plastic bag?

00:08:50 John Guest *[Chuckles.]* That—that was actually not me. That was my good friend and second unit shooter, Chris Maggio.

00:08:56 Jesse Host Did Chris Maggio get like a bonus and *[laughing]* a promotion when he brought that back to the office?

00:09:02 John Guest That seems to be, like—it's so funny. It's like, for—like, I've become so numb to that shot, it doesn't even amaze me anymore. You know. Because like, it *[laughing]*—'cause I've seen all the raw footage around like that moment. So, it like wasn't as shocking to

me. Yeah. I mean, yeah. The short answer, yeah. He deserves it. Yeah, I'll give him a promotion.

00:09:23 Jesse Host You were born in New York. Did you grow up there?

00:09:26 John Guest I was born in Queens, but I spent most of my childhood in Long Island. But I was always back and forth, because I had relatives and kind of the old apartment in New York.

00:09:37 Jesse Host Do you think you have a different relationship to New York as a mostly-insider? I mean, Long Island is a—is a slightly different kind of thing.

*[John agrees.]*

00:10:07 John Guest But it's still New York City. Than someone who lives in New York because they—you know, because it was like a choice for them, like they—you know, got on a bus from Kansas City or whatever? Yeah, I mean, I think I do have a slightly—yeah, I would say I have a—I have a different kind of unique relationship with the city. You know, it was—it was something I was just kind of came in and out of on weekends a lot of the time, growing up. And, you know, I was able to see the city disappear. You know. Like, the—like, my childhood version of New York, I was able to see that disappear and be replaced with what we have now. So, like—but I also grew up in a very kind of sleepy suburb at the same time. You know. And there wasn't really anything interesting there to shoot. You know, I was just—it was just kind of a boring strip mall-ish kind of place. And I knew that I always wanted to, you know, be back in New York and just be in the most—in the most dense kind of cluttered place imaginable. You know. I just—as, like, a kind of like a foil to like my—like, my Long Island upbringing.

00:11:28 Jesse Host But then, like, yeah, so I've seen the city kind of turn over and you know I've seen it get cleaned up in a way and it just makes me wanna preserve what's here even more. Because, you know, you think that it's gonna look like this forever and, you know—but it—that's never true.

00:12:07 John Guest There was a place near where I grew up in San Francisco that was called Palace Meats that was a place that had a big picture of a cow on the outside and you could go and get a steak for—I can't remember, it was like \$4.99 or something like that. And it stayed there for so long, like, as things changed. I was always like, "How is that place still in business with all these people that work at Netscape or whatever moving into the neighborhood?" And it eventually disappeared, and I really missed it when it disappeared, but I had never eaten there in my entire life. *[Laughs.]* Like—

I know. I mean—but it, you know, it's just part of the—just like the—you can still appreciate, you know, the visual character of something without, like, engaging with it. Like, I was really bummed out at the beginning of the pandemic. Like, this like travel agency right next to me—I had never—I had obviously never really used it, you know, to book anything, but it just had a beautiful façade and—you know, the—like, the interior was just like such a classic travel agency with all these posters on the wall from different countries and like—you know, and model airplanes and stuff like that and wood paneling and stuff. But they just closed, you know, and it—sure, I would never really use it I don't think. But—and it was kind of an anachronism, you know, but like those are the kind of places that

I wanna kind of engage with like for the show if I can. Places that seem like they're about to disappear or industries that seem like they shouldn't be there.

00:13:13 Jesse Host

When I watch your work, one of the things that I imagine—besides you just having to stand at a street corner all day until something interesting happens is like a card catalogue. Like, I genuinely wonder how you sort your footage. Like, I know people who have logged for reality shows, you know—which is where they take the raw footage and then make a text document of everything that happens at every timecode so that when they put it together into a narrative, it—they can find what they need. You know?

*[John affirms.]*

They can find someone being upset or whatever. And I wonder, like, how you manage to—like, it's one thing to remember where you kept the footage of a woman picking up a pigeon and putting it into a Duane Reade bag—'cause you're not gonna forget that one—but, like, where do you find the footage of someone falling over? After you've—you know, six or nine months after you've shot it?

00:14:14 John Guest

Everything is, like, meticulously catalogued and keyworded. You know, there are—there are kind of two kind of stages of kind of organizing all this stuff. You know. Like, the assistant editors will ingest and then very plainly kind of describe in keywords what's happening in the shot. You know, what is going on, how many people there are, maybe what they're wearing. Or any signage. And then on top of that, you know, the editors and I—we will make our own personal selects of all of the just—the most inherently pretty, funny, you know—just shocking footage. So, that bird shot—the woman putting the bird in the bag—that was probably just I think on one of our kind of select sequences that we knew that we had to use that shot or—you know, there's like a—there's usually a timeline for—that each editor has, where it's like—it's like shots that are just—that we need to find a way to use somehow. You know?

And we usually just like trade them and kind of scrub through them together and then we see if one of the shots would work thematically for a section and then we would kind of like build—write a joke around that shot. And, you know—and then we might need to pad the joke with footage, you know, that would match other phrases in the joke and either that footage already exists, or I need to go out and find something that would make the punchline—that would make, like, the buildup to the punchline work. So, I mean—I mean, in short, we have to be shooting, writing, and editing all simultaneously or else it doesn't work.

00:16:15 Jesse Host

Even more with John Wilson still to come. Stay with us. It's *Bullseye*, from [MaximumFun.org](https://www.maximumfun.org) and NPR.

00:16:22 Promo Clip

**Music: Three bouncy beats.**

**Graham Clark:** Hi! My name's Graham Clark, and I'm one half of the podcast *Stop Podcasting Yourself*, a show that we've recorded for many, many years. And, uh, at the moment, instead of being in person, we're recording remotely. And, uh, you wouldn't even notice. You don't even notice the lag.

*[Long pause.]*

**Dave Shumka:** That's right, Graham! And, uh, the great thing about this—

**Graham:** Uh—

**Dave:** Go ahead.

**Graham:** No, you go ahead.

**Dave:** Okay, and—

**Graham:** Okay, go ahead.

*[Someone stifles laughter.]*

**Dave:** And you can listen to us, uh, every week on [MaximumFun.org](http://MaximumFun.org).

**Graham:** Or wherever you get your podcasts.

**Dave:** Your podcasts.

**Music: Three bouncy beats.**

00:17:04 Promo Clip

**Music:** Relaxed piano music.

**Peter Sagal:** Hey, my name is Peter Sagal and I'm here to help you with the most pressing problem facing civilization today. There are too many good podcasts to listen to! Now, why not avoid that whole problem by listening to an extremely silly podcast hosted by me. On *Wait Wait... Don't Tell Me!* it's wisecracks about the week's news, shenanigans, fart jokes, and general silliness. And doesn't that sound pretty great right now? Listen to the *Wait Wait... Don't Tell Me!* podcast from NPR.

*[Music fades out.]*

00:17:27 Jesse Host

It's *Bullseye*. I'm Jesse Thorn. My guest, John Wilson, is the creator of HBO's *How To with John Wilson*. It's a very funny and entirely unique documentary series. It just wrapped up its first season on HBO. It's executive produced by Nathan Fielder. Let's get back into it.

There's a lot of emotion in the television show especially. I think often the episodes start with the premise that they are going to be explanatory and in some ways kind of a series of interconnected images that are just gonna flash past you and sometimes they're ironic and funny and sometimes they're "gee whiz" and—you know, that kind of thing. And then you tend to find people or find something in yourself. Are you able to plan any of that or do you have to stumble upon it?

00:18:23 John Guest

Plan any of what? Like, the—

00:18:25 Jesse Host

Any of those feelings. Like, any of that—any of those arcs that reveal themselves over the course of that 25 minutes. You know, like if it was reality television, you'd plan the heck out of it. You know what I mean? Even if it was—even if it was, you know, one of

your executive producers on the shows—Nathan Fielder, who did an amazing show for Comedy Central called *Nathan for You*—like, I’m sure that while there were things that they didn’t know exactly how they would go, they—I’m sure they figured out what they were doing in an episode before they started doing it, ‘cause that’s how television is made.

*[John agrees.]*

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| 00:19:05 | John  | Guest | Generally. So—how do—what do you know and what don’t you know?<br>Well, I mean—you know, there was a writer’s room before everything started. You know. Myself, and Michael Koman, who’s also an executive producer, and Alice Gregory. And our—you know, we would have these long conversations about each subject. You know. Whether it’s small talk or scaffolding or—you know—a restaurant splitting the check. And you know, you do, you know, like—we—we did kind of get to this point during the writing process where it’s like, yeah, I knew that like—like for, you know, “How to Cover Your Furniture”, for example, I knew that I had the <i>Matrix</i> figures back home. You know? And that was just one of those things where I have—like, I can put that really anywhere in an episode if I want to and, you know, it may be emotionally resonant or not. Or like—basically, anything that has ever happened to me is fair game in the show. So, I can kind of dip in and out of these kind of autobiographical moments and use those moments for emotional impact if I want to. But then there’s also stuff like the Hard Rock Hotel collapsing in the scaffolding episode and those are things that you obviously can’t predict and create these, like, very unique, emotionally resonant moments that there’s no way you could have written. |
| 00:20:49 | Jesse | Host  | And I wanted to make sure that there were at least a couple or a few of those in each episode—those, like, moments that could not have been planned, because it makes everything else around it feel so much richer.<br>Do you ever have unexpected feelings or understandings when you watch footage back or watch, you know, roughly edited footage back? Like, do you realize—have you—have you had the experience of realizing new meaning when you see something in the context of it being on a—on an editing screen rather than in real life, and you’re looking in your viewfinder?   |
| 00:21:20 | John  | Guest | Yeah. I mean, I notice little nuances during the edit that completely passed over me while I was shooting it. Absolutely. Like, my birthday dinner—you know, that was one scene where I would notice little details in all of the material during the edit that, you know, I—and I began to analyze the way that my friends behaved around me and stuff like that. And you know, like my friend—who is drinking every last drop of her—of her water before she left, you know. That was—that became this moment where, you know, I saw my friends as these people that were kind of using my dinner for their, you know, financial benefit.   |
| 00:22:05 | Jesse | Host  | <i>[Laughs.]</i> Not that you relate to people who share your, um... unusual fanaticisms or have their own unusual fanaticisms.   |
| 00:22:23 | John  | Guest | Um, in the footage... people that share my unusual fanaticisms.<br>Hm.  |

00:22:29 Jesse Host I don't know how many people are into the same stuff you are, but I think that drinking every last drop of water provided to you is a—is a similarly distinctive passion to walking around with a film camera and finding it comforting to log the footage. You know what I mean?

00:22:48 John Guest Oh, sure, yeah. And I didn't even think—yeah, think of that. And, you know, the audience has also just noticed things that I didn't notice before, too. And you know, I—you know, so it's been really exciting to see the response.

00:23:07 Jesse Host This show in part came out of you meeting Nathan Fielder, who's a comedian and comedy writer who made *Nathan for You*, a really intense, kind of parody or satire of business reality shows. Um... when you, like, had lunch with him and talked about what a TV would be and when you worked with him, how did his presence change what you had been doing previously?

00:23:39 John Guest Well, when Nathan and I first started working together, we did have to figure out what the show was, after we were greenlit. I mean, yeah. When we made the pilot, we—there was, you know, some push and pull because we were trying to figure out how much of the show should just be purely observational and how much I should, like, engage with the kind of subject matter and people in public. And I think we, you know—it took a little trial and error, but I think we got to a nice place, you know, where I'm not actively kind of manipulating what's happening in front of me in the way that Nathan does in *Nathan for You*. You know. He almost like puts on a bit of theatre in every episode.

And, you know, we tried kind of one or two things like that for the pilot and it just didn't really feel right and it didn't work. So, we—you know, just tossed it out and just ended up using all of the stuff that I just shot, you know, like by myself a lot of the time or stuff that we didn't really plan like at all. Like me going to Craigslist and me going on Craigslist and picking up a rug covered in blood. You know? Like that was—you know. That was just the actual guy who had the rug, and it was just me in the storage facility with him. You know. And, like, that—yeah. All the most kind of stripped-down stuff really ended up feeling like the most honest and real and Nathan is also obsessed with realism in the same way that I am. And maybe even more so. And he is like—he's very good at being able to recognize when something feels artificial and when it feels real. You know.

Because I'm biased, because when I shoot something, I know it was real and—you know, I don't need to convince anybody. I feel like I don't need to convince anybody that it's real. But Nathan will look at the same thing and think, "Oh, that looks fake. It looks like—like we've been trained to think that that is fake, so we need to kind of cut it in a way or have a different approach to it just so people know for sure that it's real." And that's something I wasn't prepared to do, but it's something he's really, really good at. And same with Michael, too.

00:25:56 Jesse Host When his show was on TV, I had a lot of comedy friends who were obsessed with it. And I watched a few episodes and could immediately see why they loved it so much. But I also couldn't watch any more of it. *[Chuckles.]* 'Cause I found it really upsetting.

*[John agrees.]*



And it wasn't upsetting because I felt like—I didn't—I didn't, you know—I have—I have no—I have no beef with the man. It was about me. But it was like—I could never put my finger on whether I felt like—in doing a satire of reality television with real people—they were picking on those real people or whether it was about—it was really just about me and I just didn't like feeling like I was getting tricked. *[Chuckles.]*

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| 00:26:47 | John  | Guest | You felt like you were getting tricked, watching <i>Nathan for You</i> ?   |
| 00:26:49 | Jesse | Host  | Yeah! Like, I think the—I think that middle area between things that are real and things that are not real, so to speak, is somewhere where I've—I am personally really uncomfortable. That was where that show lived.   |
| 00:27:04 | John  | Guest | Yeah, in that uncanny valley, you know, kind of area.  |
| 00:27:08 | Jesse | Host  | Yeah, and I feel the same way about magicians, to be clear.<br><i>[Laughs.]</i>  |
| 00:27:11 | John  | Guest | Well, Nathan was a magician. You know. So. I think part of his craft is also, you know, kind of keeping you guessing and never really truly revealing how the trick was done.  |
| 00:27:24 | Jesse | Host  | Yeah, but it's such a—it's very interesting to me that you have that very specific difference in taste and perspective and how interestingly the two of your points of view dovetail in the show.  |
| 00:27:38 | John  | Guest | Well, yeah. I mean, at the same time—I mean, what was, like—you know, the first night we met... you know, we realized we were both working with the same set of references. You know? Like, we were both really obsessed with Louis Theroux and like—and his very specific brand of documentary and, you know. Errol Morris was, you know, another one that we both like. You know. Really liked and... and like, no—we were both kind of after the same thing, but doing—you know, we had different ways of doing it. |

And yeah, I wasn't really sure how, like, a product—you know—'cause I resisted working with anybody for a long time. You know? Because I just didn't want—I just wanted to see if like I could accomplish something by myself. You know. And you know, without any kind of collaboration. And, you know, if it sucked then no one would see it. But if it was good then it would organically just kind of like get an audience. And you know, but—and Nathan—I was—I was really amazed that he—that he took a chance on me. You know? When I really didn't have much kind of proof of concept outside of these like—these really kind of shoddy tutorial videos that I just self-released on the internet. To let me steer a production of this scale was like a big gamble, I think for everybody but—I don't know. It seems like it worked, and I hope like, you know, I can replicate it somehow.

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| 00:29:19 | Jesse | Host  | Do you get a different perspective on yourself when you look at all this footage of you looking at other people and, you know, places that aren't inside you?   |
| 00:29:31 | John  | Guest | Yeah. I mean, I feel like I see myself in other people and I feel like I like to learn lessons about myself kind of in real-time. And you're seeing it onscreen. You know? Like, you know, in the finale when I got and talk to that—the guy with the—with the exhaust pipe, you know, who's spewing all the black smoke everywhere. You know, he starts talking to me about pollution and our kind of individual responsibility versus the kind of collective responsibility that we have to... to stop, you know, pollution. And you know, that's something that I started to think about and then it—you know, the |

same kind of question carried into the pandemic. You know. It's like what kind of responsibility do we have to wear a mask, you know? If one person does or doesn't wear it, it may not do much. But the fact that whole groups of people are not doing it is the thing that creates damage and, you know, that was just one of those things where I wasn't sure.

00:31:20 Jesse Host

Yeah, because I—we live in an industrialized society and sure, you can come down on someone for spewing exhaust all over the street, but you're doing a lot to damage the environment in little ways that you may not realize. And I'm not saying the solution is to—is to go in the complete opposite direction and pollute as much as you can, but you know, it was kind of an interesting question that kind of spoke to the themes—the larger themes of the episode. This spring, when the pandemic was relatively new, I drove from Los Angeles—where I live—to San Francisco—where I'm from—to take my father into hospice. And I was staying in a hotel downtown in San Francisco. And I had spent so much time in downtown San Francisco. I used to work there and—you know, it's just where you'd go to do stuff. And I was stunned by the physical space around me in the context of, you know, the lockdown orders and so forth. Like, it really was something I had never seen again, and I realized, as I was looking at it, that like I better hold onto it, because I would never see it again. You know. I would never see something like—you know, looking down Powell Street, in San Francisco, to the cable car turnaround. You know, one of the greatest tourist destinations in the world. And looking down six or eight blocks and seeing one person on the sidewalk. You know?

*[John agrees.]*

00:32:53 John Guest

The pandemic happened while you were finishing this season of TV and, you know, obviously has been going on for quite some time since. How has your experience of the place you live been changed by—you know—being constantly surrounded by a really different sense of space and a really different sense of feeling about what it is to be in public?

Um. Yeah. When the pandemic started, you know, I realized that I—you know, I had a decision to make, whether or not I was gonna continue filming my show or make something out of what I had and I realized—you know, I realized that I—there was no way that I—like, I couldn't document everything as thoroughly as I could. So, I just spent every single day out trying to capture like every moment that I could, because I knew that it was—you know, things were changing sooo quickly during those first few days, you know? Like, the landscape changed faster than it ever has. And, yeah, it was something that we may never see again. And you know, like the—like the supermarket, like the line in the supermarket. That's an image we may never see again. Like, a huge line of people with no masks on in a space like that.

You know. Like, *[chuckles]*—like, that was probably the biggest super spreader event of all. You know. The first big grocery store rush, at the beginning of the pandemic. Because nobody was wearing anything. But yeah, so I've been filming every single day since, even—you know, even though we've officially wrapped

production. I can't really stop. You know. This is just kind of my resting state. And yeah there are fewer people on the streets, but I feel like they're doing much more interesting things and the city, the landscape, is just this patchwork of all of this beautiful stuff and it's sad that, you know, it's every man for himself right now. And we have to figure out—every business has to figure out how to survive on its own. But it's lead to some really visually interesting stuff.

And I was kind of bummed that I needed to stop production right when this started, because—you know, this is one of the only shows, I think, that HBO or any network might have where the crew could be reduced to a single person and it will still look the same. And I knew I needed to take advantage of that. But you know, it's been sad. I've, you know, a lot of my favorite places have closed and I'm just drinking on the sidewalk now, but—instead of at the bar that I used to go to. But you know, hopefully something good will emerge. You know? In the ashes of all this. Because—I don't know. That's—*[chuckles and stammers]* you gotta find some way to be hopeful.

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| 00:35:47 | Jesse | Host       | Well, John, I am so grateful to you for taking the time to be on the show and your TV show's so wonderful. Thank you for making it.  |
| 00:35:55 | John  | Guest      | Yeah, absolutely! Yeah, and thanks for asking me to do this. This was—this was nice.   |
| 00:36:00 | Jesse | Host       | John Wilson. He is the creator of <i>How To with John Wilson</i> —both one of the funniest shows on television and one of the most unexpectedly beautiful and moving. It's a show that recreates one of the most wonderful parts of living in a city, which is sitting still and watching the world go by around you. <i>How To with John Wilson</i> is available now on HBO Max and it's just been picked up for a second season. Expect to see it later this year. |
| 00:36:30 | Music | Transition | Relaxed, cheerful music.   |
| 00:36:34 | Jesse | Host       | That's the end of another episode of <i>Bullseye</i> . <i>Bullseye</i> is created from the homes of me and the staff of Maximum Fun, in and around greater Los Angeles, California—where there is a... perhaps literal one inch layer of dirt on my car, because they're building two houses across the street. It turns out, once they do that, they're gonna build another house next door. So many houses. People need houses. I understand.                      |

The show is produced by speaking into microphones. Our producer is Kevin Ferguson. Jesus Ambrosio and Jordan Kauwling are our associate producers. We get help from Casey O'Brien and Kristen Bennett. Our interstitial music is by Dan Wally, also known as DJW. Our theme song is by The Go! Team. Thanks very much to them and their label, Memphis Industries, for sharing it with us. You can also keep up with the show on Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube. We post all of our interviews there.

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| 00:37:32 | Promo | Promo | And I think that's about it. Just remember: all great radio hosts have a signature signoff.<br><b>Speaker:</b> <i>Bullseye with Jesse Thorn</i> is a production of <a href="http://MaximumFun.org">MaximumFun.org</a> and is distributed by NPR. |
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*[Music fades out.]*