

BBC Four Goes Abstract

What inspired you to create this ident?

My work is usually self-initiated and not made to any kind of brief, so I find it a welcome novelty when I am asked to produce work for a particular purpose. I often have to sit and think for ages before coming up with ideas, but this one emerged almost immediately and seemed to come together almost by itself.

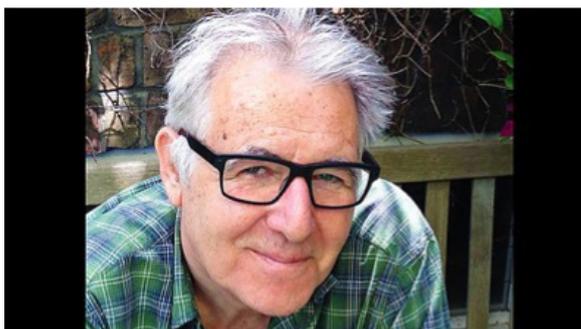
I like subverting accepted conventions, so I knew from the start that I wanted to work with the familiar quartered BBC FOUR ident and deconstruct its elements. A lot of my work involves verbal and visual punning (going back as far as Associations from 1975 and Gargantuan, made for BBC Two's The Late Show in 1992).

So the idea of using images of two bees and the sea came very naturally. And in relation to the abstraction theme, it seemed obvious that the images could be abstracted by simply zooming in on them until their origins became unrecognisable and they appeared as abstract shapes and colours.

What does Abstraction mean to you?

Abstraction of both images and sounds features strongly in a lot of my film works, as I like the mystery that this creates. I often frame representational images in extreme close-up, so that it is not at first clear to the viewer what s/he is looking at, only revealing wider shots that show the full scene later - see Dad's Stick from 2012.

I similarly explore the properties of natural sounds and combine them in collages that stress their abstract, sometimes musical qualities. I enjoy exploiting these ambiguities of cinematic material, creating a kind of audio-visual guessing game that encourages viewers to ask themselves questions about what they are looking at, actively engaging with the film rather than just passively consuming it.



John Smith



Dad's Stick, 2012