

# Advanced Portfolio

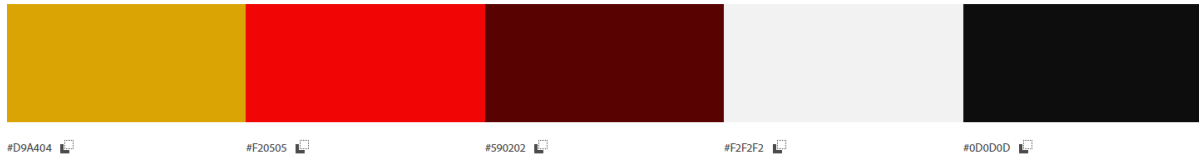
## Critical Reflection

Name: George Smith

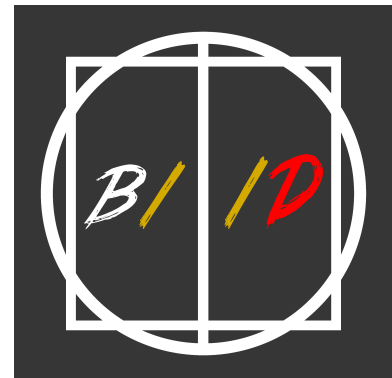
1. How do the elements of your production work together to create a sense of 'branding'?
2. How do your products represent social groups or issues?
3. How do your products engage with the audience?
4. How did your research inform your products and the way they use or challenge conventions?

## How do the elements of your production work together to create a sense of 'branding'?

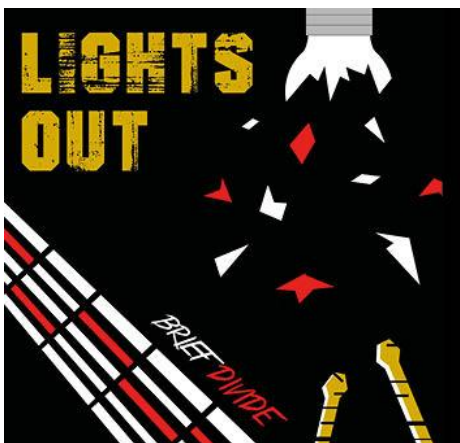
A brand should be easily recognisable by an audience as the sum of its parts. This means making sure that every product works together to represent the stars, and are recognisably related to each other. Our mission statement contained key descriptors like "sensational" and "revolutionary", and so our music video, digipak and social media page needed to effectively reflect that.



Throughout our package, we kept consistent branding, including sharing a logo between our social media page and digipak and integrated advertising for our products on our social media page, as well as keeping a consistent colour scheme of reds, whites and blacks across the two mediums. The colours used were conventional to the genre and gave images of high energy and revolution. Our music video, being a more individual product, was allowed to stray slightly further but our fast pace of edit and conventional editing techniques convey similar feelings. All of this was vital to encode the right messages that our audience would decode in what Hall would argue is their preferred reading.



## How do your products represent social groups or issues?



Authentically representing our artists was a necessity to make sure that our package appealed to our target audience of fans of rock and alternative.

The fact that our stars are not shown on the front of the digipak suggests arrogance, much like how brands like Apple use minimal branding as they are already confident that people will immediately know their products. It could also however suggest that the duo cares more about creating good music and less about their own personal fame. Either way, it fits the genre convention of not showing the stars on the front.

In place of costumes and other mise en scenes, as we did not have photos of our stars on the front, we relied on semic codes in the graphics. An example of this is the

fonts we used. For the title of the album, we used the font “bad grunge” which communicates the genre and attitude of the album through the big, bold letters with details of wear and tear. We also used the colour schemes of black, red and white to give a dark, aggressive feel through the use of symbolism. These both helped to not only show the stars’ genre but also their personal style, communicating a darker, harder side to their music.

We also used the song names to communicate our brand identity. Names such as “Paper Crown” suggest that our duo has anti-establishment ideals, which would appeal to many fans of this music as many of them are not happy with the current state of the world. “More Fake News” has a similar effect, and one of the titles also references the very real problem of substance abuse, showing how they are connected to their fans and want to fix issues within the world, and representing their social groups and issues to the audience. The rapid jumps between themes also represent our stars as discursive, not just focused on one goal but starting a massive conversation for all our issues.



## How do your products engage with the audience?

Capturing the interest and engaging with the target audience (in our case usually low to middle-class young males) is essential for a social media page. Keeping in mind Blumler and Katz’s theory of uses and gratification, we had to make sure that our social media page provided entertainment, information, interaction and a way to reinforce the audience’s personal and social identity.

We ensured that our social media page had all the relevant information for fans, like album release dates and tour information. We also used it as a platform for good, talking about charities and good causes, while also sticking to an anti-establishment theme that should be received quite well by our target audience who are known to have similar ideals. This allowed us to make sure that our audience did not reject our messages, and would allow them to reinforce their personal identity.



By posing most of our posts as questions or open-ended statements (eg. “Are you ready for the new single...”), we created audience engagement, as fans could respond in the comments. We also replied to comments we received, for example, a comment asking about preferred charities,

giving a sense of relatability as the audience would feel as if they could talk to the stars like normal people, which is essential so that our representation of our stars as extraordinary does not alienate our fans, in line with Dyer's paradox of the star.

## How did your research inform your products and the way they use or challenge conventions?

Researching music videos created by bands similar to ours was vital to creating a successful music video. One of the reasons for this is genre conventions so we know what to conform to or challenge to be the same but different and innovate on



the genre's past and not be rejected by the target audience. We analysed Royal Blood's music video for "Typhoons". The vocalist in the video was wearing a leather jacket and some jewellery, so we decided to conform to this convention to make our duo recognisable as their genre, giving our vocalist a leather jacket, jeans and a dulled metal ring. This ensured we made our stars recognisable according to the blueprint

for our genre.

We also watched many videos to inspire editing techniques for our video. Due to research, we discovered that most videos in our genre stick to a very fast pace of edit, so we decided to conform to that convention and give our video a high energy feel with a fast pace of edit and quick transitions. As Lacey might argue, this also helped to make sure we had the right repertoire of elements to meet the target audience's expectations.



We researched quite a few videos and found that the narrative sections often dominated the videos, with little to no performance sections. Instead, we decided to challenge this convention with more of a 50/50 split which enabled us to show more of our stars and allow the audience to connect with them, as we found that often with the lack of performance in videos we felt more detached from the artist, which is not what we wanted to do. Using more performance than is usual for the genre, we were able to portray our duo as extraordinary and extreme with high energy performance and make up for their lesser representation on our digipak cover.