

Written Study



The area I have chosen to work around is album cover designs and Old Vinyl cover designs I have chosen to do this because of the unique designs that are used in this area.

The idea of a design for an album cover was thought of by Alex Steinweiss, who was an Art director and graphic designer, who invented the idea of having custom artwork on an album cover, he also created the first ever album cover instead of having non branded albums in pasteboard covers, from then

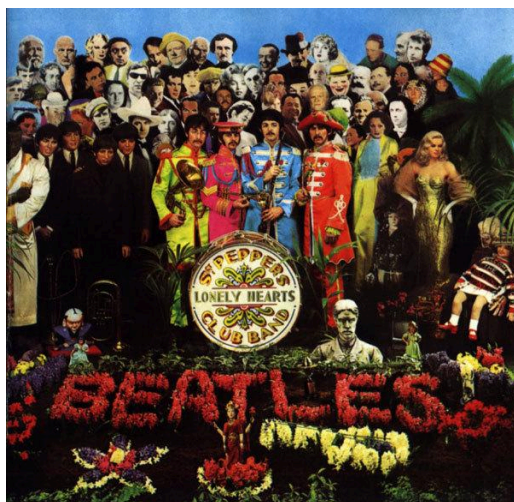
loads of people have experimented with the idea of having custom album designs, the next turning point in album covers was George Gershwin's album cover which was created by Alex Steinweiss in 1950 this was a very famous album cover and gave a lot of people ideas on creating different and unique album cover designs, the next major album cover was Jim Flora's Mambo for cats design this was a well designed album cover which has a good colour scheme and a simple design which was created in 1955 this is one of my favorite designs on an old album cover as it is very well made and looks tidy but has a lot going on in it.

Jim Floras - Mambo for cats cover



The next iconic album cover was Gene Vincents and his blue caps - Blue jean bop album cover,

this was one of the first album covers to feature an actual photograph on the cover it was also Gene Vincents first album so it was also really popular, the next Iconic album was the beatles Sgt peppers album



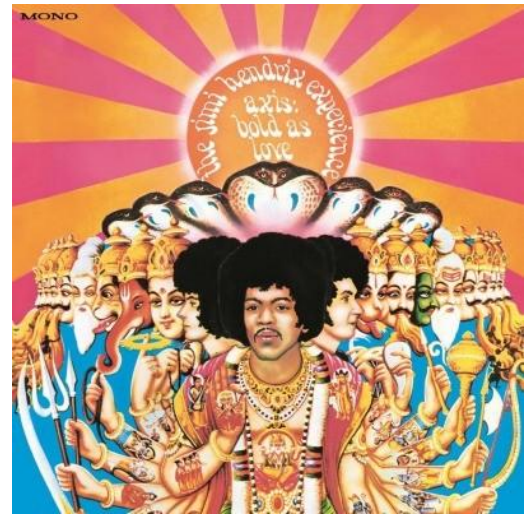
Original release

this was one of the most famous and iconic albums of all time and the cover of it gives it the iconic look this cover was created by Peter Blake who describes his work as more of a art piece rather than an album cover

and says when he was making it he didn't feel like he was making a album cover and he was making art, this album was released on 1st June 1967, This album is one of the most well known album cover in the world, it was the beatles top selling album ever, hitting number one in basically every country on its original release

Chart	Position
Australian Kent Music Report Chart^[323]	1
Norwegian Albums Chart^[324]	1
Swedish Kvällstoppen Chart^[325]	1
UK Albums Chart^[326]	1
US Billboard 200^[327]	1

The next Iconic cover that was made is Jefferson Airplane - after bathing at baxters this is a unique design which was created in 1967, I think this is a really good design as it is original and unique which is well drawn and well coloured and I like how the background is not coloured but the main part of the image the plane is coloured, The next iconic album cover was The Jimi Hendrix Experience - axis as bold as love, this cover was a very different bold and unique cover as it had a weird religious style to it I personally dont like this cover as it is messy and all over the place, but this was the kind of style that the artist wanted to portray this album was released in 1968.



The next Iconic album cover is probably one of the most well known album covers in the world it is the beatles abbey road, this cover is very simple but it works as it also carries lots of different stories such as one of them isn't wearing shoes because he is dead etc... the photographer Iain Macmillan was given only ten minutes to take the photo whilst he stood on a step-ladder and a policeman held up traffic, this was taken in 1969.

The next turning point in album cover designs was The Rolling Stones - Sticky Fingers this was a print design and it was a print of jeans this cover is a well made cover and has a simple design, but works well it has a simple contrasting design of black and white with a red stamped text.



Rolling Stones - Sticky Fingers Cover

From here on lots of different designs have been created for album covers, here is a list of the most famous designs since 1972:



Dynamicron - Leave no trace

The overall layout of this piece is good and well made as there is lots of space on the page and its not overcrowded with Text and images, this piece looks like it has used a 4x4 grid to create this piece as he has the main image in the 4 boxes down the middle and they have put the text in the top right corner of the grid, they have used this grid to get a good layout of the page and this helps it not look messy.

The Typography used in this piece is a really good choice for this cover because it fits in really well, they have used a san serif typeface which goes well with this simple design as this typeface is quite simple itself, the type on this piece is really well placed and sized as it doesn't take up much room on the piece but it still stands out this is because the writing 'DYNAMICRON' is one of sharpest colours on the page this makes it one of the first things the audience look at when viewing this piece, this is part of the hierarchy of this piece the text is near the top of the hierarchy just underneath the bright part of the jellyfish which is the main feature of this cover, back to the typeface the text underneath the band name, is a thin version of this font this is because they want people to look at the band name before they read the album



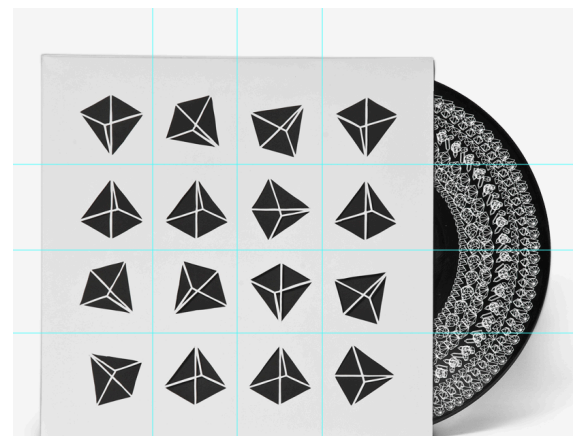
name also it is there so this band's audience can find the album they are looking for by identifying the band name.

The colour scheme used for this album cover is a simple colour scheme the colours they include are blue, white and a really light green, they use the blue for the background which is just a light grey to dark blue gradient then they use the light green for the jellyfish's tentacles they use this light green colour because it stands out against the blue background then they use the white for the text and the top of the jellyfish they use the white because it contrasts against the blue background.



This is an album cover for the modern classical composer Allan Gravgaard Madsen

This album cover is laid out very well and has a clean design the simplicity of this piece is the best part of it, this album cover has a unique neat layout for a Vinyl cover as it has a 4x4 grid which has a diamond in each square this makes the page ordered and not busy, This designer has used white space to make the cover look well spaced and it gives this designs simpleness.



The typography used on the inside of this vinyl sleeve is a smart classical serif typeface, this is used because this vinyl is being created for an old classical musician, In this piece this artist has gone for a modern hip design on the outside but on the inside it has classical writing, this contrast works really well and I really like this design, also on the Inside text the subtitle is bold and the main writing is not this makes the subtitle the important bit stand out, also the text is really small and placed in the top left corner of the cover this works really well and adds good white space to this design.

The colour scheme of this designs is a simple contrasting design of black and white these two colours work so well together in this design as the black stands out so much on the white

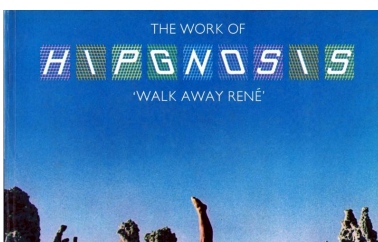


background even on the inside where the black line is really thin it still stands out on the page also the reverse design on the record where the background is black and the images are white this works really well when the record is in its sleeve because with it just being in there it is creating a contrast, the most interesting thing about this piece is when you put the record in the record player it creates weird illusion with the white shapes which makes them look like they are moving.

Link to video of record moving

<http://michaelhansen.prosite.com/15193/491413/home/vinyl-cover-with-analog-light-animation>

In the Album design industry different companies have different design ideas this is easily noticed for example Blue Note records album covers are mainly quite simple designs, which seem to feature just a picture of the artist with some shapes and typography, they also all seem to feature the same colour scheme, the reason blue note records make their album covers like this are because it is different, and a distinctive unique design, they also make their album covers like this because they make album covers for mainly jazz bands and jazz singers so this design is tailored to this genre of music and jazz is usually familiarised with the early 1900's in america after the great depression so these designs carry an old look to them, this would attract jazz fans as they could relate to these images and covers.



If you compare Blue note records design methods with Hipgnosis design methods, there is a significant difference in design as Hipgnosis go for a weird and unique style and a more adventurous design, and their album covers carry a surreal design, Hipgnosis created some of the most famous design including pink floyd's The division bell this was one of the most famous album covers ever as it had a distinctive and different design featuring 2 Easter head type things facing at each other creating a full face with a landscape behind it, the reason different companies incorporate these different styles and designs are firstly based on the designers working for the companies because they will have different ideas and have their own unique designs, another reason these companies have different designs is because they want to be different to any other designs and to make theres stand out over the others and they want their design to suit the genre that there cover will be portraying.

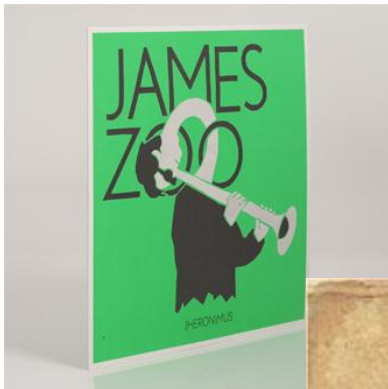
Another example of record labels using different design methods is Columbia records who tend to make colourful and artistic based designs, but the drawings they do are simple drawing which fill the page this is what makes columbia records album designs different from all other design companies, columbia records do not use many photography based album covers these covers look really nice and I have been taking ideas from there style, for example I copied and emulated there ['Mambo for cats album cover'](#) doing this has given me ideas for my final piece and the style I will be using for my final piece.



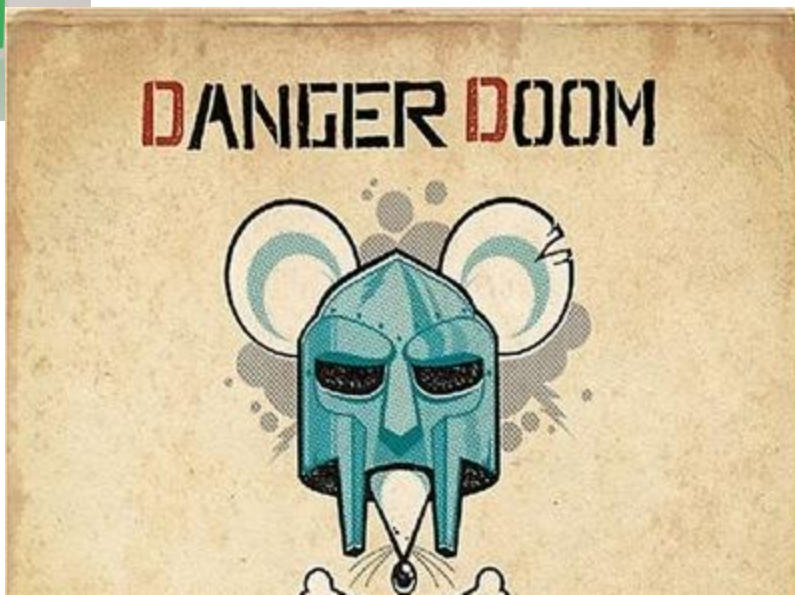
James Zoo Album Cover

This Vinyl record design is really well made and carries a simple design which stands out, The use of space is the best part of this design as it gives it that clean feel to the design.

The typography used in this piece is a thin sans serif font which is in bold, this has been used to keep up the simple design as this typeface uses less space and allows the main image to flow through it, on the piece the artist has used the same typeface for the name of the album cover but it is not in bold, they have done this as they want the name of the artist to stand out more than the album cover so that people wishing to buy CD from this artist can recognize where it is because it stands out, so the name of the artist is higher in the hierarchy than the name of the album.



The colour scheme used in this piece is monochromatic, because it only has one colour which is green, and then black and white text, the artist has decided to do this because he wants to keep the piece simple and clear, this works very well and makes the piece look really professional and the black and white contrasts with the green background which allows the main art to stand out.



Danger Doom album cover

The overall layout of this piece is good as it is not too busy and everything is center aligned, this makes this piece look very professional, but at the same time it carries this rough look with the old paper background and the text they use is an army stencil font which fits with the genre of this album cover as it makes it look scary and in the metal rock genre they try to make themselves seem intimidating.



In this piece they have used a 3x3 grid and put everything down the center and used the outside squares of the grid to create white space.

The main image in this piece is clear and well drawn the reason they have chose to draw a skull and bones is probably because the genre of music they are creating this piece for because skulls and bones are often seen in the metal rock genre, with the image I like how they have overlaid a fabric mesh they have done this because they want the image to look like it is actually on the paper.

Another point about the typeface is they have made the first letter of the word red, they have done this because red is commonly related to danger and doom so it so having this red at the start of these words massively relates to the words.

This piece has a equal hierarchy as nothing stands out over each other as the text is the similar size to the main image and they have the same shade of colour so it doesn't stand out above each other.

