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## **PROFESSIONAL DECORATION OF MUSIC ALBUM**

As the laws of physics suggest, you will see things before you hear them. It is no different when it comes to listening to an album or just one single, as more often than not, before you press play, the first thing that will catch your attention, is the accompanying cover art. While the famous saying goes “you can’t judge a book by its cover” the truth is, if the cover is beautiful enough, audience is likely to pay much more attention to what’s on the inside. Over the decades, musicians and artist have worked together to create albums where the cover art is as memorable as the music itself. Strong album covers make a statement, because after all, this imagery is an opportunity to make the right first impression. Behind every great album is a striking album cover.

Album covers were born out of the need to translate music messages into visual elements. Developing since the late 1930s, they reached a high point in the middle 1960s – early 1970s, demonstrating the genius of the most talented designers, photographers, and artists. At the same time, they performed some basic functions, such as security and packaging, and they became iconic ideas about music inside. Graphic design for the recording industry has created remarkable landmarks of the 20th century: Warhol banana skin for The Velvet Underground, The Beatles' Abbey Road, etc. It is a discipline that, according to author Charlotte Rivers, "gave us the best examples of graphic design in history and, in turn, began the career of one of the greatest, most innovative and influential graphic designers today" [1], but it "has ceased exist "regarding the size and creativity of the early years [2].

At midcentury, album cover design emerged as an important arena for graphic design, and soon after, photography. In the US, artists such as Alex Steinweiss and

Jim Flora at Columbia Records, Fran Scott at Impulse Records, Reid Miles at Blue Note Records, as well as Alvin Lustig, Andy Warhol, Ben Shahn, and Bob Cato contributed to the early art of album cover design. Following upon designer S. Neil Fujita's innovative ideas, photographers such as W. Eugene Smith, William Claxton, Francis Wolff, Roy DeCarava, and Lee Friedlander participated in the burgeoning genre, as the album cover came to represent a significant forum for cultural expression [3].

Since its creation in 1939 by Alex Steinways, "it is a discipline that has had a huge impact on the world of graphic design, transcending the limits of its original intentions" [1].

Album art is still considered an important part of the listening experience of many, and despite the less tangible nature of digital images, there are still many collectors who sell art and music for covers.

So, we can say that there is a heyday of the development of the design of covers of music albums. Covers have become a part of mass culture, so it is impossible to imagine stagnation in development in the next decade. Also, we can say that despite the mass and historically articulated stereotypes, the cover designers are trying to create unique design solutions and attract the attention of the audience.

## REFERENCES

1. Rivers, Charlotte. CD – Art: The Cutting Edge of CD Packaging. Zurich: RotoVision, 2003, p.8, 32
2. McKnight-Trontz, Jennifer. Exotiquarium: AlbumArt from the Space Age. London: Griffin, 1999, p.10.
3. Recovering and Discovering Album Cover Artists and Photographers by Janet Borgerson and Jonathan Schroeder. [Electronic resource]: [Web site]. – Electronic data. – Access mode: <https://mitpress.mit.edu/blog/recovering-and-discovering-album-cover-artists-and-photographers>. – Title of the screen