

ALBUM ART ANALYSIS

Arianna "Ari" Gonzalez

Portfolio 6

The first album and cover I chose is, "What's Going On" by Marvin Gaye. I chose this album because of how iconic it, along with my personal love for it. The aesthetics of this album cover convey hope in a time of turbulence. Marvin Gaye is surrounded by rain and it's his hair, face and clothing, but he remains calm and has a slight smile on his face. The yellow font that matches the small part of his shirt showing through also conveys this sentiment.

These sentiments make a lot of sense due to the subject matter in the album and the historical times it was released in. Specifically the album was written, "... from the point of view of a Vietnam veteran returning to his home country to witness hatred, suffering, and injustice." (Eames, 2021, p. 8) Furthermore, the album, "... explore themes of racism, drug abuse, poverty, and the Vietnam War." (Eames, 2021, p.9) These topics are extremely hard to digest and can cause pessimistic sentiments but in order to move past them we must have hope. This is what Marvin conveyed through the album art.

The second album and cover I chose was "Illmatic" by Nas. I chose this album because of how classic it is the hip hop community, coupled with personal love for it. The album cover depicts a young Nas and the, "... intersection of 10th St and 41st Ave in Queensbridge..", which is one of the biggest project housing spots in America. The colors are dull and dreary which communicate the way New York was throughout Nas' life. This was main reason for the cover itself. On another note, the album name has emphasis on the "ill" in illmatic in script, communicating how ill Nas' lyrics and flow are.

All of themes make a lot of sense considering the subject matter of the album. Nas talks about the, "...crack epidemic, the lack of a live-in father, the failures of the education system in his impoverished outer-borough neighborhood, and the prevalence of gang violence in his childhood stomping grounds..." (Conti, 2014, p.7). All of these topics resonated with the city heavily as the experiences were extremely common.

Citations:

Conti, A. (2015, September 30). The story behind Nas's illmatic is almost as great as the album itself.

Vice. <https://www.vice.com/en/article/znw8x3/the-story-behind-nas-illmatic-is-almost-as-great-as-the-album-itself-930>

Eames, T. (2021, May 24). The story of 'whats going on' by Marvin Gaye. Smooth Radio.

<https://www.smoothradio.com/features/the-story-of/whats-going-on-marvin-gaye-meaning-facts-lyrics/>

Mansell, H. (2015, April 21). Mass Appeal Uses Google Maps To Discover Locations Of Iconic Hip Hop Album Covers. Hip Hop DX. <https://hiphopdx.com/news/id.33509/title.178091>

My Album Art:





I chose this design for my release fly away for a couple different reasons. I chose the almost pastel color blue because it conveys the sadness of the song while resembling the actual sky. It also encompasses the groovy and mellow sounds of the production on the song. I chose the city skyline because the song is about flying to a different place and that place has always been a big city for me. I chose the bird to represent myself in the song, physically flying away. Finally I chose the specific font because I think it conveys the classiness of Nadie Sabe's (me) brand and looked very visually pleasing along side the bird and skyline.

This cover appeals to Nadie Sabe's audience of middle class young women of color in college because they may see themselves in that bird. Besides connecting with the song itself, they will connect

with the cover for the reason listed. It's simplicity and cleanliness directly correlate with the lives they wish to lead, which is another reason they will connect with it.