

## abstract (50-word)

Cover art has always been a way for people to identify with and connect to music, even in our current digital distribution times. *Spectrographies* proposes a new way to embody music albums. Using sound visualization as its main language, each album is translated into a “photo album” of song fingerprints.

## description (300-word)

Since designing cover art for music albums was pioneered by Alex Steinweiss by the end of the 30's, music has become inextricably associated with the artwork that serves as its medium. Music distribution was forever changed and his designs went on to inspire future covers such as Pink Floyd's *Dark Side*. Now that music distribution has turned mostly digital, transitioning to the new “radio” format of streaming, the image artwork has lost part of the importance it had to make people identify and connect to music in the vinyl and CD eras.

*Spectrographies: Decompositions of Music into Light* started out as an aesthetic experiment to remix famous album covers by digitally fusing sound and artwork and developed into a new way to represent and embody music, leading to a reinterpretation of the concept of cover art and physical album in the digital distribution age of music. The project works through a semiautomated process which transforms an album into a graphical edition made from its own tracks which, as photographs in a photo album, can be independently collected. A pictographic legend inspired by the Voyager Golden Record accompanies the enveloped edition of a full LP.

The technique developed for *Spectrographies* is grounded on the spectrogram (the decomposition of a signal in time into its constituent frequencies) and thus the resulting images work as a biometric fingerprint, or iris, of the song, each being totally unique and linked to its materiality. The only part of the process requiring human intervention is the design of the color schema of an album.

*Spectrographies* is also suitable to create animated videos where sound and visuals are played together in a live spectral analysis to produce a synesthetic experience which transfers to its static form.

instagram: @spectrographies