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Computational Photography
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Midterm

As a music lover, I've always enjoyed exploring new sounds, artists, genres, and much more. Most of my listening has come through streaming services, however two years ago, as I began to dive deeper into albums and form a closer relationship to music and artists, I began exploring more ways of accessing and absorbing those albums. This triggered the start of my record collection. Touching the vinyls and getting a closer look at the artists' decisions brought me even closer to the music. This along with my discovery of podcasts such as Spotify Studio's "Dissect," sparked my ongoing interest in analyzing albums. A lot of this included reading lyrics for meaning, understanding the story arc of albums(or a series of albums), researching other musical influences that the artists incorporated in their sounds, and much more.

Due to my passion for music analysis, I wanted to use this assignment to look at albums in a way that I was not used to. A lot of my album research has been based on sounds and words but I wanted to take a more abstract look. There were a multitude of stats to choose from: streaming numbers, ratings, reviews, etc. Although I initially began by focusing on the volume of albums, I pivoted to focus on time because the concept of time came up throughout each new idea I tried to implement in my algorithm. The goal was to capture the different ways that artists use time in their work. Artists such as Kanye West in his earlier albums for example, featured a lot of skits and interludes. This results in a lot of short tracks immediately followed by much longer tracks. On the other hand, various French-Caribbean zouk artists, for example, have very consistently long songs on some of their albums. I wanted to visualize the relationship between albums and time.

I began this project by choosing six records from my collection that I thought would fall on different positions along the time spectrum. I then scanned those album covers and took them into photoshop to tweak the coloring, brightness, etc to capture the real world look of them rather than

just flat scanned images. After this, I researched the specifications of each album and took note of the length in seconds of each track. I conceptually divided each album cover into rows equalling the number of songs they contained. The next step included building a function to add the static/noise visual to my images. The parameters of the function were the track number (so that it knew which row to alter) and the track duration/length (so it knew how much of that row should remain clear and visible to the viewer and how much of the row should have the static pixel manipulation effect). I then used a for-loop to iterate through each row adding the desired effect to corresponding rows. The static effect was created by randomizing the rgb values of the pixels in the designated areas.

I am satisfied with my final images. To me, they speak to the different ways artists use time to tell their stories. Based on my algorithm, using songs of consistent lengths forces each track to contribute about the same amount of "meaning" to the overall work. In the case of albums whose track lengths vary significantly, the burden of conveying meaning, or revealing the album cover in my case, falls on the shoulders of the lengthier tracks.