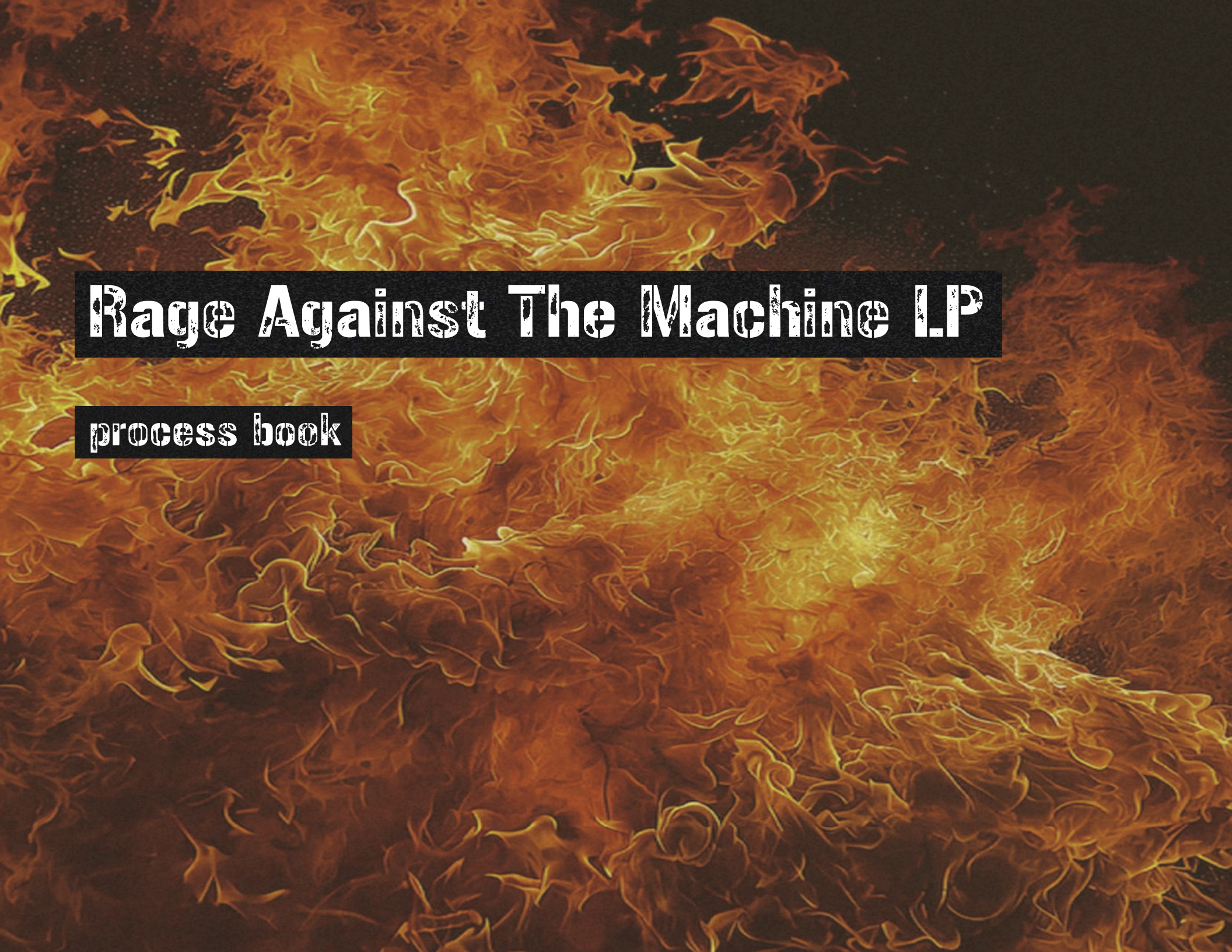




Rage Against The Machine LP

process book

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Project Introduction

COLLECTOR'S EDITION VINYL LP

Design a collector's edition release for an assigned artist/band including: LP album form featuring a specialty process, interior sleeve(s), record labels.

Many music lovers prefer the fidelity of vinyl albums over digitally distributed music. One distinct advantage of vinyl is that an actual object is produced and along with it the opportunity to create memorable forms and visuals. While used vinyl has never stopped circulating and some bands never abandoned vinyl, more and more mainstream artists are releasing vinyl albums expanding the audience for the form. Many artists create limited releases as collector items. Every year, vinyl music is celebrated on Record Store Day (April 20, 2024).

- how does vinyl differ from digital?
- what are the practical/functional considerations?
- how can innovative form and/or specialty processes create a memorable solution?
- how can you explore form & materials to move beyond what is expected?
- how can unexpected form & materials reinforce the collectible status?
- how will you create unity and variety between all of the items?
- how might you create imagery if you are not an illustrator or illustration is not appropriate? AI?
- what do the graphics and imagery convey about the music?
- how can graphics and imagery create something iconic and memorable?



Framing The Problem

DESIGN BRIEF

GOAL

To design a collectible and distinctive album package, including form and graphics, for the band Rage Against the Machine and their eponymous LP.

OVERVIEW

Rage Against the Machine (RATM) is an American rock band formed in Los Angeles in 1991. Members include vocalist Zack de la Rocha, guitarist Tom Morello, bassist Tim Commerford, and drummer Brad Wilk. Many of their songs blend elements of heavy metal, alternative rock, rap, and hip hop. They are best known for their politically charged and anti-establishment lyrics. They chose the name "Rage Against the Machine" as a statement against societal norms, particularly addressing issues of authority, injustice, and oppression. Some themes they commonly addressed included anti-authoritarianism, racial inequality, capitalism, cultural imperialism.

AUDIENCE

The primary audience are fans of RATM including people who enjoy rock and rap music. The band's music resonates with those who are critical of the establishment and embrace social and political issues.

MARKET / COMPETITORS

Some market competitors include bands such as Public Enemy and Dead Kennedys. Public Enemy commonly uses thought-provoking and symbolic imagery along with bold typography and Pan-African colors. Their covers complement their politically charged messages of resistance, black empowerment, and social justice. Dead Kennedys usually utilize provocative, grotesque, and satirical imagery along with dark, high contrast colors, and stylized typography. The use of disturbing, exaggerated visuals serve to confront the viewer and reinforce the album's themes of corruption, consumerism, and societal decay.

GRAPHICS

Graphics for this genre come in many forms. One approach includes a controversial image along with dark color tones and the name of the album. Another approach includes an illustration that is either easily decipherable or contains hidden messaging. This illustration likely uses a dark color palette or the complete opposite to convey a specific message.

FORMS

Many albums are fairly similar in form but for a special release, some albums will come with specialty packaging. Some of these forms include box sets with an interactive element, elaborative folders with special sleeves, and albums made of specific materials and folded intricately.

DESIGN OBJECTIVES

- create right-sized package solutions to fit a 12 inch vinyl and record store bins
- package must contain, secure, protect, inform, function, and market
- Graphics should align with the band's antiestablishment beliefs and aesthetic
- Graphics should be well-balanced
- Convey artistry while using controversial visuals
- Appeal to an alternative rock, metal, and rap audience
- Properly communicate the musical contents
- Use at least two specialty processes to convey that this album is collectible

RESEARCH

Chat GPT < <https://chatgpt.com/> > Accessed March 17, 2025

EARLY YEARS AND MAINSTREAM (prompt)

Rage Against the Machine, or RATM, is an American rock band formed in Los Angeles in 1991. They blended elements of **heavy metal, alternative rock, rap, and hip hop**. The band members included **vocalist Zack de la Rocha from California, guitarist Tom Morello from New York, bassist Tim Commerford from California, and drummer Brad Wilk from Oregon**. The band came together with a shared **desire to merge aggressive, politically driven lyrics with powerful and unique instrumentation**. They chose the name “Rage Against the Machine” as a statement against societal norms, particularly **addressing issues of authority, injustice, and oppression**. Some of the **themes they commonly addressed include Anti-authoritarianism, Racial inequality, Capitalism, Imperialism**.

In December of 1991, the group released a 12-track cassette tape, leading to a contract with Epic Records. In November 1992, they released their self-titled debut album, reaching triple platinum status. This album would also establish a signature sound characterized by Morello's inventive guitar work (which sometimes mimicked a DJ's turntable scratching). **RATM's lyrics are direct and unambiguous, pushing listeners to question authority and to act in ways that promote justice and equality.**

KEY ALBUMS (prompt)

Rage Against the Machine (1992)

- Their self-titled debut album became an instant classic. It introduced the band's signature sound—a **blend of rap, metal, and punk—with politically charged lyrics**. **Iconic songs like “Killing in the Name”, “Bomb-track”, and “Know Your Enemy” quickly became anthems for resistance and social activism**. The album's themes of anti-authoritarianism and rebellion against systemic injustice resonated with disaffected youth.

Evil Empire (1996)

- The band's second album, Evil Empire, continued their political critique with tracks like “Bulls on Parade”, “People of the Sun”, and “Vietnow”. **The album delves deeper into topics such as imperialism, exploitation, and media manipulation**. It earned both critical acclaim and commercial success.

The Battle of Los Angeles (1999)

- The Battle of Los Angeles is considered one of RATM's defining works. The album's title refers to the symbolic struggle against corporate control, government oppression, and societal norms. **Songs like “Guerilla Radio”, “Testify”, and “Calm Like a Bomb” highlight themes of revolution, activism, and the need to stand up against oppressive forces**. “Guerilla Radio” became one of the band's biggest hits.

Renegades (2000)

- The fourth and final studio album. It consists of covers of songs by Bruce Springsteen, Bob Dylan, Afrika Bambaataa, Minor Threat, Eric B. & Rakim, the Stooges, MC5, the Rolling Stones, Cypress Hill, Devo and others. **This album was not accompanied by a supporting tour due to the band splitting up almost two months before its release**. Shortly after the release, band members, with the exception of lead vocalist Zack de la Rocha, formed a new band, Audioslave, with the former Soundgarden vocalist Chris Cornell.

POLITICAL COMMENTARY AND ACTIVISM (prompt)

The members of RATM are best known for their **leftist anti-authoritarian and revolutionary political views**, which are reflected in almost all of their songs. The band has also voiced viewpoints highly critical of the domestic and foreign policies of the U.S. government. Since their formation, RATM and its members have participated in political protests and other forms of activism to advocate these beliefs. **The band sees its music as a vehicle for social activism**.

- ‘Rage Against the Machine’ Album cover:

- For their eponymous first studio album, **the cover (photographed by Malcome Brown) pictured Thích Quảng Đức, a Vietnamese Buddhist monk, performing self-immolation in Saigon in 1963**; He was protesting the persecution of Buddhists by Prime Minister Ngô Đình Diệm's catholic regime.

- Songs:

- The lyrics in the song, **“Killing in the Name”, on their 1992 self-titled debut album, protest police brutality**. It was inspired by the beating of Rodney King and the 1992 Los Angeles riots.

- The song **“Guerrilla Radio”**, from their third studio album is about the 2000 US presidential election, and the way the media shaped the campaigns of the two competitors, George W. Bush and Al Gore. **The song is a statement about the worthlessness of democracy in the United States.** Since the people don’t truly understand “choice” and are only able to grasp a small glimpse of those running to represent them in office, they are essentially under a one-party system.
- **The song “Bulls on Parade” from their second album is a critique of the military-industrial complex.** The lyrics, “Weapons, not food, not homes, not shoes” highlighting the government’s prioritization of military spending over basic human needs.
- Physical Protests:
 - At their 1993 Lollapalooza appearance in Philadelphia, the band stood onstage naked for 15 minutes with duct tape on their mouths and the letters PMRC painted on their chests in protest against censorship by the Parents Music Resource Center. Refusing to play, they stood in silence, only emitting audio feedback from Morello and Commerford’s amplifiers. The band later played a free show for disappointed fans.
 - The band was **permanently banned from appearing on the show, SNL, following an incident during their 1996 performance.** To protest the night’s host, Republican ex-presidential candidate and multi-millionaire Steve Forbes, **they attempted to hand inverted American flags** but were stopped immediately and kicked out of the studio.
 - During Woodstock 1999, after having played a full set, Tim Commerford lit an American flag on fire and placed it atop the band’s amps.
 - For their **1999 ‘Sleep Now in the Fire’ music video shoot**, fans were invited to participate with about 300 showing up. The shoot was located on the steps of the NYSE. After wrapping up, **everyone involved with the shoot stormed the doors of the NYSE, forcing them to lock its doors during the middle of the trading day.**
 - After playing a set during the **2000 Democratic National Convention, a handful of protesters felt incited to taunt and throw rocks and trash at the police**, leading to many people injured and several arrests.
 - During the **2008 Republican National Convention**, they were prohibited from entering even though they had the proper permits. The next day, **they performed at the nearby Target Center wearing orange**

Guantanamo Bay-like jumpsuits and black hoods. An impromptu demonstration spilled out into the streets afterwards, leading to 102 people being arrested.

- When headlining the Reading Festival on August 22, 2008, Getafe Electric Festival on May 30, 2008, and the Pinkpop Festival on June 1, 2008, they **came on stage to the sound of a prison klaxon, dressed in orange prison jumpsuits with black sacks over their heads**, referencing the conditions of prisoners at Guantanamo Bay.
- In October 2009, Rage Against the Machine, along with members of Nine Inch Nails, Pearl Jam, R.E.M. and the Roots **joined a campaign to close Guantanamo Prison, calling also for the declassification of military records regarding the use of music in torture.**
- **In June 2010 in response to Arizona’s controversial immigration law, De la Rocha encouraged artists to boycott performing in the state.** Rage Against the Machine performed in Los Angeles for the first time in 10 years on July 23, 2010, to protest the Arizona immigration law

BREAK UPS AND REUNIONS (prompt)

First Breakup (2000):

- In 2000, **Zack de la Rocha left Rage Against the Machine, having cited internal tensions and disagreements about the band’s direction. The remaining members — Morello, Commerford, and Wilk — formed Audioslave with Chris Cornell (formerly of Soundgarden) as the lead singer.** Audioslave achieved significant success, releasing three albums between 2002 and 2005, and lasting until 2007. Zack de la Rocha pursued a solo career, though he remained relatively quiet for many years. **The band refused large sums of money to reunite for concerts and tours.** Commerford said that he and De la Rocha saw each other often and went surfing together. Morello said he and De la Rocha communicated by phone, and had met at a 2005 protest in support of the South-Central Farm.

First Reunion (2007):

- Reunion Announcement: **In 2007, Rage Against the Machine reunited for a series of shows**, including a headlining spot on the final day of the 2007 Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival. The reunion was a surprise, and the band played their first shows together in seven years, sparking excitement among fans. They also went on tour in the U.S., New Zealand,

Australia, and Japan that year. **At the time, Morello said they had no plans to record a new album.**

- Reason for Reunion: This reunion was largely due to a renewed interest in political activism, the global climate of dissatisfaction with the Iraq War, and a sense of urgency about social issues. The band's music was still highly relevant, and their reunion was seen as a way to continue their message of resistance.

Second Breakup (2011):

- Reason: **In 2011, the band went on an indefinite hiatus**, which essentially marked a second breakup. This time, there were no major public tensions or conflicts that led to the split. Instead, it was seen as the band members' desire to pursue other projects. **Zack de la Rocha focused on his solo career** and collabs, **while the other members formed the band Prophets of Rage**, a super group featuring members of Public Enemy and Cypress Hill, and continued other musical endeavors.

Second Reunion (2020):

- Announcement: After nearly a decade of inactivity, Rage Against the Machine announced in 2020 that they were reuniting once again. This time, it was meant to coincide with the global political climate. The reunion was confirmed with a performance at Coachella scheduled for April 2020. By June 11, 2020, every RATM album had entered the top 30 of Apple Music's Rock Albums chart, and their debut album had entered the Billboard Top 200 at number 174. **The resurgence of interest in the band's music and politics was widely attributed to renewed worldwide Black Lives Matter protests** following the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis by law enforcement and increasing dissatisfaction with government policies.
- COVID-19 disruption: Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic led to the postponement of the tour. The band had planned to launch their reunion tour in 2020, but it was rescheduled for 2021 and beyond.

Third Breakup (2024):

- On January 3, 2024, Wilk confirmed that Rage Against the Machine had disbanded again. It was not very surprising as **most of the band was absent during their induction ceremony into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in late 2023**. Morello was the sole member on hand to accept the honor, noting that the oft-feuding group has **"differing opinions on a lot of things, including being inducted."**

CHARITABLE EFFORTS (prompt)

- Musical Donations and Fundraisers

- Following the Supreme Court's decision to overturn Roe v. Wade, RATM announced they would donate nearly half a million dollars to reproductive rights organizations in Wisconsin and Illinois, raising funds through charity ticket sales for concerts.
- RATM has supported organizations that provide legal help to people facing deportation and other adverse immigration consequences, such as the Immigrant Defense Project.
- They have also partnered with WhyHunger to support organizations like Neighbors Together, Brooklyn and The Campaign Against Hunger in New York City.
- During their 5-night Madison Square Garden residency, RATM sold "charity tickets" where proceeds went directly to charity, equating 1 million dollars
- The band has used other fundraising methods like charity auctions, 5k walks/runs, carnivals, muddy runs, and trivia tournaments.

- Civil Rights

- In May 2021, RATM added their signature to the open letter calling for a boycott of performances in Israel until the occupation of the Palestinian territories comes to an end. Zack de la Rocha and Tom Morello voiced support for a ceasefire in the 2023 Israel-Hamas war.
- The band has been vocal **supporters of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN)**, with Zack de la Rocha taking trips to the Mexican state of Chiapas to aid their efforts.
- They have used their platform to raise awareness about social and political issues, including police brutality and the war in Iraq.
- They have supported the BLM movement through public statements, social media posts, and even actions like protesting police brutality and racial injustice.
- The band has been vocal about the **U.S. prison system, which they view as a tool of oppression, especially for marginalized groups**. They've supported prison reform initiatives and have spoken out about the over-incarceration of Black and Brown communities.

- They have aligned themselves with various civil rights and activist organizations, from political protests to direct financial support. They have participated in marches, spoken at rallies, and advocated for direct action on social justice issues

LEGACY AND INFLUENCE (prompt)

Rage Against the Machine's influence on both music and culture is undeniable. They blended genres in a way that broke boundaries, and their fiercely political stance resonated with multiple generations. Their work sparked conversations on topics like police brutality, corporate greed, war, and racism, making them one of the most politically active and socially conscious bands in history.

Despite their relatively brief periods of activity, Rage Against the Machine has maintained a lasting impact, inspiring many other musicians and bands in the realms of punk, rock, hip-hop, and beyond. **Their music continues to be a rallying cry for activism and resistance against oppressive systems.**

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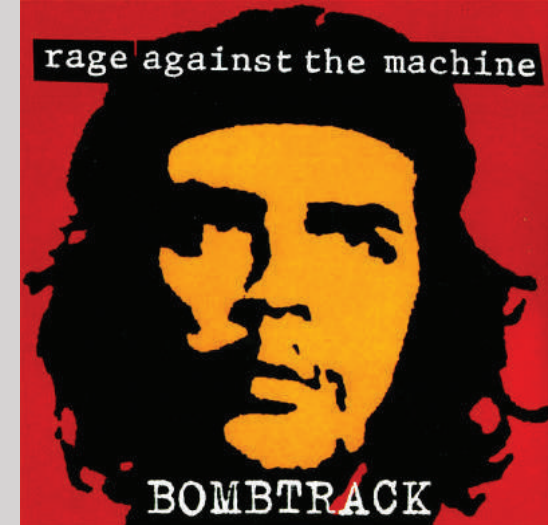
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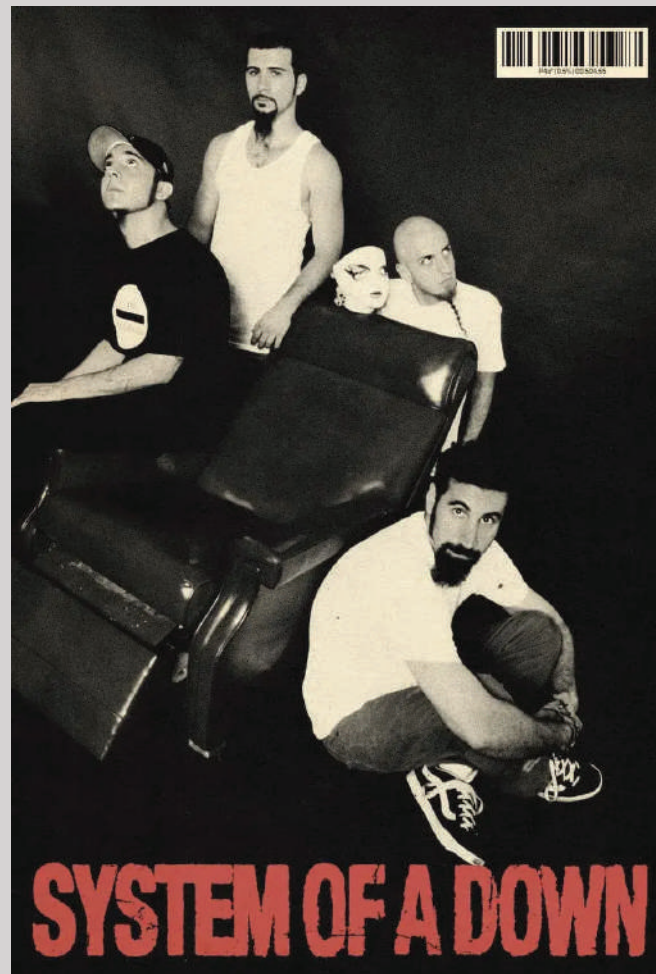
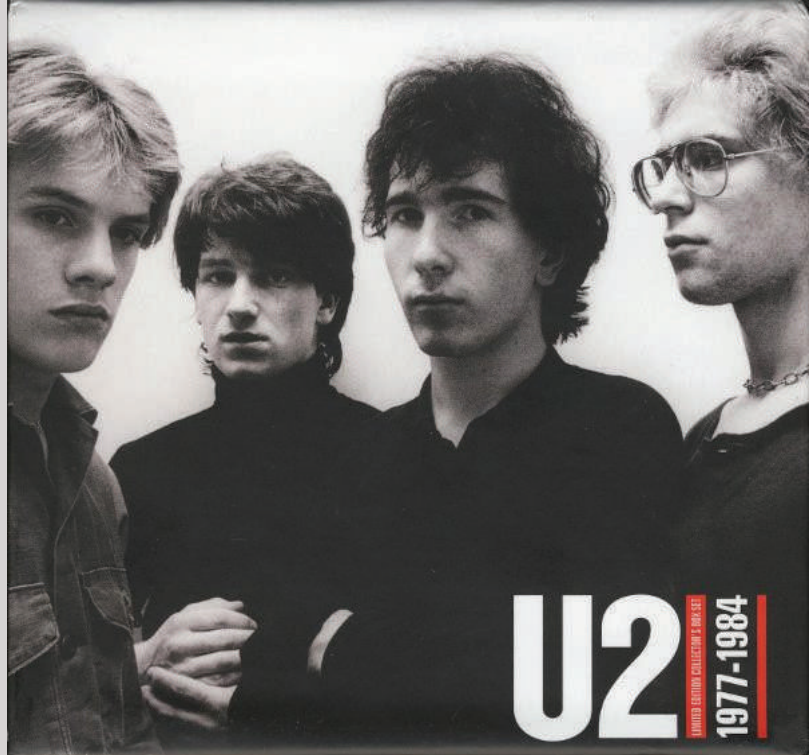
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RATM: PROTEST VISUALS







INSPIRATION PRODUCT

The product analyzed is a limited-edition vinyl set for the band, “Queen”. The set, “Queen: The Platinum Collection”, is a vinyl box set that contains a 12 x 12-inch pamphlet and a set of 6 LPs. The box seems to be made of **corrugated board** and covered with gray **coated paper**. The visuals and type on the box seem to have been printed using **metallic ink** or a **foil stamping** method. Some of the **value-added** features include a high-quality picture book and 6 separate LPs of various colors. The overall package is **right-sized**, containing contents that appropriately fit together inside the box and have very little room left over.

DEFINITIONS:

Corrugated Board: A material made of multiple layers of paper, typically two outer layers of linerboard and a fluted inner layer, which creates a strong and lightweight structure for packaging and other applications.

Coated Paper: Paper that has been coated by a mixture of materials or a polymer to impart certain qualities to the paper, including weight, surface gloss, smoothness, or reduced ink absorbency.

Metallic Ink: A type of ink that contains tiny metal flakes (like aluminum or brass) designed to create a shiny, metallic effect when printed or applied.

Foil Stamping: A printing process that uses heat and pressure to apply metallic foil to a surface, creating a shiny, elegant finish, often used for labels, packaging, and stationery.

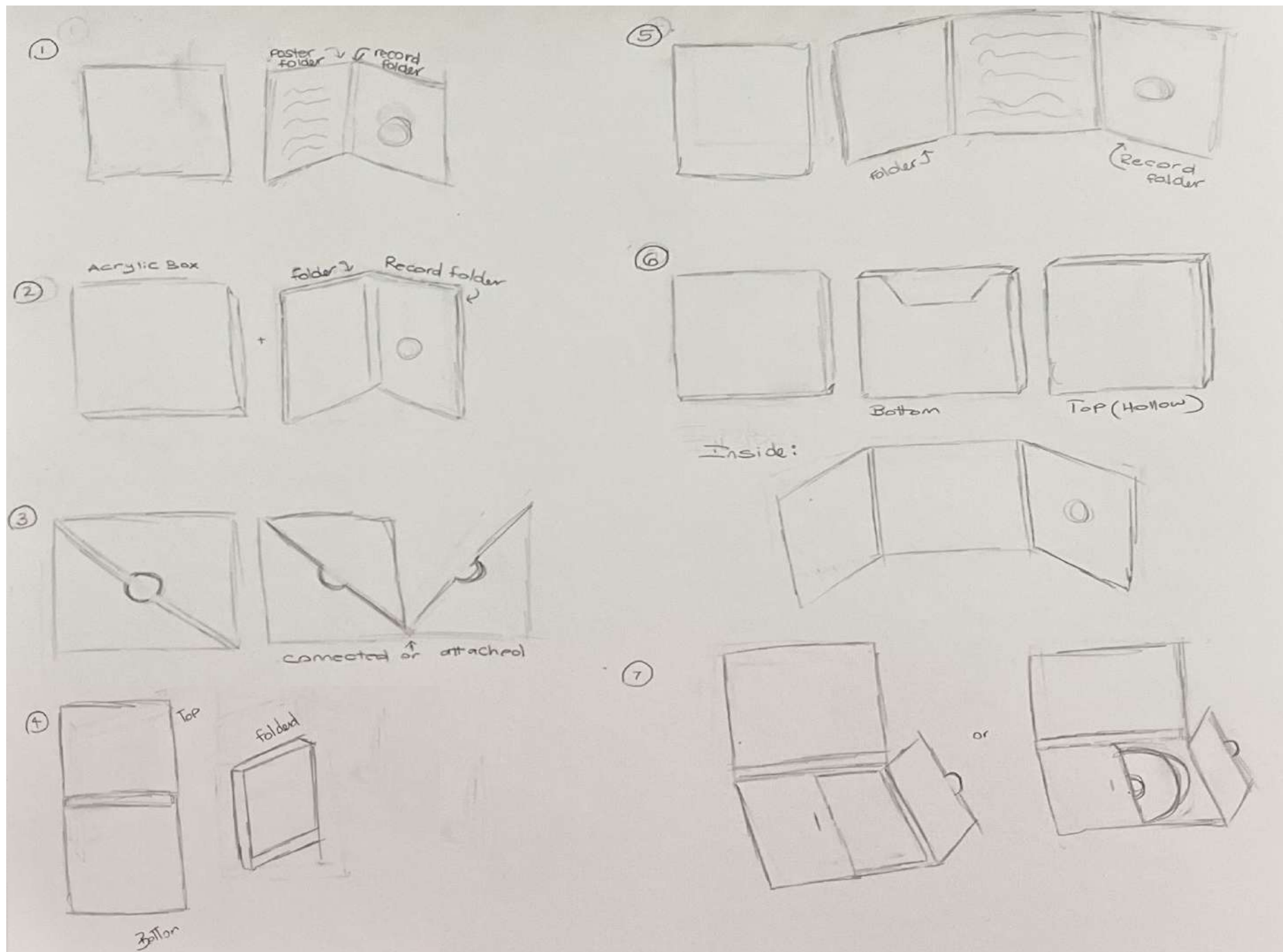
Value-added: The additional features or economic value a company adds to its products and services through packaging, aiming to increase customer appeal and sales.

Right-sized: Using packaging that is the most efficient and effective size for a product, minimizing wasted space and material while ensuring adequate protection during transit and storage.

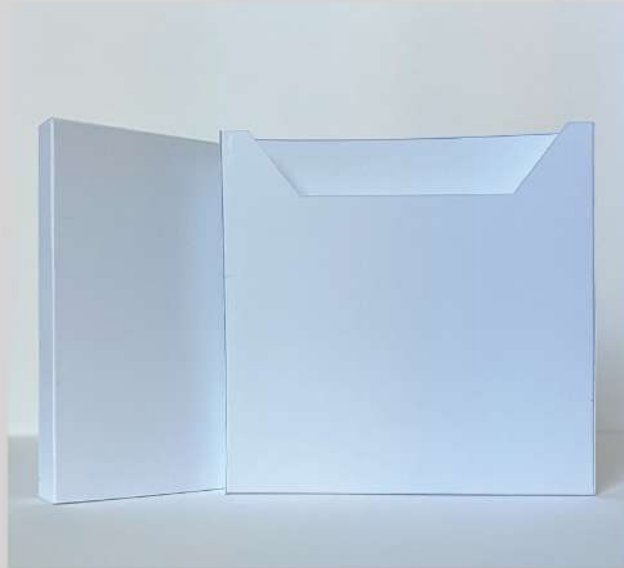




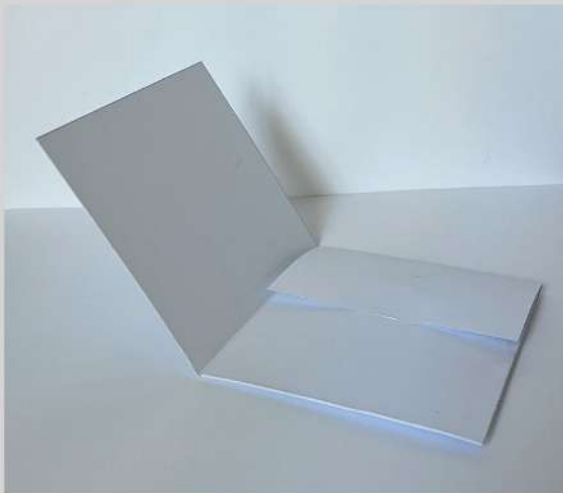
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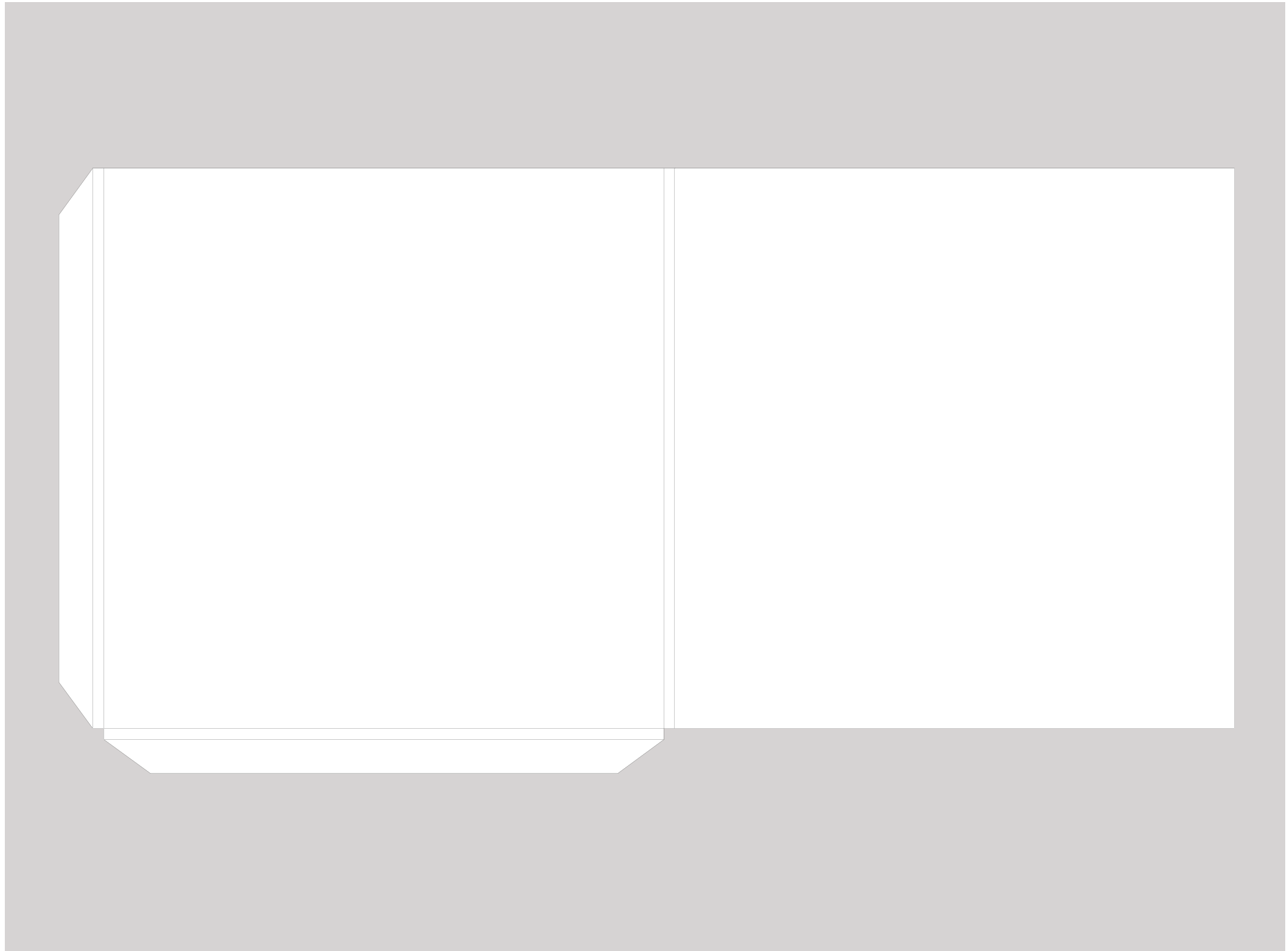


MOCKUP 1

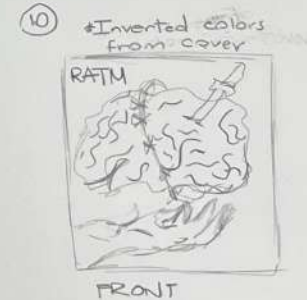
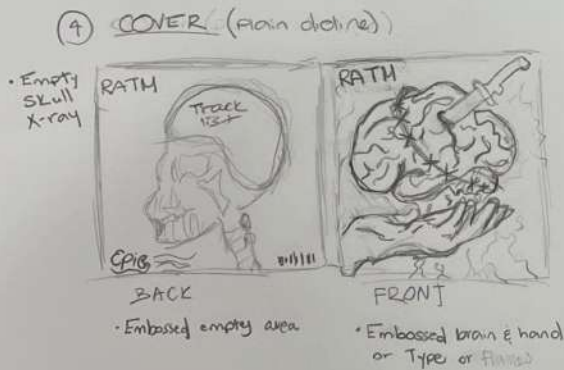
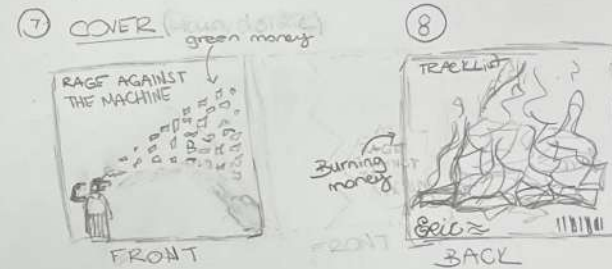
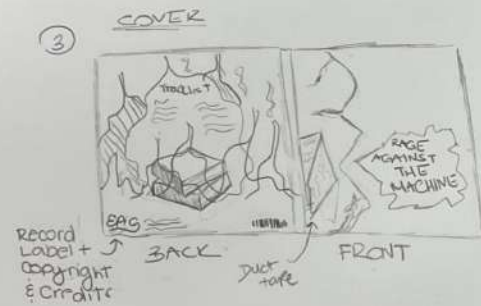
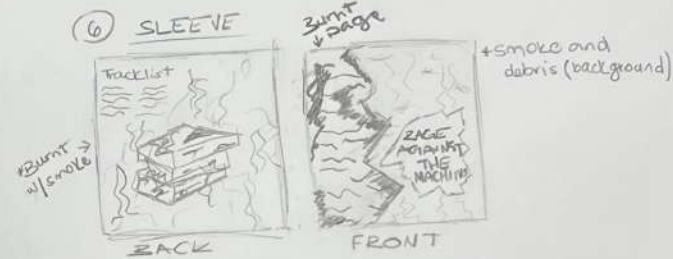
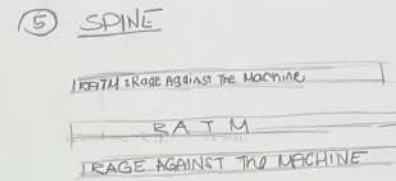
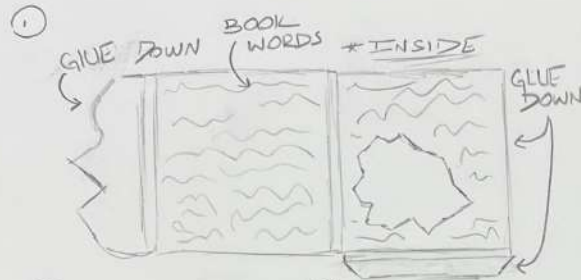


MOCKUP 2





FINAL DIE LINE

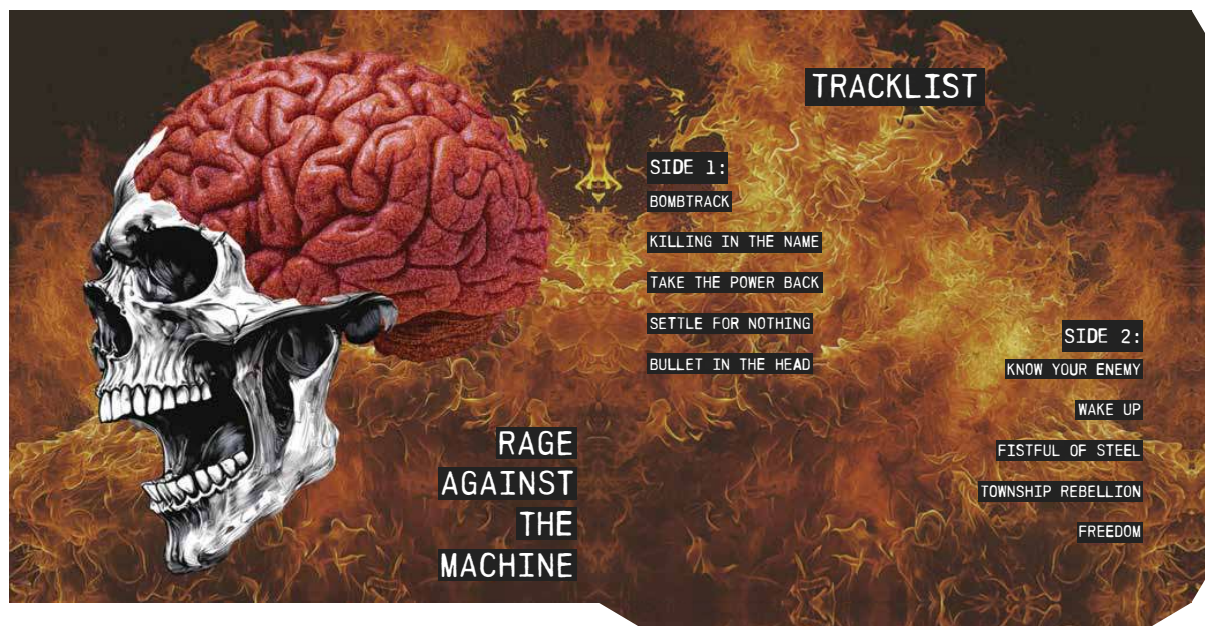
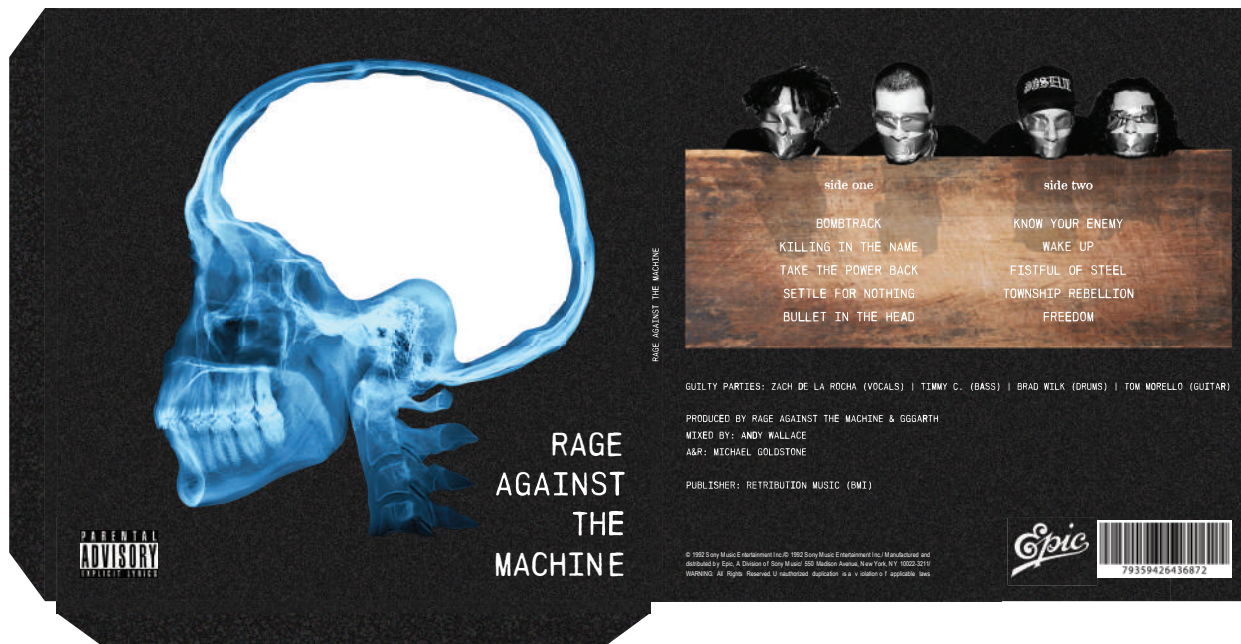




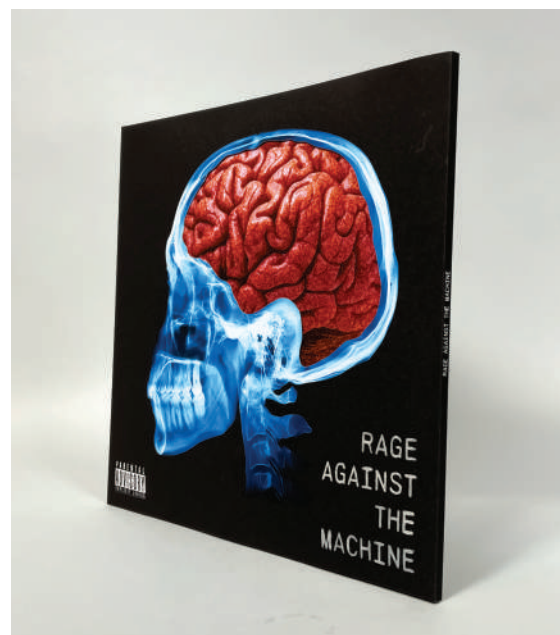




Final Form



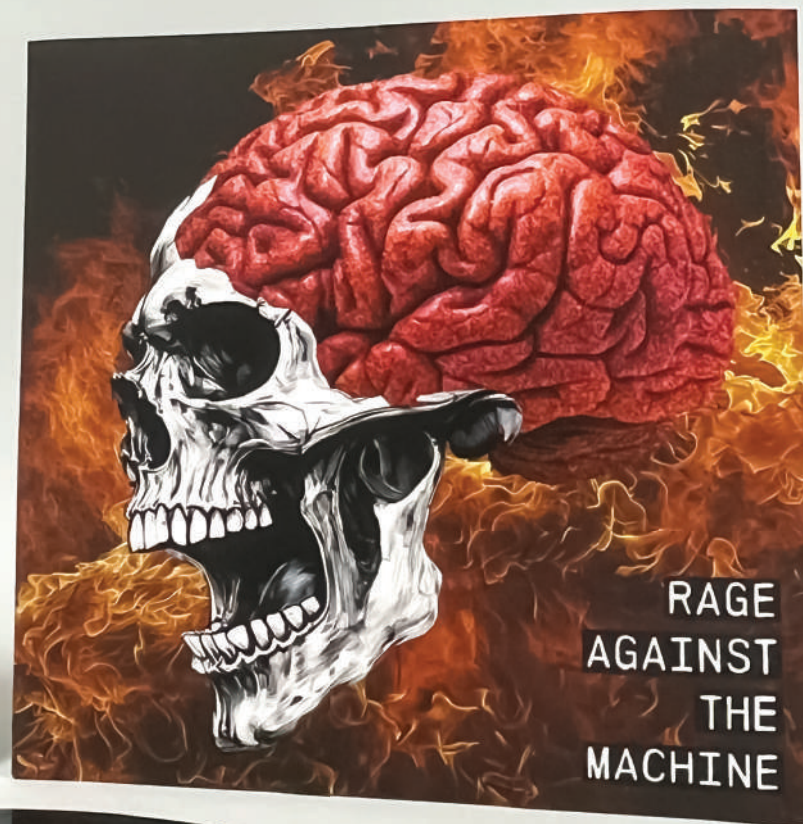
DIE-LINES WITH GRAPHICS: ALBUM, INNER SLEEVE, LABELS

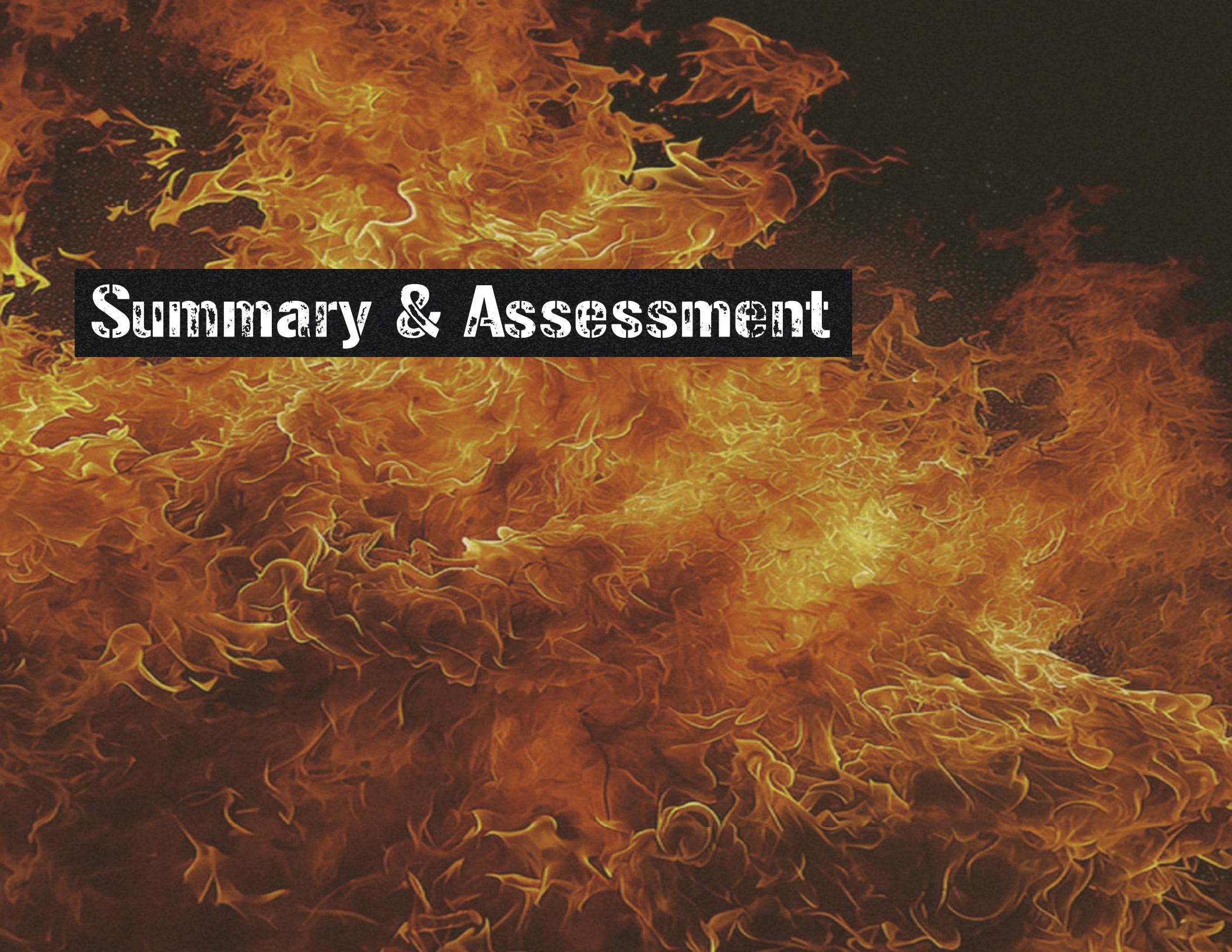


PHOTOS OF CONSTRUCTED FORM WITH ALL VIEWS AND CLOSURE



PHOTOS OF CONSTRUCTED FORM WITH ALL VIEWS AND CLOSURE





Summary & Assessment

PROJECT SUMMARY & ASSESSMENT

Design Brief Objectives:

- create right-sized package solutions to fit a 12 inch vinyl and record store bins
- package must contain, secure, protect, inform, function, and market
- Graphics should align with the band's antiestablishment beliefs and aesthetic
- Graphics should be well-balanced
- Convey artistry while using controversial visuals
- Appeal to an alternative rock, metal, and rap audience
- Properly communicate the musical contents
- Use at least two specialty processes to convey that this album is collectible

Have you met all of your objectives? Which could you improve upon? What do you consider to be a success and why? What still needs work? Why?

I believe that I have met all of my objectives. Things that can be improved upon could be the layout of the back of the outer cover and sleeve as it is very general. The duality between the cover and sleeve visuals was very successful. The sleeves back cover still needs a little work; the tracklist layout could be more creative.

Reflect on what you learned from this project.

I learned a lot about the construction of LP albums. I also learned a lot about specialty processes such as foil stamping, vinyl cutting, and the properties of paper.

What were your struggles?

I struggled in the beginning with conceptualizing the form and graphics for this project. Given my lack of knowledge about the band, establishing a concept for my LP was difficult but after some research, I was able to gain a better understanding.