My name is Josh Kolodizner, I’m a senior digital arts major with a minor in business analytics. My advisor who’s been guiding me through the process is Sarah Jantzi. I started off working primarily in graphic design but wanted to move to more mediums such as painting and sculpting, provided that my senior project uses both digital and painted aspects. The overall idea of my project is to visually show how different songs - whether they are more euphoric in nature or create feelings of rage – can elicit specific emotions that are felt when listening to them.

Both the pieces I present have a similar concept in mind. The idea of how music makes me feel in times of happiness or anger. The idea that I introduce is of me vs me, which is seen in my digital pieces. This notion in my euphoric piece describes how I feel compelled to feelings of happiness when they present themselves but for anger it’s not as clear, as it is a more complex emotion that has multiple levels. I’m drawn to face my rage and try to make sense of why I am feeling the way I am. For my fist piece my box depicts both of my faces showing true pleasure by expressing emotions in the form of a laugh and balloons lifting my head, illuminating the higher state of mind I am in when listening to those songs. For my anger piece I decided to go with 2 different faces showing how emotions of fury for me are not binary like happiness where one is either very happy or just content, Anger insights a broad spectrum of emotions that make it harder to distinguish between what feelings are felt. The use of passive aggressive versus aggressive anger shows the multiple levels that feelings of dismay can bring around. There are 6
different kinds of anger that exist within the human psyche, assertive, behavioral, aggressive, passive aggressive, retaliatory, and self-abusive anger. I chose to only depict two since the others weren’t that relevant to me. Moving forward, the heads are propped up by strings that are connected to hands visually showing that I’m being used as a puppet by a greater force unseen by me or the viewer. By showing this, I aim to describe how these feelings make me feel like I’m not in control of myself or my actions I do. I feel like someone else has taken the wheel and started driving without my consent. The boxes themselves are an extension of the digital pieces themselves. For my anger box I chose to go with a lava/magma plaster sculpt to depict how rage can be uncontrollable by nature and devastating to you and others around. The hand stationed to the left resembles the unseen force that controls the thoughts I have while having these feelings. Lastly, the lyrics that have been selected, are from the playlist that I provided via a QR code, they are burned at the edges and describe the key beliefs and emotions that the song artist is communicating. Choosing to burn only a part of the lyrics aside from them being in ‘lava’, I wanted to show how words even when said cannot be erased from existence, what is said cannot be unsaid. Moving over to the other box I chose to portray a beach on the bottom, representing happiness and a relaxed state of mind free of worries. The sand also depicts the fragility of feelings of joy and how they can be turned into something less favorable. The top of the box has a balloon that comes from the digital piece, once again showing the elevated level of bliss that is felt while listening to the songs. I’ve also included song lyrics to help spread the message of the box as a whole and showing textually the words associated with the songs themselves. By changing the fonts of the two lyrics in the boxes I intended to communicate the cloud-like feelings of joy and the scratchy and messy feelings of anger.
I’ve drawn most my influence from well-known American visual artist Joseph Cornell and his work in assemblage. The coined term ‘Cornell Box’ was first used by him to describe a box that housed photographs and various objects to create a visually stimulating art piece, that combined the movements of surrealism and assemblage to create a small space with lots of meaning. His use of space elevated the object it was housed in, the boxes that were otherwise only used for storage were transformed into something completely new. With that in mind, the intentions I had of repurposing my box came from him. My initial idea was to have an angled exhibit that used both my digital pieces and had painted elements connecting them. But the idea to use the boxes instead was to create a sense of space for my digital pieces that were separate individually but together they still had the same overall theme. My second influence was Nyoman Maulana, he is an Indonesian designer that works primarily in self-portraiture with his work in digital designs. By using his own body, he communicates the idea of the self and the emotions that are being experienced at the time of the shot. By manipulating the photographs by adding different patterns and filters, he creates an emotional appeal that allows the viewer to understand how he was feeling in that given moment. Using his idea of manipulated self-portraiture and illusive designs I aimed to recreate some of the same feelings that Nyoman presented in his pieces. The use of my own face was done to convey the personal aspect of how I felt listening to the songs.

Transitioning into one of the more interesting processes I took, using plaster as a medium. I found it very fascinating how layering and manipulating the plaster created a variety of different textures and thus emotions. The lava bed I was able to create played on the textures in the digital pieces but also communicated an idea of roughness and destruction that elevated the piece. The plaster was also used in juxtaposition, to create a soft sand dune like surface that used small ridges and flat plans to create a sensation of warmth and beauty. The plaster hand was also used
to drive the digital pieces further and at the same time combine that with the lava patterns of the box. Another process I enjoyed was creating the digital pieces themselves using my own face made the pieces feel more personal to me, further manipulating the designs into different color palates and conceiving new meanings for the images I was working with. Warmer tones for fury and anger while using cooler tones for feelings of joy. The use of elevation or control using my head as the source was also another interesting concept that I can work with more.

In conclusion, I think working with the boxes has been a learning opportunity for me and taught me to work with mediums that were very different in nature, using acrylic paint and plaster work well together and I wish to explore that further down the line. The connection with the songs and the different surfaces displayed within the boxes gave me ideas for new assemblage pieces as well. The use of sculpting as a medium is something I tried in the past and it transforms the idea of design into a 3D element. If I was to take this idea of plaster and sculpting in a new direction, I would try to create masks with faces painted on them. I feel that the dimensionality would enhance the paint and designs that I place on them and create something aesthetically pleasing. I’d like to end by saying thank you to source, for letting me share my work with music inspired design and hopefully inspire more people to become artists of their own.