

Music Album as a Complete Artifact in the Dimensions of Intermediality and Performing Identity

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Abstract: The article explores the phenomenon of the solo music album as a form of artistic expression for the performer, a means of audience interaction, and a significant cultural artifact. The author examines collection of musical works as a complex intermedial structure that combines auditory, visual, and textual dimensions. The study examines the role of sound recording as a means of capturing and transmitting aesthetic meanings. Attention is paid to the phenomenon of shifting from the acoustic concert space to the space of various media, both material and digital. This transition opens up new possibilities for the artist to capture sound information and integrates music into the multilayered system of signs that functions within the framework of contemporary cultural transmission. The analysis emphasizes the album's function as a multidimensional cultural artifact, where intermediality, performing identity, and technological mediation converge to create a rich and multilayered communicative space. The study demonstrates that the music album, as a complete artistic entity, not only preserves the interpretative individuality of the performer but also engages audiences in dynamic processes of perception and cultural dialogue, reflecting broader trends in contemporary music and media practice.

Keywords: intermediality, polysemy, artifact, space, digital age, performance practice, cultural communication.

Introduction

One of the areas of a musician's creative activity that is inextricably linked with art and serves as its embodiment is the creation of a solo album. This phenomenon has forced to reconsider and expand understanding of musical collection as a distinct genre, where the artist's personality and creative process reveal new aesthetic possibilities and modes of communication, incorporating elements of personal expression, cultural context, and historical era.

As is well known, a music album is an anthology published by a performer, serving as a creative product consisting of musical works. This format, as a form of artistic expression in music, facilitates the expression of an artist's personal style, influences, and ideas. It carries prestige and represents an important part of many artists' musical careers, allowing them to expand their artistic range and interact with the public. In particular, a piano album is a unique manifesto, intertwining the performer's personal experience with the grand themes of social concern, where every detail of the musical fabric imprinted on the medium can be interpreted as an element of an individual artistic universe, an exploration (communication) of a personal world. The need to express oneself through this artifact generates a special inner impulse that drives the creative process, becoming a stimulus for communication between the musician and audience (Arribert-Narce & Watson, 2024).

Bearing within itself the nature of an artistic artifact, a music album, to the same extent as a book or any other work of art, is a polysemantic cultural phenomenon, transmitting meanings encoded not only by the composer, but also by the performer. As Samoylenko (2002) notes, artifacts are diverse and each of them is a complex functional formation, which is reflected in the definitions of this phenomenon accepted today. Thus, it is considered to be any artificial formation, both physical and ideational, an abstract carrier of cultural semantics, an interpretative embodiment of any cultural form in a specific material product, behavioral act, social structure, information message or evaluative judgment, artistic works in their unique form (author's opuses), quotations and borrowings, remakes, performances of musical works; research, critical, philosophical and other texts, even personal opinions about this cultural phenomenon of individuals.

An analysis of the music album within the context of artifact theory reveals the complexity and multifaceted structure of this phenomenon, which simultaneously functions as a material product, an ideational phenomenon, and a bearer of cultural semantics. As an interpretive act, the result of creative thought and the explication of the performer's experiences, it acquires meaning and its own aesthetic purpose through the sound form captured in audio (or video) recordings. By uniting two temporal continua - the past, represented by the composer, and the present, where the performer plays the primary role - a collection of musical recordings becomes a structurally complex object in which technical, sound-based, and visual parameters merge into a single media event. It encompasses the recording of musical material, the principles of producer selection, the specifics of the equipment (playback instruments), the characteristics of the digital platform, and even the algorithmic mechanisms of distribution that influence how and when the work will be heard. In this regard, by combining the pianist's bodily gestures, the acoustic physics of the instrument and space, digital sound work, the visual representation of the cover and the audience's expectations, the album realizes the unification of creative and technological efforts and means – at the intersection of two different systems, such as the natural and artificial, the natural and cultural environment (Kramer, 2002).

In the contemporary digital environment, the music album increasingly functions not only as a repository of recorded sound but also as a multidimensional communicative platform. The

transformation of listening practices, the emergence of streaming services, and the integration of visual and textual components into the presentation of musical works have significantly altered the perception of the album as an artistic form. No longer limited to a physical medium, the album becomes an open cultural construct that exists simultaneously in acoustic, visual, technological, and symbolic dimensions.

Within this expanded framework, the notion of intermediality becomes essential for understanding the internal organization of the music album. The interaction of sound, visual imagery, typography, performance gesture, and digital interfaces forms a unified semiotic space in which artistic meaning unfolds across multiple channels of perception. The album cover, promotional materials, video content, and stage interpretation contribute to the formation of a coherent artistic message that extends beyond the purely sonic domain.

Equally important is the role of performing identity, which manifests itself as a central organizing force within the album structure. Through repertoire selection, interpretative choices, sound aesthetics, and visual representation, the performer constructs a recognizable artistic image that becomes an integral component of the album's conceptual unity. In this sense, the album functions not merely as a collection of musical works but as a personalized artistic statement that reflects the individuality of the performer and mediates communication with the listener.

Thus, the music album can be understood as a complete artistic artifact that operates at the intersection of performance practice, media technologies, and cultural communication. Its multidimensional nature requires a comprehensive analytical perspective that considers not only musical content but also the broader system of signs through which artistic meaning is transmitted and perceived.

With this in mind, the purpose of this article is to examine the music album as a complete artistic artifact within the dimensions of intermediality and performing identity, revealing its structural integrity, communicative potential, and role in contemporary cultural space.

2. evolution of recording: album artifact paradigm shift

In the era before sound recording, performers had only the option of live concert practice, which was the only way to realize artistic vision. Meanwhile, whatever significant was the value of live musical interaction in the context of direct artistic experience, its ontological ephemerality initially precluded the possibility of representing sound beyond the moment of performance, condemning a musical work to exist within the confines of a single performative act. Audio recording change the situation radically. The emergence and development of artistic recording in the 20th century yielded results in the formation of a new creative environment with its own aesthetic guidelines and principles. Audio recording facilitated the development of original forms of musical expression and new forms of implementing performance vision.

Since the advent of phonograph records, musical art has acquired a new form of communication, namely, the preservation of sound material, where the key to its long-term existence became the discovery of the prospect of its long-term existence. For the first time in history, a performer discovered the possibility of capturing his own interpretation of a work in a stable, complete form, something that, according to many famous musicians, was only partially achieved in concert settings. Let us recall, for example, Glenn Gould, who, after ten years of performing, devoted himself entirely to studio music-making, noting the importance of isolation and inner concentration. He believed that it is precisely silence, solitude, and maximum concentration on the musical sound that help to embody the content

of a musical text as perfectly as possible. Technical means of audio recording, in his opinion, not only expanded performing capabilities, but also created the conditions for achieving an ideal free from stage tension and accidental errors. Gould, to a certain extent, anticipated the future, emphasizing sound recording as a priority form of performance expression. He claimed that technology makes it possible to avoid this “terrible, humiliating, and destructive uncertainty for a person, which is contained in a public concert; it excludes certain specific personal qualities of the performer from the musical experience” (Gould as cited in Bazzana, 1997).

Considering the piano album as an artistic and cultural phenomenon of the digital age, it should be noted that the influence of audio recording not only affected the method of performance but also predetermined the very perception of musical representation, laying the foundation for new methods of interpretation, sonic expression, and subsequent media listening. This type of musical activity developed in parallel with changes in the perception of sound and its emotional impact on the audience. The transfer of music from the concert space to a space of a different origin, namely, carriers of various types of digital media, opened up the possibility for performers to create and record sound information, preserving it for future generations. “The new cultural reality” writes Orlov, “expresses itself in thousands of different forms - in words, projects, material objects, in the combination of colors, sounds, and movements, images, and formulas. They appeal to various intellectual abilities, forms of experience and comprehension - from the most concrete and directly experienced to the most abstract ones. Each of these forms, considered in isolation, is merely a single, highly specialized sign, which may have nothing in common with other signs. But, understood collectively, each in its own language, they point in the same direction” (Orlov, 1964, p. 255). In this cultural transmission, music, compared to an isolated sign, does not exist as a static object, but functions within a multilayered network of interconnected meanings. Thus, a musical recording, from the perspective of an analysis of perception and communicative transmission, where the listener enters into a dialogue with a symbolic space in which every element - from sound to compositional structure - can be deciphered as a sign, testifies to the integrity of the cultural context.

The multilayered forms of this cultural reality become especially significant in the context of the modern digital environment. This means that, in the future, a musical recording will represent not only a fixed material value but also a transformation of cultural processes occurring at the intersection of multiple sign systems. As part of a broader cultural ecosystem, it is worth emphasizing the specific intersection of cultural layers. As an artifact, a music album, the result of artistic design and technological process, acts as a representation of more complex mechanisms of communication and interpretation (Dieteren, 2024). Unlike the traditional approach, which perceived music as a reflection of the subjective emotions of the performer or author, in the contemporary cultural reality it becomes an act of interaction with diverse cognitive structures, knowledge, and values that represent not only aesthetic but also political, philosophical, and social contexts (Merlini, 2023).

The rejection of the isolation of a separate discipline and the focus on interdisciplinary interaction within the framework of research approaches in the field of recording art and the creation of a musical album, as well as performance in general, opens up a new path for academic musicological analysis. The new method of research is aimed at the mechanisms of comprehension and interpretation of the surrounding world in its multidimensional manifestations, within which cultural objects act as elements of complex network systems. It is precisely the network nature of the system of human consciousness and creativity that F. Capra’s fundamental work, “*The Web of Life*”, draws attention to. The fact is that the new ecological theory is directly related to the key conceptual moments of musical creativity, contributing to the emergence and isolation of the musical album as an intermedial

phenomenon. Interpreting life from the perspective of a complex dynamic system of interconnected processes, Capra proves that the whole is born through continuous and interdependent action. "The web of life is an ancient idea to which poets, philosophers, and mystics have turned for centuries to convey their sense of the interweaving and interdependence of all phenomena" (Capra, 1997, p. 44). This approach allows shifting the trajectory of worldview from a mechanical to an organic one, where each element of a system is endowed with meaning only in the context of complex connections with other elements. "The web of life consists of networks within networks. At each level, after sufficient magnification, the nodes of the network become smaller networks. We try to construct these systems, embedded within larger systems, hierarchically, placing larger systems above smaller ones, like a pyramid. However, this is only a human projection" (Capra, 1997, p. 45).

Metaphorically, such a system takes on the image of a spider's web - a complex web of threads symbolizing diverse semiotic and cultural mental elements woven into a single structure. Within this structure, the performer acts as a "spider", weaving a web of artistic and semantic connections. He not only creates musical product but also develops a space for feedback, ensuring the audience's involvement in the process of interpretation and co-creation. Creating conditions for dialogue between artist and audience fosters the emergence of new semantic "threads" in the album's interpretive "web", opening up a unique complex of interconnected modes of understanding, enriching, and complicating the overall perception of the musical work, which is transformed into a vibrant cultural ecosystem.

3 self-regulation and autonomy of interpretation in the context of music album artifact

Expanding the conceptual foundations of Capra's teaching, we can emphasize one of the key properties of such systems: their capacity for self-regulation, for internal ordering, and for broad adaptation. A solo music album, operating in a digital media environment, is an open system, continuously interacting with the technological and socio-cultural context. Its existence is not limited to a static state: it changes, "breathes", and develops in response to changes occurring in the external environment, always being a multifaceted form open to acquiring new possibilities.

In contemporary academic pianism, recording has increasingly come to be viewed as an autonomous form of interpretation, possessing its own aesthetic and communicative value. As noted earlier, freed from the constraints of the concert space, it integrates into new media contexts and becomes part of a broader cultural ecosystem. In this context, classical music is represented and reimagined as an active, relevant component of communication, capable of absorbing influences from the media sphere (Schab, 2021).

In essence, the act of experiencing a musical work has come to be largely determined by the ways in which it is perceived. Already in the last century, Eco noted similar properties in mass communication channels such as radio and television, to which he devoted considerable attention. According to Eco, radio and television, being "artistic means, contributed to the formation of an independent language and revealed new aesthetic possibilities" (Eco, 1964, p. 177). He often emphasized in his works the significance of mass media as autonomous carriers of content, as well as new forms of artistic expression that change the perception of the world. Consequently, media broadcasting transforms traditional art forms and offers new modes of communication. Firstly, it is important to consider that Eco, speaking of mass media, meant their ability to create special forms of symbiotic polyphonic "language" – a language that is not limited to text alone, but also includes images, sounds, movements, and other elements. Secondly, radio and television have historically been able to transform the viewer's or listener's perception, creating new forms of audience interaction. Providing the audience with a special space for interpretation allows each individual to perceive information in

their own way and imbue it with personal meaning. This structure of media texts opens up the ability to transform the viewer's or listener's perception, creating new forms of audience interaction that become an integral part of artistic form (Joye & Fennis, 2024). This communication model not only conveys a fixed meaning but also creates conditions for its multivalent perception. As a result, the media product functions as a platform for aesthetic experience, where not only the text itself becomes meaningful, but also the ways in which it is read, interpreted, and emotionally experienced.

The gradual transformation and shift of the media environment, the evolution of digital technologies, and the emergence of the internet universe have led to the mass distribution of audio materials, which have become reproducible content. Synthesizing classical music-making with the aesthetics of the digital age, the album format has begun to transcend sound images and sound forms, creating a unified artistic statement that encompasses an aesthetic concept, narrative style, and visual accompaniment. Intermediality, in turn, is manifested in details: in the cover design, carefully crafted video tags and teasers, listening interfaces, and integration with social media, which become a dynamic space for interaction with listeners. This structure transforms the very nature of the performance act, with the album becoming a space not only for musical interpretation but also for representation and confirmation of the pianist's artistic identity, serving as a polysemantic form of artistic presence.

Studio conditions challenged the artist to develop holistic album projects in which the compositional sequence, the specifics of lyrical interpretation, and sound processing were used as a unified aesthetic construct. In particular, pianist Khatia Buniatishvili's albums exemplify this creative approach, revealing the artist's multifaceted concert pianism in all its new interpretative and expressive possibilities. Thus, the album "Motherland" demonstrates a well-thought-out and well-structured concept, incorporating music from various styles, genres, movements, and eras. Particularly noticeable is the pianist's intermedial thinking, which manifests itself in the combination of musical text with visual associations and personal cultural experiences, allowing the album to be viewed as a kind of "musical diary".

No less representative is the work "Labyrinth", which emphasizes the metaphor of the path and search - the album is conceived as a reflection of the unity of inner growth and outer development. A more contemplative approach dominates here, although the performer remains true to habit of creating striking artistic gestures, including fusing popular classical pieces with experimental solutions. Recent projects, including a recording of Mozart concertos (with the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, an English chamber orchestra), demonstrate the pianist's desire for independence and freedom of interpretation: the rejection of a conductor brings us closer to the traditions of the Baroque and Classical eras, when the soloist also assumed the role of orchestral leader. Buniatishvili's works delight with their creativity and depth, as well as their distinctive contemporary vision, without the slightest hint of doubt about the correctness of chosen artistic position.

4. The Music Album as an Integral Artistic Form

The above presented provisions allow claiming that the music album, in its contemporary understanding, represents a form of artistic integrity that transcends the simple accumulation of individual compositions. While historically the album could function as a collection of unrelated works, modern artistic practice increasingly treats it as a unified conceptual structure, where each element contributes to the formation of an overarching artistic narrative. This transformation reflects the growing awareness of the album as a macro-text - a complex system in which musical works interact with one another, creating a multidimensional semantic field.

The integrity of the album is manifested primarily through the principle of dramaturgical organization. The sequence of musical works is rarely accidental; instead, it reflects an intentional artistic logic that determines the emotional and semantic trajectory of listening. The arrangement of compositions establishes contrasts, transitions, culminations, and resolutions that shape the listener's perception over time. In this respect, the album acquires features similar to those of large-scale musical forms, such as cycles or suites, where structural relationships between individual parts define the unity of the whole (Bacci, 2024).

Particularly significant is the role of thematic coherence, which may manifest through stylistic consistency, shared expressive imagery, or conceptual orientation. Thematic unity allows the album to function as a continuous artistic statement rather than a fragmented set of performances. Even in cases where the repertoire includes works from different historical periods or stylistic traditions, the interpretative vision of the performer can establish meaningful connections between them, forming a coherent artistic discourse.

Another dimension of artistic integrity is associated with the temporal nature of the listening experience. Unlike live performance, which unfolds in a single spatial and temporal context, the album allows for repeated engagement, selective listening, and reinterpretation. This reproducibility transforms the album into a stable artistic object that preserves the interpretative moment while simultaneously allowing new layers of meaning to emerge through successive encounters with the listener.

The notion of completeness within the album also involves its material and technological embodiment. Whether presented on physical media or within digital platforms, the album maintains its identity as a structured artistic unit (Libeks & Turnbull, 2011). The transition from vinyl and compact discs to digital streaming environments has not eliminated the concept of the album; rather, it has expanded its functional possibilities, enabling new forms of distribution, reception, and symbolic framing (Garg, A., & Suri, C. S., 2026).

Thus, the music album emerges as an integral artistic form characterized by internal coherence, dramaturgical continuity, and conceptual unity. Its structure reflects the intentional design of the performer, whose interpretative strategy transforms a series of individual works into a holistic artistic artifact capable of conveying complex aesthetic meanings.

5. Intermediality as a Principle of Album Construction

In the contemporary cultural environment, intermediality functions as one of the defining principles of artistic creation, shaping the structural and semantic organization of the music album. The album no longer exists exclusively within the boundaries of sound but unfolds as a complex intermedial construct that integrates auditory, visual, textual, and technological components into a unified artistic system. This synthesis of media transforms the album into a multidimensional artifact in which meaning emerges through the interaction of heterogeneous expressive forms (López-Varela Azcárate, 2023).

The auditory component remains the central axis of the album; however, its expressive potential is significantly expanded through the presence of visual imagery and textual elements. Album covers, photographs, typography, and graphic design form a visual code that anticipates the listener's perception and establishes an initial interpretative context. The visual dimension does not merely accompany the sound material but participates in the creation of semantic associations that deepen the listener's engagement with the artistic content. In this regard, the cover design may be understood as a

threshold element - a visual gateway through which the listener enters the conceptual world of the album (Arribert-Narce & Watson, 2024).

The textual dimension also contributes to the formation of intermedial unity. Titles of compositions, accompanying notes, performer's commentary, and digital descriptions function as semantic markers that guide perception and interpretation. Language, in this sense, operates as an additional layer of mediation, linking musical imagery with conceptual reflection. Through the integration of verbal elements, the album acquires features characteristic of literary and narrative forms, enabling the articulation of themes, moods, and symbolic meanings that extend beyond the sonic sphere (Orr, 2003).

The expansion of intermedial relationships has become particularly evident in the digital age, where the boundaries between different artistic media are increasingly fluid. The emergence of digital platforms has enabled the simultaneous presentation of sound recordings, video materials, visual design, and textual commentary within a single communicative environment. Music videos, live performance recordings, behind-the-scenes materials, and interactive digital content contribute to the formation of a dynamic artistic space in which the album evolves beyond its traditional form.

In this context, the music album can be regarded as an intermedial network rather than a static object. Each component functions as a node within a broader system of cultural signs, interacting with others to produce new layers of meaning. The intermedial structure of the album reflects the logic of contemporary perception, which is increasingly shaped by multimedia environments and hybrid artistic forms. As a result, the listener becomes not only a recipient of sound but also a participant in a complex process of multisensory interpretation.

An important aspect of intermedial construction lies in the relationship between performance and visualization. The physical gestures of the performer, captured through video or photography, contribute to the formation of a recognizable artistic image. The visual representation of the performer's body, posture, and interaction with the instrument transforms the act of performance into a visible narrative that complements the acoustic dimension (Johansson & Petersson, 2018). In this sense, performance becomes both an auditory and visual phenomenon, extending the expressive potential of the album into the sphere of embodied artistic communication Pande et al. (2026).

Furthermore, the intermedial nature of the album reflects the technological mediation inherent in contemporary artistic practice. Recording equipment, sound editing technologies, digital mastering processes, and distribution interfaces function not only as technical tools but also as aesthetic agents that influence the final artistic result. The sound itself becomes shaped by technological parameters, while the medium of its reproduction determines the conditions of perception. Thus, the intermedial structure of the album encompasses not only artistic media but also technological systems that participate in the creation and dissemination of meaning.

Consequently, intermediality may be understood as a foundational mechanism through which the album acquires its artistic completeness. By integrating sound, image, text, and technology into a coherent expressive system, the album transcends the limitations of a single medium and becomes a complex cultural artifact capable of functioning within the multilayered communicative environment of the digital age.

6. Performing Identity in the Structure of the Album

Performing identity represents one of the central dimensions through which the music album acquires its conceptual unity and expressive individuality. Within the structure of the album, the

Music Album as a Complete Artifact in the Dimensions of Intermediality and Performing Identity

performer is not merely an interpreter of musical texts but an active creator of artistic meaning. Through interpretative choices, repertoire selection, sound aesthetics, and visual representation, the performer constructs a distinctive artistic presence that shapes the perception of the album as a coherent cultural artifact.

The formation of performing identity is closely connected with the idea of authorship in performance practice. Although the composer provides the primary musical material, the performer reinterprets this material through personal artistic vision. The album becomes a medium through which this vision is stabilized and transmitted to the listener. Each interpretative decision - tempo selection, phrasing, articulation, dynamic balance, and tonal nuance - contributes to the creation of an individualized sound image that functions as a marker of artistic identity.

Equally significant is the role of repertoire selection as an expression of the performer's aesthetic orientation. The choice of works included in an album reflects not only technical proficiency but also conceptual priorities and artistic worldview. By combining compositions from different historical periods or stylistic traditions, the performer constructs a dialogue between musical epochs, thereby revealing personal interpretative perspectives. In this way, repertoire becomes a narrative tool that communicates aspects of the performer's artistic biography and cultural positioning.

In addition to purely sonic parameters, performing identity manifests itself through visual and symbolic elements associated with the album. The performer's physical presence, stage image, costume, gestures, and photographic representation contribute to the formation of a recognizable artistic persona. These elements participate in the creation of a visual identity that complements the auditory dimension and reinforces the conceptual unity of the album as a multimedia artifact.

In order to better understand the structural components that shape performing identity within the framework of the music album, it is useful to systematize the principal parameters through which this identity becomes perceptible to the listener and viewer (see Table 1). These parameters operate simultaneously on sonic, visual, and conceptual levels, forming an integrated expressive system.

Table 1 - Key Parameters of Performing Identity in the Structure of the Music Album

<i>Parameter of Performing Identity</i>	<i>Mode of Expression</i>	<i>Artistic Function</i>	<i>Intermedial Dimension</i>
Interpretative Style	Tempo, articulation, phrasing, dynamics	Formation of individual sound image	Auditory
Repertoire Selection	Choice of composers, genres, stylistic periods	Construction of artistic narrative	Conceptual / Auditory
Sound Aesthetics	Tone quality, balance, acoustic environment	Creation of recognizable sonic signature	Auditory / Technological
Visual Representation	Album cover, photographs, performer's image	Formation of visual identity	Visual
Performer's	Body movement,	Embodiment of	Visual /

Gesture	posture, interaction with instrument	artistic expression	Performative
Conceptual Orientation	Thematic unity, symbolic meanings	Organization of artistic discourse	Conceptual
Digital Presence	Streaming platforms, multimedia content	Expansion of communicative space	Technological / Intermedial

Source: developed by the authors

The parameters outlined in Table 1 demonstrate that performing identity is not limited to purely musical interpretation but encompasses a wide spectrum of expressive strategies that operate across different media environments. Their interaction produces a holistic artistic image that remains recognizable even when individual components vary. This multidimensional configuration allows the performer to establish a stable artistic presence within the cultural space, transforming the album into a medium of self-representation and symbolic communication.

The stability of performing identity is further reinforced through repetition and recognition. When listeners encounter a series of albums created by the same performer, recurring stylistic features contribute to the formation of a recognizable artistic language. Over time, this language becomes associated with the performer's name, transforming individual interpretative gestures into elements of a broader cultural signature. Thus, the album functions not only as a singular artistic statement but also as part of a cumulative process through which performing identity evolves and gains cultural authority (Bator, 2024).

Another important dimension of performing identity involves the relationship between individuality and tradition. While the performer inevitably operates within established stylistic frameworks, personal interpretation introduces elements of innovation that renew the cultural significance of musical works. The album becomes a site of negotiation between inherited musical language and contemporary artistic consciousness. Through this interaction, performing identity acquires historical depth while remaining open to transformation.

Ultimately, the music album may be understood as a stabilized form of performing identity, where artistic individuality becomes materialized through sound, image, and technological mediation. It transforms the ephemeral nature of performance into a lasting cultural object, capable of preserving the performer's interpretative vision and transmitting it across temporal and spatial boundaries.

7. Album as a Multilevel Communicative Space

The contemporary music album functions as a multilevel communicative space in which artistic meaning is transmitted through a system of interactions between performer, medium, and audience. Unlike traditional forms of musical presentation limited to a concert setting, the album creates a mediated environment that extends communication beyond the temporal boundaries of live performance. This transformation allows the artistic message to circulate across different contexts, reaching diverse audiences and enabling repeated engagement with the musical content.

Communication within the album structure unfolds through several interconnected levels. The first level involves the direct transmission of sound information, where the listener perceives the interpretative realization of musical works. At this stage, the acoustic dimension remains fundamental,

forming the basis of emotional and aesthetic response (Dozal, 2012). However, contemporary listening practices demonstrate that perception rarely remains confined to auditory experience alone. Instead, the listener encounters the album as a complex semiotic field in which multiple channels of meaning operate simultaneously.

The second level of communication emerges through visual and symbolic mediation. Album covers, promotional imagery, and video materials function as visual messages that frame the listener's expectations and shape interpretative strategies. These visual elements often carry symbolic meanings that resonate with the thematic orientation of the musical content. The listener, therefore, enters into a process of interpretative dialogue, decoding visual signs in relation to sonic structures.

A third communicative dimension is formed by technological mediation, particularly within digital platforms that facilitate the distribution and reception of music. Streaming services, digital libraries, and social media environments create new modes of interaction between performer and audience. In this digital space, the album becomes accessible beyond geographical limitations, enabling the formation of virtual communities of listeners. The circulation of musical content through algorithmic systems introduces an additional layer of mediation that influences how frequently and in what context the album is encountered.

In order to conceptualize the communicative complexity of the music album within contemporary media culture, it is useful to distinguish the principal levels through which interaction between performer and audience takes place (see Table 2). Each of these levels contributes to the formation of a holistic communicative environment that supports the transmission of artistic meanings.

Table 2 - Levels of Communication within the Music Album as a Cultural Artifact

<i>Communicative Level</i>	<i>Main Medium</i>	<i>Form of Interaction</i>	<i>Artistic Result</i>
Auditory	Sound recording	Listening and acoustic perception	Emotional and aesthetic response
Visual	Album cover, photography, video	Visual recognition and symbolic interpretation	Formation of artistic imagery
Textual	Titles, annotations, digital descriptions	Conceptual understanding	Expansion of semantic context
Technological	Digital platforms and playback systems	Mediated access and distribution	Broadening of audience reach
Social	Audience feedback, reviews, online sharing	Collective reception and discussion	Formation of cultural resonance

Source: developed by the authors

The systematization presented in Table 2 illustrates that communication within the album extends beyond the traditional performer-listener relationship. Instead, it unfolds through a network of media interactions that collectively shape the reception of artistic content. The presence of multiple communicative levels enhances the interpretative openness of the album, allowing listeners to engage with its content in diverse and often personalized ways.

An essential feature of the multilevel communicative structure is the formation of cultural memory. By preserving sound recordings and associated visual materials, the album becomes a medium through which artistic traditions are documented and transmitted across generations. In this capacity, the album functions not only as a contemporary artistic product but also as a historical document that captures specific stylistic tendencies, technological conditions, and interpretative approaches characteristic of a given cultural moment.

Furthermore, the communicative potential of the album is closely related to the dynamics of audience reception. Listener engagement does not remain passive but often involves active participation through interpretation, commentary, and dissemination. In digital environments, this participation acquires new forms, including online discussion, recommendation systems, and user-generated content. Through these processes, the album enters a broader cultural dialogue, acquiring meanings that evolve over time.

Thus, the music album emerges as a dynamic communicative environment characterized by multilayered interaction between artistic intention and audience perception. Its capacity to function simultaneously across auditory, visual, technological, and social domains confirms its status as a complex cultural artifact within contemporary media culture.

Conclusion

The examination of the music album as a complete artistic artifact within the dimensions of intermediality and performing identity reveals the multidimensional nature of this phenomenon in contemporary cultural space. The album emerges not merely as a collection of recorded musical works but as an integrated artistic system in which sound, image, text, and technology interact to produce a unified expressive structure.

In our study, the solo music album emerges as a living cultural organism, which in the digital age acquires the characteristics of an intermedial artifact, transcending the traditional understanding of sound recording as an auxiliary means of performance. This phenomenon reflects contemporary trends in the development of art and culture, demonstrating how the artist's artistic identity, audience perception, and technological capabilities mutually complement each other, creating a dynamic, constantly evolving phenomenon of meaning-making and creative interaction. Of particular significance is the artist's individual position, revealed not only through interpretation but also through the curation of the album's entire media complex. The album format, thanks to its interdisciplinary nature, integrates musical art into a broader media-cultural context and promotes a rethinking of the boundaries between the artist and the cultural community. In this respect, the significance of the album extends beyond the musical sphere and acquires a universal aesthetic and philosophical dimension.

The analysis demonstrates that the integrity of the album is achieved through the dramaturgical organization of musical material, the conceptual coherence of repertoire selection, and the interpretative strategies of the performer. These elements transform individual compositions into components of a larger artistic narrative, allowing the album to function as a macro-structural artistic form. The listener's perception, in turn, unfolds within a carefully constructed temporal and semantic trajectory that reflects the performer's artistic intention.

Particular significance belongs to the principle of intermediality, which defines the album as a synthesis of heterogeneous media. The integration of auditory, visual, textual, and technological components expands the expressive potential of the musical artifact, enabling the formation of a multilayered system of meanings. Through intermedial interaction, the album transcends the

limitations of a single medium and becomes a complex communicative structure capable of engaging the listener on multiple perceptual levels.

The concept of performing identity emerges as a central factor in the formation of the album's artistic unity. Through interpretative individuality, repertoire strategy, sound aesthetics, and visual representation, the performer constructs a recognizable artistic image that functions as a stabilizing element within the album structure. The album, therefore, becomes a medium through which artistic individuality is materialized and preserved, transforming the transient nature of performance into a lasting cultural artifact.

Equally important is the understanding of the album as a multilevel communicative space that enables interaction between performer and audience across diverse media environments. The emergence of digital technologies has significantly expanded the communicative potential of the album, allowing artistic messages to circulate beyond traditional concert settings and fostering new forms of listener participation. This transformation reinforces the role of the album as both an artistic and cultural mediator.

Consequently, the music album may be regarded as a complex intermedial artifact that embodies the unity of artistic expression, technological mediation, and cultural communication. Its multidimensional structure reflects the evolving nature of contemporary musical practice and highlights the growing importance of integrated artistic forms within the digital age. The study of the album in the context of intermediality and performing identity opens perspective directions for further scholarly inquiry into the dynamics of modern musical culture and the transformation of artistic communication in technologically mediated environments..

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