

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a white long-sleeved top and white pants, is sitting on large, dark, jagged rocks. She is looking out over a beach and the ocean. The sky is a mix of soft pinks, oranges, and blues, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The ocean has gentle waves washing onto the sandy beach. In the background, a hillside with some buildings is visible under the hazy sky.

# *Superposition*

40 visual translations

**JOANNA CHEN**

Winter 2022



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# *Abstract*

Designed during the winter quarter of my sophomore year, this publication brings together 40 cover designs I created for Daniel Caesar's song "SUPERPOSITION."

This book exists as the final project for my 10-week typography course and features 8 separate chapters plus an introduction and a conclusion. The 8 chapters are separated by the 8 different assignments we were given throughout the quarter. As seen with every chapter divider, each assignment came with different rules and parameters, created to allow us to explore the different typographic elements separately.

At the start of the course, we were guided to choose a song which carried personal meaning and memory. You can read more about why I picked Caesar's song in the introduction section. The introduction also features much of the research and inspiration I used to influence my design decisions.

All 40 of the 7 by 7 inch cover designs were critiqued by my Professor Willem Henri Lucas, my TA Yuchi Ma, and my fellow classmates. Many of the critiques are summarized in the comments listed alongside the designs. Finally, you can read my about my learnings and course reflection in the book's conclusion.

I hope you enjoy.

Joanna Chen.

# *Table of Contents*

<b>XX</b>	<b>ABSTRACT &amp; RESEARCH</b> pg. 04 - 19
<b>01</b>	<b>COMPOSITION &amp; SPACE</b> pg. 20 - 25
<b>02</b>	<b>COMPOSITION &amp; SPACE &amp; LETTERSIZE</b> pg. 26 - 31
<b>03</b>	<b>CHARACTER WEIGHT</b> pg. 32 - 37
<b>04</b>	<b>CHARACTER WEIGHT &amp; ITALICS</b> pg. 38 - 43

**05**      **TYPE SIZE COMBINATIONS**  
pg. 44 - 49

**06**      **RULES & BLOCKS**  
pg. 50 - 55

**07**      **SOUND NOTATION**  
pg. 56 - 61

**08**      **TYPOGRAPHY & COLOR & SOLIDS & PATTERN**  
pg. 62 - 67

**XX**      **RESULTS & CONCLUSION**  
pg. 68 - 71

# I. *The Song*



DANIEL CAESAR  
PERFORMING AT  
SUMMIT MUSIC HALL

AUGUST 2019  
DENVER, CO

Released in June of 2019, the song “SUPERPOSITION” exists as the seventh track on Daniel Caesar’s album CASE STUDY 01. Falling under the genre of R&B and Soul, “SUPERPOSITION” features Caesar’s buttery vocals pairing elegantly with John Mayer’s soothing instrumentals and guitar arrangements. The song examines the contradictions and complexities of Caesar’s life while making reference to the scientific principle of superposition. In physics, superposition is the phenomenon where two waves that are crossing paths can either create a larger wave, cancel each other out, or cause a combination of the two. Caesar uses superposition to describe the summation and collision of all the influences in his life—all of which have the power to either build him up or break him down. Labeling the other songs on his album “ENTROPY” and “CYANIDE,” drawing connections between scientific concepts and philosophy to explore the human experience appears to be a theme running throughout Caesar’s album.



I believe my first time hearing “SUPERPOSITION” was when the album first released during the summer before my senior year. Having survived AP Physics just the semester prior, I loved how I could apply the concepts I had learned in class to the music I was listening to. I had been a fan of Caesar’s work far before CASE STUDY 01’s release due to his lovely vocals and his thought-provoking lyrical references to psychology and philosophy. While trying to decide what song to pick for this project, I asked close friends what artist they associate me with or what my favorite artist appears to be; many of them answered Daniel Caesar. Thinking back, I think I first discovered the artist through my close high school friend Sami. The artist’s music bonded us. Sami even referenced Caesar’s lyrics in a Happy Birthday card written to me when celebrating our four years of friendship.

Having been a long time fan of Caesar’s work, I also had the pleasure of hearing the album live during his performance in Denver August of 2019. I absolutely adore the entire album for its experimental nature and for Caesar’s exploration of the human condition through scientific motifs. Specifically for the song “SUPERPOSITION,” I find myself loving the lyrics for the meaning they play in my own life and their connections to my own philosophies. The lyrics reference the notions of yin and yang and life being all about contradiction—lines of thinking I deeply resonate with. I echo the saying that light cannot exist without darkness and further state that life can only be fully appreciated and experienced when there is a mix of both highs and lows, ups and downs.

The song begins with the lines “Isn’t it an irony? The things that inspire me; they make me bleed, so profusely,” where Caesar is likely singing about the complex relationship he shares with his own passions. For me, this line reminds me of how I feel about my own creative ambitions and pursuits, where, as much as I love them, they overwhelm me. As a creative, Imposter Syndrome, perfectionism, comparison, and self doubt, can all feel very suffocating despite one’s love for creation; the song reminds me that I’m not alone in this sort of

feeling. However, Caesar also sings “I’m me, I’m God, I’m everything. I’m my own reason why I sing,” a line which correlates with what I want to embody in this lifetime. I remind myself that my choice to become a designer is intrinsically motivated and that this path that I have chosen is decided by me.

The line “The rest of my life’s in a state of chaos, but I know I’ll be okay” always strikes me as one of my favorites, especially when I was fortunate enough to hear it in person. It acknowledges life’s lack of order, yet offers a sort of self assurance and a promise to rise up despite the conditions. This song, infused with reminders of positive thinking, self affirmation, and authority over one’s life, carried me through the highs and lows of my college application journey, my pandemic experience, and my uncertainties and anxieties regarding the future.

When listening to this song, I remind myself that I’m going to be okay regardless of the outcomes and no matter the current circumstances. Oftentimes, I’ll play this song when I’m finding a moment of peace in a world of chaos and specifically when I’m admiring nature’s beauty. I specifically remember listening to this song while watching the sunset alone near a pond in the neighborhood I lived in back in Colorado. This song radiates a state of being calm, relaxed, and content. Tranquility, serenity, and ethereality are also words I would associate with this song. I’ll also listen to this song while driving or walking home from work to wind down after a long day. Especially during times where I’m going through emotional turmoil or distress, I’ll listen to this song alone in bed to create a safe haven for myself and to comfort myself.

So to those who feel like they are stumbling and lost in a world of chaos, I hope this song will remind you, like it reminds me, that things will be okay.

*“I hope this song will remind  
you, like it reminds me, that  
things will be okay.”*

## II. *The Lyrics*

Isn't it an irony?  
The things that inspire me  
They make me bleed  
So profusely

I got everything I need  
Time and space to think and breathe  
What does it mean?  
When cash grows on trees

Exist in superposition  
Life's all about contradiction  
Yin and yang  
Fluidity and things

I'm me, I'm God, I'm everything  
I'm my own reason why I sing  
And so are you, are you understanding?  
Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh

I know you think this shit is easy  
For you but not so much for me  
But I'll still ride, that's just the risk I'll take

I know you see me actin' sleazy  
I'm workin on it, take it easy  
I'll figure it all out before I break

If I should die before I wake  
Oh, please do not resuscitate  
I know I didn't live my life in vain

This music shit's a piece of cake  
The rest of my life's in a state  
Of chaos but I know I'll be okay

Exist in superposition  
Life's all about contradiction  
Yin and yang  
Fluidity and things

I'm me, I'm God, I'm everything  
I'm my own reason why I sing  
And so are you, are you understanding?





# III. *The Artist*

## **DANIEL CAESAR NR MAGAZINE INTERVIEW**

Since the release of his debut album *Freudian* in 2017, Daniel Caesar has been something of a crooner redefining R&B and soul of the 1990s with elements of gospel, taken from DC's upbringing, for a new generation. The album racked up a number of Grammy nominations at the 60th Grammy Awards, for Best R&B Album, Best R&B Performance for 'Get You' with Kali Uchis, before winning Best R&B Performance earlier this year for 'Best Part' with H.E.R. All by the age of 23 (24 now). Following the release of Caesar's second album, *Case Study 01*, in June, he has been on tour since August in the US, and now in London ahead of UK tour dates (sell out) before Europe and Canada.

**Earlier this week you reached a billion streams on Spotify which sounds pretty crazy to me. How does that feel?**

It feels like good, I don't think it's something I ever considered. Like, a million, a couple of million, sounds doable, but a billion is outside of my range of perception.

**It's fair to say you've achieved quite a lot of commercial success without being signed to a major label. So considering that, have you got any intentions to expand Golden Child Records in the future at all?**

Yeah, there's always more that can be done. I have lots of ideas, who knows exactly what those turn into, but it's not going to stop here.

**Case Study 01 has a pretty distinct vibe to it compared with Freudian. Could you explain the process and the intentions behind the record?**

With this one, I made a few beats first, and it was more about trying to get more complete ideas from my head out into the world, as opposed to writing on my guitar. So this time, some of the lyrics came long afterwards, which isn't how it usually works for me. I had more to say also, so it's a lot wordier; I was also being less practical in terms of 'first verse, second verse', etc. I was saying a lot more and doing a lot more this time around, and then, trying to organize all my thoughts when there's more going on that usual.

**There was one video you posted on Instagram – a behind the scenes of the recording with an open piano...**

Yeah, that was for Too Deep To Turn Back. We got to explore a lot more this time. With the last album, we'd go in the studio and block out a week or less because we already knew what we were going to do. Whereas, with Case Study 01, we started creating the songs in the studio, so we had time to play around and discover new things. I liked that so much more because the studio recording process is when I get to do what I want, it's like my favourite part. So, this time, we were at Abbey Road Studios and just fuck-

ing around with all the cool stuff, and we just stumbled across this sound we liked and found a part for it...

**You're commonly referred to as a crooner, a romantic, or like a present-day D'Angelo, is that something you ever anticipated? Or is that a strange thing to be?**

I mean, I guess, yeah. Singing was always my thing at school. I was always the crooner guy, that was my shtick or whatever... That was me, I could sing the emotional songs...

**Did you always want to pursue singing?**

It was always one of the things I wanted to be, not the first thing, but one of. When you're little and you tell adults, well-meaning adults, what you want to be, they try and help you manage your expectations... It's like, chances are you're not going to be able to do it, in the nicest way, and so you try and realign, and pick something more practical. So you try and fit into what you think you're supposed to be doing, and then you're just not good at that. And so, it always came back to singing.

**Something that is striking about the visuals for your albums and videos is of you as what seems like an isolated figure (especially in the spacesuit). Is there anything in that?**

When you say it, it makes sense to me, but I don't think it was intentional like, 'let's do this'. I was just feeling isolated or, trying to connect, but being unable to, you know? I'd say one of the themes is about wanting love, wanting a connection, and it's always fleeting or unrequited.

**There's a moment in your conversation with Brandy where she remarks that you're a great storyteller; How important is storytelling to you as a songwriter?**

It's important, but I don't think it's the only tool necessary. I think the most important thing is conveying the feeling, whether or not you're being descriptive and articulate, whether you're retelling a story, or you're just saying what's need to be said to convey the idea or the feeling. I think storytelling is

important; it helps make things more rhythmic. But the feeling is the most important thing, however it is you get that across.

**You mentioned that, with this album you didn't write some of the lyrics until afterwards but, with songwriting, where do you start and what's your process?**

It usually doesn't come 'til I'm in a really good mood or really bad mood. Or, say, I have a conversation and I hear a phrase that I like, it's usually something that sounds paradoxical. Just something clever. Then, chords might come and surround it. It always come through extreme emotion, energy and excitement. Usually, honestly, I'll be in the shower and I'll like, drop everything and do the voice note. Sometimes it turns into a song, sometimes it's just a short little note and I'll send it over to Jordan [Evans, Caesar's manager] and, he puts it in a folder with thousands of others...

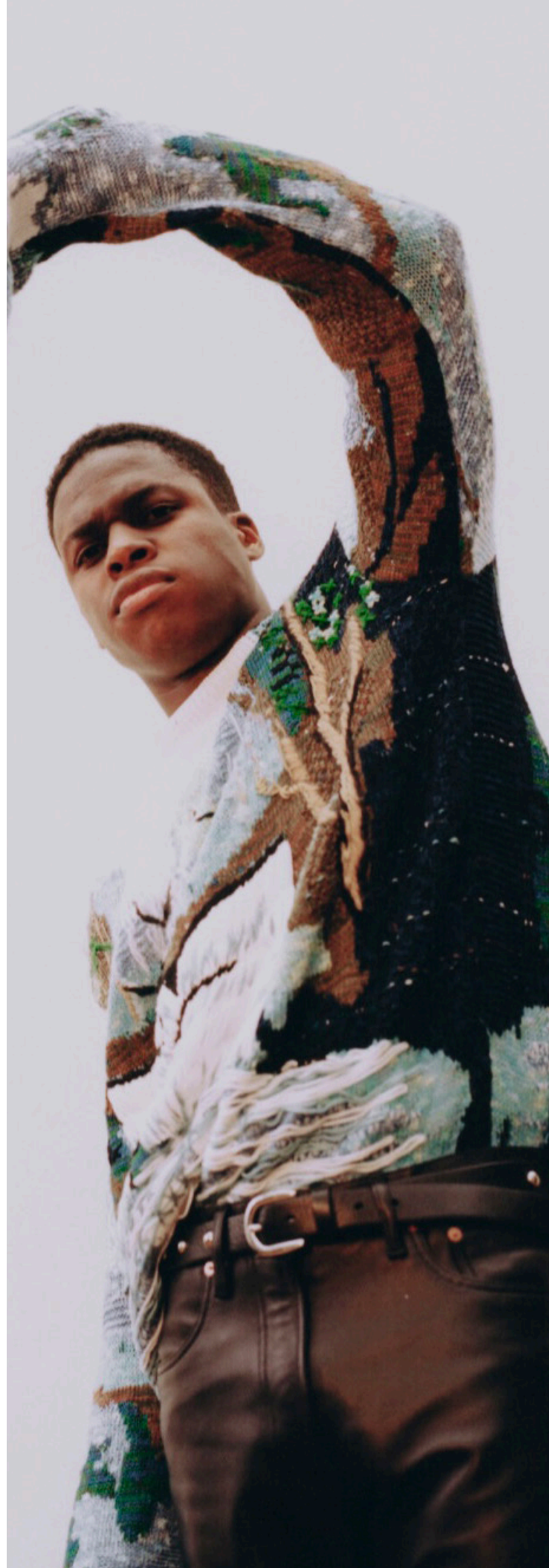
**What does 'reinvention' mean to you?**

Reinvention is death and rebirth. No one is really one thing, no one has a fixed identity. I think growing is moving from identity to identity. I mean like, what I'm doing is the extreme art version, where I'm an astronaut [for Case Study 01]. But, it's about growing through your life, finding new parts about yourself and taking it on fully.

**How would you relate reinvention to something that you've gone through or that's happened to you specifically?**

I think everybody is the way they are because of things that have happened to them, so there's no one moment I can think of... But, through trauma, through the good things and the bad, these things chip away at the sculpture that becomes the final 'thing'.

*“But, it's about growing through your life, finding new parts about yourself and taking it on fully.”*



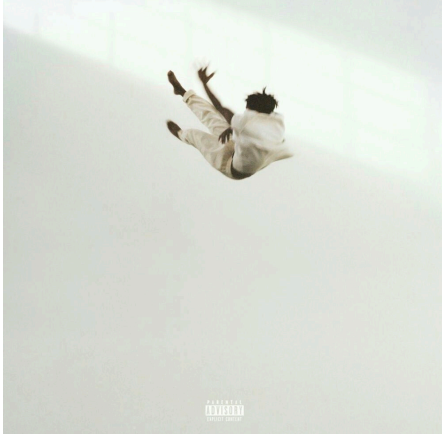
## IV. *The Aesthetic*

Before designing anything for this course, I spent some time studying Daniel Caesar's aesthetic. As seen from his previous album covers, Caesar's aesthetic is minimalist, clean, and provides an ethereal feel. Caesar's color palette consists mainly of blues, tans, grays, whites, and blacks. Caesar's covers are also centered around surreal photographs and portraits with no sight of illustration or text.

Therefore, for the design of this book, I wanted to place focus on the negative space by emphasizing the beauty of the white space. I wanted to capture Caesar's minimalist aesthetic and follow his color palette to visualize the serenity I feel when hearing Caesar's songs. As featured on the front cover and back cover, the self portraits I took also highlight the calm atmosphere Caesar's vocals create.

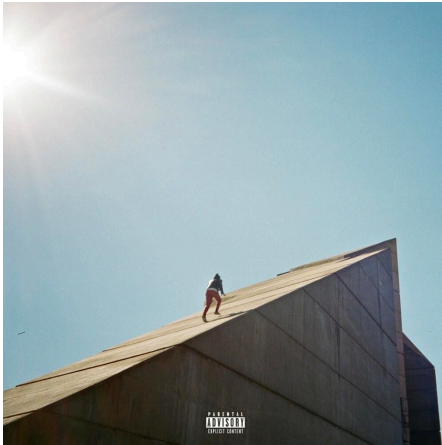
The design of this book also alludes to the design of typical scientific research papers and photobooks. Research papers often feature small text with captions, figures, and serif fonts. Photobooks on the other hand can be used to highlight everyday life through its focus on real life photography and heavy use of white space. By referencing the two different aesthetics, I seek to bridge the scientific world with the common human experience as Caesar does in the song "SUPERPOSITION" and throughout his album.





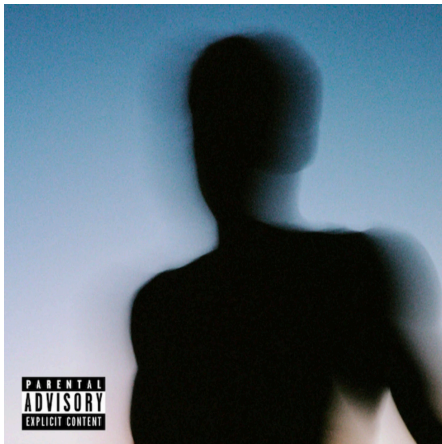
## **PILGRIM'S PARADISE**

2015



## **FREUDIAN**

2017



## **CASE STUDY 01**

2019

However, for the covers I designed for my song head in a separate direction. Although many emphasize the elegance of the Baskerville typeface, many also explore the concept of disorder and chaos through various compositions and shapes. This mix-and-match aesthetic created using both order and chaos is meant to echo the song's emphasis about contradiction and duality.

# V. *The Typeface*

## **BASKERVILLE'S BEAUTY**

For our covers, we were given the limited selection of 6 different typefaces: Baskerville, Bodoni, Clarendon, Futura, Gill Sans, and Helvetica. As you will see throughout this book, the type we decided on must be used for all 40 of our designs and for the final publication.

Out of the six fonts, I decided to go with Baskerville to represent “SUPERPOSITION.” I chose Baskerville for its minimalist, elegant, and timeless beauty. Additionally, because the song clearly references scientific principles, I thought it would be interesting to allude to the design of scientific papers through this Times New Roman lookalike.

Although I considered choosing a sans serif typeface to represent the song’s experimental and futuristic nature, the serif fonts felt less harsh or geometric, and, therefore, better expressed the song’s delicate and calming nature.



Aa  
REGULAR

Aa  
SEMIBOLD

Aa  
BOLD

*Aa*  
ITALIC

*Aa*  
SEMIBOLD ITALIC

*Aa*  
BOLD ITALIC



DANIEL CAESAR'S  
PROMOTIONAL PHOTO  
FOR CASE STUDY 01

ART DIRECTION BY  
KEAVAN YAZDANI AND  
SEAN BROWN  
2019

01

# *Composition & Space*

**DESIGN 5 DIFFERENT COVERS FOR YOUR SONG USING THE FOLLOWING PARAMETERS:**

- \* the Regular/Book or Roman of the typeface by choice
- \* 16 point size only
- \* type color: black on white background

This assignment is a study on hierarchy, and space as a composition element. Typeface and size are set, make sure you bring order in song title, name performing artist/band, album where song is taken from, year of release.

Things to play with are COMPOSITION / LEADING / LETTER SPACING / UPPER or LOWERCASE / etc.

DANIEL CAESAR  
SUPERPOSITION  
FROM CASE STUDY 01  
2019

Fig. 01

**DISORDER**

This design visualizes Caesar's lyric: "my life's in a state of chaos, but I know I'll be okay." Looking back, I love how minimal but eye-catching this design is and how it balances both chaos and order. During critique, this design was everyone's favorite with how beautifully it balances the chaos with a level of order. Out of the 5 designs for this chapter, this design also gives you a best sense of the song.

Fig. 02

## INTROSPECTION

As Caesar's song is all about introspection and contains multiple "i am" starting statements, I focused on using the letter "i" as a main design element. The song also contains many questions, hence the use of the "c" and the upside-down "i" to create a question mark. The spacing and composition of the letters, however, make it difficult to actually focus on or read the text presented.

D A N E <sup>i</sup> L C A E S A R  
S U P E R P o S <sup>i</sup> T I o N  
F R O M C A S E S T U D Y 0 1  
2 0 9  
!

D  
 A  
 N  
 I  
 S U P E R P O S I T I O N  
 L  
  
 C  
 A 2  
 F R O M C A S E S T U D Y 0 1  
 S 1  
 A 9  
 R

Fig. 03

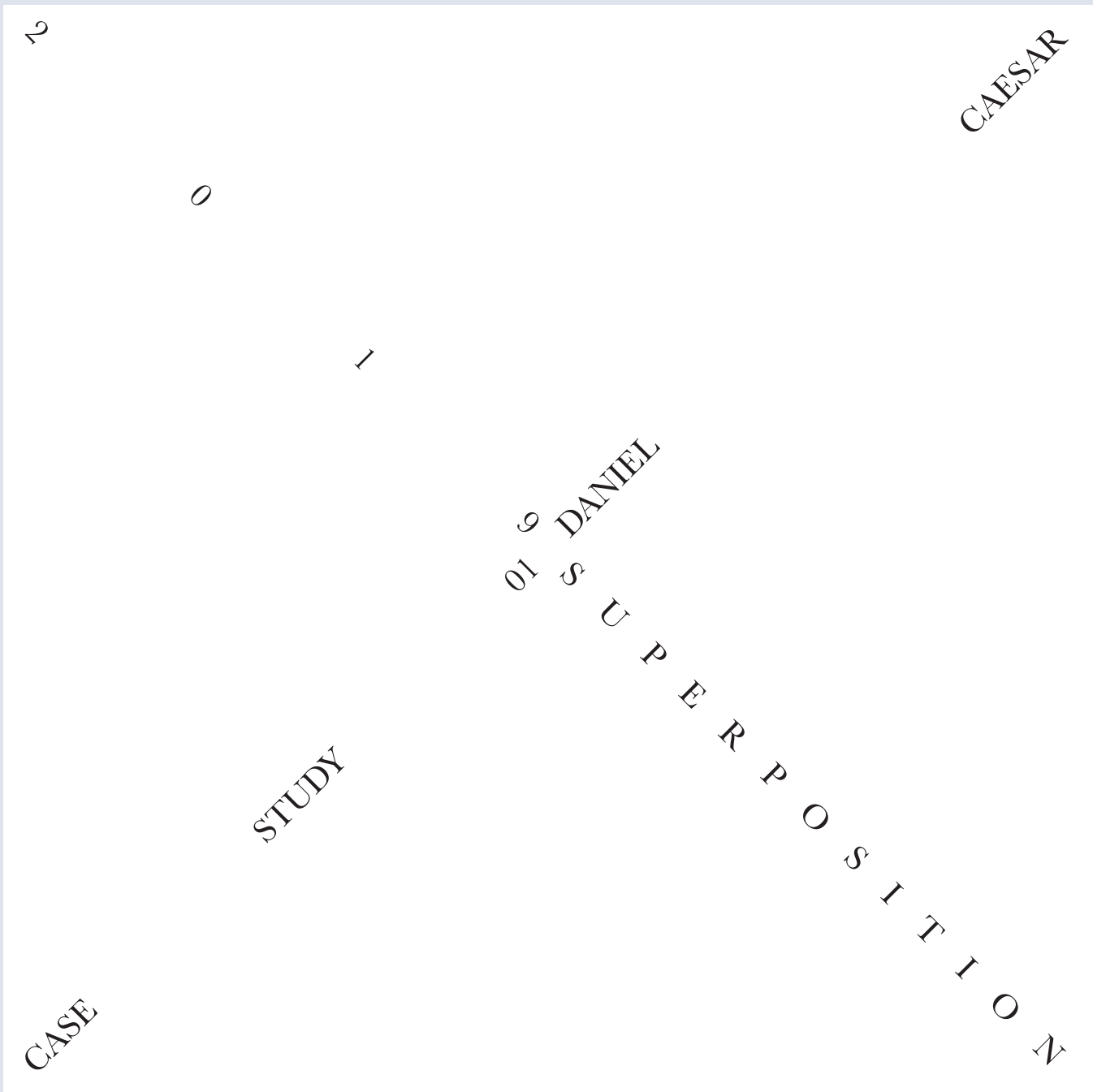
## CONNECTION

Since Caesar's song focuses on connecting scientific and philosophical principles, I connected all the separate text elements through their shared letters. A classmate mentioned that this design brought out the song's atmosphere with its use of negative space. However, looking back at this design, I question how appropriate the use of the straight and rigid lines are for such a smooth sounding song.

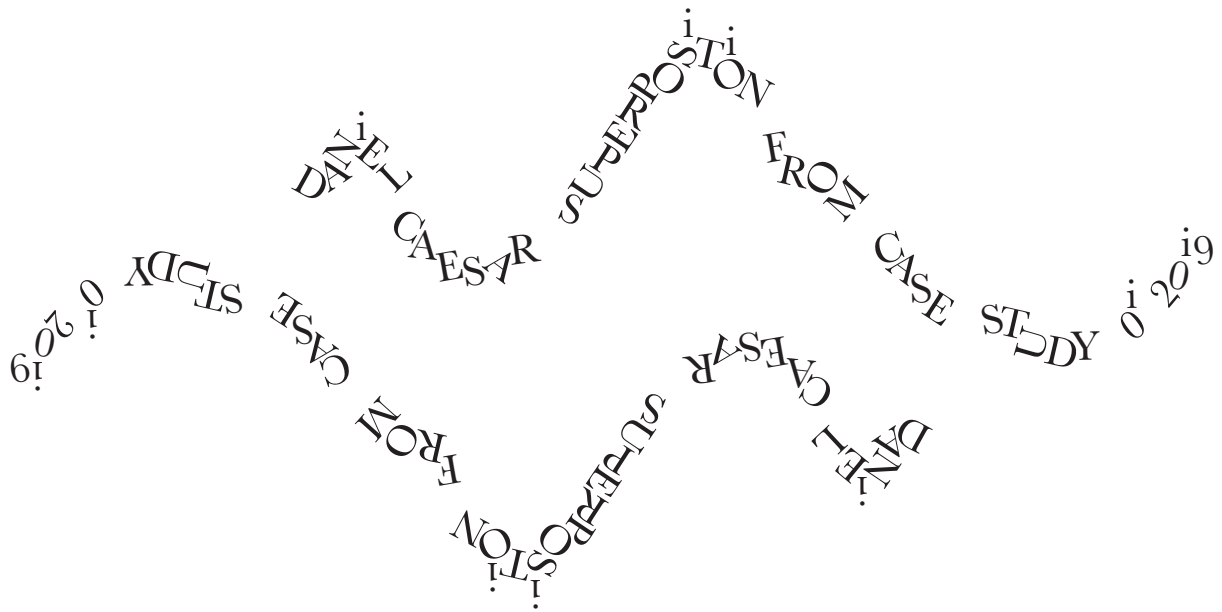
Fig. 04

## TIME + SPACE

Similar to a clock, the text divides the space into four quadrants to allude to the lyrics “time and space to think and breathe.” The design also reminds me of a scientific motion diagram, where the space between the marks indicates the speed of a particle, appropriate for “SUPERPOSITION” is also a physics phenomenon.







SUPERPOSITION

FROM CASE STUDY 01

Fig. 05

**WAVEFORMS**

As mentioned before, “SUPERPOSITION” is a physics phenomenon describing the result of two waves colliding. Therefore, I crafted the waveforms by manipulating the individual letters. However, during critique, my professor warned that this design “draws with type,” meaning the design becomes more illustration focused than type focused and the text is no longer being read by the viewer.

# 02

## *Composition & Space & Lettersize*

### **DESIGN 5 DIFFERENT COVERS FOR YOUR SONG USING THE FOLLOWING PARAMETERS:**

- \* the Regular/Book or Roman of the typeface by choice
- \* any single point size per design for all text (e.g. one design uses 16pt. another 24pt, etc.)
- \* type color: black on white background

This assignment expands on the previous assignment by adding the dimension of scale. How does changing overall text size change the balance of a composition and affect meaning? The overall size of the typeface for each of the five covers changes. The point size you select is a design decision. Make sure you bring order in song title, name performing artist/band, the name of the album where song is taken from, and year of release.

Things to play with are COMPOSITION / LEADING / LETTER SPACING / UPPER or LOWERCASE / etc. You will need to explore the total space of your cover. At what point will all your copy still fit? How large can you go and still make “legible type?” Start with 16 pt, use type sizes mentioned in your InDesign window under TYPE > SIZE.

DANIEL  
CAESAR

SUPERP o SITI o N

FROM CASE  
STUDY 01 2019

Fig. 06

## YIN & YANG

This design is an attempt at creating a sort of yin and yang design with the text. I think the use of space in this piece can be better, but I believe there is a certain beauty to the white spaces between the text. I don't love the use of the lowercase "o" for the word "SUPERPOSITION" or how the artist's first name and last name are strangely aligned, but the experimentation set me up for other designs.

Fig. 07

## INTERSECTIONS

This design revisits the style used for the concept of connection but with using a larger point size and lower case letters. I don't think there's anything really special about this design. If redone, I would like to revisit the concept and rework how the words fill the entire space. Additionally, there's a visual imbalance caused by the letters touching the left side of the cover but not the right.

superposition  
from  
case study 01  
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l  
c  
a  
e  
a  
r

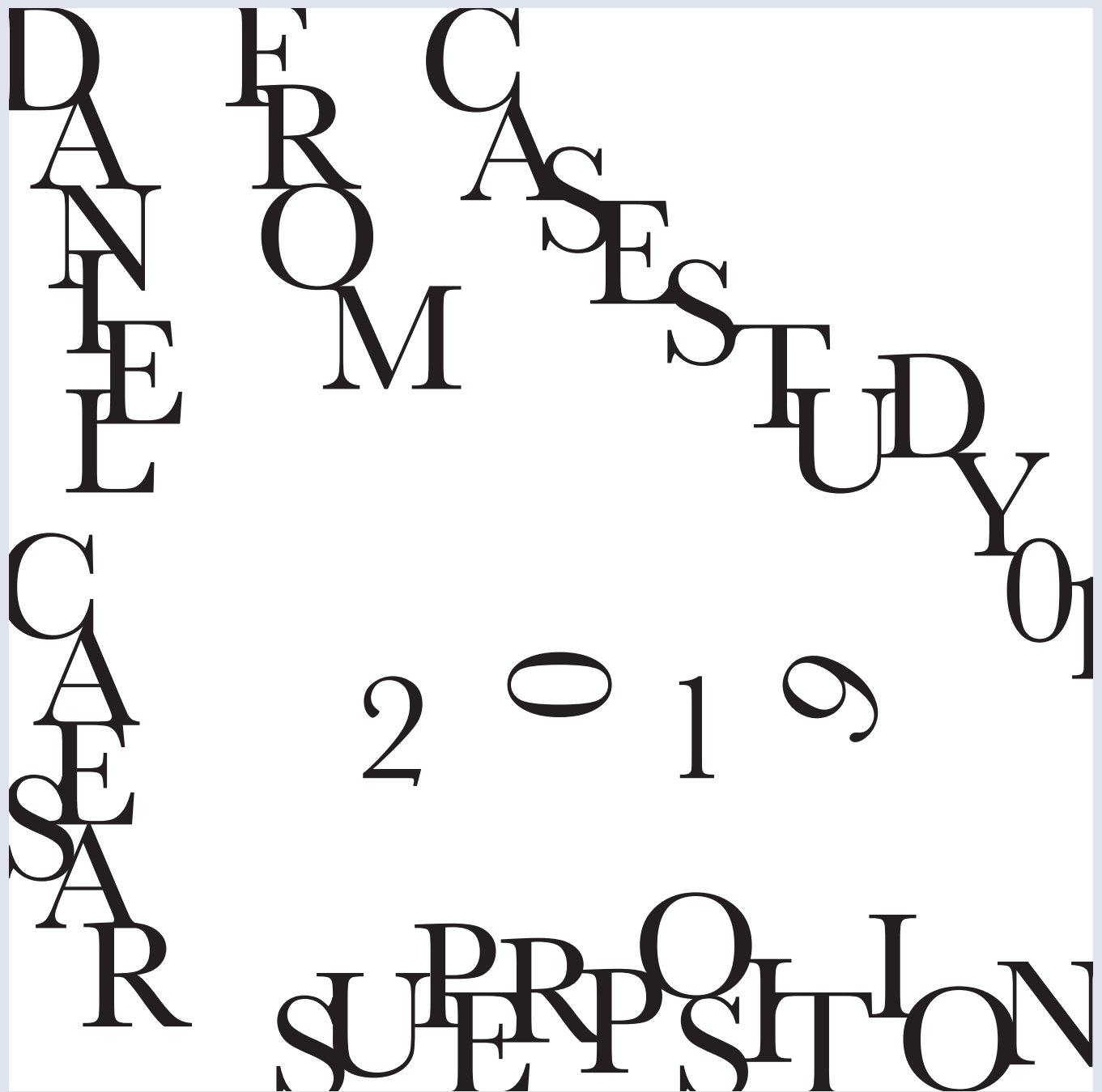


Fig. 08

## FLUIDITY

Caesar's song includes a lyric about fluidity right before the line "I'm me, I'm God, I'm everything." This design allows each design to flow into one another and take over the bounds of the page. However, during critique, it was brought to my attention that the text is quite difficult to read and the composition isn't quite balanced. I definitely think this cover needs the most reworking out of this set.

Fig. 09

## THOUGHT BUBBLE

As Caesar is contemplating the complexities of his life in his songs, I thought the motif of a thought bubble would be appropriate. I like the simplicity of this piece, but I'm not sure how I feel about the overall layout. The "01" is completely separated from "Case Study" and it's hard to differentiate which pieces of text correspond with each other.

D A N I E L  
C A E S A R  
SUPERPOSITION  
  
FROM  
CASE  
STUDY 01  
2019

dAN·EL CAESAr  
SUPERB&SITION  
FrOM CASe STUDY 01  
2019

Fig. 10

**DISORDER**

This design is an evolution of Figure 01. For this cover, I'm playing with lowercase and a larger point size, as well as the positioning of the disordered letters. This was a class favorite out of this critique. Originally the font was much smaller, but it was suggested by my professor to really play with scale and make the most of this assignment by blowing up the text.

03

# *Character Weight*

**DESIGN 5 DIFFERENT COVERS FOR YOUR SONG USING THE FOLLOWING PARAMETERS:**

- \* using the Regular/book or Roman of the typeface by choice, in combination with heavier and lighter weights
- \* any single point size per design
- \* type color: black on white background

This assignment adds weights to the design palette, which allow you to consider thicks and thins, textures and variations that affect meaning and composition. Typeface and size per design are set, make sure you bring order in song title, name of performing artist/ band, album where song is taken from, and year of release.

Things to play with are COMPOSITION / LEADING / FONT WEIGHT / UPPER or LOWERCASE / etc.



**DANIEL CAESAR**  
SUPERPOSITION  
FROM CASE STUDY 01  
2019 DANIEL CAESAR  
SUPERPOSITION  
FROM CASE STUDY 01  
2019 DANIEL CAESAR  
**SUPERPOSITION**  
FROM CASE STUDY 01  
2019 DANIEL CAESAR  
SUPERPOSITION  
FROM CASE STUDY 01  
2019 DANIEL CAESAR  
SUPERPOSITION  
FROM CASE STUDY 01  
**2019** DANIEL CAESAR  
SUPERPOSITION  
FROM CASE STUDY 01  
2019 DANIEL CAESAR  
SUPERPOSITION  
**FROM CASE STUDY 01**  
2019

Fig. 11

## **STAIRCASE TO HEAVEN**

Caesar often sings about life and death, so to allude to that, I attempted to create the motif of a staircase to heaven. I was heavily critiqued for my use of such a small font size and repetition, both of which are design elements that aren't at the focus of this assignment. If reworked, I would definitely increase the size and simply build a staircase with the original text and no repetitions.

Fig. 12

## LIFE'S CYCLES

For this design, I wanted to embed both balance and contradiction with the piece with repetition and varying character weight. This piece received critique similar to most of the designs in this set as it draws with type more than it effectively uses type to visually translate the song. The viewer will first see the image the type is attempting to create before reading the words, something that should be avoided.

D  
A  
N  
I  
E  
L  
  
C  
A  
E  
S  
A  
R

FROM

NO COLLISION  
SUPERPOSITION  
SUPERPOSITION  
SUPERPOSITION

C  
A  
S  
E  
  
S  
T  
U  
D  
Y  
  
0  
1

2019

**daniel caesar**

s u p e r p o s i t i o n  
f r o m c a s e s t u d y 0 l  
2 0 1 9  
d a n i e l c a e s a r  
s u p e r p o s i t i o n  
f r o m c a s e s t u d y 0 l  
2 0 1 9  
d a n i e l c a e s a r

**superposition**

f r o m c a s e s t u d y 0 l  
2 0 1 9  
d a n i e l c a e s a r  
s u p e r p o s i t i o n  
f r o m c a s e s t u d y 0 l  
2 0 1 9  
d a n i e l c a e s a r  
s u p e r p o s i t i o n

**from case study 01**

2 0 1 9  
d a n i e l c a e s a r  
s u p e r p o s i t i o n  
f r o m c a s e s t u d y 0 l  
2 0 1 9  
d a n i e l c a e s a r  
s u p e r p o s i t i o n  
f r o m c a s e s t u d y 0 l

**2019**

Fig. 13

**SPEED MAPS**

As Caesar references many physics concepts, I thought I would play with a design of a particle speed map. Again, this design uses too small of a font size and doesn't make use of the contrast that can exist between the bold and the regular weight. If reworked, I would get rid of the repeating text and focus on creating the same sort of speed map but experimenting with the tracking between the letters.

Fig. 12

## REFLECTION

Caesar is clearly reflecting upon his life in his song and this design brings that to life while referencing a graph like design. Again, this design becomes more illustrative than typographic with it's repetition. To better harness the power of character weight the visual contrast it can create in this design, I would get rid of the repetition and really increase the point size of the text.

DANIEL CAESAR

2019

<b>S</b> UPERPOSITION	N O I T I S O P S I T I O N
<b>S</b> UPERPOSITION	N O I T I S O P S I T I O N
S <b>U</b> PERPOSITION	N O I T I S O P S I T I O N
S U P E R <b>P</b> O S I T I O N	N O I T I S O P S I T I O N
S U P E R <b>R</b> O S I T I O N	N O I T I S O P S I T I O N
S U P E R <b>P</b> O S I T I O N	N O I T I S O P S I T I O N
S U P E R <b>O</b> S I T I O N	N O I T I S O P S I T I O N
S U P E R <b>S</b> I T I O N	N O I T I S O P S I T I O N
S U P E R <b>I</b> T I O N	N O I T I S O P S I T I O N
S U P E R <b>T</b> I O N	N O I T I S O P S I T I O N
S U P E R <b>I</b> O N	N O I T I S O P S I T I O N
S U P E R <b>O</b> N	N O I T I S O P S I T I O N
S U P E R <b>N</b> O N	N O I T I S O P S I T I O N
S U P E R <b>N</b> O I T I O N	N O I T I S O P S I T I O N
S U P E R <b>N</b> O I T I S I O N	N O I T I S O P S I T I O N
S U P E R <b>N</b> O I T I S O P S I T I O N	N O I T I S O P S I T I O N
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S U P E R <b>N</b> O I T I S O P S I T I O N	N O I T I S O P S I T I O N
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S U P E R <b>N</b> O I T I S O P S I T I O N	N O I T I S O P S I T I O N

**dAN<sup>I</sup>EL CA<sup>E</sup>SAR**  
**SuperPosiTiOn**  
**FrOm CaSe StUdy 01**  
**20!9**

Fig. 13

## **DISORDER**

This is another evolved version of previous designs regarding the concept of disorder. Out of the 5 designs for this assignment, this is the only one that really makes use of the character weight to bring contrast into the piece. However, upon revisiting this design, I don't think it beautiful represents such an elegant song. It's goes a bit overboard with the visual contrast and loses a sort of visual harmony.

04

# *Character Weight & Italics*

**DESIGN 5 DIFFERENT COVERS FOR YOUR SONG USING  
THE FOLLOWING PARAMETERS:**

\* using the Regular/Book or Roman in combination ITALICS,  
PLUS all heavier and lighter font weights available, AND their  
corresponding Italic fonts.

\* any single point size per design

\* type color: black on white background

This assignment continues the exploration by adding italics and the oblique angle. Typeface and size per design are set, make sure you bring order in song title, name of the performing artist/band, album where song is taken from, and year of release.

Things to play with are COMPOSITION / LEADING / LETTER SPACING / UPPER or LOWERCASE / BOLD + LIGHT + ITALIC TYPE etc.

# DANIEL CAESAR

## 2019

# SUPERPOSITION

# FROM CASE STUDY *01*

Fig. 16

## LEAN ON

“SUPERPOSITION” is a song I often go to when I’m in need of a song that keeps me grounded in a time of turmoil or distress. Therefore, I used the italics on specified letters to bring out this feeling of leaning on a song or someone’s shoulder. Personally, I really love how balanced and minimal this piece is. However, there’s not much visual contrast being employed here.

Fig. 17

## CONTRADICTION

Caesar sings about life's contradictions, therefore, this piece emphasizes different words and letters with the use of italics and heavier character weight. Out of the five designs, this one definitely contains the most visual contrast. However, revisiting this design, I don't think it does an amazing job at bringing out the beauty of the song and feels too harsh with the use of the bold typeface.

2019

*Daniel Caesar*  
**SUPERPOSITION**

*from*  
*CASE STUDY 01*



DANIEL  
CAESAR  
SUPERPOSITION  
FROM  
CASE  
STUDY  
01  
2019

Fig. 18

**PERSPECTIVE SHIFT**

Caesar's song is often played when I'm in need of more optimistic thinking or a calmer state of mind. This piece seeks to showcase that switch I feel when I hear the song. Out of the five designs for this assignment, this one was voted as the favorite for its minimal and elegant use of italics. This cover is definitely one of my favorite designs out of the 40 different ones.

Fig. 19

## HIGHS & LOWS

In “SUPERPOSITION,” Caesar sings about the highs and lows of his life. This cover visually translates the highs and lows through the switch between the regular and the italic typeface. I also make use of subscript text to create more hierarchy throughout the piece. I don’t think this design stands out and, if reworked, I would definitely play around more with the negative space and gaps.

*Daniel*/*Caesar*  
2019

*Superposition*

*from*

*Case Study 01*

*D*AN<sup>?</sup>EL CAESAR  
*SUPERB*S<sup>?</sup>T<sup>?</sup>ON  
F*r*OM CAS*e* STU*d*Y 01  
2019

Fig. 20

**DISORDER**

This piece again revisits and evolves the original design for the same concept. However, this time the letter “i” is italicized and flipped upside down to reference the design of a question mark. I don’t think this design does an amazing job at bringing out the contrast that exists between the italic and regular style of the typeface. I think the design overall is also quite difficult to read.

05

# *Type Size Combinations*

**DESIGN 5 DIFFERENT COVERS FOR YOUR SONG USING  
THE FOLLOWING PARAMETERS:**

- \* All possible versions of the typeface : regular/bold/light and italics
- \* any POINT size COMBINATION
- \* type color: black on white background

This assignment adds complexity by allowing the student to explore different sizes, weights and angles. Typeface and size per design are set, bring order in song title, name performing artist/ band, album where song is taken from, and year of release.

Things to play with are COMPOSITION / LEADING / LETTER SPACING / UPPER or LOWERCASE / BOLD + LIGHT + ITALIC TYPE / SIZE COMBINATIONS etc.

*from*  
CASE STUDY 01

DANIEL CAESAR  
SUPER  
POSITION 2019

Fig. 21

### **BUMPS IN THE ROAD**

This cover emphasizes Caesar's discussion of life's ups and downs through the motif of bumps in the road. My professor mentioned his liking for how the letter "O"s interact and intersect with the letter "U" and the letter "R." Looking back, I think the design does feel a bit bottom heavy and the disorder within "2019" doesn't feel quite necessary.

Fig. 22

## IN MOTION

Life is constantly in motion and in a state of unstoppable and continuous change. This piece brings that concept to life through the use of the italicized letters and the way the letters reach past the edge of the design. My professor mentioned the beauty of the large letters and the clear hierarchy created. This design is definitely one of my favorites with its elegantly intricate yet simple use of italics.



**SUPER**  
**POSITION** 2019

**DANIEL CAESAR**

*from* CASE STUDY 01

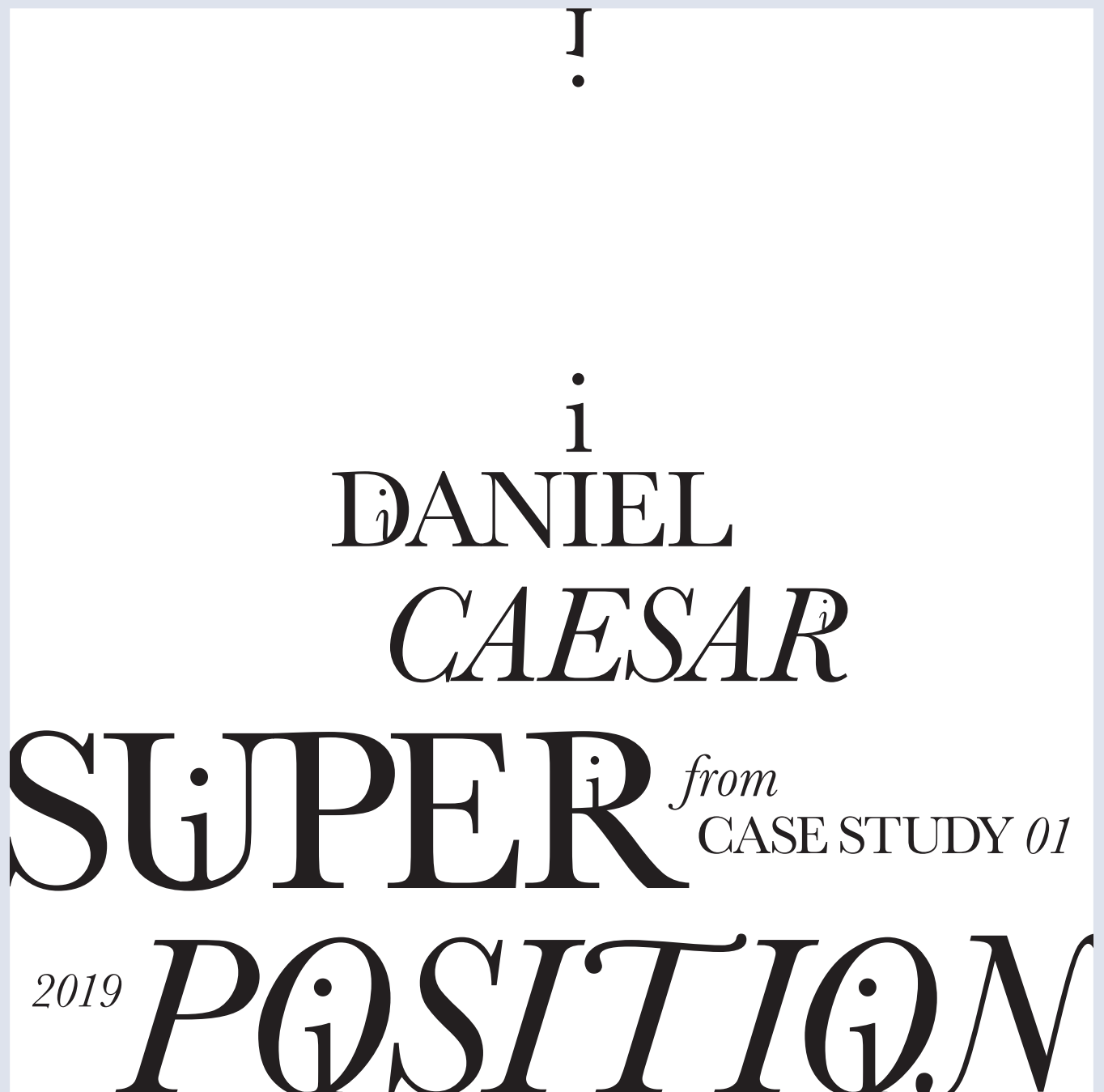


Fig. 23


## INTROSPECTION

As Caesar's song is all about introspection and contemplation of one's life, I wanted to emphasize the letter "i" throughout this piece. Now looking back and thinking about the critique for this piece, I think there's too many "i"s that the piece feels quite cluttered and feels more overwhelming. If reworked, I would definitely reduce the number of letter "i"s and play with the size and placing of them.

Fig. 24

## INTERRELATED

This design revisits the concept of interrelation and connection. I love how the enlarged text brings out the beauty of Baskerville in its italicized style. My professor mentioned how this design really brings out the curves and the serifs of the typeface. The intersection between the two “o”s also create a gentle link, relating back to the overall concept for the overall design.



SUPER  
POSTION  
DANIEL  
CAESAR

FROM  
CASE STUDY 01

2019



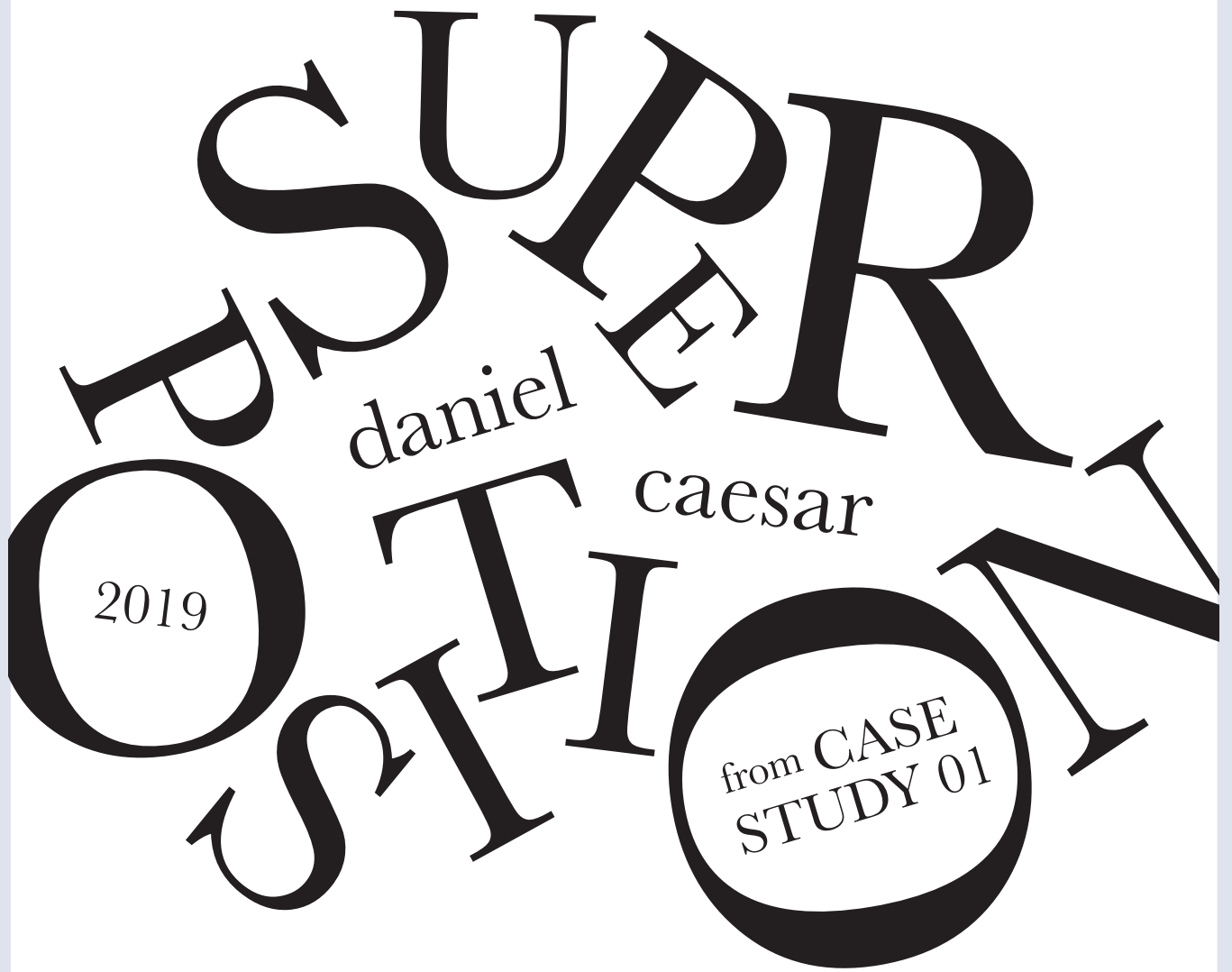


Fig. 25

## CHAOS

For this design, I actually used a random number generator to decide the size of the letters for “SUPERPOSITION.” The use of the number generator is to emulate life’s unpredictable chaos. I love how the letters appear to be protecting the artist’s name, alluding to the idea that the “SUPERPOSITION” as a mindset can shield and protect one’s self from life’s disorder.

06

# *Rules & Blocks*

**DESIGN 5 DIFFERENT COVERS FOR YOUR SONG USING THE FOLLOWING PARAMETERS:**

- \* All possible versions of the typeface fonts you are using, by choice
- \* any POINT SIZE COMBINATION
- \* introduce the following elements: RULES and SOLID BLOCKS of black
- \* 2 designs with RULES only
- \* 2 designs with BLOCKS of black and REVERSED TYPE
- \* 1 design with both RULES and BLOCKS
- \* type color: black on white backgrounds + white on black backgrounds

This assignment explores how RULES and BLOCKS can subdivide space and emphasize or de-emphasize meaning. Check out the Pinterest board references for inspiration and try adding blocks and rules to earlier assignments as a starting point to see how their addition changes the feel of the composition. Think about how RULES and BLOCKS might represent sound or other aspects of your song.

2019

Daniel Caesar

# Super position

*from Case Study 01*

Fig. 26

## CONTRADICTION

Clearly highlighting the concept of contradiction through the use of whites and blacks, I like how this design revisits the idea of yin and yang. Something suggested by my professor is to play around with where the divide is; it can potentially be better used to separate super from position. I like the overall composition of this design, except for maybe the placement of the “2019.”

Fig. 27

## IN MOTION

For this design, I wanted to bring back my design in Figure 22 and apply blacks and whites to play with contrast. With a slight rearrangement and resizing of the text, I think this design successfully brings out the beauty of the typeface and really emphasizes it with the black block. The black letter “o”'s hidden behind the white ones also provide for a nice shadow effect.

**DANIEL CAESAR**

**SUPER  
2019  
POSITION**

*from* CASE STUDY 01

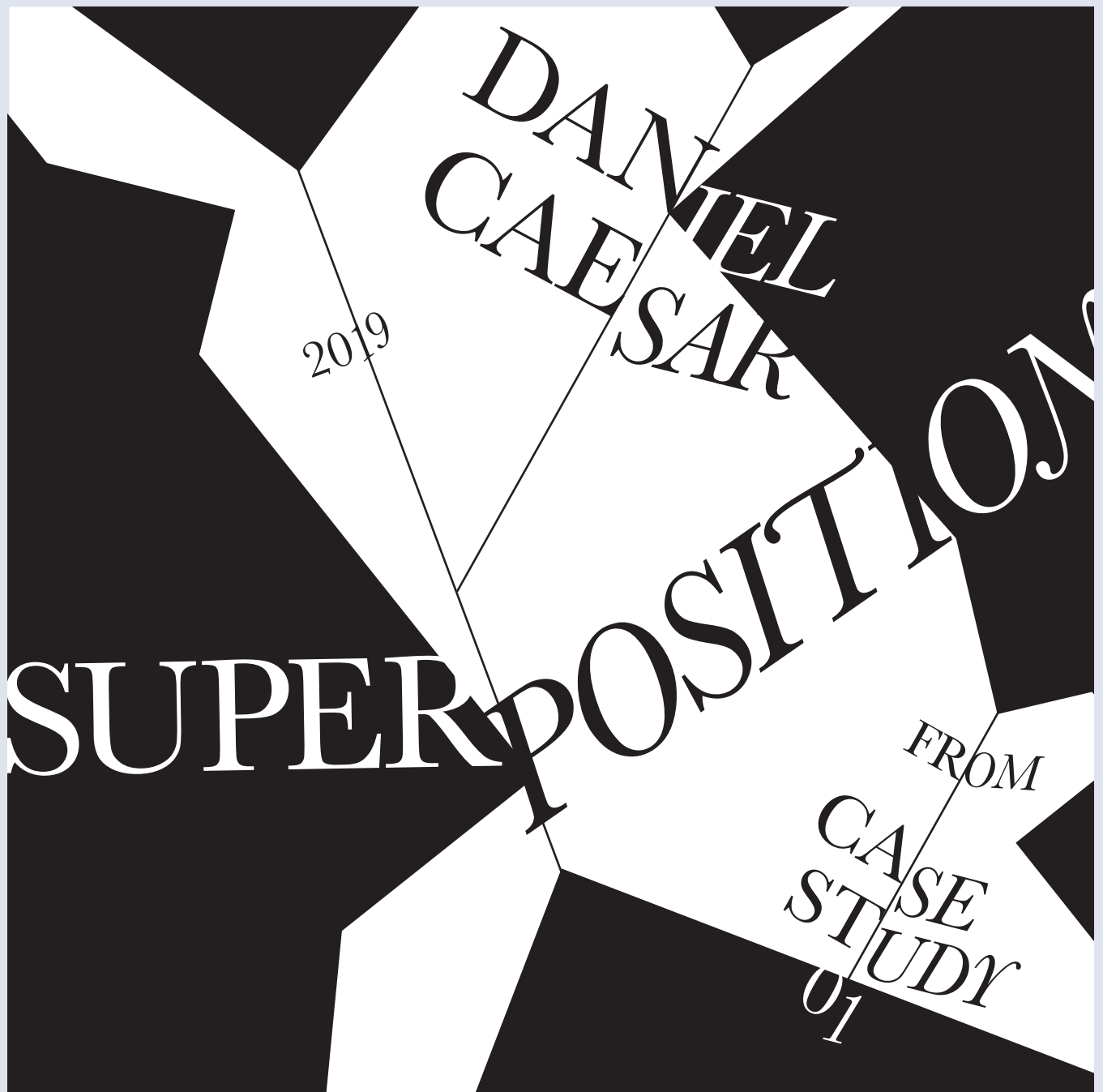


Fig. 28

## DUALITY

This design visualizes the idea of “light cannot exist without darkness” by using whites and blacks to highlight or hide the pieces of text. This design is likely the most visually interesting and eye-catching out of the set due to its strange diagonals and intersections. However, I’m not sure about the legibility of the text due to the placement of the lines and blocks.

Fig. 29

## DRAWING PARALLELS

I draw a lot of parallels between Caesar's philosophy on life and my own. This piece seeks to emphasize that sort of comparison and connection. Although I love how the italics here connect to look like cursive, I question the use of the lines as they don't appear to add to the design besides build the overall concept. The lines could potentially be used more effectively with different placements and widths.

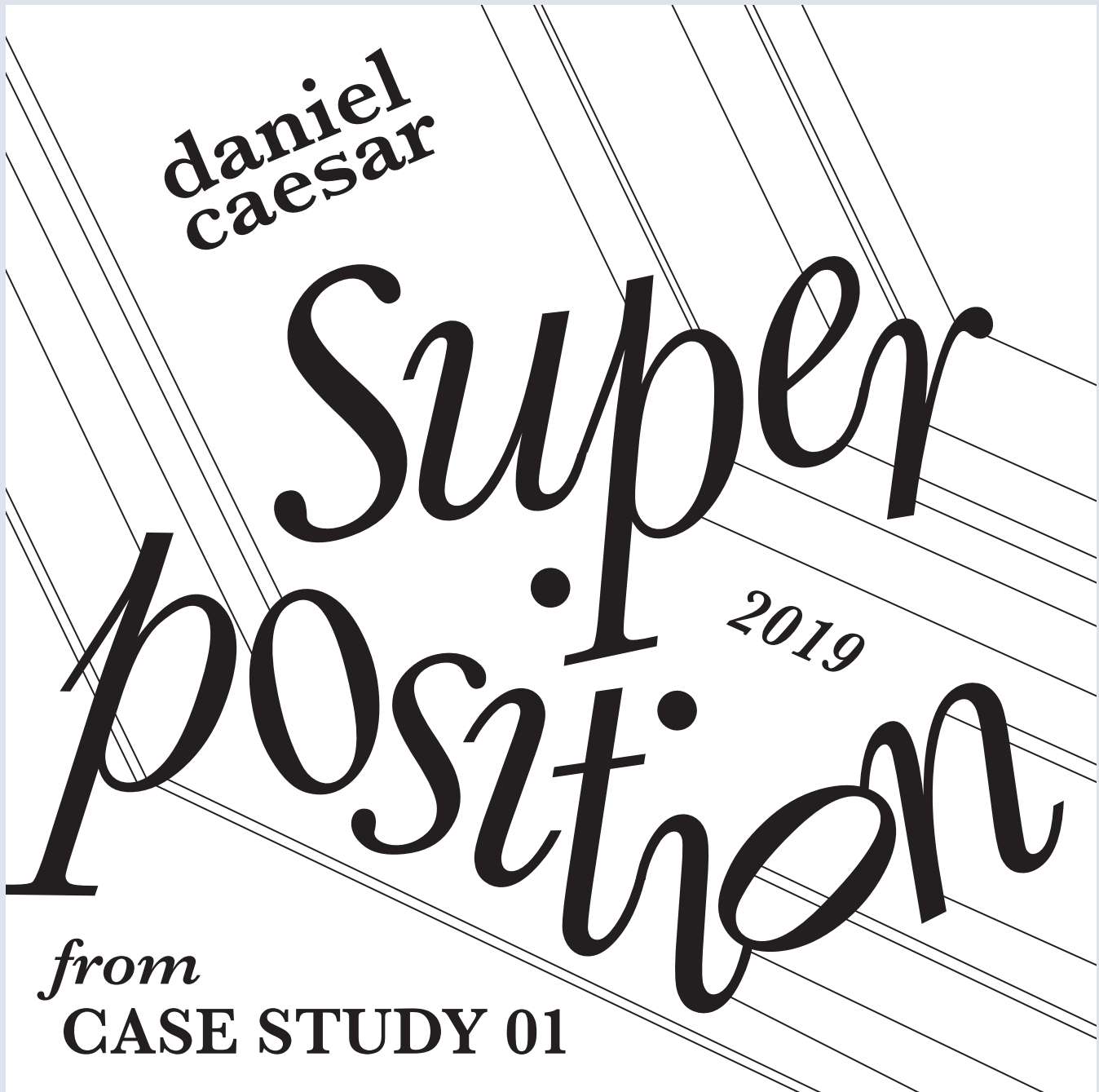




Fig. 30

## CHAOS

This evolved version of Figure 25 makes use of lines as another element to emphasize the chaos and to direct the viewer's eyes directly to the center. However, I think the chaos might be a little too much and can create a more overwhelming feeling than intended. My professor also suggested that the lines could be placed and angled more in tune with the actual letters.

# 07

## *Sound Notation*

### **DESIGN 5 DIFFERENT SOUND NOTATIONS FOR YOUR SONG USING THE FOLLOWING PARAMETERS:**

- \* all punctuation, numerals and letterforms of the typeface in all font combinations
- \* any point size combination
- \* Color: any 2 PMS (Pantone Matching System ) colors from the Pantone+ Solid Coated swatch palette, in any combination of type, pattern on a white background. You can use all values of the 2 spot colors and the “MULTIPLY” option in EFFECTS palette to simulate inks overprinting on a press to produce a third compound color.

In this assignment design complexity is added by way of spot colors and pattern making. Your task with the pattern design is to visualize parts of the MUSIC SCORE and create SOUND NOTATIONS with the use of periods, dashes, commas, slashes, new shapes from combined glyphs, etc. that are inspired by repeating melodies, rhythms, bass-lines, drum sequences, vocalizations, etc. Remember that space is also a design element.

Advice: Assign specific punctuation signs to specific sounds (e.g. a dot could be used for a drum sound, and the size of the dot (big or small) could indicate a soft or louder sound). Dashes could signify a longer lasting sound, etc. Combining punctuation signs can create new forms and shapes.



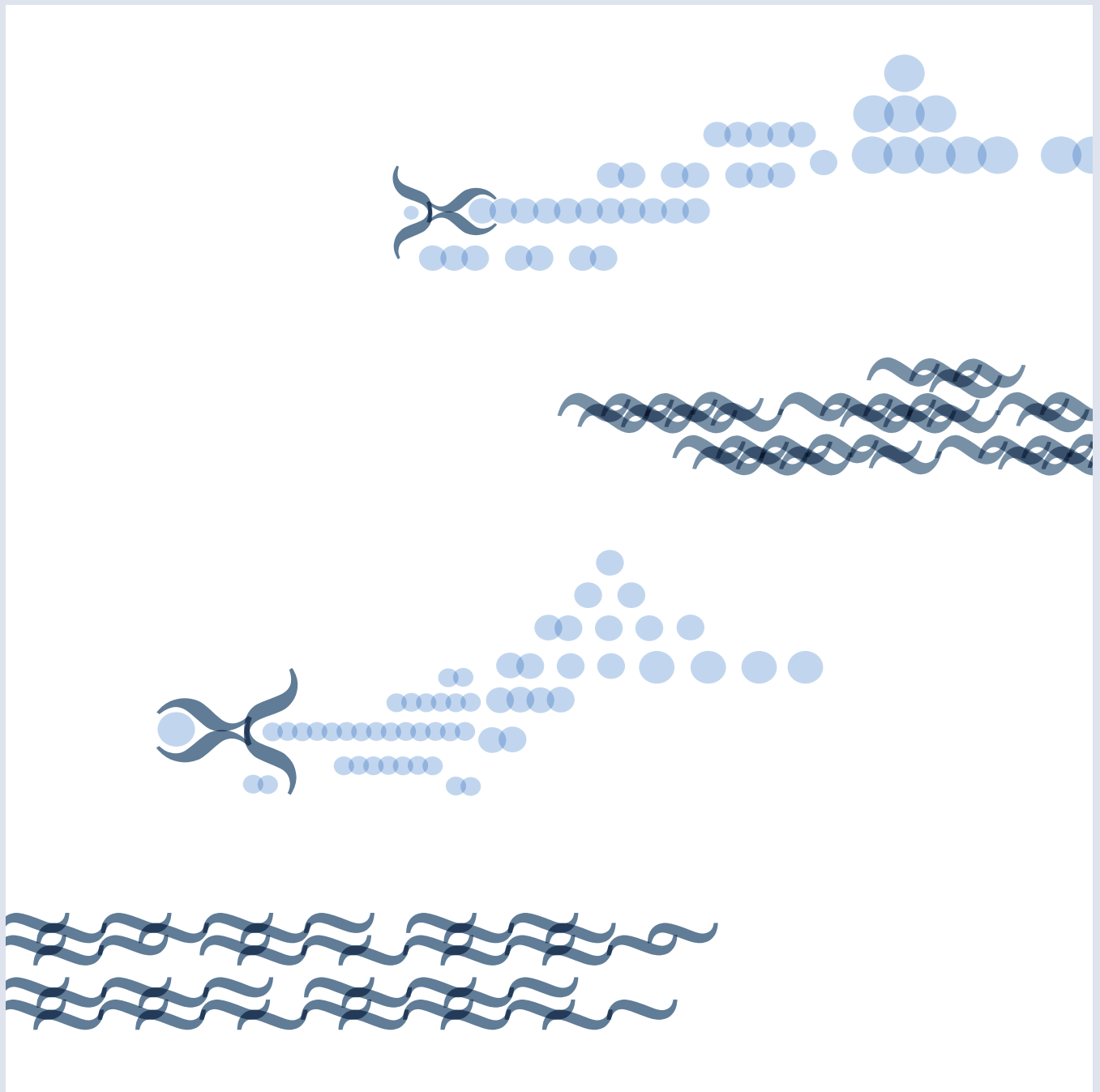


Fig. 31

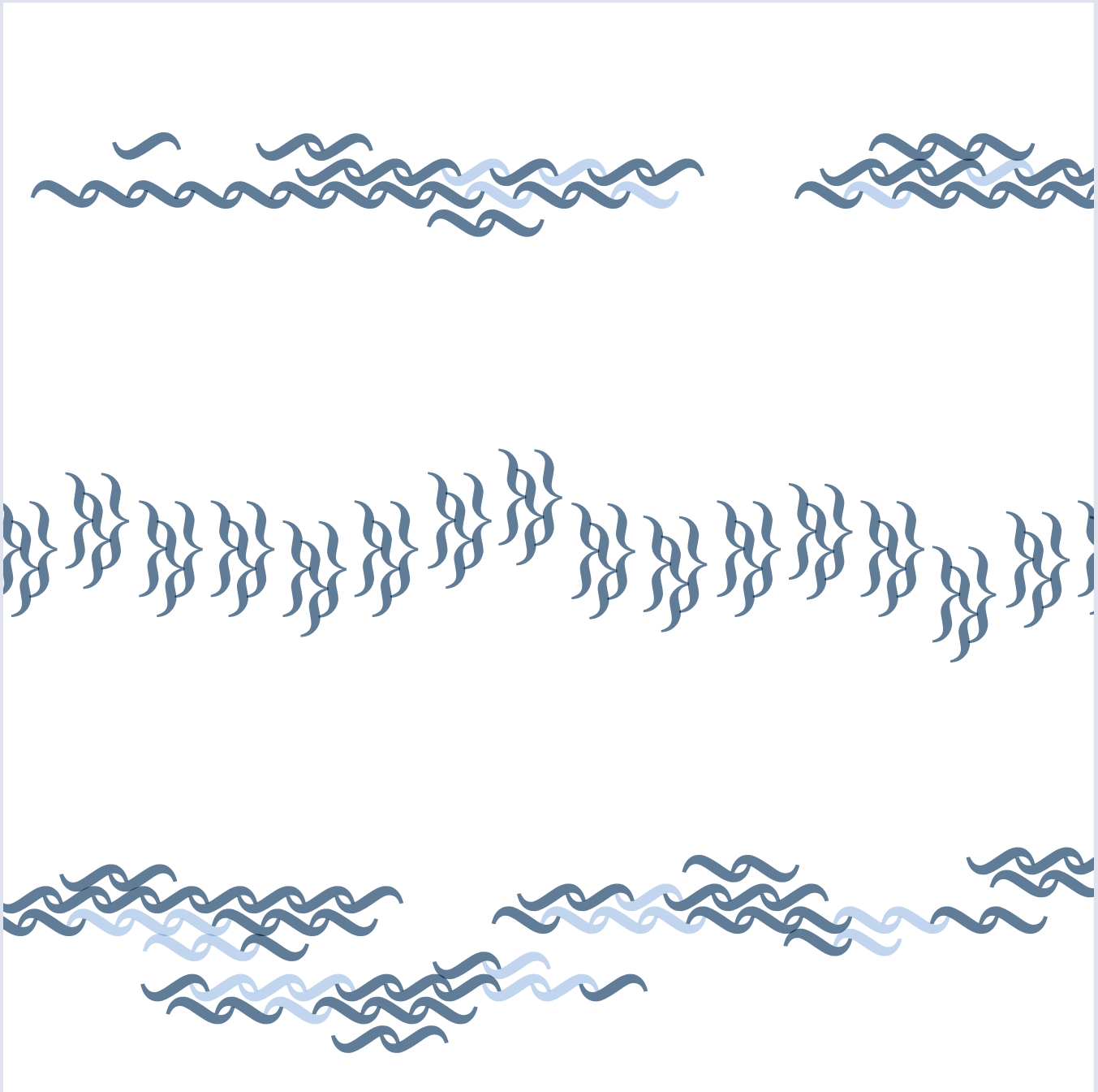
## INTRODUCTION

This sound notation is inspired by the introduction of the song where everything is slowly building and growing. A major critique I received throughout this assignment was how I should try varying size and opacity more to better represent the song's musical qualities. This design uses a bit of size variation with the different sized dots, but very minimally.

Fig. 32

## INSTRUMENTALS

This design is inspired by the instrumentals that are crafted by guitarist John Mayer. The curves attempt to bring out the delicate and buttery guitar instrumentals. Again, variation in size and opacity could be applied here to better emphasize different elements of the background instrumentals. Reducing the repetition in this piece would also assist in bringing out the patterns I've crafted.



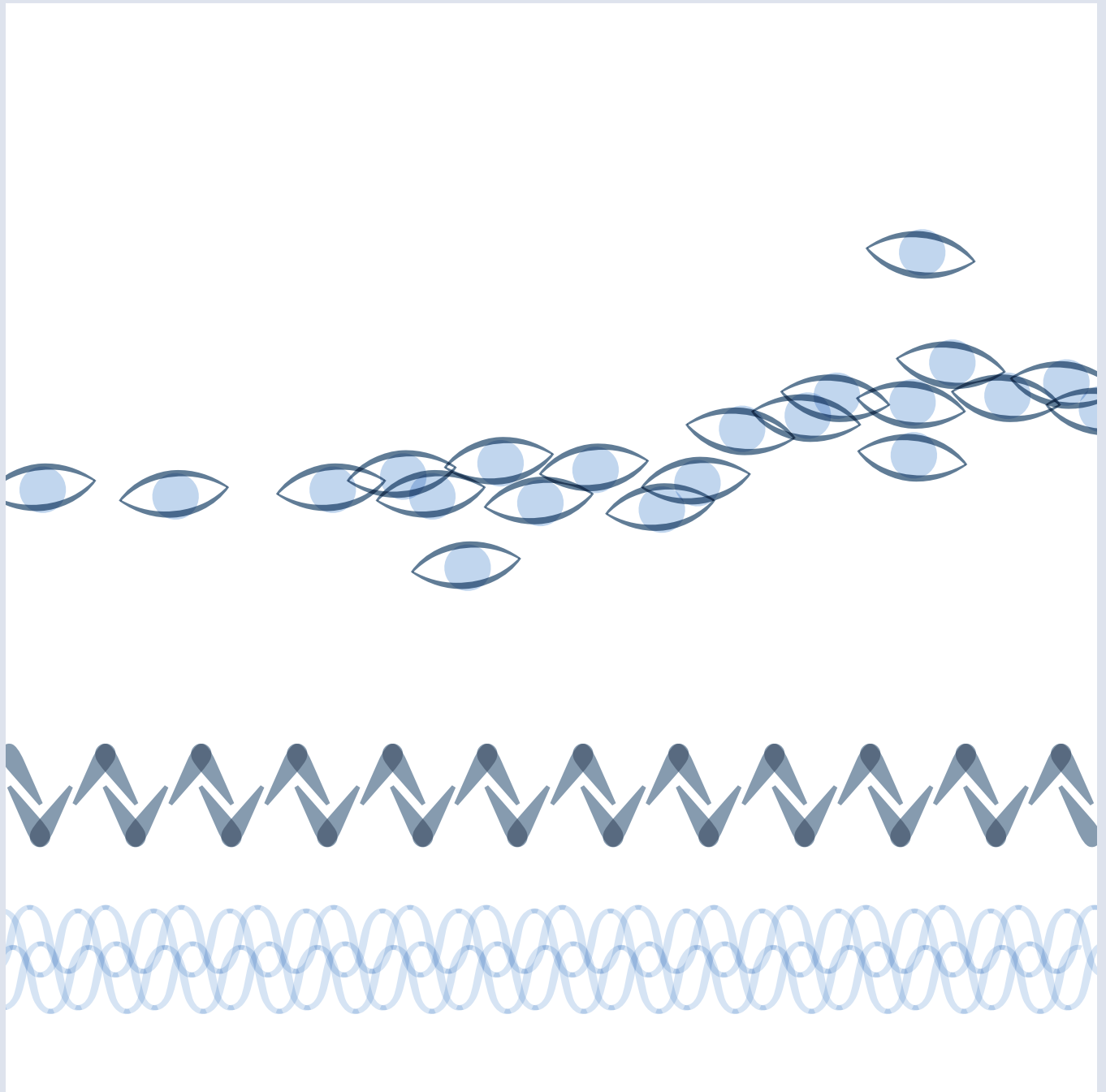


Fig. 33

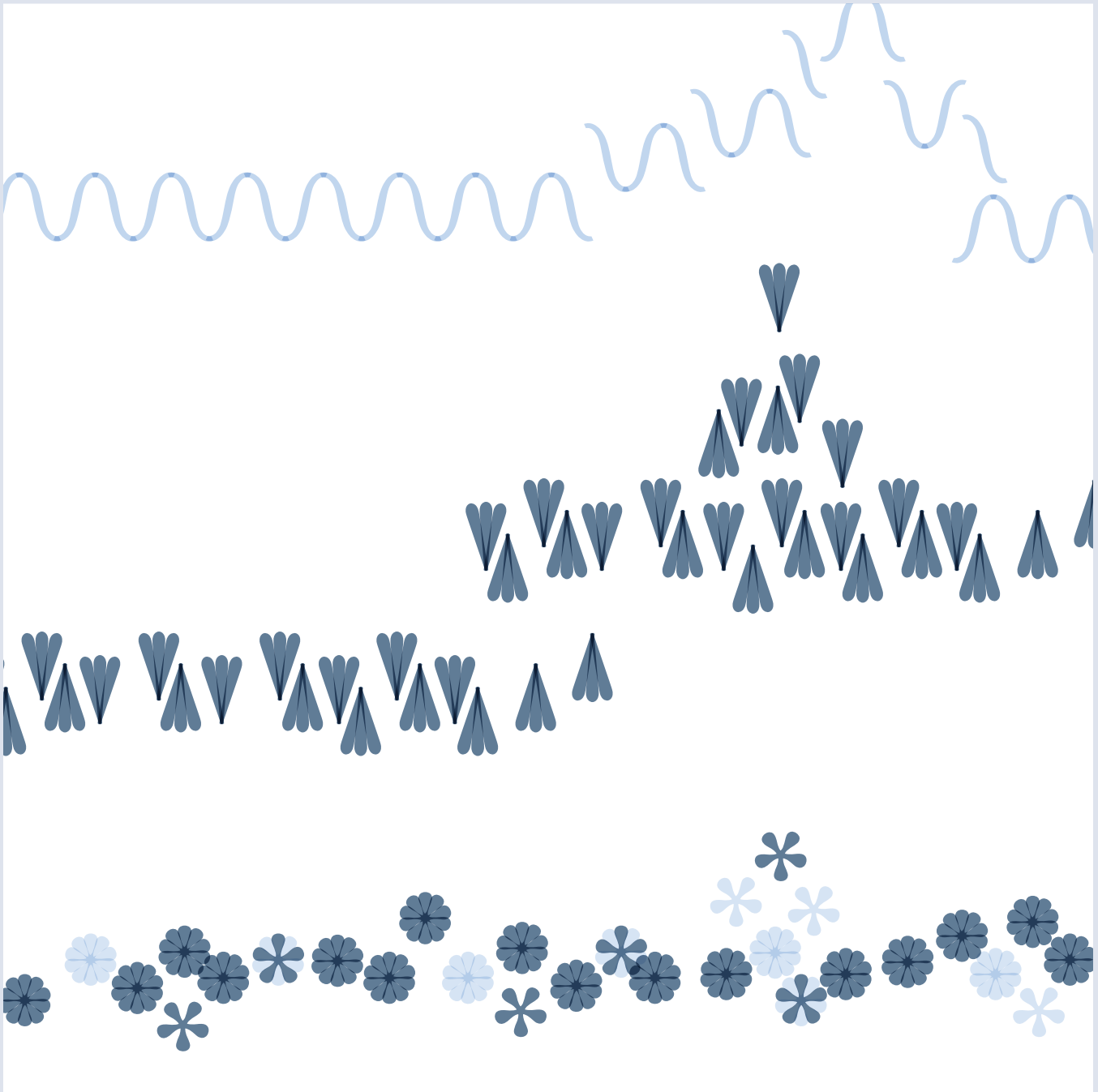
## BRIDGE

Inspired by the bridge of the song, I employed waves and the motif of the eye to refer to the song's reference to superposition and introspection. I also like how the notation that looks like an eye overlaps for areas where the song crescendos. If reworked, I would likely remove the wave and zig zag forms and focus on varying the eye motif's size, color, and rotation.

Fig. 34

## CONCLUSION

This design emphasizes the final swell before the song ends. Just like the critiques provided for the other designs, I would try focusing on playing with one motif instead of multiple. Additionally, I think varying the size and width of certain notations can better express the song's long or short notes, while variation in color can shine light on either the song's loud or quiet moments.



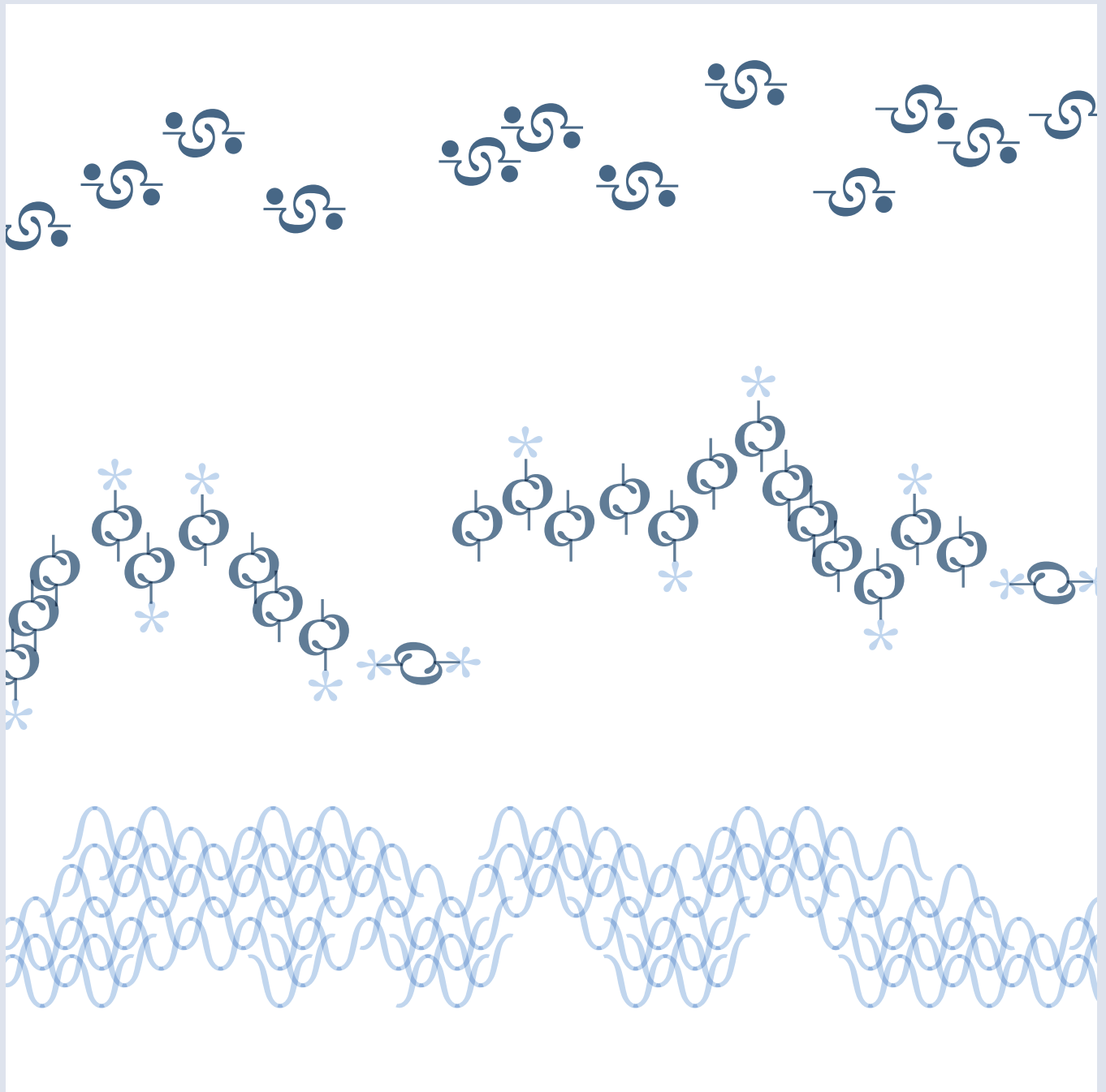


Fig. 35

## CHORUS

This sound notation was designed after the lovely chorus. Although my professor complimented me on my carefully crafted patterns, the repetition is making my designs appear dull as the different forms are starting to take away from each other. If reworked, I would definitely try focusing on one line instead of multiple to better express the song and decipher its musical qualities.

08

# *Typography & Color & Solids & Pattern*

**DESIGN 5 DIFFERENT COVERS OF YOUR SONG USING THE FOLLOWING PARAMETERS:**

- \* Combine your best typographic covers from assignment #7 with the patterns you created in assignment #8, OR CREATE NEW DESIGNS inspired by those exercises
- \* any point size combination
- \* Color: design in CMYK [full color]. You can use all values of colors and black with backgrounds and blocks in black, white or color.

This assignment adds complexity through the addition of full color (aka four color process CMYK). If you are using PMS Spot Color patterns from assignment #8, they will need to be adapted to CMYK.

Keep in mind that these 5 FINAL COVERS should represent your song in all aspects. Color, shape and form should be used in combination of typography to enhance all meaning. Aim to make these last five designs the best of the whole collection!

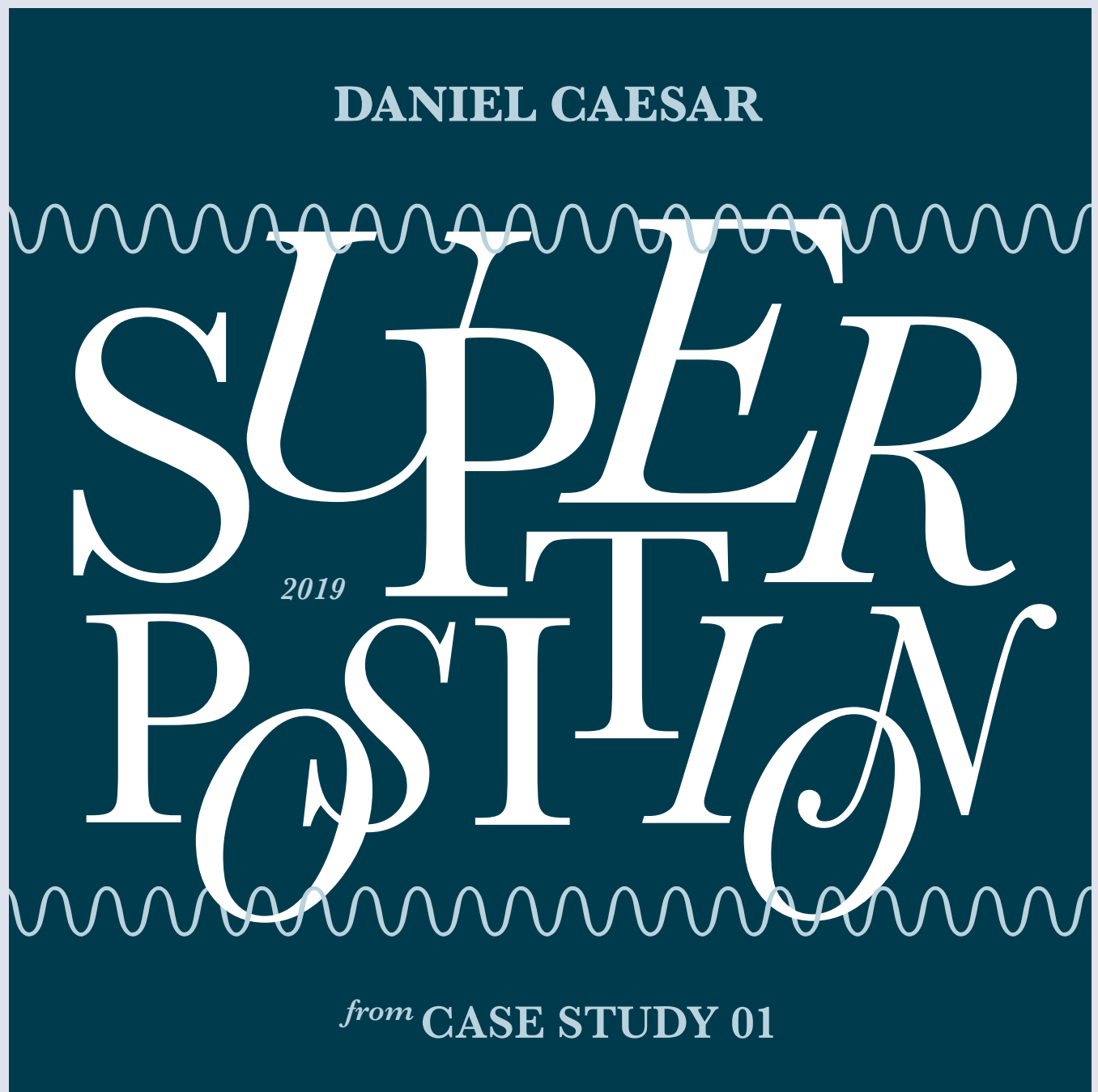


Fig. 36

## CONTINUOUS MOTION

Taking from Figure 22, this design incorporates teals and the sound notations from the previous assignment. The detail where the waveforms overlap and intertwine with various letters creates a sense of motion and depth. However, I question if the waveforms make the space feel cluttered or constrained. If reworked, I would likely play around more with the size and placement of the waveforms.

Fig. 37

## DISPLACEMENT

By lowering the opacity and slightly displacing certain letters, it build a sense of motion within this piece where the letters feel like they are moving away. However, if reworked, I would likely reduce the amount I repeat the background pattern as it dulls the overall design. I would also increase the size of the text and separate “super” from “position” to better make use of the space.

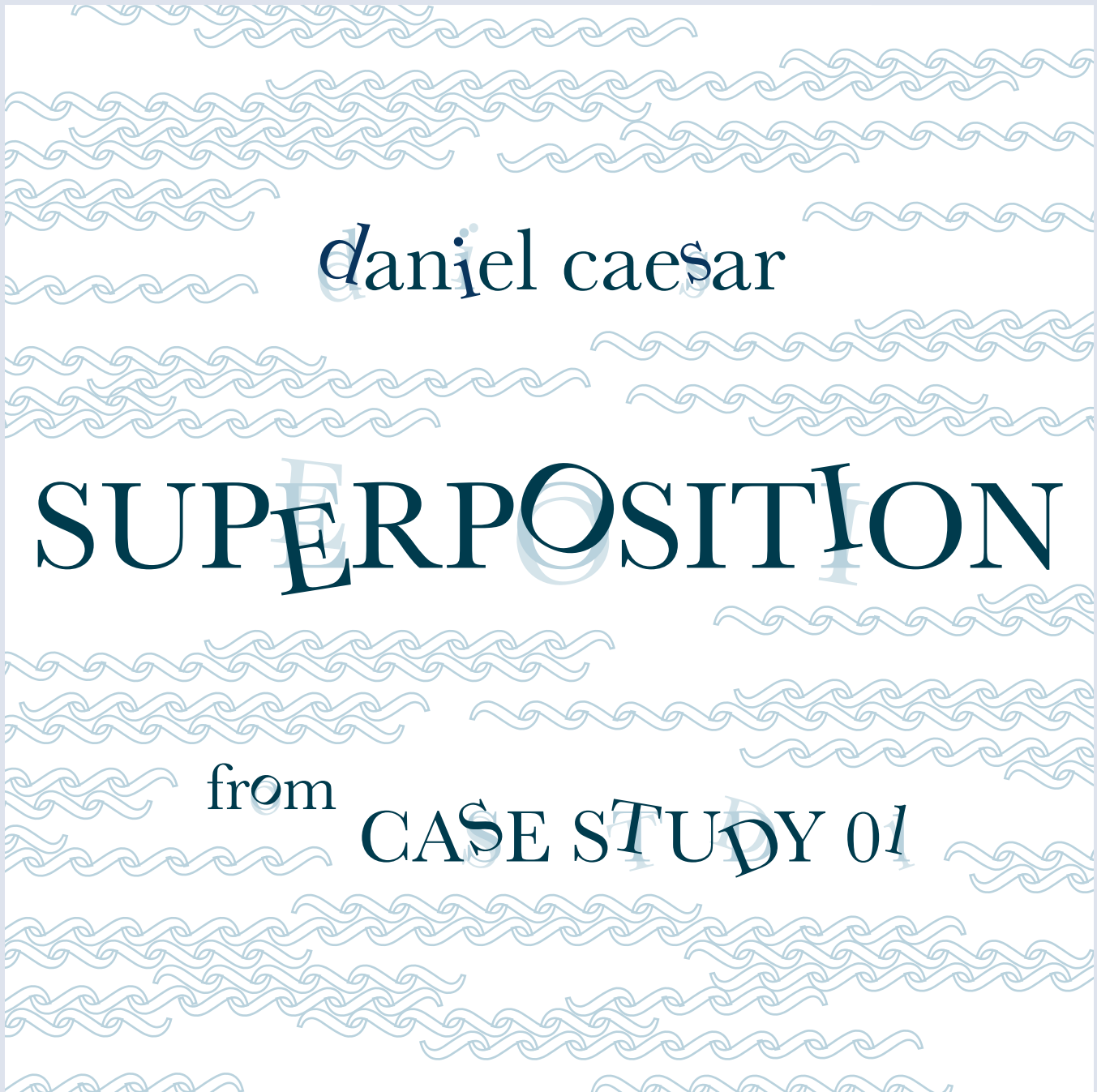






Fig. 38

## COMPLEXITY

This design incorporates Figure 28's original design while using color to balance the various forms. The use of the light and dark teals that conceal and reveal the text express the song's complexity and hidden meanings. The placement of the blocks also create a sense of clutter while still remaining orderly and appealing. The placements of the blocks also carve into the negative space in interesting ways.

Fig. 39

## PERSPECTIVE SHIFT

Bringing back the shift from the regular text to the italic text, this design revisits Figure 18. However, this design is no doubt my least favorite from the set for this final assignment. Something about it feels quite dull and I don't think it successfully emphasizes the shift I was looking to emulate in the design. The cross and the patterns feel unnecessary and don't add to a viewer's understanding of the song.





Fig. 40

## INTROSPECTION

Bringing back the eye motif from Figure 33 and the type design from Figure 25, this design again emphasizes the idea of looking inwards and reflecting on one's self. I love how the placement of the eye motifs create this feeling of growth that stem from the text and move our eyes outwards. I think this design beautifully expresses the song's overall theme and feeling through its colors and forms.



# *Results*

Looking back upon this quarter's work and this publication, I'm pleased to say I've grown immensely as a designer. I believe one of the biggest things I'll take away from this course is the skill to both ask for critique and offer it to others. As we had critiques for every assignment, I became more conscious of my commentary and what I could improve on. I started asking myself why I liked or disliked certain designs, allowing me to better understand which design decisions were working and which ones weren't. I'll also ask my professor and my fellow classmates why a certain design stands out to them or how they would've done the design differently. By doing so, I gain a deeper understanding of what to avoid and what to emphasize or adjust.

From designing and revising 40 covers, I've also learned just how much time and effort it takes to design something. So many hours just spent staring at the InDesign interface and pushing pixels around to perfect the design. As humans and especially designers, I think it's easy for us to critique everything we see, but, through this course, I've gained a greater appreciation for the designs that may not suit my taste but are the outcome of many hours of work and dedication.

This course has also challenged my perfectionist tendencies. With tight deadlines and multiple designs due every couple of days, I forced myself to focus on making progress and experimenting instead of perfecting the minute details.

I walk away from this course a more appreciative and conscious designer. Although the work I've made in this course is far from perfect or exceptional, each design acted as a stepping stone towards my growth as a stronger designer.

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