

The Retrospector
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It was not until the early 80s that I listened for the first time to the drum solo in the song "moby dick" by Led Zeppelin (the song was originally released in 1969). I was in high school and one of my friends had stolen an old vinyl album from his parents called Led Zeppelin II – "you have to listen to this", he said. We were sick of Culture Club hits and disappointed by pretty much everything touched by disco and pop music. Queen seemed to miss their original metallic-rock sound and Kiss sounded too glammy and transvestite to us. Nothing surprisingly new was arising then except for a few exceptions.

So my friends and I used to do some "archeology", either opening storage rooms or spending hours at the music store (not the iTunes store precisely) looking for "new good" music. Then, Led Zeppelin, pretty much an old and almost dissolved band by the 80s was a new thing to me.

Many decades later, both events, the real booming time for "Led Zeppelin II" at the beginning of the 70s and "my Led Zeppelin II times" in the 80s are in the past. For an older Led Zeppelin fan, I don't belong to Led Zeppelin's period. How could I if I still wore diapers when these guys were playing Moby Dick?. However to me it's a different story, yet for my son there's no difference at all between any fan of Led Zeppelin, including me. Moreover, to my children, Led Zeppelin shares a spot in the timelines next to, say, Culture Club or The Beetles.

If I try to place these events on an imaginary timeline, the gaps will be noticeable. But what adds more contrast to my perception of time is to attach other images related to those periods. For instance, a car from the times when Led Zeppelin II was launched is an old car to me. In fact, I can barely remember seeing cars like these on the roads when I was a child.

The image I have in my mind concerning the musicians provides an even greater contrast: to me Jimmy Page (the guitar player) sounded as young as I was in the 80s, however he's older than my dad. And, following the same example, the cars Jimmy Page probably drove back in the 70s belong to a different music period in my ears.

By associating images from personal experiences and memories from the past, our perception of time can be revealingly inaccurate.

To demonstrate this kind of inaccuracy, I propose a kind of visual collection of material that I am calling the "retrospector." It is a visualization tool for representing these "incommensurable" periods with very little or no written information needed.