



**Album Artwork Through The Ages
A Celebration of 70 Years of The Album**



1949

Beethoven Symphony No.3 in E Flat Major opus 55 (Eroica) Design – Alex Steinweiss

In the 1930s, recorded music was sold in plain packaging with discs often issued in plain sleeves. Steinweiss, who was the first art director of Columbia Records said “they were so drab, so unattractive. I convinced the executives to let me design a few.” With the introduction of the vinyl LP in 1948, Steinweiss was credited with inventing LP cover artwork.



1950

Arturo Toscanini and the NBC Symphony Orchestra Grand Canyon Suite by Ferde Grofé Design – Alex Steinweiss

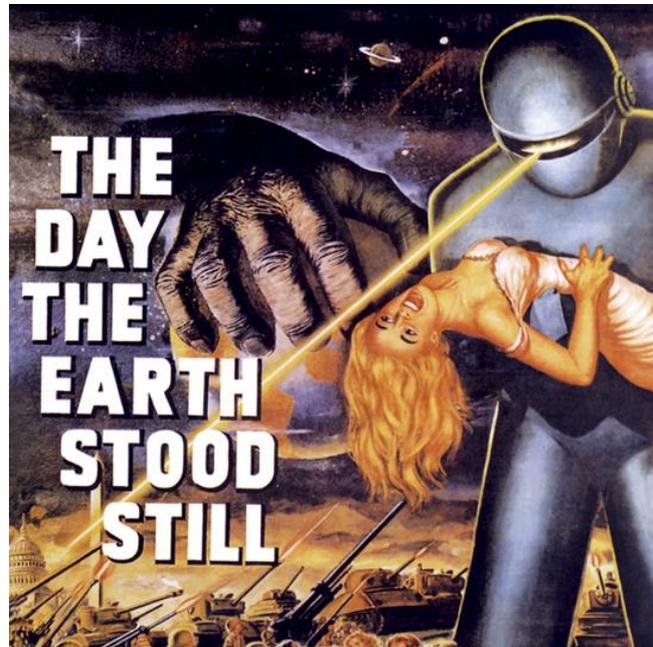
It's no surprise to see another example of work by Alex Steinweiss on this list as he created over 2,500 album artworks in his time. This is an adaptation of the original shellac release from 1945, however, the clouds at the top had to make way for the 'Long Play 33 1/3' information at the bottom of the sleeve.



1951

Bernard Herrmann
The Day The Earth Stood Still
Design – Unknown

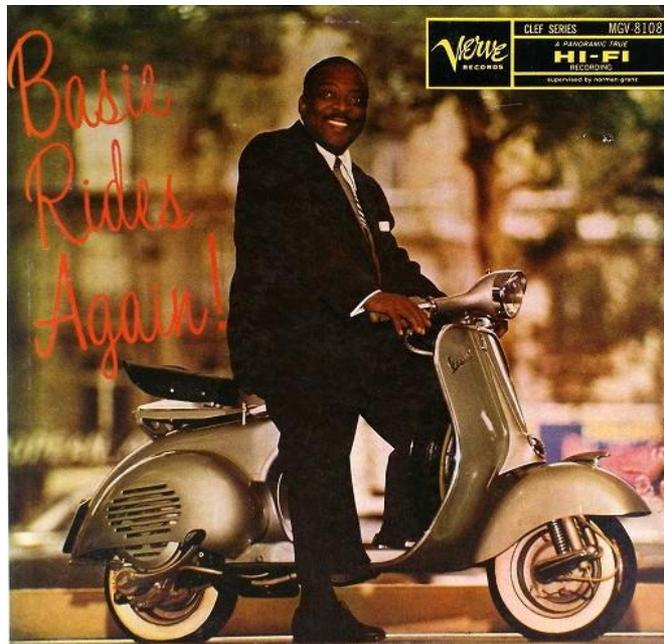
This album was originally pressed as a 10" LP for the sound track of this futuristic sci-fi film. The designer, like so many of the period, remains unknown. However, in this instance the credit must surely go to those involved in the original movie poster.



1952

Count Basie Basie Rides Again! Design – Unknown

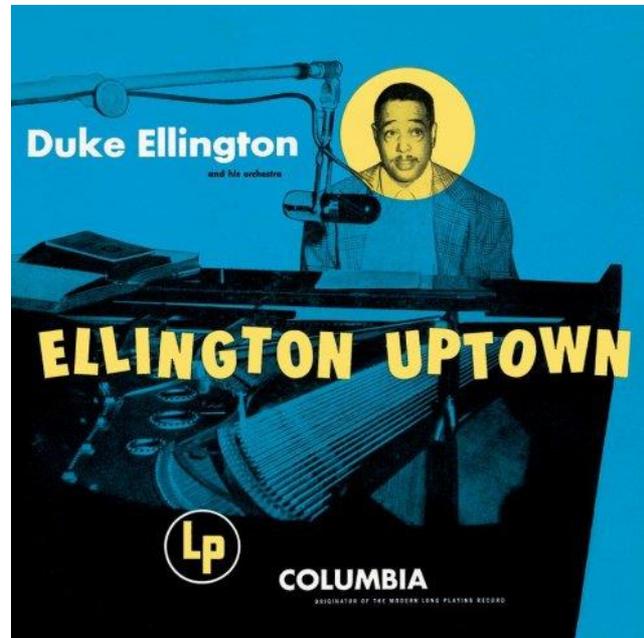
This album was originally recorded and released as a 78 and it would be a few years before this rather jovial record sleeve would see the light of day on the Verve label.



1953

Duke Ellington Ellington Uptown Design – Monogram

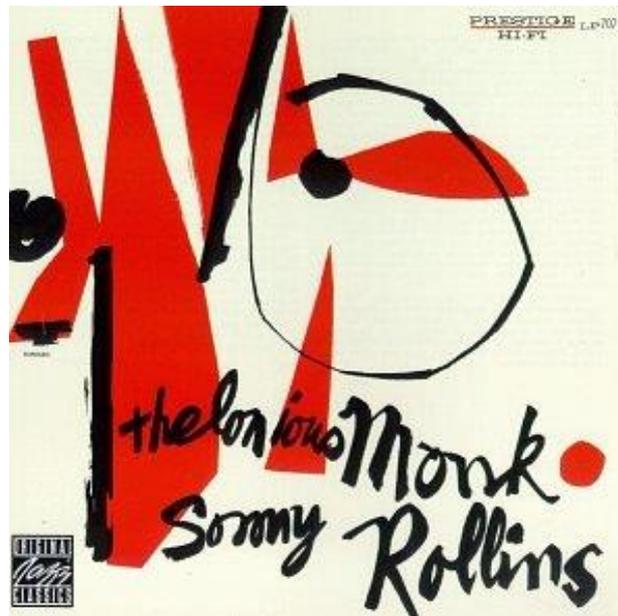
When the first LP record to feature a sleeve design was created, its purpose was purely commercial often leaving the inhouse designer uncredited. This record was also released at a crucial time for music's evolution and benefitted from the great sound quality of some of Columbia's best engineers at the time.



1954

Thelonious Monk Thelonious Monk & Sonny Rollins Design – Tom Hannan

This album was created in three recording sessions over 12 months and was the last of Monk's work to appear on the Prestige label. The cover art is a typical abstract design of the period and would soon go on to influence a whole new jazz listening generation with artists like Jackson Pollock taking inspiration from both the art and music.



1956

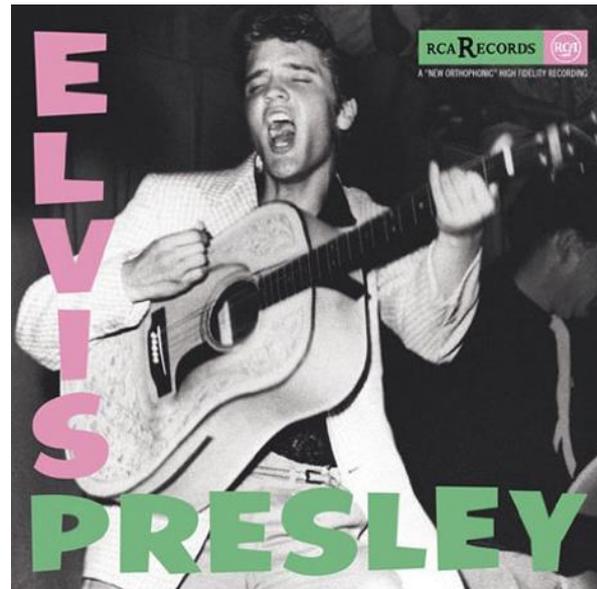
Elvis Presley

Elvis Presley

Art Director - Colonel Tom Parker

Photography - Popsie

The cover photo was taken during a performance in Florida in July 1955 and little is known about the design process that brought about the 'pink and green never be seen' typography. This graphic pioneer was most famously given homage to by the Clash, for 1979's London Calling. They used the same 'action packed rock n roll style' photography in black and white and the same typography.



1957

Little Richard
Here's Little Richard
Design – Paul Hartley and Thadd Roark

Here's a 24-year-old Little Richard letting out one of his trademark squeals. The black and white lettering makes a powerful statement next to this action shot of Richard, which depicts the enormous amount of energy for which Little Richard was known.



1958

Chuck Willis Chuck Willis, The King of the Stroll Design – Marvin Israel

Chuck Willis was often referred to as the King of the Stroll for his 1950s performance of the dance craze 'The Stroll'. Pictured here in the trademark turban he frequently performed in, Willis takes on the role of a 'King' in this artwork looking straight into the eyes of his adoring fans. Willis tragically died from a bleeding ulcer aged only 32, not long after this album was released.



1959

Billy Mure
Supersonic Guitars Volume I
Design – Charles Earnes

Graphically depicting a military jet that breaks the sound barrier, this was now the Supersonic age and the modern sounding electric guitars of Billy Mure were ready to break into the swinging 60s.



1960

Conjunto Primavera Bailemos Twist Con Texaco Design – Unknown

Released during the world-wide twist craze that arose in the early 60s, this promotional album with Texaco was released featuring a picture of a Puerto Rican Texaco fuel garage.



1961

The Miracles
Hi! We're The Miracles
Artwork Wakefield & Mitchell
Photography Pictorial Studios, Inc.

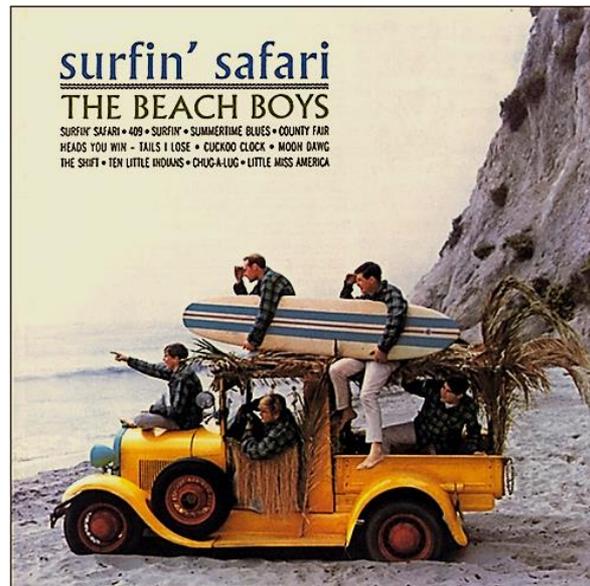
This record is history. As well as having a strong 'we're here' message, this was actually the first vinyl album ever released by the Motown Record Corporation albeit under the Tamla subsidiary label.



1962

The Beach Boys Surfin' Safari Photography – Ken Veeder

The photo taken on the beach in Malibu was created by the in-house team at Capitol, such was the low importance of sleeve design at the time. And to keep costs down they conveniently shot the cover to the follow up LP, Surfer Girl, the very same day.



1963

Freddie Hubbard
Hub-tones
Design – Reid Miles
Photography – Francis Wolff

This album cover is so simplistic, yet so effective. In fact, this artwork was regarded in such high esteem, it later went on to be used several times by the label Blue Note and was paid homage to in the artwork of several other artists, including Bob Dylan.



1964

Donald Byrd A New Perspective Design and Photography – Reid Miles

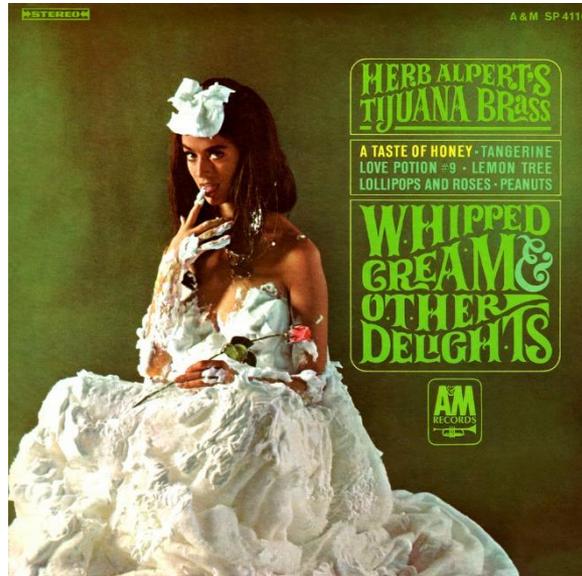
Blue Note was the first record label in history to actively create a visual identity. This Hard Bop recording was a real departure for Byrd and is considered to be one of the best uses of a gospel choir in a jazz context. Along with the chorus, Byrd was accompanied by a stellar line up of Blue Note all stars.



1965

Herb Alpert's Tijuana Brass Whipped Cream & Other Delights Design – Peter Whorf Graphics

Often considered a classic pop culture icon, it featured pregnant model Dolores Erickson wearing just chiffon and shaving cream.



1966

13th Floor Elevators **The Psychedelic Sounds of The 13th Floor Elevators** **Design – John Cleveland**

Often regarded as the first psychedelic sleeve design with its strong references to marijuana, this mix of contrasting colours almost distracts from the designer's take on the all seeing eye.



1967

The Beatles Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band Design – Peter Blake and Jann Haworth Photography – Michael Cooper

After an initial idea from Paul McCartney, it was suggested they employ a “real artist” for this album cover and Peter Blake was brought in. This is clearly a collage of heroes delivered to perfection by the founder of the British Pop Art movement. In real terms, his fee for the job that would define his career was just £200.



1968

The Beatles The White Album Design – Richard Hamilton

This is clearly a contrast to its predecessor Sgt Pepper's. One has to take the view that the design creativity is actually the avoidance of any visual distraction, encouraging the listener to simply just listen.



1969

Scott Walker

Scott 3

Design – Linda Glover

Photography – John Kelly

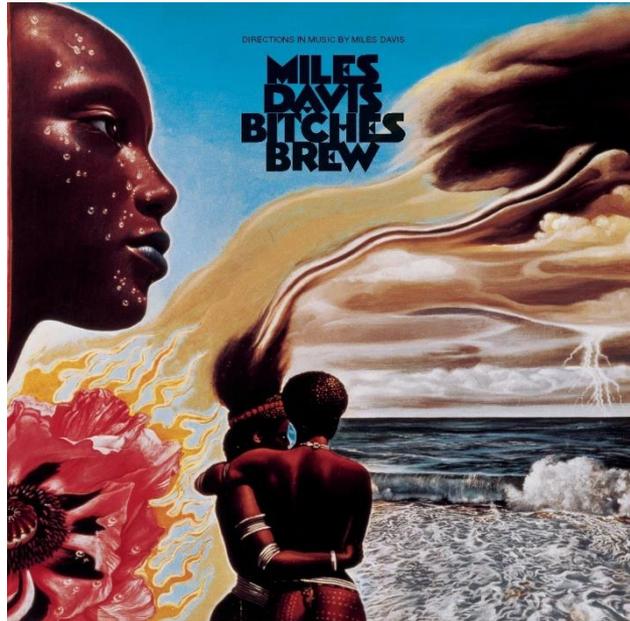
Ironically, the first two solo album sleeves didn't feature any eye contact from the singer, but, here we get the contact in a reflection from a colourful model's eye.



1970

Miles Davis Bitches Brew Painting Matias Klarwein

Painter Matias Klarwein who regarded Salvador Dali as his spiritual father became a popular choice for many recording artists, notably Santana and Hendrix. His style was very much of the time and inspired by surrealism and pop culture.



1971

Funkadelic Maggot Brain

**Design - Paul Bisacca
Photography - Joel Brodsky**

It's the turn of the century and the acid's kicked in. Celebrated fashion model, Barbara Cheeseborough is featured screaming for attention on this artwork, she was a well-known beauty of the 70s.

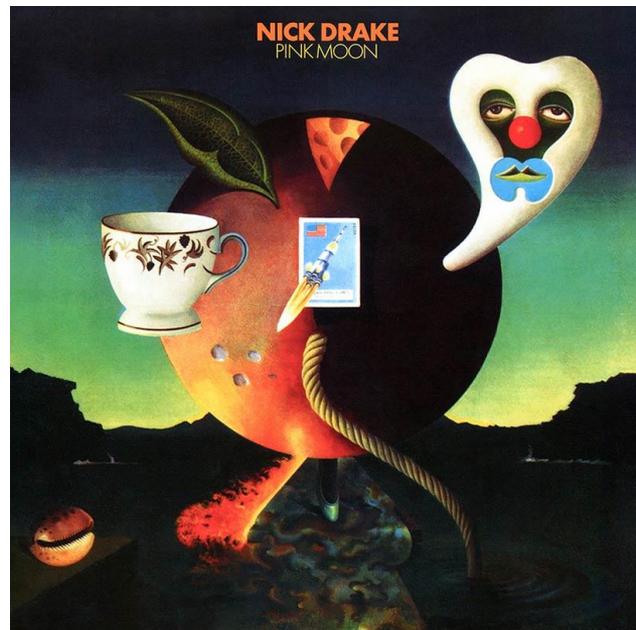


1972

Nick Drake Pink Moon

Illustration - Michael Trevithick

The sleeve originally was meant to be a photo of the artist but the label deemed his appearance to have deteriorated such that it would not be a good selling point. So it was decided a piece of Dali-esque art should be used as approved by Drake.

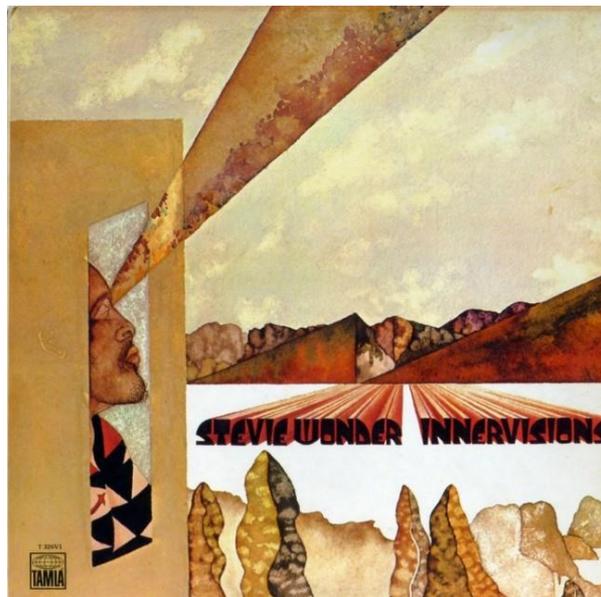


1973

Stevie Wonder Innervisions Illustration – Efram Wolff

Wolff wonderfully depicts Stevie Wonder, despite his physical blindness, as though he is a visionary or oracle with a clear view of the world around him.

This is reflected in Stevie's own quote to the New York Times in 1973:
"Innervisions gives my own perspective on what's happening in my world, to my people, to all people".



1974

Kraftwerk Autobahn (UK Edition)

Design – Unknown but inspired by British Motorway sign by Margaret Calvert

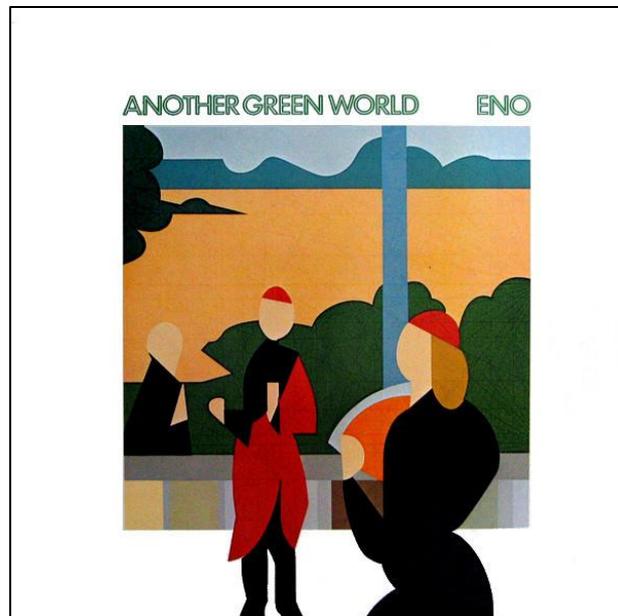
Simplistic in its design for a minimalist album that signifies the birth of electronic music. Two versions of the vinyl sleeve exist but this less complicated UK version has the added bonus of the Vertigo label logo, in itself a design classic.



1975

Brian Eno **Another Green World** Painting - Tom Phillips

The cover artwork shows detail from a painting called 'After Raphael' by Tom Phillips, who was also Eno's mentor during his time at Ipswich Art School. Originally intending to be a painter, Eno was greatly involved in the design of his album sleeves.



1976

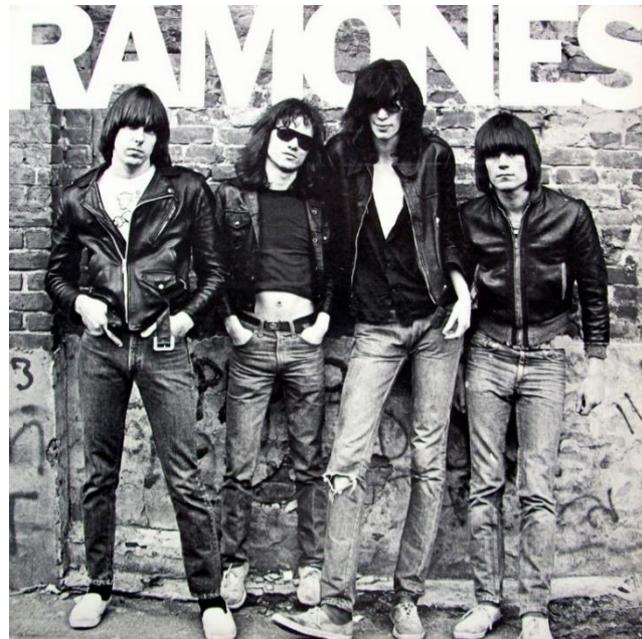
Ramones

Ramones

Design Arturo

Photography Roberta Bayley

This album cover has become one of the most imitated photos of all time. Defining the band's image from the outset, the photograph also captured the look of an era. And only cost the record label \$125!



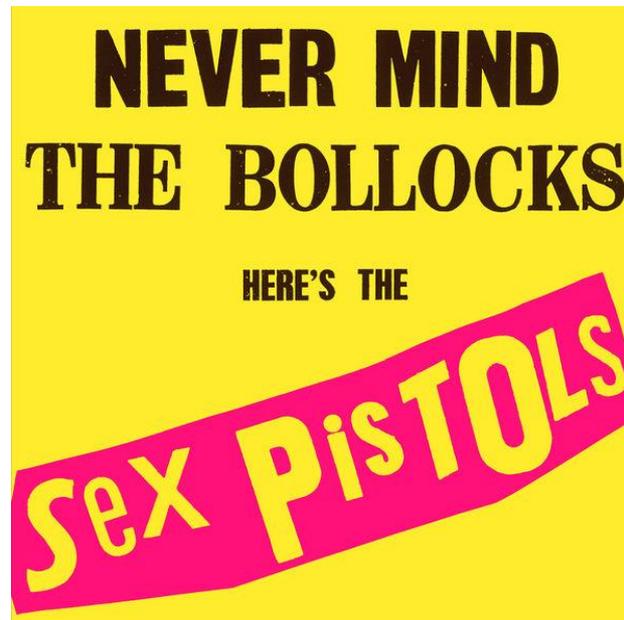
1977

Sex Pistols

Never Mind The Bollocks

Design - Jamie Reid

Coining the term 'blackmail punk' due to the effect of the cut out letters, this was to become the most symbolic sleeve for the Punk Rock generation. Some still contest its exact design origins, but in true spirit punk it stays controversial.



1978

Blondie Parallel Lines

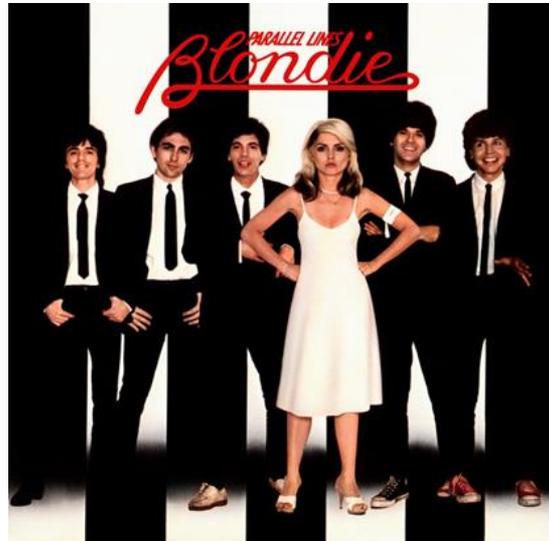
Design - Ramney Communications

Photography – Edo

Illustration - Frank Duarte

Lettering - Jerry Rodriguez

Debbie in a cocktail dress and the band in mod-revivalist suits, it's just the dirty footwear that alludes to their punk rock past. In an age where instant access to the promo videos was not available, this vinyl sleeve would often be the only visual representation of the band the listener could enjoy.



1979

Joy Division Unknown Pleasures Design - Peter Saville

This image is of successive radio pulses that the band chose out of The Cambridge Encyclopaedia of Astronomy. Originally, the image was black on white, but Saville reversed it to white on black and printed it on textured card for the original version.



1980

The Pop Group For How Much Longer Do We Tolerate Mass Murder? Design - Unknown

A record whose relevance needed time to define itself in the period that followed punk. Often described as a starter kit for street protest through the inclusion of 4 fold out poster placards, it captured a global moment in history of political unrest.

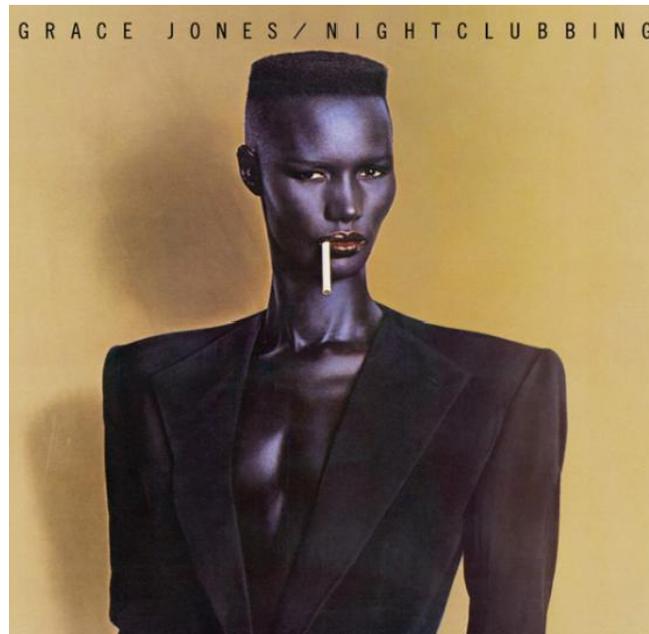


1981

Grace Jones Nightclubbing

Design and Photography Jean-Paul Goude

It was album cover art that helped propel Grace Jones from musician to icon. The now famous androgynous look was created by her lover at the time, who clearly knew how to bring out this natural sense of style. Suitably cloaked in Armani to bring the big shoulder look into the 80s.

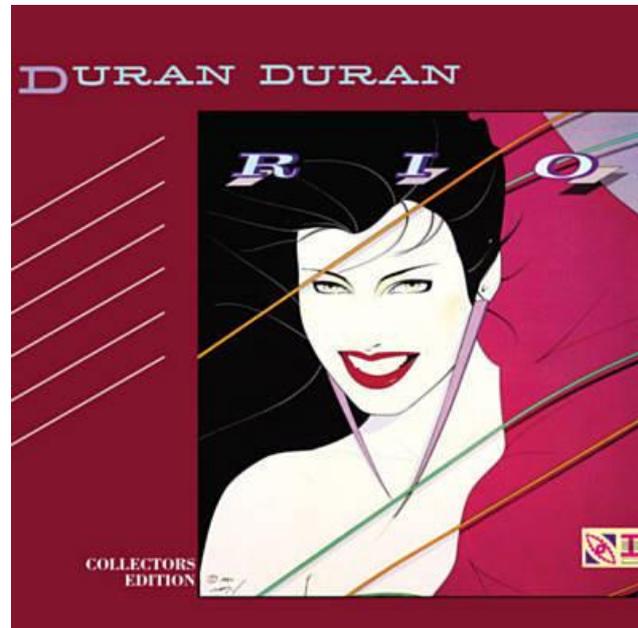


1982

Duran Duran Rio

Design - Malcolm Garrett
Illustration - Patrick Nagel

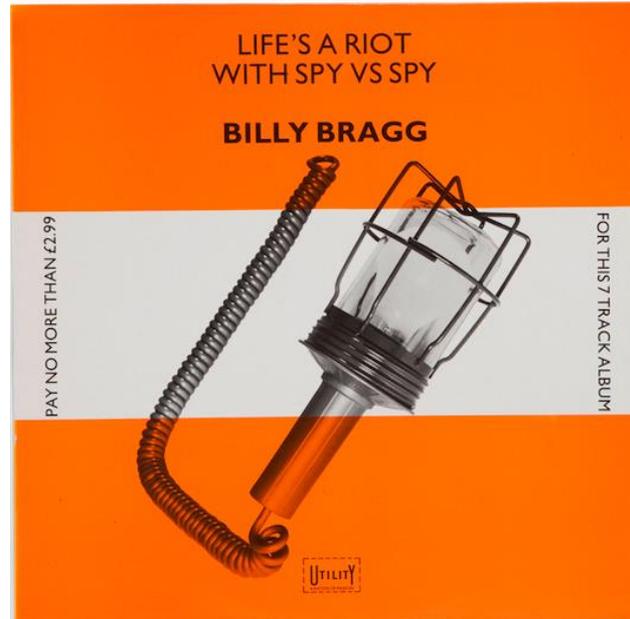
There are some records that simply define a decade and this sleeve has become so quintessentially 80s. Having spent time in the company of both Peter Saville and Barney Bubbles, Malcolm Garrett joined the club of honoured sleeve designers who have shaped the art and music we know so well.



1983

Billy Bragg
Life's A Riot With Spy vs Spy
Design - Barney Bubbles

At just 15 mins 57 seconds, this album just about qualifies as a 'long-playing' record. It would launch the career of Bragg and also define the graphic design imprint that would be used on Bragg's own short lived 'Utility' record label.



1984

**This Mortal Coil
It'll End In Tears
Design - 23 Envelope**

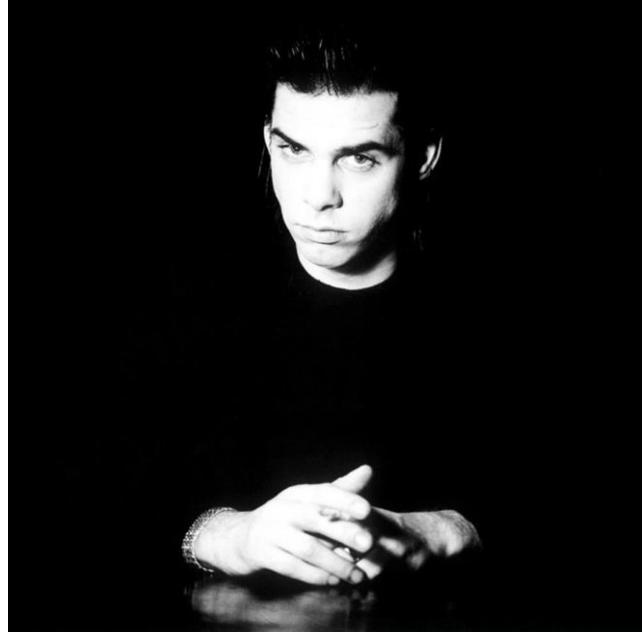
This two man design team possibly launched a thousand design careers and more. One half of the team, Vaughan Oliver, would go on to bigger things as part of the in-house team at record label 4AD. They formed the visual identity of the label that remains such an instantly recognisable aesthetic today.



1985

**Nick Cave and The Bad Seeds
The Firstborn Is Dead
Photography - Jutta Heinglein**

Cave's album title pays respect to Elvis Presley's identical stillborn twin sister, Jesse Garon Presley. The black and white photograph is a simple yet effective technique to capture Cave at his most pensive.



1986

Beastie Boys

Licensed To Ill

Design - Steve Byram

Artist - World B. Omés

A gatefold of destruction; this sleeve shows the plane intact on the front cover but depicts it crashing into a mountain when the sleeve is opened. Producer Rick Rubin thought this was the perfect way to announce a new band on the scene after reading that Led Zeppelin had a private jet.



1987

The Cure Kiss Me Kiss Me Kiss Me Design - Parched Art

The lips and make-up in the album sleeve capture the intensity at the height of the band's career. Andy Vella had contributed to the distinctive look of the band since 1981.



1988

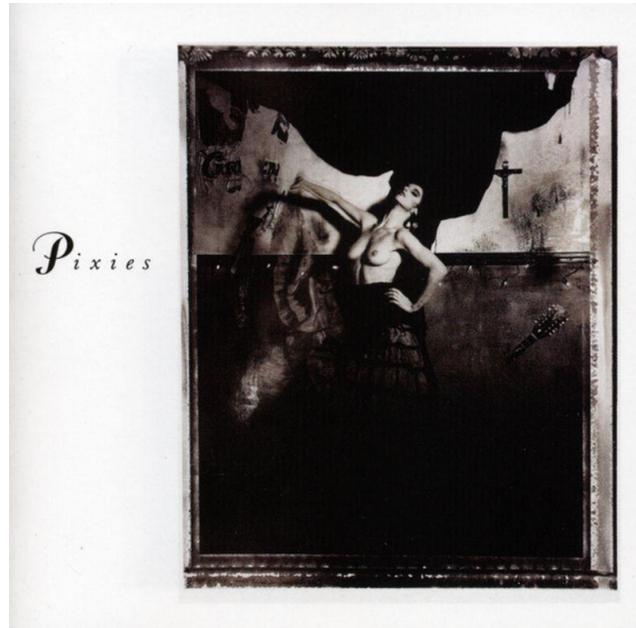
Pixies

Surfer Rosa

Design - Vaughan Oliver

Photography - Simon Larbalestier

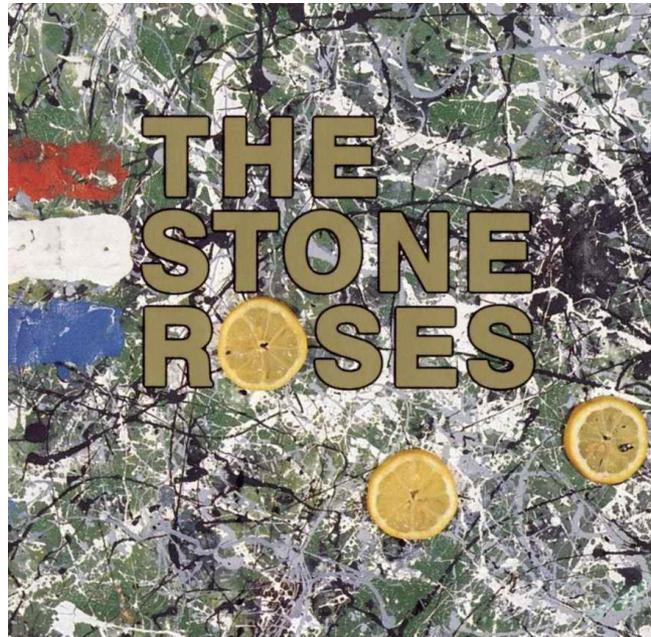
Vaughan Oliver explains his philosophy of 'not trying to define the music, I'm trying to suggest an atmosphere that is about the music'. For this US band's official debut, the Spanish bar backdrop was actually shot in a pub in London.



1989

The Stone Roses
The Stone Roses
Painting - John Squire

This Jackson Pollock-inspired painting by Squire is titled 'Bye Bye Badman' in reference to the May 1968 Paris riots. The inclusion of the highlighted spot varnish lemons is a reference to lemons being used as an antidote to tear gas.



1990

Sonic Youth

Goo

Advert - Kevin Reagan

Artist - Raymond Pettibon

As the decade turned, this slice of delinquent chic would find prominence not just as a classic record sleeve design but seen more often as a T-Shirt. As the CD became the new darling for music consumption, the vinyl sleeve designs would soon find new prominence across multiple applications.



1991

Primal Scream
Screamadelica
Design - Paul Cannell

Painted by Creation Records' in-house artist, the end result was allegedly inspired by a damp water spot on the Creation Records offices ceiling after taking LSD. This record was notably honoured in 2010 in a set of 'Classic Album Cover' postage stamps.



1992

Tom Waits
Bone Machine
Photography - Jesse Dylan

This photo was taken by Bob Dylan's son. Although blurred for effect, it is actually Tom Waits in a leather skullcap with horns and protective goggles.

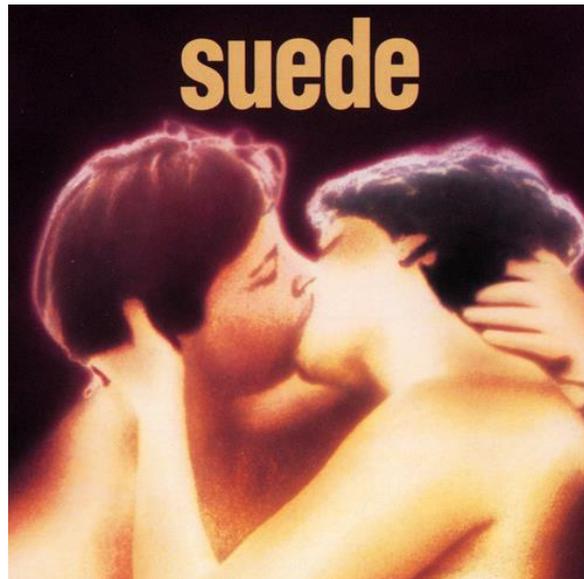


1993

Suede
Suede

Design – Peter Barrett and Andrew Biscomb
Photography - Tee Corinne

This photograph provoked some controversy at the time but lead singer Brett Anderson said they chose it “because of the ambiguity of it, but mostly because of the beauty of it”. The original image, taken by Tee Corinne, was much bigger with the two subjects pictured sitting in wheelchairs.



1994

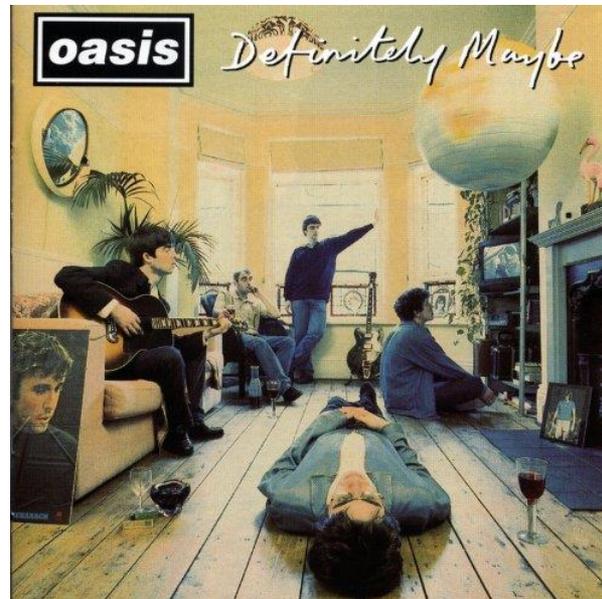
Oasis

Definitely Maybe

Design - Brian Cannon

Photography - Michael Spencer Jones

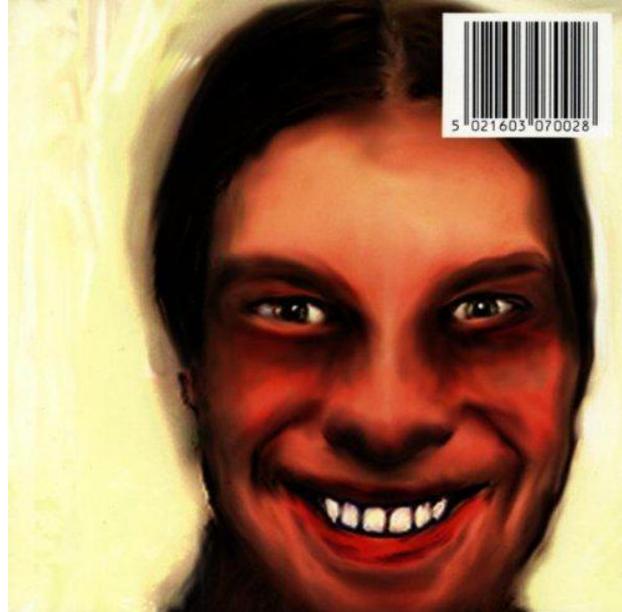
The photographer, Spencer Jones, had recently taken a trip to the Egyptology department at Manchester Science Museum, which explains the floor positioning of Liam Gallagher. The photograph was taken in the living room of guitarist Paul 'Bonehead' Arthur's house.



1995

Aphex Twin
I Care Because You Do
Original Painting - Richard D James

'I Care Because You Do' was the first Aphex Twin release to feature the artist's face, with that soon-to-be trademarked menacing grin. In this version it is portrayed in a painting by Richard D James himself.

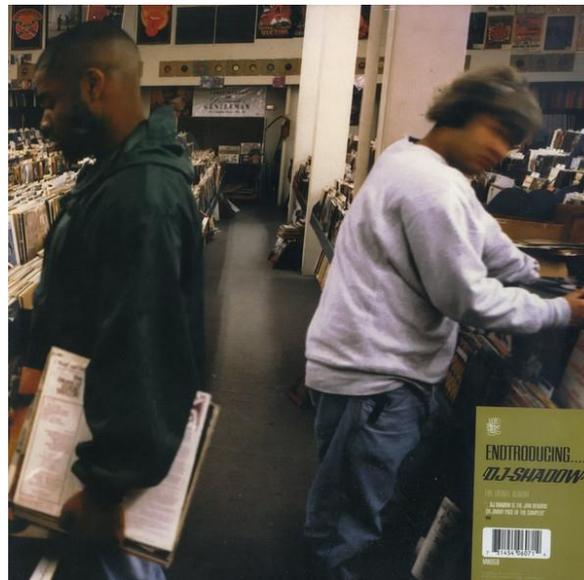


1996

DJ Shadow Endtroducing

Design - Ben Drury, Will Bankhead and B+
Photography - Will Bankhead and Barney Bankhead

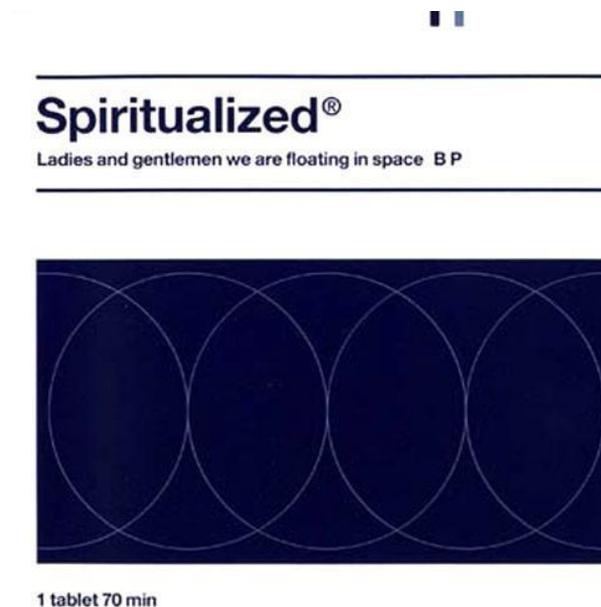
This album sleeve was shot in the basement of a record shop in Sacramento. The LP itself is completely made from samples, so this shot of people flicking through crates of vinyl is a great reflection of the different genres and music mashed together in the record itself.



1997

Spiritualized **Ladies and Gentlemen We Are Floating In Space** Design Farrow Design

The CD version of this artwork is fondly remembered by fans for its 'pop the pill' concept, which required you to break the packaging like a medicine pill to get to the aural goodies inside.



1998

Massive Attack Mezzanine

Design - 3D

Art Direction - Tom Hingston

Photography Nick Knight

Also carving out a separate career as an album cover artist, band member Robert Del Naja (known as artist 3D) collaborated with photographer Nick Knight to produce this album cover. It was quite a jump from the DIY approach of the previous albums with Del Naja commenting "I had been obsessing about spiders and the patterns on their backs at the time. This eventually led to the Beetle image."



1999

The White Stripes The White Stripes

Photography - Ko Melina Zydeco and Heather White

Stage one of a visual aesthetic that would last a career. The attention to detail in design for this band is professionally executed, yet the music comes from a true punk rock ethic.



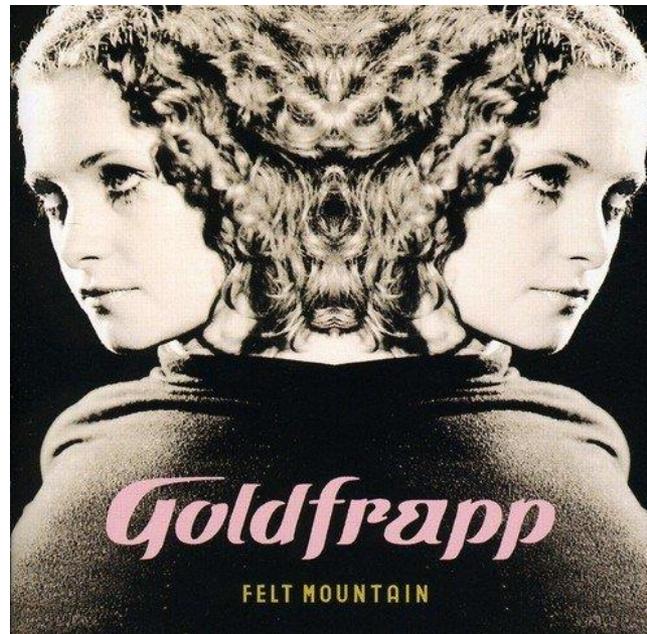
2000

Goldfrapp

Felt Mountain

Design - Alison Goldfrapp

The cover art was designed by Alison Goldfrapp herself who approaches her work as one single creative project, with the artwork, live performance, videos and costumes all deeply entwined. Her repertoire conveys an ethereal, sensual, highly theatrical persona.



2001

The Strokes
Is This It (UK Edition)
Photography - Colin Lane

This UK version of the LP was from an impromptu photo shoot of the photographer's girlfriend as she exited the shower. The black glove itself is simply a prop left behind by a stylist in his apartment.



2002

Lemon Jelly Lost Horizons

Artwork - Fred Deakin and Airside

The front cover of this sleeve design is one of 6 panels that open out to reveal a wide screen graphic of a brightly coloured countryside connecting to a grey dull city. The design was created by band member Fred Deakin, who said: "One of the many great things about Lemon Jelly was being able to do pretty much whatever I wanted with the band's visual manifestation."



2003

Blur Think Tank

Artwork and Direction – Banksy
Design - Tijuana Design

Banksy describes this particular commission "I've done a few things to pay the bills, and I did the Blur album. It was a good record and the commission was quite a lot of money. I think that's a really important distinction to make. If it's something you actually believe in, doing something commercial doesn't turn it to shit just because it's commercial.



2004

Kanye West College Dropout Design - Eric Duvauchelle

At this point in time, West wanted to bring a sense of elegance and style to what was typically a gangster-led image of rap artists. This more fun loving image was then framed inside gold ornaments taken from a book of illustrations from the 16th century.



2005

Hard-Fi Stars Of CCTV Design - Albion

The powerful contrast of the yellow background and black text makes this simplistic design eye-catching and almost intrusive. Although it's graphically simplistic, it's a clear reminder that we are all stars of CCTV.



2006

Thom Yorke The Eraser

Design - Stanley Donwood

Yorke's debut solo album artwork was developed from a linocut print by Stanley Donwood, who also designed much of the album artwork for Radiohead. The print depicts London destroyed by flood, taking influence from the legend of King Canute failing to command the ocean, which Yorke likened to government attitudes towards climate change at the time.



2007

The Cribs **Men's Needs, Women's Needs, Whatever** Design - Rob Crane

Crane sourced this black and white photograph of a couple in silhouette standing outside a Granada picture house by night. This was then subtly edited with "The Cribs" appearing to be attached in neon lights to the front of the cinema. The brief from the band was that they wanted the cover to look like a classic Smiths record sleeve - and ironically The Smiths guitarist, Johnny Marr joined The Cribs three years later for two albums.



2008

Fleet Foxes Fleet Foxes

Artwork - Pieter Bruegel The Elder

The cover art is a detail of the 1559 painting 'Netherlandish Proverbs' by Pieter Bruegel The Elder. Vocalist and guitarist Robin Pecknold liked the painting after seeing it in a book, noting that “When you first see the painting it's very bucolic, but when you look closer there's all this really strange stuff going on like dudes defecating coins into the river and people on fire, people carving a live sheep, this weird dude who looks like a tree root sitting around with a dog.”



2009

Muse
The Resistance
Design - Scott Bendall

Inspired by American space artist Jon Lomberg, this design features a single human figure trying to find their way through a kaleidoscope of multi-coloured hexagons in infinite space. It is a design that is hard to give only one meaning as it could be interpreted in many lights; meaning of life or me against the world.



2010

Klaxons
Surfing The Void
Design - Richard Robinson
Photography - Mads Perch

Designer Richard Robinson explained that this memorable cover concept was derived “after lengthy conversations in which we decided that a cat in a spacesuit was the perfect solution”. The cat used for the photo belonged to Klaxons band member Jamie Reynolds, who not long after the release declared “He’s really into our music. I keep getting phone calls from my mum saying the whole thing’s going to his head and he keeps taking up more space on the bed than he used to.”



2011

Bright Eyes **The People's Key** Design - Zack Nipper

Lead singer Conor Oberst came up with the initial idea for the album artwork, which was for the sleeve to portray a wall of fire to represent one of the themes of the album. Nipper created the design using cut out paper flames which were then pieced together. Nipper used this technique previously to create the artwork for the first Bright Eyes release he worked on 'Every Day and Every Night.'



2012

The Temper Trap The Temper Trap

**Photography and Artwork - Alberto Seveso
Design and Art Direction - Boat Studios**

Artist Alberto Seveso worked with acrylic ink in water, photographing a suite of images in a bold primary palette. Moving image versions were also created for the iTunes LP, which could be used to form the first ever moving lyrics booklet, demonstrating a new way to display a physical LP design in a digital world.



2013

White Lies Big TV

Art Direction - Gerard Saint and Markus Karlsson
Painting by Michael Kagan

The sleeve features an oil-painting called 'Pilot 2' by artist Michael Kagan and was chosen by the band who were looking for something which they connected with. Kagan explained "I like this push and pull between abstraction and representation. The goal is that the painting falls apart when viewed up close and then tightens when seen further away."



2014

Royal Blood

Royal Blood

Illustration - Dan Hillier

Hand Lettering - Harry Robbins

Design - Richard Welland

Illustrator Dan Hillier named the picture as 'Pachamama' meaning World Mother, or Earth Mother. Hillier was originally approached by the band to create an original piece for the album artwork, however they decided to use this existing piece that Hillier had produced earlier in 2014, drawing inspiration from Victorian etchings.



2015

David Gilmour
Rattle That Lock
Design - Dave Stansbie
Photography - Rupert Truman

This sleeve shows a stunning combination of creativity; a photograph shot on a dark and bleak day in North Wales, 15 hand-painted Corvidae birds, and a 3D model of a gold cage, all brought together to create one final striking image. When pitching for the sleeve design The Creative Corporation were briefed with one track from the album and a potential album title to interpret a concept around.



2016

The Last Shadow Puppets Everything You've Come To Expect

**Design - Matthew Cooper
Photography - Jack Robinson**

The cover features a portrait of a young Tina Turner, originally photographed by Robinson in New York City in 1969. Cooper, who designed the album artwork, said "Originally shot in black and white, the tint was added to create an identifiable colour scheme and a warmer, more contemporary feel."



2017

Run The Jewels Run The Jewels 3

**Art Direction and Photography - Timothy Saccenti
Drawing Nick Gazin
Layout Troy Hahn**

The image of hands has been used as a logo for Run The Jewels from the beginning, depicting one hand robbing the chain of the other. Explaining the use of the hands for RTJ3, the hip-hop duo said “the bandages are off, the chain is gone and the hands have been transformed into gold. For us, this represents the idea that there is nothing to take that exists outside of yourself. You are the jewel.”



2018

