

The Art Of The Bizarre Vinyl Sleeve • newsletter eight

From the Collection of Steve Goldman • Text : Simon Robinson B.A.
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NEWSLETTER exclusive to subscribers.

CATCHING UP

Updating you on Worst Record Covers events with the NEW EXHIBITION at Mansfield NOW ON.

For all you fans of weird and wonderful vinyl sleeves, a quick news up date from the makers of **The Art Of The Bizarre Vinyl Sleeve**, the first of 2026 (we don't like to swamp mailboxes!). Actually I thought this had already been sent out, but my software providers say I had exceeded my newsletter subscription allowance, so it languished there until I checked in the other day and paid them extra!

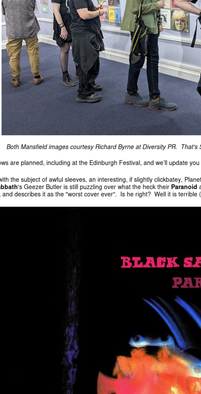
Firstly, we have to let people know that the **Art Of The Bizarre Vinyl Sleeve** book has actually sold out. However we are preparing a second print run with Steve "The Collector" Goldman and this is now in progress (albeit after a lot of problems due to software and hardware updates messing with the original artwork files). It will NOT contain new material, which would be unfair to people who already own it, but we have taken the opportunity to correct a small number of typos in the first edition spotted by Steve, ourselves and a few eagle eyed readers. We will update people on the second run over the next few weeks but the publishers are taking back-orders. They are also planning to make good on a promised ebook version, one of the main drivers for this is the high cost of shipping outside the UK.

BUT never mind that, there is a brand new exhibition taking place in the snazzy **Mansfield Museum & Art Gallery** (below). It opened on 6th June 2026 and this is the first show in the Nottinghamshire area, so do check out the museum's Exhibition page (not the events page, not the what's on page!) : https://www.mansfield.gov.uk/museum/events



As part of this show, Mansfield are also hosting Simon's illustrated **Art Of Bizarre Vinyl** talk as well, taking place on July 1st 2026 at 7.00pm sharp. Simon last hosted this at the 2025 Leicester Comedy Festival, when it produced so much laughter at times that the talk kept being held up as he couldn't hear himself speak! Full details at:

https://www.mansfield.gov.uk/museum/events/event/6248/the-art-of-the-bizarre-album-sleeve-a-talk-with-simon-robinson



Perhaps the most amazing aspect of the new show is that Steve got a promised visit from one of the mysterious cover stars in the book, John Thompson from the astonishing Peter Rabbitt album (page 172). He and Richard have now interviewed him and found out more about this very obscure record. The Guardian also sent a journo up to cover the official opening and printed a nice report.

https://www.theguardian.com/music/2026/jun/07/exhibition-worst-album-covers-ever



Both Mansfield images courtesy Richard Byrne at Diversity PR. That's Steve and John in the top pic.

More shows are planned, including at the Edinburgh Festival, and we'll update you next time.

Sticking with the subject of awful sleeves, an interesting, if slightly clickabyte, Planet Rock article recently reported that **Black Sabbath**'s Geezer Butler is still puzzling over what the heck their **Paranoid** album cover was all about fifty three years on, and describes it as the "worst cover ever". Is he right? Well it is terrible (see below!), so what went wrong?

Originally they planned to call the album War Pigs. So the photographer dressed an old bearded hippy up in purple underpants with a scimitar, a Miss World sash and scooter helmet thinking it was the way to go. It clearly wasn't. And it might have been even worse, they used a pig mask on some of the early shots!
At the last moment their American label saw the new single Paranoid becoming a hit and demanded the title change, rendering an already mad image irrelevant as well. Mind you, did Geezer ever see the terrible 'update' done for a 1980 single sleeve (below) in Ireland? (Hands up if you remember the famous Shatter typeface as well).



We do keep throwing sleeves at Steve for possible inclusion in his shows (one is never quite sure which will pass his entry criteria!) and this one below caught my eye (eyes?) recently. To me it looks like a young Bill Gates auditioning for a horror film, having been accidentally caught letting a spider wander into his Microsoft matter transformer.
Silvio Britto was the careless operative, a Brazilian MOR singer who enjoyed success there in the late 1970s after a hit debut EP (which included the song "The Hairy One Has Arrived" ..., a reference to said spider?).



Lastly, though it is short notice, Simon from Easy Books also has a small exhibition on in Sheffield. This centres on 100 years of Sheffield Record Shops, and includes dozens of vintage shop bags and sleeves from the collection of the Sheffield Music Archives (which he helps with). It also includes a number of art prints done by Simon as a response to some of this material. There is a well stocked rack of second-hand vinyl too which is bringing people in! Venue is the new Memory Dance gallery on Chapel Walk close to the Crucible Theatre. They are open most days from 11.00 to 4.00pm but the display ends on June 26th.

Thanks to everyone for their interest

Simon and Ann. Easy On The Eye Books

SMALL PRINT -

NEWSLETTERS - You can check out previous Bizarre Sleeves newsletters on the publisher's web site, plenty to read and follow up on:
https://easyontheeyebooks.co.uk/new/the-art-of-the-bizarre-album-sleeve/newsletters-bizarre-vinyl-book/

PROMO VIDEO - The promo video for the book is on the publisher's YouTube channel, and we are working on a special video for the new year *(you need to curb paste as YouTube doesn't like me linking direct)*
: https://www.youtube.com/@EasyOnTheEyeBooks

MORE DETAILS - If this book is new to you then learn more, explore sample pages and read reviews of **The Art of The Bizarre Vinyl Sleeve** on Easy On The Eye Books website: https://easyontheeyebooks.co.uk/new/the-art-of-the-bizarre-album-sleeve/

ORDERS - **The Art of The Vinyl Sleeve** was designed and printed in the UK and we do our bit to support public services (rather than dodging tax all together like certain online sites). In turn we appreciate people supporting us by buying direct through our official Easy On The Eye Books store. https://easyontheeyeshop.co.uk

Our latest title, an archive of photographs of legendary Blues musicians photographed mostly in Manchester during the early Sixties, is now available. Find out more here: https://easyontheeyebooks.co.uk/forthcoming/boom-boom-boom-boom/

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