

## Title:

Album Cover Art-Part One

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## Summary:

In 1939, Alex Steinweiss was employed at Columbia Records as the first art director for the company and decided to spruce up and repackage vinyl records. We all know the result, album cover art has become an important part of music and pop culture. (Prior to Steinweiss's creative influences, records were generally stored in plain, undecorated packaging).

For collectors, album cover art can sometimes be as valuable as the vinyl record it holds. For instance, one of the most...

## Keywords:

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## Article Body:

In 1939, Alex Steinweiss was employed at Columbia Records as the first art director for the company and decided to spruce up and repackage vinyl records. We all know the result, album cover art has become an important part of music and pop culture. (Prior to Steinweiss's creative influences, records were generally stored in plain, undecorated packaging).

For collectors, album cover art can sometimes be as valuable as the vinyl record it holds. For instance, one of the most famous album covers of all time, the Beatles "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band" cover was one of the most inventive at the time and included cut out inserts and lyrics. The price one would pay for a copy of this album is influenced by whether or not it has the original contents and they are intact. There are many album covers that included posters of the band as well and other "perks" for the buyer and all these elements factor into the resale price and collectibility.

There have been many dynamic and world-famous album covers. Consider the Beatles' album "Yesterday...and Today" (1966), also called the "butcher block album" because the Beatles were pictured on the front cover wearing white butcher coats surrounded by bloody meat and cut up dolls. The album was quickly pulled by Capitol Records after the company received numerous complaints from reviewers and DJ's. The company recalled the issue and ordered a new cover but

did not want to waste the several hundred thousand that had already been printed. Capitol then hired part-time helpers to remove that photo from the cover and paste on the new photo for the cover. But, it seems that there were many lazy employees and to save time, they just pasted the new cover on top of the old cover and the one that was supposed to be removed. The result is three different versions of that particular album and a collector's dream, the different versions of the album are worth several thousand dollars (prices vary-check a record price guide to ascertain exactly what album you may have to get the exact price).

Album cover art has also spawned numerous web sites in which to view famous covers and designs, readers' favorites and top ten lists. One such site, [www.superseventies.com](http://www.superseventies.com) offers a comprehensive look at some of the most famous covers from the 1970's including the Sex Pistols "Never Mind The Bollocks," the Eagles "Hotel California," Pink Floyd's "Dark Side Of The Moon" and the Rolling Stones' "Sticky Fingers" among others. Additionally, [www.superseventies.com](http://www.superseventies.com) offers their reader's favorite seventies album covers (more than 300) with detailed descriptions and reviews of each specific release. This is a great way to spend a rainy day, as you discover some of the best album cover art of the 70's.

Album cover design is an art form and allows the musicians greater control over the content and another important avenue in which to express themselves. In my humble opinion (and I share this opinion with countless others), with the advent of the CD, the music buying public lost a national treasure, album cover art. It is part of pop culture and recorded music in general. Sure, Cd's offer you a "stripped down" version of the original cover art, but it certainly pales in comparison to the real thing. I am sure Mr. Steinweiss would totally agree with me.