



Research Field Station #7
COVER (VERSIONS)

by Alan Dunn

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He is obsessed with examining the way mass-produced objects act as filters, intercepting the signal as it travels from a source to the organs of sense.

- Rob Young on Christian Marclay, 'Don't sleeve me this way', The Guardian (2005)

by Alan Dunn

This Research Station extends my PhD *The sounds of ideas forming* (2008-14)¹ which explores different ways in which challenging sounds and designs enter our living rooms.

Like all my research since 2003, this new presentation begins with thinking about The Beatles' *White Album* (1968), audaciously designed by Richard Hamilton and trojan-horsed into millions of living rooms across the UK. With its sleeve stripped bare, the *White Album* is released for a white Christmas and is our baseline for pondering post-1968 album sleeve design. Once Hamilton introduces a minimalist sensibility into the history of album sleeve design, where do we go next? This Research Station deploys détournement, the Letterist International technique that 'appropriates and alters an existing media artifact, one that the intended audience is already familiar with, in order to give it a new, subversive meaning'² to ponder this question. Simply, I've been going through my own vinyl collection and physically and digitally removing words and/or images to reveal hidden cultural threads. In this manner *COVER (VERSIONS)* is itself a cover version of other key projects, most notably Harold Offeh's *COVERS* (2008), John Oswald's *Plunderphonics* (2001) and Christian Marclay's *Bodymixes* (1991).

Background

This is the Waste Recycling Centre in Bidston, Wirral, and it's on my mind a lot. In 2013 I throw half my record collection into these skips over a period of weeks. Plastic in one, sleeves in another. I don't donate to a charity shop, sell on Discogs, give to a friend nor give to you, dear reader and possible record collector. They aren't put in storage, but inconceivably crushed. At the time, I probably have around 1,000 records and make choices to keep 500. As we are packing to move to a smaller house very quickly, I make two piles and discard those records that have done nothing for me and that I'm sure I won't listen to again. I reject expensive discs that have let me down with their lack of magic and I abandon dross bought in charity shops that I haven't even listened to. Why think back to it then, if it's only junk that is culled? After getting the vinyl bug back again in 2016, it's inevitable that I recall those weeks and since beginning *The sounds of ideas forming, Volume 2* on Instagram in July 2018, I wonder if the full story strikes a chord with the vast vinyl community out there. Some may already be thinking what an inconceivable waste, but please hear me out because the reasons are clear and important and will include the revolution of the CD format, the Liverpool Art Prize and problems with some Birkenhead drug gangs that I can't go into in more detail in this particular text. What happens in 2013 is private and not on the scale of Michael Landy's *Break Down* (2001) nor *The KLF burn a million quid* (1994) but you're reading this because vinyl matters. It defines us and sucks us in. It makes us look cool and makes us remember. It reminds us we have developed the technology to convert sound into solid form that presents itself at 33 or 45rpm to reflect who we are or remind us who we are not. It gathers scratches and dust as traces of each revolution on the turntable, it makes us think about being in bands (not that I ever am, but I'm open to suggestions despite not being musical) and invites us to consider square format design dating back to Kazimir Malevich *Black Square* (1915). From *Black Square* to *White Album*, it's about the tangibility of records as designed artefacts that cannot be identically replaced like MP3s. Ultimately, as the Instagram project celebrates, it is about a fragile and disposable cultural medium that can become part of our lives through the calm and the storm.

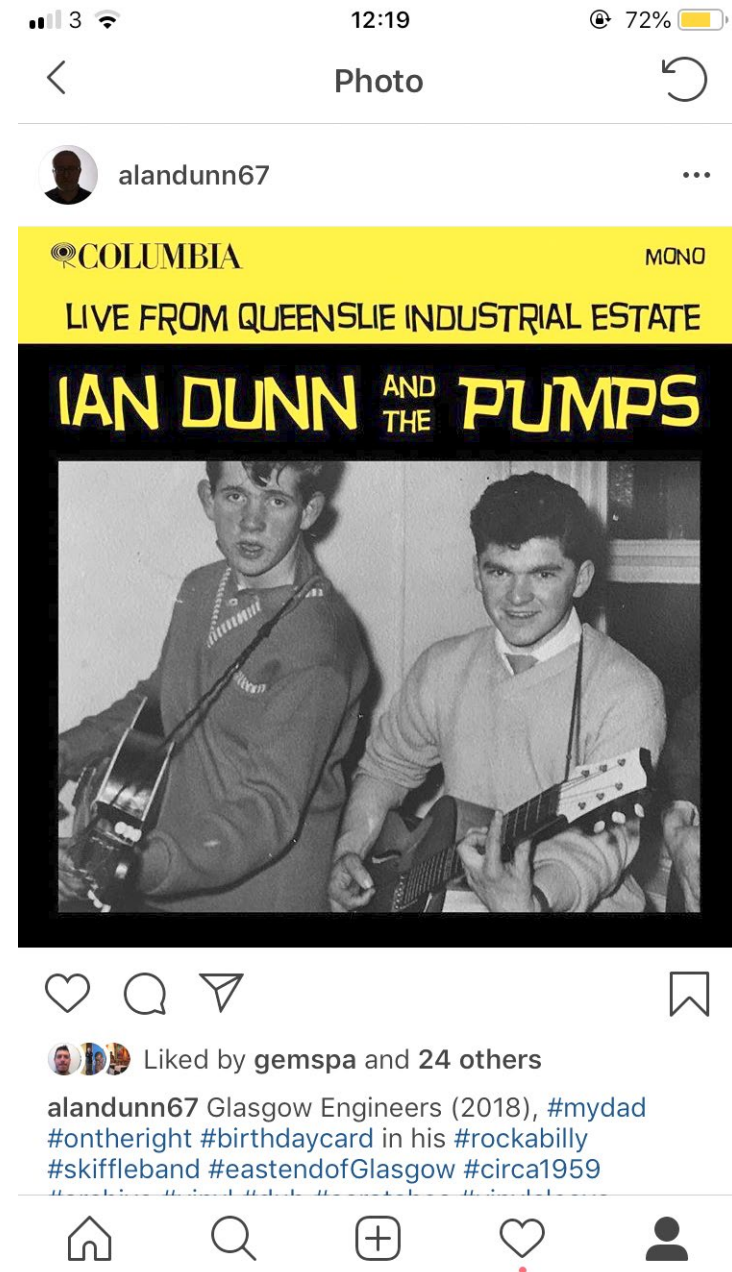


A brief history of vinyl

I grow up in the east end of Glasgow in the 70s with a dad who has what I consider at the time a colossal vinyl collection. There are no Beatles nor Stones (my gran didn't approve) but plenty of Lonnie Donegan, Abba, *BBC Sound Effects*, Shirley Bassey, James Last, *Top of the Pops* and The Shadows. Each record is treated with kid gloves and we're not really allowed to touch them. My mum has about five records and prefers radio, but it's as normal to have vinyl in your house as it is to have tables, chairs and heating. And here's an excuse to share the only picture we have of my dad in a band (he's on the right) and the mock sleeve I make for his birthday. I acquire the first vinyls of my own in late 1980 at the age of 13 and the rest of the decade is consumed by consuming vinyl. The first are bought at a school flea market and include an Otis Redding (still have) and a Boston one for its airbrushed cover (crushed). These are soon followed by my first real purchases in HMV and Virgin on Union Street of Toyah, Adam & The Ants and Dexy's Midnight Runners. In my PhD, I describe the importance of fellow pupil Graeme Ainslie and how he introduces me to an alternative world of sounds. I can draw really well and he lends me records to copy the sleeves in pencil for him, my payment being listening to them all: Sex Pistols, The Doors, T-Rex, Buzzcocks, Velvet Underground, Iggy Pop (but never really Bowie who I consider over-rated), Kraftwerk, Joy Division, Devo, New Order, Siouxsie & The Banshees, Killing Joke, Echo & The Bunnymen, Dead Kennedys and the Birthday Party.

Weird sounds inside Glasgow

An article mentions John Peel and soon his nightly programmes are providing more obscure names to track down and David Henderson's *Wild Planet* feature in *Sounds* introduces me to Einstürzende Neubauten and Cabaret Voltaire. Edwin Pouncey's reviews in *Sounds* are filled with expensive imports but through fanzines and mail order I build up my psychedelic, garage punk, Paisley Underground, The Cramps, Dream Syndicate, Fuzztones, Nuggets, Ramones and Thirteenth Floor Elevators until East Kilbride provides its own mutation in the form of Jesus & Mary Chain whose debut 7" is bought the day it comes out (and is later cut). I start my six years at Glasgow School of Art mid-decade and dive straight into C86, Smiths, Soup Dragons, Shop Assistants and most things Festive 50 until *Underground* magazine arrives with the more culturally diverse JAMMs, Sugarcubes and Pixies.



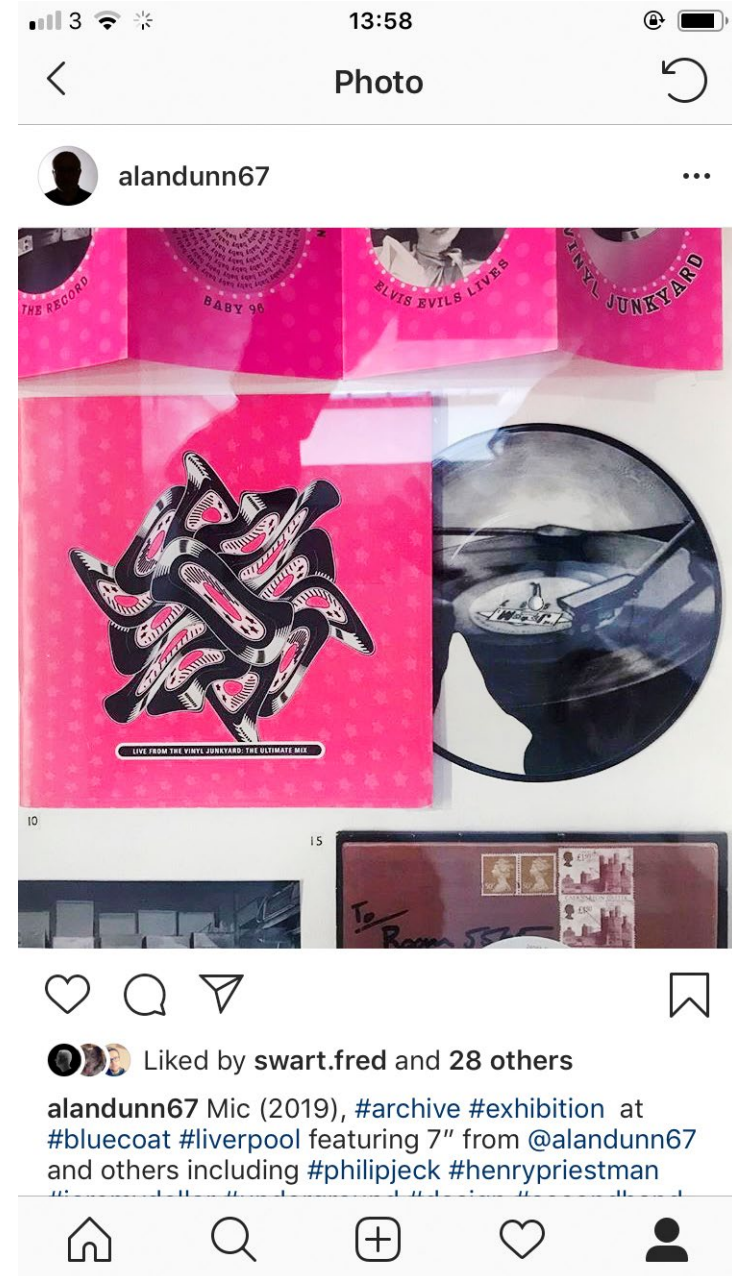
The birth of tinnitus

My art school soundtrack gets noisy around 1987 courtesy of Swans, Sonic Youth, Dinosaur Jnr, Foetus, Big Black, Hüsker Dü, Black Flag, Butthole Surfers, Septic Death and all things *Maximum Rock'n'Roll*. Peel is still a go-to and, looking back, this bleak black vinyl machoism reflects the nihilism and confusion of a young art student. We make a pilgrimage to the Rough Trade shop in London where I buy the cracking early-Plunderphonics *Culturcide* album and each Friday I pop into AK Records for Crass, Nightingales, Christ on Parade, Talulah Gosh and Annie Anxiety. I start doing photomontage and in 1988 I'm asked by the year above that includes Douglas Gordon, Craig Richardson and Louise Scullion to design their Degree Show poster. There are seven of them so I cut up the sleeve of Madness' 7 (1981) and stick their heads on the bodies, the first time I ever lay a blade on a precious album sleeve.



Drying up

As the decade draws to an end, I shift through a two-year MFA including time studying in Chicago buying as many second-hand records as I can carry home. I return, finish my studies, fall in love and leave Glasgow and then the records dry up, ironically as I begin earning disposable income. I blame dancing. I'm never a fan of it and hate it when it creeps into Peel and then into our art school studio via Happy Mondays and Primal Scream and the rave music that soundtracks many of the community art projects I work on. As the 80s finish, my relationship with a particular style of vinyl, what Hüsker Dü poetically define as *melody, aggression and intelligence*, comes to a standstill and throughout the 90s I buy very little vinyl, staying loyal only to a few. I listen to Radcliffe and Riley and pick up big expensive double-albums from Beastie Boys, Spearhead, Wu-Tang Clan and Public Enemy but they are all later crushed with disdain. They feel as extravagant and decadent as Rick Wakeman does to the punks. It's my music and I can reject it if I like. They feel empty and I feel empty in relation to new music. It says nothing to me about my life, not even grunge nor Britpop, although they have some good tunes. I'm mentally somewhere else as I spend ten years working on art projects with people, listening to them, letting them speak and hearing their stories rather than music. I still listen to Peel but feel more like a tourist than an insider. Work brings us to Liverpool in late 1994 and its pop atmosphere draws me to its many second-hand record shops, picking up some good new stuff from Tricky and Godspeed You! Black Emperor and rediscovering Scritti Politti. I meet the Bluecoat's Bryan Biggs, an avid record collector and crucial advocate of art-pop-football crossovers and in 1996 he invites me to curate an exhibition of football record sleeves within my FAIR role (Euro'96 Football Artist In Residence) that we call *The Vinyl Whistle*, borrowing amazing sleeves from artist broadcaster Roger Hill and The Institute of Popular Music at University of Liverpool. A year later, I release a 7" sound collage picture disc single with the Bluecoat that is given the blessing of Bill Drummond during its development. It's listed on Discogs under Alan Dunn & The Junkyards but doesn't feel as world-changing as it should; I learn how records are made, produced, designed and delivered yet the mystery, already under threat as the 80s end, is most certainly gone.



Compact Listening

Simon Reynolds' *Retromania* (2011) explains what is happening as there exists gaps around access to information (we need it quicker and more conveniently) and reaching out to fellow humans across continents (we'd like it more economically and/or anonymously) and towards the end of the 90s, the Internet arrives to satisfy these needs. Every sound becomes an attainable, free, sleeveless, shared, origin-less delivery onto your desktop. I subscribe to *WIRE* magazine and the intrigue returns with the increasingly obscure sub-genres and, unlike before, I can now hear it digitally, straight away. The gap between reading about, anticipating and hearing a sound shrinks to seconds and as the price of vinyl continues to rise, digital files become more irresistible. Isn't this a healthy thing to feed the ears and brain with every conceivable patina, length and concept of sound? I'm soon drawn to the possibilities of the CDR and the lowering costs of good microphones and during a *tenantspin* project at FACT I meet Chris Watson (Cabaret Voltaire/David Attenborough) who makes me completely rethink recording, producing, DIY, mixing, distributing and listening to sounds. The climate is one of making, not just consuming and collecting. The hunt is gone and stumbling upon an oddity is replaced by gorging. I can buy everything Guided by Voices do on CD for example and I just counted fifty-four releases purchased at roughly a third of the vinyl price, including shipping from USA. GBV even contact me to ask to use one of my collages on the back cover of their live CD *Moon* as collecting becomes more of a social and creative dialogue and the distance between musicians and consumers diminishes. I hear grumbling even as I type this. It's my vinyl collection, sulking away in the corner in its heavy black IKEA monolith. It is 'them', the givers of pleasure and sanctioned content. The CDs and MP3s are now 'us'—fellow creators and collaborators.

Gold
I Surround You Naked
Blessed In An Open Head
Get a Faceful
Dancing Girls and Dancing Men
The Right Thing
Dolphins of Color
Boxing About
Fresh Threats® Salad Shooters and Zip Guns
Conqueror of the Moon
I'm a Widow
I Feel Gone Again
Game of Pricks
Love is Stronger than Witchcraft

Live at the U.S. Bank Arena
 Cincinnati Ohio June 24, 2006

The Ascended Masters:
 Tommy Keene - Guitar, Keyboards, Backing Vocals
 Jon Wurster - Drums
 Jason Narducy - Bass, Backing Vocals
 Dave Philips - Guitar

All Songs written by Robert Pollard
 ©© 2006 Needmore Songs (BMI)
 Except: Dolphins of Color (Robert Pollard/Todd Tobias)
 ©© 2006 Needmore Songs (BMI)/Visibleman Music (BMI)

Mixed by Todd Tobias
 and Chris Keffer

Mastered by Chris Keffer

Recorded by John Burton

Back cover collage,
 "Normals in Tight West"
 by Robert Pollard

Billboard idea
 by Alan Dunn

Front cover photo
 by Rich Turiel

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Wha'ppen

In 2012 I'm selected for the Liverpool Art Prize and present a version of my PhD at Metal. Along one window, I wedge around 200 album sleeves, with records removed, perhaps as a comment on the compression of audio into smaller forms and redundancy of the format. After the show, I don't bother putting the records back in their correct sleeves, such is my indifference. The exhibition feels like the nail in the coffin for my vinyl but looking back at those photographs, I can at least start to piece together this list of some of the culled items, divided into retrospective categories that sum up my thinking at the time:

Bands that have become staid and release ambitious double or triple albums that bore me and that I resent having to pay more for: Primal Scream, Wu-Tang Clan, Beastie Boys, Public Enemy, Spearhead, Clash, Goldie, Jamiroquai, Stone Roses and Die Toten Hosen.

Cheap greatest hits or poor quality live albums that lead to me to better individual ones that I keep: Bob Marley, Elvis Costello, The Jam, Jimi Hendrix, The Byrds, Leonard Cohen, Neil Young, Stranglers, Squeeze, The Fall, Stiff Little Fingers, Lee 'Scratch' Perry, Michael Jackson, Sly & The Family Stone, Robert Johnson, John Lee Hooker, Neil Young, Led Zeppelin, Janis Joplin, Mahalia Jackson, The Who, Donovan, Simon & Garfunkel, T-Rex, The Monkees, Wanda Jackson, Bob Dylan and Johnny Cash.

Hip-hop and dance that I just don't get: NWA, Ice-T, BDP, Eric B & Rakim, Betty Boo, Queen Latifah, De La Soul, Fatboy Slim, Shabba Ranks, EPMD and all those *Deep Heat* compilations.

Cheap scratched shit from Charity Shops: Red Army Choir, Boston, Frank Sinatra, Johnny Cash, Burt Bacharach, Royal Scots Dragoon Guards, Edgar Winters, Monteverdi, Pierre Boulez, The Spinners, Seigen Ono and Andy Stewart.

Goth that I inherit from a deceased family member: Sisters of Mercy, The Mission, March Violets, late Gun Club and Crime & The City Solution.



This list comes closer to 100 than 500 so there's a lot more I forget, but I keep all the melody-noise-intelligence of Cocteau Twins, New Order, Joy Division, The Cramps, The Doors, Einstürzende Neubauten, Nirvana bootlegs, Dream Syndicate, Adam & The Ants, Velvet Underground, Dead Kennedys, Scritti Politti, Bikini Kill, Ramones, Bill Drummond and KLF/JAMMs, early Lou Reed, Iggy, SWANS, Echo & The Bunnymen, Hüsker Dü, Killing Joke, Björk, Spacemen 3, Oasis, hardcore punk, Butthole Surfers, Sonic Youth, Big Black, early Public Enemy, Nancy Sinatra, early Neil Young, Beatles and lots of other weird and obscure compilations that are transported into our new garage. They have made it through the turmoil to the next round and will form *The sounds of ideas forming, Volume 2*.

Indie 12" singles that also lead to better albums or are just one-liners: Lush, White Town, Babylon Zoo, Pele, The Wolfhounds, The The, Fishbone, Bob, Stretchheads, Flatmates, Camper Van Beethoven, Voice of Authority and Blaggers ITA.

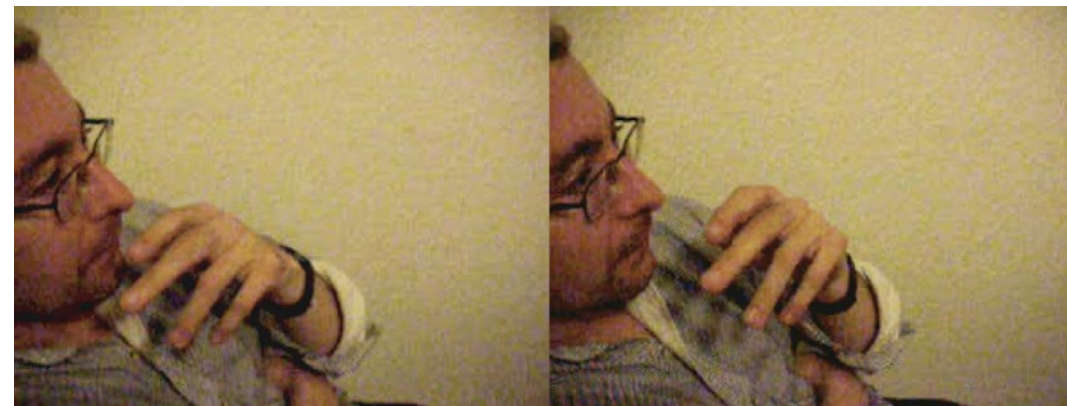
Compilations on which I only ever like one track: *Case Closed? An International Compilation of Hüsker Dü Cover-Songs*, *Beautiful Happiness*, *Colors*, *A Clockwork Orange*, *Palatine*, *God's Favourite Dog*, *The Bridge*, *This is Ska* and *Pay it all back Volume 1*.

Albums that disappoint and are played only once, that I feel I've outgrown, mostly heard first on Peel, or consider over-rated: Billy Bragg, Frank Zappa, Three Mustaphas Three, Arsenal, Scratch Acid, AC Temple, late Lou Reed, Buffalo Tom, MC5, Disposable Heroes, UK Subs, Rain Parade, Opal, Space, Nomads, Ten Benson, Bowie, Television, Patti Smith, Alan Vega, Rezillos, Dictators, Neville Brothers, Black Grape, Band of Susans, Marc & The Mambas, Bongwater, The Vaselines, Johnny Thunders & Patty Palladin, The Verve, Lime Spiders, Sham 69, The Pastels, Green on Red, Happy World, X, Teardrop Explodes, REM, Chris & Cosey, Meat Beat Manifesto, 1000 Homo DJs and INXS.



Resurrection

One day in 2016, when our lives have finally settled again following some issues with the drug gangs that cause us to move house quickly, I retrieve an IKEA bag of records from the garage and stack them in front of our stripy wallpaper and grin at the sleeves scuffed with charcoal and paint marks. These objects have genuinely inhabited rooms with me as I created, struggled, loved, lost, worried, planned, succeeded and smoked - most of them reek of tobacco from before I give up, a moment captured in *Self-portrait with last cigarette*, a 15-second film of my last ever cigarette with the cigarette digitally removed, (Canning Street, Liverpool, 2003). I put a couple of them on and listen afresh. It's never hi-fidelity that interests me; it's the way they stack, the weight, the feel of your fingers on those thin edges, the squareness and order that contains so much chaos. It's the audacity they have to say 'you're only getting 44 minutes and the sounds will be in this sequence.' I turn the bass and treble up full, forget my tinnitus and welcome vinyl back into my life with no regrets and only forward plans. But where to pick up when you have leapt from the train and all the stations now look different? I try a few record shops but they remain way over-priced and populated with gruff salespeople who don't look up. I want to scream at them: 'It's me! The vinyl addict! I'm baaaack!! Tempt me, because we both know there's only one reason for me to be in your shop. Start by teasing me with £2 each or 3 for £5. Seduce me and we both know I'll give in and be back time and time again.' I treat myself to some storage units from i-Cubes (sadly since gone bust), a £150 turntable from Argos and arrange a sofa in the living room opposite it all. I dip into eBay and Discogs to buy a few of the records that I can't afford when I am younger, but always second-hand and used, never mint. I start frequenting charity shops and second-hand stores to pick up surprises. I cycle to the Sunday morning Antiques & Collectibles in Port Sunlight and amongst all the military memorabilia and craft, I find obscure records by Sex Pistols, Peter Broderick and Hooton Tennis Club. Our local charity shops even throw up weird finds like Mike Oldfield, Kanye West, Daft Punk and Mahalia Jackson. I avoid Record Store Day and HMV at all costs, just as I view Biennials and art festivals with scepticism, hearing a voice saying 'go where the fewest people are to find the interesting stuff.' I start going to the record fair in Ellesmere Port in dismal and impoverished surroundings where the records sit in a corner of the market between greasy café, vape stalls and carpet traders. But it feels right.



Studio days

In June 2018 during the sweltering heat of the Russian World Cup, the Instagram project starts as a sequel to the PhD, having witnessed students and younger artists engaged with this particular photo-sharing application. I buy and construct a log cabin for our small garden and for the first time in a few years I have a studio again and am able to go through some boxes of older records, postcards, cassettes and fanzines. I start photographing them, cutting them up, juxtaposing, composing, collaging, collapsing, folding and holding them up to sun. I set off on a little journey with no pressure, no map, no translation and no destination, but a deep knowledge of the language. It's a journey that starts with sound. Or, more specifically, it's about looking at sounds and, like the PhD, it's about making connections between disparate things. It's about the relationships between the everyday and the avant-garde; between the pop sensibility of Lou Reed and the screeching of John Cale or Joy Division's *CLOSER* (1980) placed next to Howard Jones' *Human's Lib* (1984) because they both think about the white frame around a black and white photograph yet one is indie and one pop. I observe Carrie Mathieson in *Homeland* (2011-) staring at walls of photos for connections. Someone I know murders half my record collection and part of me wants to open the wound to find out what happens and what materialises as a result. And to do so, it has to be about sound, music, design, colour, record sleeves, vinyl, collections, collage, economy, deterioration, juxtaposition, iconoclasm, humour, entertainment and détournement.

Conditions set, foundations laid

I want a way of working that allows me to be prolific, playful and public, without relying on, waiting on or collaborating with other people. I begin in earnest in July 2018 by pinning every red, black and white record sleeve I own onto the studio walls. Start the revolution with a good palette. Scottish artist George Wyllie describes white cube galleries as bathtubs and claims he'd rather voyage in the ocean, so I set sail into Instagram armed with collage skills and a good manifesto:

This is a sketchbook.

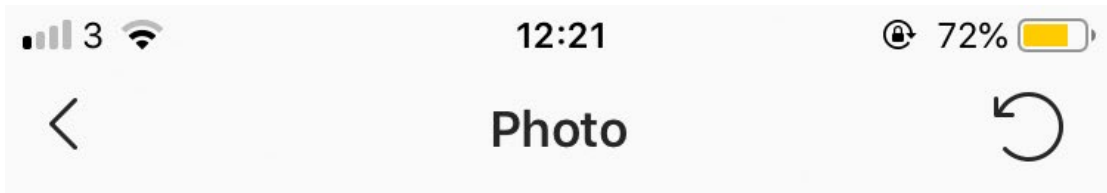
This is a celebration of tangibility, fragility, tears, writing on sleeves, cracked spines, unglued sleeves and warped, cheap second-hand vinyl found in bargain bins. This is not over-priced. This is not mint.

This is an alternative to hipsters posing with pristine 180gsm Nirvana, Joy Division and Beatles reissues next to expensive turntables in pristine rooms. This is not precious.

This is an experiment in reversing time by removing texts or images to get back to some of the origins of the design. This will be done through détournement and John Stezaker-style juxtapositions to release new connections and hidden messages.

This is an attempt to share images, collages and cut-ups with a new set of people outwith my current circles but this is not aimed at a particular age, gender nor location (except it will probably be most rewarding for those who started buying records in the 80s).

This is an attempt to be funny, alert, relaxed, hard-working, observational, spontaneous, risky, investigative, catholic, cheeky, free and punk.



alandunn67



The sounds of ideas forming **Volume 2**



 Liked by **gemsapa** and 1 other

alandunn67 #ThesoundsofideasformingVolume2

COVER (VERSIONS) by Alan Dunn

Instagramming

I begin on 16 July 2018 with these words in bold red: *The sounds of ideas forming, Volume 2*. Two people like it. I gradually teach myself about Instagram, loading about ten new images at a time, all ready to go with pre-typed texts. I sit in my studio and cut stuff up and notice things. I see the rabbit shape in the Jesus & Mary Chain sleeve, the word NORTH in Minor Threat and LIES in *Kylie Said to Jason*. I start to notice more 'likes' on some images and begin to build up followers: 10 - 100 - 500 - 1,000 - 1,500 - and I learn about hashtags. A straight photo of the back of an Elvis Costello sleeve gets nearly 100 likes for merely framing it carefully, but my Eurythmics-as-Grace-Jones also gets 100+ likes. What's the pattern? Photographs of those spines at the window from the Liverpool Art Prize also get 100+, as does another moment of genius in seeing the word VERMIN in *Never Mind The Bollocks*. Students access Joy Division through *Control* (2007) and ponder the loss of Ian Curtis and the cover of *CLOSER* has to become *LOSE*. I am addicted to doing it as a daily sketchbook to try things out, to make myself laugh, to stay alert, to look for more cheap vinyl, to re-look at cheap vinyl and, in this context, here are my own personal favourites from the first twelve months of the project:

Abba over Timelords, Laurel & Hardy and LIES

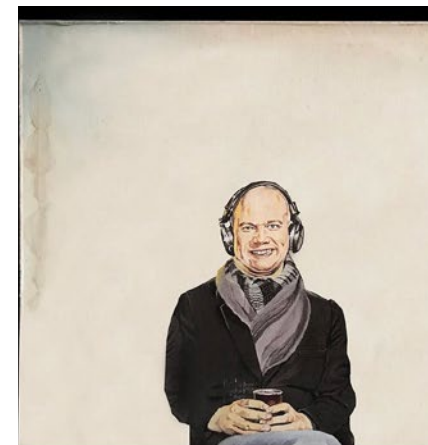
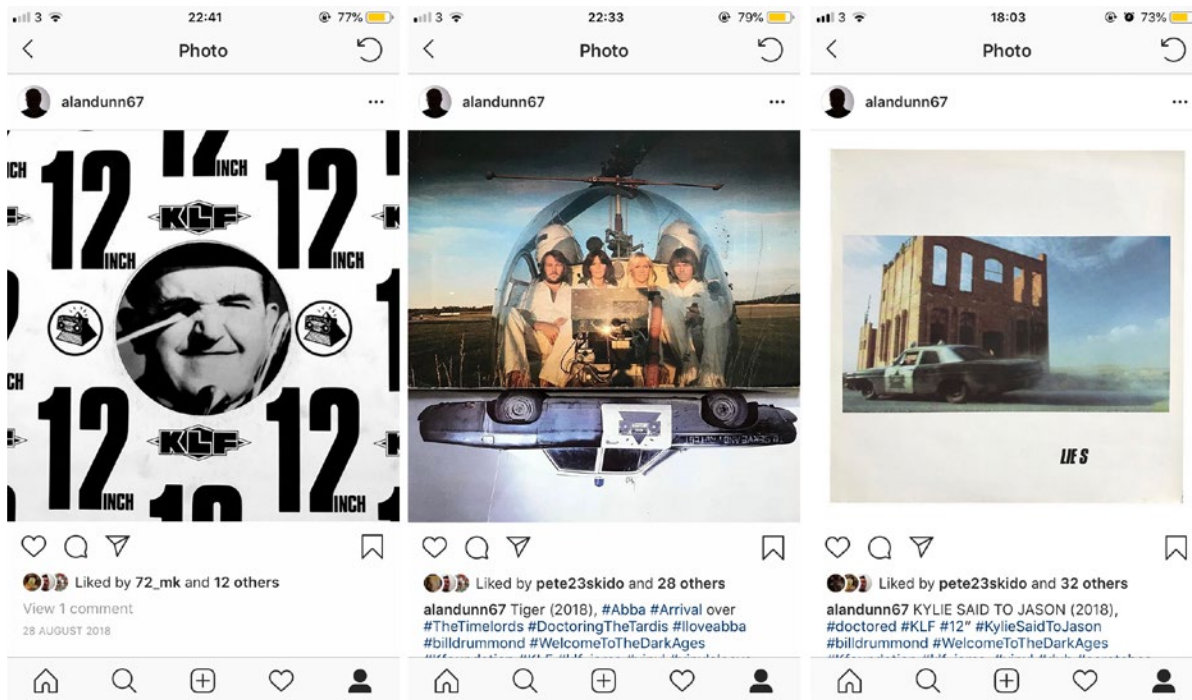
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One of the most important artists of the past twenty years, Bill Drummond has to be in here. He gets it all. He plays with images and icons and knows how to collage, grabbing his Sonic Pritt Stick and smashing the Brits, Extreme Noise Terror, Dr Who, Jeremy Deller, Echo & The Bunnymen, Liverpool Dockers, Abba, Richard Long, The Monkees, Kylie & Jason, the Turner Prize, the colour grey and *NO MUSIC DAY* together in his scrapbook. I've been graced with his contributions to a few projects and equally blessed by his eloquent refusals to take part in just as many. Bill is the Collage Patron Saint of *The sounds of ideas forming*, ably supported by Linder, John Stezaker, Jamie Reid, Hannah Hoch, John Oswald, Christian Marclay and Björk.

Bad Manners and The Strangers

9/8

I remove all the figures from *Gosh It's ...* (1981) except Buster, sat there all demure, another lead singer stripped of their band. Most of this project has a huge 80s slant but, as Pavel Bůchler once says, we're always drawn to music in the years immediately preceding our first purchase, when music is in the air rather than owned as part of a collection. Which brings me to The Strangers from 1978-79. After months of digital work, I feel the urge to cut again and wield a slow blade around those figures on the sleeve. Part disrespect, part iconoclasm, it also continues an ongoing interest in the notion of background.³



Liked by pete23skido and 33 others
 alandunn67 Don't be angry (2018), #doctored #LPsleeve #BadManners #GOSHITS #ska #bandremoved #BusterBloodvessel #Magnet



Liked by pete23skido and 33 others
 alandunn67 In the shadows (2018), #TheStrangers #BlackAndWhite #punk #vinyl #vinylporn #vinylrecord #vinyladdict #vinylcommunity



15:30
 alandunn67

3,537 posts 1,473 followers 5,996 following

Edit Profile

Alan Dunn
 July 2018: Exploring the tangibility and fragility of vinyl. New article on MIT Press about 'revolution' - <https://tinyurl.com/y6f5la8x>
alandunn67.co.uk/sounds2.html

18:14
 Photo



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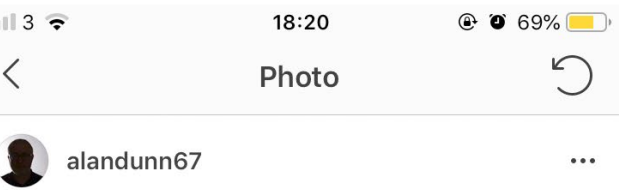


Lulu and Joey

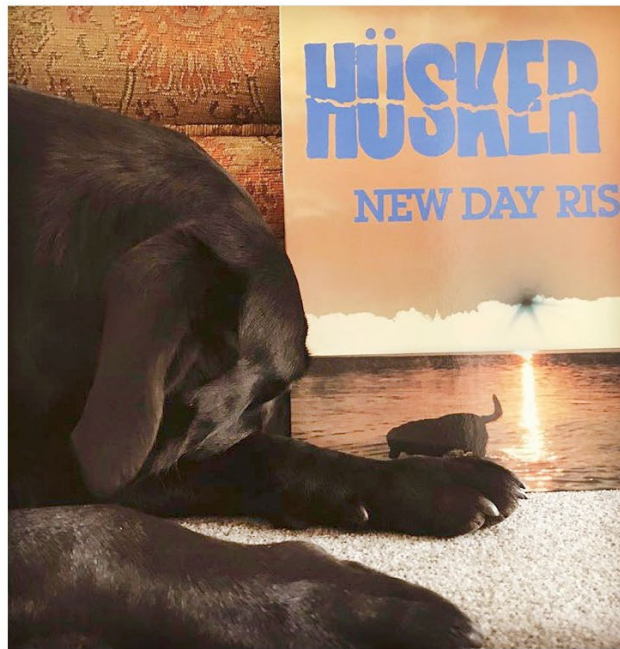
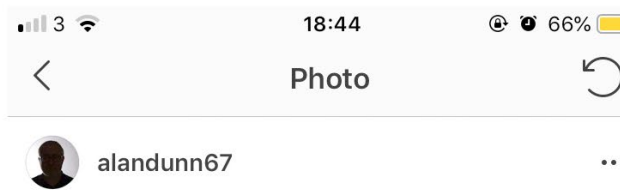
As the manifesto says, this is never going to be about a pristine record collection, or posing. My vinyl is right in the middle of the home (garden studio now used for cutting and CD listening, living room for vinyl). It's not precious, but precious. At times it's background, then foreground, but the dog Lulu and three-year-old grandson Joey get involved in it as I introduce him to caring for and playing with these cultural artefacts in amongst his Playmobil and Lego.

Björk

The arbiter of cool; the sadness, the tears, the independence, the north, the dismantling of what we think a song is, the masks, the restlessness, the weight of vinyl, the doubts and the constant eye on things. Björk visits the project every now and then just to make sure it's funny, melancholic, non-compromising, weird and unpredictable. She's the angel with a tear in her eye, watching over us.



alاندunn67 Riddler (2019), #rainy #friday #morning play with #grandson and #batman #underground #design #secondhand #recordplayer



alاندunn67 UFO (2019) #studio #saturday with #huskerdu #newdayrising #punkhardcore #underground #design #secondhand #recordplayer



alاندunn67 Kebab (2019), #sleafordmods #eton #alive #punk #björk #underground #design #björkdigital #secondhand #recordplayer #collage



alاندunn67 African flower (2018), #icelandstories covers of #NigelRofe #IslandStories + #Björk #Debut #teardrops, £500/560EUR/\$600.



alاندunn67 European Female (2018), #TheStranglers #Björk #Debut #teardrops #björkcollection #björkupdates #björkposts



alاندunn67 Unspeakable (2018), #backsleeve #KillingJoke #WhatsThisFor and #Björk #Debut



alاندunn67 Nombre (2019), side 2 of #rosalia #elmalquerer on repeat #stunning - the laugh on



alاندunn67 Cells (2019), conversations between #lp #björk #punk #whiteblood #underground #design

Bananas

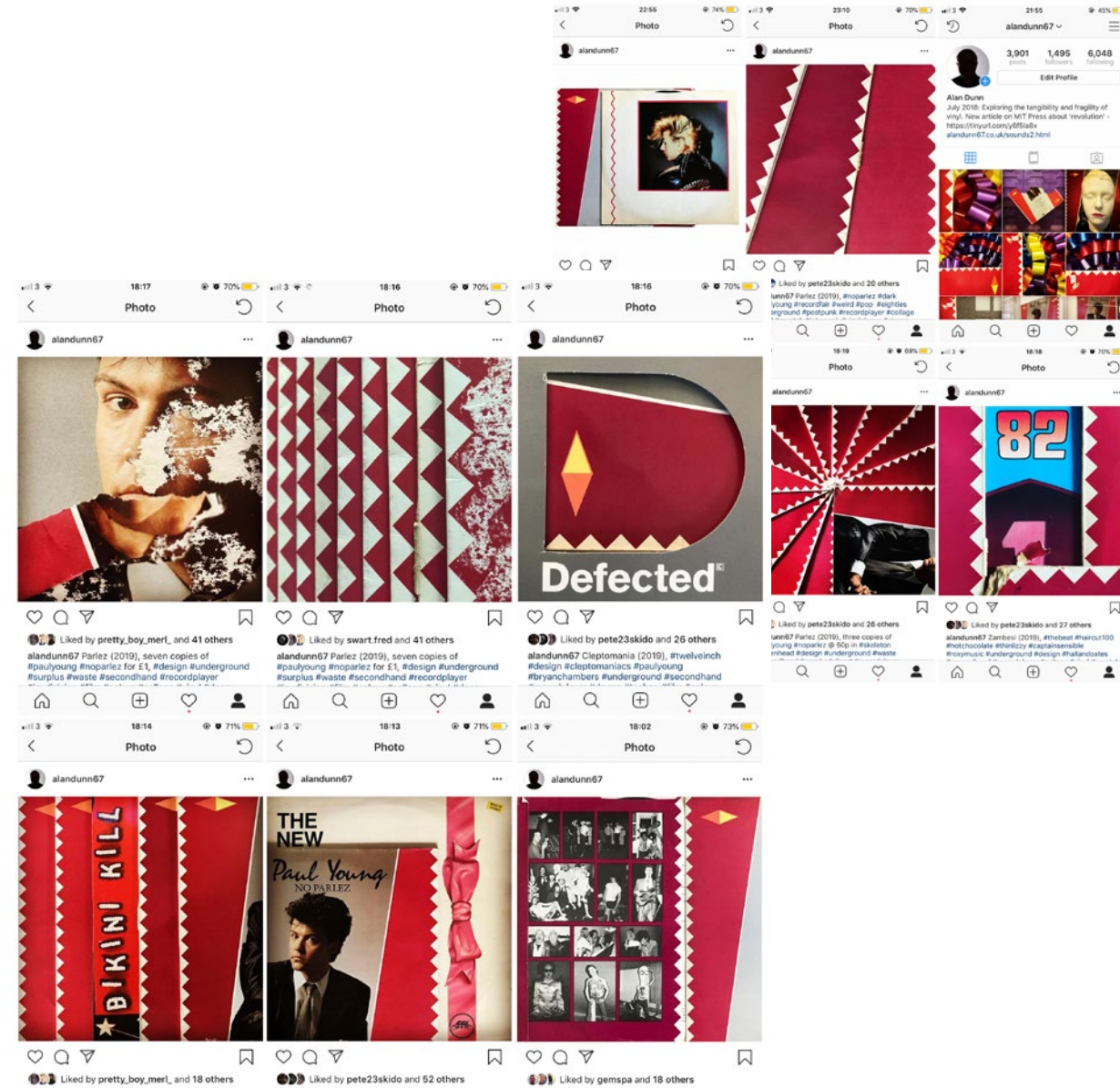
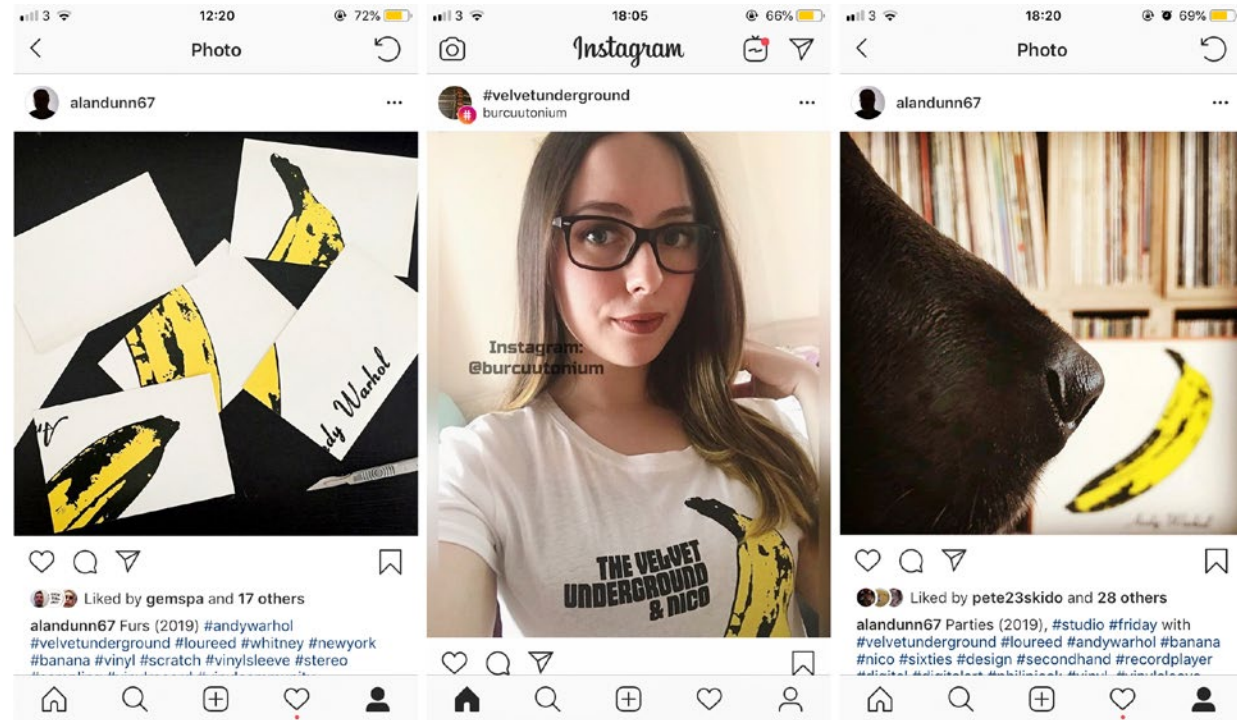
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If pushed, my favourite album sleeve of all time because of its silliness and American-ness; it looks healthy and sexual. It's Warhol being a producer and not doing a lot because Lou Reed is more influential than Bowie to most of the music I collect. I have two copies and cut one up into postcards because it sums up in one design that space between the popular and the avant-garde. The banana is the corporate identity of *The sounds of ideas forming*, demanding we are iconic, canny, humble and progressive.

No Parlez

4

Artist Rutherford Chang is buying up copies of the *White Album*⁴ and with a nod to that fantastic project, I start amassing copies of Paul Young's *No Parlez* (1983). Of the sleeve design, Young says: 'The sleeve has two flashes of burgundy on either side of the picture because you could see the photographer's assistant up a ladder at the back of the shot, so we had to cover him up.'⁵ There's a brilliant community on Twitter dedicated to finding and sharing copies - @NoParlezClub. *No Parlez* is the Charity Shop Mascot of the project. Bring your copies – all graciously received!



Eurythmics vs Grace Jones

3

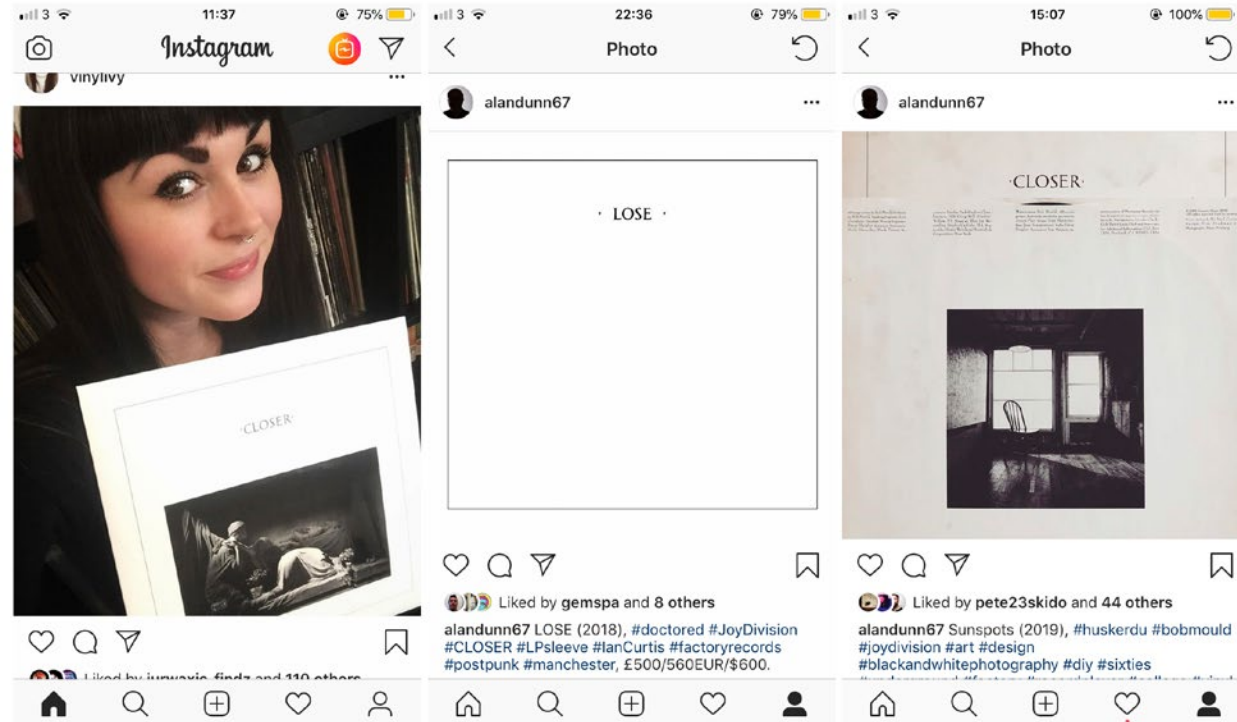
Just the one image for this very simple alteration, taking the sharp scissor edges and white 'plaster' designed by Jean-Paul Goude for the deep Jamaican dub of Grace Jones' *Living My Life* (1982) and applying to the pale Scottish temperament of Annie Lennox on Eurythmics' *Touch* from a year later while also flipping the cover horizontally and removing all text. Background becomes more important. No fear, no hate, no exoticism, no reminders, no pain.



LOSE

2

There are hundreds of images of people posing happily with *Closer*. It seems odd to me and generates a whole gamut of feelings around loss, losing, Curtis' suicide, the suicide in my family, repackaging Joy Division, the desire to lose some memories, keeping the dead alive and the suicide celebrities out there on social media. I remove two letters and move closer to lose. To lose is to be unable to find, to disinherit and to misplace. This version is the emblem of *The sounds of ideas forming*, from losing those records to nearly losing much more important things, including memories.



VERMIN

Again, just one image for one gesture,
after
Jamie Reid
after
Einstürzende Neubauten's *ENDE NEU* (1996)
after
John Oswald
after ...
what the public think of the Sex Pistols from day one.

VERMIN is the MacGuffin of the project.

1

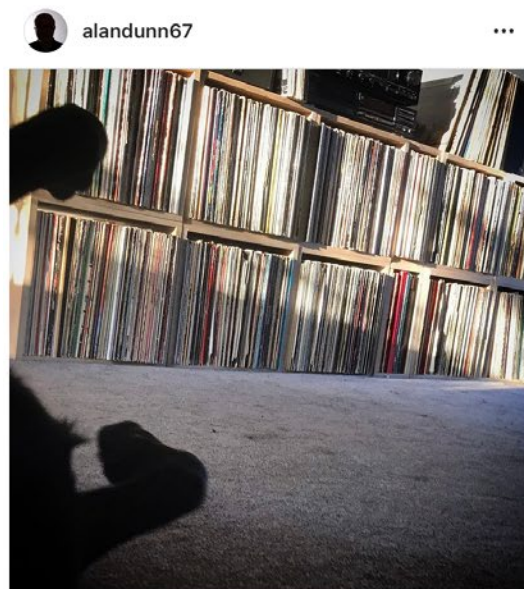


Not a crushed conclusion

The sounds of ideas forming didn't set out to introduce Batman-obsessed 3-year-olds to vinyl in the home and it didn't set out to make me think about my dad, his collection and his memories. As I write this, he's just visited for a week. He has Alzheimers and forgets things within about an hour, but he is happy. Together, we make two more record boxes and I ask him about his record collection and how he has to 'sneak' records home.

His memory of the 70s is clear but I think I've imbued his collection with too much significance. He doesn't want to discuss it at all and within an hour he'll have forgotten making these boxes. As we screw them together, I think about such memories and how sometimes they are over-rated. We've all done stuff that has consequences that leads us to the next bit, even if they don't or can't mechanically lodge as permanent memories. Live in the here and now, the experts say. My pregnant-again daughter, whose escapades escalate our move in 2013 and hence the crush, also visits when my dad is here.

She looks at her Batman-obsessed 3-year-old exploring my current collection and says that none of us will ever have time to listen to it all. Isn't that what we normally say to our young people when we see their iTunes? I say that she's probably right and then I work it out ... only 30 full days to listen to everything! It hits her ... it's about more than music hidden on a phone or laptop. I nod and pull out twenty copies of *No Parlez* and say wryly 'And this is part of your inheritance.' Of course it's not about where the project has come from – the crushing, PhD, CDs, MP3s, Art Prize, changing disposable income and chaotic family situation – but where it's heading as it picks up momentum and tells me what to do next. It's a conversation with other vinyl collectors but also with wider issues around the speed of life, selective forgetting and the love we imbue upon objects. It creates conversations, visits, fresh connections, new audiences and experiences. It pushes my own visual awareness, imagination and, within reason, risk-taking. It entertains me and costs nothing except for the records, which I'd be buying anyway. Yet now I look at cheap sleeves and think – I could do something with that one. The tail is wagging the dog, and I love it.



End Notes

- 1 <http://alandunn67.co.uk/ADCD.html>
- 2 Malitz, Z. (date unknown), *Détournement/Culture jamming*, online, available at <https://beautifultrouble.org/tactic/detournementculture-jamming/>
- 3 <http://alandunn67.co.uk/backgroundprojectpage.html>
- 4 *We Buy White Albums*, <http://rutherfordchang.com/white.html>
- 5 *Award-winning No Parlez cover art was an accident* (2014), online, available at: <https://www.express.co.uk/celebrity-news/481504/Award-winning-No-Parlez-cover-art-was-an-accident>

For further browsing, the Instagram project is @alandunn67 and this Research Station is dedicated to Instagram's top vinyl posters: @pete23skido, @slayercarito, @gavinbar, @vinylslav, @pablo.lleite, @longtallsally1666, @_bobby.jean_ and @waxbygraves.

Thanks to:

Professor Simon Morris, Tom Rodgers, Charlotte Allen, Patricia Hewitt and Aidan Winterburn.

People who care about records are always giving me a hard time

Christian Marclay, 'Don't sleeve me this way', The Guardian (2005)

Long display case

- 1 The Beatles *White Album* (1968), sleeve design by Richard Hamilton.
- 2 Jesus & Mary Chain *Upside Down* (1984) cut to reveal the mythical rabbit from Echo & The Bunnymen *The pictures on my wall* (1979).
- 3 John Oswald *Plunderphonics* (2001), a 2xCD set of détournement and audio collage.
- 4 *The Lovers* (2 x LPs), entwined copies of New Order *Blue Monday* (1983) with a nod to Sneha Solanki *The Lovers* (2001), two networked PCs, one of which is infected with a virus.
- 5 *The Strangers* (2 x LPs), cut sleeve of The Stranglers *Black And White* (1978) over blank black sleeve and Einstürzende Neubauten *Fuenf Auf Der Nach Oben Offenen Richterskala* (1987).
- 6 *The Losers* (2 x LPs) Joy Division *Closer* (1980) meets Howard Jones *Human's Lib* (1984).

Posters

- 7 Exterior poster (nearest B Building) – the word VERMIN salvaged from Sex Pistols *Never Mind The Bollocks* (1977).
- 8 Exterior poster – the word LOSE foregrounded on Joy Division *Closer* (1980).
- 9 Exterior poster – front cover of by Clinton Heylin *All Yesterday's Parties: The Velvet Underground in Print: 1966-71* (2005) replacing Andy Warhol's design for *The Velvet Underground & Nico* (1967).
- 10 Exterior poster – Eurythmics *Touch* (1983) cut as Grace Jones *Living My Life* (1982).
- 11 Exterior poster – the word NORTH kept from Minor Threat *Filler* (1981).
- 12 Interior poster – (nearest B Building) – Generation X *Ready Steady Go* (1978).
- 13 Interior poster – Various *The best of Louie Louie* (1983).
- 14 Interior poster – KLF *Kylie said to Jason* (1989).
- 15 Interior poster – Public Enemy *911 is a joke* (1990) on DefJam Recordings.
- 16 Interior poster – New Order *In a lonely place* (1981) vs PIL *Rise* (1986).

Double-sided LPs on plinths

- 17 Plinth 1 (nearest B Building) Side A – Björk *Debut* (1993) vs Soundscape *Dubplate Culture* (1997).
- 18 Plinth 1 Side B – Björk *Debut* (1993) vs Paul Young *No Parlez* (1983).
- 19 Plinth 2 Side A – Jesus and Mary Chain *Never Understand* (1985).
- 20 Plinth 2 Side B – The Timelords *Doctorin' the Tardis* (1988) vs Abba *Arrival* (1976).
- 21 Plinth 3 Side A – The Yachts *Yachting Types* (1978).
- 22 Plinth 3 Side B – New Order *Confusion* (1983).
- 23 Plinth 4 Side A – Blondie *Parallel Lines* (1978).
- 24 Plinth 4 Side B – Cleptomaniacs *All I do* (2000) on Defected Records vs Paul Young *No Parlez* (1983).
- 25 Plinth 5 Side A – New Order *1981-82* (1982).
- 26 Plinth 5 Side B – Kraftwerk *Man Machine* (1978).
- 27 Plinth 6 Side A – Stone Roses *Stone Roses* (1988).
- 28 Plinth 6 Side B – New Order *Blue Monday* (1983).
- 29 Plinth 7 Side A – The Janitors *Chicken Stew/ The Devil's Gone to Whitley Bay* (1985).
- 30 Plinth 7 Side B – Various *Phil Spector's Greatest Hits* (1983).



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