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Cover Art

An exhibition of a one-time compilation of high points in cover design

Waiblingen, 28 June 2022. The summer exhibition, *Cover Art*, of the Galerie Stihl Waiblingen honours record covers and their designers. A selection of works by outstanding record cover artists—including pioneers and legends like Alex Steinweiss, Emil Schult, Peter Saville, and Anton Corbijn—as well as by the Blue Note Records label represent high points in cover art. The exhibition was conceived in cooperation with Walter Schönauer, art director of the magazines *Rolling Stone* and *Musikexpress* and designer of the famous cover for the album *Mensch* by Herbert Grönemeyer. An exhibition catalogue will be published, also designed by Walter Schönauer.

From 2 July to 16 October 2022, the Galerie Stihl Waiblingen enables you to open both your eyes and your ears! Cover designers continue to create unique pictures of sound on record sleeves and give visual expression to the self-conception of labels or musicians until today. In conjunction with the revival of music records in recent years, the Galerie Stihl Waiblingen is paying homage to the square cardboard sleeves and the creative minds behind them. The exhibition *Cover Art* presents a one-time compilation of outstanding cover artists from 1940 until today in nine sections. Fascinating works by Alex Steinweiss, the pioneer of illustrated covers, whose works are frequently mentioned, are represented, but also being shown in Waiblingen for the very first time in a larger museum-like framework. In addition, the exhibition also includes works by legends such as Emil Schult. The artist, who studied with Joseph Beuys at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf, gives expression to his joy in experimentation not only with the music of Kraftwerk, but also with his distinctive cover design for the band. Schult's fascinating preliminary drawings and sketches are also being presented to the public for the first time in the exhibition.

What should be highlighted in particular is the selection that Peter Saville made of his own unique works—for instance, for Joy Division and OMD—especially for the exhibition, as well as Anton Corbijn's personal compilation of photographs that influenced his cover design for bands like Depeche Mode. A very special artist is represented in the exhibition with Klaus Voormann. He won a Grammy in the category of 'Award for Best Album Cover, Graphic Arts' for The Beatles' *Revolver* album in 1967 as the first German to be given this honour. The original drawings for the graphic novel *Birth of an Icon*, which are being shown on the occasion of the fifty-year anniversary of the release of the legendary cover, impressively present Voormann's drawing skills to visitors, along with the history of the creation of the cover.

Fans of art and music also have the opportunity to marvel at Philips' record series *twen*, which are being shown in their entirety thanks to a private collection. The series consists of 73 record covers that the first German art director, Willy Fleckhaus, designed for the cult magazine *twen* in the mid-1960s. This series, with its visually unusual covers, includes compositions and interpretations of Tchaikovsky to Jacques Brel.

Another section of the exhibition is dedicated to the Blue Note Records label. The famous New York-based jazz label developed its very own style-defining design line as a result of the collaboration of the graphic designer Reid Miles and the photographer Francis Wolff.

The fifty-square-metre-large walk-in installation *We Buy White Albums* by the US-American artist Rutherford Chang represents the centrepiece of the exhibition. The installation consists of an overwhelming 3,000 *White Albums* by The Beatles. Visitors are invited to listen to the famous album on record players. Another highlight of the exhibition is a multimedia installation that the women artists of the international music collective Chicks on Speed created especially for the exhibition.

The multifaceted exhibition is rounded out by a 'Soundwalk' that reproduces selected pieces of music from records for which the record cover artists once designed covers.

The loans come from international private collections, the private estate of Alex Steinweiss in the United States, the Jazzinstitut Darmstadt, the Sparkassenstiftung Lüneburg, as well as the artists themselves.

The realization of the exhibition was made possible thanks to their generous support of the Kreissparkasse Waiblingen, the Förderverein Freunde der Galerie Stihl Waiblingen e. V., and Strähle Raum-Systeme GmbH. The exhibition was conceived in cooperation with Walter Schönauer, art director of the music magazines *Rolling Stone* and *Musikexpress*.

A catalogue designed by Walter Schönauer, with texts and interviews by Jens Balzer (*Zeit*, *Rolling Stone*, *Deutschlandfunk*) and other authors, will be published on the occasion of the exhibition.

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