



The Crushed

This is the Waste Recycling Centre in Bidston, Wirral, and it's been on my mind a lot recently no matter how I try to forget it. Maybe writing this will clear some of it up - we'll find out in the last few paragraphs. In 2013 I threw half of my record collection away into those skips. Plastic in one, sleeves in another. I didn't donate to a charity shop, sell on Discogs, give to a friend nor give to you, dear reader and probable record collector. They aren't put in storage, but inconceivably crushed. At the time, I probably have around 1,000 discs and make choices to keep about 500. As we are packing to move home 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. I get rid of a lot of crap bought in charity shops and shit that I haven't even listened to more than once. Or not even once.

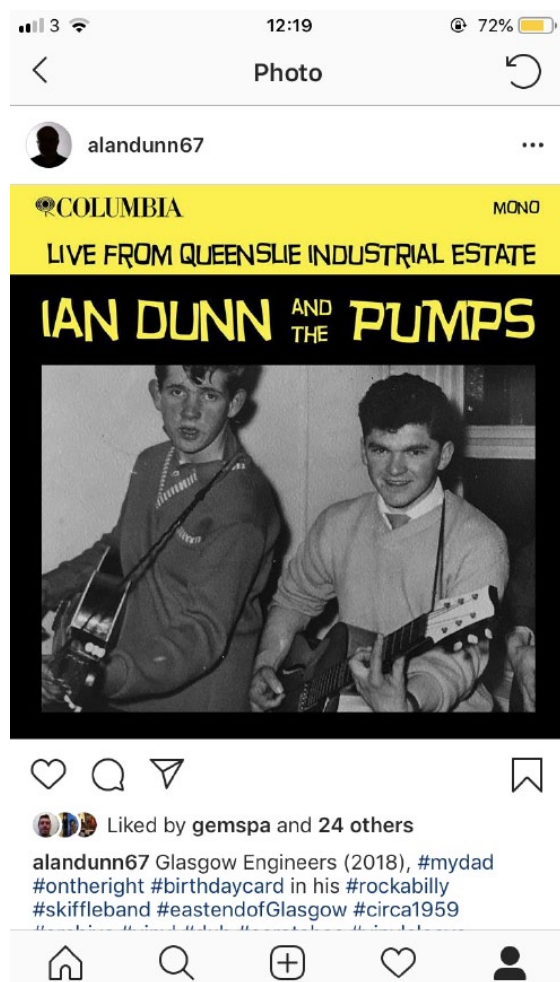
Why think back to it then, if it was only dross that got culled? After getting the vinyl bug back again in 2016, it's inevitable that I recall those weeks. And since beginning *The sounds of idea forming, Volume 2* on Instagram in July 2018, I begin to wonder if my confession may make interesting reading for the community out there, so please stay with me because there are methods behind the madness. Some will be reading this and already thinking 'fuck, he should have offered me those' or 'sacrilege' or 'hundreds of quid down the drain, spoilt twat' or 'which ones???' Please hear me out about why because the reasons are clear and important and will include the revolution of the CD format, Birkenhead drug gangs and the Liverpool Art Prize.

What happens in 2013 is private and not on the scale of Michael Landy's *Break Down* (2001) nor the KLF burning 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. Every time we take it out of those majestic sleeves, it reminds us we have developed the technology to translate time into solid form and it unravels itself at 33 or 45rpm while gifting us sounds that reflect who we are, or remind us of who we are not. As others have written, it gathers scratches and dust that are traces of each time it has been handled and played. It makes us think about being in bands (not that I ever am, but it's never too late) and makes us look at generations of graphic design commissioned for a square, a visual format we can trace back to Kazimir Malevich's *Black Square* (1915).

Ultimately, as the Instagram project demonstrates, it is a fragile and disposable medium that can become part of our lives through the calm and the storm. This project and text is about the tangibility of it and what makes it so different to an MP3 that can be deleted but easily replaced by an identical one. It is about hearing a pile of vinyl slide down into the crusher and seeing sleeves float away. But it is also about spotting a pile of vinyl at the back of a charity shop corner and not being able to resist a browse, just in case ...

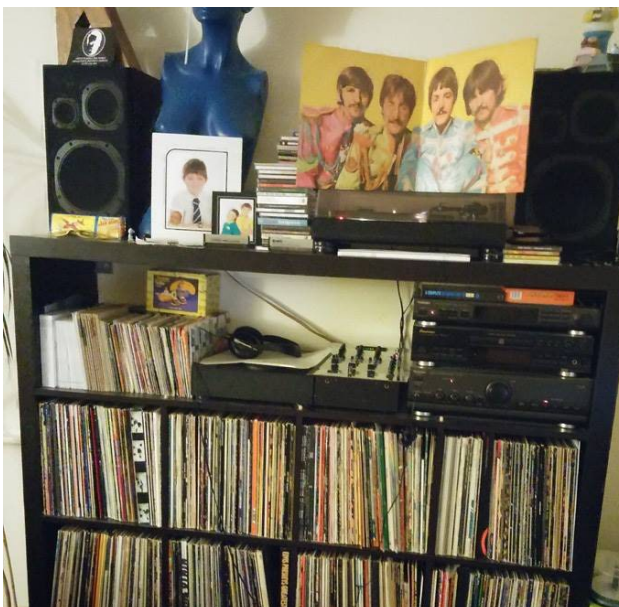
A brief history of vinyl

I grow up in the east end of Glasgow with a dad who has what I think at the time is an enormous vinyl collection hidden in a specially designed cupboard made using various bits and bobs smuggled out of his lifelong employers, WEIR pumps. There is a lot of rock'n'roll in there, but no Beatles nor Stones (my gran didn't approve) and plenty of Cliff, Lonnie Donegan, Abba, *BBC Sound Effects*, Shirley Bassey, James Last, *Top of the Pops*, The Shadows and so forth. Each one is treated with white gloves and God help any poor record that dares gain a scratch. My mum has about five records and isn't really into vinyl as much, preferring radio, but it's as normal to have a collection in your house as it is to have tables, chairs or central 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 vinyl. The first are bought at a flea market at my secondary school and include an Otis Redding (still got) and a Boston one for its airbrushed cover (crushed). These are shortly followed by my first real purchases in HMV and Virgin on Union Street of Toyah, Adam & The Ants

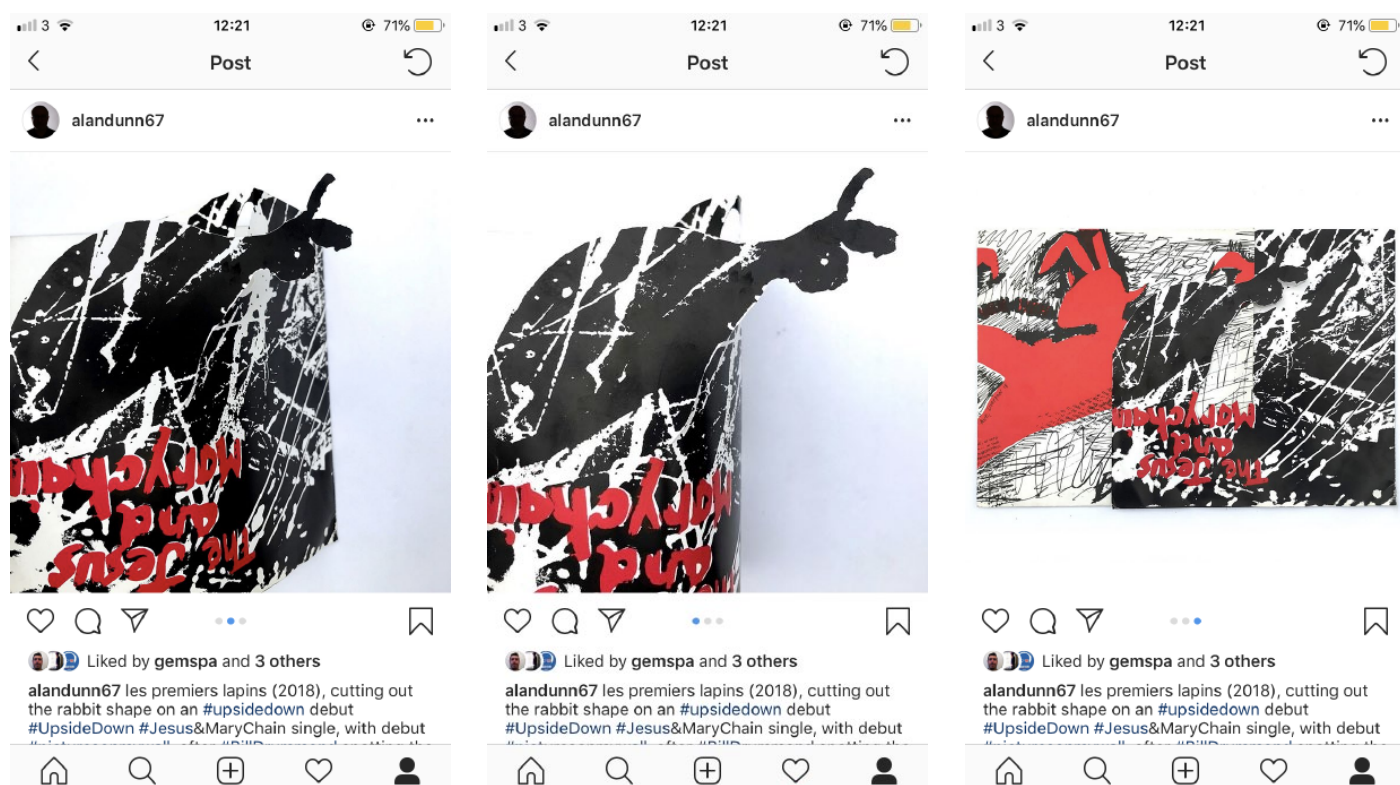
and Dexy's Midnight Runners. In my PhD, I describe the importance of fellow pupil Graeme Ainslie and how he introduces me to an alternative world of sounds. I can draw really well and he lends me albums to copy the sleeves in detailed pencil drawings, my payment being listening to them and making tape copies on my dad's system. I put together this brief *Stimulus Respond* article about him after he dies suddenly of a stroke: <http://alandunn67.co.uk/stimuluspsychedelia.pdf>. And here's proof that I shouldn't include selfies, posing in 2019 with that first ever record and a selection from Graeme's Facebook images (mostly from 2013).



Through Graeme, I become aware of and start purchasing the Sex Pistols, The Doors, T-Rex, Buzzcocks, Velvet Underground, Iggy Pop (but never really Bowie who I consider over-rated, although I try a few of the classics), Kraftwerk, Joy Division, Devo, New Order, Siouxsie & The Banshees, Killing Joke, Echo & The Bunnymen, Dead Kennedys and the Birthday Party. One Saturday I spend so long humming and hawing over which single record to purchase in HMV I'm hauled into the manager's office and accused of shoplifting (not that albums would easily fit into any pocket). While on the subject of bands I consider over-rated and the basis of a future text – Teenage Fanclub, Prodigy, Television, Talk Talk, The Dictators, Duritti Column, Pavement, A Certain Ratio, The Go-Betweens, Florence & The Machine, MC5, some late Björk and some Nick Cave.

Weird sounds inside Glasgow

An article I read mentions John Peel's radio show and soon his nightly programmes are providing obscure names on my lists of records to track down. I borrow incessantly from our local library - Pere Ubu, Pink Floyd, Bad Manners, Tom Waits, Ultravox – and start to read David Henderson's *Wild Planet* feature in *Sounds* that introduces me to Einstürzende Neubauten, and I send cheques to a company called Adrian's for rare records by unknown bands. Each Sunday I visit the Barras market's scary stalls full of second hand vinyl and, feeling like a young JP, I explore Glasgow's only reggae shop at top end of Buchanan Street (where I buy just one record, the Paul Drake *Rub-a-dub soldier* 12"). My school has its heavy metal, ska, hardcore punk, pop and goth tribes and, apart from metal, I dip into them all. Edwin Pouncey's reviews in *Sounds* are filled with expensive imports but through fanzines and mail order I build up my psych, goth, garage punk, Paisley Underground, Cramps, Dream Syndicate, Fuzztones, Nuggets, Ramones and Thirteenth Floor Elevators until East Kilbride provides our own version in the form of the 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 further into C86, Smiths, Soup Dragons and most things Festive 50 but I never buy anything from Stephen Pastel who serves in Fopp in the West End. Are the Pastels also a bit over-rated in my mind at the time or just not American enough for me? *Underground* magazine arrives and every record is now fully independent - JAMs, Sugarcubes, Pixies, Throwing Muses, The Fall, Redskins. I do this large pastel drawing in 1986, aged 19, a confused self-portrait holding the *Basement Walls* psych comp and surrounded by the bands from the *Some Bizarre* comp that I can't afford, *If You Can't Please Yourself You Can't, Please Your Soul*.



The birth of tinnitus

My art school soundtrack gets really noisy around 1987 courtesy of Swans, Sonic Youth, Dinosaur Jnr, Foetus, Big Black, Hüsker Dü, Black Flag, Butthole Surfers, Septic Death, all things *Maximum Rock'n'Roll* and Lydia Lunch. Peel is still a go-to and looking back, this bleak black vinyl void macho-ism reflects the nihilism and confusion of a young art student. Some fellow students like Martin Young seem to be able to afford very expensive Psychic TV records and we make a pilgrimage to the Rough Trade shop in London where I buy the cracking *Culturcide* album.

The sounds on some of these records are beyond words, like the Dinosaur Jnr guitar riff on *Bulbs* or the patina of *Warehouse: Songs and Stories*. Each Friday I pop into AK Records and don't come out empty handed - Crass, Nightingales, Christ on Parade, Talulah Gosh, Annie Anxiety etc. On reflection, I probably do, like many, damage my ears with loud independent music on shitty Walkman headphones, leading to the tinnitus, but silence is so rare these days that the condition is mostly buried and unnoticed in my everyday life. Worth it.



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 album and stick their heads on the bodies. My payment is a ticket to see Swans at Rooftops but the gig is pulled at the last minute due to concerns about the damage the volume might do to the architecture. Or the fans.

Drying up

As the decade draws to an end, I slide through a two-year Masters Degree that ends with curating the *Bellgrove Station Billboard Project*. I spend time studying in Chicago and buying as many second-hand records as I can carry back on the plane. I return, finish my Masters, fall in love and leave Glasgow. And then the records dry up, ironically as I begin earning a disposable income. I blame dancing. I'm never a fan of it and hate it when it starts to creep into Peel and then into our art school studio via Happy Mondays and the music that sounds like speeded up *Pinky'n'Perky* infiltrating Easterhouse where I run community art projects. Why do they call it garage when they don't know the Standells, Sonics or Fuzztones? As the 80s finish, my relationship with vinyl – which as you can tell is basically buying round bits of plastic with the sound of guitars, singers and drummers on them, or as Hüsker Dü more poetically put it, *melody, aggression and intelligence* – comes to a hiatus.

Through the 90s, I buy very little vinyl, staying loyal only to a few but even then, the gap between buying a record and listening to it for the first time grows. I listen to Radcliffe and Riley and pick up big expensive double-album heavy issues from Primal Scream, Beastie Boys, Spearhead, Wu-Tang Clan and Public Enemy but they are all later crushed with disdain. They are probably good in bits but they feel as extravagant and decadent as Rick Wakeman seems to the punks. Fuck you, 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 the next 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 now than an insider. Work then brings the opportunity to move to the city that provides much of the sporting and cultural backdrop of my youth: Liverpool.



We arrive in late 1994 and I start scouring its many second-hand record shops and flea markets, picking up some good new stuff - Tricky, Godspeed You! Black Emperor - and rediscovering Scritti Politti. I meet Bryan Biggs at the Bluecoat who is an avid record collector and crucial advocate of art-pop-football crossovers. In 1996 he invites me to curate an exhibition of football record sleeves within my Euro'96 role (FAIR - Football Artist In Residence). We call the show *The Vinyl Whistle* and borrow amazing sleeves from Roger Hill and The Institute of Popular Music at University of Liverpool. The 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 it doesn't feel as world-changing as it should. Through this project I learn how records are made, produced, designed and delivered yet the mystery, already under threat as the 80s ended, is most certainly gone.

Compact Listening

Simon Reynolds' *Retromania* (2011) explains better what is happening to me and to all of us. There exists a gap around access to knowledge (we need it quicker) and information (more conveniently) and reaching out to fellow humans across continents (more economically and/or anonymously) and towards the end of the 90s, the Internet arrives to satisfy these needs. Every sound gradually becomes available, free of charge. Sounds become sleeveless, origin-less and anonymous deliveries onto your desktop speakers. I subscribe to *WIRE* magazine and with it, the mystery returns, the same curiosity I feel reading David Henderson or Edwin Pouncey's reviews of rare underground garage limited edition releases. I thrill at the increasingly obscure sub-genres and, unlike *Sounds* before, I can now access and afford to check a lot of it out, digitally, straight away. The gap between anticipating a sound and hearing it shrinks and shrinks and as the price of vinyl continues to rise, digital files sound better and better. Didn't I dream in the early 80s when scanning all those Adrian's catalogues of just being able to have it *all*, with no concern over cost or storage space? Isn't this a healthy thing to feed the ears and brain with every conceivable type, length and intention of sound?

In 2001 I start working on the community art project *tenantspin* for the Foundation for Art & Creative Technology (FACT) in Liverpool. I'm surrounded by and plugged into new networks of people around the world trying to do new and exciting things with pre-broadband Internet - coding, sharing and producing. I'm drawn to the possibilities of the CDR and the lowering costs of good microphones and during a FACT project I meet Chris Watson (Cabaret Voltaire/David Attenborough) who makes me rethink the whole notion of sound, recording, producing, DIY, mixing, distributing and listening. The climate is one of making, not just consuming/collecting.

And the story goes like this ... one lunchtime in 2003 I am browsing in HMV which doesn't sell vinyl any more. In my head I hear the wise words of someone (possibly artist Pavel Büchler?) saying 'always go to the quiet part of a record shop where nobody else is browsing.' Following this mantra I end up standing before Stockhausen's *Helikopter-Streichquartett* (1995). I read the description of the piece and in the rare six hours before getting to hear it (back-to-back meetings), I have composed in my head what I think - or hope - it sounds like. But before playing it, when I get back to our Canning Street flat I realise I now have the tools (laptop, recording devices, video edit software) to make tangible and share what I *anticipate* it will sound like. I do so, and produce a small edition of a soundwork I call *everything you hope from ...* and on that evening start a 'label' called cantaudio (approaching it's 50th release - <http://alandunn67.co.uk/cantaudiocatalogue.html>). From this moment on I begin producing professionally-manufactured themed CDs based on legendary pieces of music I've not heard - and deliberately don't listen to until after making my own version - and this gradually morphs into a six year PhD between 2008-14 producing over 10,000 curated CDs and radio broadcasts, installations and writing called *The sounds of ideas forming* (<http://alandunn67.co.uk/ADCD.html>). This is my post-vinyl CD revolution and the images on the following pages from 2005-12 show the shift in my studio from the vinyl + CD to CD only environment.



A History Of Background

Various

www.ahistoryofbackground.com

Alan Dunn is an art lecturer at Leeds Metropolitan University, and, according to his sleevenotes for this compilation, has a fantasy of appearing on the cover of *The Wire*. In this imaginary cover photo Dunn appears blurred in the far distance while centre stage is Carol Kaye, now in her seventies, bass guitarist on "Good Vibrations", "River Deep Mountain High" and a thousand other hit songs. Moving the background into the foreground is Dunn's aim on this collection of 51 tracks, and one of its highlights is an interview with Kaye, where she demonstrates how she was hired to convert dull basslines into pure gold. It's followed by Lee Perry's wild "Jungle Skank", where the bass is the tune.

Dunn's album works like an exhibition on the subject of background, tied together by his own sleevenote essay. Nigel Rodgers from campaign group Pipedown frets about unnecessary music, and a 1968 track by The Muzak Orchestra demonstrates the full hyperactive ghastliness of background music before the calming advent of Ambient. Brian Eno tells how he conceived *Music For Airports*, and Andy Warhol natters happily over lunch in Paris. There's Erik Satie, dubstep by Cyrus, Einstürzende Neubauten, then Bo Diddley applies for a job in the persona of "Background To A Music", a bizarre comedy skit with the guitarist taking all the parts. In amongst these are pithy contributions by Leeds students.

It's a fascinating exercise in shifting perspectives, beautifully encapsulated in the closing "Space Oddity": we hear just one track from Bowie's multitrack tape, with a spot of backing vocal, a flute rhapsody and cellos sliding off into space.

Clive Bell

The sounds of ideas forming explores the democratisation of the production and distribution of sound and specifically the relationship between sound art and the everyday, moments when challenging sounds enter popular contexts such as The Beatles' *Revolution 9* (1968) in living rooms or Cage *Against the Machine* (2010).

My research is shown at the ICA alongside Bruce Nauman's *DAYS* (2012) and reviewed in *WIRE* (2011, left). I reinvent myself through a lack of vinyl. I become known as a producer and sound artist on CD and download formats and exhibit and present at numerous sound art events, but more on those later after further thoughts on the revolution of audio formats.

I contact musicians, record labels and content holders for permissions and to exchange ideas and opportunities: Einstürzende Neubauten, Andy Warhol Foundation, Carol Kaye, Melt Banana, David Bowie, Brian Eno, Pixies, Yoko Ono, Bikini Kill and The Residents. Each email conversation feels like returning them to when they are art students or starting out and doing things for free, donating recordings to compilations and supporting causes.

Seth Kim-Cohen's *In the blink of an ear* (2009) reminds us of the romantic art of recording, as 'the verb "to record" is a curious composition. The prefix re means "again" or suggests a backwards movement. The root cor comes from the Latin for the heart (*le coeur*). To record, then, is to encounter the heart again or to move back to the heart. The implication is that a recording captures and replays the heart of its source.'

Meanwhile, my vinyl collection sits there, gathering dust, surrounded by aggressive CDs and PCs with MP3s screaming their extraordinary sounds including the rare recording of Siouxsie and Sid doing *The Lord's Prayer* or the legendary *Siberian sounds of hell* file. Along comes file sharing and all the stuff I want as a teenager is there. After all, I still can't afford (or need?) the vinyls of all the music I want to hear.

The hunt is gone. The browsing and stumbling upon an oddity in a rack is replaced by gorging. I can buy everything Guided by Voices do on CD, including those extraordinary suitcases and boxes. I just counted fifty-four GBV CDs purchased

at approximately 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 (left). Collecting becomes much more of a social and creative dialogue. The distance between musicians and me shrinks. GBV's DIY energy and rawness underpins and drives my belief in the CD format during the PhD.



I hear grumbling even as I type this and it's my vinyl collection, sulking away in the corner in its heavy black IKEA monolith. It is 'them', the givers of pleasure and creators of content. The CDs and MP3s are 'us' - fellow creators and collaborators. Unlike putting cassette compilations together at the height of vinyl, working with CDs is on a par with the industry as mine are produced in the same factories using the same materials.

I take cheap punts based on intriguing reviews and can also afford to stay loyal. I buy more and more Einstürzende Neubauten and pay them upfront as part of their fan-only CD releases. I invite them to come to Liverpool to be part of the destruction of the Bluecoat prior to its renovation. I'm playing records less and less until I realise its been years. We drift apart, like a relationship that begins full of wide-eyed magic and slowly gets boring. Instead, I celebrate what I see as a more artist-friendly and down-to-earth community around the CD and MP3 and begin giving away my CDs for free, leaving them in phone boxes by Coney Island or handing them out on Deptford High Street (left, 2013).





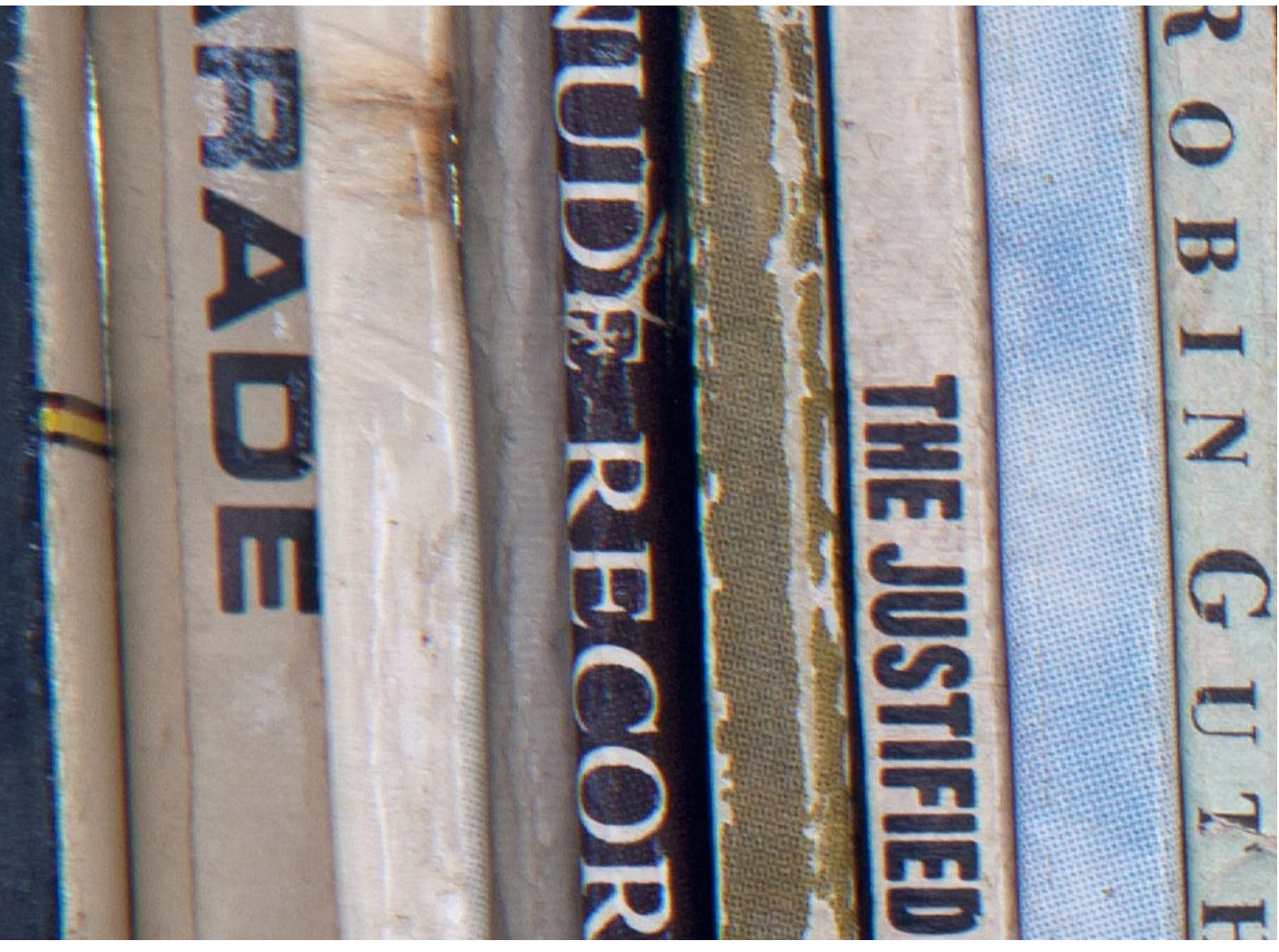
Wha' appen?

In 2012 I'm selected for the Liverpool Art Prize exhibition at Metal and present a version of my PhD which is nearing completion. I include all the CDs and a bibliography in the form of music books stretched on top of a door, like the bucket of water from practical jokes (seen below with Dave *Teardrop Explodes* Space Moongoose Yorkie). Along one window, I wedge around 200 album sleeves – with the vinyl removed – as a comment on the compression of audio into smaller forms and the redundancy of the vinyl format.

After the show, I don't bother putting the vinyls back in their correct sleeves, such is my indifference. This exhibition feels like the nail in the coffin for my vinyl and ironically, an image of those wedged sleeves on Instagram is one of the most liked, even with the half-serious comment 'I'd really worry about the effects of sunlight on the sleeves.'







Around this very period our family goes through some issues that mean we have to move house extremely quickly. Let's say that 'a tattooed boy from Birkenhead' becomes involved with our vulnerable daughter, leading to drugs, violence, social services, police, missing children and a threat to our family/home.

Here's some reflections on that difficult period: <http://alandunn67.co.uk/breakingdownthewallsofheartache2.pdf>

Breakin' down the walls of heartache Part 2:

A face that's asking to be punched



Figure 1 - Liverpool 0 Chelsea 2, Anfield, 27 April 2014.

Some Birkenhead drug dealers and violent men start threatening us, isolating us, surrounding our house, stretching our family to breaking point and we have to move, quickly. I take it as a chance to do the cull. Not just records, but books, objects, shit, crap, belongings. We have to downsize dramatically, hence the trips to the recycle centre. There's far more important things in life at this moment than stuff, especially heavy redundant stuff, which brings us to the list you want to see!

From memory, and the few images from the Liverpool Art Prize, the next page contains a summary of what I can remember being crushed back in 2013, put into retrospective categories that sum up my thinking at the time:

Bands that have become staid and release big (double/triple) albums that bore me and that I resent for having paid more for: Primal Scream, Wu-Tang Clan, Beastie Boys, Public Enemy (*Muse sick ...*), Spearhead, Clash (*Sandinista*), Goldie, Jamiroquai, Stone Roses (*Second Coming*) and Die Toten Hosen.

Cheap greatest hits or dodgy 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 box-set, Rhino Records Novelty Tracks (5xLP set), Michael Jackson's *HIStory* box set, Sly & The Family Stone, Robert Johnson, John Lee Hooker, Neil Young, Led Zeppelin, Janis Joplin, Mahalia Jackson, The Who, Donovan, Simon & Garfunkel, T-Rex, Monkees, Wanda Jackson, Bob Dylan and Johnny Cash.

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

Cheap scratched shit from Charity Shops: *The Egyptian* soundtrack, Red Army Choir, Boston, Frank Sinatra, Johnny Cash, *Greetings from Nuremberg*, *Tribute to Burt Bacharach*, Royal Scots Dragoon Guards, Edgar Winters, Monteverdi, *Memories of Japan*, Pierre Boulez, The Spinners, Seigen Ono, *Shaft*, *Cartoon Hits*, *Scooby Doo* and Andy Stewart.

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

Indie 12" singles that also lead to better albums or are just one-liners: Lush, White Town, Babylon Zoo, Pele, *Repetitive Beats*, The Wolfhounds, The The, Fishbone, Bob, Stretchheads, Flatmates (although I keep the 7"), Camper Van Beethoven (you know the one), Voice of Authority and Blaggers ITA.

Compilations on which I only ever like one track: *Tribute to Hüsker Dü* (*Green eyes*), *Beautiful Happiness* (*Holiday in Cambodia*), *Colors* soundtrack (*Paid in full*), *Clockwork Orange* soundtrack (*Lighthouse keeper*), *Palatine* (*Hymn from a village*), *God's Favourite Dog* (*Sweet home Alabama*), Neil Young tribute (*Winterlong*), various rockabilly and Northern Soul compilations, *This is Ska* and *Pay it all back Volume 1*.

Albums that disappoint and are played only once, artists that I feel I've outgrown, mostly heard first on Peel, or those I consider over-rated: Billy Bragg (everything!), Frank Zappa (all those big double live albums), Three Mustaphas Three, Arsenal, Scratch Acid, AC Temple, late Lou Reed (*New York, Magic, New Sensations*), Buffalo Tom, MC5, Disposable Heroes, UK Subs (live), Rain Parade, Opal, Space, Nomads (first full album), Ten Benson, Bowie (*Pin Ups*, *Hunky Dory*), Television, Patti Smith, Alan Vega solo, Rezillos, Dictators, Neville Brothers, Black Grape, Band of Susans, some Marc & The Mambas, Bongwater, Vaselines, Johnny Thunders & Patty Palladin, The Verve, Lime Spiders, Sham 69, The Pastels, some Green on Red, Happy World, X (horrible live double), Teardrop Explodes (keep the singles), some REM (*Green*, *Out of time*), Chris & Cosey, Meat Beat Manifesto, 1000 Homo DJs and INXS.

I realise this list comes closer to 100 than 500 so there's a lot more I forgot, which suggests they aren't important or I have a lot more from Charity Shops. And now on reflection, the six records I wish I'd kept but won't buy again and can live without and ones I hope I never come across in a shop because it will remind me of black times and force me to make a decision (although if you do have a spare copy of any, I'll supply an address, but only used/scribbled and worn copies required!). This is what vinyl can do to us...



10,000 Maniacs – *In my tribe* (for *Verdi Cries*)

Siouxsie & The Banshees - *Kiss in the dreamhouse* (memories of buying it aged 15 while on a family holiday to Morecambe on the same day as buying the Bunnymen's *Porcupine* and my aunt looking at them both and asking who 'Echo & the Porcupine' are, which is a fair question given the typography)

Black Flag - *My War* (I remember it being miserable when I wasn't)

The Fall – *Hex Induction Hour* (bought it cheap, listened once and didn't like it but maybe I would now)

Nomads – *Where the wolf bane blooms* (bought on mail order aged 16 at the height of my drug-free psychedelic garage fuzz period)

Waitresses – *Wasn't tomorrow wonderful* (had on cassette, only got vinyl late, for *I know what boys like*)

And that's that. Even reading the above list, I can live without them. In the cull, I keep all the *melody-noise-intelligence* of the Cocteau Twins, New Order, Joy Division, Cramps, Doors, Einstürzende Neubauten, Nirvana bootlegs, Dream Syndicate, Adam & The Ants, Velvet Underground, Dead Kennedys, Scritti Politti, Bikini Kill, Ramones, Bill Drummond and KLF/JAMs, early Lou Reed, Iggy, SWANS, Echo & The Bunnymen, Hüsker Dü, Killing Joke, Björk, Spacemen 3, Oasis, hardcore, Butthole Surfers, Sonic Youth, Big Black, early Public Enemy, Nancy Sinatra, early Neil Young, Beatles, *Ziggy Stardust* 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 end up in *The sounds of ideas forming, Volume 2*. Over the next couple of years, I finish my PhD and continue to exhibit and broadcast at sound art festivals and projects in America, Argentina, Italy, New Zealand, Germany, Ireland, Portugal, United Arab Emirates, France, Czech Republic, Netherlands and Canada. I write about sound for books and conferences and am invited to develop a sound art project – ironically based around cassettes – for Tate Britain (<http://alandunn67.co.uk/radiocity4.html>).



One day in 2016, when our lives have finally settled following more issues with teenage kids, drugs and police, Brigitte suggests I retrieve an IKEA bag of records from the garage and set up the turntable again, just to see what happens. I carry in a bag. What weird and fucking huge objects these are! I stack them in front of our stripy wallpaper that looks like grooves and grin at the scuffed sleeves with charcoal and paint marks. These objects have really been used and have served me and inhabited rooms with me as I created, struggled, loved, lost, worried, planned and succeeded. Most of them smell of tobacco before I give up (below - *Self-portrait with last cigarette*, still from 15-second film of last ever cigarette with 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 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. I treat myself to three (!) vinyls from people I know or work with, namely the Chris Watson 12", the Algernon Doll LP and at a project at Metal Peterborough, I'm invited to collaborate with The Pop Group and use a detail from one of their sleeves on a billboard and am subsequently able to invite Mark Stewart to contribute to some sound projects (<http://alandunn67.co.uk/ma68.html>).





But where to pick up again when you leapt off the train a few years ago and now all the stations look different? I try a few record shops but they seem aimed at collectors and remain way over-priced, with their walls still covered in out of reach sleeves and records in plastic 'protectors' and gruff salespeople always writing or typing catalogue lists or prices. It all seems churlish to me and I want to scream at them: *It's me! A vinyl addict! I'm BACK! Tempt me, play with me*, because we both know there's only one reason for me to be in your shop. Tease me with £2 each or 3 for £5. Seduce me just a little and we both know I'll give in and I'll be back time and time again. Or, ignore me and sneer when I walk up with the cheapest shit I can find in your store having been on my knees going through crammed plastic tubs of crap in the hope of a nugget. Always go to the quietest part of a record shop to find the most interesting stuff. Always look at the back of the bins. If it's stacked too tight, take out a few to make flicking more enjoyable and you can see more than just the top centimetre of that design that someone slaves over.

I treat myself to some storage units from i-Cubes (sadly since gone bust), buy a £150 turntable in Argos and arrange a sofa in the living room opposite it all. I dip into eBay and Discogs and buy a few of the records that I can't afford when I am younger – always second-hand and used, never mint. I start frequenting charity shops and second-hand stores to pick up surprises. I don't read any reviews or listen to much radio (the exception being accidentally hearing Sleaford Mods' *Fizzy* on Radio 6) and our students are still listening to Joy Division, Simple Minds and The Smiths so

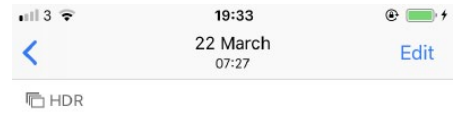
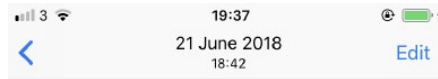
no point in asking them for recommendations. Netflix and C4 become my *Sounds* or *NME*, with the Mogwai soundtrack to *The Returned* (*Les Revenants*, 2013), Cat Stevens after seeing *Harold and Maude* (1971) and the Nina Simone documentary *What Happened, Miss Simone?* (2015) kicking off some purchases. I cycle along to an early Sunday morning Antiques & Collectibles in Port Sunlight and amongst all the military crap and craft, I find obscure records by Sex Pistols, Peter Broderick and Hooton Tennis Club, all fairly cheap. Our local charity shops even throw up weird finds - Mike Oldfield, Kanye West, Daft Punk and Mahalia Jackson. I start going to a record fair in Ellesmere Port held 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. And I avoid Record Store Day at all costs, just as I view Biennales and art festivals with scepticism, hearing that voice again saying 'go where the fewest people are to find the interesting stuff.'

Studio days

In June 2018 in the sweltering heat of the Russian World Cup, the Instagram project starts as a sequel to the PhD. 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 from the garage of older records, postcards, cassettes and fanzines. I start photographing them, cutting them up, juxtaposing, composing, collaging, 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 (and importantly excludes football, which would drag it off down another road). Or, rather, it's as much about looking at sounds and it's a journey, like the PhD, about making connections between disparate things. It's about the relationships between the everyday and the avant-garde, as *Bellgrove* (1991) was about being between the east (home) and west (art school) ends of Glasgow. It's about the pop sensibility of Lou Reed against the screeching of John Cale or Joy Division's *CLOSER* placed next to Paul Young's *Between two fires* (1986) because they both think about the white frame around a black & white photograph and they are both about loss and the inability to speak (*no parlez ...*).

I think of artist Leo Fitzmaurice reflecting that when he pins things to his studio walls, it can take weeks, months or years for him to see the connections. I think of Carrie Mathieson in *Homeland* or Jimmy Perez in *Shetland* staring at walls of photos, whiteboard texts, drawing pins and threads. Someone I know murders half my record collection and part of me wants to open the wound to find out what happens. And to do so, it has to be about sound, music, design, colour, records, vinyl, collections, cost, deterioration, collage, juxtaposition, iconoclasm, humour, entertainment and détournement.

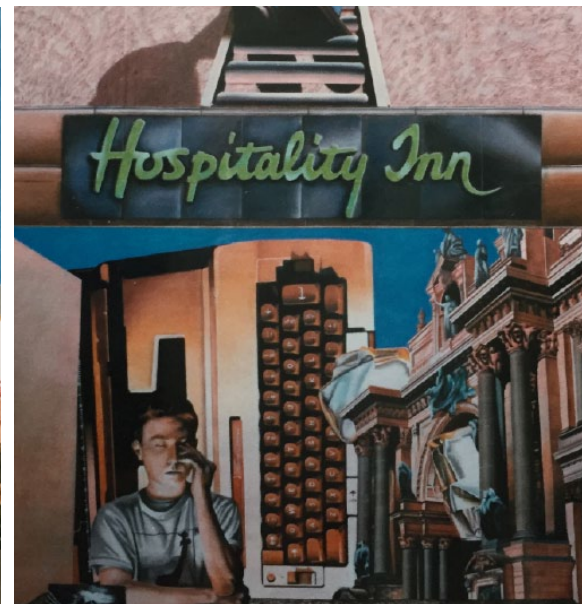
A détournement, meaning rerouting or hijacking in French, is a technique developed in the 1950s by the Lettrist International and later adapted by the Situationist International. It has been defined as "turning expressions of the capitalist system and its media culture against itself" - as when slogans and logos are turned against their advertisers or the political status quo.



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, all processes which form the basis of my other work. I begin in earnest in July 2018 when I am 'between' large projects – Burgess, Belong/Bluecoat, Channel 4 - and have time and space to start something new. I pin every red, black and white record sleeve I own onto the studio walls. Start the revolution with a good palette. I see students using Instagram and set off; collage, photography and autobiography. As mentioned, at art school I start cutting up photographs as the basis of large pastel drawings (details below), mostly my own photographs but also some rare ones from my dad the compulsive colour-blind darkroom photographer who takes pictures of us every day growing up. With this background, social media makes sense as a medium in which to explore stuff (which inadvertently is ending up having something to do with my dad ...)

But before that, every project needs a good unwritten manifesto that unfolds and collapses in your head like the *Inception* architecture:



The sounds of ideas forming, Volume 2 a manifesto

This is an alternative to hipsters posing with pristine 180gsm Nirvana, Joy Division and Beatles reissues next to expensive turntables in tidy rooms.

This is a reaction against over-priced and over-precious vinyl and I will start by putting the blatantly ironic £500, \$500, €500 pricetag at the end of every single caption.

This is a celebration of tangibility, fragility, torn sleeves, writing on sleeves, cracked spines, dirty or unglued sleeves and warped vinyl, cheap second hand vinyl, bargain bins and under-priced records.

This is not mint.

This is an experiment in reversing time on some designers and removing texts or images to get back to some of the origins of the design. This will be done by eradicating some text, détournement and juxtaposing John Stezaker-style to find new connections and hidden messages.

This is an attempt to share images, collages and cut-ups with a new set of people outwith my FB friends, art world or university circles and this is not aimed at a particular age or gender or 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.

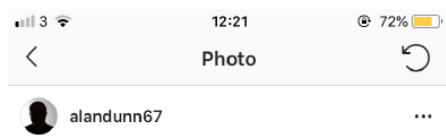
This is not commercial.

This is balance for my other projects that depend on the input of other people, collaborating, chasing people up, waiting on emails, paperwork, funding, administration, travel and more waiting. This is not a conversation.

This is a sketchbook.

Instagramming

I begin on 16 July 2018 with those words in bold red: *The sounds of ideas forming, Volume 2*. Two people like it. I teach myself about Instagram, I load about ten new images at a time, all ready to go with pre-typed texts, each with the ridiculous prices at the end. I sit in my studio and cut shit up and notice things. I notice the *Donnie Darko* style rabbit shape in the Jesus & Mary Chain sleeve. I see the word *NORTH* in Minor Threat and the word *LIES* in *Kylie Said to Jason*. I cut up the *DARE* sleeve. Each day in the studio I crush cassettes, jigsawing through them and taking floppy discs apart and realising the insides look like tiny vinyls.

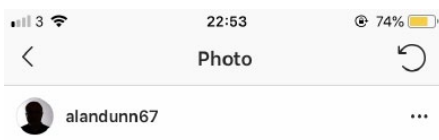


The sounds of ideas forming
Volume 2



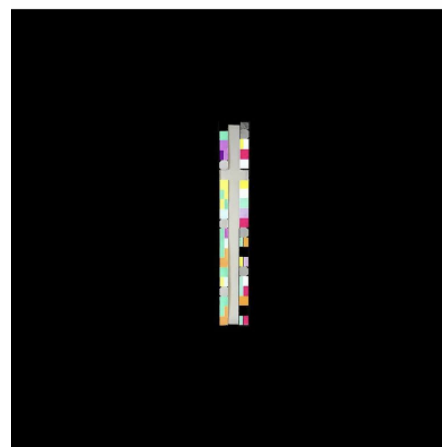
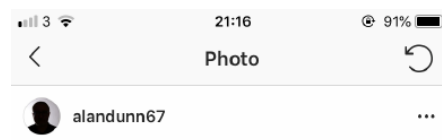
Liked by gemspa and 1 other

alandunn67 #TheSoundsofIdeasformingVolume2
16 July 2018



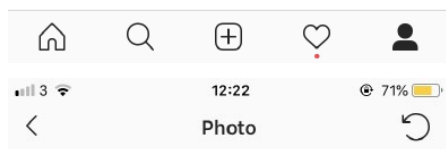
Liked by pete23skido and 34 others

alandunn67 MINOR THREAT (2018), #doctored
#sleeve of #MinorThreat #straightedge #hardcore
#punk #DC #CD #library #vinyl #tape #dub



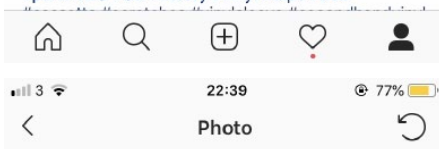
Liked by gemspa and 2 others

alandunn67 The Lovers (2018), two copies of
#NewOrder #BlueMonday after #SnehaSolanki
#TheLovers



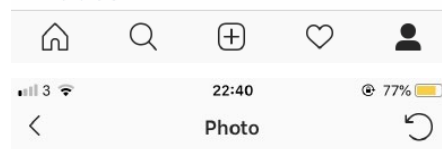
Liked by gemspa and 5 others

alandunn67 GATEFOLD 1: THE INNER LIGHT,
#CicconeYouth #WhiteyAlbum at almost ninety
degrees to #TheBeatles #WhiteAlbum,
#CicconeYouth #WhiteyAlbum



Liked by yorkshire.thistle and 21 others

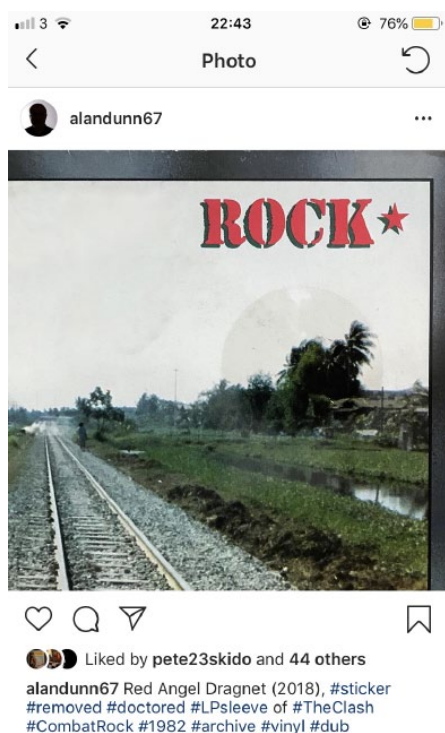
alandunn67 In a lonely place (2018), #NewOrder
#Inaloneyplace #Ceremony #Factory over
#PublicImageLimited #Rise #Single #RepoMan #vinyl



Liked by gemspa and 15 others

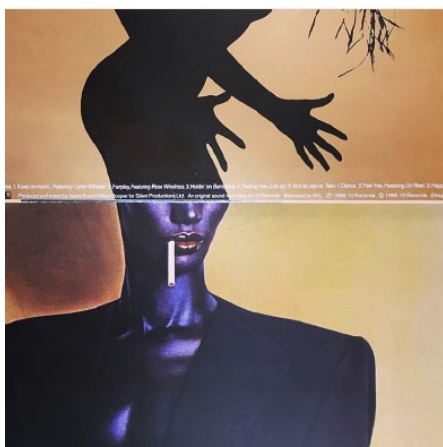
alandunn67 Promised you a miracle (2018), #gold
#innersleeves #sleeves of #SimpleMinds
#NewGoldDream #81-82-83-84 and #NewOrder

We all have our patterns. I doctor out letters to make words that are hidden and perhaps subconsciously better (NO NO NO ROCK BASTARD). I strip away all the gubbins from a sleeve - the legal, credits, artist, numbers. Or, I remove the image - Sid + all the Foetus sleeves - and leave the pattern or word. Or I put Bananarama pop next to Sonic Youth. Once I switch from real cutting to digital manipulation, it's slow work; photographing, importing to Photoshop on laptop, doctoring, copying, cloning, faking and then emailing to myself to upload from the phone. I surprise myself (which is the point). The two *Blue Mondays* next to each other are beautiful, as are the gold of New Order and the gold of Simple Minds, compete with fingermarks.





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Liked by [pete23skido](#) and 44 others

alandunn67 Nightclubbing (2019), #gracejones
#soul2soul #soul #art #design #blue #black
#nineties #eighties #underground #jamaica



alandunn67

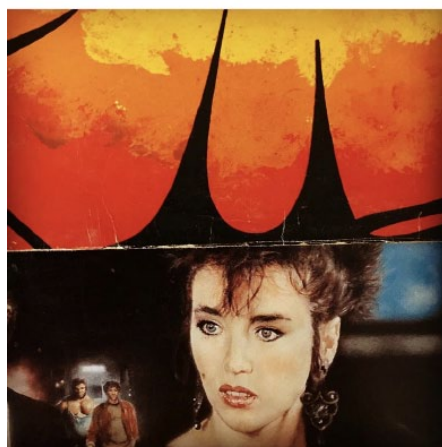


Liked by [pete23skido](#) and 24 others

alandunn67 Wart Hog (2018), #doctored #LPsleeve
of #Ramones #fansramones
#ramones_lovers2018 #joeyramone #joeyalone



alandunn67



Liked by [pretty_boy_merl_](#) and 24 others

alandunn67 Mystery (2019), conversation between
#lp #jesuschrist #jesuschristsuperstar
#andrewlloydwebber #subway #isabelleadjani



alandunn67



Liked by [pete23skido](#) and 26 others

alandunn67 Richter (2019), conversations between
#lp #einsturzendeneubauten #toyah #richter #funf
#tragedy #anthem #underground #design



alandunn67



Liked by [pete23skido](#) and 44 others

alandunn67 (Song For My) Sugar Spun Sister (2018),
#doctored #LPsleeve #StoneRoses #Silvertones
#shebangsthe drums #Madchester #summeroflove



alandunn67



Liked by [pete23skido](#) and 29 others

alandunn67 Dog (2018), #adamandtheants
#adamant #punk #marnie #eighties #vinylprices
#indie #popmusic #recordplayer #LP #collage #vinyl



My top ten personal favourites from the first year:

I start to notice more 'likes' on some images and begin to build up followers. I learn about hashtags. A straight photo of the back of an Elvis Costello single gets nearly 100 likes (for an image I don't do anything with except frame) but my genius *Eurythmics-as-Grace-Jones* also gets 100+ likes. What's going on here, 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* on *Never Mind The Bollocks*. A little bit of expert Photoshopping and *VERMIN!* Isn't that what Britain thought they were? Students return to Joy Division and *Control* (2007) and the loss of Ian Curtis and the cover of *CLOSER* becomes *LOSE*. I become addicted to doing it, 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 to think about threads and connections across genres.

And in this context, in reverse order, here are my own personal favourites from the first twelve months of the project:

10 Abba over Timelords, Laurel & Hardy and LIES

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. He gets out his Pritt Stick and smashes the Brits, Extreme Noise Terror, *Dr Who*, Jeremy Deller, Echo & The Bunnymen, Liverpool Dockers, Abba, Richard Long, The Monkees and *NO MUSIC DAY* together in his scrapbook over his morning cup of tea. I've been graced with his contributions to a few of my projects and equally blessed by his eloquent refusals to take part in just as many. Bill is the Patron Saint of *The sounds of ideas forming* (ably supported by Linder, John Stezaker, Jamie Reid, Jon Oswald, Christian Marclay and Björk).



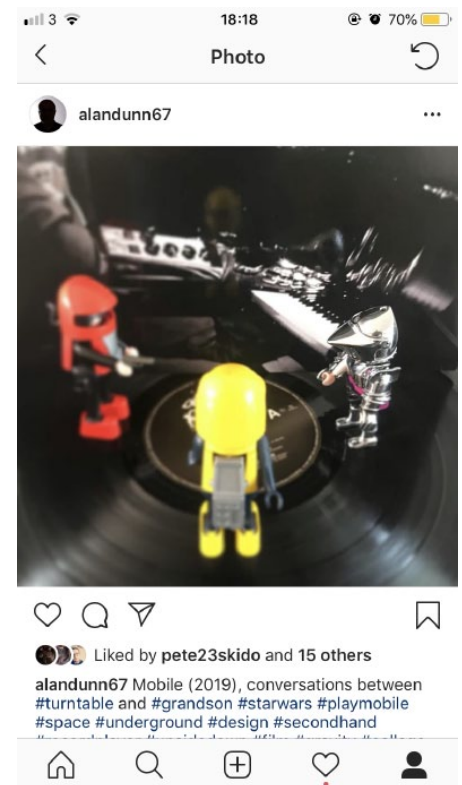
9 Bad Manners and 10 The Strangers

I remove all the figures from the *Gosh It's* ... except Buster, sat there all demure. Most of this project has a huge 80s slant. But, as Pavel Büchler 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 my ongoing interest in the notion of *background* (see <http://alandunn67.co.uk/backgroundprojectpage.html>)



7 Lulu and Joey

As the manifesto says, this is never going to be about a pristine record collection, or about recreating or posing. My vinyl is right in the middle of the home (garden studio used for cutting and CD listening, living room for vinyl!). It's not precious, but precious. And that means the dog Lulu and grandson Joey get involved in it. I teach him how to care for and play with these second-hand records, in amongst the Playmobil and Lego figures.



6 Björk

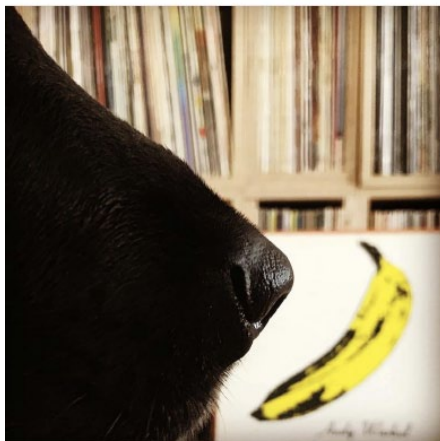
The arbiter of cool, the *debut*, the sadness, the tears, the independence, the north, the dismantling of what we think a song is, the masks, the restlessness, the weight of vinyl, the doubts and the constant eye on things. Björk visits the project every now and then just to make sure it's funny, non-compromising,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



5 Bananas

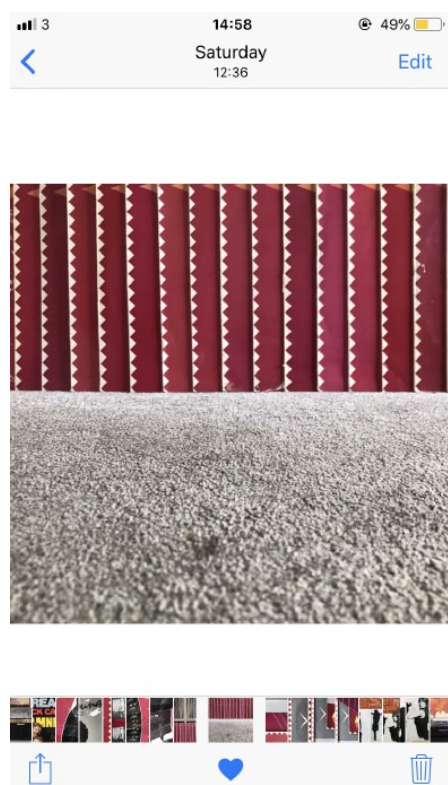
If pushed, this is my favourite album sleeve of all time because of its silliness, American-ness, because it looks healthy and sexual, because of Warhol being a producer and not doing a lot, because Lou Reed is more influential than Bowie to most of the music I collect, because of the versions, because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

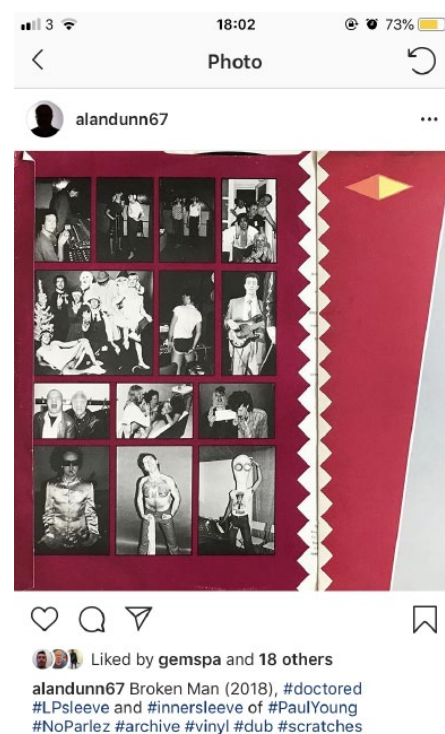




4 No Parlez

Artist Rutherford Chang is buying up copies of the *White Album*: <http://rutherfordchang.com/white.html> and with a nod to that great project, I start gathering copies of Paul Young's *No Parlez*. 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.' There's also a community on Twitter dedicated to finding and sharing copies - @NoParlezClub. *No Parlez* is the Charity Shop Mascot of the project.





3 EURYTHMICS

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 (also flipping the cover horizontally and removing all text). *No fear, no hate, no pain.*



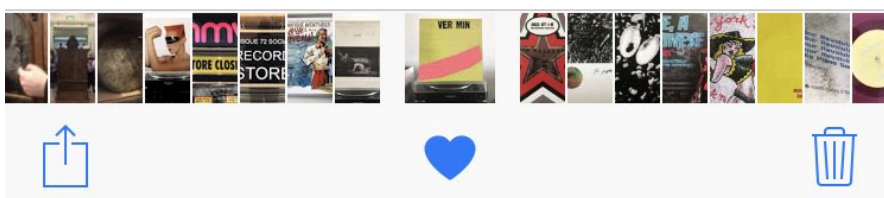
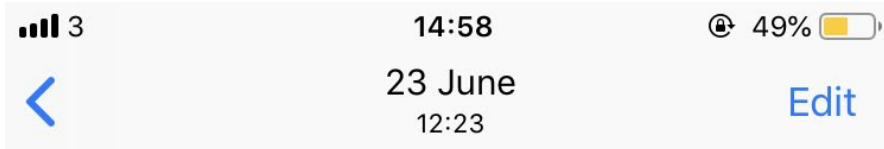
2 LOSE

There are lots of images of people posing happily with *Closer*. It seems odd to me and generates a whole gamut of images around loss, losing, Curtis' suicide, repackaging Joy Division, reselling, keeping the dead alive and the suicide celebrities out there on social media. I remove letters and it reads *LOSE*. This version is the emblem of *The sounds of ideas forming*, from losing those records to nearly losing much more important things to losing your memories.



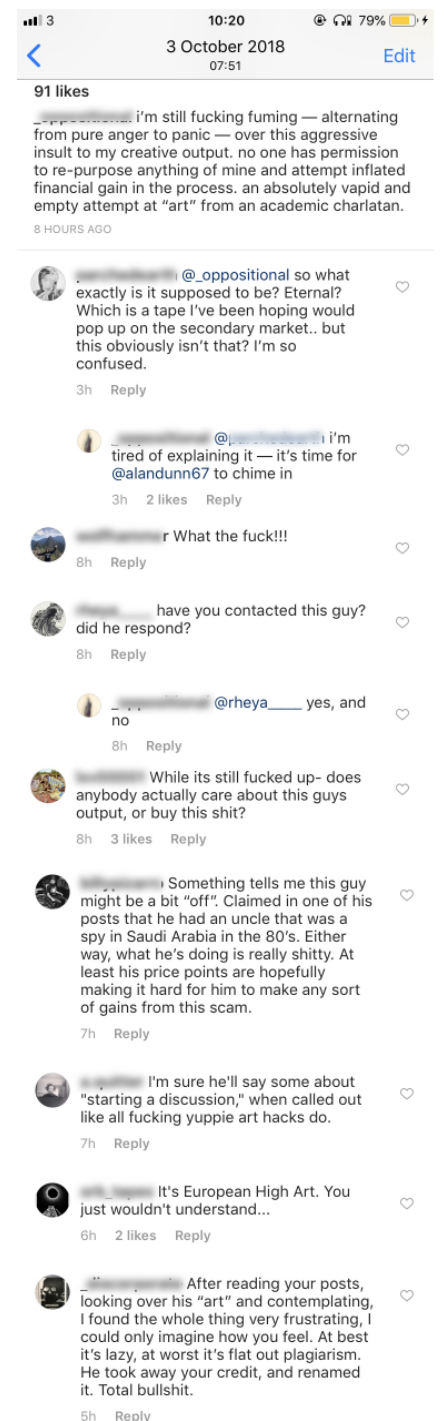
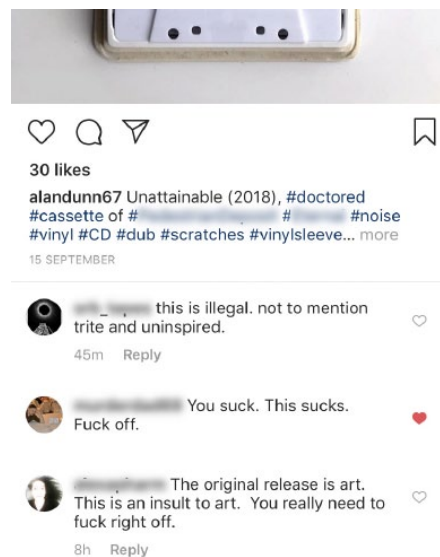
1 VERMIN

Again, just one image for one gesture, after Jamie Reid after Einstürzende Neubauten's *ENDE NEU* after Jon Oswald after ... what the public think of the Sex Pistols from day one. *VERMIN* is the MacGuffin of *The sounds of ideas forming*.

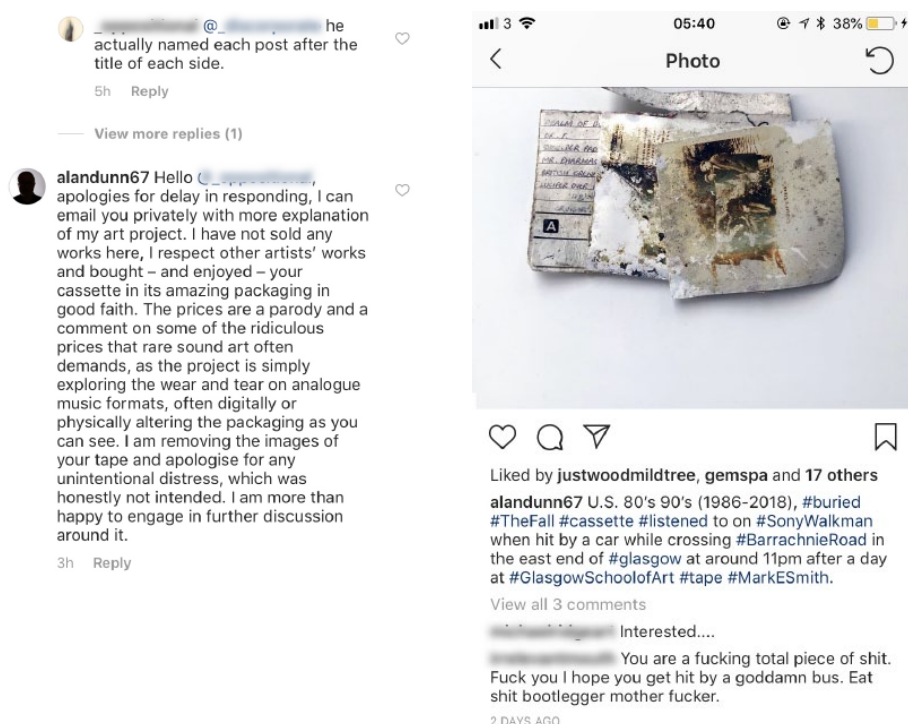


Illegal, trite, uninspired, you suck, fuck off, an insult, art, academic charlatan, fucked-up, shit, a bit "off", scam, fucking yuppie art hack, European High Art, lazy, frustrating, bullshit, plagiarism, hope you get hit by a bus, eat shit bootlegger mother fucker!

On 15 September 2018 I post an image of an excellent rare cassette-only release from an American sound artist that I purchase a few years prior. I Photoshop out a tiny blemish and use #doctored and the artist's full name and title release and, as with every upload at that time, I end the caption with £500, \$500, €500. The next day comes a flood of abuse, triggered by the original artist thinking that I am exploiting, bootlegging or otherwise making extortionate profits by selling his cassette. I've opted to doctor the names here as it's the comments we need to read. From left to right: the original posting and the reactions.



Two of those commenting then take the time to go through every one of my uploads and add more threats, sarcasm and accusations. I wait and read and work out the best way to react before composing a careful and calm response in the original thread. And that is it. Silence. I copy my public post and private message the artist and never hear anything ever again. The wolves move on to their next victim. And this is why I add to my manifesto that I shall not engage in any conversations or chat about this project within this forum. Sorry to those that are genuine and share my interests and do want to chat but I don't want that pressure of having to keep up conversations.



The speed of the venom and the pack mentality takes me by surprise. I experience similar on FB with our teenage kids but thought this was a more mature community. I misjudge the literalism and seriousness with which all comments seem to have been taken. I affront a community of DIY music producers who are obviously very raw about being exploited and trying to find an economic model to be independent but also have some income, which I understand. Lesson learned.

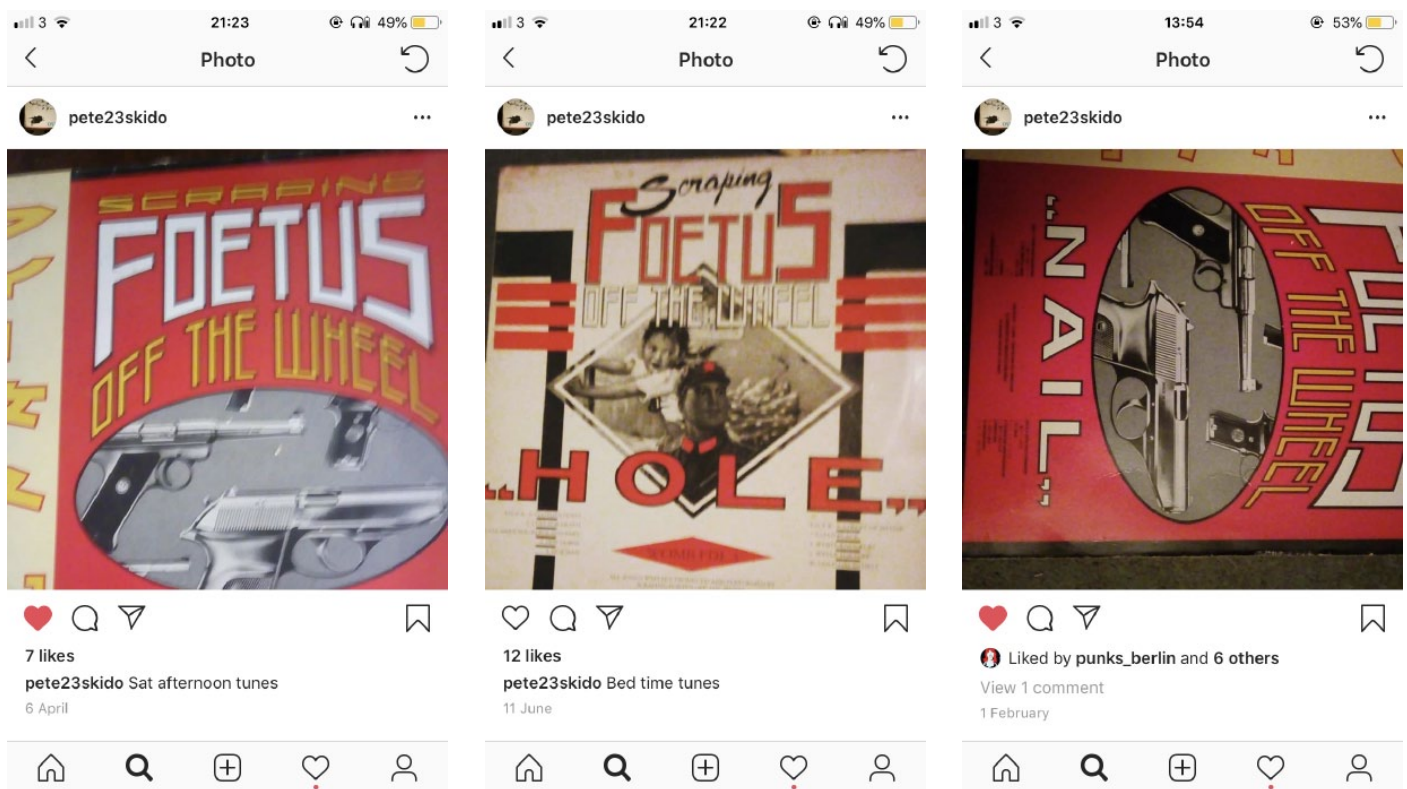
In the pub after Graduation at end of July 2018, colleague Aidan Winterburn (The Edsel Auctioneer guitars/vocals - @gemspa) chats about the project. He gets it. He completely gets the J&MC piece and we chat about the money issue and he suggests I actually increase the prices but I can see the whole project becoming derailed and I start to remove prices from all comments. I do this too quickly it seems and I am blocked three times by Instagram while removing the costs from my own comments: 'Tell us if you think we made a mistake.'

Regulars

Over the months I pick up followers including Anita Doth, lead singer and songwriter from 2 Unlimited, and Amanda Lear, singer and Salvador Dali's one-time partner and muse. I start to notice a few regular vinyl addicts and collectors posting high quality and sincere images and here's the starring cast from Season 1 (and noted that the men don't show themselves with the vinyl, only the vinyl):

Sound Design: pete23skido

A nighttime chef (until sadly being fired recently) from Bristol whose favourite Hüsker Dü album is *Land Speed Record* and who probably has tinnitus too. He's more into gigs than me and uploads fantastic gloomy shaky images of graffiti, pubs and the colossal collection of a genuine experimental noise fan – Talking Heads, Melt Banana, Bad Brains, Fugazi, Conflict and especially Jim Thirwell's Foetus project. Throw in *Oor Wullie* and *Calvin & Hobbes* for good measure and then more Corrosion of Conformity, Black Flag, Mogwai, Minor Threat and Bongwater. He understands the conversations and concerns that have been taking place within the triangle of melody, aggression and intelligence. Follow him!!



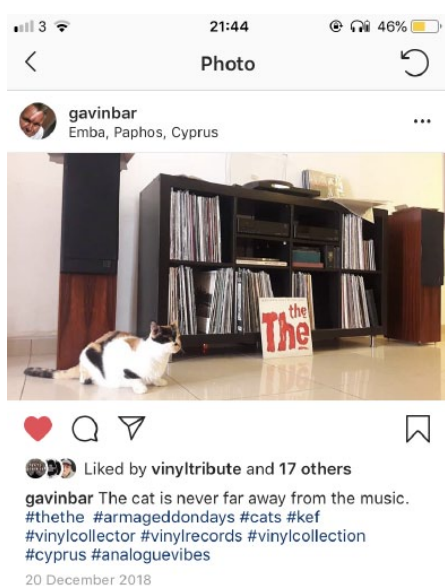
Set Design: slayercarito

Carolina Martinez sits somewhere in Southern USA with one of the three most impressive vinyl collections on Instagram, shared via self-portraits and smart reflections on the content. One or two thousand likes per image and sponsorship deals from headphone companies. This is the new world that is not the record fair in the sad community centre with weak cups of tea and bacon rolls (although those are fantastic). This is a format that allows folk of all ages (well, mostly above early-20s) to parade, reveal, show off and photograph record collections. Of course there's an art to Carolina's, a look, a colour range, a sharpness and dare I say a decadence about this curated collection. It's that balance between having a collection to use, abuse and amuse and having a collection to extend one's community.



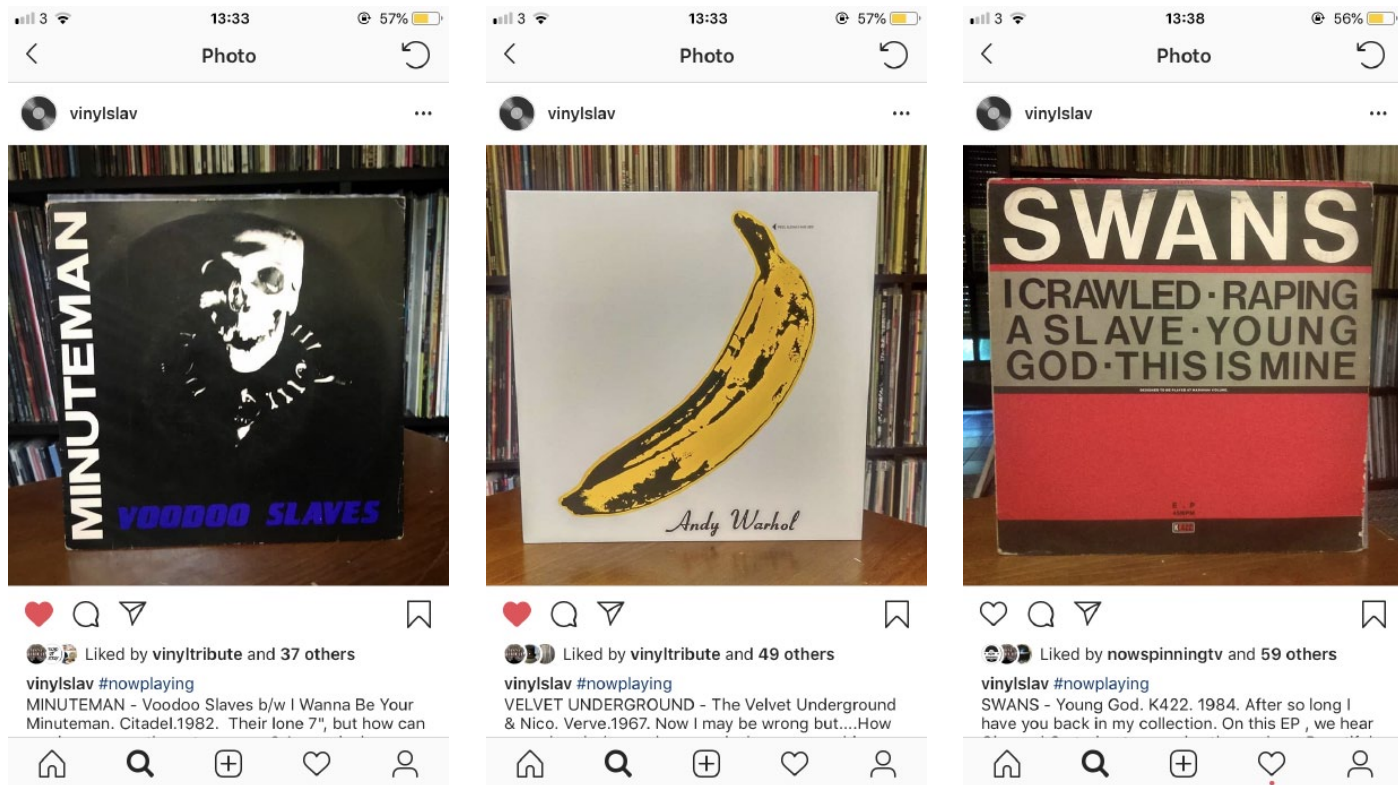
Scripting: gavinbar

Somewhere in Cyprus, Gavin Barker has one of the other impressive collections on Instagram although hasn't posted for around a month. His turntable and collection may have a pristine-ness that initially makes me shiver, giving out that no-kids, do-not-touch aura, but delve further and this is a collection that is very human, sombre and passionate, like the content: The The, Soft Cell, Christian Death (only 22 likes - perfect!), New Order, Dead Kennedys, This Mortal Coil and Lydia Lunch. As Scottish painter Steven Campbell commented about my work during an art school tutorial in 1990, 'Brilliant - it's clean, calm and clinical! Now, let's see your cassettes - Altered Images! I used to have such a crush on Clare Grogan...'



Feedback Symposium: vinylslav

The third impressive collection is shared with us straight on, covers forward, viewed slightly from above, military style, a few spines visible in the back. This order betrays the utter sonic chaos of vinylslav's collection - Radio Birdman, Killing Joke, Negazione, Jerry's Kids, D.O.A. and SWANS. No food, no cats, just memories of John Peel playing the most ferocious and obscure American hardcore and then reading out (sometimes correctly) an address to which one had to send a postal order or polite letter, including SAE. Timeless.



Visual Effects: pablo.lleite

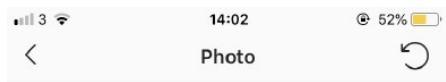
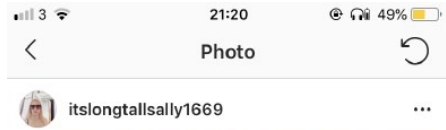
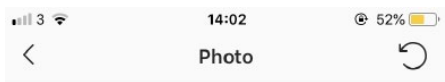
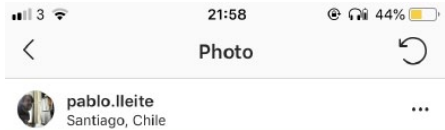
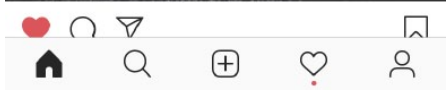
From Chile, Pablo gives us spines, hidden by front-on albums, most of which I own(ed). It's about libraries, architecture and each sleeve being genetically connected to a wider family. Rather than the themed rooms of most Museums, here we can see B52s living comfortably next door to Pink Floyd, Oasis or Aguaturbia. They are the roots that carry the blood sugar of millions of people walking up to shop counters with 12" objects (or clicking 'PAY NOW').

Continuity: itslongtallsally1669

A huge Beatles fan who beautifully and carefully recreates covers (not just Beatles but also Deee-Lite and a personal fave, Kraftwerk's *Man Machine*). Sally's uploads are a great refreshing reminder of when the album sleeve - particularly the colour photograph - exploded. It's not post-punk, goth or industrial, it's pure British Invasion guitars, drums and vocals.

Advertising: _bobby_jean

From somewhere in Germany, we get to see mostly metal and rock, changing lipstick and the occasional themed sleeves, but this is precise, obsessive, intelligent, noisy and full of harmony. This is hearing *Flip Your Wig New Day Rising* as a twenty-year old. This is walking into a record shop and getting that rush of sounds and visions and dizziness. This is about desire, temptation, kissing, theatre and the joy of holding up a mirror-sized sleeve that is not, and never will be, an MP3 file.



Supporting cast:

xixamxnoxonex for designs that look like sleeves that never existed and is perhaps what we all should be doing on the Internet, rather than celebrating what has already had a life in the analogue sphere; pretty_boy_merl_ for psychedelia, cheese, easy listening and photographing album sleeves at funny and slight angles. Distort, discort, dischord, discos and discogs. waxbygraves for the name and the hand-holding-the-vinyl photographs, placing us the viewer in the role of record owner (as opposed to partner, pet, shop assistant or musician). And a final nod to feel_specter for another great name.



Following:

By 22 October, three months in, I've got 1000 followers and as it stands today, hovering around 1500. After the hate messages, the project morphs away from cutting up sleeves to Stezaker-type juxtapositions, non-Photoshopped photographs uploaded directly using Instagram filters (usually Hefe or Lofi), focussing on the scratches, spines, scuffs, tears, reflections and vinyl within a family life with dog and occasional Batman-obsessed grandson.

Occasionally I'll see someone else post an image of an album I crushed. A finger prods in the open wound now and then but the pain quickly resides due to the adrenalin of this new project. It's reignited the hunt in the charity shops, flea markets and record fairs of the north west. Who knows where it's going?

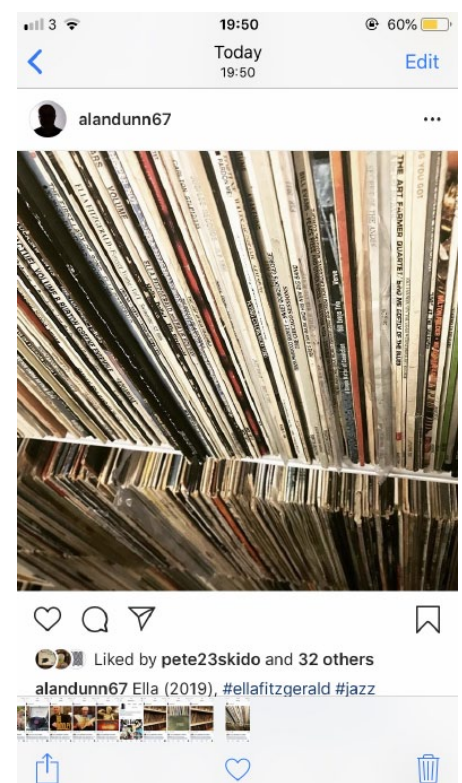
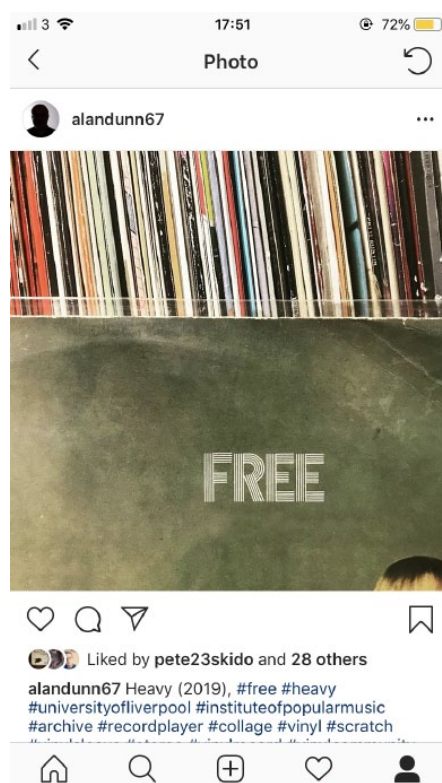
I arrange to visit the Institute for Popular Music at University of Liverpool and chat and photograph some of the thousands of albums there. This develops into a proposal which they like for an exhibition around some of these ideas, of album sleeves, of links between design, of students interested in 12" formats again, of mixing genres, potentially for the end of 2021. At the moment, it's only at proposal stage but it's raising lots of questions:

why have an exhibition in the first place?

(how) can an exhibition mirror the franticity and speed of change of Instagram?

what if we invite immediate and unfiltered comments and responses within a gallery setting?

what about copyright, ownership, collage, détournement, montage, parody and homage?



More sleeves

I give a talk with Bryan Biggs and Steve Hardstaff (who was a 'runner' on the *Sgt Pepper* sleeve design back in 1967) about two boxes of records I find in the basement of the Williamson Art Gallery. They turn out to have been left there by the late Brendan McCormack, local guitar tutor once described by John Lennon as his favourite guitarist. We show sleeves, play vinyl and ramble about Crass, *The White Album*, *Sgt Pepper*, this Instagram project and *Closer*. In the audience are two of Brendan's daughters and they invite us round to look at the other boxes of albums left in their garage. Frith even buys a new turntable for the occasion!



Following on from the visit, we're now discussing with the family commissioning an art student from nearby Wirral Metropolitan College to design and construct some form of shrine to hold Brendan's vinyl collection that will stand in the foyer of the Williamson Art Gallery. As I write, we're preparing the brief, which will include as a reference a link to Bill Drummond's *Dead White Man* (1999) sculpture developed to house Roger Eagle's vinyl collection (<http://blog.gregwilson.co.uk/2017/10/bill-drummond-homage-vinyl-evangelist-roger-eagle/>).

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, or get young art students thinking about the collections of dead white men. 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. I ask him about his record collection and how he has to 'sneak' records home and hide the collection to make it fit with the interior design. His memory of the 1970s 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 will have forgotten making these boxes. As we screw them together, I think about 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 lodge as memories. And then I remember. During one crushing visit in 2013, an older staff member at the Recycling Centre says he'll take some of the vinyl off my hands before it gets crushed. Or did I just dream that? If not, and if he still works there and if I meet him, I'll ask if he keeps any. What my follow-up question will be if he says yes is one I've played out a few times.

But most days, I just forget about the crushing.



My pregnant-again daughter, whose escapades escalate our move in 2013 and the crush, also visits when my dad is here. We can now laugh back at those dark days. Well, we can laugh at selected memories. She looks at her Batman-obsessed 3-year old exploring my current collection and says that I'll never have time to listen to it all. Isn't that what we normally say to our young people when we see their iTunes data of how many hours of music they have? 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 more than music hidden on a phone or laptop. I nod and pull out seventeen 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, the PhD, the CDs and MP3s, the Art Prize, the changing disposable income and chaotic family situation – but where it's heading. It's picking up momentum and telling me what to do. 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.

Above all else, it's a great stage to be with a project, right in its vortex surrounded by options, a dynamism and sense that it may carry you away to greater things. It may form into one of the best fucking creative projects in the world that is lauded with praise and prizes and enters teaching material around the globe.

It creates conversations, visits, new 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 he loves it.

No Parlez.

Last page: doctored covers of *The best of LOUIE LOUIE*, *The Pretenders Greatest Hits*, *ZZ Top*, *Foetus Art Terrorism*, *Sinatra meets Eno* and pregnant daughter with *No Parlez...*

alandunn67



Liked by **pete23skido** and 22 others
alandunn67 LOUIE LOUIE (2018), #doctored
#LPsleeve #bestofLOUIELOUIE #RhinoRecords
#BlackFlag #RichardBerry #Sandpipers #TheLast



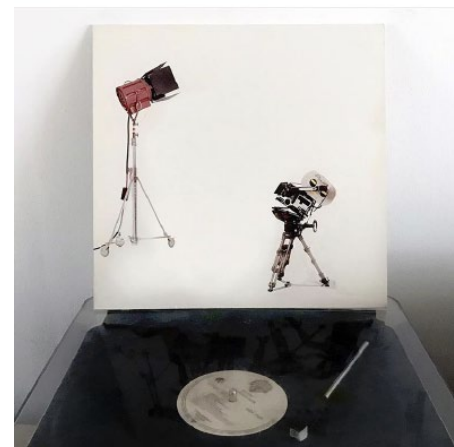
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Liked by **pete23skido** and 30 others
alandunn67 Talk of the town (2018), #doctored
#LPsleeve #ThePretenders #ChrissieHynde
#TheSingles #pop #remix #punk #postpunk #vinyl



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Liked by **pete23skido** and 26 others
alandunn67 Got me under pressure (2018),
#doctored #LPsleeve #ZZTOP #GreatestHits #indie
#remix #plagiarism #punk #postpunk #noise



alandunn67



Liked by **gemspa** and 4 others
alandunn67 Repressionist sitcom in a modern
urbanized society (2018), #doctored #FAT
#FoetusArtTerrorism #CalamityCrush 12" sleeve



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Liked by **gemspa** and 12 others
alandunn67 More Frank than Brian (2018),
#doctored #FrankSinatra #20GreatestHits and
#BrianEno #BeforeAndAfterScience



alandunn67



Liked by **pete23skido** and 29 others
alandunn67 Parlez (2019), #pregnant #daughter
with some of her #inheritance #paulyoung #noparlez
#underground #waste #secondhand #recordplayer

