READER’S POLL: 5 BEST ALBUM COVERS...EVER!

1. The Beatles - Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band
   Total Reader Votes: 1,202
   Designer: Peter Blake
   The cover was originally going to show the Beatles playing in a park. That slowly evolved into the final concept, where they stand amidst cardboard cutouts of their heroes. The band originally planned on including Leo Gorcey, Gandhi, Jesus Christ and Adolf Hitler. Common sense kicked Hitler off the cover, the still-lingering bitterness of John Lennon’s “bigger than Jesus” comment kicked Jesus off the cover and Gandhi got the boot over concerns that India wouldn’t print the album. Actor Gorcey requested $400 for his likeness, a decision he probably lived to regret.

2. Pink Floyd - Dark Side Of The Moon
   Total Reader Votes: 933
   Designer: Hipgnosis
   Their initial inspiration for Dark Side was a photo of a prism on top of some sheet music. It was black and white, but a color beam was going through it. Hipgnosis presented the prism design along with some other ideas to the band. Hipgnosis had designed several of Pink Floyd’s previous albums, with controversial results: the band’s record company had reacted with confusion when faced with the collective’s non-traditional designs that omitted words.

3. Nirvana, ‘Nevermind’
   Total Reader Votes: 755
   Designer: Robert Fisher
   “Kurt was intellectual and deep-thinking about his work,” said Fisher. “I must assume that the naked baby symbolized his own innocence, the water represented an alien environment, and the hook and dollar bill his creative life entering into the corporate world of rock music,” said Fisher.

4. The Beatles, ‘Abbey Road’
   Total Reader Votes: 729
   Designer: John Kosh
   Iain Macmillan shot the cover on August 8th, 1969, outside of Abbey Road studios. The shoot involved just six frames and 10 minutes of work.

5. The Clash, ‘London Calling’
   Total Reader Votes: 695
   Designer: Ray Lowry
   Paul Simonon was annoyed by the relatively quiet audience, so he began smashing his bass guitar against the floor. Clash singer Joe Strummer loved the photo for the cover.
EDGE OF MADNESS

The genius and torment of Alberto Giacometti

By Lara Feigel
In 1933, while in Paris, Giacometti knew and admired the work of André Breton, who was the founder of surrealism. Breton, an artist who believed that dreams and the unconscious could be used as a source of inspiration, invited Giacometti to join the Surrealists. Giacometti agreed, and his first major exhibition was held in Paris in 1933. This exhibition was a huge success, and Giacometti was hailed as a new talent in the art world.

During the Second World War, Giacometti returned to Switzerland. He continued to work in his studio, which he shared with his wife, Maggi, and his daughter, Giovanna. He continued to create his elongated figures, which became his signature style.

In his final years, Giacometti concentrated on painting, producing a series of images, rather than finished portraits. In January 1966, he died from illnesses that his physicians saw as partly caused by years of fatigue. But exhaustion is not the only mood. The intensity of his subjects’ expressions, in the sculptures, and particularly in the paintings, creates the effect of a moment that is also timeless. This was something Giacometti had sought to capture since that vision outside the cinema after the war. And in his final hours of Annette, there is a resilience that the sculptor appears to forge with gratitude. He was trying “to succeed, just once, in making a head like the head I see”. He failed, of course, but these are failures that stand as cautions to those who seek to do more than strive.

“I do not work to create beautiful paintings or sculpture,” Giacometti explained. “Art is only a means of seeing. No matter what I look at, it all surprises and eludes me…”