

British album cover designer Vaughan Oliver dies at 62

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Graphic designer Vaughan Oliver, who created album covers for bands including the Pixies, Cocteau Twins and The Breeders, has passed away at age 62. Oliver was best known for the numerous covers he designed for independent British record label 4AD, where he created the majority of its album artwork between 1982 and 1998 via the graphic design studios 23 Envelope and v2. „There was no one else like him,“ said the record label. „Without Vaughan, 4AD would not be 4AD and it's no understatement to say that his style also helped to shape graphic design in the late 20th century,“ they added. „He gave both us as a label and our musicians an identity and a voice.“

Graphic designer Adrian Shaughnessy said Oliver passed away peacefully, surrounded by friends and family. Fans of Oliver from the British design community are mourning his passing on social media. „Thank you for the elegantly surreal album covers,“ tweeted design critic Alice Rawsthorn.

Graphic designer Michael Bierut, partner at Pentagram, described Oliver as „a brilliant designer who defined a generation“. „Sunburst and Snowblind: possibly the best title and most certainly the most beautiful artwork of any record,“ said architect and Dezeen columnist Charles Holland. „I lost myself in this and so much of his work. RIP the great Vaughan Oliver.“

Sunburst and Snowblind is an album by Scottish alternative rock band the Cocteau Twins. Musician Emma Anderson, who was a singer in the Britpop band Lush, shared her experience of working with Oliver. „Someone asked me recently if working with him had been 'claustrophobic' as he seemed to thrust his ideas onto the artists and he didn't seem to care what they felt about his designs. Well, I'll tell you what happened,“ she said. „When we signed to 4AD we were in the position that we were to work with one of the most revered and talented sleeve designers of the 20th century. Bring it on, I said. We'll do the music and he can do the sleeves,“ she continued. „Vaughan was a total visionary, amazingly talented, a one-off. He was also a stubborn bastard and didn't like being told what to do and that made him all the more brilliant. He didn't bow to convention and working with him was an absolute honour and privilege.“

Anderson, who described Oliver as a „genius“, rejected the accusation that Oliver disregarded musicians' work with his album covers. „And sorry; he didn't thrust his ideas onto the artist. They were carefully considered and the images were inspired by the music. 'Scar' had scratches on it that were suggested by the abrasiveness of the record... 'Spooky' was more amorphous, rounded and space-age. They WORKED.“

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<p> <h2>Cover for new Beck album Colors is designed to be customised</h2> </p>
</article></aside><p>Born in 1957 in County Durham, Oliver studied graphic design at Newcastle-upon-Tyne Polytechnic.</p> <p>He moved to London in 1982 and joined 4AD records as their first official employee, where he created iconic album covers for albums such as Doolittle and Surfer Rosa by Pixies, The Drift by Scott Walker, and the Cocteau Twins' Treasure.</p> <p>His work, which was inspired by the surrealist artist Salvador Dali, helped establish 4AD and its artists' mysterious and alternative reputations.</p> <p>„You will be missed,“ said rock band The Breeders, who shared a sketch by Oliver sent to bassist Kim Deal, formerly of the Pixies. Oliver's ideas for their album cover included an image of a single testicle pushed through a hole in some cardboard.</p> <p>„We tried this today and it looked super,“ remarked Oliver. „I'm not sure that it's been done before. It's quite dangerous!“</p> <p>Oliver was also a keen football fan and qualified coach in the sport. He was a fan of Sunderland's football team, and designed the album cover for their single for the 1992 FA Cup – where they reached the final – Ain't No Stopping Us Now.</p> <p>Main portrait by Luca Giorietto.</p> <div class=„read-more article-tags“>Read more: </div> </div><div id=„newsletter-form“ class=„post newsletter-form-container“ readability=„35“> <form action=„“ method=„post“ readability=„7“> <p> <h2>Subscribe to our newsletters</h2> </p> <div id=„newsletter-step-2“ readability=„21“> <p><label class=„checkbox-container“>Dezeen Daily </label> <label class=„checkbox-container“>Dezeen Weekly </label></p> <p>Dezeen Daily is sent every day and contains all the latest stories from Dezeen.</p> <p>Dezeen Weekly is a curated newsletter that is sent every Thursday, containing highlights from Dezeen. Dezeen Weekly subscribers will also receive occasional updates about events, competitions and breaking news.</p> <p>We will only use your email address to send you the newsletters you have requested. We will never give your details to anyone else without your consent. You can unsubscribe at any time by clicking on the unsubscribe link at the bottom of every email, or by emailing us at privacy@dezeen.com.</p> <p>For more details, please see our privacy notice.</p> </div> <div id=„newsletter-step-3“ readability=„7“> <h2>Thank you!</h2> <p>You will shortly receive a welcome email so please check your inbox.</p> <p>You can

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