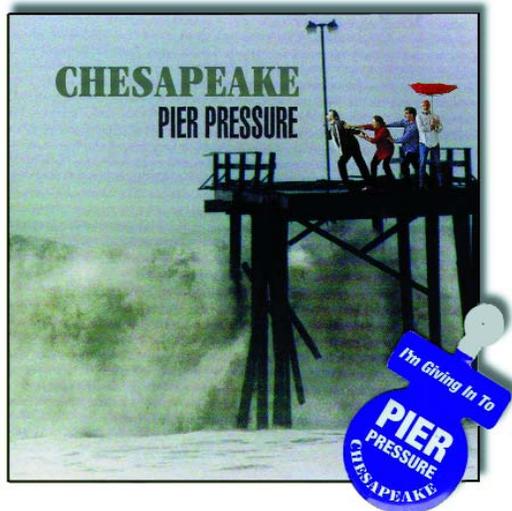


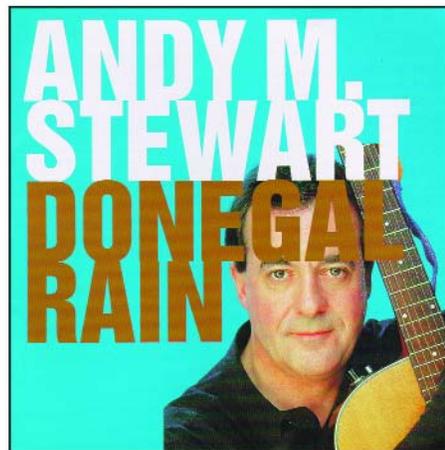
The First Annual What Were They Thinking!?! Awards

Welcome to the first annual April Fools issue WWTT awards*, given for some of the strangest design decisions of the past year. Awards are decided by a highly qualified team of paleo-ethno-octo-comato-promologists. They are restricted to album cover art only. Comments do not reflect on the quality of the music, which is mostly very good. Prizes include the following:
 Third prize — Butter served on a hot knife; Second Prize — a quart of milk in a designer wicker basket;
 First prize — A lovely coat made of paper (to keep the rain away); and Grand prize — The Coveted “Ring of Promises” (known to musicians who have ever signed a recording contract). And now on to this year’s selections!



Worst (i.e. Best) Pun on an album cover

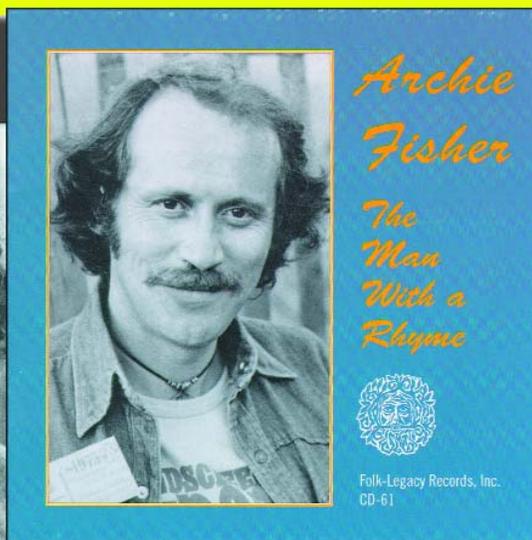
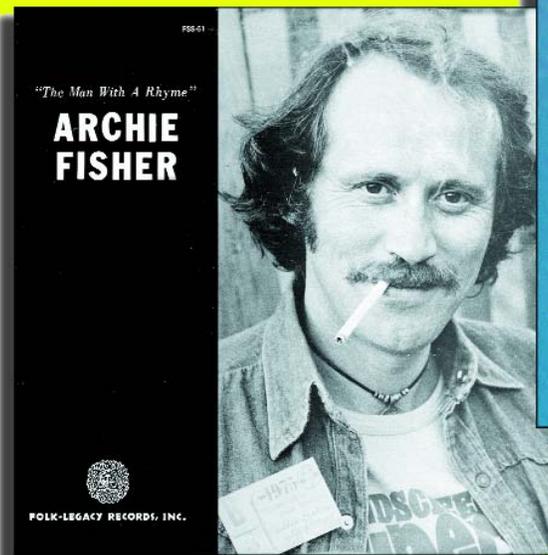
We could pylon the praise of the structure of this design, and the band who are pillars of musical support.



Best Album Cover Design of the Year (not)

It is a little known fact that Scottish musician Andy M. Stewart is missing his right shoulder. The art director tried to distract the viewer away from Mr. Stewart’s horrible affliction by skillfully arranging type all over his forehead.

Most Bizarre Retouching Job (special no prize category)

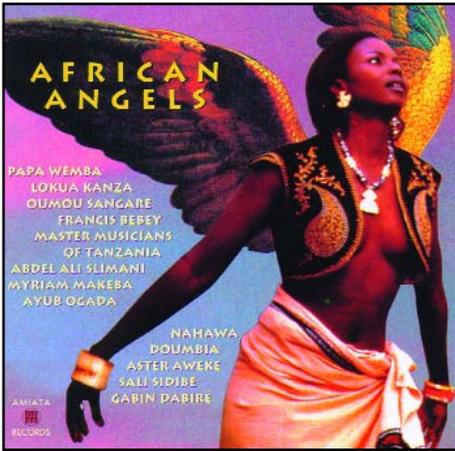


When the long-awaited CD reissue of Archie Fisher’s seminal *The Man With a Rhyme* album finally arrived, many were perplexed about why Folk Legacy felt the need to edit out Mr. Fisher’s cigarette. Not since the U.S. Post Office’s now famous cigarettectomy of Robert Johnson (on the commemorative stamp) had such an act been performed.

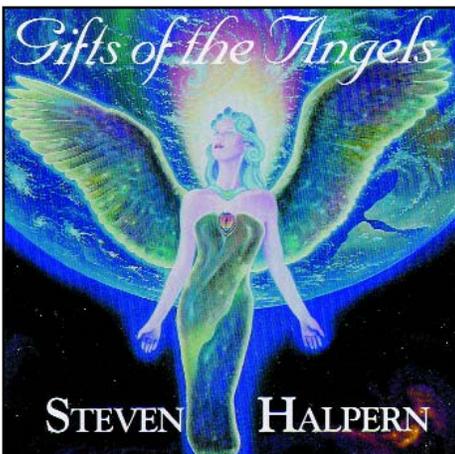
“Next album I do for that label will have just a cigarette on the cover, with no head.
 I’m gonna call it *Burn Out*.”

— Archie Fisher, January 1998

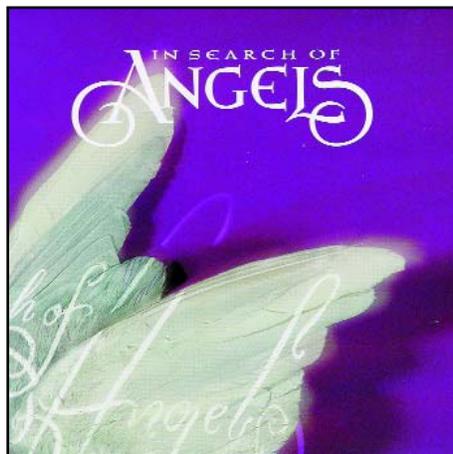
The "We're Sick of Angels" Album Cover Prize



Angels are everywhere, and frankly we're sick of 'em. Above are what must be some of the silliest album covers ever produced. The prize (a stale *Devil Dog*™) goes to Amiata Records in Florence, Italy, for their creative use of wings and cleavage. The runners up are below.



Don't look a gift angel in the . . . oh never mind!



Might want to try the Internet



Can't these guys be found on the New York subways?



Didn't they get her off of my Christmas tree?



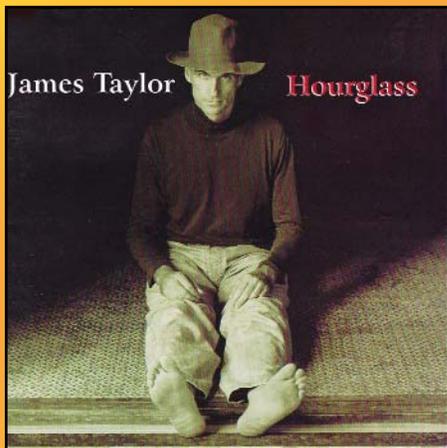
From a nifty little album called *Cupid's Revenge*. It's not folk, but we dug his do...



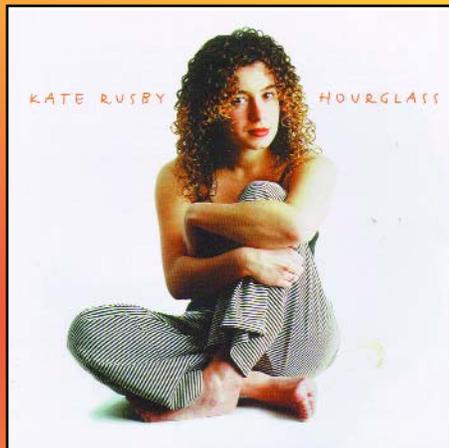
Even Suzzy Roche got involved... say... doesn't that make her a flying roche?

* Prizes are awarded solely on the album's visual merits with contestants being divided up into the following categories: 1. Awful, 2. Truly Awful, 3. They must be kidding, and 4. *What were they thinking!?!?* Certain album covers were disqualified when they produced symptoms of headaches or vomiting among the panel of expert judges. Those covers were quickly destroyed. In the event that they could not be destroyed, some of those covers may still be at large in a local record store near you. When certain prizes are not available, they will be replaced with other prizes not yet disclosed, or maybe nothing at all. Prizes are shipped and delivered at the whim of the United States Postal Service and may take up to three years for delivery. Prizes shipped via UPS may take several decades, and all Federal Express orders are guaranteed to be delivered some time in the next little while. Prizes are not available in certain states where prize giving is considered illegal, immoral or the state government is just a bunch of spoil sports because no one ever gives them prizes and so why should they allow anyone else to have fun. Your mileage may vary. Ask your doctor or pharmacist. Void where prohibited by law. In case of eye contact, flush with water. Keep frozen. Do not expose to direct sunlight. Tag not to be removed under penalty of law. You must be present to win. Batteries not included. Void where not prohibited by law. Contents may settle during shipment. May make you drowsy — do not operate heavy machinery. Parental discretion advised.

The Coincidence? . . . Or Proof Positive of a Higher Power Department



James Taylor - *Hourglass*



Kate Rusby - *Hourglass*

They say that a good idea gets around, but last spring veteran American folk musician James Taylor and bright new British folk singer Kate Rusby each released an album called *Hourglass* within a month of each other. (Rusby's came out first.) Mere coincidence? Maybe, but both artists are featured on the front cover sitting down, facing forward and wearing no shoes. Further investigations proved that if you play both albums in a multi-CD player, programming the tracks from each album so they leap frog each other, you get such wonderful combinations as "Line 'Em Up Sir/Sir Eglamore" (KR track #1/JT track #1), "A Little More Time With You/Jolly Plough Boys" (JT track #3/KR track #3), and the ever favorite, "Up From Your Life/I Am Stretched On Your Grave" (JT track #9/KR track #8). Perhaps these two should consider doing an album together?

A Cautionary Note

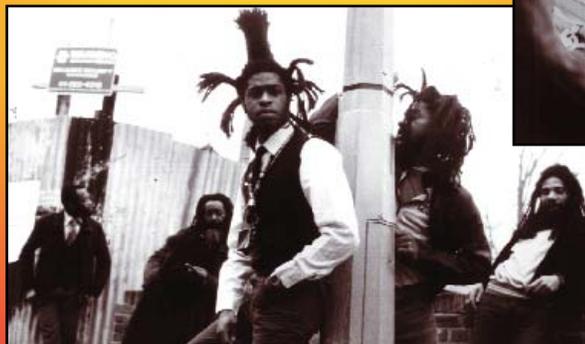
Finally, a cautionary note. The National Folk Photographers Council advises against outdoor photo shoots for the coming year due to the little fellow on the right; The Freedomian Folk Fowl, whose strange habits include nesting in the hair of folk and world musicians as they attempt to have their promotional photo shot. Because this bird may lay her eggs inside your brain cavity, this is a particular hazard to folk musicians everywhere. The following photos show several incidents that have occurred over the last year.



The Freedomian Folk Fowl
(Folkus Pesterious)



Forward Kwenda



Steel Pulse



Celia Cruz

Richard Betancourt

Adrian Boot