

PEACHES 'N' CREAM

Unquestionably, the ever-innovative art publisher Taschen produce luxurious books at amazingly affordable prices.

But it's also true that the company are past masters at repackaging the material to which they hold the rights to, in any number of different formats and at every suitable opportunity. In this instance, it is to celebrate Taschen's 25th year of operations that this book – originally published in 1999 – has been reissued, alongside a number of other classic Taschen titles. So not a new book, then – but a beautiful one all the same, and it's nice to see



the work of a man described as 'the best pin-up artist in the history of American illustration', back in large-format hardback, for the price of a paperback.



Between the mid-1930s and 1972, Gil Elvgren produced over 500 paintings of alluring but very wholesome-looking, stocking-clad girls, mainly for the calendar market – so helping to keep the American end up during times of war and national strife. Featuring detailed and extensively researched background information about Elvgren and his artistic output, this lovingly compiled tome represents the most complete overview of his life's work currently available.

And while even in their time, Elvgren's idealised portrayals of peaches 'n' cream feminine beauty may have been only mildly titillating, in this somewhat coarser day and age they exude the charm of seeming innocence and evoke a wistful sense of nostalgia for a world which was perhaps never quite as Elvgren painted it.

IAN LOWEY

Gil Elvgren:
The Complete Pin-Ups
(Taschen) £7.99