



From far left: Designs by Large-mammal Print, Luke Drozd and Tim Gough, in "Gig Posters." Above, a 1957 design by Reid Miles, from "Jazz Covers."

son made the right decision.

Rummaging through the old record bins at secondhand stores can be like stumbling on unknown masterpieces in a museum, only dustier. For me, one of those surprises was the cover of the 1956 LP "Mel Tormé With the Marty Paich Dek-Tette," designed by Burt Goldblatt. It shows the outline of Tormé's head (though it also looks like a young Sinatra), made from a collage of automobile silhouettes. This album cover and 650 others from the 1940s through the early 1990s are collected in Joaquim Paulo's **JAZZ COVERS** (Taschen, paper, \$39.99), edited by Julius Wiedemann. It's a bricklike compilation of groundbreaking design and photography, and it's almost as much fun as rummaging through those old bins, only cleaner.

Jazz labels sought out the most progressive graphic design during the '50s

and early '60s. In addition to commissioning some striking studio and conceptual photography, art directors encouraged illustrators and painters to interpret the improvisational music abstractly. Joan Miró's Surrealist "Composition" adorned the cover of a 1956 album by the Japanese-American pianist Toshiko Akiyoshi, and William Claxton's Dadaesque *trompe l'oeil* collage for a Chet Baker record from that same year "capitalizes on Baker's matinee pinup status." David Stone Martin's 1954 portrait of Count Basie, which looks similar to Ben Shahn's ragged line style, is nonetheless a remarkable evocation of Basie's music.

The sheer quantity of albums in this book ensures that not every cover will reach the same aesthetic heights. But the cool modernist minimalism displayed on many of Reid Miles's Blue Note covers is a

high point, as is the Expressionist cowboy who turns up on a Modern Jazz Quartet album designed by Stanislaw Zagorski. One of the biggest treats was finding another Mel Tormé cover, this one a forgotten piece by Piedra Blanca (the pseudonym used by Alex Steinweiss, the first designer to create original artwork for 78-r.p.m. albums). But my favorite, for the wonderfully atmospheric photograph and visual pun, is the image on "The Hawk in Paris," a record by Coleman Hawkins and Manny Albam, which portrays a typical Frenchwoman of the evening sitting at a cabaret table nonchalantly holding a hawk by its talons. Now that's cool.

THE covers for a subgenre of jazz albums known as bachelor-pad music usually had a photo of a sexy woman with a come-hither look. What differentiated this exploitative form from another kind of art, the romance novel cover, was nuance. The album covers were moody, while the book covers were swoony. What's more, romance-novel illustration almost always featured a white, blemish-free, idealized woman, whereas jazz albums were often more eclectic. In **THE ART OF ROMANCE: Mills & Boon and Harlequin Cover Designs** (Prestel, paper, \$25), Joanna Bowring and Margaret O'Brien trace a century of lovelorn fiction through its covers. Predictably, the formula of a beautiful woman looking longingly at a handsome man has not changed all that much (except now there's more photography).

Mills & Boon, Britain's leading publisher of romantic fiction, is 101 years old; Harlequin, which owns the company, is 60. Throughout these years loyal romance readers have been treated to some enduring fantasies — for example, the sheik as hero. Today, the authors say, "the modern Mills & Boon sheik is a rich, international

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A Hipgnosis album-cover composition for AC/DC, from "For the Love of Vinyl."