

Extraordinary Records

Alessandro Benedetti &
Peter Bastine (Ed)

★★★★

Taschen, £24.99

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Dig if you will, the picture disc...

Picture books brimming with intimate snapshots have long been a popular way for music fans to get up close and comfy with their favourite artists. The Beatles, Dylan, Stones, Led Zeppelin – and even major musical events such as Woodstock – all flood an arguably over-saturated market.

Seemingly quietly, and in their own good time, Taschen have also embraced the coffee table picture book market, in the past offering collectors mouth-watering publications focusing on album sleeves. With *Extraordinary Records*, however, they really up their own game and, in doing so, challenge most other publishers to come up with something half as inventive and fun.

Italian hoarders Benedetti and Bastine have raided their collections to come up with what is essentially a catalogue for the colour or picture disc. Trying to describe something so visual is like juggling with a bucket of eels, but anyone who obsesses over weird pressings that seem to fall out of nowhere will find their eyes bulging at the likes of a blue vinyl Burt Bacharach single from as early as 1958, *Star Wars* picture discs and... a rectangular vinyl Samantha Fox triptych release. Truly bizarre, and with potted histories of each entry, all we needed to make this truly indispensable was corresponding valuations.
Jason Draper