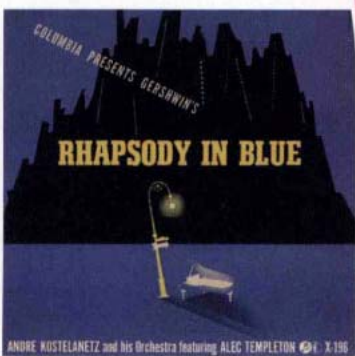
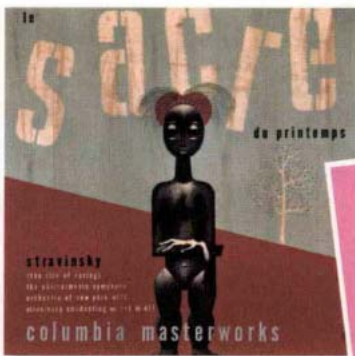
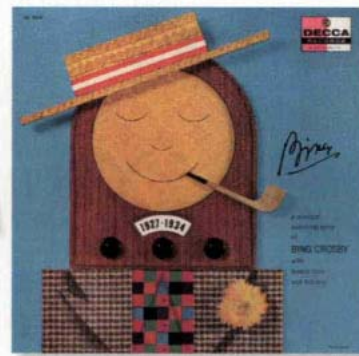
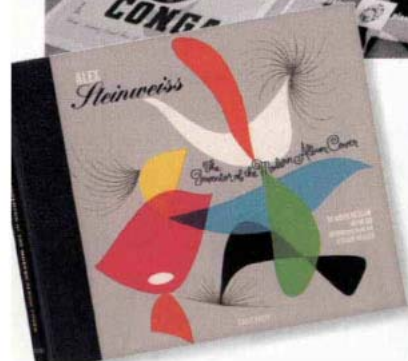
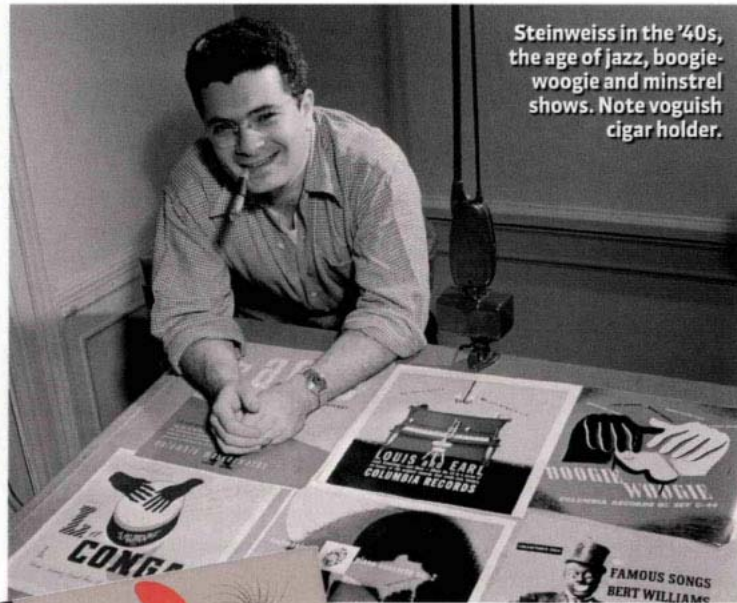


You Saw It Here First

ALBUM ART → *Marvel at the works of Alex Steinweiss, creator of the first record sleeve*

SEVENTY YEARS AGO, NEW YORK art school graduate Alex Steinweiss convinced his bosses at Columbia he could improve on the plain "tombstone" burlap sleeves that housed their 78rpm releases. They reissued a Rodgers & Hart compilation with its shellac disc inside an inspired illustration of a theatre marquee announcing their *Smash Song Hits* and realised they might be on to something: sales soared by 892 per cent. Ignoring the clanging death knell of the physical media, **Taschen** are celebrating the great man's work with a luxurious compendium that focuses on the sparkling jazz, pop and classical covers he produced before 1962, when rock and roll swept in and heralded the age of the photographic cover. Steinweiss is still with us; he's 92. **LARRY JAFFEE**

ALEX STEINWEISS, THE INVENTOR OF THE MODERN ALBUM COVER is published by Taschen at \$1,000



(Above) The first Steinweiss record sleeve, the 1939 reissue of a Rodgers & Hart hit package on 78rpm. Sales went through the roof; the industry never looked back. How brilliant are these – especially *Rhapsody In Blue* (far left)?