

## Tattoo You

### Title

*Tattoo You* was not a new studio album. It is composed primarily of outtakes from previous recording sessions from the 1970s. The Stones wanted to tour behind a new album for their

The earliest songs used were cut in late 1972 during the *Goats Head Soup* sessions: "Tops" and "Waiting on a Friend." "Start Me Up", originally called "Never Stop" was from 1978 during the *Some Girls* sessions along with "Hang Fire" and "Black Limousine." The *Black and Blue* sessions yielded the backing tracks for "Slave" and "Worried About You." The basic tracks for "No Use in Crying", "Little T&A", "Neighbours", "Heaven" and "Hang Fire" came from the *Emotional Rescue* (1980) sessions.

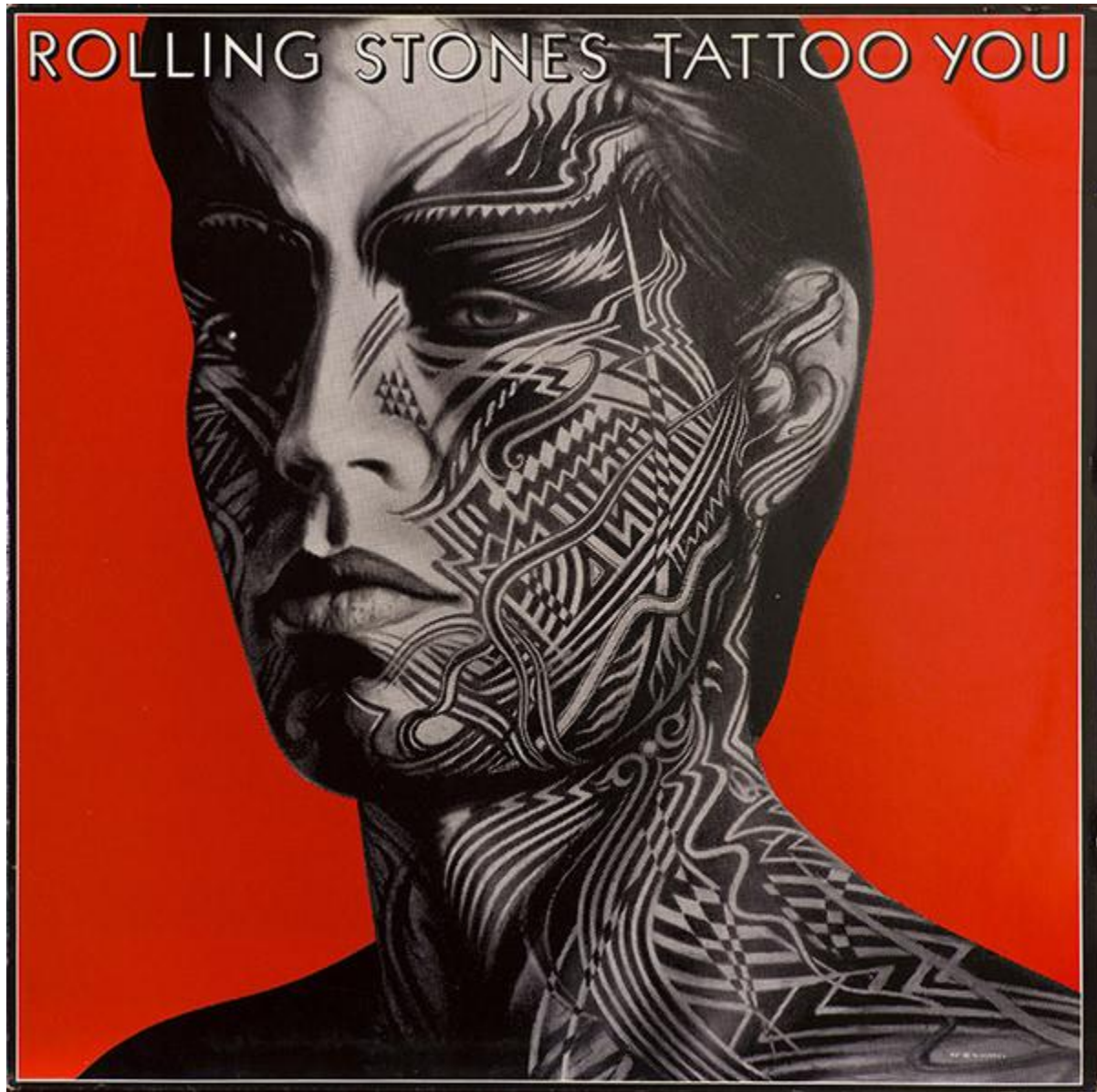
upcoming North American and European tours. Chris Kimsey, associate producer for the album said, "*Tattoo You* really came about because Mick and Keith were going through a period of not getting on. There was a need to get an album out and I told everyone I could make an album from what I knew was there." The album was originally going to be called *Tattoo*. One version of the final title's evolution is that Richards power in the band was still weakened by his drug use in the early eighties, and many decisions were still being made around him and for him. When the album came out as *Tattoo You*, Keith was surprised and not happy with the change exclaiming, "What's this *Tattoo You*?"

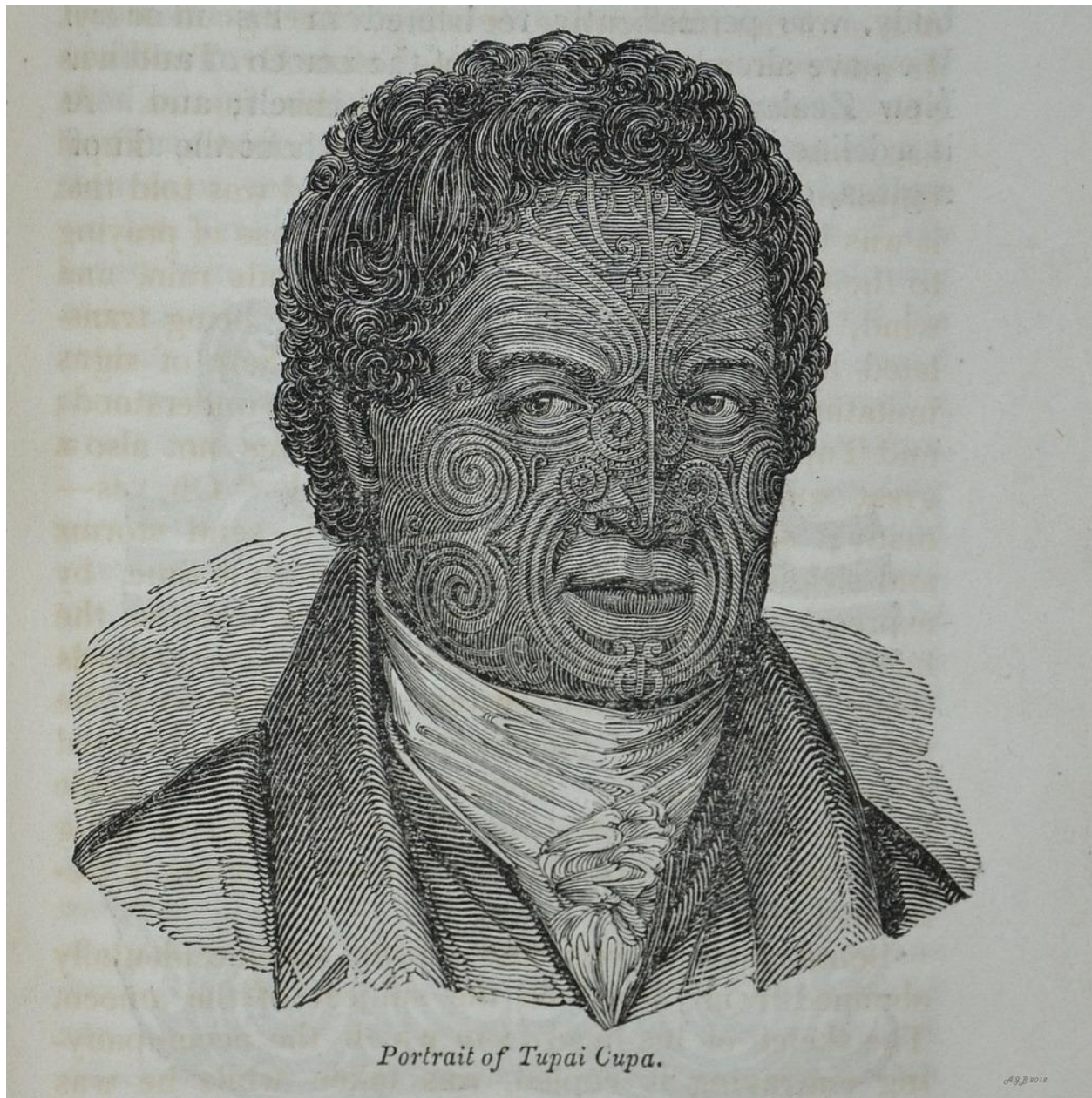
Jagger claims to this day that he has no clue how the "You" became attached to the title. This was just another nettle in the Jagger/Richards relationship as Richards suspected that Jagger had changed the title without seeking his input. In a 1981 interview Mick Jagger said, "We called it *Tattoo You* because we had these paintings by that guy [Christian Piper] and we just didn't know what to call it....Some friend of mine from Pharoah [sic] Island did these paintings....they're actually photographs but with that tattoo painting on them. I saw him do some other stuff and we liked them so I gave him a couple of pictures and asked him to do them like that. Then we used them for the cover. We had lots of different titles but in the end we decided to call it that." The title was a reference to the cover art. Hubert Kretzschmar, photographer, when asked about the mysterious "You" addition said, "Christian [Piper, illustrator] suggested that title and Mick used it." Mystery solved. The album was released 24 August 1981. It won the 1982 Grammy award for Best Recording Package.

### The Cover Art

The cover art, like the cover of *Goat's Head Soup*, featured Mick Jagger on the front and Keith Richards on the back. No images of Bill Wyman, Charlie Watts, or Ron Wood are found anywhere on the album. Jagger is covered in tribal tattoos and set against a bold red background with the band name and album title above. The labyrinth of tattoos was illustrated by Christian Piper. Jagger's face has been likened to Queequeg the cannibal harpooner in *Moby-Dick*. An 1830 woodcut of Tupai Cupa, a Maori leader, provides an excellent prototype for Piper's work. The boldness of Jagger's heavily tatted face, inked to a haunting degree, in grayscale against a strikingly red background cannot help but stand out. A great many people

did not recognize the face as Jagger's and more than a few wondered who the 'woman' on the cover was.





*Portrait of Tupai Cupa.*

Corrison has reflected that Jagger has a tendency to want his artists to do something in ten minutes. That was not possible with this cover, Corrison said, "The tattoo thing took a long time, it took a long, long time to get that. I started looking at Indian sand paintings and that led me to sideshow, these sideshow circus things where I saw the painted woman. And I thought that's kind of interesting. And I did some study of the Samurai warriors and because once again this direction, the Stones are the strongest of all the rock and roll people in the world. The Samurai are pretty strong and apparently there is a tradition where the strongest of the strong would have tattoos on their face. And also, the fact that they are branded for life that way."



Kretzschmar took the photos for the album in June, 1981 in New York at his Tribeca Studio on West Broadway. He and Piper were actively engaged in pitching ideas for the cover to the Stones. Here are two of them.



The Mercours Arcade idea (left) was a refinement of the *Some Girls* concept. The elliptical shapes you see would have been die cut windows. Continuing with similar ideas, the concept on the right would have been an interactive design. The midsections of the figures on the



bottom two rows are cut out. When the inner sleeve is removed or replaced in a different way the cover's appearance would change.

Murder Incorporated gave Kretzschmar another idea, in fact, it was his early

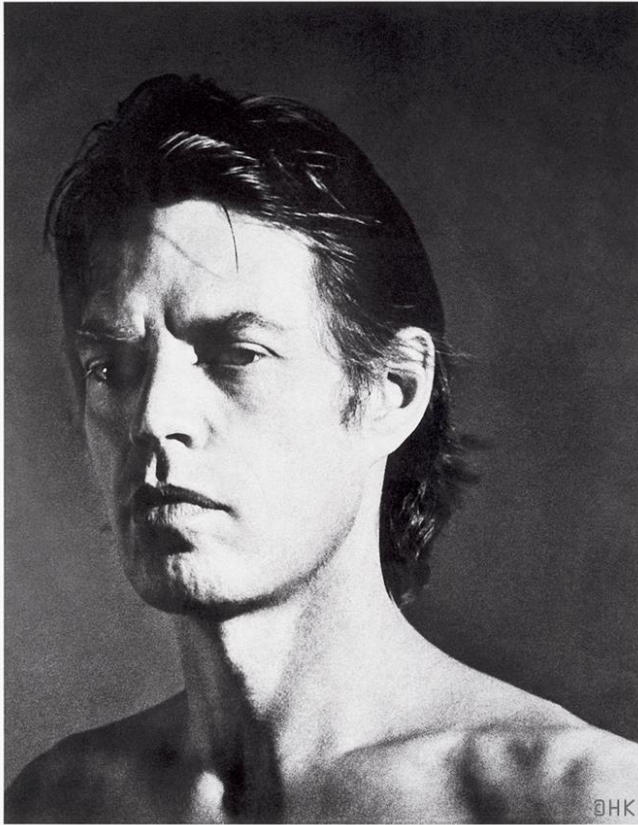
favorite idea. The nine men in this photo were surprised by a police raid on a November 10, 1931 “conference” held on Meyer Lansky’s orders and headed by Benjamin “Bugsy” Siegel at the Hotel Franconia on West Seventy-Second Street in Manhattan.



Charlie Watts has replaced Louis “Butterfly” Buchalter, Bill Wyman’s face occupies Harry “Big Greener” Greenberg’s body, Mick Jagger is Louis “the Shade” Kravitz, Keith Richards has become Jacob “Big Snout” Shapiro, and Ronnie Wood is Phillip “Sad Face” Kovalick.

Kretzschmar said, “During this time period me and Christian created a batch of different concepts, the “Tattoo” treatment being just one of them...Peter had a typesetter who set a few title type variations, which was the extent of his alleged design. Peter was the go between, between Christian, myself, the graphics production house and the band. For that role he gave himself the title “art director,” ...His later claim and grab of the Grammy award for best cover did not mention Christian’s or my work at all.” Asked why only two Stones appeared on the album Kretzschmar said, “It was a decision that Mick and Keith must have made. I remember Charlie was at the photo shoot with both of them, no effort was made to get him to pose or be part of it.” Kretzschmar took issue with the claim that Corriston originated the concept.





Corrison tells a story about getting the headshots for Jagger and Richards for the album cover. He said Jagger came to the shoot on time and spent hours modelling for the photographer. When they had finished, Jagger demanded to see all contact sheets so he could choose which shot of him was right for their "marketing demographic." The next day Richards came three hours late to his scheduled photo shoot. He entered the studio with a spliff in one hand and a bottle of Jack Daniel's in the other. When his shots were done he was asked too if he wanted to decide which shot was best, he replied, "Nah, that's what Mick's for, cheers."

In an interview, Corrison offered yet another memory of how the photographs came to be. "I vividly

"There was just me and Christian, and Mick and Keith and Charlie, plus a makeup person, just to touch them up a little and make them look natural. Nothing excessive. And their manager popped in for a minute...After one roll of film, I suggested Mick slick back his hair like an Italian movie star. He was game, but it took a little time to get the look right. Keith, on the other hand, had this great mop of hair that looked like he had just rolled out of bed, ready to go. It was very relaxed." H. Kretzschmar

remember being in Mick's kitchen up on the West Side with Christian and Mr. Kretzschmar, Chris Piper, setting up lights to photograph Mick for his tattoo. But Christian took the pictures, so...so these are things that get lost in the fodder stuff. But the real process here is really talking about the process, the greater process." So, everyone would at least agree that the photos got taken.

While the circumstances of the photos are contested in the memories of the principal artists, Kretzschmar's photograph of Jagger (his initials appear on the photo above) used for the front cover of the album is a stark black and white portrait depicting Jagger in a nude bust portrait. This photo became the art used to make the cover. It has been known for quite some time. Finding the photograph used for Richards has been more of a

challenge. When asked if he has ever shared the Richards photo used for the album, Kretzschmar said, "Christian had my negatives in his possession and I forgot to ask for them to

be returned. At some point in the 90's he sold them to Keith's office (Jane Rose) without telling me, because he was low on funds as he admitted to me later."

Piper and Kretzschmar shared Kretzschmar's New York apartment at the time of the Tattoo You work. Kretzschmar said of his temporary roommate, "At the time Christian, a buddhist, had returned from a six-month retreat from a monastery and had no earthly possessions...Christian was living with me at the time that we worked on this cover."

Describing the process of working with Piper on the cover art Kretzschmar said, "There were a few tests and trials, I helped with some color tests and prepared the prints that he used for the final artwork...The three of us worked on previous projects for the Stones. At a certain point I told Christian that I wanted him to take credit for the cover since most of the work was his illustration and I knew I would have another shot at doing a cover in the future."



Left, you see a hand-drawn pattern on a photograph of a model. Kretzschmar has described it as a prototype of the tattoo treatment. He describes it this way, "Eventually, it was my pattern drawing of a female model, which I turned photo negative and then showed to Christian, that sparked his first face tattoo designs. This concept started us on the visual path that led to the final cover. There was another idea early on that was a close-up of Mick's mouth with a tattoo across his nose."

The rear cover features the heavily inked face of Richards, also in the Maori style, against a vibrant green background. The track list appears in a small all

caps red ink font to the left of the bridge of Richards' nose.

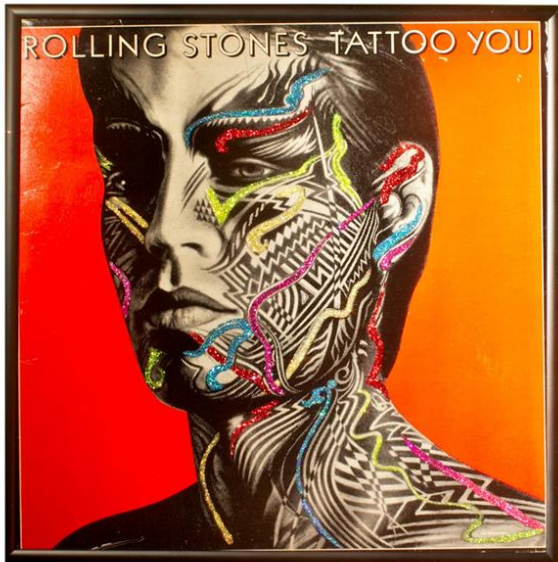


### Album Cover “Enhancements”

Many album covers have lent themselves to imitation art (see Ken Orth’s Meet the Look-Alikes [https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=meet%20the%20look%20alikes&epa=SEARCH\\_BOX](https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=meet%20the%20look%20alikes&epa=SEARCH_BOX) ). Tattoo You was especially enticing for artists who enhanced the cover. Michel Rosenthal has



created a series of glittered album covers.



Hubert Kretzschmar, the photographer for this project, has also applied his artistic touch to the original photos of Jagger and Richards. The tattoo art has been hand-tinted with red, yellow, blues, green, pink, violet, and orange



## The Inner Sleeve

Kretzschmar said, “well, once there was a release date set and we knew the sequencing of the songs and had added them to the artwork, we got the cover artwork ready to go to the lab. So, after those things were set in motion, they said, “Has anybody thought of what’s going on the inner sleeve?” The cardboard inner sleeve was a simple design. On one side was the photograph/painting of an animal’s foot fashioned into a high heel shoe. Kretzschmar said, “The goat’s foot is an airbrush and photo collage and was an illustration that Christian made, as far as I know a one color black and white image.”

Corrison spoke of the way the photo triangulated the artwork. He described it this way, “You have the kind of Yin-Yang. You have Mick on the front, orange, Keith on the back, green. Then on the inside, the rest of the guys wanted to be tattooed. And I really argued for not doing that because it would take away the power of the Glimmer Twins. So, I said we had to do something completely crazy and Christian had this painting of this hoof, a deer hoof (sic) in a high heel shoe. And I said let’s put that in there because what that does, it triangulates. You look at the front you look at the back you look at the inside and ... It kind of spins you. You really don’t know what is this about.”

The high-heeled goat image became the sleeve for the Stones August 1981 release of the single “Start Me Up.” On the upper left side of this image are three lines of text in blue, red, and green. They comprise the album credits. The credits, by color, say:

Produced by: The Glimmer Twins Recorded at EMI, Paris & Nassau, Bahamas Associate  
Produced and Engineer Chris Kimsey for Wonder Knob LTD

Mixed by: Bob Clearmountain Three Paintings by: Christian Piper Art Direction: Peter Corrison  
Mastering by: Bob Ludwig for Masterdisk

The flipside of the inner sleeve presents a pattern of black and white lines with no other images and no text. The pattern was Kretzschmar’s contribution, one he admitted lifting from a design source book.







Kretzschmar said, "Then, for the other side, I pulled out a pattern from one of my graphic design books. Once it was there, it was almost like it was meant to be. The image below shows a close-up detail for the pattern on the sleeve. It is a series of white and gray tone "cylinders" separated by black space.





One writer has remarked that compared to the elaborate cover design the inner-sleeve is ultra-minimalist with no written credits or thank yous. That is mistaken, there are a few credits on the animal hoof side. But the flipside comprises only the pattern above. Several writers have theorized the Stones were practicing some deception with this strategy so they would not have to admit that *Tattoo You* "was a ragbag of tarted-up discards" nor would they have to acknowledge that Mick Taylor and others played parts that were clearly not the work of Richards or Watts. Even saxophone virtuoso Sonny Rollins did not get a word on this album. Another theory is that the album was being put together quickly for the upcoming tour and there simply was not time to do a more formal acknowledgment. Asked about this in a 1981 interview for CREEM magazine Jagger said, he couldn't remember everyone that was on the tracks and couldn't be bothered and just decided it didn't matter since everyone was paid at the time. This has spawned another theory that Jagger was hoping the passage of time would have dulled the memories of the many contributors and he did not want to give them an invitation to come chasing him down for money with the confirmation of their contributions. Taylor, who was not credited, later demanded and received a share of the album's royalties.



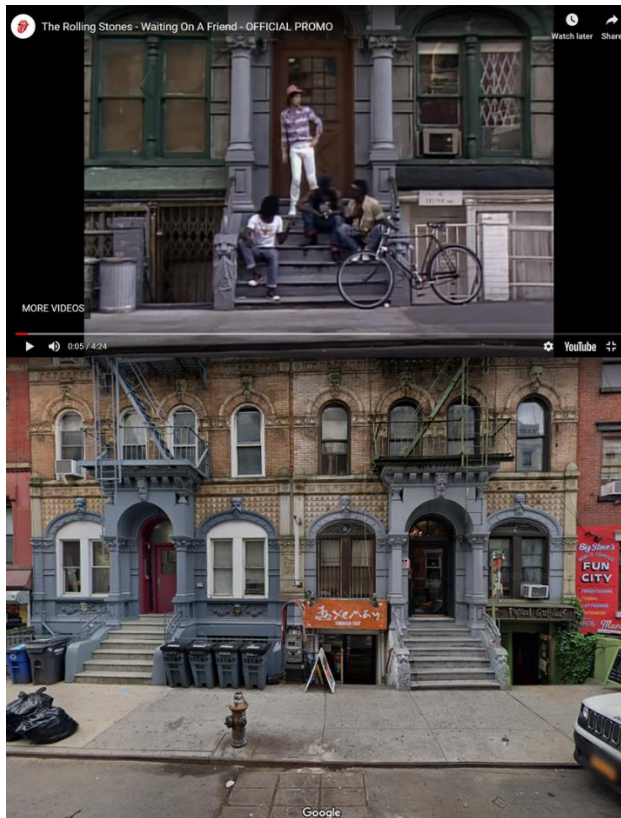
An early version of the album with one of Peter Corrison's alternative typesetting styles.

### **A Nod to the Videos**

Album art was becoming more than just the album cover. In the 1980's videos were becoming an expected adjunct for experiencing the music itself. Videos presented an avenue for additional artists to contribute to the experience of an album. Videographer Michael Lindsay-Hogg created two videos for the album. "Neighbours" is an homage to Alfred Hitchcock's film "Rear Window." The Stones can be seen playing through one apartment window. Each of the other five apartment windows tells a different story, including a couple in foreplay, t'ai chi practice, and a man putting bloody body parts in a suitcase. This video was heavily censored when on TV. On July 2, 1981 "Waiting on a Friend" was filmed on location in New York City's East Village, where Jagger waits on the front steps of 96-98 St. Mark's Place. This is the same



building designer Peter Corrison immortalized in the cover art of Led Zeppelin's 1975 album *Physical Graffiti*. Keith arrives, shakes hands with the late reggae musician Peter Tosh, and the two head off to jam with the rest of the Stones at a local pub.



Stones videos, Zeppelin cover, Google Earth April 2020

## The Tour Stage

The set was 65 feet wide. Each wing added another 80 feet. The original paintings used in the stage design were by Japanese artist Kazuhide Yamazaki.



## Cast of Characters



Peter Corrison, art director is seen left, Christian Piper, illustrator is in the middle, Hubert Kretzschmar, Photographer is on the right.

## Recycled Artists and New Art

At times, over the years, the Stones have tended to try a new artist or photographer for their album covers, liked their work and then reused them for a series of covers before moving on in a new direction, sometimes propelled by the unavailability of the artists based on their volume of work spurred by their work with the Stones! Corrison and Kretzschmar were following in the footsteps of photographers Nicholas Wright, David Bailey, Gered Mankowitz, and Ethan Russell and artist Andy Warhol. They collaborated on *Some Girls*, *Tattoo You* and *Undercover*.

Both are immensely talented men. Their views on their relative contributions to the albums sometimes conflict, memory can do that. Despite these differences they managed to collaborate for a good dozen years or so on a variety of projects.

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