



For Immediate Release

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**THE 'ALEX AWARDS' ENTERTAINMENT PACKAGING CONTEST RETURNS
AFTER 11-YEAR HIATUS AS A VINYL-SPECIFIC, JURY-SELECTED COMPETITION**

DETROIT, MI – The best in vinyl packaging will be recognized Nov. 6, 2017 at the Alex Awards at the Westin Book Cadillac Detroit at “Making Vinyl,” the first B2B conference dedicated to the rebirth of the vinyl record manufacturing industry.

“Making Vinyl” will closely examine the circumstances leading up to the astounding comeback of a format deemed to be dead and forgotten less than 15 years ago is now regarded globally as physical media’s only shining star in the digital age.

The “Alex Awards,” founded by Larry Jaffee in 2003, was named in honor of Alex Steinweiss, the creator of Columbia Records’ first 78-rpm album jacket in 1939. Mr. Steinweiss, who died in 2011 at 94, accepted a Lifetime Achievement Award at the inaugural namesake event in Universal City, CA.

After a four-year-run, the competition took a hiatus due to a corporate ownership sale, and Jaffee acquired the rights. Whereas in its earlier incarnation the Alex Awards mostly judged aesthetics of CD and DVD packaging, the new edition is focused almost entirely on vinyl records; one category covers pre-recorded cassettes, also make a bizarre comeback.

“I’ve been itching to bring back the Alex Awards, and the recent undeniable resurgence of vinyl as a commercial force presented itself as the right time,” stated Jaffee, who’s serving as program director of the Alex Awards and the larger Making Vinyl. Produced by Colonial Purchasing Co-op, a media manufacturing buying group, the two-day conference is presented in association with Record Store Day and Jack White’s Third Man Pressing.

Making Vinyl co-founder Bryan Ekus, executive director of Colonial Purchasing, agreed the Detroit conference was the perfect place for the Alex Awards to return.

“The full 12x12-inch canvas that adorned LPs had been missing in the CD age,” he said. Jaffee noted, “Alex once told me he felt sick to his stomach when he saw how small the size of a CD cover was.”

Leslie Steinweiss, son of Alex, commented, “that sounds cool that the Alex Award rises again,” adding that his father would be proud knowing it came back because of the LP’s comeback. And here’s a fun fact: Alex’s grandson, Homer, was Amy Winehouse’s drummer on her breakthrough album, *Back in Black*, one of the best-selling LPs in recent years.

Returning to host the Alex Awards, as he did 2003-2006, is Grammy Award-winning Craig Braun, renown for executing such groundbreaking album covers conceived by Andy Warhol as the Rolling Stones’ *Sticky Fingers* and the *Velvet Underground & Nico*, as well his own Alice Cooper’s *School’s Out*. Braun shifted careers to full-time acting about 15 years ago, chalking up with a long list of feature film, television and theater credits.

A call for entries is underway. In early October a panel of award-winning music packaging art directors will judge the submissions, which must be received by Sept. 30, 2017 (see addendum for categories and competition rules). The winners will be announced at Making Vinyl.

Event Hotel info: <http://www.bookcadillacwestin.com/>

Conference info: <http://www.makingvinyl.com>

Alex Awards Packaging Competition: <http://makingvinyl.com/alex-awards/>

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