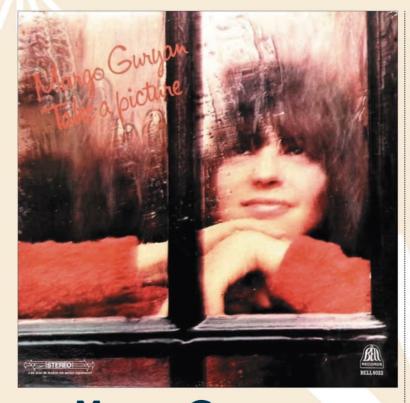


Carly Simon Torch Rar

vinylart



#73 Margo Guryan Take A Picture BELL, US, OCTOBER 1968

COVER DESIGN BY THE GRAFFITERIA, PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOEL BRODSKY CHARLES DONOVAN gazes longingly through the glass at a jazzy sunshine-pop milestone

o one gazing at the cover of Margo Guryan's first and only album would necessarily know that it was just a small fraction, an 11th to be precise, of the intended sleeve. At the time it was assembled, Joel Brodsky, like Guryan a New Yorker, was on a roll, having shot two Doors albums, Van Morrison's Astral Weeks and the debut of singer-songwriter, David Ackles. Working with Bell president Larry Uttal he devised a concept; each song on Guryan's album would have its own photograph, staged to reflect its title or a snippet of lyric. The photographs would then be presented as if scattered across a surface. But when the album came out, all that remained was the image for track eight, 'Think Of Rain' - a moody, inviting portrait of the artist through a rain-battered window, slightly blurred but otherwise looking the very picture of late '60s understated chic.

Joel took pictures representing each song," Guryan confirms. "The original cover was a montage but the placement was taking too long for Bell and they asked me to pick one photo. The rainy window pane seemed the most evocative."The 'Think Of Rain' image was used on both sides colour on the front, black & white on the reverse."I would have liked them to stick to the original plan, but they seemed to be in a hurry to release the record. David, my husband and publisher, and I were both new to the world of records and simply acceded to suggestions by Bell."

Although Guryan had written the album, her involvement in the cover was confined to being a photographer's subject. "Larry Uttal chose the photographer. I knew nothing of Joel Brodsky, but he'd taken the well-known photo of a shirtless Jim Morrison. I liked him. He seemed to know his stuff and was a pleasant man." Several locations were agreed upon for the original concept; Guryan's apartment, Central Park and Brodsky's studio. Rather than being styled and clothed by the label, an effortlessly fashionable Guryan was presented as herself. "The red sweater was mine. I wore my own

"The result showed hair blowing across my face but it looked like a scar. When we sought to replace that picture, Uttal decided it was taking too long and opted for one picture, front and back"

clothing for the photo shoots. I don't recall anyone being interested in what I wore. No racks of clothing, no hair stylists or makeup artists... just whatever I decided to wear on a particular day."

For 'Sunday Morning', Guryan was captured in an embrace ("Come hold me in your arms"). 'Thoughts' was illustrated by a close-up of interlocked hands ("Meeting you/holding hands"). It was 'Sun' (Side One, track two) that ended up causing problems. Brodsky set up a shot with a fan billowing Guryan's hair. "The result showed hair blowing across my face but it looked like a scar. When we sought to replace that picture, Uttal decided it was taking too long and opted for one picture, front and back

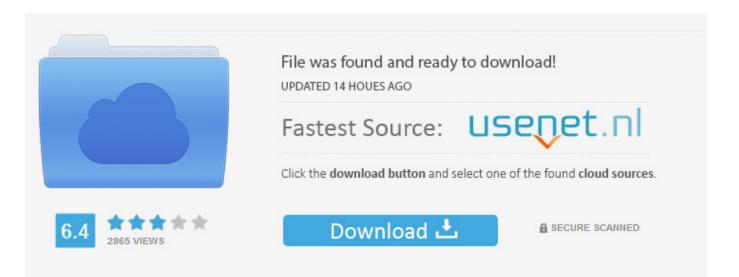
Although she was easygoing about artwork ("I don't recall any discussion of how the album would be presented visually. I simply went along with whatever Bell Records wanted"), the label was in for a surprise if it imagined Guryan would be just as biddable regarding promotion and gigs. "I thought they understood that I wasn't a performer," she insists."I was surprised when they asked me to travel and to appear on television."When Guryan informed them that she wasn't available, Bell cut its losses and ceased promoting Take A Picture. "It tanked," says Guryan, whose songs, including several from Take A Picture, would enjoy better fortunes in the hands of other artists, including Spanky & Our Gang and Bobbie Gentry & Glen Campbell ('Sunday Morning') and Jackie DeShannon ('Think Of Rain').

One piece of luck was that, by coincidence, the typeface used to spell out Guryan's name almost resembled her reallife signature."When asked to sign albums, I invariably alter my signature slightly so that it's a closer match.

Decades on, Take A Picture was rediscovered by lounge, jazz and sunshinepop cultists, leading to a variety of reissues in different territories. Following Brodsky's death in 2007, Guryan was able to acquire the photographs and, in Korea, a CD with vinyl-replica packaging was issued by the Beatball label in 2009, featuring the album, a collection of demos and, at last, the original artwork.

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Carly Simon Torch Rar



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carly simon torch

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