

Two Virgins (UK)

First announcement in trade magazines: August 24, 1968

Released November 29, 1968

The story of this LP probably began in the middle of the night on May 3/4, 1968. John had recently decided to end his marriage to Cynthia (Powell) Lennon, and on the third he spoke with longtime friend, Pete Shotton, about inviting Yoko Ono over.

I made 20 or 30 movies, just 8mm stuff but still movies, and many, many hours of tape of different sounds, just not rocking. I suppose you would call them avant-grade. That's how Yoko met me. There were very few people I could play those tapes to, and I played them to her, and then we made Two Virgins a few hours later.

She came to the house and I didn't know what to do; so we went upstairs to my studio and I played her all the tapes that I'd made, all this far out stuff, some comedy stuff, and some electronic music. She was suitably impressed and then she said, 'Well, let's make one ourselves,' so we made Two Virgins. It was midnight when we started Two Virgins; it was dawn when we finished, and then we made love at dawn. It was very beautiful.

John Lennon to Jann Wenner (Rolling Stone), December 1970

So it was that early in the morning of May 4th, John and Yoko made the tape that would become the *Two Virgins* album. The Beatles began working on their new album at the end of that month, and with the opening of Apple Records happening at the same time, the release of *Two Virgins* wound up being put off until the fall.

Shortly after recording the album of tape loops, sounds, vocalizations, and electronic games, John and Yoko decided to expand the concept into a film. This took place on June 9, when Yoko and John created a film short with William Wareing called *Two Virgins* – which was to be the title of the album. The movie consists of two central scenes. In the first scene, moving images of John and Yoko are superimposed on one another, as if suggesting a spiritual embrace. In the second scene, the couple physically embrace – fully clothed and outdoors.

In early August, John and Yoko moved into Ringo's flat at 34 Montagu Square in London. On the 12th, the dynamic duo attended Ossie Clark's fashion show at the Revolution club to support Pattie Boyd (Harrison). During the event, John wore a black suit, and Yoko wore a light top and a wrap. It was likely the following morning when John phoned Tony Bramwell with an unusual request: a camera. John made several photographs of Yoko and himself that day, including shots with a copy of the *Times Business News* page from August 1st. Behind them in the main shots are John's black pants – likely the ones that he had worn to the fashion show.



John and Yoko LP

JOHN LENNON and Japanese girlfriend Yoko Ono have made an LP together.

It is titled "Two Virgins" and will be released in the Beatles Apple label sometime next month.

Apple's Derek Taylor explained: "It is an album of sounds and experiences created by both of them. Not actually singing or talking. More the meeting of two minds. It's very interesting."

The album was made a few weeks ago in a privately hired recording studio. Both John and Yoko contributed ideas — and Lennon produced the LP.

"Two Virgins" will feature black and white pictures of the couple on the sleeve.

The first announcements of the album's impending release appeared within a week's time. The August 24 issue of *Disc & Music Echo* pronounced that the album would feature "black and white pictures of the couple," leaving out an important detail: the fact that they are nude on the cover.

Lennon passed along the film to Jeremy Banks, Apple's Photographic Coordinator who worked on the White Album packaging and on the Our First Four presentation kit. Banks developed the film and handed them off to Beatles Press Agent, Derek Taylor.

In a later (1971) interview, John said that Derek's reaction was to side with Paul McCartney to stop the album from being released. "They had *meetings* where Paul said, "Let's kill it," after he wrote about two great saints on the ... front, and all that."

Paul had made it clear that he did not want John to release that cover photograph, but he wound up contributing the album's liner note. Were John and Yoko two great saints? Or was Saint John having to prove himself (to Paul? to others?)? It doesn't seem like a coincidence that the Biblical John and Paul were "great saints."

In a letter to Martin George (Rock Ink writer) in 1971, John blasted EMI, claiming that they "wrote warning letters to all their puppets around the world telling them not to handle it in any way."

Interview With Jonathan Colt (*Rolling Stone*), September 18, 1968

Q: You just showed me what might be the front and back album photos for the record you're putting out of the music you and Yoko composed for your film 'Two Virgins.' The photos have the simplicity of a daguerreotype...

JOHN: Well, that's because I took it. I'm a ham photographer, you know. It's me Nikon what I was given by a commercially-minded Japanese when we were in Japan, along with me Pentax, me Canon, me boom-boom and all the others. So I just set it up and did it.

Q: For the cover, there's a photo of you and Yoko standing naked facing the camera. And on the backside are your backsides. What do you think people are going to think of the cover?

JOHN: Well, we've got that to come. The thing is, I started it with a pure... it was the truth, and it was only after I'd got into it and done it and looked at it that I'd realized what kind of scene I was going to create. And then suddenly, there it was, and then suddenly you show it to people and then you know what the world's going to do to you, or try to do. But you have no knowledge of it when you conceive it or make it. Originally, I was going to record Yoko, and I thought the best picture of her for an album would be her naked. I was just going to record her as an artist. We were only on those kind of terms, then. So after that, we got together; it just seemed natural for us, if we made an album together, for both of us to be naked. Of course, I've never seen me prick on an album or on a photo before: 'What-on-earth, there's a fellow with his prick out.' And that was the first time I realized me prick was out, you know. I mean, you can see it on the photo itself - we're

naked in front of a camera - that comes over in the eyes, just for a minute you go!! I mean, you're not used to it, being naked, but it's got to come out.

Q: How do you face the fact that people are going to mutilate you?

JOHN: Well, I can take that as long as we can get the cover out. And I really don't know what the chances are of that.

Q: You don't worry about the nuts across the street?

JOHN: No, no. I know it won't be very comfortable walking around with all the lorry drivers whistling and that, but it'll all die. Next year it'll be nothing, like miniskirts or bare tits. It isn't anything. We're all naked really. When people attack Yoko and me, we know they're paranoiac. We don't worry too much. It's the ones that don't know, and you know they don't know-- they're just going round in a blue fuzz. The thing is, the album also says: 'Look, lay off, will you? It's two people - what have we done?'

The notion of the record as “unfinished” is that the listener can complete the music in his own mind or room.

Two Virgins

Details Leading to the Release
of the British Album:

October saw John and Yoko working on advance advertising for the new LP. They sent raw copies of the album-cover photographs (and two of the alternate shots from the photo session) to press organizations in the UK and worldwide. The *Daily Mirror* published an article in its October 12th issue about their ad being banned. Along with that article was an unfinished copy of what was to become the back cover photo. The title of the article was “A Ban is Slapped on John and Yoko in the Nude.” The ad was going to read, “It isn't a trend, and it isn't a trick. It's just two of God's children looking and sounding much as they were when they were born. Only a little older.” In the US, *Time* magazine picked up on that story and ran a short article in its issue dated October 25th.

Disc & Music Echo reported that same week (October 12) that the album's release date had not been set, although John's plan was for the cover to feature nude photos of Yoko and himself.

● John Lennon and girlfriend Yoko Ono may appear nude on the cover of their joint LP “Two Virgins.” Beatles press officer Tony Barrow confirmed on Tuesday that the couple had been to a photo session for pictures for the album sleeve design.

“No final decision has been made. And the LP hasn't even been scheduled yet,” he explained.

Lennon's original plan was to have nude pictures of himself and Yoko on both the back and front of the cover.

On October 15, Ray Connolly interviewed Yoko for an interview that would be published in the *Evening Standard* on the 17th. She reported that, “when we decided to make a record, we decided that we should both be naked on the cover. He took the photograph with an automatic camera. No – we wouldn't have had anyone else there to photograph us. And it's nice. The picture isn't lewd or anything like that. Basically, we're very shy and square people. We'd be the first to be embarrassed if anyone was to invite us to a nude party.” The profile on Yoko also quoted her as saying about the album concept, “Everything I do is unfinished, so that you, or somebody else can add something and then pass it on.”

On October 22, EMI announced that John would be free to seek another record label to press and distribute the album in the UK, because EMI was not going to release it.

The Swedish evening paper, *Expressen*, ran all three photos in its October 23rd issue, along with an article about the shock being caused by the album's impending release. After a photo of Yoko and John cuddling and the picture of the unfinished back-cover photo, they ran the caption, "Stop if you don't want to see the front of the Beatles record back!" The next page showed a raw copy of the front-cover photo.

Annoyed by the press reaction, John made a drawing of Yoko and himself (naked) and attached the caption to it. Some press outlets ran the altered advertisement. John offered up that same drawing as part of the poster for the Beatles' "White Album." In the United States, Capitol Records edited the poster in a manner that removed Yoko's pubic hair and emasculated John.

Disc & Music Echo reported on October 26 that the album would be available in one week's time.

"John Lennon's controversial album with Yoko Ono titled *Two Virgins* is available from next Friday but not from record stores. Apple, who are issuing this 32s 6d album, have not asked record stores to stock it. But a spokesman for the famous HMV record store in Oxford Street, said on Monday, 'I imagine that if they wanted to put this on general distribution, we would stock it despite the sleeve pictures.' Beatles spokesman Derek Taylor told the newspaper, 'We have made arrangements to distribute the album. Apple will ensure that anyone who wants a copy will be able to get one.' Taylor added that the album, recorded at a private studio, was a non-vocal series of effects and images." John elaborated on how he had envisioned the album sleeve: "I was going to record Yoko just as an artist. We weren't going to be lovers or get married. I had this idea because I'd seen her work, that the only way to show her was to show her pure, nude. It was going to be white, all her gallery shows were always white, and it was just going to be her, just in this whiteness."

The imminent release turned out not to be true, since EMI refused to distribute the record in any fashion at the end of October, leaving Apple to shop around for distributors.

Rolling Stone magazine printed their issue dated November 23, 1968, on about October 30th. It featured drafts of the cover design, including text and the quote from Paul McCartney. It was at about this time that John and his associates contacted or formed a company called Technink, Ltd., whose sole purpose seems to have been to print the cover to *Two Virgins*. They used the draft design to print up advertising posters.

In late October (reported in *Cash Box* dated 02 November), we read that

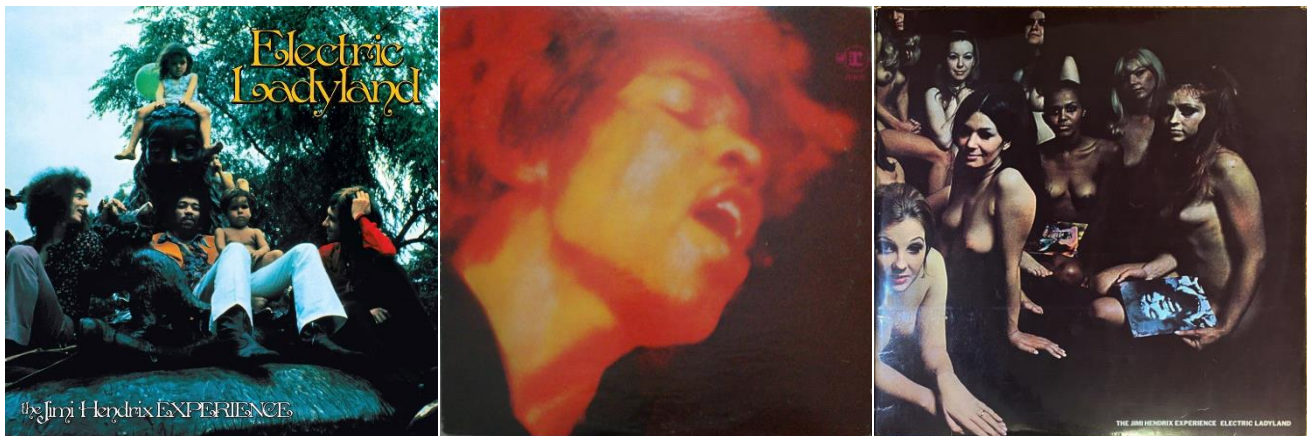
The John Lennon-Yoko Ono LP "Two Virgins" is also expected to appear this month, but will not be handled by EMI, Apple's distributors, owing to the controversial jacket photos of Lennon and Yoko Ono in a state of nudity. An independent distributor is being sought.

Record Mirror, November 2, 1968

John Lennon's appearance in the nude with Yoko Ono started an uproar—well what's wrong with being nude, don't we all like being nude at times? The only difference being we prefer to be nude in private and not in a picture on an LP album.

By early November, Apple had contracted with Track Records to distribute the *Two Virgins* album. While there were shops that elected to sell the LP, Track cut out the middle distributors – making the LP available through mail-order only. One had to purchase the album directly from Track. This meant that there were no distributors' warehouses anywhere with stocks of the cover that could be raided.

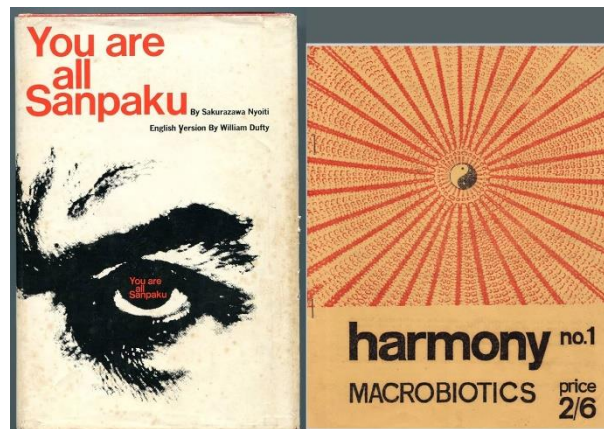
By this time, Track was already distributing Jimi Hendrix's *Electric Ladyland*, the cover to which was controversial for more than one reason. First, both the American and British record labels had rejected Jimi's chosen art for the cover, which included a photograph by Linda Eastman (soon to be McCartney). The US label, Reprise, chosen instead a photograph of Jimi in concert, which he did not approve. Track in the UK set up a photo shoot for a unique cover – one that Jimi did not approve, and which some of the nineteen nude women on the cover did not appreciate afterwards.



That's right: the cover photo featured not one naked lady but nineteen of them. With that record coming out before *Two Virgins*, Track was already experiencing some rejection from retailers who refused to sell the album.

APPLY: DEPT. M.O./I, TRACK RECORDS, 58 OLD COMPTON STREET, LONDON. W.1.

Meanwhile, John had been on a vegetarian diet, but it wasn't working. Then he read a book called *You are All Sanpaku* (which came out in 1965) about macrobiotic diets. He visited the Seed Restaurant in London, owned by Gregory Sams – the man who went on to invent the first VegeBurger and to found Whole Earth Foods. Sams was starting up a magazine called *Harmony*, and on November 7, John drew a promo for it. That promo features drawings that resemble those from *Two Virgins* – an album that was about to come out in Great Britain.



Early-mid-November saw Lennon remastering the album for stereo, in preparation for its release.

Ron Kass, head of Apple Records, said that the record was unlikely to be released in the U. S. before early January. "John Lennon is remastering it and it just won't be ready for the December 1 release date we originally planned," he said.

Dear John
- this isn't the proper master
- but - it's in stores really
but here it is anyway.
Love
Paul.

John was not really an exhibitionist. John had a musical talent. His body was nothing to write home about. As Mimi said at Apple, "It would have been all right John, but you're both so ugly. Why don't you get somebody attractive on the cover, if you've got to have somebody naked?" It was just silly. It was childish exhibitionism. It's like, "We've done everything else, now what can we do? Take our clothes off!" That's what children do at the beach. (Leila Harvey, John's cousin, in 1986)

MUSIC

Beatle in the Raw

They stand side by side stark naked, peering out from the plain white record jacket, John Lennon and his wife-to-be, avant-garde artist Yoko Ono. The flip side shows their own flip side, their bare bottoms turned to what promises to be hundreds of thousands of amused or amazed record buyers. The record is

and I thought 'Aha, there might just be trouble with this one.'

There was. The first few printers approached to do the jacket refused. Once it was made, EMI, the huge company which holds exclusive rights to the Beatles' records, refused to handle the album. Advertisements for the record were offered to Britain's three big pop-music papers, which all refused them, as did most of the national papers. "Not everyone was shocked," said Apple's Derek Taylor. "The British Naturalist [Nudist] Association thought it was splendid."

"We thought we were going to have to make it ourselves and take it around in a van from house to house," added Taylor. But a small British firm named Track Records took the project on. "When John Lennon makes a record," explained a Track executive, "kids want to buy it and that's that." In the U.S., when Capitol Records refused to touch the album, a company owned by comedian Bill Cosby, Bruce Campbell and Roy Silver, called Tetragrammaton, decided to distribute it in plain brown wrapper. It may turn out to be the only million-record album no one listens to.



Lennon, Ono: Flip side

entitled "Two Virgins," a collection of scratches, pings, plunks and crashes from the sound track of Yoko's underground film of the same name. The album will burst onto the market in America on Jan. 6. But already in England it has become the most-talked-about non-musical musical event of the year.

Originally John had planned to have Yoko alone make a record for Apple, the Beatles' new company, and to display her nude on the jacket "because her work is naked, basically simple and child-like and truthful." "When we did this thing together," Lennon continues, "it was just natural for us both to be naked." The pictures were taken with a remote-control device by John himself in a basement flat in London's Montagu Square, temporary digs during the recent divorce proceedings initiated by his wife, Cynthia. (The divorce becomes final in two weeks, with Lennon cited for adultery with Yoko, who is expecting their baby in February.) "I was a little startled," said John on first seeing the photos. "I mean, there I was, all of me, in a photo,

Newsweek, November 25, 1968

Label 68

Apple/unknown

APCOR 2 (mono)

Apple label with original cursive print across the top and bottom.

The label credits all songs to Northern Songs (John) and Apple Publishing (Yoko). It does not list any tracks separately.



There is vertical spacing above SIDE and above © 1968.

The presence of the word MONO on the label was quite unusual at the time. None of the releases from Parlophone or Apple in late 1968 or early 1969 – not even those albums that came out in mono *only* – had the word MONO on the label. Aside from this one, I can find no Parlophone album (through PMC-7183 in 1974), and no Columbia (UK) album from the period which had MONO on the label.

-1 Mother with no stamper number/-1 Mother with no stamper number

-1 Mother with no stamper number/-2 Mother with no stamper number

The absence of stamper codes seems to indicate that EMI delivered the mothers to another company for pressing. This may have been a limited pressing for promotional purposes.

Label 68

Apple (distributed by Track)

613012

(rechanneled stereo)

Apple label with original cursive print across the top and bottom.

Due to their playing old records while recording, one song on each side is credited to another company. These pressings list the tracks separately.



Spacing above SIDE and above © 1968

Labels printed by EMI; records pressed by EMI

Less spacing above SIDE and above © 1968

Known Stampers

More spacing above SIDE and above © 1968.

1G/1G
1R/1R
1A/1A
1A/1M
1G/1O
1A/1O
1O/1O
1P/1P
1R/1T

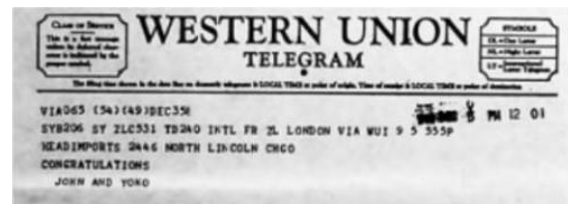
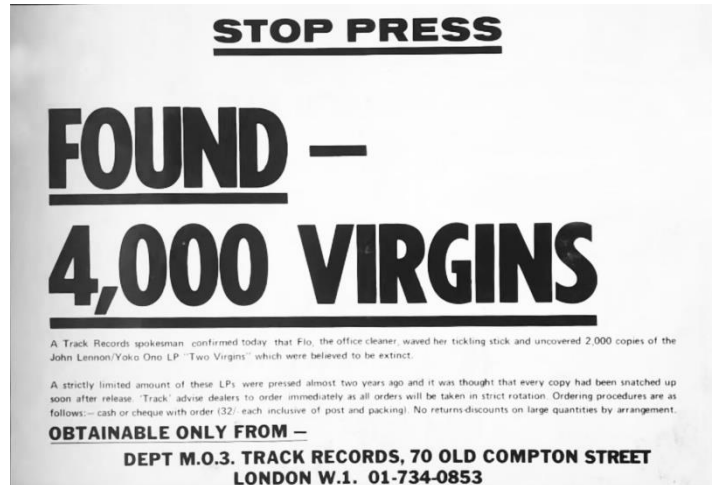
Less spacing above SIDE and above © 1968.

1H/1L
1L/1H
1T/1GP
1GD/1T
1GR/1GA
1GR/1GM

The highest stampers seem to accompany unlaminated covers. These may be copies that Track “discovered” in house in 1970. That 1970 ad reads “it was thought that every copy had been snatched up soon after release.”

Despite the insistence from collectors that only 5000 copies were ever pressed, the number of stampers tends to indicate that there are as many as 60,000 copies in circulation.

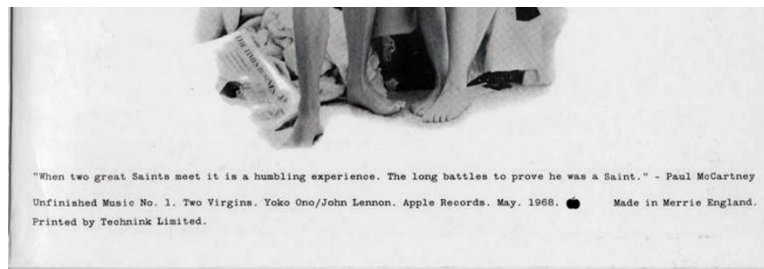
On December 3, an import shop in Chicago, Illinois (USA) became subject to a complaint and arrest when its owners were busted for displaying a poster advertising that *Two Virgins* would be on sale there. Two days later, John and Yoko heard about the arrest and sent them a simple telegram reading “Congratulations.”



Covers

Although people refer to a “mono cover” and a “stereo cover,” those expressions are misnomers. The stereo LP can be found quite frequently with the first cover design, and several mono copies have turned up in the second cover design. The following covers are known to exist.

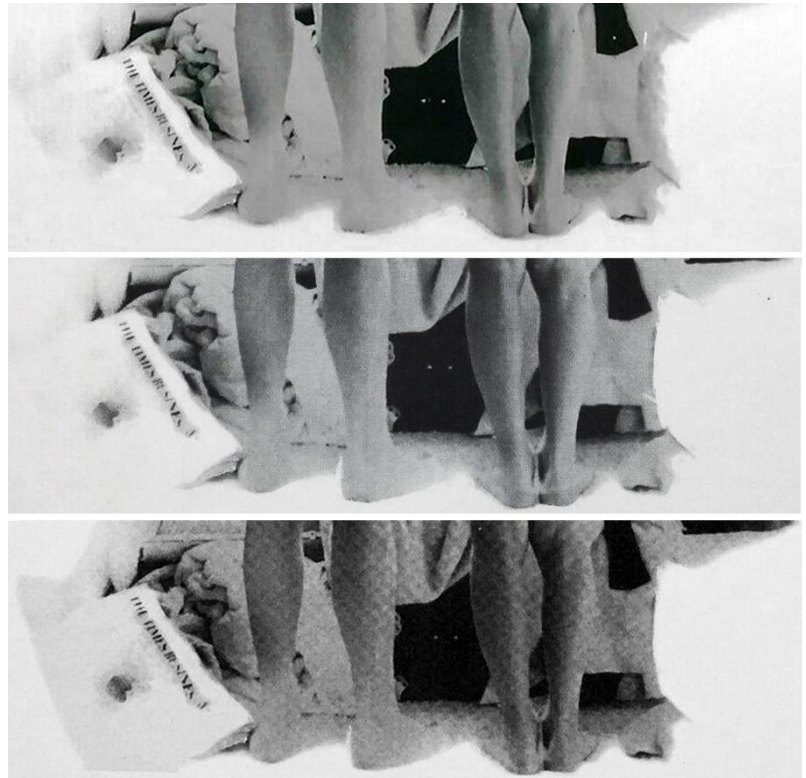
Front Text



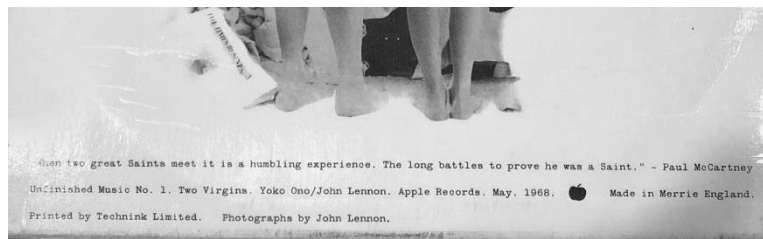
These copies of the LP have all of the text on the front cover. There is no print on the spine. There is no catalog number anywhere on the cover.

Three cover variations are known to exist – likely representing different printings. These are:

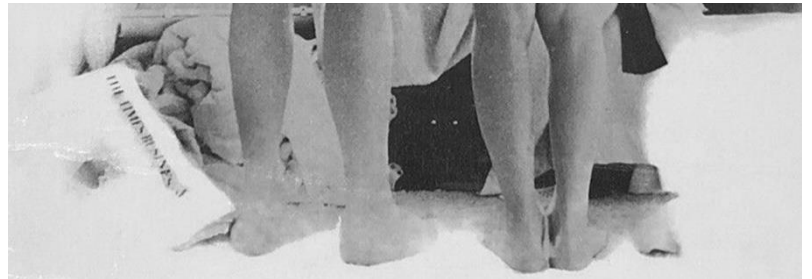
1. Front: curtain area to the left of John's head is cropped nearly horizontally across.
Back: to the right of Yoko's feet, we see diagonal marks where the bed is. In the space between John and Yoko, most of Yoko's hair is against a gray background.
2. Front: curtain area to the left of John's head is cropped nearly horizontally across -- apparently the same as design #1.
Back: to the right of Yoko's feet, the bed has been entirely covered by white space. There is a little white mark into the gray background in the lower right. In the space between J&Y, most of Yoko's hair is against a white background.
3. Front: curtain area to the left of John's head goes up, then down, then up.
Back: to the right of Yoko's feet, there is more white space than in #2. The border of the curtain behind John goes up to John's shoulder, then dips down, then comes back up to his shoulder.



Back Text



4. Front: curtain area to the left of John's area fades to gray and to white; much of it reaches to John's neck, rather than to his head.
Back: The curtain behind John fades to white as we move left. To the right of Yoko's feet, even more of the area is white.



Earlier copies of this cover (before 1970) are laminated, while later covers (1970) have no lamination.

There are several rejected designs that made it onto proofs or posters, but which I have not verified on any fully-constructed covers. These include early posters showing more of the bed than any of the cover designs.



"I phoned John and asked him to withdraw the record. He said no, with some colourful language, so I resigned. I continued to do some work on their other companies but within a few months The Beatles had broken up." (Harry Pinsker, Apple accountant, 2017)

MOST AMUSING part of this entertaining family album is the line on the label which states all the "compositions" are published by Northern Songs Ltd. Although there are titles like 'Two Virgins' and 'Hushabye Hushabye', both sides consist of continuous electronic music, with occasional snatches of conversation from John and Yoko. (*Melody Maker*, 21 December 1968)

Two Virgins was a big fight. That was – nine months later it came out; it was held up for nine months. Joseph Lockwood – who I still like (I don't know if he passed away or not) but he was a nice guy. But he sat down on a big table at the top of EMI with John and Yoko and told me he will do everything he can to help us...put *Two Virgins* out, 'cause we explained what it meant and why we were doing it. And he said that he understood it, and he'd do anything he can to help us. Then, when we tried to put it out, he sent a personal note to everybody saying: 'Don't print it. Don't put it out.' So we couldn't get the cover printed anywhere. (John on December 6, 1980)

Actually, the first record that would have been out on Apple would have been *Two Virgins* if they hadn't held it up. They stalled and they said this, that, and the other. Being naive in lots of ways, I had no idea I was going to get slagging from the immediate family. I thought maybe somebody out there will say something, but I was making a statement. It was as good as a song, it was better, you couldn't say it better – pictures speak louder than words. There it was: beautiful statement. (John in 1974)

US Album Cover Design

Front: the lower right corner area has even more white space, to the point where some of the dark clothing is missing. The curtain to John's left extends up vertically from his arm; there is no curtain to the left of his arm.

Back: The curtain to John's left extends only slightly above John's waist. The white space to the right of Yoko's feet softly fades, and some of the dark clothing is faded. There is more detail in John's and Yoko's feet than there is on any British copy of the LP.



The text is split between the front and back covers, replacing the Technink printing credit with a credit for Tetragrammaton Records.



Two Virgins (USA)

First appearance in trade magazines: January 18, 1969

Label a69

Apple/Tetragrammaton

T-5001

Apple label with no manufacturing print in the rim.

"Distributed by Tetragrammaton Records" appears in black.



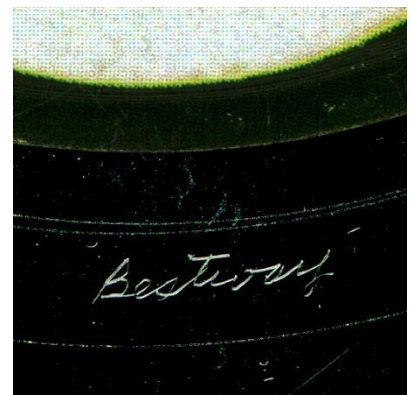
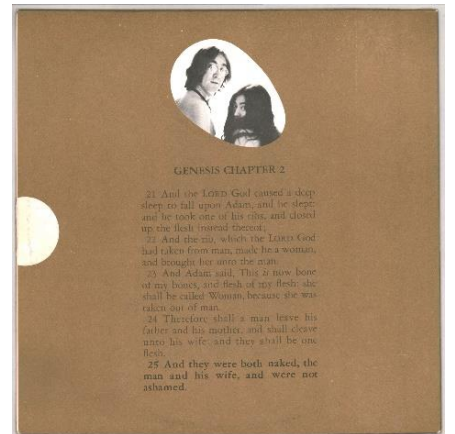
Factory: Monarch



Factory: Bestway Products

Authentic pressings from Monarch have the Monarch logo stamped into the matrix by machine, along with the Monarch job number, which is Δ 12796 on side 1 and Δ 12796-X on side 2. The Monarch number coincides with a release date of the week of January 17, 1969.

Authentic pressings from Bestway have "Bestway" written carefully in cursive in the matrix.



Cosby's Co. Faces the Naked Truth—Bows Nude LP in U. S.

By MIKE HENNESSEY

LONDON — Tetragrammaton, the Campbell-Cosby-Silver record label, will release the John Lennon-Yoko Ono Apple Records album in the U. S. Dec. 1. The album, whose jacket sleeve features a full length frontal photograph of Lennon and Miss Ono in the nude, caused a storm of indignation when pictures of it were published in two mass-circulation British magazines two weeks ago. Tetragrammaton's decision to acquire the album for the U. S. was revealed exclusively to Bill-

board by the Tetragrammaton's Roy Silver and Artie Mogull, following talks with Apple Records chief Ron Kass.

Silver said, "We'll probably have to fight law suits state by state, but we are releasing the album because we think John Lennon is a genius who has produced a product worthy of being sold." Silver added that in no circumstances would Tetragrammaton consider changing the cover picture. "We're handling the album because we believe in its worth as a com-

plete package," he said.

Capitol Records, which has a deal with Apple for the U. S., had declined to handle the album. In Britain, the LP will not be distributed by EMI but through an independent wholesaler, instead.

Advance publicity for the album describes it as a meeting of minds. It contains a dialog on philosophy and meditation between Lennon and Miss Ono, accompanied by a background of electronic music.

The week of July 12-18, 1968, saw the publication in Los Angeles of the 60th issue of *Open City*. In that issue of the underground magazine, Leon Russell's Asylum Choir advertised the imminent release of their debut album (*Look Inside the Asylum Choir*) with a photograph featuring Marc Benno, Leon Russell, and a nude woman who had her legs open. The magazine's editors were arrested on July 17th, with their trial upcoming in March 1969. Against this backdrop, Capitol Records (based in LA) had to determine whether to distribute *Two Virgins*.

In early autumn, Capitol Records had decided not to distribute the record, although they were still planning to press the album. Capitol of Canada followed suit. EMI had prepared copies of the release in Great Britain (Apple APCOR-2), but they backed out — passing the album along to Track Records, letting only a few rare mono copies leak out.

By early November, the small label Tetragrammaton Records had agreed to release the album in the United States, with plans to release it as an LP, a four-track cartridge, and eight-track cartridge, a cassette, and a PlayTape. Of these, only the PlayTape failed to emerge.

Tetragrammaton Records had been formed in 1967 as a joint venture between filmmaker Bruce Post Campbell, comedian Bill Cosby, and Roy Silver (Cosby's manager). Campbell was not involved with soup. The label's best-selling artist was Deep Purple, although Cosby's records also sold well. The label's name was taken from the four-letter representation of God's name in the Hebrew Bible: **אֵלֹהִים**.

November ran into December, and with Capitol waiving its right to press the record, Tetragrammaton still no arrangement with any pressing plants to make the LP. Meanwhile, five major store chains (including Sears) had decided not to carry the album based on a description of its cover. On December 3, the owners of an imported record shop in Chicago were arrested for displaying a photograph of the British album.

Trend to Dressing Up LPs By Undressing the Artist

By DAVE FINKLE

The latest record biz trend shaping seems to be shapes—undressed. Nudity on album jackets. Life in the raw.

The publicity is going, of course, to the Beatles, who, supposedly, are encountering troubles over the release of John Lennon's "The Two Virgins" soundtrack which is skedded to feature John Lennon and his Japanese avant garde filmmaker-girlfriend Yoko Ono nudely and full length facing front on the front and vice versa on the back side.

(Miss Ono is an exponent of nudity as art having made a film whose content was nothing but buttocks.)

The whole development prob-

ably hangs on the fate of the Beatles' Apple cover, but the shape of things potentially to come can already be voyeured on albums currently in release. Neil Diamond in artful chiaroscuro and in dime-sized reproductions is poised au naturel on the jacket of his "Velvet Gloves and Spit." (Uni). The Turtles sporting giant fig leaves are altogether in one of the comedy shots in the gatefold layout on the "The Battle of the Bands" (White Whale).

(The Turtles seem to be spoofing almost clairvoyantly on this spoof album the new idiosyncrasy, which probably got its start with Warner Bros.-Seven Arts's Fugs who have peeled to the buff for the birdie these

(Continued on page 35)

Tetra Nudie In Jan.; Capitol To Press LP

HOLLYWOOD—Consumer response to the "Two Virgins" LP from Tetragrammaton—featuring cover photos of John Lennon and Yoko Ono in the nude—will have to wait until Jan. 1, reports Roy Silver, chairman of the board of Tetra.

Initially set for December 3rd release, Silver pushed the date back so as not to detract from Tetragrammaton's Christmas product. A spokesman for Tetragrammaton told Cash Box that both the art and tapes had not yet arrived from England but was expected momentarily. Initial pressing is expected to run close to half a million.

Capitol's custom pressing division will probably be pressing the record with Tetragrammaton handling the LP jacket which will be wrapped in cellophane with brown paper covering most of the art.

A spokesman for Capitol told Cash Box late last week that, as yet, "no rights had been transferred on paper to anybody yet," though there was a verbal agreement to allow Tetragrammaton to distribute the LP in the U.S.

Five Chains Ban Apple Album; Korvette 'Bites'

By BRUCE WEBER

LOS ANGELES—The controversial John Lennon-Yoko Ono album, "Two Virgins," will be banned by at least five major record retailers here. The E. J. Korvette stores, however, are planning to sell the album with the nude cover, but not in its "raw state."

Sears, White Front, May Co., Broadway and Wallichs Music City will boycott the album. The general opinion from record buyers at the five chains is that the nude cover is obscene.

Ethan Caston, Wallichs Music City vice-president, said the chain might test-market the al-

bum in a special jacket to get customer reaction, but will not sell the album in any form.

Tetragrammaton, which will distribute the album in the U. S. and Canada, plans to enclose the cover in an opaque envelope with cutouts for Lennon's and Miss Ono's heads. Even in that state the album will be unacceptable, according to Herman Platt, record buyer of the 16-store May Co.; Paul Nebel, buyer for Sears, Roebuck; Jack Hampton, assistant record buyer at the 26-store White Front, and Caston.

The six-store Wallichs chain

IMPORTANCE OF BEING LENNON

NEW YORK—David Rothfeld, divisional merchandise manager of the Korvette chain, explained his position on the "Two Virgins" album this way: "An artist of John Lennon's stature is too important not to be heard. Appropriate arrangements are being made to handle the LP and still not offend our family trade."

• Continued from page 1

has banned only one album prior to the Lennon product—a Murray Roman album released this year also by Tetragrammaton.

A statement was issued by Sears: "We don't carry any product that might harm our reputation as a family store," said Paul Nebel.

Sears has refused to carry the Sergio Mendes and Brasil '66 album, "Fool on the Hill," which Nebel considers in poor taste graphically.

Caston and Platt, however, feel there is a major difference between the Lennon album

cover and the inside art work on the Sergio Mendes LP. "One is tastefully prepared," said Platt, "while the other is dirty."

"While it is not our job to act as a public censor," stated Platt, "I feel sensationalism and liberalism can go too far."

To date, Sears has banned the album from its more than 800 stores, with little likelihood it will change its policy even with the cover being marketed in an opaque envelope.

Several other major chains, including Montgomery Ward, Fedco and several discount outlets, said they would wait until they had an opportunity to view the album cover.

The attention drawn to the album by its cover art led commentators to decide in advance whether its release was appropriate, or (alternatively) whether its suppression would hold down the avant-garde art scene.

Tetragrammaton found it necessary to raise the prices of its albums at the time, citing increased costs, and as the year ended, they contracted with Bestway Products (NJ) and Monarch Record Mfg. Co. (CA) to press copies of the album. These were companies that Tetragrammaton normally worked with, but this was a special package that required explicit approval from the pressing plants.

Tetragrammaton placed the album in its soundtrack (5000) series, numbering it after *Girl on a Motorcycle* (T-5000). Their regular printers opting out, the label found another printer willing to oblige.

Tetra Raising LP Price—Cites Prod. & Mfr. Costs

LOS ANGELES — Tetragrammaton is raising its album list prices to \$5.79, effective Wednesday (1).

Mounting costs in production and manufacturing are responsible for the boosts, said Ed Barsky, executive vice-president. Not included in the price increases are singles.

The price hike, \$4.79 to \$5.79 and \$11.50 for a double LP, covers the label's 35 albums. The distributor prices will be discounted from the new figures.

The increase also will help offset higher marketing and promotional expenses, stated Barsky. Tetra's promotion-marketing budget is higher, he said, because 90 per cent of the label's artists have never recorded prior to joining Tetragrammaton.

Tetra announced the price policy prior to the release in January and February of three major albums.

The controversial John Lennon-Yoko Ono album, "Two

Virgins," will retail at \$5.79, as will Bill Cosby's initial album for his company, to be released Feb. 1.

The company's first double LP, "The Farwell Concert of the Kingston Trio," recorded live last year at the hungry i, will list at \$11.50. The Kingston package is scheduled for February release.

Chicago Dealer Arrested For Showing Lennon, Ono

By RON SCHLACHTER

CHICAGO — George Sells, owner of Head Imports on the northside, and his partner, the Rev. Jonathan Tuttle, are the defendants in the first obscenity case here involving the John Lennon and Yoko Ono album, "Two Virgins."

The men were arrested Dec. 3 and charged with displaying obscene material after a woman

reported to police that a record jacket, showing Lennon and Miss Ono in the altogether, was on display in the store window. In reality, it was just a photograph of the album cover and was part of a record display featuring the Beatles, Rolling Stones and others.

Sells and Tuttle were released on \$25 bail each and were scheduled to have their day in court Dec. 13. Under city law, the pair faced a maximum \$200 fine.

"Fortunately, there is no jail sentence involved," said Sells. "The point is that the police have been out to do us in since we opened last June 1."

"This whole obscenity thing is really absurd. I didn't think we'd get busted for putting that picture in the window. What are they going to do when the album is out. What is obscene and what isn't? What about the innocent small town dealer in Iowa who tries to sell the album?"

Albums at Head Imports are priced at \$3.25 each and sales total 50 to 60 albums per week. The shop carries all rock and some Indian music and blues. As for the future of the Lennon album, Sells said:

"After talking to a lawyer, I'll do one of two things I'll either 'obscenitize' it or put it back in the window the way it is. By obscenitize, I mean I'll cover it up or simply put a card in the window saying we have the album in stock."



THE THREESOME responsible for running Head Imports on Chicago's Northside consists of the Rev. Jonathan Tuttle (left), Clarence, and owner George Sells (right). While police arrested Tuttle and Sells for displaying a photograph of the John Lennon and Yoko Ono album cover, Clarence was left untouched.

With the change that moves the record business, the latest 1968 event, and perhaps the most eyebrow-raising, was the materialization of nudity as a way to express new-found freedoms and sell records. Predictably it was the Beatles and specifically John Lennon who posed with his girl friend Yoko Ono for the first nude album cover.

The Acid Test

The record industry is still waiting for the acid test—public acceptance—when the album is released after the first of the year. The decision of Lennon, however, to allow Tetragrammaton to distribute the disk, "The Two Virgins," in a brown cover indicates what the trade compromise with the "shock the bourgeois" philosophy will be: shock them in censored ways.

GENESIS CHAPTER 2

21 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;

22 And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

23 And Adam said, This *is* now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

"Two Virgins." Yoko Ono / John Lennon

Apple Records ● in association with Tetragrammaton Records © T-5001

Cash Box—January 18, 1969

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Although John and Yoko had hoped to see the album released in America in November, it did not come out until the third week in January. By the end of the month, Tetragrammaton's president was advertising the album in order to promote its acceptance.

Meanwhile, although the album had orders for over 150,000 copies, the label's east-coast plant was having problems with the police. New Jersey officers confiscated over 55,000 copies of the album from Bestway — reportedly having them destroyed as "obscene material." This confiscation explains why Monarch copies are much easier to locate in the collector market than Bestway copies are.

TWO VIRGINS; (no.1, 3-6), m John Lennon & Yoko Ono, 7 p. © Northern Songs, Ltd.; 5Mar69; EU101513.

TWO VIRGINS; pts.1-6, side 2, m John Lennon & Yoko Ono. 6 v. © Bag Music, Inc.; 23Apr69; EU112587-111592.

The label's founders had hired Arthur Mogull to operate Tetragrammaton in the role of company president. Reportedly, Mogull was the one who agreed for his label to press John's and Yoko's first album. Reportedly, everyone involved persuaded Mogull to license the album, and he ordered that they press 600,000 copies. Whether most of the Monarch copies eventually made their way to shops, we do not know. The album did chart for a few weeks, without any airplay or visual promotion.

N.Y., Calif. Cos. Press 'Virgins'

LOS ANGELES — Monarch Records here and the Best Way Products in New York will press the John Lennon-Yoko Ono album, "Two Virgins," for Tetragrammaton Records.

Capitol Records, which waived distribution rights to the album in the U. S. and Canada, also waived pressing privileges.

This latest move gives Tetra complete control of the package. Heretofore, all Beatle product in the U. S. and Canada had been pressed, sold and marketed by Capitol.

'2 Virgins' Exiled; Tetra Opens Over-the-Counter Campaign

LOS ANGELES — Record dealer resistance has forced John Lennon's nude album, "Two Virgins," underground.

Tetragrammaton is out to offset the under-the-counter selling tactics with a consumer advertising program to get the album over-the-counter.

The idea behind the newspaper-magazine-radio advertising drive, said Art Mogull, Tetragrammaton president, is to force consumer acceptance of the album.

Dealers consider the album to be "too controversial to be merchandised through regular channels" and are selling the product as pornography, he said.

More than 150,000 copies of the LP have been sold, primarily under-the-counter and without regular in-store promotion.

In many cases, record stores are handling the product but

with packaging revisions, including using brown wrapping and bands covering the nude forms of Lennon and Yoko Ono.

One wholesaler in Minneapolis, Lieberman Enterprises, has the album in stock but feels the LP is "possible pornography." The album is available but only on special orders.

Mogull said the consumer advertising program will be aimed at the non-contemporary markets, kicking off in Minneapolis. Law enforcement agencies have not made an issue of the nude cover except in isolated areas, according to Mogull.

In two instances, police in Essex County and Union County New Jersey, confiscated 55,000 albums, including 25,000 from Tetra's distributor, Bestway Records Manufacturing Co., Mountainside, N. J. Police in Essex County seized pre-released album jackets at Newark Airport.

Two Virgins (Canada)

First appearance in trade magazines: January 22, 1969

Label a69

Apple/Tetragrammaton

T-5001

Apple label with no manufacturing print in the rim.

“Distributed by Tetragrammaton Records” appears in black.
along with a Canadian manufacturing statement.



Modern Graphics likely printed the cover, and RCA (fearlessly?) pressed the record.

Tetragrammaton also picked up the distribution of the album in Canada. They sold fewer copies there, making these discs prizes in any collection of Canadian Lennon/Beatles records.

Notice that the sticker sealing the brown wrapper is orange/red, instead of the white one that appears on US albums.

Two Virgins (Netherlands)

Label 68

Apple (distributed by Negram)

NK-7004-S

Apple label with original cursive print across the top and bottom.

One song on each side is credited to another company. These labels list the tracks separately.

Once again, EMI refused to print the cover (or distribute the album).



Less space between negram logo and song titles below it

Label L68(i)

NK-7004-S left-aligned with negram logo



More space between negram logo and song titles below it

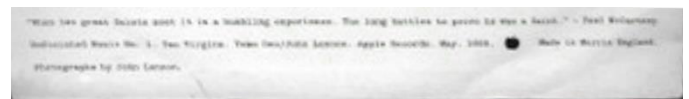
Label L68(ii)

NK-7004-S left-aligned with negram logo



The back cover features all of the text on the British second issue, including the Lennon credit, but without the cover credits to Technink.

The LP came out in the Netherlands during the third week in January, 1969 – just as it did in the United States. A review appeared in the Amsterdam daily newspaper, *Het Parool*, on January 22, 1969.



The *Gazette*, the paper that publishes statutory notices in the UK, announced on October 2, 1970, that Technink Ltd. would be dissolved three months later unless there was intervention. The issue dated January 14, 1971, indicated that since no actions had been taken, Technink Limited was officially dissolved as of that date.

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to section 353 (5) of the Companies Act, 1948, that the names of the Companies mentioned in the list hereunder have been struck off the Register. Such Companies are accordingly dissolved as from the date of the publication of this notice.

LIST 1824

Technink Limited

Two Virgins (US Tapes from 1969)

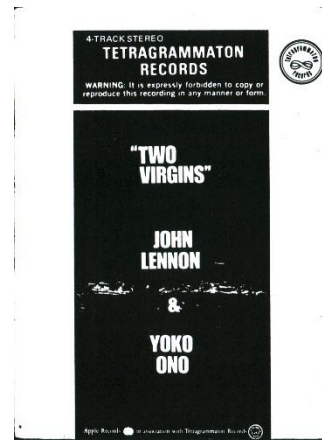
Four-Track Cartridges

Apple/Tetragrammaton

With outer title box

Made by Ampex

TNX-45001

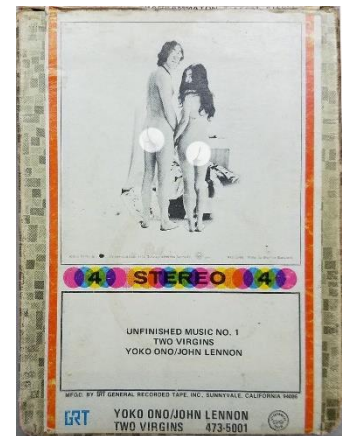


Apple/Tetragrammaton

With outer title box

Made by GRT

473-5001

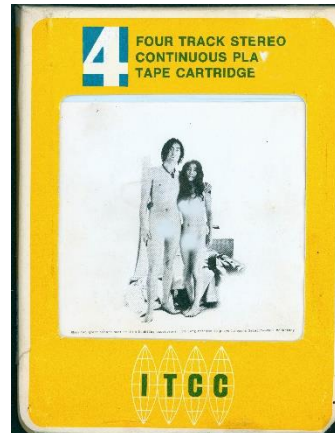


Apple/Tetragrammaton

With outer title box

Made by ITCC

F5-5001



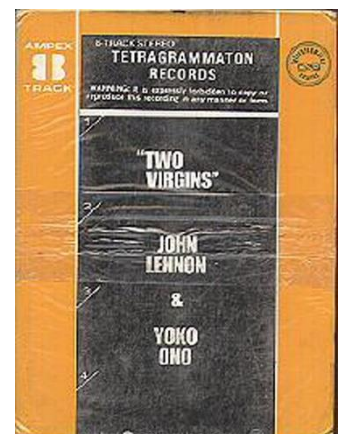
Eight-Track Cartridges

Apple/Tetragrammaton

With outer title box

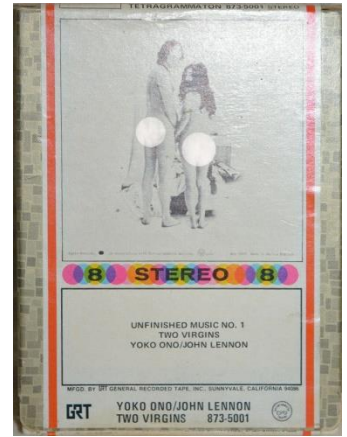
Made by Ampex

TNM-85001



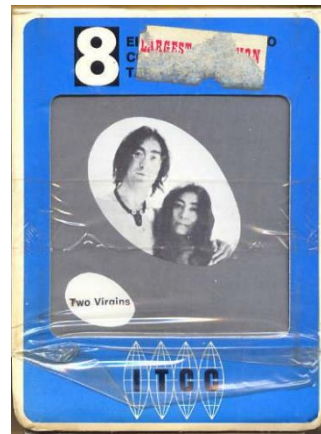
Apple/Tetragrammaton
With outer title box
Made by GRT

873-5001



Apple/Tetragrammaton
With outer cover box
Made by ITCC

L5-5001



Apple/Tetragrammaton
With outer box
Made by NAL

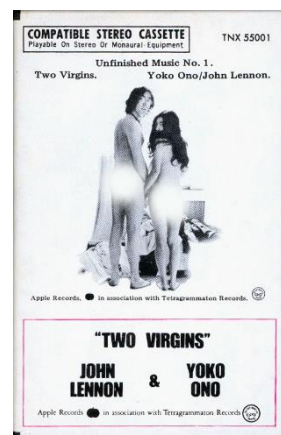
TG-85001



Cassettes

Apple/Tetragrammaton
Made by Ampex

TNX-55001



Although Tetragrammaton planned to release *Two Virgins* in the PlayTape format, no copies are extant in that format.