

JACK WHITE'S BALLOON SINGLES, MOST GO ASTRAY, THOSE THAT FALL, LAND ON EBAY



Jack White and his label, Third Man Records, have adopted a unique and innovative way to promote “Freedom at 21”, a single from their album, Blunderbuss. They attached flexi-disc records that contained their new track, to 1,000 helium balloons and released them into the sky from their headquarters in Nashville. Custom postcards, with instructions for finders, to submit their personal details along with their photographs and information regarding where and when it was found, were also attached along with the balloons. Finders who return the form, with all details filled will be featured on a special website. A video released on this occasion shows a man saying, that for long they, at Third man records have been excited about using non-traditional methods of promoting the album and that it was “an experiment exploring non-traditional forms of record distribution and a way to get records in the hands of people who don't visit record shops.” The video goes on to show a 1000 blue balloons released at the end of a countdown. The anchor, says, that the song is currently available only via the balloon and hopes “you can find one.” Unfortunately, stunts like these don't enjoy a very high recovery rate. Natural factors, like inclement weather, trees and other similar factors ensure that most are lost forever. It is presumed that of the 1000 balloons released, at the most, a hundred will be found. Third Man has confirmed that four have already been found. A family, in Coker, Ala., seems to have found a whole bunch of the balloons stuck in a tree on their property. Third Man's website have shown two other reported discoveries, in in Flintville, Tenn., about 100 miles southeast of Nashville, and another in Huntsville, Ala., about 110 miles to the south. The question this begets is what's the point if the recovery rate is so insignificant. Those in the know say it serves a dual purpose. One, those that are found have rarity value and command high prices. At an eBay auction, on April 17, a recovered “Freedom at 21” flexi-disc, fetched an unprecedented price of \$4238.88. Moreover, they will be treasured possessions of fans who find them. But the more important thing is the market awareness it creates. Incidentally the balloons are environmental friendly and made of bio-degradable latex. Even the twine that is used to tie them up is all-natural.

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