

BBC

White Lies astronaut wins record cover art prize

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Michael Kagan, the artist behind the Big TV cover, has also collaborated with Pharrell Williams on his clothing line

© Courtesy of the artist.

A record cover showcasing a painting of an astronaut has won an annual prize for the year's best album artwork.

The oil painting - Michael Kagan's 2010 work *Pilot 2* - features on the cover of White Lies' *Big TV* album, recipient of the 2013 Best Art Vinyl award.

Paul Jackson's design for Dan le Sac vs Scroobius Pip's hip-hop record *Repent Replenish Repeat* came second, while Bonobo's *The North Borders* came third.

Daft Punk, Sir Paul McCartney and Sir Elton John were among the nominees.

Now in its ninth year, the prize is organised by Art Vinyl - a company that promotes record covers as art - and decided by public vote.

The public has favoured space-based designs in the past, having voted a cover depicting a cat in an astronaut suit - used on the Klaxons' second album *Surfing the Void* - as 2010's recipient.

"The band was very sincere and I could tell immediately how connected they felt to the painting and how it was important for them to use it," said Kagan.

The New York-based artist said it had been "a very exciting experience" to have *Pilot 2* and

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three of his other works included as part of the Big TV sleeve and CD booklet. Andrew Heeps, founder of the Best Art Vinyl award, said it was “interesting to see that the public prefers such a traditional artistic technique as oil on canvas”.

The runner-ups depict a vomiting lion and panda - intended to represent hip-hop artists Scroobius Pip and Dan Le Sac respectively - and an abstract design by Australian artist Leif Podhajsky.

The nominations and winners are on display in the London, Birmingham and Oxford branches of the Malmaison hotel chain until 31 January.