

The cover for Pink Floyd's 1977 concept album 'Animals' shows a giant inflatable pig floating between the chimneys of Battersea Power Station, against a dramatic sky with banks of cloud and black smoke drifting from the chimneys.

The power station dominates the photograph, extending to the edges of the frame at both sides. Four fluted white chimney stacks rise from the corners of a massive red brick building, rather like an upturned table, but 103 metres (338 foot) in height. The power station is seen from a high viewpoint, looking across railway tracks and sheds, with a few more substantial brick buildings edged with white stone to the right. The station is at an angle to us, with the south-facing façade, one of the shorter sides of the rectangular building, turned to the left, catching the evening light. This façade is three vertical sections, with two imposing towers each supporting a chimney, and the wall of the main building set back between the towers. The other two chimneys recede off to the right. The brickwork on the towers is stepped at the top, so that the square profile narrows gracefully to join the round chimneys. Vertical lines in the brickwork running the full height of the towers are continued by the vertical ridges of the fluted concrete chimneys. The exterior of the power station was designed by Giles Gilbert Scott, who was later to design Bankside Power Station, which now houses Tate Modern. Battersea Power Station was built in several stages between 1929 and 1941 and was described at the time as a 'temple of power'.

In the photograph, the white concrete of the chimneys has taken on a golden colour in the sunset. Floating in the air between the two chimneys on the left, poised in the very centre of the square of sky they frame, there is a large pink pig, facing to the left, its snout, legs and the underside of its belly all lit up by the same warm evening light as the chimneys.

The photograph references the song on the album 'Pigs on the Wing', and was shot by design group Hipgnosis in December 1976, using a 40-foot inflatable pig, and combining images from several days of shooting.

The 'Animals' album was produced with a gatefold cover that opens up like a book. The cover photograph wraps around the back of the album, and the back half is much darker than the front. In the foreground, multiple train tracks converge, curving round to the right to disappear behind the power station, with wooden telegraph poles echoing the vertical lines of the chimneys. Beyond the train tracks, streets of low terraced houses are already in shadow, with only a few distant buildings and the suspension loops of Chelsea Bridge touched by the setting sun. In this half of the photograph, the dramatic sky takes up more than half the space. It recalls Renaissance painting, with banks of clouds massing against a deep blue sky, lit up underneath in red and gold, turning to ominous black at the top. It hints at the album's musical content, considered to be 'a scathing critique of the social-political conditions of late 1970s Britain'.