

The Final New Statesman Cover Design

Here you can see the final cover design that was chosen – note the slightly different positioning of the syringes. This is what the *New Statesman* team said about their choice and the alteration of the image.

‘Vaccine nation’, 20 November

As with ‘We can’t breathe’, the story became very timely as we were working on it: Anjana Ahuja, a science writer, was working on a follow-up piece to an earlier cover story (‘Race for the vaccine’, 17 July) when the news broke that Pfizer and Biontech had produced an inoculation with 90% efficacy. I persuaded Anjana she needed to file her piece a week earlier than we had agreed, and Erica got to work commissioning the cover. To get a range of concepts, she commissioned two artists, Brian Stauffer and Adam Maida. It was Brian’s syringes spiked into a target that immediately captured our imagination – though as more news arrived of successful vaccine candidates, we asked him to move some of them closer to the bull’s eye – a subtle shift of emphasis but an important one. I remember struggling to get the balance right in the coverline: the mood during that week was very positive but the piece was nuanced and sounded a note of caution about the enormous challenges involved.

The image needed re-working to create an area for the coverline but this is the most ‘normal’ *New Statesman* cover in a fairly abnormal year, in terms of the presentation and placement of the image and text. Adam Maida’s bold syringe worked brilliantly as an inside illustration, so we got to have our cake and eat it.

