

VALLOIS

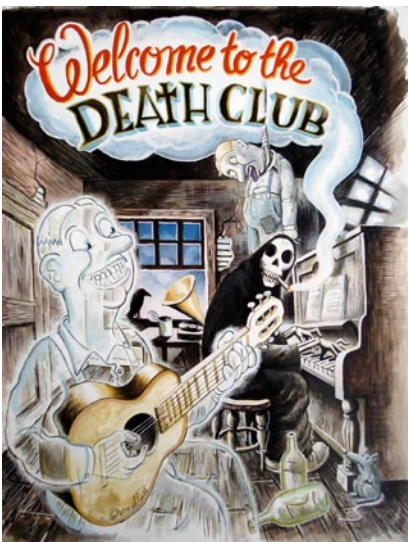
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WINSHLUSS «AMOUR»

EXHIBITION FROM 11 SEPTEMBER AU 10 OCTOBER 2009

OPENING THURSDAY 10TH SEPTEMBER



The term “graphic novel” makes him mad. He finds speech bubbles boring. He also says that the things “he loves most” are the ones that he “is best at trashing.” It’s certainly true that **Winshluss**, aka Vincent Paronnaud [sic], is a champ at the art of Aunt Sallying forth into just about any field, from comics to films to animation and music. Nobody comes away unscathed (and certainly not Mickey or Pinocchio), neither the codes and customs of the genre nor the readers or viewers of this work of mass destruction in which genetic mutations, chronic debility and economic meltdowns are deployed to maximum effect. We should note the almost prophetic nature of some of these albums whose characters have long done their business against a backdrop of financial crisis, as if he already knew what was coming. Working on the edge of the system, his intransigence and his radicalism – some justifiably prefer the word genius – often land him in the spotlight. Witness the critical reception of his work and the prizes it has won (the special Jury Prize at the 2007 Cannes Film Festival for *Persepolis*, as co-director alongside Marjane Satrapi) and the Fauve d’Or at the Festival International de Bande Dessinée d’Angoulême 2009 for *Pinocchio*, which has already become a cult album.

Many comic lovers and connoisseurs consider Winshluss to be the best comic artist of his generation. The publisher and critic Vincent Bernière, for example, speaks of him as an “uncompromising creator with his own universe, a brute force in the world of art.” A brute, perhaps, but one whose fist is a fistful of love, symbolising a healthy violence at all the things in life that he finds shocking or repulsive. His, in a word, is an artistic universe that does not tell us only about itself and its creator, but also about the world around it and our shared cultural heritage. Winshluss is always ready to bridge the gulf between popular culture and Art with a capital A. He is the author of numerous albums characterised by their dark and deliciously amoral humour, notably *Monsieur Ferraille* (the 100% metal hero is seen advising a rather hapless kid to drink rather than do sport, and his story serves as a pretext for sending up all the codes inherited from the history of comics and popular illustrations), *Pat Boon Happy End* (the tribulations of a feckless loser against a backdrop of economic crisis, porn movies and the Ku Klux Klan), *Super Negra* (the droll story of a mutant Mickey with a penchant for angling), *Welcome to the Death Club* (in which the Grim Reaper goes about rounding up all manner of losers), *Smart Monkey* (the pitiless struggle for life of the small and the weak) and *Wizz et Buzz* (the hilarious adventures of two self-satisfied cretins).

A leading figure on the underground and alternative scenes, Winshluss is also an artist who likes to collaborate and exchange with others, as can be seen from his work with the Requins Marteaux group, with whom he became editor-in-chief of the magazine *Ferraille*, and from his longstanding association with the artist and colourist Cizo. Two recent shows, one at Lieu Unique in Nantes, the other at the Atelier Magelis in Angoulême, have highlighted both the implacable coherence and the disconcerting diversity of his career. Visitors there could savour many original drawings, but also the famous *Raging Blues* cartoon (placing in parallel the actions of a shady property speculator and the pathetic life of a beggar during a crisis-ridden Christmas), and his latest film venture, *Villemolle 81* (a gory rural thriller combining cinema and animation), whose subtitle, “In the Tarn, nobody can hear you scream,” could easily be applied to all his work. Sidesplitting, hair-raising stuff.

David Rosenberg

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PROJECT ROOM

MARTIN KERSELS

FAT IGGY: DISCOGRAPHY

EXHIBITION FROM 11 SEPTEMBER TO 10 OCTOBER 2009

OPENING THURSDAY 10TH SEPTEMBER



«I have been interested in record cover design since I stole \$4 from my mother's purse in 1972 in order to buy Creedence Clearwater Revival's record "Born on the Bayou." This first purchase of music was somewhat of a pivotal moment in my personal history – thievery, first-time consumerism, rock and roll, violation of my mother's purse, etc. Lots of things to love and to later feel guilty about.

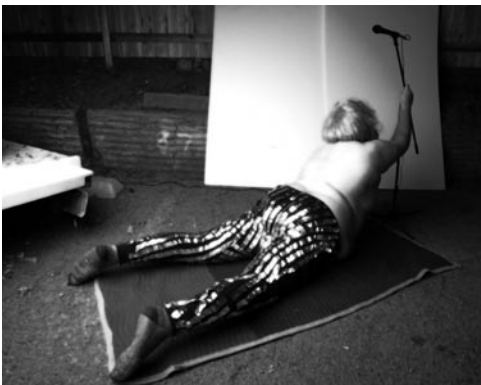
Record sleeves have at least 3 functions: In the most practical sense they are protection for the vinyl record within. In another way they are advertising for the music that they protected. But it is the 3rd function that interests me: the record cover as a creator of visual identity for the artist and for the songs on the record. Be it bold, sublime, colorful, or bland, the record cover was a format that was used to create a visual presence for items that we only accessed through our ears and artists we only imagined (most of the time) with our minds. This is the foundation for the "Discography" series.

Another area of interest for me is failure. As with any creative endeavor, a form is created from an idea. Not all attempts at creation are successful in communicating their ideas or achieving a reflection of the spirit of the time. It is remarkable when all the elements line up and a successful work is created. But all too often, as is inherent to the creative process, failure waits. And because of the popular nature of music and all that surrounds its sphere, it is keenly felt. But it is also forgiven. Due to the quick cycle of creation in music, one's failures are absolved, or at least forgotten, with the introduction of a success. In the "Discography" series I purposely created a large body of work in order to create a lineage of failure and success vying for a place in our minds and in cultural history.

In the "Discography" series I have used the technique of the mash-up (a mixture of collage, drawing, and photography) to create a discography for my alter ego, **Fat Iggy**. The record cover art of Fat Iggy is a tangible format to create visual presence to look original and current, even though as a character, Fat Iggy, may not be either. But in either way, the formal elements, the images, and the typography become shorthand to describe the culture from which the record covers arose.»

Martin Kersels

Born in 1960, Californian artist Martin Kersels begins with the performance collective SHRIMPS in 1984. Very soon he also develops a personal work using his own oversized body, craft and DIY to create a bitter-sweet humorous universe. Noticed at the 1997 Whitney Biennial, Martin Kersels is showing at the Gallery since 1999. He is also represented by ACME in L.A., Guido Costa in Torino and Jeffrey Deitch in NYC. He was recently exhibited in France by Centre Pompidou for *Dyonisiac* and by Villa Arson for *Ne pas Jouer avec des Choses Mortes*; in 2009, the Santa Monica Museum of Art offered him a survey show *Heavyweight Champion*.



PROGRAMMATION:

16 OCTOBER – 21 NOVEMBER 2009: ALAIN BUBLEX "MONT FUJI ET AUTRES PONTS"
PROJECT ROOM: SARA RAMO

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FIAC
22-25 OCTOBER