



## **press kit**

**at la maison rouge 28th May to 27th September 2009**

press preview 27th May 3 pm to 6 pm

preview 27th May 6 pm to 9 pm

# **VRAOUM !**

***Bande dessinée & Art contemporain***



Will Eisner, *The Spirit*, (détail) ca. 1940, private collection © Will Eisner Studios, Inc. All rights reserved

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## **VRAOUM !**

*Bande dessinée & Art contemporain*

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# présentation

**la maison rouge**, a private, non-profit foundation, opened in June 2004 in Paris. Its purpose is to promote contemporary creation through a programme of three solo or thematic temporary exhibitions a year, certain of which are staged by independent curators.

La maison rouge was created on the initiative of Antoine de Galbert, an art collector and active figure on the French art scene. While Antoine de Galbert's own collection is not shown, the entire project is fashioned by his personality and outlook as a collector. Beginning with *L'intime* [*Behind Closed Doors: the private life of collections*], la maison rouge stages exhibitions on the theme of private collections and the issues and questions surrounding them.

**Antoine de Galbert**, born in 1955 and a graduate in political science, Antoine de Galbert worked in corporate management before opening a contemporary art gallery in Grenoble for some ten years. Concurrently, he purchased the first works in a collection that was to take on growing importance in his life. In 2000 he chose to create a foundation as a means of both anchoring his commitment to contemporary creation and opening his collection to the public.

**le bâtiment** La maison rouge is installed in a renovated factory in the Bastille district of Paris, overlooking the Arsenal marina. The 2,500 square meters site, including 1,300 square meters of exhibition space, is centred around "la maison rouge" or red house.

By naming the venue after this house, la maison rouge makes clear its vocation as a welcoming, convivial space where visitors can see exhibitions, attend lectures, enjoy a drink or explore the bookstore.

The artist Jean-Michel Alberola (born in Paris in 1953) was commissioned for the interior design of the reception areas.

**la librairie** la maison rouge has chosen Bookstorming, a specialist in contemporary art publications, for its bookstore at 10 bis, boulevard de la Bastille. Its selection of titles is regularly updated to reflect the current exhibitions at la maison rouge. It also stocks art DVDs and videos, publications on the latest developments in the contemporary art world, and proposes an important catalogue of out-of-print books and books by artists.

**le restaurant** The restaurant's new chef, Pascal Owczarek, proposes creative cuisine that is a fusion of classic dishes and world food. Open Tuesday from noon to 3pm and Wednesday to Sunday at the foundation's usual times. Brunch on Sunday. The menu changes with each exhibition.

**les amis de la maison rouge** A non-profit organisation, les amis de la maison rouge is closely involved with and supports Antoine de Galbert's project. It contributes to reflection and debates on the theme of the private collection, organises activities to coincide with the exhibitions, and promotes la maison rouge among French and international audiences.  
Membership from €70

# activities at la maison rouge

## the vestibule

Always attentive and open to creations by young artists, Antoine de Galbert created this open-access space in 2006, showing new exhibitions every four to six weeks.

## the suite

la maison rouge develops other activities alongside its exhibitions, and in collaboration with Gérard Wacjman has opened a hotel room, the Suite, inside its walls. It welcomes guests from all fields of thought and contemporary creation to provoke unexpected encounters with the public.

Following on from *la suite, le son et l'écrit*, for which literary critic Aurélie Djian proposed listening sessions built around reading and the written word, Sophie Delpeux\* invites us to *les racontars de performance*.

One Thursday a month, within the intimate setting of La Suite, two guests will tell the same story, each colouring it with their own experiences and concerns.

Artists, choreographers, writers, historians and philosophers will take turns to create a live and living performance, restoring the power of the narrative to spark listeners' imagination.

\*Sophie Delpeux is an art historian and associate professor at the University of Paris Panthéon-Sorbonne. She has a particular interest in performance and its history. Sophie Delpeux has published articles on Valie Export, Otto Mühl, Dennis Oppenheim and Gina Pane, among others. She is currently writing an article on Chris Burden, and a monograph on Allan Kaprow.

## for children

### le mercredi, on goûte aux contes

One Wednesday a month, a story-teller takes children aged from 4 to 11 on a journey into the land of imagination.

Story + snack: €6.50 for children and accompanying adults.

Lasts around 90 minutes

Next storytimes :

10th June at 3 pm

16 September at 3 pm

Information and reservations: [stephaniemolinard@lamaisonrouge.org](mailto:stephaniemolinard@lamaisonrouge.org)

## **Guided tours**

### **For individuals**

Free guided tour in French of the exhibitions every Saturday and Sunday at 4 pm.

### **For groups**

guided tours in french : €75

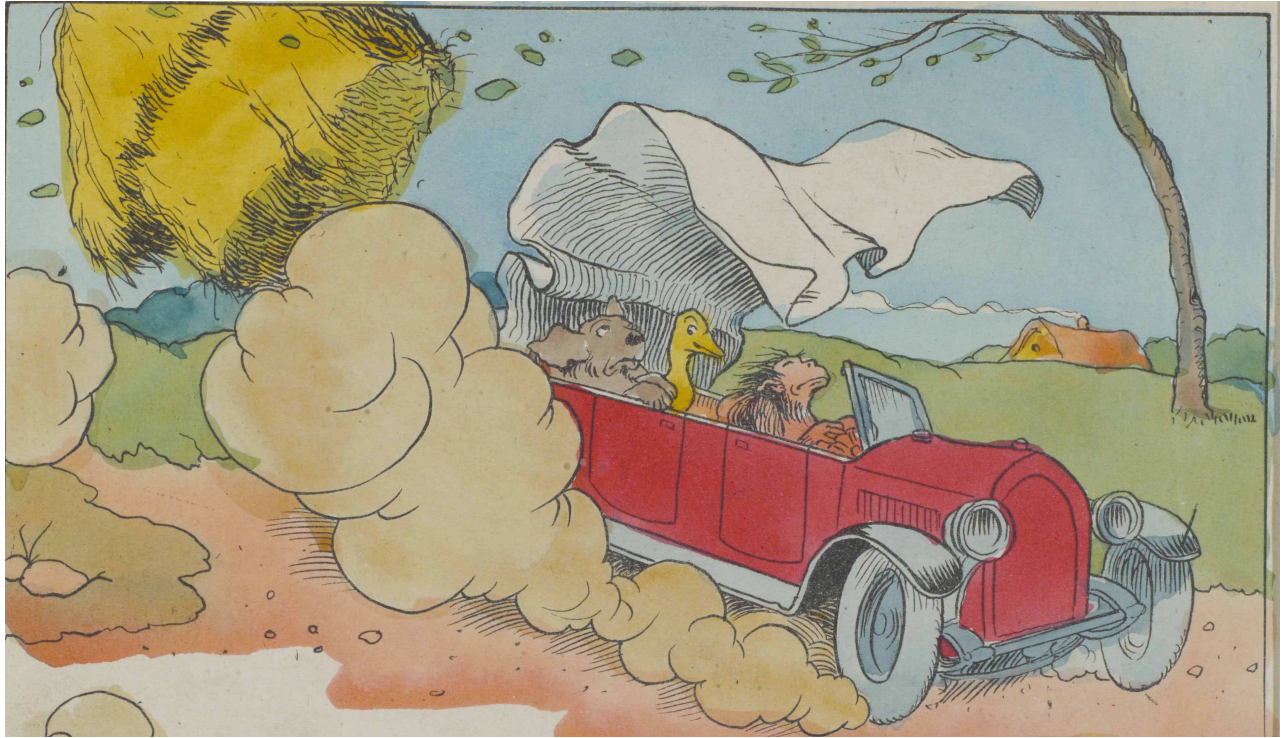
Visits are assured by students in history of art, specialized in contemporary art.

informations et reservations: Stéphanie Molinard, 01.40.01.92.79 ou [stephaniemolinard@lamaisonrouge.org](mailto:stephaniemolinard@lamaisonrouge.org)

**➤ The full programme and dates for activities are at [www.lamaisonrouge.org](http://www.lamaisonrouge.org)**

# VRAOUM !

**Bande dessinée & Art contemporain**



Benjamin Rabier, *Gédéon*, ca. 1923-1939, original drawing, private collection

**VRAOUM !** is an onomatopoeia that conjures up an image. It is a trajectory with a car at one end and a concept at the other. A noise that makes sense. We like composites such as comic strips, part grass-roots, part cerebral. Not that we have divided this exhibition at la maison rouge in two, with art on one side and comics on the other. We see art on all sides, and especially where it's least expected. **VRAOUM!** is a celebration of paintings, sculptures and drawings shown side-by-side. There is no hierarchy and certainly no divisions. Comic strips are presented as art and contemporary art as being fuelled by strips. Put simply, this is one big jubilation. We imagined encounters between these often similar worlds but in a flexible way. Sometimes comic strips fall into autonomous genres, such as westerns, sci-fi, eroticism, humour, microcosms, etc. Elsewhere, themes such as superheroes and manga have inspired a fabulous merging of visual art and strips.

We've known for decades that comic strips are art. When Warhol declared that "Walt Disney is the 20th century's greatest artist," he meant it. Yet this phenomenon had no obvious place in our culture. How many years did it take before the Centre Pompidou gave Tintin his dues? Meanwhile, enlightened amateurs, discreet and modest collectors, were at work in the shadows. They are the people we contacted, and they let us into their Aladdin's Cave: hundreds of original strips, from the very beginnings (Outcault, McCay, Saint Ogan, Herriman, McManus, etc.) to the present day (Moebius, Druillet, Trondheim, Crumb, Gottlib), not forgetting the classic European (Hergé, Jacobs, Franquin, Peyo, Jijé) and American artists (Alex Raymond, Will Eisner, Milton Caniff). We were given an equally generous and enthusiastic welcome by contemporary art galleries. Hence VRAOUM! will show painters and sculptors who are directly concerned by comic strips: Basquiat, Erro, Gilles Barbier, Wim Delvoye, Alain Séchas, Hervé Di Rosa and many more. Each of these artists' contributions reveals something about images but also, on a more reflexive level, about the semiotics of strips. For example, what is a speech bubble? A written spoken word! Or a hole in the drawing? What about panels and the spaces between them?

For many years, it was a common belief that the actual comic book, not the drawings, were the work and, because of this, original artwork by some of the greatest authors was overlooked, even underrated or mislaid. Franquin remembers how "drawings used to get trampled underfoot at the printer's!" Recent auction results show how much the situation has changed: the €800,000 paid for the gouached cover of *Tintin in America* by Hergé (1931) revealed a summit which others have since scaled. Granted, the value of a work isn't the be all and end all, but it is certainly an indication of how a particular era is feeling and what it collectively wants. Our choice wasn't guided by hammer prices and the ensuing media attention. We have consistently favoured the artistic qualities of the works. Hence masterpieces by Hergé, Jacobs, McCay, Franquin, Bilal and Moebius can be admired alongside exceptional original artwork by lesser-known authors, including some who have fallen into oblivion, such as Jacovitti, Calvo and Breccia. In this instance, VRAOUM! serves to reveal and uncover talent.

As for the history of comics, rest assured it hasn't been neglected. VRAOUM! shows Winsor McCay's first strips and a 1916 original by Richard F. Outcault, alongside works by contemporary authors such as Lewis Trondheim and Charles Burns. History features every step of the way, though not in a linear fashion. Instead, a new concept of historical data is put to the test, a sort of cartography in which history folds and unfolds to reveal the different phases of comic-strip art as countries, islands and continents. For example, the Franco-Belgian *ligne claire* school is mapped out with Alain de Saint Ogan pre-1930, reaching its classic era with Hergé and continuing with Tardi, post-1980 and beyond. Visitors, should they so wish, will have no trouble piecing together these fragments. Or they can visit VRAOUM! like an archipelago, island-hopping between the different parts in an ecstatic acceleration.

David Rosenberg et Pierre Sterckx, commissaires de l'exposition





Hergé, dessin original pour la couverture du journal *Le Petit Vingtième* pour *Le Sceptre d'Ottokar*, 1938, private collection © Hergé/Moulinsart 2009

## the curators

*David Rosenberg* is curator and author. He has published various monographs and works dedicated to modern and contemporary art. He teaches Art History as well as Art Theories at the Université de Vincennes – Saint-Denis, Paris 8. In 2006 he was curator of the exhibition “Busy Going Crazy, the Sylvio Perlstein collection.

*Pierre Sterckx* is art critic and author. He works for various art magazines, amongst them *Beaux-Art* magazine. Apart from his publications on modern and contemporary art, he has dedicated several books to cartoons and especially to Hergé, whom he knew. He is also one of the commentators on Guillaume Durand’s show *l’Objet du Scandale* on France 2.

## catalogue :

*A catalogue will be published with texts written by the curators.*



# VRAOUM !

**Bande dessinée & Art contemporain**

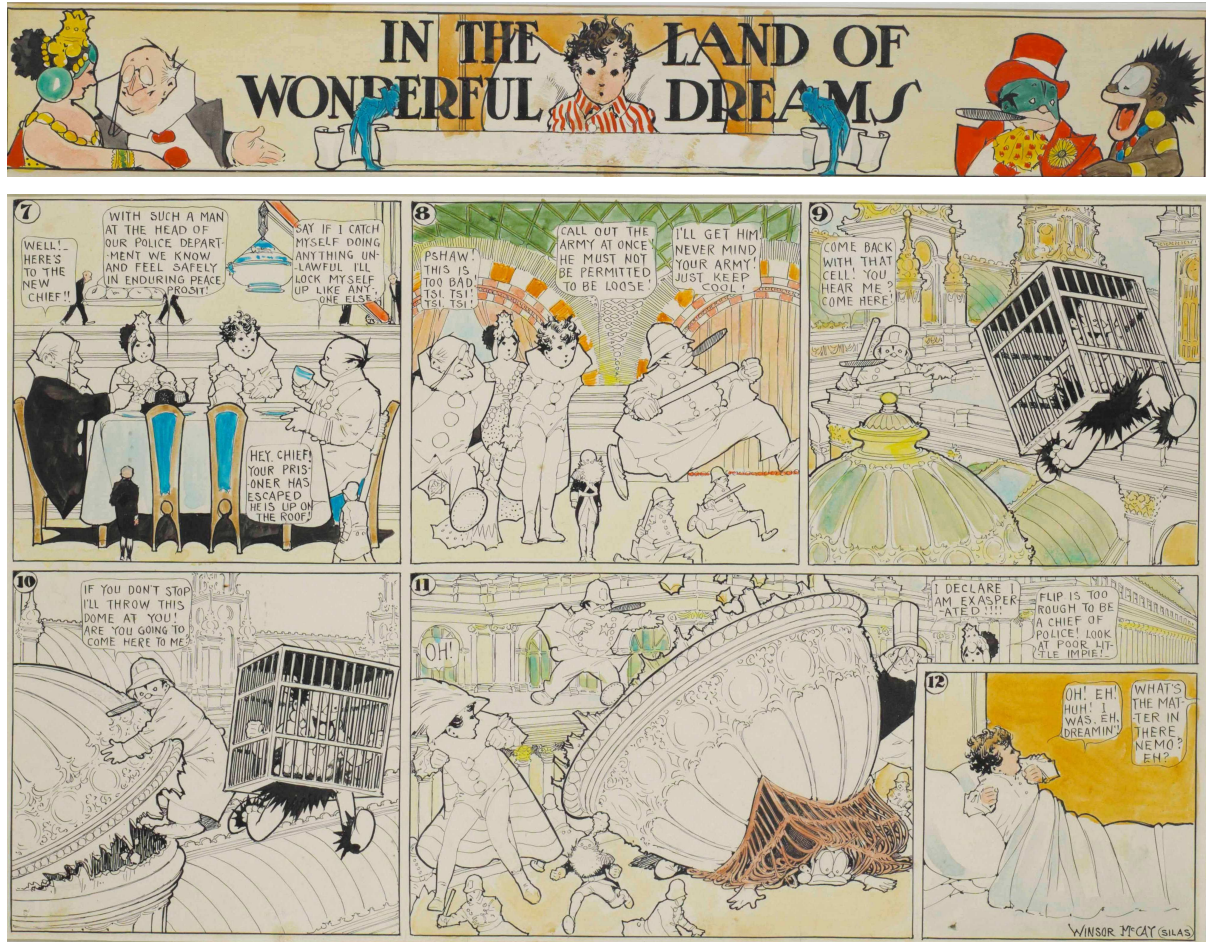


Hsia-Fei Chang, *Hi*, 2008, Polystyrène, fleurs synthétiques, Courtesy Galerie Laurent Godin, Paris

## ***presentation of the exhibition***

**VRAOUM !** is structured around multiple spaces, themes and concepts.

Visitors are welcomed in the foyer by the work of Guillaume Paris and the Taiwanese artist Hsia Fei Chang with, on one side, a column of video screens where cartoon characters fall endlessly into nothingness, and on the other a giant speech bubble made from plastic flowers. Further along, the walls are covered by a superhero's disconcerting shadow, a work by Vuk Vidor, and an impressive montage-collage of comic-strip fragments by Sylvain Paris. Fabien Verschaere's giant Mickey dominates the patio. Facing it, Rivane Neuenschwander invites visitors to draw their own comic inside giant coloured panels. A crumpled cover of the French comic-strip magazine *Fluide Glacial* lies on the floor, enlarged to monumental proportions by Wang Du with, alongside it, the originals for some of the magazine's most memorable covers. Scattered here and there are wall-hung works by Pierre La Police, a singular figure who can just as easily be found in contemporary art as in publishing.



Winsor McCay *In the Land of Wonderful Dreams* (detail), private collection

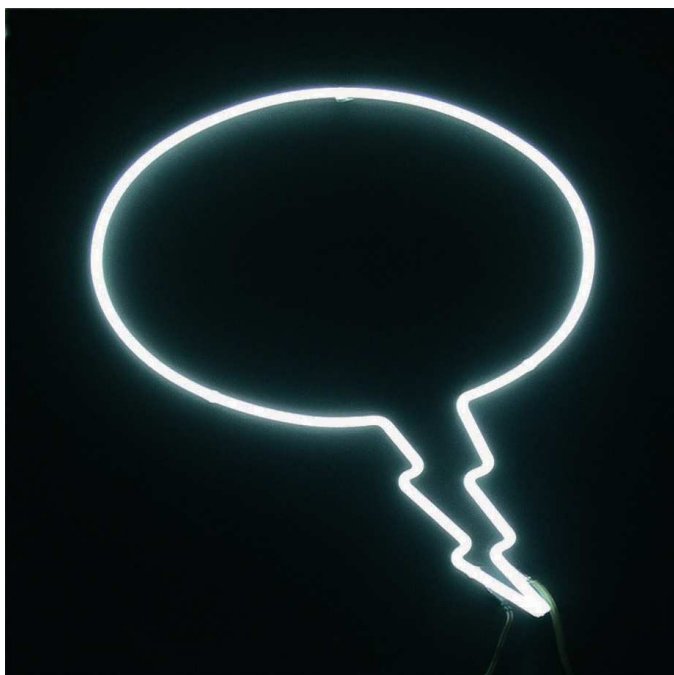
Works in the polygonal space are grouped by themes or affinities, branching off into multiple circuits.

*Pioneers* is an encounter with comics' very first heroes and their legendary creators: Outcault, McCay, Saint-Ogan, Herriman, Mc Manus, etc.

*Hergé and the ligne claire* presents original artwork, pencil sketches and covers by the master himself alongside fine examples of strips by E.P. Jacobs, Jacques Martin, Bob de Moor, Joost Swarte and Willy Vandersteen.

*Top Gear* explores the high-speed, engines-blazing worlds created by the likes of Jean Graton (Michel Vaillant) and Hubinon (Buck Danny).

*Little Rascals*, as its name suggests, is a gang of comic strips' most mischievous tearaways, with Pim Pam Poum (Harold Knerr), Zig et Puce (Saint-Ogan), Quick & Flupke (Hergé) and other loveable rogues such as Les Pieds Nickelés (Léon Forton).



Sammy Engrammer, *Sans parole*, 2005, Néon, plexiglas, acrylique,  
Courtesy Galerie Claudine Papillon

*Western transports us to the ruthless and arid Far West, brought to life in striking detail by Jijé (one of the fathers and most prolific representatives of Belgian comic strips), J. Giraud (Blueberry) or R. Morris (Lucky Luke).*

*SF sends us into the outer reaches of space and time, to meet characters created by Druillet, Forest, Gilon, B. Hogarth, Moebius or Alex Raymond.*

*Laugh a Minute is a gathering of comics' most riotously funny authors, such as Franquin, Gottlib and the ineffable Jacovitti.*

*The masters of American comics, including Milton Caniff (Terry and the Pirates), Al Capp (Li'l Abner), Will Eisner (The Spirit), Chester Gould (Dick Tracy), Walt Kelly (Pogo), E.C. Segar (Popeye) and Charles M. Schulz (Peanuts), are spread throughout the exhibition.*

*The Manga section presents rare original artwork by Tezuka (creator of Astro Boy), Toriyama (Dragon Ball), Kamimura (Lady Snowblood), Ishinomori (author of Cyborg 009 and many other famous series) and Taniguchi, a subtle portraitist of daily life (The Walking Man), together with younger mangakas such as Terada (Le Petit Monde) and Ooshima (Crime School). Spectacular artwork by Mariko Mori, Murakami and his disciples will be mingled in with their strips, as will holograms by the Chinese artist Yi Zhou and videos of Ann Lee (a fictional character, invented by a Japanese company) by Pierre Huyghe, Philippe Parreno, Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, Liam Gillick and Melik Ohanian.*

*In a separate section, Speech Bubbles explores the expressive and artistic potential of this unique device, with works by Gilles Barbier, Sammy Engrammer, McDermott & McGough, etc.*

*Contemporary strips and young authors also have their place, including C. Blain, Chaland, M. Satrapi and L. Trondheim.*





Gilles Barbier, *L'hospice*, 2002, private collection

Over on the other side of *la maison rouge*, superheroes have converged on the *salle haute*, its entrance decorated with a mural by Fabien Verschaere. In the hands of Gilles Barbier, Olivier Blanckart, Virginie Barré, Di Rosa, Erro and Gosha Ostretsov, crime-fighting crusaders such as Batman, Superman, Captain America and other superhuman personae become newly vulnerable, even laughable or pathetic. Meanwhile, wall-hung works remind us of the powers and invincibility of these heroes, created by Steve Ditko, Jack Kirby, Gil Kane and Frank Robbins.

Dropping down a level takes visitors into another space, *Walt Disney Productions*, with a Goofy skeleton, a crucified Donald, another with a wild-eyed expression, and a mirthful Mickey. Works by Combas, Wim Delvoye, Keith Haring, Bertrand Lavier, Hyungkoo Lee, David Mach, Philippe Mayaux, Joyce Pensato, Peter Saul and others are set around drawings by the master and his studios.

In the basement, and for adults only, are some of the most risqué and bawdy strips by comics' impenitent authors Crepax, Crumb, Frolo, Manara, Pichard, Reiser and Vuillemin.

## the artists (indicative list)

Chiho Aoshima (Japon 1974), Daniel Authouart (France 1943), Olivier Babin (France 1975), Gilles Barbier (Vanuatu 1965), Carl Barks (Etats-Unis 1901-2000), Virginie Barré (France 1970), Jean-Michel Basquiat (Etats-Unis 1960-1988), Enki Bilal (France 1951), Olivier Blanckart (Belgique 1959), François Boucq (France 1955), Martin Branner (Etats-Unis 1888-1970), Émile Bravo (France 1964), Enrique Breccia (Argentine 1946), Edmond François Calvo (France 1892-1957), Milton Caniff (Etats-Unis 1907-1988), Hsia-Fei Chang (Taiwan 1973), Roman Cieslewicz (Ukraine 1930-1996), Robert Combas (France 1957) Didier Comès (Belgique 1942), Guido Crepax (Italie 1933-2003), Robert Crumb (Etats-Unis 1943), Jim Davis (Etats-Unis 1945), Phil Davis (Etats-Unis 1906-1964), Wim Delvoye (Belgique 1965) Bob De Moor (Belgique 1925-1992), Hervé Di Rosa (France 1959), Philippe Berthet (France 1956), Sammy Engrammer (France 19686), Erró (Islande 1932), Will Eisner (Etats-Unis 1917), Fmur (pseudonyme de Richard Peyzare) (France 1946) , André Franquin (1924-1997), Fred (pseudonyme de Fred Othon Aristidès) (France 1931), Hal Foster (pseudonyme de Harold Rudolph Pinter) (Etats-Unis 1892-1981), Philippe Geluck (Belgique 1954), Jochen Gerner, (France, 1970), Paul Gillon (France 1926), Jean Giraud (pseudonyme : Moebius) (France 1938), Gotlib (pseudonyme de Marcel Gotlieb) (France 1934), Clarence Gray (1902-1957), Greg (pseudonyme de Marcel Regnier) (Belgique 1931-1999), Jean Graton (France 1923), Keith Haring (Etats-Unis 1958-1990), Gene Hazelton (Etats-Unis 1919-2005), Hergé (pseudonyme de Georges Rémi) (Belgique 1907-1983), George Herriman (Etats-Unis 1880-1944), Burne Hogarth (1875-1950), Victor Hubinon (Belgique 1924-1979), Pierre Huyghe (France 1962), Richard Jackson (Etats-Unis 1939), Edgar P. Jacobs (Belgique 1904-1987), Benito Jacovitti (1923-1997), Jijé, (pseudonyme de Joseph Gillain) (Belgique 1914-1980), Art Keller, Walt Kelly (Etats-Unis 1913-1973), Harold Knerr (Etats-Unis 1882-1949), Peter Land (Danemark 1966), Bertrand Lavier (France 1949), Pierre La Police, Hyungkoo Lee (Corée 1969), Liberatore (Italie, 1953), Loustal (pseudonyme de Jacques de Loustal) (France 1956), David Mach (Ecosse 1956), Raymond Macherot (Belgique 1924), Nikita Mandryka (Tunisie 1940),

Jacques Martin (France 1921), Winsor McCay (Etats-Unis 1869-1934), David McDermott & Pierre McCough (Etats-Unis 1952 et 1958), George McManus (Etats-Unis 1880-1944), Philippe Mayaux (France 1961), Otto Messmer (Etats-Unis 1892-1983), Jean-Claude Mézières (France 1938), Mariko Mori (Japon 1967), Bob De Moor (1925-1992), Charles Monroe Schulz (1922-2000), Robert Morris (pseudonyme de Maurice Bervère) (Belgique 1923-2001), Mr. (Japon 1969), Murakami, (Japon, 1972), Rivane Neuenschwander (Brésil 1967), Gosha Ostretsov (Russie 1967), Richard Felton Outcault (Etats-Unis 1863-1928), Guillaume Paris (Côte d'Ivoire, 1966), Sylvain Paris (France 1965), Philippe Parreno (Oran 1964), Bruno Peinado (France 1970), Joyce Pensato (Etats-Unis), Peyo (pseudonyme de Pierre Culliford) (Belgique 1928-1992), Raymond Pettibon (Etats-Unis 1957), Jean-Marc Reiser (France 1941-1983), Joseph Pinchon (France 1871-1953), Picasso (Espagne 1881-1973), Hugo Pratt (Italie 1927-1995), Pascal Rabaté (France 1961), Benjamin Rabier (1864-1939), Alex Raymond (pseudonyme de d'Alexandre Gillepsie Raymond) (1909-1956), Bud Sagendorf (1915-1994), Alain Saint-Ogan (1895-1974), Henrik Samuelsson (Suède 1960), Mathieu Sapin (France 1974), Riad Sattouf (France 1978), Marjane Satrapi (Iran 1969), Peter Saul (Etats-Unis 1934), François Schuiten (Belgique 1956), Charles Monroe Schulz (Etats-Unis 1922-2000), Alain Séchas (France 1955), Jacques Tardi (France 1946), Aya Takano (Japon 1976), Maurice Tilieux (Belgique 1922-1978), Adrian Tranquilli (Italie, 1966), Lewis Trondheim (France 1964), Fabien Verschaere (France 1975), Vuk Vidor (Serbie 1965), Willy Vandersteen (Belgique 1913-1990), Wang Du (Chine 1956), Andy Warhol (Etats-Unis 1928), Will (pseudonyme de Willy Maltaite) (Belgique 1927-2000), Chic Young (pseudonyme de Murat Bernard Young) (Etats-Unis 1901-1973), Yi Zhou (Chine 1978),

## practical informations

**la maison rouge is accessible** opening days and times

Wednesday to Sunday 11am to 7pm

late-night Thursday until 9pm

closed December 25th, January 1st and May 1st



### getting there

**metro stations :** Quai de la Rapée (ligne 5) ou Bastille (lignes 1,5,8)

**RER station :** Gare de Lyon

**bus :** 20/29/91

### accessibility

the exhibition areas are accessible

### opening days and times

Wednesday to Sunday 11am to 7pm

late-night Thursday until 9pm

closed December 25th, January 1st and May 1st

### admission

**full price:** €7

**concessions:** €5 (13-18 years, students, full-time artists, and over-60s).

**free:** under-13s, the unemployed, companions of disabled visitors, members of ICOM and les amis de la maison rouge.

### annual pass

**full price:** €19

**concessions:** €14

free and unlimited admission to the exhibitions.

free or reduced rate admission to related events.