

GUNGNIR to Publish *The A.R.C.*, a Darkly Funny Graphic Novel Where a Killer Virus Activates When You Lie



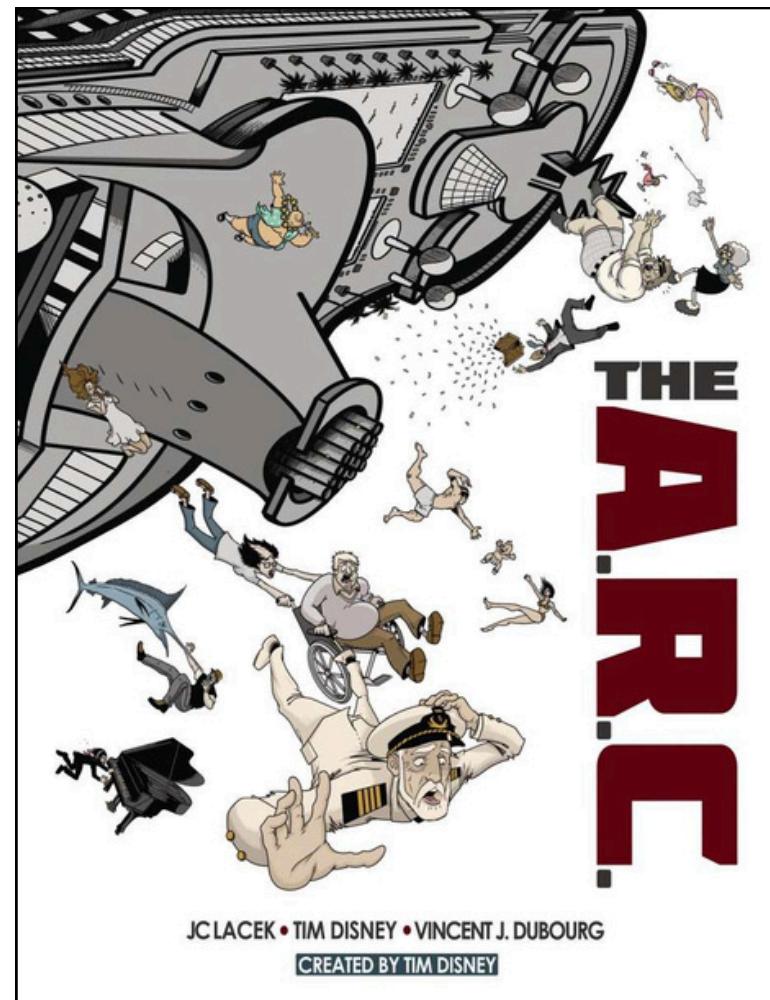
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GUNGNIR will publish *The A.R.C.*, a genre-bending adult graphic novel created by artist and entrepreneur Tim Disney, written by JC Lacek and Tim Disney, and illustrated by Vincent Jolas Dubourg, in July during Comic-Con. Part pandemic thriller, part action-disaster story, and part political satire, *The A.R.C.* imagines a lethal new virus that spreads worldwide after emerging at a climate conference attended by global elites, with one brutal twist: the disease activates when its host lies.

Screenwriter and director Adam McKay—known for *Don't Look Up*, *The Big Short*, *Vice*, *Anchorman*, and *Succession*—wrote that “Obscene wealth plus a media not even remotely tethered to reality set in a jungle during the collapse of the entire livable climate would have been a ridiculous premise for a graphic novel 20 years ago. Now it feels it’s a headline coming in a few months.”

The A.R.C. begins at the Concordia Center in the heart of the Amazon, where a who's who of global elites from business, finance, fashion, entertainment, technology, and online activism have gathered for the Global Reinvestment For Tomorrow (GRFT) conference, promising to solve climate change once and for all. Very little problem-solving occurs before the GRFTers are infected with Amazonian Recombinant Cytoneuropathy (A.R.C.), a highly contagious virus that is undetectable in its dormant phase and, once activated, 100% lethal. The attendees board their private jets and spread it worldwide. Chaos follows.



The premise can be summed up in four words that land like a punchline and a warning: You Lie, You Die.

If the contagion sounds absurd, that is the point. *The A.R.C.* is a dark comedy about our contemporary reality: a world where performative messaging routinely outruns responsibility, where institutions and individuals are rewarded for spinning, shading, exaggerating, and outright fabricating, and where social media and AI accelerate the spread and staying power of misinformation. “*The A.R.C.* has all the elements of good political satire,” wrote Lalo Alcaraz, Pulitzer Prize-winning cartoonist and creator of *La Cucaracha*, “incredible art, a plausible yet fantastical storyline, spot on clever spoofs and parodies—and jokes. Yes, it has jokes!” Many real-world figures make appearances, only to be undone by their own mendacity. In this graphic novel, dishonesty has deadly consequences.

Most of the narrative unfolds aboard The Veritas, a supposedly “sustainable” cruise ship. As the pandemic spreads and the stakes sharpen, an unlikely band of passengers and crew members must resist their own tendencies to lie long enough to understand what is happening and survive it. The ensemble is deliberately broad: a single mother and her teenage daughter; a born-again preacher and his wife; a grizzled Norwegian ship captain; an underemployed photographer and her retired stockbroker father; a pack of libidinous business bros; an unscrupulous payday-lending magnate and his Russian mail-order bride; and other shipmates who range from painfully recognizable to joyfully ridiculous. The ship becomes a pressure cooker for fear, confession, opportunism, denial, and the private bargains people strike with truth. The book does not romanticize human nature. It does, however, insist on the possibility of repair. Under the satire is a real question: what would it take, practically and emotionally, to rebuild trust when trust has collapsed?

“This work appears now when we need it, in the tradition of MAD, National Lampoon and Ramparts, it is humor for thinking people.”

— Percival Everett, Pulitzer Prize Winning Author

The A.R.C. is not interested in easy targets. “Just kidding....” writes Tim Disney. It gleefully demolishes the lies and pretensions of left, right, and center, with extra venom reserved for authoritarian takeover types and the tech and finance enablers who help normalize them. It skewers climate-pageant optics, influencer activism, corporate righteousness, ideological tribalism, and the comfort people take in narratives that flatter them. “If it's all the same to you, I'll respectfully plead the fifth,” JC Lacek says. The diagnosis is discomfiting because it is accurate: a pandemic of lying really is killing us, accelerated by the force multipliers of ubiquitous social media and AI. “Je suis français. J'ai quitté mon pays pour fuir la politique,” writes Vincent Dubourg. “Travailler sur *The A.R.C.* m'a fait réaliser que j'aurais plutôt dû changer de planète.”

Lurking beneath the story pages is one of the book's most distinctive elements: a dense web of interconnected footnotes, footnotes to footnotes, rabbit holes, fake ads, "sponsored content," and embedded storylines. The effect is a genre-bending reading experience for nerds and normies alike, full of digressions and discoveries, where the blurry blend of fact and fiction is part of the point. "Worst mistake was reading my brother's book. Second worst was agreeing in advance to write a blurb for it. Whatever...." wrote filmmaker and activist Abigail Disney.

GUNGNIR founder and publisher Matthew Medney calls Tim Disney "a rare breed—kind, empathetic, and wildly creative, qualities seemingly absent from *The A.R.C.* Until you realize the creativity is everywhere, and the empathy lies in its total lack of mercy. Everyone gets skewered equally." Yet for all of its acidity, the book runs with a just-perceptible strain of hope. "What Tim, co-writer/creative director JC Lacek, and illustrator Vincent Jolas Dubourg have made is a satire for now and for what's coming next—*Idiocracy*-level praise, and there's no higher compliment I can give this wildly deserving group. *The A.R.C.* aligns directly with GUNGNIR's mission. We exist to take creative risks and to lead—not follow—the cultural conversation around where publishing and storytelling are headed."

ABOUT THE CREATORS

Tim Disney is an artist and entrepreneur with extensive experience in the for-profit and not-for-profit sectors. He graduated from Harvard University with a degree in Fine Arts. He lives on a hill in Los Angeles with a cat, a tortoise, and a teenage human.

JC Lacek is a comic writer and playwright whose professional works include the critically acclaimed *Scout Comics' Jazz Legend*, as well as *The Polish Ambassador to Space*, *Abomination on Bolt Mountain*, *Andy Griffith Must Die*, *FRACK!!*, and *A West Virginia Story*. *The A.R.C.* marks JC's and Vincent Dubourg's third graphic novel collaboration.

Vincent Jolas Dubourg is a French artist who specializes in storyboarding, video games, and comics. His work includes *Napoleon Bonaparte* (two volumes), *Apocalypse*, and *Scions*. He is currently working on his own comics, *Sundae Times* and *Les Pieds Dans La Riviere*, available via his website, vincent-jolas-dubourg.com.

ABOUT THE PUBLISHER

GUNGNIR is a pioneering, genre-defying publishing house committed to bold storytelling that breaks boundaries and reimagines what modern publishing can be. Inspired by Odin's legendary spear, GUNGNIR aims to shatter industry norms and create a home for visionary creators whose work challenges the status quo. From comics and graphic novels to prose and cross-media storytelling, GUNGNIR builds worlds that cut deep, ignite fandoms, and resonate across audiences—forging franchises that live far beyond the page.

REVIEW COPIES AND MEDIA INTERVIEWS

To request a review copy of *The A.R.C.* or to schedule an interview with Tim Disney, JC Lacek, or Vincent Jolas Dubourg, contact publicist Nanda Dyssou of Coriolis Company at nanda@corioliscompany.com or 424-226-6148.