

M. RINARD

Matt Rinard's comic take on the secret life of dogs and cats is quickly gaining an international following. Famous for its surprising, off-kilter wit, Rinard's artwork is also prized for its bold composition and vibrant colors, but it is the artist's quirky humor and subject matter that have won him a devoted collector base around the world.

Rinard attended N.O.C.C.A. (New Orleans Center for Creative Arts) and earned a degree in graphic design from Florida State University. In 1988, he launched Spilled Inc., an art publishing enterprise that gained a national reputation for bold designs infused with clever humor and vibrant color.

"I like to take a whimsical and comical approach to art," he says. "You see galleries where everything is so sterile and there's classical music playing and everybody's whispering, and it intimidates people. I think a lot of people take it all too seriously, like once you've introduced humor into art, you've desecrated it or something."

The subjects of Rinard's most recognizable works revolve around the imagined antics and antagonisms of household pets when humans aren't watching. His own three dogs are a source of inspiration. "Lucy was a good puppy," Matt says of his miniature schnauzer, "but when she turned one, she became the Antichrist and started slowly destroying our house. That was kind of ironic, since I had done a piece called *Welcome Home*, in which a guy comes home to find that his dog and cat have destroyed the place. I guess you could say it was a case of life imitating art."

The animated animal imagery of his paintings has drawn interest from corporate customers looking for eye-catching logos. Corporate commissions include the Ferrari sports car program, Anheuser-Busch Mardi Gras promotions, Australian wine labels, designs for the Nokia Sugar Bowl, greeting card lines, and exclusive clothing designs for Saks Fifth Avenue, Neiman Marcus and Bloomingdale's.

As Rinard's work has grown in commercial popularity, he has also earned rave reviews for art exhibitions throughout Europe and North America. In Germany, Rinard was honored as the official artist of the Gronau Jazz Festival, and in the U.S. his work has been exhibited in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Las Vegas, and his native New Orleans. After being featured on a well-known Japanese website, Rinard's work quickly took root in the Asian art market. The joyful, quick-witted nature of his images attracts audiences worldwide, as USA TODAY notes: "Rinard's internationally known animal art" is the perfect platform for "his whimsical view of life and art."