TRANSLATED FROM FRENCH
FOR PANTAGRAME.COM

Interview by the Gerardmer team for the <u>Gerardmer Fantastic Arts Festival 2016</u>,
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Direct link: <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PiF41ULkYB4</u>

Raphael Lafarge
"Hey, I'm Raphael Lafarge and I'm presenting my project *Pantagrame*, a webcomic/video game. Actually, *Pantagrame* is the "pentagram", a symbol, a star which can be satanic. In the story, we have this character called Vitriol, the "bad guy", who has a mystical power but he's very clumsy: he's not the brightest bulb on the porch. So we thought it would be funny for the title to be "pentagram" with a bad orthograph.
(...)
As for the story, *Pantagrame*, the idea came quite early to me. But, I didn't know how to make it work. I became a novelist, I wrote novels and short stories such as *Teliam Vore,* a book published by Flammarion in the same collection as *Game of Thrones.* It's dark fantasy too and has a similar style, very sordid. It's a horror story, a cruel story, written in collaboration with Vincent Mondiot. And with Matthieu Leveder as the artist, it was a great experience...
But after writing *Teliam Vore*, I wanted to take a break from horror, from darkness, from all these things. I wanted to give similar in-depth planning to a light, colorful universe. And I wanted to change medium, too. What I really wanted was to try something other than just writing. Maybe someday I'll try theatre or something like that, but this time I thought "a comic with old video game graphics, like, retrogaming, pixel art." I thought it would be interesting to have interactive sequences: real video game parts with music, characters, fights, and the possibility to explore the universe extensively.
(...)
Scott McCloud once said that we have merely a limited perception of our face, of our own face, and by looking at other people, we see them precisely, while when we think about ourselves, we think about a loose, blurry version of ourselves. And that's why extremely realistic comic books tend to not work well, because they have something frozen, in the lines, in the shapes, in the facial expressions. Identification works better with stylized drawings, with simple drawings, with Mickey, with Calvin. So I knew I wanted a simple drawing style.
Video game and pixel art allowed me to have very simplified faces, almost abstract ones: just a pile of squares... I chose these abstract faces to make people feel close to the characters, and also because it allowed some harmony with the video game aspect."