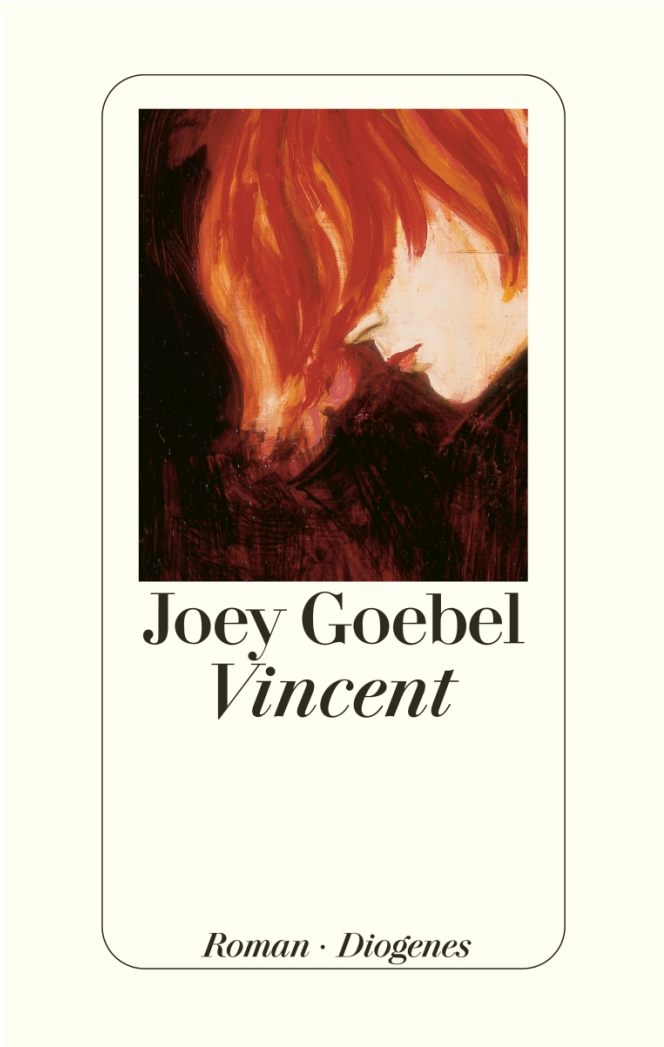
Diogenes

Book factsheet

Joey Goebel
Torture the Artist

Published by Diogenes as *Vincent*
Original title: *Torture the Artist*



An old, sick man close to death: Foster Lipowitz, founder of a media empire, has flooded the market with meaningless pop songs, bad movies and cynical TV series, and has earned a fortune. He regrets what he has inflicted on culture, and at the end of his life he wants to make amends.
A plan: In Midwestern corn fields he builds a school, where highly talented children are educated to become true artists. And because he knows that true art originates in suffering, he makes sure that his pupils get enough of that.
A dark guardian angel: every pupil is assigned a ›protector‹, there to do the dirty work. One of them is Harlan, a disillusioned ex-musician. He takes his job very seriously.
A victim: Vincent Spinetti, the most gifted student of all. Thanks to Harlan's efforts to litter Vincent's life with catastrophes, his genius comes to full fruition. The more pain and sorrow he experiences, the greater Vincent's art gets.
An unlikely friendship: hard to believe, but Vincent and Harlan become friends. But Vincent doesn't know what Harlan's job really is ...
An author with a unique voice who easily bridges the gap between levity and seriousness, between satire and poetry.

Contemporary Literature
448 pages
11.6 × 18.4 cm
September 2005

World rights are handled by Diogenes

Awards

2009 ›Festival-Preis‹ des Internationalen Festivals und Kolloquiums ›Days and Nights of Literature‹ (Rumänien)
2007 Nominierung für den Kritikerpreis in der Altersgruppe 16–18 Jahre der Jury der jungen Leser für *Freaks*
2007 ›Silberner Lufti, Lufti-Jugendbuchpreis‹ für *Freaks*
2006 Nominierung von *Torture the Artist (Vincent)* für die Longlist des ›Dylan Thomas Prize‹ in England
2006 ›Jugendbuchpreis‹ der Jury der jungen Kritiker in Wien für *Vincent*

Praise

Torture the Artist

»If you could bottle Joey Goebel's imagination and sell it by the glass, we'd all be in rehab. *Torture the Artist* – which addresses the premise that art, like grapes in a wine press, can be squeezed out of an artist by various torments – is as full of surprises as a brand new vintage, and Joey Goebel is the wunderkind of contemporary American fiction.« – Ed McClanahan / American novelist

»In ›Torture the Artist‹, Joey Goebel performs a mad exorcism on the society of the spectacle, unearthing the secrets of the American dream, doing it with the inventiveness of a twenty-first-century Mark Twain fuelled by love and sorrow.« – Peter Plate / American author

»This novel, a pointed commentary on the media machine that continuously grinds away at our culture, is by turns hilarious, thought-provoking, chilling, and sad. Goebel is a quirky, fresh, and relevant voice for our time.« – Library Journal

»As long as new writers like Joey Goebel appear on the scene, we need not be worried about our future.« – Elmar Krekeler / Die Welt, Berlin

»As daringly constructed as it is imaginatively recounted. A work seemingly inspired by the likes of John Irving and T.C. Boyle.« – Peter M. Hetzel / Schweizer Illustrierte, Zurich

»›Torture the Artist‹ is an acid-tongued denunciation of the cultural industry, in best pop-tradition, pretty vanguard.« – L'Express, Paris

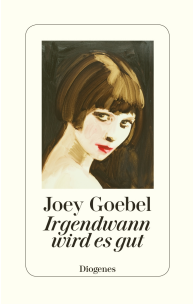


Photo: Nate Fish / © Diogenes Verlag

Joey Goebel, born in 1980 in Henderson, Kentucky, is a writer, scriptwriter, and musician – an internationally celebrated multi-talent. His novels *Torture the Artist, The Anomalies* and *Commonwealth* have been published in 15 languages. Joey Goebel has a son and lives in Henderson, where he teaches English literature.



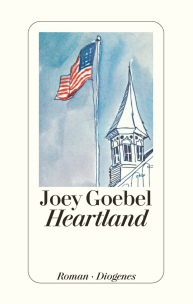
Sunset Flip
384 pages
2026



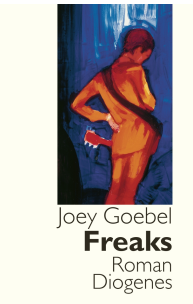
I Know It's Going to Happen for You Someday
320 pages
2019



I Against Osbourne
432 pages
2013



Commonwealth
720 pages
2009



The Anomalies
208 pages
2006
Award winner

Praise (cont'd)

»Blimey! He really has class, this newcomer in the family of rocking authors, all crazy, all American, authors like Jim Nisbet, Jack O'Connell or T.C. Boyle.« – Cédric Fabre, Rolling Stone, Paris

»If Franz Kafka had lived into the 21st century and were as funny as Jon Stewart, he might have written a novel something like ›Torture the Artist‹.« – Courier-Journal, Louisville

»Wickedly ingenious [. . .] Goebel's ebulliently funny writing sparkles off the page.« – Caroline Leavitt / Boston Globe

»... one of the most interesting and engaging books I've read in a while, a smart, witty, deeply moving parable ...« – Boston Globe

Joey Goebel

»Joey Goebel is being acclaimed as a literary discovery of the calibre of a John Irving or T. C. Boyle.« – Stefan Maelck / Norddeutscher Rundfunk, Hamburg

»So as Fitzgerald tagged his generation's excesses and delusions in ›The Great Gatsby‹ and Bret Easton Ellis did the same in the 1980s with ›Less Than Zero‹, Joey Goebel grabs the Zeitgeist by the nape of the neck and gives it a good twirl...« – Pages Magazine, USA

»Joey Goebel is a quirky, fresh, and relevant voice for our time.« – Library Journal, USA

»There is hope as long as we have young writers like Joey Goebel.« – Die Welt, Berlin

»Joey Goebel writes with the passion and humour of a modern day Mark Twain.« – Daulton Dickey / Pop Matters

»Read this incredible author!« – Benedict Wells

»Wickedly ingenious [...] Goebel's ebulliently funny writing sparkles off the page.« – Caroline Leavitt / Boston Globe

»Like a sleepwalker, the author strolls through the pop-cultural iconic universe as earlier authors moved among the Grecian gods.« – Evelyn Finger / Die Zeit, Hamburg