



Exhibition «Illustrated Cities»
24/10/1994 - 08/01/1995

An urban genre

The dividing line between illustration and art is a hazy one. Absurd, even. In these days of technical reproduction of works of art, we are not about to discuss whether a comic or a poster is more or less of a work of art than a picture painted on an easel. There is, nonetheless, a tendency to establish orders and hierarchies in the field of creation, leading us to distinguish between the rigidity of a unique piece created for eternity and the lightness of something conceived to be printed by the thousand. A subject for debate by the fireside.

It is, however, quite true that there is an unmistakable relationship between the agitated (Simmel) and the essentially changing aspects (Kostoff) of the urban culture and the emergence of the figure of the illustrator. Illustration shares all the characteristics of the urban world: haste, novelty, change, mass production, frenetic interchange, and therefore the multiplication of glances of creators and clients.

Illustration is a phenomenon rooted in the urban situation, which has found its place in the city to give it signs of identity in the all-round sense, as well as providing symbolism and language for the diversity of tribes which populate the urban space. And, in this sense, illustration is synthesis. It is the artistic genre shared by fanzines and posters for the town festival, underground groups and newspapers with large circulations, the *right-on* sectors and major groups events. Illustration is, to some extent, the city.