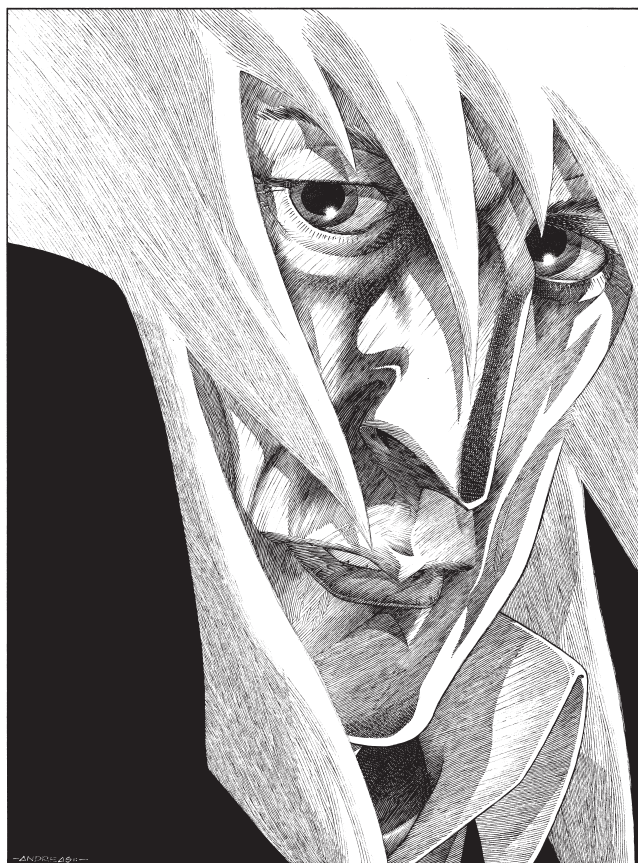


ENGLISH SUPPLEMENT TO
THE ART
OF ANDREAS

L'ART FANTASTIQUE
D'ANDREAS



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Introduction © 2023 Antoine Maurel & (translation by) Ibrahim R. Ineke

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PREFACE

Andreas has always been one to prioritize the fully-realized comic over the pleasure of drawing. To his regular readers, therefore, the present volume might come as a surprise. True aficionados, however, will recognize that each element in his work is always connected to a larger whole, like comic book panels to the comics page. A holistic approach, to which his illustration work is no exception.

Yet Andreas' obvious aptitude for page layouts never prevents him from allowing the constituent pictures to add their own dimension of plasticity to his work. The double-page spread depicting the concentration camp of The Concept springs to mind¹, with its cramped perspective mirroring the suffocating ordeal of the prisoners. Or who could forget the dizzying depiction of a splintered New York whose endlessly multiplied windows and buildings plunge the reader into the same vertiginous confusion experienced by the protagonist?² These are but a few instances of the graphic bravado that have contributed to Andreas' reputation. The latter is equally due to his complicated stories, whose intricacies invite, and reward, many rereads. But even there, shape and substance cannot be separated. *The Graveyard of Cathedrals*, for instance, was first suggested by a single mental image, which Andreas then explored to find the roads that could have brought Rork to that incongruous titular landscape.³ Such mental peregrinations eventually were to lead his hero on a journey across six albums, which in turn engendered the twenty-one *Capricorne* albums. Illustration and comics, to Andreas, are two sides of the same coin. Few comic book authors have captured so well the essence of Pierre Dac's aphorism 'Everything is in everything else, and vice versa.'

Another quote serves marvellously well to summarize his approach to illustration: 'To be free means choosing one's own chains.'⁴ Indeed, to contemplate an illustration by Andreas means looking at a synthesis of technical abilities and artistic influences built up over an entire lifetime. Look at his graphic style, with its careful hatching marks accumulating to form a critical mass of deepest black; an approach dating back to his studies at Brussels' Saint-Luc Academy, where the young comics author discovered the North American cartoonists that would become his heroes, Jack Kirby foremost among them. It's from the latter that Andreas borrowed the 'power lines' that keep even the most complex pictures clear and legible. For his own particular brand of complexity, the author of *Rork* and *Capricorne* took inspiration from the likes of Bernie Wrightson, Al Williamson and Barry Windsor-Smith. While researching their artistic trajectory, Andreas discovered the masters of early 20th century American graphic art. 'The restraint and laboriousness of Franklin Booth and the much more spirited rendering of Joseph Clement Coll' would remain beacons for his artistry.

His 1980 debut *Révélation Posthumes*, a comic drawn entirely on scraperboard⁵, is a testament to his desire to apply traditional graphic mastery to the comics medium; it soured him on this labour-intensive and boring technique forever, but it would also leave a positive imprint: it consolidated his own engraving-like approach. This book of uncommissioned work offers us the unique chance to witness the steps leading up to the final product; we can see the marks gradually filling up the page.

'I see the finished image in my mind's eye, and I draw until it is achieved on the page. I could keep it simple and finish sooner. But the point is to achieve clarity through assigning everything its right tone.' Many, indeed, would lay down their pens at a far earlier stage of drawing, or choose a subject that doesn't require drawing the windows on every single skyscraper in a cityscape. But for Andreas, it brings a profound sense of calm. 'You get into a kind of trance. The drawing disappears. It's like a Zen-exercise; it gives me peace. Drawing has nothing to do with it. It slows things down inside of me.'

On the other hand, he likes to approach every illustration as a technical challenge: 'I might grumble a bit at the start, but I'll be content once it's finished. A bit masochistic perhaps, but I like it when things take some effort.' Here, too, Andreas' very particular background shows in his work. Before turning to comics, he'd considered becoming an architect, and it was an architect who taught him perspective drawing at the Academy of Düsseldorf. It's there that he picked up the habit of starting every drawing by making a grid, as the present book shows: 'It allows me to draw without worrying about the vanishing point.' Again and again, Andreas manages to turn technical constraints into a vehicle for his own imagination, liberated from laboral concerns. A shared characteristic of his scripts and his drawings, by the way, is that they have the appearance of being extremely planned and well thought-out, while in truth both contain a fair amount of improvisation: 'Things never turn out the way I imagined them at the start. Other ideas come up along the way, or I run up against the limits of my abilities. It takes a relaxed attitude to maintain the quality.' Constraint, be it technical or self-imposed, is the bedrock upon which Andreas' liberty rests.

This compendium of artwork also shows us some recent developments in his trajectory. A couple of pictures exploring the beauty of Nature are graced with colour by Isabelle Cochet, who's been colouring his work since volume six of *Capricorne*. An individualist in his work, used to working solo, he makes an exception for her: 'She always manages to surprise me by doing things the way I wouldn't have done them, that's why. She understands even my most complex drawings, she just gets them.' It's a fertile collaboration, opening new doors for the author, even if at present these are constrained to illustration: 'I am known for the drawings of buildings with all their windows, but I live in the countryside, and when I go for a walk, I see things I like to draw, with curving, natural shapes. These are drawings done purely for pleasure.'

And isn't this, essentially, the source of his undiminished energy, which is capable of transporting us to new worlds, whatever the medium, the subject, or the technique?

Antoine Maurel

1 *Capricorne* T. 6: *Attaque* (Le Lombard, 2001)

2 *Capricorne* T. 15: *New York* (Le Lombard, 2011)

3 *Rork* T. 3: *Le cimetière de cathédrales / The Graveyard of Cathedrals* (Le Lombard, 1988; NBM 1996)

4 Romain Guilleaumes (born 1963)

5 On texts by François Rivière (Bédéràma, 1980)

QUOTES

- 6 *'The colour version was done for a commission. I then did the black and white version just for fun.'*
- 9 *'I wanted to combine Rork and Frank Lloyd Wright in a not too obvious way. On the left: Capricorn's skyscraper.'*
- 13 *'This was done for Isa Cochet to colour. No 'future project', just an illustration.'*
- 14|15 *'Another one for Isa's colours. I put the staff in to link it to the previous drawing. Other staff-drawings will follow, we'll see where it leads to.'*
- 17 *'In this drawing, I just wanted to do Deliah's dress. I was slowly getting tired of buildings and windows.'*
- 19 This illustration and the next are meant to be combined into a diptych (30 x 90 cm).
- 20|21 *'Isa's and mine first attempt to make something 'big'. Not entirely successful, as together the two images won't form a unity.'*
- 22|23 *'From time to time Isa Cochet and I like to make a large picture with lots of nature in it. For me it's a welcome change to the rather boring buildings. For Isa, nature is a favourite subject.'*
- 29 *'The 'last time' I do buildings like that. There will be no more illustrations of this kind. Knowing how to do something doesn't mean it's fun.'*
- 32 *'This was a pleasure to draw. In the middle of a dramatic scene Astor is a humorous element, which I like a lot. This drawing also gave me the idea for 'From One World to Another'.'*
- 39 *'An attempt to make an illustration with 'less' buildings.'*
- 40|41 *'I searched for a really long time for this one. In the end I went with this simple design. For a convention poster simplicity is always best.'*
- 45 *'I didn't redraw the 'rose window' of the Strasbourg cathedral, but just made photocopies of the black and white poster drawing and reconstructed the whole circle.'*
- 46 *'Instead of one image I chose to make two. Another attempt to draw less buildings.'*
- 52 *'What interested me here was the light'.*
- 56-57 *'This idea came to me suddenly. But to get the image on the strip curtains right I had to first draw and cut up the 'real' thing.'*
- 62 *'The last time I really had fun drawing buildings. This is one of my personal favourites.'*
- 66 *'This was a commission designed to bring my 'Dragon' illustration into Rork's world. A compositional nightmare!'*
- 68 *'This one is a bit strange. Not entirely sure about it.'*
- 71 *'Another one of the 'panoramic views'. An opportunity to draw Rork's house.'*
- 79 *'I really love this one! The different perspectives and Rork's stance make it work.'*
- 80 *'A rather overworked image of these people actually eating something.'*
- 85 *'I'm not always sure of what I'm doing where colour is concerned. I guess this is not too bad...'*
- 89 *'A typical result when I run out of ideas, I just put all of my characters in there.'*
- 90 *'Again, no inspiration. Even the characters themselves look bored.'*
- 91 *'With New Year's cards, I'm always happy just to come up with one idea.'*
- 93 *'This was initially a black and white only drawing, the first 'panoramic view' I attempted. The great Isa Cochet makes it work in colour.'*
- 95 *'This was a difficult one. It's bigger than the usual 30 x 40 cm illustrations. I struggled with it for some time, and in the end I had to cut out part of the drawing and redraw that section. Don't look for the cut, it's invisible.'*
- 96 *'First drawn in black and white. I coloured it later with watercolours.'*
- 102 *'My very last drawing of Capricorn's library. Never ever again.'*
- 107 *'Another of the dragon-things. Not quite happy with it, but still.'*
- 108 *'Another portrait of Rork. I never grow tired of his face.'*
- 111 *'I just love doing cluttered images! I had to go online to find knick-nacks to fill this one with.'*
- 115 *'I didn't know where I was going with this one, but I like the vibe. It is strange, but very Rorkish.'*

List of illustrations

- **1** *Rork*
See page 44
 - **4** *Andreas in his home studio*, 30 x 21 cm – 2012
Ink and sepia on paper | Illustration by Isabelle Cochet
 - **7** *Rork against wall*, 15 x 30 cm – 2017
Ink and watercolours on paper | Commission | Unpublished
 - **8** *Rork Capricorn against wall*, 15 x 30 cm – 2016
Ink and watercolours on paper | Ex-libris for the limited edition of *Capricorn Gesamtausgabe 1*, Schreiber & Leser, 2016 (1/99)
Published in *Capricornus 19* | Uitgeverij Sherpa, 2017
 - **9** *Ready for action*, 15 x 30 cm – 2016
Ink and watercolours on paper | Published in *Capricornus 19* | Sherpa, 2017
 - **10** *The architect*, 30 x 40 cm – 2018
Pencil on paper | Completed first stage
 - **11** Ink on paper | Second stage in progress
 - **12|13** Ink on paper | Sales exhibition Huberty & Breyne Gallery, 2018 | Art Print (10, 2AP, 3HC)
 - **12** Close-up, 9 x 12 cm – 2017
Ink on paper | Commission | Unpublished
 - **14** Ancient tree, 26 x 36 cm – 2019
Ink and watercolours on paper, colours by Isabelle Cochet | Unpublished
 - **15** *Ancient stone pathway*, 26 x 36 cm – 2019
Ink and watercolours on paper, colours by Isabelle Cochet | Unpublished
 - **16** *Deliah falling*, 30 x 40 cm – 2017
Pencil on paper | Completed first stage
 - **17** Ink on paper | Sales exhibition Huberty & Breyne Gallery | Unpublished
 - **18** *Autumn leaves*, 9 x 12 cm – 2009
Ink on paper | Commission | Unpublished
 - **19** *Window on New York*, 30 x 40 cm – 2017
Ink on paper | Sales exhibition Huberty & Breyne Gallery | Art print by Huberty & Breyne Gallery, 2018 (10, 2AP, 3HC)
 - **20|21** *Rork with the ghosts I*, 30 x 45 cm – 2014
Ink and watercolours on paper, colours by Isabelle Cochet | Illustration for *Les Fantômes*, Black & White, 2015 (88, 12EA, 10HC)
 - **22|23** *Rork with the ghosts II*, 30 x 45 cm – 2014
Ink and watercolours on paper, colours by Isabelle Cochet | Illustration for *Les Fantômes*, Black & White, 2015 (88, 12EA, 10HC)
Both illustrations are meant to be combined into a diptych (30 x 90 cm)
 - **24|25** *The owls*, 50 x 70 cm – 2020
Ink and watercolours on paper, colours by Isabelle Cochet | Unpublished
 - **26|28** *The marked stones*, 40 x 60 cm – 2017
(colouring completed in 2019)
Ink and watercolours on paper, colours by Isabelle Cochet | Collaboration between Andreas and Isabelle Cochet | Art print by Huberty & Breyne Gallery, 2019 (10, 2AP, 3HC)
 - **28** *Rork resting*, 12 x 18 cm – 2012
Ink and watercolours on paper, colours by Isabelle Cochet | Ex-libris for comic shop JD BD, 2012 (100, 20EA)
 - **29** *New York upside down*, 40 x 70 cm – 2020
Ink on paper | Christie's comics sale 2020 | Unpublished
 - **30** *The house*, 30 x 40 cm – 2014
Pencil on paper | Completed first stage
 - **31** Ink on paper | Cover illustration for *Les Fantômes*, Black & White, 2015 (88, 12EA, 10HC)
 - **32|35** *The ancient city*, 30 x 40 cm – 2016
Pencil on paper | First stage in progress
 - **36** Ink on paper | Second stage in progress
 - **37** Ink on paper | Commission | Published in *Capricorne Intégrale 2*, Le Lombard, 2019
 - **38** *Jump*, 30 x 40 cm – 2018
Pencil on paper | Completed first stage
 - **39** Ink on paper | Sales exhibition Huberty & Breyne Gallery | Art print, 2018 (10, 2AP, 3HC)
 - **40** *Rose window*, 30 x 40 cm – 2018
Pencil on paper | Completed first stage
 - **41** Ink and watercolours on paper, colours by Isabelle Cochet | Poster Strasbulles (Festival BD Strasbourg) | Art print Strasbulles, 2018 (40)
 - **42|43** Detail
 - **44** *Rork*, 30 x 40 cm – 2017
Ink on paper | Detail | Sales exhibition Huberty & Breyne Gallery | Art print by Huberty & Breyne Gallery, 2018 (10, 2AP, 3HC)
 - **45** *Rose window T-shirt*, 28 x 34 cm – 2018
Ink on paper | T-shirt design for the staff of the Strasbulles convention, 2018 (55)
 - **46** *Farewell*, 40 x 70 cm – 2019
Ink on paper | Christie's comics sale 2019 | Art print by Huberty & Breyne Gallery, 2019 (10, 2AP, 3HC)
 - **47** *Rork contemplating*, 30 x 90 cm – 2017
Pencil on paper | Completed first stage
 - **47** Detail pencilwork
 - **48|50** Ink on Paper | Sales exhibition Huberty & Breyne Gallery | Unpublished
 - **51|53** *Forest*, 30 x 90 cm – 2017
Ink on Paper | Sales exhibition Huberty & Breyne Gallery | Unpublished
 - **54|55** *Dragon*, 70 x 44 cm – 2005
Ink on paper | Illustration for *l'Univers des dragons*, Daniel Maghen, 2007 | Also published as a jigsaw puzzle and as a poster, Sherpa, 2014
 - **56** *Through the curtain*, 30 x 40 cm – 2019
Pencil on paper | Preparatory stage, constructing slats curtain
 - **57|58** Ink on paper | Second stage in progress
 - **59** Ink on paper | Commission | Unpublished
 - **60|61** Detail
 - **62** *Fire escapes*, 40 x 70 cm – 2017
Ink on paper | Commission | Unpublished
 - **63** Detail
 - **64** *The rescue*, 30 x 40 cm – 2017
Pencil on paper | Preliminary sketches
 - **64|65** Pencil and ink on paper | Details of first and second stage in progress
 - **66** Ink on paper | Commission | Unpublished
 - **67** Detail
 - **68** *From above*, 30 x 40 cm – 2020
Ink on paper | Commission | Unpublished
 - **69** *Home*, 30 x 90 cm – 2017
Pencil detail
 - **69** Pencil on paper | Completed first stage
 - **70|72** Ink on paper | Sales exhibition Huberty & Breyne Gallery | Unpublished
 - **73|75** *Out of control*, 30 x 90 cm – 2018
Ink on paper | Sales exhibition Huberty & Breyne Gallery | Unpublished
 - **76|77** *From one world to another*, 30 x 40 cm – 2017
Pencil on paper | Preliminary sketches – first and second stage in progress
 - **78** Ink on paper | Second stage in progress
 - **79** Ink on paper | Sales exhibition Huberty & Breyne Gallery | Art print, 2018 (10, 2AP, 3HC)
 - **80** *The banquet*, 30 x 40 cm – 2014
Ink on paper | Commission | Unpublished
 - **81** Detail
 - **82** *Trapped between dimensions*, 30 x 40 cm – 2019
Pencil on paper | Preliminary sketches
 - **83** Pencil and ink on paper | First and second stage in progress
 - **84** Ink and watercolours on paper | Second and third stage in progress
 - **85** Ink, sepia and watercolours on paper | Commission | Unpublished
 - **86|87** Detail
 - **88** *'Family' portrait*, 30 x 40 cm – 2017
Pencil on paper | Completed first stage
 - **89** Ink on paper | Sales exhibition Huberty & Breyne Gallery | Unpublished
 - **90** *Going out*, 30 x 40 cm – 2018
Ink on paper | Sales exhibition Huberty & Breyne Gallery | Unpublished
 - **91** *After midnight*, 18 x 36 cm – 2019
Pencil on paper | Completed first stage | New year's card | Partly published in *Capricorne Intégrale 4* | Le Lombard, 2020
 - **92|94** *Seen from above*, 30 x 90 cm – 2017
Ink on paper | Sales exhibition Huberty & Breyne Gallery | Art print by Huberty & Breyne Gallery, 2018 (10, 2AP, 3HC)
Print and watercolours on paper | Print of original, with watercolours by Isabelle Cochet – 2019
 - **95** *Fight with Dahmaloch*, 34 x 46 cm – 2015
Ink on paper | Commission | Published in *Capricorne Intégrale 2*, Le Lombard, 2019
 - **96** *New car*, 26 x 20 cm – 2016
Ink and watercolours | Edition Alfons, 2017 | Published in black/white in *Reddition 65*
 - **97** *Library incident*, 30 x 40 cm – 2017
Pencil on paper | First stage in progress
 - **98|99** Ink and watercolours on paper | Second and third stage in progress
 - **100|101** Ink and watercolours on paper | Third stage in progress
 - **102** Ink and watercolours on paper | Commission | Unpublished
 - **103** Detail
 - **104** *Controlling the dragon*, 30 x 40 cm – 2019
Pencil on paper | Preliminary sketches
 - **105** Pencil on paper | First stage in progress
 - **106** Pencil and ink on paper | Second stage in progress
 - **107** Ink on paper | Commission | Unpublished
 - **108** *Rork observing*, 22 x 30 cm – 2020
Ink on paper | Commission | Unpublished
 - **109|110** *The curiosity cabinet*, 30 x 40 cm – 2015
Pencil and ink on paper | First and second stage in progress
 - **111** Ink on paper | Commission | Unpublished
 - **112** *Dystopia*, 30 x 40 cm – 2018
Pencil on paper | First stage in progress
 - **113** Pencil and ink on paper | First and second stage in progress
 - **114** Ink on paper | Second stage in progress
 - **115** Ink on paper | Sales exhibition Huberty & Breyne Gallery | Art print, 2018 (10, 2AP, 3HC)
 - **116|117** Detail
- Print for The Art of Andreas:
- **Rork**, 31 x 41 cm – 2023
Ink and watercolours on paper | Unpublished
- Triptych print for the Ultra Limited Collectors Edition:
- **Rork**, 46 x 30 cm – 2019
Watercolours on paper | Unpublished
 - **Deliah**, 46 x 30 cm – 2019
Watercolours on paper | Unpublished
 - **Astor**, 46 x 30 cm – 2020
Watercolours on paper | Unpublished