

Getting Started

Most people feel the need to draw at some time or other.

Open a football magazine and quite likely you'll find a page dedicated to fans impressions of their favourite players.

If this Caricature Course helps people to do this better, then it will be worthwhile.

At times I have been called an ILLUSTRATOR, a CARTOONIST, a PICTURE STRIP ARTIST and a CARICATURIST.

These four skills often overlap. A piece of artwork may be a combination of two or three of these skills.



A lot of my work is for publication in comics , magazines or books, but sometimes it sits in a frame on a sideboard or on a wall at home, to the amusements of just a few who see it.

It is with CARICATURE that this workshop is chiefly concerned.

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This is me. It's a self-portrait.
It's a caricature.

By dictionary definition, a caricature is "a representation of someone with their most noticeable and distinctive features exaggerated for comic effect."



So, if the person you are drawing has big ears, make them even bigger. If his most noticeable and distinctive feature is his big bottom, then you caricature this by making it even larger.

A caricature may be done in three dimensions – as with the Spitting Image puppets – or simply in two dimensions, with pen on paper. This pen on paper image is what we shall be concerned with in this workshop.

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Most of the Illustrations you will see as you work through this Course will be from the world of football, simply because that's what I do most of the time. But the principles explained here may be applied to any subject or situation.

Throughout this Course we shall call the person you are drawing the SUBJECT or the VICTIM

Onlookers have been amused by caricature down the ages, and victims have been variously amused too, and sometimes annoyed and insulted.



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Anyone in the public eye – royalty, politicians, entertainers, sports persons – all are legitimate targets for the caricaturist.

As Rory Bremner does it with voice and mannerisms, so the caricaturist does it with his pen.

You may be tempted to depict a friend, family member, teacher or workmate on paper.

Some caricatures are simply for our own amusement, and not to be seen by others, and definitely not to be seen by the victim.

The more accomplished we become, the more our efforts deserve a wider audience. Many times I'm asked to do a caricature from a photograph, never having seen the person to be drawn.



This is open to pitfalls. In every case it is better to arrange to meet the subject, even just briefly, to get an idea of facial features and posture, height and build

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Of course, famous people are constantly on our screens or in print, so their faces and mannerisms are familiar. There's no excuse, therefore, for getting them wrong. But sometimes we do. Many a time I'm unhappy with what I've done, and tear a drawing up and toss it in the bin, and begin again. Some people I never did get right.



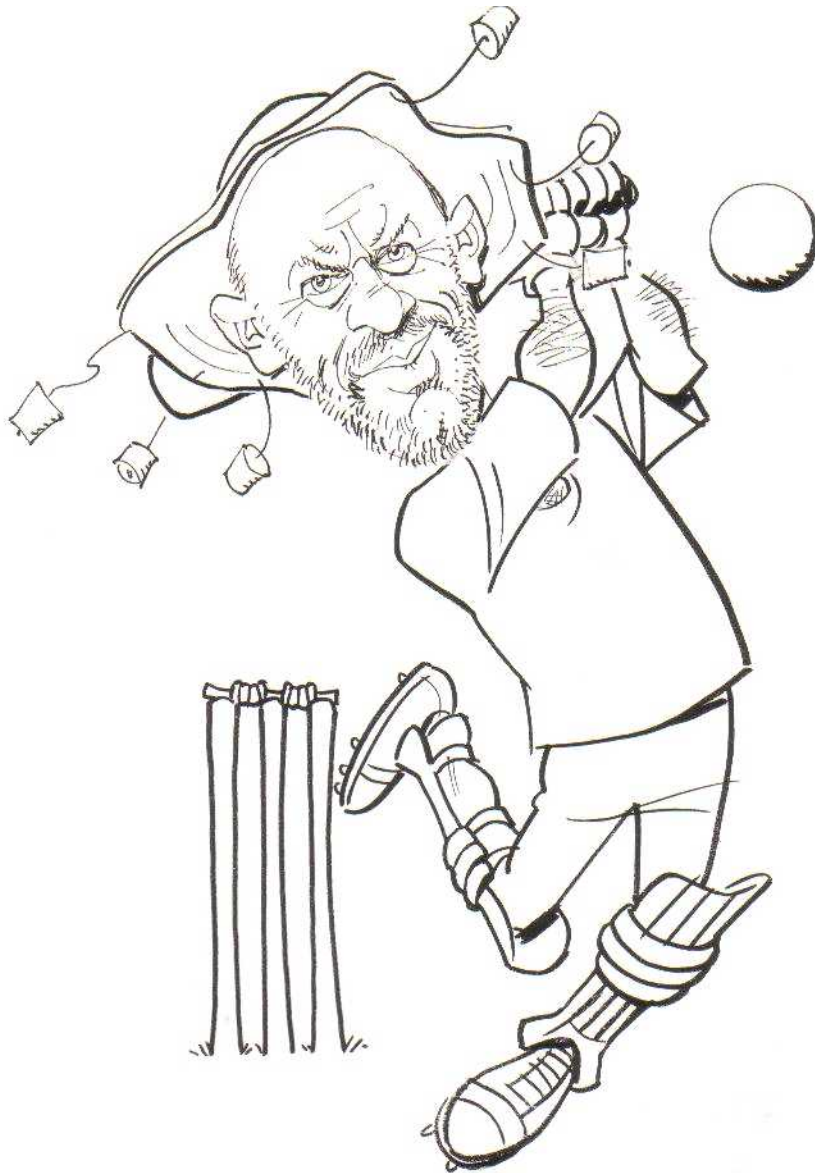
Here's a caricature I did for some wedding stationary

I knew the bride and groom in this case – they were my son and daughter in law.

I don't think I would do someone I don't know for such an important event.

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This is an Australian guy I used to play cricket with – a drawing which was coloured framed and presented to the player. It now hangs on his wall. The corks hanging from his hat help to identify his nationality.



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This is a fellow who had to be shown in action on the squash court.

These examples are just to show the variety of requests a caricaturist may have. Other times I get invited to craft fairs and promotional events and parties, simply to do ten minute caricatures of anybody and everybody – rather like the ones you might have done near the beach when on holiday on the Mediterranean.

Just a marker pen, with a reasonably wide point, is enough for this, and an A3 size drawing pad of reasonably heavy paper. With these quickies' there's no time for pencil lines.

Pencils, pens, paints and brushes, and markers of every shape, size and colour – there's no limit to the choice of media we can use. It's a question of experimenting with as many as we can.



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The fellow in the middle was the one getting married, but he wanted his mates on this drawing as well.

After you have studied all the course and you have got to a good standard always remember that each face is a caricature.

So if you get a group caricature like the one above make sure you charge more because it will just take more of your time.

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I'm going to try to show you how to start...



How to continue.....



And how to finish.



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At this stage it would be useful if you would 'have a go' at doing a caricature. Having seen the examples in this opening module you may think "I can do better than that....."

That's how I began.

My son brought home some caricatures of his favourite footballers which he had bought from a soccer shop, and asked what I thought of them. They were good. I recognised the players immediately.

"You could do just as well," he said. So I began, just for his amusement and mine, to draw Ian Rush, Kenny Dalglish and or two others.

I'm asking you now to take a pencil or pen, and caricature a friend or a member of the family, or a person in the public eye...looking for those features which you would want to exaggerate.

When you've done that we can move on to the next stage together....



