

Famous French People

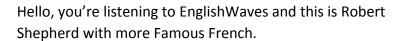
Cabu ©

by Robert Shepherd

Vocabulary & pronunciation study by Laurent Dufour©

Words are explained alongside the text

Stressed syllables are underlined and in bold*



We're about to look at the life of a **gifted cartoonist** who was described by the filmmaker Jean-Luc Godard as "the best **jour**nalist in France." He was also the father of the French singer/songwriter Mano Solo.

Sadly, his life was <u>tragically</u> ended in January 2015, when <u>ter</u>rorists <u>indiscriminately</u> shot dead members of staff at the offices of the <u>satirical</u> publication *Charlie Hebdo*. He is Jean Cabut, or better known by his *nom de plume*, "Cabu".

Born in Châlons-en-Champagne on 13th January 1938, Cabu studied art at the École Estienne in Paris. His first drawings were **published** as early as 1954 in a local newspaper.

However, Cabu's **fledgling** career was slowed down when the Algerian War forced him to be conscripted to the army for over two years. However, his talent was still put to good use – Cabu drew for the army magazine *Bled* and *Paris Match*.

It has been said Cabu's time in the armed forces turned him into a **vocal** anti-<u>mil</u>itarist and he a<u>dopt</u>ed a <u>slightly</u> anar<u>chis</u>tic view of society.

Meanwhile, he continued drawing political caricatures for Charlie Hebdo and Le Canard Enchaîné. He created popular characters, such as Le Grand Duduche, Adjudant Kronenbourg, and Mon Beauf. In fact, Mon Beauf was so accurate as the average, racist, sexist, vulgar, ordinary Frenchman that the word beauf - short for "beau-frère" – is common parlance.



gifted (adj.) talented

cartoonist (n.) person who draws cartoons, drawings making fun of someone or something

indiscriminately (adv.) at random

fledgling (adj.) new

vocal (adj.) outspoken, keen to make one's opinion heard by other people

slightly (adv.) somewhat

meanwhile (adv.) during the same time

accurate (adj.) faithfully
representing the truth

average (adj.) common, typical

parlance (n.) manner of speaking

Although some of Cabu's depictions sailed close to the wind, it wasn't until February 2006 when he courted serious controversy. One of his cartoons appeared on the cover of Charlie Hebdo - in response to the Danish cartoons affair — and it spawned a lawsuit. The illustration depicted the Muslim prophet Muhammad under the caption "Muhammad overwhelmed by fundamentalists".

Nevertheless, from September 2006 to January 2007, an **exhibition** entitled *Cabu and Paris* was organised at the Paris City Hall.

Cabu was shot dead, along with seven of his <u>col</u>leagues, two police <u>officers</u>, and two others, on 7th January 2015 when gunmen stormed the *Charlie Hebdo* offices in Paris. It happened just days before his 77th birthday.

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depiction (n.) description

to sail close to the wind (exp.) to do something that is dangerous or only just legal or acceptable

to court (vb.) to seem to be deliberately risking

to spawn (vb.) to give rise to, generate

lawsuit (n.) case in a court of law involving one party against another

Muslim (adj.) relating to the religion of Islam

caption (n.) explanation for a picture

to overwhelm (vb.) to affect, defeat someone completely

exhibition (n.) public display of artworks

gunman (n.) man shooting firearm
to storm (vb.) to attack, assault

* Tip!

Note the stress pattern in the adjectives ending in – IC/ICAL or in the adverbs ending in –ICALLY:

anar**chis**tic

po<u>lit</u>ical, sa<u>tir</u>ical

tragically