



## 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\*

Hello, you're listening to EnglishWaves and this is Robert Shepherd with more Famous French.

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

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

Born in Châlons-en-Champagne on 13<sup>th</sup> 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-**militarist** and he **adopted** a **slightly anarchistic** 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 **colleagues**, two police **officers**, and two others, on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2015 when **gunmen stormed** the *Charlie Hebdo* offices in Paris. It happened just days before his 77<sup>th</sup> 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 :

anarch**ic**istic

polit**ic**al, satir**ic**al

tragic**al**ly