



R.K. Laxman

Sketch your Thoughts

MOVING TARGET



IF EXPRESSING YOUR THOUGHTS THROUGH ARTISTIC SKETCHES IS A PASSION FOR YOU, THEN A CAREER AS A CARTOONIST OR GRAPHIC ARTIST WOULD APTLY JUSTIFY YOUR TALENT, AVERS
NIKITA MITHARE

A cartoonist's job is crucial as well as challenging, whether it involves making a visual comment on the socio-political scenario or anything under the sun - it conveys all messages in the most humorous way.



Who is a cartoonist?

A cartoonist is actually an illustrator or a graphic artist who draws pictures and cartoons to amuse, inform, educate and persuade people. They portray current events and situations with accuracy and light humour. Cartoons illustrate a topic of public interest. They add humour or sarcasm to a dull newspaper headline. Besides, it creates a certain impact on the readers. Cartoons are mainly seen in regular newspaper and magazine comic strips, books, etc. Some cartoonists specialise in caricatures (funny sketches) to double up the comic quotient. R.K. Laxman, a premier newspaper columnist created "the common man" which went on to become a national icon. It's like a visual editorial explaining current affairs with utmost simplicity and with a pinch of sarcasm.

Getting the degree

Candidates interested in a career in cartooning, are supposed to pass the Elementary and Intermediate grade exams while in school. Besides clearing these exams an eligibility of 10+2 is essential for admission to the degree courses. The candidate can apply for a one-year foundation course. This is followed by a 4-year degree course, which fetches a candidate the GFA (Graduation in Fine Arts) University Degree. Surendra Chavre, a gold medallist illustrator and artist from the prestigious Sir. J. J. School of Arts (Mumbai), further elaborates, "Interested candidates for a career in cartooning should pursue specialisation in illustration. Besides, academic qualifications a candidate should possess keen interest in drawing and should have a fine eye for observation of the things around. An aspiring cartoonist should develop practicing sketches and should imbibe a habit to feature highlight people and event in the sketches, as it is a prerequisite for a professional cartoonist."

Future scope

About the future scope of a career in cartooning, Chavre opines, "A cartoonist has immense scope in the field of media. Ad agencies, publication houses, media schools, press, etc usually hire aspiring cartoonists. Generally children's publications offer maximum scope for a budding

cartoonist, as they have more pictures and sketches. Besides, various sectors like animation, web designing, etc. hold great scope for future cartoonists." Being in print or electronic media, a cartoonist has to meet deadlines. He/she should have a good knowledge of graphic art softwares. Besides he/she should be well read and should be artistically inclined, imaginative, practical, skilful and able to generate fresh ideas as per the current events or happenings. Thus a cartoonist is almost a powerful journalist. Instead of words, he/she uses the visual medium to convey his/her point of view to the readers. In a newspaper, the cartoonist is usually a member of the staff. Besides, a cartoonist can also work on a freelance basis.

Actual tasking

A cartoonist working with a firm or company makes sketches, drawings and illustrations appealing to a particular target audience (group of people according to age, class, gender, etc.) Often such illustrations depict a theme or story, which needs explanation. The cartoonist or illustrator has to discuss it with the respective department heads or editors before outlining the work. The theme of the sketch should blend with the basic content of the campaign/editorial. In an electronic media, motion cartoonists work with the audio-visual media and computers. They make animated cartoon films for television or print media. Walt Disney was the first motion cartoonist to bring forward this amazing field of portraying imaginations.

Technical training

Cartooning can be pursued as a full-fledged career. Multimedia courses teach you the technical aspects, which are a must to be a proficient illustrator. Multimedia packages like the Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Image Ready, Director 7, Animator Pro, Animator Studio, and etc. would prove to be beneficial. Besides, there are several training programmes available in Graphic Designing, Animation Designing, Visual Communications and Applied Arts.

List of institutes

- Sir J. J. School of Arts, Mumbai
- The National Institute of Design (NID), Ahmedabad
- Industrial Design Centre (IDC), IIT -Mumbai & Guwahati
- Zee Institute of Creative Arts (ZICA)

