



A DAY IN THE ARTS

Making art accessible to all

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CARTOONING - GENERATING IDEAS THROUGH CARTOON BRAINSTORMING

By Ken Nelson

Without question, the number one question every aspiring cartoonist asks is, "Where do you get your ideas?" The thought seems to be that there is some secret method, that only the professional cartoonists are aware of, that provides an endless stream of cartoon ideas. Not true. In fact, the hardest part of the job, and the part that the most successful of us has learned to cultivate, is the process of generating ideas. Once you master the art of the Cartooning Brainstorm, you will have a generous array of ideas at your pencil-tip.

While there are no quick -and-easy 3-step methods for conducting a Cartooning Brainstorm session of your own, there are a few

principles to keep in mind as you begin your cartooning career.

Practice, Practice, Practice

The only way you'll get good at anything is to practice doing it. This is true whether you're playing sports, learning an instrument, or developing your career as a cartoonist. You must keep at it day in and day out. Sitting down and focusing on coming up with funny ideas is the basis for your career and it will get easier with practice. To shamelessly borrow an old Nike slogan, "Just Do It".

Carry a Sketchpad at all Times

Your sketchpad is your lifeline to the cartooning world. Carry it with you and take advantage of those down times in your day when you are doing nothing and could do something productive. "What down



WORD OF THE DAY

CARTOON

A sketch or drawing, usually humorous, as in a newspaper or periodical, symbolizing, satirizing, or caricaturing some action, subject, or person of popular interest.

Fine Arts. a full-scale design for a picture, ornamental motif or pattern, or the like, to be transferred to a fresco, tapestry, etc.



"My hands were too soft.. I had to find some special occupation, some kind of work that would not force me to turn away from the sky and the stars, that would allow me to discover the meaning of life."

- Marc Chagall

ART AEROBICS

Practice you drawing skills Using watercolor paper make a folded greeting card. Paint a bouquet of flowers. Write a note. Mail it to your mother, daughter, spouse, or other female friend (in that order). Fifteen minutes painting time. 🖌️

times?" you may be asking. True, we're all busy - too busy in fact - but there are times during the day when you can steal a few minutes to write or sketch. In a doctor's waiting room, in line at the grocery store, at a stop light, in a theater waiting for the movie to start - point is, there are many opportunities during the day and week to make the most of your time.

Be Observant

Consider yourself a life reporter and record everything that interests you. It doesn't even have to be funny; that will come later. Write down and consider everything that you find funny, interesting, odd, shocking, etc. Record those weird thoughts that float through your mind, and don't try to edit yourself at this point - just observe and record. Later you will use these observations to spark your brainstorming sessions.

Consume Lots of Brain Food

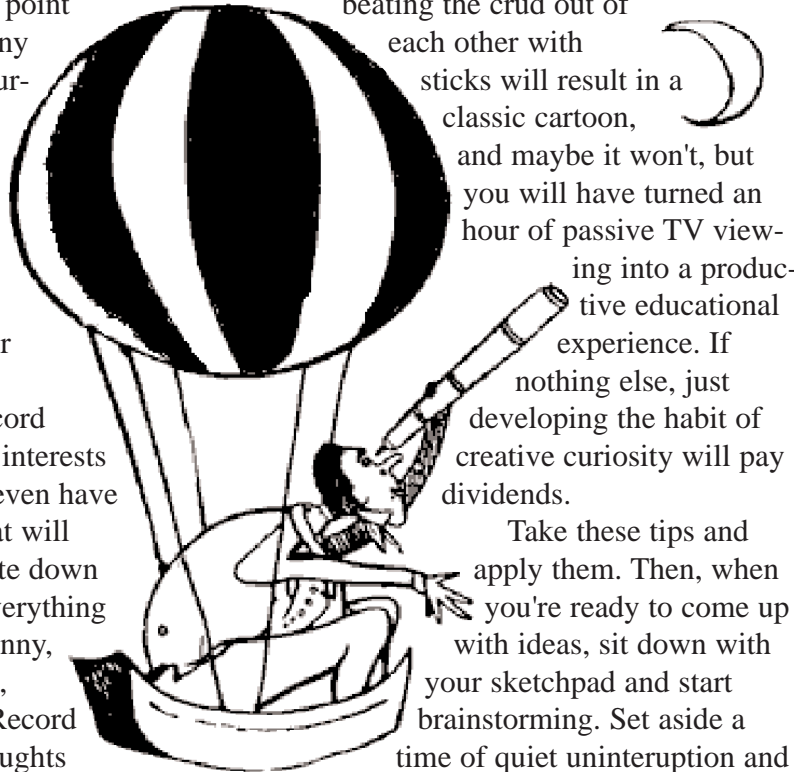
Along the same lines as the previous point, you need to feed your

brain. Educate yourself! Study different topics, take notes, make illustrations. Turn your TV watching into an educational endeavor by keeping your sketchpad handy to capture anything that interests you. Maybe that documentary featuring two African tribes

beating the crud out of each other with sticks will result in a classic cartoon, and maybe it won't, but you will have turned an hour of passive TV viewing into a productive educational experience. If nothing else, just developing the habit of creative curiosity will pay dividends.

Take these tips and apply them. Then, when you're ready to come up with ideas, sit down with your sketchpad and start brainstorming. Set aside a time of quiet uninterrupted and start moving your pencil around on the paper. Go back through your notes and observations and start connecting things together. See if anything strikes you as funny. If it does, run with it! ✎

Ken Nelson is a freelance writer and cartoonist.



ART NEWS

DRAWING FROM HISTORY

Starting Friday, May 29th, the **Metropolitan Museum of Art** is will be holding classes for adults that emphasize one-on-one attention. Each of the five sessions is divided between classroom instruction and drawing time in the galleries. Classes will be held on Friday nights from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at a cost of \$375 for the series. If you are interested in the lessons but cannot attend in the evening, daytime sessions are also being offered on Fridays from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. <http://tinyurl.com/c2fmry>

CELEBRITY IN AMERICAN ART

American artists and their dealers have always avidly sought celebrity for themselves and their subjects. How they have defined that goal has changed significantly, however; in the early years, artists aspired to formal recognition by and station within their society and to a secure place in the pantheon of art history; subsequent centuries would lower the sights (of some, at least) to the proverbial Warholian 15 minutes. The **Celebrity in American Art, 1790 - Present, 14th Annual American Art Conference** will contextualize the notion of celebrity historically, acknowledging its constancy as an aspiration, trace its evolution, and assess its current status in the art world, as well as speculate upon its future. To learn more, visit <http://tinyurl.com/d28o7p>

ARTATTACK: TEEN NIGHT OUT — AMERICAN REBELS

Are you ready to be a cultural rebel? We all know the American Revolution didn't stop in 1776. Give props to your world-changing, revolutionary role models. They could be historical freedom fighters or people in your family or community who give back in a BIG way. Rock a poem, dance, make art or sing your heart out. We want to see your skills! Come make ARTattack at the **Seattle Art Museum** your stage. American Rebels, May 8, 2009, 6-9 pm <http://tinyurl.com/d87u6f>

GUSTAVE CAILLEBOTTE ST THE BROOKLYN MUSEUM

The Brooklyn Museum has a short clip showcasing various works by Gustave Caillebotte that are on display at the museum until the end of July. Take a sneak peek at the show by viewing the clip here: <http://tinyurl.com/cspzxsx>

MANUSCRIPT MANIA! STUDIO WORKSHOP FOR KIDS



Create your own fanciful and functional books with the help of a special guest educator. Experiment with an unexpected range of materials to build books, page-by-page, tour the special exhibition *The Saint John's Bible: A Modern Vision through Medieval Methods* and illuminate your own writings. Parents don't have to leave the museum – they can also tour the special exhibition and celebrate the group's work at the end of class with a small art exhibit and reception. All

materials are included in the registration fee. Family Art Center, **The Walters Art Museum**, Baltimore, MD. <http://tinyurl.com/d4gfp6>

BIG SHOW OF MINIATURE PROPORTIONS

Kirkland's Parklane Gallery holds its 17th Annual Juried International Miniature Art Show beginning Tuesday, May 5th and continuing through the end of the month. This isn't your ordinary art show and these are not just small works of art. Miniature painters comply with a strict standard of rules that apply to balance of scale with technique, color and detail as well as to size. A work of fine art in miniature draws the viewer in for further exploration of the painting's detail. In fact, magnifying glasses are provided and closer looks are encouraged. Nationally recognized and published artist, Elizabeth Kincaid, is the juror for this year's show. The public is invited to attend the Artists Reception & Awards Presentation on Saturday May 16th, from 7:00-9:00pm. <http://tinyurl.com/dgldtj>

PICASSO AND THE ALLURE OF LANGUAGE

This exhibition at the **Yale Art Museum** examines Pablo Picasso's life-long relationship with writers and the many ways in which language affected his work. With some 80 works in all media by Picasso, as well as an array of fascinating archival materials, this important exhibition challenges the very notion of what have been considered "highlights" of the artist's oeuvre. <http://tinyurl.com/dmon8l>



ARTIST TO WATCH

Mineke Reinders - <http://minekereinders.blogspot.com/>
"Nisan yag(muru - April rain", Watercolor, 7"x5" \$100