

## Creative Corner Anchovies on your pizza?

Illustrator George Mitchell considers the use of humorous illustrations in interpretation

There's no way to explain humour any more than there is to explain horror. Either humorous illustrations (or cartoons) will do it for you or they will not; just as anchovies do it for some people and others won't touch them. It's a taste you can't explain.

In the same way, you can't 'tell' a cartoon as you can tell a joke. It is a visual combination of circumstance, characters, setting and humour portrayed in a recognisable and identifiable way.

In interpretation work, these qualities must fulfil clear objectives. We need to define the function these illustrations should have, how the illustrator is briefed, the audience concerned and the style, content and presentation of the artwork. Cartoons must be more than clip-art 'funnys' dropped in to fill a space!

Cartoons can complement and explain text in a way that makes photographs seem sterile. Visually, they can exaggerate and encapsulate points of interest that bring emphasis to a certain point - concisely, getting the message across. A good cartoon gives a momentary frisson of pleasure.

But, then, as an illustrator, maybe I am biased. I rate the role and value of humorous illustrations highly – perhaps because I already know I like anchovies!

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Restlessness and discontent are the first necessities of progress  
*Thomas Edison*