

# IllustrationClass.com Tutorials Vol. 1

Documenting the Illustrative Design Process

Created by Von Glitschka



Name: **Pop Art Illustration**

Project Type: **Billy Mays Viral Promotion**

Total Time: 6hrs

IC Library: **Vol. 1 - TUT 21 of 25**

PDF

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# Pop Art Illustration Tutorial All Content © Copyright 2010 Glitschka Studios

You've seen him pushing his goods like "Samurai Shark", "OxiClean", "Hercules Hooks", "Handy Switch" or his newest shout out "Mighty Putty." Like me you've probably watched his no frill commercials as he confidently pitches the latest and greatest joe consumer product all the while being hypnotized by his impeccably groomed beard.

Billy's ever present smile, energy and high volume reassure you that what he's offering is a must have. After all he just showed you how it worked and gave it a thumbs up! Lets face it Billy Mays has selling power!

Sometimes I get the creative itch to just illustrate something for no other reason then to have some fun. This tutorial covers such a project as I attempt to create an iconic representation of Billy Mays.

## Illustrative Design Creative Process

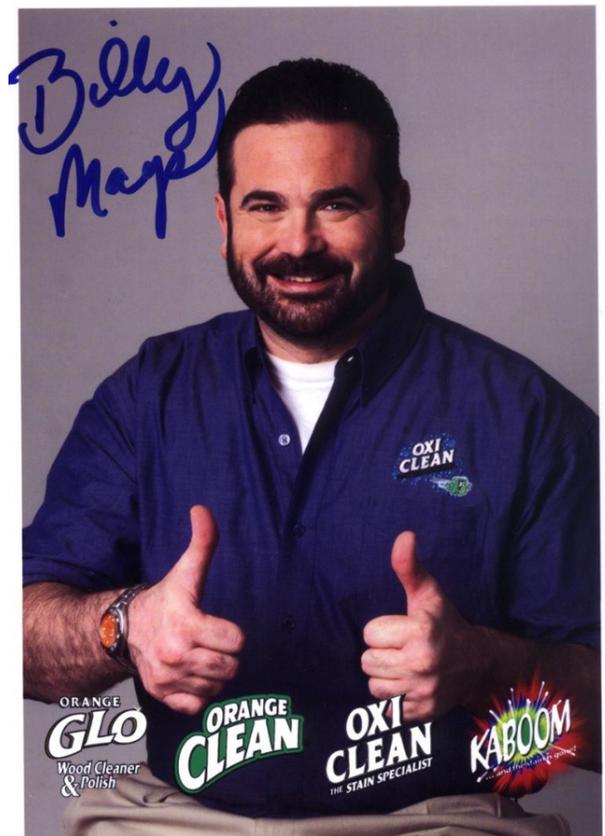
*These tutorials are meant to help you discover, enhance and facilitate your own creative growth and skills. So don't feel obligated to take my comments or examples as gospel. Use them as spring boards to explore, experiment and have fun developing your own creative process. That is how you'll benefit most from these tutorials.*

*Any referenced source files for this tutorial can be downloaded for **FREE** at <http://www.illustrationclass.com> by searching for the tutorial with the same name.*

**1** Note: I originally did this art and wrote this tutorial before Billy Mays died. He was a hard working pitchman that became an American pop culture icon and he'll be missed.

If you live in the United States you're more then familiar with Billy Mays. He's an infomercial pitch man that yells at you in a hypnotic way getting you to buy the latest miracle product he's promoting. A modern day snake oil salesman if you will.

I thought since he's become such an American icon in the last five years that he'd make for good pop art.



**2** The style I wanted to work in was going to be graphic. A faux realistic look if you will. To accomplish this style it's best to source out good photo reference that is high contrast.

I took the photo of Billy Mays and isolated his head cutting it out of the background. I adjusted contrast, and isolated areas and stereotypically improved the clarity. I am simply trying to create a base to draw from, a guide that will help me refine my drawn shapes.



Converting the color file to B&W makes translation of shadows, highlights and forms easier to simplify as you draw so I do that and then print it out to draw on top of.



**3** When drawing in this style you're looking to let the reference give you the raw form and then your goal is to refine the shapes. It may not be how the photo shows it because even though a photo is based in reality, some things just look better by either leaving it out or exaggerating it when you illustrate from a photo. This is key. You're wanting enough detail without over complicating the art.



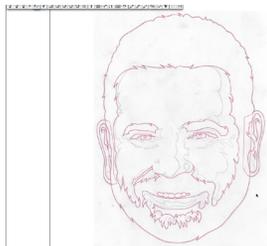
Normally I don't work out shading until after I flesh out my base vectors but in this case I decided to draw out the shading along with the main art. I did this on a separate sheet of vellum, attached it to the back side of my main drawing and scanned it in with the shading on the back side.



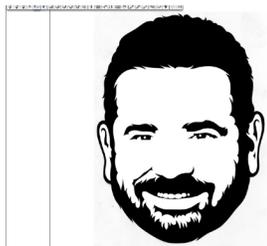
As you can see in the image this makes it easier to see what is the main art and what is the shading shapes to build when moving to vectors.

## 4 When building vectors I work in three stages:

- Stage 1: I lay down a quick rough out of the vector path, placing my points at key locations knowing where the path bends or takes on a curve etc. I don't worry about it aligning with my sketch exactly at this point. Think of it as a foundation being poured. I am not worrying about the construction just the base foundation.
- Stage 2: Once the rough vector path is laid down I go back through it point by point adjusting my bezier curves and aligning my vector art to match my refined sketch. Remember I draw to leave not guess work I've already figured out how the art will look in my sketch stage so all I am doing now is building it out. The refined sketch is my blue prints.
- Stage 3: I go back through my shape point by point a second time and zoom in refining my curves and shape to optimize it's visual appearance. I also look for visual tension, isolate it and fix it. If you don't do this it can add up and weaken the final illustration. This is a common rookie mistake, so take your time and create your art with precision.

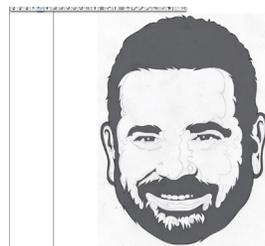


**5** This artwork isn't a complicated one so it went pretty fast. Mainly because I had figured out how I wanted the artwork to look prior to moving to the computer. So building goes a lot faster when all you're doing is following your sketch.



At this point I make copy of my paths and move them to another layer in Ai. This is a security measure incase I need to go back to my source and rework something later.

I now fill in my finished shapes to form my base art in B&W. I move the refined sketch scan layer above my base art layer, adjust opacity and begin to create my vector art for the shading. I use the same three stage method as described above.





**6** Once I have all my shading shapes done I need to butt fit them to my base art. The first thing you'll need to do is select all your shading shapes and create one compound path.

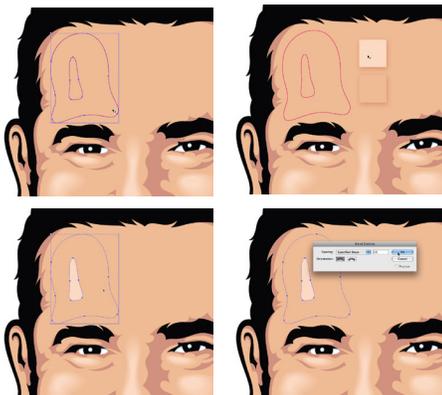


You'll then clone and select the base art of his face (colored blue in my image) and select the shading compound path making sure it is on top of the cloned base art. Using the "Pathfinder" palette you'll intersect the two vector shapes.



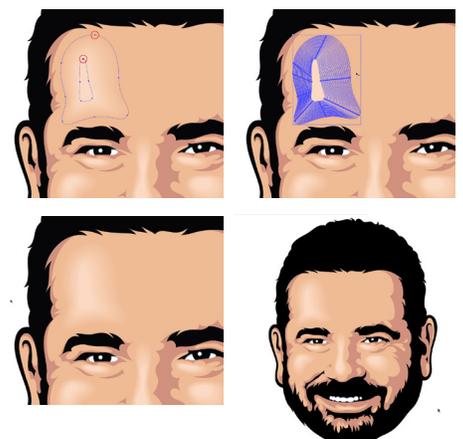
What you end up with is shading only over the areas where his skin is. You could also keep it the way you had originally build the shading and just mask it inside a clone of his face but that in my opinion is sloppy building and potentially just adds unnecessary complication to your files and makes them harder to work with.

**7** Now it's time to work out the color. This shows the base flesh tone and the shading. Billy's beard and hair frame his face nicely I think but that has more to do with his family genes not my illustration. ;-)



On the highlights I didn't want to have them hard edged like the shading so I'll be building custom shape blends instead. Essentially you create two shapes, one is the core highlight color and the second is the shape it'll blend out too. You colorize the core shape with your highlight color and the blend to shape will pick up the color of face itself. With both shapes selected you go into blend options and set the amount of steps for the shape blend. In this case I used 56. You could go higher but I wouldn't go lower or you run the risk of seeing banding when printing the artwork out.

Once you've set the number of steps you click OK then select the corresponding points on each of the two shapes (See circled red points) and this blends them together using the amount of steps you have set. If you select the shape blend you'll see the shapes. Doing this process too much in an illustration can somewhat bloat the file size so use it sparingly.



8 Now that my artwork is finished I can start to have some fun with it. That was the sole purpose I created it for after all. The first usage was to create a PDF download . I called it the “Billy Mays Power Mask.”



Since he’s a master pitch man (Snake Oil Salesman if you will) you can use this mask when making design pitches and sell your ideas with the power of Billy Mays!

9 I loathe politics. I have friends on both sides of the political fence and I think when life is all said and done politics are the least of my concerns. That said I thought Billy would make a good candidate, at least in a humorous way.



Billy is a living exclamation mark and he wants your vote! He’ll rage against those tough stains of senatorial corruption and clean up politics like a dirty rag dipped in OxiClean. In other words he’d make a mighty president!

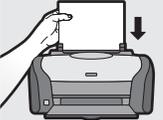


Of course a good presidential candidate needs political schwag. I was going to offer this as real product but apparently the only public figures you can create content on and sell stuff about is valid real-world political people. Apparently parody isn’t allowed on [Zazzle](#) who removed my product offerings?

You will be missed Billy Mays!



1. Print: PDF Download.



2. Cut-Out: Trim on dotted line.



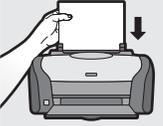
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