

= Dan Castellaneta =

Daniel Louis " Dan " Castellaneta (born October 29 , 1957) is an American actor , voice actor , comedian , singer and screenwriter . Noted for his long @-@ running role as Homer Simpson on the animated television series The Simpsons , he voices many other characters on the show , including Abraham " Grampa " Simpson , Barney Gumble , Krusty the Clown , Sideshow Mel , Groundskeeper Willie , Mayor Quimby and Hans Moleman .

Born in Oak Park , Illinois , a suburb of Chicago , Castellaneta started taking acting classes at a young age . He would listen to his father 's comedy records and do impressions of the artists . After graduating from Northern Illinois University , Castellaneta joined Chicago 's Second City in 1983 , and performed with the troupe until 1987 . He was cast in The Tracey Ullman Show , which debuted in 1987 . The Tracey Ullman Show included a series of animated shorts about a dysfunctional family . Voices were needed for the shorts , so the producers decided to ask Castellaneta to voice Homer . His voice for the character started out as a loose impression of Walter Matthau , but later evolved into a more robust voice . The shorts would eventually be spun off into The Simpsons . Castellaneta has won four Primetime Emmy Awards for Outstanding Voice @-@ Over Performance for his work on the show as well as an Annie Award for Outstanding Individual Achievement in the Field of Animation in 1993 . Castellaneta has co @-@ written four episodes of The Simpsons with his wife Deb Lacusta .

Castellaneta has also had roles in several other television programs , including the live @-@ action sitcom Sibs , The Adventures of Dynamo Duck , and the animated series Back to the Future : The Animated Series , Earthworm Jim , Aladdin , Hey Arnold ! , Rugrats , Futurama , and Darkwing Duck . In 1999 , he appeared in the Christmas special Olive , the Other Reindeer and won an Annie Award for his portrayal of the Postman . Castellaneta has also released a comedy CD , I Am Not Homer , and wrote and starred in a one @-@ person show titled Where Did Vincent van Gogh ?

= = Early life = =

Daniel Louis Castellaneta was born in Oak Park , Illinois , a suburb of Chicago , on October 29 , 1957 , to Elsie (née Lagorio , 1926 ? 2008) and Louis Castellaneta (1915 ? 2014) , an amateur actor who worked for a printing company . He is of Italian descent . Castellaneta became adept at impressions at a young age and his mother enrolled him in an acting class when he was sixteen years old . He would listen to his father 's comedy records and do impressions of the artists . He was a " devotee " of the works of many performers , including Alan Arkin and Barbara Harris and directors Mike Nichols and Elaine May . He attended Oak Park and River Forest High School and upon graduation , started attending Northern Illinois University (NIU) in the fall of 1975 .

Castellaneta studied art education , with the goal of becoming an art teacher . He became a student teacher and would entertain his students with his impressions . Castellaneta was also a regular participant in The Ron Petke and His Dead Uncle Show , a radio show at NIU . The show helped Castellaneta hone his skills as a voice @-@ over actor . He recalled " We did parodies and sketches , we would double up on , so you learned to switch between voices . I got my feet wet doing voiceover . The show was just barely audible , but we didn 't care . It was the fact that we got a chance to do it and write our own material . " He took a play @-@ writing class and auditioned for an improvisational show . A classmate first thought Castellaneta would " fall on his face with improvisation " but soon " was churning out material faster than [they] could make it work . "

= = Career = =

= = = Early career = = =

Castellaneta started acting after his graduation from Northern Illinois University in 1979 . He decided that if his career went nowhere he would still have a chance to try something else . He

began taking improvisation classes , where he met his future wife Deb Lacusta . Castellaneta started to work at The Second City , an improvisational theatre in Chicago , in 1983 and continued to work there until 1987 . During this period , he did voice @-@ over work with his wife for various radio stations . He auditioned for a role in The Tracey Ullman Show and his first meeting underwhelmed Tracey Ullman and the other producers . Ullman decided to fly to Chicago to watch Castellaneta perform . His performance that night was about a blind man who tries to become a comedian and Ullman later recalled that although there were flashier performances that night , Castellaneta made her cry . She was impressed and Castellaneta was hired .

= = = The Simpsons = = =

Castellaneta is most famous for his role as Homer Simpson on the longest running animated television show The Simpsons . The Tracey Ullman Show included a series of animated shorts about a dysfunctional family . Voices were needed for the shorts , so the producers decided to ask Castellaneta and fellow cast member Julie Kavner to voice Homer and Marge Simpson rather than hire more actors . Homer 's voice began as a loose impression of Walter Matthau , but Castellaneta could not " get enough power behind that voice " and could not sustain his Matthau impression for the nine- to ten @-@ hour long recording sessions . He tried to find something easier , so he " dropped the voice down " , and developed it into a more versatile and humorous voice during the second and third season of the half @-@ hour show . Castellaneta 's normal speaking voice has no similarity to Homer 's . To perform Homer 's voice , Castellaneta lowers his chin to his chest , and is said to " let his IQ go . " Castellaneta likes to stay in character during recording sessions , and tries to visualize a scene in his mind so that he can give the proper voice to it . Despite Homer 's fame , Castellaneta claims he is rarely recognized in public , " except , maybe , by a die @-@ hard fan . "

Castellaneta also provides the voices for numerous other characters , including Grampa Simpson , Barney Gumble , Krusty the Clown , Groundskeeper Willie , Mayor Quimby , Hans Moleman , Sideshow Mel , Itchy , Kodos , the Squeaky Voiced Teen and Gil Gunderson . Krusty 's voice is based on Chicago television 's Bob Bell , who had a very raspy voice and portrayed WGN @-@ TV 's Bozo the Clown from 1960 to 1984 . Barney 's trademark is a loud belch . During early recording sessions for the show , he recorded a new version of the belch for every episode but discovered that it was not easy for him to do it every time a script called for it . Castellaneta chose a recording of what he believed was his best belch and told the producers to make that the standard . Groundskeeper Willie 's first appearance was in the season two episode " Principal Charming " . The character was written as an angry janitor and Castellaneta was assigned to perform the voice . He did not know what voice to use and Sam Simon , who was directing at the time , suggested he use an accent . Castellaneta first tried using a Hispanic voicing , which Simon felt was too clichéd . He then tried a " big dumb Swede " , which was also rejected . For his third try , he used the voice of an angry Scotsman , which was deemed appropriate enough and was used in the episode . The voice was based partially on Angus Crock , a kilt @-@ wearing chef from the sketch comedy show Second City Television , who was portrayed by Dave Thomas . Mayor Quimby , who first appeared in " Bart Gets an F " , is a parody of various members of the Kennedy family . The episode script did not call for Quimby to be a parody of them , and Castellaneta improvised the accent . Sideshow Mel 's voice is Castellaneta 's impression of Kelsey Grammer , the voice of Sideshow Bob . Gil is a spoof of actor Jack Lemmon 's portrayal of Shelley Levene in the 1992 film adaptation of the play Glengarry Glen Ross . Show runner Mike Scully thought that Gil would be " a one @-@ shot thing " but " Dan Castellaneta was so funny at the table read doing the character , we kept making up excuses in subsequent episodes to put him in . " The Blue @-@ Haired Lawyer 's voice , as well as his demeanor , is based on lawyer Roy Cohn .

Castellaneta has won several awards for voicing Homer , including four Primetime Emmy Awards for " Outstanding Voice @-@ Over Performance " in 1992 for " Lisa 's Pony " , 1993 for " Mr. Plow " , 2004 for voicing several characters in " Today I Am a Clown " , and 2009 for voicing Homer in " Father Knows Worst " . In 1993 , Castellaneta was given a special Annie Award , " Outstanding Individual Achievement in the Field of Animation " , for his work as Homer on The Simpsons . In

2004 , Castellaneta and Julie Kavner (the voice of Marge) won a Young Artist Award for " Most Popular Mom & Dad in a TV Series " . Homer was placed second on TV Guide 's 2002 Top 50 Greatest Cartoon Characters , and in 2000 , Homer and the rest of the Simpson family were awarded a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame located at 7021 Hollywood Boulevard .

Until 1998 , Castellaneta was paid \$ 30 @, @ 000 per episode . During a pay dispute in 1998 , Fox threatened to replace the six main voice actors with new actors , going as far as preparing for casting of new voices . The dispute was soon resolved and he received \$ 125 @, @ 000 per episode until 2004 when the voice actors demanded that they be paid \$ 360 @, @ 000 an episode . The issue was resolved a month later , and Castellaneta earned \$ 250 @, @ 000 per episode . After salary re @-@ negotiations in 2008 , the voice actors received approximately \$ 400 @, @ 000 per episode . Three years later , with Fox threatening to cancel the series unless production costs were cut , Castellaneta and the other cast members accepted a 25 percent pay cut , down to over \$ 300 @, @ 000 per episode .

In the early 1990s , Castellaneta and Deb Lacusta wrote a script for an episode in which Barney becomes sober . They pitched their idea to showrunner Al Jean . Jean liked the story , but turned it down because he felt that it was too similar to " Duffless " , an episode that the writers were already working on . They waited several years and offered their script , which they updated , to then @-@ show runner Mike Scully , who liked it and had them make a few changes . Their script became the eleventh season episode " Days of Wine and D 'oh 'ses " , which first aired April 9 , 2000 . Castellaneta and his wife have also written the episodes " Gump Roast " , " The Ziff Who Came to Dinner " , " Kiss Kiss , Bang Bangalore " , and " The Fight Before Christmas " . In 2007 , they were nominated for a Writers Guild of America Award for the episode " Kiss Kiss , Bang Bangalore " . Castellaneta is also credited as a consulting producer .

= = = Further career = = =

Castellaneta has been a regular cast member in several other television series . In 1991 , he played Warren Morris in the short @-@ lived ABC live @-@ action sitcom Sibs . Heide Perlman , creator of Sibs , wrote the part with Castellaneta in mind . He also provided the voice of the eponymous character in The Adventures of Dynamo Duck , Megavolt in Darkwing Duck , " Doc " Emmett Brown in Back to the Future : The Animated Series , the lead character in Earthworm Jim and several characters , including Grandpa Phil and the Jolly Olly Man , the mentally unstable ice cream truck driver , on Nickelodeon 's Hey Arnold ! . He guest starred as The Robot Devil in five episodes of Futurama , as well as the film The Beast with a Billion Backs .

Castellaneta has also made guest appearances in a number of television series episodes . In 1992 , he guest @-@ starred in an episode of the legal drama L.A. Law , as a Homer Simpson meetable character at a California amusement park who is dismissed for inappropriate behavior while in costume . In 2005 , he appeared in the episode " Sword of Destiny " in Arrested Development as Dr. Stein , a deadpan incompetent doctor . In 2005 , Castellaneta guest @-@ starred as Joe Spencer in the Stargate SG @-@ 1 season eight episode " Citizen Joe " . He also appeared in episodes of ALF , Campus Ladies , Castle , Entourage , Everybody Loves Raymond , Frasier , Friends , Greek , How I Met Your Mother , Mad About You , Married ... with Children , Murphy Brown , NYPD Blue , Parks and Recreation , Reba , Reno 911 ! , That ' 70s Show , Veronica Mars , Hot in Cleveland , Yes , Dear , and Desperate Housewives .

He appeared as the Genie in the Aladdin sequel The Return of Jafar and on the 1994 Aladdin television series . The Genie had been voiced by Robin Williams in Aladdin , and Castellaneta described replacing him as " sort of like stepping into Hamlet after Laurence Olivier did it , how can you win ? " He also provided Genie 's voice in the Kingdom Hearts video game series for both Kingdom Hearts and Kingdom Hearts II (with archived audio used for Kingdom Hearts : Chain of Memories and its remake as well as for the later HD collections HD 1 @. @ 5 Remix and HD 2 @. @ 5 Remix) . Castellaneta portrayed Aaron Spelling in the 2004 NBC film Behind the Camera : The Unauthorized Story of Charlie 's Angels , which followed the true story of how Spelling created the show . Other films in which Castellaneta has appeared include Nothing in Common , Say Anything

... , Super Mario Bros. , The Client , Space Jam , My Giant , The Simpsons Movie , Rugrats in Paris : The Movie , Recess : School 's Out , Hey Arnold ! : The Movie , The Cat in the Hat and The Pursuit of Happyness . In 2000 , he won an Annie Award for his portrayal of the Postman in the animated Christmas television special Olive , the Other Reindeer . In 2006 , he appeared in Jeff Garlin 's independent film I Want Someone to Eat Cheese With along with several other Second City alumni .

On February 22 , 2000 , his first music CD Two Lips was published . It was followed on April 23 , 2002 by his first comedy CD , I Am Not Homer , in which he and his wife perform several comedy skits . The majority of the sketches had been written and performed before the CD was recorded , and Castellaneta thought that it would be a good idea to preserve them " since [he and Lacusta] don 't perform them much anymore . " Some came from their sketch series on a local radio station in Chicago and had to be lengthened from the " two @-@ minute bits " that they were originally , while several others were stage sketches performed in a comedy club in Santa Monica . Additionally , " Citizen Kane " , a sketch in which two people discuss the film Citizen Kane with different meanings , was something the pair had performed at an art gallery . Castellaneta noted that " we already knew that these skits were funny , [but] some of them we polished and tightened . " The skits were principally written by improvising from a basic point , transcribing the results and then editing them to the finished scene . Castellaneta chose the title I Am Not Homer as a parody of Leonard Nimoy 's famous first autobiography I Am Not Spock , as well as to show that most of the comedy featured " is not the typical Homer comedy . "

Alongside his television and film work , Castellaneta has appeared in a number of theatrical productions . In 1992 , he starred in Deb & Dan 's Show alongside his wife . In 1995 , Castellaneta started writing Where Did Vincent van Gogh ? , a one man play in which he portrays a dozen different characters , including artist Vincent van Gogh . He first officially performed the play at the ACME Comedy Theatre in Los Angeles in 1999 . In 2007 , he appeared in The Bicycle Men at The King 's Head Theatre in London .

Castellaneta hosted the final of New York comedy show Thrills and Spills on 31 December 2015 . The final was held in Montgomery , Alabama .

= = Personal life = =

Castellaneta lives in Los Angeles with his wife Deb Lacusta . He is a vegetarian , teetotaler and exercises regularly (despite being known for voicing very opposite type characters in The Simpsons) . Castellaneta also practises T 'ai Chi . His mother Elsie Castellaneta died in January 2008 aged 81 . His father died at age 99 on August 15 , 2014 ; both had " Simpsons " episodes dedicated to their memories .

= = Filmography = =

= = Discography = =

Also featured in :

The Simpsons Sing the Blues (1990)
Songs in the Key of Springfield (1997)
The Yellow Album (1998)
Go Simpsonic with The Simpsons (1999)
The Simpsons : Testify (2007)

= = Awards = =