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The world of Iranian cartoons and caricatures has a rich history that dates back to pre-revolutionary times, with only around 20 cartoonists before the 1979 Islamic Revolution, including non-professional artists numbering up to 40. However, in the wake of the revolution, a groundbreaking trio of cartoonists from the University of Tehran's College of Fine Arts, namely Asghar Kafshchian Moqaddam, Mohammad-Hossein Niroumand, and Massoud Shojai Tabatabai, formed the chicory (a bitter but healing plant) group that laid the foundation for numerous firsts in the world of cartoon.

The following text is an exclusive interview with Shojai Tabatabai, the editor-in-chief of Iran Cartoon website and a prominent cartoonist.

He is the program development of the first Geekartoon cartoon contest in Greece in 2006. He was among the jury members of various cartoon festivals and contests namely the International Caricature Competition in Syria, China Guangxi International Cartoon Contest, Aydin Dogan in Turkey, Piracicaba in Brazil, and San Antonio cartoon contest in Cuba. These visionary pioneers collaborated to create the first expert-level caricature publication titled 'Kayhan Caricature', establish the first Iranian House of Cartoon, and launch the world's first expert-level cartoon and caricature website. Additionally, they organized the inaugural cartoon biennial, providing an unparalleled platform for Iranian artists to showcase their talents on the international stage.

#### Connecting artists worldwide

Fast forward to the new

derie. Moreover, the website serves as a launchpad for global cartoon competitions, while meticulously analyzing and examining standout works within the field. With an extensive gallery of educational films and thousands

international events. In a celebrated move, Iran Cartoon took center stage during the 15th edition of the Fajr Festival of Visual Arts. The platform published a book of the year, showcasing the bests of the bests of the

world's leading cartoonists, whose average age hovered around 60. The masterpieces were later displayed in a visually stunning art exhibition. The Iran Cartoon website's impact goes beyond the

**Humanitarian impact**  
The platform's significance is further demonstrated through its humanitarian approach. In the aftermath of the tragic death of Aylan Kurdi, a three-year-old Syrian boy who drowned while

trying to reach the Greek island of Kos, Iran Cartoon swiftly organized the International Aylan Cartoon & Illustration Exhibition, which saw the participation of 202 artists from 40 countries. Iran Cartoon's pivotal role

Communication with artists from around the world is facilitated through a comprehensive data bank, along with various social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Telegram, WhatsApp, and phone numbers. Latin

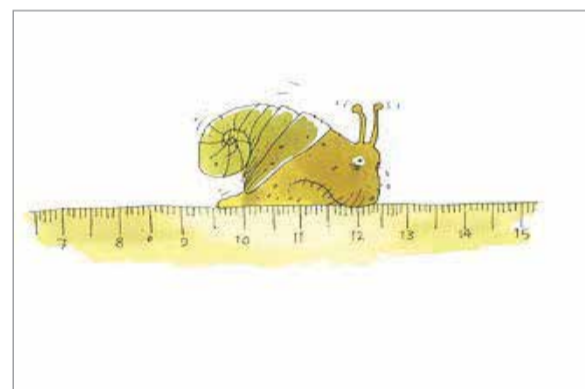
## Iran Cartoon: A global hub of artistic expression, inspiration

of images, the platform is a treasure trove of artistic inspiration.

At the core of its mission, the Iran Cartoon website continually connects with artists worldwide, facilitating international cartoon contests and exhibitions. Renowned artists and lecturers are frequently invited to visit other countries.

#### Global reach

The significance of Iran Cartoon transcends borders; the website attracts over 12 million visits each year, with June recording an impressive 12 million visits and July not far behind with over 10 million visits. On a daily basis, the website welcomes a staggering minimum of 372,000 visits and a maximum of 430,000 visits, illustrating its global influence. Indeed, artists from nearly every corner of the world, encompassing

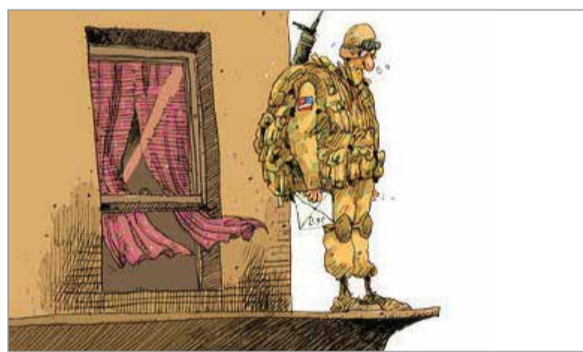


realm of art appreciation. It plays a crucial role in responding promptly to world events through art, providing artists with an outlet to express their reactions to pressing issues. For example, in response to the Qur'an burning incident, artists from across the globe expressed their outrage, leading to the creation of a powerful 65-piece exhibition titled 'Fire against the Light.'



#### Changing perceptions

Iran Cartoon has shown a remarkable ability to respond promptly and creatively to global events that demand attention. When George W. Bush's statement labeled Iran the center of wickedness, the website of the American syndicate Cagle opened a section titled "War with Iran," provoking Iranian artists to create cartoons responding to American sol-



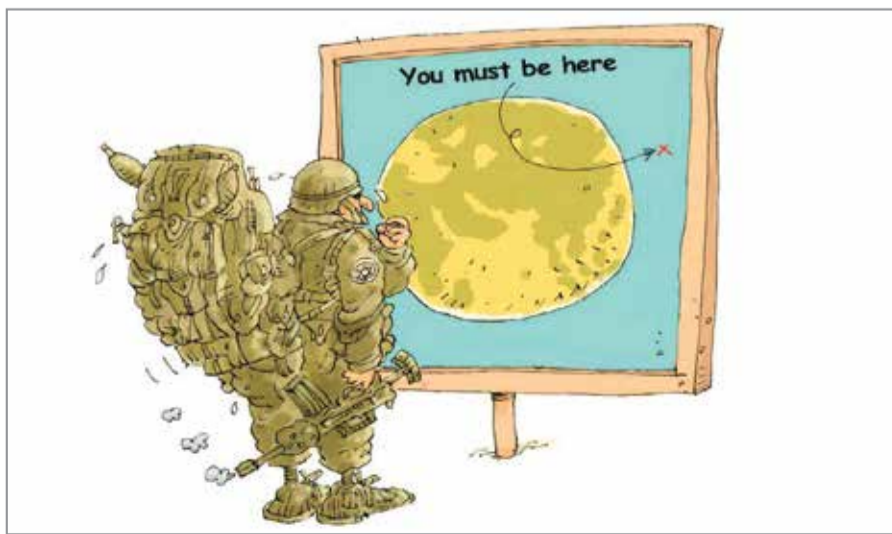
millennium, and the Iran Cartoon website emerged in 2000 with a mission to introduce Iranian cartoonists to the world, delivering content in the English language. In due course, the platform expanded its reach, launching the Persian section with an IR domain, transforming the website into the renowned "International Center of Iran Cartoon." Now, the website's latest triumph is the 'Fire against the Light' exhibition, captivating audiences both physically and virtually from July 26 to August 5.

The Iranian Cartoon website remains a dynamic and up-to-date resource, providing the latest news and information on the world of cartoons and caricatures. Its impressive roster includes prominent domestic and international artists, allowing them to shine and fostering a spirit of creative camaraderie.

200 countries, explore the website, making it a truly international hub for artistic expression.

When it comes to online searches for "cartoon contest," Iran Cartoon reigns supreme, topping the list among 300 million search results. Even notable competitors like The New Yorker and European Cartoon Center (ECC) from Belgium are unable to claim the top spot. This feat underscores the paramount importance of the Iran Cartoon website in the world of cartoons and caricatures.

Organizers of global cartoon contests universally recognize the platform's significance and approach Iran Cartoon for publishing crucial event details, including dates, venues, and rules and regulations. Indeed, the website has solidified its reputation as the preeminent platform for



extends beyond its own borders. The website once received a request from the Belgian ECC to submit cartoons and caricatures. The response was overwhelming, with numerous Iranian works surpassing Belgian submissions. Iran's prominence in the cartoon realm places it among the top three countries globally, alongside Brazil and Turkey, further elevating the stature of international competitions that feature Iranian artists. Some competitions even seek Iran Cartoon's expertise in selecting competent jury members. With a robust server capacity of 500 gigabytes and over six million pages, the website boasts several galleries, particularly in its English version. On a daily basis, Iran Cartoon showcases 200 to 300 works, providing a diverse array of artistic expressions.

diers' advice. While initially expecting hostility and wickedness, Cagle was met with thoughtful responses from Iranian artists, leading to a positive change in American perception.

In conclusion, Iran Cartoon stands as a testament to the power of artistic expression to unite the world, providing a platform for artists from diverse backgrounds to share their vision and respond to world events creatively. With its unwavering commitment to fostering artistic talent, addressing global issues, and promoting dialogue through art, Iran Cartoon continues to be a global force in the world of cartoons and caricatures. Its role as a facilitator and problem solver underscores the impact of art in shaping perceptions and fostering understanding across cultures and borders.