

Al Arabi Al Sabban

He is considered one of the pioneers of the art of caricature in Morocco. He was born in the city of Kenitra, north of Rabat, in 1948. He worked as a teacher and began publishing caricatures regularly since 1968. He contributed to the issuance of Moroccan newspapers specialized in caricature, the first of which was the newspaper "Akhbar Al-Souq" which achieved a massive spread in 1978, (it achieved a record distribution in the seventies and eighties, reaching 120 thousand copies), the most recent of which was the experience of "The Slingshot" in the year 2000. He joined the staff of the newspaper "Al-Alam" where he worked as a cartoonist and press editor.

He also worked for the newspaper «Le Ponion» in French. He was banned from working in the press for political reasons in 1986 and 1987, due to a cartoon criticizing the relationship between Morocco, the United States of America and Iran during that period. He was a founding member of the first association of Arab cartoonists in Damascus, headed by the assassinated Palestinian artist Naji Al-Ali in 1980

He held the first caricature exhibition in his hometown of Kenitra, Morocco in 1966. He also held more than twenty individual and group exhibitions at the international level. His artistic works were approved in five graduation theses at the Higher Institute of Press in Rabat, and a book was published for him by Sheraa Agency, which includes a group of his distinguished works that enriched the Moroccan treasury in this field. His drawings were published by a number of Arab platforms, including the London-based Al-Quds Al-Arabi newspaper

Chosen by the Moroccan Association of Cartoonists as honorary president for the year 2020

Al-Sabban speaks Arabic, and Berber languages (mother tongue)

He was also known for the caricature "Spur" that he created. The "Spur" was chosen as a national character by Radio Tangiers in 1981. The "Spur" is a popular critical figure that contradicts the vulgar political, social and economic conditions in Morocco and abroad.

Books & Publications

- Al-Arabi Al-Sabban - caricaturist and satirical artist, Prof. Abdul Karim Gharib, 2009

Awards

- Prize of the Third Caricature Exhibition, Damascus, Syria 1981
- Prize of the "Third World" exhibition, Egypt 1991
- "Radio Tangiers" award, where the character he created the "Spur" was chosen as character of the Year, 1991
- The Civilizational Communication Award for the futurist Al-Mahdi Al-Manjara in 1992
- Bouzgheba Award for Humor, 2009
- Honor Mention from the French Institute, Fez, Morocco, 2010
- Honor Mention from the National Caricature Festival in Chefchaouen 2012

- Honor Mention from the Bani Ammar Zerhoun Festival within its ninth session, the city of Moulay Idriss Zerhoun and the Kasbah of Beni Ammar under the title "Justice and Equality for All" 2011
- Member of the Jury, 3rd International Cartoon Festival in Africa, Morocco, 2019

Exhibitions

- Solo exhibition: Morocco 1966
- Solo exhibition: Bulgaria 1989

He participated in many Arab and international exhibitions

- France: 1980 and 1996
- Soviet Union: 1980
- Human Rights Exhibition, Tunis: 1984
- Egypt: 1988
- Brazil: 1988, 1991, 1993
- Britain: 1989
- Algeria: 1990
- Libya: 1993
- Turkey: 1994

In one of the interviews, Al-Sabban made a precise note about the differences between the single caricature and the caricature that accompanies a written comment, saying that the caricature itself is a comment on a certain reality, or an event, adding that the written comment eliminates the linguistic barrier between the caricature drawing and the receiving audience.

"The comment is intended for the drawing to have satirical elements that are no less than the irony of the caricature itself," considering that "it is part of the idea that the artist wishes to convey to the audience, and it may complement the messages contained in the caricature."