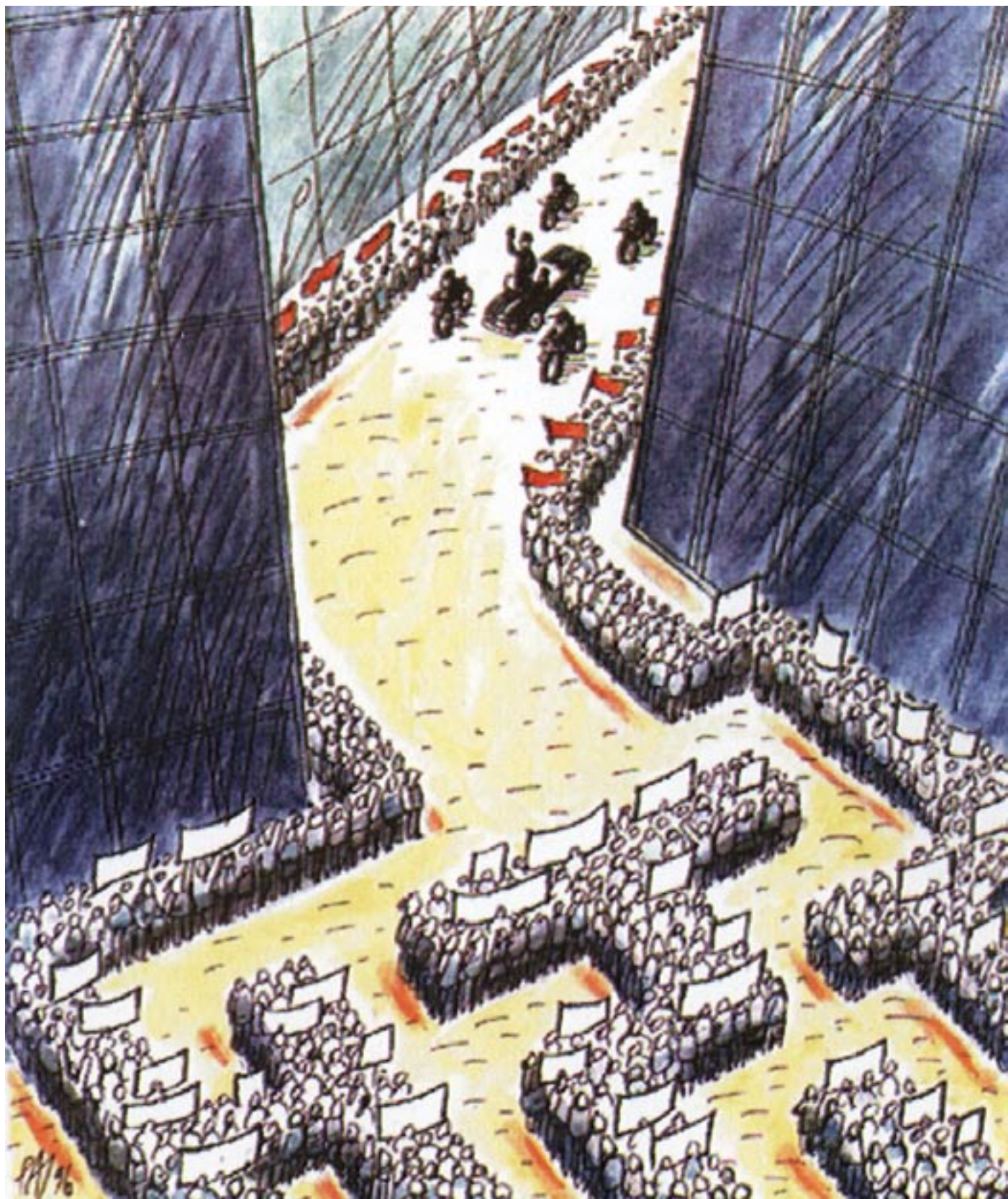


# IRAN CARTOON

Irancartoon PDF Magazine/No.3/Oct. 2008



# THE LABYRINTH MAN

## INTERVIWE WITH JULIAN PENAPAI

### ► Why did you choose cartoon?

Because the architecture did not offer me the chance to express myself as I wished. That is why I chose cartooning, here I feel free like the fish in the water.

### ► What was your first published work?

I began in 1973 in URZICA Humor Magazine with a drawing - the classic island - drawing what reflected my need for spiritual freedom in a society overfilled with restrictions. Now there is democracy and it is good.

### ► Which cartoonist more impressed your works?

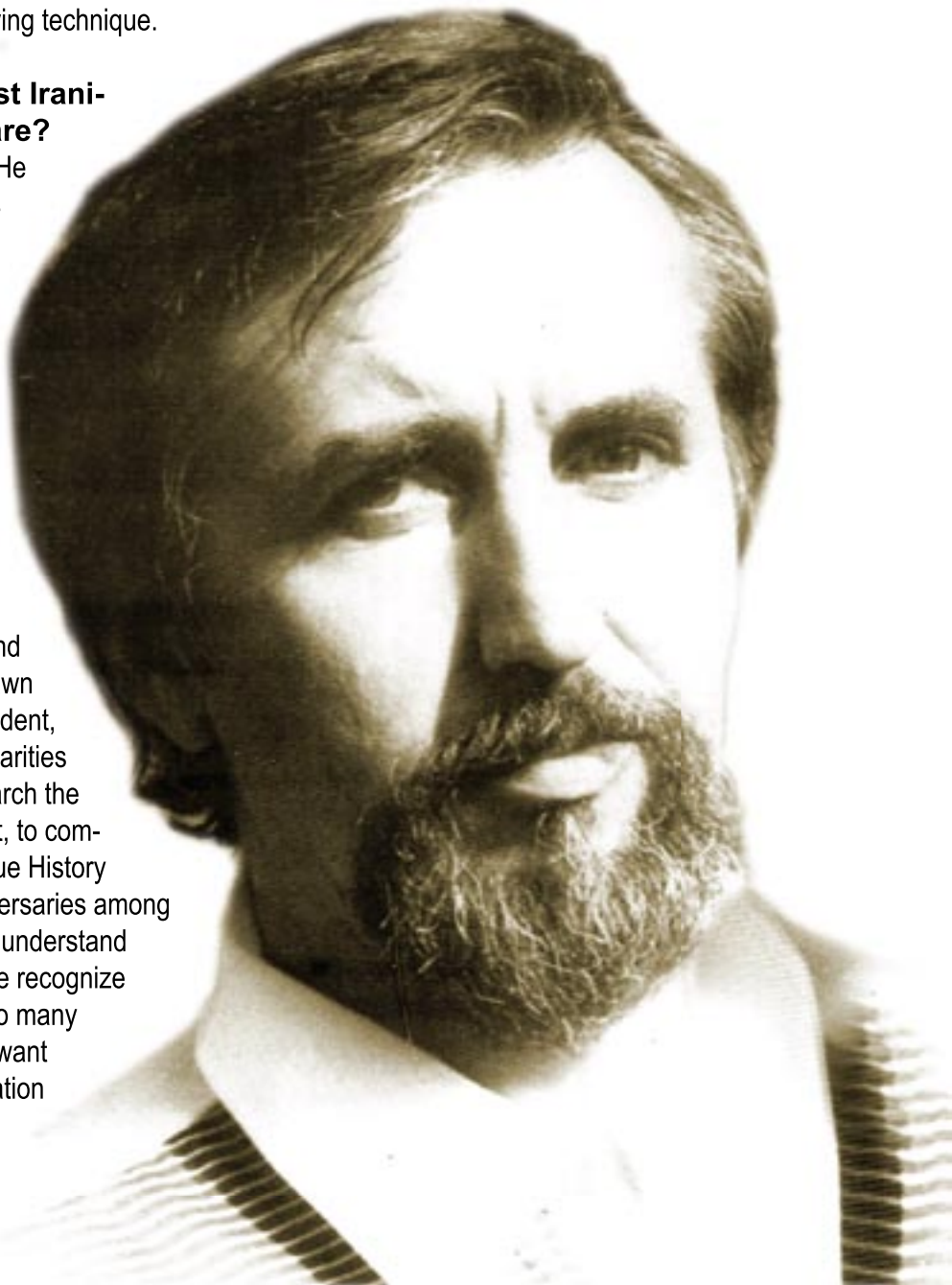
At first Matty Aslan influenced me, the most talented and popular Romanian editorial cartoonist. Later I liked Oton Reisinger and Zlatkovsky, but in my sub consciousness my mind was working on the model of Bosc and Saul Steinberg. With all those influenced I was left without a specific well defined style. Chancing the prizes, I was always looking for productivity and efficiency. That is why I admire Kosobukin which has productivity and also a specific style. In my opinion the success of my drawings is due to my ideas, not especially to the drawing technique.

### ► In your opinion who the best Iranians and foreign cartoonists are?

Kambiz is the best Iranian cartoonist. He is leading an entire «army» of masters such as : Touka, Javad, Baniasadi, Shahidi, Jahanshahi, Jamal, Azimi, Bahrami, Divandari, Farhad and a series of very talented young artists. You all together are a real power in cartooning.

### ► What was your best prize?

Of course that the Grand Prix from Yomiuri 1991. But also was a big disappointment because in 2000 I found out that my idea was already been drawn at Skopje in 1984. Because of this incident, I now became the «godfather» of similarities as I am now nicknamed. I like to research the old and new concepts from cartoon art, to compare them and to expose them as a true History of Ideas. In this way I made some adversaries among some of the colleagues, which did not understand correctly my actions. But you all please recognize that we need this history. There are too many remakes on the same concepts and I want more innovations from the new generation of cartoonists.





► **What was your best cartoon?**

It is hard for me to choose from «The time tunnel» (Yomiuri 1989), «Quo vadis» (N.Hodja 2000) and «Labyrinth» (Tehran 1997). Maybe you can tell me your opinion!

► **Have you ever seen a idea in your dreams?**

Some ideas come from Up there, but I look and think about for the most of them. The themes of the cartooning contest are a challenge and force me to find new ideas.

► **What would you do if you were not a cartoonist?**

I am so proud of my job that I refuse to think about something else.

► **Do you more like periodical or exhibition cartoon?**

I had a lot of personal exhibitions but I do not like to open new ones. A lot of work and less money. As long as the daily newspaper and the two magazines that I work for, buy all of my drawings, I am satisfied.



► **Have you ever been punished for your cartoons?**

In the communist regimen I was lucky to get away with it, because I was careful with the limitations. Now I have no restriction or boundaries.

► **Why most of your cartoons are colored?**

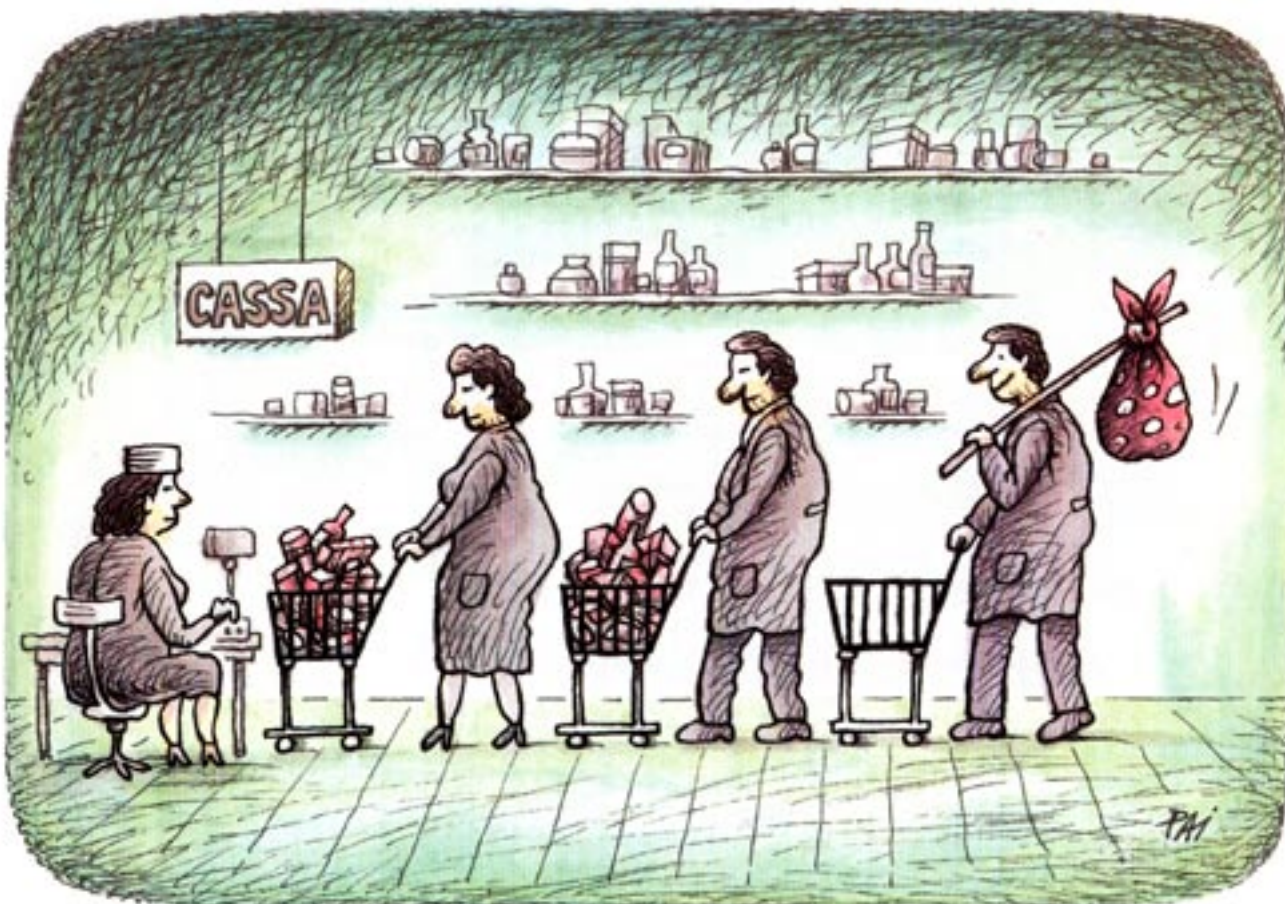
Because this is the trend. The entertainment and the commercial habits requests this. But I was hoping you would ask me something about my subjects and I will answer : I would have wanted a portofolio with more funnier subjects, but it is clear the black humor pre-dominate over my work.

► **Which you use color in your works?**

I hope that I use my colors in a way that would highlight my idea.

► **What's your opinion about Saul Steinberg**

The Romanian Saul Steinberg - because his education was formed in Romania - is the «father» of the modern cartoon art. He helped us to make a 50 years leap in the future of cartooning. A genius!







▲ Julian Penapai in the Iranian House of Cartoon, among some of Iran's Professional cartoonists

► **What's the specialty of a good cartoon?**

The recipe of a good cartoon ? As the poster, a cartoon is a good cartoon if you can «read» it as you pass by in the bus. If the drawing does not have a clear idea, it has nothing. A cartoon lives through its idea, as I always said.

► **What's your opinion about «Iranian House of Cartoon»?**

Iranian House of Cartoon is a launch platform for all of you, and by the international contests that you organize you build a great image of Iran abroad. I owe very much to this «House». On Google and Yahoo, Julian PENA-PAI exists thanks to you, and this appreciation of yours honors me.

► **What's your idea about site of Iran Cartoon?**

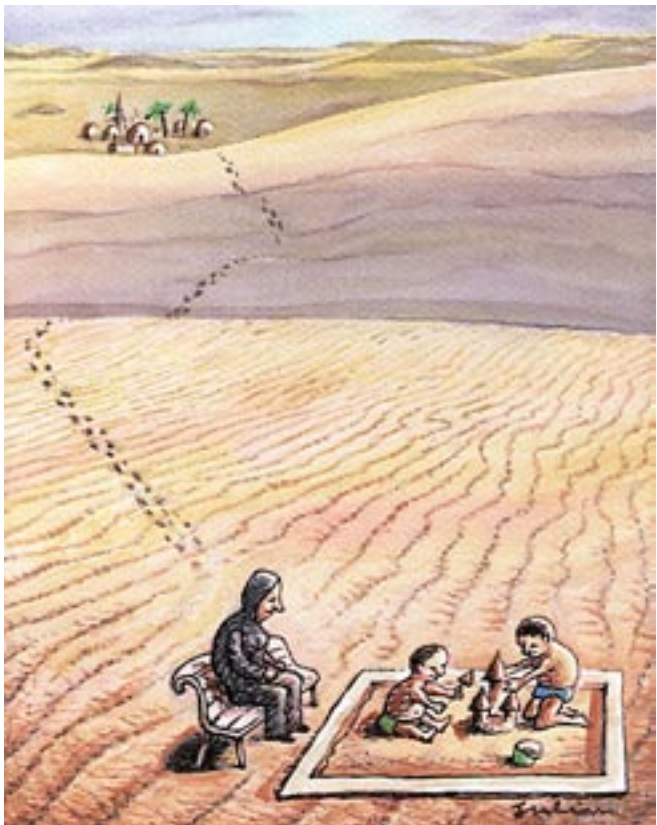
Your website is very useful, dynamic and always well informed and up to date. The professional and the amateur finds here everything that he looks for. The team of Massoud Shojai is always up to the standard, and Massoud is the right man on the right spot.

► **What about your Iranian friends?**

I have unforgettable memories about you all from my visit in 2004. And our friendship resists because is based on mutual appreciation.

► **Describe Penapai in one sentence?**

A cartoonists that lives happily through cartooning.



► **How can become Penapai?**

How can you become a Penapai ? But why become a Penapai when you can become more than a Penapai, a Zlatkovsky perhaps ? Anyway, you need 35 years of work to become a Penapai.

► **What's your hobby?**

I do not have time for hobbies. Cartoon is my hobby and my work.

► **What's your best wishes?**

I accomplished almost all of my dreams regarding my job. I consider myself a lucky man. At my 60 years of age I think about my health.

► **Have you ever been disappointed by yourself?**

I do not have such disappointments, but I wish that I had much more talent at drawing, because regarding ideas I am strong.



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