

Cuban cartoonist won in France his long-sought cow

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Angel Boligan, aka Boli, cartoonist native from Ariguanabo, was stunned after he was awarded with a “meatball” in *Saint Just le Martel*, little cattle town in France.

He is the first Cuban-born cartoonist in receiving such award. We talked about the story and the cow via email from Mexico —country where he is living right now—, even though he still feels like a farmer from San Antonio de los Banos.

For how long has *Saint Just le Martel* been giving cows as the award?

The Festival in St. Just was born in 1982. Since 1987, a cow is awarded to one cartoonist. Therefore, this is cow number 30!

More than 200 cartoonists competed this year. Did you compete with already published or unpublished works? What did you do?

Cartoonists send their published or unpublished works and a jury, or commission decides the winner of the year. But I believe the work of the year outweighs the drawings. Last year, one hundred of my drawings were exhibited. I was asked to send thirty this year. But I also know they follow my work via social media.

Is it true you stay in the villagers’ houses?

Yes, it is really a very small town fifteen kilometers away from the city of Limoges. At the very beginning, they held the event in a circus tent and villagers welcomed contestants in their homes. A majestic cultural center was built to carry out the exhibitions and events, but visitors continue staying at the villagers' houses. This is a very nice tradition that citizens wait for every year. Of course, they must be noticed some months in advance if you plan to attend and wait for the confirmation.

Why did you want to attend this event?

I received the call in my house in San Antonio de los Banos every year since 1987. The invitation was sympathetic since they urge me travel to any point in France, and they were responsible for taking me to St. Just. I always listened to comments and anecdotes from colleagues who attended and winning the cow as the award. I think many colleagues would want to participate as St. Just is heaven for cartoonists and...winning a cow.

Are you the first Cuban to win it?

Yes, several French cartoonists won the cow such as Wolinski, Tignous, Cabu (they were all murdered in the attacks to Charlie Hedo). In recent years, the cow has been awarded to Venezuelan Rayma, American Cagle, Israelite Kichka, and Tunisian Gueddar.

What did you do with the cow?

The cow is immense and her name is Glycine. She escaped once she stepped down the truck and ran all over the town until we captured her near the church. There I knew I was the chosen one to own her. The truth is I had a hard time to convince her. As farmer, I persuaded her with patience. Everyone wanted a photo with her. I was nervous about how should I take this cow home but I was relieved when I was told the cow would remain in Limonges and someone would pay the price to me!

How many international awards do you have?

174 with this one.

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