

MASSIMO BELARDINELLI

In the summer of 1966 two positive things happened in my life: military service had finished and I met a brilliant artist. He was Massimo Belardinelli, born in Rome on 5th June 1938. His father's hobby was painting, and he painted high quality oil figures on canvas.

Massimo is a cartoonist more recognized in England than in Italy, where hundreds of his work were published in weekly English comics (from the middle of the 60s until the end of the 80s).

This interview took place in his garden, full of wooden sculptures of fantastic animals, a world of fantasy!

In which moment of your life did you decide to become a comic artist?

When I was very little and my mother took me to the cinema to watch Walt Disney's 'Fantasia', in that moment I decided that when I grew up, I wanted to be a cartoon artist.

What did you do then, as in 1966 I saw a backdrop for an animated cartoon by you which was 50 – 60cm in height, which was then developed to two metres in height?

In the 60s I started working in the field of animated cartoons, in Sergio Rosi's office, principally following the

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development of various action backdrops, like those you remember.

However the animated cartoon came about by teamwork and I realised that I wasn't satisfied with this, so I decided to design comic strips, which was much more individual. I started designing only backgrounds which were my specialty, then slowly, I acquired experience and started also to design characters.

Which cartoons did you design in the Rosi Office?

Together with Giorgio Cambotti we designed weekly titles for the English editing company Fleetway for 'Steel Claw' through the Euro office of Rinaldo Dami and we had to imitate the style of Jesus Fiasco, who was the owner and graphic creator of the character. In that period Fleetway also published a pocket series. In fact in England, Fleetway published a series of pocket books which were requested by several publishers for the Italian market. Barracuda, Jonny Nero, Spider and Steel Claw. The last one, we completed in the Rosi office and also the pocket series.

Did you only work for English publications in the Rosi office?

No, around 1968 together with the group we created other characters such as Kriminal, Messalina and Jacula.



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