

Milo Manara is born in Luson, in the province of Bolzano, on 12 September 1945. Given his natural talents, his secondary education is at a private art school. After successfully completing high school, he moves to Verona where he begins working as an assistant to acclaimed Spanish sculptor Miguel Ortiz Berrocal. At the same time, he enrolls at the Faculty of Architecture in Venice. Inspired by the latest *bande dessinée* which the artist's French wife brings back from Paris – including Jean-Claude Forest's *Barbarella* and Guy Peellaert's *Jodelle* and *Pravda* – Manara discovers comics, having never been a fan of them in his childhood and adolescence, partly because of restrictions placed by his mother. He is drawn to the fact that it is a mass-produced medium, which differentiates it from the one-offness of pictorial art and makes it akin to literature, including the way it can be enjoyed by a wide audience. Manara decides to try his hand at the world of comic books, seeing it as a chance to carve out a role for himself in society.

Towards the end of the 1960s, he takes his first steps in comic book publishing in Milan, where he meets Mario Gomboli, who introduces him to the publisher Furio Viano, who in turn gives Manara his first break as the author of detective erotica stories in the *Genius* series. First conceived as a photostory, *Genius* (a masked vigilante created in the wake of the success of *Diabolik*) becomes a comic book from the episode entitled "Il morso della lupa" (The She-Wolf's Bite), which first hits the newsstands on 15 September 1969, with drawings by Milo Manara.

Manara then leaves his university studies and, alongside Silverio Pisu – with whom he previously founded the satirical magazine *Telerompo* – creates two works that are important milestones in his career: *The Ape* and *Alessio*, which mark his debut as a true *auteur* in this genre.

In 1978 he creates his first successful character and, for the first time, he is also credited as the writer of the story *HP and Giuseppe Bergman*. "HP" is a clear reference to his teacher and mentor Hugo Pratt, whom he makes one of the main characters.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s he is commissioned by *Playmen* magazine to create *Click!*, a densely erotic story for which Manara receives extraordinary and unexpected worldwide success. From now on, Manara's career veers emphatically towards erotic production.

This period also sees the first of two works written by Hugo Pratt, for which he draws two stories that are fundamental for his career and for Italian adventure comics: *Indian Summer*, published serially in *Corto Maltese* magazine from 1983 to 1985, followed by *El Gaucho*, published by *Il Grifo* from 1991 to 1995.

In 1981 another story that is important for Manara is published in France by *Pilote* magazine, this time with a western setting: *The Paperman*. The story is written by Manara himself. Immediately after this, he creates Honey, perhaps his best-known female character, who appears in *Butterscotch* and six short stories entitled *Hidden Camera*.

In 1987 he begins his collaboration with Federico Fellini. The two were introduced by Vincenzo Mollica some time before. After their meeting, Fellini asks Manara to illustrate a script idea that is published in the *Corriere della Sera*. Manara takes Fellini's text and transforms it into an extraordinary comic strip, *Trip to Tulum*, which appears in *Corto Maltese*. The relationship between the two artists grows: Fellini returns to one of his most personal projects and together they bring to life *Il viaggio di G. Mastorna detto Fernet* (The Journey of G. Mastorna, Known as Fernet), published by *Il Grifo*, a magazine headed by Vincenzo Mollica.

In the early 1990s he illustrates *Fantasex*, a collection of erotica and science fiction stories, which he follows with comic book treatments of three literary classics: *Gulliveriana*, *Manara's Kama Sutra* and *The Golden Ass*. The decade closes with the return of Giuseppe Bergman in what can be considered one of his most beautiful stories, *To See the Stars: The Urban Adventures of Giuseppe Bergman*. This particular work is a reflection on art at the start of the new millennium, through the

memory of three great friends who have departed: Andrea Pazienza, Federico Fellini, Hugo Pratt.

After numerous publications in France, now it is the turn of the United States. Thanks to a collaboration with DC Comics for the most *autorial* of his labels, Vertigo, Manara creates *Desire*, a story that is included in *The Sandman: Endless Nights* by Neil Gaiman. A few years later, Marvel Comics also commissions Manara and Chris Claremont to create a story in the *X-Men* series entitled *X-Women*.

From the texts of eclectic Chilean author Alejandro Jodorowsky, between 2004 and 2010, he draws a comic book in four episodes about the influential and turbulent House of Borgia.

In 2015 he publishes the first volume in a highly ambitious project on Caravaggio for Panini Comics entitled *The Palette and the Sword*. The second part, *La Grazia*, released in 2019, again for Panini Comics, concludes the adventures of the great Michelangelo Merisi.