Nanci Santos, "Entry on: Donald Duck and the Ducks of Capitoline Hill [Paperino e le papere del Campidoglio] (Mickey Mouse [Topolino], 2144) by Giorgio Cavazzano , Gigi Proietti [Luigi Proietti] , Alessandro Sisti", peer-reviewed by Susan Deacy and Elżbieta Olechowska. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2018). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/579. Entry version as of November 11, 2026.

Giorgio Cavazzano , Gigi Proietti [Luigi Proietti] , Alessandro Sisti

# Donald Duck and the Ducks of Capitoline Hill [Paperino e le papere del Campidoglio] (Mickey Mouse [Topolino], 2144)

*Italy*

TAGS: Barbarians Capitoline Hill Centurion Narcissus Praetorian Guard Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus

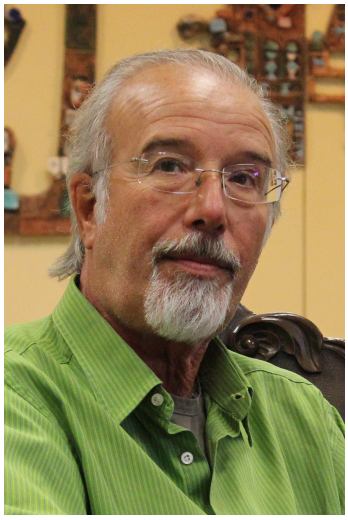
*We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.*

| General information | |
|---|---|
| *Title of the work* | Donald Duck and the Ducks of Capitoline Hill [Paperino e le papere del Campidoglio] (Mickey Mouse [Topolino], 2144) |
| *Country of the First Edition* | Italy |
| *Country/countries of popularity* | Brazil, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Netherland, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Sweden |
| *Original Language* | Italian |
| *First Edition Details* | Luigi Proietti, Alessandro Sisti, Giorgio Cavazzano, *Paperino e le papere del Campidoglio.* Italy: Walt Disney, 1997, 35 pp. |
| *ISBN* | ITL 2144-1 |
| *Genre* | Comics (Graphic works) |
| *Target Audience* | Children |
| *Author of the Entry* | Nanci Santos, OMC Contributor, nancisantos@hotmail.co.uk |
| *Peer-reviewer of the Entry* | Susan Deacy, University of Roehampton, s.deacy@roehampton.ac.uk<br>Elżbieta Olechowska, University of Warsaw, elzbieta.olechowska@gmail.com |



This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

## Creators



Giorgio Cavazzano by Claudio Martino, 2013. Retrieved from Wikimedia Commons, licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0 (accessed: December 21, 2021).

### Giorgio Cavazzano , b. 1947 (Illustrator)

Giorgio Cavazzano was born on 19 October 1947 in Venice, Italy. When he was twelve, he began working for his cousin, Luciano Capitanio, helping him colour comics for Mondadori. Later in his teens, he began an apprenticeship with the Italian cartoonist Romano Scarpa, later becoming his personal inker. ((Wikipedia) n.d.). He made his first debut as a cartoonist in 1967, with the story *Paperino e il singhiozzo a Martello.* Since then, he has drawn for Disney as well as for other editors including *Egmont,* for whom he drew stories for the saga *Dragon Lords* (2003). He has also drawn for the story *Il segreto del vetro,* a Spider-Man story set in Venice.

Bio prepared by Nanci Santos, OMC Contributor, nancisantos@hotmail.co.uk

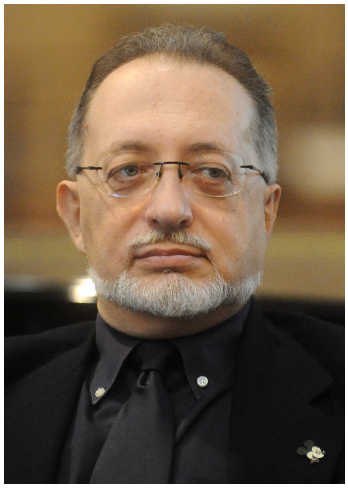
### Gigi Proietti [Luigi Proietti] , b. 1940 (Author)

Luigi Proietti, more famously known as Gigi Proeitti, is an Italian actor, director, voice actor, musician and singer. He was born on November 3, 1940 in Rome, Italy. He began studying law at the La Sapienza University, during which time he attended mimicry courses of the University Theatre Centre. In 1966, Proietti made his debut in cinema and television, with *Pleasant Nights* and *I Grandi Camaleonti*. He has also taken part in some international movies such as *The Appointment* (1969) and *Who is Killing the Great Chefs of Europe* (1978). He has also dubbed for certain films including *Aladdin*, where he voiced the Genie in the Italian version.



This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

Bio prepared by Nanci Santos, OMC Contributor,
nancisantos@hotmail.co.uk



Alessandro Sisti by Niccolò Caranti, 2016. Retrieved from Wikimedia Commons, licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0 (accessed: December 21, 2021).

**Alessandro Sisti , b. 1960**
**(Author)**

Alessandro Sisti, born on July 7, 1960 in Broni, Italy, began his career as a draftsman for Franco Fossati's studio, which, at the time, was responsible for Mickey Mouse screenplays. He wrote his first Mickey Mouse adventure in 1982, called *Mickey Mouse and the Mystery of the Satellites*, released in *Topolino* #1365. He also began working as a journalist for local newspapers such as the *Liguarian*. Whilst still writing for Disney, he also wrote for other comics such as *Big Mac Fargo*, published on *Corriere dei Piccoli*. He also produced, alongside Massimo Marconi, *The Economics of Uncle Scrooge*, published in the *Il Sole 24 Ore*, an economics-financial newspaper. Sisti has also worked for the comic series *PaperinikNew Adventures* (PKNA*), Pikappa series* (PK) and *PK*$^2$. He has also edited the screenplay for *Topolino-ino-ino* in *Topolino* #2185, released on October 14, 1997. This story held the Guinness World Record as the smallest story in the world (I.N.D.U.C.K.S. 1)

Bio prepared by Nanci Santos, OMC Contributor,
nancisantos@hotmail.co.uk



This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

## Additional information

Translation

**Brazil**: *As Patas Do Capitólio,* Almanaque Disney 318, 1998.

**Denmark**: *Kejser Joakim i knibe,* Jumbobog 197, 1997. Second edition in 2005 in Sværd & Sandaler (Jumbo-temabog 11).

**Finland**: *Capitoliumin ankattaret*, Aku Ankan taskukirja 211 – Käry kävi! 1997. Second edition in 2006 in Aku Ankan aikakone 3 – Uljaat antiikin ankat. Third edition in 2010 in Ankkojen maailmanhistoria 2 – Antiikin aika.

**France**: *Donald contre les hordes touristiques*, Mickey Parade / Mickey Parade Géant 222, 1998. Second edition in Mickey Parade (Albums) C 41.

**Germany**: *Hilfe, die Touristen kommen!*, Lustiges Taschenbuch 240 – Die glorreiche Gänse-Garde, 1997. Second edition in 2005 in Mammut Comics 68E. Third edition in 2008 in Lustiges Taschenbuch (Neuauflagen mit neuen Titeln und Titelbildern ab 1997) 240 – Die glorreiche Gänse-Garde. Fourth edition in 2009 in Enthologien 3 – Ente in Antik. Fifth edition in 2014 in Lustiges Taschenbuch History 2 – Abenteuer der Antike.

**Greece**: *Οι Πάπιες του Καπιτωλίου* [Oi Papies tou Kapitōliou], Κόσμος Ντίσνεϋ 9 – Περιπέτειες από τα Βάθη της Ιστορίας, 2006.

**Italy**: *Paperino e le papere del Campidoglio*, Topolino (libretto) 2144, 1996. Second edition in 2001 in Tutto Disney 19 - I Gladiatopi. Third edition in 2004 in Super Miti Mondadori 47 - Il Papero di Troia. Fourth edition in 2011 in La Storia Universale Disney 10 – Pippus Bis-Bis e altre storie. Fifth edition in 2014 in Le più belle storie Disney 7 – Antica Roma. Sixth edition in 2016 in Scoprire l'arte – La storia dell'arte raccontata da Disney 4 - Roma antica. Seventh edition in Raccolta Topolino (libretto) 165.

**Netherlands**: *Donaldus en de Duckinnen van het Capitool*, Donald Duck Pocket (3e reeks) 47 – De Duckinnen van het capitol, 1997. Second edition in 2016, *De eenden van het capitol*, Donald Duck History 2 – Grieken en Romeinen.

**Norway**: *Donald Duck og kapitols ender*, Donald Pocket 197 – Modige



This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

tårer, 1997. Second edition in 2005 in Temapocket 2005-2 - Sverd og sandaler. Third edition in 2012 in Donalds Verdenshistorie 2 – Antikken. Fourth edition in 2018 in Donalds Verdenshistorie (pocketutgave) 2 – Antikken.

**Poland**: *Kaczki Kapitolińskie*, MegaGiga 12 – Kwa Vadis, 2008.

**Portugal**: *As Patas Do Capitólio,* Hiper Disney, Ano 10, número 4, 1997.

**Sweden**: *Ankfröknarna på Kapitolium*, Kalle Ankas Pocket 211, 1997. Second edition in 2005 in Kalle Ankas Pocket Special 2005-02 – Svärd & sandaler.

Summary

The edition used in this entry was the Portuguese version.

*Paperino e le papere del Campidoglio* is a stand-alone story which forms part of the *Topolino* (Mickey Mouse) series released in Italy in 1996. The story begins with a close up of Donald Duck dressed in Roman armour and guarding a statue of "*Margarida Formosus*"* while some tourists in the background visit the area. The story then progresses to the modern day. We find Donald Duck doing household chores while hearing his nephews, Louie, Huey and Dewey, laughing instead – he thinks –of doing their homework. So, Donald decides to check on them and he finds them doing their history homework, studying the episode *The Geese of Capitoline Hill*. He proceeds to explain to his nephews that he was not aware that they taught that episode in school as he believed it was only a family myth. Donald notices that the school book does not mention one of their ancestors called "*Donaldus Patum*"**, so he proceeds to tell them the story to see whether it is the same story.

Donald tells a story, which, he states, dates back to the time of Cesar. There was a Praetorian group of guards who guarded the Capitólio while barbarian tourists visited the city.*** Patinius, the emperor, decided also to open the temple at night.**** This made the Praetorian Guard very unhappy as everyone complained that the tourists were too much trouble, and the citizens were unhappy as they went into public buildings such as the Domus Aurea, the baths, the senate, and the Capitólio, to write graffiti and destroy everything. The guards



This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

brought this up with Patinius who refused to allow their strike. Margarida Formosus overheard this and offered to arrange a group of lady ducks who would guard the Capitólio at night so that it would stay open. Patinius agreed to this and thus the temple opened at night. This did not please Donald as the idea of the temple being open at night was only so that the emperor could make more money.

Donald and the rest of the Praetorian Guard from the Capitólio met up in the Praetorian tavern and discussed a plan to try and make Margarida and the other volunteers quit; however, this was overheard by the owner of the tavern, a friend of Margarida. On the next day, a mysterious group of barbarian tourists appeared while Margarida was looking after it. As per the plan, Donald and the other Praetorian guards had dressed up as “Quacgoths” and caused chaos inside the temple. However, Margarida, being aware of who they were and what they were up to, had asked a group of her friends also to dress up as “Quacgoths” and join the Praetorian guards. This made Donald’s plan fail and they quickly confessed. Donald feared that he would be punished by his uncle, the emperor, by being sent to work on board a trireme. But the girls had a better idea. They asked whether the guards could help them keep the Capitólio open at night while having to do everything they ask. The Praetorian Guards agreed to this and so the Capitólio stayed open in the evenings for the tourists, with terrible live singing from the lady duck volunteers, much to the “un-amusement” of the citizens.

---

* This would translate from Portuguese as “Daisy Beautiful”.

** This would translate as “Donaldus Duckus” – it is possibly a play on the word “Pato” meaning Duck in Portuguese.

*** There is a note in the comic book explaining that *Capitólio* refers to the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus.

**** Here there is another instance of wordplay – on the Portuguese name for Uncle Scrooge, *Tio Patinhas*, hence *Patinius*.



This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union’s Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children’s and Young Adults’ Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of “Artes Liberales” of the University of Warsaw.

*Paperino e le papere del Campidoglio* is part of the *Topolino* comics written by the Italian part of Walt Disney Comics. The story follows Donald Duck's ancestors through Rome as part of the "famous" episode the *Ducks of Capitoline Hill*.

Throughout the story, we find a variety of classical Roman elements. One of the most interesting of these elements is the story plot itself. At the beginning of the story, when Donald asks his nephews why they are so amused with their homework, they reply:

"Mas estamos a estudar tio. Veja."

"No meu tempo não era assim tão divertido!"

"A lição é sobre Roma! E o célebre episódio dos Gansos do Capitólio!"*

Donald then proceeds to reply that the book is wrong and that the story is actually about their famous ancestor Donald Duckus and the episode should be called the *Ducks of Capitoline Hill*. This particular explanation is interesting in itself. In 390 BC, the patrician consul of Rome at the time, Marcus Manlius Capitolinus, defended Rome against the Gauls. According to Livy (5.47.4), the Gauls attempted to attack Rome overnight; the sacred geese of the goddess Juno were the only ones to make a noise, waking up Marcus and alerting him to the attack. This could, perhaps, correspond to the "famous" episode Louie, Hewie and Dewie discuss with Donald.

When Donald tells "the actual story", he mentions that Rome was being invaded. His nephews ask whom by, to which he replies "tourists". If we take "tourists" to mean people not living in Rome then another parallel could be drawn with Livy's account, reinforcing the links with this story, in spite of what Donald states at the beginning of the story, namely that the story occurs in the time of Caesar. However, this anachronism could be due to children being more familiar with Caesar's tine than with any other period in Roman history. This familiarity can also explain why the nephews ask Donald if those invading are the Huns, Visigoths or Barbarians.



This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

This brings me to the next interesting point in the story: the tourism industry. The main focus of the story Donald tells is how the emperor wanted to bring more tourism to Rome, so he decided to open the Capitoline Hill at night. However, tourism is beginning to irritate the local residents and to frustrate the guards in charge of looking after the Capitólio. This reflects not only the modern day, as Donald Duck explains to his nephews, but also ancient tourism in Rome. An interesting detail added to the story is the mention of the decree that the emperor is trying to pass to allow the Capitólio to be open at night. This is a reference to the official decrees passed at the time.

As Donald continues to tell the story, he explains to his nephews how the tourists invaded everything including the safes in the Domus Aurea, the baths, the imperial palace, and the senate. This brings me to my next point, which concerns the buildings included in the story. The story begins by referencing the above, but as it continues, it also references the Capitólio, which is explained in a footnote as being the temple dedicated to Jupiter and to the ancient Roman citadel. There is also a brief reference to Roman taverns, as places that the soldiers would frequent after their shift had ended.

The story also includes a short reference to the famous Roman subterranean sewer tunnels. Having been caught off-guard, the praetorian guards, posing as irritating tourists, are taken by the female ducks in charge to the tunnels under the Capitólio.

Finally, another element the story includes is a Roman ship. After being discovered as impostors, Donald begins fearing the worst, namely that he will be sent to work in the navy. Thus in the following pages, he is depicted as working on a Roman ship, possibly a merchant ship, alongside his other guard friends.

**Art and illustrations**

When Donald Duck proceeds to explain what this story is about, this brings up some interesting details within the comic squares. As Donald explains that the story occurred during the time of Caesar an overhead of picture of Rome appears. This focuses in on the local shops when Donald explains how Rome was a thriving capital in both Culture and Business. In this particular comic square, it is interesting to note how one of the business is called “Estufas Narcisus,”** which possibly alludes both to the flower, the narcissus, and to the Narcissus



This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union’s Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children’s and Young Adults’ Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of “Artes Liberales” of the University of Warsaw.

myth. Further on in the introduction to the tale, there are other Classical references such as a pair of birds saying “Ave Fulanus” and “Ave Sicranus”. This is possibly a reference to how Romans greeted each other.***

Another detail worth noting in the illustrations is the variety of clothing worn by the characters, which ranges from typical Roman-soldier wear to typical togas and royal clothing. It is also interesting to note that those described as “tourists” are a group of people featuring a tour guide, a person with an Egyptian Cleopatra-style wig, two modern day tourists, and other “barbarians” wearing horned hats and big beards.

---

* This translates to:

“But uncle, we are studying, look!”

“Back in my day, it wasn’t this amusing!”

“The lesson is about Rome. The famous Geese of Capitoline Hill episode!”

** Greenhouse Narcissus

*** It could also be linked to the fact they are both birds and the Portuguese for birds is “Ave”, however, I am more inclined to believe it to be a reference to a Roman greeting rather than addressing each other as “Bird”.

---

| | |
|---|---|
| Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts | Barbarians Capitoline Hill Centurion Narcissus Praetorian Guard Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus |
| Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant | Girls History Other literary figures, texts and writers Pop culture references Storytelling |



This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union’s Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children’s and Young Adults’ Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of “Artes Liberales” of the University of Warsaw.

for Children and Youth Culture

Further Reading

*Giorgio Cavazzano* at Wikipedia (accessed: June 09, 2018).

*Paperino e le papere del Campidoglio* at Inducks. org (accessed: June 9, 2018).

*Topolino ino ino* at Inducks. org (accessed June 3, 2018).

Addenda

The edition used in this entry was the Portuguese version:

Luigi Proietti, Alessandro Sisti, Giorgio Cavazzano, *As Patas Do Capitólio,* Hiper Disney, Ano 10, número 4.



This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.