

## VareseNews

### “After Montalbano, I won with Pinocchio’s gendarmes.”

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“You have to concentrate more on quality products, rather than audience ratings; this is a duty for RAI.” Alberto Sironi, the director, originally from Gallarate, famous for being the television father of **Montalbano**, has achieved another great success: his **Pinocchio** was broadcast on Sunday and Monday nights on RAI’s flagship channel, during prime time. **On average**, the two episodes had nearly 8 million viewers, with a share of about 30%, beating even the tenth super-edition of Big Brother.

This success exceeded all expectations, after difficult years in which the series had worked hard to achieve this kind of result, also because of the spread of Sky, which is continually gaining subscribers. “We succeeded, it was a difficult topic, and the comparison with **Comencini’s 1970’s film, with Nino Manfredi**, was obviously by no means insignificant,” explains the director, who also does not hide a certain criticism of the series’ television system. “It isn’t a book, that can be told easily in such a short space. Four or five episodes were necessary in order to express the full complexity and beauty of Collodi’s story. It is a book with which Italians have learnt to read, the language is wonderful, **a lot of people consider it a Bible**. But nowadays, RAI exists to create short pieces. We had to sacrifice a lot of extraordinary episodes, which we were unable to tell. Of course, I’m happy with the results, but the ratings aren’t the only important thing and I know that I could have done it better.

Now RAI always concentrates on standardized products. But if there are such extraordinary results, why do we have to make long television **series about topics that interest no one**? Why do we always have to create the easy but banal love story? Why can’t we aim higher?” Now, **Pinocchio** is under the lens of the critics. Since the excellent audience, also in the United States and in the United Kingdom, there has been no shortage of accusations against the acting: “**It was an international co-production by Lux Vide**, who allowed us to have some actors such as Bob Hoskins,” Sironi explains. “Acting in English penalized somewhat the spontaneity of a few of our actors. But it was an international product, and we couldn’t do otherwise.” Since the success of **Pinocchio**, Sironi has already been at work with a new miniseries for RAI, **The last trench**, with Neri Marcorè and Serena Rossi. And filming for the new **Montalbano** episodes have already been planned, for which he will be the director, and Luca Zingaretti will play the leading role: “We’re going to start filming at the end of February or the beginning of March. We’re going to film four stories: *L’età del dubbio* (The age of doubt), *Il campo del vasaio* (The potter’s field), *La danza del gabbiano* (The dance of the sea gull), and a fourth story which hasn’t been published yet.”

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