

HispaBrick Magazine® Staff: Jose Manuel Ruíz (a.k.a. satanspoet)

By HispaBrick Magazine®

Images by satanspoet



HBM: Hail! I'm from Barcelona and I'm a technical industrial electronics engineer, specialising in robotics and autonomous systems.

HBM: How and when did you start participating in HispaBrick Magazine®?

JMR: My relationship with the magazine started with issue 004, for which I designed the cover, and I've been a part of it ever since.

HBM: What are your responsibilities in the magazine?

JMR: I work in different areas. I write articles, I review and translate articles, and I look for possible interviews and collaborations within the AFOL community. I also do part of the layout work together with Lluís.

HBM: Had you done any of these things before?

JMR: I had never done this kind of work for a magazine so it was all new to me and I have had to learn on the go.

HBM: Did you need to learn how to use the tools for any of those tasks?

JMR: I have mainly needed to learn how to use Adobe InDesign to do article layout for the magazine.

HBM: Talking about all the tasks that are carried out in the magazine, what are the ones you like the most? And the least?

JMR: One of the things I like best is looking for articles. It allows me to interact with AFOLs from many different countries and to discover all their magnificent creations and constructions.

I also enjoy doing article layout as it allows me to develop the visual and design aspect, looking for the best way to show off the articles.

What I like least is the many hours it takes to do all the layout work XD

HBM: Are there any tasks you would like to do but haven't had a chance to work on yet?

JMR: More work? No thanks XD

HBM: What do you think of the rest of the people who make up the staff of the magazine?

JMR: That they are crazy?... and who isn't in this hobby? Over the years we have become a group of close friends, each with our own peculiarities, but with LEGO® as a nexus between us. Thanks to our commitment and enthusiasm we have managed to keep the magazine alive and that is something I am proud of.



HBM: Many people don't know how much work it takes to create a free fan magazine. Does it really take that much work to get each issue published?

JMR: It takes many, many hours and it often eats away at our free time since we are not exclusively dedicated to the magazine; this is not our job. The fact that we publish in several languages also means more work, so any collaboration we get is welcome.

HBM: Of all the criticism and praise you receive, what has most surprised you or drawn your attention?

JMR: All feedback, be it positive or negative, helps us to do a better job. I am pleasantly surprised with the praise we get for publishing a non-commercial magazine that can be downloaded free of charge.

HBM: It's been ten years since the first issue. How do you see the evolution of the magazine since then?

JMR: Over the years, the magazine has evolved in many ways. We have lost some collaborators, but we have also gained many others. As for the number of articles, this has increased and we have been able to incorporate a multitude of subjects related to LEGO®. This has allowed the magazine to become bigger and bigger with each issue.

During the first years getting an issue out was harder as we needed to gather a minimum number of articles. Currently we need to be selective and sometimes discard material or leave it for a future issue.

We have also seen how we have gained in reputation internationally. In the beginning when we reached out to an AFOLs we needed to explain who we were and why we wanted them to collaborate with us in the magazine. Today,

when we contact people they already know who we are and are delighted to collaborate with us. We also started to get requests for collaboration, which is something that was unthinkable when we started out. Another evolution in the magazine relates to its design and style. Over the years we have tried to find the best way to present the articles and sections of the magazine.

HBM: It all started as a local format designed to preserve and publicize MOCs by Spanish AFOLs, and now the magazine is published in three languages and read all over the world. What do you think has caused this evolution?

JMR: I think it is all about the breadth of content. We talk about practically everything that is related to LEGO®. That means that AFOLs who are specialised in different things are interested in the magazine. The fact that we publish in different languages also helps readers in different parts of the world to enjoy our content.

HBM: After ten years you are still going strong. Have you ever thought there wouldn't be a next issue?

JMR: We have gone through that at times. Especially when there have been changes in the staff... but we have always kept going ;)

HBM: What do you believe are the best qualities of the magazine?

JMR: The variety of themes we cover, which means our content is of interest to a large variety of AFOLs. I believe another important point is the fact that the magazine is free and made by and for AFOLs.

HBM: What would you like to improve in the magazine?



JMR: We are always trying to improve things, but I am happy with what we have achieved so far.

HBM: You always mention in the magazine that its continuity is possible thanks to the collaboration of those who send in articles. Is that really such an important factor?

JMR: It is vital. Without the help and collaboration of all the people who participate in the magazine it wouldn't be possible to publish it. That is why we are so grateful for any collaboration we get.

HBM: Of course there are also regular collaborators. What can you say about them?

JMR: I can only thank them for their collaboration as it is because of this that the magazine is still here. All of them are a part of the magazine.

HBM: You have also written articles and done interviews with people from the LEGO® company. How do you see your relationship with the company?

JMR: Our direct relations with the LEGO® company are the responsibility of our ambassador Jetro and our co-founder Lluís, and from my point of view they have managed to transmit what HispaBrick Magazine® means and what our goals are. To date our relationship is good and we hope to continue this way going forward.

HBM: As the motto of the magazine says, it is a magazine made by fans. So in addition to making the magazine you also like to build with LEGO®. What are your favourite LEGO® themes?

JMR: I started out my LEGO® hobby in my infancy with the 6683 Burger Stand, and my preference lies with Classic Town. As any self-respecting geek I love Star Wars and The Lord of the Rings. I am also interested in Castle, modular buildings and Architecture.

HBM: Is there any theme or set you would like LEGO® to make?

JMR: Of course, a Steampunk theme would be ideal. And since we are asking... how about a re-edition of the 6399 monorail?

HBM: Is there life beyond the magazine and building with LEGO®?

JMR: Certainly! As a film fan, I run a website dedicated to cinema in general and the Fantastic Film Festival in Catalonia in particular. I like travelling and whenever I can I will go on a trip to visit new places. And then there is music... concerts and many hours of music are an essential part of my life.

HBM: Do you think you will still be making the magazine in another ten years?

JMR: At the moment I am part of the staff. I want to continue collaborating, but who knows what the future brings?

HBM: Throughout these ten years there must have been many anecdotes. Could you share some?

JMR: It never ceases to surprise me when we get an email from someone thinking we are the LEGO® company, especially when they write to ask for a job with the company.

HBM: Finally, what would you like to see in the magazine?

JMR: Maybe a review of a re-edition of a classical set... the 6399 for example? XD
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