

Vincent Amicosante / Daniel Maffia



Vincent Amicosante, "Fig"

I FIRST MET Daniel Maffia when I was working in an art supply store in New Jersey in 1973 and he was a customer. I was a student at the School for Visual Art at the time. I didn't really know who he was, but we got to know each other a bit. Then one day at art class our teacher didn't turn up, and Daniel appeared to

substitute teach instead. It was then that I realized who he was—one of the top ten illustrators in the country, doing Time and Esquire magazine covers. We just hit it off and became friends. He was very open, very giving, and showed me all his techniques and secrets about his illustration work, so there was no mystery to it. The most inspiring thing for me was to see him achieve in his career what I wanted to achieve in mine—he made the decision to leave illustration work and focus on fine art. I remember helping him to hang one of his early shows in the West Broadway Gallery in SoHo in 1981, and that's what inspired me the most, seeing his beautiful paintings in the gallery. He told me that if I wanted to be a fine artist I should use oils, and he gave me insights into the materials and techniques he had learned to use. You can't help but admire your mentor, but it's not that they hold your hand, it's more like osmosis—being around them, hanging around their studio, watching them work. He wanted me to find my own way of painting, not to copy his. And his work ethic drives me crazy—he works incredibly hard, and always has. Hardly anything in the world matters more to him than his work. After being his friend for so long, I was in awe of him. I had so much respect for the way he lives his life, and now I'm trying to take myself to that same place. Being his friend has been a gift. I believe in some way that our friendship was meant to be. Because of all the gifts he's given me, I feel I have to use them and take my work to the next level.

- Daniel Maffia was born in Nevers, France, and spent his early childhood in an occupied village in Normandy during World War II. He came to the US in 1948 and studied for his MFA at Pratt Institute.

He soon established an international reputation for his award-winning portraits which appeared on the covers of most major magazines. He now divides his time between his studios in Truro and his home in Provence, France.

- Vincent Amicosante lives in Wellfleet. There will be an exhibition of his work on July 28th and an exhibition of Daniel Maffia's work on August 18th, both at the Harmon Gallery in Wellfleet.

Daniel Maffia, "Lux"

