

Danny Quirk post on Facebook, 9 April 2019

We never quite got to do our anatomy infused drink and draw when I road tripped through Colorado while moving to Portland, and mutually, we shrugged it off as no big deal, because there was always next time.... Well.. Eh, got some sad news today that my college anatomy professor, friend, and next level Art God amongst us mere mortals was killed last night. The details are still emerging, but it seems to be evident that it was done by the hands of another. It sucks, because Professor Raphael Sassi was a solid dude. Not sure if he was more humble than talented or vice versa, but he certainly had an abundance of both. He was quite quiet and soft spoken, but would rain Hell on those deserving. He used to take us as Juniors to the Senior Fine Arts critiques, and I'll never forget—there was this girl who we sat in on.... she was good, but not 'take your breath away' talented, soft spoken, and clearly not blessed with self-esteem. The 'panel of judges' aka fine art professors / visiting guest artists assigned to critiquing her work tore her to pieces. Rather than giving her a shred of advice as to how to better her work, they spouted off a list of names of artists that no one has ever heard of, alluded references that even the most applauded in academia would have to look up, and spent a good chunk of her precious allotted time **while she was in tears** talking amongst themselves. It was there that Professor Sassi interrupted, asked the girl if she was ok, and said "this is everything that's wrong with the art world." While *giving the stink eye* to those 'reviewing' her work. He then went on to tell the "panel of judges" that they should be ashamed of themselves for spewing pretension, not offering a syllable of advice for how this young woman could improve / better her work, and for wasting the 30 minutes she spent her entire undergrad working towards. He then went on to give her advice towards bettering her work, and when the 'judges' cut him off and proceeded to kick us out, he yelled "yeah, well fuck you", and the poor girl, choking on snot, (whose head was parallel to the ground for the last 15 mins) looked up and smiled.

He was a good dude, and a genuine inspiration.... And while it sucks what happened, getting murdered is a pretty bad ass way to go. I'll think of you every time I fail miserably with ballpoint pen, and next drink I have is in your honor. Until next time good sir! *tips hat*

Below is a graphite self portrait by a Professor Sassi— friggin' next level stuff right (t)here!

