

Daniel Mirante  
ARTIST & TEACHER SUMMARY 2020



'Chanting Down Babylon' by Daniel Mirante. Tempera grassa soffio technique on linen.

*Nationality : United Kingdom*

*Position : Founding faculty member and instructor at the Vienna Academy of Visionary Art*

*Website : [www.danielmirante.com](http://www.danielmirante.com)*



### *Summary of Professional Intent and Fields of Enquiry*

Daniel Mirante is a teacher and scholar of visionary and sacred art. His work appears in several international collections. His work focusses on a deep study of the Quattrocento period of the Italian Renaissance, especially upon artists such as Andrea Mantegna and Giovanni Bellini, who bridged the heiratic (sacred or religious) with the humanistic styles of art. He is interested in the esoteric language of symbols as found in ancient art and spiritual lineages, and their application in painting, as a visual language that can articulate pictorially the various historical and archetypal forces that have shaped and continue to shape human existence.

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### *Teaching Speciality*

*Mischtechnik - the tradition of egg tempera and oil glazes painting craft. Symbolism. Archetypal psychology, myth & fine art history.*

Mischtechnik with emphasis on the principles of optical grisaille, optical color mixing and symbolic lexicons of the sacred. Taught in an atmosphere of engagement, concentration, levity, support and empowerment.

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## Testimonials

*"I had the honour of attending the Easter retreat with Daniel Mirante, it was an incredible artistic, relational and spiritual experience.*

*I experienced a profound immersion in the traditional principles of the knowledge that comes to us from our predecessors, an alchemical journey from tradition to the new vision, the visionary one.*

*Daniel has been able to guide me with a lot of respect and delicacy in my artistic exploration. what I appreciated most about his guide was the love, passion and humility he puts into artistic practice, into his work. thanks to the sharing of his artistic career, his history and his being, he helped me to better understand how to be a conscious artist, motivating me to grow in this.*



*It was a pleasure to receive his teachings and his profound and wide knowledge in the symbolic / artistic / technical field. and thanks to his incredible vision! so much to learn.*

*This experience has marked an important point in my spiritual artistic journey, thanks Daniel Mirante!"*

*-Dyumna*

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*"From the first day Daniel was professional, friendly, warm and welcoming. Daniel knows what it means to lead by example which is part of what I believe makes him such an excellent teacher and human being. Daniel truly embodies what it means to live an authentic and creative life. This is clearly reflected in his gentle, loving, funny and kind demeanour.*

*In addition to be an all around great guy, Daniel is an incredibly talented artist. An artist who possesses a vast knowledge and understanding of his craft. Daniel has a tremendous amount of patience and love for each of his students. I always felt Daniel shared his wisdom freely without holding back or keeping painting secrets just for himself. I felt that Daniel honestly wants each of his students to become the best artist they are capable of becoming.*

*Daniel is an extremely hard worker, to say the least. Daniel worked longer days than he should have, everyday. Daniel was the life force that carried our class through this intensive process. Incredibly, each student left the course with an absolutely incredible and meaningful piece of art.*

*I can say with full confidence you will leave Daniels workshop a better artist and likely a better human being. Bon' Voyage!"*

*-Naomi*

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*"Learning from Daniel Mirante is to learn from a true alchemist of paint, a teacher of skill and soul. My two weeks as his student over the first Easter seminar were filled with inspiration, instruction and laughter. Daniel shared his deep knowledge of pigments and mediums as well as the symbology of multiple mythological and sacred traditions.*

*He was very perceptive regarding the needs of each student, knowing when to push and when to encourage. He provided clear materials and explanations, and prepared us for our main pieces with some incrementally challenging exercises. I felt supported yet free to experiment, whether in shaping initial ideas or in finding an inspiration for style/colour choices.*

*He was present as a human being as well as as a teacher, holding a welcoming and focussed space throughout. I laughed a lot, but felt I could cry as well – and so create work that felt truly meaningful."*

*-Natalie*

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## C.V

*Ba (Hons) Fine Art (1<sup>st</sup> degree)*

Manchester Metropolitan University 1998-2001

*Diploma Ecological Architecture*

Middlesex University 2004

*Apprentice to Brigid Marlin, studying Mischtechnik*

2009

*Student of oil painting under Maura Holden*

2011

*Student of airbrush under Andrew Gonzalez*

2011

*Assistant to Ernst Fuchs*

Wien, Austria, 2012

*LARA (London Atelier of Representational Art)*

Life drawing, sight-size, cast drawing

2016

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## *Art Teaching 2012-2019*

January 2012

Vision Quest

co-teaching with Kuba Ambrose

Melbourne, Australia

February 2012

Vision Quest II

Melbourne, co-teaching with Kuba Ambrose

Melbourne, Australia

July 2013

Tobas School of Art Therapy

Primary Instructor with co-hosting with Judith Way

East Grinstead, UK

January-February-March 2013

Vienna Academy of Visionary Art -

Wein, Austria

April 2013

Tobas School of Art Therapy

Primary Instructor with co-hosting with Judith Way

East Grinstead, UK

September-November 2013

Vienna Academy of Visionary Art

Wein, Austria

December 2013

Tobas School of Art Therapy

Primary Instructor with co-hosting with Judith Way

East Grinstead, UK

July 2014

Tempera Grassa Mischtechnik Intensive

Vienna Academy of Visionary Art

Wein, Austria

June 2015

Tobas School of Art Therapy

East Grinstead, UK

February-June 2016

Vision Craft, Weekend series

Lewes, UK

June 2016  
Tobias School of Art Therapy  
Co-teachers- David Heskin & Aloria Weaver  
East Grinstead, UK

July 2016  
Visions in the Mischtechnik Seminar  
Co-teacher- Amanda Sage  
Torri Superiore, Italy

January 2017  
Art in Paradise  
Byron Bay, Australia

February 2017  
Vision Craft  
Melbourne, Australia

March 2017  
House of Alchemy  
Brighton, UK

April-May-June 2017  
Vienna Academy of Visionary Art  
Wein, Austria

July 2017  
House of Alchemy  
Brighton, UK

October 2017  
Art In Paradise  
Byron Bay, Australia

December 2017  
1<sup>st</sup> Visionary Art India  
Mumbai, India, with Ainhoa Neith

January 2018  
Private classes  
Mumbai, India, with Ainhoa Neith

April-May-June 2018  
Vienna Academy of Visionary Art  
Wein, Austria

July 2018  
Anamkara Center  
Brussels, Belgium, with Ainhoa Neith

September 2018  
Vision Quest  
Ubud, Bali, with Ainhoa Neith

October 2018  
Private Instruction  
Mumbai, India, with Ainhoa Neith

December 2018  
Vision Quest  
Art In Paradise Byron Bay

March 2019  
Visions in the Mischtechnik 1<sup>st</sup> Easter Seminar  
Torri Superiore Italy

July 2019  
Visions in the Mischtechnik Summer Seminar  
Torri Superiore Italy

November 2019  
Art in Paradise  
Byron Bay, Australia

April 2020  
Art Pilgrim  
Mainarm, Australia

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## *TRANSCRIPT*

*of section of talk given at Vienna Academy of Visionary Art*

### THE PLACE OF ORIGIN

The place of Origin is a place of pure potentialities, and of expansive possibilities. A fertilised cell could become many things. In children we see this receptivity and possibility – its freshness vivifies us. According to the cosmological 'myth' of the big-bang, in the milliseconds immediately after the initial explosion of force and light, cosmic energy proceeded to condense and crystallise into ever more complex systems, leading to this effulgent, vivid qualia of human sentience.

The place of Origin is our own mystery fable, for every one of us. For here we are, and we know not whence we came. We are told of our infancy, and perhaps at some point have curiously mused on our own parents union, that produced that fertilised cell with our name. But rarely do we remember. Memory leads us only back to a thicket of obscurity. So our origin is something we position inside

ourselves, like a story, not something we directly access.

So too for our whole childlike species. The giant stone heads of deceased kings and queens litter the deserts of worn-through civilisations. But before this time, again we turn to stories of various kinds. Some based on physical evidence, some based on psychological archetypes. And we agree, and disagree, upon our stories. Wars are fought over stories. Gods and demigods, and places of sacred significance, empower not only the heights of love and creativity, but the most destructive and deluded actions. This is because the Origin is a place of power. Like the meta-energetics of those unfathomable first milliseconds, we are at the fount, where the unseen and unknowable God or non-God radiantly declares itself in existence, and proceeds to garment itself with the forms, physicalities and systems of this world we call 'matter'.

From this high place of pure potential, which in both religious and scientific systems is regarded as a vast 'mysterium tremendum' of Light and Power, this energy may only cool, may only slow, and in its process of crystallisation, becomes more complex, and more mutually dependent, more tightly woven, more established. Energy moves into the world of form. Like a great ocean withdrawing and leaving lagoons and rock pools, the water is one and the same, but experiences a finitude. This is the song of Primordial Innocence moving into Experience. Yet experience hearkens back to the Great Ocean of pure undifferentiated awareness, and by encountering it periodically, is refreshed, is given new life.

So even though all we have is stories, they are sacred, because stories lead our very consciousness back to contact with Origin, which is pre-memory, for there was nothing to remember! It is the sign of Alpha. And we have encrusted and engraven our culture with heraldic signs and symbols to lead us to the contemplation of this mystery. For it is through contact with Origin in ourselves, that we channel this further into the substances of our world, bringing that vivifying contact to the lands, the waters, the skies. We complete a circuit between Alpha and Omega, and are beyond Time.

For Origin is perpetually enacted. In the stories we tell, it is a past event. Like our physical birth. But Origin is continual, as the cells in our body continue to retell the tale of our origin. We know that matter is not a dead substance, like a kind of hard, grey, insentient microscopic bead-work. Rather, it is still aflame with the song that it first sang, it is diamond pure and unstained, and full of a mystery that lets all of this play forth. Not only growing forth in generation, but also decrepitude and decay is part of its vast song, part of the cycle of Alpha and Omega, Forgetting and Remembering.

Cosmologies naturally work with observables. The ancient Greeko-Roman peoples could observe 7 planets wandering between the Earth and the fixed firmament of the Zodiac, which they considered virtuous because of a . Contemplating the tempestuous and fluctuating nature of human life, the emotions and passions that seemed to sway the fates of whole peoples, they considered the wandering planets as correlated.

They had the quite wonderous proposition that the soul came to Earth through progressive materialisation, from the upper heavens through the changeable and wandering orbits of the 7 planets, being clothed by '7 soul garments' upon this sojourn, so that upon earth it was held sway by Hermarmine, the fates that governed the individual constitution and predilections of the individual. It was as if the individual was thus relatively separated from its cosmic home by a series of 'archons' (rulers) associated with the wandering planets. These rulers were seen often negatively, like prison guards, though more sophisticated views understand that they play a role in the formation of the soul, and once superseded in the process of 'soul ascent', are looked back upon and understood to have a fundamental role in 'soul-making'.

Chief of the Archons is a Leonine demiurgos named Yaldabaoth (or Samael – 'blind one'). This chief ruler was considered itself ignorant of its origins and the orders of cosmic majesty and divinity. "There is no other than me" is its main catechism. Its obstinate pride makes Yaldabaoth unwilling to humble itself to the True Origins, and it prefers to think of itself as God, preferring to follow its own ill-formed will, rather than opening itself to the supreme Will.

The human, in being clothed by 7 soul garments, is progressively veiled in the processes of earthly consciousness, with the 'ego' acting as a limited false self. In the Gospel of Thomas, a gnostic gospel representing a syncretism between Christian mysticism and Greco-Roman thought, the word Ahamkara is explicitly mentioned. This is interesting since Ahamkara is actually a sanskrit term, implying a deep cross-cultural meeting of mystical systems in that time, probably along the Silk Road. Ahamkara means something like 'simulations of Selfhood' – this implies that within the vast space of consciousness, small provinces of highly organised and enculturated activity are created, and taken to be 'the Self'. Whilst our personhood, our ego personality is real, it only can claim a partial, relative existence, since it is a diminutive enveiled form of consciousness, hidden from its divine totality by the 7 soul garments.

The Gnostic viewed that the human soul is ultimately representative of the upper Aeons, and the right destiny for the soul is to return to the heavenly abode. This constituted then, a symbolic story-board or scaffolding, around the processes of transcendence that is a unique potential to the human animal. We do not know much about the Gnostic rites, but the Timeus by Plato and other writings suggest that alongside spiritual practices, the development of virtuous right-conduct was seen as tantamount in this quest. Hence the '7 deadly sins' – the snares of the planetary rulers, was seen as being counteracted by the development of the '7 heavenly virtues'. In the Timeus, Plato exhorts virtue-building practice, foremost gazing at the starry heavens, and asserts strongly that virtue is inherent to the enterprise of philosophy.

This practice corresponds to 'As Above, So Below' and, we could say, 'As Above, Do Below'. Through the development of virtue, combined with spiritual practice, the soul-ascent through the seven veils is made (one must here note the obvious correspondence with yogic theory of chakras). Development of virtue was essential because only through theo-morphy (or theo-genesis) can the soul resound in harmony with the 'True, Good and Beautiful' of the upper Aeons. Contact with divine powers without a corresponding development of virtue will lead to the anguish and terror of 'the Fear of God'. Rudolf Otto discussed this often overlooked aspect of existential terror in contact with the Numinous in his ground-breaking book, and explains why virtue-building is inherent in many spiritual paths. From a Gnostic perspective, fear can be understood as direct encounter with the terrible rulers on the path of soul-ascent. One cannot 'storm heaven'.

Each planet was also considered to exist within an interconnected net of correspondences. Upon the chain of being, mineral, vegetable, animal, human, angel, subtle and causal are all linked not just sequentially but by shared attributes. These correspondences are at the heart of sympathetic magic, and work strongly with symbol-creating and metaphorical consciousness. Therefore, one may, for instance, 'resonate' with Mars through the colour red, through fire, through lead, through various other substances, and through meditation upon the 'sins' (obscurations) and virtues corresponding to Mars. Just as in yogic philosophy, a lack of development at a chakra such as the manipura (solar plexus) would receive recommended asanas and character-building exercises, it is suggested by the extant literature that the Gnostics also followed specific measures to mitigate obscurations at these various levels, which thoroughly transcend limited categories of the cosmological vs the personal – they are both.

Gnostic cosmology is, for us, a loose enterprise, since we are heir to fragments, often contractory – enough to show us that gnostic mystery schools shared themes but on the whole developed idiosyncratic approaches unique to region, surrounding traditions and backgrounds of lineage, and to the orientations of the teachers and students. Thus we are able in the corpus to identify in some strains that archons are 'bad' – an evil to be vanquished through the soul-ascent, the triumph of light over the sons of darkness ; an error proceeding from the passion of Sophia, an errant goddess. Eve's fall into temptation is mirrored in some gnostic mythos, and the archons are a consequence of her impulsivity and independent thinking – a will to create by herself. Instead of a flaming sword at the gates of Eden, from which Adam and Eve are exiled, there are 7 cosmological and existential guardians blocking our access to Origin, and these guardians are not only external, but fettering garments upon our very Anima (soul), which we may live countless lifetimes in ignorance of the very existence, let alone their veiling effect.

In other systems, Sophia is the blemishless Barbello, the Gaia-Sophia, the Anima Mundi, and Earth and our very souls are creations-in-progress, and in such a system, the janus-faced aspects of the Planetary Archons and their attendant soul garments must be considered. Yes, they still assert a disorientating effect upon us here on earth. But they are part of a soul-matrix that allows this temporary sojourn as a body on Earth to exist, as a cthonic possibility. And their veiling allows for not only Fate, but for 'free will' to occur within a holding, structuring process of creative limitation. One may suppose, in the Jungian sense, an interaction between the infinite and complete 'Soul' of Origin, and the ignorant, tyrannical and dogmatic aspect of the Ego. Through such a reciprocal relationship, the Soul may be born into the World, and not only transcend it.

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