



**FEDELE SPADAFORA** (b. 1968) is a citizen of the world, currently based in New York City yet always on the move. Having earned a BFA from Michigan State University in his native Lansing, Spadafora headed to Prague, which was just shaking off 45 years of communist groupthink. He spent six exciting years there, painting and co-founding an alternative press, then five years studying with Nelson Shanks at the Art Students League of New York and Studio Incamminati in Philadelphia. (Please see the Shanks profile in the May-June 2011 issue of *Fine Art Connoisseur*.)

Deeply imbued with Shanks's passions for impeccable draftsmanship, lively brushwork, moody lighting, and narratives both specific and suggested, Spadafora has gained still other perspectives from gifted teachers like Steven Assael, Frank Mason, Marvin Mattelson, Alyssa Monks, Frank Porcu, and Dan Thompson. Yet he has drawn from modernism, too: "I construct each piece by using shapes in an abstract way to design the picture," Spadafora notes. "And I continually refine these shapes until figures and landscapes emerge and become solid and real."

Though he shifts easily from portraiture to still life, Spadafora is now most interested in combining figures with New York cityscapes to create seemingly timeless "human landscapes." His objective for these is to "evoke a sublime beauty and express the human condition as it plays out in the melancholy diners and hole-in-the-wall restaurants that are quickly being replaced by Starbucks, T-Mobile, and Chase. There I look for places and people that intrigue, amaze, and perhaps even frighten me."

FEDELE SPADAFORA (b. 1968)  
*AROUND THE TABLE*  
 2011, ACRYLIC ON PAPER, 38 x 50 IN.  
 SLAG GALLERY, NEW YORK CITY

Spadafora's busy year ahead is characteristically cosmopolitan. On October 11 he will appear in a two-person show at El Teatro in Tunis, and the following month will unveil a dozen portraits of dynamic female leaders being honored by the New York-based advocacy organization Wonder Women. Spadafora was recently commissioned to paint St. Ippolito (Hippolytus) for St. Cornelius Cyprian Catholic Church in Bunker Hill, Michigan. "My family is from the Calabrian village of Sant'Ippolito," he explains, "so this project has huge personal significance for me."

Next spring, New York City's Slag Gallery is set to open Spadafora's solo show featuring a series of evanescent acrylics on large sheets of paper. Drawn more than painted, these are adapted from a group of black-and-white photographs of the artist's own family taken in the 1940s and '50s.

Finally, Spadafora is set to participate as both exhibitor and juror in Norwegian master Odd Nerdrum's next *Kitsch Biennale*, which hits New York City in autumn 2012. Stay tuned for details, and prepare yourself for the fireworks that always surround Nerdrum.

Spadafora is represented by Slag Gallery (New York City).