

While Armand worked with the **Mambo Kings** he gave an interview to **GQ Magasin**, it's written by **Stephanie Mansfield december 1991**. This happens after Hollywood had made him "to foreign" ! (what ever that is?) among other things the story of his grandfather coming to America is told:

His grandfathers name was: **Ainello Assante** and he was born in Neaples (Napoli) he was son of a merchant, and had big dreams thought that the streets of America was paved with gold...he stowed away on a ship, was caught in Liverpool, sent home and did it again...finanally he succeeded and ended up in America with no skills and no money. He took jobs a a dishwasher in restaurant's and laiter as he took up cooking...he was goog at that..**because only 30 years old he owned 5 restaurants and had become a millionare**. Then came the great depression Ainello Assant lost most his fortune but he manage to stay in the reastaurant business and he had a place near Broadway that featured the **first all-girl orchestra in New York**.

Ainello Assante had 8 children one of them: **Armand Assante ..(the actors father)**...he was a gifted artist. During the world war 2 he served in China on an island of Okinawa.

Once he bought a ticket to a trackmeet. There he met **Katherine Healy**, she sang at that place "**The Star-spraggled Banner**" and he fell for her. Katherine saw photos of him during service and saw that he had been good to the local kids and she said:

"That's the kind of man for me !"

They married and lived in **Washintong Heights** and there home became full of music and arts.

Armand Assante proceeded painting, but he was to shy to hire anyone to promote his art.

Katherine was a student at the Manhattan School of Music.

They had their first child, a daughter: **Denise in 1948** followed a year laiter by their first and only son: **Armand** .

One ordinary morning Katherine reached out for her babyboy in the creddle as usual, she was stricken with inexplicable weakness.

She could'nt move, her body was numb. She manage to reach for the phone and call for help.

The **polioepedemi of 1949** has caught yet another victim.

Denise was brought to family at her mothers site and Armand went to his grandparents. His grandmother nicknamed him: Aldo.

Armand formed , in these early years of his life, a lasting camaradie with his grandfather and his father's younger brothers.

Armand says about this: "I was trying to explain t my sister, that in a way I had some more support than maybe she did, emotionally...because of my uncles. They were really like my brothers. They were all well-educated hard-working people. If I have the ability to work, it's because I come from that. My grandfather was a fighter. He was a tough guy. A very hard man.. You gotta remember , these men worked eighteen hours every day of their lives !"

The journalist dwells in her own thought's for a while and make it clear, that any student of Freud is aware of the profound effects of such an early seperation form one's mother; its safe to assume that the loss stayed with Assante, even after Katherine returned to the home in a wheelchair .

Katherine also laiter was complicated with diabetes.

"It disrupted he flow of what might have been the family life" says Denise. "I think we both had powerfull inner worlds. We connected to the imagination!"

In **1957 the Assantes moved to Cornwall**, near the Hudson River.

By then Armand Assant Sr. had taken a job in advertising and Armands mother who now had her master's degree, taught music allthough she was in a wheelchair. The children had a difficult time fitting in.

Armand was a quiet boy with a deeb voice and his sister Denise says, there was some drama in him allready then.

Denise remebers her childhood home a place where both parent's was devoted Roman Catholics, the house was full of literature, art and music and there was certainly strong ideals around the household, it was'nt easy to live up to all the time.

Denise was only 13 when she left home, and studied music in New York, Armand stayed behind with Andrea, his then very small sister.

A Cornwall Highschool Armand Assante was neither the brightest nor the most athletic, but he was good with drama and poetry.

He loved music and with a feew freinds he organized a **band called:" The Pheaton Four"**

"He was a gifted **powerfull drummer**" his sister Denise says, "Girls wanted pieces of his shirt!"

Armand tell that there: "...was a tremendous honesty in my family, which was nice. And I as out the door very young. I was in bars when I was young, doing all kind of things. My parents gave me tremendeous freedom. They trusted me " After Armand graduated they trusted him again, and let him **join Denise at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York**.

(He was accepted at theopera department of the Mahattan School of Music, but declined.) !

Armand says he was in analyzis as he was 20, because of his atracktion to weman,.... he persued them voraciously.

(Now we hope it's the other way around: webmaster)

The farm is called **The Lone Oak Farm** because he saw a little oak tree alone in the field, and he thought, it takes some currage !

His father helped him renovate the farm, and his parents live twelve mile away.