

# Louis Eppolito, Police Officer Found To Be Hit Man for the Mob, Dies at 71

By ED SHANAHAN

Louis Eppolito was practically born into the Mafia.

His father was a Gambino family soldier known as Fat the Gangster. An uncle known as Jimmy the Clam, a grandfather and a cousin were made men, too. By age 10, Louis was joining his father on his bookmaking rounds.

A life in organized crime seemed preordained, but Louis's interest faded after several relatives were killed by rival gangsters. So after graduating from high school, Louis went in a different direction: He joined the New York Police Department.

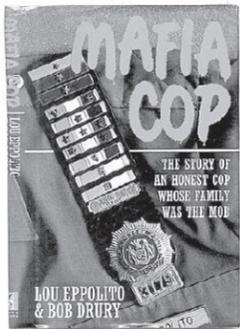
It was an unlikely career that earned him many medals and headlines. But Mr. Eppolito would end up at the center of one of the biggest scandals in department history.

He and a fellow detective, Stephen Caracappa, were convicted in 2006 of moonlighting as mob assassins, involved in eight gangland slayings while on the payroll of Anthony Casso, a Luchese crime family underboss known as Gaspise.

Mr. Eppolito, 71, died on Nov. 3 at a hospital in Tucson, Ariz., his wife, Frances Ann Eppolito, confirmed this week, without providing a cause. He had been serving a life sentence at the high-security United States penitentiary nearby.

After their arrest, Mr. Eppolito and Mr. Caracappa, who died at a medical detention facility in 2017 at 75, became widely known as the "Mafia Cops." The nickname came easily: Mr. Eppolito had already written a memoir, "Mafia Cop: The Story of an Honest Cop Whose Family Was the Mob" (1992), in which he recounted his mob pedigree.

Louis John Eppolito was born on July 22, 1948, in Brooklyn and grew up in East Flatbush, according to the memoir. His father,



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Ralph, was a professional criminal. His mother, Theresa, was a registered nurse.

Mr. Eppolito knew by the time he was 12 that his father killed people for pay, he acknowledged on Sally Jessy Raphael's talk show in 1992 while promoting his book. But he did not know details. The following exchange, he said, was typical.

"If I said to him, 'What happened to this guy?' He'd say 'He had to go.'"

"Go where, Dad? Where did he go? To St. Louis?"

"No. He's gone."

According to "Mafia Cop," Ralph Eppolito beat his son often, but also instilled in him a lifelong respect for "honor and loyalty."

Louis Eppolito attended Erasmus Hall High School in Brooklyn, where he played several sports and graduated in 1966. He got into bodybuilding, and was crowned Mr. New York City in 1967.

Mr. Eppolito's father died before his son entered the Police Academy. It was good timing.

"He hated cops with a passion," Mr. Eppolito told Ms. Raphael.

But Louis Eppolito saw similarities between police officers and gangsters: Both lived by a strict code. And both, he believed, could deliver justice as they saw fit.

Mr. Eppolito joined the police force in 1969, the same year as Mr. Caracappa. They rose through the ranks and first worked together a decade later.

Mr. Eppolito came under suspicion in April 1984 when the authorities raided the New Jersey home of Rosario Gambino, a mobster and heroin trafficker.

There, investigators found copies of dozens of confidential intelligence reports on organized crime figures, according to court records. The copies had been made at the precinct where Mr. Eppolito was assigned at the time, and his fingerprints were on them, court filings showed.

Mr. Eppolito was suspended and hit with internal charges, but he was cleared after a departmental trial. He claimed in his book that he had been totally vindicated, saying the case was an effort by his enemies to set him up.

A federal judge later took the opposite view, criticizing police officials in a harsh ruling for what he called their "inexplicable failure to discipline." Mr. Eppolito in 1985 "after he was caught red-handed passing confidential police documents" to Mr. Gambino.

Mr. Eppolito stayed on the job for nearly five more years, receiving a promotion and, as a jury would find, cementing his ties to organized crime.

Mr. Eppolito and Mr. Caracappa began their relationship with Mr. Casso's circle in 1985. A career criminal with ties to Mr. Casso hired them that year to kill a Long Island jeweler to keep him from testifying in an F.B.I. inquiry.

The detectives used a confidential police database to find the jew-



Mr. Eppolito during his trial in 2006 on charges that he and another officer carried out killings.

eler's home address, the type of car he drove and his license plate number. They pulled him over and asked him to come to the precinct station house.

Instead, they took him to a building in Brooklyn, where Mr. Caracappa and another man killed him. Mr. Eppolito acted as a lookout.

It was the first of the eight killings they would participate in over the next several years on Mr. Casso's orders. They received \$4,000 a month and up to \$65,000 for individual murders, prosecutors said.

The other victims included a Brooklyn man gunned down mistakenly because he had the same name as a rival of Mr. Casso's; a Luchese gangster; two Gambino soldiers; and two F.B.I. informers.

The City of New York ultimately paid \$18.4 million to settle wrongful death lawsuits filed by the relatives of seven of the eight men killed by Mr. Eppolito and Mr. Caracappa.

Another \$9.9 million — a record

payout at the time for the city — went to a man who spent 19 years of a 20-year sentence in prison before his murder conviction was overturned, after evidence emerged that Mr. Eppolito had framed him.

Along with his wife, Mr. Eppolito's survivors include three chil-

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dren, Andrea, Deanna and Anthony; four grandchildren; and a sister. A son from his first marriage, Louis Jr., had long been estranged from his father but was a regular presence at his trial.

Mr. Eppolito and Mr. Caracappa also fed Mr. Casso the names of people who were cooperating with the government, as well as infor-

mation about active investigations and pending indictments.

Mr. Casso, hoping to enter the witness protection program, first identified Mr. Eppolito and Mr. Caracappa as working for him after he was arrested in 1993. But he was deemed an unreliable witness, and no charges were filed against the detectives.

By then, though, there was a cloud over them. Mr. Eppolito retired to a gated community in Las Vegas on a police pension, published his book and started a movie career that included bit parts in "Goodfellas," "Predator 2" and "Lost Highway."

It all came to a halt when he and Mr. Caracappa, who had moved in across the street from Mr. Eppolito, were arrested in Las Vegas in 2005.

The two men maintained their innocence until their deaths. Ms. Eppolito did the same on her husband's behalf on Wednesday, although she acknowledged, "There is nothing I'm going to say that is going to change public opinion."

# Marie Laforêt, 80, French Star With the 'Golden Eyes'

By ANITA GATES

Marie Laforêt, the French actress and singer known in Europe as "the girl with the golden eyes" ("la fille aux yeux d'or"), died on Saturday in Genolier, Switzerland, a small town in the Nyon district north of Geneva. She was 80.

The death was announced by her family.

Ms. Laforêt appeared in some 35 feature films, as well as numerous television movies and mini-series, but her music career was even more successful than her work onscreen. She sold more than 35 million records, counting among her biggest hits "Vendanges l'Amour," "Ivan, Boris et Moi," "Viens, Viens" and "Il A Neigé sur Yesterday" ("It Has Snowed on Yesterday"), a 1977 tribute to the Beatles. Her songs were strongly influenced by folk music, and she even recorded versions of American folk songs, including "House of the Rising Sun."

Ms. Laforêt came from "a bourgeois milieu" and a family that was passionate about music, she said in a 2008 interview with the French newsmagazine VSD (Vendredi Samedi Dimanche). "The tea was brought on a silver platter at 5 p.m.," she recalled, adding: "My parents used the formal address 'vous.' My mother changed for dinner."

But her early years included considerable trauma.

Maitène Marie Brigitte Doumenach was born on Oct. 5, 1939, in Souillac-sur-Mer, France, a seaside resort town north of Bordeaux. Her parents, Jean Doumenach, a manufacturer, and Marie-Louise (Saint Gully) Doumenach, had one other daughter.



Marie Laforêt made her film debut at 19 in "Purple Noon," released in 1960, alongside Maurice Ronet, left, and Alain Delon.

At 3, Maitène suddenly stopped speaking. More than three decades later, Ms. Laforêt revealed publicly that she had been raped by a neighbor that year, more than once, while her father was in a

**Her oeuvre included 35 films, as well as numerous TV movies and mini-series.**

German prisoner-of-war camp. She was deeply affected for decades, and it was suggested in various articles that she later turned to acting because it offered catharsis. She agreed.

At the end of World War II,

Maitène's father returned and the family moved, first to Valenciennes, in the north of France, and then to Paris. She attended Lycée Jean de La Fontaine, in the wealthy 16th Arrondissement, where she became interested in drama.

For a while, she talked about becoming a nun. But when she entered a radio talent contest in 1959 (filling in for her sister at the last minute), she won and was discovered by the director Louis Malle.

Ms. Laforêt was signed to appear in Malle's next film, but that project fell through. Instead she made her film debut, at 19, in "Purple Noon" ("Plein Soleil"), a movie released in 1960 based on a Patricia Highsmith novel about a handsome, homicidal young con man.

She starred opposite Alain Delon as a rich girl living in Italy, later played by Gwyneth Paltrow in "The Talented Mr. Ripley," the

1999 American film, starring Matt Damon, based on the same novel.

Ms. Laforêt's second film, "Saint-Tropez Blues" (1961), in which she sang the title song, led to her career as a vocalist. Her third, "The Girl With the Golden Eyes" (1961), gave her a lifelong professional nickname. (Her eyes were actually yellow-green.)

When that film opened in New York the next year, it led the critic Bosley Crowther of The New York Times to evaluate French cinema's latest direction, the Nouvelle Vague, or New Wave. He declared the picture "beautifully photographed" but said that it seemed to hit "the jackpot of intentional obscurity." Happily, he found Ms. Laforêt "haunting."

Ms. Laforêt left France for Switzerland in 1978 and ran an art gallery in Geneva for three years. She remained in her adopted country for the rest of her life, but did return to the entertainment industry.

In the 1980s and '90s, she appeared in films, television movies and mini-series. In 2005, she gave a sold-out concert tour of France. She played Maria Callas onstage in Terrence McNally's "Master Class" twice, in 2000 and 2008.

Her final screen appearances were in "God's Offices" ("Les Bureaux de Dieu"), a 2008 film about social workers and pregnant women, and "Dispositif 47 — the Second Death" (2010), a short that also starred Jeanne Moreau.

Ms. Laforêt was married and divorced five times. Her first husband, Jean-Gabriel Albicocco, whom she married in 1961, was a filmmaker who directed two of her early movies. She later married Judas Azuelos (1965), Alain Kahn-



Ms. Laforêt in 1972. Her music career was even more successful than her work onscreen. She sold more than 35 million records.

Sriber (1971), Pierre Meyer (1980) and Eric De Lavendevra (1990).

Her survivors include two daughters, Lisa Azuelos, a French filmmaker, and Eve-Marie-Deborah Kahn-Sriber; a son, Mehdi-Jean-Abraham Azuelos; and sev-

eral grandchildren.

Le Monde wrote in its obituary that Ms. Laforêt was "modest, snobbish and cheeky, all at the same time, with a corrosive sense of humor," quoting her as saying that she loved "anguished people."

## Deaths

**BARTON—Catherine A.**, Ph.D., died on November 6, 2019. Catherine served as a teacher, principal and superintendent of the schools of West Point for her entire 30-year career. Beloved daughter of the late George and Margaret (nee McLoughlin) Barton. Dear sister of the late Margaret Dooner, George T. Barton, Sr. and John J. Barton. Cherished aunt of Mary T. Barton, Margaret Connor, George T. Barton, Jr., John J. Dooner, Gerard Dooner and the late George Dooner. Adored great-aunt of Liam and Mary Kate Connor. The family will receive friends on Friday, November 8, at Joseph Duffy Funeral Home, 255 9th Street, Brooklyn, N.Y., from 2-5pm and 7-9pm. The Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Saturday, November 9, at 9:45am at St. Augustine RC Church, 116 6th Avenue, Brooklyn, N.Y. Interment will follow at St. Charles Cemetery, Farmingdale, N.Y. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Fordham University Graduate School of Education or St. Augustine RC Church, Brooklyn, N.Y.

## Deaths

**EVAN—Uri M.**, The Harmonie Club notes with sorrow the passing of our honored member Mr. Uri M. Evan. We extend our heartfelt condolences to the entire family. The Harmonie Club

## Deaths

**MINZER—Leonard, M.D.**, The Medical Staff of Moimoides Medical Center is deeply saddened by the death of Dr. Leonard Minzer. He was an internist with the Department of Medicine at Moimoides Medical Center for over 45 years. He was a very caring man and always had a smile for whoever he came into contact with. He will be sorely missed by all his colleagues, patients and friends. Sincere condolences are extended to his entire family. Edward Chonick, MD, Pres; Harry Adler, MD, Pres-Elect; Monica Ghilan, MD, Secy; Juan Kuterman, MD, Treas; George Neiderman, MD, Post-Pres

## Deaths

**ROSENKRANZ—Sol.** Sol Rosenkranz, died of the age of 101 on Sunday, October 27th at his home on West End Avenue in Manhattan. Born in Grabow, Poland, on February 16, 1918. Sol was a Holocaust survivor who lived through the ravages of six Nazi labor camps until his liberation in Theresienstadt. Sol met his wife, Sala (Sally) Kuperwasser, in Bergen-Belsen and after settling in New York, he started a slipcover business in Brooklyn. Years later he opened a large leather wear factory in New York's garment district. Sol and Sally retired to Los Angeles in 1974 where he volunteered at the Simon Wiesenthal Center for thirteen years. Upon Sally's death in 1996, Sol relocated to the Upper West Side of Manhattan and for more than twenty years was an active educator at the Museum of Jewish Heritage in Battery Park, where a large-scale photo of him, along with other survivors' portraits, graces

## Deaths

the facade of the museum. Sol educated tens of thousands of visitors of all ages, races and religions about the Shoah, providing an irrefutable tale of his personal journey during the war. His family of nine members was decimated. Only one brother, Henry, survived. Sol is survived by his son, Joel Rosenkranz (companion Helen Nirkkin), daughter, Rita Rosenkranz (companion Mort Rosen), and his grandson, Daniel Rosenkranz. He was predeceased by his son Melvin Rosenkranz and daughter-in-law, Brigitte Maurer (Danielle's parents). He is also survived by his nieces Sarah Goldstein and Frances Rosenkranz and their families, and his niece Eva Grubler-Vargas and her family. After Sally's death in 1996, Sol married a close family friend, Charlotte Sherman, in 2000, and their marriage lasted until her death two years later. Sol is survived by Charlotte's loving children, Abby Cook, Hope Jones, and Glen Sherman and their families. Sol was a singular man whose passion for purpose, innate optimism, moral compass, quiet dignity and irrepressible memory proved inspiring to his family, his shul, his museum, and so many others. Donations in his memory may be sent to: The Museum of Jewish Heritage, 36 Battery Place, New York, NY 10280. Please note on check - Sol Rosenkranz and Family Fund.

## Deaths

**SADAO—Shoji.** The Board of Trustees and staff of the Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum mourn the passing of Shoji Sadao, a vital force in the world of architecture and design and a crucial collaborator of Isamu Noguchi. Shoji worked closely on the design and construction of The Noguchi Museum, the realization of Moerenuma Park, in Sapporo, Japan, and countless other projects. An Honorary Life Trustee of the Museum, he served as Executive Director of the Isamu Noguchi Foundation from 1989 to 2003. His lifelong dedication and contributions to our museum and to furthering the legacy of Isamu Noguchi were immeasurable. He will be profoundly missed. We extend our deepest condolences to his beloved wife Tsuneko.

## Deaths

**SCARDINO—Joseph M.D.**, of Great Neck, NY on November 3rd, 2019 at the age of 94. Beloved husband of Sorelle. Cherished father of Joseph (deceased), Michael Ryan, and Olivia. Fulfilling career as a psychiatrist and mentor to many in the field. Worked until 81 years of age. Visiting being held at Riverside-Nassau North Chapel (Dignity Memorial) located at 55 North Station Plaza, Great Neck, NY 11021 Sunday, November 10, 2019. Visiting 2-4pm and 7-9pm. Service of Riverside-Nassau North Chapel of 10am on Monday, November 11th, 2019 at 10 am. Interment at Locust Valley Cemetery following service.

## Deaths

**SCHUR—Janet E.**, age 94, died on November 2, 2019. She was an avid traveler, humanitarian, and lover of art and nature. She will be deeply missed. She is survived by her daughter, Lisa Schur, son-in-law, Douglas Kruse, niece, Michelle Link, and great-niece, Madison Link. Funeral services will be held at "The Riverside" at 70th St. and Amsterdam Avenue on Sunday, November 10th at 11:30am.

ANNOUNCEMENTS OF DEATHS MAY BE TELEPHONED FROM WITHIN NYC: TO (212) 858-3800; OR OUTSIDE NYC: TO TOLL FREE 1-800-458-5522; OR SUBMITTED ONLINE AT ADVERTISING.NYTIMES.COM (EFFECT IN MEMORIAM) FOR THE FOLLOWING EDITIONS: Until 6:30 PM, the day before for Tuesday through Saturday editions; until 5:00 PM, on Friday for Sunday's Nationwide Edition; until 12:45 PM, Saturday for Sunday's New York Region edition; until 2:00 PM, Sunday for Monday's editions. Photos may be submitted by noon the day prior to publication Tuesday through Friday. Photos for Saturday, Sunday and Monday must be submitted by 12 noon on Friday.