

The original documents are located in Box 39, folder “Ford, Betty - Portrait” of the Sheila Weidenfeld Files at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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Father was an Am. Engineer
 worked for Am. Comp. in Cuba.
 Age 5, 1931 moved to the
 States. St. Paul, Minn &
 then to Oak Park, Ill.

~~Studied at~~ Supt. age 2 interested in
 art. \$⁵ set of oil paints at age
 10. Remembers drawing at
 age 5, 6 on. & wanted to
 be a portrait painter.
 Studied art in senior
 fashion su/ 12 - Taking
 rep. drawing & oil classes.

Went to art Institute of
 Chicago in '46 after army -
 Stud studied at oil pa

~~Parent~~
 Paul Wiegardt, student of
 Paul Klee at Bauhaus in
 Germany.

Wife an artist. - intense colors.
 Angela Von Neumann, Approach
 towards surrealistic. & ~~fantasy~~
 fantasy.

Works in the organic world -
 from



JOHN ULBRICHT . ES CLAPES 85, GALILEA, MALLORCA, ESPAÑA *Portraits*

September 15, 1975

Miss Sheila Rabb Weidenfeld
Press Secretary to Mrs. Ford
The White House
Washington D.C.

Dear Sheila,

I'm writing just to tell you that I plan to arrive in Washington on about October 15 and plan to spend a few weeks there and in New York. The painting of the President is completed at last, as is a second and smaller portrait of the First Lady. I've already notified Mr. Conger of this, by the way, but have had no reply from him thus far. I hope and trust that it will be possible to show these paintings to the President and Mrs. Ford at some moment during my stay in Washington, and will contact you (and Clement Conger) upon my arrival.

With all best regards, and looking forward to seeing you again soon,

Sincerely,

John

John Ulbricht



Stan - 8/29/74

Portrait Artist Finds Betty Ford A Relaxed Poser

By Ymelda Dixon

Special to the Star-News

John Ulbricht, a young
American artist, who lives

portraitist who paints as
an artist and not as a com-
mercial agent. He paints
from a standpoint of qual-
ity, not from an aspect of

For release
Tuesday, Jan. 14, 1975

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary to Mrs. Ford

NOTICE TO THE PRESS

A portrait of Mrs. Ford, commissioned by the President when he was Vice President, was presented at a private party at the White House last night. A few close friends and staff members were invited.

The portrait, by American artist John Ulbricht, is done with oils on a linen canvas and will hang in the Family Quarters. The canvas measures 78" x 59", and the frame is 3" wide. The frame is classical and simple in design, done in a subdued antique gold leaf on wood.

In the painting, Mrs. Ford is seated against a background of soft green. She is wearing a pale green gown of Chinese silk embroidered with pale green chrysanthemums.

According to Ulbricht, the painting does not fit into a stylistic category, and although in muted lines and shadings is not truly impressionistic. He uses a technique in which layers on layers of oil glazes are built up over a period of time.

Ulbricht, who lives in Mallorca, has also done portraits of Picasso; Lord Mountbatten; Novelist and poet Robert Graves; the Duchess of Devonshire; and the Duchess of Alba.

Biographical material follows:

John Ulbricht was born in Havana, Cuba, in 1926. He studied at the Art Institute of Chicago from 1946 until 1950, when he was awarded a grant to continue his studies abroad. For the following two years he lived in Mexico City, after which he became the assistant to the director of the Denver Art Museum in Denver, Colorado. In 1954 he moved to Europe and currently resides in the village of Galilea, Mallorca with his wife, the painter Angela von Neumann, and their two children.

He has held one-man exhibitions in London, New York, Paris, Edinburgh, Los Angeles, Mexico City, Madrid, Palma de Mallorca and other cities. His paintings are represented in numerous private collections as well as in a number of public institutions including the following: the Dallas Art Museum, the Denver Art Museum, the Columbus Gallery of Fine Arts, the State University of New York at Buffalo, the Pasadena Art Museum, the London National Portrait Gallery, the La Jolla Museum of Art, the University of Texas, the University of Southern Illinois, the University of Victoria (Canada), and the University of San Francisco.



GUEST LIST FOR THE UNVEILING OF MRS. FORD'S PORTRAIT ON
ON MONDAY, JANUARY 13, 1975, AT 7:30 P.M., THE WHITE HOUSE,
BUSINESS SUIT:

Buchen, Mr. and Mrs. Philip
Byrnes, The Honorable John and Mrs.
Cederberg, The Honorable Elford and Mrs.
Conger, Mr. and Mrs. Clem
Davis, The Honorable Glenn and Mrs.
Hartmann, The Honorable Robert
Jarman, Mrs. John
Lammerding, Miss Nancy
MacGregor, The Honorable Clark and Mrs.
Markley, Mr. and Mrs. Rod
McGuire, Mr. and Mrs. Perkins
Nessen, Mr. and Mrs. Ron
Rockefeller, The Vice President and Mrs.
Weidenfeld, Mr. and Mrs. Edward
Whyte, Mr. and Mrs. William G.

Artist's Party: Ulbricht, Mr. and Mrs. John
Brune, Mr. and Mrs. (Beatrice Ulbricht Brune is the
artists sister)
Pina, Mrs. Pepe (Mrs. Pina is the wife of Mr. Ulbricht's
agent, Pepe)

Kissinger, The Secretary of State and Mrs. Henry
Mahon, The Honorable George and Mrs.
Rumsfeld, The Honorable Donald and Mrs.
Scott, Mr. and Mrs. David

BUFFET

Hot Senegalaise Soup

Lamb Curry with Rice and Raisins

Condiments:

Sliced Almonds
Chopped Hazel Nuts
Grated Orange Rind
Chutney

(light red wine)

Tossed Green Salad
Assorted Rolls

Pineapple Sherbet



Summary
JAN. 7, 75

2

days of interviews. Robert L. Brown, deputy Director of personnel for recruiting and employment, U.S. State Department, was diplomatically, but unmistakably, stunned yesterday by the lines of people who started gathering at 6 a.m. to seek work. Any work. Brown and his two recruiters, Terry Denlinger and Dolores Biersbach, did their best. They called Washington for three extra interviewers, who were there last night.

Suzy Says, New York Daily News: The official picture of Mrs. Gerald Ford, a six-foot canvas by John Ulbricht, will be unveiled this weekend at the White House. The Fords, who saw the portrait for the first time after their return from Vail, were so pleased that Ulbricht is flying to Washington to start work on a picture of President Ford on Thursday. Ulbricht, a native of Cedar Rapids, has been living in Majorca. He has painted such biggies as Pablo Picasso, Joan Miro and Lord Mountbatten. After observing President Ford at work for several days, Ulbricht will return to Majorca to do the portraits. Those Grand Rapids fellows sure stick together. (Suzy used "Cedar Rapids" in the first instance, "Grand Rapids" in the second.)

Dorothy Collin, Chicago Tribune: Don Rumsfeld, the former congressman from Chicago's North Shore who is now President Ford's chief of staff, is getting the treatment from the star makers-and-breakers of Washington and New York. Women's Wear Daily, which spends much of its space reporting on either Jackie O. or the decline in the girdle business, has taken to calling Rumsfeld "Rummy." In a recent profile, W.W.D. quotes him as denying he has any interest in the presidency: "The future? It's all blurred. All I see is smog." He also replies to a question about whether he is Ford's Haldeman with: "My goodness."

Dorothy Collin, Chicago Tribune: Former President Nixon's signature, "is one of the vilest scrawls of history, along with Napoleon's and Jack Kennedy's," says New York autograph tycoon Charles Hamilton. But such scrawls bring lots of money in the autograph market. A handwritten Nixon letter sells for about \$2,000 these days, according to Hamilton, who recently held the first sale of Gerald Ford autographs. The President's 1931 high school yearbook with seven signatures by him brought \$450.



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Scaling Down an Executive Portrait

By Dorothy McCardle

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He will continue with preliminary
sketches of President Ford through

Portrait Of the First Lady

Yesterday was a big day
for First Lady Betty Ford.
In the morning, she was

WHILE HOUSE
society decides to buy it
for the White House.

By Daily News, 1/3/75
First Lady's
Portrait Done
Washington, Jan. 7 (UPI)
—A newly painted portrait of

dent.

new vice presi-

Personalities

THE WASHINGTON POST
B2 Tuesday, Jan. 14, 1975



olio

Ford, as Seen by an Artist

By Ymelda Dixon

Special to the Star-News

John Ulbricht, who will paint the official portrait of President Ford, gave a revealing assessment of Gerald Ford the man

national magazines are after interviews, and other VIP's are calling wanting to be painted by the current court painter.

Among the guests at tonight's unveiling of Ul-

gation is made of why it was misaddressed."

* * * *

WHEN GEORGE Bush, now Ambassador to the People's Republic of China, was a congress-

from Ohio, thinks big. Glenn is reported to have asked for 350 tickets for the Senate swearing-in ceremonies tomorrow. The capacity of the galleries: 350.

Washington Star-News

Sunday, January 26, 1975

Section E

Business—Finance

portfolio

Ulbricht Paints the Person Behind the Face He Paints

By Ruth Dean
Star-News Staff Writer

To American artist John Ulbricht, "the face is a revelation of what we are," but few people have a Dorian Gray realization of it.

ing a pale green gown of Chinese silk embroidered with pale green chrysanthemums.

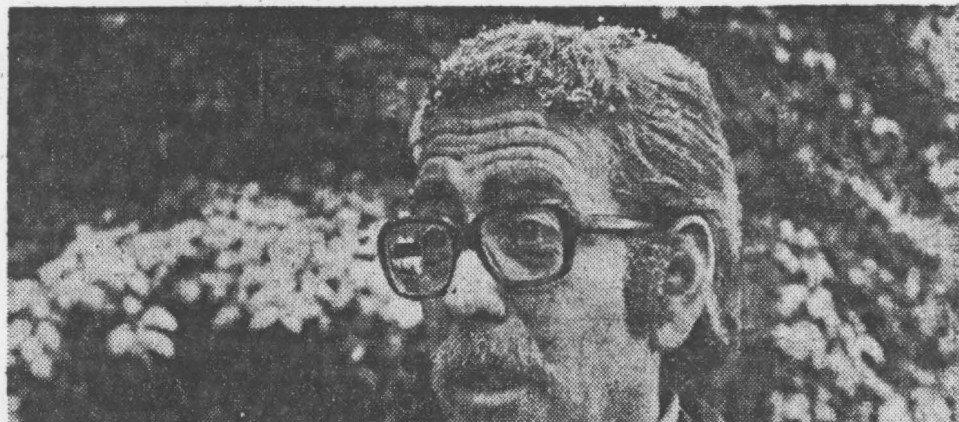
"She has great inner grace, a certain fragility, but with that fragility a vitality, a projection of some inner quality. It was

read in that face that did not frankly to me in any sense, psychologically humanly."

He'd been talking about how the face reveals the inner man and of how the artist is fooled by a so-called ma-

Portfolio / people

e Person
e Paints



Notes on People

Ford, 'Most Paintable' President

Preliminary work for the official White House portrait of President Ford started last weekend, and the paint-

ing the gavel for the last time, he said, "That's it—good-bye and good luck." Then he took the gavel and

performance against Australia in the present series, Bishop Sheppard said tactfully, "It is obvious the Australians

portfolio

- People
- Amusements
- The Arts
- TV: Page C-6

Picture The Fords —In Portraits By John Ulbricht

President and Mrs. Ford will find a large unopened crate waiting for them when they return to the White House tomorrow afternoon. It contains the completed life-size portrait of the First Lady that will become her official White House portrait if approved by the White House Historical Association. It was painted by American artist John Ulbricht, who will fly in from his home in Mallorca Jan. 9 and will be present for its unveiling later in the month.

BUT THE MAIN purpose of Ulbricht's visit will be to begin the official portrait of Gerald Ford. He will use the same method he used with Betty Ford's portrait, which was the result of innumerable sketches he made in the Fords' Alexandria house while he was still vice president. At that time, her painting, which was done at the request of her husband, was to hang in his vice-presidential office.

It took Ulbricht only two days (four hours each day) to make his rapid sketches for Mrs. Ford's portrait.

Betty Beale

He sketched her while she was talking, moving, sitting, making as many as eight or nine drawings of one facial feature alone. Then he went back to Palma and painted the portrait.

In a six-foot high canvas, Mrs. Ford is presented in a seated posture against a background of soft green. She is wearing a pale green gown of Chinese silk embroidered with pale green chrysanthemums.

The Fords' Siamese cat Shan is not in the painting, although Mrs. Ford had hoped it would be. But the cat was nervous that day and not in a mood to be handled, having bitten Nancy Howe's finger so deeply she had to have it operated on.

Anyway, says David Scott of the National Gallery of Art, the artist may have ruled out the cat for an official portrait because cats suggest domesticity. Dogs,

on the other hand, have always been used to suggest aristocracy. The dog in Mrs. Coolidge's official portrait adds a certain éclat.

THE PRESIDENT'S PORTRAIT will be started next weekend. The artist will make his sketches while Ford is working at his desk and probably on Sunday, the 12th, while he is watching the Super Bowl game.

The slender, graying Ulbricht who has painted Picasso, Miro, and is the only contemporary American artist represented in the National Portrait Gallery of London with his painting of Lord Mountbatten, has done "a very distinctive, very beautiful and very sensitive portrait" of Mrs. Ford, says Scott, who was director of the National Collection of Fine Arts before he became the National Gallery's planning consultant for its new building.

"Our experience with official portraits over the last

See BEALE, B-9

Suzy Says

Cerf-Wagner Nuptials Set

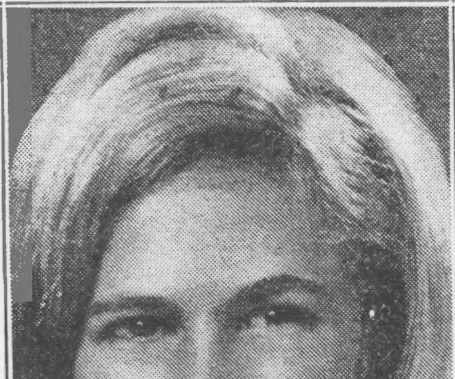
MRS. BENNETT CERF, the widow of the distinguished publisher, and former New York Mayor Robert F. Wagner Sr. are announcing that they will be married at the end of January at St. Thomas More Church in New York City. They'll honeymoon in Barbados, where they have taken a house for the month of February.

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Mountbatten. After observing President Ford at work for several days, Ulbricht will return to Majorca to do the portrait. Those Grand Rapids fellows sure stick together.

Robert Joffrey of New York's Ballet (recently in Moscow) gave all the members of the senior class at the Bolshoi Ballet School new leotards as prezies. Mary Ann



portfolio

- People
- Amusements
- The Arts
- TV: Page C-6

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"Our experience with official portraits over the last

See BEALE, B-9

Portrait Artist AUG 29 1974 Finds Betty Ford A Relaxed Poser

By Ymelda Dixon
Special to the Star-News

John Ulbricht, a young American artist, who lives in Majorca, came here last spring to do a portrait of Mrs. Gerald Ford at the request of her husband,

portraitist who paints as an artist and not as a commercial agent. He paints from a standpoint of quality, not from an aspect of fulfilling a commission."

Meanwhile, another portrait, of the late Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, by

THE WASHINGTON POST

C6

Thursday, Jan. 16, 1975

PEOPLE

VIP

Presidential Portrait-Sitting

By Maxine Cheshire

White House Chief of Staff Donald Rumsfeld and other aides were in the Oval Office last week while President Ford was being sketched for an oil portrait by American artist John Ulbricht,

SALA PELAIRES

Pelaires 63 - PALMA DE MALLORCA (España)

John Ulbricht

EL MUNDO DE JOHN ULBRICHT

Conociendo al mismo tiempo que a su obra al pintor John Ulbricht, se percibe esta perfecta armonía que existe entre ambos.

Este pintor norteamericano que dejó las metrópolis de su país para encontrarse a sí mismo en el retiro de Galilea (Mallorca), donde tiene su casa, sus hijos y su mujer (la pintora Angela von Neumann), ha alcanzado una perfección en su vida que se corresponde con la de su obra. Entre ambas existe esa armonía que les da un profundo sentido, que hace en definitiva de su pintura algo valioso porque corresponde a una evolución natural de su personalidad, desarrollada sin pausas y sin apresuramiento, siguiendo el desenvolverse de la vida en unos años llenos de significado para el pintor, que los ha colmado de trabajo, de reflexión, de seguridad y también —y en ello no hay contradicción— de inquietud.

Visitar la casa y el estudio de Ulbricht, visitar el pueblecito de Galilea, su campo, todo lo que más inmediatamente está en torno al pintor, transmite una sensación de calma que da al tiempo ese profundo sentido de gustarlo como lo que en definitiva es, como un fragmento de la eternidad, y ello se vuelca, de algún modo en sus telas, en las que hay al mismo tiempo una indiferencia a lo accesorio y circunstancial y una certeza de que, como anotara el visionario y humilde Wols:

A cada instante
en cada cosa
está la eternidad.

Pronto llegamos a la conclusión de que el arte de Ulbricht, si es aventura, si es búsqueda, si es hallazgo y, en definitiva, si es arte, no lo es de una manera exclusiva. Lo es desde luego por la armonía que existe entre concepción y realización, por su evolución consecuente con la obra, pero al mismo tiempo es una afirmación del mundo que le rodea y también una respuesta.

John Ulbricht, aunque vive en un pueblecito mallorquín, aparentemente retirado, no lleva una vida solitaria y productiva al modo de la de un Armando Reverón, sino que permanece en contacto con las manifestaciones y personas de nuestro tiempo en su representación amplia. El, viajero, lector y espectador de las manifestaciones de la cultura y de la vida, está en la hora en punto de cada momento suyo y ello se traduce en su pintura, en el tono en el que se dan de manera manifiesta la coordinación de las contradicciones que el hombre percibe en el mundo, directamente con sus sentidos e intelectualmente con su inteligencia. Si su pintura le debe mucho a la observación no le debe menos a la interpretación y al pensamiento.

Cualquiera que haya hablado con Ulbricht inmediatamente se habrá dado cuenta que posee una cultura inquieta y personal, que siendo de nuestro tiempo enraiza con las preocupaciones constantes del hombre y sobre todo que su cultura pictórica no es nada común, que si ha llegado a estar en posesión de un lenguaje pictórico propio, es al mismo tiempo un conocedor de los múltiples caminos y de las distintas personalidades que ha dado la pintura, que da cada día. Los que trabamos inicialmente contacto con su obra abstracta pudimos ver, desde un principio, que todo un mundo de personales alusiones concretas está en ella. Y al mismo tiempo una serie de alusiones culturales que después,

el paso del tiempo, también nos ha ido confirmando como realidades tangibles. Lo que parecían, lo que podían parecer a una observación digamos externa, aunque no necesariamente apresurada, manchas combinadas con la maestría del que domina la técnica y sigue el impulso de su inspiración, han resultado además precisas alusiones a una realidad tangible y al mismo tiempo metafísica. Desde una abstracción ha llegado al ser y al objeto, pero en la abstracción inicial, la que pertenece a la época de su pintura que corresponde a sus primeras sólidas realizaciones, ya está un paisaje que es, en un sentido, de tono esencialmente oriental y en otro mallorquín. Ulbricht en estas obras ya realiza su mundo más peculiar penetrando en la esencia de la sensación para abstraer de ella lo permanente en la realidad inmediata en sí y en su vinculación con cualquier otra realidad. Por eso su obra de pintor lo es también de pensador, sin que esto quiera decir —sino en todo caso lo contrario— que es la respuesta a una teoría. En este momento en que con tanta frecuencia los artistas siguen, y se realizan o fracasan en ello, unos postulados de grupo o las directrices de una moda, Ulbricht sigue los imperativos de una evolución personal que es al mismo tiempo, y sin que en su obra exista la paradoja, un permanecer en sus iniciales conquistas y realizaciones desarrollándolas y profundizándolas.

Aunque la comparación quede aparentemente alejada, no es ajena a Ulbricht la lección de Duchamp, su profunda comprensión del papel, del significado y de la limitación del arte, en cuanto a que ambos son artistas pensadores. Pero, sin que se establezca ninguna clase de comparación sino de referencia, Ulbricht añade a su arte la contemplación de la naturaleza y la meditación del paso del tiempo, su paladeo. Pienso, viendo sus cuadros, que no podrían dejar de resultarle gratos a un Rilke, pues en el recto sentido de la palabra ellos son profundamente literarios, sin el menor desmedro de su plasticidad. Al tiempo nos hacen pensar y nos ganan con todo lo que es únicamente pintura, proceden de la sabiduría del que ha tenido experiencias profundas: las que pertenecen al hombre que está en contacto con las manifestaciones próximas y remotas de la cultura y ha participado en algunos de los avatares más significativos de nuestro tiempo y ha quedado en él la huella de su comprensión.

Cuando Ulbricht pinta un fruto, un pedazo de carne, una flor, no nos ofrece una imagen convencional y repetida del asunto. Entonces nos sitúa ante su imagen agrandada, de forma que sólo nos ha sido dado contemplarla, pero rápidamente, en el cine. Y ante sus cuadros nos situamos delante de una presencia que no se aparta de nosotros sino que

insiste sobre nuestra sensibilidad y, al mismo tiempo que se nos aparece en una manifestación en cierto modo más real que la cosa misma, interroga a nuestra realidad de seres tangibles y conscientes.

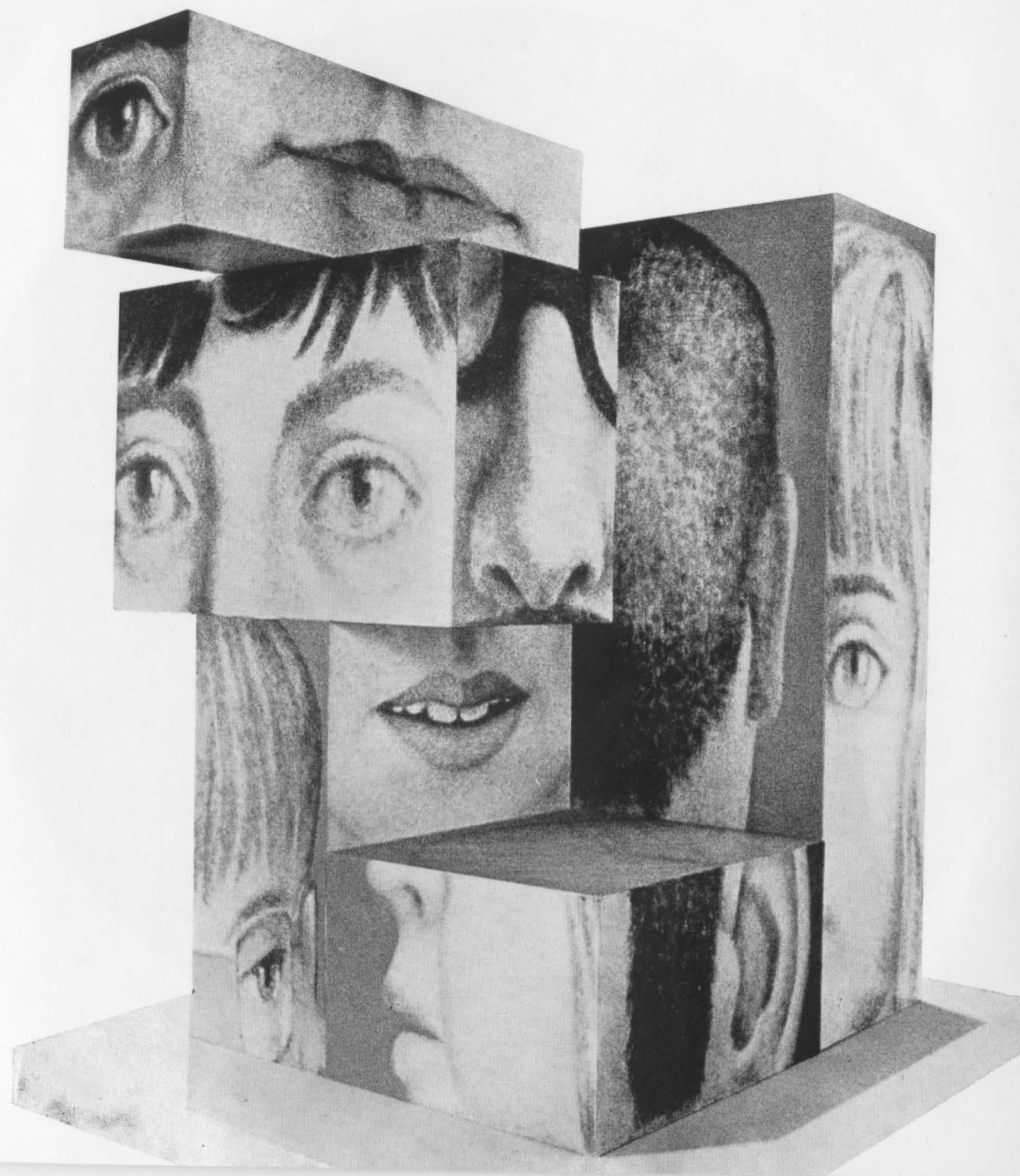
Pero hay que tener en cuenta que Ulbricht no cultiva la monstruosidad —lo cual sería seguir un camino errado y peligroso para la comprensión de su obra— sino la evidencia. Ante la imposibilidad que siente el artista de realizar la obra de arte única, lo que podría ser el cuadro que representase y explicase el sentido del mundo —como ante la imposibilidad que siente el escritor de escribir el libro que todo lo explique— Ulbricht ha optado por transcribir ampliamente de forma que esta realidad esté presente del modo más intenso posible, con la certeza de que si se llega a explicar una parte de ella, por limitada que sea, se explica el todo. Así nos encontramos que estos cuadros conjugan la ambivalencia de lo grande y de lo pequeño, y tienden a armonizar lo limitado con lo infinito. El hecho de que estas cuestiones se planteen con un lenguaje no sólo pictóricamente válido sino técnicamente notable, es la circunstancia más favorable a su real valor, pues si el dominio de una técnica, cuando está ajena de contenido conduce a la repetición y a la frialdad, cuando, como en el caso de Ulbricht está alimentada de preocupaciones que van más allá de lo estrictamente plástico, le dan además a lo plástico un calor y un sentido en el que se hace reconocible la obra de arte tras la que está el hombre que la siente como una parte de la vida que interpreta, dándole sentido a su actividad.

En esta aproximación a la realidad hay una parcela de la obra de Ulbricht que es especialmente significativa y en la que ha alcanzado una mayor maestría y penetración: sus retratos. Para Ulbricht, que es un hombre de observaciones y de ideas, la cara de cada uno de nuestros semejantes es lo que tenemos más cerca de nosotros, aunque parece que nos hemos obstinado en no mirarla. Estos tiempos en los que se han ganado tantas cosas para la humanidad también se han perdido otras que antaño pertenecieron más al dominio de los hombres. Una de ellas es la del cabal conocimiento externo (externo e interno, en el sentir de Ulbricht es lo mismo) de los semejantes que más inmediatamente nos rodean, de su rostro, que es la ventana más abierta a su auténtica realidad, esa realidad que es una abstracción y que permanece en el tiempo. El arte clásico, en algunos de sus más excelsos representantes sabía esto muy bien. Ahí queda como cima el retrato del Papa Inocencio X de Velázquez. Los modernos, con alguna excepción entre las que habría que destacar, en sus distintas vertientes, las aportaciones del expresionismo. han

parecido olvidar esta lección. Pero Ulbricht sabe que el rostro es un paisaje en el que está escrita la historia del individuo que es la repercusión de una realidad más amplia. Por eso, fruto de la intuición y de la reflexión, ha realizado algo que es una aportación original tanto como un paso adelante en las conquistas del arte de nuestro tiempo, al situarnos ante las cosas, en su realidad más inmediata, pero sobre todo ante los rostros de sus retratos, delante de los que el espectador se siente desarmado, sin ese espacio que suele separarle del retrato, inmerso en su presencia. Ganados por una intimidad que no nos era conocida y en la que la cara vive su propia realidad, observamos y sentimos por primera vez con objetividad. Entonces los rostros están más allá y más acá de unos cánones de belleza; percibimos en ellos una hermosura que se nos revela de pronto como distinta; una luz metafísica los anima poniendo de manifiesto el modo cómo sobre ellos ha ido labrando el tiempo, tallándolos, hacia una madurez para la que de algún modo parecían destinados.

Si a la ejecución de estos cuadros no la acompañaran el amor a la realidad y el arte de la ejecución, su resultado no podría ser más ingrato. Pero Ulbricht sin duda ama cuanto le rodea, y posee una técnica en la que se conjugan la sencillez con el dominio del dibujo y la sobriedad del color. Cuadros los suyos muy trabajados en los que parece que el pintor se ha afanado en eliminar todo lo accesorio, para dejar eso esencial que posee la capacidad de fascinarnos.

A. F. Molina



«...Una naturaleza ávida de vivir, de gozar, desenfrenadamente... Riquezas simples, naturales, procuran una fruición física, casi sensual. La enorme precisión del conjunto otorga un cierto realismo encantador, mágico. Los colores finos, de pergamino, un poco graves, están emparentados con los empleados por los pintores del renacimiento...»

«...Nature seized with the gourmande-like avidity of joy, of an unshackled thirst for life... These simple and natural riches create a physical impression that is almost sensual. The great precision of this ensemble confers upon it a sort of magical, enchanted realism. The jewelled colors, vellum-like, a bit sultry, are neighbors of those employed by the painters of the Renaissance...»

LA GALERIE DES ARTS - JULIO, 1969



THE WORLD OF JOHN ULBRICHT by A. F. Molina.

Knowing the painter John Ulbricht at the same time as his work, one senses the perfect harmony existing between them. This North American painter, who left the metropolis of his country to find himself in the seclusion of Galilea (Majorca), where he has his home, his children and his wife (the painter Angela von Neumann), has reached a perfection in his own life which corresponds to that in his work. Between them exists a harmony which endows them with profound significance, which in conclusion converts his painting into something really valuable in that it corresponds to a natural evolution of his own personality, developing continuously and without haste, following the significant evolution of the painter throughout the years, enhanced with work, reflection, confidence and also - indubitably - inquietude.

Visiting Ulbricht's house and studio, the little village of Galilea, its countryside, everything

immediately surrounding the painter, transmits to us a sensation of calm and a deep sense of pleasure in the appreciation of time as a fragment of eternity, and that is reflected somehow in his canvases, insofar as there is at the same time indifference towards the accessory and circumstantial and also a certainty that, as visionary and modest Wols also believed.

«At each moment
in everything
exists eternity».

At once we reach the conclusion that Ulbricht's art, if it is adventure, search, discovery, and in fact art, it is not exclusively so; but it is attained through the harmony between conception and realization, through his own evolution consequent with that of his work; and at the same time it is an assertion of the world surrounding him and also a response.

Although he lives in a tiny Majorcan village, apparently isolated, John Ulbricht's life is not solitary and productive in the same way as was that of Armando Reverón, because he remains well in contact with the manifestations and personalities of our time. Being a traveller, reader and spectator of cultural manifestations and of life itself, he is constantly up-to-date, and this is reflected in his painting, insofar as this manifests the co-ordination of the contradictions perceived by man in the world, directly by his senses and intellectually by his intelligence. If his painting owes a great deal to observation, it does not owe any less to interpretation and study. Anyone who may have spoken with Ulbricht will have realised immediately that his refinement is inquiet and personal, and although of our era, based on the constant preoccupations of man, and above all that his pictorial education is extraordinary in that, having attained a pictoric idiom of his own, he is at the same time aware of the multiple styles and distinct personalities enriching the painting of the past and present day. Those of us who make a primary contact with his abstract work can observe, from the outset, that a whole world of personal allusions are united therein. And also a series of cultural allusions which, after certain consideration, are confirmed as tangible realities. What seem to be, or rather could seem at a superficial though not necessarily hasty observation, masses manipulated with mastery (in which technique dominates and impulse follows inspiration), result in precise allusions to a tangible reality, simultaneously metaphysical. From an abstraction, the being and the object have emerged, but in the initial abstraction (belonging to the phase of his painting

which corresponds to his first solid realizations) there already exists an air at one time essentially oriental and also Majorcan. Ulbricht already manifests his most peculiar world in these works, penetrating the essence of a sensation in order to absorb from it whatever is permanent in the immediate reality of the same, and its connection with any other reality. For this reason his work is not only that of a painter but also of a thinker; and that does not mean that his work is the response to a theory, but the contrary. These days when so frequently artists follow the dictates of some group or fashion, either fulfilling themselves or failing, Ulbricht follows the demands of a personal evolution which remains at the same time true to his initial conquests and realizations, developing and deepening them, and without his work containing evidence of such a paradox.

Although the comparison is apparently distant, the ideas of Duchamp are not irrelevant in connection with Ulbricht, as both are reflexive artists, sharing a deep comprehension of the part, significance and limitation of art. But, without establishing any sort of comparison and only as a reference, Ulbricht adds to his art the contemplation of nature and the meditation of the passage of time, plus his own enjoyment. When studying his paintings. I feel that they could not fail to please someone like Rilke as, in the strict sense of the word, they are profoundly literary, without detracting from their plasticity. Simultaneously they force us to think, and they win us over in all that is purely painting. His works are the fruit of knowledge gained from the profound experience of a man familiar with local and foreign cultural events, who has participated in some of the most significant transformations of our time which have left on him the seal of comprehension.

When Ulbricht paints a fruit, a chunk of meat, a flower, he does not offer us a conventional and often-repeated image of the matter. These objects appear through his imagination amplified in such a way that we are forced to contemplate them, rapidly; both in the cinema and faced with his paintings, we are set in front of a presence which forces itself on our sensibility to such an extent that it appears even more real than the object itself, questioning our own reality as tangible and conscient beings.

But it must be kept in mind that Ulbricht does not cultivate monstrosity, but palpability, to think otherwise would follow a mistaken and dangerous path towards the comprehension of his work. In the face of the impossibility the artist feels to create the unique work of art which could be the painting which might represent and explain the whole sense of

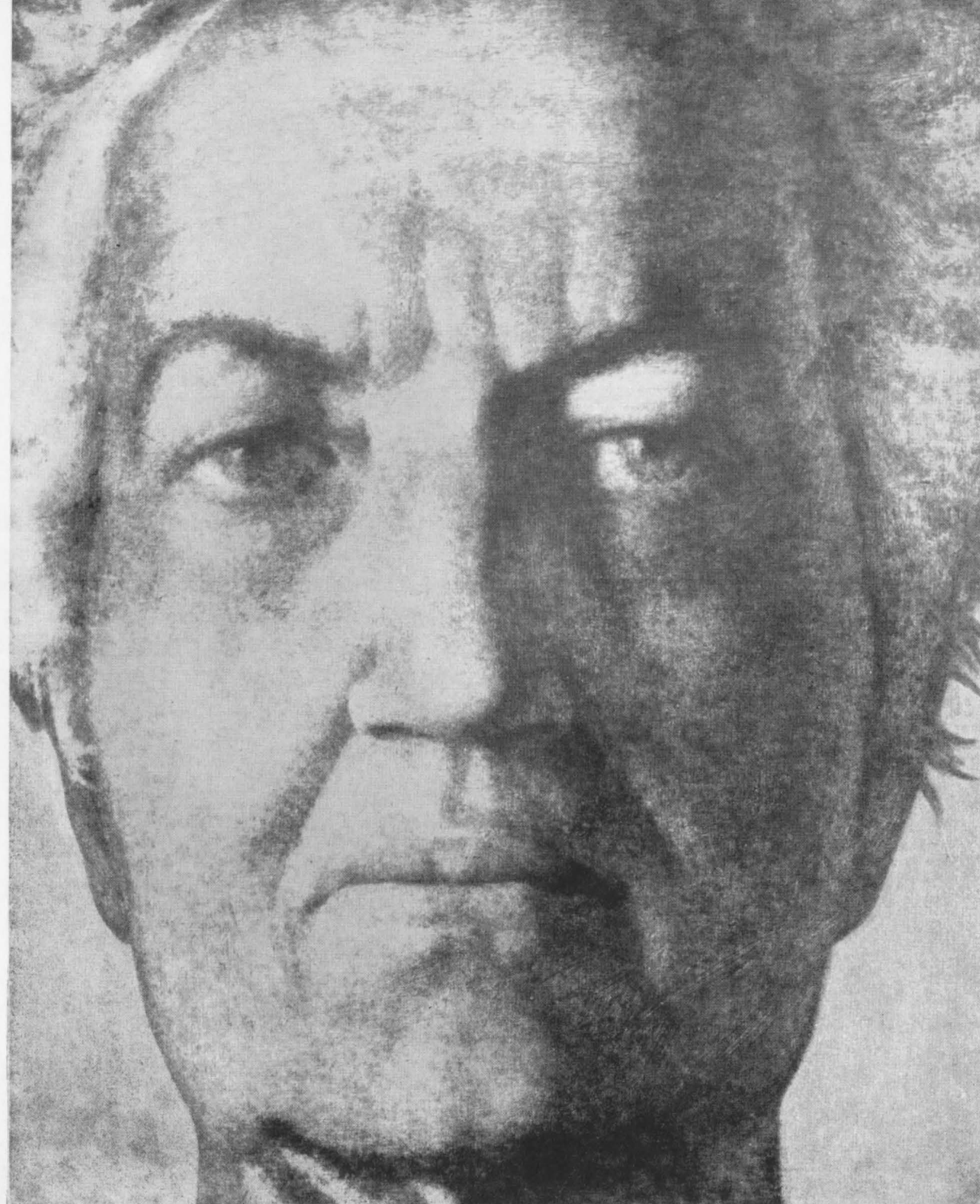
the world - just as in the face of the impossibility felt by the writer to create the book which explains absolutely everything - Ulbricht has opted for transcribing everything amplified in such a way that reality is presented in the most intense way possible, in the certainty that if even a particle is explained, however minute, then everything is explained. Thus we find that those paintings juxtapose the co-existence of large and small, and tend to harmonize the limited with the infinite. The fact that those questions are posed in an idiom, not only pictorially valid but also technically notable, is the circumstance most favourable to their real value because, if the domination of a technique leads to repetition and coldness, then when in Ulbricht's case, it is enriched by preoccupations reaching far beyond strict plasticity, it has as well as plasticity a warmth and meaning by which the work of art is recognised, behind which is the man who perceives it like an element of life which he interprets, thereby justifying his activity.

In this approximation to reality, there is a part of the work of Ulbricht which is especially significative and in which he has attained even greater mastery and penetration, his portraits. For Ulbricht, who is a man of observation and ideas, the face of each and every one of our fellow-creatures is what is most in evidence; although it seems that we have been obstinate in not observing this. In these times when so many conquests have been gained for humanity, we have also lost others which belonged more to the dominion of man before. One of those circumstances is the precise exterior knowledge (exterior or interior is the same as far as Ulbricht's way of thinking is concerned) of the persons nearest to us, of their faces, the window of their authentic reality, this reality which is an abstraction and of all time. Classical art, recognised this in some of its most sublime representatives, the climax being the portrait of Pope Innocence X by Velazquez. With some exceptions, among which in its distinct versants the contribution of the expressionists stands out, the moderns seem to have forgotten this lesson. But Ulbricht knows that the face is a landscape in which the history of the individual unfolds, which is the repercussion of a greater reality. For this reason Ulbricht, combining intuition and reflection, has effected an original contribution and a step forward among the conquests of contemporary art, in situating us in front of elements in their most immediate reality, but above all in the faces of his portraits which disarm the spectator who does not sense the space which normally separates the observer from the portrait, but feels immersed in its presence. Thus the faces are further away and at the same time closer than any

precepts of beauty. We perceive in them a loveliness which suddenly is revealed to us, animated by a metaphysical light which shows the way time has been moulding them towards the maturity to which they seemed in some way destined.

If the execution of those paintings were not accompanied by love of reality and artistic realization, their result could not be more harsh. However, Ulbricht certainly loves his surroundings, and his technique combines simplicity with dominion of drawing and elegance of colour. His paintings are very laboured, in which it seems as though the painter had toiled to eliminate everything accessory, leaving only the essential elements which have the capacity to fascinate us.

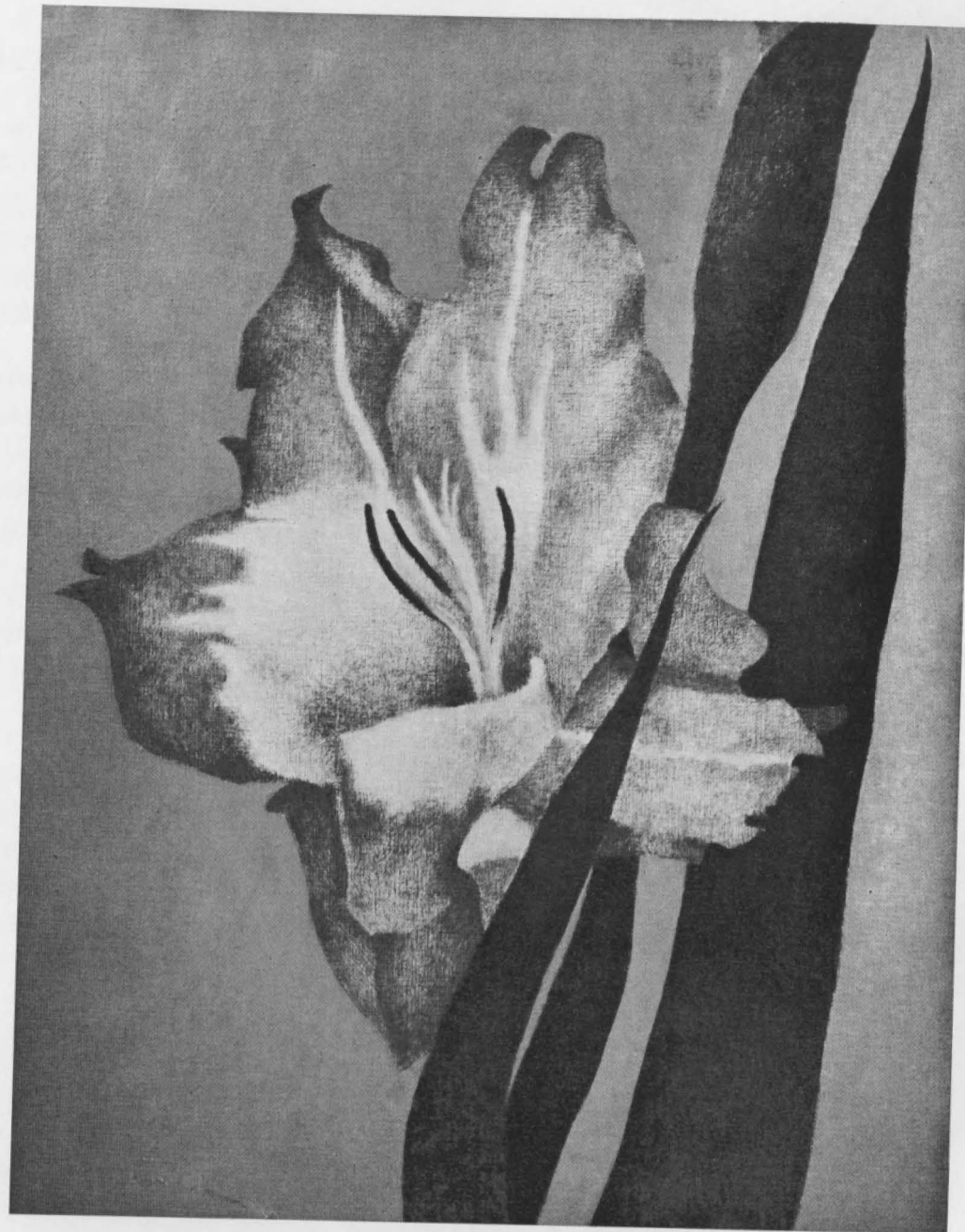
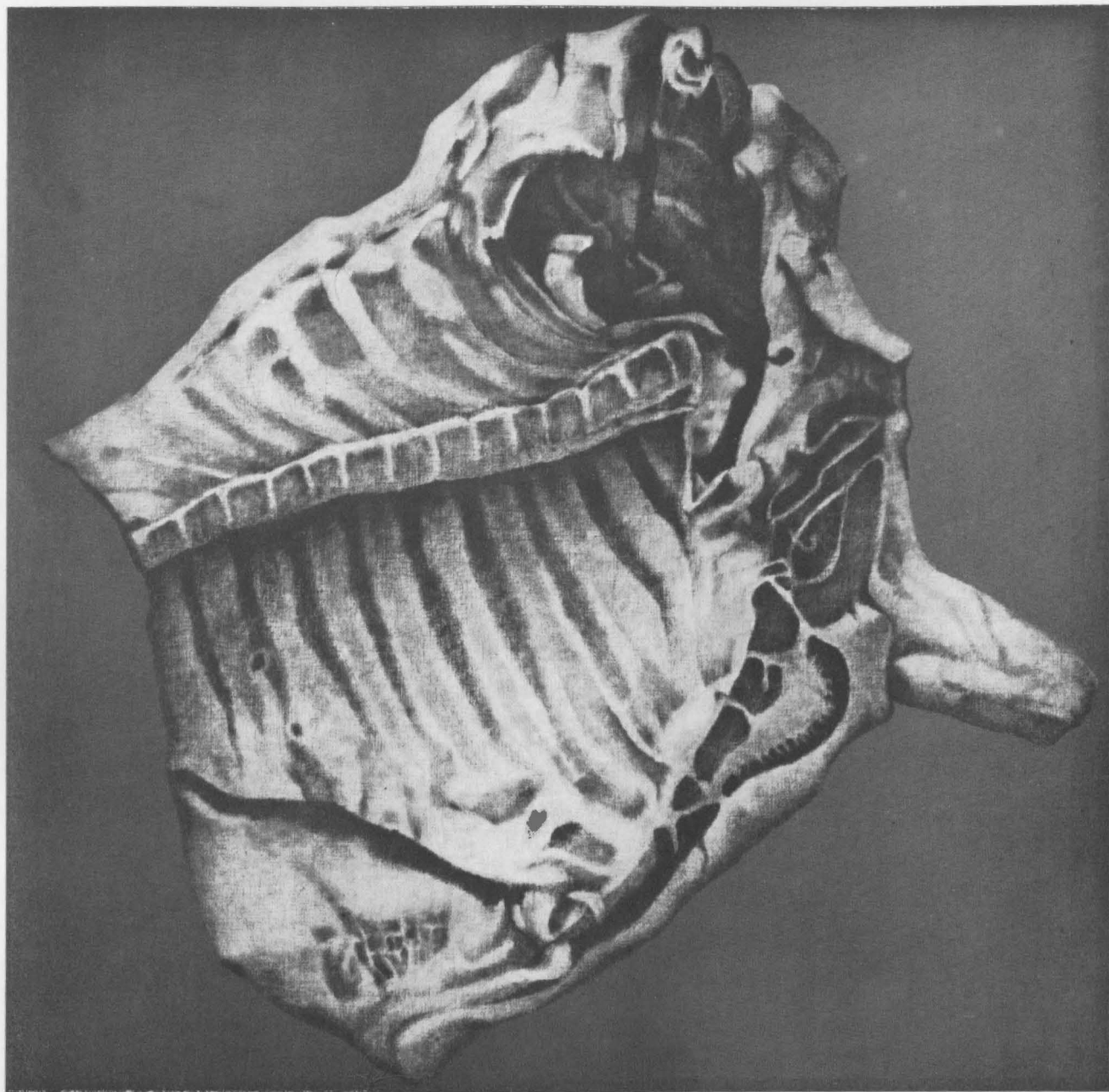
Colección del State University of New York at Buffalo, Lockwood Memorial Library. Oleo Robert Graves
162 x 130 cms.



«Las pinturas de John Ulbricht son retratos de organismos, incluso de personas, que no sólo son ampliados a escala somáticamente sino también en su dimensión psicológica. Rostros, flores, legumbres y frutas agrandados fascinan al espectador, pero no porque al ser ampliados se vean con más detalle sino porque Ulbricht hace de cada una de sus telas toda una creación... Su virtuosismo se vuelve poesía, de la grande, intensa, de asombro hacia la naturaleza que tan a menudo escapa al ciudadano».

«John Ulbricht's paintings are portraits of organisms, including people, that are not only blown up in scale but in psychological dimension... Nor do the enlarged faces, flowers, vegetables and fruits fascinate the viewer because magnification is equated with greater detail. On the contrary, Ulbricht manages to make each of his canvases into a creative and individual whole... This painter's virtuosity turns into poetry of a high intensity, projecting a sense of wonder towards nature that so often escapes the city dweller».

THE LOS ANGELES TIMES - H. J. SELDIS - MAYO, 1969



BIOGRAFIA

John Ulbricht nació en La Habana, Cuba, en 1926. Estudió en el Instituto de Arte de Chicago desde 1946 hasta 1950, al ganar una beca para proseguir estudios en el extranjero. Después marchó a la capital de Méjico, donde vivió hasta 1952. Por estas fechas fue nombrado director adjunto del Museo de Arte de Denver, Colorado. Dos años más tarde se vino a Europa, fijando su residencia en España. Desde 1956 reside en el pueblo de Galilea, Mallorca, con su esposa, la pintora Angela von Neumann, y sus dos hijos.

Después de pintar abstracto varios años, por los años 1963-1964 se hace figurativo. Realiza entonces una serie de 12 retratos españoles, que más tarde serán expuestos en el Pabellón de España de la Feria Mundial de Nueva York. En 1966 la Universidad de Nueva York compra un retrato suyo de Robert Graves, y en 1968 su retrato de Lord Mountbatten fue adquirido por la National Portrait Gallery de Londres, siendo el primer retrato de un personaje aún vivo que compraba dicha Galería.

Ha expuesto en numerosas exposiciones colectivas de Europa y América y ha celebrado las siguientes exposiciones individuales:

1951.—Galerías Saloncito, Mexico, D. F.; 1953.—Denver Art Museum; 1954.—Milwaukee Art Institute; 1957.—Galerías Quint, Palma de Mallorca; 1958.—Galerías Costa, Palma de Mallorca; 1960.—Galerías Darro, Madrid; 1961.—Coe College, Iowa; 1961.—Forsythe Gallery, Ann Arbor, Michigan; 1961.—Formentor, Mallorca; 1963.—Lee Malone Gallery, New York; 1963.—Ateneo de Madrid; 1965.—Pabellón de España de la Feria Mundial de Nueva York; 1965.—Sala de Exposiciones de la Dirección General de Bellas Artes; 1968.—Giraffe Gallery, Los Angeles; 1969.—Richard Demarco Gallery, Edinburgh; 1969.—Giraffe Gallery, Los Angeles; 1969.—Galerie Jacques Massol, París.

Su obra se encuentra en muchas colecciones particulares de Europa y América, y en los siguientes Museos: Museo de Arte de Dallas, Texas; Museo de Arte de Denver, Colorado; Museo de Arte de Columbus, Ohio; La Universidad del Estado de Nueva York en Buffalo, N. Y.; El Museo de Arte de Pasadena, California; Museo de Arte de la Jolla, California; y el National Portrait Gallery de Londres.

BIOGRAPHY

John Ulbricht was born in Havana, Cuba, in 1926. He studied at the Chicago Art Institute from 1946 to 1950, having won a scholarship to continue his studies abroad. Afterwards, he went to the capital of Mexico, where he lived until 1952, when he was appointed joint director of the Art Museum at Denver, Colorado. Two years later he came to Europe and settled in Spain. Since 1956, he resides in the village of Galilea, Majorca, with his wife, the painter Angela von Neumann, and their two children.

After painting abstract for several years, about 1963-1964, his work became figurative. He then executed a series of twelve Spanish Portraits, which later were exhibited in the Spanish Pavillion at the World Fair in New York. In 1966, the University of New York bought his portrait of Robert Graves, and in 1968 his portrait of Lord Mountbatten was acquired by the National Portrait Gallery in London, that being the first portrait of a living personality bought by the said Gallery.

He has exhibited in numerous collective shows in Europe and America and has held the following individual exhibitions:

1951.—Saloncito Gallery, Mexico, D. F.; 1953.—Denver Art Museum; 1954.—Milwaukee Art Institute; 1957.—Quint Gallery, Palma de Mallorca; 1958.—Costa Gallery, Palma de Mallorca; 1960.—Darro Gallery, Madrid; 1961.—Coe College, Iowa; 1961.—Forsythe Gallery, Ann Arbor, Michigan; 1961.—Formentor, Majorca; 1963.—Ateneo, Madrid; 1963.—Lee Malone Gallery, New York; 1965.—Spanish Pavillion at the World Fair, New York; 1965.—Fine Arts Society; 1968.—Giraffe Gallery, Los Angeles; 1969.—Richard Demarco Gallery, Edinburgh; 1969.—Giraffe Gallery, Los Angeles; 1969.—Jacques Massol Gallery, Paris.

His work is to be found in many private collections throughout Europe and America, and in the following Museums: Art Museum of Dallas, Texas; Art Museum of Denver, Colorado; Art Museum of Columbus, Ohio; New York State University in Bufalo, N. Y.; Art Museum of Pasadena, California; Art Museum of La Jolla, California; and the National Portrait Gallery of London.

INDICE DE OBRAS

- 1. **Oleo, construcción pintada "La familia"** 155 x 115 cms.
- 2. **Oleo circular** 150 cms.
- 3. **Oleo** 162 x 130 cms.
- 4. **Oleo** 140 x 140 cms.
- 5. **Oleo** 110 x 85 cms.

BUT WHO'S GOING TO AUTOGRAPH IT? . . . Chums fretted about Jimmy Schlesinger's hopping to the doc's just two days after the President fired him. Ulcers? Angst? Tired old Republican blood? Certainly not. To get a cast fitted on his tennis elbow. Life does go on, after all.

O WAD SOME POW'R THE GIFTIE G'VE US, TO SEE QURSEL'S AS ULBRICHT SEES US. . . . Ear hears all that hoopla about John Ulbricht's portraits of the Fords may have more behind it than meets the eye. First, as you know, the pic

Shash. Star
11/19/75

The Ear

of Ms. Ford was deemed "too big" for its allotted space on the White House wall by curator Clem Conger. So Ulbricht did smaller ones, of both. Still, he hasn't been paid. A New York art dealer says he knows why: "Far too revealing," he

opines. "It shows a side of Ford people just don't know." Another informed opinion: "Portrait of a devious six-million dollar man; Ford hates it." Honestly. What tosh. The artist himself said of Ford in January, "a unifying, self-inte-

grated personality with much more power in his head and more interesting and exciting things going on in his face than I would have suspected . . . Power under pressure — you could feel it buzzing beneath the surface." *He* could, Earwigs. Painting's good for that sort of thing. Better than tennis.

EEEEEEEEEEK . . . We almost lost Number 3 Saturday morning: Carl Albert's Chevy Nova, Himself ensconced at the controls, had a dreadfully close, brake-screaming shave at 38th and Woodley.

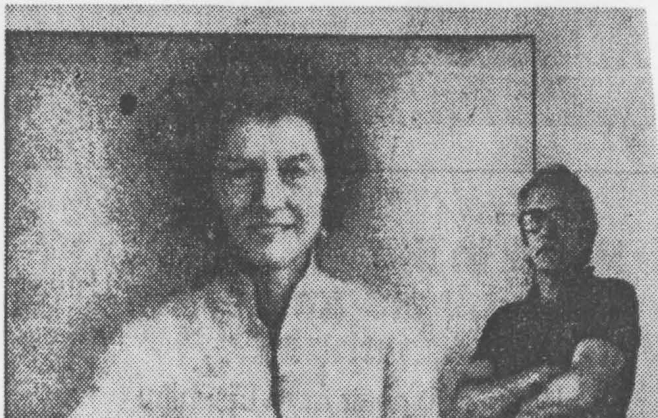
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The Washington Star

Monday, June 7, 1976

Did Ford Artist Get Paid?

*Quotes and notes from
Washington parties
uncovered for The Wash-
ington Star by Ymelda
Dixon:*



WHITE HOUSE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

5026 New Executive Office Building

Washington, D. C. 20506

737-8292

October 4, 1974

PERSONAL ATTENTION

Mrs. Helen McCain Smith
Press Secretary for the First Lady
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mrs. Smith:

This refers to our telephone conversation on October 4 concerning certain statements made in Ms. Maxine Cheshire's article "A Stunning John Ulbricht Portrait of First Lady Betty Ford" in the October 3 issue of The Washington Post.

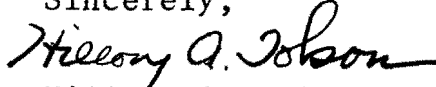
In the second paragraph of her article, Ms. Cheshire states that the White House Historical Association is negotiating to buy the 4' x 6' canvas from Mr. Ulbricht who may also be its choice to paint President Ford's official White House portrait.

This Association does not negotiate purchases of portraits of Presidents and First Ladies. Such action is taken by the President and the First Lady concerned, assisted, perhaps, by the White House Curator, and other White House officials. Also, this Association does not select the artist who paints a President's or First Lady's portrait.

The Board of Directors and officers of this Association are interested in having portraits painted of the President and First Lady as soon as possible after the election of a President for the permanent White House Collection of historic items because illustrations of their portraits appear in the books it publishes, in cooperation with the National Geographic Society, for sale at the White House, at the Association's offices, and elsewhere.

The Association's Board of Directors has authorized the allocation of not to exceed a specified amount of money to defray the cost of having portraits painted of President and Mrs. Ford for the permanent White House Collection if such action is desired by them.

Sincerely,


Hillary A. Tolson
Executive Director

John Ulbright
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

friend of David Scott - adv to Mellon
Gallery
Known in Europe - lives in
Spain (Mallorca)

he asked to
official portrait - being paid for
Hist Assoc



NOTES ON THE PAINTING

Measurement: 78"x59"
classical & simple in form
(subdued)

Frame: Antique gold leaf ^{on a wood frame (what type of wood?)}.
 Frame is 3" wide. The tone of the frame repeats the texture of the background of the painting. Designed as a happy blend of the painting and the setting it would be in.

Q: Where will it hang?

A: In the Family Quarters. The exact place has not been determined. Once the family leaves, the portrait will be hung in the Ground Floor Corridor.

Q: Is it an official portrait?

A: David Scott () introduced John Ulbricht to Mrs. Ford. Ulbricht was commissioned to do a portrait for her when Mr. Ford was Vice President. It was to be placed in the Vice Presidential office. She likes it so much that it probably will become the official portrait.

Q: What is the cost?

A: The price was never discussed between the artist and Mrs. Ford.

Colors in the painting; It is hard to determine the color scheme. It is fushion of pale to dark to silvery greens combined with flesh tones. The painting shouldn't be shown in bright lights because her image would disappear.

Painting: Done with oils on a special linen canvas. The linen canvas was made in Barcelona. The painting doesn't fit into a stylistic category, and is not truly impressionistic as such. He has developed his own style but the technique used is layers on layers of glazes over an oil paint which are lightly built up over a period of time. This specific technique is called "cumble." He uses a big brush with just a little paint on the brush. The artist says he painted over and over until the colors built up over the linen canvas. The speckles that you see are the knots of the linen canvas. (Glaze made with innumerable thin layers of paint over and over and over again.) He worked on it from July to April (?). Took two months on and off; he worked

in spurts. He is not a good photographer but took a few snapshots. Did numerous sketches and drawings and many notes because he wanted to capture the feeling of the person. Before he decides upon the approach, he does many, many sketches of the finger, nose, etc.

Others He Has Painted: Edward G. Robinson; Lord Mountbatten; Robert Graves (novelist and poet) which is in the Lockwood Memorial Library in Buffalo; Duchess of Devonshire; Duchess of Alba (Spain); Picasso (one where sections of his face are floating--eye of him in one corner; etc.); Miro (good friends of his who lives near him in Spain.

John started as an abstract painter and in 1963 went back to more realism. He was influenced by Spanish artists such as Valesque; classic artists such as Titian and Rembrandt; as well as contemporary artists and impressionistic artists. His approach is not tied down to extreme detail.

