

Sir Peter Blake 1932 –

By Clive Barker (1940 –)

Collage, 1983

11 x 7 1/2 in. (27.9 x 19 cm)

The artist Peter Blake (b. 1932) was a leading figure in the Pop Art movement of the 1960s. His work was linked to popular culture and in particular to pop music; he designed the record sleeve for the Beatles album 'Sgt Pepper'. He was a co-founder of the Brotherhood of Ruralists in 1969 and elected to the Royal Academy of Arts in 1980.

Referred to as the 'Peter Blake Box', this work is one in a series of portraits of artists made by Clive Barker incorporating items from their environments.

As if pinned to a notice board, the elements of this tiny portrait are overlaid on a brick red background. On white paper Peter Blake's profile is turned to our right and a small area of his shoulder fills the top two thirds of the composition. The paper is pinned at the top to the background with two red drawing pins at the corners. His head is a printed image using three colours: the skin washy yellow-brown ochre and the dark areas such as his eye, hair, bushy beard and moustache a dark blue.

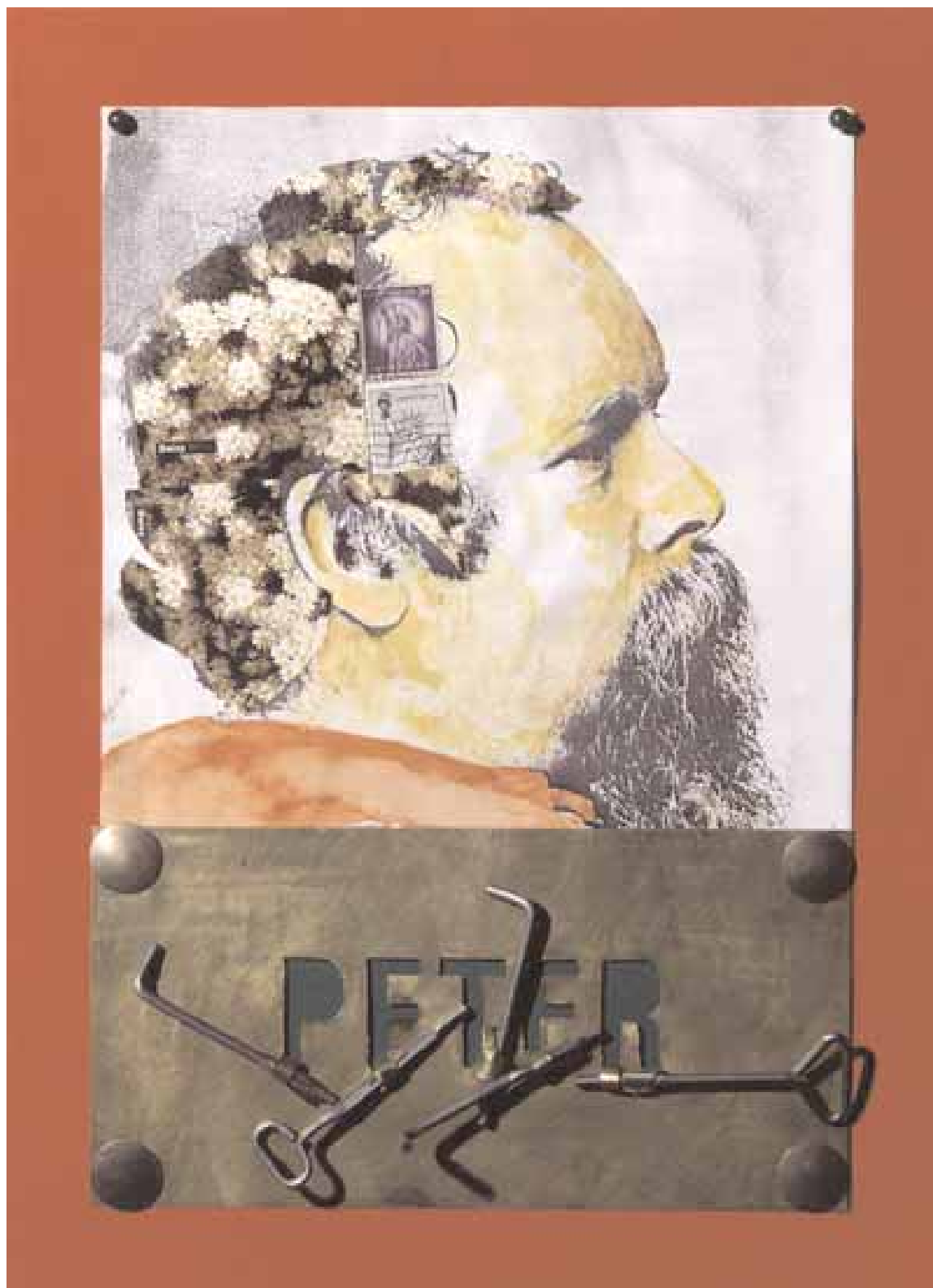
Individual grey hairs are picked out in white. The contour of his receding curly hair and side burn are cut out from pieces of a print of daisies, arranged together as one simple, flat shape and collaged over the original image; small wisps of hair from this underlying image are visible at the edges. The daisies are a reference to the name of one of his daughters. There are two tiny labels on the daisies: one vertical, cut off by the shape of the hair at the back of his head with the word 'Daisy' and the letter B, the other horizontal and above with the words 'Daisy Bush'. Level with the top of his ear and above his side burn are two vertically placed American stamps. The images of the Statue of Liberty allude to his other daughter, Liberty. The small area of his shoulder is painted with reddish brown watercolour.

Just overlapping the bottom of this portrait is a rectangular piece of thin metal, held in place with drawing pins at the corners. Five keys similar to those used to open a can of sardines appear to peel back pieces of metal to reveal the word 'PETER' in dark green. The keys cast shadows and are held in varying diagonal positions by small curls of metal at the bottom of each letter.

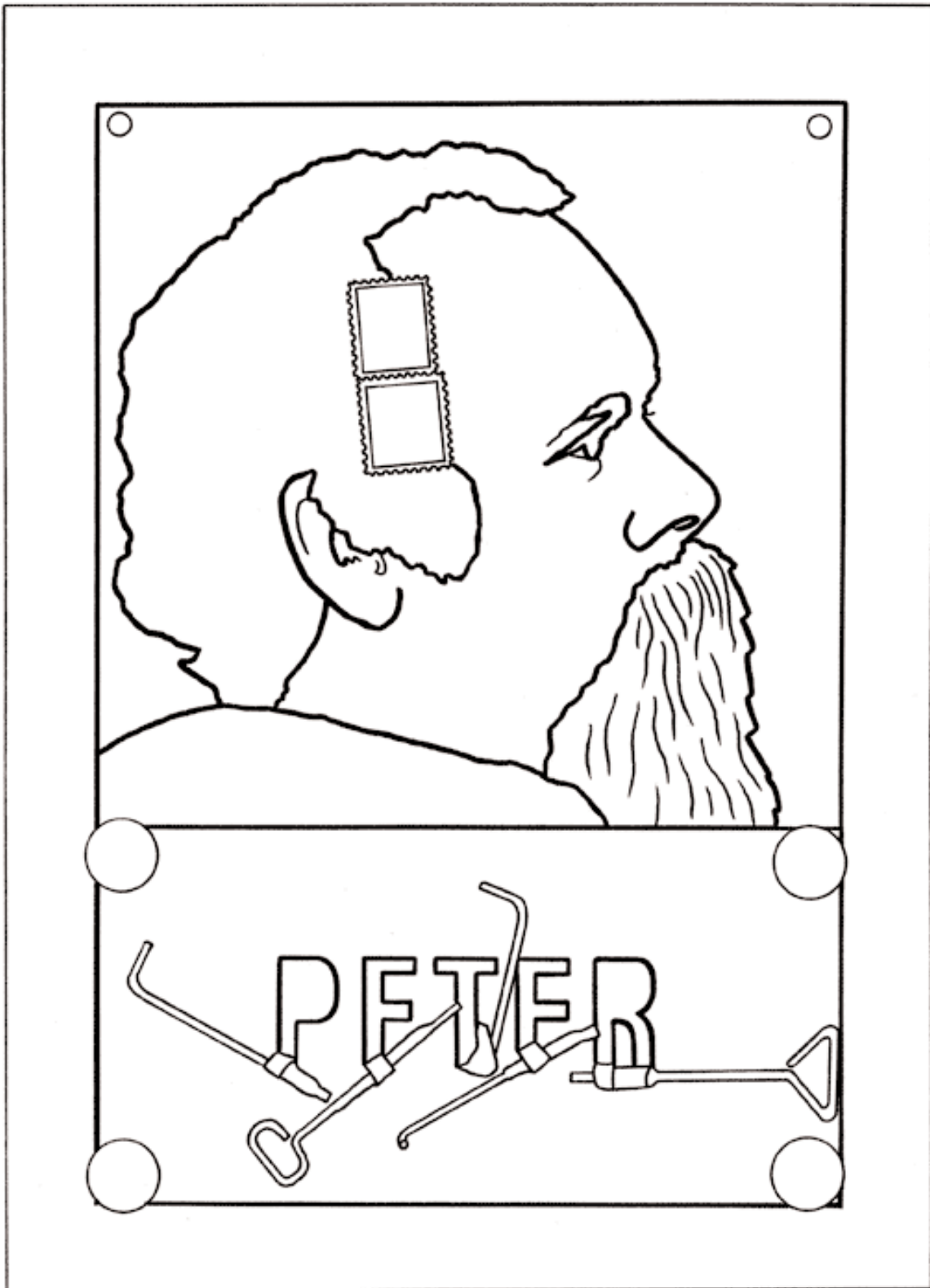
Late 20th Century
Britain 1960 – 90

National
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Sir Peter Blake 1932 –



Sir Peter Blake 1932 –



Sir Elton John (Reginald Kenneth Dwight)

1947 – ‘On the throne’

By Suzi Malin (1950 –)

Tempera on gold leaf, 1978

16 x 13 3/4 in. (40.6 x 34.9 cm)

This popular celebrity, famous as a rock composer, singer and keyboard player, has released over 600 songs and 30 albums. Born Reginald Dwight in 1947, he achieved recognition in America before records such as ‘Goodbye Yellow Brick Road’ (1973) brought him fame in Britain. Founder in 1993 of the Elton John AIDS Foundation, his song ‘Candle In The Wind’, adapted for the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales in 1997, raised over £20 million for her memorial fund in the first 6 months.

In this tiny, jewel-like painting, Elton John is seated, his face turned slightly to our right. The portrait is three-quarter length, finishing at the upper thighs, his head positioned just above centre, leaving an area of background visible above.

Elton John is characteristically flamboyant in a witty and outrageous outfit of differently textured white silk. His pose conveys self-confidence; left arm bent, hand pressed on top of his thigh, right hand spread out on his right thigh. His face is dominated

by enormous square-shaped, orangetinted glasses, framed with rhinestones. The frames seem to press against the sides of his small turned up nose, the distortion of the lenses making the eyes appear smaller and the edges of his face narrower. He has a dreamy expression, a slight smile playing at the corners of his mouth. His hair, cut around the top of the ears and with a short fringe, frames a high forehead. Pale skin is painted delicately; subtle tones of pink, lemon yellow and blue-grey describe the contours of his face.

He wears a jacket of padded silk with large diagonally zipped patch-pockets, one on either side. The most arresting features of the jacket are the embellishments at the edges of the shoulders. They are made from white plumes of different widths, some narrower and longer than others that sprout from small stiffened crescents of fabric attached to the top of the sleeves. Fixed to the shoulders are long loops of white cord to complete the decoration. The shirt with a large collar and two visible pearl buttons is open to expose a hairy chest.

The gold background shimmers through softly applied brown paint, and as if etched into the paint,

two symmetrically positioned angels, viewed from the side raise a crown above his head.

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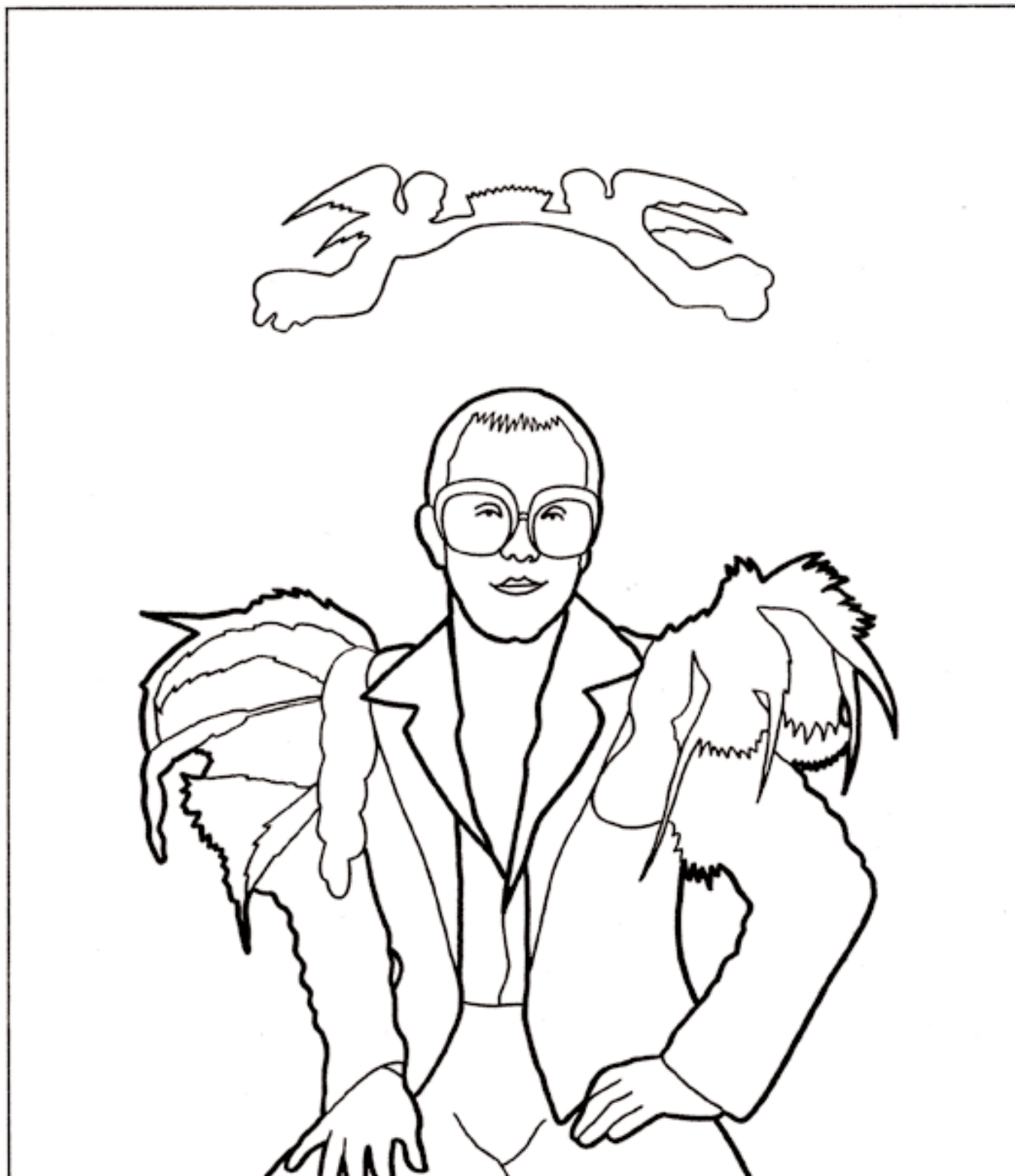
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Sir Elton John (Reginald Kenneth Dwight)

1947 – ‘On the throne’



Sir Elton John (Reginald Kenneth Dwight)
1947 – ‘On the throne’



Maggi Hambling 1945 –**By Maggi Hambling (1945 –)****Oil on canvas, 1977 – 78****59 7/8 x 68 7/8 in. (152 x 175 cm)**

At the age of seventeen Maggi Hambling (b. 1945) began to study with the painters Cedric Morris and Arthur Lett Haines at their private art school, Benton End, in Suffolk. She went on to study at Camberwell Art School and at the Slade until 1969. After four years as a performance and installation artist she returned, in 1973, to drawing and painting from life, the discipline she had learned at Benton End. Her first London exhibition in 1973 featured portraits of people observed in pubs and painted from memory. From 1980 – 1 Maggi Hambling became the first Artist in Residence at the National Gallery. There are six portraits by her in the National Portrait Gallery collection.

Hambling stated that in this self portrait she confronted the muddle of her life. Objects and images swarm across large expanses of white canvas. They vie for attention and revolve around an image of the artist wearing a thick blue pullover and paint-spattered, green trousers. She is vying for a

seat on her white chair with a tabby cat which is squashed over to her right. Her life-size head at the centre of the painting faces us with a direct gaze, but we see only one eye. The other is hidden by the wing of a white bird flying towards her left and followed by the gaze of the cat. Hambling's right arm lies across her lap holding a paintbrush. Her left arm appears twice. It is shown with her hand reaching out horizontally to hold a blue glass tumbler which sits on a white drinks bar beside her. A penguin walks away from the tumbler along the bar to the extreme right hand edge of the painting. Her left hand is also shown holding a cigarette while resting against her cheek. She described these as being the three essentials of her life: painting, drinking and smoking.

One of the largest and most eye-catching objects flies above Hambling's head. It is a large, decorative teapot more than twice the size of her head. Its spout points towards the left of the picture and overlaps an image of a three-armed card player, in suit and tie, standing as tall as the teapot. This is a man she had seen in a pub doing card tricks for drinks without success. The teapot handle passes behind the uppermost wing of the white bird.

A tiny image of the supersonic airliner Concorde appears in the distance, beside the teapot handle, as if to fly directly overhead. Hambling admits to being transported by spiritual love for the maker of the flying teapot.

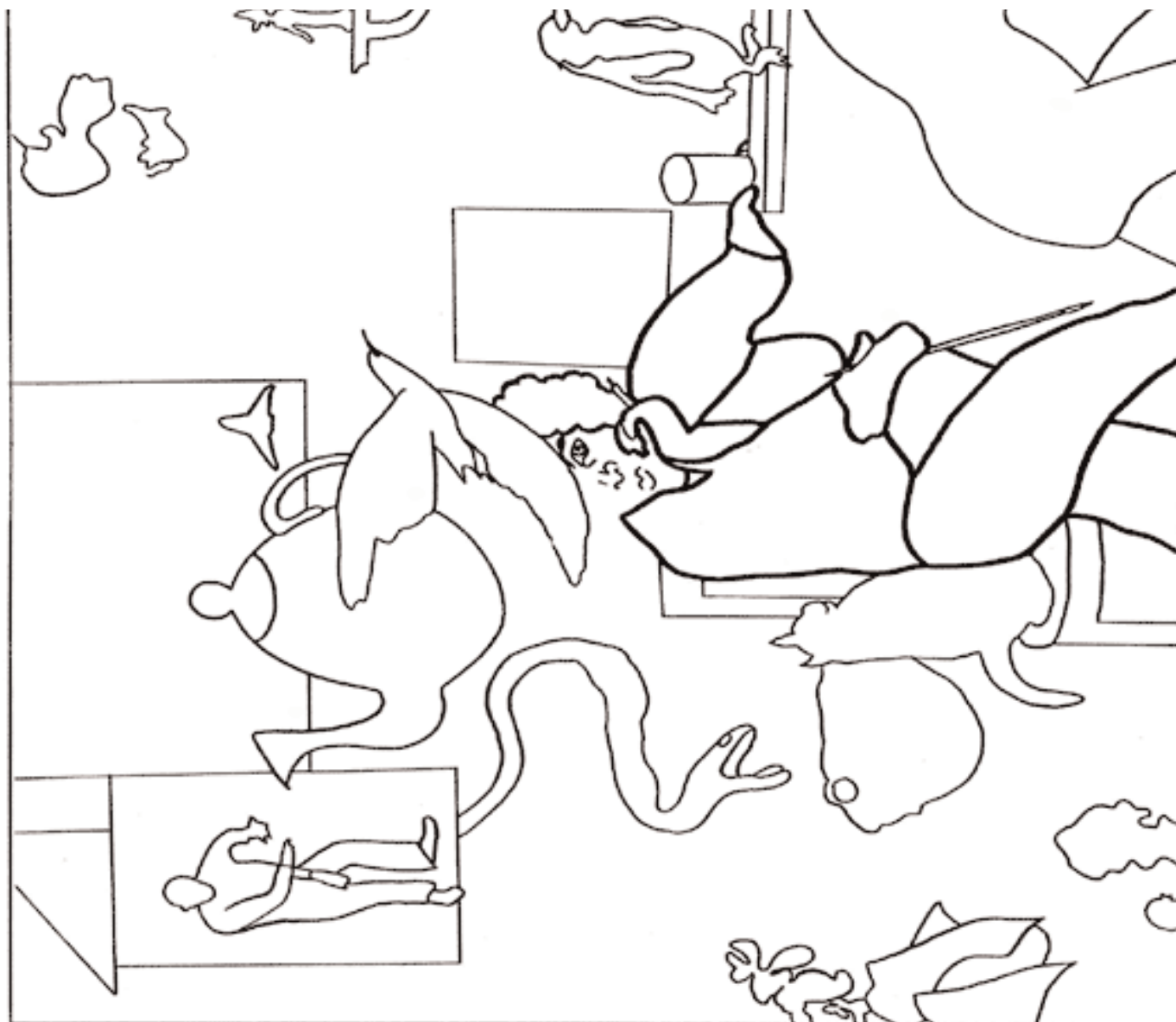
A naked female figure bends across the lower right hand corner. Its buttocks are towards the artist as her back bends beyond the edge of the picture. This is someone else with whom Hambling was physically in love. Another feature emphasises the place of erotic beauty in the artist's mind. A black and white photograph shows a clothed man and a woman in her underclothes, lying across a bed in a romantic embrace. This mid-twentieth-century photograph was taken by Brassai in a brothel. It appears above her left arm as Hambling reaches for a drink.

On the artist's right, beyond the cat, an adder with an aggressively opened mouth, snakes down towards a puffer fish. The tail of the adder emerges from under the picture of the card-trickster. The puffer fish balloons out its yellow belly in response to the snake. Hambling comments that she is also quite small and puffs herself up.

Maggi Hambling 1945 –



Maggi Hambling 1945 –



Pandit Ram Gopal 1920 – 2003**By Feliks Topolski (1907 – 89)****Watercolour, gouache and silkscreen on paper,
unknown date****93 1/4 x 39 7/8 in. (236.8 x 101.2 cm)**

Ram Gopal (1907 –89) was a dancer, choreographer and teacher. He was a pioneer in acquainting Western audiences with classical Indian dance. Initially trained in the dance style of Kathakali, he also acquired training in the style of Bharata Natyam. Ram Gopal appeared in America and Europe in the late 1930s. He received great acclaim in this country at the Aldwych and Vaudeville theatres in 1939. He later appeared in Hollywood epics for which he choreographed the dance sequences such as 'The Purple Plain' (1954) and 'Elephant Walk' (1954). One of his most unusual choreographic creations was 'Radha Krishna', a 1960 duet at the Prince's Theatre in London, based on Hindu myths. In it he played the god Krishna, and Alicia Markova, a British ballerina known for her exquisite lightness, was the princess Radha. It transferred to the Edinburgh festival.

Ram Gopal directed dance schools in Bangalore

and London and published his autobiography, 'Rhythm in the Heavens', in 1957. From 1954 he divided his time between London, Venice and the South of France. In 1990 Gopal was named a fellow of the Sangeet Natak Akademi, the National Academy for Music, Dance and Drama in New Delhi, and in 1999 he received the Order of the British Empire. He was also given the title 'Pandit', a Hindu term meaning master, by the Indian government.

Shown dancing full length and larger than life, Ram Gopal performing the part of Krishna has been conjured up by a few broad virtuoso sweeps of the brush. He wears a tall, but floppy, cylindrical turban of fine muslin, in stripes and bands of light grey, pink and white. Black hair cut just above his shoulders, spreads out and frames his face. Dramatic lighting from his left casts strong violet shadow across the right hand side of his face while the lit side is accented with the colours of teak.

His upright pose makes angular movements. Parallel with his head his left hand is raised vertically from the elbow, which is horizontally in line with his left shoulder. His right arm outlines a

triangle so that his hand meets his hip. Ram Gopal wears a black tunic with gold braid around the lapels and waist band. The sleeve of his left arm is a light greyblue, it lifts a gauze-like fabric of colourful cloth shot through with crimson, lemon yellow and viridian green. Each colour has been painted with a wide brush in a long rapid brushstroke. Such marks are in keeping with the movements of classical Indian dance which aim to look easy, graceful and fluid. There are no sharp edges to the dance, yet the dance is extremely vigorous, especially those performed by the male dancers. Here there is a similar delicacy created in part by the use of gouache and watercolour on paper – on this large scale one might expect the use of oil on canvas instead.

Ram Gopal's costume boldly creates a loud colour harmony over the rich crimson background, just as the music of Indian dance uses drums and cymbals without being aggressively loud. The flowing fabric around his legs swish to his right as his dancing feet both point in profile down towards the lower right-hand corner. Neither of his feet seems to be in contact with the ground directly beneath them, which is a rectangle of bare paper at the centre of

which the name 'RAM GOPAL' is loosely inscribed in pink capitals, while in the right hand corner the artist Topolski has scrubbed his signature with a dry brush.

On closer observation fragments of imagery are found in the crimson background. Obscure images of groups of people are printed beside Ram Gopal to his right. One shows a squiggly drawing of a group of redcoats carrying guns and bayonets. A caption shows that they are swearing. On very close inspection a group of thin horizontal lines are incomplete printed statements about death, such as 'Death is taboo, but...', Ram Gopal's garments hide the rest. Another line begins 'Death stockpiles the chemistry of your smiles'. The final and complete line states that 'Death is unspeakable'.

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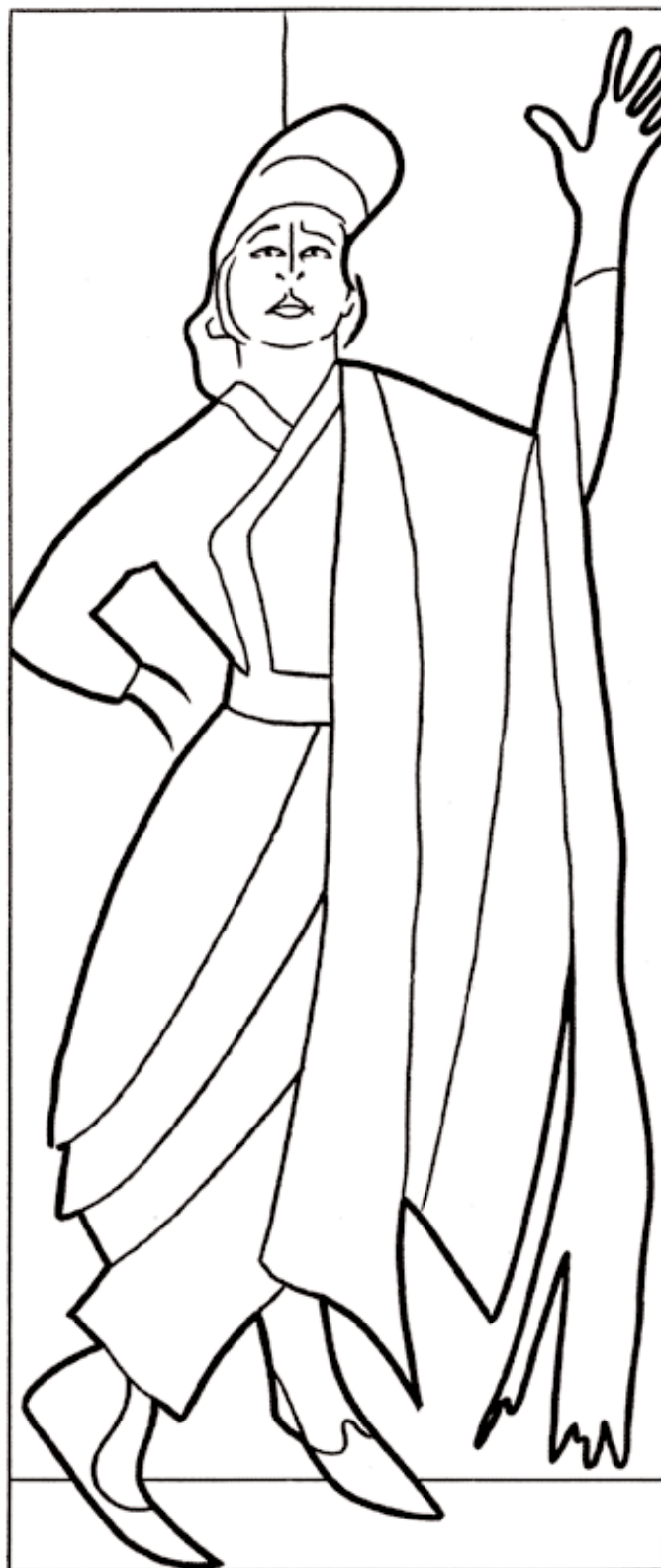
Pandit Ram Gopal 1920 – 2003



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Pandit Ram Gopal 1920 – 2003



Zandra Rhodes 1940 –**By Andrew Logan (1945 –)****Glass mosaic bust, 1989****16 1/2 in. high (42.2 cm)**

Zandra Rhodes (b. 1940) is a fashion designer noted for her exotic designs in floating chiffons and silks. Unusual handling and choice of materials are part of her style; for example, jersey made into fabrics with 'lettuce' edges and with seams on the outside. Zandra Rhodes was born in Chatham and after studying at Medway College of Art and the Royal College of Art, she designed and printed textiles setting up her print factory and studio in 1965. In 1967 she participated in opening the Fulham Road Clothes Shop. In 1975 she co-founded Zandra Rhodes (UK) and Zandra Rhodes (Shops) in London. In addition to clothes design, her brand now produces cosmetics, jewellery and home furnishings. Sitting for this portrait involved climbing a ladder to her attic where the artist, Andrew Logan, was a temporary lodger.

Amongst the other exhibits at the National Portrait Gallery, this sculpted bust glows and glitters, shines and sparkles. On a bright pink box-shaped base

that is edged with glitter, the pale slender neck and face of Zandra Rhodes rise between her cascading locks of thick, pink, shoulder-length hair. This hair is a dazzling sea of waves and ripples, created by pink slabs and segments of glass. The glass is lined with a shiny golden binding material. On top of her head she wears a huge bow of segmented glass tilted slightly over to the right. The wide ribbon is a deep pink coloured glass edged with dark violet, between which runs another violet stripe. A circular, glittering, silver clasp holds the two loops of her bow in the middle. Edged with blue glass beads, it carries a gold bead at its centre, around which a ring of pink beads are set into its glitter.

The curtains of her hair part beneath the bow to reveal Zandra Rhodes' whitened face. Under her pencilled brows her strongly-lined, wide almond eyes highlight long artificial eyelashes. Two black beauty spots sit high on her left cheek near the eye. Her eyes are very realistic glass eyes set into the solid plaster. Under her long bony nose her teeth are glimpsed as her bold crimson bow-shaped lips open in a tentative smile.

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Zandra Rhodes 1940 –



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Zandra Rhodes 1940 –



Harold Wilson, Baron Wilson of Rievaulx 1916 – 95

By Ruskin Spear (1911 – 90)

Oil on canvas, exhibited 1974

20 1/8 x 15 in. (51.1 x 38.1 cm)

Harold Wilson (1916 – 95) served as a Labour Prime Minister twice. First in the sixties from 1964 to 1970 and again in the seventies from 1974 until his sudden resignation in 1976. Elected in 1945 and appointed President of the Board of Trade two years later, he had been the youngest cabinet minister since William Pitt. He was known for coining phrases such as ‘the pound in your pocket’ and ‘the gnomes of Zürich’. In 1951 he resigned with Aneurin Bevan in protest at the introduction of Health Service charges resulting from financing the Korean War. Born in Huddersfield in 1916, his Yorkshire accent combined with his pipe smoking, his Gannex raincoat and his habit of taking holidays in the Isles of Scilly combined to create a strong familiar image.

In 1963 he delivered a notable speech to the Labour Party conference which established his reputation as a classless technocrat. He asserted ‘the Britain that will be forged in the white heat of

(the scientific and technical) revolution will have no place for restrictive practices and outdated measures on either side of industry’.

This portrait captures Wilson’s air of dignified informality. It was painted in Downing Street and shown at the Royal Academy in 1974, with the title ‘Man with a Pipe’. A thoughtful frown plays across the broad dome of Harold Wilson’s forehead, amidst the coils of smoke he is busy puffing out. His complexion is warm with sandy colours and pinkish highlights. Keeping the pipe stem in his mouth, beneath a thick top lip shaped like a trapezium, his left hand lifts the bowl, while his right hand holds a lit match to it. Wilson’s receding white hair stands out against a dark earthy red background.

Wearing a greenish-grey suit, a plain white shirt and a moss-green tie, strong shadows are cast around his eyes and lower face and across his chest by light that falls from his left. Warily, his fleshily lidded, round eyes look from behind his broad oval-tipped nose towards the right. A slab of white paint between the fingers of his hands is enough to show his simple shirt collar catching the light. A long fleck of thick yellow paint stands for the match flame.

Ruskin Spear captures the effect with rapidly executed, unrefined touches of colour.

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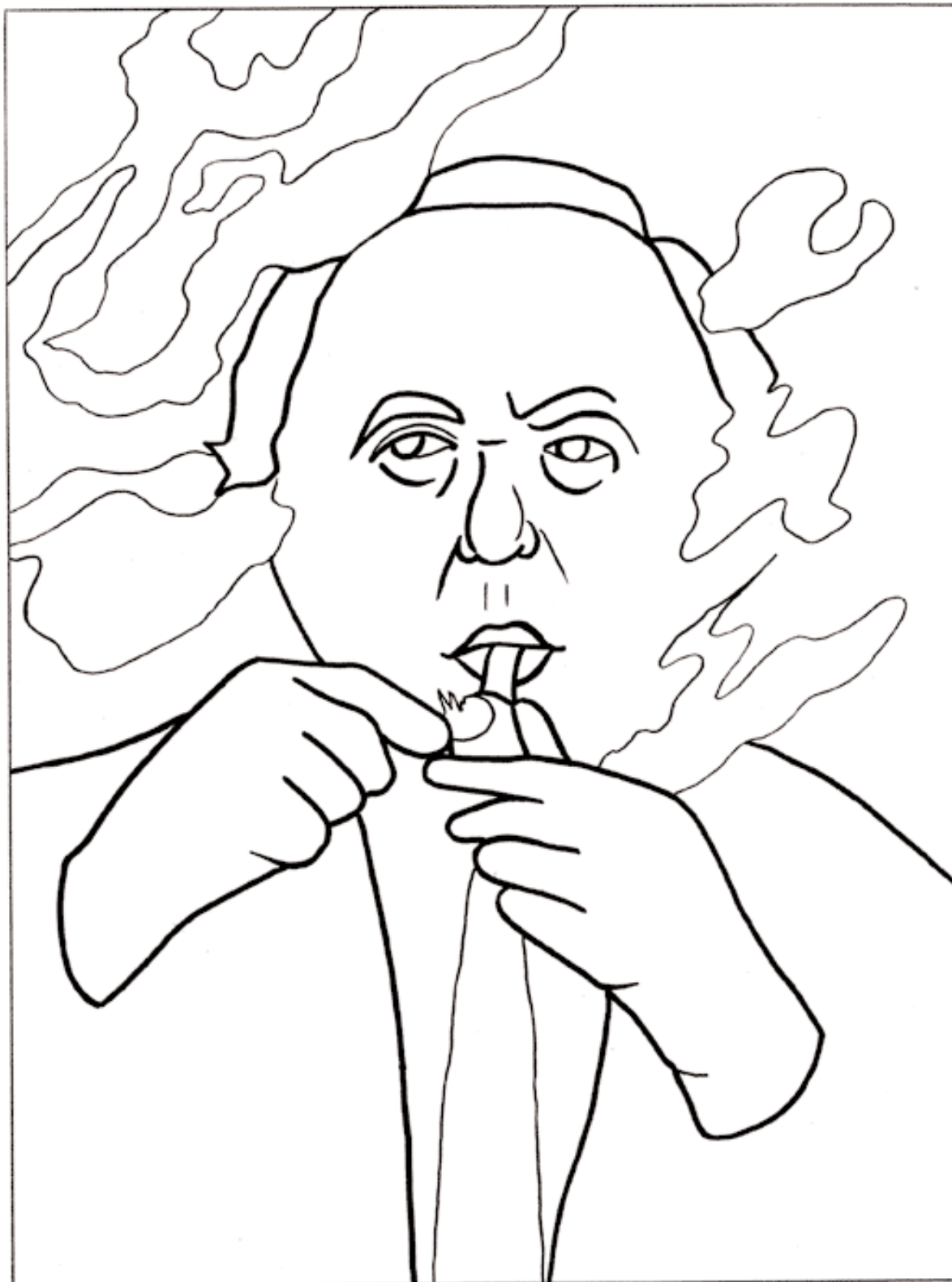
**Harold Wilson, Baron Wilson of Rievaulx
1916 – 95**



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**Harold Wilson, Baron Wilson of Rievaulx
1916 – 95**



Ian Botham 1955 –

By John Bellany (1942 –)

Oil on canvas, 1985

68 x 60 in. (172.7 x 152.4 cm)

Ian Botham (b.1955) was a Somerset, Worcestershire, and Durham cricketer, who captained England twelve times. Fourteen Test centuries and 383 wickets stand in the record books as testament to Botham's sporting success. He is particularly remembered for sensational all-round performances in the summer of 1981 as batsman, bowler and fielder, in the slips, during the last three matches of the Test series against Australia.

An entirely different set of figures measure his magnificent record as an inspirational individual. Botham raised over £4.5 million for research into leukaemia, mainly through his high-profile fundraising walks. He made eight gruelling treks from John O'Groats to Land's End, after his original 'Hannibal Walk' through the Alps. He also appeared on television as a highly competitive but fun-loving team leader on 'A Question of Sport'.

In this half-length portrait, a cricketer stands facing us in his whites. John Bellany plays off the

cricketing whites, accented with blue, against warm tobacco browns found in the band of colour around Botham's V-neck sweater and in his hair colour. On a large white poster behind him the name Ian Botham is written so that its large reddish brown lettering appears beside his head. The poster, carrying the word England and some romantic graffiti of hearts, hangs on a warm tobacco coloured wall.

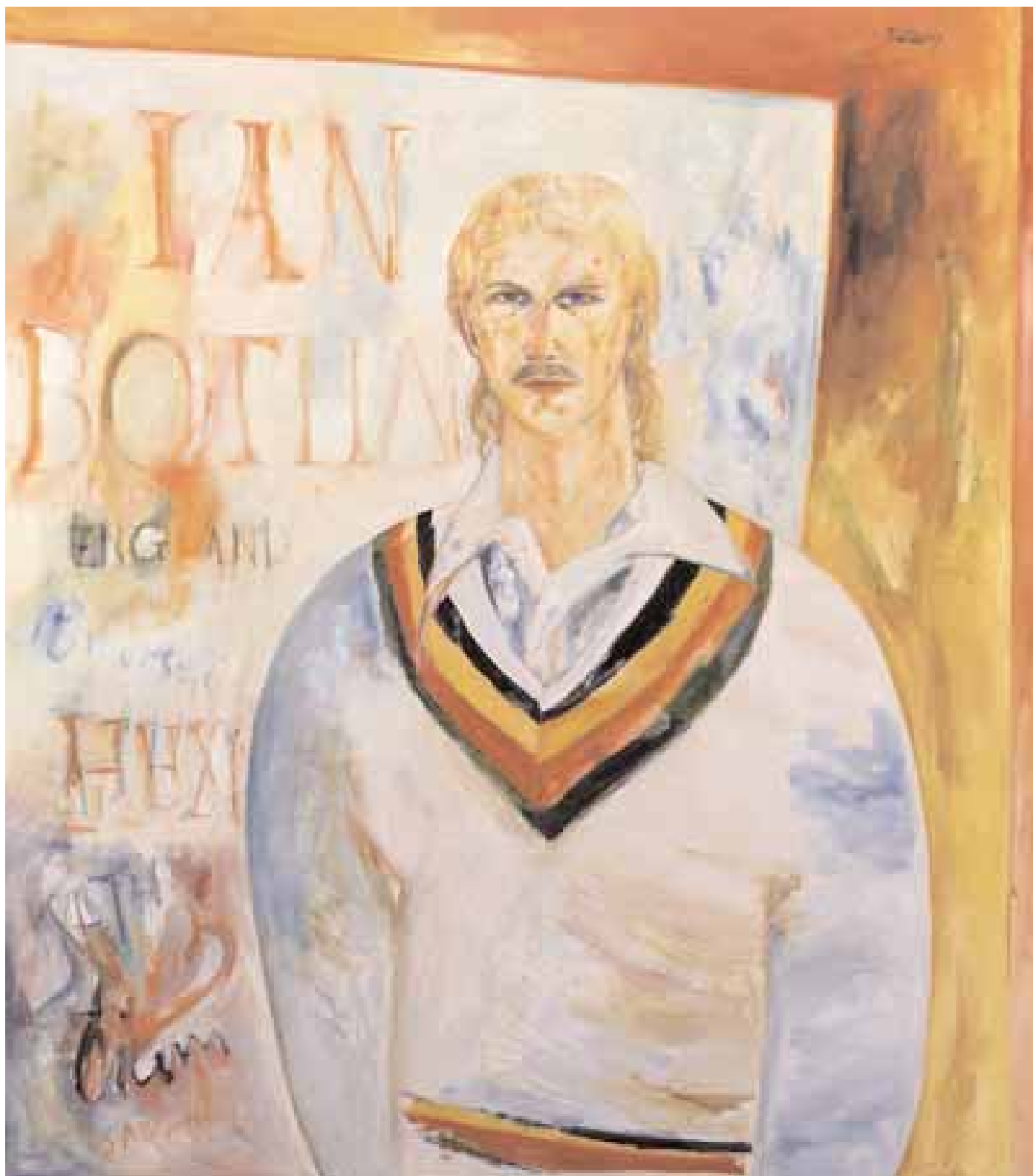
Ian Botham dominates the surrounding space with the long, narrowed eyes of a determined competitor. This pensive look in his delicate almond shaped face is at odds with a heavy brown moustache on his upper lip and a 'mullet' style haircut. These convey his laddish rock-and-roll attitude.

Affectionately known as 'Guy the Gorilla', Ian Botham has a robust build. John Bellany gives the body colossal bulk by making it vast in relation to the head. The arms at his sides add bold curves that push outwards. A suggestion that the picture cannot contain Botham's dynamic physical presence is added by having his hands and lower body escape from view at the bottom of the picture.

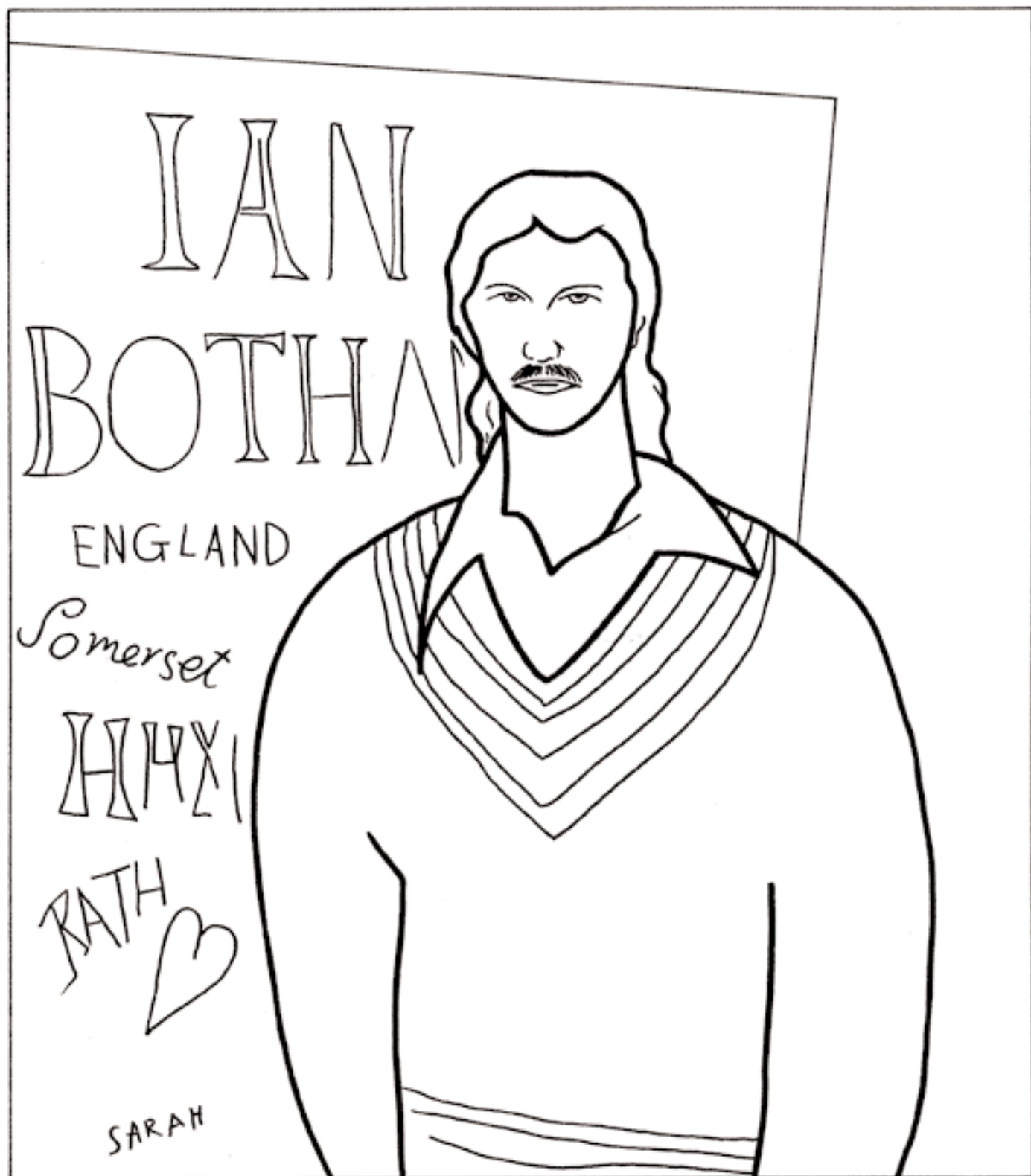
There is an overall warmth and a jauntiness created

by the rhyming of simplified shapes in this portrait. The almond shape of his face rhymes with his rounded arms, and these curves are echoed by the broad, spreading collar of his open-necked, white shirt.

Ian Botham 1955 –



Ian Botham 1955 –



Dame Iris Murdoch 1919 – 99

By Tom Phillips (1937 –)

Oil on canvas, 1984 – 86

36 x 28 in. (91.4 x 71.1 cm)

This portrait of the novelist and philosopher Iris Murdoch (1919 – 99) shows her head and shoulders. Her face, which is turned slightly to the right, almost seems to glow, while her relaxed and unfocused eyes stare into the distance. She is wearing a dark v-necked sweater with a light blue collar standing up around her neck. Her hair is dark brown with touches of grey.

In the background the artist has included part of the late painting by Titian, 'The Flaying of Marsyas', which both Tom Phillips and Iris Murdoch had recently seen at an exhibition at the Royal Academy. The subject is the revenge of Apollo on the satyr Marsyas after the god had beaten him in a musical contest. Marsyas is hanging upside down. From the left the laurel-crowned Apollo leans across, the knife in his hand catching the light; on the right a hand proffers a bucket.

In the bottom left corner of the portrait is a green sprig from a Gingko, the world's oldest tree. The

fan shaped leaves add a burst of brightness to the composition.

Dame Iris Murdoch 1919 – 99



Dame Iris Murdoch 1919 – 99



**Lucian Freud 1922 –
'Man's Head (Self-Portrait III)'**

By Lucian Freud (1922 –)

Oil on canvas, 1963

12 x 9 7/8 in. (30.5 x 25.1 cm)

Lucian Freud (b.1922), grandson of the pioneering psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud, came to Britain at the age of eleven. He studied at the Central School of Arts and Crafts and then studied with the painters Cedric Morris and Arthur Lett Haines at the private school, Benton End, in Suffolk. He is a prominent figure in a group known as the School of London, alongside his friends Frank Auerbach and Francis Bacon. Known for relentlessly painting the human figure with an unsparing gaze, he has said, 'As far as I am concerned, the paint is the person. I want it to work for me just as the flesh does'.

Lucian Freud narrows his eyes and darts a look over his left shoulder towards you. In a small portrait that shows his head and neck with just a glimpse of his naked left shoulder, he emerges into the light. His shock of dark brown, tousled hair merges with a black background. His body, placed sideways on to you, faces the extreme right hand side of the painting. The shapes of his eyes are not precisely

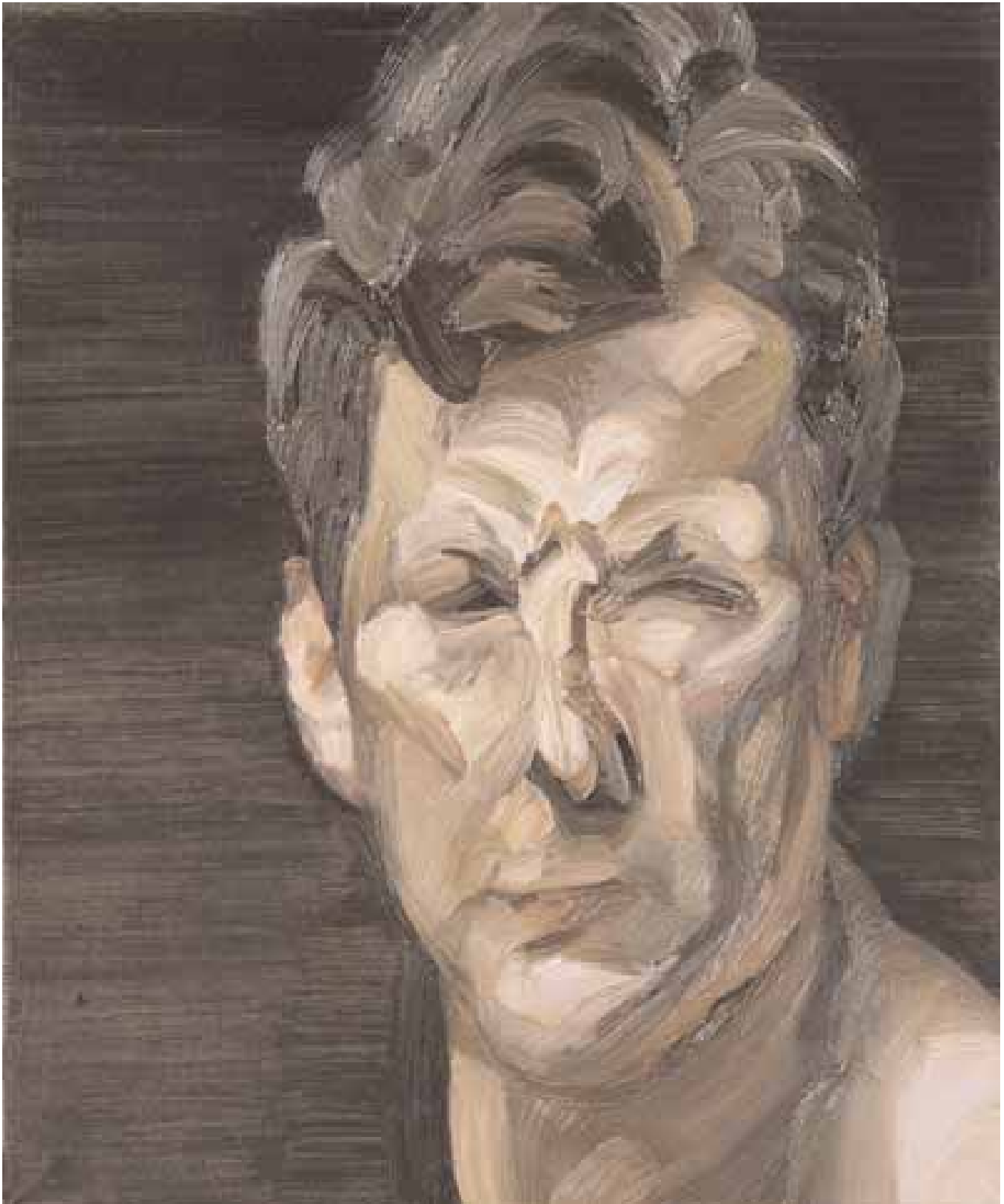
outlined. None of his features have distinct self-contained shapes. Instead, the painting follows the light and shadow that sweep around his head. Brush marks jab and sweep to make a very physical paint surface. Their restless movement twists and turns around the delicate bony features of Lucian Freud's head and neck. He has a long, bony nose, and a gaunt face with high cheekbones and a narrow mouth. Every movement is an abrupt change of tone, rapidly and inquisitively exploring the shape and recesses of his head.

Freud is not interested in adorning his painting with glowing colours. Drab colour and awkwardness engage you instead with an edgy energy.

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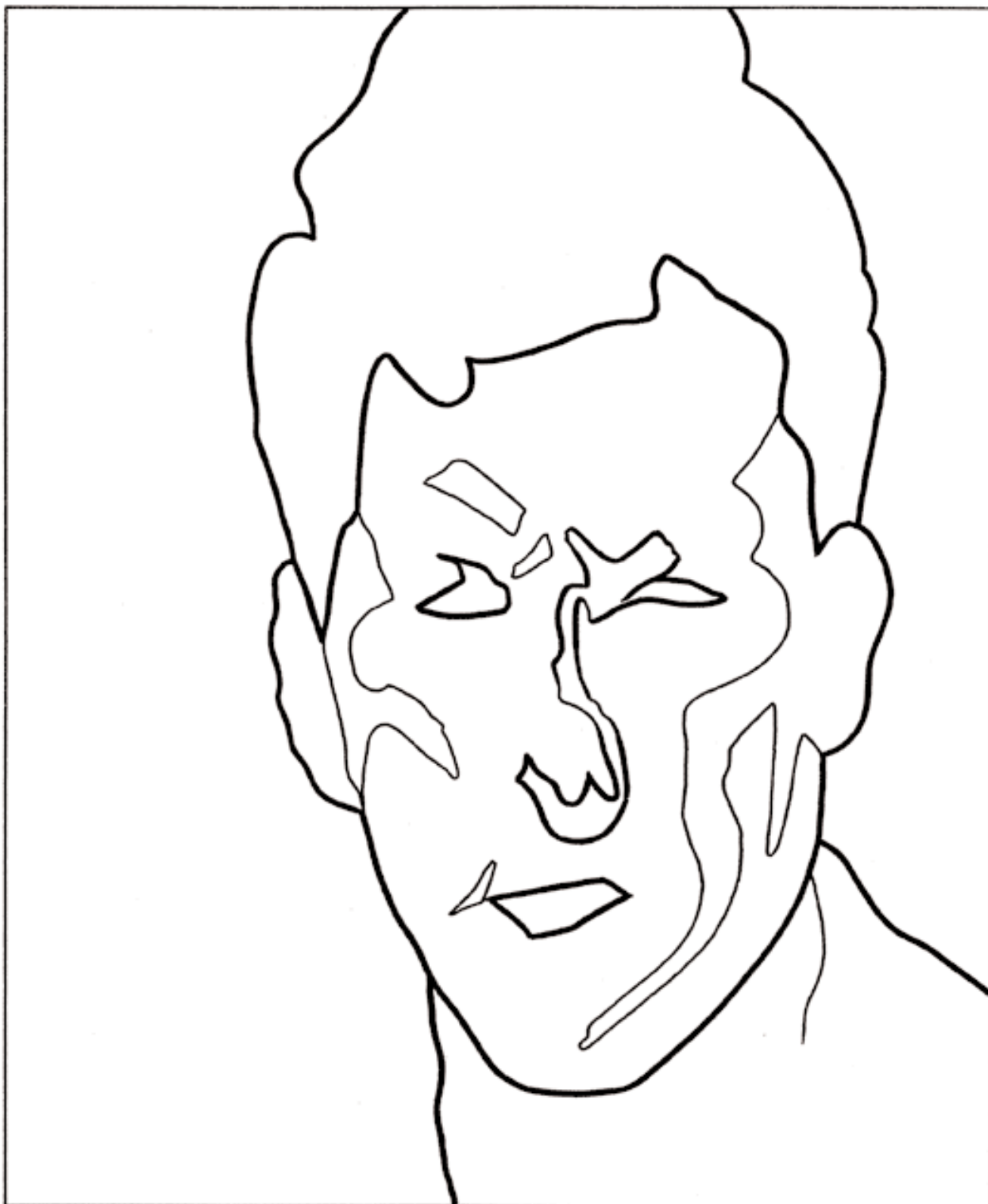
**Lucian Freud 1922 –
'Man's Head (Self-Portrait III)'**



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**Lucian Freud 1922 –
'Man's Head (Self-Portrait III)'**



John Primatt Redcliffe-Maud, Baron Redcliffe-Maud 1906 – 82

By Ruskin Spear (1911 – 90)

Oil on canvas, exhibited 1973

73 x 30 1/8 in. (185.4 x 76.5 cm)

Redcliffe-Maud (1906 – 82) was a senior civil servant and diplomat. After studying at Oxford and Harvard in the 1920s, he conducted research and lectured in politics at Oxford and was awarded a travel fellowship to Africa. He became a high-ranking civil servant at the Ministry of Reconstruction in 1945 and went on to posts in numerous government ministries. He was appointed High Commissioner in South Africa (1959-1961) and then British Ambassador after independence (1961-1963). He was also High Commissioner for Basutoland, the Bechuanaland Protectorate and Swaziland (1959-1963).

He was best known as Chairman of the Royal Commission on English Local Government in the mid-1960s, playing a part in redrawing the county boundaries. Three years after this portrait was painted he contributed a report to the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation on support for the arts in Great Britain. President of 'RIPA' (the Reusable

Industrial Packaging Association) (1969-1979), and the British Diabetic Association, (1977-1982). He was also Senior Fellow at both the Royal College of Arts and the Royal College of Music. Redcliffe-Maud died in 1982.

A kindly, white-haired city gentleman in his late sixties stands full length before you, brightly illuminated from the right. He looks light on his feet and ready to move closer. At first glance the painting announces that this is a figure of the establishment. The colours of officialdom are used, setting off his formal black city clothes against a burgundy background.

He looks interested in meeting and engaging you with bright alert eyes. His wrinkled face offers a gentle smile behind his long enquiring nose and his head is tilted slightly to his right. Broad-shouldered and energetic, with his left foot forward, he is poised to step closer. He wears the trappings of the city and of the civil service in the 1960s: the narrow-brimmed dark hat, the tie-pin, the black waistcoat with its pocket watch chain, the folded handkerchief in the pocket of his long black jacket and the pin-striped trousers with shiny black town shoes. A brief

case is in the firm grip of his left hand and a furled black umbrella used as a walking stick is in the grip of his right hand.

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**John Primatt Redcliffe-Maud, Baron Redcliffe-
Maud 1906 – 82**



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