

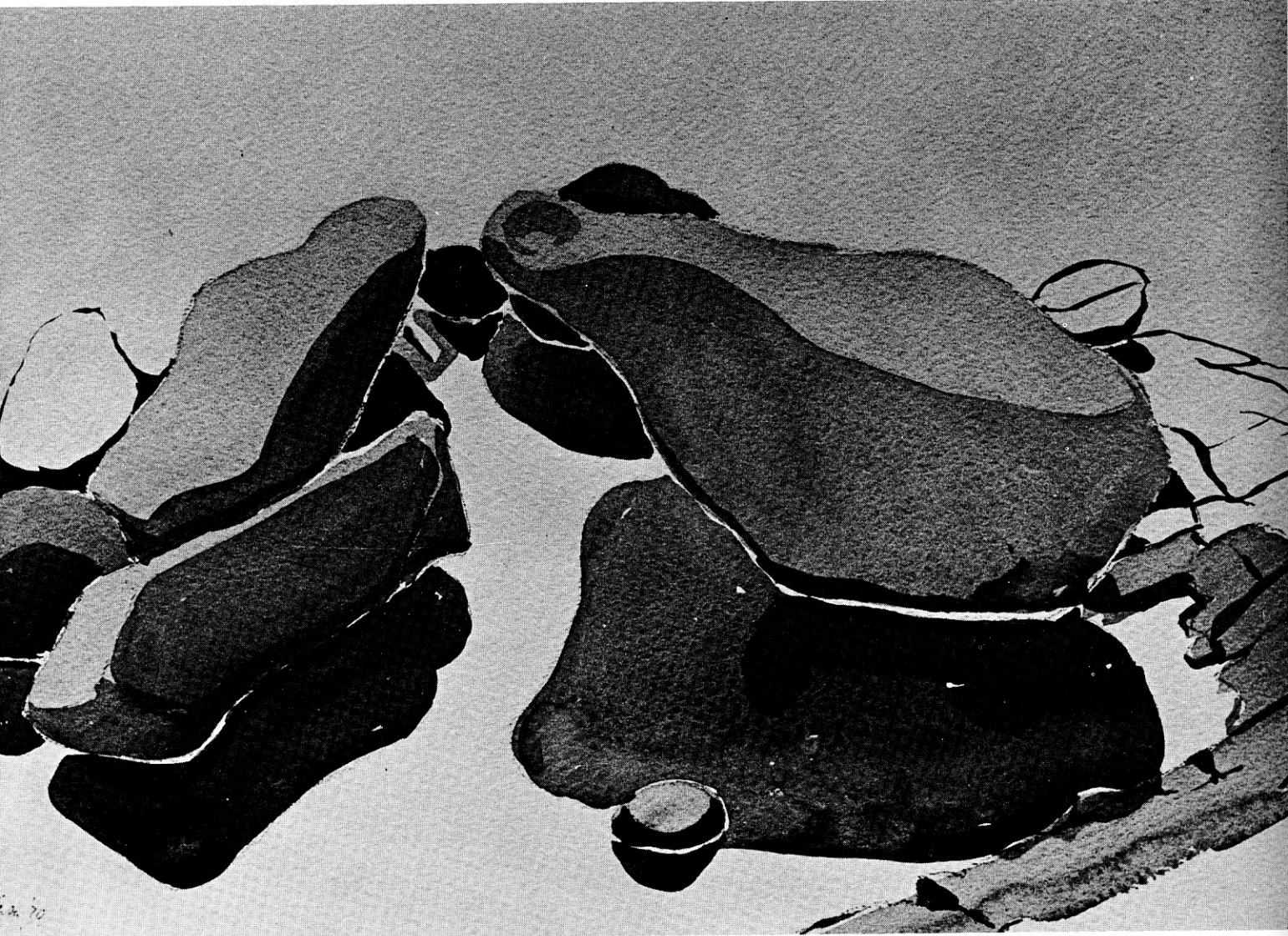
45c

# artlook 52

Registered at the G.P.O. as a newspaper. MARCH 1971



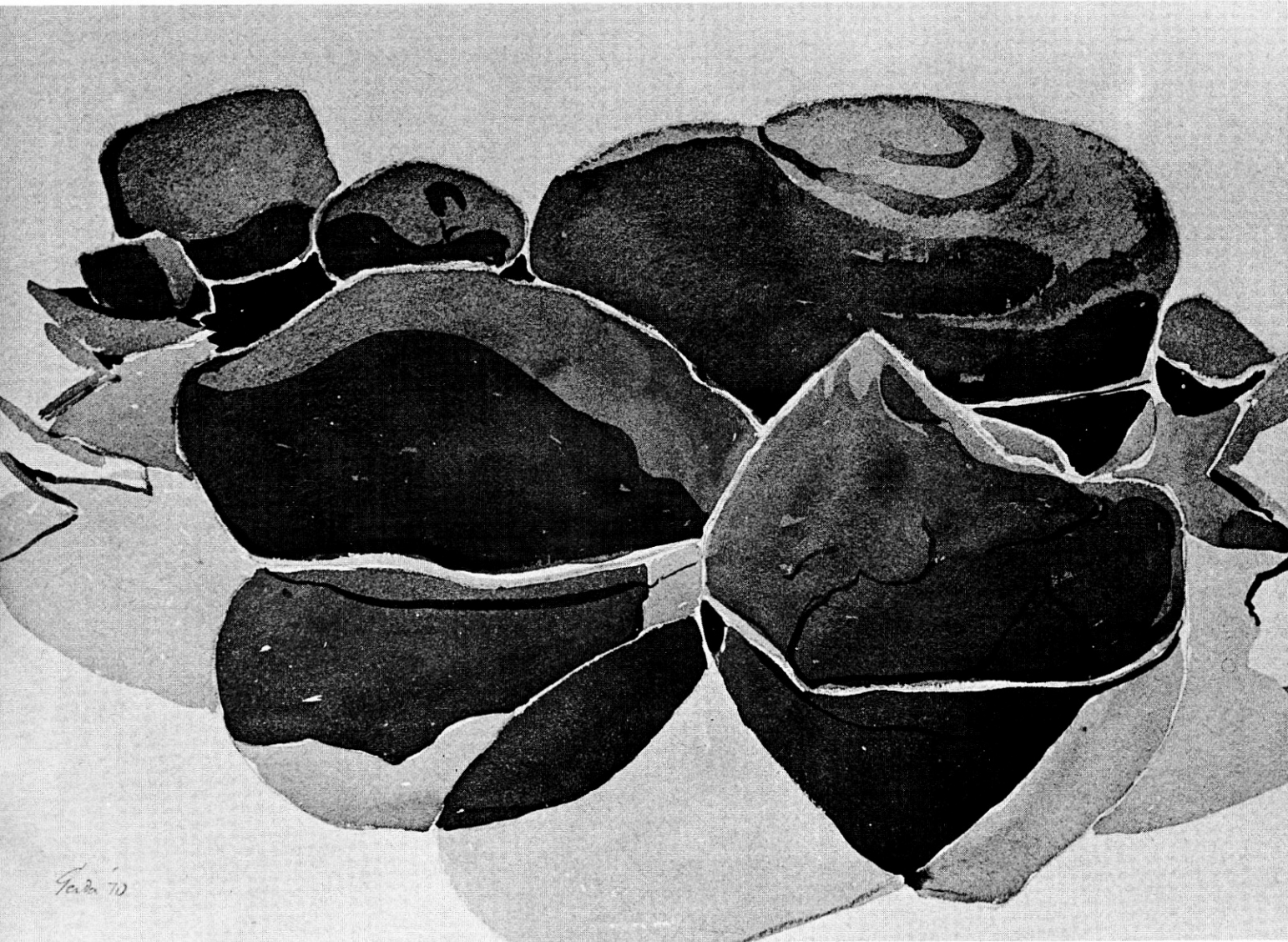
GERDA VON MALTITZ  
Bror Gliemann



Water-colour

"You must do it with 'loving care'; you must be alive to it; you have to get your hands on it." These are words that might have been said by Gerda von Maltitz; they express part of the way she works at her painting. And indeed she works; every day, as if to make up for lost time.

She studied languages and the history of art in Bloemfontein — there was no opportunity to study fine art but she took extra classes and studied modern child art. Her diploma enabled her to become an art mistress. Soon after she married and the demands of growing children and her husband's position made it impossible for her to do any concentrated painting.



About ten years ago she felt that her children required less attention and she could make the time for some serious work in the field that most satisfies her nature — painting. In addition to her painting she writes and enjoys playing the piano.

In 1966 she was asked to exhibit in both Paris and New York. In Paris *"Le Peintre — Guide du Collectionneur"* said *"... Elle situe la vue largement ouverte d'un site que baigne une lumière diffuse qui me semble traduire bien l'atmosphère d'une région. C'est une exposition d'un peintre doux qui ne force pas son caractère ..."*

Water-colour

Gerda von Maltitz paints in oil and water-colour. She is conscious always of the necessity to remain receptive to stimuli, to be aware of movements in the world of art and at the same time be true to one's own development. She is fortunate to be able to travel widely and she is earnest in her wish to be in tune with the pulse of life.

Her work has now reached a crucial stage. She seems to be purging it of uncertainty and elaboration. In her oils she has explored the colours and rhythms of Africa, starting with an abstract construction of forms and allowing the canvas to suggest shapes and figures to her. This has resulted in an intriguing and sometimes disturbingly atmospheric series of pictures. The atmosphere of the Orange Free State with its widening horizons contrasts with the other enigmatic and menacing face of this country. Gerda von Maltitz says that she feels that here she is working, so to speak, from the inside out.



Oil

Her water-colours are a complete contrast. She rises at dawn and examines the rock pools at Port St. Johns. Here her sense of composition and her drawing ability come into their own. Each tone and line is weighed before ever the brush touches paper. It is in these works, perhaps, more than in the oils that the essential Gerda von Maltitz appears. They have a strength and serious simplicity together with a feeling of excitement and joy in the discovery of the interplay of colour, form and texture to be found in the rocks of the sea-shore.

Looking at her work one must agree with the Parisian critic who said that here is an artist who desires to share her vision rather than impose it.