

Picasso Aggrandized in Alberti's Ekphrastic Poetry

In Rafael Alberti's poetry relating to painting ("ut pictura poesis", in Horace's expression), Picasso's life and work is mythified. Alberti feels absorbed by the painter for whom he writes one of his most avantgarde works, *Los 8 nombres de Picasso*,/*The 8 Names of Picasso*, a work of which Manuel Bayo has commented that:

[t]he enthusiasm, the affection and admiration for his friend are expressed in a kind of word festival. The language explodes and decomposes and recomposes in astonishing and varied forms to display Picasso and his work in a homage that is passionate yet precise. Poetic fantasy is inspired by, and fuses into pictorial fantasy. Autobiographical elements, longing for happiness and nostalgia for the past mark this at once ordered and tumultuous Picassian fiesta (93).

Later we shall analyse Alberti's Picassian poetry and the lyrical-pictorial symbiosis that is at its origins, but for now suffice it to say that painting is a paradise for the poet, in which he rediscovers himself. Unlike many other poets guided by the ekphrastic principle, Alberti's first passion was painting just as his later allegiance was to an original broad artistic project known as "liricografía" (lyricography), that is, a pictorial alphabet. In this sense, Alberti's manuscript poems are of a piece with drawings, lines, pictorial suggestions, in line with his ekphrastic model.

For Kurt Spang painting in Alberti is synonymous with unease, a paradise of the lost tree-groves in the nostalgia of exile. As a mere youth, the poet goes into that "adolescent box of colours" announced in the "Diario de un día"/"Diary of a Day" from *Poemas de Punta del Este*/*Poems of Punta del Este* (328). He also does this in the visual poetics contained in *A la pintura*/*To Painting* (as homage to the painting, techniques and colours of painters represented in the Prado Museum) and much later, through his poetry, his alphabetic calligraphic drawings, in the exhibition *La parola e il segno*/*Word and Sign*, held in Rome in 1972. In this connection Alberti told me [PGR] when I interviewed him in 1989 that *A la pintura* was a treatise, his treatise on painting, in the same way that León Battista Alberti, Luca Paccioli, Rejón de Silva or Leonardo da Vinci wrote poetic treatises on painting. Numerous writers and scholars such as Carlos Arean, Ángel Crespo, Vittorio Bodini, Luis Monguió, Pedro Ruiz Martínez, Ana María Winkelmann, Kurt

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Spang, García de la Concha, González Martín, Luis Lorenzo Rivero, Catherine G. Ellver, Concha Argente have emphasized the importance of painting in the poetic works of Alberti and, especially, his lyrical/pictorial passion for Picasso, to whom he devoted not only a poem in *A la pintura* but a whole book and one of the greatest works that have been written on the Malagan painter's mythic dimension: *Los 8 nombres de Picasso/The 8 names of Picasso*.

The names and eyes of Picasso

Los 8 nombres de Picasso (y no digo más que lo que no digo)/The 8 Names of Picasso (And I'm not saying more than what I'm not saying), published by Kairós in Spain and by Grafica Internazionale in Italy, in homage to the painter on the occasion of his eighty-ninth birthday, and containing drawings (almost all of them erotic) by Picasso with a dedication to the poet and his wife, María Teresa León, as well as lyricographs by Alberti, who opens this book and the one published by Bruguera, *Lo que canté y dije a Picasso y Picasso o el rayo que no cesa/What I sang and said about Picasso and Picasso or the Unceasing Flash of Lightning* with the following lines:

Dios creó el mundo -dicen y en el sétimo día, cuando estaba tranquilo descansando, se sobresaltó y dijo: he olvidado una cosa: Los ojos y la mano de Picasso.	God created the world -so they say- and on the seventh day, when he was resting peacefully, he gave a start and said I've forgotten something: The eyes and the hand of Picasso.
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(Lo que canté, 7)

For Alberti Picasso is the hundred eyes in two eyes, the one who painted the nameless little bullfighters and doves, like his father, the one who painted peace and war, for whom the poet calls on all his love for the painter's eyes, those eyes, the all-embracing eyes, and the one who looks at everything.

In 1968, Alberti, by now almost entirely devoted to what he would call "creaciones caligráficas" (calligraphic creations) presented in Milan's Galeria 32 a file entitled *Los ojos de Picasso/The Eyes of Picasso* (Alberti had begun to write this work of homage to the painter in Anticoli), together with three other works: *Tauromaquia/Tauromachy* and the other works devoted to the painter Calle and the sculptor Mastroianni. The file contained leadplate engravings and drawings and verse accompanied by drawings, all relating to Picasso.

"A Picasso lo conocí en París, la noche menos pensada, en el patio de butacas del teatro Atelier de Charles Dullin", dice Alberti en "Imagen primera de Pablo Picasso". Y añade: "Me lancé al patio de butacas, no sin cierto pánico a una helada acogida o, lo más grave, a un fracaso en mi ilusión de visitarle".

— “¿Picasso?

—Y continúa Alberti: “...le dije mi nombre, hablándole, entrecortado, de amigos comunes y de mis pretensiones de verle en su estudio.

— Pase por mi casa: veintitrés, rue de la Boétie. Pero avíseme antes. Mañana mismo, si puede.” / “I first met Picasso in Paris, one fine night in the stalls of Charles Dullin's Atelier theatre”, Alberti informs us in “Imagen Primera de Pablo Picasso” / “First Image of Pablo Picasso”, adding that “I rushed to the stalls, feeling not a little panic-stricken at the prospect of a chilly response or, even more seriously, that I would fail to fulfill my dream of visiting him. —“Picasso?” And I told him my name and spoke to him in a faltering voice of friends we had in common and my aim of seeing him in his studio.— “Come by my house: 23 de la Boétie Street. But telephone in advance” —As soon as tomorrow, if you can” (*Imagen* 97).

What Alberti remembered most about that first visit were his “two gray buttons”, the painter's eyes, “round tobacco-coloured eyes, insistent and flat, “as hard as two insufferable buttons.” Alberti goes on to say that “[t]he following day, at three o'clock sharp in the afternoon, Picasso himself opened me the door of his flat. As I had in the theatre, I again felt the presence of a bull, crossed this time—minotaur-like—with something of the rancher, a Fernando Villalón, perhaps less uncouth, more refined, owing doubtless to the luminous grayness of his eyes and the famous now graying wave, which divided his forehead at a slanting angle.” Picasso then showed Alberti the paintings in his studio, “a simple garret, measuring little more than three metres by four” (*Imagen* 97) Alberti pictured him as reminiscent of the Cordoban poet Góngora, grazing on stars and offering the horned divinity of his solitude (*Relatos* 143).

Years later, Rafael Alberti's stay in Europe tightened the bonds of friendship with Picasso. They saw each other on different occasions: living in close-by Antibes, Alberti went to visit Picasso frequently at his house at Mougins, at a time when Picasso continued to be Director of the Prado Museum, because, as Alberti pointed out, they had never informed the painter of his dismissal from the post.

Thus was formed a deep friendship between the two, that involved meetings and long conversations on Andalusia, on the bullfighters Frascuelo, Lagartijo, el Guerra o Machaquito, whom only Picasso could remember as Alberti started to go to bullfights when Belmonte and Joselito came on the scene. They spoke of their Parisian experiences on the hill at Mougins or in the rooms of Notre-Dame de Vie; after five months of visits, Alberti bade farewell to Picasso, who gave him a monumental copy of Pierre Reverdy's posthumous poetry, with ten of his own watercolours and a dedication in his own handwriting:

Para Rafael Alberti	For Rafael Alberti
(Lo que es todo decir)	(which is to say everything)
mi amigo (no hablemos)	my friend (don't let's speak of it)
mi primo y mi tío	my cousin and my uncle
su amigo y el mío	his friend and mine
y que más que un montón	and more than a pile
de abrazos novísimos y muy	of new embraces and very
viejos y además el cariño	old ones as well as the affection
De tu	of your
Picasso	Picasso
El 22-5-68	El 22-5-68

("Visititas..." 217)

Rafael Alberti took to *Notre-Dame de Vie Los 8 nombres de Picasso* (Picasso's book *El entierro del Conde Orgaz/The Burial of the Count of Orgaz*, with a prologue by Alberti had already been published). The poet always found in Picasso an entertaining, quick and witty friend and they always had a good time together. Alberti created a poetic mythology around the Andalusian painter, his joviality, creative force and surprising eyes, the eyes of the "monster". In the first instance, "Los ojos de Picasso" / "The Eyes of Picasso" was a manuscript poem from which were made twenty copies, illustrated with lead engravings and coloured drawings.

Alberti commented that in *Los 8 nombres de Picasso* he wanted to express all the admiration that he had felt for him since he was a youth: "Picasso siempre ha sido un pintor para poetas y en todas las diversas etapas de su vida estuvo cerca de ellos: recordemos a Max Jacob, a Apollinaire, a Pierre Reverdy, Jacques Prévert, Paul Éluard... Todos han sabido recoger algo de ese gran río de fluir permanente que es Picasso: una onda, un reflejo, un pez, un pájaro, una estrella..." (*Canciones*, 82) / "Picasso has always been a painter for poets and during all the different stages of his life he was close to them: think of Max Jacob, Apollinaire, Pierre Reverdy, Jacques Prevert, Paul Éluard... All of them have drawn something from that great permanently flowing river that is Picasso, a wave, a reflection, a fish, a bird, a star..."

Alberti would define Picasso as "un movimiento sísmico cuyo epicentro se halla en los dedos de su mano" / "a seismic movement, whose epicentre is to be found in the fingers of his hand", as "un mundo que inventó la primera palabra" / "a world that invented the first word", as "un hombre que se derrama en luz por los miles de ojos que ha pintado" (*Lo que canté*, 162-63) / "a man. who flows out in light through the thousands of eyes he has painted". The poet also noted that "[s]u genio es el del pueblo español, capaz de las arrancadas más luminosas y violentas. El bombardeado toro de Guernica clama siempre en su sangre" (*Lo que canté*, 163) / "[h]is genius is that of the Spanish people, capable of

the most luminous and violent spurts of energy. The bombarded bull of Guernica always clamours in his blood." When Alberti took him the Italian edition of *A la pintura*, with his own illustrations, in the Italian bilingual Grafica Internazionale edition, (a more complete volume than the Kairós one), along with the reproduction of the dedications that Picasso had inscribed to him during the meetings of the later years and a folder with three new poems and three prints in lead plate, as a homage to the painter on the occasion of the ninetieth birthday, Picasso made him a present of some extraordinary lyricographs, "Twenty-nine Imaginary Portraits," and remarked: "C'est très bien fait, n'est-ce pas?" (*Lo que canté* 168).

But Picasso, according to Alberti, was at that moment all "en furia, en llama, en ira, en cólera, en trompa, en toro, en sangre, en perro, en rabia, en gato, en odio, en fallo, en pito,, en paz, en luz, en sombra, en guerra"(L que cante, 169)/ "in a fury, aflame, in a rage, irate, aroused, like a bull, incensed, doglike, maddened, cat-like, hate-ridden, in a void, on hard, at peace, alight, wrapped in shade, at war", a mythic constellation for the poet of Puerto de Santa María. At the beginning of *Los 8 nombres de Picasso* Alberti presents us with a startling aggrandizement. It is God who says: "He olvidado una cosa: /los ojos y mano de Picasso" (7) /"I have forgotten one thing: / the eyes and the hand of Picasso".

After this introduction would come seventy-two poems divided in seven sections, in the Kairós Spanish edition, and seventy five poems — three more— in the Grafica Internazionale Italian edition. The first section has a mythical dimension. According to Concha Argente del Castillo, the poet lingers over "the physical, psychological particularities and over the myths of his work that embody that individuality called Pablo Ruiz Picasso" (169). In order to express this, Alberti goes from a reflexive tone to a burlesque one, passing through the chaotic enumeration of "Los ojos de Picasso"/"The Eyes of Picasso" or "Consejos picassianos"/"Picassian Pieces of Advice", or the childlike and illogical series in "Tres retahílas para Picasso"/"Three Series for Picasso", in a kind of poetry that mythifies the painter:

Es un demonio. Se metió en el siglo
por la puerta menos pensada.
Escondía colores nunca vistos

(.....)

Se veía en sus ojos que era hijo de las llamas
(.....)

Nunca ha habido hasta hoy fuerza capaz de detenerlo

(*Lo que canté*, 26)

He is a demon. He got into the century

through the least imaginable door.
 He was hiding colours never seen before.
 (.....)
 It could be seen in his eyes that he was the the son of the flames.
 (.....)
 Never till today has there been a force capable of stopping him.

In this first section, "Sueño y mentira" / "Dream and Lie", poem XIX does not appear in Kairós's Spanish edition, but it does in the Italian edition and the Bruguera one. In general, the poems vary metrically, and also in their tone; some are descriptive, others intelligent and penetrating, adjusting the poetic to the figurative. There are short epigrammatic compositions and sonnets of perfect classical structure. The poetic tone is nimble, amusing and ironical, or there are rigorous examples of Alberti's powerful poetic imagination, which as an example of exceptional creative complicity matches Picasso's plastic imagination. "He is a demon", Alberti writes of him. "Picasso — Catherine G. Bellver notes— emerges from this poetry as monster of nature, synonymous of the sea and of cataclysm. As a dehumanized and deified being, he shows qualities of the devil as well as of God. With the devil he shares his strength, rebelliousness, originality and his insatiable search for freedom, which because of the threat this implies against the established order of things is the enemy of the world (155).

This transposition of Picasso's "different" painting, is also related to the avantgarde. The technique is common to all his ekphrastic poetry, as much in the sonnets, in separate poems, in the poems on paintings as in the description of Picassian techniques, in the dualistic approach and in the painter's paradoxical, chaotic and mythical side, as if both Alberti and Picasso were having a dialogue in poetry and painting, talking, recreating a similar kind of painting and poetry. Kurt Spang comments that "the autobiographical plays a larger part in *A la pintura/To Painting* and memories of meetings between the two friends come up frequently ("Cuando te conocí" / "When I met you", "Así lo vio" / "Thus he saw it") and the praises and friendly homages ("Tres retahílas para Picasso" / "Three Series for Picasso", "Mougins", "Cuando yo andaba junto al mar", "When I was walking by the Sea", and "Denuestos y alabanzas en honor a Picasso" / "Insult and Praise in honour of Picasso" (149).

The visual-pictorial dimension is for Alberti a paradise that seemed lost and that he finds again in Picasso's artistic genius. Picasso is the symbol of a lost paradise, identified with the painter from Málaga, whose eyes fix on it and go beyond the real and create new unrepeatable forms, new disturbing and permanent registers with which Alberti constructs his ekphrastic model.

The second section of *Los 8 nombres de Picasso* is concerned with the daily life of the painter in Mougins amidst the bright Picassian colours, his doves of peace, the sea overflowing with Picassian objects and full of light:

El mar domesticado por los flautas suelta ovejas azules y caballos.	The sea domesticated by the flutes releases blue sheep and horses.
Sobre la arena al sol todos los días tiende la luz sus ojos amarillos.	Over the sand in the sun every day the light stretches out its yellow eyes.

(Lo que canté, 49)

In the words of Argente del Castillo, "Alberti introduces himself into the poems as a privileged spectator of that relation established between Picasso and nature, which at times expresses itself as harmony, at other times as a struggle between vital principles" (171).

Son las profundas horas,
Las más cargadas de pasión, de asombro
que este siglo soporta ya escalando las cimas

(Lo que canté, 57)

It is the deep hours,
that are the most heavy with passion, and with astonishment
that this century endures as it scales the heights

The century is the one that Picasso occupies, time stood still in Picasso, time that is Picasso.

The third section is a commentary on Picassian themes and techniques. Five sonnets with figures who are in the paintings by the artist, to whom the figures speak: "De la Fornarina a Picasso"/ "From Fornarina to Picasso", "De Rafael..."/ "From Raphael..." and "De Miguel Ángel"/ "From Michelangelo".

In the fourth section of the book, we find the return to Pablo Ruiz Picasso, who "is but is not there". The poems LXX ("Antes que tú les rayabas las tripas"/ "Before you scratched their guts") and LXXI ("Tú serías quemada"/ "You would be burnt") are not to be found in the Kairós edition of 1970, but do appear later in the Grafica Internazionale bilingual edition. Here Picasso writes, paints, engraves, harmonizing with the century in which he creates his works:

¿Pablo? ¿qué haces? Pintas
Oyes el siglo. Pintas.
Pintas dibujos, grabas, escribes, pintas, pintas...

(Lo que canté, 98)

Pablo, what are you doing? You paint.
You hear the century. You paint.
You paint drawings, you engrave, you write, you paint, you paint...

In poem LXIV, section 12 Alberti writes:

Picasso ofende y cuanto más ofende
crecen más los que le aman.

(*Lo que canté*, 101)

Picasso offends and the more he offends
the greater the number of those who love him.

And in section 15:

Si Velázquez volviera y recrease
las Meninas recreated by Picasso,
¿pintaría de nuevo sus Meninas?

(*Lo que canté*, 102)

If Velázquez were to come back and recreate
the Meninas recreated by Picasso,
would he paint his own Meninas again?

This creative intentionality, which is disconcerting, aggrandized, a form of poetry concerned with Picasso's occupancy of his century is parallel to the idea of the "monster" as Alberti compares him with that other great genius, Velázquez, identifying the studies Picasso made of the Meninas with Velázquez's painting in the Prado Museum.

The fifth and sixth sections have the function of recalling the Picassian mythology in Alberti's spirited poetry. Poem LXXIV ("No digo más de lo que no digo" / "I'm not saying more than what I'm not saying") is the one that Picasso asked Alberti to write as a prologue to his own book *El entierro del Conde Orgaz*.

Using nuances and metaphorical and stylistic registers in *Los 8 nombres de Picasso*, Alberti embodies the painter in a poetically mythical world (Picasso and God share the act of creation) and in "Tú eres una catástrofe" / "You are a catastrophe", Picasso comes out of the sea to engender a child, as G. Bellver has it. For this critic the painter represents the order that emerges from the disorder of destruction and chaos, "although the God that Alberti sees in Picasso is in himself all-powerful and immutable" adding that "the god Picasso rises up like a terrible force to challenge man, other painters, nature and God himself. Implicit in the cult that Alberti pays Picasso is not only the firm faith of the poet in the eternity of art but also a raising of the painter to levels higher than those reached by all other painters that have existed. And Catherine G. Bellver goes on to say that "Alberti leaves us with a man transformed into an abstraction, an emblem, and one could say, into a symbol of a whole century" (156):

Una vez en la tierra existió una edad maravillosa
A la que llamaremos picassiana.

(*Lo que canté*, 107)

Once on earth there existed a marvellous age
that we'll call Picassian.

Notable too is Picasso's obsession with eyes, and the poetic game involving Picasso's names, the use of "all" and "without":

...Pablo
sin Diego,
sin José,
sin Francisco de Paula,
sin Juan Nepomuceno,
sin María de los Remedios,
sin Crispín
sin Crispiniano de la Santísima Trinidad

(*Lo que canté*, 14)

...Pablo
without Diego
without Joseph
without Francis of Paula
without John Nepomuceno
without Mary of Remedies
without Crispin
without Crispiniano of the Holy Trinity Picasso

Also the Picasso from Malaga, the man of blues ("De azul se arrancó el toro" / "From blue the bull charged" and the Spanish Picasso, of the Albertian alphabetical name:

España:
fina tela de araña,
guadaña y musaraña,
braña, entraña, cucaña,
saña, pipirigaña,
y todo lo que suena y consuena
contigo: España, España.

Spain:
fine spider's web
scythe and speck in the eye,
pasture, entrails, greasy pole,
fury, pipirigaña [children's pinching game]
and all that sounds and harmonizes
with you: Spain, Spain.

(*Lo que canté*, 15)

These are all the confines of non-jingoistic Hispanism, of all of Spain that exists in Alberti: black Spain and luminous Spain, which also forms part of Picasso's painting. Here are the memories of two Andalusians, who had to leave Spain at a young age, and that memory of what is Spanish remains like an evocative recurrent nostalgia in the conversations they shared in Mougins, memories that also appear in the poems of Alberti.

Spain as it appears in Alberti's exile: the Spain of Málaga and bull-fights, tragedy and uncertainty, the bull and Guernica, war and peace, and the poetry that derives from going through Picasso's paintings: the

women from Avignon, the doves, the Meninas..., all expressed in that vibrant way of aggrandizing the painter, who does not take his eyes off him," *el cien mil ojos en dos ojos*" / "the hundred thousand eyes in two eyes", "el que te clava con los ojos en un abrir y cerrar de ojos" / "the one who rivets you with his eyes in the wink of an eye" (*Lo que canté* 22).

Eyes, always the eyes of Picasso, a poem dedicated "a Jacqueline que vive siempre dentro de los ojos del monstruo" / "to Jacqueline, who always lives inside the eyes of the monster", and coming after a quotation from the Ultraist poet Vicente Huidobro, the form and poetry in the Albertian ekphrastic mythology in "Los ojos de Picasso" / "The Eyes of Picasso" and his book *Los 8 nombres de Picasso*:

Siempre es todo ojos.	It's always all eyes.
No te quita ojos.	He doesn't take his eyes off you.
Se come las palabras con los ojos.	He eats up the words with his eyes.
Es el siete ojos.	He's the seven-eyed one.
Es el cien mil ojos en dos ojos.	He's the hundred thousand eyes in two eyes.
El gran mirón como un botón marrón y otro botón.	The big starrer like a brown button. and another button.
El ojo de la cerradura	The eye at the keyhole
por el que se ve la pintura.	through which he sees painting.
El que te abre bien los ojos cuando te muerde con los ojos.	The one who opens his eyes wide when he bites you with his eyes.
El ojo de la aguja que sólo ensarta cuando dibuja.	The eye of the needle that he only threads when he draws.
El que te clava con los ojos en un abrir y cerrar de ojos.	The one who rivets you with his eyes In the blinking of an eye.

(*Lo que canté*, 22)

And from Picasso's eyes emerges:

El ojo avizor, agresor abrasador.	The vigilant eye, aggressive scorching.
El ojo amor.	The loving eye.
El ojo en vela, centinela	The awake eye, sentry,
espuela, candela,	spur, candle,
el que se rebela y revela.	The one who rebels and reveals.

(*Lo que canté*, 22-23)

Alberti constructs a whole poetic edifice on Picasso's painting (only a pictorially-inclined poet could have done so), but he also plays with Picasso's nature, his names, his eyes, concerned to discover for us inef-

fable eyes, which are everything, which compose and decompose you. The poet gradually makes the poem take shape, rise in an imaginative vertigo, and very rhythmically in that mythical-magical-poetic mode imbued with musicality he metaphorically pursues Picasso's ever open eyes, which pursue us too.

No cierra los ojos.
 No baja los ojos.
 Te quita los ojos.
 Te arranca los ojos
 y te deja manco
 o te deja cojo.
 Luego te compone
 o te descompone
 la nariz te quita
 o te pone dos.

He doesn't close his eyes.
 He doesn't lower his eyes.
 He takes out your eyes.
 He rips out your eyes
 and leaves you one-handed
 or he leaves you lame.
 Then he puts you back together
 or takes you apart,
 he takes away your nose
 Or gives you two.

(*Lo que canté*, 23)

And Picasso's eyes, in a poetic crescendo full of sketched-out irony, as in Picasso's erotic drawings, which takes on a tremendous hyperbolic speed in the untrammelled rhythmic advance of the laudatory poem on Picasso:

Ojo que te espeta
 que te desjarreta
 te agranda las tetas,
 te achica las tetas,
 te hace la puñeta,
 te levanta el culo,
 te deja sin culo,
 te vuelve un alambre,
 te ensarta en estambre,
 te ve del revés,
 todo dividido,
 tundido, partido,
 cosido, raído,
 zurcido, fluido.

Eye that transfixes you
 that hamstringing you
 that makes your tits bigger,
 that makes your tits smaller,
 that tells you to go to hell,
 he raises your arse,
 he leaves you arse-less,
 he makes you thin as a rake,
 he strings you into woollen yarn,
 he sees you inside out,
 all divided up,
 beat up, split open,
 sewn up, threadbare,
 darned, free-flowing.

(*Lo que canté*, 23)

Eyes, eyes and eyes in Picasso, the natural ones, the overflowing ones, those that look at you and make you confused, and the eyes of the black bull of Spain, aggrandized, eyes in a shiver, eyes in fear, eyes as word-game, poetic palette, rhythm, vertigo...

Ojos animales,
 letales,
 mortales,
 umbilicales,

Animal-like eyes
 deadly,
 mortal,
 umbilical.

Ojos cataclismo,
temblor, terremoto,
maremoto, abismo,
flor.
Ojos toro azul,
Ojos negro toro,
ojos toro rojo
Ojos.

Cataclysmic eyes,
tremor, earthquake,
tidal wave, abyss,
flower.
Blue bull-like eyes,
Black bull-like eyes,
Red bull-like eyes,
Eyes.

(*Lo que canté*, 23-24)

Eyes, Picasso's eyes, which "con el sin y el con" *Lo que canté*, 23" "are the with and the without", eyes that are "opuestos, crueles, molestos" *Lo que canté*, p. 24) "opposed, cruel, discontented". And in a poetic flourish, springing from lexical invention and musicality, Alberti creates some concluding lines for the eyes of his friend the painter in a form of poetry that recalls on occasions his poem for Hieronymus Bosch, in its invented and sonorous letters and for its joy, and for the existence of eyes for which he seeks eternity, for these eyes are those of the monster Pablo Ruiz Picasso. Furthermore, he seeks for the eyes of the painter "all the love of the world", eyes that at the same time are killing him.. This poem, which is remarkably beautiful, forms part of the "topográfica" (topogrammic) and musical poetry that Alberti liked so much and that here leaves us startled:

¡Afuera esos ojos!
¡Quítlenme esos ojos!

Outside with those eyes!
Take those eyes out for me!

(...)

(...)

Mátenme esos ojos,
virojos,
pintojos,
ojos trampantojos.

Kill those eyes for me.
swivel-eyes
painter's eyes
tricky eyes.

(...)

(...)

Ojo, que remonto plato..
Ojo, que salto hecho jarra.
Ojo, que giro paloma
Ojo, que remonto cabra.

Eye, that plate-like I get over
Eye, that jar-like I jump over
Eye, that dove-like I circle
Eye, that goat-like I surmount.

Vivan esos ojos.
Luz para esos ojos.
Líneas y colores para esos dos ojos.

Long live those eyes.
Light for those eyes.
Light and colours for those those
two eyes.

Todo el amor para esos ojos.
El cielo entero para esos ojos.

All love for those eyes.
The whole sky for those eyes.

El mar entero para esos ojos.	The whole sea for those eyes.
La tierra entera para esos ojos.	The whole earth for those eyes.
La eternidad para esos ojos.	Eternity for those eyes.

(*Lo que canté*, 24-25)

That paradise of Alberti's, painting, becomes in the shape of Picasso's painting a passion for him. Alberti looks at it and looks at himself through the eyes of the "monster". It is not only a question of eyes but also hands in accordance with the line "he olvidado una cosa: los ojos y la mano de Picasso" (*Los 8 nombres* 7)/ "I have forgotten something: the eyes and the hand of Picasso", eyes with which to see and hand with which to paint. The poet asks that they be loved and kept safe, although also the strength they express as they reappear before him cause pain. Picasso's hand goes through a process of multiplication in Alberti's *Arboleda perdida*: "Primero Picasso comenzó pintando con dos manos, luego con cuatro, luego con diez, con veinte, con cuarenta, con cien, con quinientos, con mil, hasta llegar a tapar de colores todas las superficies. Manos de Picasso, por todas partes, por sobre papeles, sobre cerámicas, sobre hojalatas, hierros, sobre todas las cosas. Y se llenó el mundo con sus manos" ("El otoño 19")/ "First Picasso began painting with two hands, then with four, then ten, the twenty, then forty, then a hundred, then five hundred, then a thousand, reaching the point at which all surfaces were being covered with colours. The hands of Picasso were everywhere, on papers, on ceramics, on tin, iron, on all things. And the world was filled with his hands".

The hyperboles relating to eyes and hands in *Los 8 nombres de Picasso* come one after another to form a metaphorical chain. Eyes and hands that are necessary to achieve plasticity; a hundred thousand eyes and the world was filled with his hands. Picasso is "un relampaguear de pura plástica sonora, de puro ingenio delirante, en continua arrancada vertiginosa" (*Relatos* 18) "a flashing of pure sonorous plasticity, of pure delirious wit, a continuous outpouring", for Alberti, who will be similarly enthusiastic in his dedication to Picasso in *A la pintura*, and the poems in this book "Picasso" and "De azul se arrancó el toro"/ "From blue the bull charged" .. The bull recurs in Alberti's burlesque poetry as an explosive game and becomes the terrible animal of the Spanish Civil War when it shakes the Guernica painting. This is the other mythical dimension that Picasso assumes in the work of Alberti, who asserts: "Arrancada, sí, arrancada de fuerte toro español (...)arrancada de toro haciendo añicos el orden de las cosas (...) Para ofrecerlo compuesto de otro modo, en reinventada, cínica e imposible vida nueva" (*Relatos* 143) "Charge, yes, charge of the strong Spanish bull (...) Charge of the bull shattering to pieces the order of things (...) To offer it composed in a new way, in a reinvented, cynical, and impossible new life". Alberti pictures

Picasso in the bull: "Y me lo imaginé paciendo de aquel alimento sobrenatural que el picassiano poeta cordobés Luis de Góngora ofrece a la divinidad astada de sus Soledades: stars" (*Relatos* 143) "And I imagined him grazing on that supernatural nourishment, which the Picassian Cordoban poet Luis de Góngora offers to the horned divinity of his *Solitudes: stars*". Grazing on stars, the mythic painter, all eyes and hands, takes on in Alberti's poetry the personality of the immense talent of the monster or the aggrandized genius, whom objects seem to follow, passing through his eyes to be devoured, digested in a singular way and recreated by his painter's hand. This, then, is Alberti's Picasso: "cien mil ojos en dos ojos" (*Lo que canté* 22) "a hundred thousand eyes in two eyes".

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