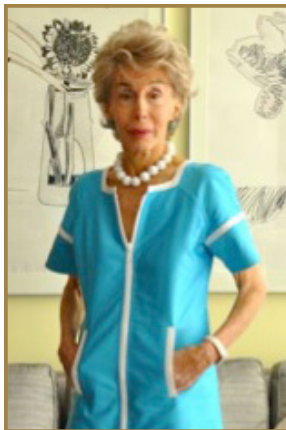


IFE's 2011 International Diplomacy Award Recipient



Ina Ginsburg

Ina has been an iconic behind-the-scenes figure in Washington, D.C. for many years. Members of the diplomatic corps, whether newly arrived, or veterans of Washington service, have sought out her diplomatic skills and advice, as have members of Washington's political establishment — on both sides of the aisle. She has arranged countless off-the-record lunches and dinners and gatherings in Washington for artists, designers, filmmakers, political leaders and entrepreneurs from the world over.

For almost two decades, Mrs. Ginsburg was the Washington editor of Andy Warhol's Interview magazine. She interviewed heads of state, cultural icons, and Washington political leaders; these interviews appeared worldwide as part of the New York Times Syndicate. She introduced Andy Warhol, one of the most celebrated 20th century artists, to Washington and Washington to Andy Warhol. This took place on the highest levels, including The White House. Mrs. Ginsburg has also been published in Town and Country, and Connoisseur magazines, and The Washington Post.

For her countless efforts leading to better understanding and awareness in the nation's capital of other nations, Mrs. Ginsburg has been decorated by the Republic of Austria, the Kingdom of Morocco, and the Republic of France. She has also received citations from the European Union, and the Federal Reserve of the United States. Mrs. Ginsburg is a member of the International Advisory Council of the United States Institute of Peace. In 2011 she received the IFE International Diplomacy Award for her work promoting civility.

Ina represents many of the fine qualities the Institute for Education embodies, perhaps especially its Youth Global Citizen program. Her curiosity about the world, love of languages, and ability to engage quickly with people from any corner of the world - without any hesitation - set a fine example for the interns at the IFE.

Contributed by son Mark Ginsburg

"Ina was a remarkable woman. She was kind, intelligent, knowledgeable and generous. No-one welcomed people more graciously. If she took you under her wing you were in good shape. And her wings were wide. She wanted Americans to understand Europeans better. She had broad interests. She loved art and beautiful objects including beautiful clothes. No-one dressed more exquisitely. She appreciated good manners and felt respectful debate should be encouraged especially among people who disagreed with each other. She was a most civilized person who had had an extraordinary life with challenges she rarely discussed. No wonder she said with subtle humor after being told she would be 'shown life' by Andy Warhol's magazine editor that 'having been born in Central Europe and having lived in Paris I was not sure that would be necessary'. Washington will miss her and so will her friends."

Justice Stephen and Joanna Breyer

"I first met Ina at the 2010 Opera Ball, when my husband, Todd Park, and I moved to DC. "Welcome to Washington!" she said to us with a beaming smile, and later we understood that Ina embodied the essence of Washington society. I was fortunate to be able to work with her this past year, at the Institute for Education. Ina loved and supported IFE—she took her role as IFE Steward seriously and championed its mission tirelessly at innumerable diplomatic events. She made everyone feel special. We will miss her."

Dr. Amy Geng, IFE Innovation Steward

"Ina was a venerable fixture in Washington's high society."

Gerard Baker
Editor in Chief, The Wall Street Journal, IFE Steward

"Ina was the embodiment of style and grace. She valued and encouraged civility and was a breath of fresh air in our nation's capital. There is a good reason that Andy Warhol found a muse in Ina Ginsburg. She is iconic."

Jennifer Griffin and Greg Myre

"I was lucky enough to meet Ina a couple of decades ago through the Institute of Education. While one was immediately struck by her elegance and sophistication, the joy of becoming her friend was to share in her appreciation for art, culture and the non-political side of DC. Talking to Ina transported to Central Europe, my mother's birthplace, a gift for which I am very grateful."

Juliet Eilperin

"Ina Ginsburg was a remarkable woman who lived an incredible life. I wasn't around when she was escaping from Nazis, palling around with Andy Warhol, or bringing fine arts to the Federal Reserve. But I was fortunate enough to get to know Ina through her work as a steward of the Institute for Education, where she worked tirelessly to foster civility and bipartisan common ground. Ever elegant, she expressed optimism that any problem could be overcome and anyone made a friend. Ina made Washington a better place."

John Paul Farmer
Emerging Technology Roundtable Founder, IFE

"We are deeply saddened by Ina's passing. Ina was an inspiration, a wonderful friend and a remarkable mentor who helped us to appreciate and participate in so much that her Washington has to offer. We will miss her terribly."

Moshira Soliman and Les Deak

"Unforgettable! Nobody compares to Ina Ginsburg. Among the many thousands of interesting people we've met in our 5 wonderful years in Washington, Ina Ginsburg holds a very special place. We felt exceptionally blessed by her friendship. We were countless times invited at her home in Foxhall Crescents. Ina was a frequent guest at the Belgian residence. She loved to talk with us in French, and after a while we were shifting to German .."Ich bin doch eine Wienerin". No week could pass for us without meeting her somewhere: concerts, receptions, dinners, IFE-meetings, etc... Agnes and I were always glad to see her, for a short or for a longer conversation, for her generous introductions to friends, or for a ride home with us, as neighbors. Her long life spans over an astonishing "éventail" of world history, with culture, fashion, beauty, humanity. She shared some of her fascinating stories with us, there must be many more. We hope she kept notes for a biographer. She didn't talk too much about the past, she was forward-looking, curious about the actual world, and interested in young people's plans and views. That kept her young for so long. She was a noble, warm-hearted, wise person. Unforgettable."

Jan Mattheyson and Agnes Matthysen
Former Ambassador to the U.S. from the Kingdom of Belgium and IFE Diplomatic Steward

The Washington Post

Ina Ginsburg, socialite who wrote about D.C. elite for Warhol's magazine, dies at 98

By Adam Bernstein

November 9, 2014

Ina Ginsburg, who escaped Nazi-occupied Europe, became a Washington arts patron and hostess, and parlayed her connections into a job writing about the city's glamour and power crowd for a magazine run by a friend, the artist Andy Warhol, died Nov. 9 at her home in the District. She was 98.

The cause was complications from an infection, said a son, Mark Ginsburg.

Unlike many in her circle, the Austrian-born Mrs. Ginsburg was averse to self-promotion. Linked socially to the Kennedys, Kissingers and Grahams, she surfaced in high-society news but shied from interviews.

Any news article, she figured, would mention a past that she had largely tried to forget. Raised in a cultured and privileged Jewish family, she fled persecution in Europe and sailed to the United States aboard a refu-gee ship that was nearly turned back to Europe.

"She never spoke of her life before arrival in Washington — ever," her son said. "She didn't want to ever be seen as a refu-gee. She came here to start a new life, and that was that."

Ina Ginsburg with a 1983 Andy Warhol silkscreen portrait of her. (Bill Sneed/The Washington Post)

Mrs. Ginsburg, whose second husband, David Ginsburg, was a prominent lawyer and liberal activist, became a founding member and honorary trustee of what is now the Washington National Opera. She was a trustee emeritus of the American Film Institute and was instrumental in starting the Federal Reserve's fine arts advisory panel.

"The first time I went [to the Fed] for a reception, I noticed the walls were embarrassingly empty, with no art to speak of, unlike nearly any other central bank of prominence," she said in an unpublished oral history. "The main reception room had a still life of a dead fish."

Imagining that an "atmosphere of beauty and art" might positively influence financial decision-makers, she approached a friend, Fed chairman Arthur F. Burns, who agreed to create the fine arts panel in 1975. The organization has since presented more than 150 arts exhibitions, including paintings by Jackson Pollock, photographs by Alfred Eisenstaedt, portraits by Arnold Newman and illustrations by Howard Pyle.

Mrs. Ginsburg's former home in Georgetown — decorated with Warhol's silkscreen-on-canvas portrait of her — became a meeting place for visiting movie stars, ambassadors, business tycoons, political leaders, Cabinet members, U.S. Supreme Court justices and socialites.

About a decade later, Mrs. Ginsburg threw a party in Washington for Warhol, the Manhattan-based Pop artist known for his silk-screen images of Campbell's soup cans and who started a magazine, *Interview*, that celebrated celebrity.

At the gathering, Warhol's retinue sized her up in her Dior gown and her knowledge of the city's social life. She once said that Bob Colacello, the editor of *Interview*, told her, "'We decided you're all right, and we want you to join us. We're going to show you life.' I said, 'Great, fine.' Though having been born in Central Europe, and having lived in Paris, I wasn't certain it was necessary."

He tapped Mrs. Ginsburg to write for *Interview* with a focus on Washington, a city he once called "Hollywood on the Potomac." For years, including after Warhol's death in 1987, she contributed stories about members of the political establishment, diplomatic spouses and visiting cultural figures.

She created a stir with her 1983 interview of former defense secretary Robert S. McNamara, who had long avoided discussing his role in prosecuting the Vietnam War. Mrs. Ginsburg flattered and lulled him into revealing that he thought the war was unwinnable as early as mid-1965.

"It was obvious early on that there was no military solution to the problem," he said before catching himself and refusing to discuss the matter further.

Mrs. Ginsburg was born Ida Spira in Vienna on Oct. 10, 1916. Her father was an officer with a shipping company, and her mother was a dressmaker who started a knitware business that copied the latest French fashions.

Around the time of the German annexation of Austria in 1938, the family converted to Catholicism to improve their chances of receiving travel visas. She said her blond hair and light eyes helped her avoid confrontations with Nazis.

By that time, she had married an Austrian champion fencer twice her age, Kurt Ettinger. They managed to get to Paris, but Ettinger, who was Jewish, was ordered for a time to a concentration camp.

He later was released, she said in her oral history, "but I never saw him again, although we spoke by phone on several occasions when he moved to the United States." Her immediate family survived the war.

Meanwhile in Paris, she was a film extra, work she detested because of the "casting couch at its worst." She managed to obtain a French passport and a Spanish transit visa and made her way through Franco's Spain to Lisbon. In 1940, she bribed her way onto a small Portuguese cargo ship, the *Quanza*, which was bringing more than 300 war refugees to the West.

Some American citizens were allowed to disembark in New York, but most of the refugees — many of them Jewish — were denied political asylum. The scene was repeated when the ship docked in Veracruz, Mexico.

Mexican authorities did not recognize the refugees' hastily arranged transit visas. She said someone proposed suing the Mexican government as a means of getting off the boat, even if that meant going to jail. She said she volunteered, and that the French film actress Madeleine LeBeau, who would go on to sing "La Marseillaise" tearfully in the movie "Casablanca," rushed forward to accompany her.

As Mexican police came for her, she was urged by a friend to reconsider.

"She took me to the side of the ship and pointed to the deck below where there was a man who was completely bandaged — his face, his hands, everything," Mrs. Ginsburg recalled. "All you could see was his eyes. She said, 'This is a leper, and he's cleaning the ship, and you want to go to a Mexican jail? You cannot do that.' Luckily, I had the guts to say 'I'd changed my mind. ... It was probably the best decision I ever made.'"

The ship moved on to Norfolk, Va., to restock coal for the return trip to Portugal. Before the ship turned back, however, first lady Eleanor Roosevelt interceded on the refugees' behalf. The State Department granted them visas to enter the United States.

Mrs. Ginsburg made her way to Chicago, where she found help from a relative of a childhood friend: Abram Nicholas "A.N." Pritzker, the Chicago lawyer and billionaire who became the patriarch of a business dynasty that included Hyatt hotels.

Pritzker helped her become an American citizen. Under the stage name Christina Esslay, she performed with a Baltimore troupe called the Hilltop Players, often portraying what one reviewer called "slinky and seductive" native women, such as Tondelayo in "White Cargo."

After the war, when she returned to Vienna to try to reclaim family property, Pritzker recommended she seek out David Ginsburg, an aide to Gen. Lucius D. Clay Sr., who oversaw U.S. forces in Europe after World War II.

The Ginsburgs wed in 1950, and became active in Washington's social, political and artistic scenes. David Ginsburg was a founder of Americans for Democratic Action, a liberal advocacy group, and was tapped by President Lyndon B. Johnson to serve as executive director of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders after race riots exploded in the late 1960s.

Her marriage to Ginsburg ended in divorce. Survivors include their three children, Jonathan Ginsburg of Fairfax County, Va., Susan Ginsburg of Alexandria and Mark Ginsburg of Berlin; and two grandchildren.

Warhol was a defining influence for Mrs. Ginsburg, who was once described by a fashion writer for the old *Washington Star* as one of the "best-dressed women" in her set. She told *Capitol File* magazine that Warhol helped open her mind to the personal expressiveness of *outré* fashion. She recalled sharing a cab in New York on the way to the nightclub Studio 54.

"We had stopped at a red light and saw two young men crossing the street," she said. "One had green hair, standing up so strange. And I was about to say, 'How awful,' you know, but just then Andy said, 'Oh, Ina, look. How wonderful. They're really trying to say something, and that's beautiful.' From that, I changed my outlook. In that sense, and in many others, he did a lot for me."