



John McLean

Ian Collins

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John McLean (b. 1939) has been likened to British art's secret weapon: a self-propelled missile whose long career has been an unfettered exploration of abstraction and a unique journey into colour. This is the first book to be published on the artist, and celebrates his ongoing creativity in painting, as well as his more recent forays into printmaking, sculpture and his glittering designs for cathedral stained-glass windows.

Raised in north-east Scotland, John McLean has been based in London since the early 1960s save for spells in America spent nurturing his exhilarated and exhilarating paintings. Like many of his heroes - Braque, Miró, Gottlieb - he is self-taught. Down the decades he has shown supreme powers of resilience and invention in developing his celebratory art regardless of finance and fashion. A playful wit, which spills into festive cards and caricatures, only underlines a wider seriousness of purpose.

For this book, writer Ian Collins sets the biographical scene and marshals a parade of expert witnesses - critics and curators, musicians and architects, poets and painters - to provide a personal response to the artist's work. In this lively procession of voices, painter and printmaker Bert Irvin salutes 'some of the most important abstract paintings of our period', while artist Jeffery Camp hails John McLean as 'The always aware, ever young, ever colourful, ever colour loving, surefire abstract artist'. John McLean himself remains the main act, however, speaking eloquently for himself both in words and pictures.

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About the Author

Ian Collins is a writer, curator and collector. His 2005 volume *Making Waves: Artists in Southwold* was a book of the year choice in the *Times*, *Sunday Telegraph* and *Spectator*. He has organised exhibitions from Aldeburgh to London and arranged the Mary Newcomb memorial exhibition at Norwich Castle in 2009.

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