



Jasper Johns (Painters)

L.M. Poole

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JASPER JOHNS A revised and updated introduction to the art of Jasper Johns. American artist Jasper Johns was born in 1930 in Augusta, Georgia, and grew up in Allendale, South Carolina. He moved to New York City in 1949, where he remained for much of his life (more recently he has lived in Connecticut). Johns was associated with artists such as Marcel Duchamp, one of his heroes, and Robert Rauschenberg, with whom he lived in 1950s. His first solo show was in 1958 (at Leo Castelli in Gotham). Johns has become one of the U.S.A.'s premier artists, guaranteed a mention in any critical study or art history book of modern art and contemporary art, American art, and avant garde art. Jasper Johns' reputation was greatly enhanced in the late Eighties by the boom in the economics of the art world: on November 9, 1988, Johns' White Flag fetched \$7 million in a sale of the Burton and Emily Tremaine collection. Johns' False Start went for \$17 million the following day, from Victor W. Ganz's collection. These were huge prices for a living artist. Jasper Johns works very closely with his paintings, becoming absorbed totally in the surfaces, as a his friend Michael Crichton wrote: when he is working, Jasper is totally concentrated on those surfaces. He lives in those surfaces. The surfaces are his whole world, they are everything. He loses himself in them. They are everything. Jasper Johns works intuitively, instinctively: 'One works without thinking how to work,' he has said. And: 'I have no ideas about what the paintings imply about the world. I don't think that's a painter's business. He just paints paintings without a conscious reason.' Johns has faith in the power of the unconscious: it would work out what needed to be done: 'The thing is, if you believe in the unconscious - and I do - there's room for all kinds of possibilities that I don't know how you prove one way or another.' Illustrated, with a newly revised text for this edition. Bibliography and notes. ISBN 971861712905.
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