



# Independent

The approach

presents

John Maclean

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# John Maclean

With a focus on landscape and contemplative outdoor scenes, John Maclean sources his imagery from salvaged, hand-tinted postcards or print-outs from the internet. Although small, these paintings evoke ideas of a larger narrative, where we, the viewer, only experience a single vignette from a much broader storyline. With its story-telling qualities, it is difficult not to compare Maclean's approach to painting with his other creative pursuit in writing and directing films.

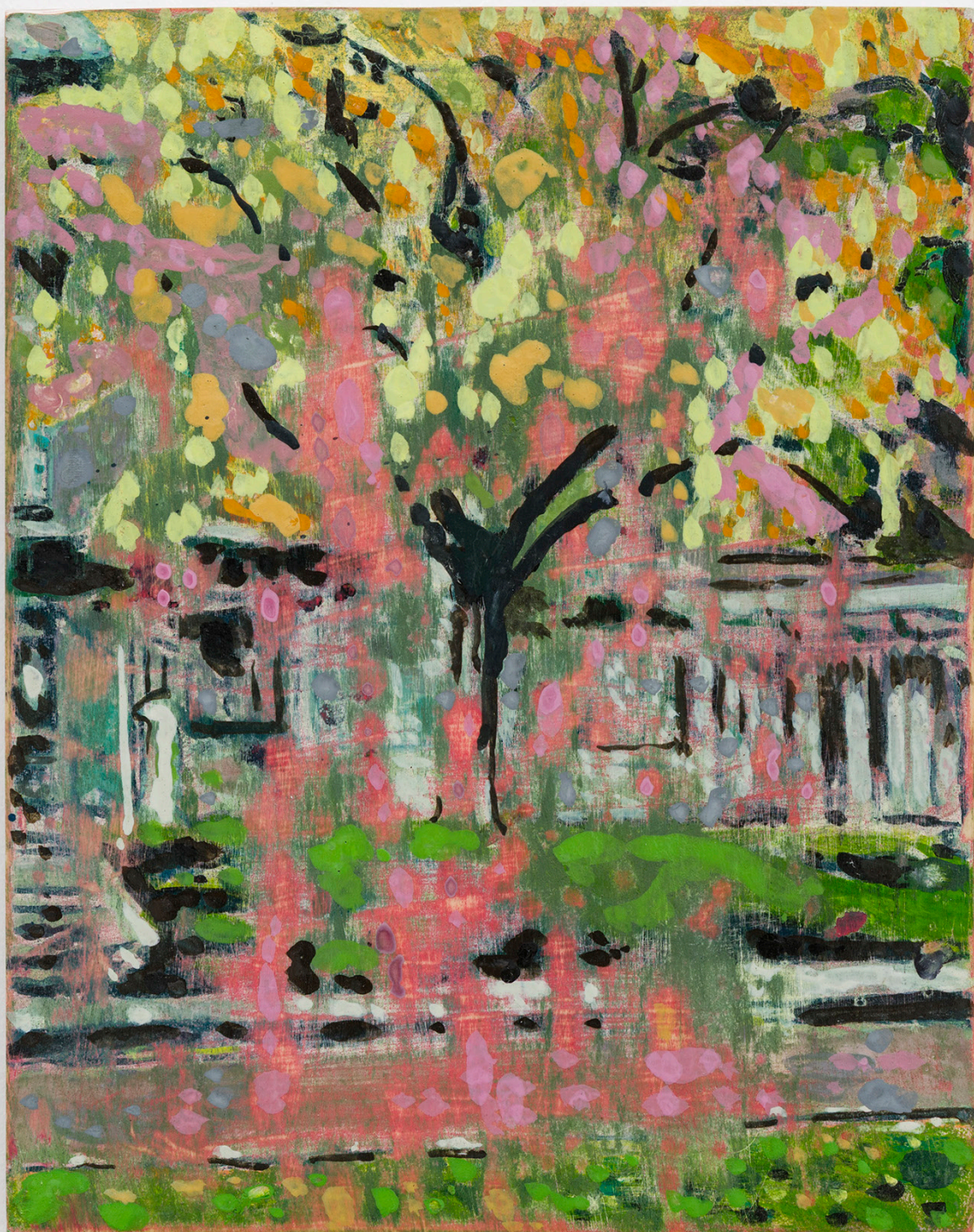
Though gaining an education in visual arts, including studying at the Royal College of Art, Maclean took a hiatus from painting to follow his musical career as a founding member of the influential group The Beta Band (1996-2005). He then pursued film directing and only returning to painting during the pandemic and subsequently being offered his first solo show which took place at White Columns in New York in March 2022.

John Maclean (b. Perth, Scotland 1972) lives and works in London, UK.

John Maclean

Link with availability: <https://privateviews.artlogic.net/2/b5d06c2aea7a441351282f/>





*Tree Street*, 2025  
Watercolour on board  
30 x 24 cm | 11 13/16 x 9 7/16 in.

£ 10,000 ex. tax





*Red Roof*, 2025  
Watercolour on board  
30 x 24 cm | 11 13/16 x 9 7/16 in.

£ 10,000 ex. tax





Maclean finds his source material (the landscape postcards) via deep-searches online, translating the image directly from his computer screen as he paints onto board. Maclean was drawn to the inconsistency of these vintage postcards, which are often poorly printed in black and white, hand-tinted in unnatural hues and out of register – both painterly and photographic, but lacking authenticity. Maclean enhances or saturates the colour of the original images, preferring to focus on tone over colouration to create textural and dynamic surfaces, a technique borrowed from his film-making. He begins with a small colour detail that ultimately informs the rest of the painting, emanating outwards like a psychedelic hum, edges softening within the painting. This gentle intensification of colour disrupts the naturalness of the landscape scene, placing it at odds with the artificiality of the palette, evoking the slippage of authenticity found in the postcards themselves.





*Forest Colour*, 2025  
Watercolour on board  
30 x 24 cm | 11 13/16 x 9 7/16 in.

£ 10,000 ex. tax









"Becoming a professional artist at the age of 50 was not intentional. Like a lot of people, Maclean found himself painting during the pandemic just for something to do. At the time, he was casting for his second film - a follow-up to 2015's Sundance-winning western *Slow West* - when everything ground to a halt. He sourced some old postcards on eBay, zoomed in on peripheral parts of the landscape that caught his eye (a tree, a waterfall) and tried to replicate them - applying the paint thickly (you wouldn't guess they were watercolours) on to wooden panels using a psychedelic palette reminiscent of Hockney's iPad spring paintings."

- Tim Jonze, *The Guardian*, 2023





*Yellow Sky*, 2025  
Watercolour on board  
30 x 24 cm | 11 13/16 x 9 7/16 in.

£ 10,000 ex. tax





*Grey and Lake*, 2025  
Watercolour on board  
30 x 24 cm | 11 13/16 x 9 7/16 in.

£ 10,000 ex. tax





*Emerald Forest*, 2025  
Watercolour on board  
30 x 24 cm | 11 13/16 x 9 7/16 in.

£ 10,000 ex. tax





*Snow Lake*, 2025  
Watercolour on board  
30 x 24 cm | 11 13/16 x 9 7/16 in.

£ 10,000 ex. tax





*Forest in Snow*, 2025  
Watercolour on board  
30 x 24 cm | 11 13/16 x 9 7/16 in.

£ 10,000 ex. tax





*Miami Swamp, 2025*  
Watercolour on board  
30 x 24 cm | 11 13/16 x 9 7/16 in.

£ 10,000 ex. tax

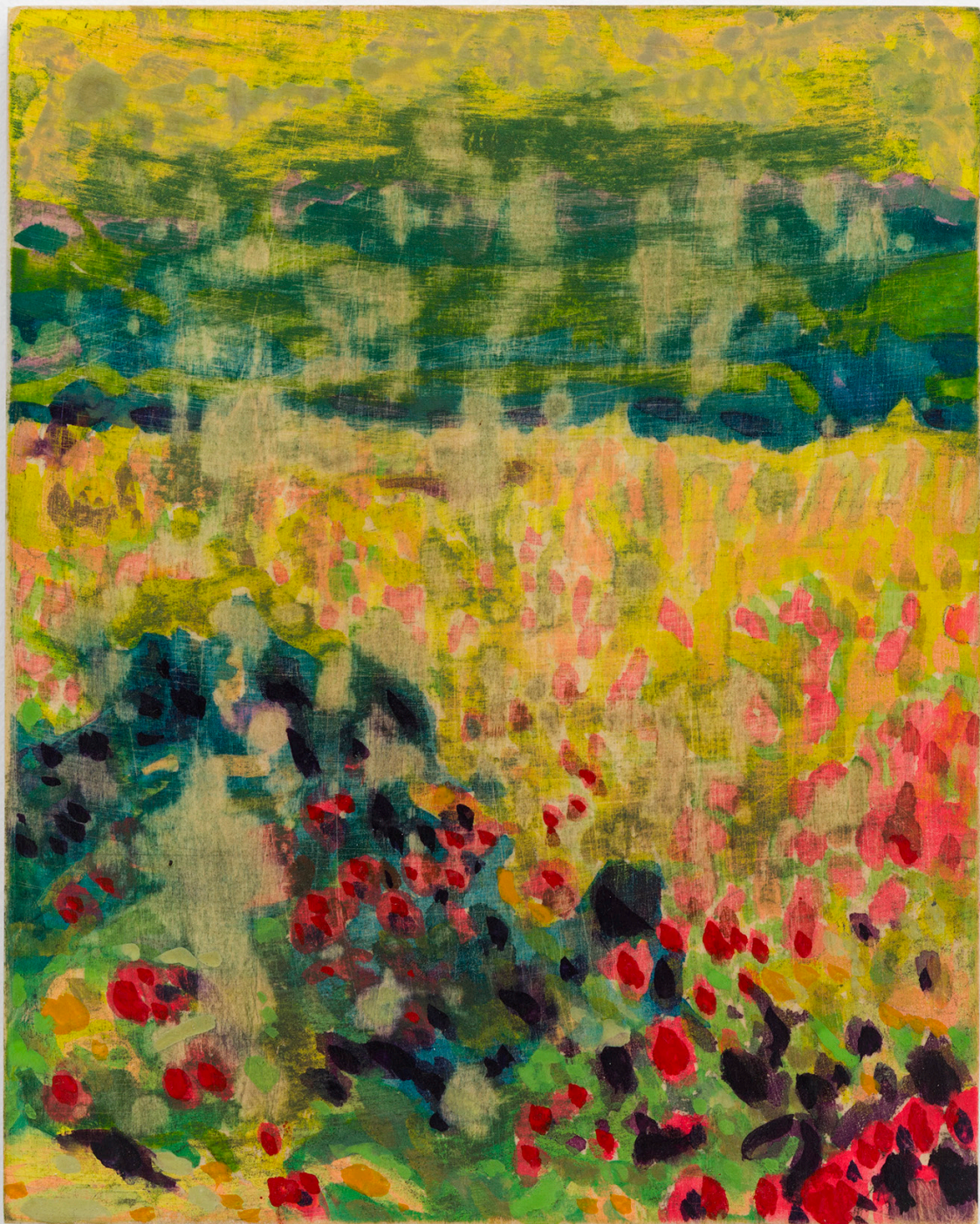




"Painting is most like writing – in terms of its relationship to filmmaking. You need time to think and to experiment. It is essentially a lonely pursuit. Much of one's time is spent on research, on dreaming, on false starts and minor breakthroughs. When it comes to actually shooting a film, it's probably as far from painting as can be; making a film is all collaboration, a form of improvised madness, watching the clock, and shifting with the external circumstances. I love this social and chaotic aspect of filmmaking precisely because it's the opposite of painting."

– John Maclean in conversation with Matthew Higgs, 2022





*Poppy Field*, 2025  
Watercolour on board  
30 x 24 cm | 11 13/16 x 9 7/16 in.

£ 10,000 ex. tax

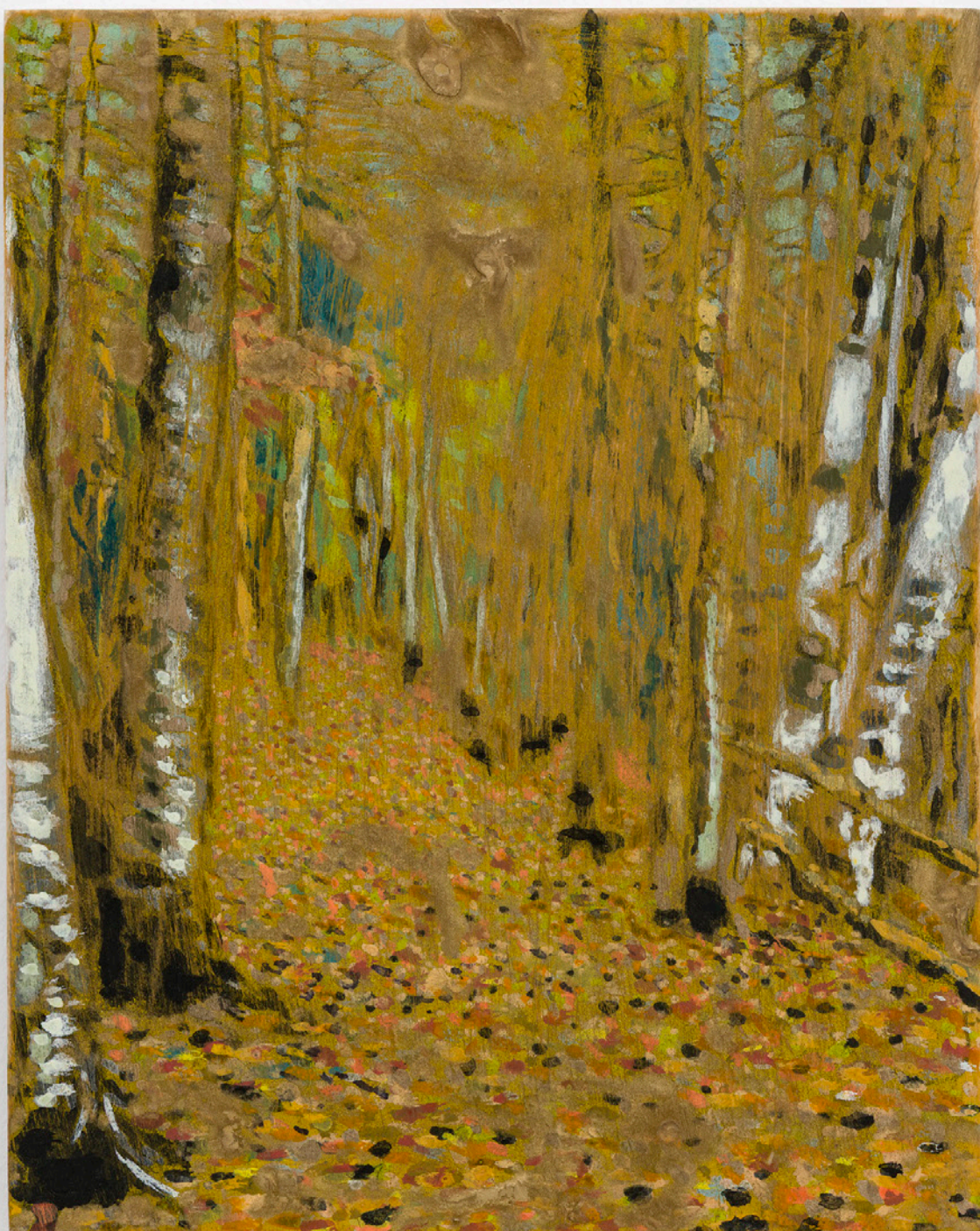




*Birch + Colour*, 2025  
Watercolour on board  
30 x 24 cm | 11 13/16 x 9 7/16 in.

£ 10,000 ex. tax





*Silver + Gold*, 2025  
Watercolour on board  
30 x 24 cm | 11 13/16 x 9 7/16 in.

£ 10,000 ex. tax





*Number 17, 2025*

Watercolour on photographic paper

Unframed: 43 x 37 cm | 16 15/16 x 14 9/16 in.

Framed: 50.7 x 43 x 4 cm | 19 15/16 x 16 15/16 x 1 9/16 in.

£ 8,000 ex. tax





For his works on paper, Maclean paints his familiar subject matter on found photographs of the night sky. These star maps, printed in negative, were discovered in a junk shop in Maclean's native Scotland. Attracted to their silvery-grey colour, size and framing, his impressionistic brushstrokes combine with these sublime speckled images to create works that sit in between photography and painting.





*Number 15, 2025*

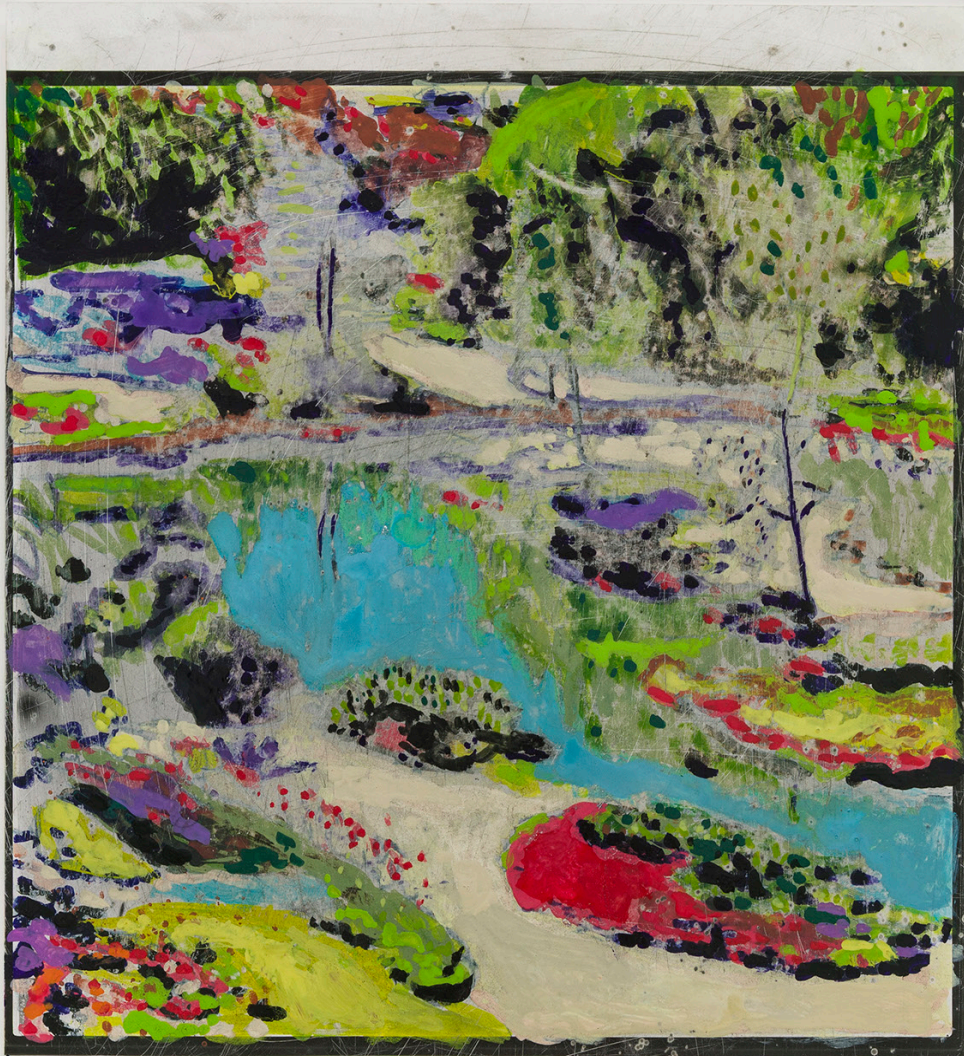
Watercolour on photographic paper

Unframed: 43 x 37 cm | 16 15/16 x 14 9/16 in.

Framed: 50.7 x 43 x 4 cm | 19 15/16 x 16 15/16 x 1 9/16 in.

£ 8,000 ex. tax





*Number 16, 2025*

Watercolour on photographic paper

Unframed: 43 x 37 cm | 16 15/16 x 14 9/16 in.

Framed: 50.7 x 43 x 4 cm | 19 15/16 x 16 15/16 x 1 9/16 in.

£ 8,000 ex. tax