



John Minton

Dance till the Stars Come Down

Frances Spalding



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John Minton (1917-57) was an artist, a Bohemian and, in his own lifetime, a myth. During the 1940s and early 1950s he became a central figure within Soho, an intimate friend of, among many others, Michael Ayrton, Robert Colquhoun, Lucian Freud and the poet W.S. Graham. He enjoyed early success as a painter and was associated in the 1940s with the English Neo-Romantics. By the early 1950s he had become the most admired and influential illustrator of his day.

Frances Spalding's sensitive account of Minton's life and work makes use of letters, articles and revue sketches by Minton himself, as well as many interviews with the artist's friends and acquaintances. She brings out the many conflicts within him, and shows how these were reflected in his art through its combination of romantic imagery and taut severities of style. His deep melancholy was for the most part kept hidden behind a euphoric generosity and a wild restlessness. But gradually, like his alcoholism, it became all-pervasive, and tragic and embittered he took his own life, aged thirty-nine.

This new edition incorporates a new preface by the author and a new appendix featuring lists of public collections, exhibitions, illustrated books and book jackets, and a select bibliography. It will be widely welcomed by art historians, curators, dealers and all those interested in this fascinating period in British art and culture.

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Acknowledgements; Foreword to the new edition; Introduction; Background and Schooldays; Art School and Paris; A Complete and Fixed Expression of the Living; Revelling by Night; Johnny's Circus; Mad Tearful Gaiety; The Hopkin Myth; Now Cracks a Noble Heart; Notes; List of Illustrations; Index; Appendices: Public Collections; Solo Exhibitions; Listing of Illustrated Books and Book Jackets; Select Bibliography.

About the Author

Frances Spalding is an art historian, critic and biographer. She is the author of *British Art since 1900* as well as much-acclaimed biographies of Roger Fry, Vanessa Bell, Duncan Grant, Gwen Raverat, John Piper and the poet Stevie Smith.

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