



EXPLORING THE FOURTH DIMENSION

Astoria-based artist's work delves into technology

By ALYSSA EVANS
The Astorian

A few blocks north of downtown Astoria, artist Paul McLean sits in his home studio.

McLean is surrounded by dozens of paintings. Each is abstract, textured and features bright colors.

In front of McLean is a finished painting. In the coming weeks, McLean will focus his attention on the canvas, ultimately creating a new piece, as he paints over his previous work.

McLean started working as an artist in the 1980s. His work, which he calls "4D+ art," has been featured in some of the world's largest art hubs.

"What I'm doing all the time is trying to extrapolate the world into four dimensions," McLean said.

McLean's recent pieces delve into themes of "network culture," focusing on data and technology, and the different ways they've evolved and impact humans.

"The internet provides all the tools that we'd hope to have in order to expand everything we're looking at. It gives us a means of how to do that ... Everyone is overwhelmed because we can see everything. I'm trying to make art for this moment," McLean said.

Here, there and everywhere

McLean was raised in West Virginia. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in English from the University of Notre Dame. As a freshman, he started a clothing company, FunkshunArt, which featured hand-painted clothes. The company's clothes were sold in boutique stores in New York City, Detroit, Washington, D.C., and Chicago.

"I worked with impressive people, that's how I got my chops. I was very careful to keep my learning curve. Everything I made was terrible, like any other beginner," McLean said.

McLean soon participated in art projects and shows. After graduating, he moved to Santa Fe, New Mexico. McLean opened his first gallery in Beckley, West Virginia, followed by an artist collective in Santa Fe.

In Santa Fe, he ran an art radio program,

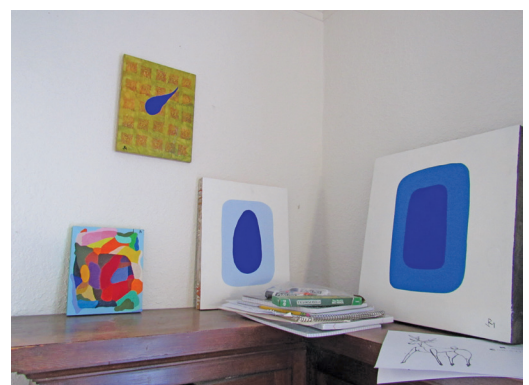


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wrote for local magazines and created art for individual and group shows. In 1995, McLean traveled to Scotland, where he created an art exhibit that was featured in the Isle of Skye and Edinburgh.

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Photos by Alyssa Evans/The Astorian
TOP: Paul McLean looks toward one of his paintings inside his living room. **MIDDLE:** McLean shows the texture of one of his paintings, art materials. **BOTTOM:** A few of McLean's paintings, art materials and sketches decorate a mantel in his home.