



Photo by C. Fowler

## William Pehudoff A life in art

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1918 - 2013



Born in Saskatoon in 1918 into a Doukhobor community, William Pehudoff became one of Canada's foremost visual artists. His formative years were spent near Langham, Saskatchewan on the family farm. Hard work, the deep connection to the land, a love of the colorful textiles of the Doukhobors and the ever present panorama of the North Saskatchewan River, comprised the well-spring from which he emerged as an artist.

His art career was fostered early on by important figures in Saskatchewan art including Robert Hurley whose evocative prairie landscapes and knowledge of colour theory left a lasting influence on his work. Also significant was his relationship with the Mendel family in Saskatoon whose extensive art collection was a major resource for the emerging artist. In 1947 Fred Mendel accepted Pehudoff's proposal to create large murals in the plant cafeteria of Intercontinental Packers. Working for union wages and with some income from farming, he earned enough in 1948 to further his studies in Colorado with the eminent French muralist Jean Charlot. In 1950 he had his first one-person exhibition at the Saskatoon Art Center and set out to New York to study art with Amédée Ozenfant, co-founder, along with Le Corbusier, of Purism. In 1951 he married the artist, Dorothy Knowles in Paris. In spring of 1952 they returned to Saskatchewan for the duration of their 61 years of marriage.

His career spanned nearly seven decades and the elegance, intelligence and brilliant color of his work helped define Canadian abstract art and influence successive generations of painters. Pehudoff developed an international reputation as a color field abstract painter. He became a Member of the Order of Canada and an associate of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts. He was a recipient of the Saskatchewan Order of Merit and held an Honorary Doctorate of Laws from the University of Regina. In 2012, he was the recipient of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal. His paintings are included in many significant public and private collections including the National Gallery of Canada and the Canadian Museum of Civilization (now the Canadian Museum of History). In 2012 the Mendel Art Gallery in Saskatoon mounted a major retrospective of his work entitled *The Optimism of Colour: William Pehudoff, a retrospective*.

## Links to Articles

August 17, 2015

<http://pirihalasz.com/>

<http://wanderingcarol.com/?s=William+Perehudoff>

<http://wanderingcarol.com/william-perehudoff-the-show-must-go-on/>

<http://wanderingcarol.com/william-perehudoff-obituary/>

<http://rukajgallery.com/blog/project/perehudoff-william>



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## Perehudoff Artwork

