Biography

Throughout his life, the Canadian painter William Perehudoff maintained a close connection with the farm on the prairie of Saskatchewan, Canada, where he grew up. At the same time, he kept pace with the new art of his time, receiving accolades in commissions, exhibitions, and awards. Recalled in 2013 by Timothy Long, head curator of Saskatchewan's Norman MacKenzie Art Gallery, as "one of the greatest colorists this province and Canada has produced," Perehudoff is regarded as the heir to Jack Bush as Canada's most important Color Field painter.

Perehudoff progressed from a realist artist in the 1940s, in the manner of American Scene painting, to a stylistic broadening, encompassing influences of Cubism, the art of the Mexican muralists, the Purism of Amédée Ozenfant (with whom he studied), and Abstract Expressionism. From the 1960s until the end of his career, he created works in the Color Field aesthetic, with which he sought a means of expression based exclusively on the language of color and form. His goal was to achieve feeling with this reductive vocabulary. Many of his Color Field paintings are suggestive of light flowing across the open plains of the prairies, but their essence is more experiential than referential, evoking musical harmonies and reverberations. Seeing this work, it makes sense that Perehudoff listened while painting to classical music, especially that of Bach and Beethoven. In a review of his 1974 exhibition at Waddington Galleries (Montreal), a writer for the Montreal Gazette observed that in several of his works, blocks and slabs of color lean and push against each other, setting up a series of moving pressures upon a white ground, which gives each canvas the kind of sequence one experienced with sound." As noted by Long, "the colors can put you on edge, but they move you into their space, into a wonderful environment you can live with."

The eldest of four children, William Wassily Perehudoff was born in 1918 in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, and raised in the Russian Doukhobor colony in rural Bogdanovka, twenty-five miles northwest of Saskatoon, near the North Saskatchewan River. His parents, who emigrated from Russia in 1899, were part of a wave of spiritual pacifists, who left their homeland to escape from Czarist persecution at the end of the nineteenth century. Perehudoff, whose first language was Russian, attended school through tenth grade and completed eleventh grade in a correspondence course. By the time he was in his early twenties, he had begun to paint, receiving advice from local artists, including Ernst Lindner, known for high-keved, sharply focused watercolors of the countryside around his home at Emma Lake (later the locale of the influential artist-workshops led by leading modernists). Perehudoff showed his work for the first time in the fall 1944 exhibition of the Saskatoon Art Center. Perehudoff began to receive recognition from the press in 1945, when the Saskatoon Star Phoenix described him as one of the most promising artists in the art center's fall exhibition. In the late 1940s, he was drawing from several new sources, among them a mail-order course offered by the Ralph M. Pearson Design Workshop, which emphasized the commonality between the art of the past and the modernist movement of the time. In 1947, Perehudoff came into contact with Canadian artists working in abstract styles, including Lawren Harris, Stanley Brunst, and Keith Thorne. Having developed a fascination on his own for the art of the

Mexican muralists, Perehudoff sought instruction at the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center (Colorado) from Jean Charlot, a Paris-born artist of partial of Mexican descent, who worked in a manner similar to that of Diego Rivera and José Clemente Oroszco, expressing sympathy for the commonplace worker in realist imagery rendered in a monumental and forceful reductive style. From Charlot, Perehudoff learned the age-old technique fresco painting, which contributed to the humanist message of such social realist imagery. Perehudoff also took classes at the art center in anatomy and drawing. After completing a large fresco entitled Evolution, he returned on a scholarship for the fall 1948 and spring 1949 sessions at the art center.

In 1949, Perehudoff began what would be a long association with Fred Mendel, the owner of International Packers Limited, a meat-packing factory that was one of Saskatoon's major employers. Perehudoff's first contact with Mendel was as an employee at International Packers, but when his position was suddenly terminated, he proposed that Mendel pay him his regular salary to create a mural in the company's cafeteria. An art collector who would establish a museum named after him in 1964, Mendel accepted, resulting in Perehudoff's murals of ca. 1949, depicting different stages in the meat-packing industry. He portrayed figures exhibiting a Baroque muscularity paralleling the style of Thomas Hart Benton's murals of this time. Perehudoff also painted murals on the themes of recreation and family for the Mendel home in Saskatoon.In 1950 Perehudoff was featured in his first solo exhibition, which was held at the Saskatoon Art Center. In the fall of the year, he arranged to study with the German figurative painter Max Beckmann in New York. When this plan was precluded by Beckman's death in the year, he instead enrolled in the Ozenfant School of Fine Arts, also in New York City. There he worked under the French Purist Amédée Ozenfant, who emphasized relationships of art to architecture in colour and form. After a brief return to his family's farm. Perehudoff traveled to Europe, spending time in Paris and London. In the latter city, he was joined by fellow Saskatchewan artist Dorothy Knowles. The two were married in Paris within the year and traveled through France and Italy during 1952. The couple settled in Saskatoon, but continued to work on the Perehudoff family farm. Perehudoff and Knowles would have three daughters. With a family to support, in 1954, Perehudoff accepted a full-time job as an artist-designer at the Modern Press, a publishing firm in Saskatoon. His art of the time consisted of abstract paintings with thick impastoed surfaces along with his representational, modernist-inspired murals.

In the summer of 1957 he participated in the third summer artist-workshop at Emma Lake, led by Will Barnet. Perehudoff would attend many of the Emma Lake workshops in the following summers, including those led by artists Anthony Caro, Herman Cherry, Donald Judd, and Kenneth Noland, and the art critic and champion of Post-Painterly abstraction Clement Greenberg. Perehudoff developed close friendships with Noland and Greenberg. He also came to know Jules Olitski, who led the workshop in 1964—the two artists visited each other at their respective homes. In 1988, Perehudoff was himself a workshop leader at Emma Lake.

In 1965, Perehudoff had a one-man show at the newly opened Mendel Art Gallery. Three years later, he became the first Saskatchewan artist to be appointed associate of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts. He had a number of solo exhibitions in the 1970s. including shows at the Edmonton Art Gallery in 1972, the University of Saskatchewan and the Waddington Galleries in Montreal in 1974, and the MacKenzie Art Gallery, Regina, Saskatchewan in 1978. In 1981, a ten-year retrospective of his art, 1970-1980 -organized by the Mendel Art Gallery-traveled to a number of other venues. In 1987, he was invited to participate in the Triangle Workshop, begun in 1982 by artists Robert Loder and Caro "to counterbalance the tendency of the Western art world to put the emphasis on the object and its marketing rather than on the creative process itself." Perehudoff continued to receive several honors in the 1990s and 2000s. He was given the Canada 125 Commemorative Medal in 1993, the Member of the Order of Canada in 1999, an honorary Doctor of Laws by the University of Regina in 2003, and the Saskatchewan Centennial Medal in 2005. In 2010, a large exhibition of his work, The Optimism of Colour, was organized by Mendel Art Gallery and again traveled to various other museums. Its catalogue, in French and English, included essays by Karen Wilkin, Roald Nasgaard, and Robert Christie. Perehudoff continued to farm and paint until close to the time of his death at age 94 in 2013.

Lisa N. Peters, Ph.D.

CV

1918, Born Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

2013, Died Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

1948 – 49, Studied at Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, Colorado

1950 – 51, Studied at Ozenfant School of Fine Arts, New York

1968, Attended Carnegie Institute of Technology

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

Saskatoon Arts Centre, Saskatchewan, 1948.

Saskatoon Arts Centre, Saskatchewan, 1950.

Saskatoon Arts Centre, Saskatchewan, 1961.

Regina Public Library, Saskatchewan, 1961.

The Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, 1965.

Regina Public Library, Saskatchewan, 1965.

Bonli Gallery, Toronto, 1967. The Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, 1970.

Edmonton Art Gallery, Alberta (traveled to Dunlop Art Gallery, Regina, Saskatchewan), 1971 – 72.

Noah Goldowsky Gallery, New York, 1974.

Saskatoon Public Library, Saskatchewan, 1974.

Theo Waddington Galleries, Montreal, 1974.

Noah Goldowsky Gallery, New York, 1976.

Waddington-Tooth Gallery, London, 1976.

Theo Waddington Galleries, Montreal, 1977.

Glenbow Alberta Institute, Calgary, 1977 – 78.

Banff Fine Art Centre Gallery, Edmonton, 1978.

Gallery One, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, 1978.

Meredith Long Contemporary Gallery, New York, 1978.

University of Alberta Art Gallery, Edmonton, 1978.

Waddington Gallery, Toronto, 1978.

Theo Waddington Galleries, Montreal, 1979.

Theo Waddington Gallery, London, 1979.

Downstairs Gallery, Edmonton, Alberta, 1980.

Meredith Long Contemporary Gallery, New York, 1980.

Waddington Gallery, Toronto, 1980.

Canadian Art Galleries, Calgary, Alberta, 1981.

Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan (traveled to various locations in Canada), catalogue by

Karen Wilkin, 1981 - 83.

Downstairs Gallery, Edmonton, Alberta, 1982.

Waddington Galleries, New York, 1982.

Waddington Shiell Gallery, Toronto, 1982.

The Gallery / Art Placement Inc., Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, 1983.

Waddington Shiell Gallery, Toronto, 1983.

Waddington Shiell Gallery, Toronto, 1985.

Woltjen Udell Gallery, Edmonton, Alberta, 1985.

Canadian Art Galleries, Calgary, Alberta, 1986.

Waddington Gorce Inc., Montreal, 1986.

Waddington Shiell Gallery, Toronto, 1986.

The Gallery / Art Placement Inc., Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, 1987.

Waddington Shiell Gallery, Toronto, 1987.

Eva Cohon Gallery, Chicago, 1988.

Waddington Gorce Inc, Montreal, 1988.

Woltien Udell Gallery, Edmonton, Alberta and Vancouver, 1988.

Canadian Art Galleries, Calgary, Alberta, 1989.

Miriam Shiell Fine Art Ltd., Toronto, 1990.

Waddington Gorce Inc, Montreal, 1990.

Woltjen Udell Gallery, Edmonton, 1990.

The Gallery / Art Placement Inc., Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, 1991.

Woltjen Udell Gallery, Vancouver, 1991.

Grand Forks Art Gallery, British Columbia, 1992.

The Gallery / Art Placement Inc., Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, 1993.

Miriam Shiell Fine Art, Toronto, 1993.

The Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan (traveled to Edmonton Art Gallery, Alberta; Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta), William Perehudoff, 1993 – 94.

The Gallery / Art Placement Inc., Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, 1996.

Douglas Udell Gallery, Vancouver, 1997.

Douglas Udell Gallery, Vancouver, 1998.

The Gallery / Art Placement Inc., Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, 1998.

Winchester Art Galleries, Victoria, British Columbia, 1998.

Douglas Udell Gallery, Edmonton, Alberta, 1999. The Gallery / Art Placement Inc., Saskatoon,

Saskatchewan, 1999.

Miriam Shiell Fine Art, Toronto, 2000.

New Zones Art Gallery, Calgary, Alberta, Millennium Exhibition, 2000.

Douglas Udell Gallery, Edmonton, Alberta, 2001.

The Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, William Perehudoff, Now and Then, 2002.

The Gallery / Art Placement Inc., Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, 2003.

Winchester Galleries, Victoria, British Columbia, 2004.

Art Placement, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, William Perehudoff - Important Works from the 90s, 2006.

Canada House, London, William Perehudoff, Colour Chording Post Painterly Abstraction of the Canadian Prairies, 2006.

Canada House, London, 2006.

Douglas Udell Gallery, Vancouver, Muse for Major Paintings, 2007.

Nikola Rukaj Gallery, Toronto, 2007.

NewZones Gallery of Contemporary Art, Calgary, Alberta, 2008.

Poussin Gallery, London, 2008.

Newzones Gallery of Contemporary Art, Calgary, Alberta, Fifty Years of Abstraction, 2010.

Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan (traveled to Kamloops Art Gallery, British Columbia; Glenbow

Museum, Calgary, Alberta; Art Gallery of Windsor, Ontario, Robert McLaughlin Gallery, Oshawa, Ontario),

The Optimism of Colour: William Perehudoff, A Retrospective, curated by Karen Wilkin and Roald Nasgaard, 2010 – 12.

Nikola Rukaj Gallery, Toronto, 2011.

Douglas Udell Gallery, Edmonton, Alberta, 2012.

Han Art Gallery, Montreal, 2013.

Newzones Gallery of Contemporary Art, Calgary, Alberta, 2013.

The Mural Room, College Art Gallery, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, William Perehudoff, 2013.

Berry Campbell, William Perehudoff: Color Field Paintings from the 1980s, 2013.

Berry Campbell, New York, William Perehudoff: A Retrospective, 2015.

Newzones, Calgary, William Perehudoff: "four decades", 2016.

Rukaj Gallery, Toronto, William Perehudoff, 2017.

Berry Campbell, New York, William Perehudoff: Architect of Color, 2019.

Rukaj Gallery, Toronto, Perehudoff, 2023.

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

The Saskatoon Art Association, Saskatchewan, Spring Show, 1945.

The Saskatoon Art Association, Saskatchewan, Fall Show, 1946.

The Saskatoon Art Centre, Saskatchewan, Two Person Show with Mashel Teitelbaum, 1946.

The Saskatoon Art Association, Saskatchewan, Spring Show, 1947.

The Saskatoon Art Association, Saskatchewan, Spring Show, 1948.

The Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery, Regina, Saskatchewan, Artists of Saskatchewan, 1952.

The Saskatoon Art Centre, Saskatchewan, Two Person Show with Dorothy Perehudoff, 1952.

Winnepeg Art Gallery, Manitoba, Winnipeg Bienniel, 1962.

Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Montreal Spring Show, 1963.

Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Montreal Spring Show, 1964.

Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Montreal Spring Show, 1965.

Saskatchewan Jubilee, Regina, Saskatchewan Artists (Clement Greenberg as coordinator), 1965.

Winnipeg Art Gallery, Manitoba, 1965.

Calgary Allied Arts Centre, Alberta, 1966.

The Norman MacKenzie Art Gallery, Regina, Saskatchewan, Saskatchewan Artists, 1967.

The Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, British Columbia, 1968.

The Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, Canadian Artists, 1968.

The Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, 1968.

Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, 88th Annual Exhibition of the Royal Academy of Arts, 1968.

Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Survey 68, 1968.

The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario, 7th Biennial Exhibition of Canadian Painting, 1968.

Winnipeg Art Gallery, Manitoba, 1968. Winnipeg Art Gallery, Manitoba, 11th Winnipeg Show, 1968.

The Art Gallery of Hamilton, Ontario (traveled to Edmonton Art Gallery, Alberta), 89th Annual Exhibition, RoyalCanadian Academy of Arts, 1968 – 69.

Waddington Galleries, Montreal, 1969.

The Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Four Western Colourists, 1970.

Edmonton Art Gallery, Alberta (traveled to The Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan; The Glenbow, Calgary, Alberta), West 71 (catalogue by Karen Wilkin), 1971.

The Norman MacKenzie Art Gallery, Regina, Saskatchewan (traveled to Public Library, Regina, Saskatchewan),

Saskatchewan Art and Artists, 1971.

Waddington Galleries, Montreal, 1972.

Art Gallery of Hamilton, Ontario, 24th Annual Exhibition of Contemporary Canadian Art, 1973.

Edmonton Art Gallery, Alberta, Edmonton Collects (catalogue by Karen Wilkin), 1973.

The Norman MacKenzie Art Gallery, Regina, Saskatchewan, Emma Lake Workshops, 1973.

The Norman MacKenzie Art Gallery, Regina, Saskatchewan, Recent Acquisitions of the Norman MacKenzie Art

Gallery, 1973.

Edmonton Art Gallery, Alberta, Prairie 74, 1974.

Hamilton Art Gallery, Ontario (traveled to Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery, Ontario), 9 out of 10 – A Survey of Contemporary Canadian Art, 1974.

Wallack Gallery, Ottawa, Ontario, 1974.

The Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Major Saskatchewan Artists, 1975.

National circulating exhibition, The Canadian Canvas (catalogue by Dorris Shadbolt, Karen Wilkin, Alvin Balking, Ferdinand St. Martin, and Allan Mackay), 1975 – 76.

National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario (traveled to various locations in Canada), Emma Lake and After, 1976.

Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC, 14 Canadians, A Critic's Choice, 1977. Edmonton Art Gallery, Alberta, Modern Painting in Canada (catalogue by Terry Fenton and Karen Wilkin), 1978.

Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto (traveled to various locations), 7 Prairie Painters, 1978 – 79.

Collector's Choice Art Gallery Ltd., Saskatoon, Sascatchewan, Group Show, 1979.

The Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta, Aspects of Canadian Painting in the Seventies, 1980.

The Robert McLaughlin Gallery, Oshawa, Ontario, The Heritage of Jack Bush, A Tribute, 1981.

Assiniboia Gallery, Regina, Saskatchewan, 1986.

Woltjen Udell Gallery, Edmonton, Alberta (traveled to Edmonton Art Gallery, Alberta), Fall Show, 1986.

The Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Tradition and Innovation, Saskatoon Art and the 1950s, 1987.

Triangle Artists' Workshop Exhibition, Pine Plains, New York, 1987.

The Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Talking Through Time, Contemporary Art from Saskatoon, 1988.

Swift Current National Exhibition Centre, Saskatchewan, A Common Bond, 1988.

The Mendel Art Gallery, The Flat Side of a Landscape, The Emma Lake Artist's Workshops, 1989.

McMullan Gallery, University of Alberta Hospital, Edmonton, A Family Show, 1990.

Douglas Udell Gallery, Edmonton, Alberta, New Acquisitions, 1993.

The Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, The Urban Prairie, 1994.

Douglas Udell Gallery, Edmonton, Alberta and Vancouver, Christmas Show, 1995.

Kootenay Art Gallery, Castelgar, British Columbia, 1996.

Winnipeg Art Gallery, Manitoba, Royal Canadian Academy Group Show, 2000.

Atrium Gallery, Ontario College of Art and Design, Toronto, Triangle Workshop Artists of OCAD, 2001.

The MacKenzie Art Gallery, Regina, Saskatchewan, 2001.

Portland Art Museum, Oregon, Clement Greenberg, A Critic's Choice, 2001.

Assiniboia Gallery, Regina, Saskatchewan, 25th Anniversary Show, 2002.

Douglas Udell Gallery, Edmonton, Alberta, Fall Show, 2002.

The Gallery / Art Placement Inc., Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, New Abstraction, 2003.

Kenderdine Art Gallery, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Loadstar, 2003.

The Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, The Uncanny, Experiments in Cyborg Culture, 2003.

Winchester Art Gallery, Victoria, British Columbia, 2003.

Kenderdine Art Gallery, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan (traveled to APT Gallery, Deptford, United Kingdom),

Three Generations, William Perehudoff, Robert Christie, Jonathan Forrest, 2004 - 05.

Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, The Shape of Colour: Excursions in Colour Field Art, 1950 - 2005,

2005. The Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan (with The Robert McLaughlin Gallery, Oshawa, Ontario), 2005.

The Art Gallery of Alberta, Edmonton, Seeing Through Modernist Edmonton 1970 – 1985, 2008.

The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, Halifax, Abstract Painting in Canada, 2008.

Poussin Gallery, London, Poussin Review, Form and Space, 2008.

The Gallery / Art Placement Inc., Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, A Conversation in Colour (with John McLean), 2010.

Poussin Gallery, London, Colour and Substance, Willard Boeopple, John McLean, William Perehudoff, and Tim Scott, 2011.

Kenderdine Gallery, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, The Shortest Distance Between Two Points, 2012.

AWARDS

1995 Order of Merit of Saskatchewan 1999 Order of Canada

EMMA LAKE WORKSHOPS

Will Barnet, 1957 Herman Cherry, 1961 Clement Greenberg, 1962 Kenneth Noland, 1963 Donald Judd, 1968

Triangle Artist's Workshop, Pine Plains, New York, 1987

William Perehudoff (workshop leader), 1988

Willard Boepple, Robert Kudielka, Dorothy Knowles, 1990

SELECTED COLLECTIONS

AbitibiBowater Inc., Montreal

American Express Company, New York

The Argus Corporation, Toronto

Art Gallery of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta

Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, British Columbia

Art Gallery of Mississauga, Ontario

Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, Halifax

Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto

Art Gallery of Windsor, Ontario

Bank of Montreal / Bank of Nova Scotia, Toronto

Canada Council Art Bank, Ottawa, Ontario Canadian Potash Exporters, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

City of Saskatoon, Frances Morrison Library, Saskatchewan

The Coca-Cola Company, Atlanta, Georgia

Confederation Centre Art Gallery, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island

Dunlop Art Gallery, Regina, Saskatchewan

Fasken Martineau, Toronto

F.H. Deacon Hodgson Inc., Toronto

Glenbow Museum, Calgary, Alberta

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, London

Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York

Kamloops Art Gallery, British Columbia

Museum London, Ontario

The MacKenzie Art Gallery, Regina, Saskatchewan

McMillan Binch LLP, Toronto

McMaster Museum of Art, Hamilton, Ontario

McIntosh Gallery, University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario

MDC Group of Companies, Kedah, Malaysia

Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Mine Supply Company of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon

Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, Collection Lavalin

Museum of New Zealand

Nabisco, East Hanover, New Jersey

National Art Gallery of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur

National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario

National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi, India

Portland Art Museum, Oregon

Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon

Principal Trust Company, Wilmington, Deleware

Remai Modern Museum, Saskatoon, Canada

Rexel Canada Electrical Inc., Mississauga, Canada

Royal Bank of Canada, Montreal

Saskatchewan Arts Board, Regina and Saskatoon

Saskatchewan Telecommunications Holding Corporation, Regina

Shell Canada Limited, Calgary, Alberta

TD Canada Trust, Toronto

Txibanguan Ltd., Toronto

University of Calgary, Alberta

University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom

University of Lethbridge, Alberta

University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon