

## Edythe Hembroff-Schleicher

### 1906 - 1988

Edythe Hembroff was born in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan in 1906. Moving to Victoria with her family in 1912, she attended Victoria High School, studied art in San Francisco and Paris, and continued her studies by traveling throughout Europe, sketching and painting in oils and watercolours, and freely experimenting in the latest artistic fashions.



*Edythe Hembroff-Schleicher with Jack Shadbolt  
Royal Museum of BC Archives, F-09345*

Returning to Victoria in 1930, Hembroff met Emily Carr, with whom she shared the experience of having attended three of the same art schools in England, France and California. Thus began an enduring friendship which would involve three sketching trips together. Her portrait of Carr, painted on one of these occasions, is part of the permanent collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery. Hembroff became a great admirer of Carr's work and lent her support to the latter's rise to prominence, at the same time developing her own distinctive painting style.

Hembroff first exhibited with the Island Arts and Crafts Society (IACS) in 1930. Her painting "Nu", an oil-on canvas shown at a Paris exhibition, also in 1930, won a major award at the Art Institute of Seattle later the same year. This was one of her four paintings displayed in the "Modern Room," organized by Max Maynard as a component of the annual exhibition of the IACS in 1932, with the intent of introducing modern trends in art to the traditionalist art scene in Victoria. Other contributors to the Modern Room included Emily Carr, Jack Shadbolt, Ina Uhthoff and Maynard himself.

During World War II, Hembroff joined Prisoner of War Censorship in Ottawa, where her supervisor was Dr. Julius Schleicher, a Pole whom she eventually married. During her 20 years in Ottawa she never touched a paintbrush. After returning to Victoria, Edythe Hembroff-Schleicher wrote her first book about Emily Carr, entitled "M.E.", published in 1969, and in 1978 there followed a sequel, "Emily Carr, the Untold Story."

In 1974 she was appointed by the provincial government as a special consultant on Emily Carr, and researched the life of her old friend diligently in the Provincial archives. In 1981, at the Emily Carr Gallery in Victoria, she organized a partial re-creation of Max Maynard's 1932 Modern Room. Her catalogue, written for this event, is now a collector's item.

Edythe Hembroff-Schleicher died in Victoria in 1988.