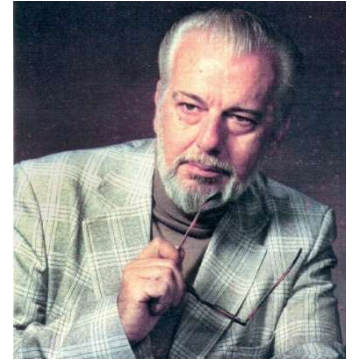


This month's subject brings us up to relatively recent times, although our Club's longest serving active member, Christine Gollner, is the only one of our present number to remember him personally. Certainly, as an established administrator and educator in the world of art, and a reputable practising artist, John Climer seems to have been well respected for his stature in our Club.

John Eldon Climer was born in 1924 in Syracuse, New York. After serving with the Royal Canadian Air Force (1943-1946), he studied at the Ontario College of Art in Toronto, receiving his Associate Diploma in 1950.

From 1951 to 1957, he worked in several communities in Ontario as an advisor for community art recreation programs, and later, based in Ottawa from 1958 to 1963, as an organizer and producer of the Lakeside Festival of the Arts in that city.



Climer's next move was to Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, where he served as curator and director of the distinguished Mendel Art Gallery from 1963 to 1979. During this time, he also spent a year teaching art at the University of Saskatchewan and curating the Canadian Government Pavilion in Montreal for Expo 67. In his role as curator at the Mendel Art Gallery, Climer became well acquainted with the Saskatchewan arts community, working with, and mentoring, local artists.



A gifted artist in his own right, he exhibited his work across Canada in both group and solo shows, and he is represented in the collections of the Government of Saskatchewan and the Mendel Art Gallery in Saskatoon. He worked in a variety of media, including oil, watercolour, and etching, and with a variety of subjects including landscapes and still life.

As Climer expressed his philosophy: "My subject, I would like to think, is the medium, and how it may be exploited with reference to what my statement might be."

Moving on again, this time to British Columbia, he became well-known for his art instruction courses during the 1980s. In the winter months his routine was to encourage his students to continue with their painting here while he enjoyed the warmer climes down south. Students' work would be critiqued on his return. As Delphine Large, one of his many successful proteges later recalled, "He had remarkable perception in noting the art student's direction."

During his association with our Club in these years, members were clearly able to benefit from his influence and his presence as an advisor and exemplar of the practice and theory of art. Christine remembers that he attended many of the summer outings and contributed to annual shows with many of his small paintings.

Sadly, this period proved to be relatively short-lived, as John Climer died in 1994 while wintering in Yuma, Arizona.



*~John Lover*