

# Claude Trudel



Citizen of Longueuil (1953-2021)

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Claude Trudel lived and worked in Longueuil all his life. During his professional studies he developed his technical drawing skills as well as the skills required to assemble dioramas. He continued self-learning while working on various projects: drawings and paintings on science fiction themes, miniature train tracks

with large-scale dioramas, models of known or imaginary spaceships. He entered his models into numerous competitions and won several prizes over his lifetime.

His attitude, both artistically and technically curious, was notably influenced by that of Leonardo da Vinci, a designer he greatly admired.

## Materials and techniques

Claude Trudel worked in Longueuil in companies that produced extruded plastic parts, which gave him in-depth knowledge of the production processes and the characteristics of the raw material he used in most of his creative work.

Many of his models are made from commercial kits of various planes, helicopters, historic or science fiction spaceships. For his original creations, he combined pre-fabricated parts from these kits and added recycled parts from other sources: plastic packaging, factory scraps and artist materials. Finally, other materials were used to increase the realism of certain dioramas, such as aluminum foil and rusty steel wool.

Claude Trudel also taught himself to airbrush which he used creatively to produce paintings with space themes as well as to improve his model work.

## The conquest of space

Very early in his life, he was influenced by the the Space Race as well as by science fiction work dealing with space themes. This naturally led him to make realistic models of famous rockets and space capsules, such as Apollo 11. Each project was an opportunity to do in-depth research to gather the information required to pro-



*All of Claude Trudel's talent for making dioramas is evident in this magnificent depiction of a spaceship crash (Pierre Gillard photo).*

duce realistic details and satisfy his technical and scientific curiosity.

At the same time, science fiction started to occupied more of the public imagination as a result of popular television series like Star Trek and films like Star Wars. These influential productions used models rather than computer graphics to depict space themes. This led Claude Trudel to also produce models of imaginary spaceships of various sizes - the largest of which was two meters long!

### Aviation

Claude Trudel's interest in space themes naturally extended to aviation. He was fascinated by the technological that enabled modern aircraft design. And he was a regular visitor to air shows at St-Hubert Airport over several decades where he enjoyed seeing real planes in action.

From the 1990s, part of his model-building efforts were dedicated to aviation. His interest was mainly in air-

planes developed in the period from the Second World War to the end of the Cold War (1947-1991), a period that already interested him from a space technology perspective. His interest in the history of early rockets led him to research the development of wartime German aircraft and the influence wartime German aeronautical research had on the development of both the Russian and US space programs.

### Donation

A few weeks before his death, Claude Trudel expressed the wish to donate his collection of model airplanes to an educational institution such as the École nationale d'aérotechnique. The family and friends of Claude Trudel are very happy that the Québec Aerospace Museum has accepted the gift of this impressive model collection and believes this will give it a second life showcasing aviation and space to new generations.



*Claude Trudel had an admiration for the German technical achievements of the Second World War like this Heinkel He-162 Mistel / Arado E377a combination in 1/72nd scale (Pierre Gillard photo).*



*Cold War-era planes were also part of Claude Trudel's interest as evidenced by this Soviet Tupolev Tu-22M made at 1/144th scale (Pierre Gillard Photo).*



*Claude Trudel was a past master in the use of airbrushes for painting his models. Here is a fine example of a complex camouflage applied to a Heinkel He-219 in 1/72nd scale (Pierre Gillard photo).*

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