

Douglas Cardinal, Metis Architect (b. 1934)

Métis architect Douglas Cardinal was born in 1934 at Red Deer, Alberta. He is the son of Joseph Trefflé Cardinal, of Blackfoot ancestry who was a forest ranger and game warden, and Frances Marguerite Rach, a nurse, who was the daughter of a German immigrant and a member of a large Métis clan, the Morin family. Cardinal was the eldest of 8 children. He grew up in mainstream communities and attended St Joseph's Convent residential school near Red Deer.

Cardinal designed the Museum of Canadian Civilization and did the building designs for the Oujé-Bougoumou community of the James Bay Cree. This work won the “We the People” United Nations Community Award. He also designed the Neeginan Centre recently opened in Winnipeg and was principal designer for the Smithsonian Institution’s National Museum of the American Indian. Cardinal studied architecture at the University of British Columbia and the University of Texas. He graduated with honours in 1963 and then practiced architecture in Edmonton for 18 years. He is known for his unique “organic style” of architecture. Some of his earlier commissions in Alberta include St. Mary’s Church in Red Deer, the Grand Prairie Regional College and the Edmonton Space and Sciences Centre. In 1985 he relocated his practice to Ottawa. His work has been exhibited in Europe, at New York’s Museum of Modern Art and throughout Canada.



Douglas Cardinal in front of the Canadian Museum of Civilization
(Canada council photograph)

Cardinal’s design for the First Nations University of Canada (in Regina) received awards from the International Academy of Architecture, who invited him to Europe in

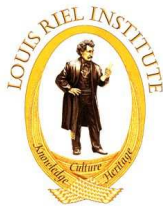
2005 where they declared him Professor/Academician. He was also awarded with a Gold Medal in Architecture from the Royal Architecture Institute of Canada. In 2006, the International Academy of Architecture also awarded him the title of World Master of Contemporary Architecture.

Cardinal is a recipient of the Order of Canada for his contributions to Canadian culture (1990). He has received numerous honorary doctorates and awards of excellence, including the Caledonian Prize Lectureship in Edinburgh, Scotland (1997), the National Aboriginal Achievement Award (1995), and the Canada Council Molson Prize for the Arts (1992).

References

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