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Graphic artist Jan Sawka dies

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Prominent painter, poster designer and architect Jan Sawka has died in his home in High Falls, N.Y., at the age of sixty five.

Born in Zabrze, southern Poland, in 1946, Sawka first studied architecture, before taking up the arts at the State Higher School of Fine Arts in Wrocław.

Upon graduation he lived in Warsaw for a few years and in 1976 went to Paris, thanks to a grant from the Pompidou Centre. A year later, he moved to the United States and settled in New York, where he developed a successful career, regularly contributing editorial commentary drawings for the New York Times and working as a stage designer with various theatre companies.

Jan Sawka's artistic awards include gold and silver medals at the Poster Biennales in Warsaw, Florence and Lahti.

He had about 70 one-man shows in museums and galleries around the world. His paintings and posters are in the collections of 60 museums.

He had just completed a multimedia piece titled 'The Voyage' set to tour next year with former Grateful Dead drummer Mickey Hart.

One of his last projects was the Peace Monument, an homage devoted to the cause of dialogue between Christianity, Judaism and Islam.

It was to be erected in Jerusalem. Even though it has not been realized, it last year won Sawka the American Institute of Architects' Excellence in Architecture Award.

Sawka is survived by his wife of thirty eight years, his daughter and two grandsons. (mk/pg)

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