

# ARTS & TRAVEL

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Section H

## Gibbes shows Neumann works on the human form

BY DOTTIE ASHLEY  
*The Post and Courier*

The work of an artist who risked the wrath of the Nazis to create figures from Dante's "The Divine Comedy," depicting the tortures of the damned, will be on display at the Gibbes Museum of Art from Friday through July 22.

Fifteen diverse prints by German expressionist Otto Neumann (1895-1975) will be the subject of the exhibit "Otto Neumann: Modern Expressions."

On view in the Gibbes' Works on Paper Gallery, the 15 monotypes

### If you go

**WHAT:** "Otto Neumann: Modern Expressions."

**WHEN:** Friday through July 22.

**WHERE:** Gibbes Museum of Art, 135 Meeting St.

**HOW MUCH:** \$9, general admission; \$7, senior citizens, students, members of the military; \$5 children ages 6 to 12; under age 6, free.

and woodblocks trace the evolution of Neumann's depictions of the human figure. The art to be on display was selected from 35 works on pa-

per donated to the Gibbes 17 years ago by Herbert Rothschild, one of Neumann's heirs. Rothschild and his wife, Bobbie, are residents of the Isle of Palms.

"The Neumann works have been part of the Gibbes' collection for some time," says Gibbes curator Angela Mack. "We are bringing these back mainly because of the publication of a book 'Otto Neumann: His Life and Work,' written by Dr. David Sokol of Chicago, a nationally recognized art historian and curator of the overall Neumann collection.

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PROVIDED GIBBES MUSEUM OF ART

The work of German expressionist Otto Neumann, whose work was viewed as degenerate by the Nazis, will be on display Friday through July 22 at the Gibbes Museum of Art.

## Gibbes shows prints by Neumann

"The exhibit shows how Neumann used the human form to move his work from figurative to abstract; it presents a distinctly modern artistic vision," says Mack. The son of renowned Heidelberg scholar Fritz Neumann, Otto Neumann grew up surrounded by the German intelligentsia, including such luminaries as Max Weber and Ernst Troeltsch. After completing his formal schooling and serving one year in the German army, Neumann studied with several noted German artists before returning to Heidelberg to begin his career as an artist.

"Neumann, considered by the Nazis to create degenerate art, was a consummate draftsman; some of his works will just knock your socks off," says Sokol of Chicago, where he has taught for many years at the University of Illinois.

Sokol explains that after Neumann died in 1975, his artwork went to his wife's nephews since Neumann's family mostly had been wiped out in World War II. His wife had died earlier, and their only child, a son, had committed suicide.

Herbert Rothschild said that he and his brothers selected Sokol to be the curator of the Neumann collection more than 25 years ago.

"At the time, my wife and I were living and working in the Chicago area when I learned that members of my family were heirs to these paintings," says Rothschild. "I knew absolutely nothing at all about art, and so someone put us in touch with the Art Institute of Chicago."

At the Art Institute, the curator of prints connected the Roth-

schilds with Sokol. After he was selected as curator, Sokol became intrigued by Neumann's work and life history.

"I made visits to Germany to trace Neumann's roots, and I have curated several of his exhibitions across the nation," says Sokol, who last gave a talk about the exhibit at the Gibbes in 1989.

Rothschild says he first thought that Neumann's style would not sell well in a place such as Charleston. However, he was put in touch with art dealer and gallery owner Anne Long, who says, "I was really blown away by the

work, and immediately believed that people would recognize not only its importance in modern art history, but also view it as beautiful, calming and intriguing, all at the same time."

The Gibbes exhibition is sponsored by the Ann Long Fine Art Modern Gallery, which is the exclusive representative of the estate handling all sales and lending of Neumann's works. Sokol will sign his book 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Friday and Saturday at the Long Gallery, 177 King St., where a number of Neumann's works will be on display for purchase.