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Death Certificate 1924
photo copy

THE VITAL STATISTICS ACT
Birth Certificate

DA 13718

NAME
SCHNEID, OTTO

SEX MARRITAL STATUS
MALE MARRIED

DATE OF BIRTH
MAY 12, 1974

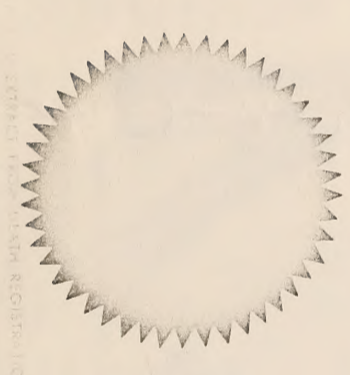
AGE
74 YEARS

PLACE OF BIRTH
TORONTO

REGISTRATION NUMBER
1974-05-022472

DATE OF DEATH
MAY 16, 1974

ISSUED AT
MAY 31, 1974



Handwritten signature: H. H. King

Handwritten signature: J. J. King

REGISTRAR GENERAL

011951 RG

Arts

Show opens Dec. 5 at Columbus Centre

Large-scale oils by Otto Schneid on exhibit

By
RON CSILLAG

TORONTO — Suffering, death and rebirth in Jewish history were the major themes explored by Otto Schneid, a renaissance man by any standard.

Schneid, who died in 1974, was a painter, sculptor, dramatist, poet and the author of books on Chinese, Greek and Jewish art.

Sadly, his work was not widely exhibited, at least not in Canada, where he and his wife moved in 1960. After Schneid's death, his widow, Miriam, herself an award-winning sculptor and poet, held on to his paintings for sentimental reasons.

Not long ago, however, she approached the Joseph D. Carrier Art Gallery, located in the Columbus Centre (901 Lawrence Ave. W.), which unhesitatingly snapped up an offer to exhibit at least 20 of Schneid's most vibrant oils.

The exhibit will open Dec. 5 and run until Dec. 28.

On display will be several large-scale paintings,

one bronze bust and, possibly, Schneid's correspondence, in Yiddish, with Marc Chagall, an artist to whom he is inevitably likened.

Schneid was born in 1900 in Jablunkova, a small town in Czechoslovakia's Beskid mountains. His Polish-born parents had come there from Vienna, possibly to escape the anti-semitism of the day.

Schneid established himself as a rebel early. While exhibiting an obvious talent for art, he refused to study it. Rather, he took up philosophy, aesthetics and Oriental studies at Vienna University.

In 1938, he set up an art museum in Vilna, which would be destroyed by the Nazis. That same year, the Germans invaded Austria and seized one of Schneid's many books while it was still on the presses. Luckily, the young artist saw the writing on the wall and in 1939, escaped to Palestine, as a research student at Hebrew University.

Then, in 1943, came the artist's epiphany: word that his whole family had been murdered at Auschwitz.

believe Schneid was a major proponent of "Jewish tension" in art. He taught art history at the Technion in Haifa from 1947 to 1960, during which time he created many pivotal sculptures, including one memorializing the World War II hero Janusz Korczak, and a huge bronze in tribute to the Six Million.

He also explored biblical motifs, through his personal visions of Old Testament prophets and martyrs. These mirror the artist's self-confessed love of the Bible's simplicity yet depth of narrative. However, like



Double Self Portrait by Otto Schneid

From then on, much of Schneid's work was characterized by themes of despair, suffering, chaos and oppression. Shady images lurk through dark, gloomy backgrounds. In other paintings, though, strong, bright colors play a major role, reinforcing their sheer "aliveness," but in an anguished and ironic sort of way.

In fact, some art scholars

his Holocaust-rooted work, even Jonah and Jacob are depicted hauntingly.

Not all Schneid's work was gloom and doom. There is hope and resurrection in his quiet landscapes and whimsical renditions of children.

Schneid's last one-man show in Canada was in 1964, the year his work was "discovered" by the art community here. Now, he is represented in numerous collections, including those of the Royal Ontario Museum.

For exhibit hours and more information, call 789-7011, ext. 269.