



Portrait of a physicist

Elizabeth Korn, a Jewish German artist and children's book illustrator, drew portraits of several well-known European scientists in the 1920s and 1930s. She sketched her subjects during conferences and meetings that she attended with her husband, Arthur, a physicist and inventor. Pictured here is one of her sketches of the German chemist Walther Nernst. He devised the Nernst heat theorem, which states that as a system approaches absolute zero, so, too, does the entropy change of any chemical reaction or physical transformation.

In 1939 Korn and her husband fled Nazi Germany and eventually settled in New Jersey. She was a professor of art

at Drew University, where she worked until her retirement in 1966, and she became known for her abstract expressionist mixed-media artwork. Korn's collection of portraits were acquired by the Niels Bohr Library and Archives at the American Institute of Physics (publisher of *PHYSICS TODAY*) in 1999. The Emilio Segrè Visual Archives there currently holds about 100 portraits of several notable scientists she sketched, including Niels Bohr, Marie Curie, Otto Hahn, Werner Heisenberg, and Max von Laue. Additional collections of Korn's work are at the Smithsonian Archives of American Art and the Museum of Modern Art.

—KJ

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