

Guide to the Norman Holmes Pearson Collection of "Art for the Wrong Reason"

YCAL MSS 1031



by Beinecke Staff

2015

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
P. O. Box 208330
New Haven, CT 06520-8330
(203) 432-2977
beinecke.library@yale.edu
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

CALL NUMBER: YCAL MSS 1031

CREATOR: Pearson, Norman Holmes, 1909-1975, collector

TITLE: Norman Holmes Pearson Collection of "Art for the Wrong Reason"

DATES: 1833-1979

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 63 Items (6 boxes) + 14 Art

LANGUAGE: Captions in English, French, and German.

SUMMARY: The collection contains sixty-three sketches, drawings, paintings, and prints acquired by Yale faculty member Norman Holmes Pearson not for their aesthetic or artistic merit, but because they were created by poets and other authors; he titled his collection "Art for the Wrong Reason." The works were executed in crayon, gouache, graphite, ink, charcoal, oil, and watercolor on paper, board, canvas, and panel, by fifty-three writers including E. E. Cummings, George Du Maurier, Victor Hugo, D. H. Lawrence, and Katherine Anne Porter, with multiple works by John Dos Passos, H. D., Herman Hesse, Denise Levertov, Wyndham Lewis, John Masefield, Henry Miller, and William Makepeace Thackeray. Among the drawings are portraits, self-portraits, or caricatures of G. K. Chesterton, Hugh Hefner, Henry Miller, J. M. Mitchison, Norman Holmes Pearson, Bernard Shaw, and Osbert Sitwell.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.pearsonawr>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.pearsonawr>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to beinecke.images@yale.edu.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Chiefly bequest of Norman Holmes Pearson (Yale 1932, 1941 PhD), 1975. Other additions noted at folder level.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Preferred Citation

Norman Holmes Pearson Collection of "Art for the Wrong Reason." Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Processing Information

Collections are processed to a variety of levels, depending on the work necessary to make them usable, their perceived research value, the availability of staff, competing priorities, and whether or not further accruals are expected. The library attempts to provide a basic level of preservation and access for all collections, and does more extensive processing of higher priority collections as time and resources permit.

Related Materials

Norman Holmes Pearson Papers (YCAL MSS 899), Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Norman Holmes Pearson (1909-1975)

Norman Holmes Pearson (Yale 1932, 1941 PhD), professor of English and American Studies at Yale University and officer in the United States Office of Strategic Services during World War II. Pearson collaborated with Yale University Library curator Donald Gallup to develop the Yale Collection of American Literature, playing an instrumental role in the library's acquisition of the papers of H. D. and Bryher.

Scope and Contents

The collection contains sixty-three sketches, drawings, paintings, and prints acquired by Yale faculty member Norman Holmes Pearson not for their aesthetic or artistic merit, but because they were created by poets and other authors; he titled his collection "Art for the Wrong Reason." The works were executed in crayon, gouache, graphite, ink, charcoal, oil, and watercolor on paper, board, canvas, and panel, by fifty-three writers including E. E. Cummings, George Du Maurier, Victor Hugo, D. H. Lawrence, and Katherine Anne Porter, with multiple works by John Dos Passos, H. D., Herman Hesse, Denise Levertov, Wyndham Lewis, John Masefield, Henry Miller, and William Makepeace Thackeray. Among the drawings are portraits, self-portraits, or caricatures of G. K. Chesterton, Hugh Hefner, Henry Miller, J. M. Mitchison, Norman Holmes Pearson, Bernard Shaw, and Osbert Sitwell.

Arrangement

Arranged alphabetically by author.

Collection Contents

b. 3 (Oversize), f. 34	Anderson, Sherwood, [Cross-section of a log], watercolor on paper (1980.131.42)	undated
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 1	Ballantyne, R. M., "After the Deer," watercolor on paper (1980.131.26) With inscriptions on verso to describe the costumes depicted.	undated
b. 3 (Oversize), f. 35	Belloc, Hilaire, "Pictorem Male Nata Turba Ridet...," ink and watercolor on board and paper (1980.131.31)	1897
b. 3 (Oversize), f. 36	Benet, William Rose, [Whale gallant], watercolor on board (1980.131.54)	undated
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 2	Boschère, Jean de, [Illustration for <i>The Arabian Nights</i>], watercolor on paper (1980.131.14)	undated
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 3	Bukowski, Charles, [Man seated in room], ink on paper (1980.131.57)	undated
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 4	Chesterton, G. K., [Self-portrait], graphite and crayon on board (1980.131.53) Inscribed at lower right: "GCK to AB." Inscribed on verso: "From Doran Collection."	undated
b. 7 (Art)	Clemens, Samuel Langhorne, [One-eyed dog], ink on paper (1980.131.18) Inscribed: "Executed instantaneously and blindfolded by / Truly Yours / Mark Twain / (Educated artist)."	1895
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 5	Coates, Robert, "Portrait of the Artist Reading His Favorite Author," graphite on paper (1980.131.56) Inscribed "To Althea Thurber"	1928
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 6	Cocteau, Jean, [Sketch on "Santo-Sospir" letterhead], ink on paper (1980.131.40)	1960
b. 8 (Art)	Corso, Gregory, [Forest scene], crayon on paper (1980.131.52)	undated
b. 3 (Oversize), f. 37	Cummings, E. E., [Silver Lake, New Hampshire], watercolor on paper (1980.131.1)	undated
Dos Passos, John		
b. 9 (Art)	[Manhattan skyscrapers], gouache on paper (1980.131.30)	undated
b. 3 (Oversize), f. 38	"Recollection of the Aurescu -- Pays-Basque, 1923," gouache on paper (1980.131.9) Inscribed on verso: "Recollection of the Aurescu / -- Pays Basque 1923 / for Norman Pearson / Nov 1965." Dos Passos refers to the Auresku, a traditional Basque dance.	1965
b. 10 (Art)	Douglas, Norman, [Gardeners], graphite on paper (1980.131.46)	undated
b. 1 (Oversize), f. 7	Du Maurier, George, [Autograph letter to "Willi" with drawings of dogs], ink on paper (1980.131.58)	undated
b. 11 (Broadside)	Grass, Günter, [Group of clothed skeletons talking], lithograph (1980.131.8)	undated

H. D. (Hilda Doolittle)

b. 1 (Oversize), f. 8 [Wild cyclamen], graphite on paper (1980.131.17) undated

b. 12 (Art) "Homage to Georges Braque," crayon on paper (1980.131.4) 1958

Hesse, Hermann

b. 1 (Oversize), f. 9 "Aprikosenblute I," watercolor on paper (1980.131.45) 1926

b. 4 (Oversize), f. 39 "Juli, Abend," watercolor and crayon on paper (1980.131.12) 1925

b. 1 (Oversize), f. 10 [Montagnola, Tessin], watercolor on paper (1980.131.35) 1931

b. 1 (Oversize), f. 11 "Sonnenaufgang überm Nebel," watercolor on paper (1980.131.25) 1933

b. 4 (Oversize), f. 40 "Souvenir pour Bryher," watercolor on paper (1980.131.13) 1922

b. 1 (Oversize), f. 12 [View from terrace, Montagnola, Tessin], watercolor on paper (1980.131.44) 1934

b. 1 (Oversize), f. 13 Hodgson, Ralph, [Two profile portraits], graphite on paper (1980.131.59.1-.2) undated
 Both inscribed on verso

b. 1 (Oversize), f. 14 Horgan, Paul, [From the Pont-Royal Hotel, Paris], watercolor on paper (1980.131.38) 1959
 Inscribed at lower right: "Paul / du rue Montalembert / Paris / 17 oct / '59"

b. 1 (Oversize), f. 15 Hugo, Victor, [At low tide], ink on paper (1980.131.51) 1842

b. 2 (Oversize), f. 16 Jarry, Alfred, "César-Antéchrist,," ink on paper (1980.131.19) undated

b. 2 (Oversize), f. 17 Knight, Eric, [Roses], tempera on board (1980.131.3) undated

b. 4 (Oversize), f. 41 Lawrence, D. H., "Arabella!," watercolor on paper (1980.131.28) undated

Levertov, Denise

b. 13 (Art) [Sketch of trees], ink on paper (1980.131.20) 1973

b. 4 (Oversize), f. 42 "A Tree Recalls Orpheus," ink on paper (not numbered) undated

Lewis, Wyndham

b. 2 (Oversize), f. 18 [Abstraction], ink on paper (1980.131.43) 1924

b. 14 (Art)	[Portrait of John Murdoch Mitchison], charcoal on paper (1980.131.34) Inscribed below: "Portrait of my son Murdoch, by Wyndham Lewis / in late 1931 or 1932 / Naomi Mitchinson"	circa 1931
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 19	[Portrait of Osbert Sitwell], watercolor and graphite on paper (1980.131.11)	1920
b. 15 (Art)	Lindsay, Vachel, "The Dream of King David in Heaven...," watercolor and ink on paper (1980.131.33)	undated
	Masefield, John	
b. 4 (Oversize), f. 43	[Clipper ship], watercolor, tempera, and graphite on paper (1980.131.49)	undated
b. 4 (Oversize), f. 44	[Clipper ship], watercolor, tempera, and graphite on paper (1980.131.50)	undated
b. 6 (Oversize), f. 49	Martinelli, Sheri, "Leucothoe," ink on panel (1980.131.24) Inscribed on verso: "For H.D. in Keeping until I get the 'Magic Head' to her Sheri end June 1958"	1958
	Miller, Henry	
b. 5 (Oversize), f. 45	[Self-portrait], watercolor on paper (1980.131.5)	undated
b. 5 (Oversize), f. 46	"Tropical," watercolor on paper (1980.131.6)	1955
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 20	Moore, Marianne, [Flower drawings], watercolor on paper (not numbered) Removed from Marianne Moore correspondence in the H.D. Papers (YCAL MSS 24) and placed in the Pearson Collection.	undated
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 21	Porter, Katherine Anne, [Caricature of Elinor Wylie], ink on paper (1980.131.7)	1927
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 22	Proust, Marcel, "Fuad Pasha," ink on paper (1980.131.48)	undated
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 23	Rannit, Aleksis, "Lesbos," ink on paper (1980.131.47)	1959
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 24	Reid, Mayne, [Portrait of a man], lithograph (1980.131.10) Inscribed in ink on mount: "To Captain Frederick Brockwell from his friend Mayne Reid."	undated
b. 16 (Art)	Ruskin, John, [Mountainous stream on coast], graphite on paper (1980.131.21)	undated
b. 17 (Art)	Russell, George William Erskine, [Children on the Irish dunes], oil on canvas (1980.131.2)	undated
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 25	Seton, Ernest Thompson, [Autograph with paw print], ink on paper (1980.131.60)	undated

b. 5 (Oversize), f. 47	Shaw, Bernard, [Self-portrait as Don Quixote], watercolor on paper (1980.131.39) Inscribed on separate sheet (with drawing): "This will do with one alteration / The donkey is blind. / His eyes should be straining at the / carrots, and his ears should be / also strained towards them rigidly. / [with drawing of donkey]"	undated
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 26	Stevenson, Robert Louis, "Vailima," watercolor on paper (1980.131.22)	undated
Thackeray, William Makepeace		
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 27	[Man and woman at well], ink on paper (1980.131.23)	undated
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 28	"Road to Charmouth," ink and graphite on paper (1980.131.55)	1833
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 29	Valery, Paul, "Piazza Cavour," ink on paper (1980.131.37)	undated
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 30	Valtman, Edmund S., [Caricature of Norman Holmes Pearson], ink on paper (1980.131.27) Inscribed: "For Aleksis, / affectionately / Norman Holmes Pearson" and "Aleksis Raninit'ile / sõpruses / Edmund Valtman / 11. aug. 1976."	1974
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 31	Victoria, Queen of Great Britain, [Figure studies after R. Doyle], etching (1980.131.16)	1865
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 32	Warren, Rosanna, [Olive tree], graphite on paper (1980.131.15)	1976
b. 18 (Art)	Welch, Denton, [Still life], oil on canvasboard (1980.131.29)	undated
b. 2 (Oversize), f. 33	Wiens, Paul, "Abstract Composition," ink on paper (1980.131.61) Inscribed at bottom in pencil: "Paul Wiens, the German poet, gave me this drawing and I am giving this drawing to Norman Holmes Pearson Collection. Alexis Rannit, 3/4/1982." Inscribed on verso: "Paul Wiens / Abstract Composition / Felt-tip pen / color drawing of 1979 / made during the International / PEN-Congress in Rio de Janeiro."	1979
b. 19 (Art)	Wilder, Thornton, [Sketch made during W. S. Lewis reading, Farmington, CT, 5 April 1962], graphite on paper (1980.131.36)	1962
b. 20 (Art)	Williams, William Carlos, [Scene on the Passaic River], oil on panel (1980.131.32)	undated
b. 5 (Oversize), f. 48	Wolfe, Tom, [Caricature of Hugh Hefner for "King of the Status Dropouts" in <i>The Pump House Gang</i>], ink on board with collage (1980.131.41) Inscribed "For Norman Holmes Pearson, this American Study of the stroke magazine publisher Hugh Hefner, offered with a deep bow and a tip of the hat, by Tom Wolfe Christmas 1974."	circa 1965

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects

Artists -- Portraits
Authors -- Portraits

Geographic Names

Montagnola (Switzerland) -- Pictorial works
Passaic River (N.J.) -- Pictorial works

Genres / Formats

Caricatures
Drawings (visual works)
Etchings (prints)
Lithographs
Oil paintings (visual works)
Portraits
Self-portraits
Watercolors (paintings)

Occupations

Artists
Authors

Names

Boschère, Jean de, 1878-1953
Chesterton, G. K. (Gilbert Keith), 1874-1936
Chesterton, G. K. (Gilbert Keith), 1874-1936 --
Portraits
Clemens, Samuel Langhorne, 1835-1910
Cummings, E. E. (Edward Estlin), 1894-1962
Dos Passos, John, 1896-1970
Du Maurier, George, 1834-1896
Grass, Günter, 1927-2015
H. D. (Hilda Doolittle), 1886-1961
Hefner, Hugh M. (Hugh Marston), 1926- --
Caricatures and cartoons
Hesse, Hermann, 1877-1962
Hugo, Victor, 1802-1885
Jarry, Alfred, 1873-1907
Lawrence, D. H. (David Herbert), 1885-1930
Levertov, Denise, 1923-1997
Lewis, Wyndham, 1882-1957
Lindsay, Vachel, 1879-1931

Masefield, John, 1878-1967
Miller, Henry, 1891-1980
Miller, Henry, 1891-1980 -- Portraits
Mitchison, J. M. -- Portraits
Moore, Marianne, 1887-1972
Pearson, Norman Holmes, 1909-1975
Pearson, Norman Holmes, 1909-1975 --
Caricatures and cartoons
Porter, Katherine Anne, 1890-1980
Russell, George William Erskine, 1853-1919
Shaw, Bernard, 1856-1950
Shaw, Bernard, 1856-1950 -- Portraits
Sitwell, Osbert, 1892-1969 -- Portraits
Thackeray, William Makepeace, 1811-1863
Valtman, Edmund S., 1914-
Welch, Denton
Wiens, Paul, 1922-1982
Williams, William Carlos, 1883-1963
Wolfe, Tom, 1930-2018
Wylie, Elinor, 1885-1928 -- Caricatures and
cartoons

Contributors

Pearson, Norman Holmes, 1909-1975 , collector
Boschère, Jean de, 1878-1953 , artist
Chesterton, G. K. (Gilbert Keith), 1874-1936 ,
artist
Clemens, Samuel Langhorne, 1835-1910 , artist
Cummings, E. E. (Edward Estlin), 1894-1962 ,
artist
Dos Passos, John, 1896-1970 , artist
Du Maurier, George, 1834-1896 , artist
Grass, Günter, 1927-2015 , artist
H. D. (Hilda Doolittle), 1886-1961 , artist
Hesse, Hermann, 1877-1962 , artist
Hugo, Victor, 1802-1885 , artist
Jarry, Alfred, 1873-1907 , artist
Lawrence, D. H. (David Herbert), 1885-1930 ,
artist
Levertov, Denise, 1923-1997 , artist
Lewis, Wyndham, 1882-1957 , artist
Lindsay, Vachel, 1879-1931 , artist
Masefield, John, 1878-1967 , artist
Miller, Henry, 1891-1980 , artist
Moore, Marianne, 1887-1972 , artist
Porter, Katherine Anne, 1890-1980 , artist
Russell, George William Erskine, 1853-1919 ,
artist
Shaw, Bernard, 1856-1950 , artist

Thackeray, William Makepeace, 1811-1863 ,
artist

Valtman, Edmund S., 1914- , artist

Welch, Denton , artist

Wiens, Paul, 1922-1982 , artist

Williams, William Carlos, 1883-1963 , artist

Wolfe, Tom, 1930-2018 , artist

Acquired From

Pearson, Norman Holmes, 1909-1975 , donor