

Wyndham Lewis:

An Inventory of His Collection at the Harry Ransom Center

Descriptive Summary

Creator:	Lewis, Wyndham, 1882-1957
Title:	Wyndham Lewis Art Collection
Dates:	1898-1949 (bulk circa 1919-1932)
Extent:	1 box, 1 oversize folder (14 items)
Abstract:	The collection consists of nine portraits (eight drawings and one lithograph) and one self-portrait by Wyndham Lewis, and two watercolor landscapes by his mother, Anne Stuart Lewis.
Call Number:	Art Collection AR-00162
Language:	No linguistic material present
Access:	Open for research. A minimum of twenty-four hours is required to pull art materials to the Reading Room.

Administrative Information

Acquisition:	Purchases (R830, R2683, R2726, R3480, R4957, R5180) and gifts
Processed by:	Alice Egan, 1997, and Helen Young, 2001
Repository:	Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin

Biographical Sketch

Wyndham Lewis was a novelist, critic, and a predominant experimental artist who founded Vorticism, an early 20th century English abstract art movement. Lewis was born November 18, 1882, near Amherst, Nova Scotia, Canada, to Captain Charles Edward Lewis of New York and Anne Stuart (née Prickett) Lewis of England. In 1893, his parents separated, and he moved with his mother to London. At the age of sixteen, Lewis enrolled in the Slade School of Art, where he spent the next three years studying. Following his formal education, Lewis left for the continent; between 1901 and 1909 he spent most of his time in France, but also traveled in Germany, Spain, and Holland.

Lewis returned to England in 1909, and that same year saw three of his stories published in the *English Review*. Subsequent to the publication of these stories, Lewis joined the literary circle of Ford Madox Hueffer, later known as Ford Madox Ford. While pursuing his literary career, Lewis continued to produce visual works of art. In 1911, his drawings were exhibited with the Camden Town Group, and in 1912 he had works in the Post-Impressionist exhibition organized by Roger Fry. The following year, Lewis joined Roger Fry's Omega workshop, only to split from the group later that same year. In 1913, Lewis also took part in Frank Rutter's Post-Impressionist and Futurist exhibition, and in an exhibition with the London Group.

In 1914, Lewis founded his own group, the Rebel Art Centre, and its movement, Vorticism (named by Ezra Pound). In 1914 and 1915, Lewis published the only two issues of the Vorticist review, *Blast*. During this time he was mainly associated with such figures as Richard Aldington, Gaudier-Brzeska, Ezra Pound, William Roberts, and Edward Wadsworth.

Lewis served in World War I. His first novel, *Tarr*, was published in 1918. In 1919, he attempted to revive Vorticism under the name X Group, which held one exhibition in 1920. After this time, Lewis was not connected with any art groups, but he continued exhibiting his work, in addition to publishing books and articles. He spent the years of World War II in the United States and Canada, but returned to England in 1945. In 1946, he became the art critic of the *Listener*. Wyndham Lewis died March 7, 1957, in London.

Source

Bertram, A. (1972). "Percy Wyndham Lewis." In E. T. Williams & H. M. Palmer (eds.), *The Dictionary of National Biography, 1951-1960*, (pp. 626-9). London: Oxford University Press.

Scope and Contents

The Wyndham Lewis Art Collection consists of nine portraits (eight drawings and one lithograph) and one self-portrait by Wyndham Lewis, and two watercolor landscapes by his mother, Anne Stuart Lewis. The works, which span between 1898 and 1949, are divided into two series: I. Works by Wyndham Lewis, and II. Works by Anne Stuart Lewis. Works within each series are arranged alphabetically by title. Titles are transcribed from the items; cataloger's titles appear in brackets. The portrait subjects include Lewis' contemporaries, namely G. K. Chesterton, T. S. Eliot, James Joyce, T. E. Lawrence, Ezra Pound, and J. B. Priestley.

Related Material

The Art Collection holds an additional drawing by Lewis, a portrait of Nancy Cunard, which can be found in the Nancy Cunard Art Collection. Two portrait etchings of Lewis can be found in the Augustus John Art Collection and the David Schorr Art Collection. Other works held by the Ransom Center, both by and about Lewis, can be found in the Manuscripts Collection, the Photography Collection, and the Library.

Series I. Works by Wyndham Lewis, 1919-1949, undated

Accession Number: 69.104 Lewis, Wyndham. [G. K. Chesterton]. 1932. 1 drawing: pencil, 38.1 x 28 cm.	Box 1.1
Accession Number: 67.52 Lewis, Wyndham. Head of T. S. Eliot. 1925. 1 drawing: pencil and watercolor, 31 x 25.6 cm.	Box 1.2
Accession Number: 65.82 Lewis, Wyndham. [Head of T. S. Eliot, study]. Undated. 1 drawing: pencil, 31.5 x 26.3 cm.	Box 1.3
Accession Number: 65.95 Lewis, Wyndham. [T. S. Eliot, 1949]. 1949. 1 drawing: charcoal, 56.1 x 38.6 cm.	Location Flat file
Accession Number: 69.148 Lewis, Wyndham. Rough note for [T. S.] Eliot. 1938. 1 drawing: charcoal, 38.2 x 28.6 cm.	Box 1.4
Accession Number: 69.106 Lewis, Wyndham. Drawing of James Joyce. 1920. 1 reproductive print, 34.1 x 27.1 cm.	Box 1.5
Accession Number: 74.49 Lewis, Wyndham. Drawing of James Joyce. 1920. 1 reproductive print, 32.3 x 24.1 cm.	Box 1.6
Accession Number: 69.91 Lewis, Wyndham. T. E. Lawrence of Arabia. 1929. 1 drawing: pencil and white, 23.7 x 22 cm.	Box 1.7
Accession Number: 65.70 Lewis, Wyndham. [Wyndham Lewis, self-portrait]. 1931. 1 drawing: pencil, 34.1 x 27.1 cm.	Box 1.8
Accession Number: 65.180 Lewis, Wyndham. [Ezra Pound]. Circa 1919. 1 drawing: charcoal pencil, 25.4 x 17.7 cm.	Box 1.9
Accession Number: 65.216 Lewis, Wyndham. [Ezra Pound]. Undated. 1 drawing: charcoal pencil, 37 x 32.4 cm.	Box 1.10
Accession Number: 65.442 Lewis, Wyndham. J. B. Priestley. 1932. 1 print: lithograph, 34.9 x 27.2 cm.	Box 1.11

Series II. Works by Anne Stuart Lewis, 1898-1948?

Accession Number: 79.321.1 Lewis, A. S. [Two landscapes]. 1948? 1 drawing:
watercolor, 16 x 34.2 cm. **Box**
1.12

Accession Number: 79.321.2 Lewis, A. S. [Waterfront with boats and dock]. 1898. 1
drawing: watercolor and pencil, 23.2 x 31.5 cm. **Box**
1.13