

# Nancy Cunard:

## An Inventory of Her Art Collection at the Harry Ransom Center

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### Descriptive Summary

<b>Creator:</b>	Cunard, Nancy, 1896-1965
<b>Title:</b>	Nancy Cunard Art Collection
<b>Dates:</b>	1920s-1980s (bulk 1930s-1950s)
<b>Extent:</b>	61 items
<b>Abstract:</b>	A collection of drawings, prints, photographs, two scrapbooks, and a needlepoint of and related to the British author, heiress, and activist, Nancy Cunard.
<b>Call Number:</b>	Art Collection (AR-00055)
<b>Language:</b>	English
<b>Access:</b>	Open for research. Researchers must create an online Research Account and agree to the Materials Use Policy before using archival materials. Please note that a minimum of 24 hours notice is required to pull art materials to the Ransom Center's Reading and Viewing Room. Some materials may be restricted from viewing. To make an appointment or to reserve art materials, please contact the Center's staff at <a href="mailto:art@hrc.utexas.edu">art@hrc.utexas.edu</a> .
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## **Administrative Information**

**Acquisition:** Purchases and Gifts, 1970-2000

**Repository:** [Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin](#)

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## Biographical Sketch

Nancy Clara Cunard was born in Leicestershire on March 10, 1896, to Sir Bache Cunard, heir of the Cunard steamship line, and young American heiress Maud Alice Burke. Although born into wealth and privilege, Cunard would eschew these comforts for the life of a renegade poet, publisher, and civil rights activist. She often suffered the scorn and ridicule of family, friends, and the general public for her political beliefs and artistic pursuits. With her sharp, arresting features and strong sense of visual style (which often included armfuls of African bracelets), Cunard was extensively photographed, most famously by Man Ray and Cecil Beaton. Cunard founded the Hours Press in 1927, first publishing Samuel Beckett and financing the monumental anthology of African and Black music, culture, art, and politics, *Negro*, in 1934. She was a freelance journalist during the Spanish Civil War, advocating for refugees, and traveled to the United States to investigate racial injustice and support the rights of African Americans. Cunard traveled as a poet and activist throughout most of her life, but did pause to write memoirs of Norman Douglas in 1954 and George Moore in 1956. Cunard died on March 16, 1965, in the Hôpital Cochin in Paris. For a more extensive biographical sketch, see the Nancy Cunard Collection (MS-01010) finding aid.

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## Sources:

Marcus, Jane. "Cunard, Nancy Clara (1896–1965)." Jane Marcus *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, edited by H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison. Oxford: OUP, 2004. Online ed., edited by David Cannadine, September 2010. <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/39454> (accessed September 22, 2017).

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## Scope and Contents

The collection consists of drawings, prints, photographs, two scrapbooks, and a needlepoint of and related to Nancy Cunard. Artists in the collection include John Banting, Augustus John, and Wyndham Lewis. Subjects include portraits of Cunard, Norman Douglas, George Moore, and Abraham Lincoln, as well as landscape drawings, Banting's surreal figural and abstract drawings, and sketches of African sculpture, power figures, jewelry, and masks. A pencil sketch of Nancy Cunard's home in the south of France, which dates to circa 1963, was given to the Ransom Center in 2000.

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## Related Material

Works and correspondence by and about Nancy Cunard can be found in the Nancy Cunard Collection (MS-01010), and photographs of, by, and related to her are present in the Nancy Cunard Literary File Photography Collection (PH-00281). Additionally there is a portrait of Cunard in the Augustus John Art Collection (AR-00131).

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## Separated Material

A reptile skin and brass frame, and a tooled leather folder reside in the Nancy Cunard Personal Effects Collection.

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## Index Terms

### People

Banting, John, 1902-1972.  
Core, Philip  
Cunard, Nancy, 1896-1965.  
John, Augustus, 1878-1961.  
Lewis, Wyndham, 1882-1957.  
Lincoln, Abraham, 1809-1865.  
Plunkett, Grace Gifford, 1888-1955.

### Subjects

Art, African.  
Authors--British--20th century.  
Masks, African.

### Document Types

Drawings.  
Engravings.  
Needlepoint (visual works).  
Paintings.  
Photographic prints.

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- Accession Number: 70.33** Lewis, Wyndam (Canadian, 1882-1957). Nancy Cunard, 1923. Pencil on paper, 42.7 x 26 cm. **Location**  
Box  
344b
- Accession Number: 73.314** Montague, Elliot. Nancy takes G. M. [George Moore?] for a pleasant walk?, undated. Pencil on paper, 21.1 x 13.5 cm. **Location**  
Box  
344a
- Accession Number: 73.315** Unidentified. Side view of man with beard [Prof. Gersey Karr or Ross?], 1922. Pencil on paper, mounted, 25.4 x 17.1 cm. **Location**  
Box  
344b
- Accession Number: 73.316** Banting, John (English, 1902-1972). Norman Douglas, October 1938. Pencil on board, 31.7 x 23.5 cm.
- Accession Number: 73.353** Attributed to Plunkett, Grace Gifford (Irish, 1888-1955). A Widow's Mite: to George Moore, undated. Pencil and ink on board, 24.1 x 17.8 cm. **Location**  
Flat File
- Accession Number: 73.354** Unidentified. The Well of my Childhood, L. T., undated. Needlepoint on paper, 7.6 x 10.6 cm. **Location**  
Box  
344b
- Accession Number: 73.379** Buttre, J. C. (American, 1821-1893). Bust view of Abraham Lincoln, undated. Engraving, 22.2 x 14.3 cm.
- Accession Number: 73.38** Unidentified. Portrait of Abraham Lincoln, undated. Engraving, 23.5 x 14.4 cm.
- Accession Number: 74.117.1** Banting, John (British, 1902-1972). Half view of woman's face with lips, 1930. Photograph, 10.2 x 14 cm.
- Accession Number: 74.117.2** Banting, John (British, 1902-1972). Half view of woman's face with lips, 1930. Photograph, 14.1 x 20.3 cm.
- Accession Number: 74.117.3** Banting, John (British, 1902-1972). Abstract figure, circa 1930s. Photograph, 21.2 x 14.6 cm.
- Accession Number: 74.117.4** Banting, John (British, 1902-1972). Abstract design, 1931. Photograph, 20.2 x 16.8 cm.
- Accession Number: 74.117.5** Banting, John (British, 1902-1972). Mature congratulations [animal skulls], 1931. Photograph, 24 x 16.5 cm.
- Accession Number: 74.117.6** Banting, John (British, 1902-1972). Animal skull, 1931. Photograph, 15.9x 21.3 cm.

**Accession Number: 74.117.7** Banting, John (British, 1902-1972). Nocturne [reclining nude], 1927. Photograph, 9.5 x 13.7 cm.

**Accession Number: 74.117.9** Banting, John (British, 1902-1972). Abstract design, undated. Pen and ink on paper, 14 x 9.8 cm.

**Accession Number: 74.117.10** Banting, John (British, 1902-1972). Swan, undated. Pen and ink on paper, 11.4 x 17.6 cm.

**Accession Number: 74.117.11** Banting, John (British, 1902-1972). Thames River and Bridge, undated. Pen and ink on paper, 11.4 x 17.6 cm.

**Accession Number: 74.117.12** Banting, John (British, 1902-1972). Abstract, 1950. Pen and ink on board, 24.1 x 15.6 cm.

**Accession Number: 74.117.13** Banting, John (British, 1902-1972). Nude woman and man riding bull, 1938. Pen and ink, 25.9 x 41.8 cm.

**Accession Number: 74.117.14** Banting, John (British, 1902-1972). Square abstract, undated. Pen and ink, 25.2 x 19.4 cm.

**Accession Number: 74.117.15** Banting, John (British, 1902-1972). Abstract design, undated. Pen and ink, 26.7 x 22.9 cm.

**Accession Number: 74.117.16** Banting, John (British, 1902-1972). Abstract design, undated. Pen and ink, 30.5 x 45.4 cm.

**Accession Number: 74.117.17** Banting, John (British, 1902-1972). Abstract design, undated. Pen and ink, 32.1 x 39.7 cm.

**Accession Number: 74.117.18** Banting, John (British, 1902-1972). Faces, undated. Pencil on paper, 30.3 x 24.1 cm.

**Accession Number: 74.117.19** Banting, John (British, 1902-1972). Fly, 1950. Pen and ink on board, 25.1 x 32.1 cm.

**Accession Number: 74.117.21** Banting, John (British, 1902-1972). Abstract figures with typed text on verso, undated. Paint, pen, and ink on paper, 33.7 x 25.1 cm.

**Accession Number: 74.117.22** Banting, John (British, 1902-1972). Abstract figures with typed text on verso, undated. Paint, pen, and ink on paper, 33.7 x 25.1 cm.

**Accession Number:** Banting, John (British, 1902-1972). Abstract figures with typed text on verso, undated. Paint, pen, and ink on paper, 33.7 x 25.1 cm.

**Accession Number: 74.117.23** Banting, John (British, 1902-1972). Abstract figures with typed text on verso, undated. Paint, pen, and ink on paper, 33.7 x 25.1 cm.

**Accession Number: 74.117.24** Banting, John (British, 1902-1972). Abstract figures with typed text on verso, undated. Paint, pen, and ink on paper, 33.7 x 25.1 cm.

**Accession Number: 74.117.25** Banting, John (British, 1902-1972). Abstract figures with typed text on verso, undated. Paint, pen, and ink on paper, 33.7 x 25.1 cm.

**Accession Number: 74.117.26** Banting, John (British, 1902-1972). Abstract figures with typed text on verso, undated. Paint, pen, and ink on paper, 33.7 x 25.1 cm.

**Accession Number: 74.117.27** Banting, John (British, 1902-1972). Abstract figures with typed text on verso, undated. Paint, pen, and ink on paper, 33.7 x 25.1 cm.

**Accession Number: 74.117.28** Abstract figures with typed text on verso, undated. Paint, pen, and ink on paper, 33.7 x 25.1 cm.

**Accession Number: 74.117.29** Abstract figures with typed text on verso, undated. Paint, pen, and ink on paper, 33.7 x 25.1 cm.

**Accession Number: 74.117.30** Banting, John (British, 1902-1972). Typescript dialogue, undated. Ink on paper, 33.7 x 25.1 cm.

**Accession Number: 74.117.31** Banting, John (British, 1902-1972). Typescript dialogue, undated. Ink on paper, 33.7 x 25.1 cm.

**Location**  
Box  
344a

**Accession Number: 74.117.32** Unidentified. Parallax, undated. Pencil on paper, 47.6 x 31.1 cm.

**Accession Number: 74.117.33** Unidentified. Trees, undated. Pencil on paper, 40 x 31.2 cm.

**Location**  
Box  
344b

**Accession Number: 74.117.34** Unidentified. Village scene, undated. Pencil on paper, 40 x 31.2 cm.

**Accession Number: 74.118** Banting, John (British, 1902-1972). Abstract design, 1953. Pen and ink on paper, 14 x 9.9 cm.

**Accession Number: 74.157** John, Augustus Edwin (British, 1878-1961). Nancy Cunard, 1910 October. Pencil on textile and board, 17.8 x 12.7 cm.

**Accession Number: 74.158** Banting, John (British, 1902-1972). Portrait of Nancy Cunard, 1937 November. Pencil on paper, 25.4 x 20.3 cm.

**Accession Number: 74.159** Bright, Harry (British, 1847?-1896?). Portrait of Nancy Cunard, 1930. Pencil on paper, 28.3 x 15 cm.

**Accession Number: 74.16** De Gazalaino. Portrait of Nancy Cunard, 1950 October. Pen and ink on paper, 20 x 22.9 cm.

**Accession Number: 74.161** J. H. Tropical scene, 1962. Acrylic on paper, 14 x 20.3 cm.

**Accession Number: 78.127.1** Unidentified. Scrapbook with embossed cover resembling reptile skin, circa 1920s-1930s. Pen, ink, pencil, watercolor on paper, 33.7 x 25.4 cm.

**Accession Number: 78.127.2** Unidentified. Fetishes [sic] of the spirits of the dead, undated. Pencil on paper, 27.1 x 19 cm.

**Accession Number: 78.127.3** Unidentified. African masks, undated. Pencil on paper, 27.5 x 18.6 cm.

**Accession Number: 78.127.4** Unidentified. Masks from Eastern Congo, undated. Pencil and ink on paper, 26.7 x 18.4 cm.

**Accession Number: 78.127.5** Unidentified. African power figures, undated. Pencil and ink on paper, 23.2 x 18.3 cm.

**Accession Number: 78.127.6** Unidentified. Basonge Bakete and Kundu Masks, undated. Ink and pencil on paper, 27.8 x 18.4 cm.

**Accession Number: 78.127.7** Cunard, Nancy (British, 1896-1965). Rubbing of Benin mask, 1956 March 15. Pencil on paper, 10.3 x 21.8 cm.

**Accession Number: 78.127.8** Unidentified. Rough tracing of Benin mask, 1932. Pen and ink, 26.7 x 19.1 cm.

**Accession Number: 78.127.9** Unidentified. Rubbed tracings of systum, ivory box, and carved heads, undated. Pen and ink, 25.7 x 18.1 cm.

**Location**

**Accession Number: 78.127.10** Unidentified. Toile Security, undated. Ink on paper, 26.7 x 21.3 cm.

**Accession Number: 84.27** Core, Philip McCammon (American, 1951-1989). Nancy Cunard and Brian Howard, circa 1970s-1980s. Oil on canvas, 177.2 x 126.4 cm.

**Location**  
Box  
344a

**Accession Number: 92.18** McCown, Eugene (American, 1899-1966). Portrait of Nancy Cunard, 1923. Oil on board, 99.1 x 66 cm.

**Location**  
Box  
344b

**Accession Number: 99.9** Various artists. Scrapbook of Paintings and Drawings, undated. Mixed media on paper, 31.8 x 24.1 cm.

**Accession Number: 2000.16** Viers, H. Sketch of Nancy Cunard's house in the south of France, circa 1963. Pencil on paper, 13.2 x 21.6 cm.