

Denton Welch:

An Inventory of His Art Collection at the Harry Ransom Center

Descriptive Summary

Creator:	Welch, Denton, 1915-1948
Title:	Denton Welch Art Collection
Dates:	circa 1838-1948 (bulk circa 1933-1948)
Extent:	2 boxes, 25 flat file drawers, 3 paintings (2 framed) (92 items)
Abstract:	The collection includes thirty-seven oil paintings, eight watercolor paintings, thirty drawings (pencil, ink, and/or watercolor), and two sketchbooks. Subjects include still lifes and landscapes, many done in a surrealistic style, as well as a few portraits. There are also works by other artists which include family portraits and watercolor paintings.
Call Number:	Art Collection AR-00291
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

Provenance:	The Denton Welch Art Collection has nine works given by the estate of Gordon Hooper of Strood, Kent, England. These include six works by Denton Welch: an oil still life, a watercolor, and four drawings of nudes; and three prints that had belonged to Denton Welch.
Acquisition:	Purchases (R3326, R4815, R4228, R13557), 1957-1995; Gift (G12509), 2006
Processed by:	Helen Young, 1997, 2001
Repository:	Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin

Biographical Sketch

Maurice Denton Welch was born March 29, 1915, in Shanghai, to Arthur Joseph Welch, whose parents were English, and Rosalind Basset, whose family was originally from New Bedford, Massachusetts. Denton Welch was the youngest of four boys and spent his early childhood in Shanghai, with many visits to England.

In 1924, Welch was enrolled in a school in Kensington, and then from 1926 to 1929 he attended St. Michael's, a preparatory school in Uckfield, Sussex. While he was in school, his mother, with whom he was especially close, died in Shanghai in March 1927; this event had a profound effect on him. In 1929, Welch started attending school at Repton in Derbyshire. Welch started at the Goldsmith School of Art in New Cross in 1933, where he studied for three years; among his teachers was the printmaker and graphic designer Edward Bawden. At first he lived in a house where his brother Bill was also rooming, and then he moved into a house near Greenwich Park where the landlady was Evelyn Sinclair, who became a close, lifelong friend.

On June 7, 1935, Welch was traveling by bicycle to go visit his aunt when he was hit by a car. His spine was fractured, and for a few months he was paralyzed from the chest down. He was able to learn to walk again, but with difficulty. For the rest of his life he had kidney and bladder infections, which would cause frequent and severe headaches. After the accident, Welch first spent time at National Hospital, and then in the Southcourt Nursing Home in Broadstairs, Kent. When he left the nursing home July 1936, Welch rented an apartment with Evelyn Sinclair in Tonbridge in order that he could be close to his doctor, John Easton. Sinclair remained with Welch as his housekeeper at his different residences until May 1946, two months after Welch and his partner Eric Oliver moved to Middle Orchard, the country house of Noël and Bernard Adeney at Crouch, near Borough Green, Kent. However, Sinclair returned to Middle Orchard in July 1948 to assist Welch until his death.

Welch continued to paint and draw after his accident. In 1941, the Leicester Galleries in London first exhibited some of his paintings, and continued over the next few years to include his paintings in their exhibitions. The Leger Gallery and Redfern Gallery, both in London, also exhibited his works. Welch began writing in 1940, and some of his poems appeared in minor publications in 1941. In 1942, after the death of the painter Walter Sickert, Welch's article "Sickert at St. Peter's" (an amusing account of his having tea with Sickert shortly before Welch left the nursing home in Broadstairs) was published by Cyril Connolly in the August *Horizon*. Welch received a letter of praise from Edith Sitwell. Soon after, Herbert Read, editor at Routledge, accepted Welch's manuscript for "Maiden Voyage", and Sitwell offered to write the foreword; she also wrote a review for the book. With her support, *Maiden Voyage* sold out before its May 1943 publication. The book received enthusiastic reviews, and Welch began writing *In Youth Is Pleasure*, which was published in February 1945. He also wrote several short stories, and in the fall of 1945, as his health was worsening, Welch resumed his work on *A Voice through a Cloud*, a novel that he had begun earlier and that was to remain unfinished at his death. Although Welch was to consider himself primarily a writer after the success of *Maiden Voyage*, he kept painting and drawing. Nine of his late paintings, created during a time

when his health was failing, were reproduced in *A Last Sheaf* (published in 1951). He died December 30, 1948, at Middle Orchard Cottage in Crouch, Kent.

Sources:

De-la-Noy, Michael. *Denton Welch*. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Viking, 1984.

Laughlin, Charlotte Gay. "A Catalogue of the Denton Welch Collection at the University of Texas." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, 1975.

Phillips, Robert. *Denton Welch*. New York: Twayne, 1974.

Welch, Denton. *The Denton Welch Journals*, edited and with an introduction by Jocelyn Brooke. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1952.

Scope and Contents

The Ransom Center's Denton Welch Art Collection is organized in two series: I. Works by Denton Welch, and II. Works by Other Artists. All works are arranged by accession number. Titles given in the list are transcribed from the works; cataloger's titles appear in brackets.

The Works by Denton Welch series comprises most of the collection. It includes thirty-seven oil paintings, eight watercolor paintings, thirty drawings (pencil, ink, and/or watercolor), and two sketchbooks. Most of the works are still lifes and landscapes, many done in a surrealist style. There are also a few portraits, including three self-portraits, two portraits of his friend and housekeeper Evelyn Sinclair, a portrait of his brother Bill, and portraits of unidentified subjects. Among the drawings are also designs for the title page and a decorative border for *Maiden Voyage*. One of the sketchbooks was created during Welch's hospital stay in 1935.

The Works by Other Artists series is comprised of a miniature portrait of Welch's maternal grandfather, Thomas Bassett; an award medallion of Welch's maternal great-grandfather, William Pitt Denton; ten watercolor paintings by William Pitt Denton's wife, Elizabeth H. (Randall) Denton; and three erotic prints by Larée.

Related Material

The Ransom Center also has Denton Welch material in its Manuscript Collection, its Library, and its Photography Collection.

Series I. Works by Denton Welch, 1935-1946, most undated

	Location
Accession Number: 65.299 Welch, Denton. [Self-portrait; verso: still life with tea pot, pitcher, fruit]. Undated. 1 painting (oil on board), 58 x 51.9 cm.	Painting storage
Accession Number: 66.72.1 Welch, Denton. [Denton Welch seated, writing; rough sketch of person on verso]. Undated. 1 drawing (pencil), 21.8 x 25.7 cm.	Box 1.1
Accession Number: 66.72.2 Welch, Denton. Maiden Voyage by Denton Welch ...[title-page design]. Circa 1943. 1 drawing (ink and pencil), 24 x 18.1 cm.	Box 1.2
Accession Number: 66.72.4.1-39 Welch, Denton. [Sketchbook "Done in my first days in the hospital June 1935": includes human figures, surrealistic figures, still lifes, various objects]. 1935. 1 sketchbook (39 drawings, ink, pencil), 16.1 x 24.2 cm.	Box 2.3
Accession Number: 66.72.5 Welch, Denton. Sun [sun above mimeographed poem]. Undated. 1 drawing (ink), 15.1 x 15.5 cm.	Box 1.3
Accession Number: 66.72.6 Welch, Denton. The moon was arched like a finger nail ... [moon above mimeographed poem]. Undated. 1 drawing (ink), 15.5 x 14.7 cm.	Box 1.4
Accession Number: 66.72.7 Welch, Denton. [Still life with fish skeleton, snake, hyacinth]. Undated. 1 drawing (ink), 12.2 x 18.5 cm.	Box 1.5
Accession Number: 66.72.8 Welch, Denton. [Surrealistic design with woman's head; verso: sketch of the word "End"]. Undated. 1 drawing (ink), 18.3 x 8.9 cm.	Box 1.6
Accession Number: 66.72.9 Welch, Denton. [Surrealistic figures and objects]. Undated. 1 drawing (ink), 10.3 x 16.1 cm.	Box 1.7
Accession Number: 66.72.10 Welch, Denton. [Woman reading behind lamp]. Undated. 1 drawing (ink), 19.2 x 13.3 cm.	Box 1.8
Accession Number: 66.72.11 Welch, Denton. [Seated man; verso: 2 sketches of figures]. Undated. 1 drawing (ink), 29 x 22.1 cm.	Box 1.9
Accession Number: 66.72.12 Welch, Denton. [Tea serving with cake, madeleines]. Circa 1946. 1 drawing (ink), 17.5 x 11.1 cm.	Box 1.10
Accession Number: 66.72.13 Welch, Denton. [Surrealistic creature on wheels; flower]. Circa 1944. 1 drawing (ink), 22 x 13.8 cm.	Box 1.11
Accession Number: 66.72.14 Welch, Denton. The End [book illustration design; verso: sketches of objects and figures]. Undated. 1 drawing (ink), 22.8 x 17.7 cm.	Box 1.12

- Accession Number: 66.72.15** Welch, Denton. Suggested frame for Edith Sitwell's Foreword for "Maiden Voyage" by Denton Welch [border design]. Circa 1943. 1 drawing (ink), 18.9 x 12.6 cm. **Box** 1.13
- Accession Number: 66.72.16** Welch, Denton. [Man's head with chalice]. Undated. 1 drawing (ink), 20 x 15.8 cm. **Box** 1.14
- Accession Number: 66.72.17** Welch, Denton. [Grazing cow]. Undated. 1 drawing (ink), 17.7 x 22.9 cm. **Box** 1.15
- Accession Number: 66.72.18** Welch, Denton. [Surrealistic mermaid]. Undated. 1 drawing (ink), 20 x 12.5 cm. **Box** 1.16
- Accession Number: 66.72.19** Welch, Denton. [Design with profile of head of man wearing crown of laurel; verso: ms. poem "By the cold wash Of the fountain waterfall ..."]. Undated. 1 drawing (ink), 12.5 x 20 cm. **Box** 1.17
- Accession Number: 66.72.20** Welch, Denton. [Fish with belt and human face; man and woman in front of house]. Undated. 1 drawing (ink), 10 x 25.5 cm. **Box** 1.18
- Accession Number: 66.72.21** Welch, Denton. [Three flowers; verso: part of holograph letter from Noël Adeney]. Undated. 1 drawing (ink), 11.4 x 17.7 cm. **Box** 1.19
- Accession Number: 66.72.22** Welch, Denton. [Surrealistic graveyard]. Undated. 1 drawing (ink), 17.2 x 20.3 cm. **Box** 1.20
- Accession Number: 66.72.23** Welch, Denton. [Two female nudes and tent; verso: nude torso]. Undated. 1 drawing (ink and watercolor), 17.5 x 18.5 cm. **Box** 1.21
- Accession Number: 66.72.24** Welch, Denton. [Vegetable garden with clothes on stakes]. Undated. 1 painting (watercolor and ink), 22.2 x 27.9 cm. **Box** 1.22
- Accession Number: 66.72.25** Welch, Denton. [Graveyard scene; verso: still life sketch]. Undated. 1 painting (watercolor and crayon), 23.8 x 30.3 cm. **Box** 1.23
- Accession Number: 66.72.26** Welch, Denton. [Neptune with horses; verso: sketches of centaur and other figures]. Undated. 1 painting (watercolor), 26.5 x 37.6 cm. **Box** 1.24
- Accession Number: 66.72.27.1-16** Welch, Denton. [Sketchbook: painting of female nude, drawing of group of 4 figures in classical costumes, sketches of figures, buildings]. Undated. 1 sketchbook (15 drawings, pencil and ink; 1 painting, watercolor), 26.5 x 37.8 cm. **Box** 1.25
- Accession Number: 66.72.28** Welch, Denton. [Nude male bathers in stream]. Undated. 1 painting (oil on board), 40.1 x 58.2 cm. **Location** Flat file

- Accession Number: 66.72.29** Welch, Denton. Loving Cup [still life with cup, bottles, jade plant]. Undated. 1 painting (oil on board), 51.3 x 61 cm. **Location**
Flat file
- Accession Number: 66.72.30** Welch, Denton. [Still life with table setting]. Undated. **Location**
1 painting (oil on board), 34 x 44.5 cm. Flat file
- Accession Number: 66.72.31** Welch, Denton. [Farmhouse with moon and clouds]. **Location**
Undated. 1 painting (oil on board), 47 x 62.4 cm. Flat file
- Accession Number: 66.72.32** Welch, Denton. [Still life with bottle, sea shell, **Location**
toothbrush]. Undated. 1 painting (oil on canvas board), 35.1 x 30.4 cm. Flat file
- Accession Number: 66.72.33** Welch, Denton. [Young man wearing crown of laurel: **Location**
3/4 head portrait; verso: math figures and faint sketches]. Undated. 1 painting (oil on Flat file
masonite), 47 x 37.7 cm.
- Accession Number: 66.72.34** Welch, Denton. [Cubist still life design; verso: vase of **Location**
flowers]. Undated. 1 painting (oil and collage on board), 28 x 50 cm. Flat file
- Accession Number: 66.72.35** Welch, Denton. [Still life in pastel colors, face in **Location**
window above; verso: painter with easel next to brick wall]. Undated. 1 painting (oil Flat file
on board), 45.4 x 55.5 cm.
- Accession Number: 66.72.36** Welch, Denton. [Sea shells with figures; verso: **Location**
surrealistic design with woman's face, wall]. Undated. 1 painting (oil on canvas), 44.2 Flat file
x 50 cm.
- Accession Number: 66.72.37** Welch, Denton. [Still life with pitcher with flowers, **Location**
fruit, knives]. Undated. 1 painting (oil on board), 51.2 x 61.2 cm. Flat file

- Accession Number: 66.72.38** Welch, Denton. [Still life with fruit and flowers, figure standing outside window; verso: still life with 3 green apples, box, can, 2 hands reaching from above]. Undated. 1 painting (oil on board), 54.5 x 45.5 cm. **Location**
Flat file
- Accession Number: 66.72.39** Welch, Denton. [Clothes on clothesline, sundial in garden]. Undated. 1 painting (oil on board), 53.2 x 61 cm. **Location**
Flat file
- Accession Number: 66.72.40** Welch, Denton. [Centaur; verso: still life with stein, ear of corn]. Undated. 1 painting (oil on board), 75.8 x 55.5 cm. **Location**
Flat file
- Accession Number: 66.72.41** Welch, Denton. [Surrealistic design with ear, hinges, plants, table leg; verso: still life with pitcher of flowers, pipe, sea shell, brush]. Undated. 1 painting (oil on board), 61 x 76.8 cm. **Location**
Flat file
- Accession Number: 66.72.42** Welch, Denton. [Three figures at table, dog below; verso: house on road]. Undated. 1 painting (oil on board), 63 x 75.6 cm. **Location**
Flat file
- Accession Number: 66.72.43** Welch, Denton. Farmhouse, Yalding. Undated. 1 painting (oil on board), 76.4 x 61 cm. **Location**
Flat file
- Accession Number: 66.72.44** Welch, Denton. Pond Farm. Undated. 1 painting (oil on board), 55.3 x 81 cm. **Location**
Flat file
- Accession Number: 66.72.45** Welch, Denton. [Small church and cemetery]. Undated. 1 painting (oil on board), 55.6 x 81 cm. **Location**
Flat file
- Accession Number: 66.72.46** Welch, Denton. [Landscape with small buildings, stacks of bricks, barrels, road]. Undated. 1 painting (oil on board), 50.7 x 71 cm. **Location**
Flat file
- Accession Number: 66.72.47** Welch, Denton. [Country houses and trees]. Undated. 1 painting (oil on board), 55.5 x 80.8 cm. **Location**
Flat file

Accession Number: 66.72.48 Welch, Denton. [Standing female playing rebec, seated female at table with 2 candles]. Undated. 1 painting (oil on board), 62.7 x 74 cm. **Location** Flat file

Accession Number: 66.72.49 Welch, Denton. [Pitcher with flowers on table, 4 figures (including woman with violin) around table, nude angel in sky, background landscape with man with bow at pond; verso: 3 nude figures and swan]. Undated. 1 painting (oil on panel), 85.3 x 76.5 cm. **Location** Flat file

Accession Number: 66.72.50 Welch, Denton. [Seated Chinese woman holding blond baby in lap; verso: Outside still life at night, with blue pitcher and fruit]. Undated. 1 painting (oil on board), 92.2 x 61.2 cm. **Location** Flat file

Accession Number: 66.72.51 Welch, Denton. [Still life with squash gourd on book]. Undated. 1 painting (oil on canvas board), 29 x 25.1 cm. **Location** Flat file

Accession Number: 66.72.52 Welch, Denton. The Gilded Serpent. Undated. 1 painting (oil on board), 21.7 x 28.4 cm. **Location** Flat file

Accession Number: 66.72.53 Welch, Denton. [Still life with pitcher of flowers, cabbage, egg with swastikas; verso: vase with lilies, painted over]. Undated. 1 painting (oil on canvas), 45.8 x 30.7 cm. **Location** Flat file

Accession Number: 66.72.54 Welch, Denton. [Still life with tape measure, brush, chess board; verso: still life with mask, plants]. Undated. 1 painting (oil on board), 69 x 58.6 cm. **Location** Flat file

Accession Number: 66.72.55 Welch, Denton. The Moon Was A Great Egg Born In Blood When I Trampled My Baby's Face In The Mud. 1943. 1 painting (watercolor and ink), 25.7 x 36.8 cm. **Box** 1.26

Accession Number: 66.72.56 Welch, Denton. [Four women's heads]. Undated. 1 drawing (ink), 26.7 x 37.5 cm. **Box** 1.27

- Accession Number: 66.72.57** Welch, Denton. [Road leading through farmhouse and buildings, bare trees]. Undated. 1 painting (watercolor), 25.3 x 36.5 cm. **Location**
Flat file
- Accession Number: 68.49** Welch, Denton. Cat Waiting for its Master. 1946. 1 painting (watercolor and ink), 34.5 x 23 cm. **Box**
1.28
- Accession Number: 70.3.1** Welch, Denton. [Self portrait, figure reclining against pillow, hand holding pipe]. Undated. 1 painting (oil on canvas), 50.6 x 71 cm. **Location**
Painting storage
- Accession Number: 70.3.2** Welch, Denton. [Prince Belosselsky: head and shoulders portrait of man with pipe, wearing hat]. Undated. 1 painting (oil on board), 59.8 x 40.7 cm. **Location**
Flat file
- Accession Number: 70.3.3** Welch, Denton. [Unidentified woman, head and upper torso, arms folded; verso: preliminary version of same portrait]. Undated. 1 painting (oil on board), 71.1 x 50.6 cm. **Location**
Flat file
- Accession Number: 70.3.4** Welch, Denton. [Evelyn Sinclair]. Undated. 1 painting (oil on board), 81.6 x 55.5 cm. **Location**
Flat file
- Accession Number: 70.3.5** Welch, Denton. [Flowers in Worcester tea pot]. Undated. 1 painting (oil on board), 71.7 x 50 cm. **Location**
Flat file
- Accession Number: 70.3.6** Welch, Denton. [Capel Church]. Undated. 1 painting (oil on board), 74 x 49.4 cm. **Location**
Flat file
- Accession Number: 70.3.7** Welch, Denton. [Bill Welch holding book, 3/4 head and shoulders portrait]. Undated. 1 painting (oil on board), 61.3 x 43.5 cm. **Location**
Flat file
- Accession Number: 70.3.8** Welch, Denton. [Kentish farm with large house, stables, 2 towers]. Undated. 1 painting (oil on board), 50.9 x 63.7 cm. **Location**
Flat file
- Accession Number: 70.3.9** Welch, Denton. Pigs in an Orchard. Undated. 1 painting (watercolor), 25.3 x 36.4 cm. **Box**
1.29

- Accession Number: 70.3.10** Welch, Denton. [Macbeth in armor]. Undated. 1 drawing (pencil and watercolor), 37.7 x 26.5 cm. **Location**
Flat file
- Accession Number: 84.60** Welch, Denton. [Kneeling woman; verso: sketch of figures?]. Undated. 1 drawing (ink and wash), 37.4 x 26.3 cm. **Box**
1.30
- Accession Number: 84.61** Welch, Denton. [Design with three figures; verso: sketch design with figure]. Undated. 1 drawing (pencil), 26.5 x 37.8 cm. **Box**
1.31
- Accession Number: 96.1** Welch, Denton. [Evelyn Sinclair]. Undated. 1 drawing (ink), 37.5 x 26.6 cm. **Box**
1.32
- Accession Number: 2007.5.1** Welch, Denton. [Flowers in jug; verso: potted plant and fruit]. Undated. 1 painting (oil on board), 60 x 31 cm. **Location**
Flat file
- Accession Number: 2007.5.2** Welch, Denton. [Church interior]. Undated. 1 painting (watercolor), 36.5 x 25 cm. **Box**
1.33
- Accession Number: 2007.5.3** Welch, Denton. [Male nude standing before an easel; verso: reclining figure reading a book]. Undated. 1 drawing (pencil and ink), 36.5 x 25 cm. **Box**
1.34
- Accession Number: 2007.5.4** Welch, Denton. [Male nude sitting before an easel]. Undated. 1 drawing (pencil), 36.5 x 25 cm. **Box**
1.35
- Accession Number: 2007.5.5** Welch, Denton. [Male nude standing]. Undated. 1 drawing (crayon and pencil), 36.5 x 25 cm. **Box**
1.36
- Accession Number: 2007.5.6** Welch, Denton. [Male nude reclining]. Undated. 1 drawing (crayon and pencil), 25 x 36.5 cm. **Box**
1.37

Series II. Works by Other Artists, 1838-1866

Accession Number: 66.72.1-10 Denton, Elizabeth H. Randall. [Leaves, fruits, flowers]. Circa 1866. 10 paintings (watercolor), 35.3 x 25.9 cm. and smaller **Box**
2.4-13

Accession Number: 2007.5.7-9 Larée. [Erotic classical scenes including Hermes, a faun, and a goat]. Undated. 3 prints (engraving), 10.7 x 15.5 cm. and smaller. **Box**
2.14-16

Accession Number: 72.71a Unidentified. Thomas Bassett (circa 1840) of Boston Mass. [miniature portrait of Denton Welch's maternal grandfather]. Circa 1840. 1 painting (oil on paper), 6.9 x 5.5 cm. **Box**
2.1

Accession Number: 72.71b Unidentified. Fourth Prize Chauncy Hall School ... Awarded to Wm Pitt Denton [award medallion]. 1838. 1 medallion, 4.4 cm. in diameter **Box**
2.2