Descriptive Summary

Title: Charles Ricketts Collection, 1888-1931

Date (inclusive): 1888-1931

Collection number: Ricketts Collection

Creator: Ricketts, Charles S., 1866-1931

Extent: 54 items(approximately 6 linear feet

Repository: University of California, Los Angeles. William Andrews Clark Memorial Library

Los Angeles, California 90095-1490

Abstract: This collection contains visual material created by Charles Ricketts, an English printer and artist active in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Physical location: Clark Library

Language of Material: Collection materials in English

Access

Collection is open for research.

Publication Rights

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Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], Charles Ricketts Collection, Ricketts Collection, William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, University of California, Los Angeles.

Acquisition Information


Processing History

Processed by Katie Duvall, October 2010

Biography

Charles de Sousy Ricketts was born on October 2, 1866 in Geneva, Switzerland. In 1882, at the age of sixteen, he met his lifelong partner, artist and lithographer, Charles Haslewood Shannon.

The two lived in London, where together they founded an occasional art journal, The Dial (1889-1897) and designed and illustrated books, including Daphnis and Chloe (1893) and Hero and Leander (1894). During this period Ricketts also worked for commercial publishers designing books, including an edition of Oscar Wilde's The Sphinx (1895).

In partnership with wealthy lawyer William Llewellyn Hacon, Ricketts and Shannon ran their own imprint, called the Vale Press, from 1896-1904. The Vale Press published over eighty volumes.

After the Vale Press closed, Ricketts focused his energies on painting, sculpture and theater design. He was also a great connoisseur of art and, with Shannon, developed an extensive personal collection of drawings, paintings, prints and antiquities. This connoisseurship led to a position as the acting art adviser to the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa from 1924-1931.

In 1929, Shannon's brain was damaged in a fall and parts of their art collection had to be sold to pay for Shannon's care. The financial and emotional strain of Shannon's condition contributed to Rickett's death on October 7, 1931 at his home in London.

Scope and Content

This collection contains visual material created by Charles Ricketts, an English printer and artist active in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This collection includes artwork, costume designs and book designs. Also included are a substantial number of trial proofs of wood engravings created by Ricketts and Charles Haslewood Shannon for their publication of Daphnis and Chloe.

The collection is organized into the following series:

- Series 1. Theater Design, 1909-1916. 7 items
- Series 2. Artwork/ Illustration, 1888-1931. 6 items
Series 3. Book Design, 1892-1894. 5 items
Series 4. Vale Publications, 1893. 32 items, 2 boxes
Series 5. Miscellaneous Material Relating to Charles Ricketts. 2 items

Indexing Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Subjects
Vale Press
McCarthy, Lila Emma, 1875-1960
Shannon, Charles Haslewood 1863-1937
Sperisen, Albert, 1908-1999
Wilde, Oscar, 1854-1900

Genres and Forms
Book design
Costume design
Drawings (visual works)
Lithography
Printmaking
Woodcuts (prints)

Series 1. Theater Design 1909-1916
Physical Description: 7 items
Scope and Content Note
This series contains costume designs created by Charles Ricketts, primarily for Arnold Bennett's production of the play "Judith."
Arrangement
This series is arranged chronologically by date.

Location Ricketts Art Drawer, Folder 1

Three costume designs for Lillah McCarthy in Arnold Bennett's, "Judith" 1909
Physical Description: 3 drawings: watercolor and pencil; images 20 x 12 in., 16 x 12 in., and 22 x 12 in., unframed.
Scope and Content Note
Note
Accession #: MS.1961.008

Location Ricketts Art Drawer, Folder 2

Slave costume for the play "Judith" 1909
Physical Description: 1 drawing: watercolor and pencil; 16 x 12 in., mounted to 25 x 20 in.
Scope and Content Note
Sketch is either for the Arnold Bennett or T. Sturge Moore version of "Judith". Both versions were designed and dressed by Ricketts. Exhibited at Royal Academy commemorative exhibit 1932-1933.
Note
Accession #: MS.1963.009.
| Box 1, Folder 1 | **Sketch of a woman’s costume design showing front and back probably 1909**  
Physical Description: 1 drawing: watercolor and ink on "Lansdowne House" letterhead paper; image 10 x 8 in., unframed  
Scope and Content Note  
Designed for Lillah McCarthy, possibly for Arnold Bennett’s "Judith." From the collection of Lillah McCarthy.  
Note  
Accession #: MS.1961.008 |
| Box 1, Folder 2 | **"Negro Attendant" costume 1909**  
Physical Description: 1 drawing: watercolor and pencil. Portraying a semi-naked figure with amulets, orange head-dress and fan. Title in Ricketts' hand. 16 x 10 in.  
Scope and Content Note  
For Arnold Bennett's "Judith." From the collection of Lillah McCarthy.  
Note  
Accession #: MS.1961.008 |
| Box 1, Folder 3 | **Costume for English actress Penelope Wheeler 1916**  
Physical Description: 1 drawing: watercolor and pencil. 16 x 11 in, mounted to 22 x 17 1/2 in.  
Note  
Accession #: MS.1963.009. |

**Series 2. Artwork/ Illustration 1888-1931**  
Physical Description: 6 items  
Scope and Content Note  
This series contains original artwork created by Charles Ricketts. This includes drawings, lithographs and one sculpture. The sculpture was created as a memorial to Oscar Wilde after his death.  
Arrangement  
This series is arranged chronologically by date.

| Box 1, Folder 4 | **The Story of Pan probably 1888**  
Physical Description: 2 illustrations: pen and ink wash heightened with chinese wash. 5 x 5 in. each, mounted together in 19 x 11 in. board.  
Scope and Content Note  
From the W. Graham Robertson collection.  
Note  
Accession #: MS.1963.009. |
| Box 1, Folder 5 | **The Lover Despairing to Attain circa 1889**  
Physical Description: 1. Original drawing: pen and ink. 10 1/2 x 8 in. 2. An example of the published page.  
Scope and Content Note  
Drawn for “The Magazine of Art.”  
Note  
Accession #: MS.1963.009. |
**Box 1, Folder 6**

**Untitled Illustration for The Magazine of Art probably 1900**

Physical Description: 1 drawing: pen and ink; 10 1/2 x 8 in., mounted to 18 x 14 1/4 in., unframed

Scope and Content Note
For "The Magazine of Art."

Note
Accession #: MS.1963.009.

**Box 1, Folder 7**

**Finis circa 1900-1931**

Physical Description: Original lithograph in black and white, portraying figure of Death. 12 3/4 x 9 3/4 in. mounted to 20 x 15 1/4 in.

Note
Accession #: MS.1963.009

**Location Framed Artwork**

**Immanent Will, or It 1914**

Physical Description: 1 print: black & white lithograph; 23 1/2 x 18 in., in wood frame 27 x 20 1/2 in.

Scope and Content Note
Original poster advertising Harley Granville-Barker’s production of Thomas Hardy’s, The Dynasts. Includes Thomas Hardy’s signature.

**Location South Bookroom**

**Silence 1905**

Physical Description: 1 statuette: bronze; 14 in. tall

Scope and Content Note
Statue created as a memorial to Oscar Wilde after his death.

**Series 3. Book Design 1892-1894**

Physical Description: 5 items

Scope and Content Note
This series contains things related to book designs created by Charles Ricketts for commercial publishers. This includes cover proofs and illustrations for editions of Oscar Wilde’s work.

Arrangement
This series is arranged chronologically by date.

**Box 1, Folder 8**

**Proof designs for an edition of Oscar Wilde’s "Poems" 1892**

Physical Description: 3 items: 1. Proof of cover design: gilt on binding cloth; 11 1/4 x 7 3/4 in. 2. Rough pull of earlier design in red; ink on paper. 3. Prospectus

Scope and Content Note
The rough pull in red is from the collection of C. Elkin Mathews.

**Box 1, Folder 9**

**On the reedy banks 1894**

Physical Description: 1 drawing: pen and ink on pink paper; image 8 x 6 in.

Scope and Content Note
Original drawing for Oscar Wilde’s, The Sphinx. Illustration #5 as appears in book.

Note
Accession #: MS.1963.009
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Series 3. Book Design 1892-1894</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The burden of the cross 1894</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Description: 1 drawing: pen and ink on vellum, 4 colors; 8 1/2 x 6 in., unframed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustration for Oscar Wilde's, The Sphinx. This was not used in the final publication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accession #: MS.1963.009.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Series 4. Vale Publications 1893</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Daphnis and Chloe 1893</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Description: 32 prints: black and white woodcuts; various sizes, mounted to 12 1/2 x 19 in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accession #’s: MS.1965.003-plates 1, 2, 4, 10-13, 15, 16, 18, 20, 28, 31, 37; MS.1968.009-plates 7, 14, 17, 22, 25, 32; MS.1968.010-plates 3, 9, 19, 21, 23, 33; MS.1969.001-plates 6, 8, 24, 29, 30, 36</td>
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<tr>
<th>Series 5. Miscellaneous Material Relating to Charles Ricketts</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Guests at Daphnis &amp; Chloe's Wedding Feast undated</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Description: 2 prints: black &amp; white, red print on paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printed by Harold Seeger and Albert Sperisen for members of the Roxburghe Club.</td>
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</tbody>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>An Exhibition of Books Designed by Charles Ricketts from the Collection of A.E. Gallatin 1946</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical Description: 1 pamphlet: black &amp; white</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Content Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibition brochure from The Houghton Library at Harvard University.</td>
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</tbody>
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