

FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869-1947 Aotearoa New Zealand]

The Bird Bath 1942

Oil on canvas

Private Collection, Dunedin

FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869-1947 Aotearoa New Zealand]

The Red Elevator 1942

Gouache

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery

Purchased 1966 with funds from the Dunedin Public Art
Gallery Society

FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869-1947 Aotearoa New Zealand]

Green Valley, Carmarthenshire 1942

Gouache

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery

Purchased 1967 with funds from the Dunedin Public Art Gallery Society

Hodgkins often wrote about the impacts and strains of the war – of nights spent sitting in ‘darkened rooms, gas masks handy’. She would take many trips as a respite to the daily realities of war in Corfe. In the early 1940s she made several trips to Bradford-on-Tone in Somerset where she had access to a studio called The Croft, owned by her friend, Geoffrey Gorer. In another trip, Hodgkins spent time in Wales, writing letters from Carmarthenshire in 1942 she noted:

‘I am here & *really resting* brain and body... Very pleasant & friendly & comfy here – old Farm turned into Inn unpretentious – clean – good food & nice folk... To me it is paradise after Corfe.’ (c.16 September 1942)

In 1943, Hodgkins had an exhibition at Lefevre Gallery in London titled *Gouaches by Frances Hodgkins – A New Series of Gouaches Painted during 1942-3*. This sellout exhibition included *Green Valley, Carmarthenshire* (1942) and *Welsh Farm* (1943). Hodgkins received a cheque for just over £290. Hodgkins’ exhibition was shown alongside the exhibition *Picasso and his Contemporaries*.

FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869-1947 Aotearoa New Zealand]

Corfe Castle 1943

Oil on canvas

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery

Purchased 1967 with funds from the Dunedin Public Art Gallery Society

Frances Hodgkins first spent time in Corfe in the mid-1930s, where she processed and produced work that reflected upon her recent time in Spain. Writing from Corfe in 1936, Hodgkins wrote of 'looking for a quiet corner where I can settle down & chrystallize (sic) the after glow of my Spanish memories – before they grow dim'. Over time, she moved between painting from memory and painting the landscapes, objects, and people in her immediate surroundings. While Hodgkins never stayed in one place for long, she settled in Corfe in 1939 and was based there until 1945. She worked in a studio that was once a nonconformist chapel, with high ceilings and central heating.

'I was feeling very much under the weather both physically & otherwise but have picked up wonderfully since coming here and am now doing quite good work under the spell of the place & general atmosphere of calm & simplicity: boredom, of course for anyone but a fool artist waiting believingly for inspiration... I do better in every way by remaining out of London – I hope I am now in for a steady flow of work...'

(Highlands, Corfe Castle, Dorset, 20 December 1934)

FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869-1947 Aotearoa New Zealand]

The Weir 1943

Oil on plywood

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery

Purchased 1967 with funds from the Dunedin Public Art Gallery Society

On 26th July 1943, Hodgkins wrote of a major disaster with her studio in Corfe. 'Without warning of any kind the roof of my poor old studio did a slide into the court yard below – happily with no injury to self or pictures but with great inconvenience'. In her studio at this time was a series of paintings that looked to the weir, a low dam, as subject matter. In these works, Hodgkins used weirs and waterways to experiment with composition, perspective, and form.

FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869-1947 Aotearoa New Zealand]

Circular Barn 1939

Gouache

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery

Purchased 1971 with funds from the Dunedin Public Art Gallery Society

In 1939, Hodgkins received an invitation to represent Britain at the 22nd Venice Biennale (1940), alongside Edward Wardworth, Frank Dolson, Alfred Munnings, Glyn Philpot and Duncan Grant. She completed twenty-six works for the Biennale, and while Britain withdrew because of the war, the exhibition was shown at Hertford House in London. *Circular Barn* (1939) was one of the works selected for the Biennale. Works from this period emphasize Hodgkins' experimentation with abstracted forms, angular shapes, and a more muted colour palette of greys, browns and black.

FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869-1947 Aotearoa New Zealand]

The New Rick 1942

Gouache

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery

Purchased 1971 with funds from the Dunedin Public Art Gallery Society

In *The New Rick* (1942) and *Corfe Castle* (1943) Hodgkins populated the landscapes with three key motifs – church, castle, and elements of rural life. Both of these works speak to the ways in which she would approach her source material, playing with scale, perspective, and geography. Built in the 11th century, the Corfe Castle ruin is perched on a hill overlooking the village of the same name and appears in many of Hodgkins' works.

FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869-1947 Aotearoa New Zealand]

Welsh Farm 1943

Gouache

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FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869-1947 Aotearoa New Zealand]

Mangolds, Purbeck 1944

Gouache

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FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869-1947 Aotearoa New Zealand]

The Baker's Shop 1945

Gouache

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery

Purchased 1971 with funds from the Dunedin Public Art Gallery Society

Surrounded by snow, this Corfe bakery was painted at a time when the realities and rationing of war time were an ongoing consideration. In a letter written to her brother William Hodgkins on 1 June 1943, she spoke of the food parcels sent from Aotearoa New Zealand:

'The only really 100% good food I get is what you send – N.Z tinned goods are supreme – especially the meat – cheese etc. Cheese a bit mouldy (sic) if it is delayed in the post – but good. American sardines are the latest delicacy (!) we are sampling – price 5d. Even the cats wont touch them... You will notice that food is uppermost in my mind – my baser side – not hungry but just bored – your gifts are like corn in Egypt'.

(Dorset, 1 June 1943)

FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869-1947 Aotearoa New Zealand]

Flowers and a Cat 1941

Gouache on paper

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery

Given 1982 by Mary, Dora and Esmond de Beer through
the National Art Collections Fund, London

Benefactors and siblings, Esmond, Mary, and Dora de Beer, generously gifted many works to the Dunedin Public Art Gallery collection. The strength of the Gallery's European holdings is, in part, due to the incredible generosity of the de Beer family. In 1982, following the death of Mary (d.1981) and Dora (d.1982), Esmond offered the family's entire collection to three institutions in Ōtepoti Dunedin (Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Otago Museum, and the University of Otago Library). The Gallery received 172 works, including Hodgkins' *Flowers and a Cat* (1941). While many of Hodgkins' works from the early 1940s looked to the landscape, still life painting became an important focus during the war – when Hodgkins was often forced to stay indoors.

FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869-1947 Aotearoa New Zealand]

Landscape with engine 1941

Gouache

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery

Given 2002 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade

FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869-1947 Aotearoa New Zealand]

Purbeck Study

Oil on canvas

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery

Purchased 2015 with funds from the I M Richdale Trust
through the Dunedin Public Art Gallery Society

FELIX H MAN

[1893-1985 German]

**Frances Mary Hodgkins painting in
her studio at Corfe Castle**

Photograph

Photographs of Frances Hodgkins. Ref: 35mm-00339-D.

Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.
