

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Gateway on the Riviera 1901

Watercolour on paper

On loan from MTG Hawke's Bay, collection of Hawke's Bay Museums Trust, Ruawharo Tā-ū-rangi

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Although ill for most of her journey from New Zealand, on 30 March 1901 Hodgkins was able to disembark in France, writing later to her mother:

Marseilles is the most beautiful old town imaginable. I thought I had never seen anything so picturesque as it looked as we approached it in the early morning under a sky of true Mediterranean blue, blue-green water, white quays . . . I began to understand the witchery an old continental town must have for artists.

*Gateway on the Riviera*, circa 1901 reflects the colour and energy of the town. Little then did she know that her instant attraction would become a lifelong passion.

## **FRANCES HODGKINS**

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

### **Untitled [Mother and Child] 1903**

Watercolour

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 2007

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The rich rose madder tones of the mother's clothes and her cross-legged position suggests that this watercolour was created while Hodgkins was in Morocco. As a woman artist, Hodgkins was able to gain a perspective on Moroccan women's private lives denied to male outsiders. Both mother and child stare intently at the artist, appearing slightly distrustful of this novel experience.

## **FRANCES HODGKINS**

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

### **Mother and Child circa 1921**

Watercolour

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 1958

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# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## The Dye Yards

[The Dyer's Courtyard] 1903

Watercolour on paper

On loan from The Field Collection Trust and Mahara Gallery, Kāpiti Coast District Gallery

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Hodgkins wrote of Tetuán:

. . . the whiteness & pearliness of the town simply defies you — you can't get it pure & brilliant enough & the shadows drive one silly — you race after them, pause one frenzied moment to decide on a blue mauve yellow or green shadow — when up & over the wall & away & the wretched things gone for that day at least & you are gazing at a glaring blank wall & wondering why on earth you ever started to sketch it. Cubes & domes are the general outline of things & the intoxicated pergola props take off the stiffness of things & help out compositions & foregrounds in a wonderful way.

## FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

### **Study of a Soudanese [sic] 1903**

Watercolour on paper

On loan from Jonathan Grant Gallery, Auckland

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Although sometimes identified as Absolom, an Arab boy who became Hodgkins' and Mrs Ashington's guide in Tangier, the facial features of this sitter identify him as African hence the title of the work. Hodgkins had started painting larger-scale portraits before leaving New Zealand, her sensitive handling demonstrating her empathy with the sitters. Here, the dignified sitter looks down, as if unused to having a woman gaze at him from close quarters. By dividing the background between yellow ochre and viridian, Hodgkins adds dynamism to the composition.

## FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

### **Untitled [Boats by the Harbour Wall] circa 1911**

Watercolour and charcoal

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 2007

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Susannah 1902

Watercolour

On loan from a private collection, Hamilton

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*Susannah*, 1902 was begun in Penzance, but possibly finished in France, as the girl is wearing a traditional Breton cap. The watercolour was first exhibited at the New Plymouth Carnival and Exhibition of Art and Industries in 1904 and won First Prize, affording some consolation to Hodgkins as her sister had sold it for very little. Hodgkins wrote indignantly from San Remo:

Susanne was the outcome of two months hard work . . . Don't think that because my work looks easy that it is so – remember what Sheridan said when a friend complimented him on the easy style of his books – 'Then all I can say [is] that easy reading is damned hard writing.'

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Venice 1906

Watercolour on paper

On loan from the Ravenscar Trust, Christchurch

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To put Venice into words is impossible,  
likewise is it impossible to put it into paint...  
There is a fairy enchantment about it, a sort  
of Wizardy that can't be expressed. It is better  
to be silent about it all than to use the wrong  
word or the wrong colour. All day & all night  
there is a laplap of the water trying to get in  
the front door and opposite my window is the  
Salute, & beyond again the Doge's Palace &  
the blue domes of St Marks.

– Letter to Rachel Hodgkins from Casa Frollo,  
Giudecca, 18 April 1906

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Untitled [The Watermelon Seller]

circa 1903

Watercolour

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 2007

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Markets became favourite subjects for Hodgkins in her early years in France and Morocco. In Arles, November 1901, she described the market hall in a letter home:

... the butcher's stall, made to look as red as possible with crimson colored tables & awnings . . . flanked by the poulterer on the left who is always in a cloud of feathers and distressed cackling & gurgling from the strangling victims. Then comes the green grocer with her two pretty daughters always beaming from behind a barricade of pumpkins, melons, pomegranates, figs and green stuff. This is my favourite stall and I have made many studies of it.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Untitled [Checking the Baskets]

1906

Watercolour and charcoal

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased with assistance from the Auckland Decorative & Fine Arts Society, 2007

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In Avignon in 1906, Hodgkins described how she was working out of doors before the the autumn became too advanced:

The vintage is over & the last grape converted into wine. It has been a plenteous year... It was an interesting & primitive scene watching the men, who might easily have belonged to any century, handling the grapes with purple stained hands, weighing them & sending them off in laden lumbring carts generally painted the brightest blue, drawn by white mules already much overburdened by heavy but very picturesque harness in which bells play a part.



# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Untitled [Fisherman Sewing a Sail]

circa 1911

Watercolour and charcoal

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 2007

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Canadian artist Emily Carr joined Hodgkins painting class in Concarneau in 1911, later writing that they had scrambled in a number of unlikely places to sketch, including a sailmaker's loft. Here you can see Hodgkins experimenting with different approaches to figuration. The sailmaker's garments and tools laid beside him on his bench are detailed, contrasting with the almost abstract mass of white for the sail in the foreground. The depth of the space beyond, where shadowy shapes suggest the clutter of the workroom, is mediated by the elderly man's squat body, which serves as a fulcrum for space and light.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## The Hill Top circa 1909

Watercolour on paper

Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, purchased  
1913 by public subscription

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In *The Hill Top*, circa 1909, a single figure stands out against the sky, gazing into the distance, while her companions are relaxing on the grass, away from the wind's buffets. Here, only one small girl is included, firmly clasping her sunhat to her head.

In *April*, circa 1909, one young woman grips the hand of a girl, a smaller child on the left holding up one arm to shield her eyes from the sun. Another young woman looks away, following the gaze of a little girl pointing out of the picture frame. In the foreground, a beautifully rendered hound glances at the artist, completing a circular effect as our eye is led from figure to figure and back again, as if they are dancing in the wind.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Untitled [Summer Garden]

circa 1911

Watercolour and charcoal

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 2007

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One of 20 works from a folio of Hodgkins' paintings discovered outside of Paris in 2007, in *Untitled [Summer Garden]*, circa 1911 the artist demonstrates her bravura use of colour, saturating the paper with pigment, and capturing the warmth of a summer's day. It is only after several moments that we fully make out the two women seated in the shade, and the large-wheeled perambulator beside them.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Untitled [The Piano Lesson]

circa 1911

Watercolour and charcoal

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 2007

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Vertical washes have been used to rapidly map the walls of the large salon in which these women are sitting, the windows thrown open to the garden beyond, allowing cooling breezes to enter. Curving lines of colour dance and tumble across the middle ground, and while the two figures at the piano are clearly defined, the woman bending over the table on the left takes longer to identify. Of the works discovered in Paris, this is the only watercolour that Hodgkins has signed, indicating that she considers the work finished. She often only signed a work when it had been acquired by a collector.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Untitled [Laying the Table]

circa 1912

Watercolour, charcoal and gouache  
Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of Maurice and  
Beverley Allen, 2007

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In 1909, Hodgkins described in a letter a portrait she was painting of her friend Rosamond Marshall, tossing a salad in the dining room of her hotel with a *bonne* (maid) in the background. In another version, Rosamond is alone at the table, wearing a striking large hat, a stuffed bird skimming across its front. The handling of the objects across the front of the table is similar, with a fine brush used for delicate outlines which are then filled in with broad washes. In this preparatory sketch, only the maid stands in the background, somewhat closed off by the vase of flowers and bottles in front of her.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Le Reveil (Mother and Child)

circa 1910

Watercolour

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 1955

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The 'Paris Letter' in the 29 October 1910 edition of American Art News, reviewing the annual exhibition of the Société Internationale des Aquarellistes at the Galerie Georges Petit, singled out Hodgkins for praise:

. . . for one is not accustomed to expect so many good things in the lighter medium . . . Perhaps the most daring in originality, are the works of Frances Hodgkins, an impressionist to be admired for exquisite free treatment of light and atmosphere. 'Le Déjeuner' is an interior remarkable for its play of flickering sunlight and shadow and graceful movement of figures. 'Marie' is a harmony of pearly tones and is contrasted by 'Le Réveil,' a figure work of a child and mother in low tone.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Untitled [Woman with a Mirror]

circa 1912

Watercolour and charcoal

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

purchased with assistance from Georgina Ralston, 2007

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Hodgkins' deftness at using the white of the paper to suggest the volume of fabric in works such as *Woman with a Mirror*, circa 1912, its form defined by only a few rapid dashes of paint, is a *tour de force*. This watercolour stands out among her works done in France. Introspective in mood, the figure is no longer in the flush of youth. We are invited to consider how the woman feels about her reflection in her mirror, adding a dimension not often found in her portraiture, and possibly reflecting Hodgkins' own growing awareness of the passing of time.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Untitled [Still Life with a Bunch of Flowers] circa 1908

Gouache and watercolour on cardboard

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 2007

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Objects on mantelpieces were popular subjects throughout Hodgkins' career. Here a sheaf of pink flowers, possibly carnations, lie cocooned in their white tissue. The tall glass vase for which they are destined stands beside them, its reflection glistening in the mirror behind. Compositions such as this, with their handling of light and reflection, were a pleasing alternative to scenes that called for deep space, indicating that the artist is very close to her subject matter.



# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## The Edwardians circa 1918

Oil on canvas

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of Lucy Carrington Wertheim, 1969

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The sitters of this double portrait, Edith Skinner and her husband Edgar, became close friends and supporters of Hodgkins. A retired bank manager turned artist, Edgar Skinner was responsible for organising artists' allotments during the war years.

The influences of Paris underlie the compositional formality of *The Edwardians*, circa 1918, with its dense patterns and brilliant colours set off by bold passages in black, which pay homage to Pierre Bonnard and Édouard Vuillard. Hodgkins has broken up Edgar Skinner's face with smudges and overpainting, while Mrs Skinner's is treated differently. A blue outline, white highlights amplifying her plump cheeks and lilac shadows are reigned in by the black toque perched jauntily over her forehead. The maid, with her tray of wine carafe and glasses, adds animation to the scene.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## **Ann, Catherine and Lucy 1913–19**

Tempera on gesso on muslin on plywood mounted on chipboard

Purchased 1975. Collection: Queensland Art Gallery

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*Ann, Catherine and Lucy, 1913–19* was the standout work among Hodgkins' paintings included in the 1919 Women's International Arts Club exhibition at the Grafton Galleries, London. Hodgkins wittily confuses the viewer, because the third 'sitter' is the rag doll balanced on the nearer girl's knee, while another doll can just be made out in the blonde girl's arms. Both refugees and locals were happy to earn a few pence by serving as models. The two girls seem swamped by their oversized garments and the swathes of fabric that surround them, suggesting that they are props supplied by the artist rather than their own clothes.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## By the Brook 1917

Watercolour

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 1936

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Young, modern and lively, Mrs Hellyer asked Hodgkins to stay at nearby Port Isaac in August 1917, after she had completed a bold oil portrait of her in the studio in St Ives. Commenting on a commission to paint the whole family at their house in Port Isaac, Hodgkins wrote:

. . . in the garden in the hammock, round the tea table, sunshine effect, which came off happily & they were awfully pleased. It was all very cheery & comfy . . . I painted for 3 days then a day off.

*By the Brook*, 1917 is one of a group of these rapid watercolours, the black and white spotted blouse easily distinguished in each of them. The figure in the blue-spotted dress and purple cloche hat is probably Mrs Hellyer.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Lancashire Family 1927

Oil on canvas

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 1963

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The working women of Manchester were favourite models for Hodgkins. Many wore shawls over their heads, reminiscent of the Mediterranean peasant tradition found in many parts of Europe. Like *Spanish Shrine*, circa 1933, the woman becomes both mother and icon, the gesture of her cupped hand being particularly suggestive. Hodgkins later recounted the painting's history in a letter to Eardley Knollys:

I remember about that period I had artistic yearnings to paint Lancashire Mill Girls: some of them were raging beauties. I loved painting piled up family groups. This must have been one of them – It was shown at the London Group & skied. Later it was lent to the 2 scallywag young men at 3d. a week, who finally vanished to S Africa. I missed their pleasant company but I missed my picture more.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## **Still Life: Anemones and Hyacinths** circa 1928

Oil on canvas

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 1956

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While the two vases of flowers in *Still Life: Anemones and Hyacinths*, circa 1928 sit on a tray which rests in turn on a table, there is no attempt to give depth to the space behind the group. Instead the artist has used a flat bed of colour which seems to have flowed up from the surface of the table itself. On the lower right hand side, a folded cloth seems to hang precipitously off one corner, as if draping down into our space, a technique that goes back to 17th-century Dutch still-life painters.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## *The Birdcage* circa 1929

Oil on canvas

On loan from The Fletcher Trust, Auckland

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*The Birdcage*, circa 1929 formerly owned by Hodgkins' one-time friend and dealer Lucy Wertheim, was included in the *Frances Hodgkins (1869–1947) Centenary Memorial Exhibition* in 1969. An experimental painting, there is no attempt to depict space apart from the surface of the table, and yet it is implied by the birdcage, which appears to float against the richly impastoed pale turquoise background. Even stranger, the porcelain figurine has its own spotlight, which seems to emanate from the base of the birdcage, creating a rather surreal note, while the twisted cloth wrapping around the vase is painted in a manner which suggests it could be carved wood or stone.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Bridge Near Rosthwaite, Borrowdale 1926

Watercolour

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 1956

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Although only there for Whitsunday weekend (22–24 May), 1926, Hodgkins managed at least one watercolour, choosing her favourite motif of a bridge, this time over the river Derwent in Rosthwaite, Borrowdale in the Lake District. She had travelled up from Manchester with her friends, Jane Saunders and Hannah Ritchie, who presumably also produced sketches of the location. In a letter Hodgkins described how her mood had to be in tune with the surroundings in order for her brushstrokes to capture the atmospheric qualities of any given spot – what it felt like to be there rather than just what she saw before her.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## **Mother and Child** circa 1928

Pencil

On loan from a private collection, Auckland

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This deliciously plump baby, with its pom-pomed hat and laced boots, is one of many that Hodgkins portrayed throughout the 1920s, although they seem to have disappeared from her oeuvre by 1932. The artist juxtaposes the outlines used to depict the baby with the more heavily modelled treatment of the shy mother, not least her fashionable striped coat and patterned dress. Hodgkins has brilliantly captured the baby's determined efforts to escape the constraints of its mother's tightly clasped hands.



# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Still Life in Front of Courtyard

circa 1930

Oil on canvas

On loan from Catherine and Martin Spencer, Auckland

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The courtyard in this work lies across the River Stour from Willy Lott's cottage at Flatford Mill, first made famous by John Constable. Hodgkins seems to have inserted the larger urn of peonies into the space to add a rosy warmth to the prevailing cooler tones. Achieving the colour harmonies she required was problematic for her when she was away from the Mediterranean, and she complained to Lucy Wertheim:

I am glad of the quiet & deep peace of this place but anywhere in England is unsympathetic & difficult for an artist – the sea of green everywhere – the red brick.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Portrait of Annie Coggan (Farmer's Daughter) 1929–30

Oil on canvas laid on board

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery

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There are two versions of this portrait, this other quieter in tone. There is a radiance to the sitter's face, created by lighter tones on the contours of her cheeks and neck offsetting her rosy cheeks, while the sky behind her head is a soft golden yellow. A gentle smile plays across Coggan's lips.

After Hodgkins' death in 1947, her friend David Brynley revealed a clue to the title of the work. Both he and Hodgkins admired 'Blackmware Maidens', a poem by the Dorset poet William Barnes:

...An' all the farmers' housen show'd /  
Their daughters at the door; / You'd cry to  
bachelors at hwome— / Here come: 'ithin an  
hour / You'll vind ten maidens to your mind,  
/ In Blackmwore by the Stour.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Village Scene, Peaslake circa 1929

Chalk

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of the Friends of the Auckland Art Gallery, 1988

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In the summer of 1929, Dorothy Selby and Frances Hodgkins rented a summer cottage at Birch Wood, Haywards Heath, making day trips out to local Sussex villages. Hodgkins relished the ‘. . . great panorama of the Downs – nothing but space & air’.

The conical roof of the oast house (used for drying hops) near the centre of this drawing is typical of those found in Sussex. The scene is very similar to a postcard of Peaslake from the same vantage point, but Hodgkins has stripped out some of the trees and shrubbery to produce a pared-back, more coherent composition.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## **Stormy Sunset over Peaslake Surrey** circa 1929

Pencil on paper

Hocken Collections, Uare Taoka o Hākena, University of Otago

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The way local buildings nestled into the rise and fall of the land, and the diverse moods of the countryside, charmed Hodgkins during her stay in Sussex, inspiring a number of lyrical, highly finished drawings that are readily identified among her other works. Dark smudged lines demarcate the folds in the hills, and while the walls of the houses are in shadow, late evening light has escaped the stormy clouds overhead to bounce off some of the rooftops.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Jug of Flowers circa 1928–29

Pencil on paper

Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, gift of the Friends of the National Art Gallery, 1988

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Here, the circular form of the lipped tray resting on the larger round table sets up a satisfying rhythm that is mediated by the individuality of blooms and the highly patterned jug and mugs in the foreground. At this stage the tables Hodgkins used are still recognised as such in her drawings, but in the oil paintings that followed, the objects are gradually set free from their surfaces. Again, light effects seen through the trees suggest late afternoon viewed from a shady position.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## **A Country Window** circa 1929

Oil on canvas

On loan from the Stevenson Collection, Marlborough

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At the end of the 1920s Hodgkins gradually evolved an innovative form of composition in which still life moved from the surface of an interior table or window ledge out into the landscape itself. In some works, dishes of fruit, patterned jugs of leaves and ornate dishes are grouped on an identifiable table, in others they sit on a patterned cloth that merges with the landscape itself. In the background of several works deriving from her time at Haywards Heath in Sussex she included the half-timber houses seen throughout the county. The thick impasto lines of the sky prefigure the horizontal bands of colour used in a number of her St Tropez paintings in 1931.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Still Life with Eggs and Mushrooms circa 1929

Oil on canvas

On loan from Royal Pavilion and Museums, Brighton & Hove

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A summer painting, *Still Life with Eggs and Mushrooms*, circa 1929 appears deceptively simple. It is uncertain whether the horizontal boards are part of a table or a veranda, and the patterned rectangle on the right might be either a cloth or perhaps a woven mat. The viewpoint from above suggests Hodgkins has laid out the ensemble at a lower level, but what are the three vertical strips beside the vase on the far right? And was the shirt sleeve dangling on the left a precursor for the cloths that weave in and out of her paintings over the next few years?

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Flowers in a Vase circa 1929

Oil on canvas

UK Government Art Collection

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The period around 1930 is perhaps the easiest in which to trace the development of what was to become a leitmotif in Hodgkins paintings, the still life in the landscape. In *Flowers in a Vase*, circa 1929 the exuberant bouquet is placed on a table inside, while flowers seem to have grown onto the green walls or shutters either side of a window. Key to the work is the curtain which appears to have blown out of the upper window, for shortly Hodgkins was to move her still lifes out into the landscape, sometimes taking the draped cloth with her.



# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## **Still Life** circa 1930

Oil on canvas

On loan from The Fletcher Trust, Auckland

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Compared to *Flowers in a Vase*, circa 1929 the table in this painting is almost vertical, a device sometimes used by Georges Braque. *Like Still Life with Eggs and Mushrooms*, circa 1929 (from the same year and also on display nearby) the paved brick courtyard is clearly defined, but Hodgkins has now introduced a viridian curtain that appears to hang down from the sky, cleverly bringing an internal motif into an outdoor composition. She uses the same curtain in a second version, but replaces the red house in the background with a white chateau.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Elizabeth and Sara Martin

circa 1929

Charcoal and pencil on paper

On loan from Royal Pavilion and Museums, Brighton & Hove

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Ethiopian-born, British-educated physician Hakim Workneh Eshete (also known as Dr Charles Martin) sent several of the children from his first marriage to England for their education. Elizabeth (also known as Elsie) and Sara studied at The Vyne, a private girls school which was part of a huge Elizabethan mansion in Hampshire, where Hodgkins stayed for several weeks in the summer of 1929. Nieces of Ras Tafari (later Haile Selassi, Emperor of Ethiopia), the sisters fascinated Hodgkins. According to the headmistress Lucie James, Hodgkins spent 'a long time studying the little girls in whom she shared a strong interest'.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Portrait of Elsie Barling circa 1929

Pencil

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of Mr Gerald Selby, from the estate of Dorothy Selby, 1954

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This portrait of Hodgkins' friend, Elsie Barling, was done when they were staying in the cottage at Haywards Heath, Sussex in the summer of 1929. According to Barling, she was descending the little winding staircase and the artist asked if she would stay where she was for a moment while she drew her. The work was later given to a fellow guest, Dorothy Selby, with the inscription 'Of a friend to a friend by a friend'.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Woman with Pearls (Dorothy Selby)

circa 1930

Pencil

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of Mr Gerald Selby, from the estate of Dorothy Selby, 1954

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As with so many of Hodgkins' friends, Dorothy Selby was initially her student. She started acquiring small works by Hodgkins in the mid-1920s, building up a collection of 10 or more, which she often kept as mementoes of places in France – Martigues, Tréboul, Concarneau – where they spent time together, but also to support Hodgkins in times of financial stress. At one point Hodgkins stored some watercolours in the Selby's basement at Egerton Tce in the West End, London, and she also used Selby's address as a *poste restante*.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## **The Mill House** circa 1938–39

Oil on hardboard

On loan from the Ravenscar Trust, Christchurch

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Originally owned by Hodgkins' potter friend Amy Krauss, *The Mill House*, circa 1938–39 has been difficult to locate, in part because Hodgkins was so fond of mills as subject matter. Being more abstract in treatment, stylistically this does not resemble her other mills in identified locations. Hodgkins focuses on the mass of each of the farm buildings, and the horses in the foregrounds are like brown ghosts reflected on the water. She returned to the location in the mid-1940s, producing a very different rendering, yet retaining the curving rumps of the horses in the foreground.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## **Landscape with Still Life** circa 1930

Oil on canvas

South Australian Government Grant 1959

Art Gallery of South Australia

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The fusion of still life with landscape was a distinctive theme of Hodgkins' work from the late 1920s. She releases the still life from its typical domestic interior setting and places it outdoors, altering the scale so that the still-life objects appear to loom above the miniature trees. *Landscape with Still Life*, circa 1930 shares the striped treatment of the sky that she continues to use in *St Tropez* in 1931.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## **Berries and Laurel** circa 1930

Oil on canvas

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased with funds from the William James Jobson Trust, 1982

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Painted from a similar vantage point at Geoffrey Gorer's cottage, 'The Croft', at Bradford-on-Tone, there are both similarities and differences between *Landscape with Still Life* and *Berries and Laurel*, both circa 1930. The floral-painted ottoman which serves as a base for the still-life objects becomes a plain cloth in *Berries and Laurel*, animated by *sgraffito* lines scratched into the surface by the end of Hodgkins' brush. The central white vase is moved to the left, and various pots with foliage have been added to the composition. The land seems to rise up to the white cottage which draws our eye into the distance.

# CEDRIC MORRIS

[1889–1982 Wales, England]

## Portrait of Frances Hodgkins 1928

Oil on canvas

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased with funds from the William James Jobson Trust, 1954

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Cedric Morris met Hodgkins in 1919 at Newlyn, Cornwall, and they started a tradition of making portraits of each other. Together with his partner, Arthur Lett Haines (more commonly known as Lett Haines), Morris was to remain a life-long friend.

This portrait dates from August/September 1928, when Hodgkins was living in Bloomsbury, London, a short distance from Morris's home. The combination of colours and surface textures is characteristic of both of their styles between 1927 and 1932. Expatriate New Zealand photographer, Donald Glass said of Hodgkins:

She was a very, very witty woman . . . she was an absolute original, her painting was original, anything she had to say was original, even her dress.



# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Portrait of Cedric Morris circa 1930

Oil on canvas

On loan from Towner Art Gallery, Eastbourne, UK

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Hodgkins stayed at the Pound, where Cedric Morris and Arthur Lett Haines were living in 1930. A large 16th-century farmhouse, it boasted a superb garden front and back, with sweeping views of the Stour valley. Morris was an expert iris grower and horticulturist, and many of the species he cultivated ending up in his still life paintings. Here, Morris nurses his macaw Rubeo, whose name he also gave to one of the irises he propagated. It was a discussion in their garden that led Hodgkins to advise Lucy Wertheim to call her new gallery by her own name, rather than 'Young Masters'.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## **Blue Barge** circa 1932

Watercolour, pencil, chalk and bodycolour on paper  
On loan from Jonathan Grant Gallery, Auckland

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One of Hodgkins' preferred places to teach summer classes in England was Bridgnorth in Shropshire. She first took a group there in 1926, returning for a longer period in 1932. She and her pupils stayed outside the town, walking across the fields to her favoured location on the towpath beside the Severn River. The terrace of a riverside inn allowed the group to work in comfort, affording views of the pleasure boats that worked up and down the river in summer. Tall warehouses line the opposite bank, the steep hill rising up to Bridgnorth's ruined castle on the skyline.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Olives, St Tropez 1920

Black chalk on paper

Hocken Collections, Uare Taoka o Hākena, University of Otago

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In 1921, Hodgkins spent time in the South of France working around St Tropez and then Cassis. She produced a number of sketches in black chalk, introducing strong black lines and definite tones, as demonstrated in this drawing of the olive fields surrounding St Tropez. These stark, light-filled winter landscapes initiate the beginning of a decade of experimentation in Hodgkins' work. Topographical and strongly expressive of place, *Olives, St Tropez*, 1920 stands in marked contrast to her English painting.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Landscape Cassis 1920

Ink on paper

On loan from a private collection, Dunedin

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Hodgkins drew this work from the track above Plage de l'Arène in Bestouan, the bay around from the port at Cassis. The magnificent crag of Couronne de Charlemagne (Crown of Charlemagne) towers over the valley which runs down to the sea. She includes what should be the pharo or lighthouse built at the end of the breakwater to guide the fishing boats back to safe harbour, although she replaces its sturdy structure with a slender column resembling the tall chimney of the mine nearby.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## **Cassis** circa 1920–21

Chalk

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 1972

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Hodgkins has drawn this sketch from a high vantage point, looking down into the port itself. Cassis was much smaller in the 1920s – today the hill in the immediate foreground is covered in houses. She portrays the way in which the hills fold into one another in a style reminiscent of Paul Cézanne, whose work Hodgkins admired. The white horizontal form in the middle of the composition is the ancient fortified Château de Cassis, which overlooks the village.

## **FRANCES HODGKINS**

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

### **Cassis** circa 1920–21

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Hodgkins has drawn this sketch from a high vantage point, looking down into the port itself. Cassis was much smaller in the 1920s – today the hill in the immediate foreground is covered in houses. She portrays the way in which the hills fold into one another in a style reminiscent of Paul Cézanne, whose work Hodgkins admired. The white horizontal form in the middle of the composition is the ancient fortified Château de Cassis, which overlooks the village.

## **FRANCES HODGKINS**

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

### **Café Les Martigues** circa 1928

Pencil

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of Mr Gerald Selby, from the estate of Dorothy Selby, 1954

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# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## **Cornish Landscape** circa 1931

Watercolour on paper

On loan from a private collection, Auckland

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Here, Hodgkins focuses on the textures and structure of the soil and trees overlooking Bodinnick and the river Fowey. She commented:

They are so beautiful these leafless trees .  
. . I hate the idea of spring with its foolish  
green leaves & sentimentality . . . The beech  
trees are brown with bud & in a week or two  
the wretched leaves will be out. They are to  
me infinitely more beautiful in their present  
state and I must hurry up & get some  
sketches before they turn.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Sea Landscape with Flowers 1931

Pencil

On loan from The Fletcher Trust, Auckland

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Hodgkins dealt with the problem of mid-winter's restricted daylight hours by creating a series of noctures. Here, she moves the landscape to suit her needs. On the right the gate that opened out from the Nook can be seen. The water's edge is masked by the flowers which take up much of the composition, but the broad curve of the road leading down to the jetty below forms a dark band in the centre. The village of Fowey is depicted as a black and white band in the distance, and flashes of light bounce on the water.



# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Bodinnick, Cornwall 1932

Watercolour

On loan from a private collection, Auckland

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Discussing looking for a suitable location to live in the winter of 1931, Hodgkins, wrote:

[I] searched round and found Bodinnick up a creek, over several ferries & quite unforgettable after dark – and here I am . . . It is too cold to work out of doors – besides which the colour is so dark & sodden with damp – bracken is bright red – black ships on the river ...

Ferryside, where the young writer Daphne du Maurier was living, provides Hodgkins 'white note', while the picket gate leading from The Nook, where Hodgkins was lodging, was the favoured perch of Rob, her landlady's parrot.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## **Wings Over Water** 1932

Oil on canvas

Leeds Museums and Galleries (Leeds Art Gallery). Given by the Contemporary Art Society, 1940

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In this second version of *Wings over Water*, 1932 the artist has returned to her view of Ferryside, and the kaolin clay ships at their moorings. Rather than the window which frames Tate's version of *Wings over Water*, 1932, a plain ledge supports an uptilted bowl, its inner base decorated with flowers, beside a cherry-festooned jug.

Ferryside stands slightly away from the bare hill on the left, counter-balanced by Rob the parrot on the right. He leans down from a slender twig to pick berries on the bush below, his brilliant red feathers a foil for the masses of green that dominate the scene.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## **Self Portrait: Still Life** circa 1935

Oil on cardboard

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 1963

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In later life, Hodgkins invariably felt uncomfortable about being photographed, partly perhaps because she was an older woman competing in a modernist market with younger artists. Rejecting a traditional self-portrait format that requires the use of mirrors, she painted highly individual, semi-abstracted groups of favourite objects – scarves, shoes, belts, jewellery and flowers – in this instance balanced precariously on her favourite armchair, creating a ‘postmodern’ metaphor for the self. Commenting on her appearance, the writer Geoffrey Gorer noted that Hodgkins ‘. . . had made herself a decoration, almost a still life, in her own style’.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## **Still Life with Fruit Dishes** circa 1937

Oil on canvas laid on hardboard

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery

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Although the cut melons and twisted cloth appear in paintings from the South of France, *Still Life with Fruit Dishes*, circa 1937 was almost certainly painted over a period of time following her return to England. After her friend Ree Gorer re-covered Hodgkins' much-loved armchair, the artist wrote a long letter elaborating on how much the armchair meant to her, describing it as, among other things, 'a prop'. Hodgkins plays with reality – the slices of melon defy gravity by floating in front of the chair and a jug lies on its side, either consciously placed there or the happy result of its refusal to stay upright on the padded seat.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Cassis Quarryman and Wife

circa 1921

Black chalk on paper

On loan from Jonathan Grant Gallery, Auckland

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When Hodgkins first arrived in Cassis in late December 1920, she described it as ‘off the beaten track, not very far from Marseilles, on the coast, much frequented by artists on account of the landscape ...’ She was particularly drawn to the Spanish community, many of whose men worked in the quarries chiselled out of the white stone cliffs.

Although only one visit is mentioned in her known letters, she returned at some point in the 1920s, as a photograph shows her sketching in bright sunshine with Jean Campbell, their faces cast in strong shadow, something not likely in winter when the temperatures rarely climb above 11 degrees centigrade.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## **Miss Jean Campbell and Colonel Peter Teed at the Chateau Fontcreuse, Cassis-sur-mer 1921**

Ink and wash on Rowneys Clifton Card

On loan from a private collection, Auckland

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While in Cassis, Hodgkins visited fellow New Zealander Jean Campbell and her English partner Colonel Peter Teed, who had acquired the Château de Fontcreuse further up the valley from the port. Hodgkins made a rapid ink portrait of the couple on 1 January 1921. Teed is absorbed in his reading, wine glass at hand, while Campbell is focused on some form of needlework, a slightly self-conscious smile on her lips. Her hands are sketchy, suggesting her movements made them more difficult to draw, while Hodgkins gives more attention to the stripes and flowers on her dress, providing a counterpoint to Teed's formal attire.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Child in a Pram circa 1925

Oil on canvas

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 1956

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Having spent nearly two years in the village of Burford in Oxfordshire, Hodgkins headed south once more, this time to St Paul du Var (now better known as St Paul de Vence), where she was to remain for the first half of 1924. She took a room in a former prison tower, still replete with iron rings and chains in the wall. She had travelled down via Paris, and her work in the following year shows strong cubist influences. *Child in a Pram*, circa 1925, which is experimental in technique, was rejected by Hodgkins once back in Manchester, but her friend Hannah Ritchie quietly hid it away for posterity.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Red Cockerel 1924

Oil on canvas

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery

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Hodgkins was delighted to be shown at the Lefevre Gallery in 1943 at the same time as *Picasso and his Contemporaries*. For the exhibition, her friend and sometime dealer Eardley Knollys persuaded her to part with what she considered two of her most successful paintings from the 1920s, *Red Cockerel*, 1924 and *Lancashire Family*, circa 1927 (also in the exhibition), once she had tracked down the two ‘scallywag’ friends that had been storing them for her.



# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Phoenician Pottery and Gourds

circa 1933

Watercolour

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased with funds from the Winstone Bequest, 1954

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In this still life, the upper brushstroke demarcating blue hills suggests a distant landscape yet the furrowed earth seems to wrap around them. Some of the the still-life objects that seem to float above the tilled ground are outlined with a scrupulous simplicity, concentrating on pattern and rhythm, but also giving a surreal air to the work. The jug on the right can also be found tucked in behind the woman on the left in one of Hodgkins' major paintings, *Spanish Shrine*, 1933–35.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Yudi y Moro circa 1933

Watercolour and bodycolour on paper  
Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery

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Even though she was constantly on the move, Hodgkins could not resist local cats and dogs. Yudi y Moro (Yudi and Moor) are two of the famous Ibizan hunting hounds, indigenous to the Balearic islands, whose long legs enable them to leap over scrub in search of prey. Although this work has been sometimes associated with Hodgkins' stay in Tossa de Mar from 1935 to 1936, like *Siamese Cats*, circa 1933, it was exhibited at Lefevre Gallery in London in February 1935, before the artist visited the Costa Brava. The darker tones and the light on the water in the background suggest it is a nocturne painting.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## **Spring in the Ravine, Ibiza** circa 1933

Oil on canvas

National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa. Gift of the Massey Collection of English Painting, 1946

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Hodgkins angles the monastery complex at San Miguel da Balansat in the northeast of Ibiza away from the viewer as if it is sliding down the other side of the hill. A stony road appears briefly in the centre, and the landscape is scattered with trees, their bent branches rising upwards. Some have clumps of leaves behind the branches, a conscious compositional device. The rich pink tones are modified by shadows in contrasting blue, similar tones subtly 'framing' the scene, and the background is dominated by stylised mountains and puffs of clouds.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Outside the Ramparts 1932–33

Pencil on paper

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery

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Unlike the many rapid sketches that were to serve as *aides-memoire*, to be worked up on Hodgkins' return to England, *Outside the Ramparts*, 1932–33 is a fully finished exhibition drawing which Hodgkins also turned into an oil painting. Like other drawings from the early 1930s, she combines calligraphic squiggles with areas of smudging to provide tone. The walls of the ramparts of Dalt Vila (the ancient upper fortified acropolis) of the town of Ibiza rise sharply up the cliff face, but Hodgkins has softened their mass by framing them with the undulating forms of trees and rocks.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## **Two Heads** circa 1929

Watercolour on paper

Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, purchased 1979

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Hodgkins painted this watercolour when she was in the seaside town of Santa Eulalia in Ibiza. The figure on the right is the American artist Mary Hoover (later Mary Aitken), who had moved to the island after assisting the Spanish artist Luis Quintanilla paint frescoes at the university in Madrid. The Balearics were seen as being safer than Spain's large cities in the early 1930s, when political tensions were on the rise. The communists and anarchists sided with the democratic republicans against the conservatism of the nationalists, with the conflict finally erupting into the Spanish Civil War in 1936.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## **Two Sicilian Shepherds** circa 1933

Watercolour and black chalk on toned wove paper laid down on card

Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Given by Miss Monica Withers

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Placing the two figures side by side in a landscape is a compositional motif that Hodgkins often employed, rather than being intended as personal portraits. There is a lyrical, dreamy quality to this work. The soft pinks and greys look back to her St Jeannet palette of 1930, as well as forward to the winter landscapes she painted on the Costa Brava in 1936. The title of the painting must have been added to the watercolour after Hodgkins' death in 1947, as it seems it was not exhibited as such in her lifetime.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## **Spanish Shrine** circa 1933–35

Oil on canvas

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 1954

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The central figure in this painting has frequently been interpreted as a fusion of a pre-Christian Tanit goddess particular to Ibiza and the Virgin Mary. She is based on Ibiza's much loved *Inmaculada* (Immaculate Virgin), date unknown, in the Cathedral of Ibiza, which was severely damaged by anarchists in the Spanish Civil War and has only recently been restored. Hodgkins has abbreviated the figure – the billowing clouds on which the sculpted figure stands have been modified to a kind of ruff around her hips. The two peasant women who flank the central figure – one with a traditional local wooden water barrel on her head, the other carrying a traditional woven basket used for transporting vegetables and fruit back from the fields – share her dignity.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## **Ibiza** 1932–33

Oil on canvas

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 1982

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This view of Ibiza harbour, from the vantage point of Dalt Vila, looks down to the promontory of the fishermen's quarters of Sa Penya, against a backdrop of mountains. The deep colours suggest the late afternoon or evening, the time when Hodgkins preferred to paint to avoid the heat and intense light of midday. Emphasis is given in this work to the simplicity and geometric forms of Spanish architecture which had a natural affinity with modernist ideals, but by softening their forms, the artist gives an organic overlay to the composition.



# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Ibiza – Study for Oil 1933

Watercolour

Auckland Art Gallery Toi Tāmaki, purchased 1956

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In her Ibizan sketches the geometric forms and simplicity of Spanish architecture are a central focus. This study is one of Hodgkins' 'pure' watercolours, although the manner in which the paint has been applied is more akin to a gouache technique. The paper used here was handmade by J Green & Son, a paper mill in England – the same as for the watercolour *Phoenician Pottery and Gourds*, circa 1933.

Hodgkins' friend and former student, Hannah Ritchie, later added the signature to replace the original, which she had cut out and attached to a much-needed traveller's cheque that required Hodgkins' full name.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## **Courtyard in Ibiza** circa 1933

Watercolour on paper

On loan from the University of Auckland Art Collection

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Hodgkins liked the stepped courtyards in front of a line of fishermen's cottages leading down a set of very steep steps towards Figueretas, so much so that she painted each of the lower houses in turn. In the one nearest the sea, a cat sleeps in the sun on the whitewashed wall dividing the houses, whereas in this work a caged bird rests on the neighbouring wall. One can almost feel the warmth of the sun in the brilliance of Hodgkins' watercolour washes – all that is missing is birdsong.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Ibiza Harbour 1933

Oil on canvas

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery

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When Hodgkins was in Ibiza in 1933 it was possible to view the breakwater protecting the fishing boats in the harbour from the vantage point of Es Soto, the rocky scrubland between Dalt Vila and the bay of Figueretas that stretches out of sight to the right. At the time, the large grey building at the beginning of the breakwater was a house of ill repute, but in 1950s it was converted into apartments. One suspects, however, that Hodgkins was interested in its form rather than its function. She has used a lot of black to outline the white buildings, and an unnatural rosy pink to depict the rocky outcrops around the shore line.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Monastery Steps 1933

Oil on canvas

On loan from the Ravenscar Trust, Christchurch

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While Hodgkins' watercolours responded more directly to particular locations, many of her later oils, often worked up after she returned to England, interwove elements that were plucked from several locations — a complex and sophisticated approach only recently identified in her work. Hodgkins has thought very carefully about how she wanted colour to work in this painting, for in reality it is the monastery at the top of Dalt Vila adjacent to the cathedral that is ochre coloured, while the left-hand building is painted the blinding white used for most traditional buildings. The walled path is located on the far side of ramparts, but Hodgkins has swung the two locations together — a fascinating demonstration of how an artist transforms the literal into a creative refinement that is entirely her own.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Almond Tree 1933

Gouache

On loan from a private collection, Auckland

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The side view of the church of San Miguel (Sant Miquel de Balansat) rises on the horizon in *Almond Tree*, 1933. The valley below is peppered with almond trees, but Hodgkins has taken a single tree and made it tower over the church like a frothy pink umbrella. To heathen eyes, the brown mounds to the right of the painting may look like a file of fat, self-important priests departing from the site of an inquisition, but in fact they are *pajer* or haystacks.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## **Pastorale** circa 1929–30

Oil on canvas

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 1982

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At the end of 1929, with the support and encouragement of Arthur Howell at St George's Gallery in London, Hodgkins headed south once more, staying with two friends at La Pastorale until a combination of deep snows and isolation drove her across the valley to St Jeannet. The farmhouse and its surrounding outbuildings reflect the architecture typical of the Alpes Maritimes, where it was always easier to build up the slopes, whereas in the valley below houses were more varied in structure. The divided waterway suggests that the building had been a mill.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Maurice Garnier 1933

Pencil on paper  
on loan from Tate Archive

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In St Jeannet, Hodgkins spoke only French, which found its way into her letters. She became friends with Maurice Garnier, a French experimental artist who created garden sculptures from stones, wood and other found objects ‘in a style “un peu mystique, un peu precieuse”’. Garnier was working on a commission for the Marquise de Brantes in Vence, who kindly sent a car for Hodgkins so she could view the project. He also treated Hodgkins to a lunch at Prunier in Paris in 1930 when she was on her way to St Tropez, and she stayed at his home in Royan in south-western France after she left Ibiza mid-1933.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Shrine of St Peter, Tréboul 1927

Watercolour and wash over pencil on paper

On loan courtesy of the Royal Academy of Music  
Museum, London

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A key moment in Hodgkins' rise to fame was a solo show held in April 1928 at the Claridge Gallery in London. After the opening, Cedric Morris, Arthur Lett-Haines and Jane Saunders held a small *soirée* to celebrate. Two of the works displayed referred to the Fontaine de St Pierre in Tréboul. Unlike the simple *lavoirs* or women's communal washing troughs that had caught Hodgkins' attention before World War I, the water from the shrine of St Peter, patron saint of fishermen, was considered miraculous. A photographic postcard from the time shows the same view.



# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Tréboul 1937

Watercolour

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased with funds from the Winstone Bequest, 1954

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Although it was previously thought that Hodgkins only visited Tréboul in the 1920s, her full letters reveal that she went back in August 1937, spending time with Dorothy Selby, who she continued to advise about painting. Hodgkins no longer had a camera but Selby took photographs that she sent on for Hodgkins to use as *aides memoire*. A further watercolour, *Tréboul*, 1940, suggests they were put to good use. Hodgkins returned to England immediately to prepare for her upcoming show, staying in London until after her exhibition at Lefevre Gallery opened on 27 October 1937.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## **Lilies and Still Life** circa 1929

Watercolour and pencil on paper

National Galleries of Scotland. Bequeathed by Miss Elizabeth Watt 1989

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Along with eggs, lilies abound in Hodgkins' watercolours at the end of the 1920s and early 30s, but this work fascinates because it also has unusual block-like elements which may be part of a stone wall, and the table and stool are out of proportion to the ledge and the arrangement of items laid out on it. It looks as if Hodgkins has balanced a tray or table on top of a long bench, giving the arrangement a slightly precarious feel.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## **Fish** circa 1931

Watercolour on paper

Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, on loan  
from the British Council Collection, London

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Traditionally, in some parts of the Mediterranean, freshly caught and washed fish were laid on a bed of bracken to dry. Hodgkins has tilted up the plate so that it floats against an abstracted landscape, allowing us to enjoy the pattern on the plate as well as the shiny surface of the freshly caught fish.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## **Still Life, Fish and Shells** circa 1932

Watercolour on paper

Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, on loan  
from the British Council Collection, London

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Dating works by Hodgkins can sometimes be very difficult, unless there are strong hints of place, or other indicators relating to style. The delicate palette used in this work suggests it may be from the Ibiza, but it also includes motifs Hodgkins used in St Tropez in 1931, the one winter leaf, for example, which can be seen in *Spanish Jars*, 1931–35 nearby. The composition is more complex than *Still Life, Fish and Shells*, circa 1932, in that the plate is tipped up to form a kind of frame around the fish. The shells are depicted in a more fluid manner than those included in *Lilies and Still Life*, circa 1929 (also in the exhibition), as are the leaves.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Cut Melons circa 1930–31

Oil on canvas mounted on cardboard

Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, purchased  
1980 with Special Projects in the Arts funds

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In *Cut Melons*, circa 1930–31 a still life of jugs and melons is laid out on a patterned cloth in front of a simple modular building. This has a deep windowsill, the space within painted a dark blue and lightened by a rectangle of diagonal white lines in the lower left corner.

The curved top of the window behind appears in *Spanish Jars*, 1931–35, but this time from the outside. This is a painter's painting – every section draws attention to its compositional gambit.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Red Jug 1931

Oil on canvas

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 1982

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When she passed through Paris early in 1931, Hodgkins lunched at the famous oyster bar, Prunier, with her friend Maurice Garnier, as well as visiting a modernist exhibition that included works by three of her favourite artists – Henri Matisse, Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque. Matisse's use of flat planes of colour, particularly red, seem to have directly influenced the red jug that gives the title to this work, while the cubist form of the other vessel, created through the use of flat tonal layers, may also be a homage to Picasso and Braque. The twisting, pale blue cloth rising up animates their forms and drapes over what may be the residual form of the back of a chair.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Untitled (Vases in an Alcove)

circa 1931

Pencil on paper

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, 2005

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In many of Hodgkins' works still-life objects are liberated from the confines of interiors, moving out into space, or else clustered in front of a nominal window. The preparatory sketch for *Spanish Jars*, 1931–35, this drawing is unusual in that the group of vases are enclosed in a clearly defined alcove. This space tapers to a tiny window in the background, but there is no intimation of the landscape beyond. A number of drawings in Auckland's collection were acquired from her friend and executor John Piper, who inherited the works remaining in her studio after Hodgkins died.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Spanish Jars 1931–35

Oil on canvas

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of the Friends of the Auckland Art Gallery with funds from the Joy Marchant Bequest, 2016

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*Spanish Jars*, 1931–35 shows the same alcove as seen in *Cut Melons*, circa 1930–31, but this time from the inside, with two jars resting within the niche and a third standing in the foreground, playing with our perception of what is interior and what is exterior. A twisted cloth that is a leitmotif of Hodgkins' time in St Tropez in 1931 lies to the right. A single stem rises up in the foreground to support a selection of flowers and leaves, as if it is growing in the earth. The small section of sky through the window is striped, as in *Red Jug*, 1931 while the white house also appears in *Evening*, 1932–33.



# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Spanish Pottery 1930

Watercolour on paper

Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū, on loan  
from the British Council Collection, London

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These double-handled vessels derive from the ancient wine amphorae that were distributed around the Mediterranean shores, except they have lost their pointed base, making them more practical. The extended flat rim that Hodgkins depicts may have been a local adaptation for ease of pouring. She found their forms deeply satisfying, including them in a series of watercolours and gouaches. The twisted cloth in the foreground and the lilies link the work to St Tropez and other places Hodgkins painted along the Côte d'Azur in the late 1920s and early 30s. Wittily, the lilies float behind the jugs rather than in them.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## **Amphorae** circa 1933

Pencil and watercolour on paper

On loan from a private collection, Auckland

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*Amphora* is the Greek name for a double handled vase or jar used for storing water, wine or oil, most commonly with a foot allowing the jar to stand upright, but sometimes with a pointed base that would be pushed into soft sand for support. Hodgkins has adapted the common forms of *amphorae*, flattening out the lip so that each vessel takes on a more fluid shape to suit her purpose. Hodgkins often played with titles – calling certain jugs ‘Spanish’ when they were in fact painted during the time she visited St Jeannet and St Tropez from 1929 onwards. This may be due to the large population of Spanish workers to be found along the French Riviera, some of whom may have brought traditional vessels with them.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## **Methodist Chapel** circa 1937

Gouache on paper

On loan from Jonathan Grant Gallery, Auckland

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One of the paintings selected for the Venice Biennale in 1940, *Methodist Chapel*, circa 1937 was painted by Hodgkins from the opposite side of the river, resulting in a truncation of the building's form and the removal of the upper set of windows. The façade of the chapel is framed between a group of houses on the left, sitting on the same side of the road, while in the foreground on the right a further building stands on the river's edge. Its window is clearly defined, however Hodgkins has turned it and the hillside beyond, into a single merged field of patterns, like an expressionistic patchwork quilt with no defining barrier between the sections.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Welsh Landscape 4 circa 1938

Gouache on paper

On loan from a private collection, Auckland

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Study for Pembrokeshire Landscape 1938

Gouache

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased 1956

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Up the lane from Solva, Middle Mill originally boasted a corn and woollen mill, but today only the latter continues to function. At the time Hodgkins visited, sheep would be walked to this field beside the Solva River and plunged unwillingly into the water for cleaning, before their wool was clipped for the mill. Two cows grazed in the field by day after being milked. Hodgkins delighted in this view, making numerous studies depicting the double-arched bridge and the readily identifiable Llanunwas Arms to the right, although she has moved it slightly up the hill from its true location.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## China Shoe 1938

Gouache on paper

The Radev Collection, London

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Staying in Wales in 1942, Hodgkins wrote to her friend Eardley Knollys that she had ‘made pictures of the funny Chimney ornaments, which do lend themselves to decoration – I love them – tender silly unarranged things’. She unites stray objects into a rhythmically patterned whole, reminiscent of her *Self-portrait Still Life*, circa 1935. The deep, subtle colouring and calligraphic flourishes in this painting create a mysterious Neo-Romantic mood reminiscent of the work of John Piper.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Phoenician Ruins circa 1937

Gouache on paper

Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o  
Waiwhetū. Gift of Mr and Mrs M Ash, England, 1980

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This gouache is one of Hodgkins' more abstracted paintings of the fortifications at Tossa de Mar, painted on her return to England. The artist overlays the distinctive crenelated towers that dominate Vila Vella (Old Town), which she painted from a favourite vantage point high on the walk leading round the cliffs. But because she has surrounded the scene with milky blues and greys, one could be forgiven for thinking that the fortified town was an island.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## **Ibiza [Hill Town Landscape] 1938**

Oil on canvas

Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o  
Waiwhetū. Purchased 1979

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Although not finished until 1938, this painting derives from Hodgkins' time on Ibiza, evidenced by the building on the left with its block-like forms and painted door frames, yet the artist has also merged elements from Tossa de mar. It has a composite aspect to it and is more abstracted than the drawings and paintings the artist completed at the time. Works like this spring from Hodgkins' happy recollections of the period, incorporating the softer tones that she developed on the Costa Brava.



# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Spanish Landscape with Stooks in Grey and Pink circa 1936

Gouache

On loan from Brian and Pam Stevenson, Auckland

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Barren through the heat of summer, once autumn rains began the fields beside Tossa's river burst into life again. English anarchist Greville Texidor, who would later be encouraged to write by Frank Sargeson when she fled Europe for New Zealand in 1940, became friendly with Hodgkins and joined her for long walks. Texidor would suggest possible subjects in the landscape, and was somewhat puzzled by her irritation at the uniform rows of cabbages that stretched across the fields, none of which made their way into any of her paintings.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Sketch for Hill Landscape 1935–36

Pencil on paper graphite

Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, purchased  
1998 with New Zealand Lottery Grants Board funds

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Travelling on from Cadaqués, Gorer's chauffeur took the precipitous coastal road to the fishing village of Port de la Selva, where Hodgkins sketched Santa Maria de la Neus (Our Lady of the Snows), capturing the distinctive curving baroque gable and square bell tower against the broad sweep of the bay and the mountain beyond. Then they went south to Barcelona, where she saw Pablo Picasso's first exhibition in the city since his initial visit to Paris in 1901. She described it as a most purifying experience, while admitting that it sapped her own sense of creativity.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Pumpkins and Pimenti 1935–36

Gouache

On loan from The Fletcher Trust, Auckland

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Gourds, marrows and pumpkins all provided satisfying forms for Hodgkins. She described a series of still lifes as her ‘joyless marrows’, but in spite of the self-deprecating tone of her comments, Hodgkins’ brushwork here is tremendously assured, its tones as rich and sonorous as the church interiors she so admired. A surreal effect is created by the echo of the distant mountains, which float forward into the space of the still life. Critic Eric Newton wrote:

To call her colour ‘delicious’ is merely to praise it without giving an inkling as to its quality . . . Hers is a twilight colour. It is queer and surprising. Moreover, it continues to be surprising. Looking at her best gouaches, the eye, long after the first impact, goes on receiving little subsidiary shocks of delight.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## **Chairs and Pots** circa 1938

Gouache and watercolour on paper

National Galleries of Scotland. Bequeathed by Miss Elizabeth Watt 1989

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Two chairs are set back to back in this gouache, the first a traditional, sturdy rush-seated chair on which Hodgkins has perched a pair of blue-striped espadrilles, their laces dangling over the side. A further lace loops up and over the back strut, reminiscent of the cloths twisting their way through her paintings from the south of France at the end of the 1920s. Her favourite vessels add volume to the foreground, 'floating' on blue and white ripples of water lapping against the legs of the rush-seated chair, suggesting the shimmer of the sea and the afterglow of summer.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## **Kimmeridge Foreshore** 1938

Oil on canvas

Victoria University of Wellington Staff Club Collection,  
purchased 1956

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The Neo-Romantics Myfanwy and John Piper argued that abstraction didn't serve countries going through depression and war, arguing for the validity of painting objects and figures, and that it would be 'a good to get back to the tree in the field'. Kimmeridge, not far from Corfe, provided rich material for Hodgkins, its barren foreshore littered with fishermen's lobsterpots, torn nets and overturned boats. After producing a large body of gouaches focusing on this carpet of detritus, she pared back *Kimmeridge Foreshore*, 1938 so that its form and composition are unmarred by a profusion of detail.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Houses and Outhouses, Isle of Purbeck circa 1938

Oil on canvas

Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū on loan from the British Council Collection, London

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Hodgkins ultimately embraced the charm of rural communities in Britain, peopling her landscapes with the flotsam and jetsam found in farmyards, fields and foreshore. Always fond of creating ‘pairs’ of paintings, as if one canvas wasn’t enough for her to completely deal with her ideas, Hodgkins created a second version, *Houses and Outhouses, Isle of Purbeck*, circa 1938 in which she uses brilliant yellow, blues and greens. The man and the hen are absent and the structure of the outhouse more cubist in effect.

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# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Zipp 1945

Oil on canvas

Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o  
Waiwhetū, purchased 1979

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Annie Coggan, who looked after Hodgkins when she stayed at Geoffrey Gorer's cottage at Bradford-on-Tone, claimed that *Zipp*, 1945 was derived from an incident when refugees who had been moved into 'The Croft' were thought to have stolen some of Hodgkins' possessions. But the painting also reflects the artist's interest in fashion. In 1917 Gideon Sundback patented the 'separable fastener', which rapidly became known as the 'zipper' in the United States and 'zip' in Britain, and women's ability to dress with ease changed overnight. Hodgkins wittily doubles the last consonant: 'zip' becoming 'zipp'.

# **FRANCES HODGKINS**

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## **To the Castle, Corfe 1945**

Gouache and crayon on paper

Collection of Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o  
Waiwhetū, purchased 1980

# **FRANCES HODGKINS**

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## **The Baker's Shop 1945**

Gouache on paper

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery



# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Portrait of David (Brynley) 1945

Gouache and watercolour on paper

On loan from a private collection, Auckland

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Opera singer, painter and writer David Brynley (1902–1981) and his partner, Norman Notley (1890–1980), also a singer, have been described as part of the bohemian artistic community surrounding Corfe Castle in the 1930s. They became great supporters of Hodgkins, collecting her paintings, and retaining some of her memorabilia after her death. This delightful sketch, which perhaps does little justice to Brynley's inordinate good looks, puts particular stress on the curl of the fingers over the chair back, as if he were about to pluck a harp or the strings of a cello.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Mimosa 1939

Watercolour and gouache on paper

On loan from a private collection, Auckland

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When *Mimosa*, 1939 was first exhibited at Alex Reid & Lefevre, London in April 1940, it proved highly popular. Hodgkins wrote to her dealer, ‘. . . people have taken a fancy to her. I have told Miss Maureen Raymond that I never copy pictures but that I will do something on similar lines, let you frame it & show it to her. Price of course will be higher.’ The square vase used in a number of her compositions holds the spray of mimosa, while on the far right her favourite milk churn, possibly one seen at Mr Bridie’s farm at Worth Matravers, is also included in *Houses and Outhouses, Purbeck*, circa 1938.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## August Month circa 1939

Gouache on paper

On loan from a private collection, Auckland

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As noted by art historian Elizabeth Eastmond, the vivacious handling of paint in *August Month*, circa 1939 dates it to before the outbreak of war on 1 September 1939 when Hodgkins was staying with Jane Saunders in Northumberland. Like many Britons, Hodgkins had been fearing war for some years. Writing to Dorothy Selby, she commented on how much she was enjoying her stay, especially as the housekeeper was cooking ‘delicious vegetable meals – all fresh from the garden – great dishes of raspberries & cream . . . I make the most of it – feeling it is a lull before a crash – to be cherished.’

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Corfe Castle 1943

Oil on canvas

Collection of the Dunedin Public Art Gallery

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Hodgkins' nephew Peter Field visited Corfe while on leave during the war in 1943, later recalling:

...her perception of everything that was taking place. Her power of observation was completely unimpaired and everything that she saw you could see that she was registering and forming an opinion. Even things such as the ivy growing on Corfe Castle she objected to because she thought it was hiding the beauty of the stonework. The simplicity with which she analysed objects, I think was one of her greatest assets in her painting. Whatever she saw she was capable of observing analytically with a view to, not actually to putting it on paper, but the whole thing seemed to convey something to her and she seemed to be able to convey it to whoever she was talking to.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## The Root Crop 1943

Gouache

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, purchased with funds from the Winstone Bequest, 1954

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Myfanwy Piper recalled how in the 1940s Hodgkins was greatly attracted to a farmyard near where they lived which was full of discarded farm machinery: ‘It was an incredible junky mess and Frances adored it.’ Her husband John Piper added:

It suited her because she was able to select among these objects the shapes that she liked and the colours. It was full of virtue and beauty in her eyes . . . powerful and extraordinary, they are about humanity and its fate.

The hayricks and ladders in front of the simple farm buildings create a strong vertical and diagonal framework for the mounds of vegetables, while in the upper left a series of rapid curves suggest some overhanging foliage.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Courtyard, Corfe Castle 1942

Gouache, ink, charcoal

On loan from Art Gallery of New South Wales Collection: Art Gallery of New South Wales – Gift of the Contemporary Art Society, London 1944

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For this composition Hodgkins has taken various elements from the tiny courtyard that stood between her studio in West Street, Corfe Castle, and the tiny cottage next door where she slept. Even the castle has been floated in above the cottage.

John Piper, who was fascinated by her work, commented:

Probably no living painter has such extraordinary powers of arranging colours in original and telling ways . . . At first glance her paintings seem to have such a strong life of their own in colour and pattern that the subjects appear to be of little importance; they seem as independent and self-sufficient as fine Persian rugs or early medieval windows of pattern glass.

# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## The Courtyard in Wartime 1944

Oil on board

On loan from the University of Auckland Art Collection

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A number of Hodgkins' paintings resonate with a sense of wartime danger. In a letter to in 1942, she wrote:

I am writing this in a Raid (mock) commencing 8 am this morning Sunday whistling Dive bombers waltzing round our heads & roof tops. Hearts were beating. Then the gas & bombs & now there is a nice big fire blazing at the Castle. Officially of course, we were all dead hours ago. Tonight we will hear & see things. AK [Hodgkins' potter friend and neighbour, Amy Krauss] is very solemn & silent giving nothing away – her mouth clenched. This is no time to write letters ...

All too soon, the real thing began in earnest.

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# FRANCES HODGKINS

[1869–1947 New Zealand, England]

## Houses and Outhouses, Purbeck circa 1938

Oil on canvas

On loan from the Northern Club, Auckland

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In *Houses and Outhouses, Purbeck*, circa 1938 milk churns are clearly defined against a pump, while other objects have become an assemblage of coloured stripes or rectangles 'standing in' for farmyard objects. In the background, the houses to the left have squat chimneys either end, similar to those Hodgkins saw in Pembrokeshire in 1937, whereas those on the far right stretch upwards, echoing the vertical lines of the outhouse. Curiously, while she has used rich tones of blues, pinks and yellow ochres for the landscape, the figure of the man and the cockerel are monochromatic, as if belonging to another time and place. Hodgkins wrote of her 1941 exhibition: '... unquestionably my high spot is the Man & Chicken & it takes a John Piper to say so – and see.'