

Frances Hodgkins (1869–1947)

New Zealand, England

Red Jug 1931

oil on canvas

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

purchased 1982

I roto i te pikitia āhua toi pohewa o *Red Jug* a Frances Hodgkins, i whakatakotoria ngā puoto ki tētahi wāhi wātea i waho, ā, he rākau tūtahi e rite ana ki te rārā anake e tū ana i reira, e makarotia ana te wehenga o te pikitia tirohanga whenua me te ao pahoho. I peitahia i te Tonga o Wīwī, kua whakaurua mai e Hodgkin te wera me te hawene o tōna takiwā ki roto i tāna peita. Ka puta i te tiaka uku te mahana o te rā, ā, ka whakangāwarihia e Hodgkins ki ngā tāhei kikorangi me te kākāriki e pae ana i te pikitia. Ehara i te mea ko te tino kaupapa o *Red Jug* ko te hopu i ngā iroirotinga o tōna wāhi, engari i whakaawetia te tohunga toi e ngā āhuatanga o St Tropez, engari kē mō tētahi waiaro herekore me te matakite kua puakina i roto i te kaha o te tae.

Placing vessels in a barren outdoor setting with only a lonely twig-like tree for company, Frances Hodgkins' quietly surreal *Red Jug*, 1931 blurs the boundaries between landscape painting and still life. The painting was made in the South of France and Hodgkins has let the heat and sensuousness of her surroundings seep into her painting. The terracotta-coloured jug and clay vase emit the sun's warmth, which Hodgkins tempers with bands of blue and green that border the composition. *Red Jug* is less about capturing the specifics of her location – though the artist was undoubtedly shaped by the conditions of St Tropez – than expressing an untethered and visionary attitude that revels in the power of colour.

John Weeks (1886–1965)

New Zealand, England

Still Life with Fruit and Decorated Jar 20th century

tempera on board

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

purchased 1938

E rere ana i roto i te *Still Life with Fruit and Decorated Jar* a John Weeks nō, ko te whero, te kōwhai me ngā rārangi pango mātotoru, ā, he rite te āhua ki tētahi matapihi karakara. E whakaata ana tēnei pikitia pahoho iti noa i te pānga o tētahi neke o te ao i roto i ngā toi i rerekē ai ngā tikanga o te peita me te tuhituhi ki ngā āhuatanga hou me te rerekē, ā, i whakamahia e ngā tohunga peita me ngā kaituhi ngā tikanga tino kaha i mīharo ai te hunga mātakitaki ki ngā whakakitenga o tētahi ao hurihuri. I te tekau tau i mua o te peita a Weeks i tēnei pikitia pahoho, he mīharo te whakamahi a te kaituhi o Aotearoa a Katherine Mansfield i te tae i roto i tāna pūrākau poto *The Doll's House*, i puta i te tau 1922. E whakaata ana i te tino āhuatanga o te tamarikitanga, i tuhi a Mansfield:

I reira ka tū te whare Tāre, he uriuri, hinuhinu, he tino kākāriki, me te kōwhai. He whero me te mā te tae o ōna timera, kua whakamaua ki te tuanui, ā, he rite te kūaha, he kōwhai mōhinuhinu, ki tētahi poro tawhi iti.

With a pop of red, a swathe of yellow and thick black lines contouring form, John Weeks's *Still Life with Fruit and Decorated Jar*, circa 1930, radiates like a stained-glass window. Despite its diminutive size, this still life reflects the impact of an international groundswell in the arts that saw the conventions of painting and writing give way to new and discordant forms, as modern painters and writers discovered potent methods to dazzle audiences with intense impressions of a rapidly changing world. A decade before Weeks painted this work, New Zealand writer Katherine Mansfield had used colour to similarly startling effect in her short story *The Doll's House*, published in 1922. Conjuring the intensity of childhood, Mansfield wrote:

There stood the Doll's house, a dark, oily, spinach green, picked out with bright yellow. Its two solid little chimneys, glued on to the roof, were painted red and white, and the door, gleaming with yellow varnish, was like a little slab of toffee.

John Weeks (1886–1965)

New Zealand, England

Still Life with Fruit and Decorated Jar circa 1940

tempera on board

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

purchased with the aid of a grant from the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand, 1970

I runga i tōna amaru me tōna pūmanawa, ka takahuri e John Weeks te whakanahatanga noa o ngā taputapu ki tētahi toi āhua waitara. E tohu ana ngā pakitaha me ngā whakahokihoki whakarākei, me te kākāriki, porotea me te karaka kua āta whakatauritea ki tōna kaingākau ki te hoahoa kua whakahaerehia, kua te whakaputa i ngā kare-ā-roto pākaha. I ngā tau o te 1950, ko ngā pikitia pahoho o Weeks he taurite, he rawe te titiro atu, i tohu i te toi hou, engari ki ētahi he tōngā rawa, i te kakea mai e ngā tohunga peita hou e kaha ana te whakaputa i te ngākaunui ki tō rātau whenua. I ātete te tohunga toi tamariki a Colin McCahon ki te aronga whāiti, whakapaipai rawa ki ngā mahi a Weeks, ā, ki tōna whakaaro he iti tōna mōhio ki ngā āhuatanga o te noho i Aotearoa. Heoi, he kaiwhakapanoni a Weeks, he kaiako whai mana i āwhina ki te whakaatu i ngā mōhio o te kaupapa toi hou o Ūropi ki ngā tohunga toi e hiakai ana ki ngā mōhio e takahuri ai i ā rātou mahi peita.

With poise and quiet flair, John Weeks transforms an ordinary arrangement of objects into a stylised, semi-abstract composition. The addition of borders and decorative zigzags, as well as the sensitively balanced passages of peppermint green, mauve and orange, signal his interest in controlled design rather than the dizzying depths of gesture and emotion. By the mid-1950s, Weeks's harmoniously balanced still lifes represented a restrained – some say timid – modernism that was being supplanted by a successive generation of painters engaged in a more strident form of artistic nationalism. The younger artist Colin McCahon opposed the insular and refined approach that Weeks's work seemed to represent, which in his view had little to say about the conditions of existence and 'New Zealandness'. Nevertheless, Weeks was an agent of change and an influential teacher who helped transmit knowledge of European modernism to artists hungry for a recipe to transform their painting.

Bessie Christie (1904-1983)

New Zealand

Flowers, Fruit and Glass circa 1950

oil on board

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

purchased 2016

Kei runga ake i te whīwhiwhitanga o ngā huarākau me te papanga e tōpaki ana, ko tā ngā piko auau he kukume i tō tirohanga huri noa i te toi. Ehara i te mea he mana nui ake tō tētahi i tō tētahi. Ko te mea kē, kei roto te manawataki o te *Flowers, Fruit and Glass*, circa 1950 i te āta whakaritenga o ngā āhua me ngā tae. Kua tutuki te toi peita i ngā tāhina mātaratara o te kōwhai me te kahurangi, ka mutu ko ngā waiporoporo me ngā hāura he punga mā tēnei toi. I mōhiotia a Bessie hei Bombardier Christie i te Pakanga o Te Ao Tuarua, ā, he kaitaraiwa ia i te Rōpū Wāhine Whaitaua o Te Ope Kātua, he ringa peita rongonui hoki i Tāmaki-makau-rau i ngā tau 1940, 1950. I tētahi taha ko āna mahi toi he kaupapa mō te tangata, he tirohanga o te ao hurihuri, i tētahi taha he ata ōkawa, he ata kiato, pēnei i tēnei nā.

Hovering above the tangle of fruit and fabric, repeated curves draw your eye in and around the composition. No object is prioritised over another. Instead, in *Flowers, Fruit and Glass*, circa 1950 finds its rhythm in the careful arrangement of shapes and colour. Shared icy tones of yellow and blue tie the painting together, while the earthy purples and browns function like anchors in the composition. Known as Bombardier Christie during World War II, Bessie was a driver in the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps and a prominent painter in Auckland during the 1940s and 50s. In her practice she balanced an interest in people and depicting scenes of contemporary life, with more formal and tightly composed images like the one seen here.

Wilfred Stanley Wallis (1891–1957)

New Zealand

Still-life with Red Chair circa 1950

oil on board

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

purchased 1958

He maha ngā korowai o Wilfred Stanley Wallis: he mātanga whakatika wheua, he ika a Whiro, he kaitākaro kirikiti, he ringa peita. Kei Rotorua e noho ana, mahia ai ia ki te paenga o te ao toi hou e puta mai ana, ā, nāna anō hoki ona pūkenga i whakapakari. Ki tā te ringa toi a John Weeks, he kaiārahi ia i a Wallis, ko te mohoaotanga me te mātauranga ōkawa kore o tōna hoa he painga mōna nā te mea i te wātea ia ki te whakapakari i ōna ake tikanga toi, arā he tae muramura, he hanga ihiihi. Ko tā te *Still-life with Red Chair*, circa 1950 he kawē i te wairua hihiko. Kāore he herenga o te ariā ōkawa, o te ture tātai, i wātea a Wallis ki te whakamātau i te tirohanga hou, i ngā tae hihiko, i te tikanga mata.

The multifaceted Wilfred Stanley Wallis was many things: an orthopaedic surgeon, war veteran, keen cricketer and progressive painter. Based in Rotorua, he worked at the periphery of an emerging modern art scene and was largely self-taught. Artist John Weeks, a mentor to Wallis, believed that his friend's isolation and lack of formal training worked in his favour as it allowed him to develop his own technique – one that was bold in colour and composition. *Still-life with Red Chair*, circa 1950 communicates a sense of liveliness. Unencumbered by any particular theory or formula, Wallis was free to experiment with unconventional perspective, electric colours and a raw technique.

William Reed (1908–1996)

New Zealand

Still Life 1949

oil on canvas on cardboard

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

purchased 1976

I haere a William Reed ki te Canterbury College School of Art ako ai, ā, ko te nuinga o ōna tau mahi, he kaiako ia i Te Waipounamu. He āhua mārie te *Still Life*, 1949 mēnā ka titiro ki ngā mahi toi rongonui a Reed, arā ko ngā peita pakanga mō te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa. I mua i tāna mahi hei hōia o te Ope Waka Tūroro, he kaihoahoa pukapuka me te pānui whakaahua. Kei te kitea te kaha o tana aronga ki te hanganga i roto i tēnei ata toka whaihanga. Kitea ai i konei tāna mihi ki ngā mātua o te toi matahuhua, ki a Georges Braque rāua ko Pablo Picasso mā te whakamahi i ngā tauira kakano rākau, i ngā hanga whakatīaho, i ngā rangiruatanga ā-mokowā, heoi anō kua whakaratahia te Matahuhuatanga. Kei te whakaatu a Reed i tōna mōhiotanga ki te ao houtanga o Ūropi, ā, kāore e tukuna kia kaumingomingo rawa te whakaari.

William Reed trained at the Canterbury College School of Art, and spent most of his career teaching in the South Island. *Still Life*, 1949 is relatively sedate compared with his war paintings of the Pacific, for which Reed is best known. Before enlisting as a territorial in the Field Ambulance Corp, Reed worked as a book and poster designer. His attention to composition is apparent in this stylised still life. In it he acknowledges the work of his cubist ancestors Georges Braque and Pablo Picasso through the use of woodgrain patterns, translucant forms and spatial ambiguities. But the Cubism is tamed. Reed demonstrates his knowledge of European modernism without letting his scene become too unruly.

Michael Shepherd (born 1950)

New Zealand

Cut-throat Razor and Cotton Reel 1978

oil on linen on board

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

purchased 1982

Ko tā Michael Shepherd *Cut-throat Razor and Cotton Reel*, 1978 he whakaari i ngā mea o te rautau 19 i roto i tētahi wāhi hiwa, tētahi wāhi katia o te peita ata toka o mua. Ko te heu motu-korokoro he kautete nō te wā i whai pāhau ai te tāne; ko te takatakai kātene nō te wā i tuia ai, i tapia ai ngā kākahu e te wahine. Ko tēnei toi he hokinga mahara ki te rautau 17, he wā i kauanuanutia ai taua momo toi, ā, he mana whakaharahara tō te mea. I taua wā ko te kārara he tohu mō te oranga rangitahi; ko te pukapuka he tohu mō te whakapono; ko te pua tiere he tohu mō ngā rangi tūhāhā. I oti i a Shepherd āna mahi toi i te whiore o ngā tau 1970; he ōrite āna mea ki ngā rawa tawhito e kitea ai i roto i te toroa kāore e tino whakamahia, i te wā e paraketuhia ana mea kē. E ai ki te mātanga hītori toi a Francis Pound: ‘. . . kei te piri tonu ngā maumaharatanga tawhito ki āna mea, me he puehu angiangi, rangiwhāwhā.’

Michael Shepherd's *Cut-throat Razor and Cotton Reel*, 1978 sees objects from the 19th century set in a dark and hermetic space of historical still-life painting. Cut-throat razors come from a time when men wore beards, and cotton reels from when women sewed and mended their own clothes. The work harks back to the 17th century when the genre was at its zenith and objects held great symbolic power. A time when candles represented the transience of life, a book signalled piety; and cherries connoted paradise. But Shepherd's work was made in the late 1970s, and his objects are more like those old things found in a forgotten drawer when you're rummaging for something else. Art historian Francis Pound elaborated: ‘. . . his objects have old memories clinging to them still, like a fine and pervasive dust.’

Frances Hunt (1890–1981)

New Zealand

Composition circa 1949

oil on board

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

purchased 1990

I whakahouhia te tāera toi a Frances Hunt e tōna akoranga ki te Elam School of Art i ngā tau tīmatanga o 1930. I te mutunga o tōna akoranga e toru tau te roa, ka hangaia e ia tētahi taupuni mahi toi nui i tōna kāinga i Tāmaki-makau-rau. He wāhi whai rauemi toi, ā, e ai ki tētahi mātanga hītori toi a Eric McCormick, ‘kī tonu ngā pakitara ki ngā paenga e pupuri nei i ngā pukapuka toi, i ngā mea hei kaupapa mā te ata toka, i ngā hangarewa ukutea – he pane Benin, he pākurukuru Julius Caesar, he rīpene whakarākei nō Kirīhi, he Apollo mau rau piki’. Ko te tāruatanga pane Benin te kaupapa matua o te *Composition*, circa 1949; he rawe te whakataurite a Hunt i te koropikopiko huatau me te tipuranga e tupu kūnakunaku ana ki tōna taha. Ko taua taupuni hou he wāhi mutunga mai o te pai hei taiao peita; e ai ki a McCormick ‘he taupuni pai tērā mā Michelangelo’.

Frances Hunt’s artistic practice was rejuvenated by her training at the Elam School of Art in the early 1930s. Following the completion of the three-year course she had a large studio built at her home in Auckland. It was a well-appointed space and art historian Eric McCormick recalled ‘walls lined with shelves holding art books, ornaments for use in still lifes, and plaster casts – a Benin head, a bust of Julius Caesar, a Greek frieze, a fig-leafed Apollo’. The replica Benin head is the central focus of *Composition*, circa 1949, and Hunt expertly balances its graceful curving shape with a more unruly neighbouring pot plant. The new studio provided the ideal conditions to paint, and McCormick quipped ‘that the place would have done nicely for Michelangelo’.

Frances Hunt (1890–1981)

New Zealand

Still Life date unknown

oil on board

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

gift of Mrs A J C Fisher, 1951

Ko tā Frances Hunt i mua i te ako toi turua, he mahi ahuwahenua. Ka kitea ōna pūkenga toi i tōna tamarikitanga, heoi ka waiho ki rahaki hei taunaki i tōna whānau. I te Pakanga o te Ao 1 ko ia anake te tamāhine e ora tonu ana, ā, i te wehenga o ōna tungāne ka waiho māna te pāmu e whakahaere. He ākonga pakeke ia i te Elam School of Art i te tau 1932, te āhua nei i reira hangaia ai te *Still Life*. Ki ētahi he maroke pea te toi nei, heoi he wero tonu i mua i te aroaro o te ringa peita: ka pēhea te whakaatu i ngā kōripi aho i runga i te pātara kōata, ka pēhea te tītohu i te hōhonutanga kei roto i te kapu, ka pēhea te whakaari i te kōtakataka mōhanihani o ngā hēki.

Before studying fine art, Frances Hunt worked on the land. She put her early artistic promise to one side in favour of family responsibilities. As the only surviving daughter, and in the absence of her brothers, Hunt had to run the farm during World War I. She enrolled as a mature student at the Elam School of Art in 1932, which is where *Still Life* was likely created. The work may seem prosaic, but it would have provided a range of challenges for the painter: how to capture fine slivers of light on the glass bottle, how to show the depth inside the teacup, and how to capture the perfectly smooth roundness of the eggs.

Jude Rae (born 1956)

New Zealand

Still Life 48 1999

oil on linen

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

purchased 1999

Ko tā te ingoa o tēnei peita nō te tau 1999, he whakaari i tōna wāhi i te raupapatanga – ko te *Still Life 48* he wāhanga nō tētahi mahi nui ake. He wairua pōturi, he wairua āta mahia tō tēnei peita. Karekau he āhukatanga poka noa; kei te kitea te whakapau kaha ōrite tonu ki tēnā mea, ki tēnā mea – i kaha pū tonu te whakaoti i tēnā tiaka, i tēnā ipu putiputi. Kei te tīhaea te ngūtanga e ngā kōtingotingo aho ruarua noa, e te ātārangi paku kei te taha mātau o te tiaka mā, e te ipu pango whano kē e tata huna ana ki muri. He ātārangi ranei? Nāwai rā, nāwai rā, kei te oho haere ngā mea muna a Jude Rae, ā, ka panoni haere kia puta hei whanaunga kē. I te tīmatanga he kohinga āhua maroke o ngā mea tae piakano, i te mutunga he mea maha rawa e kōmitimiti ana, he mea whakamanawarau.

The title of this painting from 1999 suggests it is part of a series – that *Still Life 48* belongs to a longer enquiry. The painting has a slow and studied quality. Nothing is spontaneous as each object is given the same even treatment – the jugs and vases rendered with absolute precision. The sense of stillness is only slightly interrupted by a few flecks of light, a small shadow to the right of the white jug, and an ambiguous black vessel tucked in at the back. Or is it just a shadow? After a while, Jude Rae’s anonymous objects take on greater presence and begin to feel like characters in a family. What started as a seemingly banal collection of pastel-coloured objects becomes an increasingly crowded mingling, redolent with unease.

Lionel Lindsay (1874–1961)

Australia

Dahlias 1925

wood engraving and woodcut
Mackelvie Trust Collection
Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

E ai ki te kairauhī a Anne Ryan, ko ngā tārākau a Lionel Lindsay – nāna anō ōna pūkenga tā rākau i whakapakari – ‘ētahi o ngā mātātuhi kōhure, pai rawa, i oti ai i Ahitereiria i mua tonu i te Pakanga o Te Ao Tuarua.’ I ngā tau 1920, i te ngākaunui te tokomaha o ngā ringa toi nō Ahitereiria ki te toi o te ao hou, inarā ko rātou i noho ai i Poihākena – engari Ko Lindsey. He kaha tāna whakahē i ngā take hou, take whakawhana, ā, mōhiotia nuitia ai tāna whakahē i te ao houtanga i tāna pukapuka *Addled Art* (1942). Ko tā te *Dahlias*, 1925, pērā i ngā mātātuhi ātaahua mō ngā putiputi me ngā manu, he whakaatu i te whakaaweawe a te kaitā-rakau nō Ingarangi a Thomas Bewick me tāna *A History of British Birds* (1797). Kei te takahuri a Lindsay i te papamuri māori kia angiangi kē te kakano. Kua whakahorohia ngā kōtingotingo mā e kātoretore ana, ki te mata tuauriuri o te tēpu a runga. Kei te tautoko ēnei āhuatanga katoa i te kaupapa matua – he whakaritenga putiputi paroparo haere e kotiti ana.

For curator Anne Ryan, self-taught etcher and engraver Lionel Lindsay’s woodcuts represent ‘some of the most distinctive and memorable prints made in Australia in the period prior to the Second World War.’ The 1920s saw many Australian artists embrace modern art with vigour and energy, particularly those living in Sydney – but not Lindsey. A vocal opponent of the new and radical, Lindsey famously voiced his opposition to modernism in his book *Addled Art* (1942). *Dahlias*, 1925, like many of Lindsay’s stylish prints of flowers and birds, shows the influence of early English wood-engraver Thomas Bewick and his *A History of British Birds* (1797). Lindsay transforms a plain background into a fine network of texture. The table top with its ink black surface is punctuated with a constellation of white dots which appear to glimmer. All of this supports the main event – an angular and wilting arrangement of flowers.

Patrick Caulfield (1936–2005)

England

Curtain and Bottle 1973

screenprint

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

gift of the Institute of Contemporary Prints, London, 1976

I roto i te *Curtain and Bottle*, 1973, ka hangaia e te ārai wini kapakapa, e te taeka aho, e ngā ātārangi hōhonu, tētahi wairua porehu ānō nei he kiriata-noir. Ka hopukia kahatia te aronga o te kaimātakitaki e te mōhio a Patrick Caulfield ki te tuku i te poho tārewa mā te huarahi horehore noa. Karekau he kauruku, karekau he whakatauirā. Kua whakapāpakuhia ngā mea kia tata tonu he kauwhata whakaahua, ā, kua tāhuahuatia ki ngā rārangi matotoru, pango hoki. Nā te āta ako i ngā peita kaupapa rō-whare i whanake ai i a Caulfield taua tāera tahanga. E ai ki te Kaihautū o mua o te Whare Whakairi Toi o Tate a Nicholas Serota, he ‘ringa toi matatau’ ia e mōhio pai nei ka pēhea e tiaho iho ai te aho ki runga i ngā mea.

In *Curtain and Bottle*, 1973 the blowing curtain, shaft of light and deep shadows create a film-noir air of mystery. The scene is doubly intriguing for the way Patrick Caulfield infuses a sense of suspense using the barest of means. He makes no attempt at shading or modelling. Objects are reduced almost to the point of pictographs and rendered in thick black lines. Caulfield developed his pared-down style through close study of paintings of interiors. Former Tate Gallery Director Nicholas Serota described him as a ‘knowing artist’, one who understands deeply how light falls against objects.