

# New Zealand Artists and Water in Art

The Highgate Partners Lunchtime Lecture Series  
An Otago Art Society 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Event

12noon to 1pm, Otago Art Society  
First Floor, Dunedin Railway Station

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This document provides more information on each of the lunchtime lecture topics, presented by artist Doug Hart.

## **Presentation Outline:**

This six session presentation of New Zealand artists and the portrayal of water in art is an integral part of the 150th Anniversary of the founding of the Otago Art Society. Members and the public are very welcome to attend the sessions which are held in the Hope Gallery at the Dunedin Railway Station, home of the society. Here's a more detailed list of what will be presented .

### **1) February 5th....William Mathew Hodgkins and the history of the Otago Art Society.**

William Mathew Hodgkins (1833–1898) was a pioneering New Zealand landscape painter and a key figure in Dunedin's early art scene. Deeply inspired by European Romanticism, his works captured the majesty of New Zealand's natural landscapes. Hodgkins founded the Otago Art Society in 1876 that fostered local talent and set the scene to establish the love of art across the country. He is noted for influencing his daughter, the acclaimed painter Frances Hodgkins.

### **2) February 19th....Frances Hodgkins.**

Inspired and nurtured by her father Mathew Hodgkins, Frances Hodgkins (1869–1947) was a pioneering New Zealand modernist painter known for her innovative use of colour and form. Working mainly in Europe, she became one of Britain's leading modern artists. Her work blended landscapes, still lifes, and figures, reflecting emotional depth and experimentation. Hodgkins significantly influenced modern art in both New Zealand and Britain.

### **3) March 5th....Colin McCahon**

Colin McCahon (1919–1987) was a pioneering New Zealand painter known for his powerful exploration of faith, landscape, and human existence. His work combined modernist abstraction with biblical and spiritual themes, often incorporating words and numbers as visual elements. McCahon's stark, expressive paintings reflect his deep connection to the New Zealand environment and his search for meaning. Today, he is celebrated as one of New Zealand's most influential artists.

#### **4) March 19th.....Rita Angus**

Rita Angus (1908–1970) was a pioneering New Zealand modernist painter renowned for her distinctive landscapes and portraits. Her work combined precise detail with a strong sense of design and symbolism, often reflecting her pacifist beliefs and deep connection to the New Zealand landscape. Iconic works like *Cass* and *Portrait of Betty Curnow* capture both realism and spirituality. Angus's art celebrates national identity, individuality, and harmony between people and nature, securing her legacy as a defining figure in New Zealand art.

#### **5) April 2nd.....Robin White**

Robin White (born 1946) is a celebrated New Zealand artist known for her distinctive blend of realism and spirituality. Her work often portrays everyday life in Aotearoa and the Pacific, infused with cultural symbolism and a deep sense of place. Early paintings such as *Fish and Chips*, *Maketu* reflect New Zealand's rural communities, while later collaborations with Pacific artists explore themes of connection, faith, and environment. White's art embodies simplicity, humility, and a profound engagement with people and landscape.

#### **6) April 16th.....Water and Art**

Water in art symbolizes life, change, and reflection. Artists portray it as both tranquil and powerful, capturing its shifting forms—ripples, waves, and mist—to evoke emotion and movement. From Turner's turbulent seas to Hokusai's iconic waves, water embodies nature's beauty and unpredictability. Its transparency invites metaphor, reflecting human emotion and the passage of time. Through water, artists explore harmony, chaos, and the ever-changing essence of existence.

### **About your presenter Doug Hart**

Doug Hart, a Dunedin-based artist and former president of the Otago Art Society, is celebrated for his detailed and humorous watercolour and ink works that capture the city's unique charm. His art reimagines Dunedin's architecture, wildlife, and culture with playful imagination and meticulous precision. Hart's involvement with the Otago Art Society reflects his commitment to fostering local creativity and community. Through exhibitions such as *Stunning Dunedin* and *Port Folio*, he showcases not only his affection for the region but also the Society's role in nurturing emerging and established artists, helping to keep Dunedin's artistic spirit lively, inclusive, and proudly distinctive.

### **About the Otago Art Society**

The Otago Art Society, New Zealand's oldest art society, plays a vital role in nurturing creativity and community in Dunedin. It provides artists with exhibition opportunities, mentorship, and a supportive space to share ideas and develop their craft. By promoting local talent and art appreciation, the Society helps sustain Otago's vibrant and enduring artistic culture.