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MEDIA RELEASE



## **New Te Papa art treasures unpacked in Whangarei**

More treasures from the national art collection will be unveiled at the Whangarei Art Museum over the coming year in the second season of *Unpacked – Treasures from Te Papa*.

The quietly intense portrait *Head of a girl* from Christchurch-born artist Raymond McIntyre is the first of four works on display at the museum from Saturday.

Whangarei Art Museum Trust Chairperson Grant Faber says, “We are delighted to bring major art works from Te Papa to the North for a second season.”

*Unpacked* is part of Te Papa’s broader programme to work with regional museums and galleries.

“We work hard to ensure New Zealand’s national treasures are accessible to more people in more places,” Te Papa’s Chief Executive Rick Ellis says.

The Whangarei Art Museum and Te Papa worked together on the rotating programme of art, which features a different work in the space every three months.

Te Papa’s Curator Historical New Zealand Art, Dr Rebecca Rice, says McIntyre was one of New Zealand’s most intriguing artists of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

“He pared everything back to capture the essence of his sitters,” Dr Rice says.

“McIntyre studied at the Canterbury College School of Art, and after leaving New Zealand in 1909, he steadily developed a reputation in England, where he was influenced by the latest European art trends,” she says.

“However his career was cut short by his death at only 54.”

In July, a second art work will go on show from celebrated New Zealand painter Frances Hodgkins, *Still life: self-portrait*.

Dr Rice says of the painting, “By the time Hodgkins painted *Still life: self-portrait* in the 1930s, she was a leading modern artist in Britain. Already in her 60s, she knew that her age and gender might threaten the reception of her work. Her self-portrait, then, is actually a still life. The mirror in the centre refuses to reflect.”

In October and January 2016 two further art works will go on display as part of *Unpacked – Treasures from Te Papa*.

### **Background on Raymond McIntyre**

Raymond McIntyre was born in Christchurch in 1879. Educated at Warwick House until the age of 15, he then went to the Canterbury College School of Art as an evening student.

McIntyre was able to observe the fresh techniques of impressionism in 1906–7 when 20 works by New English Art Club painters were shown at the New Zealand International Exhibition in Christchurch. He had been exhibiting landscapes and portraits regularly with the Canterbury Society of Arts since 1899 and by 1908 his loosely brushed paintings blended influences from Petrus van der Velden with English impressionism. Local critics were not always impressed. He was labelled 'a decorator' and, according to Leonard Booth, was scorned because he was an impressionist. This lack of critical and local artistic success seems to have convinced McIntyre that he should pursue his artistic career in Britain.

Arriving in London in February 1909, McIntyre began a period of intensive study and painting. He exhibited frequently over the next decade, and had a painting accepted for exhibition at the Royal Academy of Arts in 1924. He ceased to exhibit his work after 1926 although he still painted for his own enjoyment.

McIntyre was also a writer, printmaker, photographer and theatre and music critic. He died in London in September 1933 from an infection.

(credit: Linda Tyler. 'McIntyre, Raymond Francis', from the Dictionary of New Zealand Biography. Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, updated 19-Nov-2013 <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/biographies/3m11/mcintyre-raymond-francis>)

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Raymond McIntyre, *Head of a girl*, about 1922, oil on board. Gift of C Millan Thompson to mark the occasion of the retirement of the director, S B MacLennan, 1968. Te Papa (1968-0002-21)



Frances Hodgkins, *Still life: self-portrait*, circa 1935, oil on panel. Purchased 1999 with New Zealand Lottery Grants Board funds. Te Papa (1999-0017-1)