

**Press Release
Wednesday 3 August 2016**

Historic exhibition of Māori portraits to open at Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki this October

Sponsors

**MĀORI
TELEVISION**

AUT

**CHISHOLM
WHITNEY
CHARITABLE TRUST**

**TE MĀORI MANAAKI
TAONGA TRUST**



Gottfried Lindauer, *Pare Watene* 1878, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of Mr H E Partridge. 1915



Gottfried Lindauer, *Eruera Maihi Patuone* 1874, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of Mr H E Partridge. 1915

More than 150 historic oil portraits of Māori and Pākehā will be shown at Auckland Art Gallery in the largest ever exhibition of work by artist Gottfried Lindauer.

The Māori Portraits: Gottfried Lindauer's New Zealand will feature artworks from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It opens Saturday 22 October and entry is free.

After a public search to locate further portraits by Lindauer, Auckland Art Gallery has discovered 36 bona fide artworks from around the world. At least six of these will be shown in the exhibition.

Gallery Director Rhana Devenport says this will be the most significant exhibition of Māori portraits to ever be seen.

'It will be a once in a lifetime opportunity to see this many Lindauer oil paintings together, which are an important part of Aotearoa New Zealand's story and identity,' she says.

The Māori Portraits: Gottfried Lindauer's New Zealand celebrates artist Gottfried Lindauer (1839 – 1926), New Zealand's pioneering and most prolific portrait painter and a key cultural figure in the country's art history.

The exhibition will bring together an array of finely-detailed portraits of Māori rangatira (men and women of standing in their communities) in both traditional and

western dress, portraits of colonial settlers, and large paintings depicting Māori life and customs.

Lindauer's personal history, from his art training and migration from Europe to his artistic inventions once in New Zealand, will be highlighted, bringing new insights to the relevance of his life's work in the 21st century.

New ways to understand how this period of change, controversy and colonisation was visually recorded will also be investigated in the exhibition, as the role of photography in the creation of Lindauer's portraits is explored.

Independent curator Ngahiraka Mason, who until 2015 was Auckland Art Gallery's Indigenous Curator, Māori Art, has been working on the project for more than four years. The Gallery's current Curator, Māori Art, Nigel Borell, is assisting Mason.

Mason says a strong feature of the show will be the Māori portraits as they represent a diverse portrayal of confident and powerfully poised Māori ancestors.

'The exhibition gives an incredible insight into iwi and hapu (community) leadership of the period. Lindauer's portraits of rangatira have tremendous mana (prestige) with their striking likeness or resemblance of subjects,' she says.

Historical photographs from the period, historic correspondence and Māori taonga (treasures) that were gifted to the artist, plus memorabilia and documentaries will also offer a deeper awareness into this fascinating period of New Zealand's history.

Mason says many of the people depicted in the portraits have descendants living today.

'These artworks, although impressive in their own right, are more than just portraits, they're living connections to the past, and Auckland Art Gallery is proud to be able to facilitate that connection,' she says.

Alongside the main show, the Gallery will run a smaller exhibition, *Identifying Lindauer: His Materials and Techniques*. This will look at Lindauer's art practice and provide insights by comparing a number of his original works with real-life forgeries.

(ends)

Exhibition details:

The Māori Portraits: Gottfried Lindauer's New Zealand

When: Saturday 22 October 2016 to Sunday 19 February 2017
10am to 5pm daily except Christmas Day

Where: Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki
Corner Kitchener and Wellesley Streets
Auckland, New Zealand

Admission: Free

Image credits:

Gottfried Lindauer, *Pare Watene* 1878, Auckland Art Gallery, Gift of Mr H E Partridge 1915

Gottfried Lindauer, *Eruera Maihi Patuone* 1874, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of Mr H E Partridge, 1915

Notes to Editor:

Accompanying book: *Gottfried Lindauer's New Zealand: The Māori Portraits*

A 300-page book, *Gottfried Lindauer's New Zealand: The Māori Portraits*, is being co-published by Auckland University Press and Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki for the occasion of the exhibition. Edited by Ngahiraka Mason and Dr Zara Stanhope.

This definitive book collects Gottfried Lindauer portraits for New Zealanders. It presents 67 major portraits and eight genre paintings alongside detailed accounts of the subject and work, with essays by leading scholars that take us inside Lindauer and his world: from his artistic training in Bohemia to his travels around New Zealand as Māori and Pākehā commissioned him to paint portraits; his artistic techniques and deep relationship with photography; Henry Partridge's gallery on Auckland's Queen Street where Māori visited to see their ancestors; and the afterlife of the paintings in marae and memory.

RRP \$75.00

About Gottfried Lindauer

Gottfried Lindauer (1839 – 1926) was the most prolific and best-known painter of Māori subjects, in particular portraits, in the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries.

He was born in Pilsen, Czech Republic.

Professionally trained at the Academy Fine Arts in Vienna, he migrated to New Zealand in 1874. Lindauer's first portraits of Māori were painted in Nelson. He worked in many parts of NZ before establishing a studio in Auckland in the late-1870s where he met businessman, Henry Partridge (1848-1931), who over the next 30-plus years commissioned from Lindauer numerous portraits of eminent Māori as well as large-scale depictions of traditional Māori life and customs. Partridge's commission project aimed to create a pictorial history of Māori at a time when society was rapidly changing.

For more information, high-res images and interview requests contact

Olivia Boswell, Communications Officer, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

M +64 21 952 759

E olivia.boswell@aucklandartgallery.com

W www.aucklandartgallery.com