



GOTTFRIED LINDAUER AND THE NÁPRSTEK MUSEUM: ETHNOGRAPHIC COLLECTION

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ABSTRACT: Gottfried Lindauer was a Bohemian painter residing and working in Aotearoa New Zealand. His paintings capturing the native people and their life earned him praise and respect from the Māori and Pākehā alike, as well as international recognition within and outside the artistic community. The Náprstek Museum in Prague owns two of his paintings, a small collection of Maori objects, photographs and letters to Ms Josefa Náprstková. This set of resources offers a comprehensive view on the artist's collection practices, his creative process, and last but not least his relation to the Náprstek family.

KEY WORDS: Gottfried Lindauer – New Zealand – Náprstek Museum – museum collections

Introduction

Gottfried Lindauer was born on the 5th of January in 1839 in Pilsen, Bohemia (the present-day Czech Republic). He is sometimes known under the Czech version of his given name, Bohumír². Aged 16, Lindauer commenced his studies in the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna, where he worked under Josef von Führich (1800–1876), who was also of Bohemian descent, and Leopold Kupelwieser (1796–1862). His apparent talent earned him commissions for portraits (e.g. Jan Valerián Jirsík, the Bishop of Budweis [České Budějovice]) and he worked in Carl Hemerlein's workshop. Lindauer shortly joined the army in the 1860s for a regular mandatory military service, but he spent more time painting and soon his name disappeared from the official records. It is likely that

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² At the time of Lindauer's birth, Bohemia was part of Austria-Hungary and hence, all official documents including birth registries were kept in German with German and/or Latin and/or Czech version/s of the name inscribed.

the Catholic Church managed to negotiate a deferment so Lindauer could work on religious paintings. However, in 1873, Lindauer decided to leave the country, as the end of his deferment was approaching. It is not clear why he chose New Zealand. Whether he was lured by a newspaper article (Graham [ed.] 1965: 9) or by visiting the World Exhibition in Vienna (Filip – Musil 2015: 22), he boarded a ship and arrived at Wellington in 1874. In Auckland, Lindauer met Henry Partridge and together they commenced an ambitious project of documenting the Māori and their culture that was considered to be vanishing. In 1880, he became acquainted with another patron of his, Sir Walter Buller. Lindauer with his family visited Europe and his homeland on several occasions and kept in touch with their compatriots. Lindauer died in 1926 in Woodville, New Zealand, where he is also buried.

The life and work of Gottfried Lindauer are well documented in literature (Graham [ed.] 1965; Hudcová 1994; Bell 2000; Kittelmann – Schmitz [eds.] 2014; Filip – Musil [eds.] 2015; Mason – Stanhope [eds.] 2016). An extensive website presented by the Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki makes accessible all kinds of resources and offers various and unique perspectives on the artist as well as his sitters (<http://www.lindaueronline.co.nz/>). Memories and stories of the descendants were captured in two seasons of a TV series *Behind the Brush*.

In New Zealand, the work of Lindauer is part of cherished legacy, generally considered to be *taonga* (treasures), with portraits assuming public roles, such as those exhibited in the Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, as well as strictly private ones which are carefully kept in households of the *tūpuna's* descendants (Blackley 2018: [30]). On the other hand, Lindauer was virtually unknown for decades in his native homeland. This has slowly begun to change, especially after a bilingual article by Leonard Bell in the Czech magazine of *Umění / Art* (Bell 2000) drew attention of the Czech public. A breakthrough came with the major exhibitions of Lindauer's work in Berlin (*Gottfried Lindauer. Die Māori Portraits*, Alte Nationalgalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, 2014–2015) and especially in his hometown of Pilsen (*Gottfried Lindauer (1839–1926). Plzeňský malíř novozélandských Maorů*, Západočeská galerie v Plzni, 2015).

Gottfried Lindauer in the Náprstek Museum

The National Museum – Náprstek Museum of Asian, African and American Cultures (Náprstek Museum) in Prague, Czech Republic, keeps in its collections two of Lindauer's Māori portraits, a small collection of ethnographic objects, several letters mostly addressed to Josefa Náprstková, and photographs. This set of materials offers a complex view on the artist's collection practices, his relation to the Museum and the Náprstek family, and his creative process. The present paper deals with Lindauer's oil paintings and the collection of ethnographic objects, while the letters and photographs will be targeted in separate articles in subsequent issues of the present periodical.

Lindauer's Māori portraits are well known and valued especially for their great attention to detail. Despite some mistakes and inaccuracies (cf. Bell 1990: 145), he strove to capture the reality as precisely as possible, including a laborious study of the facial *moko* of his sitters (VN 144/58-3/11, but cf. Ellis 2018). His collection of ethnographic objects was assembled by direct purchases or exchange (VN 41/57) and as presents from his sitters and their families (Kořenský 1908: 6). The motivation for collecting Māori objects was apparently a blend of interest in the culture and an effort to introduce it to his fellow Bohemians. Indeed, he sent some of his objects to the Náprsteks to be

exhibited at their museum (today the Náprstek Museum). In his letters, he called the objects “curios” (VN 41/57) and it is evident that he purposefully sought after typical, characteristic, and visually attractive examples of the Māori material culture. The collection clearly reflects the contemporary fascination by the exotic faraway lands that was sparked by fashionable world fairs (Hubatová-Vacková 2015: 94).

The first objects assembled by Lindauer were acquired for the Náprstek Museum by Vojta Náprstek himself. In 1892, he received a letter from one Antonín Pecivál, an innholder from the town of Kostelec nad Orlicí, who claimed to own a collection of Māori objects and photographs (VN 144/58-3). Inscriptions on the photographs revealed that they were sent to Hynek (Ignác) Lindauer by his brother Gottfried. Further objects were delivered by Josef Kořenský, a famous teacher and traveller, who met Lindauer in 1900 during his visit to New Zealand; some objects were sent directly by the painter. Lindauer repeatedly promised to send two portraits in his letters to Josefa Náprstková (VN 41/362; VN 8/1904; VN 52/456). Unfortunately, when he eventually did (VN 8/1907), the paintings arrived only several months after Ms Náprstková had passed away. A feather cloak was purchased from the family of Václav Frič in 1974, and a wooden club was sold in 1985 by the family of V. Hons.

Lindauer’s collection of ethnographic objects is unburdened by colonialist (often times controversial) collecting practices. Combined with his correspondence and photographs, it brings a unique and comprehensive perspective not only to the personality of Gottfried Lindauer himself, but also for the history of objects curated by the Náprstek Museum.

Table 1. Overview of objects from Gottfried Lindauer in the Náprstek Museum.

Cat.No.	Inv. No.	Item	Provenience
1	A6845	Portrait of Harawira Te Mahikai	New Zealand
2	A6846	Portrait of Mrs. Háromi	New Zealand
3	A6869	Kaitaka cloak	New Zealand
4	A6870	Korowai hukahuka cloak	New Zealand
5	A6874	Kahu huruhuru cloak	New Zealand
6	16835	Kahu huruhuru cloak	New Zealand
7	56187	Piupiu skirt	New Zealand
8	16838	Rāpaki kilt	New Zealand
9	56224	Kete muka bag	New Zealand
10	A6838	Kete muka bag	New Zealand
11	28611	Patu club	New Zealand
12	11095	Pā kahawai lure	New Zealand
13	11096	Fishing lure	Solomon Islands
14	56176	Bundle of tobacco	New Zealand
15	10909	Tapa	Fiji (?)
	Unidentified ³	Bag	New Zealand
	Unidentified	Bundle of flax	New Zealand
	Deaccessioned	Sample of golden ore	New Zealand
	Deaccessioned	Sample of nephrite	New Zealand
	Deaccessioned	Nephrite carving	New Zealand

³ The existence of these items is known from Lindauer’s and Pecivál’s letters to the Náprstek.

The Māori Portraits

1. Portrait of Harawira Te Mahikai

Inv. No: A6845 [Pl. 1]

Oil on canvas; height 76.2 cm, width 60.2 cm

History: Sent to Josefa Náprstková by Gottfried Lindauer in 1907 (cf. VN 8/1907)

Inscription on the front: G. Lindauer, pinx-1907

Inscription on the back: "Harawira Te Mahikai", chief of the Ngati-Kahungunu Hapu.
New Zealand



Pl. 1

The painting is a waist-up portrait of an elderly man with full facial *moko* and numerous symbols of his high status. He wears a *kahu kurī*, a highly prestigious chiefly cloak made of the *kurī* dog (*Canis lupus familiaris*) pelt. In his right hand, the man is holding a richly carved *taiaha kura* (warrior staff) decorated with *pāua* shell (abalone/ormer) eyes, and a collar of orange *kākā* parrot feathers and *kurī* dog hair. In his left ear, there is a *mako* (shark tooth) pendant with a ribbon; in his right ear, there is a nephrite pendant *kuru pounamu*. His short white hair is adorned with one black and white tail feather of *huia* (*Heteralocha acutirostris*).

The portrayed man is Harawira Mahikai Te Tatere of Ngāti Kahungunu *iwi* (nation). He was the son of Te Orihau and his wife Hinekona, and the younger brother of Tiakitai, after whom he assumed the position of *rangatira* (chief). On 24 June 1840, Harawira Mahikai signed the Treaty of Waitangi (*Te Tiriti o Waitangi*)⁴, considered to be the founding document of New Zealand. This portrait is one of the six known Lindauer's depictions of Harawira Mahikai (Bernhardt – Davidson-Ladd – Mason – Norman 2015: 254).

Published:

Čech malířem australských Maorů, *Český svět* 4/15, 31. 1. 1908, p. 355

Amerikán 32, 1909, p. 217

Buck 1963, 4th page of appendix between pp. 144–145

Filip – Musil (eds.) 2015: 254–255

Burianová – Dašková (eds.) 2018: 55

2. Portrait of Mrs. Hárómi

Inv. No: A6846 [Pl. 2]

Oil on canvas; height 76.9 cm, width 60.2 cm

History: Sent to Josefa Náprstková by Gottfried Lindauer in 1907 (cf. VN 8/1907)

Inscription on the front: G. Lindauer, pinx=1907, New Zealand

Inscription on the back: Mrs Hárómi "Maori Woman"

This sitting portrait depicts a woman with her right arm uncovered, long black hair and facial tattoo consisting of *ngutu pūrua* (tattooed lips) and *moko kauae* (a tattooed chin). She is wearing a *korowai hukahuka*, a flax cloak with black tassels. The woman is adorned with a *mako* (shark tooth) pendant in each ear, and a pair of *huia* (*Heteralocha acutirostris*) tail feathers in her hair.

Unlike the previous painting, the identity of this sitter remains unclear. Lindauer's caption suggests it could be Harómi Te Ata, the niece of Harawira Mahikai (the daughter of his older brother Tiakitai). However, in another painting of Lindauer's from 1901, the same sitter is named as Hinekura of Te Reinga, and in yet another of Lindauer's works, the famed painting *The Maori at Home* from 1885, the same woman was identified by the descendants as Harawira Mahikai's wife Maata Maki⁵.

⁴ Circumstances of Mahikai's signature of the Herald – Bunbury copy of the Treaty, including interactive scan, are accessible online via <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/interactive/herald-bunbury-treaty-copy>; accessed 17 January 2019.

⁵ See Behind the Brush, S02E03, accessible online via <https://www.maoritelevision.com/shows/behind-brush/S02E003/behind-brush-series-2-episode-3>, accessed 17 January 2019.



Pl. 2

Published:

Čech malířem australských Maorů, Český svět 4/15, 31. 1. 1908, p. 354

Amerikán 32, 1909, p. 217

Kittelmann – Schmitz (eds.) 2014: 148–149

Filip – Musil (eds.) 2015: 256–257

3. *Kaitaka* cloak

Inv. No.: A6869 [Pl. 3]

Flax fibre, dog skin; width 125 cm, length 79 cm

History: Donated by Gottfried Lindauer via Josef Kořenský in 1901 (cf. VN 41/57)



Pl. 3

The cloak is finely woven from *muka* (fibres of the New Zealand flax, *Phormium tenax*). The sides are hemmed with a stripe of *tāniko* pattern in natural, red, green, blue and black colours. The lower rim is bordered with a wide stripe of fine *tāniko* in purple, black, natural, red, green and blue colours. The upper rim is decorated with two stripes of *kurī* dog skin with dark and light fur.

Published:

Filip – Musil (eds.) 2015: 98

4. *Korowai hukahuka* cloak

Inv. No.: A6870 [Pl. 4]

Flax fibre, wool; width 173 cm, length 119 cm

History: Sent to Josefa Náprstková by Gottfried Lindauer in 1907 (cf. VN 52/456; VN 8/1907)

The cloak is finely woven from *muka* (flax fibres) and decorated with tassels (*hukahuka*). The sides and the lower rim are hemmed with short woollen fringes in black, white, yellow, green and red colours. The bottom is further decorated with thin



Pl. 4

longitudinal stripes and one rectangle with a herringbone-like pattern in each corner. The upper side is bordered with long black, red and blue fringes. Long black tassels are evenly distributed on the whole surface of the cloak.

Published:

Filip – Musil (eds.) 2015: 58

5. *Kahu huruhuru* cloak

Inv. No. A6874 [Pl. 5]

Flax fibre, feathers, wool; width 118.6 cm, length 74 cm

History: Purchased from the family of Václav Frič in 1974

This cloak with a base from *muka* (flax fibre) is adorned with feathers and a woollen geometric pattern. The plumage is arranged in 12×10 rectangles (the rectangles on the very right and left of the bottom row were intentionally left blank) of regularly alternating colours. Four bird species can be distinguished: white feathers of *kererū* or the New Zealand pigeon (*Hemiphaga novaeseelandiae*); brown-green feathers of the *kākāriki* parakeet (*Cyanoramphus novaeseelandiae* or *C. auriceps*); bluish-black *tūi* feathers (*Prosthemadera novaeseelandiae*); and deep blue-green feathers of non-native but naturalised peacocks (*Pavo cristatus*). The sides of the cloak are decorated with small tufts of red, blue, white, green and pink wool. The bottom of the cloak is bordered with a row of coloured rectangles and a rim with woollen *tāniko* pattern.

Published:

Filip – Musil (eds.) 2015: 99



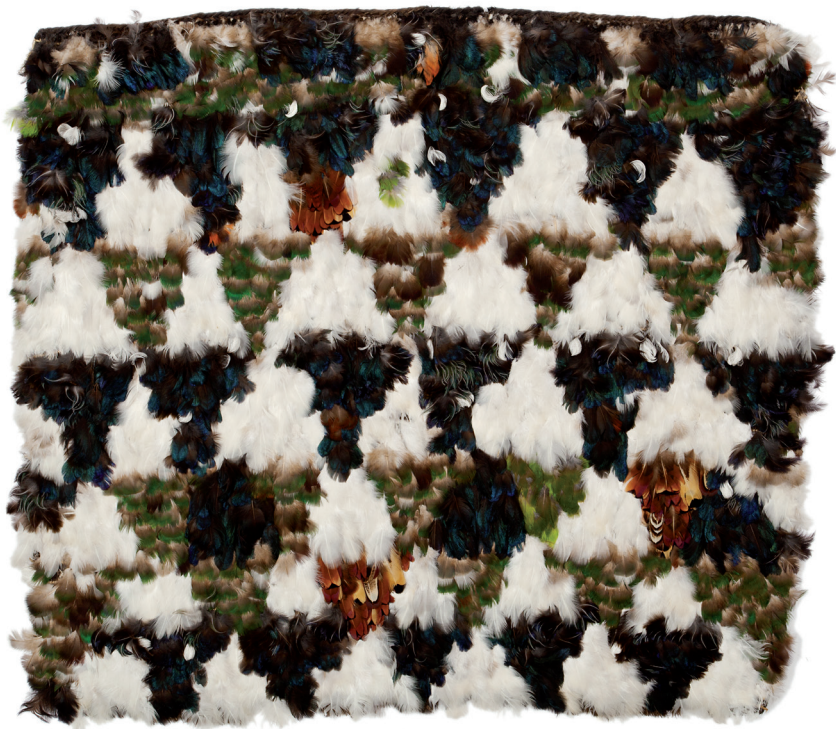
Pl. 5

6. *Kahu huruhuru* cloak

Inv. No.: 16835 [Pl. 6]

Flax fibre, feathers; width 60 cm, length 56 cm

History: Sent to Josefa Náprstková by Gottfried Lindauer in 1901 (cf. VN 41/57)



Pl. 6

This cloak from *muka* (flax fibre based) is adorned with feathers arranged in a triangular pattern. The feathers come from the following bird species: white feathers of *kererū* or the New Zealand pigeon (*Hemiphaga novaeseelandiae*); brown-green feathers of the *kākāriki* parakeet (*Cyanoramphus novaeseelandiae* or *C. auriceps*); bluish-black *tūi* feathers (*Prosthemadera novaeseelandiae*); and red-orange feathers of the *kākā* parrot (*Nestor meridionalis*). A *muka* cord is attached to the upper rim in order to hold the cloak in place.

Published:

Filip – Musil (eds.) 2015: 58

200 let Národního muzea ve 200 fotografiích, 2018: 96

7. *Piupiu* skirt

Inv. No.: 56187 [Pl. 7]

Flax; width 100.3 cm, length 48.6 cm

History: Donated by Gottfried Lindauer via Josef Kořenský in 1901 (cf. VN 41/57)



Pl. 7

This skirt is made of *muka* (flax fibres) with a cloak-like base to which rolls of curled *harakeke* (flax) are attached. The upper border is left without rolls and woven in a simple but decorative design. The skirt is hemmed with a braided cord.

Published:
Filip – Musil (eds.) 2015: 99

8. *Rāpaki* kilt

Inv. No.: 16838 [Pl. 8]
Flax fibre; width 65.5 cm, length without tassels 21 cm, length with tassels 49 cm
History: Purchased from Antonín Pecivál in 1892 (cf. VN 144/58-3)

This garment made of flax fibre (*muka*) is decorated with one yellow stripe and multiple black stripes and triangles. The lower end is bordered with long tassels of twisted fibres. The garment is to be kept in place by a braided cord.

Published:
Filip – Musil (eds.) 2015: 99



Pl. 8

9. *Kete muka* bag

Inv. No.: 56224 [Pl. 9]
Flax fibre; width 30 cm, length 20.5 cm
History: Purchased from Antonín Pecivál in 1892 (cf. VN 144/58-3)

This rectangular bag woven from *muka* (flax fibres) features a loose criss-cross pattern arranged in three wide longitudinal sections. The patterned sections are divided by narrow stripes of simple smooth weaving. The bag is decorated with fringes along



Pl. 9

the sides and the lower rim. A braided cord serves as a strap. The bag is in the natural undyed colour of the *harakeke* fibres.

Published:
Unpublished

10. Kete muka bag

Inv. No.: A6838 [Pl. 10]

Flax; width 41.8 cm, length 28 cm

History: Sent to Josefa Náprstková by Gottfried Lindauer in 1906/1907 (cf. VN 52/456; VN 8/1907)



Pl. 10

This rectangular bag is woven from *muka* (flax fibres) with a wide stripe of a criss-cross pattern in the centre of the body. The bag is hemmed with fringes and two bundles of six tassels each. The strap of the bag is formed by a twisted cord. The fibres feature natural colour and artificially dyed shades of greenish-yellow, brown and purple.

Published:

Filip – Musil (eds.) 2015: 130

11. *Patu club*

Inv. No.: 28611 [Pl. 11]

Wood; length 33.4 cm, width 12 cm

History: Purchased from the family of V. Hons in 1985

Inscription on one side: druh dřeva "Černá Maire" (wood kind "Black Maire" [*Nestegis cunninghamii*])



Pl. 11

This short hand-club is made of hardwood with a smooth shiny surface and a well pronounced figure. The club has a symmetrical spatula-like shape and the handle knob is decorated with three circumferential grooves.

Published:

Filip – Musil (eds.) 2015: 58

12. *Pākahawai* lure

Inv. No.: 11095 [Pl. 12]

Wood, shell, bone, feathers, flax; length 10.8 cm, width 1.9 cm

History: Purchased from Antonín Pecivál in 1892 (cf. VN 144/58-3)

This fishing lure with a wooden body is inlaid with a piece of *pāua* shell (abalone/ormer) and a bone barb. Two feathers are attached to the lower end. The composition is tightly fastened by a *muka* (flax fibre) string. This kind of lure was used for trolling (pulling behind a canoe); flashes of the shiny shell and the movement of the feathers in the water attracted the fish.

Published:

Filip – Musil (eds.) 2015: 58



Pl. 12

13. Fishing lure

Inv. No.: 11096 [Pl. 13]

Shell, tortoiseshell, beads, vegetal fibre; length 6.7 cm, width 1.3 cm

History: Purchased from Antonín Pecivál in 1892 (cf. VN 144/58-3)



Pl. 13

This fishing lure is made of a piece of shell with a tortoiseshell hook attached by a fine string of vegetal fibres. A trailer consisting of blue, indigo, red and white glass beads is fastened to the lower end.

Note: This type of hook corresponds to those from the Solomon Islands, and thus the item is not a Māori work.

Published:
Unpublished

14. Bundle of tobacco

Inv. No.: 56176

Tobacco; length 33 cm

History: Purchased from Antonín Pecivál in 1892 (cf. VN 144/58-3)

Inscription on a paper sticker: Porori neb Maori kuřlavý tabák (Porori⁶ or Maori smoking tobacco)



Pl. 14

These are light-brown leaves which are longitudinally folded and twisted into a tight bundle.

Published:
Unpublished

15. Tapa

Inv. No.: 10909

Tapa; length 140 cm, width 135 cm

History: Purchased from Antonín Pecivál in 1892 (cf. VN 144/58-3)

This is a rectangular two-layered tapa with fringes along three sides. The natural-coloured tapa is decorated with freehand painting in black and red. The surface is divided into uneven rectangles that feature floral motives and triangles.

⁶ This is most likely a confusion with *pituri*, which is an Australian plant mixture that, much like tobacco, is chewed and has stimulating effects.



Pl. 15

Note: According to A. Pecivál, the tapa comes from Fiji.

Published:
Unpublished

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