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GOTTFRIED LINDAUER

1839 - 1926

Tapita Matina

Oil on canvas 85.0 x 66.0

ESTIMATE

\$100,000 - 150,000

PROVENANCE

Ex George Wooller Collection, Auckland

Private Collection, North Island

REFERENCE

For comprehensive information on the life and work of Gottfried Lindauer visit Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki's Gottfried Lindauer website www.lindaueronline.co.nz/

This exceptionally fine painting by Gottfried Lindauer is unusual in that it is a direct portrait study rather than a studio painting from photographs.

In a letter to Auckland dealer Barry Lett, dated November 1964, art curator Hamish Keith comments on the quality of the work and states that to the best of his knowledge it is the only known portrait of Tapita Matina.

For many years the painting was owned by the subject's family. On her death it was gifted by her husband to Manawatu publicans Mr & Mrs Hancock, owners of the Awahuri Hotel near Palmerston North.

From a handwritten letter written by Mrs Hancock to her sister Josephine we learn that Tapita Matina was one of two sisters who owned land from Rangiwahai to Foxton Beach and the Oroua River through the King Country to Rangitikei. Tapita and her sister Henepaka were renowned horse women and local identities, their uncle being a signatory of the Treaty of Waitangi. We are further told that Tapita married Kiwi Reano a much loved and admired Otaki local, instantly recognisable on his grand white horse. Kiwi and Tapita adopted a young Pakeha boy who was later to lose his life in World War I.

In the early 1960s the painting was purchased at auction by Auckland businessman, George Wooller. It remained in the Wooller collection for twenty six years until its purchase in 1996 by current North Island owner.

Gottfried Lindauer and Charles F Goldie are the preeminent painters of Maori subjects from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Professionally trained at the Academy Fine Arts in Vienna, Lindauer migrated to New Zealand in 1874. His first portraits of Maori were painted in Nelson. A decision to move to Auckland in the mid 1870s resulted in a historically important meeting with businessman Henry Partridge. Over the next thirty years Partridge commissioned from Lindauer numerous Maori portraits and large scale works of traditional Maori life. Partridge gifted his Lindauer collection of sixty two portraits to the Auckland Art Gallery in 1915.

Lindauer travelled and painted extensively throughout New Zealand whilst retaining his European connections. In 1886 he visited Britain, exhibiting twelve of his Maori portraits at the Colonial and Indian Exhibition in London. Lindauer died in 1926 and is buried in the Old Gorge cemetery in Woodville.

