

Media Release:



New Zealand's Major Metropolitan Museums and Te Papa Announce Long-Term Agreement on Valuable Oldman Collection

An agreement has been signed by Auckland War Memorial Museum, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Canterbury Museum and Otago Museum setting in place permanent and responsible guardianship for the William O Oldman Collection, a major compilation of Maori taonga and Polynesian objects held by all four museums.

The Oldman Collection of some 3,500 objects was purchased by the New Zealand Government in 1948 from William Ockelford Oldman of London. Portions of it have been held in a number of museums around New Zealand since that time, with the major part housed in the Auckland, Canterbury and Otago Museums and Te Papa.

Since the 1992 passage of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa Act the major museums have sought a way to assure long-term custodianship of the treasures, whilst honouring the intention of the acquisition to make the collection available to as many New Zealanders as possible.

Discussions at the Museum Directors and Chairs meeting held at Auckland Museum in May, 2009, paved the way for this agreement. Negotiations and meetings were led by Laura Vodanovich, Director Collections and Research at Auckland Museum, and all four major museums resolved outstanding issues and created the current agreement.

“This is an excellent result to a far-ranging consultation and negotiation,” says Auckland Museum Director Vanda Vitali. “We are especially pleased with the commitment to creating a shared database of the entirety of the collection, which will aid all the museums, and be a valuable tool for future research.”

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