



LINDEN-MUSEUM STUTTGART
Staatliches Museum für Völkerkunde



Press release

14 September 2022

LindenLAB

Participation, Provenance, Presentation

Since autumn 2019, the Linden Museum Stuttgart has been testing and developing new forms of museum knowledge production, participation and presentation in the experimental space LindenLAB. The project is funded within the framework of the Initiative for Ethnological Collections of the German Federal Cultural Foundation.

The Linden Museum, like many ethnological museums, is undergoing change. In an increasingly diverse society, the social role and relevance of ethnological museums is being renegotiated. Based on the idea of the laboratory, the LindenLAB opens up the possibility of experimentally develop the basis for a new orientation.

Selected collections and objects help to address different aspects of social inequality and the effects of (post-)colonial structures in the museum. A total of eight LABs are planned. Some of the LABs work on questions using a regional example, others focus on the work behind the scenes. All LABs deal with overarching themes: practices of ethnographic collecting, colonial structures and their aftermath in the present, the distribution of authority for interpretation in museums, and the role of ethnological museums today. For this purpose, participatory formats are combined with research on the origin of the collections in order to reveal and reflect on their entanglements. In this way, an innovative and experimental space is created in

Linden-Museum Stuttgart
Staatliches Museum für Völkerkunde
Hegelplatz 1
70174 Stuttgart / Germany

Tel. ++49.711.2022-3
Fax ++49.711.2022-590
www.lindenmuseum.de
UST ID-Nr.: DE 811.401.685

Public Relations
Martin Otto-Hörbrand
Tel. ++49.711.2022-444
info@lindenmuseum.de

the museum, which enables an intensive exchange with actors — representatives of the source communities, members of the diverse urban society of Stuttgart, scientists, artists and designers.

Together existing structures are questioned from within and multivoiced presentations are created. This experimental and procedural approach also means that any conclusions reached can change over the course of the project, as what is learned and experienced is taken up again and again and developed further. Process and results are presented in the LAB and will also be documented on the project blog at www.lindenlab.de. Ultimately, the results will also be incorporated into new permanent exhibitions. They form the basis for the new museum concept in a future new building.

Upcoming LABs:

The following LABs are currently on display:

LindenLAB 1: Museums and indigenous societies

New forms of working together

since 27 February 2020 part of the permanent exhibition

Indigenous groups were often marginalized by precolonial empires, colonial powers and postcolonial nation states. Threatened by poverty and war, they often had to sell their cultural property. What can museums as keepers of collections of indigenous heritage contribute to the empowerment of indigenous communities today?

Together with representatives of indigenous cultural initiatives from Myanmar's Karenni region, LindenLAB 1 experimented with new forms of sharing knowledge and resources and of working together.

A first part of the LAB took place in the Karenni region in Myanmar in March and April 2019, where the project was developed by the curator Georg Noack in dialogue with

representatives of indigenous cultural organizations, and joint workshops were held. For the second part, the indigenous partners spent four weeks at the Linden Museum in November 2019. During this time they had the opportunity to get to know the collections and to study the museum's approaches to curating and exhibition design, conservation of valuable objects, and cultural mediation. They gained new insights and inspirations for their own cultural work that the Linden Museum will continue to support as advisors.

In the framework of the LAB an exhibition was curated by Olivia Musu and Patricio Doeï of the Kayaw Literature and Culture Central Committee, and by Khun Vincentio Besign and Khun Myo Aung of the Kayan Literature and Culture Central Committee. It is on display in the 2nd floor of the Linden-Museum.

LindenLAB 7: El 'buen vivir' mapuche

What is a 'good life'?

9 December 2022 until 25 February 2024

LindenLAB 7 explores and explains the Mapuche philosophical and cosmological concept of 'buen vivir', 'good life', through a new collection produced by Mapuche silversmiths. What do their land, their ancestral territories mean to the Mapuche? How do they get in touch with the ancestors, the knowledge bearers of their culture?

The Mapuche in southern Chile were autonomous until 1883. The conquest by the Chilean military cost half of the Mapuche population their lives, they lost over 90 % of their territories. Afterwards, European, mainly German, settlers were deliberately recruited to colonize the land. Timber companies also manage a large part of the northern Mapuche territory by creating eucalyptus and pine plantations for the production of pulp.

LindenLAB 7 aims to explore new ways of collecting for an ethnological museum while also contrast worldviews and illuminate colonialism's contempt for humanity. It is created in participatory collaboration with Mapuche representatives from Contulmo, Wallmapu, now part of Chile.

LindenLAB 3: Across Time, Place and People

Whakawhānaungatanga: Connecting taonga Māori

11 December 2022 until 25 February 2024

The Linden Museum holds a collection of nearly 150 *taonga Māori* (*Māori* treasures) from *Aotearoa* New Zealand. They were received by the Museum from 1899 onward as gifts from European travellers, acquisitions for the museum by patrons, or otherwise obtained from other collections through exchange or purchase. We know little to nothing about most of their histories – their *whakapapa* (genealogy) – before they came into the museum, but LindenLAB 3 plans to change that. Through online and on site engagements, we will consider new ways of engaging with taonga Māori (*Māori* treasures) through examining their provenance and how this generates meaning, *mana* and *kōrero* between *Māori* and museum people. The project reinforces the living nature of the collection, and in collaboration with and guided by *Māori* researchers and experts will show connections that link the collection with individuals and local communities, with the histories of institutions and nations. We will examine approaches and forms of presentation that can make these relationships visible - without losing sight of the respective cultural meanings, aesthetics and artistic significance of the objects.

LindenLAB 8: What remains?

Insights for the Future of the Linden Museum

11 December 2022 until 25 February 2024

Laboratories are experimental fields of utopian thinking. In seven LindenLABs on the topics provenance, participation and presentation, we have tried out a lot in the last four years. At the end, however, questions remain: What exactly have we explored? What will remain of this experiment? What will we reject again? How can the project be transferred to museum practice in the long term? And how do we fulfil the diverse societal expectations we face as an ethnological museum?

With LAB 8, we are making the lessons learned from the LindenLAB visible once again in the museum. At selected locations in the museum, experiences and ideas for the further development of the museum will be outlined in five thematic fields.

Former LABs:

LindenLAB 2: Objects and collectors

New ways to mediate provenance research

26 June 2020 – 30 January 2022

How do we trace the origin of objects? How did they get into the museum? Who gave them to the museum? In what context were they collected? Have they been bought, given, exchanged or possibly robbed? What are the consequences for museums and scientists working with the objects today?

These are the typical questions with which provenance researchers deal. LindenLAB 2 also raises the question of how to communicate the results and the working methods of provenance researchers to visitors.

The installation at LindenLAB 2 invites visitors to playfully reconstruct the working methods of provenance researchers on the basis of a real research assignment. Visitors gain insight into the working methods and sources used and can discover the story behind it for themselves.

For the LindenLAB 2, the collection of Karl Holz (1857 - 1934) was intensively examined. Holz was a merchant who probably emigrated to Chile in the early 1880s. From then on he called himself Carlos Holz and supplied Karl Graf von Linden with many objects, especially from the Mapuche. What is the story behind his collection? What obstacles, twists and turns and historical events are involved?

LindenLAB 4: Entangled: Stuttgart – Afghanistan

Relationships in the past and present

30 March 2021 – 16 October 2022

There are thousands of objects, photos, and documents from Afghanistan in the Linden Museum. Their exciting and sometimes problematic stories tell us a lot about personal experiences and memories, but also about political and economic circumstances and interdependencies. They embody highly ambivalent facets of German-Afghan relations in the past and present.

A working group of interested people from Stuttgart and the surrounding area, with and without reference to Afghanistan, has focused on the photographs of the Stuttgart Badakhshan expedition (1962/63).

LindenLAB 5: (in) relationships

challenging / (un)learning / breaking open

30 March 2021 – 16 October 2022

LindenLAB 5 deals with the relationships between people, objects and the institution museum. How are these relationships formed and how can they be changed? Especially the topic of language is essential for a museum and the transfer of knowledge. Exhibition texts, event calendars and press releases are media that speak to and with visitors.

The museum reflects on its position in relation to non-discriminatory, gender-sensitive and accessible language and faces the question of change: How can we change our everyday spoken language? What structures must be broken down to achieve this? Which images do we use and which not?

LindenLAB 6: Trails from the Storage

Searching Histories' Futures

1 July 2022 – 25 June 2023

The LindenLAB 6 exhibits – for the first time in the 'modern' history of the Linden-Museum – a selection from the 238 objects that were shipped to Karl Graf von Linden by Hermann Karl Bertram in 1908. Bertram was a first lieutenant of a so-called 'Schutztruppe' in Cameroon and participated in the 'Southern Expedition' between 1905 and 1907. This military campaign was geared at subjugating the political institutions of southeastern Cameroon, gaining control over the region and favoring the interests of European trading companies active in the area at that time.

The three partners of the LindenLAB 6 - Prof. Germain Loumpet, Tah Kennette Konsum and Stone Karim Mohamad - have in different ways long been engaged in reflecting on the histories embedded in Cameroonian cultural heritage. Sharing a path from the museum storage back to southeastern Cameroon, they came into contact with a long-lost historical collection and with each other. Through this, they are sharing glimpses into a lively discussion concerning current politics of cultural memories and heritages, both in Germany and Cameroon.

Other activities of the LindenLAB:

The New Museum, Conference, 28/29 February 2020

"What does the Linden Museum mean to you?", Visitor survey, March to July 2021

Further information: www.lindenlab.de

