Finch & Co



**A FINE FEATHER LEI HULU OF HAWAII COMPOSED OF RED AND YELLOW BIRD FEATHERS IN THE 'PANI ' O' STYLE**

A FINE FEATHER LEI HULU OF HAWAII COMPOSED OF RED AND YELLOW BIRD FEATHERS IN THE ‘PANI ‘ O’ STYLE
CIRCA 1870 – 1880
SIZE : 58.5 CM LONG – 23 INS LONG

**LITERATURE**

LEI HULU WERE DESIGNED AND MADE TO BE USED BY WOMEN . THEY WERE WORN TWISTED IN THE HAIR ON THE TOP OF THE WOMEN'S HEADS AS CAN BE SEEN IN THE FAMOUS DRAWING BY JOHN WEBBER , ARTIST ON CAPTAIN COOK'S THIRD VOYAGE . LARGER LEI WERE ALSO WORN AROUND THE NECK TO GREAT EFFECT . AS SHOWN BY WEBBER IN HIS DRAWING OF A HAWAIIAN WARRIOR , LEI WERE SOMETIMES WORN ROLLED DOWN ABOVE THE EYES BY MEN TO KEEP THEIR FEATHER HELMETS IN PLACE . LEI WERE TREASURED ANCESTRAL POSSESSIONS HANDED DOWN THROUGH GENERATIONS . THEY WERE OFTEN COLLECTED BY WOMEN IN LARGE NUMBERS WHO WOULD OCCASIONALLY HANG THEM UP TO AIR AND STROKE THEM WITH THEIR HANDS ; THE BODY OILS KEEPING THE FEATHERS SUPPLE AND THE COLOURS BRIGHT .

A GREAT DEAL OF FEATHERWORK WAS COLLECTED DURING CAPTAIN COOK'S VISITS OF 1778 AND 1779 . THE CHIEFS BROUGHT HELMETS , CAPES , CLOAKS AND NECKLACES TO USE IN BARTERING FOR METAL DAGGERS AND AXES WHICH WERE MUCH ADMIRED BY THE HAWAIIANS . CAPTAIN COOK AND HIS MEN IN TURN WERE IN A STATE OF WONDERMENT OVER THE EXTRAORDINARY BEAUTY OF THE HAWAIIAN FEATHER OBJECTS .

THE FEATHERS WERE TAKEN FROM BIRDS FOUND IN THE MOUNTAINS AND ALONG THE SHARP CLIFFS AND BEACHES OF THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS . MOST OF THESE BIRDS WERE UNIQUE TO THE LUSH HAWAIIAN RAINFOREST . CAPTAIN CLERKE , A NATURALIST ON THE ENDEAVOUR , OBSERVED 'THE BIRDS OF THESE ISLANDS ARE AS BEAUTIFUL AS ANY WE HAVE SEEN DURING THE VOYAGE ; AND ARE NUMEROUS THOUGH NOT VARIOUS Â€¦ ONE OF WHICH IS SOMETHING LARGER THAN A BULLFINCH ; IT'S COLOUR IS A FINE GLOSSY BLACK , THE RUMP , VENT AND THIGHS DEEP YELLOW ; ANOTHER IS OF EXCEEDING BRIGHT SCARLET COLOUR , Â€¦' THESE BIRDS WERE KNOWN AS THE 'MAMO' WHICH PRODUCED DARKISH YELLOW FEATHERS AND THE 'I 'IWI' WHICH PROVIDED THE MAIN SOURCE OF RED FEATHERS . THE HAWAIIAN HONEYCREEPER CALLED 'MAMO' HAS NOT BEEN SEEN ON THE BIG ISLAND , IT'S ONLY HOME SINCE 1898 .