

This portrait from Goldie's late period depicts Te Hei of Ngāti Raukawa, identified by the *New Zealand Herald* in 1907 as a subject for whom he has a great fondness. When he first painted her in 1906, Te Hei was an elderly woman whose visage, presented through the lens of Goldie's paintbrush, already seemed to bear the weight of time, grief and imminent loss. As if in affirmation of this, an earlier work was entitled *Touched by the Hand of Time*. This late portrait is a beautifully distilled expression of Goldie's original pathos of mortality and fragility for his sitter; magnified and at the same time bearing its most essential qualities after a period of more than thirty years.

Though her eyes are partially obscured by shadow, Te Hei's gaze transcends the picture plane with compelling intensity. Her wrinkles are deep grooves, etched unto her face as if carved. Particularly striking is the impressionistic light applied to the surface of the portrait. By this point, Goldie's technique was no longer a

formally restrained means to the end of photographic fidelity; he was apparently striving for something more fluid and spiritually-charged. The period surrounding the production of this work may be thought of as something of a personal and artistic self-reckoning for Goldie, who had by this time been battling with his own ill health for a number of years.

Through the repetitious act of returning to Te Hei, a beloved subject he had painted over the course of several decades, the artist was forging an alternative rhythm for himself, one which lay somewhere between the spheres of classical formalism, impressionism and his own experience of Māori culture. In doing so, intentionally or otherwise, he also appears to have been expressing something of his own journey.

