Conceptualising the work of the Indigenous screen producer as a creative system of practice

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I see film as a part of the whakapapa of Māori storytelling. We come from a tradition where stories, legends, aspects of our mythological past are a normal part of the stories we hear on the marae, as much as newspapers, radio, television – all these aspects of modern storytelling – are themselves descended from the storytellers of yore … So in more modern times when we think of film and the layers of film, the development of film over recent decades, our film is at a new stage of development.

Tainui Stephens, *Hautoa Ma!,* 2016

Abstract

This thesis presents a detailed analysis of the work of the producer in the screen industry, centring on the producer in the Indigenous screen production ecology of Aotearoa New Zealand. The theoretical underpinning of this study is Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's systems model of creativity, which frames creative practice as the product of three interconnected features: the 'individual' who creates new work, the existing body of knowledge or 'domain' within which they practise, and the network of experts or 'field' who recognise the value of the new work. This approach provides a framework for analysing the work of the producer, locating it within its surrounding social and cultural contexts.

Drawing on interviews, archival research, autoethnography and a case study, the thesis presents a detailed history of the emergence of Māori filmmaking from the beginning of the 20th Century to the present day. It then focuses on the practice of a specific group of feature film producers to establish how their own personal histories, philosophies and experiences have shaped the work they do. Finally, it develops a case study of a feature documentary to reveal, through the author's personal experience, the producer's decision-making process and how that is shaped by both internal and external creative and industrial forces.

The thesis as a whole follows a media production studies approach and, through this, offers a comprehensive understanding – historical, social, creative, industrial – of how Māori filmmaking has developed and the importance of the individual producer within this development. In doing so, the thesis offers an Indigenous revision of Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's systems model of creativity, connecting the elements of the individual, the domain and the field through the holistic framework of *te ao Māori*, the Māori worldview.

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Figure 5: A_181105NZHPE02. Actor and filmmaker, Don Selwyn talks of his Award from Creative New Zealand. November 18, 2005. *New Zealand Herald.* Photograph by Paul Estcourt.

Figure 11: A_210118NZHGBQUIN26. Quinton Hita, broadcaster, DJ, writer, actor and producer. Photographed for *Canvas* Magazine, January 21, 2018. *New Zealand Herald.* Photograph by Greg Bowker.

Links to case study film: *The Price of Peace*

TRAILER:
https://vimeo.com/132524687

FILM:
https://vimeo.com/688151470
Password: Ngai_Tuhoe

DISTRIBUTOR'S WEBSITE:
https://www.journeyman.tv/film/6707/the-price-of-peace

Attestation of authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Signed: Date: 20 April 2022

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Ethics

Ethics application number: 17/326

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Glossary: Te Reo Māori (the Māori language)

Māori words and phrases are generally translated into English immediately following their first appearance in the text. It is also usual now to identify Māori by their tribal affiliations and efforts are made to do so in this text by naming tribal affiliations immediately after the first use of a person's name.

Māori is an official language of Aotearoa New Zealand and many of the Māori words in this text are now frequently or commonly used in New Zealand English. However, for ease of reading, especially for international readers, all Māori words have been italicised, except for the terms 'Māori' and 'Pākehā' and names of organisations. Italicisation within quotes is as in the original.

hapū	kinship group, clan, subtribe
iwi	extended kinship group, tribe, nation
kai	food, meal
karakia	(v) recite a prayer, say grace; (n) prayer, incantation
kaumātua	elder, person of status within the *whānau*
kaupapa	policy, proposal, theme, agenda, issue, initiative
koha	gift, donation
kohanga reo	preschool operating under Māori principles, in Māori language
kōrero	(v) to tell, speak; (n) speech, narrative, news, discussion, information
koretake	useless, ineffective
kura kaupapa	school operating under Māori principles, in Māori language
mana	prestige, influence, spiritual power
mana motuhake	autonomy, self-determination, sovereignty
manaaki	to support, take care of
manaakitanga	hospitality, kindness, showing respect and care for others
marae	community buildings including the meeting-house, dining-hall and *marae ātea* or sacred space in front of the meeting-house; the *marae* is a symbol of tribal identity
mātauranga	knowledge
mauri	life force, essence
moko	Māori tattooing designs on the face or body
ngākau	heart

papakāinga	original home, home base, village
puna	spring (of water)
rangatira	chief
rangatiratanga	sovereignty, chieftainship
rautaki	strategy
rohe	district, territory
taha Māori	Māori identity or descent
tangata	person
tangata whenua	people of the land: Indigenous people of Aotearoa NZ
tangi	to cry, mourn
taonga	treasure, something prized
te ao Māori	the Māori world; the Māori worldview
te reo/te reo Māori	the Māori language
tika	correct, fair, just
tikanga	correct procedure, custom, rule, protocol
tohunga	skilled person, chosen expert, priest, healer
tūrangawaewae	place where one has rights of residence and belonging through *whakapapa*
wairua	spirit, soul
waka	canoe, vehicle
wānanga	(v) to meet and discuss; (n) tertiary institution, university for Māori
whakaaro	opinion, understanding
whakapāha	to express regret, apologise
whakapapa	genealogy, lineage, descent
whakataukī	proverb
whānau	extended family; people united in a common enterprise
whanaungatanga	relationship, kinship
whenua	land, country

Sources consulted for this glossary are Barlow (1994), Moorfield (2005), and Walker (2004).

Terminology

Aotearoa New Zealand	Aotearoa was originally the name used by Māori for the North Island only; it is now becoming popular as the name of the whole country, either as Aotearoa or Aotearoa New Zealand. Aotearoa New Zealand and Aotearoa NZ are used interchangeably in this thesis.
Māori	Indigenous person of Aotearoa NZ; *māori* also means usual, original, common and at the time of first contact with Europeans was used as a way to differentiate between the Indigenous and the arriving foreigners.
Pasifika	A contentious but commonly-used term for people of Pacific Island origin, including those from Sāmoa, Tonga, Cook Islands, Niue, Tokelau, Tuvalu and other small states, born in or now living in Aotearoa NZ.
Pākehā	New Zealander of European descent generally originating from the United Kingdom, specifically white New Zealanders; other non-Māori are usually referred to by the name of their country of origin or descent.
Indigenous	The use of Indigenous in the text implies the wider Indigenous world, including Indigenous other than or as well as Māori.
non-Indigenous / non-Māori	The use of non-Indigenous implies an international focus; non-Māori refers to all who are not Māori in Aotearoa NZ, including for example Chinese New Zealanders who are neither Māori nor Pākehā.
screen / film	Technological convergence means that divisions such as film and television, until recently taken for granted, are now being reassessed with the rise of streaming services and home cinemas. The New Zealand Film Commission (NZFC) now uses the words 'screen' and 'film' to mean "for the most part … shorts, feature films and series drama" (NZFC, 2021b). While the focus of this thesis is the work of the film producer, i.e., work produced for first release in cinema, the text uses the terms 'screen' and 'film' interchangeably, and where appropriate ranges beyond cinema to include television production.
producer	There are many types of producer, including the executive producer, the co-producer, the associate producer and the line producer. The person who is called the 'producer' (with no qualifier) is the person who actually produces the film or television/online programme.
New Zealand Film Commission	The Film Commission was established in 1978 to invest in and promote films and filmmakers from Aotearoa NZ. Its further purpose now is to promote the country as a destination for international production companies. Its budget for 2018/2019 was $26 million.[1] Additionally, it administers the Screen Production Grant which supports local and international high-end productions with a budget for 2018/2019 of $38 million (NZFC, 2021b).

[1] Dollar amounts quoted in the thesis are New Zealand dollars unless otherwise stated.

Te Māngai Pāho	Te Māngai Pāho (TMP) was established in 1993 to promote Māori language and culture by funding programmes for radio and television. It supports the making of content across television, radio, music and online media, as well as investing in films to support their local broadcast. Its budget for 2018/2019 was $60 million (TMP, 2019).
New Zealand On Air	NZ On Air (NZOA) was established in 1989 to support the making of content for television, radio, music and online media. It invests in films to support their local broadcast. It also supports platforms and services such as disability media access, specialist radio stations including Radio New Zealand, and online content hubs such as the children's online channel HEIHEI. Its budget for 2018/2019 was $146 million (NZOA, 2019).

Introduction

I am a drama and documentary producer, with more than twenty-five years' experience in the screen industry in Aotearoa New Zealand. My practice focusses on screenwork that tells Indigenous stories[2] to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous audiences. I share with many other Indigenous filmmakers a sense that we are starting to achieve a real mass in terms of the body of Indigenous cinema work now being produced worldwide as the rising number of Indigenous films being released year on year shows (Mitchell, 2018; Vivarelli, 2021). As an Indigenous film producer who is both a practitioner and a researcher, I have formed the view that the way Indigenous, in my case Māori, creative voices operate within the business and creative environment of local and international screen productions is territory that is under-researched as yet (see section 1.4, below). Additionally, as a producer (as opposed to a director, for example), I observe that there is very little research about the nature of my own specific craft. Filmmakers are daily negotiating their cultural identities in their work (J. T. Caldwell, 2008) as they address matters of what screenwork is, how it communicates, how the audience receives it, how it contributes to or reflects the surrounding or another culture, and so on. In this thesis, therefore, I am bringing into the space of research the questions and explorations that have been part of my everyday creative practice, in order to examine and critique my own experience as a film producer within its specific cultural context. My aim is to contribute new knowledge to the understanding of the work of the film producer within a media production context that has hitherto been little explored.

Hesmondhalgh (2013) makes the point that "[t]he cultural industries and the texts they produce (are) *complex, ambivalent and contested"* (p. 5) and my own experience as a screen producer has been one of immersion in a practice that is highly complex, realised through processes that are rigorously structured yet open to change at any moment, and affected by external influences over which the practitioner sometimes has little control. Explaining this practice in theoretical terms calls for a conceptual framework which allows for ambiguity and subjectivity and which can encompass a process which spans both the creation of a cultural object and its reception in the market place. The search for such a framework has led me to the work of Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and his systems model of creativity. This model is one among a number of analytical approaches that have emerged since the late 20th Century, which are predicated on the understanding of

2. Indigenous stories in this context means stories originated by Indigenous people. They may or may not use traditional knowledge; they may or may not conform to what non-Indigenous people consider to be 'Indigenous'.

creativity as a socio-cultural phenomenon. It is built around the interaction of three essential elements: a domain, an individual and a field, where the domain is the cultural structure or existing body of knowledge; the individual is the person who produces a variation within that body of knowledge (in essence, creates something new); and the field is the social structure or 'network of experts' who recognise value in the new and enable its absorption into the domain (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, 1996, 1999, 2014a). This approach provides a framework for unravelling the complex interplay between individual creatives and the social and cultural contexts within which they operate.

To apply Csikszentmihalyi's model to my own practice, I first explore the cultural context of my work, which is Māori film production, to establish the historical, social and political foundations of this 'domain' and to explicate the present-day conditions within which my practice is conducted. I then place my own understanding of the role of the producer and its context in concert with the voices of a group of my peers, experienced Māori film producers, in order to examine how our different life experiences and career development pathways influence the work we do and thus evaluate the place of the 'individual' in the systems model. Finally, I discuss a case study of a feature documentary I produced in order to bring into focus the many and varied decision-makers who influence the achievement of a particular film; in this way, I am able to assess the influence of the network of experts or 'field' which is the third element in the systems model of creativity. This process is driven by three research questions:

1. What constitutes the screen production context for this research?
2. What are the key influences on the screen producer's decision-making process?
3. How does the screen producer exercise her creative authority to achieve an intended outcome?

Csikszentmihalyi's approach, like that found in other similar work, shifts the focus from the individual to that individual's interplay with their socio-cultural milieu in promoting an understanding of creativity as a process of interaction. It is applicable in my research because it provides a framework to explain how a group of creative workers collectively produce an artefact which is perceived by others who can make an informed judgment as having value, and also because it enables me to focus on the contribution of one of the individuals in that group, the producer.

The origins of the thesis

My drive to delve into my own work is predicated on answering a question which has greeted me throughout my working life. When asked what I do, and variously answering "I'm a film producer", "I'm a screen producer" or "I produce films and television", there is always surprise and interest. It is after all not a common occupation. But as night follows day, the question eventually comes: "What does a producer actually do?".[3] This question is also not surprising because the work of the film or television producer is most often invisible to the public. Producers are rarely stars, unlike actors and directors. It is often very hard for a producer to explain what she does because the role is a generalist one, requiring a rather esoteric mix of skills. The head of Channel 4 in the UK, Jeremy Isaacs, once described producer David Rose as having "an eye for a situation, a nose for a script, and a mind of his own to make the critical judgement" (as cited in Spicer & McKenna, 2012, p. 2). It is hard to come up with a more elegant description of the role.

'An eye for a situation' implies the ability to seek out or recognise an opportunity. For the screen producer, an opportunity can come in the guise of a script, a potential collaborator, a potential investor or a potential audience. 'A nose for a script' means the expertise to recognise and then acquire the rights to a particular story, whether it has been actually written as a script or is still in its undeveloped stage as perhaps a book, a newspaper article, or still nascent as an idea in someone's head. The ability to make 'the critical judgement' implies the skill to evaluate both people and ideas and know how to bring the two together productively, as well as provide the leadership that enables collaborators to give of their best in often trying circumstances. Additionally crucial is an understanding of the potential audience, who they might be and what will draw them to which screen. This implies knowledge of what the market might be and how it can be accessed. Finally, none of this is possible without money, often a great deal of money, and knowing where and how to access money is fundamental to the work of any screen producer.

The term 'producer' has different meanings in the research literature across various disciplines, but the definition that applies in this research reflects screen industry practice –, that is, the producer is the person who is legally and financially responsible for a particular screenwork. In terms of feature films, this means the producer is the person

3. This is clearly a perennial question. At the *Producers at the Table* webinar (29/11-3/12/21), the first question was "How do you describe what a producer does?" New York indie producer Lizzie Shapiro gave the best answer: "It's the producer's job to protect the film" (Film Independent, 2021).

who is ultimately answerable for all aspects of the production, including its creative achievement (Ryan et al., 2014). Producers tend to fall outside the conventional hierarchical structures of the screen industry (Cameron et al., 2010), which is to say from a research point of view that they sit somewhere between top-down analyses of the film and television industries which focus on organisational or industry structures, and bottom-up approaches which focus on labour. Many producers work for large companies, particularly in the United States and Europe. However, in the screen production ecology of small countries like Aotearoa NZ,[4] many producers are sole operators, who work from project to project as members of the precariat along with the crew and cast members they employ.

In my career, I have produced for large companies as well as the very small company that I co-own with my husband. I have produced many, many hours of television drama (1987–2004) and produced or executive produced a range of feature films, drama and documentary (1991–ongoing). I have worked in a variety of executive roles for funding bodies. Additionally, I have served on industry boards and as an adjudicator, mentor and advisor in a variety of industry situations (see Appendix F). My career reflects the distinctive nature of film production in this country, where the interweaving between Indigenous (Māori) and settler (Pākehā) communities and ideas is much more pronounced than in many other post-colonial societies.[5] This underpins all discussion in this thesis and is reflected in the conclusions drawn.

Framing my identity as the researcher

I am Māori and I am also Pākehā, and this has made for a life of practice and research conducted in a "complicated, challenging and interesting space" as Māori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012, p. ix) describes the intersection of Māori and Pākehā worlds. To paraphrase Homi Bhabha (1994), the engagements of cultural difference in this space are often simultaneously conflictual and consensual. Thus, those of us who grow up white in Aotearoa NZ knowing we are not just white but also brown live, to varying degrees, conflicted lives. The era in which we grow informs this complexity. I came of age through the 1970s when Māori activism was rearing its head alongside youth activism

4. Aotearoa NZ is a small country in theoretical terms in the discussion of cinema (for example, Hjorte & Petrie, 2007). It is also small in industrial terms: in 2020, 92% of the businesses in the industry turned over less than $500,000 (Screen Sector Strategy Facilitation Group, 2020).
5. This characterisation elides the other cultures whose members also contribute to screen production in Aotearoa New Zealand, including Pasifika and Asian creatives.

and the demand for a fairer share of social wellbeing for women. At the age of fifteen, my speech in the annual school competition was titled *Te Atatu Hou* (The New Dawn) and discussed the emerging Māori activism of the time. It was probably quite simplistic but for the early 1970s, it was unusual at our small school in our small town. It was doubly unusual because my sisters and I were assumed to be Pākehā and with our white skin we questioned none of our privileged situation. My Pākehā-educated mother who also passed as white came from a generation many of whom kept their Māori world private, so though I was quietly proud of my heritage, it only surfaced in my life when I was on holiday with my maternal grandparents several hours away from our home town. I continued to travel through life as a Pākehā but over time, my Ngāti Porou[6] heritage began to find expression in my work, through such elements as ensuring Māori protocols were properly observed on shooting locations, promoting the work of Māori actors and developing Māori elements in television drama scripts. However, it was not until I had spent an extended period living in Australia and been shocked by the racism in that society that I began to see it was time for me to commit more fully to telling Māori screen stories. Once I returned to Aotearoa NZ with my family, I sought opportunities to work with Māori collaborators and, as a result, over time I have been able to position myself within both landscapes, Māori and Pākehā.

Thus I bring to my work a Western worldview because that is how my habitus[7] originated, but that habitus has been overlaid through my life by a progressively stronger understanding of the Māori worldview and of my own heritage. I am descended from both Ngāti Porou and Pākehā, and share Tess Moeke-Maxwell's view of the concept of 'hybridity' as liberating (Grennell, 2014) reflecting Bhabha's (1994) conception of the hybrid cultural identity as a "split-space of enunciation … based not on the … *diversity* of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture's *hybridity*" (p. 56). The subject of Māori-Pākehā hybridity has been problematised in Aotearoa NZ because of Māori suspicion of hybridisation as a continuation of the colonial project and also because of the demands of government-sanctioned biculturalism, which would seem to mitigate against the actual complexities of lives lived in ambiguity of definition (Bell, 2004; Moeke-Maxwell, 2006; Webber, 2006). I have in earlier research explored the contradictions in Indigenous representation that arise as a result of Māori-Pākehā

6. Ngāti Porou is my *iwi* on my mother's side; on my father's side, my heritage is a mixture of English and Irish.
7. This concept, developed by Pierre Bourdieu, refers to the ongoing process by which we form ourselves, incorporating our personal and social history, how we apply that history in the everyday, and how that history informs our future actions and the choices we make.

hybridity (Milligan, 2014a). However, my focus in this thesis is not on representation in media, but rather on how media are made. I have become progressively more grounded in my life, not just through age and experience, but through the conscious decision to bring together both sides of my heritage in my work, an experience which mirrors Moeke-Maxwell's discussion of hybridity as freeing the subject from "a sense of unbelonging, dislocation and alienation, and (of) a partial participation and location within the culture(s) of origin" (as cited in Grennell, 2014, p. 56). This sense of working from a new space – Bhabha's (1994) Third Space – is reflected in a comment from one of my interviewees, the very experienced screen producer, director and social commentator Tainui Stephens:

> *I'm very aware of what new fusion we are creating. New definitions. New ways of working that involve the best of the Māori and Pākehā, tikanga or whatever works. (Stephens, interview, 2018)*

The discussion of Indigenous filmmakers working from a new space has been traversed by others, notably Faye Ginsberg (2005) on Australian Indigenous filmmaking, Glynn and Tyson (2007) on Māori television drama, and Hokowhitu (2013) on Māori filmmaking. Hokowhitu points to an Indigenous media that "moves beyond the identity production at the interstitial space of the politics of recognition to signify the importance of shifting the camera away from those biopolitical subjectivities that are recognizable" (p. 116) towards Indigenous subjects with less obvious identifying elements. How Māori filmmakers negotiate this shift is reflected in this thesis (see sections 3.5, 4.5 and 4.6, below).

Stories are the paths we follow through our individual and collective lives in our search for meaning. We use them to educate our children in the ways of the world, in the moral codes of our societies, and in the possibilities lying dormant in their own spirits. Stories connect us to our ancestors and to our descendants yet to be conceived, and a society that restricts who gets to tell their stories to the wider world through media such as film and television is a society with a crippled imaginary. This was the world I grew up in, where the only Māori faces I can remember seeing on screen as a child were the Howard Morrison Quartet.[8] To be part of a world where a strong Indigenous production community has been established and Māori screen storytellers now have the opportunity

8. This quartet of Māori singers was extremely popular during the 1950s and early 1960s.

to carve the image meeting houses[9] of the nation is a privilege that I do not take for granted. Equally, the opportunity to research this world of Māori filmmaking is something I have approached with care. My hybrid identity influences my research and in this thesis I am using a theoretical framework that has emerged from Western scholarship (see Chapter 1, below) while the context is Indigenous. The question has been therefore how to, as Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012) puts it, get the story right and tell it well.

Smith is here pointing to the need to ensure any research is *tika*, a Māori concept which translates as "to be correct, true, upright, right, fair, accurate, appropriate" (Moorfield, 2022). Given this, it is important to clarify that at the beginning of my research I considered whether it would be appropriate for me to use a *kaupapa Māori* research framework. This framework, which grounds research in *te ao Māori* (the Māori worldview), emerged from the revitalisation of Māori political, cultural and linguistic aspirations which began in the 1970s (see section 2.3, below) and is now widely used in Māori research, including research into Māori filmmaking (Barnes, 2018; Mercier, 2010). *Kaupapa Māori* theory is in essence emancipatory, in that it centralises matters of self-determination (Ford, 2013; Pipi et al., 2004; L. T. Smith, 2012), addressing historical and current power imbalances and framing the research within Māori structural concepts (Ford, 2013, L. T. Smith, 2012). This emancipatory intention and structural framing are not applied in this thesis, but I do address some matters central to the *kaupapa Māori* approach, for instance the historical power imbalances that have affected the development of Māori filmmaking (Chapters 2 and 3). For this reason, my approach, while grounded in Western theory, additionally applies a Māori lens to the work because it is informed by my own knowledge and sense of the principles of *te ao Māori*. I apply these principles in much the same way as I apply them in my filmmaking practice, which is appropriate given that this research centres on that practice. What this means is that I seek to observe Ngahuia Te Awekotuku's set of guidelines for researchers, as discussed in L. T. Smith (2012, p. 124):

- *Aroha ki te tangata* (respect for people)
- *Kanohi kitea* (working face to face)
- *Titiro, whakarongo, korero* (look, listen, then speak)

9. This phrasing references Barry Barclay's (2003a) discussion of Māori filmmaking (see sections 2.5 and 2.6, below).

- *Manaaki ki te tangata* (be generous)
- *Kia tupato* (be cautious)
- *Kaua e takahia te mana o te tangata* (respect the *mana* of others)
- *Kia mahaki* (don't flaunt your knowledge)

These guidelines sit well with me as they outline a way of working aligning with filmmaker Barry Barclay's concept of the 'communications marae', a place where all are welcome but the work done therein observes correct protocol, or in other words is *tika*. Put simply, they can be seen as a requirement to behave morally and ethically, which from my perspective as a researcher requires consideration of the moral values informing the media production I am researching. This approach goes some way to answering concerns raised by cultural scholar David Hesmondhalgh (2015) and echoed by media scholars David Lee and Anna Zoellner (2019) in their discussions of the 'challenge of normativity', that is, the need for ethics and values to be brought to the centre of studies exploring the relationship between culture, economy and the media. My research approach is informed by the question of ethics and values in the media production I am here researching and the theoretical framework I use (see sections 1.5 and 1.6, below) is central to enabling this.

The absence of the producer in the literature

In 1982, film critic and writer David Thomson published a trenchant article mourning the quality of most films coming out of the Hollywood of his day, in particular criticising the imbalance between the budgets of many films and their disastrous performance at the box office. He attributed this largely to the influence of auteur theory and its resulting elevation of the director as the sole and central creative force in filmmaking, and made a strong call for the role of the producer to be re-evaluated, noting "It is a disaster that the theory and practice of production have so wilfully been avoided in American film studies … Minor directors have books written about them and yet the great producers are ignored" (p. 39). Thomson's call for attention to be paid to the producer fell on rather deaf ears at that time, and it was not until 2014 that a collection of research essays, described by its editors as the first volume specifically devoted to the subject, was published (*Beyond the Bottom Line: The Producer in Film and Television Studies,* Spicer et al., 2014a). In this volume, Audun Engelstad and Jo Sondre Moseng (2014) go so far as to say: "The cult of the director, particularly in relation to European cinema, has meant that academic attempts to analyse and discuss other types of talent involved in filmmaking

have been virtually non-existent" (p. 45). This is something of an exaggeration, as, in the intervening years since Thomson's commentary, the rapid growth in the discipline of media studies, with its offshoots media industries studies and production studies, has resulted in discussion of the contributions made by a range of collaborators in the production of cinema and television.[10] Nevertheless, Engelstad's and Moseng's statement, and indeed Spicer et al.'s book as a whole, do underline the relative paucity of scholarship on the work of the producer to date.

Given the enduring influence of auteur theory and the resulting focus on the director in the public arena as well as in research, it is useful to take a moment to consider it. The doctrine grew out of the work of young French film critics, several of whom, including Francois Truffaut and Jean-Luc Goddard, went on to direct and became known as the *nouvelle vague* or New Wave. Writing in the journal *Cahiers du Cinema,* they sought to spotlight the work of a range of Hollywood directors, maintaining that despite working within a studio system, the personalities of these directors were revealed through their films (Corrigan & White, 2009; Grant, 2008; Hanet, 1997; Petrie, 1991). They drew a distinction between the journeyman director and the artist, and in a sense projected onto certain Hollywood directors the achievement of creative vision that was apparent in the work of European directors like Roberto Rossellini and Ingmar Bergman. The subsequently much-contested concept of the director as the sole author with regard to any and all films has proven tenacious, and it is only in recent times that the work of writers and producers has re-emerged for the press and particularly the public as worthy of attention, for instance with the public acclaim in this age of Netflix for the showrunner (writer-producer) in dramatic television. The origin of the title 'auteur theory' is a mistranslation by critic Andrew Sarris, who brought the idea to attention in the US in the 1960s; the English mislays the political implications of the original French '*la politique des auteurs*'. Sarris misfired because he inflated the concept into a theory rather than using it as a critical tool as writers in *Cahiers* and in the English journal *Movie* had (Corrigan & White, 2009; Petrie, 1991). His writings were critiqued at the time, for example by Pauline Kael (1971) in her discussion of *Citizen Kane* and its writer Herman Mankiewicz, and in the world of scholarship now, while some directors are deservedly

10. A range of instances from the many examples: Petrie (2007) on the art of the New Zealand cinematographer; Ballinger (2004) on cinematographers in the US and Europe; Crittenden (2016) on the art of the film editor; Murch (2001) on his own editing practice; LoBrutto (1992) on production designers; Harper (2009) on the marriage of sound and music in visual media; and Booth (2008) on making film music in Bollywood.

discussed as visionaries, there is as noted a growing appreciation of the contributions of all key contributors to the making of a film.

Given this background, it is not entirely surprising that scholarly consideration of the producer has been notably absent, but the elevation of the director is only one aspect of this discussion. Spicer et al. (2014b) quote Michael Balcon, the producer who ran Ealing Studios in its heyday, describing himself as "the creative man and the trustee of the moneybags" (p. 10) and this marriage of art and commerce, a twin focus which the working producer takes for granted, has proven to be a core problematic in academic consideration. By titling their volume *Beyond the Bottom Line,* Spicer et al. (2014a) are referencing the historical view propounded by the traditional film studies approach of the producer as a suspect figure, one whose philosophy is solely expedient, dictated only by concern for the bottom line, and representing "an unwelcome reminder of film's showground origins, its lack of cultural capital" (Spicer, 2004, p. 34). This perception of vulgarity is grounded not just in the commercial origins of cinema, but also in the larger-than-life personas that producers like Samuel Goldwyn and David Selznick evinced in the zenith of Hollywood's studio period, a stereotype maintained to the present day (though arguably starting to be broken) by the likes of Harvey Weinstein.[11] In his analysis of cinema screenplay development in the UK, Lyle (2015) views the problem of the art–commerce dichotomy as arising from a lack of industry knowledge among researchers. He presents examples of mistaken assumptions in research that I suggest would be familiar to all working screen producers and, with reference to his own focus on the development process, he explores the role of the producer as creative leader, commenting that the "creative contribution of producers … is often overlooked" (p. 231) particularly when it comes to the process of conception of a film.

The work of the producer has evolved as modes of production have changed; it is practised in varying ways depending on the historical, industrial or social conditions, and this underlines the need to anchor study of the role in specific and relevant contexts. Spicer (2004) points, for instance, to the differences between the Hollywood modes of production discussed by Janet Staiger in Bordwell et al. (1985) and Rachel Low's (1985) discussion of the British production context. This importance of contextual specificity is

11. In New Zealand, perhaps the three best-known film producers outside the industry have been John O'Shea, John Barnett and Peter Jackson, all of them with a larger-than-life aura, which could be read as an awareness of the importance of showmanship in attracting press attention and therefore reaching audiences.

reflected in more recent discussions of the producer's role in, for instance, Hong Kong (Chan, 2010), Germany (von Rimscha, 2011), the UK (Porter, 2012), Norway (Engelstad & Moseng, 2014), Australia (Ryan et al., 2014), Denmark (Redvall, 2016) and the Czech Republic (Szczepanik, 2018). The framing of the producer's role within a national cinema is just one possible context, and the various essays in Spicer et al. (2014a) discuss the work of the producer within a range of contexts: historical, theoretical, industrial, national, and transnational. Notably, none of the researchers mentioned here addresses the Indigenous context which is the focus of this study and this is an omission that this present research project is designed to rectify.

Overview of the thesis: Chapter summary

The term 'creative producer' is widely used in the production industry to underline what many producers consider to be axiomatic: that their work requires creative insight as much as it requires business acumen, and producers tend to spread along a continuum, with few whose talents lie solely in the financial sphere and few whose creativity is wholly unmoored from an ability to raise investment, oversee a budget and successfully deliver the film to the marketplace (Bloore, 2013; Pardo, 2010). This research explores all the elements that make up the practice of the creative producer within a contextual particularity which shapes the research and the practice together. The shape of this thesis as a whole is designed to shine light on the varying facets that contribute to this work, separating out the individual elements of the overall creative system before bringing them together in the conclusion.

Chapter 1 lays the groundwork for this exploration by reviewing the literature which pertains to the subject, framing the discussion within the relevant area of cultural studies before moving on to the specific area of screen production to identify the research gap that I am addressing. The chapter then discusses in detail the elements of Csikszentmilahyi's systems model of creativity – the domain, the individual and the field – and the methods used in this research. This chapter thus sets up the body of the thesis, which is shaped around the three elements of the systems model as they pertain to the work of the Māori film producer.

Chapters 2 and 3 explore the domain of Māori filmmaking to answer the research question: What constitutes the screen production context for this research? As this research has progressed, it has become clear to me that there are substantial gaps in the

written history of Māori filmmaking, particularly in the modern era since the 1970s. My own participation in screen production since the 1980s, while much of it was in the mainstream, means that I am well informed about the period, and my personal friendship and working relationship with some of the key figures through this period to the present day gives me a perspective that enables me to write authoritatively about this time. These two chapters therefore trace Māori filmmaking from its origins to the present day, bringing to the discussion an understanding of the broad range of influences on it. Chapter 2 covers development through the 20th Century, including the changing nature of the political and social worlds within which this filmmaking has developed; the foundational importance of key individuals and their practice; the struggle by many filmmakers against political and institutional headwinds; and the place of mainstream producers and policy makers in enabling and constraining Māori creative progress. Chapter 3 continues this exploration, tracing developments through the 21st Century and providing a detailed discussion of the changes in both domestic and international Indigenous filmmaking opportunities and achievement.

Chapter 4 addresses the position of the individual within the systems model of creativity to answer the research question: What are the key influences on the screen producer's decision-making process? Every project brings together a different group of artists and craftspeople who work as one for the duration of the film before scattering and recombining in different groups as they move on to the next film. For the period of production, the workers feel like a family, even if sometimes a very dysfunctional family. Over the period of my working life, I have belonged to many such families and overarching all is the larger family of Indigenous filmmakers, both local and international. In this chapter, I bring into play the voices of a number of Māori producers who illustrate the diversity of origins and intentions in the larger landscape we all share. These producers are all industry colleagues of mine and, at the time I interviewed them for this research (late 2018/early 2019), they were among the most experienced Māori film producers in Aotearoa NZ. Discussion in this chapter traverses how we all came to be producers and the joys and pains of the craft. Specifically, it explores aspects of practice particular to Indigenous creatives including commitments beyond the immediate work that come from the obligation of being a storyteller for those who lack voice, and the opportunities afforded through this to contribute to the growth of wellbeing of the community. Notably, it discusses the range of hopes that minority producers share,

including the desire to move beyond the burden of representation some feel they continue to struggle under.

Chapter 5 explores the field or 'network of experts' in the systems model to answer the final research question: How does the screen producer exercise her creative authority to achieve an intended outcome? The exploration takes the form of a case study of a documentary I produced, released in 2015, called *The Price of Peace*. I use the case study to look at three specific aspects of the producer's craft: raising finance, exercising editorial judgment and taking the film to market. Through this, I detail the day-to-day decision-making that the producer engages in to illuminate how creative authority is exercised and how the producer responds to the requirements of the field. The field in Māori filmmaking is complex: it includes many of those who constitute the field in mainstream filmmaking in Aotearoa NZ, as well as a range of people or organisations who bring specifically Indigenous influence to bear, both locally and internationally. The development of this field is ongoing as the nature of Māori filmmaking changes with the growth of opportunities, and the case study, while detailing a relatively low-budget documentary, offers an examination of many of the key elements that now make up this field.

The thesis is brought to a conclusion with a discussion of the findings in the research, looking at the implications therein and drawing out the significance of this exploration of my own practice and that of my peers, what this has to say about Māori filmmaking in the present and what it may presage for the work of the Indigenous producer going forward. I look again at Csikszentmihalyi's original systems model of creativity, and the theoretical structure underlying this enquiry, and I find that a revision is required to adequately conceptualise the work of the Indigenous screen producer. In revising the model, I consider the key dimensions of difference that set the Māori screen producer's creative practice apart from that of non-Māori or mainstream producers. The implications of these differences then lead me to a new version of Csikszentmihalyi's systems model, reconceptualising it through *te ao Māori* or the Māori worldview. In this way I extend Csikszentmihalyi's model by incorporating the Western conceptualisation into a Māori framework, and through the commonalities we share with our Indigenous cousins internationally, I argue this version of the model could be applied beyond *te ao Māori* to represent the creative practice of filmmakers from other Indigeneities (allowing for adjustments to reflect their particular Indigeneity).

My development of the model of the work of the Māori screen producer as a creative system of practice, and by extension the work of the Indigenous producer as a creative system of practice, offers new knowledge in rethinking a Western model from an Indigenous perspective. Additionally, in the course of the research, I have developed a visualisation of the documentary film value chain (see section 5.3 below): value chains have been constructed for a variety of aspects of filmmaking but I have not found any evidence of this thinking being applied to the production of documentaries and this is further new knowledge produced in the course of writing this thesis. The thesis as a whole offers a considerably more detailed history of Māori filmmaking than has hitherto been available, with newly conceived illustrated timelines of Māori feature films (in section 4.3, with an extended version in Appendix A). In taking a production studies approach, I have produced an analysis which offers a holistic understanding – historical, social, and industrial – of how Māori filmmaking reached its present moment. The world of filmmaking is evolving very rapidly and I see this research as foundational for further enquiry, and I make suggestions for such enquiry in the concluding chapter.

CHAPTER 1: Mapping the theoretical terrain

1.1 Introduction

This chapter considers the scholarly and theoretical terrain in which this study is conducted. To be precise, within the discipline of cultural studies, its intellectual home is an offshoot of media industry studies which has emerged in the last fifteen years called media production studies. In this literature review, therefore, I first provide an overview of the territory germane to media industry studies and then discuss media production studies, considering perspectives which influence my own research. Subsequently, I discuss the literature pertaining to the Indigenous screen production landscape and make the argument that this is where a gap in the current research into the work of the producer exists. Finally, considering how to address this gap, I detail the methodological approach I use to examine my own practice, which enables me to place that practice within its historical, social and political context with the aim of contributing new knowledge, not just to the field of media production studies but also to the field of Indigenous media studies.

As a scholarly pathway for researching the making and meaning of media, media production studies focuses on sites of media production as diverse and differentiated communities. This enables the exploration of specific production practice, considered as an intersection where political, cultural and economic forces meet. In other words, while positioned within cultural studies, media production studies in fact functions within a multidisciplinary framework, focusing its lens on those who produce media artefacts, or in John Caldwell's (2016) term, those who operate in the world of "slippery, shifting, and unruly modes of production" (p. xviii). In doing this, production studies positions the values and understandings that media workers draw from their own experience as the site of meaning making. It has emerged from a background of media industry scholarship, a research focus which itself inherits theoretical and methodological frameworks from cultural, film and media studies (Macdonald, 2013; Schatz, 2014).

1.2 Media industry studies

Historical influences on media industry scholarship include the Frankfurt School with its humanities-based approach in bringing to the fore questions about mass media industries and texts, and research in social science exploring the effects of mass communication on the public. The term 'mass' was foundational in much of the original theorising of media, but has limited application in the present day and the current definition of 'industry' is

far removed from its original Fordist connotations (Holt & Perren, 2009; Lotz, 2009). The 'industry' in media industry studies is no longer an object for analysis that is bound, for example, by national borders, or even by specific forms of media. This perspective reflects work done by a number of key cultural and media theorists in the early 21st Century (J. T. Caldwell, 2008; Garnham, 2005; Hesmondhalgh, 2002; Jenkins, 2006) on which scholars in media industry research have built (for example, Freeman, 2016; Havens & Lotz, 2017; Havens et al., 2009; Mayer, 2011, 2016; Perren, 2013; Wasko & Meehan, 2013). The work of these scholars has contributed to bringing media industry studies to a position where it now applies a broad range of research perspectives to the remarkably complex landscape in which the media industries in the present day operate.[12]

The sheer variety of approaches to theorising the field of media industry studies can give the researcher pause[13] and it can be argued this reflects the diversity and range of elements that need to be considered in any comprehensive discussion of the field (Freeman 2016; Holt & Perren, 2009; Macdonald, 2013). As an example, the 'Industrialization of Culture' framework proposed by Timothy Havens and Amanda Lotz (2012) posits three levels of influence in the operation of media industries. The first is the *mandate* or goals of a particular media organisation which may be, for example, commercial or non-commercial, governmental or community-based, mainstream or alternative. The second is the *conditions* of the larger media sector within which the organisation is operating: this may include, for example, government regulation, technological developments, and economic considerations. The third is the day-to-day *practices* within the organisation, which will vary depending on the medium, the audience and so on. These levels sit within the enclosing influence of the wider culture within which the organisation functions and from which it draws its resources, and all levels contribute to the production of the individual media text. Matthew Freeman (2016) focuses less on specific practice and more on the "discourses communicated by media industry practitioners, and thus the ways in which media practitioners narrativise the transformation of deep social structures into clear sets of meanings and understandings about media industries" (p. 13). These discourses for Freeman connote the 'discursive context' which he places together with the 'societal context' and the 'corporate context' as "overlapping principles" (p. 13) for

12. Holt and Perren's (2019) review of the preceding decade discusses a "stunning expansion" of research in the field (p. 31).
13. Lotz (2009) notes the following: circuit of cultural production (du Gay), cultural economy (du Gay & Pryke), creative industries (Hartley), cultural industries (Hesmondhalgh), critical industrial practices (Caldwell), critical media industry studies (Havens et al.) (p. 28).

the study of media industry practices. Freeman sees the 'discursive context' as not necessarily concerning actual practice but I would argue that the study of a 'discursive context' can only be fully informed if the practice underlying it *is* brought under the microscope. This view is informed by my understanding of the complications and contradictions inherent in the forms and sites of media practice I have experienced. For example, to the outside eye there may appear little difference between the work of a drama producer within a large television company and that of the producer of an independent feature film: both do essentially the same job, yet the 'meanings and understandings' that might be generated from the two different situations of practice would, from my experience, be highly contradictory. My view thus resonates more with the style of approach that Havens and Lotz bring to their framework and this has influenced my choice of methodology (see sections 1.5 and 1.6, below).

For the experienced practitioner coming to theory, knowledge of one's own practice is deep and the task of theorising requires seeing past the boundaries of one's own work to ascertain what knowledge can be offered beyond a case study. Indeed, Horace Newcomb (2009) maintains that "every media industry study is a case study" (p. 712) by which he means to challenge the easy generalisation which can mask how varied each instance of media production actually is: for example, the 'commercial' of one industry sector or one country or one regulatory framework may not be the 'commercial' of another. The call on the researcher, therefore, is to find the patterns and relationships that do exist and it can be argued that this task is becoming more and more complex as the production of media itself changes, growing at the same time both more fragmented and more integrated. Both these processes, and this fragmentation and convergence, are fundamentally altering the production landscape and research is complicated by the increasing complexity of the relationships between the media-maker and the consumer as well as between media workers and those for whom they work. Mark Deuze (2009), for example, points to the very high levels of production work done by independent contractors, often in different cities if not in different countries, with power relationships diffused "in a complex web of mostly temporary connections, transient links (and) short-lived joint ventures" (p. 418). John Hartley (2009) questions, in such a post-broadcast era and with the rise of user-generated content, whether the term 'industry' is any longer appropriate in the discussion of media, carrying as it does implications of ideology that he considers outdated and/or irrelevant. These points are relevant when it comes to discussing many of those who work in production, particularly in a field like filmmaking,

in the small-country media ecology that pertains in Aotearoa New Zealand, where it is not uncommon to hear those working in the film industry refer to it as a cottage industry.[14]

There has been recognition by a number of scholars that the field of media industry studies is in need of a more consolidated methodological approach (for example, Freeman, 2016; Hesmondhalgh, 2015; Wasko & Meehan, 2013). However, they differ about the way forward. Without wishing to revisit historical arguments between cultural studies and political economy in detail, it is interesting to note how the inheritance of those arguments plays through the discussion. Janet Wasko and Eileen Meehan (2013) are critical of approaches which problematise, and in many ways reject, political economy theory and methods, arguing that much of the literature on the political economy of media in reality does engage in a much broader analysis than those they are critiquing allow. They argue that identifying new approaches (as, for instance, Havens et al.'s 'Critical Media Industry Studies') is simply unnecessary and reflective of a jaundiced view of political economy prevalent in both academic and cultural policy areas. Thomas Schatz (2014), on the other hand, expresses concern that the agency of the individual is not considered enough in media industry studies and sees the political economy approach outweighing attention to the creative and cultural aspects of the field. He places particular focus on what authorship is and how it operates, and how the work of the author (individual or collective) generates change or disrupts the industrial production of culture. Caldwell (2013) also makes a forceful argument against overestimating the determining role of industry and emphasises the need for humanities-based scholars to be engaged in the research of media industries. Both recognise what Schatz (2014) characterises as "aesthetic, humanistic and cultural concerns … alongside issues of ownership, commerce and control" (p. 39) and this approach is reflected in this present research.

1.3 Media production studies

It can be argued that research which has emerged in the last ten years or so has laid solid foundations on which media production studies can progress (for example, Banks et al., 2016a; Bloore, 2013; J. Caldwell, 2013; J. T. Caldwell, 2008; Herbert et al., 2020; Mayer, 2011; Mayer et al., 2009b; Paterson et al, 2016). John Caldwell, in his groundbreaking study *Production Culture: Industrial Reflexivity and Critical Practice in Film and*

14. The outsize presence of Peter Jackson's companies and productions, together with use of local crews and locations in Aotearoa NZ by companies such as Amazon, masks the real scale and fragility of the local film industry as a whole (see sections 4.5 and 4.6, below).

Television (2008), called for an 'integrated cultural-industrial method' of analysis, seeking "to find and articulate examples of critical theory embedded within the everyday of workers' experience" (p. 5). He articulated clearly what media-makers know intrinsically in explicating how, within their processes of production, they employ critical judgment and analyse their work *as* they work. In doing this, he paid close attention to how media practitioners communicate among themselves and to others, and focused strongly on how workers in what he called the "industrial food chain" (p. 3) self-theorise. To a researcher like myself, coming from industry, his observations and subsequent analyses resonate with my own experience.[15] Caldwell's research was conducted among the film communities of Los Angeles but much of his discussion can be applied across other screen production ecologies, though as he points out, screen production processes "function on a microsocial level as local cultures and social communities in their own right" (p. 2).

As indicated above, my own sense that studies of production should be grounded in the specificities of a particular practice is based on my knowledge of how difficult it can be for an outsider to access the inner workings of industry and how easily, therefore, important elements influencing that practice can be overlooked or misunderstood. This view is supported by Lee and Zoellner (2019) and by Banks et al. (2016b), who maintain that research into the first-hand experience of media-makers enables "new insights into otherwise opaque industrial processes" (p. xi), assisting better understanding of how production communities connect with and are influenced by government policy, economic constraints, industry structures, and so on.

What constitutes media production and where it takes place has changed remarkably over the relatively short period since Caldwell published his foundational 2008 study. New forms of media production such as social media and gaming have matured, industries such as journalism and music have changed almost beyond recognition, and fundamental changes are taking place in both the film and television industries. Underlying all this is the rapid rate of technological change as the internet has radically altered the relationship between producers and consumers by making both dependent on internet-enabled products and platforms for "formatting, distributing, accessing, and sharing media

15. Two examples are his view that the industry distinction between 'creatives' above-the-line and 'workers' below-the-line is "suspect" from a research point of view (J. T. Caldwell, 2008, p. 406n), and his commentary on the ease with which industry executives understand the links between economic and aesthetic value, a linkage which, as noted earlier, troubles many researchers (p. 234).

content" (Deuze & Prenger, 2019, p. 13). Banks et al. (2016b) include magazine production, comic books and promotional media as sites of production and this indicates the breadth of perspective in scholarship now on what constitutes a media text, how that text is shaped, what the influences of both the individual media producer and the political, cultural and economic contexts within which she operates are, and how these micro and macro foci can together illuminate the underlying meaning of media text and media production. This research aims similarly to combine the micro foci of the production of a specific text and the detail of the producer's practice with the macro foci of the political, cultural and economic context within which that practice takes place. That context is Māori screen production and this chapter now considers the research within media production studies that is applicable here.

1.4 The context of production studies in the Māori screen landscape

Spicer et al. (2014b) draw attention to the need to evaluate and understand the specificities of individual producers' practices and the contexts within which they are conducted as a requisite for understanding national cinemas, and Meir (2014) acknowledges this point, drawing attention to the significance of the producer to understanding "national and transnational media ecologies" (p. 279). The Indigenous screen landscape is a transnational media ecology that, as noted earlier, has begun to attract widespread attention in the international industry and among international audiences (Mitchell, 2018; Vivarelli, 2021). In 2018, the Arctic Indigenous Film Fund (AIFF) was launched (partners: Canada, Greenland, Russia and Sápmi [the Indigenous lands of Norway, Sweden and Finland]). This fund is an example of how interconnected Indigenous filmmaking is becoming beyond the level of nation states (AIFF, 2021). A recent Canadian report on the support for such Indigenous initiatives by publicly-funded film bodies discusses how two decades of investment has contributed to a growing audience for Indigenous screenwork worldwide, and cites examples of Indigenous features from Canada, Australia, Aotearoa NZ and the Nordic countries which have achieved box-office success in their respective home territories and beyond (De Rosa & Burgess, 2019). The report discusses the importance of the international Indigenous film festival circuit in promoting Indigenous screen productions, including television and digital media work, though at this stage this circuit still exhibits what Cordova (2012), writing from a Latin American perspective, identified as a "rather unacknowledged North-South divide" (p. 74) with the strongest connections in the circuit being in mainly Anglophone regions, in addition to northern Europe. The rise in the visibility of Indigenous media production

(and distribution) has been paralleled by a rise in attention to this work within the academy. For this study, which focuses on the producer of Indigenous cinema, the relevant background research has been conducted within the discipline of film studies rather than the study of production; in this discipline, attention to Indigenous cinema has been both prefigured and paralleled by the theorising of the concepts of world cinema and transnational cinema.

World cinema is a concept similar to world music, in that it takes a Western perspective on media products and practices that emerge from non-Western cultures (Dennison & Lim, 2006; Dissanayake, 1998). Implicit in discussion of world cinema is a recognition and problematising of the very concept itself, tethered as it has been to the gravitational pull of Hollywood and Eurocentric scholarship (Andrew, 2006; Dennison & Lim, 2006; Iordanova et al., 2010a; Nagib, 2006). Ella Shohat and Robert Stam (2014) laid the groundwork for this discussion with their call for a decentred approach to the study of media, taking an interdisciplinary approach in their critique of "the universalization of Eurocentric norms" (p.3). There is also recognition in studies of world cinema that the financing and production of films have increasingly become sites of supranational engagement (Nagib, 2006) and this recognition has resulted in continuing debate examining the relationship between centre and periphery, a debate which has spurred the development of the concept of transnational cinema.

Columpar (2010) dates the emergence of this concept as a focus for scholars from Ezra and Rowden's anthology *Transnational Cinema: A Film Reader* (2005a). In the introduction to their anthology, Ezra and Rowden (2005b) argue that "binary oppositions ... have lost even their heuristic value in the complexly interconnected world-system with which even the most marginalized of (filmmakers) must now contend" (p. 4). They point out that the centre/periphery view of 'Hollywood and the rest' ignores the fact that cinema has circulated across borders from its inception, leading to the concept of the transnational as an appropriate lens through which to view the international cinema landscape. The concept of 'national cinema' endures as a tool of analysis, particularly given the influence of state policy on cinema investment and production (Ezra & Rowden, 2005b; Higson 2005). However, what Newman (2010) calls the "geopolitical decentering of the discipline" (p. 4) has progressed at pace and what was once considered peripheral can now be seen as integral. Iordanova et al. (2010b) confirm this by analysing *from* the periphery, which they define not from a geographical standpoint, but as a "mode of

practice, as a textual strategy, as a production infrastructure" (p. 9). In other words, they take the periphery *as* the centre. Not only are more films being produced from peripheral industry centres, they are being seen more widely as the possibilities for reaching the audience expand through digital distribution to cinemas and through digital streaming (Iordanova, 2010). Writing of what she calls "global cinema's long tail", Iordanova notes "one increasingly recognizes that the localities of production are spatially disjointed and audiences increasingly scattered around the globe" (p. 24).

The media-making of Indigenous peoples – peripheral, spatially disjointed and with increasingly global audiences – has attracted growing scholarly attention since the 1990s and Indigenous media studies can now be identified as an emerging field in its own right. Anthropologists Terence Turner (1991) and Faye Ginsberg (1991, 1993) conducted foundational work in this field at a time when the availability of low-cost, portable video equipment and the spread of satellite access combined to confront Indigenous communities with what Ginsberg (1991) called a "Faustian dilemma" (p. 96), whereby their access to the means to control their own representation encouraged the spread of 'destructive' foreign-language media into Indigenous homes. Ginsberg (1993) was referencing the work of the Frankfurt School regarding the malign influence of mass media (p. 560). She argued presciently against this view, proposing that this dilemma did not automatically mean a solely destructive influence on Indigenous lives, perhaps because her fieldwork in outback Australia had given her insight into how Indigenous media-makers welcomed the opportunity to control the means of production and the resulting images and stories. Production of Indigenous media has gone from strength to strength in the thirty years since Ginsberg's 'Faustian dilemma' commentary, reflecting the growth of what Hokowhitu and Devadas (2013) term Indigenous peoples' "tactical use of the media" (p. xvi). Shohat and Stam (2014) cite productions from many different regions which have found mainstream recognition and international audiences, contributing to what they call the " 'mainstreaming' of indigeneity" (p. 413) and this is reflected in my discussion below (see sections 2.7 and 3.2). Hokowhitu and Devadas (2013), like Shohat and Stam (2014) and many others writing on Indigenous media, focus on matters of identity, representation, struggle and empowerment which are foundational concerns for the field. In terms of production, issues of identity and representation (and empowerment) translate in practice for the Indigenous producer into struggles with such matters as who pays and how to reach an audience, and therefore whether and how to

embrace or reject the lure of the mainstream. These are issues which this study traverses (see, particularly, sections 2.7, 3.6 and 4.5, below).

While there has been growing scholarly attention to the making of Indigenous media, it is only recently that attention has turned specifically to the production process of Indigenous feature films. Michael Robert Evans' (2010) consideration of Zacharias Kunuk's 2002 film *Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner* explores the complete context of the film's creation, from the origins of the filmmakers and how their film company operates, to how they researched the traditional story which the film retells, to how they ensured the integrity of their work, and finally to the film's journey in distribution. Such a complete consideration of the making of an Indigenous film is rare as yet, though various aspects of Indigenous cinema production are increasingly being explored (for example Davis, 2007; S. Turner, 2013; Wood, 2008). In Aotearoa NZ, theorising of cinema in general has increased dramatically with the emergence of local filmmakers into the international arena, with Peter Jackson, Jane Campion and Vincent Ward attracting most of the attention. Scholarship exploring Māori cinema has grown in parallel with this work, with attention centring on the representation of Māori in both historical and present-day cinema (Blythe, 1994; Dennis & Beiringa, 1996; Fleras & Spoonley, 1999; Gauthier, 2008; Joyce, 2007; Keown, 2008; Martens, 2007; Peters, 2007; Pihama, 2000). However, little has been written about Māori film *production*, the two key writers in this area to date being directors Merata Mita and Barry Barclay, who are among the elders of modern Māori filmmaking and were writing in the 1980s–early 2000s (see section 2.5, below).

My previous research (Milligan, 2017a, 2017b, 2021a, 2021b) discusses both my own and others' work in the development of Māori feature film scripts and the role of the producer within the creative triangle of producer, director and writer. However, the most substantial recent discussion of production processes in Indigenous media in Aotearoa NZ is Jo Smith's (2016) in-depth exploration of Māori Television. This includes a detailed chapter on the practicalities of Māori production, looking for instance at the "use of te reo in the workplace" (p. 51) and "tikanga-based production practices" (p. 56), discussions in which current media practitioners reflect the spirit of Barclay and Mita's thinking. Many of those who work in film production also work in television and this thesis, while it focuses on film production, reflects how elements of development, production and distribution across various Indigenous media feed into one another (see sections 3.2, 3.3 and 4.5, below). Other recent research which touches on aspects of

cinema production within the Māori filmmaking landscape includes Stuart Murray's detailed exploration of Barclay's complete works, *Images of Dignity* (2008). Additionally, there is a growing body of research by emerging and established Māori scholars using a *kaupapa Māori* theoretical approach in reading historical and current Māori screenwork, which also touches on aspects of Māori cinema production (Mercier, 2007, 2010; Barnes, 2018; K. R. Waititi, 2007), and Ella Henry's (2012) discussion of Māori entrepreneurship in screen production is informative on Māori screen producers' careers though none of her research subjects were then producing feature films.

There is thus to date a paucity of research into the work of the Indigenous feature film producer from a production studies perspective, and my aim is to contribute to addressing that gap by examining my own practice, placing my voice in discussion with that of my peers in the production industry, and bringing to this discussion an examination of the historical, political and cultural context within which my peers and I as Māori film producers operate. Achieving this has required me to identify a methodological approach appropriate to the task. In 2013, John Caldwell called for "more holistic systems approaches" (p. 163), concerned as he was that production studies scholars had not then engaged with the fast-developing research into complex systems going on elsewhere. This concern has since begun to be addressed by theorists working with Csikszentmihalyi's systems model of creativity (McIntyre et al., 2016) and this research project applies this systems model as its principal methodology precisely because it offers a critical approach which is robust yet flexible enough to enable the exploration of a highly varied and complex set of processes and positions, including my own explicit presence in the research.

1.5 The systems model of creativity

As a psychologist, Csikszentmihalyi approached his early study of the nature of creativity in the 1960s through the lens of individual artists, seeking to understand "the process of creative production itself" (Csikszentmihalyi & Getzels, 1971, p. 47). Much later, in the 1980s, when he subsequently came to reflect on his early findings, he found them wanting, providing no explanation for example as to why the outstanding young women in his doctoral study of arts college students had not established careers as artists while a number of the less highly-regarded young men had. This suggested to him a need to look more widely, beyond the individual, to fully explain the creative process, and led him to rethink the question What is creativity? and reformulate it as *Where* is creativity?

(Csikszentmihalyi, 1988/2014b, p. 47). Csikszentmihalyi was making the point that creativity is not bound to the person considered creative, nor to the object created, but requires a culturally-defined domain within which the individual achieves their creative work, and a group of peers to recognise that achievement as worthy. His thinking led him to develop a systems approach to creativity, one which incorporated the domain and the group of peers as well as the individual.

Csikszentmihalyi was one of a number of psychologists whose research into creativity led them to propose explanations which incorporated systems approaches to account for the emergence and recognition of novelty which the concept of creativity implies. Amabile (1993, 1996), for example, bases her creativity model around three primary components – domain-relevant skills, creativity-relevant skills and task motivation – to explain how differences in the skills and motivation that individuals bring to their creative task account for different outcomes. Sternberg and Lubart (1992; Sternberg, 2006) draw on the metaphor of the stock market to frame several factors such as knowledge, motivation and environment within their 'investment theory of creativity', suggesting that ideas which have little currency, if pursued ('buy low'), have the potential to be highly-regarded when eventually recognised by audiences or buyers ('sell high'). Simonton (2014) discusses an 'integrative research agenda' to explore the influence of an individual's genetic and environmental inheritance as well as their acquisition of expertise in explaining the variability of creative outcomes. These are isolated examples from among a wide range of differing theoretical approaches to the understanding of creativity, all of which reflect the clear trend from the 1950s/60s to the present day for research into the phenomenon of creativity to expand outwards from the original focus by psychologists on neurological explanations. This reflects equally a trend away from the inheritance of the historical Western view of creativity as the property of an individual (the 'artist'). That these approaches have emerged contemporaneously can be seen as a reflection of developments in the wider research community with the increasing use of qualitative methodologies and a developing trend toward interdisciplinary research from the 1980s onward (Moore & Murdock, 2000; Sawyer, 2012); insights from fields such as history, art history, literature, sociology and philosophy have enabled the expansion of the conceptual understanding of what elements contribute to the process and production of a creative object or outcome. The recent publication of a 'manifesto', signed by a number of key researchers in the field, attests to the centrality of the socio-cultural

approach in the field now, with its call for all creativity researchers to "reflect up, study, and cultivate creativity as a socio-cultural phenomenon" (Glaveanu et al., 2020).

The socio-cultural approach is fundamental to Csikszentmihalyi's systems model, which is built around three elements: a cultural domain or body of knowledge; an individual who brings about creative change in the domain; and a field, the experts or gatekeepers who recognise the change as new and valuable (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, 1996, 1999). Csikszentmihalyi (1999) posits that "creativity is a process that can be observed only at the intersection where individuals, domains and fields interact" (p. 314), and this theoretical approach, as shown in Figure 1 below, incorporates a flexibility in its design and in its understanding of what it takes to create something new which I see as enabling the excavation of meaningful observations from my own and others' practice.

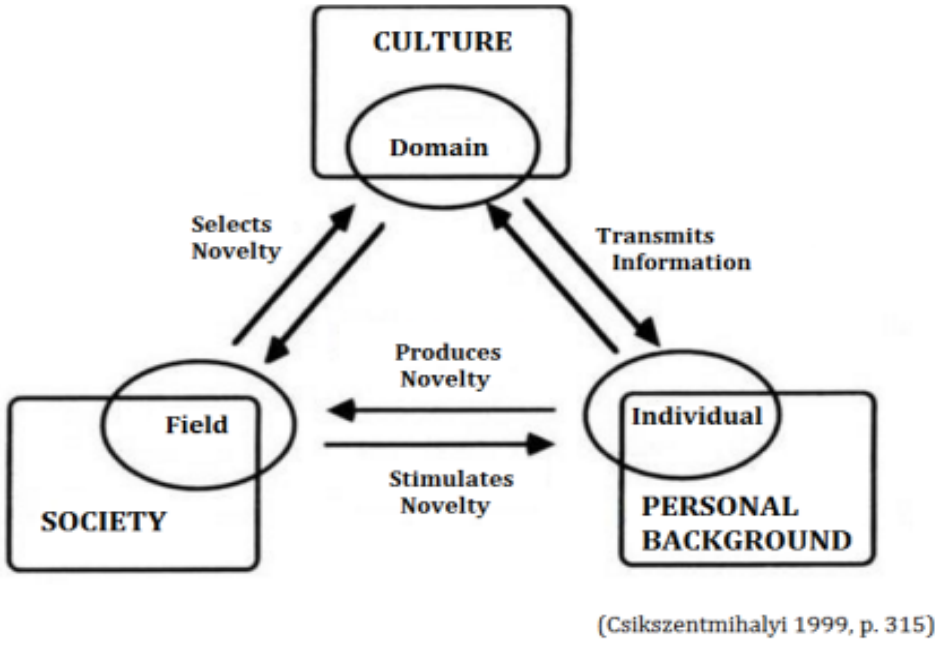

Figure 1: The systems model of creativity

The span of Csikszentmihalyi's research, from the 1960s to recent years, reveals a progressive growth in his understanding of the implications of the model, details of which he explored with colleagues (Jacob Getzels, Keith Sawyer et al.). The fundamental elements or components of the model have remained remarkably stable since their first clear expression in the 1980s (Csikszentmihalyi, 1988/2014b), which speaks to the simplicity and applicability of the model itself.

1.6 The components of the model: The domain, the individual and the field

The **domain** denotes the traditions, codes, rules and practices operant in a subdivision of culture where the content shares similar characteristics. Domains may have their own language or use of language, sometimes a very specific technical language (for example, film editing), and a common understanding by those within the domain of what can be considered intrinsic to it. Each domain inherits traditions and practices from antecedent domains, for example the emergence of filmmaking as a domain owes much to antecedents as diverse as photography and vaudeville, and while a domain is being established, what can be a long process of trial and error may occur, as with the early development of the moving image camera (Corrigan & White, 2009). A domain, once established, develops a set of its own traditions which must be understood in order that the emergence of something new can be recognised as such. Equally, in order to contribute something new to the domain, the individual must understand the traditions and codes of a domain, which means they must be able to access that domain in the first place. Domains are organic, in that they may change, growing or withering over time: the ongoing rapid pace of change in the domain of screen production worldwide as a result of digitisation illustrates how domains may not only change, but how their rules of accessibility (who may play the game, where it may be played) can be fundamentally altered in quite a short period of time.

Looking at the implications of these qualities of the domain, Csikszentmihalyi (1988/2014b) suggests a series of questions can then be generated, such as: How is information stored and transmitted in the domain? How does the structure of the domain affect creativity? How can creativity already expressed in a domain be made available to newcomers? How can individuals be motivated to engage with the domain? To which one can add: How does a domain emerge? How does it change over time? And so on. Csikszentmihalyi (1988/2014b) also discusses the importance of "common conceptual commitment" in the structure of a domain, and how its "fragmentation ... guarantees that ... recognition will remain for a long time parochial" (p. 55). My identification and exploration of the domain of Māori film production addresses this and shows how this domain is shifting quite rapidly from one of fragmentation to one of surprising cohesion (see Chapter 3).

The second component of the model is the **individual** and the structure of the systems model enables the individual's creative contribution to be theorised in terms of

motivation, personality and judgment: for example, a person must be well-motivated to take the time to understand and internalise the rules and practices of the domain; she must have the personality which enables her to gain access to the gatekeepers and convince them that her work is worth consideration; she must be willing to break rules if needed; and she must have the judgment to know which rules to break as the orthodoxy of a domain may need to be challenged if something new is to be brought into existence and recognised as worthy of inclusion. Csikszentmihalyi (1998/2014c) makes the point that the individual is the element in this equation that has been and continues to be most extensively studied (a point which perhaps motivates the call for a collective pursuit of the socio-cultural approach outlined in Glaveanu et al. (2020)). Countering critics of his inclusion of recognition by specific others (the field) as an element of creativity, Csikszentmihalyi (1998/2014c) argues for "the essential element of human response" (p. 123) and in researching in a domain like film production, it is apparent that the element of human response is intrinsic to the nature of the enterprise because recognition and appreciation by peers is both validating for the individual and necessary if one wishes to build a career in filmmaking.

The third component, the **field,** by its simplest definition consists of "all those persons who can affect the structure of a domain" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1988/2014b, p. 330). Thus, in the domain of screen production, the field may include production executives, funding bodies, investors, commissioners, film festival directors and distributors, all of whom are in a position to choose or influence which works are worthy of recognition. In his earlier research, Csikszentmihalyi (1988/2014b) differentiated between those members of the field who contribute to recognition (for example, teachers at a film school) and those who are in the position to be gatekeepers (for example, film festival directors). He suggested all contribute to the make-up of the field but gatekeepers are in a much stronger position to promote and secure the position of individuals entering the field or the recognition of particular works as truly exceptional. In his more recent gloss of the concept of the field, he defines it as "the part of society that acts as gatekeepers to the domain" (Csikszentmihalyi, 2014d, p. 538). This shift reflects, in part, his attention to the world of commercial cultural production, where he suggests that "the field almost overlaps with society at large" because commercial success can override gatekeepers. While it can be argued that Csikszentmihalyi is here overlooking the decision-making (gate-keeping) that enables a cultural production to be placed in front of a commercial audience in the first

place, nevertheless over time his point has been gaining validity as the internet enables the most unusual and unpolished talent to garner attention from the field.

Looking at the implications of the concept of the field, Csikszentmihalyi (1998/2014c) generates such questions as: What are the characteristics of a field that enhance creativity? What are the social conditions that need to be taken into account? He points to the varying autonomy of a field, meaning how specialised it may be. Domains that are highly codified and inaccessible to the public will have a relatively small field: for instance, considering cinematography as a domain, the field which can recognise skill and artistry is quite limited. In opposition to this, the domain of screen performance, the craft of the actor, can be seen as more open to both public and specialised evaluation, and the field can be argued to be larger. Csikszentmihalyi (1998/2014c) also discusses the importance of accessibility to a field and the conservative influence of a hierarchy in a field. These aspects – reflected in such questions as What constitutes the criteria of a field? and Who qualifies to be a member of the field? – are all formative issues which I discuss in relation to the field of Māori film production (see Chapters 3 and 5).

It is important to note that the concept of time is intrinsic to Csikszentmihalyi's model but is obscured in the two-dimensional illustration above. Csikszentmihalyi (1988/2014b) describes the model as an "ascending spiral" (p. 55) because it is essentially a process of evolution, where the novelty introduced by the individual is recognised by the field over time and absorbed into the domain, where it in turn influences another individual in their conception and production of the new. Reflecting evolution in nature, he sees this as a process of "variation, selection and transmission" (1988/2014b, p. 55). For a variation to be recognised, it has to be introduced to the domain at a time when there is enough of a receptive cohort to perceive its value, or it falls on barren ground. Over time, what was once unreceptive can change, so that the same or a similar variation introduced at another time will be taken up and hailed as original. Equally, an innovation hailed in one era may fade over time (Csikszentmihalyi, 1988/2014b). The social conditions of the domain at any particular time can have a strong influence on the field in terms of receptivity, and the discussion of the domain of Māori screen production in the 21st Century illustrates how these conditions can play out in practice (see Chapters 2 and 3). Additionally, the starting point for the creative cycle can be quite arbitrary: it may start with an individual, but equally conditions in the domain may prompt or enable the development of a new idea.

1.7 Applying the systems model of creativity

Exploring the concept of the individual through both my own work and that of my peers has led me to turn to Pierre Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* because I share McIntyre's (2012) view that it offers added value in analysing the various forms of capital an individual may bring to their creative work. There are resonances and differences between Csikszentmihalyi's approach and that of Bourdieu (Fulton & Paton, 2016; McIntyre, 2012). The aims of these two theorists are fundamentally different, as Csikszentmihalyi is pursuing an overarching explanation of the phenomenon of creativity while Bourdieu was seeking to understand the relationship between the individual and society. However, as McIntyre (2013) points out, "Bourdieu's own account of cultural production was itself an attempt to get past the oppositions and determinisms of the agency versus structure dichotomy and replace it with a view that centralized complementarity, not polar oppositions" (p. 12). This emphasises the key commonality between Bourdieu (1996) and Csikszentmihalyi, the holistic nature of their view of cultural production, though the systems model and Bourdieu's theories do not map directly. There are broad commonalities between Bourdieu's concept of the 'field' as an arena of social contestation and the systems model component of the 'field' as the location of those who can affect the structure of the domain, in Bourdieusian terms the site of the struggle for power. Additionally, Bourdieu's 'field of works' shares commonalities with the systems model's 'domain' (Fulton & Paton, 2016) and his concept of *habitus* is similar to but not the same as the systems model component of the 'individual'. While I find that Csikszentmihalyi's conception of the domain and the field serve my purpose in this research, Bourdieu's theorising of how one's *habitus* develops offers a useful framing for exploring my own experience and that of my peers (see section 4.3, below) by focusing discussion of how we have acquired our varying forms of capital (cultural, economic, symbolic).

Csikszentmihalyi's systems model has formed the theoretical basis for an increasing number of research papers in a wide variety of cultural endeavours, including fiction writing (Paton, 2013, 2016), music recording (Thompson, 2016), filmmaking (Kerrigan, 2013, 2016a, 2016b), songwriting (McIntyre, 2008), comedy (Meany, 2016) and journalism (Coffee, 2016; Fulton, 2016). In her practice-based research into documentary filmmaking, Kerrigan (2010) revises the model to show how 'creative practice' takes place at the intersection of the system's components of domain, field and individual, thus

drawing attention to how the components of domain, field and individual are not discrete entities but intertwined, essentially making visible Csikszentmihalyi's holistic view of creativity, something which is less clear in his visualisation of the model. Thompson (2016) uses this idea as a basis for his exploration of how musicians work together in the recording studio, and presents versions of the model which he scales to the level of the individual and the level of a group (by presenting the domain and the field relatively scaled to these perspectives) with 'creative ideas or actions' as the point of intersection. DeZutter (2016; Sawyer & De Zutter, 2009) discusses distributed creativity and focuses specifically on the individual component of Csikszentmihalyi's model in exploring the emergence of creativity through a series of improvised theatre performances. This approach provides insight into how the contribution of each member of a group builds on the contributions of others, and how the resultant collective work is effectively greater than the sum of its parts. This reflects a process of collaborative emergence which is specific to groups where the intent of any one participant does not override any other, the type of group where studying the individual as an individual is unlikely to contribute to explaining the particular collective process in action and the group takes the place of the individual in the systems model (Sawyer & DeZutter, 2009). Variations like these are valuable in my research in drawing attention to how others have applied Csikszentmihalyi's thinking but do not offer an approach that is applicable here.

As revealed in Mockros and Csikszentmihalyi (2000/2014), Csikszentmihalyi became concerned, as his systems model began to be applied by other researchers, that adequate attention be paid to the social context of the research. He drew particular attention to the limitations on women and on minorities in gaining access to opportunities to enhance their professional development, noting the need for researchers to "attend to the role of the historical context, the availability of social support systems, and differential familial and cultural expectations" (p. 158) of the lives of those studied. This call is an element of my own motivation in approaching this research using the systems model and influenced my final decision to revise Csikszentmihalyi's model from an Indigenous perspective.

1.8 A note on methods

Bearing in mind that this research addresses Caldwell's 2013 call for a more holistic systems approach to the study of media production, it is useful to turn to his earlier text *Production Culture* (J. T. Caldwell, 2008) and what he calls his "integrated cultural-

industrial method of analysis" (p. 4) because I use a similar approach in bringing my different methods in tune with each other. Caldwell uses four methods: field observation, interviews, textual analysis and "economic/industrial analysis" (p. 4) and this approach of using several methods and placing them in dialogue enables the integration of "microsociological cultural analysis with macrosociological political economic frameworks" (p. 5). My aspiration to explore the work of the producer within a very particular cultural framework means I seek to bring together analysis of the intimate day-to-day with the overarching political, cultural and economic contexts of the domain and the field. I therefore use a similarly "integrated" method to bring together autoethnography, interviews, a case study and archival research, and here I comment on each of them in turn.

AUTOETHNOGRAPHY

When one is coming from a lifetime of practice as a storyteller, it is natural to want to tell stories. As Adams et al. (2013) note "stories invite us not to *describe* the world as it is, but instead to *move* and *live into* the world with others to try to shape the future together" (p. 669). In embarking on this research, I worked from the central assumption that I would be telling my own story, that is, using autoethnography as a method. Autoethnography continues to draw criticism despite the fact it has flourished as a qualitative method of analysis. Key concerns include the debate between the method as self-indulgent and emotional as opposed to analytical and scholarly, with the former seen as timely and relevant and the latter seen as conservative and therefore limiting (Wall, 2016). There is a substantial range of opinions on this, reflecting the substantial range of approaches which scholars are employing when writing autoethnography (Berry & Clair, 2011; C. Ellis et al., 2011; Wall, 2016). My own use of the method falls somewhere in the centre of the spectrum, requiring substantial and careful self-analysis while aiming to produce analytical commentary. My approach is not about 'disclosing secrets' as Holman-Jones et al. (2013) put it when discussing research which "(performs) the ways we have lived" (p. 24). This is not to criticise the often deeply personal approaches to research that some autoethnographers use. It is simply to state that my purpose here is rather to examine and critique my own experience *as it contributes to* an understanding of the work of the film producer. Working from insider knowledge in this way enables the creation of a highly nuanced description of a craft which, as noted earlier, is difficult to access otherwise (J. T. Caldwell, 2008; Paterson & Zoellner, 2010).

In applying a reflexive lens in this research, I have paid focused attention to relational ethics or relational concerns (C. Ellis et al., 2011, p. 281), which means taking care of those implicated in the research.[16] The nature of filmmaking means that professional and personal behaviour, relationships and ethics are intertwined in the intensity of the day-to-day work, and handling issues of power relations as a producer are matters for constant negotiation. The practice discussed in the case study, for instance, was such that it is not difficult to reflect accurately on the relationships of the key individuals involved: the work was conducted with remarkable harmony in terms of my long experience in the industry. Nevertheless, key actions are discussed in the case study which illustrate where this harmony was challenged and how such issues were managed, and analysis of the motives, actions and outcomes of such events illustrates the challenge and the value of the autoethnographic approach.

INTERVIEWS

I decided very early in the research process that it would be crucial to interview other Māori producers in order to hear their stories. I saw commentary from these industry colleagues to be vital in layering an accurate understanding within both the domain and the field sections of this research, and in contributing data to expand and contextualise the answers to the research questions. My aim with these interviews was to explore how the producers experienced the cultural, political and economic structures within which they as Indigenous producers operate. I anticipated that the exploration of their experiences would illuminate the forces which acted upon and influenced their practice. Additionally, I was interested to hear whether and how their emotional responses in their own engagement with the world resonated with my own behaviour in practice. In sum, I was seeking to analyse how they as producers express their agency within the Indigenous production landscape, how this might resonate with my own experience, and what this might reveal about the craft of the producer.

The interview is a fundamental methodological tool in media industry studies just as it is a fundamental tool of enquiry and storytelling in the media industries themselves. I was conducting intensive rather than extensive interviews (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011) as I was investigating in close-up rather than with a wide lens, focusing intimately on the personal experience of a small number of practitioners rather than looking for patterns in

16. The interviewees were provided with a draft of the relevant chapters of the thesis and invited to comment before the thesis was finalised.

a wider community. For this type of investigation, the semi-structured interview is an appropriate approach. It offers a flexibility and open-endedness to the questions, which enables the generating of a conversation that can be focused by the interviewer but leaves room for the interviewee to express their own interpretation of events (Brinkmann, 2018). As noted earlier, Caldwell (2008, p. 2) makes the point that workers in the screen industry self-theorise to a considerable degree and that is certainly my experience, so the fact that all the interviews generated thoughtful, intense conversations did not surprise me as I have spent years listening to practitioners like these discuss their work in public and industry forums, as I have done myself, and being able to articulate one's thoughts and opinions is intrinsic to the craft of the producer. I also shared a common technical language with the interviewees and a common understanding of the more esoteric rules of the industry so that, like US practitioner/researcher Erin Hill, I benefitted from their awareness that I "got it" when talking shop (J. T. Caldwell, 2009, p. 222).

I limited my interviewee selection to producers with feature film credits[17] because the creative difficulty and organisational complexity of producing a feature film substantially differs from and outweighs the requirement of producing even a large television series. The success of Māori Television and the growth of internet production has created a sizeable cohort of Māori screen producers. However, many of them are young and have developed their skills in a world of access to (relatively) low-cost digital cameras and editing tools, and to the low-cost modes of distribution that the internet offers, which means that their pathway to acquiring professional knowledge and skills is different from those producers who have feature film credits. Additionally, because my own journey has been one of immersing myself progressively in the Māori world, my instinct was that my interview subjects would know more than I did about working within the framework of *te ao Māori.* It became clear to me, however, that some had pursued journeys of identity every bit as complex as mine to reach their present positions of authority as Indigenous creative and industry leaders, so paradoxically, a quite unexpected benefit for me from the interview process was a renewed confidence in the path my own journey to identity is taking. This confidence enabled me to approach my revision of Csikszentmihalyi's systems model from a Māori perspective, comfortable in the

17. This refers to when the interviews were conducted in late 2018/early 2019. I interviewed experienced producers whom I knew to be accessible (others lived overseas or were just establishing their feature film careers) (see Appendix A).

knowledge that my approach is valid. The producer interviewees are introduced in detail in Chapter 4 but are noted here:

- LARRY PARR (tribal affiliations: Ngāti Raukawa, Muaūopoko) – leading producer in the development of the modern film industry in Aotearoa NZ. Currently Chief Executive/Kaihautū of Te Māngai Pāho (Māori Broadcasting Funding Agency).

- AINSLEY GARDINER (Te Whānau a Apanui, Ngāti Pikiao, Ngāti Awa) – producer currently extending her skills into writing and directing features. 2019 co-recipient of the Merata Mita Fellowship (Sundance Institute, US). 2010 SPADA Independent Producer of the Year (with Cliff Curtis).

- DESRAY ARMSTRONG (Te Aitanga a Hauiti, Ngāti Porou) – producer with three features released in 2021. 2018 SPADA Independent Producer of the Year.

- CLIFF CURTIS (Ngāti Hauiti, Te Arawa) – maintains his career as an international film star alongside his producing career. 2010 SPADA Independent Producer of the Year (with Ainsley Gardiner).

- QUINTON HITA (Ngā Puhi) – 2020 Te Waitī award for championing the revitalisation of Māori language and culture. 2019 Finalist NZ Herald New Zealander of the Year.

- TAINUI STEPHENS (Te Rarawa) – film and television producer/director, presenter and social commentator. Co-founder of Māori Screen Funding body Te Paepae Ataata. Co-founder of the Māoriland Film Festival.

The interviews produced a rich series of exchanges which I analysed following a process which I can best describe as ‘thinking with given narratives’. This is in essence thematic analysis but rather than aiming to extract specific themes through, for instance, a coding process, I applied a more free-ranging approach using a mix of inductive and deductive analyses. I had framed some interview questions quite specifically: for instance, I used quotes from industry predecessors like Merata Mita to generate discussion around the difference between power relationships on a Māori and a non-Māori-controlled film set,

so in this case a potential theme was established at the point of interview. Conversely, all the interviewees took the discussion in unexpected directions, so in analysing the resulting transcripts I sought to put their voices into play with my own and allow what I learned from this dialogue to inform the thesis as a whole. Thus, while there is a chapter specifically focused on drawing common themes out of our dialogue (Chapter 4), the narratives generated from our discussions contributed to shaping the structure of the thesis itself. For example, the interviews strongly influenced my approach to Chapters 2 and 3, the discussion of the domain of Māori filmmaking, by throwing light on the different achievements of individual filmmakers and their influence, thus contributing to the ways in which aspects of the history were emphasised. This is in no small part because our histories as producers began at different times during the common history of Māori filmmaking and the harmonics of each exchange produce, in a sense, different resonances in time. It can be said that the producers, like myself, are living documents in this exchange.

CASE STUDY

Similarly, the case study of the film *The Price of Peace* produced exchanges in interviews with my key collaborators, the film's director and editor, which contributed fundamentally to the shaping of that area of research (see Chapter 5). Simons (2009) describes a case study as an "exploration from multiple perspectives of the complexity and uniqueness of a particular project, policy, institution, programme or system in a 'real life' context … to generate in-depth understanding of a specific topic" (p. 27). I felt that a descriptive[18] case study of the documentary *The Price of Peace* offered the opportunity to generate a deep understanding of the day-to-day practice of the screen producer. Given the overarching theoretical framework of the systems model of creativity, it is interesting to note Schwandt and Gates' (2018) discussion of the "potential relevance of systems thinking for case study methodology", in which they point to the value of such thinking in offering "a framework for understanding … unbounded ontological complex realities" (p. 353). This supports my sense that a systems theory approach is an appropriate framework for this research, and a descriptive case study presents as a well-matched research tool for the purpose of making visible to non-filmmakers how the producer thinks and functions.

18. Following Schwandt and Gates (2018), I am using the concept of a single case to generalise analytically. They point out that this approach moves beyond the strictly descriptive by using the case to explore a theoretical proposition or concept (p. 347).

The Price of Peace is a documentary which explores the events and aftermath of a raid by the New Zealand Police on the rural Māori community of Rūātoki, ostensibly in search of domestic terrorists. I chose this film for the case study for a number of reasons. It was the most recent film I had completed as a hands-on producer (as opposed to executive or co-producer) and I wanted to use my most recent practice because the landscape in the screen industry, particularly in distribution, is continuing to morph rapidly as the roll-out of digitisation matures.[19] I also knew that it would be a relatively straightforward matter to get access to the two key colleagues I wished to interview, the director and the editor: I felt that as this film was relatively fresh in our recall, there was a stronger chance that these colleagues would be able to discuss the film in depth. Additionally, like all films, *The Price of Peace* generated a large quantity of working documents, including a four-year email trail, and these were held in the archive of the production company of which I am co-owner. Finally, the reception this documentary received both in New Zealand and overseas was quite particular: it is a rare example in world terms of a story where an Indigenous community received a personal apology from a government (in the person of the Commissioner of Police) and it also encompassed the New Zealand Government's apology to the *iwi* of Tūhoe for historical wrongs. As such, it presents the opportunity to explore some important motivations in Indigenous filmmaking.

ARCHIVAL RESEARCH

In researching the history of Māori filmmaking, a range of primary sources were accessed, including government and other institutional records, company websites, films and personal documents such as emails. Secondary sources included written histories, online newspaper records, videotaped interviews and theses. Websites such as NZ On Screen (www.nzonscreen.com) provided both primary and secondary sources. In the documentary case study, the archive held by the production company proved a rich source of information including, for example, a transcript of an interview I conducted with the director Kim Webby during post-production of the film in early 2015, in order to prepare the publicity kit for the film. The documents present opinions held and decisions made during the course of the filming and therefore open a window into the thinking of the people involved that is not clouded by memory or the distance of time. There were also

19. For instance, given the changes in distribution between 2015, when the film was released, and 2021, when this thesis is being completed, I can see likely alterations in the path of distribution that we could take were we releasing the film now.

secondary documents – for instance, reviews, funding body regulations, film festival information or industry commentary – analysis of which was informative in the discussion of aspects of the funding and distribution of this film. In analysing the primary and secondary documents related to the film, I was aware that my strong familiarity with the events under discussion might cause me to overlook an element of data simply because I took its meaning for granted, so I took care to remain aware of the reflexivity of my position (a reflexivity which was quite unavoidable at times as the documents revealed with startling immediacy things I said or did that I had completely forgotten).

In a sense, bringing together all these different methods – reflecting Caldwell's integrated approach – can be seen as a process that parallels the work of editing a film. Materials are gathered, they are engaged with on a deep level to bring understanding, they are sifted, new connections are established, the best are brought together into a coherent storyline, and then given to others for final evaluation.

1.9 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the theoretical framework and the methodological approach of this thesis. I first outlined the reasons for my decision to ground the study in the framework of media production studies, briefly reviewing the historical influences on the antecedent of production studies, media industry studies. The breadth of approaches to media industry studies was considered as I explained my conviction of the importance of understanding the specific practice underlying research into a particular media industry if one is to reach supportable conclusions. I discussed how a practitioner coming to research, however, needs to see beyond the boundaries of their own work in order to successfully theorise; and how, in the present time with media both converging and fragmenting, the work of finding patterns and relationships in the practice being studied is becoming more and more complex. I drew on the thinking of Schatz (2014) and Caldwell (2013) to support my belief that focusing on the media-maker was an appropriate approach to this thesis, as I share their view that "humanistic and cultural concerns" (Schatz, 2014) must be attended to in order to ensure that they are not outweighed by "issues of ownership, commerce and control" (p. 39).

I then turned to media production studies, reviewing its emergence and very rapid growth as a separate field of scholarship. I discussed the recognition within the field of the value of practitioner research, given that many of the industrial processes of media production

can be very difficult to access from the outside. I also looked at the speed with which media processes are changing and entirely new ones have emerged, in commenting on the breadth of scholarship that is now germane to the field, before moving on to consider media production studies in the context of the Māori screen landscape. I drew briefly on theories of world cinema and transnational cinema to show that the background to theorising production studies in terms of Māori feature filmmaking has been conducted in these areas, as media production studies per se in the Indigenous context is a still-developing area. This is partly because Indigenous use of media such as video has developed only in the later 20th Century and Indigenous-originated filmmaking similarly dates from the 1980s onwards. Scholarly interest in Indigenous filmmaking, including the work of Māori filmmakers, from a production studies perspective has therefore been quite recent and sporadic, with the most in-depth exploration of Māori production processes to date being in the field of television rather than cinema.

My search for an appropriate methodology to use in exploring my own practice and what it might say about the work of the Indigenous screen producer led me to Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's systems model of creativity. This is one of several systems approaches to creativity that have emerged since the 1980s as psychologists and others have moved on from the previous conception of creativity being a property of an individual to one which incorporates factors such as motivation, environment, cultural inheritances and social influences – that is, a socio-cultural approach. I discussed the detail of Csikszentmihalyi's systems model and its three components – the domain, the individual and the field – looking at the implications inherent in each component and reviewing examples of the questions Csikszentmihalyi considered would need to be answered in the course of a specific systems model exploration. I observed how Csikszentmihalyi's concepts did and did not resonate with some of Bourdieu's concepts, noting particularly that from my perspective Bourdieu's concept of habitus is useful when discussing Csikszentmihalyi's concept of the individual, offering as it does a useful way to consider how individuals acquire the varying forms of capital which enable their creativity. Finally, I drew attention to Csikszentmihalyi's concern that researchers using his model should pay attention to social context, particularly to be aware of how minorities' opportunities may be limited, and pointed to how this present study seeks to address that concern. In terms of methods used in researching this thesis, I discussed my decision to follow Caldwell's (2008) approach, where he brings together several different methods and puts them in dialogue with one another to achieve a macro- and micro-

sociological integration in his research. I similarly have brought together autoethnography, interviews, a case study and archival research. I discussed each of these methods in turn, drawing out why they were appropriate to the task and what the use of each method was designed to achieve.

In reviewing both the methodology and the methods used, I have sought to make clear how these were appropriate for answering the research questions I set myself and I address the first of these questions – What constitutes the screen production context for this research? – in Chapters 2 and 3. I have taken two chapters on this question because there is much relevant material to cover, and because there is a natural break around the beginning of the new century with, I argue, a new impetus in the opportunities available to Māori filmmakers after the millennium, as well as a change in the environment internationally, as already noted, with Indigenous films being sought after. Chapter 2, which now follows, looks first at the concept of the domain in the creative system in some detail. It then explores the history of Aotearoa NZ post-World War II in order to clarify the social and cultural pressures on Māori generally in the mid-to-late 20th Century, pressures which in no small way helped shape the difficult path that Māori filmmakers struggled on for much of this period. The chapter reviews the early exposure of Māori to filmmaking, principally as romanticised natives in stories told by non-Māori. It then explores the work of those considered the elders of modern Māori filmmaking as well as looking at the influence of Pākehā filmmakers and institutions, in both enabling and constraining the work of Māori. Finally, it closes by looking forward to the 21st Century, summarising the state of filmmaking in Aotearoa NZ at the end of the 1990s and how Māori were placed within the industry at this point in time. (A discussion bringing this exploration of 20th Century Māori filmmaking together with discussion of 21st Century Māori filmmaking, and detailing how Csikszentmihalyi's systems model illuminates what is revealed, takes place at the end of Chapter 3 (see section 3.6)).

CHAPTER 2: The domain (Part 1) – The 20th Century

2.1 Introduction

> *I dedicate this to all the Indigenous kids in the world who want to do art and dance and write stories. We are the original storytellers and we can make it here as well. (Waititi, 2020)*

When Taika Waititi accepted his Academy Award for Best Adapted Screenplay for *Jojo Rabbit* with these words in February 2020, his ascent marked a high point in the progress of Māori filmmakers on the international stage. At the same awards ceremony, the producers of the picture, Waititi together with Carthew Neal and Chelsea Winstanley, were nominated for Best Picture, with Waititi and Winstanley becoming the first Indigenous producers to be nominated for this award. While it can be argued that the Oscars are not always, or even often, the benchmark by which filmmakers choose to judge themselves and their films, it is hard to deny their value as a benchmark in a filmmaker's career and the recognition for *Jojo Rabbit* was welcomed by Māori. Interviewed by *The Guardian*, Māori scholar Ella Henry noted that despite the film not appearing to be Indigenous, Waititi's storytelling was in fact in keeping with Māori traditions:

> *If you look at the way Taika's films have evolved to use humour and pathos to express trauma, he elevates survival by bringing that pathos and humour and resilience to those stories. So I would say it's a very Māori story. (as cited in Graham-McLay, 2020, para. 12)*

The success of Waititi and Winstanley is a notable milestone for all Indigenous filmmakers. Henry's framing of *Jojo Rabbit* as a 'very Māori story' can equally be seen as a notable milestone confirming Māori filmmaking has moved well beyond essentialist assumptions of what constitutes a Māori film. I discussed this issue in an unpublished essay in 2014 when I wrote the following:

> *The release of the third of The Hobbit films in New Zealand cinemas in December will cap 2014 as a year of exceptional local filmmaking. Feature releases included The Dark Horse, the story of real-life bipolar chess champion Genesis Potini, written, directed and produced by Pākehā; What We Do in the Shadows, a vampire comedy horror, written and directed by Māori with Māori and Pākehā producers; Fantail, the story of a Pākehā girl who identifies as Māori, written and produced by Pākehā with a Cook Islands Māori director; and The Dead Lands, an action*

> *horror set in pre-European New Zealand, filmed entirely in te reo, written by Māori, directed by a Fijian-New Zealander, produced by Māori and Pākehā. These films follow the release in 2013 of White Lies, a historical drama based on a book by Witi Ihimaera, written and directed by a Mexican (filmmaker), produced by Pākehā; and Mt Zion, a coming-of-age story of a Pukekohe spud-picker obsessed with Bob Marley, written, directed and produced by Māori. With the exception of Fantail (and The Hobbit), all of these could be described as Māori films. (Milligan, 2014b, p. 1)*

I reproduce this lengthy paragraph here because it is a particularly acute example of how cross-cultural filmmaking in Aotearoa New Zealand can be. I noted at the time that the matter of what constitutes a Māori film has been the subject of considerable debate and pointed to the box office success of both *The Dark Horse* and *The Dead Lands*, directed by non-Māori and majority-funded by the state funder, the New Zealand Film Commission (NZFC), in asserting the need to continue to explore questions of representation and authenticity when ostensibly Māori films are directed by non-Māori. These words now seem out of date but, at the time I wrote them, it was hard to foresee the rate of change in the film industry itself and how that change might shift the ground for Māori filmmakers between 2014 and 2021.

My discussion in 2014 acknowledged that the very question of what constitutes a Māori film was dismissed by the original theorist in this area, Barry Barclay, as 'adolescent' (J. Smith & Mercier, 2012). Nevertheless, the continuing difficulty that Māori filmmakers, especially women, seemed to have when it came to securing funding to tell Māori stories, or indeed any stories, at that stage pointed to the need to continue to pursue the question. Ocean Mercier (2010) rightly calls the question Eurocentrally-assumptive. Jo Smith and Brendan Hokowhitu are scholars who also steer away from assuming inherent value in the question at all. Jo Smith (2012) reads Taika Waititi's earlier film *Boy* (2008) as showing the director's ability to marry the global with the local to disrupt "orthodox interpretative frameworks surrounding Indigenous cultural producers" (p. 67), and Hokowhitu (2012) nails the issue accurately in criticising

> *the current preoccupation of many Indigenous theorists with a schizophrenic envisioning of an authentic Indigenous self located in a precolonial past and, thus, divorced from the materiality of the present. That is, a craving for a 'classical' form of Indigenous culture that never universally existed, which permits the*

> *ontological blunder of divorcing what it means to be Indigenous from modernity and the present. (p. 110)*

As a nascent academic in 2014, I felt the need to address the question of what constituted a Māori film. As a screen producer, I had never seriously considered the issue. I shared the very practical view of producer Quinton Hita:

> *There's nothing that needs to be over-analysed … it's somebody who has a Māori sensibility and a Māori upbringing, Māori education and they bring that to the production … I don't think it's an intellectual exercise. What you do is … like you do in all these other Māori domains, you select the right people and then you give them the tools to do their job. (Hita, interview, 2018)*

I was strongly aware of the difficulty Māori filmmakers had securing funding to tell stories that spoke to ourselves as well as others about our lives, and it seemed to me that the broader the frame of reference that Māori filmmakers could work within, the better the chances of finding the money to make the films we wanted to make. Without being conscious of it, I agreed with Jo Smith's (2012) view that there is value in inviting the audience to "learn to listen anew to expressions of (and from) te ao Māori" (p. 67), as I could never understand why there should be a limit on the cinema stories that could be told from Aotearoa NZ by either Māori or Pākehā. What I was still somewhat blind to was the weight of convention in defining the expectations of the government bodies that funded most of the filmmaking in Aotearoa NZ so to be looking back from 2021, when I can see more clearly, but also when there has been change for the better, is an unanticipated privilege. That weight of convention has been suffocating for many Māori filmmakers for many years and for many reasons, and this chapter looks back in order to look forward, exploring the origins of Māori film production in Aotearoa NZ, from the invention of cinema through to the early 2000s. The next chapter, as earlier noted, picks up the story in the early 21st Century, which can be seen as a midpoint, a point of acceleration, propelled both by Māori filmmakers and by outside forces in the surrounding polity.

The exploration in these two chapters is driven by the first research question in this thesis: What constitutes the screen production context for this research? The work of the screen producer which is the fundamental subject of this thesis takes place within a highly specific, highly differentiated environment: a producer in Aotearoa NZ is working in a

very different environment from a producer in South Africa or India or Finland, and a producer working within the Māori film sector works in a different environment from those working in the non-Māori or mainstream sector within Aotearoa NZ. This examination of the context of Māori film production will illustrate the social, political and industrial circumstances in which Māori film makers operate; in other words, it will illuminate the nature of the domain of Māori film production. To frame this examination, I will first briefly address the theoretical underpinning of the concept of the domain.

2.2 The domain in the creative system

As discussed in Chapter 1, Csikszentmihalyi's systems model of creativity rests on the interlocking framework of the individual, the field and the domain. Csikszentmihalyi (1996) defines the domain as "a set of symbolic rules and procedures" (p. 27). It is the cultural component of the system, a subdivision of culture where enough similar characteristics can be defined to enable its discussion as a separate element in the cultural landscape. He draws an analogy between the way that genes carry biological information and the way memes or units of information carry cultural content. Creative people change these memes and "if enough of the right people see the change as an improvement, it will become part of the culture" (p. 7) and contribute to the development of the domain. Csikszentmihalyi (1996) frames his enquiry as exploring "the kind of creativity that leaves a trace in the cultural matrix" (p. 27) and this is a very useful way of viewing the context of this chapter, as it seeks to identify how Māori film production has emerged in the consciousness of the culture of Aotearoa NZ and what traces it is impressing in the screen production matrix nationally and beyond.

Different domains are suited differently to the recognition and dissemination of new ideas (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996, p. 31), and by extension, an encompassing culture within which a specific domain exists can affect to varying degrees the speed with which that domain develops, depending on how new ideas are helped or hindered. Additionally, creative output within a particular domain can be enabled or constrained by "the clarity of structure, the centrality within the culture and accessibility" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996, p. 38). 'Clarity of structure' points to the relevance of clear rules which can be communicated to novices and Csikszentmihalyi (1996) argues that domains such as physics and chemistry with a strong reliance on formal rules enable easier acceptance of new thinking (though as Fulton and Paton point out, this overlooks the degree of subjectivity in scientific domains) (p. 32). In theory at least, domains with clear rules

make it easier for novices to learn the operating requirements therein. 'Centrality within the culture' points to the attraction of the domain for talented people and also the likelihood of the domain drawing support and potential investment from, for example, commercial sources or government bodies. 'Accessibility' acknowledges that the more accessible a domain, the more chance that a novice will be able to inject their ideas into the arena and be noticed, with the potential to be successful within that arena and thereby influence the domain overall. All three of these questions are highly relevant in the discussion of the domain of Māori cinema production and an assessment of their relevance and applicability will be drawn out of the narrative below.

Eva Novrup Redvall (2013, 2016) researches Danish television drama and her development of Csikszentmihalyi's model is useful in this discussion in terms of the greater specificity which she brings to applying his systems model to the world of screen production. She draws on Havens and Lotz's (2012, 2017) 'Industrialization of Culture Framework' and, as noted in the literature review earlier, Havens and Lotz address the multiple levels of complexity – of landscape, of structure and of agency – that are in play in the making of any media product. They discuss the encompassing landscape in terms of the social tastes, trends and traditions of the surrounding culture, which then intersect with the specific mandate of a particular production organisation or entity and thus shape the practice of an individual, where and how that practice is conducted, and where and how the product of that practice is taken up by the eventual audience or consumer. Havens and Lotz position this framework as a set of analytical tools that enable the researcher to account for the highly differentiated and dynamic production of media across different countries and industry sectors. Redvall (2013) sees value in this approach because Havens and Lotz's work "lead(s) to discussions of the work of practitioners as different degrees of circumscribed agency" (p. 146). She then points to the sheer complexity of elements that have to be taken into account before one can begin to explore the work of, for instance, the screen producer who is but one element within the system. What is most valuable here for this discussion is the addition of Havens and Lotz's terminology of 'tastes, trends and traditions' to bring specific definition to Csikszentmihalyi's concept of the domain. The narrative below seeks to illuminate the tastes, trends and traditions that have accumulated to manifest the domain that is Māori cinema production in the present day.

Reference has been made in Chapter 1 to Csikszentmihalyi's description of his systems model as an ascending spiral given that it is essentially a process of variation, selection and transmission and the moment at which a variation emerges is relevant. If a variation appears too early, it goes unappreciated or even unrecognised. If it appears too late, it may be perceived as unoriginal. Thus, the social conditions of the culture can have a strong influence on what is seen as praiseworthy (and in the case of filmmaking, worth investing in) and this exploration of the domain of Māori cinema production begins with a brief overview of the political and social conditions pertaining through the period during which this domain has developed and matured.

2.3 The social and political context

On November 30, 2020, the news company *Stuff* issued a press release which gained attention worldwide. *Stuff* bills itself as Aotearoa NZ's largest news website and it owns key newspapers, *The Dominion Post* in Wellington, *The Press* in Christchurch and the *Sunday Star-Times* in Auckland. In the press release headed "Tā Mātou Pono, Our Truth", *Stuff* made an apology for its coverage of Māori dating back 163 years:

> *From the first editions to now, our monocultural lens means we haven't always fairly represented tangata whenua. We've been racist, contributing to stigma, marginalisation and stereotypes against Māori. Ke whakapāha mātou ki te Māori. We apologise to Māori. (Williams, 2020)*

This apology, and the company's subsequent articles detailing the racism they found in their archives from the 19th Century to the present day, was surprising and welcomed by Māori, not least because it threw down a gauntlet to other media organisations. Some Māori did not want to hear the apology, which *Stuff*'s lead journalist on the project Carmen Parahi found understandable given the level of historic pain caused by so many years of racist coverage (Hayden, 2020). For someone like myself, while it was a very unexpected apology, it was not hard to see it as an inevitable step forward in the evolution of media, reflecting the evolution of society, that has progressed slowly and unevenly during my lifetime, and this section presents an overview of the key elements of that progression in relation to the emergence of Māori filmmakers (and media-makers generally).

The story of post-World War 2 Māori is an urban story, unlike the eras preceding. From the 1940s what historian Michael King (2003) calls a "third migration" took place as,

first, young people, and then whole families, migrated from the countryside into the towns and cities to look for work.[20] This relocation changed the face of *te ao Māori*: in 1936 only 11.2% of the Māori population lived in urban areas; by 1996, the figure was over 81%. Historian Ranginui Walker (2004) cites factors beyond just work. These include the achievements of the Māori Battalion in Europe and North Africa during World War 2 and the recovery in population numbers (from a nadir of 42,000 in 1896), as well as a revival in culture driven by figures such as Te Puea Herangi and Āpirana Ngata in the pre-WW2 period which, Walker says, "gave the Māori confidence to abandon rural poverty in exchange for a place in the economy of the social mainstream" (p. 198). Walker and King, among others, detail the difficulties the adjustment to urbanisation caused, with the rise of associations like the Māori Women's Welfare League (MWWL), and the establishment of urban *marae* (meeting places) key in the 1950s and 60s to improving the lives of many urban Māori. Both National and Labour Governments through this time struggled to assist Māori because of their paternalistic attitudes and because of the ongoing expectation that Māori would be best served if they were to assimilate or, as it was expressed in the government's 1961 Hunn Report, "become like us" (Easton, 2020). A number of Māori organisations worked either with the government (the Māori Council) or within conventional Pākehā structures (the MWWL, the Māori Health League) but with the arrival of the 1970s, the anger of young Māori generated a period of activism which has sustained until well into the 21st Century and this activism was crucial in progressing the aspirations of Māori in the screen industry.

A key activist body that emerged at this time was Ngā Tamatoa (The Young Warriors), a group which included university students and unionists among others, and to which filmmakers like Barry Barclay and Larry Parr as well as actor Rawiri Paratene belonged. As Paratene states in a documentary retrospective on the group:

> *1971 – revolution was in the air. Civil rights, women's rights and anti-Vietnam War. Three out of four Māori now lived in the cities but were still at the bottom of the heap for housing, health and employment. The urban youth's response was Ngā Tamatoa*. (Ngā Tamatoa: 40 Years On*, 2012*)

20. King (2003) suggests the first migration from the Pacific ancestral homelands was followed by a second migration from the first point of arrival in Aotearoa NZ to the ultimate place of settlement.

The group led protests over successive years from 1971 at the annual Waitangi Day observances which commemorate the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. The Treaty is the nation's founding document, signed by the British Crown and Māori *rangatira* (chiefs) in 1840. It has been the subject of dispute ever since signing as, first, the British Government, and subsequently the New Zealand Government, have ignored the rights of Māori, resulting in the loss by Māori of all but a fraction of their tribal land through alienation, conquest and theft. Ngā Tamatoa's demonstrations were opposed by police and the military, confrontations which were covered repeatedly in newspapers and on television, with no explanation of the issues that were driving the protestors. Though they were therefore reviled by most Pākehā and also angered their own elders, Ngā Tamatoa and other similar groups made key political contributions which helped lay the foundations for subsequent social changes. These included the Māori Language Petition which Ngā Tamatoa, together with Victoria University's Reo Māori Society, submitted to Parliament in 1972. This petition can be seen as a direct precursor to the teaching in *te reo* (the Māori language) of pre-schoolers (in *kohanga reo* or language nests), school pupils (in *kura kaupapa* or schools) and university students (in *wānanga* or universities), though the language remains vulnerable. The petition was equally a precursor to the establishment of Māori-language radio and television (Harris, 2004), and the latter is discussed below as notably relevant in the development of the domain of Māori film production.

The conservative Māori Council made a submission to the Government in 1973 substantiating the reasons behind Ngā Tamatoa's protest action at Waitangi and spelling out the way various statutes contravened the Treaty of Waitangi (Walker, 2004). The response by Government to the Council's submission led to the establishment in 1975 of the Waitangi Tribunal to hear grievances and make recommendations to Parliament. The Tribunal was seen by Māori as having no substance, which resulted in further protest by a broad land rights movement. These protests included *Te Hikoi*, a march the length of the North Island to Parliament in 1975; the occupation of Takaparawhā/Bastion Point in 1977/78; and ongoing demonstrations at Waitangi led by the Waitangi Action Committee. Ultimately, in 1984, the Government made the powers of the Waitangi Tribunal retrospective, extending its authority to hear claims back to 1840 and opening a path for *iwi* (tribes) and *hapū* (sub-tribes) to seek redress for historical wrongs in a process which continues to this day (Easton, 2020; Walker, 2004). King (2003) calls the Tribunal's subsequent contributions to the reinvigoration of tribal activity "one of a series of

measures which so changed the face of New Zealand life in the 1980s and 1990s that their cumulative effect could legitimately be called a revolution" (p. 487).

As a result of a claim in 1985 known as the Māori Language Claim (WAI 11), the Waitangi Tribunal ruled that *te reo* is a *taonga* (treasure) and that the Crown was obliged to work to protect it under the requirements of the Treaty of Waitangi (Waitangi Tribunal, 1986), which led to the declaration of *te reo* as an official language of Aotearoa NZ. Additionally, from the 1970s onwards, the work of a variety of Māori artists was receiving increasing public attention in the areas of literature, poetry, music, sculpture, painting and carving (King, 2003). These developments proceeded in parallel with the growing aspirations of Māori in all areas of the media and, in 1989, the Crown's obligation to protect and promote *te reo* was extended to radio and television in the Broadcasting Act, leading ultimately to the establishment of the *iwi* radio station network throughout the country (from 1983), the media funding agency Te Māngai Pāho in 1993 and Māori Television in 2004.

In the years since these seminal events in Māori media, and in no small part because of them, the language and culture of Māori have become more visible to Pākehā and better understood by many. There is now a broader understanding of the diversity among Māori, though strongly racist attitudes still surface daily as shown in the continuing battle for Māori places in local government (Mitchell, 2020). Inequities and inequalities remain entrenched: the social statistics in terms of poverty, access to education and rates of incarceration for example still show an awful gap between Māori and non-Māori (Department of Corrections, 2020; Health Quality and Safety Commission, 2019; Infometrics, 2019). The continuing financial settlements and apologies from the Government for historical wrongs, which are guided by the Waitangi Tribunal, are enabling some *iwi* and *hapū* to improve their economic standing, and the so-called Māori economy is now regularly discussed in the business pages of major news outlets (for example, Hitchcock, 2019). It is easy to feel both as an academic and as a citizen that none of this is moving fast enough, but when I look back to my early adult life, the ground we have covered is considerable, as is indicated by the reports that there are more Pākehā adults wishing to learn *te reo* than can possibly be accommodated in all the classes currently available.

This very brief rehearsal of key elements of political and social change forms a background to the following detailed narration, which concentrates on factors which have contributed to the growth of the domain of Māori film production. Of necessity, it will not mention by name many who have contributed to this growth and for this I apologise; the drive in this discussion is to clarify and focus on the main elements of the narrative as I see it. It differs from and expands on other narratives of the development of filmmaking in Aotearoa NZ because it focuses specifically on Māori film production and because it tells the story through a production studies lens. It also seeks to illuminate the place of the producer as it progresses.

2.4 The early years: 1898-1960s

Addressing the question of origins, of how this domain emerged and where from, leads us inescapably to Barry Barclay (Ngāti Apa, 1944-2008) and Merata Mita (Ngāti Pikiao, Ngāi Te Rangi, 1942-2010). Barclay and Mita directed respectively *Ngāti* (1987) and *Mauri* (1988), the first two feature films to be directed by Māori. More importantly, they were both vocal in fighting for the rights of Māori to pursue cinema storytelling from the Māori worldview and they can be seen as key to the emergence of modern Māori filmmaking, as both have left a strong and continuing legacy (Murray, 2008; Peters, 2007; S. Turner, 2013).

The achievement of both filmmakers, and Mita particularly as a woman, in releasing their first features at this time was substantial. From the early days of cinema, Māori were romanticised on screen as the 'exotic', the 'native', the 'South Sea Islander'. The first films to be made in New Zealand date from 1898 were very short recordings of live events. The earliest surviving of these position Māori firmly as unusual and interesting sources of entertainment, for example the 3,000-strong assembly of Māori *iwi* performing for *The Visit of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall to Rotorua,* filmed by the Limelight Department of the Australian Salvation Army in 1901. Foreign fiction filmmakers taking early advantage of what New Zealand offered included Georges Melies' older brother Gaston, who made a number of one- and two-reelers: *How Chief Te Ponga Won His Bride*, 1913; *Hinemoa*, 1913; *Loved By A Maori Chieftess*, 1913. The story of Hinemoa, being an appealingly romantic story, was constantly recycled as a source in early New Zealand cinema, including the country's first feature-length film, George Tarr's *Hinemoa* (1914).

Other early features include Raymond Longford's *A Māori Maid's Love* (1915) and Gustav Pauli's *The Romance of Hine-moa*, (1926) (Babbington, 2007; M. Mita, 1996). Perhaps the most notorious of these early visitors was Alexander Markey, whom Merata Mita (1996) discusses as arriving "with already entrenched ideas about racial superiority, and what his audience's expectation of the romantic South Seas should be" (p. 42); Markey left a trail of offended Māori in his wake, and Mita references tribal sources as remembering him with bitterness into the late 20th Century, for his insensitivity and theft of *taonga* which had been used as props in his filmmaking. From George Tarr's *Hinemoa* through to Jane Campion's *The Piano* (1993) almost eighty years later, Māori have been endlessly positioned in relation to a national identity construed by Pākehā in which Pākehā are the 'normal' and Māori are the 'strange', objects for scrutiny, the 'noble savage' in need of the settler's guidance (Keown, 2008). For Māori women, the rare opportunity to appear on-screen often translated into the position of love-object in a cross-cultural romance (including such films as *The Betrayer*, directed by Beaumont Smith, 1921; *Broken Barrier*, directed by John O'Shea, 1952; and *To Love A Māori*, directed by Rudall and Ramai Hayward, 1972).

Thus the early encounters between Māori and the cinematic camera set the tone for much of the inclusion of Māori in both fiction and nonfiction filmmaking in Aotearoa NZ up to the early 1970s, as the camera remained firmly in the hands of non-Māori. However, it is indicative of the singularity of the filmmaking ecology in the country that both Rudall Hayward and John O'Shea, noted above as directors of films objectivising the 'Māori maiden', were nevertheless as producers among the earliest champions of Māori cinematic aspirations. Hayward's wife, Ramai te Miha (Ngāi Tahu, Ngāti Kahungunu), travelled and worked with him and is credited as his producing and directing partner from the 1950s to the early 1970s (Henry & Wikaire, 2013). Similarly, as a producer John O'Shea was instrumental in enabling Barry Barclay to make the television documentary series *Tangata Whenua* (1974) and his first feature film *Ngāti* (1987), both of them groundbreaking in their positioning of the filmmaker's point of view as unmistakeably Māori.

Hayward and O'Shea were both producers who needed success with the paying audience in order to survive commercially, and reaching that audience required the commitment of distributors and exhibitors, without whom their films would not see the light of day. In the years prior to the 1970s (and arguably into the 21st Century), distributors and

exhibitors in Aotearoa NZ were wedded to the belief that local films would not draw an audience. As Lindsay Shelton, marketing director for the NZFC from 1979 to 2001 notes: "They were smugly confident that New Zealanders wanted movies only from the mainstream American and British suppliers – the films which were so profitable for their businesses" (Shelton, 2005, p. 9). Thus, for a locally-made film to be taken up by these gatekeepers, appealing to the mainstream Pākehā audience was unavoidable. O'Shea in particular kept the notion of the local fiction feature film alive for a long period, as director and producer of the only three feature films made in Aotearoa NZ between 1940 and 1972 (*Broken Barrier*, 1952; *Runaway*, 1964; *Don't Let It Get You*, 1966).[21] He is now rightly remembered more for his producing than his directing, including his foundational contribution to the work of Māori filmmakers as the producer of Barry Barclay's early work.

2.5 The emergence of a philosophy of Indigenous filmmaking

Barry Barclay joined John O'Shea's company, Pacific Films, in 1969, cutting his teeth on commercials, trade films and television documentaries. He grew up in rural Wairarapa where, reflecting the contradictions of many Māori lives, he "noted that other than some members of the shearing gangs engaged in seasonal work, his mother was the only Māori he saw" (Murray, 2008, p. 36). It was as a young adult that he engaged strongly with his Māori heritage, when he joined Ngā Tamatoa, writing of being "shaken out of his smug view of the Māori situation" (Barclay, 1996, p. 123) by his membership of the group. This awakening flowered in his work when he directed the six-part television documentary series *Tangata Whenua*. It is difficult from this distance to comprehend the impact this series made when it was broadcast in 1974. At the time, television was a relatively new and therefore fascinating medium in Aotearoa NZ and everyone watched the same single national channel. In John Reid's (2018) words, the series "crept up on its audience, quietly lobbing an incendiary device into living rooms around the country" (p. 237). This comment reflects how little most Pākehā knew about or were even aware of the Indigenous Māori world. It reflects also the fact that most televisions in most living rooms were in middle-class Pākehā houses.

Tangata Whenua was an exploration of the customs and traditions of Māori. The series was conceived and cowritten by Barclay and Pākehā historian Michael King, and each of

21. It is notable that the films either side of O'Shea's lonely output were both Rudall and Ramai Hayward's: *Rewi's Last Stand*, 1940; *To Love a Māori*, 1972.

the six episodes is defined by the *iwi* and *rohe* (district) that frames the particular episode, as the series addresses individual aspects of *te ao Māori* such as *mana* (spiritual authority), *rangatiratanga* (chiefly authority) and *tūrangawaewae* (homeland). Stuart Murray (2008) comments:

> *In place of the ethnographic gaze common to many images of Māori produced in the twentieth century, the details that emerge out of the conversations in Tangata Whenua highlight innumerable intricacies of lived experience, the sense of which can only be fully understood by listening to the logic through which they are produced … In this sense, Tangata Whenua presents what many viewers (especially non-Māori) would understand as 'traditional' culture [but the] society presented here is anything but static. Rather it is caught in the flux of the contemporary, where the competing demands of tradition and change present unique and specific examples of the tensions inherent within the community at a particular time. (pp. 35-36)*

The series was a critical success at a time when, as Rewiti (2006) notes, "the general attitude was that [television programmes about Māori] were of high nuisance value and minimal importance" (p. 182) and its achievement helped lay the groundwork for the later emergence of Māori as filmmakers and broadcasters. Barclay brought to the making of the series a belief in the importance of respect for the communities being filmed and a foundational commitment to the concept of reciprocity, that is, the importance of giving in order to receive. He believed in prioritising the security and wellbeing of the subject on camera over that of the filmmakers: this led him to keep the crew as far from the subjects as possible, using long lenses and positioning the sound and lighting equipment strategically out of the subject's eyelines, so that the "crew is invisible and people are left to chat" (Barclay, 1990, p. 16). This is both very simple and very sophisticated, and his attitude that the camera should "act with dignity" in the Indigenous world (p. 9) was revelatory at a time when very few Indigenous filmmakers were in action.[22] It was producer John O'Shea who brought Barclay and King together, secured the budget to make the series, and then fought to ensure that the series was broadcast without editorial interference from the broadcaster (Reid, 2018, pp. 218-238). His sensibility as a producer (and extraordinary aptness to be working on a Māori *kaupapa* or initiative) is indicated by Barclay's own comments:

22. Wood (2008) records one Native American feature film *House Made of Dawn* in 1972 and another *Itam Hakim, Hopiit* in 1985, with the Sámi film *Ofelas (Pathfinder)* appearing in 1987, the same year as *Ngāti.* Ginsberg (2016) records Indigenous broadcast media first emerging in Canada in the late 1970s and Australia in the 1980s.

> *"Taking pictures!" – John O'Shea loathes that phrase. I recall him explaining why back in the early 70s, when we were both involved in making the Tangata Whenua series. He sticks firmly to the same line to this day: "We do not take pictures. People give us pictures." (Barclay, 1990, pp. 83-84)*

Barclay travelled internationally for some years after completing *Tangata Whenua*, a period during which he completed the feature-length documentary *The Neglected Miracle* (1985), a film which, as I have commented elsewhere (Milligan, 2021a), was ahead of its time in its exploration of how seeds harvested from Indigenous crops in South America, Australia and elsewhere are genetically modified by Western companies. As these new strains are patented, Indigenous farmers find themselves having to pay for what was originally theirs. Angela Moewaka Barnes (2011) notes of the film: "Barclay's articulation of genetic exploitation was visionary and expressed Indigenous and Māori struggles before the full significance was realised" (p. 193).

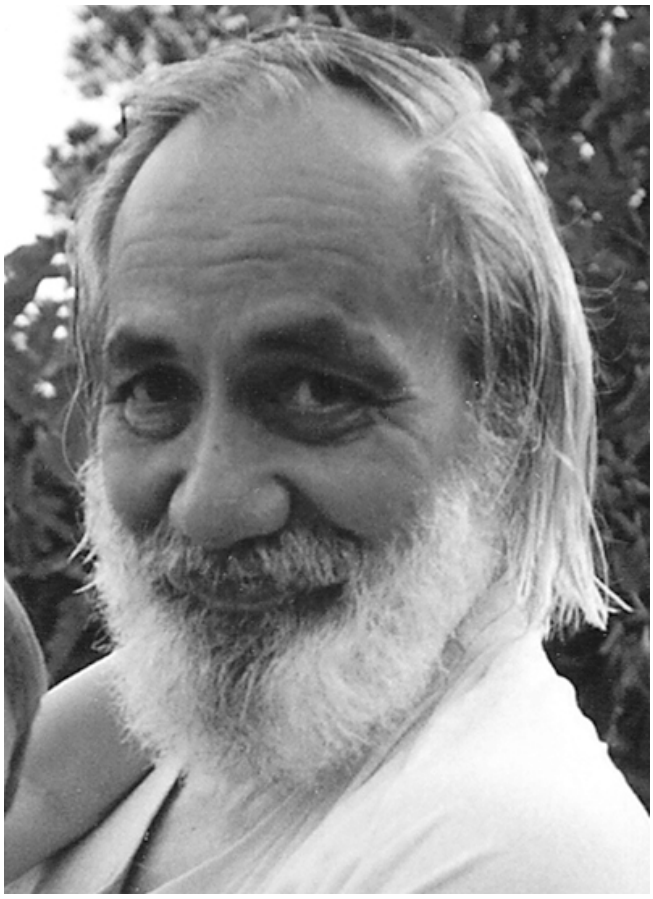

Figure 2: Barry Barclay (Conbrio Media)

O'Shea described the resulting film which was over two hours long as "much too inaccessible and wandery for the television audience" for which it was originally

targeted[23] (Reid, 2018, p. 352). This is reflective of criticism which was to follow Barclay throughout his career, with the exception of his first dramatic feature *Ngāti,* which was released in 1987 to considerable acclaim including an invitation to compete in Critics Week at that year's Cannes Film Festival.

Ngāti is often cited as the first dramatic feature from an Indigenous filmmaker, which overlooks Ramai Hayward, who co-directed *To Love a Māori* with her husband Rudall in 1972. Certainly, *Ngāti* was the first Indigenous film to be invited to a major festival such as Cannes, with the other Indigenous feature from the same year, *Ofelas (Pathfinder)*, from Sámi filmmaker Nils Gaup, being released six months after Barclay's work. *Ngāti* was written by Tama Poata and tells the story of the tiny remote Ngāti Porou community he grew up in. It is set in 1948 and presents a warm, inviting world, explored through the eyes of a young man returning from abroad and discovering his Māori heritage. There is a strong political story running through the film as the locals fight to keep their freezing works (abattoir), the source of most jobs, open, and the underlying theme of the film is the self-determination of the Māori community at its centre. However, the combination of the historical setting and the way in which the community handles confrontation with humour and logic rather than any form of violence made the film attractive for a Western audience, even in the more racist era of the 1980s in Aotearoa NZ. The world of *Ngāti* is seen through a Māori lens, with the critical importance of community underlying every element, and Murray (2008) notes that, given the time it was being made, this centralising of community as the wellspring for all can be read as a strong statement of protest. The country was undergoing wrenching political upheaval as a result of the neo-liberal reforms introduced by the Labour Government from 1984 onwards and Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2006) points out:

> *In the neo-liberal conceptualisation of the individual, Māori people in the 1980s presented a potential risk to the legitimacy of the new vision because Māori aspirations were deeply located in history, in cultural differences and in the value of the collectivity. (p. 249)*

The shoot and editing period of *Ngāti* was difficult from the producer's perspective, as Barclay clashed with what he viewed as intrusive Pākehā production requirements (Reid, 2018, pp. 357-372), but the end result was engaging and accessible to a wide audience.

23. I viewed this film on its cinema release at the 1985 NZ International Film Festival in Auckland and found it very difficult for the same reasons that O'Shea notes.

It was positively received when it was released locally and internationally (Dunleavy & Joyce, 2011) and was particularly important for a coming generation of Māori filmmakers. For many it was their first experience of seeing themselves on screen. Interviewed for a documentary on the rise of Māori filmmaking, *Hautoa Mā!,* writer/director Briar Grace-Smith commented:

> *It was pretty much the first time I had seen on the big screen just Māori faces and they were talking to a very Māori story. It was a non-commercial story so it was different from films I'd seen before like Star Wars or all of those big kinds of films … It addressed who we were as a people, our tikanga and our spirituality. So that moved me and at the time I probably didn't know why it moved me so much. (*Hautoa Mā!*, 2016)*

Her words are echoed by Tainui Stephens:

> *When I saw* Ngāti*, what moved me most was the tangi scene, because I felt a truth there that I'd not seen on screen. Full stop. There was a sense of timing. There were emotional truths. There was sadness as much as happiness … and it just felt like the tangi I'd been to. And that blew me away … The Maoriness and the spirit of it was very, very important to me. (Stephens, interview, 2018)*

Ngāti has entered the canon of films from Aotearoa NZ and it remains Barclay's best-known work. His subsequent trajectory as a filmmaker is the story of an increasingly activist and committed campaigner for the rights of the Indigenous filmmaker and the Indigenous audience. In this, he joined his fellow pioneer Merata Mita, who followed Ramai Hayward as only the second Indigenous woman to direct a dramatic feature, when she made *Mauri* in 1988. They remained the only two Māori women to direct dramatic features for nearly thirty years, a lacuna finally broken in 2017 by the release of the portmanteau film *Waru* directed by a collective of eight Māori women.

Merata Mita came to prominence as the maker of two trenchant documentaries, *Bastion Point Day 507* (1980) and *Patu!* (1983). She had already completed a considerable body of nonfiction work for television but these two films stand out for their uncompromising and courageous approach to covering two seminal events in late 20th Century Aotearoa NZ: the 1978 occupation of Takaparawhā/Bastion Point and the 1981 tour by the South African rugby team, the Springboks.

Figure 3: Merata Mita (University of Hawai'i at Mānoa)

The occupation of Takaparawhā resulted from the government's decision to sell off land which had been wrongfully alienated by the Crown from the people of Ngāti Whātua in central Auckland. Led by Joe Hawke, a group from Ngāti Whātua moved onto the land and occupied it for a period of 17 months before the police and military were sent in to evict them (Harris, 2004; Walker, 2004). Together with Gerd Pohlmann and Leon Narbey, Mita filmed the day the protesters were evicted, capturing images of a community fighting for their land against government forces. Viewed from the vantage-point of forty years later, the images remain shocking and relay the intensity of fear and determination of the people driven to protect their land. With the same collaborators, Mita followed this work with the feature-length documentary *Patu!,* again capturing confrontation, this time of Māori and Pākehā together protesting against the government's refusal to ban the Springboks from touring New Zealand. As she discusses, both these films were generated by the same impulse that marked all her work:

> *It was my intention to reflect a Māori point of view of our changing society. To see it as a Māori sees it, to write visually as a Māori would write it … It's exactly the same technique that*

> *speakers on the marae use – they take you from one point of origin to the other. From the modern to the ancient and the ancient to the modern – that's their job, their function – to translate space and time, to perceive them in different ways to what Pākehā are used to – [conveying] a sense of history, spirituality and the vast distance that you take your audience through. (Peters, 2007, p. 107)*

While she worked closely with Pohlmann and Narbey on both these documentaries, the films are recognised as principally Mita's work, and she continued the task of producing as well as writing and directing on her one dramatic feature, *Mauri* (1988). Like Barclay's *Ngāti*, the film is set in the small-town post-World War 2, a time of severe dislocation in the rural Māori world as employment opportunities drew many young people into the cities away from their *tūrangawaewae* (home territory). Mita herself acknowledges that the film is not necessarily strong technically, but it stands with *Ngāti* as a statement of Māori identity, limning the deep connection between *te tangata* (the person), *te whenua* (the land) and *te wairua* (the spirit), at the same time as it addresses the difficulty for Māori of confronting Pākehā individuals and structures: she writes of the film as "really a parable about the schizophrenic existence of so many Māori in Pākehā society" (M. Mita, 1996, p. 49). Mita eventually resolved some of the difficulty of being a Māori filmmaker in a Pākehā world by taking her filmmaking skills offshore, and her great standing as a teacher and mentor within the international Indigenous filmmaking community was acknowledged after her death by the Sundance Institute in the US, which established an annual fellowship in her honour.

Mita and Barclay were both groundbreakers because they had the courage to insist on following their Indigenous hearts at a time when support for Indigenous filmmakers in Aotearoa NZ, and indeed worldwide, was next to non-existent. Both wrote eloquently about the difficulties they encountered as Māori filmmakers, due to the very Pākehā-centric world of film funding and distribution in which they operated. Merata Mita's (1996) paper "The Soul and the Image" echoed the complications that Barclay explored in his book *Our Own Image* (1990), in which he analysed the limitations of conventional First World filmmaking processes when applied to the making of films set in the Māori community telling Māori stories. Mita dissected the bureaucracy and inflexibility of the Pākehā funding, production and archival institutions then extant, and her perceptive commentary, like Barclay's writings, reflects some of the pain and struggle they both endured.

Barclay's philosophical approach to solving the problems that beset him led to his developing a theory of Indigenous film production which he called Fourth Cinema. This appellation makes the point that Indigenous cinema, while it is built on acquired aesthetic and industrial foundations, is nevertheless sui generis. As Barclay (2003c) puts it, pointing to the departure of this cinema from its antecedents:

> *I am not in First Cinema. The cinema of America. The cinema of the international mass market. I am not in Second Cinema either; in the art house cinema for the cinema buffs of the modern nation state … And I know that I am not in Third Cinema also. I am not living in a Third World nation state.*

He opens *Our Own Image* with a question: "How can we take that maverick yet fond friend of ours – the camera – into the Māori community and be confident it will act with dignity?" (Barclay, 1990, p.9) and this notion of 'dignity' is a touchstone for any discussion of Indigenous media production, implying as it does that such work is animated by concepts originating from within the Indigenous community. I have discussed this from a production studies perspective in my case study of the film *Mt Zion* (Milligan, 2015), which focuses on how the production process, as well as the story of that film, can be seen to address Barclay's suggestions of what Fourth Cinema might look like in practice, that is, a cinema "conceived and manufactured within Indigenous frameworks" (Barclay, 2003b, p. 11). In my discussion of the film's making, I examined how the Māori concepts of *whanaungatanga* (kinship), *manaakitanga* (hospitality) and *mana* among others are demonstrated in the production and in the storytelling. I contrasted two readings which could be applied to the film – the Hollywood concept of the 'hero's journey' and the Indigenous concept of 'the story of community' – showing why the latter was the appropriate interpretation. As I went on to state then:

> *[Barclay's] illuminating metaphor of the camera on the ship (that of the arriving colonizer) and the camera on the shore (that of the Indigenous people) crystallizes his perception of the gulf between the cinemas of the modern nation state and that of Indigenous people. Key to this is Barclay's belief that Indigenous cinema, the cinema of First Nations, differs fundamentally from what has gone before. This is the heart of his argument: the Indigenous camera will see differently, frame differently, provide a different context and serve a different philosophy. (Milligan, 2015, p. 349)*

As this thesis will illustrate, there are as many interpretations of this philosophy as there are Indigenous films, but in Aotearoa NZ it is only very recently that a broad enough variety of Māori working across all media has emerged in sufficient numbers to throw some light onto the depth and range of screen stories that Māori wish to tell. In the late 1980s, the number of Māori working within the screen industry was just starting to expand, through the sustained efforts of a group determined to fight for the right to self-representation.

2.6 Putting the philosophy into practice: Towards the 1990s

Barclay's early work was enabled and supported, as noted, by Pākehā producer John O'Shea. Mita produced or co-produced her own work but another early Māori pioneer, Don Selwyn, is credited on her feature *Mauri* as Production Supervisor. Selwyn (Ngāti Kuri, Te Aupouri, 1935-2007) moved into screenwork from an early career in theatre.[24] His career has been less researched than those of Barclay and Mita, but Angela Moewaka Barnes (2011) has provided a valuable record of his background in establishing the New Zealand Māori Theatre Trust, then moving into television and film as an actor and a casting director, before he established himself as a director and producer. It was in this latter role that Selwyn provided early momentum to the development of young Māori as film-crew members through a training course he established with others in 1984 which became the forerunner of his company He Taonga Films (co-created with producer Ruth Kaupua). This effort mirrors similar work done by Barclay in 1985 as part of the early preparation for filming *Ngāti,* when he established a course run on Māori principles to train a group of people, predominantly Māori, in a variety of film-crew roles. Barclay took this path as he foresaw the need to ensure the crew working on *Ngāti* understood how to work within a Māori environment (Barclay, 1996; Murray, 2008). His drive in this also grew out of the group he helped establish in Wellington in the mid-1980s, Te Manu Aute, a group that subsequently included writer Tama Poata and actor Wi Kuki Kaa, both of them central to the making of *Ngāti,* as well as Merata Mita and Don Selwyn, along with several others whose contribution to raising the voice of Māori in the screen sector during this period was invaluable. Te Manu Aute's constitution began:

> *Every culture has a right and a responsibility to present its own culture to its own people. That responsibility is so fundamental*

24. My own path crossed with Don Selwyn's over a number of years. I performed with him as an actor in the 1976 Downstage Theatre production of *Othello*, script edited a television series he starred in (*Mortimer's Patch*, 1984) and produced another series he starred in (*Marlin Bay,* 1994). I also worked as a script editor on the television drama series *Ngā Puna* which he produced in 1994.

> *that it cannot be left in the hands of outsiders, nor be usurped by them. (Barclay, 1996, p. 127)*

This constitution prefigured the Declaration of Indigenous Cinema which spelt out the principles of Indigenous filmmaking as interpreted by an international group of Indigenous filmmakers in 2011 (Appendix B).

Te Manu Aute lobbied the NZFC, which at that time had a chairman and CEO who were both amenable to their ideas (Henry & Wikaire, 2013). Ultimately, they succeeded in securing $1 million from the NZFC and Television New Zealand to produce an anthology drama series for television. The aim was partly to further develop the skill-base of Māori in screenwork, but more to be free to make a series over which the Māori filmmakers held sovereignty (Barclay, 1996, p. 127; *Don Selwyn: Power in our hands*, 2017). The result was *E Tipu e Rea* (1989), a title which reflected the intention of its makers, translating as 'Grow up tender young shoot'. The series was produced by Larry Parr (Ngāti Raukawa, Muaūopoko), who had been developing his craft in the world of Pākehā filmmaking in parallel to the emergence of Barclay, Mita and Selwyn. Parr was associate producer of what is regarded as the key film in launching the modern era of filmmaking in Aotearoa NZ, Roger Donaldson's *Sleeping Dogs* (1977), and went on to associate produce Donaldson's *Smash Palace* (1981) and Nagisa Ōshima's *Merry Christmas Mr Lawrence* (1983). He then produced a number of well-regarded films through the 1980s before adding writing and directing to his skillset with *A Soldier's Tale,* the story of an American soldier in World War 2, filmed in France and released in 1989.

Parr was aware that he was the only Māori producing dramatic features in the decade from 1977 through to 1988 and that his decision to work on mainstream rather than Māori films irked some:

> *It's interesting … I used to get a bit of stick from Barry and Merata because I didn't … they didn't feel I was strong enough to the kaupapa. You know what I mean? … People didn't understand, you know? … I used to always say to people, well, my Māoriness – okay, it may be an invisible cloak to some of you but it's there. (Parr, interview, 2018)*

Figure 4: Larry Parr (NZ On Screen, CC BY-NC 3.0 NZ)

Parr is proud of the anthology series *E Tipu e Rea*:

> *I worked really hard to make sure that I got people in the right spots. ... In every case I got somebody who came in and wanted (that particular) job ... And that's why I think there was such a success rate with the people who stayed in the industry. (Parr, interview, 2018)*

Parr's words are borne out by a review of the cast and crew whose careers were launched or accelerated by the series. The roll call includes writer/director Riwia Brown and director Lee Tamahori, both of whom went on to create *Once Were Warriors* (1994), as well as actors Temuera Morrison, Rena Owen and Taungaroa Emile, cinematographer Fred Renata, and actor/writer/director Rawiri Paratene, who was subsequently the lead actor in *Whale Rider* (2003) (Rakuraku, 2017). The series broke ground despite the late-night time-slot it was given by state broadcaster Television New Zealand:

> *We did the first simulcast with Patricia Grace's story that Rawiri directed (called)* The dream, Te moemoeā. *We decided that we were going to shoot it in te reo. ... We didn't do a double version (shooting a version each in Māori and English). We dubbed it in*

> *English and we played that out on Radio New Zealand as a simulcast. (Parr, interview, 2018)*

Looking back years later, writer Patricia Grace spoke of the time the series was shot: "If you look at advertisements on television and none of the people are of your culture, or appearance, or language, or background, then you don't see yourself at all" (Rakuraku, 2017). In such a culture, the achievement of this series and of the features which Barclay and Mita shot around the same period can be seen as considerable. As Barnes (2011) notes, one Māori woman working in Television New Zealand at this time recalled "Māori staff were reluctant to identify themselves as Maori given the 'cultural myopia' in the organisation" (p. 102), and the late-night time-slot given to *E Tipu e Rea* is indicative of a fight that would continue for years to come to get broadcasters and funders to acknowledge, let alone appreciate, what Māori screen creatives had to offer.

As the 1990s arrived, Mita and Barclay both released features which did not achieve the high profile that subsequent films made by Māori have, but which in retrospect can be read as important milestones in the emergence of the Māori voice on the big screen. Mita completed the restoration of the feature documentary *Mana Waka* (1990), a film commissioned by Tainui leader Te Puea Herangi and shot by a Pākehā cameraman, recording the construction of three *waka taua* (war canoes) during the late 1930s. Te Puea was well ahead of her time in seeing the value of film as a means to record such an event. The film was shot but never completed and fifty years later, the New Zealand Film Archive restored the original nitrate negative and invited Mita to assess how to make the material available to both Māori and viewers in Aotearoa NZ generally. She worked with editor Annie Collins to complete the film (Mita, 1996) and Peters (2007) quotes Mita on watching the elders of Tainui viewing the finished film and seeing their ancestors on screen:

> *The images of those people, and the images of the building of the canoes were very tangible to them. It was a very deeply spiritual and emotional feeling on a level that people don't normally associate with film. (p. 115)*

Barnes (2011) points to this film as an example of the concept of 'interiority', referring to the spiritual elements that animate the film at its deepest level. This concept was central to Barry Barclay's notion of Fourth Cinema. Developing the idea, Barclay theorised how a lack of knowledge of cultures beyond one's own inhibits the ability to accurately

understand stories from another culture. He was here considering the position of the Indigenous filmmaker, the 'camera on the shore', and emphasised the centrality of *te ao Māori* in the context of Māori filmmaking. As I discussed in my paper analysing *Mt Zion*, Barclay drew on an analysis from the art world:

> *Barclay points to the importance of 'interiority' (2003a: 7), referencing an article by Rangihiroa Pānoho. In this article titled 'Kei Hea Te Ngakau Māori? Locating the heart' (2003), Pānoho draws a contrast in present-day Māori art between that which focuses on 'exteriority' or surface, and the more fundamental importance of 'interiority' or heart. His exploration of the work of artist Shona Rapira-Davies can be read as a parallel discussion of Barclay's principles of Fourth Cinema, exploring as it does the artist's work as a site of struggle, where a purely surface reading reveals none of the hidden heart. ... Extrapolating from this how Indigenous cinema is freighted differently from First Cinema, [Barclay] noted that the phrase te ao Māori evokes 'a whole cosmology, a world of physical and spiritual things, a world of spirits and gods' (Milligan, 2015, p. 349)*

This centralising of the principles and practices of *te ao Māori* was fundamental to the creative thinking of both Barclay and Mita and is important in understanding their films and their careers. In Barclay's case, it was to lead to his progressive estrangement from John O'Shea after the failure of his second dramatic feature *Te Rua* (1991) to appeal to audiences either at home or in Europe. A German-New Zealand co-production, *Te Rua* explores the issue of the control of Indigenous culture, and Barclay saw it as a film made by Māori for Māori. It is a confusing film, and Reid's (2018) discussion of the breakdown in the relationship between Barclay and his producer makes for sad reading, growing out of their inability to reconcile what Barclay saw as O'Shea's unwillingness to support his aspirations to tell a strongly political story, and what O'Shea eventually concluded was Barclay's inability to communicate on set and therefore capture the necessary performances and scene coverage to tell the story successfully. The intentions of the film were not lost on some reviewers, however. Costa Botes (1991) wrote: "This picture actually marks quite a stylistic breakthrough for New Zealand film in that Barclay has managed to appropriate the technical apparatus of cinema into the Māori oral storytelling tradition," and he concluded "It is an important film, another vital step in the evolution of a unique Indigenous cinema". Against this, the judgment of Stuart Murray (2008) is nevertheless difficult to refute: "there is no doubt that some of the feeling of the disjointed narrative produced by *Te Rua* is due to Barclay's refusal to engage with the orthodoxies

of narrative film-making" (p. 76). *Te Rua* was to be Barclay's last dramatic feature.[25] It was a clear pointer to his future path, as a writer and as a documentary-maker, as he progressed deeper into philosophical and political considerations of issues of cultural sovereignty.

In developing his theory of Fourth Cinema, Barclay (2003b) commented:

> *It seems likely to me that some Indigenous artists will be interested in shaping films that sit with confidence within the First Second and Third cinema framework. While not closing the door on that option, others may seek to rework the ancient core values to shape a growing Indigenous cinema outside the national orthodoxy. (p. 11)*

Both he and Mita worked outside the national orthodoxy, but as the millennium was arriving, two films were made which can be seen as pivotal to the emergence of Māori films into international prominence, *Once Were Warriors* and *Whale Rider,* both of which were commercially successful precisely because they took an orthodox approach to reaching their audiences, domestically and internationally.

2.7 Māori storytelling goes mainstream

The popularity of *Once Were Warriors* (1994) and *Whale Rider* (2002) has ensured that they have become basic reference points in the public sphere in Aotearoa NZ and internationally when talking about Māori film. One was written and directed by Māori and the other by Pākehā, and both had Pākehā producers. *Once Were Warriors* tells the story of Beth Heke, a battered wife struggling to keep her family together in the face of the violent disfunction of her husband, Jake. Though the spotlight in the film is often drawn by Jake, Beth is its beating heart and she progresses from a state of great desperation to finally finding the courage, through the suicide of her daughter, to leave Jake, taking her family home to her *tūrangawaewae*, an act of reclaiming her heritage which represents renewal for her and not coincidentally offers an upbeat ending, unlike the book on which the film is based. *Whale Rider,* based on the book by Witi Ihimaera, follows the struggle of a young girl, Pai, who believes she is born to lead her tribe but faces the implacable opposition of her grandfather Koro, because no woman can inherit the mantle of leadership. Pai's journey through the film is one of learning the protocols and skills that she needs without her grandfather's knowledge or blessing. At the climax

25. His later film *The Feathers of Peace* (2000) is a dramatised documentary, though some texts refer to it as a drama.

of the film, she reveals the depth of her *wairua* when a pod of southern right whales beaches near their home, and Pai is able to rescue them by climbing on the back of the largest whale and coaxing it back into the ocean. The whale dives deep with Pai on its back. Eventually she surfaces and is found and taken to hospital, where her grandfather comes to visit her and ask forgiveness, before declaring her to be the tribe's new leader.

In terms of their storytelling approach, it can be argued both follow the conventional Hollywood structure of the hero's journey, albeit being somewhat ahead of most Hollywood films of their time in that the heroes in both films are female. The concept of the (male) hero's journey originated in Joseph Campbell's writings on mythology, particularly in *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* (1968) and became the conventional tool for Hollywood script structure and analysis in the late 20th century. In essence, the hero receives a call to adventure at the beginning of the story, and pursues his destiny through a series of ever-increasing obstacles, both externally and internally generated, which force him to reach deeper and deeper into his reserves of courage. At the climax of the film, he confronts his greatest trial, which he overcomes, and through the accomplishment of which he is left a wiser/stronger/more self-aware human being, ready to move on (Dancyger, 2001; Vogler, 2007). Arguments for and against the hero's journey as a structural tool in narrative film have raged inside and beyond Hollywood since the emergence of Robert McKee,[26] Christopher Vogler and others who have travelled the world (and now the internet) teaching its principles to neophyte screenwriters. It can be a useful tool for analysis after a script is drafted, depending on the generating culture and the intended audience, but I share the view of many that it can strongly inhibit the screenwriter's creative process if used as a set of structural rules, and as my paper on *Mt Zion* (Milligan, 2015) argues, mapping it onto a film from a non-Hollywood culture runs the danger of completely misreading the film.

My argument here, however, is that the story structure of both *Once Were Warriors* and *Whale Rider* follows this very orthodox approach and together with excellent writing, direction, performances and producing, this is a key element in the remarkable success of both these films. This is firstly because funders and investors recognise a conventional screenplay when they read it and are therefore more likely to consider investing, so the

26. McKee was brought to Aotearoa NZ by the NZFC in 1988 to conduct three-day seminars on his principles of screenwriting. As a neophyte producer, I drank it in. John O'Shea, older and wiser, ignored the invitation, with a note to one of his associates, saying simply: "Shall I say we're busy?" (Reid, 2018, p. 378).

orthodox approach improves the film's chances of being made. Secondly, up until the very recent disruption caused by streamers, Western countries were the main territories for producers from Aotearoa NZ wishing to turn a profit. Most audiences in these countries were weaned on Hollywood films, so they recognise the story's intentions as the film progresses, even if they have never heard of the hero's journey, and this element of subtle familiarity creates a receptive attitude that works to the film's advantage. This pertained as much in Aotearoa NZ as internationally: the marketing manager for the NZFC, Lindsay Shelton, noted in his memoir that "Gordon Mirams, the much-admired film critic of the *New Zealand Listener*, wrote that if there were such a thing as 'New Zealand culture', it was to the large extent the creation of Hollywood" (Shelton, 2005, p. 3). This was the milieu in which New Zealand producers at this time were operating but the Pākehā producers of both *Once Were Warriors* and *Whale Rider* were alive to the potential for Māori stories to thrive commercially if they were developed with this understanding in mind.

In a retrospective interview with James Coleman, producer Robin Scholes describes her drive to develop Alan Duff's book *Once Were Warriors* into a film as a response to a challenge from Don Selwyn:

> *So I was sitting with Don Selwyn – because at the time we were on the Board of the New Zealand Film Commission – and I said to Don "It's hard sometimes in this industry being a woman." And he did one of his Māori challenges. He poked his finger at me and he said "You do not know what it is like to be a Māori in this industry – to be a Māori in this industry! If you tried to make a Māori film, you would know how hard it was." I went (to myself) 'Right. I think you're right. And I will take that challenge' ... That was the big motivation. (Coleman, 2010)*

Scholes explains that it was difficult to persuade the NZFC to back the film because, at that point, Māori films had not been particularly successful commercially and also because "it was politically incorrect to show Māori in a bad light" (Coleman, 2010). She overcame this, in a display of very canny producing, by persuading a leading Māori policeman who had experience of "the Once Were Warriors way of life" to accompany her to pitch the film to the NZFC Board:

> *I'll never forget this moment. He stands up and ... he challenges the Film Commission. He says "We will never advance as a*

> *nation if you do not make this film. We must stop ignoring what is happening. We must stop sweeping this under the carpet. To move on we must make this film." And I always credit him as being the person who overcame quite understandable resistance that people had to making the film - because at that Board meeting, we actually got funded. (Coleman, 2010)*

Once Were Warriors was the first Māori film to be screened in multiplex cinemas reflecting the determination of the producer and of the director, Lee Tamahori, to break through the prevailing assumption that local audiences were not interested in seeing local films, as Scholes notes:

> *No-one expected it to succeed to the extent that it did. I mean the problems people had with it – firstly it was Māori. The cops were the only white people in it, deliberately. And up until that point in time, no Māori film had succeeded in getting a big audience. There were very credible Māori films made but they had all failed at the box office. And so at the premiere, to one side, I find people – other distributors – making bets as to how little it would do in the box office. So that was the atmosphere it was kind of born into. (Coleman, 2010)*

The film premiered in the market at Cannes in 1994 and became a runaway hit, selling to over one hundred countries and playing in cinemas in Aotearoa NZ for over twelve months (Shelton, 2005, pp. 139-145). It remained at the top of the local box office chart for eleven years, and is still fourth on that chart in 2021 (Appendix C). Lee Tamahori's remarkably assured direction catapulted him into a Hollywood career from which he returned to filmmaking in Aotearoa NZ twenty years later, picking up where he left off with producer Robin Scholes for his two subsequent local films, *Mahana* (2016) and *The Convert* (in production 2022).

Once Were Warriors is a very difficult film to watch because the violence is so confronting and it deeply offended some Māori. Poet Apirana Taylor claimed "To demoralise, to undermine Māori confidence … is the primary objective of *Once Were Warriors* – both book and film" (Babbington, 2007, p. 237). The story was gentrified on its journey from the page to the screen: for instance, in the book Grace's rapist appears to be her father, but in the film it is clearly one of her father's friends. Equally, by making Beth the protagonist rather than Jake, the film effectively places a more sympathetic character in its centre, which helps the audience digest the severe violence. Additionally,

the film is designed and shot with a commercially stylised approach, reflecting Tamahori's background as a leading director of commercials. Finally, by removing almost all the white characters, the film loses the book's comparison of Māori failure with white success and the implications of the effects of colonialism (Babbington, 2007; Dunleavy & Joyce, 2011). Tamahori thought his film would only appeal to middle-class whites and that Māori would avoid the film (Wilson, 2013) but as Jani Wilson's thesis shows, Māori audiences are partial to it, primarily because "they are relieved to finally see characters that look, gesture and sound like themselves" and she particularly notes the importance of the film's "aural authenticity" (p. 209).

The film's popularity with a broad audience, domestically and internationally, was repeated when *Whale Rider*, another mainstream film telling a Māori story, was released in 2002. Producer John Barnett secured the rights to Witi Ihimaera's book *The Whale Rider* in 1987 but in the time before *Once Were Warriors'* success it proved very difficult to bring together the finance required to make it, as he discussed in an interview with Clare O'Leary:

> *For a long time people said to me, no-one will go and see a Māori film. And I said it's not a Māori film. It's a universal story, it's an absolutely universal story, and wherever you went in the world people understood the story. (O'Leary, 2009a)*

Barnett tried a number of approaches in developing the film before he asked director Niki Caro to consider it. Her script positioned Pai, the young girl, as protagonist, rather than Pai's uncle Rawiri as in the book, a decision which transformed the story and updated its appeal, making it what Dunleavy and Joyce (2011) call "a post-feminist tale with a girl-child heroine at the centre" (p. 235). Caro explained to interviewer Michael O'Sullivan her concerns about contributing to Pākehā appropriation of Māori culture:

> *When I made Whale Rider – of course, I'm not Māori and have no business, as a white girl, telling people how to be in this movie – I started by learning the language, as best I could. I spent lots of time in the community. I realized that by being on the ground, eating the food … I could experience the truth and beauty of a culture. It's not about me. I am absolutely in service of the truth of the story. (O'Sullivan, 2017, para. 16)*

Not all film directors see themselves as 'in service to the story'. It is a very difficult, demanding job and generally requires a very healthy ego married to a strong creative drive to succeed. Caro spoke further of her own severe doubts about her right to be at the helm of the film:

> *There was a very damning editorial in a Māori publication before I shot the film. The gist was that a Pākehā shouldn't be telling that story, that the author of Whale Rider (Witi Ihimaera), who is Māori, should never have allowed it. Of course, I was devastated. And the chief of the community (in Whangara, where the book and film are set) came to my production office, quite unannounced, shut the door and said: "You have to understand two things: Firstly, we have chosen you. The second thing is, now you have to be a chief". I realized that my story was the same story as little Paikea in the movie. I desperately needed the approval of some people who could never give it to me. But I knew that the work would speak for me. (O'Sullivan, 2017, para. 21)*

Actor/producer Cliff Curtis played a major role in the film and acknowledges the integrity that he saw the Pākehā producing team brought to making the film:

> *What they did that was beautiful about Whale Rider as a production entity is the consultation process. Everything was done through Witi and his whānau. So whatever choices they made about it were approved in, I think, a really respectful and appropriate way. (Curtis, interview, 2018)*

The film premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival in 2002 where it was voted most popular film, and the 13-year-old star Keisha Castle-Hughes became, at the time, the youngest nominee for the Oscar for Best Actress. *Whale Rider* went on to box office success second only to *Once Were Warriors* in terms of the earnings of New Zealand films at that time (Shelton, 2005, p. 176). In 2021, nearly twenty years after it appeared, it still stands fifth on the New Zealand box office chart (Appendix C). Producer Barnett saw both *Whale Rider* and *Once Were Warriors* as successful for the same reason, that is the universality of the story, saying of *Once Were Warriors*:

> *It didn't matter where people were in the world they were aware of a social setting where this could happen and the implications of it and the struggle to resolve this kind of thing … by making it as specifically as Lee and Robin did, it became accessible to people. (O'Leary, 2009a)*

Barnett is here reflecting a truism in the script development world that 'the particular is universal'. In other words, if a story is told through characters and settings that are true to their origins, the story will travel because we are all human beings and we all share versions of the same hopes, dreams and fears. Māori academic Leonie Pihama's (1996) response to *Once Were Warriors* points to the real dilemma that this framing can present as she discusses how promoting such a film as a 'universal story' enables the audience to read the violence of the film as a product specifically of Māori culture, overlooking the history of oppression and denial that underpins such societal dysfunction. *Whale Rider* similarly can be seen as a film which locates the Māori community in the film such that the history of colonialism is effectively erased and for scholars and commentators, including Barry Barclay, this highlighted much that they saw wrong with the representation of Māori on screen (Barclay, 2003a; Bennett, 2006; Hokowhitu, 2007; Ka'ai, 2005). Nevertheless, the skill with which both these films were executed and marketed, and particularly the magnetism of the stars – Rena Owen and Temuera Morrison in *Once Were Warriors*, and Keisha Castle-Hughes and Rawiri Paratene in *Whale Rider* – meant that Māori films were now proven winners at the box office and the argument that 'no-one will go and see a Māori film' was laid to rest.

I have dwelt at some length on these two films because they mark a major turning point in the development of the domain of Māori film production. Both the producers demonstrated very commercial instincts, seeking a broad audience and bringing on board strong international distributors. Both films were adaptations, and adaptations have been shown to generate more consistent returns at the box office so they are, in essence, a better bet for a producer and therefore help mitigate risk (Hancock, 2010). Although *Once Were Warriors* was a relatively low-budget film (around $1.7 million), Scholes had difficulty putting together the funding when Television New Zealand turned the film down. Commercial network TV3 took a bolder approach and their decision to license the local television rights unlocked funding from television funding body NZ On Air (NZOA). Together with the NZFC's investment, this enabled the film to go ahead. TV3's green light was conditional on the film's script being rewritten to incorporate a more uplifting ending (Dunleavy & Joyce, 2011, p. 163). This is an example of how the final shape of a film can be driven by forces other than the immediate creative team of producer, director and writer; it is an example also of how a producer will take on board the requirements of a distributor or broadcaster because she recognises that that organisation knows their

audience and will only pay for a story they believe will work for that audience.

Barnett was aiming for a larger budget film with *Whale Rider* ($9.5 million), and this was the first film to take advantage of the New Zealand Government's extra funding of $22 million to support the film industry announced as part of the 'cultural recovery' package by Prime Minister Helen Clark in May 2000. This extra funding (called Film Fund 1) was the first of a series of investments by successive governments through the 21st Century, as progressively more attention has been paid to the value of the film industry to the country's economy. The rules for these investment funds, which have varied over the years, require substantial evidence of likely commercial return. In the case of *Whale Rider,* Barnett was able to demonstrate this by securing German, French and Italian investment which covered approximately 55% of the film's budget (Dunleavy & Joyce, 2011, p. 234). The skill of both these Pākehā producers in bringing together all the elements required to make these films so successful in commercial terms raised the profile of Māori cinema stories both locally and internationally. *Once Were Warriors* accelerated Lee Tamahori's career and that of the film's screenwriter Riwia Brown. While there were few Heads of Department on either film who were Māori, a review of the crew-lists for both films reveals a number of Māori rising up through the ranks but, overall, the progress for Māori behind the camera remained much slower than most Māori in the industry hoped. A brief consideration of the work of two Māori producers during this period, Larry Parr and Don Selwyn, highlights some of the complications.

2.8 Working the mainstream, working the margin

Through the 1980s, Larry Parr emerged as one of the most successful producers in New Zealand. Presciently, in an interview nine years before the success of *Once Were Warriors*, he had talked of the need for a major success in the New Zealand film industry:

> *What the New Zealand film industry needs is a gusher. If the New Zealand film industry could have its own Mad Max, its own Gallipoli, or Breaker Morant, then I think the industry would get a fantastic boost – and the industry will have that in the foreseeable future. I'd like to think that it would be one of my films but I don't really care who it is. The New Zealand industry actually needs a runaway success. And once we have that I think the rub-off will benefit all serious people in the industry. (*Kaleidoscope*, 1985)*

Ian Mune, the prolific writer and director who teamed up with Parr in 1984 to make *Came A Hot Friday*, judged Parr to be the producer with more hours of screentime to his name than any other producer at this time (*Kaleidoscope*, 1985). Together with Pākehā producer Don Reynolds, Parr formed Mirage Corporation, a film and music company with ambitions to "establish a quality international presence" (Shelton, 2005, p. 96). However, the company ran afoul of the vagaries of the film industry when the international distributor of Parr's film *A Soldier's Tale* collapsed, failing to pay the promised advance of US$1 million, and Mirage itself collapsed as a result in May 1988 (Shelton, 2005). It would be nine years before Parr produced another film when he established a new company, Kahukura Films, with more modest ambitions.

The presence of Don Selwyn through much of this period as a promoter and supporter of Māori film-workers is known to most Māori who were entering or already in the film industry at this time, particularly those in Auckland. In 1995, he produced together with Ruth Kaupua a series of short films for television, *Ngā Puna*, with the aim of giving experience to a number of emerging Māori writers, directors and crew; in 1996, he repeated the exercise with the series *Tala Pasifika*, this time supporting emerging Pasifika filmmakers. In 1997 and 1999, a second series of both were produced. Though his aim was always to give a job to Māori (or Pasifika) first, Selwyn had no issues bringing in experienced Pākehā to fill out the crews or work in senior roles where he felt inexperienced Māori could learn from them, as actor Lawrence Makoare remembers:

> *I've talked to a whole lot of people … that Don helped through the industry, behind the scenes as well as in front of the (camera) … Don would tell us all that we needed to be well-trained. Now I can see that we were part of his vision to carve out a place for Māori films and filmmakers. (*Hautoa Mā!*, 2016)*

In 2002, Selwyn was able to realise his long-held dream to produce (with Ruth Kaupua) and direct *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti*, a version of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* in *te reo*, using scholar Pei Te Hurinui Jones' 1945 translation (Ngā Taonga, 2020). Barnes (2011) details the travails endured in trying to raise funding to make the film, with several rejections from the NZFC. Serendipitous timing resulted in Te Māngai Pāho (TMP), the funding body for Māori-language radio and television, putting up the $2.4 million budget, an unusual move on their part as their remit did not include funding feature films at this time. Barnes (2011) notes that this decision on TMP's part was a strategic one, based on the idea that "a feature length film in te reo Māori offered an

immersion experience that lasted for a considerably longer time than anything available on television at that time" (p. 299). The resulting work was the first feature film to be released entirely in *te reo*, an achievement not repeated until the release of *The Dead Lands* 12 years later.

Figure 5: Don Selwyn (NZ Herald)

Selwyn was motivated to make the film in part to fulfil a promise he had made years earlier to Pei Te Hurinui Jones that he would ensure Jones' translations of this and other Shakespearean plays would be performed (McDougall, 2011, p. 94), though when the promise was made in the 1950s it can be assumed Selwyn was envisaging stage productions. A further motivation was his wish to counter the effect of *Once Were Warriors*, showing Māori performers and audiences the power and beauty inherent in *te reo* and in the culture of Māori (Barnes, 2011, p. 301; McDougall, 2011, p. 97). He used a mixture of experienced and novice actors, seeking out those with ability in *te reo*, who were then rehearsed into familiarity with the highly formal, classical *reo* which Jones used in his translation to capture the sense of the language of Shakespeare. As he had previously, Selwyn used a mix of Māori and non-Māori in his crew, with some of the Heads of Department having previously been students in his training courses in the 1980s (Barnes, 2011).

When it came to releasing the film, Selwyn followed a path that Barry Barclay was discussing around the same time as he continued to lay out the principles of Fourth Cinema (Barclay, 2003b; 2003c). Barclay had always held that Fourth Cinema was not just about content and modes of production but also about distribution. Not surprisingly,

he was never able to articulate a definitive answer as to how Indigenous films might recoup their budget, let alone make a profit, if they did not make the compromises necessary to reach a broad audience. It can be surmised that the NZFC refused to fund *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* because they saw little chance of a return on their investment; TMP on the other hand had a very different remit and were able to support the film despite a lack of expected commercial return. Selwyn toured the film throughout the country after its initial screenings in Hamilton and Taumarunui, these places chosen to honour the *iwi* connections of Pei Te Hurinui Jones and Selwyn himself.[27] The film subsequently launched internationally at the Hawaii International Film Festival before screening at other international festivals. Barnes (2011, p. 312) notes, however, that it had a limited release internationally and it is difficult to confirm that Selwyn's hope that it would be used widely in schools has been achieved. Actor/producer Cliff Curtis is among the many who acknowledge the importance of Don Selwyn and Larry Parr in the development of Māori filmmaking:

> *Merata, Don, Barry – also I link Larry Parr in there – they were all from that time and they all worked together to sort of lay the foundations for us to tell our stories. (*Hautoa Mā!*, 2016)*

The year 2002 marked a turning point in the cinema careers of both these producers. Parr's company Kahukura films completed or part-completed five low-budget films before financial difficulties forced it into receivership, with filmmakers and politicians weighing in to criticise Parr because public money received through the NZFC was involved (NZPA, 2002; Tizard, 2002). The demise of Kahukura Films meant that Parr produced no further dramatic features; however, through Kahukura he supported a number of Māori in furthering their careers, notably producer Ainsley Gardiner and cinematographer Fred Renata, both of whom achieved their first feature credits with the company. *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* remained Selwyn's only dramatic feature film credit as a producer. The careers of both these filmmakers differ substantially from those of Barry Barclay and Merata Mita. Barclay and Mita are, with good reason, seen as foundational in the roll-call of Indigenous filmmakers internationally. Yet the work of Larry Parr and Don Selwyn, while perhaps less lauded, can be argued to be of equal importance in the development of the domain of Māori film production.

27. The importance of taking the film back to the *iwi* or *hapū* connected with its origins is discussed further below (see section 5.7).

2.9 Conclusion

This chapter began by detailing Csikszentmihalyi's concept of the domain, the cultural component of the systems model, discussing the characteristics which help or hinder the emergence of such a domain. I noted Redvall's comments on the complexity of elements that are generally in play within the world of screen production and how they can be taken into account in research such as that detailed in this thesis. Turning to the world of Māori screen production, I reviewed the social and political influences on Māori in the mid-to-late 20th Century to lay the groundwork for understanding some of the key difficulties Māori filmmakers encountered in their struggle to be heard. I discussed the long period from the early arrival of international filmmakers seeking 'tales of the exotic', through the mid-20th Century drought from 1940 to the 1970s, when very few local features were produced, noting Ramai Hayward is the only Māori credited as director or producer of a dramatic feature through this period.

I then moved on to discuss the years from the 1970s to the early 2000s. These years are seen as the period when the modern film industry of Aotearoa NZ became established. They saw the emergence of directors Jane Campion, Peter Jackson and Vincent Ward whose films from this time captured both critical and audience acclaim. Their work can be seen to have established filmmaking from Aotearoa NZ on the international scene as well as being a success with the domestic audience. Other directors including Roger Donaldson, Geoff Murphy and Lee Tamahori parlayed their success into careers in Hollywood, while some like Ian Mune and Gaylene Preston advanced their careers by remaining onshore. In this time a range of skilled producers emerged, notably Larry Parr, John Barnett, Robin Scholes, Robin Laing, Bridget Ikin and John Maynard (producers respectively of Jane Campion's and Vincent Ward's early films) and Jackson himself together with his partner Fran Walsh. In 2001 the first of *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy was released and this, together with the television series *Hercules: The Legendary Journeys* (1995-1999) and *Xena: Warrior Princess* (1995-2001), marked the rise of Aotearoa NZ as both a maker of Hollywood product and an outstanding location for shooting international cinema and television drama (Conrich & Murray, 2007; Petrie, 2007; Shelton, 2005).

Within this period of growth from the 1970s, I showed that the development of Māori film production progressed fitfully, with the ground being broken by Barry Barclay and Merata Mita whose work, I argue, illustrates the emergence of a philosophy of Indigenous

filmmaking in Aotearoa NZ. Both were highly intellectual filmmakers with a fierce ability to fight for their creative vision. Both were supported in their work by colleagues, Māori and Pākehā, but it was not in their natures to make the compromises that might have led them to more commercial success. They were, like other Indigenous feature filmmakers from this period including Nils Gaup (Sámi, Norway), Chris Eyre (Cheyenne-Arapaho, US) and documentary-maker Alanis Obomsawin (Abenaki, Canada), breaking the trail for those who came after in bringing their Indigenous sensibilities and skills to cinema. They established for those who followed an ethos and a commitment to portraying the truth of Indigenous lives in a medium where, previously, Indigenous people had in the main been sorely misrepresented. Don Selwyn laid the groundwork for many young people to learn their craft and achieved the milestone of making the first feature film completely in *te reo.* Larry Parr took a different path in establishing himself in the mainstream and it was only over time that he moved into more explicitly Māori production, a path which is not unusual for those of us who gained our skills in mainstream film or television. Parr remains one of the most successful producers to emerge in the history of film in Aotearoa NZ, and Selwyn's record in the teaching and support of young Māori coming into the film industry was unparalleled at the time.

However, the release of *Once Were Warriors* and *Whale Rider*, straddling the turn of the century, points to the complexities inherent in the progress made by Māori filmmakers during this time. Both films were produced by Pākehā, with *Whale Rider* also written and directed by Pākehā, and as I discussed, their orthodox storytelling approach and excellent production values have ensured both films remain firmly fixed in the general public sphere both locally and internationally as the definition of a 'Māori' film. For Māori specifically, the heritage of both films is mixed with some being strongly critical and some being strong in their praise. However, there is little argument that the films together raised the profile of Māori cinema stories and laid to rest the notion that "No-one wants to see a Māori film". Nevertheless, the paucity of Māori as Heads of Department on either film underlines the fact that the ability of *Māori* screen creatives to bring Māori stories to the big screen would remain difficult for some time to come, and the reasons and some solutions for this are discussed in the next chapter which explores the development of the domain from the early 2000s. In it, I traverse the importance of related fields such as television in the growth of feature opportunities for Māori. The discourse then ranges widely in exploring the relationships between filmmakers and their funders and investors, locally and internationally. Finally, I draw the discussion back to

Csikszentmihalyi's concept of the domain, detailing first the key themes that emerge from Chapters 2 and 3. I then consider Csikszentmihalyi's analysis of what constitutes a domain and show how the themes discussed and the two chapters as a whole support the view of Māori film production as a subdivision of culture or domain in its own right.

CHAPTER 3: The domain (Part 2) – The 21st Century

3.1 Introduction

The success of *Once Were Warriors* and *Whale Rider* provided a springboard into the 21st Century for filmmaking in general in Aotearoa NZ, principally because both were very successful, as art-house films internationally and as commercial hits in the local market. This dual audience – art-house abroad and multiplex at home – is a dilemma for both Māori and Pākehā producers in Aotearoa NZ when it comes to shaping a film to reach an audience, and it takes a certain talent to manage both. The success of these two films permanently changed the view of distributors, funders and mainstream audiences towards seeing Māori stories on the big screen, and this helped unlock opportunities for subsequent Indigenous filmmakers, though not immediately.

The arrival of the millennium saw the beginnings of major change for the film industry. The digitisation of filmmaking progressed quickly, first in post-production with non-linear editing, then in production with the emergence of digital cameras that could compete with 35-millimetre film cameras. The rise of the internet and, subsequently, the rise of streamers started to exert increasing pressure on the shape of filmmaking in Aotearoa NZ as in most other countries. The emergence of the Covid pandemic in 2020 has accelerated these changes.[28] Before this, however, a major gamechanger for Māori film production was the arrival of Māori Television (MTS) which opened up the way for the development of Māori production companies. More importantly, MTS picked up the baton from *Once Were Warriors* and *Whale Rider* in growing a broad local audience, Māori and Pākehā, for Māori screen stories.

This chapter opens with a discussion of Māori Television then progresses to the wider landscape of mainstream film and television before focusing on the work of Māori screen creatives and their developing relationships with mainstream government funding bodies who control the majority of investment funding available for filmmaking in Aotearoa NZ. At the start of the century the domain of Māori filmmaking was still fragmented with filmmakers struggling to be seen as creative storytellers worthy of investment. It would take another ten years for this situation to change, for Māori filmmakers and their stories to be taken seriously by funders and investors, and for audiences both local and international to pay increasing attention to the resulting films.

28. The range of possibilities for the near future internationally are canvassed in detail in Koljonen (2021) and Stolz et al. (2021).

3.2 Changing the paradigm: Māori Television

In the years prior to the opening of MTS in 2004, a small number of Māori had been working within Television New Zealand (TVNZ) and its predecessor, the Broadcasting Corporation of New Zealand (BCNZ). In 1978, a petition from Ngā Tamatoa sought the creation of a Māori television unit and, partly as a result of this, through the late 1970s/early 1980s, the BCNZ and subsequently TVNZ ran courses to train Māori journalists and production staff for general programming such as sport and entertainment. The first regular Māori television programme, the weekly half-hour factual series *Koha,* was launched in 1980. Merata Mita (1996) found her time working on *Koha* demoralising because the programme was targeted at a majority non-Māori audience but Tainui Stephens sees the experience differently. He points to the work of his then boss Ernie Leonard (Ngāti Rangiwewehi, Rangitāne)[29] in enabling those in the Māori Department to take advantage of the Sunday morning time-slot into which Māori programming was scheduled:

> *Ernie's view was that it was a time for experimentation (as) the bosses at TVNZ didn't really give a rats, because it was a non-commercial time … so I vividly remember the 80s as having been a time for stretching our skill base. (Stephens, interview, 2018)*

Stephens' recalls launching the pioneering young people's show *Mai Time*:

> Mai Time *started as an experiment … I rationalised some resources and did a six-part pilot … The then programmer for Channel 2 was really pissed off that we made something for young Māori people because, in her words, "They wouldn't be watching TV, they'd be in the spacey parlours playing Space Invaders." (Stephens, interview, 2018)*

Not for the first time, a non-New Zealander saw the issue through different eyes:

> *Around 1994, Michael J. Lattin came in to be in charge of all programming (for) Channels 1 and 2 … he came from Australia. He had no preconceptions about Māori things and (he said) "Yeah, ok. You've got 45 weeks."… So from '95 we started* Mai Time *as a stand-alone production. (Stephens, interview, 2018)*

29. Ernie Leonard and Whai Ngata (Ngāti Porou, Te Whānau ā Apanui) were both leaders of the Māori Department at TVNZ and outstanding in their recruitment and training of young Māori working in television.

The Māori programme-makers at TVNZ established a number of long-running programmes including *Mai Time,* which ran from 1995 to 2007. *Waka Huia,* covering cultural issues in *te reo*, was launched in 1988; *Marae* discussing current affairs in *te reo* and English was launched in 1992. Both these programmes continue to be made and screened by TVNZ at the present time. However, despite the achievements of those concerned, Dunleavy and Joyce (2011) rightly point out that, because of TVNZ's monopoly in the limited market of Aotearoa NZ, "Māori programming remained under-developed, under-funded, and institutionally marginalised" (p. 64). In this atmosphere, the calls for an independent Māori-controlled channel grew louder. Stephens was involved in many of these discussions:

> *I remember being very determined in the thought that whatever politics threw up, whatever platform, we needed programmes. And that's only going to happen if people were able to make them and so consequently I felt very committed to training, to giving independents as much voice as we could within the system. (Stephens, interview, 2018)*

In 1994, the Waitangi Tribunal recorded its final report on the WAI 176 claim. This claim resulted from the Government's decision to restructure TVNZ from a public broadcaster into a commercially-oriented state-owned enterprise in 1989, and was brought by a range of Māori organisations including the Māori Language Board, the Māori Council and the Māori Women's Welfare League. The claim argued that the public broadcasting system was a *taonga*, a treasure or resource covered by the Treaty of Waitangi and that the Government was obliged to afford Māori an equal share in it (Waitangi Tribunal, 1994). The claim was fought by the Government up to the Privy Council in London (then Aotearoa NZ's highest court), and the outcome was that the Government was obliged to listen to Māori and address the issue of developing a Māori television service.

After the failure of the first step towards creating such a service, when Aotearoa Television Network collapsed amid a lack of planning and funding in 1997, the second attempt was both better resourced and given a two-year lead-in time (Dunleavy & Joyce, 2011; Stephens, 2004). The launch of MTS in 2004 is seen by Ngā Aho Whakaari (NAW) as "herald[ing] a vibrant era for Māori broadcasting, [and] increasing the capacity of the Māori screen industry" (Henry & Wikaire, 2013). The path of the broadcaster since its founding has been complex and much argued over, with particular debate around how

much it should target the mainstream audience as opposed to Māori, where the onscreen balance between *te reo* and English should be struck, how important it is for staff to speak *te reo* and how to maintain cultural integrity in their practice. The depth of disagreement around all these issues is substantial (Smith, 2016). However, this thesis is not the place to rehearse this detail. What is relevant is that MTS has become embedded in the screen landscape of Aotearoa NZ, and is seen by NAW as having "had a profound impact on Māori screen production capacity and output" (Henry & Wikaire, 2013).

Producer Larry Parr was appointed Head of Programming for MTS in 2005, and nominated the programme he established on MTS in 2006, the all-day coverage of Anzac Day, as "probably the most important thing I've done because its impact on our political and social landscape was enormous" (O'Leary, 2009b). Anzac Day is 25th April, the annual commemorative day in Australia and Aotearoa NZ recalling the war casualties of both countries. The day itself marks the defeat of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) at Gallipoli in Turkey in 1915. As the first major battle undertaken by the two countries' joint military force, it has been regarded by many as a symbolic 'coming of age' of the two settler nations. The Anzac Day coverage on MTS continues annually and includes live broadcasts of commemorative ceremonies from Gallipoli and around the country. The strength of emotion surrounding the celebration of 'nationhood' which the day represents for many Māori and Pākehā has been underlined by the remarkable response to the MTS coverage of the day. The online screen archive, NZ On Screen (2020a), says "Māori Television has staked such a claim on Anzac Day coverage that the two have almost become synonymous". As Abel (2013) notes, setting up this coverage was a very clever political move taken at a time when the broadcaster, which was only two years old, was under threat from the opposition National Party in Parliament, which had declared it would disestablish MTS if it came to power. Given this threat and the fact that National did in fact win the election in 2008, MTS "has had to for its own survival establish itself as a financially viable 'good citizen,' and has adopted specific strategies to proffer political and public goodwill" (Abel, 2013, p. 205). Abel critiques the 'nation-building' that MTS can be seen to be contributing to in the interests of its survival, but clearly from Parr's point of view, the Anzac Day coverage is a major success, and it can be argued that MTS has used the resulting goodwill that many Pākehā, including politicians, have extended towards the broadcaster to help solidify its presence in the national broadcasting landscape. That presence, as noted, has been a crucial element in growing the participation of Māori in the screen industry.

Parr's journey from being a highly successful film producer from the 1970s to the 1990s, to Head of Programming for MTS (and subsequently *Kaihautū* or Chief Executive of funding body TMP) is indicative of the varied paths filmmakers must travel in order to earn a living in the small nation screen ecology of Aotearoa NZ (see section 4.5, below). MTS has provided Māori screen creatives with the possibility of supporting their feature work through making television product in both *te reo* and English, though the disparity between funding available to those making projects for MTS and those making projects for mainstream channels is stark; former MTS commissioner Annie Murray places funding for Māori programme-makers at 60% of mainstream funding, a gap which has a severe effect on production companies, as she notes:

> *They're not very robust businesses compared to mainstream ones, because they're underfunded. So for them to invest a significant amount of time in a proposal, and usually it's the producer themselves who writes it, they really want to have a fair idea they're going to get it funded, because when they get turned down, that money basically gets written off and all that time that's gone into it. (Smith, 2016, p. 59)*

Even so, as producer Quinton Hita notes,

> *You won't find a Māori producer that's not involved in television somewhere. (Hita, interview, 2018)*

Hita agrees that "limited funding limits opportunities", though he can see potential value for the industry:

> *if that means the demise of (some) companies, so that this evolves out of being a hobby industry into an industry that can actually sustain itself, well, I'm happy to be part of that process, for better or worse. (Hita, interview, 2018*)

Hita is not inaccurate in sharing Murray's view of the lack of robustness of many Māori screen businesses, and this continues to be an issue for Māori in the broader screen industry. It can be argued that it has contributed to the difficulty Māori producers and screenwriters have in being able to develop feature work, because while making projects for television does enable companies to survive, it does not enable most to thrive; it is therefore extremely difficult for Māori creatives to make the time for feature

development, a period when generally speaking no funding is available for long periods. What MTS does enable for upcoming producers is the development of production and management skills, so that those who wish to are able to approach their big screen work, shorts or features, with some allied experience under their belt. More importantly, as a company run by Māori for Māori, MTS operates within the principles of *te ao Māori,* fulfilling to some extent Barry Barclay's dream of Fourth Cinema, though making greater concessions to its 'all New Zealanders' audience than Barclay would have found acceptable. Perhaps most importantly, its achievement is, as Abel (2013) puts it, that "to some extent at least, an Indigenous voice, Indigenous history and Indigenous *tikanga* have been inserted into the national imaginary" (p. 211). This achievement has in no small way contributed to the move in recent years by the mainstream state funding bodies NZOA and the NZFC to pay attention to how they engage with their Māori stakeholders (creatives and audience alike). It will be seen below that this is starting to have fruit. In the meantime, however, for those producers, directors and writers seeking to develop the high level of skills required to achieve their cinema aspirations, other avenues beyond MTS are required and both short films and mainstream television drama are relevant here.

3.3 Enabling progress: The role of short films and television drama

Short films have become a key step on the road to a feature-film career for directors, writers and producers in Aotearoa NZ, as they are in many countries, and since the early 1990s, there has been considerable financial support from the NZFC for making and marketing them (Blomkamp, 2009; Cole-Baker, 2008). This is because the NZFC sees them as an important way for emerging creatives to show they have the talent to progress to longer-form work such as features. Shorts are generally defined as films with a running time under one hour, but for film festivals the usual expectation is that the film will be 15 minutes or less. They are usually written or directed by young people because it is easier to pull together the resources required and, while difficult to do well, they are easier to make than a feature. Producers too tend to work on shorts earlier in their career, though some experienced producers will work on a short with a young writer or director as a way of establishing a relationship in the expectation of working together in the future (Milligan, 2014b).

Māori filmmakers have achieved considerable success with short films, both with the films themselves and in using them as stepping stones to feature careers. For example, all of the six producers interviewed for this research have produced and/or directed short

films. Larry Parr and Ainsley Gardiner have both written and directed shorts before subsequently moving on to directing features[30] as well as producing them. Tainui Stephens had his first taste of working in the field of drama when he directed his short *The Hill*. Quinton Hita produced two shorts for writer/director Tearepa Kahi, before the pair moved onto their first feature, *Mt Zion,* and Desray Armstrong produced a number of award-winning shorts before producing her first feature, *Stray*. Gardiner was a producer on Taika Waititi's Oscar-nominated *Two Cars, One Night*, and she and Cliff Curtis produced Waititi's next short *Tama Tū*, before they all moved on together to Waititi's first two features *Eagle vs Shark* and *Boy*. The value of these shorts, aside from the experience gained, is that they raise the international profile of the filmmaker through exposure at festivals, they reassure potential investors of the filmmaker's talent and capabilities, and writers, directors and producers are able to experiment with their own creative ideas and relationships without being exposed to the greater risk of failure that comes with a feature.

A further advantage of working on short films is that the target audience is not the paying public, so there is a lack of pressure to conform to commercial box office expectations. There is, however, the need to convince someone to finance the production, and most quality short films in Aotearoa NZ are funded by the NZFC. From the late-1990s[31] until 2014, the selection and executive management of short films was devolved by the NZFC to independent producers, chosen annually through a competitive process. This structure was designed to broaden the range of shorts the NZFC funded by expanding the range of decision-makers, and during this period a number of Māori producers took up the opportunity to executive produce through this process, including Ainsley Gardiner, Cliff Curtis and Quinton Hita.[32] This both expanded the number of Māori films being selected for funding and also offered a higher level of producing experience to those producers who fulfilled the role (Milligan, 2014b). Since 2014, short film funding has been moved back in-house at the NZFC for reasons to do with changes in the way the body targets talent development. The NZFC's approach to supporting Māori filmmaking is discussed

30. Parr directed *The Makutu on Mrs Jones* in 1983 before directing his feature *A Soldier's Tale* in 1988; Gardiner directed *Mokopuna* in 2009 and co-directed the portmanteau feature *Waru* in 2017 before co-directing her feature *Cousins* in 2020.
31. I was on the Board of the NZ Film Commission from 1993-1996 and was a member, and subsequently Chair, of the NZFC Short Film Committee from 1993-1997, when the Committee approved the decision to devolve the management of short films to independent producers and put itself out of business.
32. From 2006 to 2008, I executive produced a series of short films under this scheme, together with Rawiri Paratene and Roger Grant under the title *Conbrio Shorts*. Other Māori who EP'd through this process include Tearepa Kahi, Michael Bennett, Brad Haami, Poata Eruera, and Tui Ruwhiu.

further below, but allied to short films in terms of growing new talent has been the ability of filmmakers to explore their craft through television drama.

In mainstream television drama as in mainstream feature filmmaking, through the 1990s and early 2000s, opportunities for Māori key creatives (writer, director, producer) were rare but Māori cast continued to garner more major roles, and the availability of steady work enabled some Māori crew to polish their skills to a very high level.[33] In terms of Māori drama, the series *E Tipu e Rea* has already been discussed as a turning point for Māori key creatives and it paved the way for the *Ngā Puna* series. They were followed by the 2001 romantic drama series *Aroha* (a collection of love stories in *te reo*), and the multi-series anthology *Matakū* (2002-2004) inspired by traditional mythology. Like *Aroha, Matakū* was written, directed and produced by Māori and its creative team included Cliff Curtis directing, as well as writer/director Michael Bennett and director Peter Burger, who both subsequently extended their careers into telefeatures and feature films. Producers Brad Haami and Carey Carter, who created the series, used stories heard in their own childhood as inspiration after watching imported television shows such as *The X-Files* and *Twilight Zone*. Glynn and Tyson (2007) call *Matakū* "a fascinating case of postcolonial television that is geared … to both local and global mediaspheres" (p. 209). The series interwove spiritual elements from *te ao Māori* with everyday events and references to popular horror films to produce three series of stories which screened on mainstream television in primetime, first on TV3 and subsequently on TVNZ. Funding came from both mainstream and Māori funding bodies and the series was bilingual. It is difficult for a drama series to win a large enough audience to convince a broadcaster (and funders) to renew it, so *Matakū*'s three series for two different broadcasters is indicative of substantial success, as is its winner's award for television programming at the New York Festivals in 2004. Tainui Stephens (2004) says of *Matakū* that it possessed

> *a tangible 'wairua' … a feeling that is pervasive and reflects a respect for the teachings and beliefs of our culture and lore. It is rooted in spirituality and an understanding that all things are related and interlinked … When you wed a superb story with a staunch Māori wairua to utterly professional production skills, you give birth to magic! (p. 113)*

33. For example, mainstream drama co-production series I produced for South Pacific Pictures in the early 90s had Māori crew in assistant directing, camera, sound, locations, wardrobe, art and stunts departments.

It might be expected from this that the one high-end drama series which MTS has so far invested in, *Kaitangata Twitch* (2009), would reflect the progress among Māori filmmakers by having Māori writers, directors and producers. However, the complicated nature of the screen ecology in Aotearoa NZ is again evidenced in the credits of this production. *Kaitangata Twitch* is a 13-part adaptation of a book by children's author Margaret Mahy. It is a bi-cultural story, following a 12-year-old Māori protagonist as she seeks to understand the powers of an island where spirits are coming back to life, and the story thus explores elements of *te ao Māori* and *te wairua Māori.* It is created, directed and produced by non-Māori. Dunleavy and Joyce (2011) describe the series as "a triumph for Māori Television" (p. 178) and Jo Smith (2016) includes the series in her overall comment that MTS "continued to make appeals to New Zealand nationhood" (p. 78). The bi-cultural formula for children's drama series brought great success to first TVNZ and then drama producer South Pacific Pictures from the 1970s through the early 2000s (Dunleavy, 2005, p. 77; Dunleavy & Joyce, 2011, p. 194), so screening such a drama series, especially one based on a book by Aotearoa NZ's best-known children's author, can be seen as a smart commissioning decision in terms of reaching a broad local audience. Two of the three writers were Māori and experienced Māori screen storytellers are listed as Story Consultant and Cultural Advisor. From this distance, however, it is curious to see no Māori producer, director or lead writer credited, and this can be read to reflect that Māori key creatives were still at this stage either not seen as capable, or not seen as necessary, to the execution of a high-end television drama even for a broadcaster whose *kaupapa* is fundamentally Māori.

A decade has passed since this production was broadcast. MTS continues to support drama, partly through signing on as local broadcaster for feature films like *Mt Zion*, and partly through commissioning drama and comedy such as *Ahikāroa* and *Find Me a Māori Bride*, series which are made by Māori production companies, though at a funding level that is much lower than that of *Kaitangata Twitch*.[34] Māori producers, directors and writers as well as crew and cast continue to work in mainstream television drama and documentary, and high-end drama productions on mainstream channels now offer opportunities for Māori key creatives to tell stories that may or may not originate in *te ao Māori* or centre on the lives of Maori characters: for example, director Peter Burger (Ngāi Tahu, Rangitāne) has emerged as one of Aotearoa NZ's most successful television drama

34. This comment is based on a review of principal funding body NZOA Annual Reports 2009-2019.

directors, having followed his feature *The Tattooist* (2007) with a remarkable run of telefeatures and drama series (NZ On Screen, 2020b). Where stories do originate in *te ao Māori,* it can no longer be automatically assumed that non-Māori producers can secure funding from the Māori funding body TMP or the mainstream funders NZOA and the NZFC by attaching a Māori cultural advisor and/or story consultant, as these attachments are more and more being seen as unacceptable substitutes for Māori control of production. While this partly reflects the ongoing changes in society generally, equally it can be seen to be the result of continuing hard work by Māori in the screen industry and by the funding bodies to reach an understanding that, from the Māori perspective, is long overdue.

3.4 The challenge for rights: Māori practitioners and the screen funding bodies

In 1996, a number of those in the Māori screen production sector saw the need to establish a legal entity to enhance their ability to communicate with Crown agencies, and in a move that could effectively be seen as the professionalisation of the lobbying group Te Manu Aute, NAW was established. NAW was specifically concerned with having a voice in the changes that were occurring in the Māori screen landscape, as at this time the funding body TMP was newly established and the Aotearoa Television Network was launched on its brief run before its collapse in 1997 (Henry & Wikaire, 2013; Smith, 2016). Relationships between Māori practitioners and the three national screen funding bodies have developed at different speeds because of the different remits of each body and the different periods in which they were launched. For the purposes of this thesis, value in this discussion lies in exploring the shifts in thinking that have occurred in the two mainstream funders, the NZFC and NZOA, as these shifts best illustrate the ground that has been covered and how industry practitioners have helped drive this change.

Reviewing NZOA first, after the NZFC this organisation invests the most from the public purse in local feature films, through its financial support of the screening of local features on television. Additionally, as the body which funds the most hours of locally-made screen work, it is a strong contributor to the Māori screen ecology. In 1996, the same year that NAW was established, and indicative of the need for its existence, Barry Barclay took issue with what he described as ‘series racism’ when NZOA agreed to fund a series of one-off television dramas, *Montana Sunday Theatre*, with no Māori content. Barclay decided to challenge this and organised a public protest designed to embarrass NZOA, by setting himself up in the street outside their headquarters in Wellington.

Figure 6: Barry Barclay protesting outside New Zealand On Air (Stuff Limited)

The action led to a swift response and within two months NZOA had announced a formal quota system for Māori documentary and drama (Barnes, 2011). In August 2000, NZOA demonstrated a more serious commitment to Māori with the launch of its Rautaki Māori (Māori strategy), at that time under the guidance of producer Tainui Stephens. This document has been redesigned over the years since but remains the touchstone for the organisation in its role as a funder of Māori programming for mainstream television audiences, a remit which has expanded to include funding programmes on MTS as well as screen production for radio and online. The Rautaki now states a priority in funding Māori content as follows: "proposals led by or with the significant involvement of Māori key creatives: for screen production this means at least two of the three key roles of producer, director and writer/researcher should be Māori" (NZOA, 2020a, p. 1). It is noticeable that the conditional terms 'priority' and 'should' are used, which seem designed to leave room to manoeuvre. Equally, from a practitioner's perspective, it can be seen as not unnecessarily constraining the producer's ability to work with appropriate creative partners, who may or may not be Māori.

NZOA is also now working more closely with the Māori broadcasting funder TMP: in 2019 and 2020 they issued joint calls for Māori language programming. The 2020 call for proposals states:

> *Both funding agencies are committed to supporting the Māori media sector and collectively improving the outcomes of the Maihi Karauna, the Crown's strategy for Māori language revitalisation, including ensuring that New Zealanders value te reo Māori as a crucial part of national identity. (TMP, 2020, p. 2)*

What is relevant in the document from a practitioner's point of view is not necessarily the motivations of the funding bodies, which clearly include supporting the current government's continuing project of incorporating *te reo Māori* in the identity of all New Zealanders (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2019). It is the fact that applicants for this funding do not require a commitment from a broadcaster in order to be considered for funding. The requirement to have a broadcaster attached before seeking funding has been set in stone in terms of NZOA since its establishment in 1989. The understandable reason for this is that the organisation might otherwise run the danger of funding the development and making of programmes that no-one wants to screen. The effect for practitioners has been that conservative mainstream broadcasters effectively hold the reins in this environment and it is not just Māori screen creatives who have been frustrated by their inability to bring imaginative, risky storytelling to the small screen in Aotearoa NZ. Clearly there is a shift underway and the joint NZOA/TMP decision to omit the need for a broadcaster attachment underlines how rapidly the landscape is changing, with traditional broadcasters ceding ground to online platforms. Additionally, screen creatives are finding alternative outlets including establishing their own online channels. In this environment, the fact that NZOA and TMP see value in working together in this way is unsurprising as all funding bodies are adjusting their methods to maintain their ability to support local content in an environment where international streamers are rapidly gaining ground (NZOA, 2020b).

Regarding the NZFC, again filmmakers were active in pushing the organisation to improve its engagement with Māori, when Barry Barclay together with Don Selwyn and several others made a claim to the Waitangi Tribunal in 1998. The claim asserted that the 1978 Act under which the NZFC was established failed to make provision for the active protection and promotion of Māori culture and language (Cleave, 2000). Ultimately the claim was allowed to lapse, but Barclay and others continued to pursue a dream originally expressed at a *hui* (meeting) held by Te Manu Aute in 1990, that of the establishment of both a Māori Television authority (achieved when TMP was established in 1993) and a Māori Film Commission. This latter dream was partially achieved when

Te Paepae Ataata (TPA) was launched by the NZFC in 2007, as an autonomous fund for feature film development with processes grounded in *kaupapa Māori*. This was the first time the NZFC specifically targeted funding for Māori filmmaking with decision-making controlled by Māori, and the NZFC's stated aim in establishing the fund was "ensuring that tangata whenua cinema is a dynamic constituent voice within New Zealand film" (NZFC, 2008, p. 4).[35]

TPA supported the development of a range of films with one *The Pā Boys*, produced by Ainsley Gardiner and Mina Mathieson, going into production and being released in 2014. It is unclear why it ceased activity after 2014, but the passing of one of its founders, Merata Mita, in 2010 was a shock to all in the industry who knew her. In the preceding five years, other key founders of TPA including Barclay, Don Selwyn, Tama Poata, Tungia Baker and Wi Kuki Kaa had all passed,[36] and it may be that the following generation felt unable at least at that time to fill their shoes. As noted by NAW (2014), "they set a high standard for creative excellence, Māori integrity, and 'getting on with the job' " (para. 5). The NZFC in the following years established further pathways specifically targeted for Māori filmmakers, and started the process together with NAW of establishing its own Māori strategy or Rautaki, which was launched in 2018 with the appointment of the newly-created position of *Pou Whakahaere*. This is the first specifically Māori executive role to be created in the 40-year history of the organisation (Paranihi, 2018), and that this appointment is long overdue is underlined by former NZFC staff member Karin Williams' (2018) framing of this event: "[the] NZFC did not have a formal Māori strategy or policy until April of 2018, despite being a Crown agency with obligations under the Treaty of Waitangi" (p. 2). The Rautaki contains specific short- and medium-term action plans and funding initiatives, and it is the latter more than anything that will show over time how its intentions are fulfilled.

Up to the early 2000s, initiatives taken by both NZFC and NZOA to support Māori filmmaking can be viewed as having reinforced what Kate Moffat (2020) calls 'constituted precarity'. Discussing the position of Sámi filmmakers in the Norwegian regional film ecosystem, Moffat frames constituted precarity as "a type of ideological power relationship where the 'host' nations strategically engineer the precariousness of

35. In 2011 and 2012, the company I co-own, Conbrio Media, received funding from TPA to develop two drafts of a screenplay which to date remains unmade.
36. The loss of this generation was amplified by the fact that only one, Don Selwyn, was over 70 at the time of passing.

(Indigenous) media platforms, primarily through policy" (p. 191). The situation of the Sámi people is quite different from that of Māori in that they are Indigenous to several countries (Norway, Sweden, Finland, Russia). Moffat proposes that in Norway at least the Sámi identity is negotiated and exhibited more in the cultural space than in economic or political spaces, and that Norwegian Government funding for Sámi cinema is partly predicated on offsetting the Government's "colonial practices in other areas of Sami rights and policy … including interventions made by the energy industry" (p. 197n). Norway shares with Aotearoa NZ its position as a small country with a cinema industry highly dependent on state funding and, in both countries, control over who receives funding continues to lie with the dominant culture. However, the moves outlined above by both mainstream funding organisations to explicitly bring a Māori voice to their internal funding processes and to support Māori-driven initiatives can be read as designed to counter such constituted precarity, though this position is arguable, as shown in the varying views of individual Māori producers (see sections 4.5 and 4.6, below).

The stated mission of the NZFC's Rautaki is "To champion Māori film and filmmakers, in partnership with the Māori film industry, to Aotearoa and the world" (NZFC, 2018, p. 5) and those last words "to Aotearoa and the world" are indicative of how many of those who work within the Māori film industry position themselves now, as voices speaking not just to local audiences but increasingly to international audiences as well.

3.5 Going global: Māori filmmaking since 2005

Once Were Warriors fulfilled Larry Parr's wish for a runaway local success and was a sign of things to come for Māori feature films and filmmakers. The possibilities for building a career and for seeing a Māori-originated film reach distribution have increased considerably over the course of this century. It has been an intermittent process which can be seen to have accelerated since around 2013/2014 and a number of factors have influenced this. The increasing depth of talent and skill across the field of Māori screen production is central to this growth. Allied elements – the development of Māori television, growing opportunities in mainstream television drama, and the opportunities offered by short films – have been discussed. Other factors include developments in the mainstream screen ecology of Aotearoa NZ, the NZFC's investment in Māori, the local audience, and the importance of stars, and these are now reviewed in turn.

The years around the turn of the century saw several major developments across the screen industry in Aotearoa NZ, particularly in feature films, which catapulted the industry forward in what Conrich and Murray (2008) characterise as a "swift" rise to international recognition (p. 1). Prime Minister Helen Clark took the portfolio of Minister of Arts, Culture and Heritage in the incoming Labour government in 1999, and this marked a sea-change in the government's view of the arts and, in particular, the possibilities inherent in film production. A cultural recovery package of $146 million was announced, targeted to address what had been severe underfunding throughout the arts sector in the preceding years. Of this, as noted earlier, $22 million was granted to the NZFC to establish Film Fund 1, designed to attract offshore capital to support the making of more ambitious films and enable filmmakers to gain international exposure with the stated government intention of growing the Aotearoa NZ film industry (Clark, 2000). The concept of film as an important element in the government's development of 'national identity' and ultimately of 'Brand New Zealand' evolved from this period, not least because of the startling success of Peter Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy and the international reception of *Whale Rider*. Clark (2002a) was explicit about the government's expectation that it would leverage off "the release of The Lord of the Rings … to help promote New Zealand as technologically advanced, creative and successful" (para. 41). In this, the government was reflecting international repositioning of screen and other cultural industries as "creative industries" which Clark (2002b) declared "not only underpin the effective branding and marketing of all New Zealand goods and services, but also can … have a major impact on industrial output" (para. 39). The 'creative industries' model, which emerged from the UK in the 1990s, places economic considerations in the valuation of cultural activities alongside social and aesthetic considerations. As Volkerling (2009) argues in relation to Aotearoa NZ, the adoption of this model by the state requires that 'heritage, identity and creativity' become central considerations in such a policy, and this underlines the importance of the film industry being clear about what makes it distinctive if it is to thrive economically.

The NZFC's understanding of 'heritage, identity and creativity' is important in this context as it is the central funding body of filmmaking in Aotearoa NZ, and administrator of the state's investment in international filmmaking onshore. So how it understands *te ao Māori* and how that may have changed in recent years is relevant to this discussion. Launching TPA in 2007, the NZFC (2008) called it a "Māori Responsiveness Strategy" and acknowledged that "(d)eveloping Māori storytelling and story tellers is fundamental

to the NZFC's purpose" (p. 9). In its current Statement of Intent, the NZFC (2021a) now states "Māori voices as tangata whenua are integral to the success of the film industry" (p. 10) which is a noticeable shift from the previous language, framing the importance of Māori to 'success' and not just 'purpose'. A review of the top twenty local films at the box office in Aotearoa NZ indicates the reason for this[37] (Appendix C). Of the twenty, six are directed by Māori, including three of the top four; eight have Māori in producing or executive producing roles; five are written by Māori. Overall, films telling Māori stories, including those by Pākehā creatives, number nine out of the twenty, which is clearly a measure of success in terms of selling Māori stories to the domestic audience. The NZFC's increasing support for Māori filmmakers can be seen as a response to this as much as it is a response to its responsibilities under the Treaty of Waitangi.

Aside from funding the development, production and to some extent the marketing of feature films, the NZFC has throughout its existence supported individual filmmakers and many Māori writers, directors and producers have been supported in their career growth, through short film funding, festival travel, attendance at local and international workshops, and training opportunities including internships and mentoring. With the demise of TPA in 2014, the NZFC set up He Ara, a funding tranche specifically designed to support development of Māori and Pasifika films and from 2018 this was added to with the establishment of the Rautaki funding. In 2018/19, the NZFC reports that it gave development funding to three feature films in *te reo,* and that Māori were represented in two out of three key creative roles in 21% of the feature films financed by them (NZFC, 2021b). In initial data released for 2019/20, the NZFC notes that $2.4m was approved for production funding for a new feature in *te reo* (NZFC, 2021c).

The progressive growth in features made by Māori creatives, as noted, accelerated from 2013/2014 on (see Appendix A). 2014 marked the release of both *The Dark Horse* and *What We Do In The Shadows*, which followed *Mt Zion*, released in 2013. All three are among the top twenty films at the local box office. 2014 also saw the release of *The Pā Boys*, developed through TPA and therefore representing a step forward in the enabling of film production following a Māori *kaupapa.* The year also saw the arrival of *The Dead Lands*, the first feature since *Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti* in 2002 to be completely in *te reo*. Two years later, 2016, *Poi E, Mahana* and *Hunt for the Wilderpeople* were

37. This list does not include Peter Jackson's films or others like Jane Campion's *The Piano* as they are funded and owned by offshore studios.

released with *Wilderpeople* entering the top twenty and settling in at number one. This represents a run of films which were very popular with local audiences and this can be seen as a fundamental contributor to the improving outlook for Māori filmmakers. The local audience provides the bedrock for international careers, which is important because making feature films and high-end drama for television/streaming is a very high-cost business and creatives wishing to establish solid careers in these areas need to look beyond local shores. When a producer sets out to finance a film, one of the first questions asked by potential international distributors or sales agents is how much investment there is from a local distributor. Evidence of such investment shows that the local market believes the project has promise and without it, finding international investment can become extremely difficult.[38] Given this, popularity with the local audience is very important in ensuring a film has a substantial life and here the question of stars is relevant.

The importance of stars is fundamental to the film industry. While a star may be unable to rescue a badly-conceived or badly-made film, their presence lifts a film's visibility with the media and with the film-going public. *Mt Zion* is an example of a film which benefitted from the casting of a star, in that case the singer Stan Walker in his first acting role. Equally, both the *Sione's Wedding* films (2006 & 2012) can be considered to owe their position in the top twenty local film list to the popularity of their stars, the comedy group The Naked Samoans. While Aotearoa NZ has produced its share of local and international acting stars, head and shoulders above all of them are two preeminent talents, the writer/director/producers Peter Jackson and Taika Waititi. The presence of Waititi on the international stage, bringing his singular talent to both his own films and his Hollywood work, is a factor in the increasing profile of Māori cinema. As producer/actor Cliff Curtis, a star in his own right, says:

> *The system understands artistic merit. There's a recognition of that. But what really wakes it up, really gets people's attention, is commercial viability. (Curtis, interview, 2018)*

Waititi drew international attention from his early short film, *Two Cars, One Night*, which was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Live Action Short Film in 2005. His second feature, *Boy*, became the most successful feature released in Aotearoa NZ in 2010, and held that position until it was topped by his *Hunt for the Wilderpeople* in 2016. His

38. At the time of writing it is unclear how this situation will change as a result of the effect of Covid on the exhibition sector worldwide.

career now spans executive producing film and television in Aotearoa NZ as well as internationally, while he continues his work both as a director of international commercial films and television, and as a writer/director/producer of his own work such as his Oscar-winner *Jojo Rabbit* (2019). Waititi's career can be seen as a 21st Century response to Barry Barclay's original vision. Barclay saw the dangers of prescription and from his first written publication he addressed the complexity of the arguments he was making for Indigenous ownership of Indigenous image-making:

> *A Māori film might be very violent, or frivolous. Māori films might deal with incest, robbery, or love under the apple tree – who is to say? A Māori film might have nothing whatsoever to do with what both Māori and Pākehā are pleased to think of as "the Māori style of life". (Barclay, 1990, p. 20)*

Partly as a result of the increasing targeting of funding towards development for Māori companies and Māori films by both the NZFC and NZOA, a growing number of Māori production companies are producing a range of work at higher budget levels and targeting international audiences, as international streamers open up formerly inaccessible markets to niche product, including Indigenous and non-English language productions. Looking at the range of films made by Māori producers in the last three years, they include a number which are not specifically Māori in terms of theme, story, director, or stars, including *Stray* (2018), *The Breaker Upperers* (2018), *Reunion* (2020) and *Baby, Done* (2020). The 2020 announcement of future projects from Piki Films, the production company owned by Taika Waititi and Carthew Neal, is indicative of how a company with solid foundations can take advantage of the growing attention being paid to Māori film production. In June 2020, the US industry magazine *Screen Daily* announced the launch of three projects by Piki, with Māori writers "focusing on stories about the effects of colonisation" (Dalton, 2020, para. 1). Piki producer Morgan Waru (Ngāti Porou) comments: "Globally, these calls for racial equality and reconciliation of the past are louder than ever. We feel so passionately about those stories, and we have the means and momentum to bring them to a global audience" (Dalton, 2020, para. 15). Tainui Stephens frames this international moment in a broader context, not just in terms of the audience, but in terms of the ambition of Indigenous filmmakers:

> *We've had a lot of contact with Indigenous filmmakers worldwide and we're … very common in what we want to do … In the era of fake news and partisan storytelling and*

> *franchised entertainment, I think people are starting to feel the lack of stories that actually speak to the truths of our existence. … And Indigenous stories, yes they're fresh, they're exotic and all that, but they also speak to our humanity in ways that the planet needs to hear. (Stephens, interview, 2018)*

Stephens' reference to contact among Indigenous filmmakers worldwide reflects work done over many years by Māori producers in the industry to establish and maintain contacts with international colleagues. Those working internationally, such as Merata Mita, who was artistic director of the Sundance Institute Native Lab from 2000 to 2009 (Sundance, 2016), have cemented friendships and working relationships that have benefitted the industry in Aotearoa NZ. Organisations like NAW have sponsored repeat workshops by international filmmakers from Canada, Australia and the US (Henry & Wikaire, 2013). The Wairoa Māori Film Festival was established in 2005, the first of several Māori film festivals now running annually. The festival with the highest profile, the Māoriland Film Festival founded in Otaki in 2014, is a partner in NATIVe-Indigenous Cinema, which promotes Indigenous film and video production at the European Film Market in Berlin (Māoriland, 2015), a key international market along with Cannes and Los Angeles. Ventures such as this sponsor fellowships to introduce Indigenous filmmakers to potential film partners and buyers worldwide, and in 2020 the NATIVe-Indigenous Cinema Fellowship was established, open to Indigenous producers from Canada, Aotearoa NZ, US, Chile, Greenland/Denmark, Australia and Sápmi Territory (Norway, Sweden, Finland, Russia): this gives an indication of the range of Indigenous territories from which Indigenous filmmakers now regularly connect internationally. These connections are now leading to international co-productions, such as the Canada-Aotearoa NZ 2021 co-production *Night Raiders* with Ainsley Gardiner and Chelsea Winstanley producing and Taika Waititi executive producing, and the Australia-Aotearoa NZ 2022 co-production *We Are Still Here* with Mia Henry-Tierney producing.[39]

Finally, the growing influence of international streamers including social media platforms is set to have increasing impact on the industry, mainstream and Indigenous, as evidenced by recent developments in the funding sector. Examples include Every Voice, a joint initiative between NZOA, Screen Australia and TikTok "cultivat(ing) original Australian and New Zealand content that resonates with global online audiences" (Screen Australia,

39. I have been an executive producer on this film since 2018.

2021), and Te Puna Kairangi/Premium Production Fund, an investment by the government of $50 million as part of the screen industry Covid-recovery package. This fund brings together the three industry funding bodies – NZFC, NZOA and TMP – as partners to support growth in the sector through promoting production at a higher level of ambition than previously possible (NZFC, 2021d). The fund supports feature films and series across a broad range of genres including drama, documentary, children's and animation. It requires a Māori story to have two out of three Māori key creatives and requires that the intellectual property (IP) – that is, ownership of the project – reflects a commitment to growth within the Māori sector in accordance with the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi (NZFC, 2021d).[40]

3.6 Conclusion

The previous chapter, together with this one, has offered a detailed exploration of the origins of Māori film production and its consolidation into a recognisable 'domain', that is, a clearly identifiable subdivision of culture which can be discussed as a separate element in the cultural landscape. Several key themes emerge from these two chapters. Firstly, the growth of the domain and its individuation from the surrounding ecology of mainstream film production in Aotearoa NZ has proceeded in parallel with the evolution of the social and political milieu of the country, in terms of the recognition of the place of Māori as the Indigenous people of Aotearoa NZ. The activist environment of the 1970s fostered engagement by both young and older Māori, particularly around the need to revive *te reo,* and the importance of events like the 1972 Māori Language Petition and the 1985 Māori Language Claim cannot be underestimated as foundational events in terms of the development of Māori media production generally, including film. The establishment of *te reo* as an official language underpins the work of many, many Māori in developing *kohanga reo, kura kaupapa* and *wānanga* to embed in the fabric of the nation *mātauranga Māori* (Māori knowledge) as equal to Western knowledge. This is a work in progress and is part of the ongoing project to address the inheritance of colonisation; its particular value in terms of Māori film production is that it is now delivering into the film industry, as in other industries, young people who stand on solid ground as Māori and can bring their Māori language and worldview to their work alongside their English-language skills. The relatively recent shift by mainstream funders NZFC and NZOA to actively work to support and promote Māori culture and language

40. I am the Independent Chair of this Fund (2020–2022).

can be seen here also as a late but welcome understanding of the important part they play in the media landscape in terms of their ability to help or hinder Māori aspirations.

Secondly, the growth of Māori film production corresponds with the development of Māori screen production as a whole. MTS's success in bringing the Indigenous voice and Indigenous *tikanga* "into the national imaginary" (Abel, 2013, p. 211) since its launch in 2004 has created a bedrock for the growth of a local audience which is attuned to the breadth and vitality of the Māori world. The contrast between the response to Barry Barclay's series *Tangata Whenua* in 1974 and to MTS's all-day coverage of Anzac Day from 2006 shows the trajectory of this growth; the expansion of the remits of both NZOA and TMP to fund Māori screen work on online channels and radio, as well as television, reflects their understanding that the audience for this screen work now spreads across all media. The fact that both funders are now working together to support the Māori media sector signals an expanding commitment to growing both the production capacity and the audience for Maori screen production. The development of production skills in television and online work is the entrée for many into film production and creates a financial base for many production companies which also work in the film sector, so growth of opportunity in these areas is reflected in growth of opportunity in the domain of Māori film production. In this, Indigenous filmmakers in Aotearoa NZ are no different from their counterparts in the Indigenous screen industries of Canada and Australia.

Thirdly, the history of Māori film production has been shown to be one of struggle and without the deep commitment of many who have gone before the present generation, the current position in which one can be guardedly optimistic would not exist. It must be acknowledged that this optimism is a personal view and I believe it would be very unlikely to be shared by Barry Barclay or Merata Mita if they were here today. Barclay and Mita, together with the somewhat less polemical Don Selwyn, were key drivers in the establishment of Māori film production and their work was paralleled by the commitment of Larry Parr. They represent many others, some of whom are named in this thesis, whose courage in persisting in the face of difficult odds has been crucial in enabling those who work in Māori film production now. Their willingness to criticise funding agencies and lobby for more resources, both as individuals and through organisations such as Te Manu Aute and NAW, led over time to improvements in practice within those agencies. However, hopes expressed eloquently by Barclay, Mita and

Selwyn to embed *tikanga Māori* deeply in the ways the production industry conducts its practice remain to a large extent unfulfilled.

Fourth, it is unusual for Māori working in production for the big screen to work solely in a Māori environment. While the number and skill-level of Māori in production continues to grow, most jobs are in the mainstream production sector. Large, expensive productions such as the *Avatar* series and large companies such as Weta Workshop provide training and experience opportunities that are unmatched by the Māori production sector. Equally it is taking a long time for Māori key creatives – directors, producers, writers – to establish their right to funding on the same basis as non-Māori and while this situation has improved in recent years, unless a story is seen to have 'universal' appeal, it remains very difficult to fund. It can be argued that this is true for all film stories from Aotearoa NZ, but the issue of who decides what is universal remains, despite the improvements that the funders have made to their processes. The converse of this is that many Pākehā have approached Māori film stories with an understanding that has assisted the growth of Māori film production, key among them being producers like John O'Shea and Robin Scholes, who supported the filmmaking of directors Barry Barclay and Lee Tamahori among others. This situation is likely to continue, as Māori in the industry make their own choices of where in the industry to work, who to work with and what stories to tell; what is key is the availability of opportunity, and the growth of Māori film production since 2015 supports the sense that opportunities for Māori key creatives in the industry are increasing.

Fifth, as the screen industry in Aotearoa NZ has become more entwined with the international world of screen production, so the Māori film production sector is becoming progressively more engaged internationally. The English-language series adaptation of the film *The Dead Lands* for US streamer Shudder is an example of this and reflects the recognition that the two elements that distinguish films from Aotearoa NZ internationally are the landscape and the Indigenous culture.[41] This can drive decision-making by producers when deciding which stories to develop and by funders and investors when deciding where to invest: as a result, Māori stories or stories with Māori characters are increasingly sought after. Given the progressive disapproval of Māori screen work being made without Māori creative control, there are growing opportunities for Māori key

41. An arguable addition to this group is the Kiwi sense of humour which is now winning international audiences, for example, Flight of the Conchords, *Wellington Paranormal*, Rose Matafeo (McConnell, 2021).

creatives and for Māori producers in terms of the ownership of IP. Additionally, the recognition that 'Brand New Zealand' is strongly dependent, particularly in terms of design and story, on the Indigenous identity of Aotearoa NZ ensures that funding is available to support the international promotion of Māori films and filmmakers alongside their mainstream compatriots. However, it is work by Māori filmmakers themselves that has driven much of the increasing attention. The success of an individual like Taika Waititi helps draw the light towards all Māori filmmakers, and in terms of Indigenous production, the establishment of a world-class festival like Māoriland assists in promoting the making of co-productions with other Indigenous film industries and helps drive the visibility of Māori films in the international landscape.

These themes draw together the threads of the exploration in Chapters 2 and 3. As noted, Csikszentmihalyi (1996) suggests creative output within a particular domain can be enabled or constrained by "the clarity of structure, the centrality within the culture and accessibility" (p. 38) and these three points are addressed in turn.

CLARITY OF STRUCTURE

Clarity of structure effectively requires that the set of rules and practices that apply to the domain, in other words its internal logic, can be learned and applied successfully by newcomers so that they will be able to contribute work that has a chance of being absorbed into the domain. In feature filmmaking, Māori or non-Māori, many of the skills needed are quite clearly defined, for instance competent sound recording or effective camera operating. When major technological shifts happen, such as with the capture of images which has shifted successively from celluloid to magnetic tape to computer hard drive, remarkably complex rules are revised and new practices spread across the industry very quickly. These are practices of craft which must be applied successfully for any element of creativity to blossom. Skills such as screen acting and screenwriting are more subjectively judged, but even here the reason why some performers or screenwriters are more successful than others is not just to do with talent; it is also to do with how the individual absorbs and chooses to apply the rules and practices which enable their talent to be recognised, encouraged and rewarded. The best actors and screenwriters make their craft invisible behind their talent in the same way that the best cinematographers do, despite the fact that the latter's craft is arguably more able to be clearly defined. The same is true of producers.

For Māori film production, the question is what rules and practices apply that are particular to this domain, and this is perhaps best answered by looking at the progress in terms of achieving story sovereignty, for the rules and practices are essentially to do with being able to apply the technology of filmmaking in ways that speak with a Māori voice and come from a Māori heart. What this actually means ranges from Taika Waititi's view that his film *Eagle vs Shark* is a Māori film simply because he made it, despite its lack of anything that identifies it as Māori, to producer Quinton Hita's view that he himself is unlikely to make another film "until the Film Commission … find a way to meet me on my Māori terms" (interview, 2018). It can, however, be seen that whatever story Māori filmmakers choose to tell, the politics of investment have changed progressively since the establishment of modern filmmaking here in the 1970s. It is a very rare film that is made in Aotearoa NZ without some form of government investment from mainstream funding bodies, and the expectations of these bodies are now clearly supportive of Māori aspirations for control over Māori screen storytelling. Until recently, this commitment was not matched by an appropriate level of funding but the recent commitment to growth within the sector in accordance with the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi is a further step forward. How this translates in practice can be seen in how the Māori television sector has grown since the establishment of MTS in 2004: there is now a thriving Māori production sector with Māori-owned production companies bringing their own understanding of *te reo me ngā tikanga* to the *kaupapa* of Māori image-making, in filmmaking as in television and online, and the specificity of these practices is reviewed further in the next chapter. The key point being made here is that the existence of the Māori production sector and the increasing number of films being made by Māori producers indicates an internal logic to this domain, reflecting the application of Māori knowledge to the technology and art of filmmaking that continues to develop as the 21st Century progresses.

CENTRALITY WITHIN THE CULTURE

If a domain is central to the culture, it will attract people with talent and it has the possibility of investment. The argument for the centrality of Māori filmmaking to the culture rests on two elements: the enormous increase in visibility in local filmmaking as a whole in the last thirty years in Aotearoa NZ, and the increasing acknowledgement of the importance of *te ao Māori* as a bedrock of the nation's culture. These two elements have come together to create a situation where filmmaking is seen as a viable career for young people (including Māori) as executive producer of *The Dead Lands* Matthew

Metcalfe comments: "Twenty years ago, film and television was mostly a hobbyist industry for a lot of people here. Now you can hardly walk down the street without falling over someone who has an Oscar" (Brzeski, 2019, para. 5). Where in the past the gateway for young Māori wanting to be in film was very narrow and generally via working in the mainstream industry, now starting a career in a Māori company, including in *te reo Māori*, is possible. Equally, the increase in visibility of Māori creative talent, locally and internationally, has risen substantially on the back of the success of Taika Waititi, Jemaine Clement, Julian Dennison and others, and as producer Tom Hern notes: "There is a whole new wave of filmmakers traveling the path that Taika and his crew trailblazed" (Brzeski, 2019, para. 12).

In terms of attracting investment, this thesis has shown progressive attention being paid to acknowledging and supporting Māori filmmakers' aspirations and argues that this, together with the increasing attraction of young people with talent, has contributed to the increase in films being written, directed and produced by Māori over the last ten years. The direct commissioning of the series *The Dead Lands* by a US streamer is indicative of an understanding which is commonly acknowledged in the industry, which is that *te ao Māori* is a key cultural identifier of Aotearoa NZ for international investors in the screen sector; the fact that, outside of *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, the films *Once Were Warriors* and *Whale Rider* remain arguably the best-known films internationally from this country underlines this. The terms noted above of the rules around the Premium Production/Te Puna Kairangi Fund can be read as confirmation that the key investors in filmmaking in this country, the government funding bodies, understand the importance of ensuring the growth of this domain and therefore its place in the overall culture of Aotearoa NZ.

ACCESSIBILITY

Csikszentmihalyi (1996) posits that the better the access to information within a domain, the quicker and more likely it is for innovation to be accepted; subsequently, the more likely it is that the innovation will be built on by newcomers. In other words, one needs to look at how new ideas are recognised and disseminated when assessing a domain. Filmmaking thrives on new ideas and, with the rise of streaming, what would once have been considered niche material is now being made available to very large international audiences, as a review of currently available drama and comedy on Netflix quickly reveals. Additionally, what was once a much more hierarchical structure in Aotearoa NZ

has been democratised by, for example, the emergence of online competitions for screenplays and short films meaning those whose task it is to identify talent on behalf of studios or investors are looking to the internet to make their latest 'discovery'. From the perspective of new Māori filmmakers, sponsorship to markets like the European Film Market and internships with international productions shooting onshore are the types of structural support accessible now that were unavailable even a few years ago, and such initiatives bring them into contact with a wide cross-section of experienced contributors to the ecology of film production internationally who are able to advance their careers. Conversely, the creative ideas of the newcomers feed into that ecology, and it can be argued that filmmaking, both within the Māori domain and in other cultures and markets, is fundamentally built on the quick discovery, absorption and distribution of new ideas, driven in the case of the Māori film production domain by greater access to investment and greater access to audiences.

Finally, Csikszentmihalyi (1988/2014b) notes that "the lack of common conceptual commitment, the fragmentation of the domain, guarantees that … recognition will remain for a long time parochial" (p. 55) and this is clearly shown in the development of the domain of Māori film production. It is only within the last ten years that the number of Māori key creatives succeeding in making feature films has increased noticeably and the reasons for this have been canvassed. It is clear that there is now a 'common conceptual commitment' on behalf of the majority investors in filmmaking in Aotearoa NZ, the mainstream government funding bodies, to accelerating the development of Māori filmmakers and to supporting the making of Māori-owned films, both in English and in *te reo.* Additionally, there is now recognition among private investors such as international streamers that Māori stories have the potential to travel and are therefore worthy of investment. The issue for this domain is not attracting newcomers but sustaining those who succeed in entering the industry and enabling them to tell their own stories. The increasing structural support that is currently available can be seen as contributing to achieving this. However, the increase in support from government funders to all filmmaking, Māori and non-Māori, will only continue while the industry continues to have what is judged by politicians in present-day economic terms as 'success', that is, continues to contribute strongly to the country's GDP. Equally, the concern among international analysts is that the probable effects of the Covid pandemic long-term are impossible to ascertain at this stage, but it is notable that the strong likelihood of governments worldwide heading into a long period of having to pay down debt means

that no firm assumptions can be made about continuing government investment in the arts (Koljonen, 2021; Stoltz et al., 2021).

I will now turn from the macro to the micro in the next chapter to explore the 'individual' in Csikszentmihalyi's model by drawing upon industry colleagues of mine, Māori film producers with life experiences and therefore careers that have differed substantially from mine. I look first in detail at how Csikszentmihalyi and his colleagues position the individual in their research and then comment on the complex status of the individual in my own research, which is conducted within a culture which considers the collective nature of humans as fundamental to society. Further, filmmaking itself is almost always a collective enterprise, which also complicates the position of the individual. This discussion is reflected in the body of the chapter, where I tease out key themes to illustrate where we as producers share common ground, where we differ, and what this can tell us about the present-day life and work of the Māori screen producer.

CHAPTER 4: The individual – The producer

4.1 Introduction

The progress discussed in the previous two chapters, and the moderately optimistic tone of my conclusions that the domain of Māori filmmaking has a visible and viable future, must be weighed against the voices of individual Māori producers working in the domain to place my optimism into relief and consider whether it is justified. My own experience, as noted, has been that of someone raised and educated in the Pākehā world with the benefits that are afforded in this society to those who are not visibly non-white. As a result, my life-story illustrates Stuart Hall's (1990) definition of cultural identity as a matter of 'becoming' as well as 'being', experienced in my case as a lived progression towards an understanding of my *taha Māori* that will never equal my innate understanding of my *taha Pākehā*, but which nevertheless enables me to walk in both worlds. I believe that my background and education contribute strongly to the guarded optimism I bring to this work, in essence because any struggles I have experienced as a producer have not been the result of overt racial discrimination. The producers I interviewed for this study bring a variety of life experiences different from mine to their work and this is reflected in the following discussion.

The interviewees are:

- **LARRY PARR** (tribal affiliations: Ngāti Raukawa, Muaūopoko)

Figure 7: Larry Parr (Te Māngai Pāho)

- Producer *Came A Hot Friday, Constance, Queen City Rocker, Magik and Rose, E Tipu E Rea (tv series), ANZAC Day – Nā Rātou Mō Tātou (tv);* associate producer *Sleeping Dogs, Smash Palace;* producer/director *A Soldier's Tale;* writer/director *The Makutu on Mrs Jones (short).*
- Currently *Kaihautū* Te Māngai Pāho (Māori Broadcasting Funding Agency).

- 2018 appointed Officer of NZ Order of Merit of services to film and television.

- **AINSLEY GARDINER** (Te Whānau a Apanui, Ngāti Pikiao, Ngāti Awa)

Figure 8: Ainsley Gardiner (NZ Government, CC BY 4.0)

- Producer *Kombi Nation, Two Cars One Night (short), Eagle vs Shark*, *Boy*, *The Pā Boys*, *The Breaker Upperers*, *Reunion, Night Raiders*; executive producer *Fantail;* writer/director *Waru, Cousins.*
- 2010 SPADA (NZ Producers' organisation) Independent Producer of the Year Award with Cliff Curtis.
- 2018 appointed Member of NZ Order of Merit for services to film and television.
- 2019 co-recipient of the Merata Mita Fellowship from the Sundance Institute (US).
- 2019 Matariki Awards, winner Te Waipuna-ā-Rangi award for arts and entertainment.

- **DESRAY ARMSTRONG** (Te Aitanga a Hauiti, Ngāti Porou)

Figure 9: Desray Armstrong

- Producer *Stray, Coming Home in the Dark, Reunion, Juniper, Millie Lies Low.*

- 2016 Women in Film and Television Awards, Woman to Watch Award.
- 2018 SPADA Independent Producer of the Year Award.
- 2019 Ngā Aho Whakaari Awards, Te Kai Ngakahi Melissa Wikaire Award.

- **CLIFF CURTIS** (Ngāti Hauiti, Te Arawa)

Figure 10: Cliff Curtis (Wikimedia, CC BY-SA 2.0)

- Producer *Eagle vs Shark, Boy;* executive producer *The Dark Horse, Muru, Merata: How Mum Decolonised the Screen (doc), Herbs: Songs of Freedom (doc.)*
- 2010 SPADA Independent Producer of the Year Award with Ainsley Gardiner.
- 2016 Matariki Awards, winner Te Waipuna-ā-Rangi award for arts and entertainment and winner Te Tohu Tiketike o Matariki Supreme Award.

- **QUINTON HITA** (Ngā Puhi)

Figure 11: Quinton Hita (NZ Herald)

- Producer *Mt Zion, Ahikāroa (tv series), Māui's Hook (doc).*
- 2019 Finalist *NZ Herald* New Zealander of the Year for his work nurturing young

people and supporting Māori language development.

- 2020 Matariki Awards, Winner Te Waitī award for championing revitalisation of Māori language and culture.

- **TAINUI STEPHENS** (Te Rarawa)

Figure 12: Tainui Stephens (Conbrio Media)

- Producer *ANZAC Day – Nā Rātou Mō Tātou (tv), Rain of the Children (doc), Whina;* co-producer *River Queen, The Dead Lands;* associate producer *The Strength of Water;* director *Let My Whakapapa Speak (doc).*
- Co-founder of Māori Screen Funding body Te Paepae Ataata (funded by NZ Film Commission).
- Co-founder of the Māoriland Film Festival, now in its ninth year.

The exploration of the individual in this study is directed by the research question: What are the key influences on the screen producer's decision-making process? This question leads us first on a journey of origins to excavate common elements in the formation of the *habitus* of the six producers interviewed, so we can understand how their personal and social history informs their choices and actions. The chapter subsequently identifies and explores key commonalities in the interviewees' professional experiences, what they see as foundational to the work they do, what they consider enables and constrains their achievements. The narrative discussions generated by these interviews intersect in varying ways with my own experience, and the similarities and differences between us all shed light on the range of backgrounds, personal qualities and professional ambitions of those of us who are experienced producers in the domain of Māori film production.

To frame this discussion, as noted, I will first delineate the theoretical approach Csikszentmihalyi brings to the concept of the individual and also comment on the status of the individual in this research given the collective nature of *te ao Māori* and, similarly, the collective nature of filmmaking.

4.2 The individual in the creative system

Csikszentmihalyi and Wolfe (2000/2014) suggest the systems model "makes it possible to see the contributions of the person to the creative process in a theoretically coherent way" (p. 169), because it focuses attention on what qualities the individual needs in order to be able to come up with a novel idea and introduce it successfully to the domain. Motivation is a key characteristic, together with other cognitive factors appropriate to the particular domain the individual is operating within. Additional factors include personality traits such as divergent thinking, a willingness to break rules, confidence in one's own abilities, and the ability and willingness to engage with people of influence within the domain. In Csikszentmihalyi and Wolfe's view, the creative individual has the ability to bring opposing personal qualities into play as the occasion demands, for instance being sociable and gregarious when gathering ideas, but able to withdraw when needed to concentrate on their work in isolation. They portray this as the ability of the individual to "operate through the entire spectrum of human characteristics" (p. 170) so that ultimately the creative person exhibits a variety of behaviours in response to the varying stimuli they are receiving from the domain.

Csikszentmihalyi (1998/2014c) points to some key aspects to be borne in mind when exploring the individual. First, in order to contribute to the domain in a creative way, the individual must have access, and this depends on both external and internal factors. External factors include the cultural capital at a person's disposal, and this is reliant on opportunities afforded to the individual through their parents, their early life and their exposure to information appropriate to the development of an interest in the particular domain in question. External factors may also include what opportunities are available to enter and learn about the domain. Such opportunities may arise in a person's life quite by chance: for example, the emergence of a filmmaker like Peter Jackson and his decision to base himself in New Zealand has created hundreds of jobs in the film industry in Aotearoa NZ, particularly in post-production and animation, that were simply unavailable before the 1990s (Grant, 2007). Internal factors besides motivation may include qualities such as temperament, curiosity and determination. The latter may be a particularly

important quality where there is a lack of structural opportunities: for example, aspiring filmmakers or film students growing up in small town Aotearoa NZ will need to move to a bigger city to access the appropriate education and it is likely they will need to stay in the city to find employment, engage with networks and develop their skills.[42]

The ability to make a creative contribution to a particular domain requires both skill and inclination. Innate ability or talent certainly helps but Csikszentmihalyi (1998/2014c) points to cognitive style and personality as much as motivation and talent as being central qualities in enabling the individual to progress in their chosen domain (p. 117). This underlines the importance of a marriage between personal abilities and context in enabling the individual to succeed, and such an outcome is reliant on the ability of the individual to internalise both the rules of the domain and the expectations of the field or 'network of experts' whose judgement underpins what is recognised and absorbed into the domain. In the context of this study, this means the individual producer must absorb and understand the rules of filmmaking in general as practised within the small-country ecology of Aotearoa NZ's screen industry, as well as understanding the particularities of the domain of Māori film production. Allied to this, the producer must internalise the expectations of the mainstream field, which overlays and to a considerable extent controls the work of the Māori film producer, even when working on specifically Māori projects. To this the producer must then add their understanding of the expectations of those who constitute the Māori film production field and, as will be discussed in the next chapter, this field may include Indigenous and mainstream audiences, both locally and internationally to a greater or lesser degree, depending on the production. As Csikszentmihalyi (1996, p. 105) notes, to succeed in their chosen domain, individuals will be constantly paying attention to the work of others to identify new ideas and insights as they emerge as well as continually developing their own domain knowledge, for example taking on board new techniques as they are developed. In the domain of filmmaking as in the screen industry generally, the requirement to keep up to date with new technical and creative knowledge is paramount. Csikszentmihalyi further points to the individual's need to monitor their own creative work to ensure it is developing in such a way that it will garner attention and respect, while at the same time tracking the shifting

42. Moving into the 2020s, this structural element in the screen landscape shows signs of changing as the internet eases the problem of working at a distance from the main centres. Additionally, government investment in the regions currently includes supporting regional arts initiatives. A Māori illustration of this is the growth of the Steambox Collective centred in Rotorua (Desmarais, 2021).

currents of 'taste' that will influence whether the field will be open to the work they present.

Csikszentmihalyi's delineation of the qualities an individual needs to successfully contribute a novel idea to the domain can be applied equally, I would argue, whether one is considering the place of the producer in a mainstream film world or in a Māori film world. What differs is the values that the individual brings to their work or, to put it another way, the worldview which animates their thinking. In my discussion of the emergence of a philosophy of Indigenous filmmaking (see section 2.5, above), the word 'community' is mentioned repeatedly and this is because the aspirations of Māori are deeply rooted in the concept of collectivity (Smith, L.T., 2006). Reverend Māori Marsden, *tohunga* (expert) and scholar, defines the obligations one has in *te ao Māori* to serve others as "serving one's extended self" (Royal, 2003, p. 42) and comments "Māori social values are based on social obligations which always entail a measure of self-sacrifice" (p. 43). Thus, service to others – the *whānau*, the *hapū*, the *iwi* – is fundamental to the Māori way of thinking and acting. However, there have always been leaders. There have always been those who, whether they chose it or whether it was thrust upon them, have emerged to be the person who points the way for the collective, allowing for the fact that the collective then has the final say over whether that direction is followed. In the same way, a successful producer leads a collective enterprise by identifying the common goal and having the skill to take everyone on the team with them in the pursuit. So it is not difficult to see filmmaking as a highly apposite field for Māori to be working in, given that, as noted in my overview of the thesis above, the artists and craftspeople who come together to make a film are, for the duration, a family or *whānau* working for the common good of the project and bringing their individual talents and commitments to the collective enterprise. Indeed, this very point is made explicitly by producer Desray Armstrong (see section 4.4, below) and as becomes evident through this chapter, the producers interviewed here all continually tie their own success and wellbeing back to the success and wellbeing of their wider Māori community.

4.3 Beginnings

My own decision to become a producer is a moment I can clearly remember. My early career as an actor was proving to be deeply unsatisfactory by my late twenties when, driven by a twin desire to do something different and get bread on the table, I talked my way into a job with the national broadcaster Television New Zealand as a script editor. I

had little idea what a script editor did when I suggested to the company that they should hire me, but surprisingly they agreed to take me on and after a month of rapid on-the-job training, I found myself in sole charge of the script output of TVNZ's Drama Department in Auckland. While I do not remember the exact day of my epiphany, I do remember concluding almost immediately when I started watching my colleagues in the Drama Department at work that the best job was clearly that of producer. As a result, I embarked on a course of self-directed upskilling which involved learning all that I could about the key things a producer needs to understand, which is to say all aspects of the craft of making a screen production. This culminated after five years in my acceptance onto an in-house course to train as a director, with the specific intention of then being promoted to the position of producer on the TVNZ hit drama series *Gloss* (1987). This very brief summary of my own journey into producing shows a combination of opportunism and determination that is common in the stories of the producers I interviewed. In my case, I took a job about which I knew little that put me in a position to see very clearly what a producer did and to realise it was what I wanted to do. I also had enough motivation to spend years upskilling myself by observing and learning about the range of production crafts I needed to understand. Serendipity, in my case, played a role in that my timing coincided with the start of a golden run of New Zealand television drama creation through the 1980s (Dunleavy, 2005; Dunleavy & Joyce, 2011) which meant I was subsequently able to develop my producing skills making a range of quality mainstream drama series at a time when very few Māori stories were being dramatised for television or cinema, and opportunities for women to produce were only just opening up.

Serendipity similarly figures in the journeys of several of my interviewees:

> *There's no great moment or thought-out rationale for my getting into (producing). You know, I just happened to be Johnny on the spot really.*
>
> *– Larry Parr*

> *I became a producer earlier than I wanted to be. I didn't want to do it because I was just enjoying learning about the craft of directing ... And then (my boss) said to me: 'Well, if you're a producer you can choose what you want to direct' (So I said) 'Yeah, ok, sweet'.*
>
> *– Tainui Stephens*

> *I didn't want to become a producer. I wanted to become a writer/ director. But I got my first work placement with Larry (Parr) ...*

> *Larry is one of those rare producers who's really good at everything, creative, business. So I kind of got exposed to producing as a much more creative thing ... It was just a side-step that I wasn't really aware I'd taken until I had taken it.*
>
> *– Ainsley Gardiner*

It is not uncommon for life journeys to reveal paths unseen while they are being trod, but it is noticeable how most of the interviewees, who view themselves as falling into producing, nevertheless are able to take advantage of the producing opportunity when it presents itself. De Rond (2014) posits that serendipity is mistakenly viewed as synonymous with luck, chance or providence. He makes the case that serendipity should be understood as a 'capability' rather than a 'happening' and suggests that human agency is central in the operation of this concept. I share de Rond's view that human agency is implicit in serendipity, a view that can be expressed in the vernacular as 'You make your own luck' and the journeys of my interviewees, as well as myself, tend to support this view. The interviewees were ready to take advantage of opportunity because they already had a considerable range of applicable skills, skills that started with their education.

In the most relevant survey available regarding the value of education to the career of producer, Cameron et al. (2010) found Australian screen producers did not see education "as being of direct benefit to their career as producer" (p. 97). Despite this, 75% of the producers surveyed held at least a bachelor's degree qualification, with 42% holding a postgraduate degree. The authors of that study conclude that despite the producers' dismissal of the value of tertiary education, the prevalence of this education would suggest at least intangible benefits. With one exception, all the producers discussed in this study, myself included, were educated to tertiary level, through either university or drama school, though none to postgraduate level. The value of education per se was not discussed in the interviews and it is noteworthy that only one interviewee brought up his education when asked about why he became a producer.[43] What the level and particularly the focus of education (for example, performance, law) does suggest is that the producers were all able, in the formative years of their careers, to win the attention of those recruiting for television or film companies or they were developing the entrepreneurial skills that freelance producing requires.[44]

43. This absence of discussion of education likely reflects the fact I did not specifically frame a question around it. It may also reflect a normalisation of higher education in the families of those interviewed.
44. A more recent report from the US into producers' sustainability, while less relevant given the different industry size and structure, reports 85% of producers as tertiary educated (Ariganello, 2021).

The Australian researchers found that their results strongly suggested that "many producers arrive at their profession after qualifying for another" (Cameron et al., 2010, p. 98). My study similarly found that the interviewees followed different paths into the craft, paths where they acquired skills which all seem quite various, but which all offered foundations for their future work as producers:

> *I got a job at Te Māngai Pāho as a television administrator and ... just saw through the window all the kind of independent practitioners. They were busy making content before Māori Television went to air between 2002-2004. ... Then I was offered a job to train as a production manager...*
>
> *– Desray Armstrong*

> *I came from the Race Relations Office where I discovered in myself a certain capacity for diplomacy, a certain capacity for cultural interpretation ... I saw myself as a bridge-builder [and] I could see that taking those things into a storytelling industry ... would fulfil ultimately the aims of the Race Relations Office ...*
>
> *– Tainui Stephens*

> *Working for Kerridge Odeon introduced me to something totally different – commerce. And so when I went back to do my degree, instead of carrying on with Māori and politics, I switched to economics and basically I thought, wow, this is a whole new world...*
>
> *– Larry Parr*

These varied journeys affirm that there are many possible pathways into producing and also illustrate very practical, experiential mindsets. Mockros and Csikszentmihalyi (2000/2014) note that creative achievement "depends on a combination of important personal qualities including skills, ego strength, a sense of purpose, and the ability to mobilize and productively orchestrate aspects of one's life" (p.132). The ability to 'mobilize and productively orchestrate' their own talents to take advantage of opportunities presented is displayed in varying degrees by all the interviewees. Allied to this, most also spoke of specific influences, people whom they saw as critical to enabling their personal development. For some, this was a figure early in their life:

> *Bill Hohepa was my mentor through my formative years. He was a* kaumātua *[elder] from Waima and I had him as a high school*

> *teacher. ... I was fortunate enough to have him to the point where I would spend weekends at his house for years ...*
>
> *– Quinton Hita*

> *When I was a kid at school, a feature journalist for the* Auckland Star*, Harry Dansey, came out to school. ... And he said that when he came back from the war, he decided he needed to get a qualification ... so he worked full-time and he studied and he never went to bed before midnight. That was his rule. ... So I worked. I had a regime where I never went to bed before midnight.*
>
> *– Larry Parr*

For others, it was an industry figure whose support came into play later:

> *Barrie Osborne was like, why don't you ... start producing? I was like, wow, I didn't see that coming. I was basically a featured extra on* Rapanui *[a film which Osborne was producing]. But we got to know each other. He was very encouraging and I slept on couches at his place [in Hollywood] ...*
>
> *– Cliff Curtis*

> *Chelsea [Winstanley], definitely. She's been somebody who has seen the potential in me before I saw it in myself. ... I mean for me it's [being] validated, you know? ... Being asked to produce her doco and then for that professional relationship to continue has been really quite awesome ...*
>
> *– Desray Armstrong*

The intergenerational intersubjectivity represented here illustrates some of the elements Mockros and Csikszentmihalyi (2000/2014) discuss in their paper, "The Social Construction of Creative Lives", in which they make the point that mentorship can be less about teaching substantive skills and more about modelling ways of thinking, ways of working, ways of solving problems. An important element also, as seen in the two industry mentor excerpts above, is the contribution mentors can make to the development of self-confidence by providing confirmation of a person's ability and by assisting in their professional growth (Mockros and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000/2014). When I thought of mentors in my own life, I found that rather than one standing out, a range of older producers had provided me with inspiration. This echoes Mockros and Csikszentmihalyi's findings that men and women do not necessarily have similar experiences with mentoring, as they note most women in their study "cannot point to a particular person in the field who influenced them ... rather, they indicate that many people influenced their development" (p. 141).

The period during which the producers under discussion came into the industry has influenced how their careers were launched. Larry Parr was a young merchant banker in the 1970s when he helped raise the finance for *Sleeping Dogs,* the film that more than any other can be said to have launched the modern filmmaking era in New Zealand (Shelton, 2005):

> *The next day on page 3 of the* NZ Herald *there was about three columns: 'Broadbank to fund feature film'. ... Overnight I'd become the expert on film finance. ... So I went to Cannes. And I thought, hell, this looks like a lot more fun than being a lawyer in a bank. And I decided you know to become a film producer ... I think I was at that early stage really focused on just sort of scrambling to know. And the thing was there was nobody who knew any more [than me].*
>
> *– Larry Parr*

The late 1970s and early 1980s saw a remarkable number and range of films produced before the government clamped down on some aspects of tax law relating to film production, an action which sharply scaled back the number of films being made annually. Parr was a key producer through this period as can be seen by the number of films he produced in a short period of time compared to all the producers who followed him (see Figure 13, below). His success reflects his command of both the business and the creative side of producing, to a level which few New Zealand film producers have matched. As Dunleavy and Joyce (2011) note: "The importance of producers like Parr during this period, as one primarily driven by an auteur sensibility, has sometimes been overlooked" (p. 93).

As Figure 13 below illustrates, none of the producers in this study who followed Parr have yet been able to replicate his acceleration from a standing start as a feature film producer. Nor have any of us to date enjoyed such a fruitful period of feature filmmaking, year on year.[45]

45. It is possible that this may change as the decade of the 2020s progresses, with for example both Ainsley Gardiner and Desray Armstrong becoming more prolific as cinema producers as their careers progress (each with four dramatic features released in the years 2018-2021).

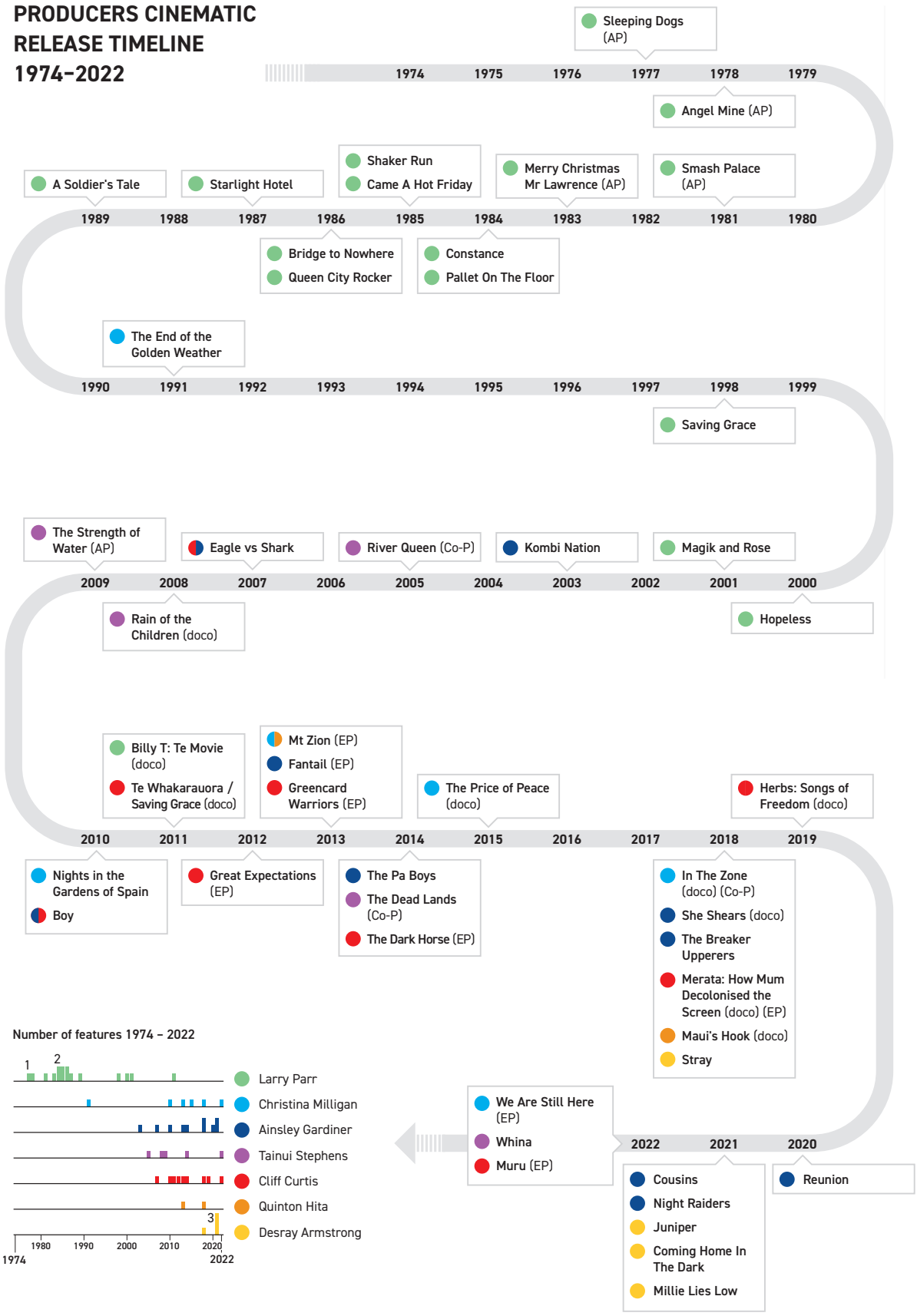

Figure 13: Producers' Cinematic Release Timeline 1977-2022

The difficulty of making a feature, compared to almost all television production, is such that it is an unusual New Zealand producer who works in this space without an apprenticeship in other areas of production such as television, advertising or short films first. Additionally, there has been a long slow progression in the professionalisation of the industry in Aotearoa NZ since the 1970s; the early period when Parr launched his career, aptly characterised by Dunleavy and Joyce (2011) as an era of pioneers and mavericks, has given way over time to a more bureaucratised, more competitive era in which mavericks are less likely to survive, even though being a maverick is an ideal quality for a producer. Allied to this, a seemingly opposite quality, a strong sense of responsibility, is fundamental for any producer who wishes to make and keep their reputation in the business.

4.4 A sense of responsibility

In their exploration of creative lives, Csikszentmihalyi and Nakamura (2007/2014) explore the nature of responsibility and this quality, a sense of responsibility, is threaded through the narratives of all the producers. Most spoke of their family, of the circumstances in which they grew up, of their appreciation of the support of parents and *whānau*:

> *I've always carried a strong sense of obligation, you know as clichéd as it sounds, to the old people who invested in me ...*
>
> *– Quinton Hita*

For some, that sense of responsibility was anchored to those who led them into the industry:

> *I had a meeting with Cliff and Merata and Larry in which, I guess, they were just really encouraging me. They were saying, what can we do to keep you producing? ... [They] were motivated to keep me there, and so I felt a huge sense of responsibility to be honest to keep producing ...*
>
> *– Ainsley Gardiner*

Csikszentmihalyi and Nakamura (2007/2014) look to the origins of the word 'responsibility' in the noun 'response' and discuss the concept as answering a call, both a call from the past and a call to the future. They posit that creative people combine their responses to both calls in the quality of the work they do in the present. This they speak of as a 'call to excellence', reflecting the strong sense of ethics which they observe in their discussions with highly creative individuals. This combination of a call from the

past and a respect for future possibility, deeply imbued with a sense of ethics, informs all of the interviews in my study. In varying ways, most acknowledge their driving force as their desire to speak for and to Māori, to contribute to the health and growth of the community through storytelling:

> *The single most successful thing about* Two Cars, One Night *for me was that for years afterwards we have people coming up to us and saying "Thank you. Because that's the first time I and my children have seen themselves as we see ourselves on screen." So I know it has that potential to impact our own.*
>
> *– Ainsley Gardiner*

For Cliff Curtis as for Gardiner, the short film *Two Cars, One Night* was the first time he identified an opportunity to give expression to his responsibility to the community by structuring the *process* of filmmaking as much as the content through the application of Māori values. This meant shooting the film on the isolated East Coast, at the home marae of both director Taika Waititi and Gardiner, who is Waititi's cousin:

> *We needed a practical application of the* whakaaro *[thinking] really. You know, of the philosophy, which is like written, directed, produced by Māori for Māori. And it was really to take the film back to the marae. ... We could have shot it in Auckland and just gone back [to the* marae*] for the external shots. But it was really about [showing] that we can tell our stories from our own* papakāinga *[home] ... We can stand with our* whānau*, with our* iwi*, with our* hapū*, with the support and the love and create something that is truthful, that is defiant, and that an audience will come and see.*
>
> *– Cliff Curtis*

This thinking echoes the philosophical approach of Barry Barclay and Merata Mita, but equally it is echoed by Csikszentmihalyi and Nakamura (2007/2014, p. 283) when they speak of the insistence with which the creative people they interviewed discuss their sense of responsibility to their own experience and to their roots or origins. Language is a specific marker of origin and for some of the producers interviewed here, the sense of communal obligation explicitly reflects a commitment to the language:

> *I have to say that in all my professional life, it was always driven by a desire to learn the language ... so I've gone where the language is and if not the language, the thinking behind the language.*

– Tainui Stephens

> *My introduction to film and television is on the back of my life-long passion really, for* te reo Māori*. ... Twenty-something years later, I'm still here, but it's been entirely motivated by being part of that bigger social cause of retaining and evolving our language ...*
>
> *– Quinton Hita*

For others, it is not necessarily the language or even the content that embodies the expression of responsibility, but rather what can be seen as the flow of commitment to one another that circulates within the Māori filmmaking community itself. Discussing the collapse of his two film companies, Mirage Films and Kahukura Productions, Larry Parr comments:

> *In 1988, you know I lost Mirage. And it was pretty devastating really ... It was ten years of work that I lost contact with essentially. Anyway, what happened? [I was offered the tv series]* E Tipu E Rea*. Māori were there to pick me up. ... In 2002 I lost Kahukura, and what happened immediately after that? I got a phone call from Don Selwyn: 'Look, I'd like you to come and associate produce this documentary for the BBC for me'. Actually, no, the first thing he got me to do was present a short film series for Māori Television. And then he got me to do this [BBC] thing. And I'm just saying Māori are there all the time, not just the good times.*
>
> *– Larry Parr*

This illustrates explicitly the commitment of communal responsibility within the Māori film world, as in the wider Māori world beyond. As Hirini Moko Mead (2003) states when discussing *tikanga* or customary practices and values:

> *All* tikanga *are underpinned by the high value placed upon* manaakitanga *– nurturing relationships, looking after people, and being very careful about how others are treated. ... It cannot be stressed enough that* manaakitanga *is always important no matter what the circumstances might be. (p. 29)*

Several of the interviewees in varying ways emphasise the responsibility and sense of community underpinning the collaborative nature of work in the Māori world:

> *I think that's why Māori are so good in film generally, because we have this value system of collectivism. It is everyone has their*

> *role to play and you can't do it without any one of those people … (It's) just, you know,* manaaki. *It's such a big concept …*
>
> *– Desray Armstrong*

Ainsley Gardiner brings out a deeper meaning to the concept when discussing her recent production *Cousins* (2021), which she produced, wrote and directed together with Briar Grace-Smith:

> *[Co-directing] is another model of its own. So I think the difference is, I guess,* tikanga *… it's more about the* tikanga *of collaboration and the way you bring people together … You* wānanga *[deliberate] together to bed down the* wairua *of the piece.*
>
> *– Ainsley Gardiner*

Following this thought through, she points to the purpose of this way of working:

> *It's the way we tell stories that is the most important part of it, because creativity knows no bounds, right? We should be able to tell whatever story we want in whatever way. And what we know, as Māori, is that we've got this set of guiding principles that keep us safe and grounded, you know? So as long as we are applying them in a meaningful way the theory is that the result will be good. … What I love about* tikanga *is it's a moveable feast and it changes. … So it's an exciting thing being able to create a process that is grounded in* tikanga *and to just see how it grows and develops.*
>
> *– Ainsley Gardiner*

Exploring the values which underlie this discussion of responsibility leads to a consideration of how the producers see themselves in relation to the world beyond Māori. Writing about her struggles in the film industry of Aotearoa NZ in the 1970s and 1980s, Merata Mita (1996) saw mainstream films as stories of dislocation and neuroticism which failed to address the root causes of their characters' malaise, which she termed the 'absence of identity': she criticised films made by Pākehā for considering trauma always at the level of the personal, never at the level of the political. Mita wrote that Māori films, which she acknowledged at that stage barely constituted a body of work, were "driven by identity, resolution and survival" (p. 47). The producers in this research all commented on matters of identity and survival and their comments in some ways reflect how much has changed since Mita's time for Māori filmmakers, and how much has not.

4.5 "Identity, resolution and survival"

Discussing theoretical approaches to Indigenous media, Brendan Hokowhitu (2013) considers what has driven the development of Indigenous media, noting the incentive of countering the misrepresentation or complete lack of recognition of Indigenous people by non-Indigenous media. He discusses the problem of the non-Indigenous expectation that Indigenous media must be 'authentic' in order to be valid and he critiques 'culturalist' considerations of Indigenous media that rarely take into account the lived realities of Indigenous people:

> *any definition of Indigenous sovereignty must be underpinned by the notion of Indigenous existentialism. Primarily, Indigenous existentialism focuses our historical remembrances upon the paths of political resistance ... so that we understand the production of Indigenous identities as outcomes of the choices Indigenous people have made, and Indigenous responsibilities. (p. 119)*

Asked if they share Mita's view that identity, resolution and survival drive Māori filmmaking, the producers in this study reflect the complexity of the Indigenous existence and its grounding of their choices:

> *My experience as an actor was the experience of being told who I was by people who are not Māori and explaining to me who we are as Māori by people who are not Māori ...*
>
> *– Cliff Curtis*

Curtis' comment reflects the structural racism he encountered in the entertainment industry and is echoed by Desray Armstrong:

> *I need to see myself. You know? Like definitely not my reflection in the mirror, but I want to remember who we were, feel who we are now, have aspirational hope of what we will be. And the only people that can show me that are us.*
>
> *– Desray Armstrong*

Armstrong points to the importance of taking control of the Indigenous image, reflecting her inheritance of the legacies of Barclay, Mita and Selwyn. Tainui Stephens develops this idea further in his commentary on the importance of actively performing one's identity:

> *If you're going to be a leader in any kind of way, you've got to know why you're doing what you're doing. You've got to be aware. I don't take anything for granted. I wake up every day with the active thought that I'm a Māori and I enter the world proactively being Māori.*
>
> *– Tainui Stephens*

For Ainsley Gardiner, who was raised in a Pākehā environment, the journey towards her Māori origins has resulted in a very strong commitment to realising her Māori values through her producing work:

> *My entire life journey has been personally as someone trying to work out how they belong and what does being Māori mean to me? And professionally, developing the same sense in my work as well … [I had] an 'aha' moment going "Oh yeah, that makes sense to make films by Māori, about Māori, that explore identity, that give Māori voice …"*
>
> *– Ainsley Gardiner*

Gardiner is explicit here about a journey that has been implicit in my own life as I have struggled to resolve my own questions of identity as a white Māori brought up in a Pākehā environment. This has played out in my working life as my producing has shifted from the mainstream to the Māori domain. Although raised in the Māori world, Larry Parry similarly acknowledges that his Māori identity has become more important to him as his career has progressed and points to the support he received from Māori when he needed it as an important driver of this.

Viewing the concept of struggle through a societal rather than a personal lens, the interviewees reflect on the broader implications of being Indigenous in a settler society:

> *I do think a lot about survival, I do. I think about resilience, and I think about, you know,* Ka whawhai tonu mātou mō āke tonu atu *[We will fight on forever and ever]. I think about that a lot because it feels like … in a sense we want to get beyond that feeling of struggle and survival and into a place of power …*
>
> *– Ainsley Gardiner*

> *We're evolving, so we're not static. So it might be a slightly different lens than it was in the 70s [but] we're still struggling to be heard …*
>
> *– Desray Armstrong*

> *I think it's changed but I think it informs everything we do because it's just part of the wider struggle of still being Māori.*
>
> *– Quinton Hita*

This sense of struggle, and the burden of representation that is carried, is reflected in a frustration with the shadow cast by the success of *Once Were Warriors*. In discussing this film (see section 2.7, above), I made the case for its contribution to the development of Māori filmmaking, but for individual filmmakers as for many other Māori, the film is an unnecessary weight. Cliff Curtis reflects on his discussions with *Warriors* author Alan Duff:

> *I challenged him. I said 'Look mate, why are you insisting on focusing on the underbelly? … I'm not saying don't tell the* Once Were Warriors *story, but why don't you tell other stories? … Why don't you help elevate us instead of like focusing on that and reinforcing that that is who we are?'*
>
> *– Cliff Curtis*

Ainsley Gardiner points to how this trope is a fixture in Pākehā thinking about Māori:

> *It pisses me off actually, that still when Pākehā filmmakers choose to make films about us, it's films about gangs … because that's their only frame of reference …*
>
> *– Ainsley Gardiner*

In her article "Indigenous storytelling: Deconstructing the archetypes", Yaegl filmmaker Pauline Clague (2019) from Australia points to the fundamentally different ways that Indigenous filmmakers view the world and share it with their audiences, noting that the strength and resilience that undergirds Indigenous communities is rarely portrayed or even perceived by non-Indigenous storytellers. This inability to accurately represent what Masel and Taylor (2011) call the 'imagined common life' that films allude to means that it is not just characters or events that may be misconceived. Missing from most mainstream representations of Indigenous lives are the social and spiritual elements which bind Indigenous communities together. All the interviewees, in varying ways, express a desire to make visible to a broader audience the much richer world that Māori inhabit:

> *We're fighting negative statistics on every single front so of course that still informs our world, but I think that audiences – that's not what they want to see on screen … I think the younger generations don't want to feel the weight of that baggage. They actually want*

> *themselves and the Māori world represented in a less burdened way … I think people are looking for positive energy.*
>
> *– Quinton Hita*

This desire for the positive that Hita sees in young people can be argued as being addressed by the emergence of Taika Waititi, the perfect filmmaker for the times as shown by the remarkable success of his films in the local market:

> *I feel like Taika [Waititi]'s danced that line really beautifully. He's done it so well because it's so true to his world, our world: the bittersweet territory, so his style gives people the permission to have a laugh and then have their heart broken. … Our storytelling is very human so … everyone can relate to that, whether they know what a* karakia *[blessing] is or not. I think that learning comes from opening up our world to people, so that they can feel.*
>
> *– Desray Armstrong*

The filmmakers, like the young audiences Hita is discussing, are equally looking to be less burdened:

> *I want to make sci-fi. I want to make action. I don't want to be bound by the idea that ... struggle, resolution and identity need to be overt in our work ...*
>
> *– Ainsley Gardiner*

At the same time, reflecting Hokowhitu's (2013) comment in terms of theorising Indigenous media that "typically those excluded are those who have been most displaced by colonial rule" (p. 119), there is a recognition that for many Māori nothing has changed:

> *We do have a fighting spirit and we have absolutely legitimate things to fight against … I live on a street that is populated by solo parents, Black Power.*[46] *You know for so many people nothing has changed.*
>
> *– Ainsley Gardiner*

The precarity of many Māori lives is reflected in the precarity of producers' lives despite their understanding of the privilege they have of doing fulfilling work:

> *I'm very aware of what I can do and what I can't. And I think sometimes you get embarrassed by it because you have a*

46. 'Black Power' alludes to a prominent gang, whose members are mainly Māori and Polynesian.

> *reasonable kind of living, no matter how hard it is. I think nurses and teachers are the most under-valued people in our society. So we can gild the lily and talk about the power of stories and I don't disavow any of that. But I exist equally with respect for those who work at the cliff face.*
>
> *– Tainui Stephens*

Stephens' qualifier 'no matter how hard it is' speaks to the reality that for many producers, Māori and Pākehā, surviving financially is extremely difficult. Cameron et al. (2010) note that for many Australian producers, sustainability is a major issue, with most owning their own companies and having very few employees, in other words working as a cottage industry, which echoes the situation in Aotearoa NZ. Many of the producers they surveyed are clearly members of the precariat, working from project to project "with little in the way of cumulative gain, financial security or genuine business development" (p. 99). This tenuous position is certainly echoed in the lives of the producers interviewed for my research. Some of us, like myself, work only part-time in the industry. In my case, I have made the decision to executive produce only, as it enables my research while requiring minimum input of time. Some of the cohort live outside the main centres so their living costs are lower; others use their allied skills such as production management to earn enough to support them through periods like the development of a film when the project itself brings in little income; others work in television to support feature film work as television projects are generally quicker to raise funding for and provide income over a longer time period. It is clear that while money is important, it is not the prime motivator:

> *I'm single and broke for a reason, and that is the unfortunate reality of film.*
>
> *– Desray Armstrong*

> *How do we all stay sustained? I don't know ... I live in Whakatāne so I think about trying to sustain things at a smaller level, you know? That actually as long as we are making something and everybody's being fed then that's about this level of sustainability that we're talking ...*
>
> *– Ainsley Gardiner*

> *I think it's unrealistic to think that film is going to offer us much more than that, because the financial structure isn't there. ... I think if people want to pursue film because they've got a story they need to get out or just for pure creative reasons, that's perfectly*

> *acceptable but I don't think that equals a sustainable business model.*
>
> *– Quinton Hita*

The survey of Australian producers discussed by Cameron et al. (2010) "overwhelmingly suggests that it is 'psychic income' (the subjective value of non-monetary satisfaction) that plays a huge role in keeping producers in the industry" and point to their subjects' displaying "a strong tendency towards idealism" (p. 99).[47] The producers I interviewed speak with a range of emotions towards their work: while their comments are tempered by the very real difficulties they face as Indigenous producers in a mainstream world, there is nevertheless an underlying joy in the lives they lead.

4.6 The creative joy of producing

Producing can appear to those who are not producers to be a thankless task. For producers themselves, however, the ability to drive the whole process of making a screen production can be experienced as an extremely creative personal force, even when the work itself has not achieved great success with the intended audience. This is something I have experienced in my own career and, for most of those I interviewed, a similar sense informs their reflections.

Unsurprisingly, satisfaction in being the leader emerges strongly, inflected in specifically Māori ways:

> *I don't like to be in the front … What I've realised is I can lead from the back and for me it's a bit like a marae situation, you know? In our* whānau *we're always in the kitchen and that's not to say that role is any less important than the* kaumātua *out the front … I just love that synergy and being the person that can help find that balance between (everyone).*
>
> *– Desray Armstrong*

> *I've kind of distilled my management philosophy down to* karakia*,* kōrero *and* kai *[blessing, talking and eating]. You have your* karakia*, you have your togetherness. It's not just a spiritual thing … Then* kōrero*, you have communication. … And then* kai*, you give thanks, whether it's with food or gifts or a thought.*
>
> *– Tainui Stephens*

47. Ariganello (2021) quotes a US producer: "99% of my producer friends have flat-out said they couldn't do this if their partners weren't paying the bills. Also, we can't talk about who gets to make whose films if the barrier to entry is being able to work for years without getting paid" (p. 4). In the same report, more than 50% of the producers said they "love" their work (p. 19).

Even when the work is not necessarily going well, there is an *esprit de corps* among a film crew that is very seductive. Making a film is extremely demanding on everyone; for the producer, being responsible for sometimes hundreds of people, millions of dollars and the associated creative and financial management of a production brings its own kind of pain and satisfaction:

> *I remember vividly walking on set on the first day for* River Queen *and the [lead producer] said to me: "There will be days when you've got a problem and your world will fall down and it will just be nothing else matters except this problem. And then something will happen, it'll be solved and then the next day you won't even remember it." ... And, you know, those kinds of instances, which I call my points of pain ... you expect them. The more you have vested in a project, the more they may happen and they are always valuable.*
>
> *– Tainui Stephens*

Stephens is here expressing what Angus Finney (2008) alludes to in discussing the project-based nature of the film industry and how the idiosyncrasy of filmmaking means the only effective way for the producer to absorb the craft is on the job: "Ultimately, the only way that film producers learn how to deal with the gap between knowledge of how the process is supposed to unfold, and control over this process is [through] dealing with crises" (p. 110). Finney finds the only way he can explicate the producer's role is through case studies of his own experience as an executive producer in the UK and US film industries. He titles his paper "Learning from Sharks" and he is talking about how to keep one's head above water in what is from many perspectives an impossible job. Getting from start to finish on a particular film successfully is an extraordinarily challenging and complex task, but the energy and conviction we all share shows when the producers talk about what they love in their work:

> *One thing I do feel good about is human relationships and how to hear people's frustrations, because you know we are always trying to deal with limited resource and big ambition and trying to bridge the gap between the two and, yeah, that's what I love.*
>
> *– Desray Armstrong*

> *Once I started producing … I had a lot of input and control [and] I was enticed by the kind of big, broad, creative element that it represented.*
>
> *– Ainsley Gardiner*

For each of the producers, a different element is paramount when they discuss their primary source of satisfaction. For one, the value of producing comes from the opportunities it offers to advance the cause of *te reo* rather than the act of producing itself:

> *I'm not an artist. I don't feel I've got one artistic bone in my body. I have a different skill set. To me I'm always looking for how does that plug into a bigger picture [and] collectively move us forward? Does film play a role in the collection? Yes, absolutely. The status of the language being heard in the mainstream, you know, being seen in those domains … grows support for the language across society and then that creates support and positive results.*
>
> *– Quinton Hita*

For another, the ability to enable others is central:

> *I love seeing people work to full effect … you've got to move quicker, leaner and that in and of itself is a craft … So, for me, I want to satisfy my* ngākau *[heart] and, yeah, help my Māori mates and my* whānau *be in control of their storytelling destiny really.*
>
> *– Desray Armstrong*

The joy of cinema is fundamental for a third:

> *The film medium is precious to me because it's the theatric and it's a collective experience … I think what is so precious is just the capacity of big screen stories to bring people into one space.*
>
> *– Tainui Stephens*

In all the interviews, when discussing pride or joy or satisfaction in what producing offers and what it enables the producers to do, there is a constant sense, sometimes overt, sometimes covert, that they fully recognise the privilege of their position:

> *You know, one of the big things that Merata taught me was that filmmaking is a privilege and it's a privilege afforded to very few. … [So] I'm optimistic. I'm equal parts optimistic and pessimistic, which is why I'm a pretty creative producer.*
>
> *– Ainsley Gardiner*

> *I thought well if I never work on another feature, I would've worked on one of the most vivid adventures ever possible and I'll die a happy man.*
>
> *– Tainui Stephens*

The discussion never proceeds very far without arriving at the point of the whole exercise, that of reaching an audience. Who might constitute that audience can be read across a continuum from those producers for whom the Māori audience is paramount to those for whom reaching beyond a Māori audience is a given. For the former, the difficulty of communicating with funders or investors and therefore being able to raise the necessary finance to make a film is a major stumbling-block, given what they see as the inability of funding bodies and investors to recognise the value inherent in alternate worldviews:

> *It's about getting through the Celtic knot of IP. ... All of the producing models as they exist, the funding agency models, the government agencies, all of these models are capitalist-driven ... but ours are – they have socialist values ...*
>
> *– Cliff Curtis*

For Quinton Hita, the result is that he is not considering making further features:

> Q: Do you see yourself producing another film?
> *No, not until the Film Commission, I think, find a way to meet me on my Māori terms. ... I, along with the people that I collaborate with, come to the project with a world and a culture and values intact. And that should be the starting point of the conversation, not the other way around.*
>
> *– Quinton Hita*[48]

For others, there is value in the compromises required to reach beyond the Māori audience.

> *It goes back to not allowing ourselves to be categorised. Why should we always put out the films that are more art-house or more worthy? We need the full gamut. We need the commercialism of a Taika or* The Dead Lands *to be a part of that ordinary big picture ...*
>
> *– Tainui Stephens*

48. In January 2022, Hita sold his company, Kura Productions, to his colleague Te Ataraiti Waretini (South Pacific Pictures, 2022).

> *The interesting difference is that the world wants us now. They want our stories and I think the struggle is for us to retain control of that …*
>
> *– Desray Armstrong*

Compromises can be difficult not just in terms of how the producer intersects with the audience. Ainsley Gardiner discusses the difficulty of bringing change to the process of shooting:

> *One of the things I'm kind of coming to terms with now is that the process is where our political action needs to take place. … We have to shake up the Hollywood model [of shooting] and it's so hard to do. It's hard with the funders, it's hard with the crews. … You know [if I want to hire] just women or just Māori, there's that really boring argument, "Actually, we need to hire the best person for the job." And it's like, "No, because the person who is best for the job is an equation that's been worked out in the Hollywood model."*
>
> *– Ainsley Gardiner*

Gardiner's allusion to working with just women reflects the efforts in the screen industry worldwide to address the lack of opportunities for women (M. Evans, 2020; Liddy, 2020). She is under no illusions about how hard this is, inside or outside the Indigenous film world:

> *You know, we tried to do it on* The Breaker Upperers *and we were like, "Yeah, we've got so many women". And then when you actually counted them we had probably just over 50%. And that's not even something to celebrate.*
>
> *– Ainsley Gardiner*

Desray Armstrong points to a deeper issue, in terms of Māori women writers, directors and producers:

> *We're less gung-ho, more considered. We'll kind of workshop our projects to death … just to make sure it's the best version … and I love that, but I think now we need to just be a bit braver and go: "Right, I'm fucking making it." 'Cause there's no shortage of talent.*
>
> *– Desray Armstrong*

In a sense, while Armstrong is talking about women here, her words are echoed by Tainui Stephens in summing up the present position of Maori film producers and Māori

filmmakers generally:

> *One of the bitter fruits of colonisation has been our need and subsequent habit to categorise ourselves for all sorts of reasons. … When in fact we can be whatever we want to be. And if we choose to strike out for a horizon in a particular endeavour, the only thing that is incumbent upon us really is to take our Māoriness with us. And that's not for the faint-hearted … I'm very aware of what new fusion we are creating. New definitions. New ways of working that involve the best of the Māori and Pākehā,* tikanga *or whatever works.*
>
> *– Tainui Stephens*

There is a confidence in these words that can be seen to reflect how much more developed the opportunities for Māori filmmakers are now compared to the struggles of the earlier generation. The acceleration in the number of feature films produced by Māori and the range of opinions evidenced in the interviews with my producing compatriots, I suggest, justifies this confidence and validates my own optimism regarding the development and growth of the domain of Māori filmmaking.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter has examined some of the ways the individuals interviewed for this research view their own careers and the wider implications of the work they do, what drives them and what enables and constrains their ability to achieve their aims. As noted, elements of their experiences echo my own and this is expanded on in the next chapter. Several themes emerge which relate clearly to Csikszentmihalyi's analysis of the individual in the creative system, inflected by the culture from which we all emerge.

A key theme is that all of us developed over many years a *habitus* suitable to the role. All were educated to tertiary level, most had preceding careers in other allied work-areas (banking, performance, relevant roles in administration), and most discuss mentors who encouraged or inspired high achievement. Underlying this personal development are the varying circumstances experienced growing up, from my own trajectory of coming late to my Māori self to those like Cliff Curtis who experienced the racism of being told early "who we are as Māori by people who are not Māori". Along the way, all developed the determination to succeed and the ability to recognise opportunities that are both

fundamental to success in the high-stakes end of the screen industry that is feature filmmaking.[49]

The producer's role at its most complete is a combination of creativity, management and mothering, and the sense of responsibility implicit in this emerges as a strong theme in the interviews, together with its mirror image, a sense of obligation. Illustrating Csikszentmihalyi and Nakamura's (2007/2014) framing of responsibility as a 'call to excellence', all the interviewees reflect a deep commitment to behaving ethically, which is driven by a commitment to telling diverse Māori stories on-screen and a commitment to promoting Māori *tikanga* in the screen industry of Aotearoa NZ. The latter reflects the specific divergence of Indigenous framing from Western thinking, in that responsibility and obligation are seen by all the interviewees as deeply collective concepts, carrying a fundamental commitment to one's own people that is unquestioned: which is not to say that there are not disagreements about how these are expressed, as noted by the variance between those who celebrate the commercial possibilities of a mainstream audience and those for whom such filmmaking is of no interest. Hopi filmmaker Victor Masayesva notes: "The tribal person today – who uses new technologies – must have quantitatively more knowledge than the traditionalist and be more facile than the colonizers in order to be understood in the world community" (as cited in Hopkins, 2006, p. 342) and the repeated reference made to Taika Waititi, as someone succeeding in Hollywood as much as in his own Indigenous storytelling, in a sense illustrates this. Desray Armstrong's philosophy of leading from the rear, reflecting where she is comfortable on the *marae*, and Tainui Stephen's production philosophy of "*karakia, kōrero* and *kai*" both speak to the marriage of Māori principles with the exigencies of the day-to-day management of a film production.

Another theme that is not specific to Aotearoa NZ but reflects the worldwide community of independent producers, especially in small-country screen production ecologies, is financial insecurity. Most of the interviewees sustain their careers either through earning in an allied area or through structuring their lives to enable sustainability on a modest income (for example, by living outside the main cities). Cameron et al.'s (2010) concept of 'psychic income' is reflected in all the interviews, confirming the Australians' findings regarding the 'strong tendency towards idealism'; the satisfaction that the interviewees

49. As this thesis is being written, the high-stakes end of the screen industry is transforming from the big screen (features) to the long arc (streaming). It is unclear at this stage what the future for cinema might look like.

feel in their work is shown as coming from a variety of motivations, including the ability to enable others, the ability to enable the advancement of *te reo* and the sheer joy of cinema itself. However, this satisfaction is tempered explicitly for some by a recognition that many Indigenous are not in the position to enjoy the privilege of doing fulfilling, challenging work.

The interviewees in varying ways illustrate Csikszentmihalyi's range of personality traits needed for an individual to be successful within the creative system, including confidence in one's own abilities, a willingness to take risks (break rules), divergent thinking and a willingness to engage with people of influence (and disengage, as illustrated in the case of Quinton Hita in his decision to disengage from the sector when he considers it does not serve his personal *kaupapa* of advancing *te reo*). They display a variety of personal styles and motivations which have enabled them to progress successfully within the domain, reflecting Csikszentmihalyi's assessment of the importance of a relevant cognitive style and personality. They show that they have internalised the rules of the domain, identifying the particular area within the domain that suits their talents and engages their curiosity (that is, feature films as opposed to making solely television or online work); they also show that this internalisation is broad-reaching, so that they are able to operate successfully within Māori film production and within the larger domain from which it has emerged, the mainstream screen industry of Aotearoa NZ. All except Quinton Hita continue to develop and/or support new film work, showing that they are constantly paying attention to new ideas and tracking changing currents of 'taste' in order to remain relevant and attract the necessary investment to continue their producing.

How each producer's motivations, ways of working and styles of leadership play out in practice are naturally highly varied, but I now want to circle back to the question asked at the start: What does the producer actually do? And how exactly does her practice contribute to a film being made and seen by an audience? To answer this, the thesis now explores a case study of the making of a specific film, the feature documentary *The Price of Peace*, to analyse the third element of the systems model of creativity, the field. I give an overview of Csikszentmihalyi's positioning of the field and who or what constitutes it, highlighting the complicating factor of the producer's position as a member of the field as well as being the key person on the filmmaking team answerable to the requirements of the field. This dual positioning of the producer is discussed in detail in the case study,

which focuses on specific aspects of the producer's craft to show how the producer exercises her creative authority through the production and distribution of a film.

CHAPTER 5: Working with the field

5.1 Introduction

> *What a great documentary – well-balanced, moving, beautifully directed and … a fabulous edit. I am so proud to be a New Zealander – I may be as white as they come but it doesn't stop me having an emotional reaction to the culture of the tangata whenua and I love Tami Iti! (email from member of public, Conbrio Media archive, 2015)*

In July 2015, a feature documentary I produced premiered at the New Zealand International Film Festival (NZIFF) in Auckland. *The Price of Peace* told the story of the 2007 New Zealand Police raids on the rural Māori community of Rūātoki, ostensibly in search of terrorists. I had been working on the film with its director, Kim Webby, since 2013 and it went on to receive a respectable international release which continues to this day. This chapter uses the making of this film to discuss key elements of my experience as the producer. Through this method, I explore and answer the final research question of this thesis: How does the screen producer exercise her creative authority to achieve an intended outcome? I make visible how a producer's decision-making is continuously calibrated by her expectations of and interaction with the decision-makers who influence her ability to execute her role successfully. In doing this, the chapter reflects a number of the complexities in play when working in the domain of Māori filmmaking.

There is one drawback in choosing a documentary for the case study, which is that its development process is quite different from that of drama. Documentary filmmakers often start shooting before they are even sure they have a story, working on instinct to cover important events, then taking time to create a visual or written outline of what the story might be (Bernard, 2011, p. 34). This outline called a 'treatment' can then be used to raise money to go on to shoot, edit and distribute the completed work. Drama, on the other hand, is almost always written first, with initial or all investment being raised on the quality of the script itself, and it is during this development process in drama that the producer can make the greatest contribution to the creative shape of the final film (Bloore, 2013; Lyle, 2015; Pardo, 2010). As noted earlier, I have in the past discussed my own work as a producer of drama in the making of the feature *Nights in the Gardens of Spain* (US title: *Kawa*) (Milligan, 2017a). In that paper, I explored how I and my co-producer saw that film as an opportunity to "speak to non-Indigenous New Zealanders about the

reality of modern middle-class Māori lives" (p. 23). Much of that opportunity was realised in how we exercised our creative judgment working with the writers in development, and this is the deeply creative period that is not generally available to the producer in the making of a documentary. However, a case study of even a low-budget narrative feature would be considerably more complex and lengthier than that of a documentary and I feel that unravelling the making of this particular documentary provides enough range to effectively illustrate the producer's practice.

The decision-makers who influence the producer's ability to succeed or fail, the field, is defined by Csikszentmihalyi (1988/2014b) as "all those persons who can affect the structure of the domain" (p. 52). In the domain of Māori filmmaking, this encompasses a broad range of people, most of whom work for a variety of companies or institutions. This chapter illustrates how the producer engages with the field, who comprises that field, and the interactive nature of the relationship between the producer and the field. To frame this discussion, I first review Csikszentmihalyi's theorising of the concept.

5.2 The field in the creative system

In his 1990 paper, Csikszentmihalyi gave a more detailed definition of the field as the element of the systems model of creativity that "has the power to determine the structure of the domain. Its major function is to preserve the domain as it is, and its secondary function is to help it evolve by a judicious selection of new content" (p. 206). The implications of this include a tendency to inertia which, depending on the field, can make it very difficult for new work to achieve recognition. In other words, different fields display different levels of receptivity to innovation. Similarly, just as domains develop, grow and may decay over time, so the field of any specific domain changes over time as the surrounding society changes.

In the domain of Māori film production, as in screen production generally, the field includes investors, funders and commissioners who control the flow of money, company owners and executives who control the flow of employment opportunities, and sales agents, distributors, critics and film festival directors who influence or control access to the audience. The field may also include the audience itself, whose judgment controls the commercial return on a film. An important caveat regarding the audience includes the currently moot question as to whether to include exhibitors, who until recently would without question have been considered gatekeepers. As of 2021, the rise of streamers and

therefore the power of their commissioners appear positioned to replace exhibitors at least in terms of art-house cinema, leaving open the question of their position vis-a-vis studio films such as the Marvel Cinematic Universe films.

Of particular relevance in terms of Māori film production when compared with non-Māori work, the influence of tribal members on the decision-making of Māori film producers (in effect, therefore, as part of the field) varies from producer to producer, or more particularly from project to project. Depending on what story is being told, whether it has historical or present-day origins in real-life events, where it is shot and who is depicted in it, there may be considerable input from *kaumātua* or others which influences the shape of the story and its shooting.

Csikszentmihalyi (1996) discusses three ways in which the field can affect the output of creativity in a particular domain. Firstly, a field can be either reactive or proactive, the reactive field being one that "does not solicit or stimulate novelty, while a proactive field does" (p. 43). This suggests that a proactive field will more actively influence the development of a domain while a reactive one maintains a status quo. Secondly, there is the question of whether a field uses a narrow or a broad filter, as a conservative field will be restrictive in its choice while a more liberal filter will welcome a broader range of novelty. Csikszentmihalyi sees extremes of both as dangerous because a conservative field can stagnate and decline, while a more liberal approach may suggest a lack of effective judgment on the part of a field. Thirdly, connection is important, in that a field that is "well connected to the rest of the social system" (p. 44) can drive support for the development of a domain. This latter point is well illustrated in filmmaking in general in Aotearoa NZ as the increase in government support for filmmaking activities in the last ten years attests (NZFC, 2021e).

Looking at creativity through the life span, Csikszentmihalyi and Nakamura (2007/2014) discuss the ways in which the creative output of artists, scientists and others can be affected by the demands on experienced creatives to take on roles in the field. They speak of the transition many (though not all) make within their domain from neophyte or apprentice through expert practitioner to, finally, gatekeeper and therefore one who may be extremely influential in the field. This can be particularly relevant in a small-country screen ecology. It is not unusual for filmmakers to cycle in and out of film funding bodies as development or production executives in countries like Aotearoa NZ and Australia.

There is benefit seen in offering filmmakers such positions on short-term contracts as a way of both upskilling the filmmaker by broadening their understanding of funding/investment mechanisms and processes, and consistently reinvigorating the funding body through the injection of fresh ideas. Equally, filmmakers are often called on to perform a variety of assessor roles, vetting scripts or projects on behalf of organisations who are positioned to assist career- or project-development, or as jury members for industry prizes. Of relevance in Aotearoa NZ is a growing as yet difficult-to-fulfil demand for those who have appropriate industry knowledge married to appropriate knowledge of *te reo me ngā tikanga* to serve in the field in a variety of executive or assessment roles for Māori films and filmmaking.[50]

Equally, the position of producer is itself a gatekeeping role for without a producer most screenwriters have great difficulty getting their projects in front of those who control the money. If a screenwriter cannot convince a producer to take on their project, this is seen as confirming to others in the field that the project lacks merit. It is also the producer who ultimately hires the writer, director and everyone else who works on a film and who is responsible for ensuring the finished film reaches its audience, so the producer is continually in an ambiguous position, seeking both validation from the field and offering validation as a field member. In the following case study, key facets of how the producer interacts with the field will be explored in depth. First, however, I will discuss briefly the value chain of the type of film under discussion in order to make clear to those not engaged in filmmaking the processes that a producer and director pursue when creating and marketing a feature documentary.

5.3 The value chain of a feature documentary in Aotearoa New Zealand

The concept of the value chain is attributed to business analyst Michael Porter and describes a series of interconnected activities performed within a company that create value for customers. These activities might include research, development, manufacturing, marketing and distribution. Porter's theory extends much further than this to discuss value systems, but over time the concept of the chain and the system have lost this distinction and the value chain as conceived in the present day encompasses all stages of the process of creating value, no matter how many companies or entities may be involved (Kehoe & Mateer, 2015). The concept has been used by Bloore (2013),

50. This commentary on the transition from producing into the field is based on my own knowledge and experience of the screen industry of Aotearoa NZ – see my curriculum vitae (Appendix F).

Finney (Finney & Triana, 2015) and others to analyse both the front-end of filmmaking (development, financing) as well as the back-end (marketing and distribution). Figure 14 shows the end-to-end process for a feature documentary produced in Aotearoa NZ:

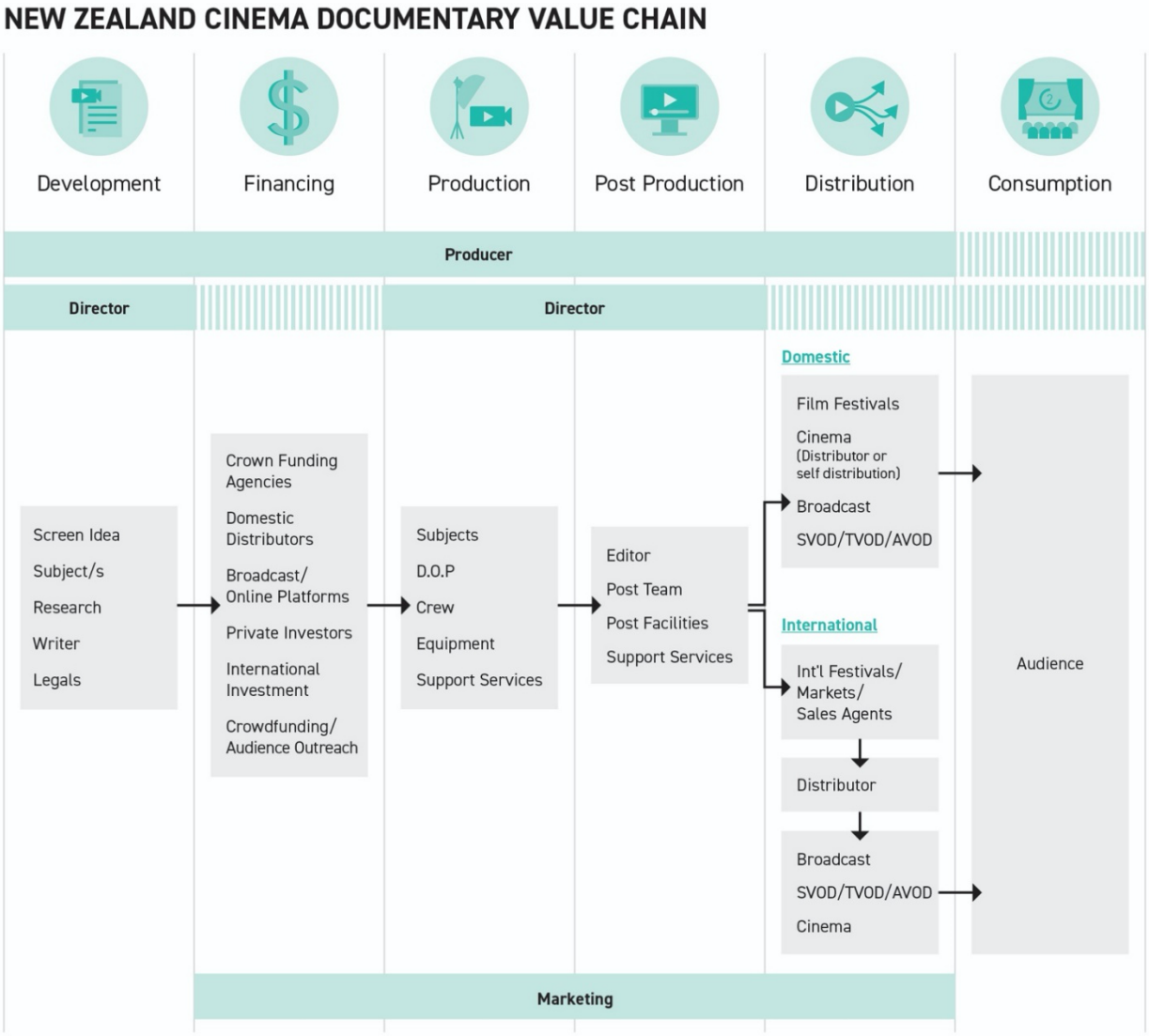

Figure 14: Cinema Documentary Value Chain in Aotearoa New Zealand (2021)

This value chain shows each stage of the making of a feature documentary. **Development** is the period when the story is being found and established as viable and marketable; whoever has the trust of the subjects of the documentary, whether producer or director, is working to ensure that they will commit legally to being in the film; a researcher is doing extensive background research to establish potential story material; and the producer will be starting to talk up the film with potential investors/funders and possibly distributors. **Financing**, for a feature documentary in Aotearoa NZ, as discussed in detail below, will generally start with one of the government funders ('soft money' in film parlance[51]),

51. Soft money is finance that has nothing to do with the film's ability to turn a profit and in principle does not have to be recouped or repaid. Examples include tax rebates, location incentives, grants, crowdfunding. Money from government funders in Aotearoa NZ may be structured as grants or may require recoupment.

either the NZFC or NZOA/TMP; it will usually include a local broadcaster and a distributor; if it is an 'impact' documentary – an inspirational story with potential social impact – it may raise funding through a targeted crowdfunding campaign; and the producer will also be working to secure private investment and/or international interest.

When enough of these elements are in place, **production** can be achieved, though often the director may have already launched into elements of production earlier, either because of the timing of a particular event or because materials are needed to illustrate the viability of the idea to potential funders/investors. In the value chain above, the director of photography (DOP), and the editor in post-production, are singled out from the rest of the crew because they usually play an outsize role compared to the rest of the crew in contributing to the final quality of the work. Once production is approaching completion or is complete, **post-production** can begin, when the final shape of the film is achieved, the pictures and sound are polished and elements such as music added. As the film nears completion, the producer will be working to fully engage preferred distributors and festivals, locally and internationally, to launch the film on its path through **distribution** to the audience.

This is a somewhat elementary view of what is usually a very complicated process, and the value chain here indicates the stages at which the producer and/or the director are likely to be fully engaged (with the broken lines indicating continued involvement at a less engaged level). The qualifier 'likely to be' is used because every film is different: for instance, it will be seen in the case study below that the financing of *The Price of Peace* extended right through production and into post-production. It is a very rare film where all the events will happen sequentially as illustrated above and as the distribution landscape continues to evolve, the pathway for feature documentaries will change: for instance, while funding from local government funders (soft money) will always be in the mix if it is available, it may be that in the future documentaries leapfrog local broadcasters and distribution and go straight to international streamers. For the present, this value chain summarises the steps involved in making and marketing a feature documentary in Aotearoa NZ, and the case study of *The Price of Peace* shows how this can play out in practice.

5.4 The case study: *The Price of Peace*

On April 19, 2013, I was pitching together with a director at the DOC pitch in Auckland, an annual competition bringing together local and international commissioners, distributors and festival directors to listen to verbal presentations of documentary productions on the hunt for financial support. The project I was pitching was unsuccessful, but afterwards I was approached by filmmaker Kim Webby, also unsuccessful in the competition, to see if I would be interested in coming on board her project as producer. I knew Kim a little and I had been very impressed by her pitch, so we agreed to talk further. Within a month, I was sending out my first email in my official capacity as producer of the film that came to be *The Price of Peace.*

Kim is a very experienced journalist of Pākehā-Chinese descent. She has worked extensively in both mainstream and Māori media, and had already been working on her film for some years. Indeed, her pitch, though impressive, had been undercut by her revelation at the end of the presentation that she had already made a documentary for television on the same subject. I felt I was not the only person in the room disappointed to hear this, as the question immediately arose: Why make the same film twice? It did not take long for Kim to convince me that the film she had now embarked on was a new work, with the potential to deliver a deeper, more historically contextualised examination of the subject, which was the police raids on the rural Tūhoe community of Rūātoki in the Bay of Plenty. These raids and others around the country, conducted by the New Zealand Police, including the Armed Offenders Squad and the Special Tactics Group, were carried out on October 15, 2007, ostensibly to arrest activists offending against the Terrorism Suppression Act and committing firearms offences. Within four weeks, the Solicitor-General had ruled the alleged offences did not meet the criteria of the Terrorism Suppression Act[52] and, ultimately, of the 18 charged with firearms offences, 13 were discharged leaving five to face trial. One of the defendants, Tūhoe Lambert, died before the trial commenced. The remaining four, Tame Iti, Te Rangikaiwhiria Kemara, Urs Signer and Emily Bailey, stood trial in Auckland in 2012. The jury failed to reach a verdict on the most serious charge, that of being part of an organised criminal group. All four defendants were found guilty on a variety of firearms charges, with Signer and Bailey being sentenced to home detention, and Iti and Kemara receiving jail terms of two-and-

52. The Solicitor-General stated that "the evidence fell short of actually meeting the very technical requirements of the Act" (Cheng, 2007) and the Act was ultimately revised in 2007. The first person to be charged under the revised Act was the gunman accused of perpetrating the Christchurch mosque shootings in 2019 (Kirkness, 2019).

a-half years. Ultimately Tame Iti, the best known of the defendants, was released for good behaviour after serving nine months.

The trailer gives a taste of film that at this point lay in the future: https://vimeo.com/132524687

The police raids received extensive press coverage, nationally and internationally, and Sue Abel's (2008) close analysis of New Zealand television coverage on the day shows how mainstream media coverage of the raids "did not reflect Māori realities" (p. 115). Abel summarises the television coverage as telling two different stories about fear: the mainstream story (on TV One and TV3) told of New Zealanders' fear of potential terrorism in their own backyards, while the Māori bulletins *Te Karere* (on TV One) and *Te Kāea* (on MTS) "told a story about the continuation of state force against Tūhoe" (p. 119). Hokowhitu (2008) discusses the raids within the context of the 'age of terror', pointing to how the two sides of the raids became personalised in mainstream and some Māori media, with one side, the state, manifest in the person of Howard Broad, the Police Commissioner, and the other side, the "dangerous face of Māori radicalism"[53] (p. 166), manifest in Tame Iti. Iti had had a high profile in mainstream media for some years as a Māori activist and the perception of him as an "Indigenous 'folk devil' " (Devadas, 2013, p. 9) is a telling summation of the Pākehā view of him, a perception compounded by his full-face *moko* (tattoo). Most Pākehā were then and remain today unaware of Iti's considerable work among his own people as a social worker, an artist and a *kaumātua,* and it was this as much as anything that drove Kim Webby in the making of *The Price of Peace* (Kata, 2015).

Kim had known Tame Iti for at least twenty years before the events of October 2007. Her mother had been public health nurse for two generations among the Tūhoe people and although she was not Māori herself, Kim was well-connected within the Tūhoe *iwi*, as she discussed with me when I interviewed her for the publicity kit for *the Price of Peace*:

> *we always travelled within the Tūhoe district and … I heard Tame speak at hui on many occasions and I guess he formed my world view in many ways of what it is to be Tūhoe and what it is to be Māori… (Webby, publicity interview, 2015)*

53. Hokowhitu is here quoting journalist Derek Fox, but this phrase can be seen across a range of papers and newspaper articles.

Kim was working for Māori Television when the raids happened.

> *I was sitting in a room (with) all of the people who do the translating of Māori into English, all te reo experts ... a large number of them Tūhoe ... and suddenly these pictures were coming through of what was happening and there was just stunned silence ... everybody was just shocked staring at these screens and not saying anything. It was just disbelief ... disbelief at the military-style outfits. ... I think it's the first time that New Zealand saw the police like that, as an army. (Webby, publicity interview, 2015)*

She filed a short freelance report on the events for Al Jazeera, but resisted delving deeper into the story until a colleague convinced her that she should think again. With that colleague, she made the decision to concentrate on the effect of the raids on families within the Tūhoe community, and the outcome was the television documentary *October 15,* which screened on MTS on August 7, 2010 (MTS, 2010). With the completion of that documentary, Kim thought she had finished her work in telling the story of the raids. However, her film was selected to screen at the Festival International du Film documentaire Océanien (FIFO) in Tahiti in January 2011 and after the screening there, the common response from the audience was: What happened next? With encouragement from this response and from a member of the festival jury who ultimately became the editor of *The Price of Peace,* Kim decided to carry on.

As noted, it is not unusual for documentary filmmakers to start shooting before a detailed plan or even an end intention is in place. In this case, Kim already knew her overall intention but she had little idea of how the story would play out and found herself wrestling with a much larger story than she had addressed in the earlier documentary:

> *I realized ... that you couldn't tell the story of the raids in isolation. You know if it had just happened to an individual or a family or even a community that didn't have that history of Crown conflict, you could have just told that story. But it was always going to be set in this wide context, the history of Tūhoe and their relationship with the Crown. (Webby, publicity interview, 2015)*

The history between Tūhoe and the Crown is one of pain and loss for Tūhoe. The Crown assumed sovereignty over Tūhoe territory despite the fact the *iwi* was never invited to sign the Treaty of Waitangi, and the history of the latter half of the 19th Century is one of

repeated invasion and land confiscation. The Crown is described in the Government's 2014 apology for historical wrongs as using "scorched earth tactics … summary execution of prisoners and the killing of non-combatants" in its actions against the *iwi* and "at least 12 percent of the population died as a direct or indirect result of the Crown's conduct" (Finlayson, 2014, para. 21, 22, 31). Tūhoe had their most productive land alienated, an action remembered in the present day with the 'confiscation line' marking the boundary of land lost. Crown injustice continued through much of the 20th Century, including the establishment of the *iwi* homeland Te Urewera as a National Park without *iwi* permission or agreement. As part of the settlement negotiated between Tūhoe and the Crown, Te Urewera has now become a legal entity jointly administered by the *iwi* (in the majority) and the Crown, and redress has been agreed in relation to cultural and commercial losses, including acknowledgement of *te mana motuhake o Tūhoe,* Tūhoe's right to self-determination (Tūhoe Claims Settlement Act, 2014).

The settlement was still in the future when Kim returned from Tahiti in January 2011 and began filming again. She knew she would struggle to encapsulate such a complex narrative in the commercial hour[54] which was the norm for New Zealand television. She felt she had the makings of a cinema-scale documentary. Additionally, she had a broader audience in view:

> *I always thought it was being made for an international Indigenous audience. I just always believed that in my heart. I thought that they would be really interested in what had happened here, how that would resonate with them, how they would see similarities. … I was aware that New Zealand was kind of leading the way with this Treaty process … (Webby, interview, 2018)*

When Kim approached me in April 2013, therefore, she had a clear sense of the potential of the story, she knew the audience she wanted to reach and the medium she wanted to reach them through, and she had a variety of footage already gathered from several shoots. The content of the nascent film had already been judged by the field in a number of ways: the rejection of Kim's proposal in the pitching competition which indicated a broad selection of commissioners and distributors did not see value in a new version; the selection of her earlier television documentary by the festival selectors in Tahiti which indicated international interest in the story; and the desire of the audience in Tahiti to

54. The commercial hour on television channels in Aotearoa NZ varies between 42–44 minutes on TVNZ to 50–52 minutes on MTS.

know more about the story which drove Kim's decision to start filming again. She was also encouraged, as noted, by the jury member in Tahiti who ultimately edited the film. Additionally, from Kim's perspective, my decision to work with her was a field validation. I was driven by my respect for her as a journalist and my fascination with the way she pitched the story to me. I could see the potential value in what she was proposing and I was convinced that as a producer I could raise the necessary funding to complete the film and reach an audience. The fact that her pitch had been rejected in the pitching competition worried me because it indicated that the task would not be easy but I felt the story needed to be told to a wider audience than Kim's earlier television version had reached. To achieve that, my immediate task was to raise some money so that Kim could continue making the film and, at this point, it is useful to show the complete timeline for the making and marketing of this film for context:

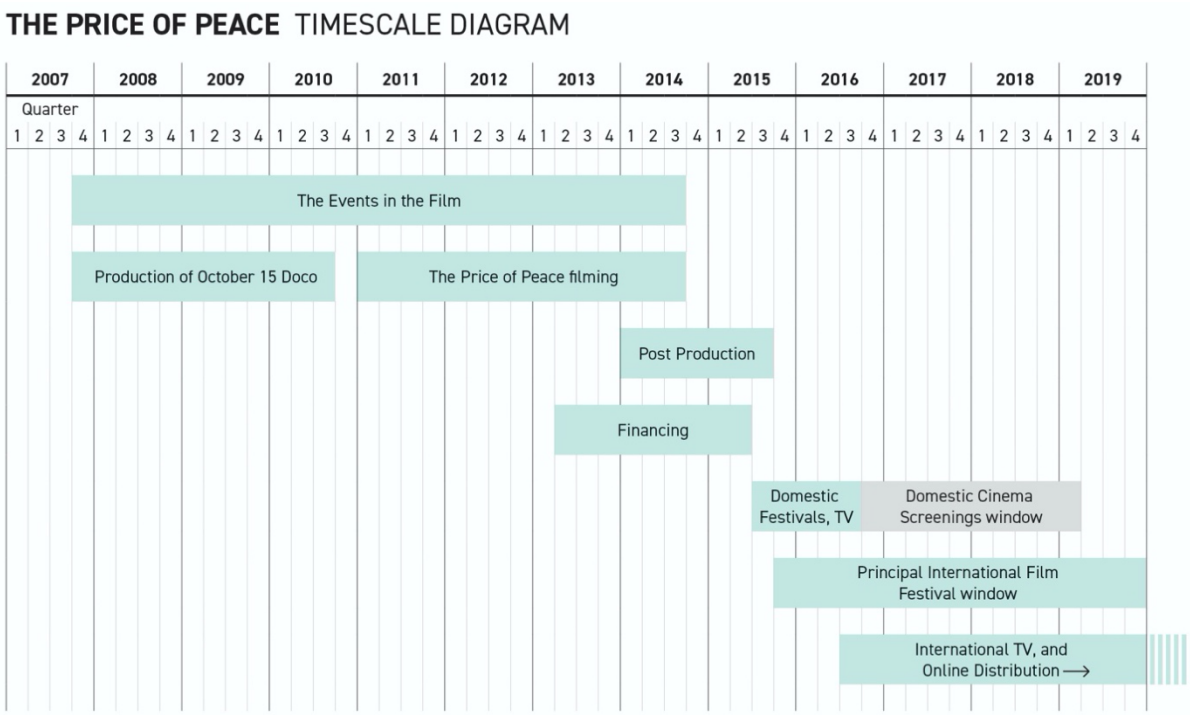

Figure 15: Timeline of the making and distribution of The Price of Peace

5.5 Raising the money

From the beginning of my involvement with the project in early 2013, a key focus became refining the proposal to convince a broadcaster that this was a story worth (re)telling. In our favour was the fact that the story was still unfolding: the *iwi* were still finalising arrangements with the Crown to sign their Deed of Settlement at Parliament in Wellington; the Independent Police Conduct Authority were still looking into a range of complaints about police behaviour during the raids; it was anticipated that there would eventually be a public ceremony on Tūhoe territory to formalise the Crown's settlement;

and though we did not know it at this stage, the event that would provide the climax of the film, the personal apology by the police to the families of Tūhoe, also lay in the future. Thus, rather than it being a retelling of (recent) historical events, when it came to pitching the film to potential funders we could position it as a story with forward momentum and a sense of anticipation in that we did not yet know how it would play out.

The focus on winning over a broadcaster was central, because we were always going to be a lower-budget feature documentary, meaning an approach direct to the NZFC for funding was not appropriate. The funding and investment realities for feature documentaries in Aotearoa NZ present a constantly shifting landscape, with the increase in investment available from the NZFC and other sources since the early 2000s offset by the continued decline in support for the screening of feature-length documentaries by domestic broadcasters (Jackson, 2014, p. 146).[55] Nevertheless, the mainstream broadcast funding body, NZOA, is still seen as central to the funding of most feature documentaries in the lower budget range (sub-$500,000) because it is possible to use this funding as a springboard to unlock further monies, either offshore or through the NZFC. MTS was the one broadcaster at this time with a slot for feature-length documentaries and Kim had received positive feedback to her pitch in the DOC competition from an MTS executive who heard it. We were asked to send them a proposal and this potentially opened the pathway for us to apply for funding from NZOA and enhance this through an application to the NZFC. However, I was taking nothing for granted as I cautioned in one of my first emails to Kim:

> *I wouldn't assume anything re NZOA, as there will be a lot of people chasing that money and it will be very competitive – having said that, with the broadcaster on board (as long as they stay on board) we are in a strong position. If the broadcaster and NZOA want the doco, I believe we can get the [NZFC] over the line and am happy to handle this. I think the key to this will be how much money we need – a small(ish) ask is more likely to appeal to them. (Milligan, email, May 7, 2013)*

My caution around the broadcaster was prescient. This was the beginning of a convoluted dance of enticement with them that was to last nearly two years, a period which was in

55. The situation has not changed in subsequent years. In March 2019, four years after we were in post-production, the report from an industry *hui* to discuss state funding for television and online factual programming commented that one-off documentaries remained threatened by the frequent refusal of television networks to schedule them without a strong hook for the audience (NZOA, 2019).

some respects not surprising. MTS went through a series of changes of commissioner in this time, and in a sense every change put us back to square one, as we had to present our intentions with the story to each new incumbent, following what producer's coach Stacey Parks (2019) calls 'iterative development' as we constantly adjusted our pitch and our proposal to suit our new target. We understood clearly their reluctance to tell again a story already told. Our persistence was based on the fact that we knew our documentary was much more than just a story about the families immediately affected by the raids. Additionally, the harder it became to convince MTS of the value of the work, the more bloody-minded we became, knowing as we did that Tūhoe's side of the story had not been widely heard. Bloody-mindedness, or the ability never to take no for an answer, is a prerequisite for successful screen producing, so throughout this period, we reached out to the other three national free-to-air broadcasters, TVNZ, Mediaworks and Prime. We were not hopeful that any of them would see a story told, as this was, from the Māori perspective as a likely candidate for their mainstream audiences, and despite a sympathetic reception from all their commissioners, the commercial strictures under which they all operated meant that, as we anticipated, they were unable to support us.

At the time our fortunes with the broadcasters reached their lowest point, Kim Webby was successful in securing a financial grant from Te Kotahi a Tūhoe, the governing body of Ngāi Tūhoe, which was a very generous gesture on their part and a comment on how well regarded Kim was in that community. They saw the value in her act of documenting the historical events that were unfolding (in their relationship with the Crown). This financial contribution is an example of an *iwi* functioning as a member of the field. It was also pivotal at this point, as Kim was exhausted and we felt we were running out of options for getting the film finished at all, let alone to the high standard we hoped for. The timing of this grant is an example of how locking in just one element of funding can make the crucial difference in the life of a film project. It not only raised our spirits; it enabled us in March 2014 to embark on the first stage of post-production, editing, and an email from our editor Cushla Dillon captures some of the relief that we were finally moving on:

> *Hooray! Tomorrow we begin another part of this journey. … I'm sure this project has already had a blessing but please feel free to generate another blessing as I start in the morning. … Thank you for the wonderful opportunity and together let us create something meaningful, informative and challenging, and something we are*

> *all very proud to provide a voice for. (Dillon, email, March 3, 2014)*

Through March and April 2014, Kim and Cushla produced a 75-minute rough cut (or first draft) of the film. We forwarded this to MTS and discussions resumed and continued through much of 2014 until we received another rejection from the broadcaster in early August. However, in an example of how contingent any discussion with a broadcaster is on personalities, another change of commissioner at MTS meant that, by October, we were again submitting a full proposal with budget to MTS for their consideration. Within ten days, the broadcaster was on board. Their support for us to apply to NZOA for funding came at a very difficult cost: our submitted budget was $97,212 and for their own internal reasons, they could only support us if we cut the budget to $60,000. My reply to the commissioner was rather honest, indicating that I trusted her enough to let her know my true feelings:

> *As to whether we can finish the work on less than the current budgeted amount, the answer is yes. What will happen will be that Kim will continue to work for nothing as she has done for so long, and as a producer I am not at all happy about that … I do feel the broadcaster needs to be aware that in making these sorts of requests, the one who suffers is always the filmmaker, without whom the work that goes to air would not exist … If there is any way that you could enable us to have more than $60,000 in the budget, I'd crawl over broken glass to your office for it – but otherwise I can deliver you a revised budget for $60,000 tonight if that is what is needed. We are extremely grateful for your support – and we will find a way to make this work. (Milligan, email, November 5, 2014)*

The contradictions in this email are glaring, as I sought to make my anger visible but still keep it tempered enough to avoid giving the broadcaster reason to change its mind, illustrating the navigation skills required of the individual producer in a complex landscape. The commissioner's reply was gracious: they would not extend to supporting a larger budget. I understood her reasoning, as I knew her hands were tied by internal considerations that all broadcasting commissioners have to deal with. We went on to apply to NZOA in January 2015 with a final budget of $81,700 (including the Tūhoe grant which had already been spent on editing). By April 2015, we were signing contracts with the broadcaster and the funder giving MTS free-to-air domestic television rights for

five years and online VOD rights geoblocked to Aotearoa NZ and Australia[56] for the same period.

There remained the question of how to raise the funding to finish the film to a high enough standard for screening in cinemas, and how to reconcile the broadcaster to accepting a cinema-length edit (though if they had refused, we intended to supply them with the shorter broadcast edit that we had agreed to in the contract). Winning the opportunity to screen at the NZIFF was crucial to achieving this, as a screening at an approved festival was a requirement for applying for post-production funding from the NZFC. I had already initiated discussion with the director of the NZIFF and he was keen to see a cut of the film as soon as we had it ready. Kim was in Turkey directing MTS' coverage of the ANZAC Day celebrations when, on April 23, 2015, I was able to email her to tell her that the NZIFF were inviting us to premiere the film at their festival later that year, and also that MTS were happy to take the cinema-length cut. After nearly two years' work, we had achieved much of the outcome we had been seeking. As a result of the festival invitation, we were able to apply to the NZFC for additional post-production funding and in June 2015, they approved a grant of $18,000. I also went back to NZOA with a request for additional funding to cover our ballooning archive costs, and later that month we received a further grant of $10,000, giving us a total budget of $109,700.

This review of the process of funding *The Price of Peace* indicates some of the delicacy involved in the dance that unfolds when a producer engages with persuading a buyer or commissioner to take a film. Patience and tenacity are necessary qualities if the producer is to succeed in this dance. More importantly, understanding the pressures on the other person, in this case the various commissioners with whom we were negotiating and the philosophy behind their decision-making, was crucial. Thus, the producer's knowledge of the gatekeeper's priorities at any one time is vital and this discussion of funding our documentary exemplifies how knowledge of the field is fundamental to success in a particular domain. In this case, knowledge of the field explicitly includes having good relationships with the gatekeepers, for example in my ability to talk directly to the director of the NZIFF and persuade him to view an early edit of our film and then securing a favourable decision based on that, which again unlocked further much needed funding.

56. MTS has an important audience in Australia as an estimated one-sixth of all Māori live there.

The Price of Peace was not an expensive documentary to make. There was no international travel, for example, and no requirement for historical or present-day re-enactments. Nevertheless, like many documentaries, our production relied on the filmmakers and the shooting crew to work for very, very little financial reward. Because we were able to raise enough funds to cover post-production, those who worked in this area were better rewarded though their fees were still lower than standard as a favour to the production. Our concerns about this were slightly ameliorated once the production started earning income, as we were sharing all earnings 50/50 between our production company and the director, and both she and we made further payments to the key crew-members from these earnings. Well before we could think about earnings, though, we had the film to complete and the following section illustrates how a producer works with the filmmaking team to bring editorial judgment into play.

5.6 Exercising editorial judgment

I have learnt through my career the calibration that is required for a documentary or drama to feel cinematic as opposed to televisual. To be effective on the big screen, the documentary maker must engage the audience emotionally (J. Ellis, 2012, p. 102; Rabiger, 2009, p. 263), and this requires the filmmaker to commit to her particular point of view (POV) or 'voice', unlike television documentary-making where, for a variety of reasons, a journalistically 'objective' point of view has been the norm. Discussing the resurgence of creative documentary in cinema in the 2000s, Annie Goldson (2015) comments: "Filmmakers are able to take more political and formal risks than television traditionally permitted, breaking from notions of balance and objectivity" (p. 89). For Kim Webby, this initially presented problems: she felt somewhat torn as her journalistic training pulled against her instincts. When she first approached Tūhoe elder Tāmati Kruger to ask for his support for the film,

> *He said to me 'What perspective will it come from?' He said he would like it to be from a Tūhoe perspective. And the journalist in me went 'I can't take a side' and then the human being in me understood that I had been so involved in that community for so many years that I didn't have any other perspective anyway … (Kata, 2015)*

Anchoring the film in the filmmaker's perspective draws the audience fully into the world of the film. As Michael Rabiger (2009) notes: "When POVs are strongly present you know, because you get that enormously exciting sense of temporarily vacating your own

existence and entering someone else's emotional and psychological experience" (p. 263). Rabiger's words are echoed by the editor of *The Price of Peace,* Cushla Dillon:

> *what draws me to documentaries I guess is … the process of discovering what is going to be the best way to tell the story … finding really creative ways of using what [material] is there to convey that story … so that once the viewer is watching it they can't take their eyes off the screen and they are getting, I guess, a visceral response. (Dillon, interview, 2019)*

The director's perspective or POV, interrogated frame by frame through the editing process with the editor, is the source of what becomes the final authorial voice of the film. When I came on board *The Price of Peace* as producer, I understood from the outset that the film was being made for the big screen and therefore Kim's perspective would be driving the eventual filmic experience, but Kim and I were both concerned that the lack of financial resources meant that our choices were limited, both in terms of what material we were able to gather and the quality of that material:

> *In terms of the storytelling aspect … a lot of what I'd hoped for … kind of ended up being something that we had to just get out of necessity. So I had an idea of how I wanted it to look, but because we were often using borrowed cameras and [the director of photography] was basically working for free at that stage, often we just had to go with what we had. So it was always a bit of a worry … how that was all going to end up [on] the big screen. (Webby, interview, 2018)*

Kim is expressing here the difficulty of achieving a focussed and coherent point of view when the lack of resources restricts how the director can frame the shot and capture personalities, events, key moments with the precision she would like. These circumstances persisted throughout the shoot as we were not able to raise the necessary funding during the shoot itself, and this put extra pressure on the editing process, as Kim and her editor worked to structure a story that would satisfy the audience.

The authorial voice is informed by the framing question of the documentary, the interrogatory position that the audience is placed in by the filmmaker at the beginning of the film, which is ideally resolved by the end, so that the audience leaves the theatre emotionally satisfied:

> *In a documentary situation it's about framing the interviews and the lay of the land at the beginning, so that there's a real sense of the question. What is the question? What is the question that this journey is going to answer, and then all going well and perfectly in this documentary, which of course it doesn't ever go perfectly, but you know … in a perfect world the whole thing unfolds. … And once we answer that [question] there's a sort of thrill in the audience … so that they feel safe, they feel confident, they feel trust in the filmmaker, and they're carried along to the end. I mean this is documentary making at its best. (Dillon, interview, 2019)*

Cushla Dillon captures here perfectly the desire of all good filmmakers and it was this desire that drove Kim and the team in the making of *The Price of Peace.* The edit started on March 4, 2014, and ran for seven weeks before taking a long hiatus while we raised funds, resuming for three weeks through March and April of 2015: the fine cut (or final structure of the film) was accepted by the broadcaster on May 18, 2015. As the producer, I visited the editing suite together with co-producer Roger Grant at key points to give feedback though we held off visiting the edit room for the first producer's viewing as I emailed Kim:

> *I don't want to view yet so I can keep fresh for when you and Cushla have a cut you think I should look at, which I appreciate may be a little further down the track – I'm more useful to you if my eyes are fresh. (Milligan, email, March 28, 2014)*

Judging the right point to view a rough cut (work in progress) is always difficult for a producer. View too soon and it is hard not to prejudice later viewings with premature opinions. Leave the viewing too late and the director and editor may find it difficult to take on board critical feedback as they have become wedded to their decision-making. Discussing what she was looking for in a producer, Kim pointed to the following:

> *I was looking for … someone with experience, someone that I could ask questions of and know that I would get a good answer, you know, a useful answer. … For a documentary I kind of feel like the producer is the person you ask the questions of when you don't know the answer yourself. (Webby, interview, 2018)*

I knew from experience that producer's notes to the directing/editing team are no use if they are not honest and this can be a challenge as relationships among the filmmaking team require support and nurturing in order to achieve the common goal. I have in the

past been through very difficult meetings with directors (less so with editors who tend to take feedback less personally). On this project, the discussions among the team were comparatively straightforward but no less complex for that:

> *Everybody has the blueprint of what this film is, but they all bring their own thoughts and ideas and creativity to that process. And in the end … one person has to say: 'Right, okay, so then taking all that on board, let's do it this way. Let's do this bit this way and the next bit this way.' I think having the producer like yourself … coming in with fresh eyes after we've sat there fiddling … is really helpful to just either get back on track, or say: 'Yep, carry on … but try this, this and this.' (Webby, interview, 2018)*

From my notes and emails through this period, it is clear that we all (Kim, Cushla, Roger and myself) shared two key concerns: firstly, the complexity of the story with the need to plait together the raids and their aftermath, Tame Iti's own history, and the history of the Tūhoe nation and their pending settlement with the Crown; secondly, a feeling we were not doing our central character justice. It was the latter which led to a key decision which in hindsight I consider to be an important editorial choice without which the film may not have achieved the critical and audience reception that it enjoyed.

It was clear to us from the beginning that Tame Iti would be the central character in the film. As noted earlier, he had the highest profile of those arrested during the police raids of 2007. He is also a performative character, confident in front of cameras and happy to play to an audience, which feeds directly into the prevailing zeitgeist in the post-millennial documentary world for as theorist Stella Bruzzi (2006) notes: "performative aspects of documentary have by now become relatively commonplace … [including] a sustained interest in subjects whose lives seem built around layers of performance" (p. 222). Tame's skills as a performer were in danger of blinding us to the fact that we were not getting the person beneath the skin across to the audience, that the Tame we sensed needed to be on screen was not there. We struggled for a while to find the answer until collectively we realised that the issue lay with the English-language interviews as I discussed with Kim:

> *You said that we need to flesh him out more and we need to bring more of his back story of who he is as a person and what shaped him. … There'd been about five interviews with him up to that point, five kind of proper sit-down interviews [in English]. And it*

> *had always been a struggle because Māori is his first language and I think between us we decided, it's got to be in* te reo *because he is so much more eloquent … (Webby, interview, 2018)*

A decision was made to re-interview Tame in *te reo* and, through this, Kim was able to capture footage which gives the film a much-needed depth in terms of the personal story, as the editor notes:

> *[CD] When that interview came in with the transcripts and he told his story, it was beautiful. It was astounding. It was this wonderful story about, you know, how he was adopted and growing up … suddenly …*
>
> *[CM] It added a depth and a richness …*
>
> *[CD] And a truth. Yeah. And there was a real sense of – you really connected with him. And I mean how amazing is that? That he spoke Māori but you connected with him. (Dillon, interview, 2019)*

The interviews in *te reo* are intended to bring the viewer into empathy with Tame's view of the world. Capturing such a complex individual and then shaping the film's narrative to do that complexity justice in a way that keeps the audience engaged emotionally is difficult, and this is where the editor's style of connection with the material is invaluable:

> *I guess I feel that I am the audience. I am there to represent the audience … to say, I'm not connecting here … you know every time we watch this scene, I'm just – I'm starting to think of what's for dinner, right at this point, you know? … And the director may be 'No, no, no, this scene has to be here' … because as far as they're concerned, that scene is sort of incredibly important because of some intellectual thing. … I guess my job is to look and seek ways that … the audience is constantly connected. My theory is that … in general the audience is watching through their heart. (Dillon, interview, 2019)*

Tame's generosity and honesty in telling us on camera in *te reo* about his early life – of being *whāngai*'d (fostered) out to a relative and found on their doorstep as a baby in a nail-box; of listening to his elders being belittled by the white teachers at school; as a young man of hearing Māori being referred to as 'lowlifes' and '*koretake* (useless)' – these bring the film to life emotionally in a way that up to this point in the edit we knew was lacking. As Rabiger (2009) notes, documentary editing is about the "search for

meaning and subtexts" (p. 514) and with Tame's willingness to let us look into his heart, we were able to draw the audience deeply into a political story by wrapping our film's thesis in the story of what it means to be human. However, doing justice to our protagonist required more than just capturing him well; we also had to ensure we framed him and the surrounding political and historical stories well enough to justify asking the audience to pay money for the experience.

Improving the quality of a film when a shoot has suffered from a lack of resources calls on the imagination of all involved. We were reliant on what we could add in post-production. Post-production includes editing, adding visual elements such as archive and graphics, polishing the visual look of the film through colour-grading, polishing the sound and adding extra sound elements, adding music, and producing the finished product in the appropriate digital format required. A large number of people are involved in all these processes and our co-producer Roger Grant, a post-production specialist, took the lead on ensuring *The Price of Peace* was finished to the standard we were seeking. The funding from the NZFC enabled us to add value through more time in colour grading, sound-mixing, graphics and composing. The additional funding from NZOA enabled us to use more archive footage than originally envisaged. Using a substantial amount of archive, moving and still, can enrich a historical documentary as it brings events to life for the audience in a way that even the most engaging interview or voice-over may not achieve. Shane O'Sullivan (2013) has written in detail of the complexities of using archive in low-budget documentary-making in the UK and his points apply equally to the filmmaker's difficulties regarding this in Aotearoa NZ. Clearing rights is time-consuming and expensive,[57] and finding the balance between what the filmmaker can afford and what the film needs can be very difficult. Figure 16 shows the disproportionate cost of archive as a percentage of the film's budget overall:

57. In October 2019, filmmaker Heperi Mita (2019) publicly discussed his frustration at the cost of getting access to his own mother's archive for his film *Merata: How Mum Decolonised the Screen.* He was expressing a frustration that documentary makers in Aotearoa NZ have been expressing for many, many years.

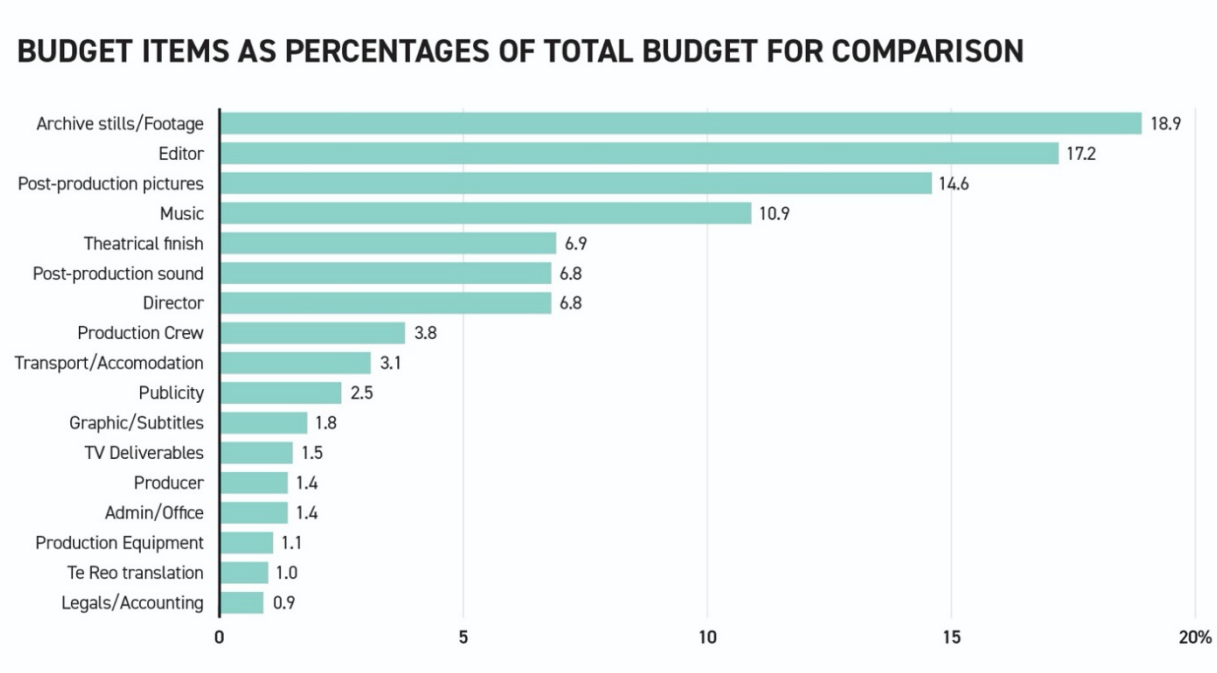

Figure 16: The Price of Peace – *Budget items as percentages of total budget*

The creative value of a producer to a director is very much the external quality of critique that the producer can bring all the way through the filmmaking process, but even the best producer starts to lose a clear sense of judgment as she becomes more and more immersed in the project. For this reason, filmmakers will, at a certain point before the edit is locked off, conduct test screenings, bringing in outside viewers to receive feedback on whether the film is working or not. We held a test screening in April 2015 for several invited guests, Māori and Pākehā, all of whom were engaged in filmmaking as writers, producers, directors or crew and therefore understood how to view a film where the edit has been completed but the sound and vision have not yet been polished (for instance, the music may be temporary music and not the final work from the composer). The screening was extremely useful and pointed to key issues which we subsequently addressed, including the fact that the storytelling in the first act was not tight enough, that there was too much archive covering the period of Tame's early activism, and that they would have liked more of the historical coverage of the story of Tūhoe.

One of the hardest editorial decisions we addressed with this film was how to make the ending work both cinematically and in story terms. We had to make a choice: do we end on the personal story of Tame Iti? Do we end on the personal apology by the Police Commissioner to Tame's family, which is a very, very strong and intimate emotional scene and wrapped up the story of the raids? Or do we end on the government Minister for Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations' apology to the Tūhoe nation, which wrapped up the

larger, encompassing political story? We felt these scenes were all necessary, but they were somewhat confounded by a fourth element, which was the police apology to the wider Tūhoe community for the raids, which played emotionally somewhere between the intimacy of the family apology and the formality of the Minister's apology. Three apologies was in danger of feeling like two too many. Rabiger (2009) maintains that "If your film has multiple endings, it's because you haven't decided your film's central purpose" (p. 520). We knew our film's central purpose and while we had multiple *possible* endings, we knew we needed to wrap up all of the story strands and that if we found the right sequence for them, the film would not feel as though it had multiple endings but would feel simply that it progressed to a natural conclusion. Our final decision resulted in a sequence which wrapped up the overarching story with the Minister's apology, then led into a long sequence focusing on the family apology, before a short closing sequence which included the wider police apology leading into Tame himself in close up delivering the final words:

> *There will always be a policeman. There will always be a Tame Iti. There will always be a Tūhoe. So we've really got to try and bring all of that together. Where we all fit in. Where they fit in, where I fit in. Yeah. Because we've got a big future ahead of us. (The Price of Peace, 2015)*

This statement of Tame's appears disarmingly straightforward and his delivery on camera, caught almost in a casual way by the filmmaker, is quite understated. As a closing note for a film, it even appears too low-key. Yet our decision-making around the end of the film ultimately proved solid, as I emailed the team following acceptance of the film for the NZIFF:

> *under strict embargo I can confirm that [the festival director] has said yes. ... He said it is a "powerful and important" piece and he thought the current ending is extremely strong ... (Milligan, email, April 23, 2015)*

Artists must internalise both domain knowledge and field opinions in order to succeed in their endeavours (Kerrigan, 2016a; McIntyre & Coffee, 2016; Thompson, 2016), and it can be seen from this discussion of the exercise of editorial judgment how deeply as a producer I have internalised the expectations of the field. I understand the differences between what engages the audience of the big and small screens, and therefore what is required to connect with those who are commissioning or buying or designing festivals

for different audiences. I have a sense honed from years of practice of how to structure the emotional line of a film so that it will connect with the audience and how to engage with and support a director and filmmaking team to achieve this intention. I have a clear view of what technical and creative standard a film like *The Price of Peace* needs to reach to be seriously considered for festival release and how to lead the team to achieve a higher standard than the budget suggests would be possible. As the director notes above, I was able to be a sounding-board she could trust and someone who could find answers for questions she could not answer herself. Knowledge of how the field judges documentaries informed our decision-making around such matters as the decision to reinterview our central character in his first language, and the final shape of the film's ending, which I knew from experience had to be solved correctly: if the audience has a strong emotional response to the end of a film, they will forgive any earlier issues they may have with it and this is, for obvious reasons, equally true of festival directors, sales agents and distributors. At the same time, I knew when my own judgment needed support, and other members of the field were brought in at that stage as our test audience. Equally, although this immediate summary is couched in the first person, I am under no illusions that this project was anything other than Kim Webby's creative achievement, realised with a team of collaborators. My role was to bring creative judgment and moral support, allied to a deep knowledge of the field and its expectations, to enable Kim to achieve her aim to the highest standard possible in the circumstances. The judgment of the audience is the final judgment as to whether we were successful.

5.7 Accessing the local audience

The distribution landscape for feature-length documentaries is as complicated and disrupted as every other corner of the present-day media ecology: as a result, there has been a progressive shift since the turn of the century in terms of where the filmmaker decides to place their energy regarding the balance between production and distribution. In 2008, filmmaker Dorothy Fadiman (Fadiman & Lavelle, 2008) discussed the three options generally available for documentary filmmakers to reach their audience: through an established distributor, through self-distribution, or through a hybrid approach. In 2017, the International Documentary Association presented a panel discussion on "the problem of finding a distributor, and/or determining a path to self-distribution" (Margolin & Reiss, 2017, para. 1), reflecting the continued applicability of Fadiman's options. For the individual filmmaker, which path she takes depends on personal preference as much as informed strategy. The advantage of securing professional distribution is that the

filmmaker can hand over part or all of the very time-consuming and quite specialised process of getting the film out to its audience; the disadvantages include the cost of the distributor's services and a loss of some decision-making power. Against this, self-distribution has the advantage of putting more earnings directly into the filmmaker's pocket, but the great disadvantage of requiring a very large amount of the filmmaker's time and energy to be devoted to distribution at a time when, ideally, she would be developing and possibly shooting her next film. Nevertheless, the reality is that, over time, the need for the documentary feature filmmaker to focus more energy on distribution-related activities has grown. Discussing documentaries from Aotearoa NZ, Anna Jackson (2014) notes:

> *The growing need for direct audience engagement via social media channels is one dimension of a shift in the role of the independent filmmaker to encompass a range of activities that previously would have been undertaken by a number of individuals. Not only are film-makers increasingly performing a range of production tasks single-handedly – such as operating a camera and sound equipment while also producing, directing and editing – but they are also increasingly managing their own distribution and marketing. (p. 160)*

The production path of *The Price of Peace* to some extent illustrates Jackson's point. Kim acted as sound-recordist for much of the shoot and was effectively self-producing until I joined the project. When it came to distribution, it made sense to us to follow the tried-and-true route of securing first a broadcaster and then a feature launch at the NZIFF. However, I knew that securing cinema distribution locally beyond the festival would require considerable effort on our part. My knowledge of the field led me to believe we were unlikely to be picked up by local distributors, so I had started talking to another producer experienced in self-distribution as this seemed our likely path. It has been my experience that most of those who work in the small film industry in Aotearoa NZ are generous when asked for advice, and this producer was no different, making available to us her contact list for all the cinemas in the country and giving me considered opinions on which were worth approaching. She left me in no doubt that my sense that self-distribution might be a lot of hard work for questionable financial reward was accurate.

At the same time, as noted earlier, the field in terms of Māori filmmaking may include *iwi* or others who are involved in the story or the film production and for us, clearly,

Tūhoe were not only the subjects of our film, they had granted us funding with no requirement for a return on investment, signalling their respect for Kim and the potential of the film to archive an important period of their history. The trust the *iwi* expressed in our project was deep and it was imperative in return that we seek their response to the final work before it was released to a commercial audience. We screened our fine cut to Tame Iti and Tāmati Kruger, the Tūhoe leader who features strongly in the film, and were gratified that they had a very positive response to the work. Once the film was complete and just before the release, we travelled to Taneātua, Tame's home town, to screen it for all the locals who wished to see it. It was a relief that the film was well received.

We had our first public screening at the NZIFF in Auckland on July 19, 2015. It was a heartwarming event, complete with a standing ovation for Kim and for Tame who was present, followed by an intelligent and engaged question-and-answer session. Being selected for the festival was in itself a very clear validation from the field but it was particularly heartening that the director of the NZIFF, Bill Gosden, wrote of the film when the festival opened: "*The Price of Peace* explores national identity with rare power and emotional intelligence. The ending of this film feels like a homecoming for the entire nation" (NZIFF, 2015). The positive response from festival audiences in Auckland and Wellington resulted in extra screenings being added and the film being taken on the rest of the NZIFF circuit through Christchurch and Dunedin and several North Island centres. We used publicity from the festival to secure cinema screenings throughout the upper North Island. The task of self-distribution was not as onerous as I had anticipated but the financial rewards were very minimal once the costs of Kim and Tame travelling to screenings (for Q&A sessions) were taken into account (see Figure 18 in section 5.8, below). Nevertheless, it was a worthwhile experience: the exhibitors we worked with in all these towns were uniformly keen to screen the film and uniformly disappointed with the small crowds they were able to entice to come and see it.

As the local cinema screenings progressed, we were also looking forward to the audience response to the television screening, even though we shared the dislike that many if not most filmmakers have of the need for the story to be interrupted by commercials. For our co-producer who watched the broadcast, the experience was less than pleasant and his comments the following day reflect a view we still hold: "The commercial presentation doesn't do anything for the film. Its power is in the whole" (Grant, email, October 14, 2015). The ratings for the television screening were terrible, with a total average audience

of only 7,400 viewers, of whom about half were Māori. The channel's summary noted that audience engagement was low with the average viewer watching only 12% of the programme, and Māori viewing engagement somewhat higher at 17% of the total duration ("Ratings Summary", 2015). This was extremely disappointing for us but the commissioner, with her broad view of the television landscape, was somewhat philosophical: she had hoped for an audience of around 30,000 and felt that since the documentary had longevity, it had the potential to perform well online over a longer period (MTS placed it online on their website following transmission).[58] In the event, our disappointment with the television ratings was offset quite spectacularly by goodwill coming from other directions as, on the night it was broadcast, Kim and I were in Toronto where the film was about to start its international journey.

5.8 Taking the documentary out into the world

Between October 16, 2015, when it launched internationally at the imagineNATIVE Media and Arts Festival in Toronto, the world's preeminent Indigenous film festival, and the present day, *The Price of Peace* has had a wider and more rewarding reach than we imagined it could (see Appendix E). It is possible to point to some key reasons for its positive international journey: it occupies a specific niche as an Indigenous film; it has a charismatic protagonist; it was promoted with a very good key image and trailer; and, as noted earlier, it is a rare example of an Indigenous community receiving genuine apologies from settler government officials for historical wrongs.

Kim's dream was to make a film that spoke to an international Indigenous audience. No-one questioned her right as a non-Indigenous person to make the film, partly because her own upbringing among Tūhoe meant that she understood and operated comfortably within the correct *tikanga*. She was a well-respected journalist and director for both Māori and Pākehā television companies before she embarked on this project and she had access to the key players in the film, most particularly Tame Iti and his *whānau*. Nevertheless, my *whakapapa* (genealogy) was the key to gaining entry to the imagineNATIVE Media and Arts Festival, which in 2015 required at least one of the three key creatives (writer, director, producer) to be Indigenous; once we had screened and

58. There was no discussion at the time as to any effect our festival and cinema screenings might have had on the television audience numbers since none of us considered that of relevance, given the low numbers that the overall cinema screenings represented compared to the potential viewing numbers of even a small channel like MTS. They and we discussed the festival screenings as likely to generate favourable publicity that would help the channel promote the film.

been recognised with an award there, the film was able to stand on its own feet internationally with its provenance not in question.

The screenings in the NZIFF in Aotearoa NZ and at imagineNATIVE in Toronto gave the film enough visibility to get on the radar of festival selectors internationally. This is not an easy task for any film and spotlights how even experienced filmmakers must keep ensuring they engage the attention of those in the field who hold the key to recognition. We screened at a considerable range of festivals around the world with Kim or me accompanying the film to several of them. Kim's international hopes for the film were well achieved, yet until that first screening in Toronto, nothing was guaranteed as she noted:

> *At ImagineNATIVE … I think I was a little bit nervous about whether they would get it. I was pretty sure they would, because Indigenous experience is pretty similar around the world, but … there's nuances of things Māori, right down to the way you might say something … that subtitles don't always catch the essence of. (Webby, interview, 2018)*

In fact, the audience in Toronto gave the film a wonderful response and, ultimately, we received the award for Best Documentary, named after the Abenaki filmmaker Alanis Obomsawin who presented it to us in person, which for both Kim and I was an unexpected and quite remarkable honour for Alanis is, like Merata Mita, seen as a trailblazer in the Indigenous filmmaking world.

Other festivals like the Festival International de Programmes Audiovisuels (FIPA) in Biarritz, were not Indigenous and presented Kim with different challenges:

> *It's a very European festival and most of the films are from Europe. So I thought how on earth are the French going to get this? But they have their colonies in the Pacific so … perhaps they'll understand it through that. The thing that they were most interested in was the process of reconciliation in New Zealand between Māori and Pākehā and the Waitangi process – the Waitangi Tribunal and the Crown process of direct negotiation, because they were quite relevant to France in dealing with its South Pacific colonies. (Webby, interview, 2018)*

My own observation when I presented the film at the Skábmagovat Film Festival among the Sámi people of northern Finland in January 2017 was that the audience were quite stunned to see the head of a country's police force apologising in person to Indigenous people who had been wronged and as I noted in my Facebook post from the festival:

> *It is such a pleasure screening at Indigenous festivals – a lot of questions about the Treaty and how the process works and whether we can feel optimistic about the future. For those who do not have a reconciliation process like the Waitangi T[ribunal], the process can seem like a shining beacon. (Milligan, Facebook, January 28, 2017)*

When films are invited to international festivals, the director is the person that audiences want to hear from, so my travelling to some of the festivals was principally in order to make connections with representatives from other festivals and potential buyers. We had a strong sense that if we were going to sell the film it would happen early in its festival journey and this proved correct: it was the screening at FIPA in Biarritz in January 2016 that ultimately enabled us to secure an international distributor, not something that can be taken for granted as many excellent documentaries, from Aotearoa NZ as elsewhere, struggle for visibility in the very crowded international documentary scene. The distributor we signed with, London-based Journeyman Pictures, found us by chance in the FIPA catalogue (they were not attending in person), and this points to the importance of having a key image for the film that stands out.

While the title and the trailer are crucial elements in selling a film, my experience from years of reading festival catalogues and talking to publicists is that the key image (photograph or graphic image) is the single most important element of publicity for a film. In our case, we were blessed with a protagonist who is visually quite astonishing to the international audience, and our DOP gave us access to the perfect head-and-shoulders still of Tame which he had shot on location. It is an intriguing image, showing Tame with his full-face *moko* looking straight into the lens, wearing a top-hat, bow-tie and waistcoat. With the black, white and red of the image accentuated, it not only offers echoes of colours associated with Māori, it also offers a challenge as it presents the contradiction of the Indigenous face in the coloniser's clothes. The posters were widely commented on and their effectiveness as a selling tool we judged from the fact that it was the poster image that caught the eye of Journeyman Pictures in the FIPA catalogue.

Figure 17: The Price of Peace – *Poster*

Once Journeyman reached out to us, things moved fast. We gave them access to the film and they quickly responded that the film was "a crafted documentary with a powerful protagonist, overall a brilliant account of the recent battle between the government and the Tuhoe people" and ended with the welcome words "Are world rights available?" (Journeyman, email, February 26, 2016). We researched them and concluded they were a good match for our film. At the same time, I had reached out to Kanopy Films based in San Francisco, who had been recommended to us as a good fit for streaming to tertiary

institutions in the US, Canada, Australia and Aotearoa NZ. I was keen to get the film into the tertiary sector as I could see its value to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars. During the contracting period, Journeyman let us know that Al Jazeera wanted to make an offer for global rights to play *The Price of Peace* in their *Witness* documentary slot. Kim and I had discussed the possibility of approaching Al Jazeera as early as July 2013 so we were very happy to say yes to what was, given the fracturing state of the global market and the niche appeal of our film internationally, a good price. Its earnings to date are moderately respectable though less than we would like:

INCOME – DOMESTIC	
NZ International Film Festival	6,257
Domestic Cinema Release	1,204
Domestic TV (additional to funding)	1,000
Domestic non-cinema screenings/DVD sales	444
Domestic Total to Oct 2021	**NZ$8,905**

INCOME – INTERNATIONAL	
International Film Festival Awards	8,236
International FF Screening Fees	980
International distribution - TV/Online sales	40,012
International Total to Oct 2021	**NZ$49,228**

Figure 18: The Price of Peace – *Earnings to Oct 2021*

It is impossible to judge if the film could have done better in the marketplace than we achieved. If it had been produced with a higher budget and promoted by a larger company with well-established international connections (that is, a higher standing in the eyes of the international field), it is likely it would have had a greater reach and earned more. For Kim, Roger, myself and the crew, the struggle to get the film made at all was hard, as it almost always is for documentary-makers in most countries, and much of the reward comes simply from the positive reception, the awards and the experience of seeing Indigenous audiences in other countries being inspired by the story, an example in practice of the 'psychic income' discussed earlier. For Kim and myself, there was the further reward of improving our standing with the filmmaking field in Aotearoa NZ, as Kim was able to move on to develop her next feature documentary and I moved on to executive produce an international Indigenous feature drama.

5.9 Conclusion

This chapter has explored aspects of the producer's craft in order to make visible how the field interacts with the individual in the systems model of creativity. What is apparent from the outset is that, in terms of Māori filmmaking, the field in many ways mirrors the field of non-Māori filmmaking, for example in terms of those who control the flow of

money from the mainstream funding bodies and those who make some key festival decisions: they are the same people. However, it does differ in a number of ways. In terms of investment, there are growing sources of private investment which require a larger potential return than an Indigenous documentary can be expected to generate so these sources are unlikely to support Māori-generated stories. Against that, as illustrated here, investment or grants can be found from Māori sources if the story is of value to them. The distribution field for Indigenous work is limited again because of the difficulty of generating a return from mainstream audiences; however, there are quite specialised opportunities internationally that *The Price of Peace* was able to take advantage of (for example, Indigenous festivals, Indigenous television networks). Additionally, as illustrated by our connection to Journeyman, the right story at the right time can still cut through to catch the attention of non-Indigenous distributors. Another element of the field which is common to Indigenous filmmakers worldwide is the understanding that the first audience for Indigenous work is those who have shared their story: to echo John O'Shea, there is a deep sense that we do not take pictures, people give us pictures.

Csikszentmihalyi (1996) discusses three ways in which the field can affect the rate of creativity: reactivity versus proactivity, the scale of the filter used, and the field's connection to the rest of society. This case study has shown the domestic field to be relatively reactive, given that as filmmakers we had to work very persistently to get a broadcaster on board. Securing a screening at the NZIFF was somewhat easier as, after my first contact with the festival, their interest remained intense. This confirmed our expectation that the story would work better on the big screen, and the festival audience was its strongest home audience. The hard work to achieve support domestically contrasts with the relative ease with which the film has travelled internationally. Here the field was proactive once we launched at imagineNATIVE in Toronto, with festivals worldwide seeking us out, as did Journeyman and the international broadcaster Al Jazeera. This international recognition has enabled both Kim and me to advance our careers and in a small-country filmmaking ecology, it can be seen as inevitable that international recognition is necessary for filmmakers to progress as there are always more filmmakers seeking production funding than can be funded. Thus, international recognition becomes a de facto triage mechanism. Additionally, as noted, the field has recognised in recent years that *te ao Māori* is intrinsic to the appeal of our filmmaking industry internationally and this has resulted, as discussed in earlier chapters, in a marked shift among field members like the NZFC to a more proactive stance in support of Māori

films and filmmakers. We cannot quantify how our documentary benefited from this but one example illustrates: in mid-2015, before Kim and I even left for Toronto, the NZFC asked to include the film in a showcase at GZ DOC in Guangzhou, and Kim travelled with the film to screen in Guangzhou (her father's hometown) and Beijing later that year. Regarding the filter the field applies, again it can be argued that the case study shows a more restrictive filter being applied domestically than internationally but it is very difficult to draw conclusions as to the implications of this without studying the funding and distribution of a range of films. The change of commissioner at the broadcaster resulted in a complete volte-face in terms of our success at securing our key funding and one could say that this member of the field applied a broader filter than her predecessors. It might also be argued that the field displayed its ability to apply a broad filter in supporting another version of a story already told; equally, that success could be put down to Kim and the team's creative ability in structuring the story to show the events in a new light. What can be said in general terms is that the increasing support for Māori work in the screen industry on some occasions includes the audience who form part of the field. Our production certainly benefited from this in terms of the audience support at the NZIFF and through international distribution; conversely, the disappointing audiences when we distributed the film ourselves in Aotearoa NZ and the terrible domestic television ratings can be read to show either complete disinterest or a negative judgment on our work.

The increasing government support for, and international investment in, Māori screen work and, indeed, for all screen production in Aotearoa NZ does illustrate that the field is well connected and many filmmakers in the country currently benefit from this. This social connection is the end result of the work of countless individuals both inside and outside companies and institutions. Because producers are part of the field as well as being beholden to others in the field, their ability to maintain good social connection across the field is fundamental to their achievement. Writing of her own documentary practice, Kerrigan (2010) discusses how her deep internalisation of some of the constraints of the production environment meant that she was unaware in effect of how they influenced her decision-making, and comments that "dispositions seen as 'second nature' arose, which can be so familiar for a practitioner that they give the feeling of being able to freely make choices about practice" (p. 148). This accurately describes my own sense of much of the decision-making during the production of *The Price of Peace*. At this stage in my career, I have deeply internalised a range of the constraints in the

production environment and many decisions and creative judgments I made during the course of the work came instinctively to me. However, as producers often do, I had continually to force myself to bring these implicit understandings into the light in order to justify production decisions that I made and explain them to my co-workers. Reflecting on this process from a distance, it is plain to me that this internalisation of constraints in the production environment influences, one could even say controls, the conduct of social connection within and beyond the field, and I think it is no exaggeration to say that success or otherwise in the filmmaking endeavour for the producer is more a matter of conducting successful social relationships than any other single element.

Conclusion

Overview

This thesis has used a personal lens to critically analyse my practice as a Māori film producer with the aim of bringing to light a practitioner's understanding of a craft which is not yet widely researched, within a media production context, that of Indigenous media-makers, which currently remains underexplored. It has been researched and written in a time of rapid change in an industry where that change is being turbocharged by technological developments. I have sought to bring a critical reflexivity to an 'ethnography of a present situation' (Westbrook, 2008) because I see value for other researchers in the academy as well as industry researchers in placing on record my reading of the work of the Māori producer at this juncture. The accident of the timing of my career connects me to the foundational Māori producers, two of whom, Barry Barclay and Don Selwyn, I worked with and learnt from; at the same time, I am still working in the industry and currently executive producing a new Indigenous film, which is breaking ground as a co-production between Aotearoa NZ and Australia (*We Are Still Here*, 2022). So it is a privilege to be able to consider the landscape from this position.

In this research, I have explored the social, political, historical and industrial circumstances which have led to the present moment in my career in order to establish the shape of the domain of Māori filmmaking. I have then investigated the experiences and opinions of a range of other seasoned Māori film producers to establish the qualities they share as individuals and the key influences that contribute to their decision-making to contextualise what is revealed through my own experience. Finally, I have discussed a detailed case study to make visible how I achieve my aims as a producer through interaction with those who constitute the field – that is, those who help or hinder my ability to execute my role successfully. Through these methods I have addressed the three central research questions:

What constitutes the screen production context for this research?

What are the key influences on the screen producer's decision-making process?

How does the screen producer exercise her creative authority to achieve an intended outcome?

The theoretical framing for this research is Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's systems model of creativity, which frames creative practice as the product of interaction between the domain, the individual and the field (Chapter 1). In this conclusion, I briefly revisit the findings under each of these three aspects of the systems model before moving on to discuss implications of the research and show how these contribute to a conceptualisation of the work of the Indigenous screen producer as a creative system of practice.

In establishing that Māori film production constitutes a recognisable domain (Chapters 2 and 3), I explored the history of Māori filmmaking, showing how over time it has emerged from its subordinate position as a component of the generalised or mainstream body of filmmaking in Aotearoa New Zealand. This flowering has been enabled by forces both within and beyond the Māori filmmaking community. Forces within the community have included those who fought long and hard to make the Māori voice heard onscreen, not as a story told by others but as a story told by Māori. They include those who fought for recognition of *te reo* as well as those who fought for the establishment of a wider Māori media ecology, bringing the Indigenous voice "into the national imaginary" (Abel, 2013, p. 211). This surfacing of the Indigenous voice in film, as in media generally, reflects the social and political evolution of the nation as the mainstream settler culture comes to recognise the rightful place of Māori as the Indigenous people of Aotearoa NZ. Parallel to this, the recognition that *te ao Māori* is what differentiates the country from an international perspective has assisted the growth of Māori film production. This recognition underlies the decisions by the mainstream public funding bodies in the film and broadcasting sectors both to increase their funding for Māori screen storytelling and also to shift, albeit much more slowly than one would like, towards a funding model that requires that Māori own the means of production and the IP when Māori stories are told. The funding bodies are the primary source of finance for much of the filmmaking in Aotearoa NZ so their requirements lead the market in promoting Māori ownership. Story sovereignty, or Māori control over Māori stories, is at the heart of the enterprise and Tainui Stephens (2021) notes: "Story sovereignty belongs with the people we serve" (para. 11). This position is echoed in interviews with other Māori film producers.

Many of the qualities displayed by the producers in the research (Chapter 4) are qualities that would be found among a similar group of film producers anywhere: we are driven people, idealists who care passionately about our craft, and though we like making money, it is not our primary motivation. We relish the opportunities afforded us to lead

a group of creatives to achieve a common purpose, and we enjoy taking risks. However, there are a number of elements that differentiate us from mainstream producers and these can be regarded as revealing our kinship with other Indigenous producers elsewhere in the world. There is a common understanding of the producer's responsibility as something going beyond the immediate production, its investors and audience, to incorporate a commitment to the wider community, as expressed in the way we observe obligations of *tikanga* within an environment that incorporates many Western ways of working. There is an ongoing concern about misrepresentation of Indigenous in the media generally and, for some, a sense of exhaustion at having continually to fight for the right to tell our own stories from our own perspective, rather than from someone else's notion of what constitutes a 'universal' tale. All of us are highly aware that we are responsible in our work to build on the gifts we have received from those who have broken the path for us. We bring a variety of motivations to our work, from a love of cinema to a desire to advance the cause of *te reo,* alongside a conscious commitment to supporting the development of those who are following in our footsteps. The fact that there is now a growing number of younger Māori producing cinema work, even in this age of convergence, is heartening; though what Cliff Curtis calls "the Celtic knot of IP" (section 4.6) or notions of shared or communal ownership mitigate against raising finance in the current Western model of filmmaking and this remains an issue of primary importance in the development of Māori film production going forward.

The case study of *The Price of Peace* (Chapter 5) illustrated the complicated position the producer occupies within the screen production environment, as both a member of the field and one who is highly reliant on the judgment of others in the field. The further ambiguity of this position was shown in my relationship with the director Kim Webby, as I sought to protect her from some of the difficulties of production, including fund-raising and dealing with gatekeepers, while at the same time bringing creative judgment to the feedback sessions throughout editing and in the marketing of the film. My judgment overall was informed by my knowledge and understanding of how to negotiate with those in the field who were in a position to enable or disable our film's chances of being made and reaching an audience, as well as my understanding of how to position the film for the market, which drove every decision I made from the moment I joined the project. This reveals my deeply internalised consciousness of the range of forces acting on my practice as a producer. Further, as a production team, we were very conscious that we had a responsibility to give voice to those from Tūhoe who had been damaged by the

events the film covers, and this reflects an Indigenous filmmaker's view that the participants in a film are, in a sense, partners in the film rather than just subjects for the filmmaker's use. They were thus part of the field in that if we had in their judgment failed, we might not have had a film (if they refused to partake) or we might not have been able to complete the film satisfactorily and launch it with their goodwill.

The confidence of culture

Aotearoa NZ is a market where the "mainstream and the margins readily meet", as Goldson and Smith (2008) have noted in a different context. This is borne out in this thesis in its illustration of the way that Māori producers spend much if not most of their time walking in both worlds, the Indigenous and the non-Indigenous. It is possible to see this position as 'border-crossing' to use Ginsberg's (2003) term, meaning the recognition by media-makers of their need to communicate effectively in two different communities, the Indigenous and the settler. However, I would suggest that what we are discussing here is not border-crossing, it is immersion in two worlds simultaneously, in that it is not just about (though it certainly requires) the ability to communicate effectively to both Indigenous and settler communities. What immersion means is that the practitioner is bringing their whole self to both worlds: they walk *in* both worlds, not back and forth. I would argue this goes beyond the hybridity discussed at the beginning of this thesis in terms of identity, and represents instead a confidence of culture that is most strongly apparent in Taika Waititi's work, where he brings an Indigenous eye to mainstream work and a mainstream eye to Indigenous work, drawing no attention to either while representing a truth that he sees in the world. He "dance[s] that line really beautifully … because it's so true to his world [and] our world" as Desray Armstrong frames it in her interview (section 4.5). She continues "I think that learning comes from opening up our world to people, so that they can feel", and this confidence to 'open up our world' comes, I suggest, from having feet firmly planted in both worlds and bringing the best of both together. In some respects, this represents for filmmaking a true "geopolitical decentering of the discipline" (Newman, 2010, p. 4) as binary positioning becomes irrelevant (moving beyond the notion of hybridity which remains tied to the need to consider the two components of the hybrid and therefore reflecting the Anglo-European world of the coloniser together with the colonised).

There is a reimagining in progress in Aotearoa NZ on a much larger scale that just in the world of filmmaking, for instance as progress is made on embedding the Treaty of

Waitangi in the nation's political and business structures, an extension of earlier examples discussed in this thesis relating to the Crown's legal commitment to promote Māori language and media. There is never a guarantee that such progress will continue and the likelihood of the Treaty becoming a standard of normativity seems a long way off. However, the increasing number of young people emerging from *kura kaupapa* and *wānanga*, highly educated in both cultures and languages, indicates a shift in the culture which these younger generations may accelerate, recalling Quinton Hita's comment that young people "don't want to feel the weight of" the struggle for identity in their entertainment but want to see themselves "represented in a less burdened way" (section 4.5). For Māori producers, the growing depth of connection among international Indigenous filmmakers and film funding bodies is supporting a growth of ambition as suggested by the international attention to Piki Films' forthcoming slate of projects discussed earlier (section 3.5). It is also notable that a number of Māori producers are now driving the production of films with no reference to *te ao Māori*, no Māori stories, themes or stars (section 3.5), alongside their work on Indigenous films.[59]

Looking back over the history of the domain of Māori filmmaking, it is possible to see that residual social positions have been transcended ("No-one wants to see a Māori film") and that structural changes have taken place (as evidenced by the embedding of *rautaki Māori* in the management as well as financing structures of state funders). This means the Māori producer now operates in an emergent culture, one in which new kinds of relationships and new practices are valued and may be built on. To illustrate this, the question of what makes the Māori producer's practice different is now summarised.

Dimensions of difference in the Māori producer's practice

> *Every culture has a right and a responsibility to present its own culture to its own people. That responsibility is so fundamental that it cannot be left in the hands of outsiders, nor be usurped by them. (Barclay, 1996, p. 127)*

There is no one Māori way of working as there is no one American or Spanish or Chinese way of working. Māori producers have different ambitions and different dreams from one another and this results in different choices being made when engaging in practice,

59. Both Larry Parr and I did this in our early careers but there was not the support or opportunities for Māori filmmaking then that there is now.

as this thesis has illustrated. Nevertheless, there are commonalities which can be discussed as the dimensions of difference in the Māori producers practice, a *kaupapa Māori* through which their practice is realised, and I summarise these under five headings:

Whakapapa

Whakapapa is most often translated as 'genealogy' but its origins in the word *papa* or 'layer' point to its literal meaning, which is to create a base or foundation, and it is through *whakapapa* that kinship and economic ties are cemented (Barlow, 1994 p. 174). In the context of the Māori producer's practice, there are two *whakapapa* to consider: the filmmaker's own genealogy and the *whakapapa* of the industry. Ainsley Gardiner and Cliff Curtis speak of the importance of shooting Taika Waititi's Oscar-nominated short *Two Cars, One Night* in the *papakāinga* or home territory to which Taika and Ainsley belong (section 4.4): this is the filmmakers' own *whakapapa* in action, observing the ties to *iwi* and *hapū* and imbuing the film with the *mana* of this value. In terms of the industry, there is a line of descent from filmmakers who have passed: from Ramai Hayward through Barry Barclay, Merata Mita and Don Selwyn, through elders such as Ernie Leonard and Whai Ngata in the related field of television, others like the founders of Te Manu Aute and Te Paepae Ataata, and still others who are not named in this thesis. As Māori filmmakers in the present, we are enabled by their hard work and talent, and there is a sense among all the producers in this research that we have a responsibility to carry their work forward: this is the *whakapapa* of the industry.

Tikanga

Tikanga or protocol, that is the right way of doing things, is as Ainsley Gardiner notes, a "moveable feast and it changes" (section 4.4) depending on the circumstances. For the Māori filmmaker, *tikanga* is a set of principles that keeps everyone safe on and off set; it guides behaviour so that respect is properly observed, so that for instance Kim Webby and I did not even have to think about who saw the finished film of *The Price of Peace* first: there was no question that we took the film down country to Taneātua to screen it for the Tūhoe people (section 5.7). Similarly, when it came to the self-distribution of the film in local cinemas, the first audiences we sought were in the towns of Whakatāne, Ōpōtiki, Gisborne and Wairoa (see Appendix E) as these are the towns local to the people of the area. *Tikanga* is underpinned by:

Manaakitanga

Manaakitanga is the obligation to show respect and care for others. In practice, it can be

summed up by Tainui Stephens' philosophy of *karakia, kōrero* and *kai* (section 4.6): first, there is the *karakia*, the blessing which brings everyone together in common cause and creates a safe space for work; then there is the *kōrero* or talk, which enables everyone to know what is expected on and off set in the course of the day, perhaps how the rushes[60] are looking or responses to the work from executives (such communication is not guaranteed on all sets); finally, there is *kai*, the sharing of food to give thanks at the end of the day or the week: what, to paraphrase Stephens (section 4.6), can be called a Māori way of managing.

Whanaungatanga

Whanaungatanga means relationship or kinship. The *whānau* is principally the extended family, but can also mean people united in a common cause. Everyone who works on a film becomes *whānau* for the duration. On a bigger scale, there is the *whānau* of Māori filmmakers. On a bigger scale again, there is the *whānau* of Indigenous filmmakers, a worldwide community becoming more and more entwined as our films become more in demand. This sense of connection is not just a convenience of co-production financing, it is a deep, deep matrix of common cause, of seeing now the opportunity to have our voices heard and our stories told by us. It is driven also by the rootedness of all Indigenous people in their community: as Linda T. Smith (2006) notes "Māori aspirations (are) deeply located in history, in cultural differences and in the value of the collectivity" (p. 249), a view echoed by Desray Armstrong when she says this is why "Māori are so good in film generally, because … everyone has their role to play and you can't do it without any one of those people" (section 4.4).

Te reo Māori

Most films made by Māori are not made in *te reo Māori* as most Māori, including filmmakers, do not speak the language fluently. However, all the producers interviewed for this research spoke in varying ways of the importance of the language. As Quinton Hita notes, there is growing support for the cause of *te reo* across society (section 4.6) and ability to speak the language is increasingly in demand across media, with bilingual graduates sought after. There is a recognition among all successful filmmakers that without a market of the appropriate size, it is very difficult to raise investment for making a film in *te reo*. This is recognised by bodies like the NZFC through their separate tranche of funding for films made in *te reo Māori* and 2022 will see the release of the first of

60. Rushes or dailies are the raw, unedited footage captured while shooting a film.

these films.[61] As I wrote in 2015 in discussing the concept of Fourth Cinema, "the Indigenous camera will see differently, frame differently, provide a different context and serve a different philosophy" (p. 349). This is true for films made by Māori whether they are in *te reo Māori* or English, echoing Tainui Stephens' comment "I've gone where the language is and if not the language, the thinking behind the language" (section 4.4).

When I embarked on this study, I anticipated I might generate a revision of Csikszentmihalyi's systems model with some form of production or product or achievement at the centre, meaning what the producer's work results in. What I have learned instead is what I already knew: that *te ao Māori* is the centre. I have shown that the way the Māori film producer expresses themselves in practice reflects the Māori way of being (including the contradictions inherent for some of us in our Māori/Pākehā positioning) and what this means. It requires incorporating *kaupapa Māori* principles to a greater or lesser extent, and this is the key to enabling us to think differently about the way Csikszentmihalyi sets up his systems model of creativity.

The work of the Indigenous screen producer as a creative system of practice

Here is Csikszentmihalyi's original model:

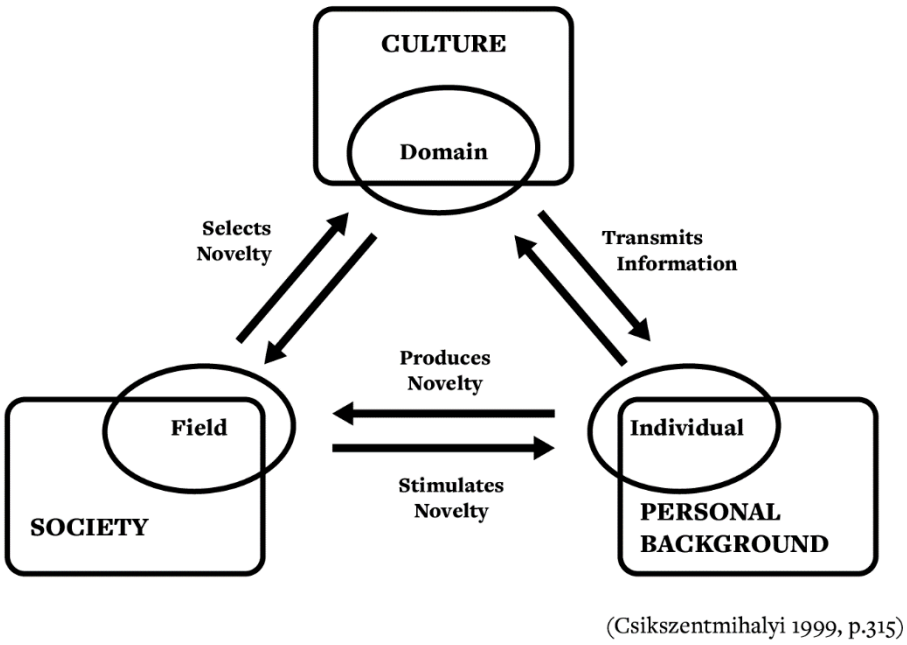

Figure 19: The systems model of creativity

The findings of this study can be incorporated to revise the model in order to

61. *Muru*, written/directed by Tearepa Kahi. Producers include Reikura Kahi, executive producers include Cliff Curtis.

conceptualise the work of the Māori film producer and, by extension, the Indigenous screen producer, thus:

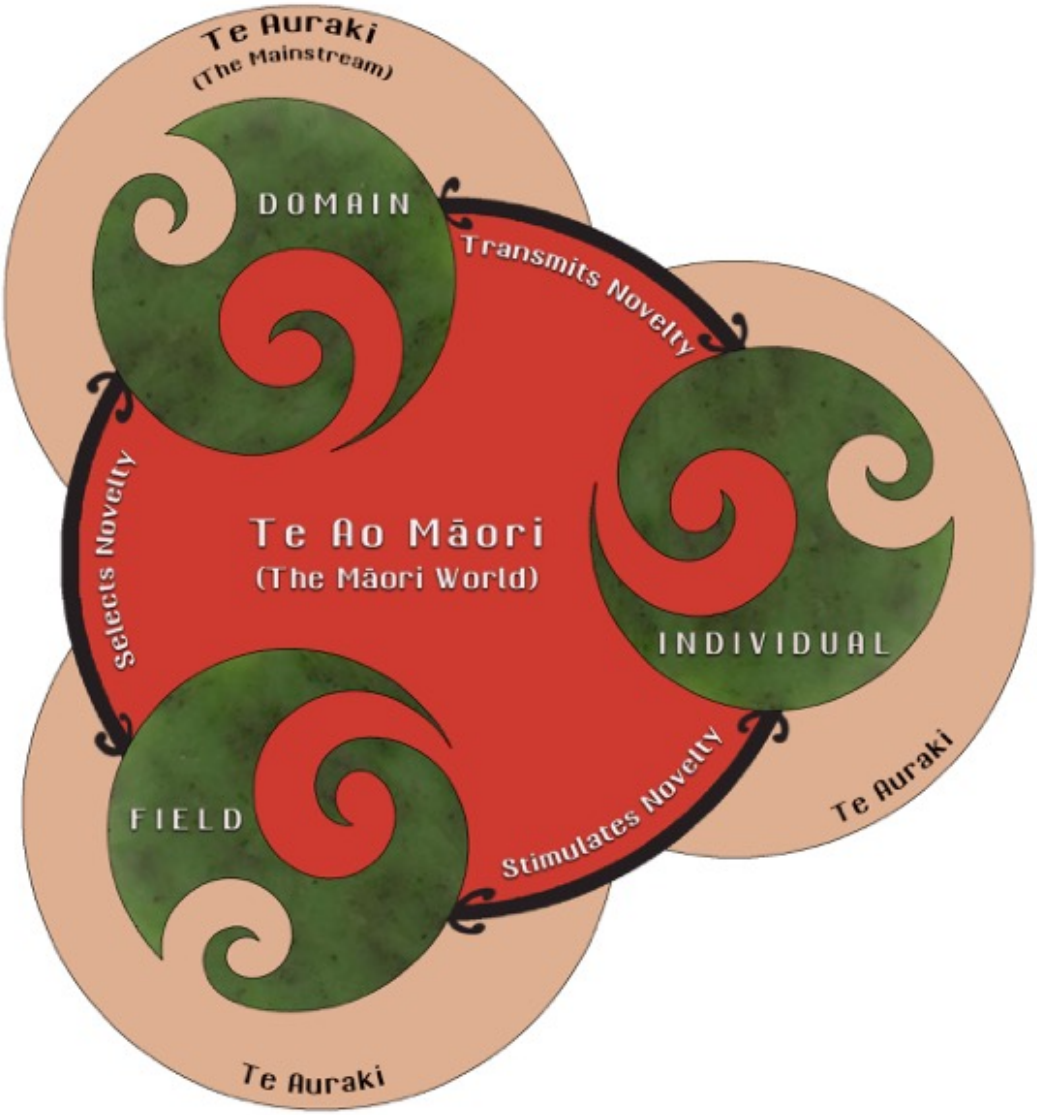

Figure 20: The work of the Māori screen producer as a creative system of practice

I arrived at this revised model through my critical exploration of the history of the domain of Māori filmmaking, through analysis of my detailed discussions with my producing colleagues, and through critical reflection on my own practice as described in the case study. The revision incorporates and extends the Western envisioning of domain, individual and field with the cycle of selection and transmission of novelty. It connects these through the holistic framework of *te ao Māori*, an Indigenous way of being which sees the three elements as interconnected much more clearly and completely than the original model. *Te ao Māori* is the force binding all together, which illustrates how the dimensions of difference detailed above are intrinsic to the functioning of the individual Māori producer, to much of their domain and to much of their field. By showing the

circles delineating the three elements as open on both sides, the revision shows how all elements, while centred on *te ao Māori*, are also unavoidably shaped by the influence of *te auraki*, the mainstream world and mainstream practices. Thus, this illustration shows the openness and integration of the relationship between Māori and non-Māori in the film world, but the influence of the mainstream world is tied to each element – the individual, the domain and the field – rather than completely encompassing *te ao Māori*, so the visualisation shows the strength of *te ao Māori* weighted against *te auraki.*

As a two-dimensional realisation, this visualisation suffers from the same issue as Csikszentmihalyi's original model in that it does not show progression through time; from the Māori perspective, one could say that therefore it is not able to illustrate *whakapapa*. However, the concept of *whakapapa* is foundational to the concept of *te ao Māori* so, by implication, the element of time, of inheritance from those who have gone before and intention toward those who come after, is included.

The sense that this visualisation can, by extension, be considered a realisation of the work of the Indigenous screen producer as a creative system of practice is founded on the commonalities, the sister and brotherhood, shared by Indigenous worldwide: the sense of being in a continuum with not just humanity but also the universe, the sense of rootedness to the place of origin, and for filmmakers the sense that through film we can recuperate our destiny. As it is expressed in the Declaration of Indigenous Cinema (see Appendix B):

> *WE WILL:*
>
> - *Be recognised as the primary guardians and interpreters of our culture*
> - *Respect Indigenous individuals and communities*
> - *Faithfully preserve our traditional knowledge with sound and image*
> - *Use our skills to communicate with nature and all living things*
> - *Through screen storytelling heal our wounds*
> - *Preserve and pass on our stories to those not yet born*
>
> *And thus through motion picture make the invisible visible again*
> *We will manage our own destiny and maintain our humanity and pride as Indigenous peoples through screen storytelling.*

Looking to the future

I noted at the start of this thesis, when discussing the paucity of research into the work of the film producer, that internationally I could find little research specifically focused on the Indigenous producer. Additionally, acknowledging extant research into the work of

Māori filmmakers, I noted that there was little from the production studies perspective. This thesis goes some way towards addressing these gaps.

As Perren (2016) notes, there is much research material now available in media industry studies, but much remains hidden, and the same is true of Indigenous media studies. This detailed study from an insider's perspective therefore offers research of value to both Indigenous media studies and to media production studies. For scholars of Māori filmmaking particularly, this thesis offers a much more detailed understanding of the drivers of the emergence of present-day filmmaking than has been available, with new illustrated timelines of Māori feature film production. For scholars in media production studies, this study of the work of the film producer offers a perspective that is Indigenous, female and conducted in a small-country media ecology. This underlines its originality. In addition, the research into and creation of the cinema documentary value chain is new and offers research which may be of value not just to scholars of documentary but also to industry researchers. Principally, the research explains in detail the practice of a generation of Māori filmmakers, placing them in relation to the generation preceding and showing how they intersect with the mainstream world of filmmaking in Aotearoa NZ, a world which to date has been more researched than the Indigenous.

Looking forward, I see this research as a springboard in two very important directions. Firstly, there is a new generation of Māori producers springing up. They have emerged into a different industry from that in which the producers in this research developed and there are now enough of them to constitute a body of practitioners with different histories, different training and no doubt different aims in their work. They will change the film industry in Aotearoa NZ, and it would be valuable to research their practice and place it in contrast with what this current project has revealed. Secondly, similar research across other Indigenous industries would expand our understanding of film production, particularly across Canada, Australia and the United States, all Indigenous industries which share similarities of origin with Aotearoa NZ; contrasting these industries with those of, for instance, the Sámi of northern Europe or the Indigenous filmmakers of Latin America would be equally valuable. In a related area, our Indigenous cousins throughout Te Moananui a Kiwa (the Pacific Ocean) are growing their filmmaking, and while there has been some research into filmmaking in the Pacific, a broad research project using the production studies approach remains in the future.

List of film, television and online productions referenced in thesis

Films: (* indicates short film)

A Māori Maid's Love. Directed by Raymond Longford. Produced by Raymond Longford and Lottie Lyell. 1915.

A Soldier's Tale. Directed and produced by Larry Parr. Mirage Films. 1989.

Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner. Directed by Zacharias Kunuk. Produced by Zacharias Kunuk, Norman Kohn, Paul Apak Angilirq. Igloolik Isuma. 2001.

Avatar. Directed by James Cameron. Produced by James Cameron, Jon Landau. Dune Entertainment, Lightstorm Entertainment. 2009.

Baby, Done. Directed by Curtis Vowell. Produced by Morgan Waru. Piki Films. 2020.

Bastion Point Day 507. Directed and produced by Merata Mita, Leon Narbey and Gerd Pohlmann. Awatea Films. 1980.

Boy. Directed by Taika Waititi. Produced by Ainsley Gardiner, Cliff Curtis, Emanuel Michael. Whenua Films. 2010.

Broken Barrier. Directed and produced by John O'Shea. Pacific Films. 1952.

Came A Hot Friday. Directed by Ian Mune. Produced by Larry Parr. Mirage Films. 1985.

Coming Home in the Dark. Directed by James Ashcroft. Produced by Desray Armstrong, Catherine Fitzgerald, Mike Minogue. Light in the Dark Productions. 2021.

Constance. Directed by Bruce Morrison. Produced by Larry Parr. Mirage Films. 1984.

Cousins. Directed by Ainsley Gardiner, Briar Grace-Smith. Produced by Ainsley Gardiner, Georgina Allison Conder, Libby Hakaraia. Miss Conception Films. 2021.

Don't Let It Get You. Directed and produced by John O'Shea. Pacific Films. 1966.

Eagle vs Shark. Directed by Taika Waititi. Produced by Ainsley Gardiner, Cliff Curtis. Whenua Films. 2007.

Fantail. Directed by Curtis Vowell. Produced by Sarah Cook, Brett Mills, Matt Noonan. Yes Please Films & Curious Films. 2013.

Herbs: Songs of Freedom. Directed by Tearepa Kahi. Produced by Reikura Kahi, Cliff Curtis. Jawbone Films. 2019.

**Hinemoa.* Directed and produced by Gaston Melies. 1913.

Hinemoa. Directed and produced by George Tarr. 1914.

House Made of Dawn. Directed and produced by Richardson Morse. National Museum of the American Indian. 1972.

**How Chief Te Ponga Won His Bride.* Directed and produced by Gaston Melies. 1913.

Hunt for the Wilderpeople. Directed by Taika Waititi. Produced by Carthew Neal, Matt Noonan, Leanne Saunders, Taika Waititi. Piki Films, Defender Films, Curious Films. 2016.

**Itam Hakim, Hopiit*. Produced and directed by Victor Masayesva Jr. 1985.

Jojo Rabbit. Directed by Taika Waititi. Produced by Carthew Neal, Chelsea Winstanley, Taika Waititi. Piki Films, Defender Films. 2019.

Juniper. Directed by Matthew J. Saville. Produced by Desray Armstrong, Angela Littlejohn. Sandy Lane Productions. 2021.

Kombi Nation. Directed by Grant LaHood. Produced by Ainsley Gardiner. Arkles Entertainment. 2003.

**Loved by a Māori Chieftess.* Directed and produced by Gaston Melies. 1913.

Magik and Rose. Directed by Vanessa Alexander. Produced by Larry Parr. Kahukura Productions. 2001.

Mahana. Directed by Lee Tamahori. Produced by Robin Scholes. The Patriarch Ltd. 2016.

Mana Waka. Directed by Merata Mita. Production: Te Puea Estate, Tūrangawaewae Marae. 1990.

Māui's Hook. Directed by Paora Joseph. Produced by Quinton Hita. Kura Productions. 2018.

Mauri. Directed by Merata Mita. Produced by Merata Mita and Geoff Murphy. Awatea Films. 1988.

Merata: How Mum Decolonised the Screen. Directed by Hepi Mita. Produced by Chelsea Winstanley. 2018.

Merry Christmas Mr Lawrence. Directed by Nagisa Ōshima. Produced by Jeremy Thomas. 1983.

Millie Lies Low. Directed by Michelle Savill. Produced by Desray Armstrong, Angela Littlejohn. Sandy Lane Productions. 2021.

**Mokopuna.* Directed by Ainsley Gardiner. Produced by Glenis Giles, Ainsley Gardiner. 2009.

Mt Zion. Directed by Tearepa Kahi. Produced by Quinton Hita. Small Axe Films. 2013.

Muru. Directed by Tearepa Kahi. Produced by Reikura Kahi, Selina Joe, Tame Iti. Jawbone Films. 2022.

Ngāti. Directed by Barry Barclay. Produced by John O'Shea. Pacific Films. 1987.

Night Raiders. Directed by Danis Goulet. Produced by Ainsley Gardiner, Chelsea Winstanley, Georgina Allison Conder, Paul Barkin, Tara Woodbury. Alcina Pictures. 2021.

Nights in the Gardens of Spain. Directed by Katie Wolfe. Produced by Christina Milligan, Nicole Hoey. Cinco Cine Conbrio. 2010.

Ofelas (Pathfinder). Directed by Nils Gaup. Produced by John M. Jacobsen. Filmkameratene A/S, Mayco, Norsk Film, Norway Film Development. 1987.

Once Were Warriors. Directed by Lee Tamahori. Produced by Robin Scholes. Communicado. 1994.

Patu! Directed and produced by Merata Mita. Awatea Films. 1983.

Poi E: The Story of a Song. Directed by Tearepa Kahi. Produced by Reikura Kahi, Alexander Behse. Jawbone Pictures, Patea Film Collective. 2016.

Queen City Rocker. Directed by Bruce Morrison. Produced by Larry Parr. Mirage Films. 1986.

Rain of the Children. Directed by Vincent Ward. Produced by Vincent Ward, Marg Slater, Tainui Stephens. Vincent Ward Films. 2008.

Reunion. Directed by Jake Mahaffie. Produced by Ainsley Gardiner, Georgina Allison Conder, Nadia Maxwell, Mike S. Ryan. Grayshack Films, Miss Conceptions Films. 2020.

Rewi's Last Stand. Produced and directed by Rudall Hayward, Frontier Films. 1940.

River Queen. Directed by Vincent Ward. Produced by Don Reynolds, Chris Auty. Silverscreen Films. 2005.

Runaway. Produced and directed by John O'Shea. Pacific Films. 1964.

Sione's Wedding. Directed by Chris Graham. Produced by John Barnett, Chloe Smith. South Pacific Pictures. 2006.

Sione's 2: Unfinished Business. Directed by Somon Bennett. Produced by John Barnett, Paul Davis. South Pacific Pictures. 2012.

Sleeping Dogs. Directed and produced by Roger Donaldson. Aardvark Films. 1977.

Smash Palace. Directed and produced by Roger Donaldson. Aardvark Films. 1981.

Stray. Directed by Dustin Feneley. Produced by Desray Armstrong, Dustin Feneley. Long Road Films. 2018.

**Tama Tū*. Directed by Taika Waititi. Produced by Cliff Curtis, Ainsley Gardiner. Aio Films. 2005.

Te Rua. Directed by Barry Barclay. Produced by John O'Shea. Pacific Films. 1991.

Te Tangata Whai Rawa o Wēniti. Directed by Don Selwyn. Produced by Ruth Kaupua. He Taonga Films. 2002.

The Betrayer. Produced and directed by Beaumont Smith. 1921.

The Breaker-Upperers. Directed by Madeleine Sami, Jackie van Beek. Produced by Ainsley Gardiner, Georgina Allison Conder, Carthew Neal. Piki Films, Miss Conception Films. 2018.

The Convert. Directed by Lee Tamahori. Produced by Robin Scholes. (In production 2021-2022.)

The Dark Horse. Directed by James Napier Robertson. Produced by Tom Hern. Four Knights Films. 2014

The Dead Lands. Directed by Toa Fraser. Produced by Matthew Metcalfe, Glenn Standring. Co-Producer: Tainui Stephens. General Film Corporation. 2014.

The Feathers of Peace. Directed by Barry Barclay. Produced by Ruth Kaupua. Executive producer: Don Selwyn. He Taonga Films. 2000.

**The Hill.* Directed by Tainui Stephens. Produced by John A. Givins. Livingstone Productions. 2002.

The Lord of the Rings trilogy. Directed by Peter Jackson. Produced by Peter Jackson, Barrie M. Osborne, Tim Sanders, Eric Monette, Fran Walsh. WingNut Films. 2001-2003.

.**The Makutu on Mrs Jones.* Directed and produced by Larry Parr. Mirage Films. 1983.

The Neglected Miracle. Directed by Barry Barclay. Produced by John O'Shea. Pacific Films. 1985.

The Pā Boys. Directed by Himiona Grace. Produced by Ainsley Gardiner, Mina Mathieson. Whenua Films. 2014.

The Piano. Directed by Jane Campion. Produced by Jan Chapman. CIBY 200. 1993.

The Price of Peace. Directed by Kim Webby. Produced by Christina Milligan, Roger Grant and Kim Webby. Conbrio Media. 2015.

The Romance of Hine-moa. Directed and produced by Gustav Pauli. The Gaumont Company. 1926.

The Strength of Water. Directed by Armagan Ballantyne. Produced by Fiona Copland. Filmwork. 2009.

The Tattooist. Directed by Peter Burger. Produced by Robin Scholes, Julie Christie, James Dean, Daniel Yun. Eyeworks Touchdown. 2007.

**The Visit of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall to Rotorua.* Produced by Australian Salvation Army, 1901.

To Love a Māori. Directed and produced by Rudall and Ramai Hayward. Rudall and Ramai Hayward Film Productions. 1972.

**Two Cars, One Night*. Directed by Taika Waititi. Produced by Ainsley Gardiner, Catherine Fitzgerald. Defender Films. 2003.

Waru (2017), Directed by Ainsley Gardiner, Casey Kaa, Renae Maihi, Briar Grace-Smith, Awanui Simich-Pene, Paula Whetu Jones, Chelsea Cohen, Katie Wolfe. Produced by Kiel McNaughton and Kerry Warkia. Brown Sugar Apple Grunt Productions. 2017.

We Are Still Here. Directed by Chantelle Burgoyne, Miki Magasiva & Mario Gaoa, Renae Maihi, Richard Curtis & Tim Worrall, Dena Curtis, Tracey Rigney, Danielle MacLean, Beck Cole. Produced by Mia Henry-Tierney, Mitchell Stanley, Toni Stowers. Te Kotukutuku Ltd, No Coincidence Media Pty Ltd. 2022.

Whale Rider. Directed by Niki Caro. Produced by John Barnett. Tim Sanders and Frank Hubner. South Pacific Films. 2002.

Whina. Directed by James Napier Robertson, Paula Whetu Jones. Produced by Matthew Metcalfe, Tainui Stephens. General Film Corporation. 2022.

What We Do In The Shadows. Directed by Jemaine Clement, Taika Waititi. Produced by Taika Waititi, Chelsea Winstanley, Emanuel Michael. Defender Films. 2014.

Television and Online Productions:

Ahikāroa. Directed by various. Produced by Quinton Hita, Karen Waaka-Tibble, Viv Wigby-Ngatai. Kura Productions. 2018-2022 continuing.

ANZAC Day – Nā Rātou Mō Tātou. Directed by various. Produced by various. Māori Television. 2006-2022 continuing.

Aroha. Directed by Brad Haami, Sally-Anne Kerr, Paora Maxwell, Puhi Rangiaho, Ngamaru Raerino Produced by Joanna Paul-Robie, Karen Sidney, Melissa Wikaire. Aroha Films. 2002.

Don Selwyn: Power in our hands. Produced by Catherine Fitzgerald. Blue Skin Films. 2017.

E Tipu e Rea. Directed by Lee Tamahori, Rawiri Paratene, Riwia Brown, Joanna Paul-Robie, Don Selwyn. Produced by Larry Parr. Te Manuka Trust. 1989.

Find Me a Māori Bride. Directed by Kiel McNaughton, Awanui Simich-Pene. Produced by Kerry Warkia. Brown Sugar Apple Grunt. 2015-2017.

Gloss. Directed by various. Produced by Janice Finn, Christina Milligan. Television New Zealand. 1987-1989.

Hautoa Mā! 2016 Directed by Libby Hakaraia. Produced by Tainui Stephens. Blue Bach. 2016.

Hercules: The Legendary Journeys. Directed by various. Executive producers: Rob Tapert, Sam Raimi. Pacific Renaissance Pictures. 1995-99.

Kaitangata Twitch. Directed by Yvette Mackay. Produced by Chris Hampson. Production Shed TV. 2010.

Kaleidoscope. Directed by various. Produced by various. Television New Zealand. 1976-1989.

Koha. Directed by various. Produced by various. Television New Zealand. 1980-1989.

Let My Whakapapa Speak. Directed by Tainui Stephens. Produced by Christina Milligan. Conbrio Media. 2008.

Mai Time. Directed by various. Produced by various. Television New Zealand. 1995-2007.

Marae. Directed by various. Produced by various. Televison New Zealand, Pango Productions. 1992-2022 continuing.

Marlin Bay. Directed by various. Produced by Janice Finn, Christina Milligan. South Pacific Pictures. 1992-1994.

Matakū. Directed by various. Produced by Carey Carter, Brad Haami, Rhonda Kite. South Pacific Pictures. 2001-2005.

Montana Sunday Theatre. Directed by various. Produced by various. Productions companies: various. 1995-1996.

Mortimer's Patch. Directed by various. Produced by Tom Finlayson, Logan Brewer. Television New Zealand. 1980-1984.

Ngā Puna. Directed by various. Produced by various. Executive producer: Don Selwyn. He Taonga Films. 1994, 1996.

Ngā Tamatoa: 40 Years On. Directed by Kim Webby. Produced by Nevak Rogers. Tūmanako Productions. 2012.

October 15. Directed by Kim Webby. Produced by Pietra Brettkelly. Pietra Brettkelly & Kim Webby. 2010.

Tangata Whenua. Directed by Barry Barclay. Produced by John O'Shea. Pacific Films. 1974.

Tala Pasifika. Directed by various. Produced by various. Executive producer: Don Selwyn. He Taonga Films. 1995, 1997.

The Dead Lands. Directed by Peter Burger and Michael Hurst. Produced by Matthew Metcalfe, Glenn Standring. Associate Producer: Tainui Stephens. General Film Corporation. 2020.

Te Kaea. Daily news programme. Māori Television. 2004-2022 continuing.

Te Karere. Daily news programme. Television New Zealand. 1982-2022 continuing.

Waka Huia. Directed by various. Produced by various. Television New Zealand. 1988-present day.

Wellington Paranormal. Directed by various. Produced by Paul Yates. New Zealand Documentary Board. 2018-2021.

Xena: Warrior Princess. Directed by various. Produced by Rob Tapert, Chloe Smith, Erich Gruendemann, Bernadette Joyce. Renaissance Pictures. 1995-2001.

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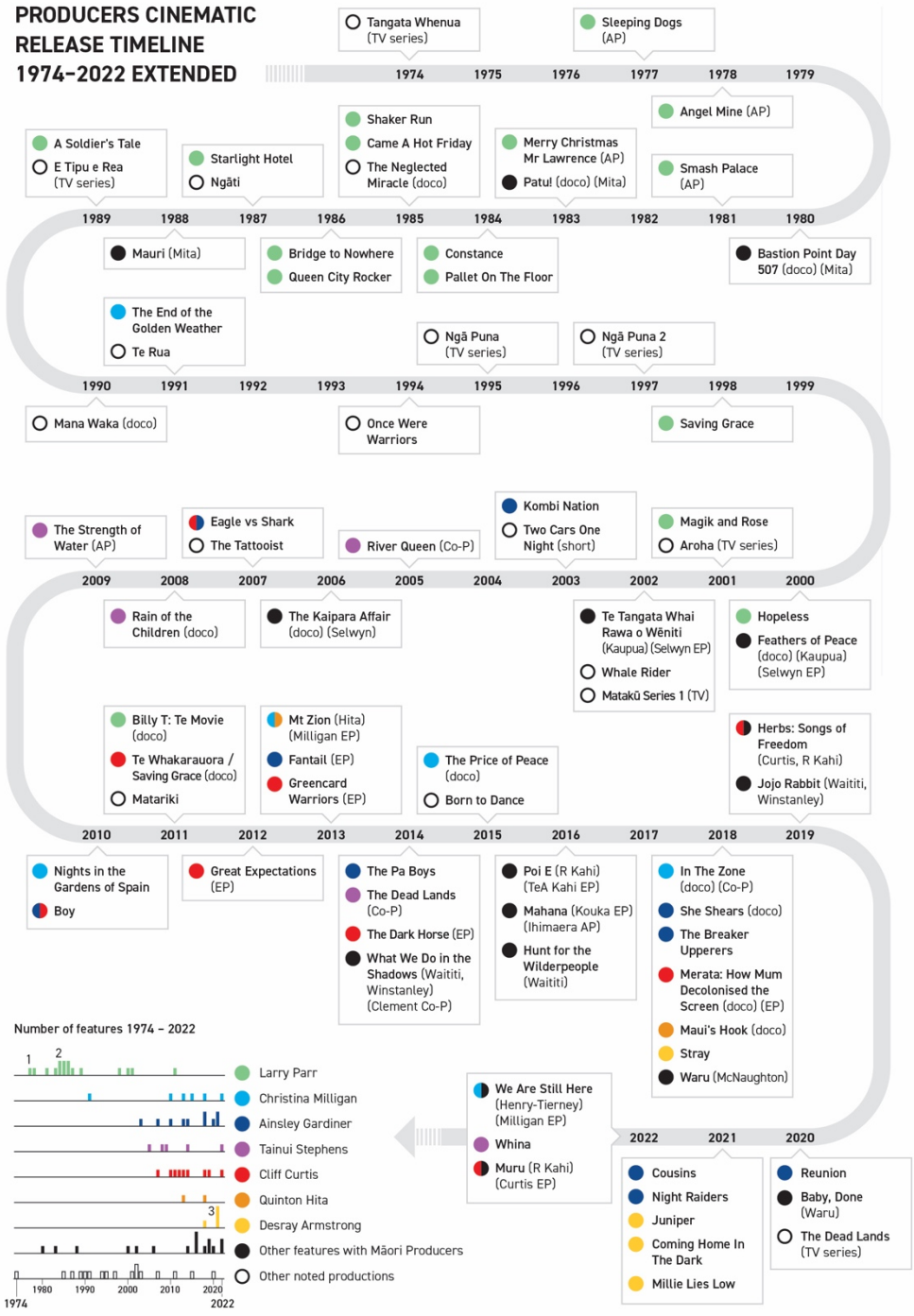
Appendix A – Producers' cinematic release timeline 1974-2022 (extended)



Appendix B – Declaration of Indigenous Cinema

WE, THE INDIGENOUS SCREEN STORYTELLERS, UNITED IN THIS NORTHERN CORNER OF OUR MOTHER THE EARTH, IN A GREAT ASSEMBLY OF WISDOM DECLARE TO ALL NATIONS:

WE GLORY IN OUR PAST,

- When our earth was nurturing our oral traditions
- When night sky evoked visions animated in our dreams
- When the sun and the moon became our parents in stories told
- When storytelling made us all brothers and sisters
- When our stories fostered great chiefs and leaders
- When justice was encouraged in the stories told

WE WILL:

- Hold and manage Indigenous cultural and intellectual property
- Be recognised as the primary guardians and interpreters of our culture
- Respect Indigenous individuals and communities
- Faithfully preserve our traditional knowledge with sound and image
- Use our skills to communicate with nature and all living things
- Through screen storytelling heal our wounds
- Preserve and pass on our stories to those not yet born

And thus through motion picture make the invisible visible again

We will manage our own destiny and maintain our humanity and pride as Indigenous peoples through screen storytelling.

Written by Asa Simma (Sami), with support from Darlene Johnson (Dunghutti), and accepted and recognized by the participants of the Indigenous Film Conference in Guovdageaidnu, Sapmi, (Kautokeino, Norway), October 2011. https://www.sundance.org/blogs/indigenous-film-conference/

Appendix C – Top 20 films at the NZ box office at May 31, 2021 (NZFC, 2021f)

New Zealand FILM COMMISSION
Te Tumu Whakaata Taonga

Top 20 Films at the New Zealand Box Office

Box Office	TITLE	DIRECTOR(S)	YEAR	DISTRIBUTOR
$12,207,699	Hunt for the Wilderpeople	Taika Waititi	2016	Piki/Madman
$9,322,000	Boy	Taika Waititi	2010	Transmission
$7,047,000	The World's Fastest Indian	Roger Donaldson	2005	Beckers
$6,795,000	Once Were Warriors	Lee Tamahori	1994	Footprint
$6,400,000	Whale Rider	Niki Caro	2003	Buena Vista
$4,075,000	Sione's Wedding	Chris Graham	2006	SPP
$3,201,000	What Becomes of the Broken Hearted	Ian Mune	1999	Polygram
$2,595,000	What We Do in the Shadows	Taika Waititi, Jemaine Clement	2014	Two Canoes
$2,420,000	Footrot Flats	Murray Ball	1986	Endeavour
$1,948,000	The Dark Horse	James Napier Robertson	2014	Transmission
$1,913,000	Second Hand Wedding	Paul Murphy	2008	Metropolis
$1,828,941	Chasing Great	Michelle Walshe & Justin Pemberton	2016	Transmission
$1,817,000	Sione's2: Unfinished Business	Simon Bennett	2012	Sony/SPP
$1,820,000	The Topp Twins: Untouchable Girls	Leanne Pooley	2009	Rialto
$1,776,484	The Breaker Upperers	Madeleine Sami & Jackie van Beek	2018	Piki/Madman
$1,600,000	Goodbye Pork Pie	Geoff Murphy	1981	Pork Pie Prod.
$1,551,160	Savage	Sam Kelly	2020	Madman
$1,518,662	Cousins	Ainsley Gardiner & Briar Grace-Smith	2021	Vendetta
$1,506,000	In My Father's Den	Brad McGann	2004	Icon
$1,284,000	Mt. Zion	Tearepa Kahi	2013	Sony

Appendix D – Interviews: Time and place

Wednesday 21st November 2018
Larry Parr at Te Puni Kokiri House, Central Wellington
Desray Armstrong at Elements Cafe, Lyall Bay, Wellington

Sunday 25th November 2018
Kim Webby at author's home, Beach Haven, Auckland

Wednesday, 12th December 2018
Tainui Stephens at South Pacific Pictures, Henderson, Auckland

Friday 15th February 2019
Cliff Curtis at Kokako Cafe, Grey Lynn, Auckland

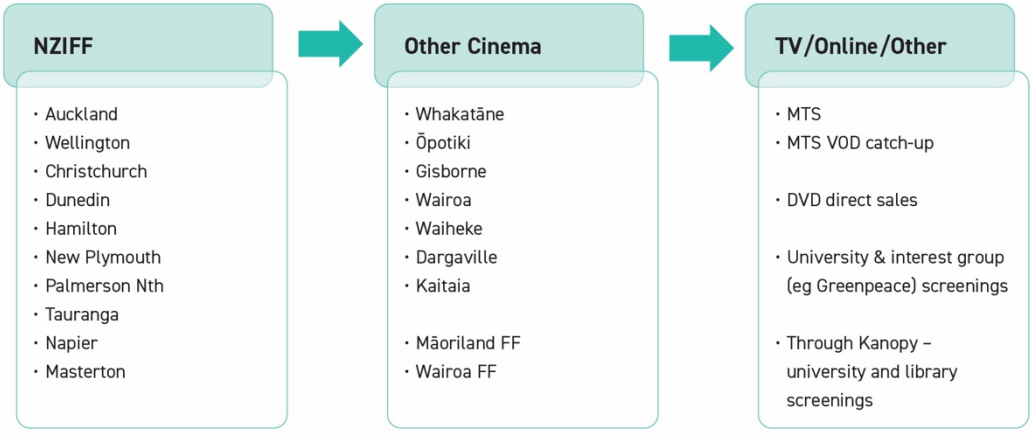
Wednesday 20th February, 2019
Cushla Dillon at her home, Avondale, Auckland

Tuesday, 26th February 2019
Quinton Hita at Didas Cafe and Bar, Ponsonby, Auckland

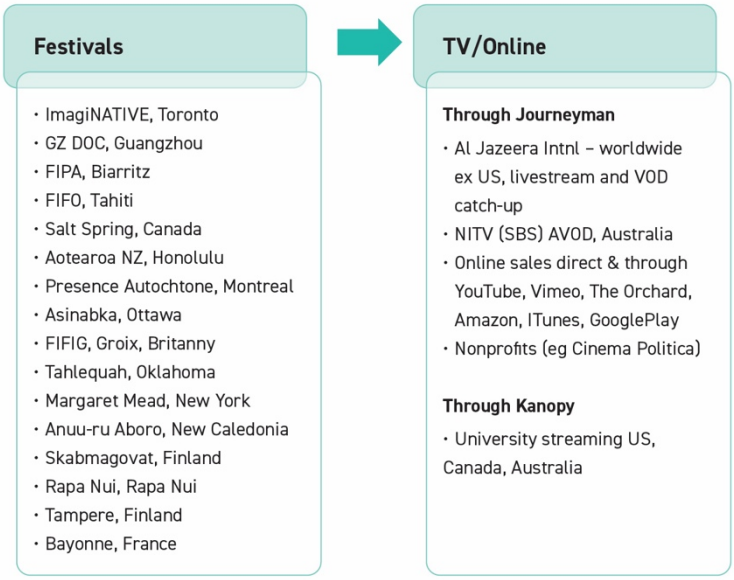
Monday 4th March 2019
Ainsley Gardiner via Skype

Appendix E – *The Price of Peace:* Distribution table

DOMESTIC



INTERNATIONAL



Appendix F – Author's industry curriculum vitae

SELECTED CREDITS

Ka Whawhai Tonu (Executive Producer) Feature in te reo Māori, for production 2023

We Are Still Here (Executive Producer) Feature, for release 2022
NZ/Australia co-production

In The Zone (Co-Producer). Feature documentary, 2018
2018 Domestic Release, Vendetta (theatrical); TVNZ (VOD)

The Price of Peace (Producer). Feature documentary, 2015
2015 International Sales, Journeyman Pictures (DVD, VOD); Kanopy (VOD)
2015 Domestic Release, Māori Television (broadcast); NZIFF (theatrical)
International Official Festival Selection
2015 New Zealand International Film Festival
2015 imagineNATIVE Film and Media Arts Festival, Toronto, Canada
2016 FIFO, Tahiti
2016 FIPA Audio-Visual Arts Festival, Biarritz, France
2016 Wairoa Māori Film Festival, NZ
2016 Māoriland Film Festival, Otaki, NZ
2016 Présence autochtone First Peoples Festival, Montréal, Canada
2016 Margaret Mead Film and Video Festival, New York, US
2016 Anuu-ru Aboro Festival International du Cinéma des Peuples, New Caledonia
2017 Skábmagovat: Indigenous Peoples' Film and TV Festival, Finland

Mt Zion (Executive Producer). Feature, 2013
2013 International Sales, Sony Pictures (theatrical, DVD)
2013 Domestic Release, Sony Pictures (theatrical, DVD)
International Official Festival Selection
2013 Hawaii International Film Festival, Honolulu, US
2013 imagineNATIVE Film and Media Arts Festival, Toronto, Canada
2013 Mill Valley Film Festival, San Francisco, US

Nights in the Gardens of Spain *(US title: Kawa)* (Producer) Feature, 2010
2012 International Sales, Wolfe Releasing (VOD, DVD)
2011 Domestic Release, Television New Zealand (broadcast, DVD)
International Official Festival Selection
2011 National Geographic All Roads Festival, Washington, US
2011 Frameline, SF Intnl LGBT Film Festival, San Francisco, US
2011 Outfest, Los Angeles, USA
2010 Hawaii International Film Festival, Honolulu, US

Let My Whakapapa Speak (Producer). Television documentary, 2008
2009 International Sales, France Television (broadcast)
2008 Domestic Release, Māori Television (broadcast), Conbrio Media (DVD)
International Official Festival Selection
2009 FIFO Festival of International Films, Papeete, Tahiti
2008 imagineNATIVE Film and Media Arts Festival, Toronto, Canada

SELECTED EARLIER CREDITS

2008	*Silent Warriors* (Producer) – feature documentary (Pacific shoot only) German/NZ co-production (Dokumente Des Meeres/ONP)
2006	*Tūwhakairiora* (Producer/Director) – non-broadcast whānau documentary
2004	*P.E.T. Detectives* (Producer) – children's television drama series English/NZ co-production (Screentime/TVNZ/Target)
2001-2003	*McLeod's Daughters* (Writer/Script Editor) – primetime tv drama series (Millennium/Channel Nine/Hallmark)
2000-2002	*All Saints* (Writer/Script Editor) – primetime tv drama series (Seven Network)
1999-2000	*Above The Law* (Story Editor) – primetime tv drama series (McElroy Television/Ten Network/Columbia Tristar)
1999	*Something In The Air* (Supervising Story Editor) – primetime tv drama series (Simpson Le Mesurier/Australian Broadcasting Corporation)
1996-1998	*Shortland St* (Dialogue Writer) – soap opera tv series (South Pacific Pictures)
1995-1999	*Malice; It Was Darkness; Pushing The Envelope, Whiria* (Producer) Feature films in development funded by NZFC (TopStory Productions)
1994	*Marlin Bay III* (Producer) – primetime tv drama series (South Pacific Pictures/TVNZ)
1992-1993	*Deepwater Haven* (Producer) – family television drama series Australian/French/German/NZ co-production (Beyond/f Productions/TFI/Ravensburger/South Pacific Pictures)
1991	*The End of the Golden Weather* (Producer) – 35mm feature film (South Pacific Pictures/NZ Film Commission/TVNZ)
1990	*StarRunner* (Producer) – family tv drama series and telefeature Canadian/NZ co-production (Atlantis/South Pacific Pictures)
1987-1988	*Gloss II* (Producer) – soap satire television series (Television New Zealand)
1986	*Erebus: The Aftermath* (Script Editor)– political television mini-series (Television New Zealand)
1984-85	*Hanlon* (Script Editor) – historical television drama series (Television New Zealand)

AWARDS / NOMINATIONS

2016	New Zealand Peace Foundation Award for "contribution to peace and aroha" for feature documentary *The Price of Peace* (producer)
2016	Best Pacific Documentary, Anuu-ru Aboro Festival International du Cinéma des Peuples, New Caledonia for feature documentary *The Price of Peace*
2016	Rigoberta Menchu Prize, Présence Autochtone First Peoples Festival, Montréal, for feature documentary *The Price of Peace* (producer)
2016	Jury Prize, Festival International du Film documentaire Océanien (FIFO), Tahiti, for feature documentary *The Price of Peace* (producer)
2015	Alanis Obomsawin Award for Best Documentary, imagineNATIVE Film and Media Arts Festival, Toronto, for feature documentary *The Price of Peace*
2013	Flicks People's Choice Award Best Film, NZ, for feature film *Mt Zion* (executive producer)
2013	NZMPIC NZ Box Office Achievement Award: highest grossing NZ film for feature film *Mt Zion* (executive producer)
2011	Best Film, National Geographic All Roads Festival, Washington, US, for feature film *Kawa* (producer)
2010	Jury Prize, Siggraph Computer Animation Festival, Los Angeles, US, for performance capture CGI short film, *Poppy* (executive producer)
2009	Best Short Film, Berlin Internationale Festspiele, Germany, for short film *Aphrodite's Farm* (executive producer)
2008	Finalist, Best Māori Language Programme, Qantas Awards, NZ, for feature documentary *Let My Whakapapa Speak* (producer)
2005	Finalist, Best Children's Programme, Qantas Awards, NZ, for television drama series *P.E.T. Detectives* (producer)
1992	Best Film, NZ Film Awards, NZ, for feature film *The End of the Golden Weather* (producer)
1991	Finalist, New York Festivals, US, for television drama series *Star Runner* (producer)
1989	Best Drama Series, Listener Film & TV Awards, NZ, for drama series *Gloss* (producer Series 2)
1986	Finalist, International Emmy Awards, US, as production team member for drama series *Hanlon* (script editor)

SELECTED INDUSTRY APPOINTMENTS

2020-2022	Chair, Te Puna Kairangi Premium Production Fund (NZ Government Covid recovery fund for the screen industry)
2016	Chair, Board of Trustees, Script-to-Screen, Auckland
2014-2016	Member, Mana Wāhine Award Committee (annual award for outstanding Māori woman in the screen industry in Aotearoa NZ)
2014 & 2016	Chair, Women in Film and Television NZ Awards Committee (biennial awards celebrating the achievements of women in the screen industry in Aotearoa NZ)
2012-2016	Founding Board Member, Big Screen Symposium, Auckland
2011-2015	Member, Board of Trustees, Script-to-Screen, Auckland
2011-2013	Board Member, Ngā Aho Whakaari (Māori Screen Practitioners), Auckland
2007	Acting Television Manager, NZ On Air, Wellington
2005	Auckland Industry Representative, NZ On Air, Auckland
1995-1997	Chair, NZ Film Commission Short Film Committee
1994-1995	Board Member, Film and Electronic Media Industry Training Organization
1994-1995	Founding Board Member, Women in Film and Television, Auckland
1993-1996	Board Member, New Zealand Film Commission
1993-1995	Committee Member, NZ Film Commission Short Film Committee

I have for many years been a regular assessor of business and project applications for industry funding bodies and independent producers, and regularly present at screen industry seminars and conferences.

Appendix G – *The Price of Peace*: Credits

Director
Kim Webby

Director of Photography
Jos Wheeler

Editor
Cushla Dillon

Composer
Joel Haines

Producers
Christina Milligan
Roger Grant
Kim Webby

In Memory of
Tūhoe Lambert
Lucy Hunt

Ngā mihi nui
Tame Iti
Tāmati Kruger
Maria Steens
Amie Rangiaho
The people of Rūātoki
Ngāi Tūhoe

Additional camera
Chris Pryor
Richard Curtis
Gavin Newton
Samarah Wilson

Sound Recordist
Brent Iremonger
Deb Frame
Tipene Rogers

Māori language interviewer
Te Whetu McCorkindale

Māori language consultant
Hemana Waaka

Post Production Supervision
Roger Grant

Post Production Facility
Toybox

Graphics and Animation
Bruce Carter

Digital Colourist
Dave Gibson

Sound Post Production
Reade Audio

Re-recording Mixer
Dick Reade

Sound Editor
Colleen Brennan
Sam Moore

Music Producer
Charmaine Haines-Batt

Publicity Stills
Jos Wheeler

Thanks to
Te Kotahi a Tūhoe
Russell Fairbrother
Tūmanako Productions
Scottie Productions
Frans Steens
Alex Lee
Dan Shanan
Gavin Newton
Deb Frame
John Miller
Samarah Wilson
Tangata Whenua Television
CutCutCut Films
Tia Taurere Clearsky
Monsoon Pictures
Rewarewa Marae
Michael and Sue Breckon
Land Information New Zealand

Archive Supplied By
Alexander Turnbull Library
Arthur Ninnis Breckon 1187-1965
John Miller
Te Papa Tongarewa
Ngā Uri o Te Kooti Rikirangi Settlement Trust
Archives New Zealand / Te Rua Mahara o Te Kāwanatanga
Pietra Brettkelly and Kim Webby
Tangata Whenua Television
TVNZ Television Archive
CutCutCut Films
Monsoon Pictures
TV3 News

Made in association with New Zealand On Air

Made in association with Māori Television

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