



Storytelling for Our Own People: A Reflection on Script Developing with the Māori Filmmaker Barry Barclay

Christina Milligan

INTRODUCTION

Māori filmmaker Barry Barclay (1944–2008) is recognised internationally as a foundational figure in indigenous filmmaking. A director of both documentary and drama, he was also a skilled screenwriter. At a time when very few features were written or directed by indigenous filmmakers, he was arguing strenuously that control of indigenous image-making should be in the hands of indigenous people themselves. Barclay sought to centralise *te ao Māori* or the Māori worldview in principle and in his practice. He was fierce in pursuit of what he saw to be *tika*, that which is true, upright and just, and his unwillingness to compromise was sometimes seen as intransigence. He was thus frequently at odds, not just with mainstream film funders and distributors, but also with some of his compatriots in the world of Māori filmmaking (Reid 2018). Yet from my perspective as an indigenous producer working with him later in his career, the process

C. Milligan (✉)

Auckland University of Technology, Auckland, New Zealand

e-mail: christina.milligan@aut.ac.nz

© The Author(s) 2021

C. Batty, S. Taylor (eds.), *Script Development*,

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-48713-3_11

171

of developing a screenplay with him was a constructive, deeply creative experience where disagreements were always focused on enhancing the work itself. This chapter discusses Barclay's writing process on the feature *It Was Darkness* (1997) and shows it to be true in many respects to what Margot Nash premised when she wrote of the "uncertainty, risk and entering unsafe territory" (2013, p. 151) that is implicit in a process that places creative discovery above commercial concerns. Despite the conventional genre to which *It Was Darkness* belonged, Barclay's approach to theme, structure, character and setting displayed an originality and fidelity to his own philosophy of filmmaking that was rare in New Zealand cinema at the time.

BACKSTORY

Barclay came to prominence as a young filmmaker with his 1974 TV documentary series *Tangata Whenua*,¹ transmitted in New Zealand at a time when all viewers watched the same single national channel. In John Reid's words, the six-part series "crept up on its audience, quietly lobbing an incendiary device into living rooms around the country" (2018, p. 237), a comment reflecting the fact that most Pākehā² knew very little about the indigenous Māori world. The series took viewers into the worlds of different *iwi* (tribes), giving local elders space and time to tell their own stories in their own dialects, and Reid's comment indicates the yawning gulf at that time between settler and indigenous communities in New Zealand. During the making of the series, Barclay developed a methodology of filmmaking that continued to be the basis of his work throughout his career, an approach centred on community as he noted in an email to me many years later: "I would like to think there is a level of social conviction ... a passion about community struggle ... Here I think of Ken Loach, of course, film after film ... With Loach, community counts, every single individual in it" (personal communication, 17 June, 2007).

Barclay's debut feature as a director, *Ngāti* (1987) written by Tama Poata, was the story of a fictional Māori community. It was easily accessible to mainstream, non-indigenous audiences, and it remains his most popular and best-known work. However, his subsequent trajectory as a

¹ *Tangata whenua* – *tangata* is 'man' or 'human being'; *whenua* is land. The phrase is translated as 'people of the land' and is used to refer to all Māori.

² *Pākehā* – commonly used term in New Zealand for New Zealanders of European descent.

storyteller in both drama and documentary steered more and more towards a rejection of compromise with the expectations of mainstream investors or distributors. He laid out, in writings and public debate from the late 1980s through to the mid-2000s, a theoretical framework for indigenous filmmaking that he named Fourth Cinema (1988, 1990, 2003a, b), and his focus on community informed his thinking not only in terms of content and production but also reception. He argued "... if we as indigenous storytellers become hell-bent on satisfying the mass audiences and commercial barons ... we may cease to be storytellers for our own people" (Barclay 2003b, p. 15). Barclay is here summarising one of his principal concerns: the consuming influence of the commercial imperative in cinema. As Stuart Murray observes: "The tendency such a system possesses to commodify its images is obvious, and the consequent evacuation of cultural specificity is exactly the threat ... Barclay sees in the packaging of indigenous images" (2008, p. 19).

While Barclay's Fourth Cinema thesis was a validation of indigenous experience, it was not, however, a rejection of other cinematic practices. He recognised the danger of prescription, and from his early theorising he wrestled with the complexity of the arguments he was putting forward. In *Our Own Image*, he comments:

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)

This comment was made well before the emergence of the new generation of Māori filmmakers like Taika Waititi (*Hunt for the Wilderpeople*, 2016; *Thor: Ragnarok*, 2017), for whom such sentiments are passé (Hokowhitu 2013, p. 116). When I was working with Barclay, however, the list of Māori filmmakers, let alone Māori feature films,³ was much thinner than it

³The use of the term 'Māori film' in this article elides the fact that the question of what a Māori film is and who may tell Māori stories on film has a contested backstory in New Zealand (e.g. Hokowhitu 2007; Ka'ai 2005; Mita 1996; Pihama 1992, 1994). That the best-known film internationally about Māori is probably still *Whale Rider* (2002), written, produced and directed by Pākehā, rankles with some Māori filmmakers and some theorists. Recent work by Māori theorists like Brendan Hokowhitu (2013) and Ocean Ripeka Mercier (2010, 2007) has moved the debate beyond its earlier incarnations. Mercier in particular has pursued an analysis of Taika Waititi's films based on the principles of *te ao Māori*, applying

is now and statements such as the above had yet to acquire the welcome patina of looking old-fashioned. The gulf between support for Māori filmmakers in the 1970s and 1980s, when filmmakers such as Barclay and writer-director Merata Mita were establishing themselves, and the present day is striking. The New Zealand Film Commission (NZFC), the state-funded body that finances much of the film development and production in the country, now recognises the high value which Māori storytelling brings to New Zealand filmmaking, particularly from an international perspective, and funding specifically targeting the identification and growth of Māori screenwriting talent is growing year on year. When I was working with Barclay, such support lay in the future. However, by the late 1980s, the NZFC had loosened its earlier, somewhat heavy-handed control of the development of films and devolved considerable funding to the discretion of producers through its Producer Operated Development Scheme (Dunleavy and Joyce 2011, p. 89). It was through one of these schemes that I was able to commission the script development of *It Was Darkness*, a feature project on which I worked as producer with Barclay between 1995 and 1997.

THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

In January 1996, the New Zealand production company that I co-owned, TopStory Productions, signed an agreement with Barclay giving us an option on his screenplay *It Was Darkness* (TopStory 1996). Barclay and I had already been working together on the project for several months after he approached me to see if I would be interested in producing the film. It was a conspiracy story inspired by the worldwide indigenous response to the Human Genome Diversity Project (HGDP). The HGDP was a very large international scientific project designed to collect biological samples from a variety of population groups to establish a database of human genetic diversity. Given its aim of collecting and storing blood and tissue samples, the HGDP ran into fierce opposition from indigenous peoples early on (Mataatua Declaration 1993; Mead 1996). A story based on such

“new interpretive frameworks” to read the films through the protocols of the *marae* or meeting ground (2007, p. 39). Mercier applies the form of specific protocols of encounter on the *marae* in her readings of Waititi’s films and then uses this framework to explore films such as *Utu* (1983) and *River Queen* (2005). Both these films were made by Pākehā, telling historic stories of dramatic conflict between Māori and Pākehā. Mercier’s approach can thus be seen to enable the reading of a broad range of New Zealand films using a Māori methodology.

an issue, which spoke to the heart of indigenous activism and which was coming from a filmmaker with unquestionable commitment to the indigenous point of view, offered the possibility of an original and intriguing film.

It Was Darkness is a political thriller, an international story set among the Tūhoe people from the Urewera mountain region in New Zealand and the Pitjantjatjara (Anangu) people of the Central Australian desert. It centres around a modern intertribal Māori dance troupe who travel from the Urewera to tour throughout Australia. The dancers' creative drive is political and their performances evolve to include both spiritual and political commentary relevant to the Aboriginal tribes they are travelling among. The troupe becomes caught up in a major smuggling operation that is revealed to be using their tour as a cover to transport crates of body tissues. This material is stolen from indigenous peoples in Indonesia and countries further north and is being trafficked to a North American black market via Australia and New Zealand. The dancers use the performance in Alice Springs at the climax of the film to blow the cover on the smuggling operation. The local people, assisting them, ensure that the worst of the traffickers is left alone with his awful contraband to die of thirst in the desert.

My work with Barclay on the film required many hours of discussion and, in the days before emails were common, letters and faxes with written feedback. Barclay travelled to Central Australia to conduct research when he decided to shift the original setting of the story from Canada to Australia. In the period we spent together, he redeveloped the story to incorporate the Australian setting, working through several drafts of the film's treatment and producing a first draft of the complete screenplay. In late 1997, my family decided to move to Australia and the production company was closed down, so with Barclay's blessing, we passed the project on to another New Zealand producer. A rule of thumb among filmmakers worldwide is that only one screenplay in ten succeeds in being put into production (Bloore 2014, p. 80), and regrettably *It Was Darkness* did not prove to be the one in ten. As a film, it remains unmade. As a screenplay, it offers the opportunity to explore the script development process of an indigenous screenwriter challenging the Western worldview even as he used a conventional genre approach.

The draft of the screenplay completed in 1997 is 235 pages long, roughly twice the length of the average screenplay. It does not conform to the standard technical layout of a screenplay and in fact Barclay was still

calling it a treatment. It resembles more a cross between a novel and a screenplay, with very detailed visual description and not all of the dialogue in place. There is a very large number of major characters, the plot is extremely convoluted and it is not satisfactorily resolved. For all this, it has what Barbara Masel and Cory Taylor call the screenwriter's "capacity to surprise (that) we experience as originality" (2011, p. 122). The characters come alive on the page, the action is absorbing, and the scene-setting is masterful, from the humid forests of the Urewera mountains, to the pitching deck of the freighter carrying the contraband across the Timor Sea, to the scorching red earth of the Australian desert. An extract from a scene called 'A Meeting of Traitors' gives the flavour. In it, Canadian arts festival director Donald Hanning and a New Zealand Pākehā undercover agent John Fowley meet at night with an Aboriginal police liaison, Yarrin Fraser:

There are vehicles parked back in the dark, Yarrin is ready to leave. He looks appreciatively at Donald: 'May your ancestors deal kindly with you.' 'And yours with you.'

Yarrin bursts out laughing: 'At least you can escape yours. Mine – they're all around. No escape!' He waves in a restrained way, so do the Aborigines with him, it's like a salute, and straight away they're gone. Donald stands staring into the dark after them.

'I could have quizzed him on where he's going, couldn't I? I could have said to him, "What is your next step, your next move?" "Lay your cards on the table – or else!" What do you think, John? Should I have done something like that?' But who is there to do the answering to that sort of question so far out here on these remnant soils, soils ground and compacted and swept barren over millennia, soils sometimes under tropical forest, sometimes under glacier, soils hoisted as high as the Canadian Rockies, buried under billions of tonnes of salt-rich water, soils stubborn and dried and drained – and almost eternal. Donald turns to go back to the caravan, taking John with him. Behind them, it's blackfella business.

(Barclay 1997, pp. 207–8)

This is not conventional screenwriting. Such lengthy description slows down the reader's progress in following the action. Yet this dense, poetic style consistent throughout the screenplay achieves the goal of bringing alive in the reader's mind the look, the smell, the taste of the landscape in a story where landscape imbues the characters and the action with a rich subtextual depth; this is hardly original in terms of filmmaking but not

usually spelt out in such detail in a screenplay. As Masel and Taylor note: “A screenplay is a personal investigation in which the writer publicly tests a private version of experience” (2011, p. 122), so it is no surprise that as an indigenous writer Barclay explores the landscape in this way. The landscape itself effectively becomes a character as the outback desert, where most of the action occurs, exerts an inescapable pressure on how that action unfolds and ultimately becomes the weapon of justice as the villain meets his fate. This agency of place is discussed by Stephen Turner in his consideration of Barclay’s philosophy:

If *tangata whenua* means people-place, making people an expression of the historical being of the land, and not simply the people of it, then land, forest, and waters also have agency. These interconnected elements are historical actors in Fourth Cinema. They need to be understood as foreground and not as background or context. (2013, p. 166)

As Turner notes, properties of place “constitute a visceral and material element” in all Barclay’s work (2013, p. 173). Equally, the use of dancers as characters gives the film a sensual visual quality from the outset but Barclay writes the dancers’ action, both Māori and Aborigine, to imply a richer net of diverse indigenous traditions, with performances evoking within their modern choreography both cultures’ much older histories of gesture as a form of storytelling. This is the ‘camera ashore’⁴—the Fourth Cinema camera—linking kin, bringing together the old and the new indigenous experience across borders.

As a story of indigenous activism, *It Was Darkness* can be seen to correspond strongly to Barclay’s earlier film *The Neglected Miracle* (1985). A feature documentary, *The Neglected Miracle*, was well ahead of its time in terms of its content. It explored “the geopolitics of the genetic resources needed to sustain our major crops” (Barclay, n.d.) and in the film Barclay brought his worldview to an exploration of the developing international concern regarding the patenting of seeds. The film ranges from Central and South America to Europe to outback Australia as it explores how seeds harvested from indigenous crops are genetically modified by Western companies; the subsequent patenting of the new genetic strains requires

⁴ Barclay used the metaphor of the camera on the ship (that of the arriving colonizer) and the camera on the shore (that of the indigenous people) to express his perception of the gulf between the cinemas of the modern nation-state and that of indigenous nations (2003a, p. 9).

the indigenous owners of the base material effectively to pay for what was originally theirs. As Angela Moewaka Barnes notes: “Barclay’s articulation of genetic exploitation was visionary and expressed indigenous and Māori struggles before the full significance was realised” (2011, p. 193). Writing about the documentary, Barclay said: “the film becomes a metaphor about control among nations of the very guts of life – plants – but by implication, the metaphor speaks of control of many kinds” (1992, pp. 121–122). With its focus on the exploitation of human genetic material, *It Was Darkness* takes this concern over control of resources to an even darker place.

Another of Barclay’s films, the dramatic feature *Te Rua* (1991) offers strong resonances with *It Was Darkness* in its thematic and character concerns. *Te Rua* is a complex political story of a group of activists seeking the return of misappropriated Māori *taonga* (treasures) from a Berlin museum. Like *It Was Darkness*, *Te Rua* sets up a group of characters in pursuit of a common goal but with varied, often conflicting motives, which are sometimes far more selfish than any of them will admit. In this, both narratives can be seen as more sophisticated than the earlier *Ngāti*, in the range and complexity with which Barclay sets the characters against one another, even as they pursue a common dream. In *It Was Darkness*, it is revealed that the trafficking of the stolen genetic material is being organised by a group of operatives acting with the secret compliance of a consortium of Western governments. Thus, like both *The Neglected Miracle* and *Te Rua*, *It Was Darkness* has at its heart the anger Barclay was driven to express at what he saw as the historical and ongoing lack of justice indigenous people experience at the hands of officialdom. Where the screenplay diverged from both its antecedents, however, was in its structure.

It Was Darkness is a thriller⁵, and the thriller is a genre with some quite specific requirements: the audience must be kept constantly in a state of suspense, with each story element taking them by surprise while pushing the plot relentlessly forward. In this case, William Goldman’s dictum “screenplays are structure” (1983, p. 195) holds true, for without a correctly plotted structure, the thriller will not achieve the desired impact on the audience, no matter how interesting the characters and intriguing the set-up. We were to find, as the work progressed, that the technical

⁵ *Te Rua* was described as a “thriller” in a press release as it went into production but Barclay himself described it as an “action adventure” (Reid 2018, pp. 373–4). The finished film would be very difficult to recognise as a thriller.

requirements of such a structure were the hardest writing problem to grapple with. My notes to Barclay at one point show the prevailing issue was the difficulty in finding a balance in terms of story weight between the story of the dancers and their political motives, and the story of the international smuggling operation (Milligan, personal communication, 25 April 1996). Barclay was strongly attached to exploring the dancers' story, focused through the lead character, dancer Vanessa Potiki, but his concentration on them drew the light away from the overarching international story, which was underpowered as a result, as well as lacking enough screen time. Such difficulties assail many writers in the early stages of script development so there was nothing surprising in this. Based on the notes, however, I was clearly aware that addressing the needs of a commercial audience might struggle for Barclay's attention, although given the early stage we were at and now still looking back, I can see ways to resolve such a conundrum.

It is impossible to know how the finished film might have looked, had I or another producer succeeded in getting it made. That Barclay was shaping his story within a genre familiar to non-indigenous audiences in no way gives the lie to Murray's assertion that "At heart, Barclay's films are a refutation of the logic that European ... modernity asserts a claim to a singular legitimacy, one that other cultures and other narratives can only ... ever be 'outside'" (2007, p. 100). The screenplay of *It Was Darkness* is imbued with a *wairua* (spirit) that speaks across indigenous borders, bringing together Māori and Aborigine characters in common cause to fight for the principle that was central to all Barclay's work: the dignity of sovereignty (Barclay 1992, p. 118; Murray 2008, p. 67). We were working with a coproducer from CAAMA Productions, an Alice Springs-based Aboriginal media company, on the understanding that the film would be directed by an Aboriginal director and that an Aboriginal cowriter would join Barclay as the development of the script progressed (TopStory 1997).

Genuine collaboration with our Aboriginal partners was so central to the project that the first draft, when it arrived on my desk, had a front page from Barclay headed 'Cultural Authenticity' that detailed areas in the script where he effectively apologised for writing dramatic events which he felt only an Aboriginal writer should be creating; we both accepted from the outset that ultimately such events could only be addressed authentically by an Aboriginal writer. This speaks to the depth of respect—dignity of sovereignty—that shaped not only the story and the script, but also the

process of development itself. Māori screenwriters often discuss their difficulties in having their voices heard in the conventional development process, and in New Zealand little space has been found for non-mainstream approaches. The development process of *Waru*⁶ (2017), a film written communally by nine Māori women and directed by eight of them, shows that respecting the dignity of an indigenous approach can result in a film that not only speaks beyond the indigenous community but also succeeds in attracting a domestic and international audience.

CONCLUSION

The period of script development, while it can be exceedingly draining for all concerned, is a time when anything is possible with the story and the film. This can create an intoxicating sense of freedom even when working within constraints. Nash speaks of the creative process inevitably involving uncertainty “and those brave enough to enter this space must prepare themselves for both frustration and the possibility of failure” (2013, p. 151). Barclay was no stranger to frustration and failure, but he was always able to bring a freshness and commitment to the writing process. At the time we worked together, the pathways that he and other indigenous screenwriters were laying down were still trod by few. The recent growth of niche markets and what feels like an explosion of interest in indigenous stories have helped open up government policymakers, such as the New Zealand Film Commission, and commercial investors like Netflix (Gruenwedel 2019) to the richness inherent in alternative ways of thinking, and alternative approaches to the development of screenplays and the production of films. It remains to be seen whether the resulting growth in indigenous screen storytelling sustains.

An earlier version of this article appeared in *Medianz* 17(2), 2017, under the title ‘Storytelling for our own people: A reflection on working with Māori filmmaker Barry Barclay’.

⁶ *Waru* premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival in 2017 and was described by UK Observer film critic Mark Kermode as “a remarkable achievement – authentic, impassioned, unexpected – that stands as a testament to the radical power of cooperative filmmaking” (11 Nov 2018).

REFERENCES

- Barclay, B. (1988). The Control of One's Own Image. *Illusions*, 8, 8–14.
- Barclay, B. (1990). *Our Own Image*. Auckland: Longman Paul.
- Barclay, B. (1992). Amongst Landscapes. In J. Dennis & J. Bieringa (Eds.), *Film in Aotearoa New Zealand* (pp. 116–129). Wellington: Victoria University Press.
- Barclay, B. (1997). *It Was Darkness: A Feature Film Treatment*. Unpublished manuscript, May 13. TopStory Productions.
- Barclay, B. (2003a). Celebrating Fourth Cinema. *Illusions*, 35, 7–11.
- Barclay, B. (2003b). Exploring Fourth Cinema. Paper Presented in Hawai'i as Part of Summer School Lectures. *Re-imagining Indigenous Cultures: The Pacific Islands*. National Endowment for the Humanities, Summer Institute. Retrieved from <https://www.kainani.hpu.edu/hwood/HawPacFilm/BarclayExploringFourthCinema2003>
- Barclay, B. (n.d.). *Barry Barclay Filmography*. Unpublished document. TopStory Productions.
- Barnes, A. M. (2011). *Ngā kai para i te kabikātoa: Māori filmmaking, forging a path*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Auckland, Auckland.
- Bloore, P. (2014). *The Screenplay Business: Managing Creativity and Script Development in the Film Industry*. Norwich: University of East Anglia.
- Dunleavy, T., & Joyce, H. (2011). *New Zealand Film and Television: Institutions, Industry and Cultural Change*. Bristol: Intellect.
- Goldman, W. (1983). *Adventures in the Screen Trade*. New York: Warner Books.
- Greunwedel, E. (2019). Netflix Announces Pact with Canadian Indigenous Filmmakers. *Media Play News*. Retrieved from <https://www.mediaplaynews.com/netflix-announces-pact-with-canadian-indigenous-filmmakers/>
- Hokowhitu, B. (2007). Understanding Whangara: *Whale Rider* as Simulacrum. *New Zealand Journal of Media Studies*, 10(2), 53–70.
- Hokowhitu, B. (2013). Theorizing Indigenous Media. In B. Hokowhitu & V. Devadas (Eds.), *The Fourth Eye: Māori Media in Aotearoa New Zealand* (pp. 101–123). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Hunt for the Wilderpeople*. (2016). Wr/Dir: Taika Waititi. Auckland: Piki Films. Feature film.
- Ka'ai, T. M. (2005). *Te Kauae Mārō o Muri-ranga-whenua* (The jawbone of Muri-ranga-whenua): Globalising local indigenous culture – Māori leadership, gender and cultural knowledge transmission as represented in the film *Whale Rider*. *Portal Journal of Multidisciplinary International Studies*, 2(2), 1–15.
- Kermode, M. (2018). Waru Review – Death, Guilt and Māori Life Lessons in Eight Acts. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from www.theguardian.com
- Masel, B., & Taylor, C. (2011). Unscripted: The True Life of Screenplays. *Lumina AFTRS*, 7, 118–124. Retrieved from <https://www.afters.edu.au>

- Mataatua Declaration on Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights of Indigenous Peoples of June 1993. *First International Conference on the Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 12–18 June, 1993, Whakatane, Aotearoa (New Zealand)*. Retrieved from www.wipo.int/tk/en/databases/creative_heritage/indigenous/link0002.html
- Mead, A. T. (1996). Genealogy, Sacredness and the Commodities Market. *Cultural Survival Quarterly*, 20(2). Retrieved from <https://www.culturalsurvival.org/publications/cultural-survival-quarterly/genealogy-sacredness-and-commodities-market>
- Mercier, O. (2007). Close Encounters of the Māori Kind – Talking Interaction in the Films of Taika Waititi. *New Zealand Journal of Media Studies*, 10(2), 37–51.
- Mercier, O. R. (2010). “Welcome to My Interesting World” – Powhiri Styled Encounter in *Boy. Illusions*, 42, 3–7.
- Mita, M. (1996). The Soul and the Image. In J. Dennis & J. Bieringa (Eds.), *Film in Aotearoa New Zealand* (2nd ed., pp. 36–54). Wellington: Victoria University Press.
- Murray, S. (2007). Images of Dignity: The Films of Barry Barclay. In I. Conrich & S. Murray (Eds.), *New Zealand Filmmakers* (pp. 88–102). Detroit: Wayne State University Press.
- Murray, S. (2008). *Images of dignity: Barry Barclay and Fourth Cinema*. Wellington: Huia.
- Nash, M. (2013). Unknown Spaces and Uncertainty in Film Development. *Journal of Screenwriting*, 4(2), 149–162.
- Ngāti*. (1987). Wr: Tama Poata, Dir: Barry Barclay. Wellington: Pacific Films. Feature film.
- Pihama, L. (1992). Repositioning Māori representations: Contextualising *Once Were Warriors*. In J. Dennis & J. Bieringa (Eds.), *Film in Aotearoa New Zealand* (pp. 191–194). Wellington: Victoria University Press.
- Pihama, L. (1994). Are Films Dangerous: A Māori Woman’s Perspective on *The Piano. Hecate*, 20(2), 239–242.
- Reid, J. (2018). *Whatever It Takes: Pacific Films and John O’Shea 1948–2000*. Wellington: Victoria University Press.
- River Queen*. (2005). Wr/Dir: Vincent Ward. Wellington: Silverscreen Films. Feature film.
- Tangata Whenua*. (1974). Wr: Barry Barclay, Michael King, Dir: Barry Barclay. Wellington: Pacific Films. Television series.
- Te Rua*. (1991). Wr/Dir: Barry Barclay. Wellington: Pacific Films. Feature film.
- The Neglected Miracle*. (1985). Wr/Dir: Barry Barclay. Wellington: Pacific Films. Feature film.
- Thor: Ragnarok*. (2017). Wr: Eric Pearson and Craig Kyle & Christopher L. Yost, Dir: Taika Waititi. Los Angeles: Marvel Studios. Feature film.
- TopStory Productions. (1996). Letter of Agreement, 26 January 1996.

- TopStory Productions. (1997). Letter of Agreement, 9 May 1997.
- Turner, S. (2013). Reflections on Barry Barclay and Fourth Cinema. In B. Hokowhitu & V. Devadas (Eds.), *The Fourth Eye: Māori media in Aotearoa New Zealand* (pp. 162–178). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Utu*. (1983). Wr: Keith Aberdein & Geoff Murphy, Dir: Geoff Murphy. Wellington: Utu Productions. Feature film.
- Waru*. (2017). Wr: Stewart-Te Whiu, J. Wr/Dir: Grace-Smith, B., Kaa, C., Gardiner, A., Wolfe, K., Maihi, R., Cohen, C., Jones, P., & Simich-Pene, A. Taranaki: Brown Sugar Apple Grunt Productions. Feature film.
- Whale Rider*. (2002). Wr/Dir: Niki Caro. Auckland: South Pacific Pictures. Feature film.