Knowledge Session

Thursday, November 21, 2024 15.30-17.00

Participatory Storytelling

PAR TOS EXPERTISE CENTRE HUMANITARIAN COMMUNICATION

Guiding Principles for Inclusive Communication

P.5

1.Communication matters

P.5

2. Deconstruct communication

P.6

3. Consider storytelling challenges

P.6

4. Avoid stereotypes

P.7

5. Be clear and transparent

P.7

6. Obtain informed consent

P.8

7. Adopt participatory storytelling

P.8

8. Ensure equal exchanges

P.9

9. Support self-identification

P.9

10. Keep learning

Gradual Scale of Participation

Degrees of:

Consent > Participation > Co-creation

Stages:

Pre-production > Production > Post-production > Screening

Today

1. **Alternative media**
2. **Community media: Maori cinema**
3. **Participatory storytelling in humanitarian communication**

Participatory storytelling practitioners and advocates

- Conor Ashleigh (Filmmaker and Photographer)
- Kasia Kowalska (Chairperson of Upstream Stories)
- N'Deane Helajzen (Marketing & Sales Manager at Fairpicture)
- Mirte Jepma (Housing Researcher and Activist, and Filmmaker of *The Sinking Fringe*)

"*De Zinkende Rafelrand* (*The Sinking Fringe*) is a 2024 documentary by Mirte Jepma about the unique Baaibuurt-West neighborhood on Zeeburgereiland, which will disappear on December 31, 2024. It's a neighborhood with several tight-knit communities, creative workspaces, and a spirit of freedom that will undergo 'development' starting in 2025. (…) The film captures the stories, faces, and places of a neighborhood that is at risk of vanishing under the sand."

Participatory storytelling is an adaptive and strengths-based method of working with people and their stories.

Creating stories with people and ensuring they are actively making decisions throughout the entire process is crucial in ensuring participatory methods used are both meaningful and effective.

I work with

World Health Organization
Australian Red Cross
theguardian
World Vision
The New York Times
UNSW THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES
ALJAZEERA
SCHMIDT OCEAN INSTITUTE
Kathmandu
IAS International AIDS Society

upstream stories

Who What How

Upstream Stories

stories that move beyond the screen

Stories are everywhere. Around the corner, up the stream. In Upstream Stories we support people in telling their own unique stories in a digital form, connecting people both on and off the screen.

More about US

We're all about participatory media

Upstream Stories is a non-profit organization, working to offer a voice to people with fewer opportunities through participatory media. We do:

- Digital Storytelling projects/workshops
- Participatory photography projects/workshops
- Facilitator workshops (learn how to facilitate the methods)
- Developing learning materials

fairpicture

The Power of Community Storytelling and Co-Creation

by N'Deane Helajzen, May 2024

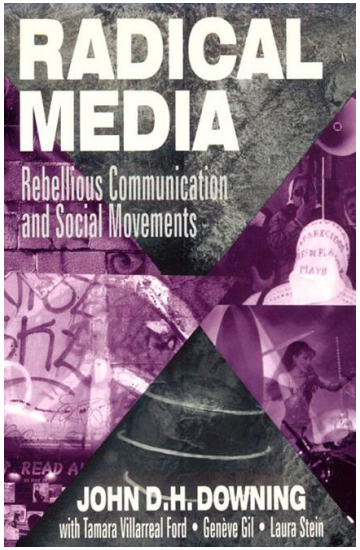
Storytelling is undergoing a transformation. The traditional top down model where stories are told by a single voice to a passive audience is giving way to more dynamic, participatory forms of ethical storytelling. Community storytelling, paired with the concept of co-creation, is at the forefront of this transformation, offering profound opportunities for engagement, understanding through common values and experiences, deep listening, and impact. This blog explores the importance of community storytelling and its relationship with co-creation, illustrating how they can enrich collective narratives, deepen connections between and within communities and contribute to a more ethical storytelling.

https://fairpicture.org/stories/the-power-of-community-storytelling-and-co-creation/

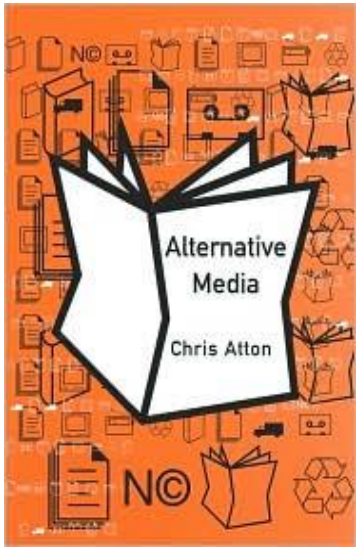
INTRODUCTION: TOWARDS AN APPROACH TO MEDIA ACTIVISM

INTRODUCTION TO ALTERNATIVE MEDIA

2000

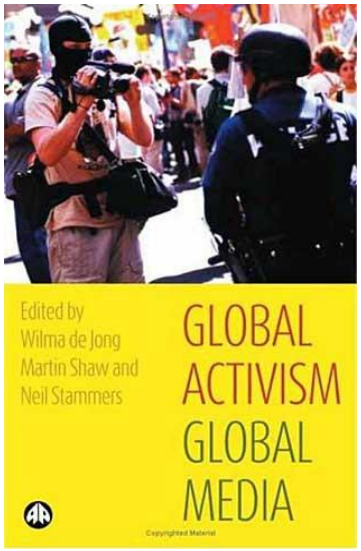


2001

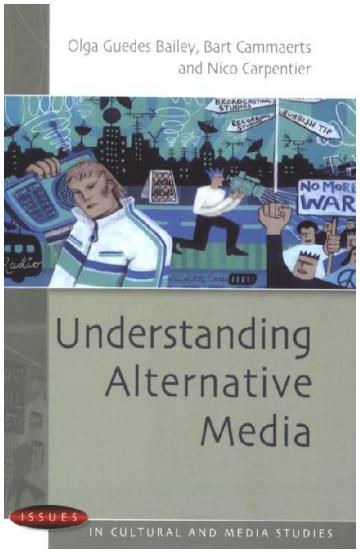


2005

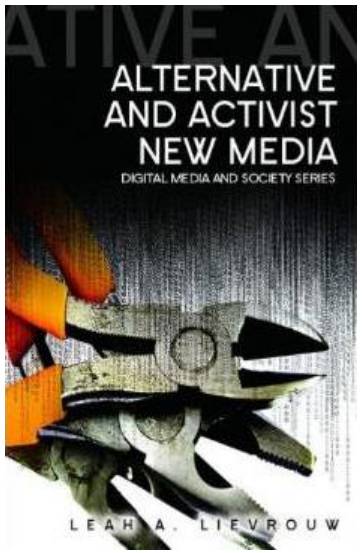
2005



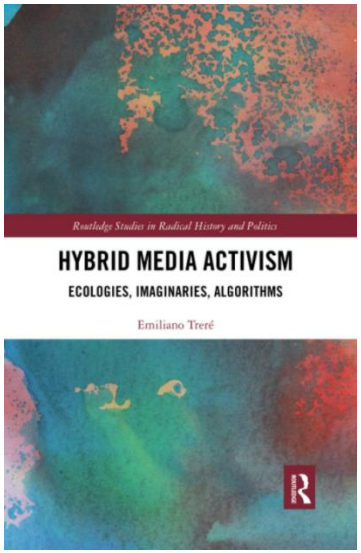
2007



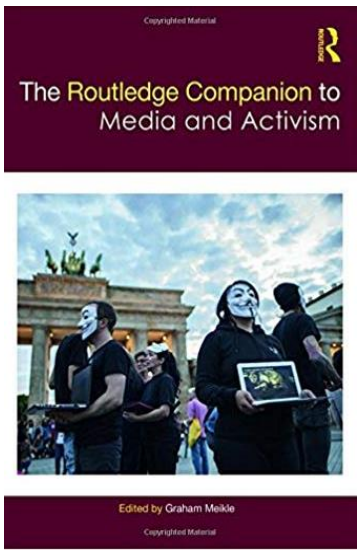
2011



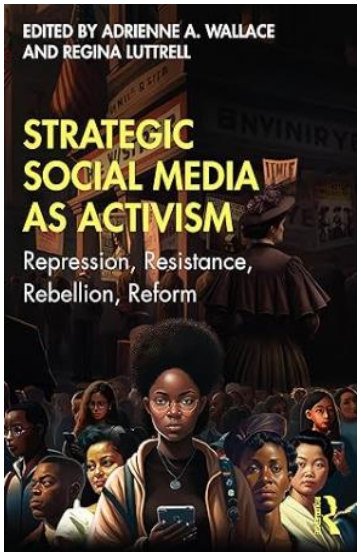
2018



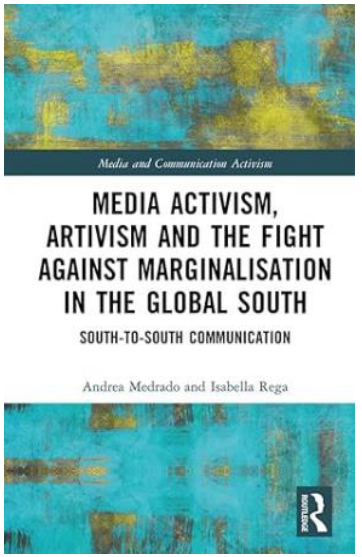
2020



2023



2023



LABELS OF MEDIA ACTIVISM

Alternative media

Oppositional media

Radical media

Activist media

Tactical media

Independent media

Autonomous media

Citizen media

Community media

Minority media

"None of these are empty phrases: they all express differing beliefs about the **cultural and political function** of this area of work."

Tony Dowmunt (2007, 3)

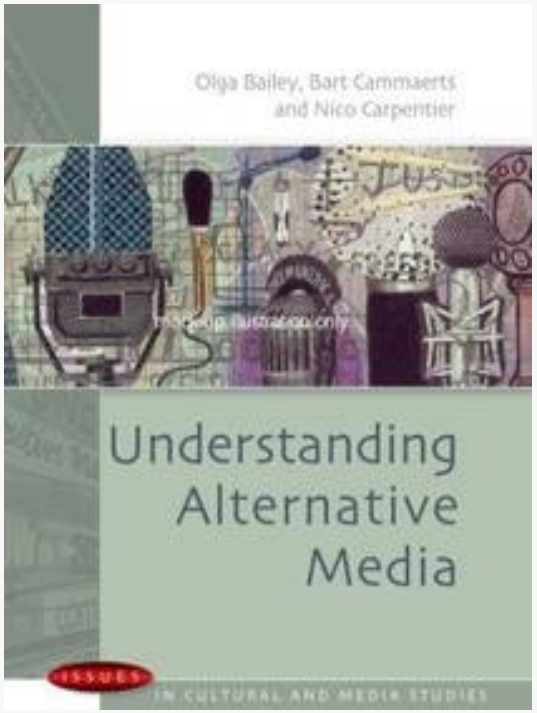
UNDERSTANDING ALTERNATIVE MEDIA

"Even within a single area of alternative media there is much **heterogeneity** (of styles, of contributions, of perspectives)."

Chris Atton, *Alternative Media* (2002, 8)

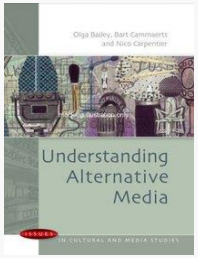
Multi-theoretical approach (Bailey, Cammaerts and Carpentier 2007)

1. Alternative media as a supplement to or critique of mainstream media (***alternative media***)
2. Alternative media as media independent of state and market power (***civil society media***)
3. Alternative media as media serving the community (***community media***)
4. Alternative media as critically connected with market and state (***rhizomatic media***)

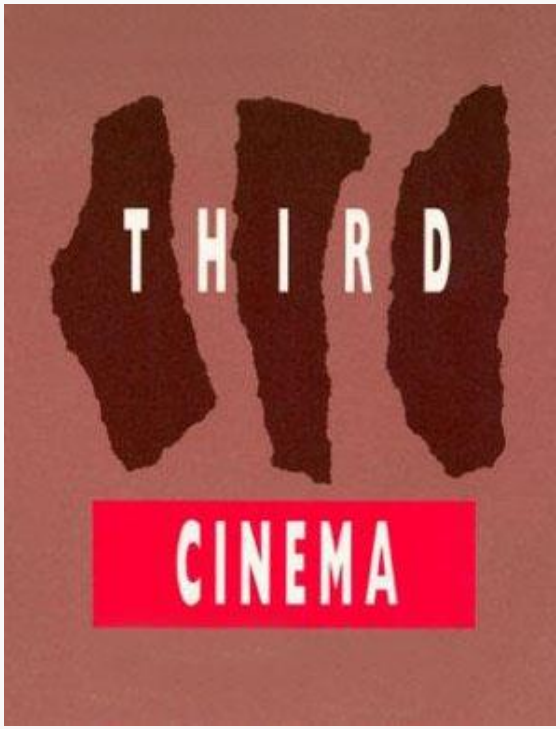


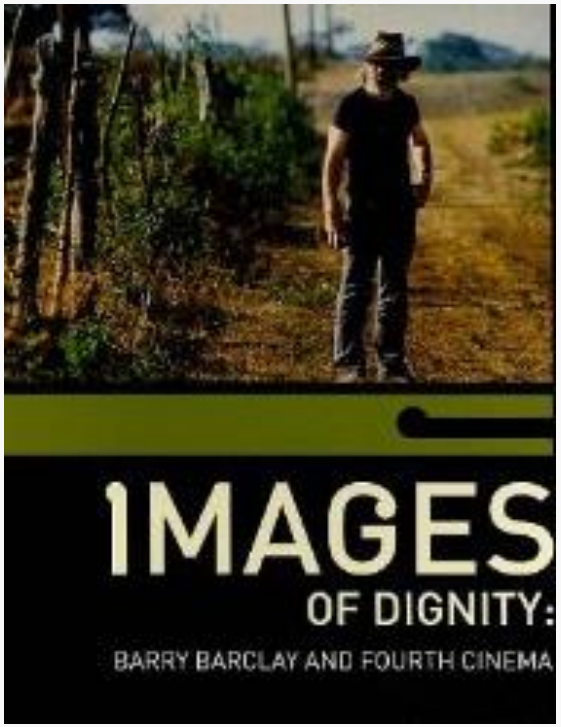
COMMUNITY MEDIA

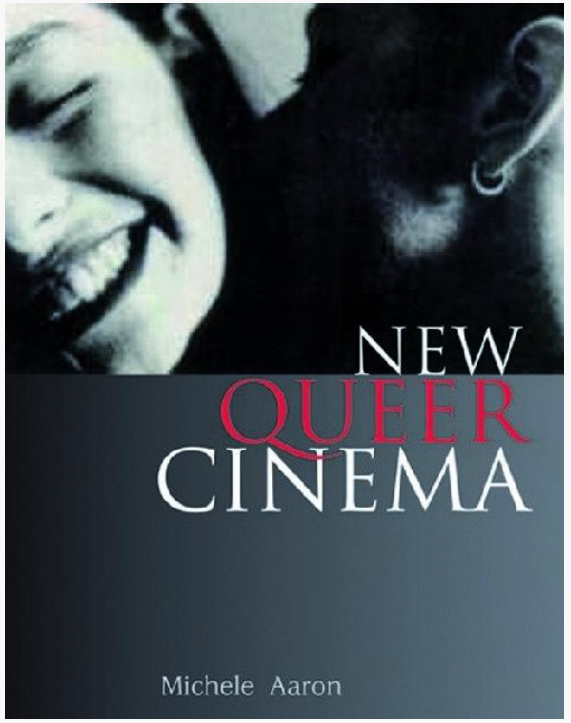
"Access by the community and the participation of the community (…) [as] key defining factors for alternative media. (…) The relation between the broadcaster and the community is in the foreground" (11, 14).



Communities of geography
Communities of interest

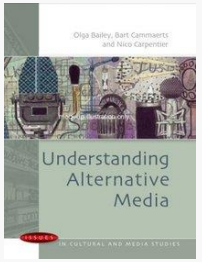






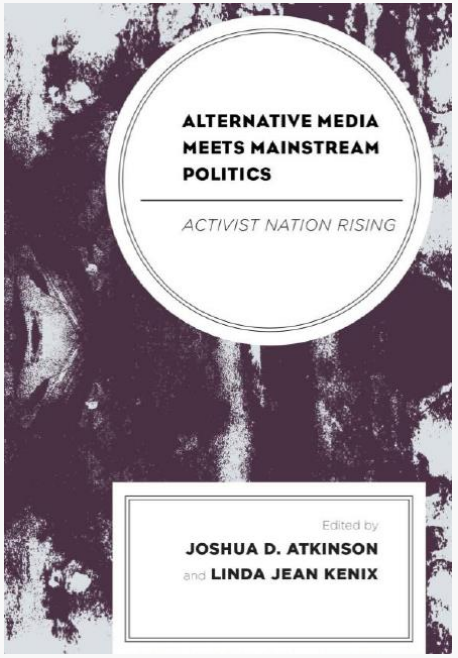
CIVIL SOCIETY MEDIA

"Alternative media as part of civil society, (…) the **'third voice'** (…) between state media and private commercial media (…), a societal segment considered crucial for the viability of **democracy**" (23-4).



Media as essential to democracy
Democratization of communication seen as key for equality and justice

"**Participatory alternative media** (...) adhere to the political model of participation, in which audiences are brought together and engage in **dialogue and debate**. To a certain extent, the audience has some measure of **control** over topics and issues for discussion, and how they are framed."

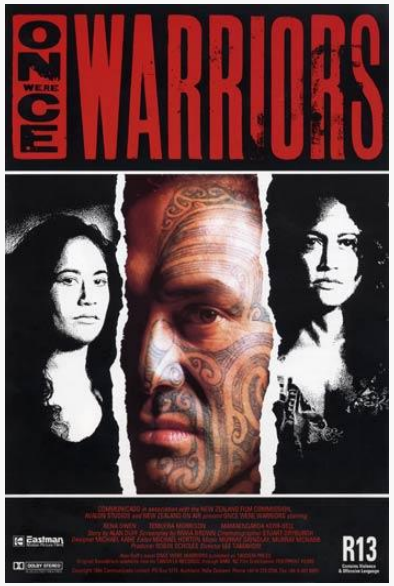


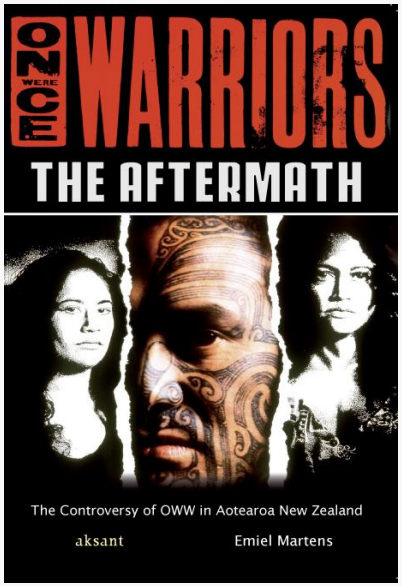
INDIGENOUS CINEMA

Merata Mita, “The Soul and the Image” (1996).
Emiel Martens, “Maori on the Silver Screen: The Evolution of Indigenous Feature Filmmaking in Aotearoa/New Zealand” (2012).
Andre Dudemaine, Gabrielle Marcoux and Isabelle St-Amand, “Indigenous Cinema and Media in the Americas” (2020).

1. Introduction of key terms
2. The representation of Maori in mainstream cinema
3. The emergence of Maori feature filmmaking
4. *Once Were Warriors*: From margin to mainstream
5. Into the 21th century: Opportunities and challenges

Viewing: *Once Were Warriors* (1994, 95 min.)





INDIGENOUS MEDIA

"New vehicles for internal and external **communication**, for **self-determination**, and for **resistance** to outside cultural domination."

Ginsburg, "Indigenous Media" (1991, 35)

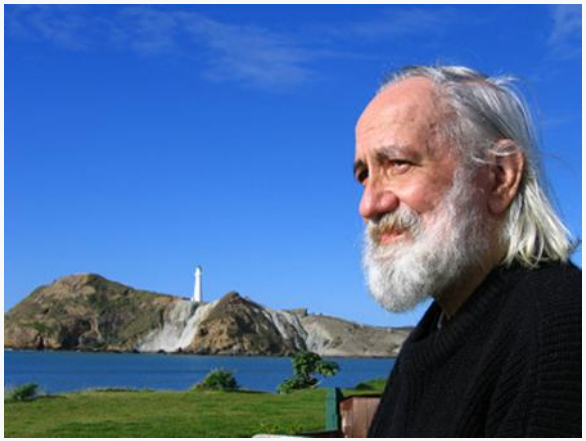
"**Empowering vehicle[s]** for communities struggling against geographical displacement, ecological and economic deterioration, and cultural annihilation."

Shohat and Stam, *Unthinking Eurocentrism* (1994, 35)

FOURTH CINEMA

"There is a category which can be legitimately called **'Fourth Cinema'**, by which I mean **Indigenous Cinema** (…). The phrase Fourth Cinema comes as a late addition to the First-Second-Third Cinema framework with which you will be familiar, **First Cinema** being American cinema; **Second Cinema** Art House cinema; and **Third Cinema** the cinema of the so-called Third World."

Barclay,
"Celebrating Fourth Cinema" (2003, 8)

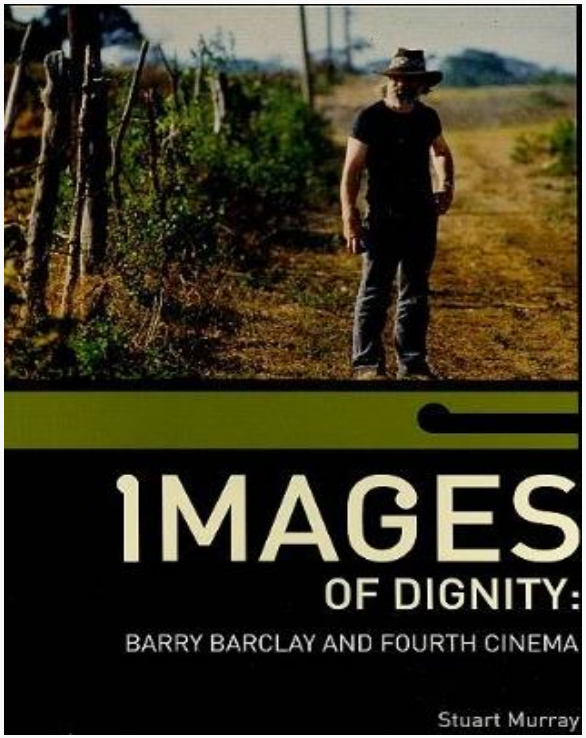


"Decolonising and indigenising the screen"
(Mita 1993, 53)

"A point of address, an attitude towards film in its totality" **(Murray 2008, 18)**

"Collective nature of production," distribution & exhibition
(Dudumaine, Marcoux and St-Amand 2020, 31)

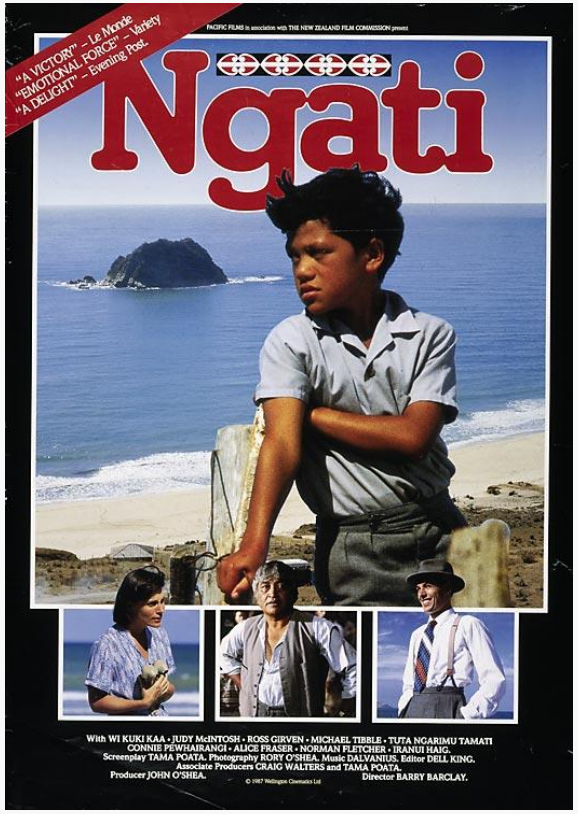
"Non-intrusive approach to filming in the community"
"Reciprocity of the film-making process"
(Murray 2008, 24)



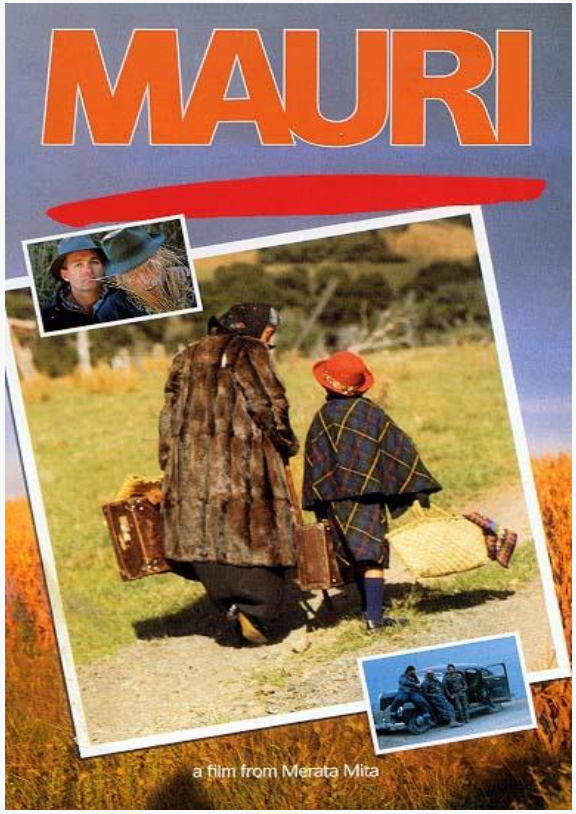
THE EMERGENCE OF MAORI FEATURE FILMMAKING

"Out of over eighty [New Zealand] fiction films, three have been **directed by Maori**: ***Ngati*** and ***Te Rua*** by Barry Barclay, and my own ***Mauri***. There are films around that are technically more accomplished than *Ngati* and *Mauri*, but these two feature a **strong Maori identity put there by Maori themselves**."

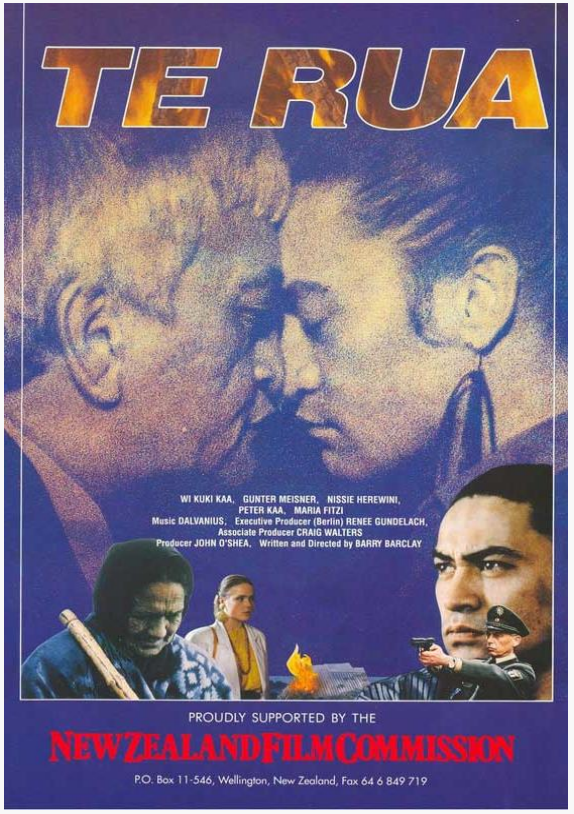
Mita, "The Soul and the Image" (1993, 49)



1987

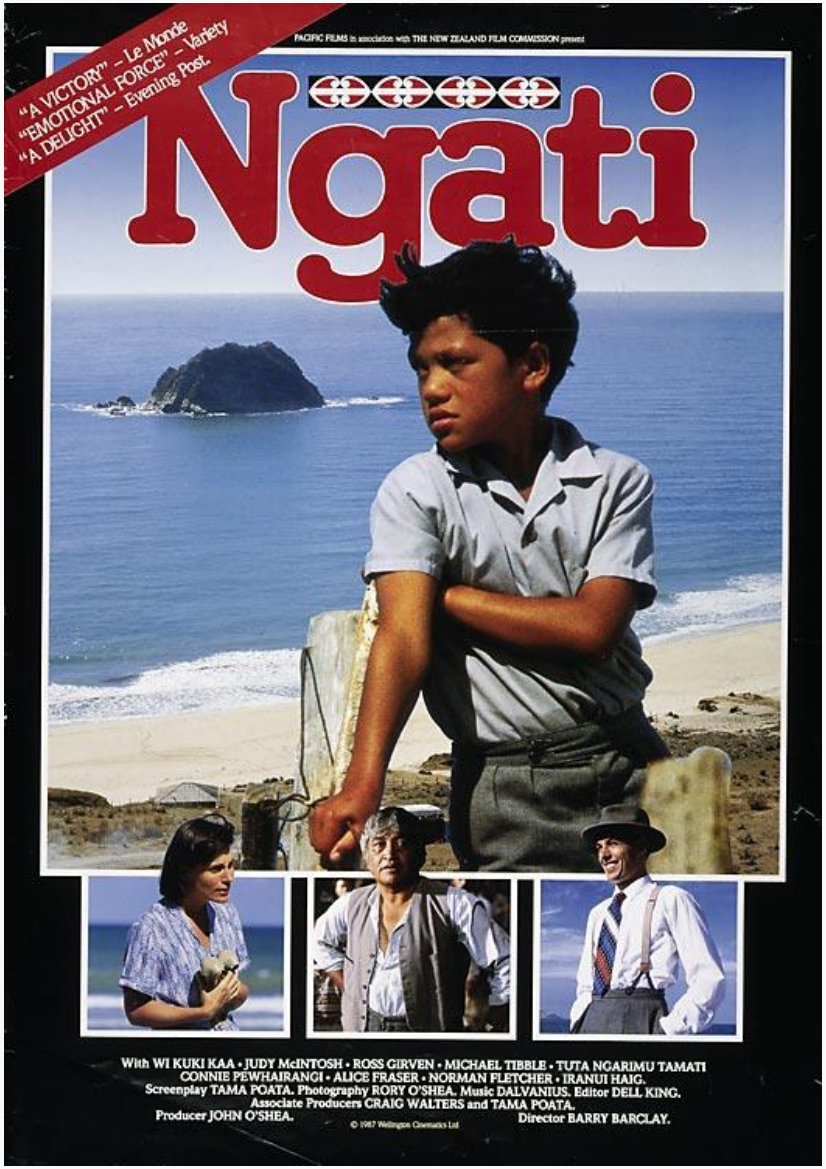


1988



1991

THE EMERGENCE OF MAORI FEATURE FILMMAKING



"It's about **being Maori** – and that is political (…). Political in the way it was made, a serious attempt to have **Maori attitudes** control the film. Political in having as many Maori as possible on it or being **trained** on it. Political in physically **distributing** the film or speaking about it and **showing** the film in our own way."

Barclay in Lomas (1987)

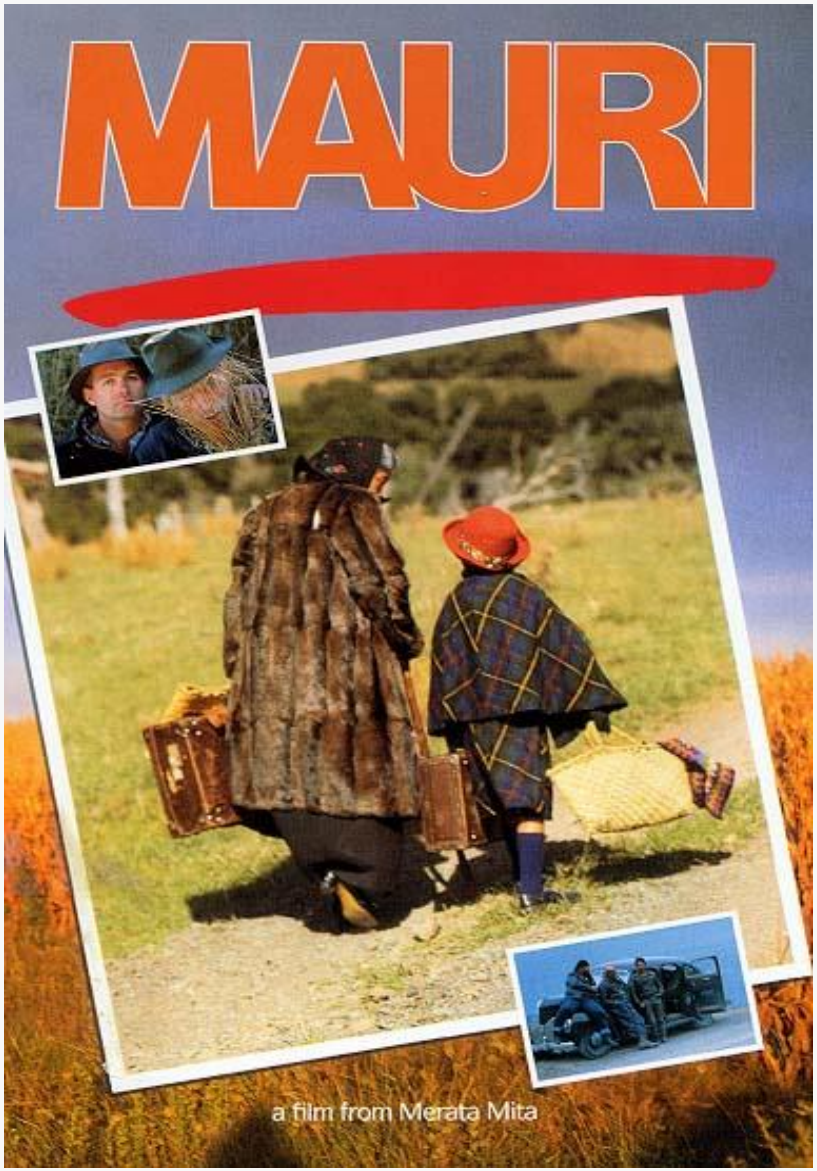
"visual sovereignty" (Dudemaine, Marcoux & St-Amand, 2020, 30)

Rejection of "the principle of the director as auteur in favour of collective and community creation" (Dudemaine, Marcoux and St-Amand, 2020, 31)

Communal production approach

Communal story approach

THE EMERGENCE OF MAORI FEATURE FILMMAKING



"Instead of a fast-paced linear story-line, *Ngati* and *Mauri* offered a **slow-paced multi-layered narrative** inspired by the oral story-telling traditions of the Maori. They were not so much action-driven and individual-driven, but merely **flow-driven** and **community-driven**."

Martens (2012, 7)

"A **form of storytelling** that originates with Indigenous peoples" and uses "both **narrative structures** and **visual vocabularies** (…) grounded in **ancestral values and narratives** as well as in Indigenous temporal and relational epistemologies."

Dudemaine, Marcoux & St-Amand (2020, 30)

Communal production approach

Communal story approach

What is Community Storytelling?

Community storytelling, also named participatory storytelling, contributory storytelling or inclusive storytelling depending on context, focuses on narratives that are rooted in the experiences and perspectives of a community. This approach recognises the diverse voices within a community and elevates them to share control of the narrative process. By doing so, it ensures that the visual and narrative stories reflect the authentic and multifaceted realities of community members.

The significance of this approach lies in its inclusivity and representativeness. Stories are not just told about community members; they are told by and co-created with them. This method breaks down barriers of misunderstanding and misrepresentation, as it values each individual's input and acknowledges their lived experiences as part of the collective narrative. It is important to remember that community members are at the center of relationships with different groups, systems and structures including being beneficiaries of the services or programs NGO's and ethical businesses provide.

Linking Storytelling with Co-Creation

Co-creation in storytelling is a collaborative process where community members work alongside storytellers, such as photographers and filmmakers, to craft narratives that incorporate diverse perspectives. For Fairpicture and its clients, this means producing stories that reflect the insights and perspectives of community members, creators, and communication professionals alike. This partnership ensures that the final narrative is enriched by multiple viewpoints, truly representing the lives and experiences of those depicted.

True co-creation is not merely about amplifying the voices of community members but about creating stories together.

N'Deane Helajzen
Fairpicture Marketing & Sales Manager

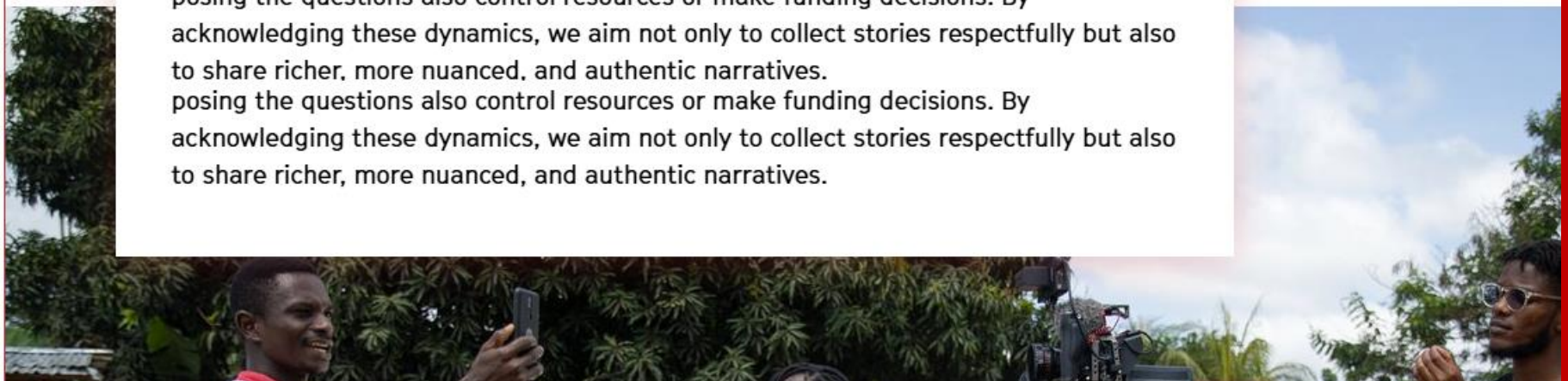
Why Community Storytelling?

Stories hold immense importance. They teach important lessons about a society's culture, the land and our interaction with each other and the environment. Stories foster connections, cultivate empathy, and remind us of our shared values and common humanity. By sharing stories through still and moving image we're doing more than recounting experiences; we're crafting narratives that spotlight the issues, challenges, and injustices people face.

However, traditional or conventional storytelling can easily become an act of mere extraction. An outsider photographer or videographer might spend a day or two in the community, unable to establish transparent relationships and trust. We "take' or "capture" photos and videos without providing anything in return, including explaining the purpose of the shoot or where those still and moving images will be used. Consent often becomes a mere checkbox, lacking genuine understanding or agreement.

This scenario involves complex and uneven power dynamics, especially when those posing the questions also control resources or make funding decisions. By acknowledging these dynamics, we aim not only to collect stories respectfully but also to share richer. more nuanced. and authentic narratives.

posing the questions also control resources or make funding decisions. By acknowledging these dynamics, we aim not only to collect stories respectfully but also to share richer, more nuanced, and authentic narratives.



Benefits of Community Storytelling and Co-Creation

1. Enhanced Authenticity
2. Stronger Connections
3. Empowerment and Agency
4. Cultural Preservation
5. Social Impact

How do we implement these principles at Fairpicture?

- Authenticity and Intentionality
- Local Expertise
- Informed Consent
- Protection of Vulnerable Individuals
- Transparency
- Secure Storage

Communication in development cooperation

Future Brief - Part 3

Production practices in humanitarian communication

This is the third and final Future Brief in the trilogy about humanitarian communication. Here we discuss the role of production processes in humanitarian communication and highlight how not only representations but also productions of international solidarity can become more ethical, inclusive, and equitable. We propose three modes of shifting the power in content production: on the level of INGOs and their partner organisations (the institutional mode); on the level of (the work of) creative agencies, artists, and professionals who are close to the projects that are represented (the creative mode); and, finally, on the level of civil society organisations, community activists and ordinary citizens activists who are part of the projects (the civic mode).

Photo by Adnan Mughal

Humanitarian Communication Awards 2024

The winners will be announced on Thursday, November 28, 2024 at humanitairecommunicatie.nl/awards-2024

This year's jury: Cíntia Taylor, Abdel El Bacha, Nadine Ridder, Anika Altaf

Knowledge Session

Thursday, November 21, 2024 15.30-17.00

Participatory Storytelling

PAR TOS EXPERTISE CENTRE HUMANITARIAN COMMUNICATION