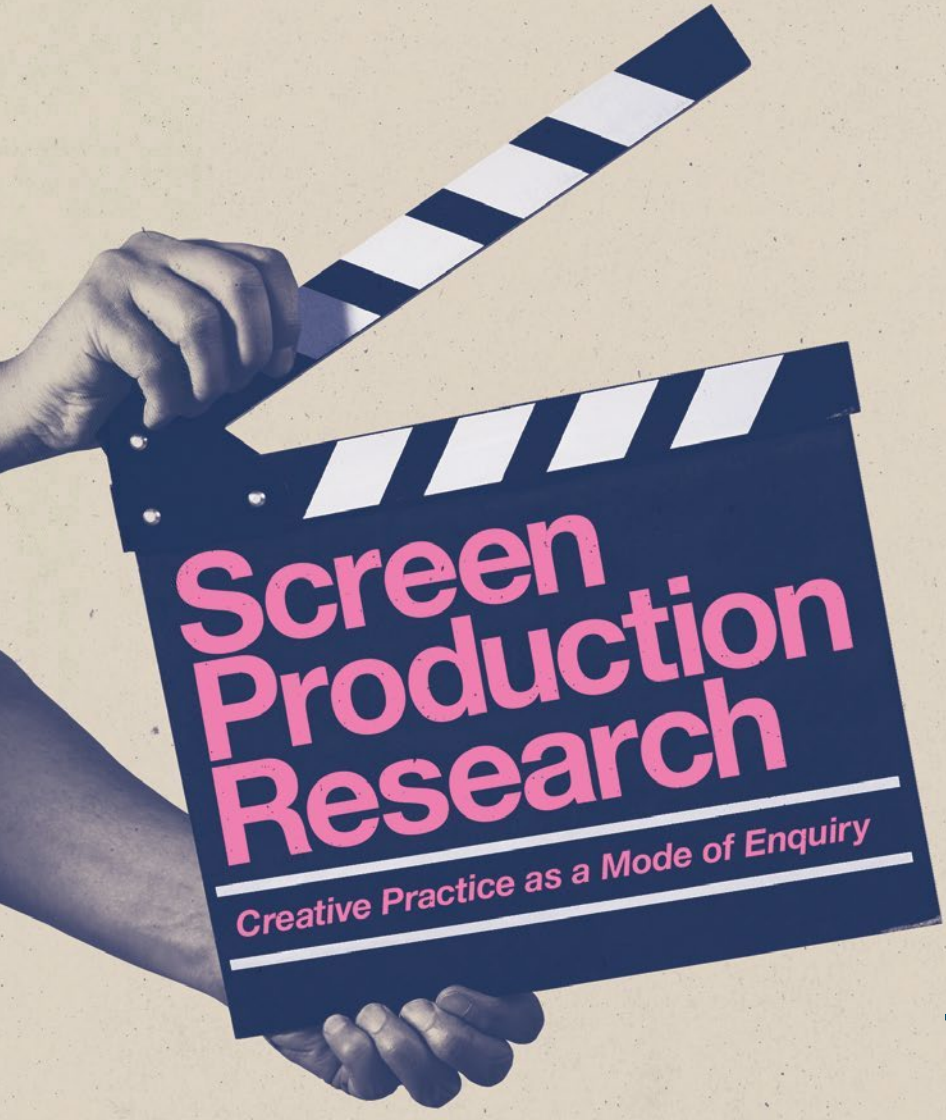
EDITED BY CRAIG BATTY AND SUSAN KERRIGAN



Screen Production Research

"Cutting through the forest of discourse about *creative this* and *research that, artistic this* and *knowledge that*, Batty and Kerrigan's new collection illuminates the crisscrossing paths leading to where two worlds meet: the worlds of film production and of the academy. It looks closely at the push-and-pull of thinking, seeing, writing; technology, art, poetics; truth and representation and performance; and suggests productive ways of being, doing and making, in an engagingly elegant sequence of essays."

—Distinguished Professor Jen Webb, *University of Canberra, Australia*

"As the possibilities for practice-based research expand both within and outside the academy, this exciting new collection introduces us to a range of creative and industry-embedded approaches to screen production research. Batty and Kerrigan are themselves leading the way in these areas and their collection showcases a number of practices, texts and methods which will be invaluable and impactful for students and scholars alike."

—Dr. Bridget Conor, *King's College London, UK*

"A timely and relevant contribution to the debate within creative practice presented through a series of critical reflections on case studies that offer a valid series of alternative research methods to those more generally aligned to the social sciences; that screen production—and all that this term encompasses—is a form of research. Whilst unpacking the erstwhile troublesome definitions surrounding research practice, practice as research and practice led or based research the authors settle on articulating the value of screen production as creative practice research. All this is done within the context of the academy and perhaps specifically, current approaches to the assessment of research quality which dictate policy and funding. Focussing on data drawn from practitioner case studies rather than the metrics of the empiricists, what's here provides a legitimate and equally robust alternative to traditional scientific measures of citations, bibliometrics, impact factor and 'H-indices' demonstrating that these are largely irrelevant tools for evaluating the value of screen production as research with its inherent ability to generate new and potentially transformative knowledge from data drawn from practice."

—Professor Paul Egglestone, *University of Newcastle, Australia*

Craig Batty · Susan Kerrigan
Editors

Screen Production Research

Creative Practice as a Mode of Enquiry

palgrave
macmillan

Editors
Craig Batty
School of Media and Communication
RMIT University
Melbourne, VIC, Australia

Susan Kerrigan
School of Creative Industries
University of Newcastle
Newcastle, NSW, Australia

ISBN 978-3-319-62836-3 ISBN 978-3-319-62837-0 (eBook)
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-62837-0

Library of Congress Control Number: 2017947718

© The Editor(s) (if applicable) and The Author(s) 2018
This work is subject to copyright. All rights are solely and exclusively licensed by the Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed.
The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use.
The publisher, the authors and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, express or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made. The publisher remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

Image credit: gerenme/Getty Images
Cover design by Henry Petrides

Printed on acid-free paper

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by Springer Nature
The registered company is Springer International Publishing AG
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

Foreword: Cognitive Two-Steps

Universities are generators and purveyors of *knowledge*. It is their *raison d'etre* and their currency, which means that unless academic employees are bound to tightly defined 'teaching-only' posts, they are obliged to be actively involved in the knowledge generation and transfer that are integral to research.

In my home base of Australia, the funding agency responsible for tertiary education defines 'research' with language that has all the elegance of a user's manual for a vacuum cleaner:

> This definition of research is consistent with a broad notion of research and experimental development (R&D) as comprising of creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of humanity, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications.
>
> This definition of research encompasses pure and strategic basic research, applied research and experimental development. Applied research is original investigation undertaken to acquire new knowledge but directed towards a specific, practical aim or objective (including a client-driven purpose).[1]

After reading this chunk of verbiage three or four times, you get the idea. The ugly definition is serviceable enough. But I prefer the definition from New Zealand, not only for its cleaner prose but also for the greater emphasis it places on the experience of *understanding*:

> **Research** is original investigation undertaken in order to gain knowledge and understanding. It typically involves enquiry of an experimental or critical nature driven by hypotheses or intellectual positions capable of rigorous assessment. It is an independent, creative, cumulative and often long-term activity conducted by people with specialist knowledge about the theories, methods and information concerning their field of enquiry. Its findings must be open to scrutiny and formal evaluation by others in the field, and this may be achieved through publication or public presentation. In some fields, the results of the investigation may be embodied in the form of an artistic work, design or performance.
>
> Research includes contributions to the intellectual infrastructure of subjects and disciplines (e.g., dictionaries and scholarly editions). It also includes the experimental development of design or construction solutions, as well as investigation that leads to new or substantially improved materials, devices, products or processes.[2]

One of the qualities I like in this definition is the New Zealanders' strong validation of *understanding* as an outcome produced by researchers who use artistic practice as the engine of their investigations—filmmaker-researchers, for example. (I will offer more on this notion of understanding presently.)

But first let us appreciate a home truth: the work we do as filmmakers *in the academy* is pre-eminently the work of knowledge production rather than the work of film production. In our research ventures, the academy employs us to seek, generate and communicate fresh knowledge. We can, of course, make this fresh knowledge by making films. But there is almost always a hierarchy dictated by the academy: the films are a means; the knowledge is the end. And *the knowledge*, not the film itself, is the thing around which the institution conducts its calculus: how good is the knowledge, how readily identifiable, how full of impact, how significant, how 'weighty'?

What are the best ways to think, define and strategise about this process of making knowledge via filmmaking? How can we do all this without being in bad faith with both the academy and the specific, quick qualities of the cinematic medium itself? Audio-visual knowledge: how to envisage it, chase it, generate it, grasp it, communicate it, tally its impact and heft?

Such knowledge arises, I suggest, when the filmmaker-researcher experiences the immersed, messy routines of creativity oscillating with the distanced analytics of reflective critique and theorisation. Compiling their publication in both audio-visual formats and written text, the

creative researcher engages in a *cognitive two-step*, jinking rapidly back and forth between immersed investigation leading to inchoate understanding, on the one hand, and reflective knowing outside and after the event, on the other hand. To use anthropological terms, this means the researcher deliberately shuttles back and forth between the 'emic' and the 'etic' stances (i.e., between being a 'participant observer' and being a 'detached scrutineer') while appreciating the phenomenon under investigation. The cognitive two-step is most readily understood if we can first agree on definitions both of what it means to *know something* and of *creative practice*.

To know is to be in a state of having understood or comprehended something. Knowing—deriving from the Greek *gnosis*—is a state of being imbued with some illumination, blessed with the ability to see into a mystery, to dispel ignorance (which is the state of i-gnosis, the state of *not* knowing). Knowing is thus an after-effect of understanding.

Literally, understanding is the process of bringing oneself close to a particular quandary, to stand under or in proximity to a mystery, to come in from outside its radiation and influence. By coming in and standing under the mystery, by ceasing to be excluded from it, you can *comprehend* the phenomenon ('com'—'with'; 'prendre'—to take); you can literally take *this* aspect in hand with *that*, you can combine yourself with the mystery till you and it imbue each other and you *know* it with a glowing, gnostic sense of the rightness of your having understood it.

Then you need to know what it is that you have come to know. You need to distill the principles of your knowledge momentarily, to reify them by extracting them from your tacit understanding before using them as a way to re-enter the experience with more focus and with better questions.

Note the message that comes through emphatically here: you need to step both outside and inside the mystery that you are using cinematic means to address. Not one without the other.

Research and creative practice can join effectively to make knowledge whenever their conjunction causes a shift away from ignorance or befuddlement. The shift can often take you to a new set of befuddlements, of course. Even so, it is *the shift in common sense* plus *the fresh ability to account for that shift* that ensures that the occurrence is *research*.

Of course, you can do research *for* creative projects, research *about* creative projects and research *through* creative projects. Mostly it is the latter process that concerns me here, with particular attention to creative

projects conducted as filmmaking research. Such filmmaking can investigate the affordances of its own medium, of course; but it can also be directed at probing, revealing and encompassing phenomena that can be 'gathered' via camera and microphone before being shaped, synthesised and communicated via dynamic screen displays and audio systems. The audio-visual 'language' can be deployed for investigation and knowledge transfer, just as the written language can. (I will offer more about this relationship between the audio-visual and the textual presently.)

Acknowledgement—a shift in knowledge within the consciousness of an inquirer—is instigated when the researching filmmaker conducts a productive and purposeful *experiment*. Etymologically, to experiment and to experience are closely related. Indeed, the French verb for 'to experiment' is *expériencer*, which means 'to venture into the world via aberration and risk'. With 'peri' so structural within it, the word 'experiment' is related to words such as 'peripatetic' and 'peril'. The experimenter goes consciously and interrogatively into and then out of an experience, knowing it somewhat by immersion and then somewhat by exertion, extraction and reflection. Here is the oscillation, a two-step, encouraging the creative investigator to be both inside and outside. An experience is a dynamic and complex phenomenon that must be known through engagement with its organising tendencies and through attentiveness to the entropy and change also coursing through it. An experience is best understood experimentally therefore, through trial and error, through involved tampering and subsequent reflection, through a developing awareness of the actions and repercussions that are available and definitive inside and alongside the experience. Filmmakers, whether they label themselves documentarists or creators of fiction, know this two-step well. It is the routine they enact when trying to understand firstly what the film needs in order to account for the mysteries being filmed and edited, and secondly what the film is revealing to them about the phenomenon that they are trying to know better.

Anyone who has developed a film sequence on a set (be that set a fiction-production soundstage or some documentary zone in the actual world) is familiar with these accounts of experiment and changefulness. This is why so much of a filmmaker's knowledge always makes sense first as an altered personal experience, as some inextricably *embodied* pattern of feelings on the move inside one's consciousness, as a force of *mise-en-scène* that courses through the filmmaker as much as through the scene being portrayed, and as much as through the sequence of film

being assembled on set and cut together after the shoot. The know-how that can arise on the set is immersive and nervous, more implicit than explicit. But for all that, the on-set savvy is no less a form of knowledge than some other, more critically distanced mode of knowing. If you have spent time muddling on a set with cast and crew, you know the value of this embodied savviness, this sense of intuition, this sense of a delicate conviction in the bones.

The crucial next move is to draw that tacit and innate itch of understanding out in the open, where it can be proffered and critiqued amidst a community committed to enhancing the welter of knowledge surrounding the phenomenon being investigated with film. In my experience, there is an 'arc' of connected activities that, if followed assiduously, can guarantee that a filmed and edited venture counts as scholarly research. The arc has thirteen key moments that must occur in the following sequence:

1. Start with a hunch or an urge or some curiosity. It is good if you are thrilled about it. Refine this rightly fuzzy sense over a good amount of 'mulling time'. Feel the allure of the mystery. The process quickly gets less blurry as you seek definitions, aims and focal zones in your curiosity, but you can validly start disoriented or even wonder-struck.
2. Identify precisely what you want to know or need to know—give language to this intrigue—so you can begin to satisfy the urge by composing and following a communicable plan.
3. Check (by means of in-depth investigation of existing knowledge) whether this identified intrigue is something the scholarly community wants or needs to know about. If yes, proceed; if no, revise.
4. Declare, out loud not only to yourself but also to others, the quest-for-knowledge that you are commencing.
5. Focus the quest with one or more questions (so that the questions will motivate and constrain the scope of the quest all the way through the rest of the research process).
6. Read and examine everything extant, everything already known *that is relevant to the quest*. This process shores up your foundation, takes you to the edges of the unknown, and gives you a firm footing for stepping into the mysteries.

7. Devise and declare your method for generating the information, the insights and revelations that will eventually be synthesised to form the knowledge that will fulfil the quest.
8. Generate the knowledge, using the method. This is an iterative, creative and cumulative and sometimes recursive and revisionary process.
9. Explicate that knowledge to yourself, especially if the knowledge is tacit or embodied and implicit, or if you just sense that you have some kind of 'know-how' that is not yet manifest knowledge. This explication can be evinced in an audio-visual format or in written text. It is preferable to use both, in separate but related utterances.
10. Get ready to communicate your freshly acquired knowledge explicitly, using evidence to back up your contentions, using written language as well as evidence within the audio-visual creation to show that some significant new knowledge or understanding has been attained and made explicit and communicable through the creative and practice-based activities as well as through the theoretical, historical and analytical processes that tend to rely more on verbal language published in textual form.
11. In a safe place, such as peer groups, departmental seminars and mentor conversations, test your arguments and your evidence in order to strengthen your claims to knowledge.
12. Complete the 'knowledge transfer' to the larger scholarly community via submission of the written thesis or the publication of a scholarly text along with the exhibition or screening of the creative work—and prepare for further dialogue.
13. Start a new investigation.

Thirteen stages make the arc arduous and complex. Between three and five stages would make the arc simple and saleable. But then *everyone* would be a researcher. And centuries of postgraduate programs within academies all attest that 'breakthrough' research is not meant to be easy. So, thirteen it is. And here is some more difficulty: if any of the thirteen phases is missing or occurs radically out of sequence, the researcher will meet strong scepticism about the *bona fides* of the project *as research*. This is because the researcher is obliged to account for her/his findings, to use words wrapping around evidence all calling to account the righteousness and usefulness of the knowledge that has been discovered, packaged and conveyed via the arc of research.

But realistically, how much of a filmmaker-researcher's energy should be expended on writing? Is the screening of the work not sufficient as knowledge transfer? Why do some academics (me included) insist that language—be it spoken or written—is presently a necessary mode in the robust and effective transfer of filmmaking-based knowledge? As well as espousing a two-step involving inside and outside stances in relation to the investigated phenomenon, why do so many academics (myself included) also insist on the value of another two-step, the filming and writing one?

My first answer stems from my recent experiences with government actuaries and on multi-disciplinary committees within the Australian research-monitoring system. Accounting for the dynamics—informal as well as formal, and policy-governed—of these powerful rule-making bodies, I think it is currently imprudent to ignore the prevailing realpolitik. To say it plainly, I can report that most scientists and politicians are stunned and angered by artists' brusque assertions that no linguistic accounts need to be appended to the outcomes of their experimental processes. The scientists tend to offer a sincerely testy riposte: 'So, there's no need to write up our laboratory exercises—we should just invite people to visit the labs, and everyone will understand all the nuances of what's being discovered?' In the next breath, they usually say that it is in the struggle to synthesise lab data into verbal propositions and evidence-substantiated justifications that the crystalline and mind-changing concepts and arguments emerge. As one scientist said to me, 'First we need to learn how to manipulate *things*, then we have some chance of manipulating *concepts*; that's how we show what knowledge has been generated from everything we have learned to manipulate.' At which point I cannot see myself winning any argument about artists demanding some privileged exemption from the obligation to offer verbal disquisition and debate-based defence of their knowledge claims. There may come a time when a sizable portion of our society can sense and accept an artwork to be speaking directly and unambiguously to them in that particular artwork's own argot. Indeed most artist-researchers work to bring that time closer. But I feel obliged to say, respectfully and strategically, that now is not that time.

My second answer stems from my own experience as an artist-researcher. Thirty years of such toil persuades me that although an exhibition or screening might be an effective enough means of offering propositions to a small and stringently selected community of peers, there are undeniable benefits associated with the cognitive ordeal of translating

one's implicit, 'in-the-bones' knowledge from one set of semantic and affective structures (deeply embodied) over to a linguistic set (readily expounded). It is worth the effort, I am convinced by experience, to haul the implicit privacy of understanding out into the explicit publicity of verbal as well as audio-visual configurations of knowledge. This is because the explication coerces in the artist-researcher a series of cognitive shifts inside and outside the palpable and cerebral memories of the on-set and at-edit-bench experiences. In other words, the act of linguistic explication requires the artist-researcher to oscillate between seeking the insider's sense of experiment-adduced conviction on the one hand, and achieving the outsider's stance of critically distanced disquisition on the other hand, whereby the validity and efficacy of claimed knowledge can be challenged and endorsed in extensive discourse conducted in the open air of a scholarly community. The linguistic explication does not 'decode' the film work. Rather, the explication opens an arena for debate around the knowledge that has been synthesised and proffered both in the film work *and* in the linguistic account. Thus, by appending explicit oration to implicit know-how, artist-researchers can cobble a doubled consciousness that increases their purchase on the mysteries in the world.

Why am I so confident that it is a beneficial ordeal to produce a verbal disquisition on what gets learned within the ebbs, flows and pulses of artistically led research? The answer brings this foreword to its nub and therefore to it conclusion. The answer lies in the fact that artist-researchers (filmmakers included) typically investigate and give interpretive shape to dynamic circumstances. As they go about their work, filmmakers experiment with relationships unfurling in space and time amongst people and things and amongst the tendencies that galvanise the system under investigation. In doing so, they can generate and convey fresh knowledge about actions, repercussions, changefulness. Usually this knowledge is *felt* by the researcher before it can be espoused; usually it is tacit, unspoken, un-analysed when it first emerges.[3] Conducting experiments to bring change to the relationships amongst characters within unstable scenarios, filmmakers work in the midst of *complexity*, therefore catalysing mutability and making decisions about the best ways to find form within it. In experiments conducted in order to develop a work, the artist negotiates complex relationships of initiative and repercussion.

Meanwhile, in the world outside the artist-researcher's studio, complexity defines everyday experience evermore emphatically in our globalising economies. Given that most experts agree complexity can be

understood only by *experiencing it directly*, by imbibing and appreciating it from inside the systematics of its always-unfolding occurrence, it follows logically that artists are specialists in investigating, stage managing, portraying and understanding this major aspect of contemporary life.[4] In short, complexity needs to be understood by means of a special, doubled mentality, a means of being fully attentive both inside and outside the unfolding phenomena. And artists and filmmakers are potential leaders in research that probes and deploys this paradoxical capability.

Hence this book.

Canberra Ross Gibson
December 2017

Notes

1. Definition of 'Research'—Australian Federal Department of Innovation, Industry, Science & Research (2011). URL citation: http://www.uq.edu.au/research/research-management/research-definition.
2. Definition of 'Research'—New Zealand Tertiary Education Performance-Based Research Fund Working Group (2002). URL citation: http://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/fms/Research/Higher%20Research/College/The%20Performance%20Based%20Research%20Fund%20(PBRF)%20Definition%20of%20Research.pdf.
3. This notion of tacit cognition was well espoused several decades ago by Michael Polanyi. See his *The Tacit Dimension*, New York: Anchor Books, 1967. See also his *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy*, Chicago University Press, 1958.
4. See especially, Paul Cilliers, *Complexity and Postmodernism*, London: Routledge, 1998.

Acknowledgements

The authors wish to thank all of the contributors for making this book what it is. Without them the idea of what screen production research is would be just that: an idea. The authors would like to thank their respective universities—RMIT University and the University of Newcastle—for continued support, guidance and resources that assisted the book to come into being. They would also like to give special thanks to the Australian Screen Production Education and Research Association community, who have, over the years, given consistent encouragement, debate and support for what is still an emerging (and exciting) area of academic discourse.

Susan would like to thank David, Alice and Rose for their patience and support.

Craig would like to thank family and friends on both sides of the world, for continued belief and encouragement.

Contents

1 **Introduction** 1
Craig Batty and Susan Kerrigan

2 **A 'Logical' Explanation of Screen Production as Method-Led Research** 11
Susan Kerrigan

3 **Lights, Camera, Research: The Specificity of Research in Screen Production** 29
Leo Berkeley

4 **The Primacy of Practice: Establishing the Terms of Reference of Creative Arts and Media Research** 47
Desmond Bell

5 **Screenwriting as a Mode of Research, and the Screenplay as a Research Artefact** 67
Craig Batty and Dallas J. Baker

6 **Using Practitioner-Based Enquiry (PBE) to Examine Screen Production as a Form of Creative Practice** 85
Phillip McIntyre

7 Ethnography and Screen Production Research 103
Marsha Berry

8 Method in Madness: A Case Study in Practice Research Methods 121
Erik Knudsen

9 Cinematography: Practice as Research, Research into Practice 143
Cathy Greenhalgh

10 Practices of Making as Forms of Knowledge: Creative Practice Research as a Mode of Documentary Making in Northeast India 161
Aparna Sharma

11 Fragments, Form and Photogénie: Using Practice to Research the Intersectional Work of Poetic Documentary 177
Bettina Frankham

12 Peter Kennedy's *The Photographs' Story*: The Dialectical Image as Research 195
John Hughes

13 The Naïve Researcher Resisting Methodology: A Ph.D. Experience 213
Smiljana Glisovic

14 Afterword: Tacit Knowledge and Affect—Soft Ethnography and Shared Domains 233
Belinda Middleweek and John Tulloch

Index 249

Editors and Contributors

About the Editors

Dr. Craig Batty is Associate Professor of Screenwriting at RMIT University, Australia, where he is also Higher Degrees by Research convenor for the School of Media and Communication. He is a screenwriter and script editor, with experiences of working on short film, feature film and online drama projects. He is author, co-author and editor of numerous books, including *Media Writing: A Practical Introduction* (2nd ed., 2016), *Screenwriters and Screenwriting: Putting Practice into Context* (2014), *The Creative Screenwriter: Exercises to Expand Your Craft* (2012) and *Movies That Move Us: Screenwriting and the Power of the Protagonist's Journey* (2011). Craig has also written many journal articles and book chapters about screenwriting, creative practice research and doctoral education.

Dr. Susan Kerrigan is Associate Professor of Creative Industries at the University of Newcastle, Australia. She specialises in creative practice research methodologies. She is a co-investigator on the Filmmaking Research Network grant, funded by the UK's Arts and Humanities Research Council, and has held an Australian Research Council Grant investigating the creative industries. Susan's research is closely aligned with her past employment at ABC Television in Sydney (1987–2003), where she worked across a variety of productions using multi-camera and single camera approaches. Susan has professionally produced and directed Australian television programs,

including *Play School*. Other highlights include 'continuity' on Australian television drama productions including *Wildside*, *GP* and *Big Sky*.

About the Foreword Author

Prof. Ross Gibson is Centenary Professor in Creative and Cultural Research at the University of Canberra, Australia. His work spans several media and disciplines. Recent projects include the multimedia installation *Protection* (University of Queensland Art Museum, with Carl Warner, 2011) and the public-art installation *Bluster-Town* at Wynyard Rail Station, Sydney (2017). Books include *The Summer Exercises* (2009), *26 Views of the Starburst World* (2012), *Changescapes* (2015) and *Memoryscopes* (2015), all published by UWA Publishing.

Contributors

Dr. Dallas J. Baker is an academic in the School of Arts and Communication at the University of Southern Queensland, Australia. His study and research intersect with a number of disciplines: writing, editing and publishing, and media and cultural studies. Dallas is also a writer with creative work published in a number of journals and anthologies. His current research interests are memoir and memory, scriptwriting, editing and publishing and 'self-making' in cultural practices such as creative writing and popular music consumption.

Prof. Desmond Bell is a Visiting Research Fellow at the Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities at the University of Edinburgh. His research interests include documentary film theory and practice, the history of visual culture, the social history of photography in Ireland, and practice-based research methodologies. He has written extensively in the fields of cultural studies and media policy, in *Media, Culture and Society*, *European Journal of Communication*, *The Journal of Communication*, *Western European Politics* and *Kinema: A Journal for Film and Audiovisual Media*. He is also an award-winning filmmaker, whose work has been regularly broadcast and screened at international film festivals.

Dr. Leo Berkeley is a Senior Lecturer within the School of Media and Communication at RMIT University, Australia. He also has considerable

experience as an independent filmmaker, having written and directed the feature film, *Holidays on the River Yarra*, which was an official selection for the Cannes Film Festival in 1991. More recently he has developed an interest in a new media form called 'machinima'. A machinima work he produced, *Ending with Andre*, screened at the 2005 Machinima Film Festival in New York. His more recent creative works have been exploring what it means to make a film as academic research. His current research interests are in the practice of screen production, low and micro-budget filmmaking, improvisation, essay films, community media and machinima.

Dr. Marsha Berry is Senior Lecturer in the School of Media and Communication at RMIT University, Australia. She is co-editor of the book, *Mobile Media Making in an Age of Smartphones* (2014), has a forthcoming book called *Creating with Mobile Media*, and has written numerous journal articles and book chapters on screen, mobile and interactive media, creative writing, and higher education. She is also a creative writer and artist whose practice includes filmmaking, participatory art projects, poetry and new media.

Dr. Bettina Frankham is a practice-led researcher in digital media. She has a background of industry experience that spans multiple forms of media, including television, radio and web production. She makes creative works that cross into territories of documentary, art and poetry. Her projects have screened at international media arts festivals including Videobrasil International Electronic Art Festival, Stuttgart Filmwinter Festival for Expanded Media, Berlin Asia-Pacific Film Festival, the Artivist Film Festival California, and Flickerfest International Short Film Festival Australia. Her research interests include art and documentary intersections, expanded documentary practice and the impact of digital culture on creative media production. Bettina teaches in digital media arts and production at the University of Technology Sydney, Australia.

Dr. Smiljana Glisovic is an early career researcher in the fields of documentary and poetic forms in audio-visual installation, and creative practice and the moving image. Her practice engages with text, moving image, installation and performance. She has worked across various mediums and forms, as an artist, actor, writer and filmmaker. She has published short-form fiction, and written for the theatre and for screen. She

works at RMIT University in the School of Media and Communication, where she teaches in creative writing and media programs.

Cathy Greenhalgh is an independent filmmaker, lecturer, media anthropologist and writer. She has thirty years' university teaching and management expertise (latterly as Principal Lecturer in Film and Television, University of the Arts London), and for fifteen years has worked as a professional cinematographer, directing films using choreography and essay/ethnographic documentary modes for cinema, gallery and museum spaces. Her research interests and publications centre on collaborative and interdisciplinary creativity, filmmaking practices and communities of practice, cinematographic phenomena and aesthetics, light and landscape.

Dr. John Hughes is Adjunct Professor, School of Media and Communication, RMIT University; Honorary Fellow, School of Film and Television, University of Melbourne; and ARC Research Associate, Faculty of Art and Design, University of Canberra. Currently developing a history of filmmakers' co-operatives in Australia (1966–86), his film work includes feature drama, essay documentary, on-line documentary, video art and gallery installation. Recent broadcast works include: *Love & Fury* (2013), *Indonesia Calling: Joris Ivens in Australia* (2009) and *The Archive Project* (2006). *The Films of John Hughes: A History of Independent Screen Production in Australia* (Cumming, 2014) is published by ATOM.

Prof. Erik Knudsen is a filmmaker and Professor of Media Practice at the University of Central Lancashire, UK. Alongside his current role, Erik is also Visiting Professor, and former Head of the Editing Department at the Escuela Internacional de Cine y Television in Cuba. His most recent feature film, *The Raven on the Jetty*, was released in 2015. He is currently in production with his latest feature film, *Cleft Lip*, which is due for release in 2018. He runs his own production company, One Day Films Ltd, which produces and distributes his work.

Dr. Phillip McIntyre is an Associate Professor at the University of Newcastle, Australia, in the Discipline of Communication and Media. His research interest is in creativity and innovation, and he has been a video maker, music journalist, record producer and songwriter and musician. He is the President of the Australian and New Zealand Communication Association (ANZCA) and is a chief investigator on

an Australian Research Council project investigating the creative industries in the Hunter Region in NSW. His book, *Creativity and Cultural Production: Issues for Media Practice*, was published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2012.

Dr. Belinda Middleweek lectures in the School of Communication at the University of Technology Sydney, Australia. She has worked as a producer and researcher across documentary film, television and radio broadcasting. Her Ph.D. explored media representations of 'deviant women' and her research on gender, media and film studies has been published in the international journals *Feminist Media Studies* and *Crime, Media, Culture*. Her current book, with John Tulloch, is *Real Sex Films: The New Intimacy and Risk in Cinema,* to be published by Oxford University Press.

Dr. Aparna Sharma is a documentary filmmaker and theorist. Her films document experiences and narratives that are overlooked in the mainstream imagination of the Indian nation. She works in India's northeastern region, documenting cultural practices of indigenous communities. As a film theorist, she is committed to writing about non-normative subjects in Indian cinema, with an emphasis on documentary films. In *Documentary Films in India: Critical Aesthetics at Work* (2015) she explores non-canonical documentary practices from India. She has previously written on Indo-Pak ties through documentaries and the representation of gender in Indian cinema. She works as an Associate Professor in the Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance, UCLA.

Prof. John Tulloch is an internationally recognised scholar across the fields of sociology, theatre studies, media and cultural studies. His academic career has seen him work in Australia and the UK, publish over twenty books, dozens of articles and book chapters, as well as gain several national competitive grants and publish significant consultancy reports. He is Professor Emeritus at Charles Sturt University, Australia, and Adjunct Professor at the University of Newcastle, Australia. His current books are (with Andrew Hoskins) *Risk and Hyperconnectivity: Media and Memories of Neoliberalism* (2016, OUP), and (with Belinda Middleweek) *Real Sex Films: The New Intimacy and Risk in Cinema* (forthcoming, OUP).

List of Figures

Fig. 2.1	The interrelationship between the building blocks of research (Grix 2004, p. 66) 'Grix, Jonathan, *The Foundations of Research* (2nd edition), published by Palgrave Macmillan. Reproduced with permission of Palgrave Macmillan'	15
Fig. 4.1	William Kentridge, *More sweetly play the dance* (2016). Installation in Luma Gallery, Arles, and single screen	49
Fig. 4.2	William Kentridge, *More sweetly play the dance* (2016). Installation in Luma Gallery, Arles, and single screen	50
Fig. 4.3	Still from *Barry Lyndon*	61
Fig. 4.4	*Zidane: A 21st Century Portrait*, National Gallery Scotland (2008), installation and close-up	62
Fig. 4.5	*Zidane: A 21st Century Portrait*, National Gallery Scotland (2008), installation and close-up	63
Fig. 4.6	Modelling artistic research	65
Fig. 8.1	Accessing the research	131
Fig. 8.2	The research elements	132
Fig. 8.3	Mark Duggan and Erik Knudsen conversing in vlog 1 (One Day Films)	133
Fig. 8.4	A page from *The Raven on the Jetty* production scrapbook (Knudsen 2015c)	135
Fig. 8.5	A scene from the forthcoming film *Doubt* (Knudsen 2017)	139
Fig. 10.1	Stone sculptures on the outer façade of the Kamakhya Temple	169

Fig. 10.2 A close-up depiction of a canvas from Kandarp Sarma's, 'The Kamakhya series' 170
Fig. 10.3 A contextual view of a weaver working on a handloom at TDMS 173
Fig. 12.1 Framed newspaper, folded 201
Fig. 12.2 *The Photographs' Story*, AEAF, June 2016 207

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Craig Batty and Susan Kerrigan

Screen production research is the study of the creation of audio-visual work that is disseminated on/with screens and can include theory-driven practices that use the screen to 'do' research (e.g., research-led practice), and systematic reflection upon a production to gain rigorous insights into how a work was made (e.g., practice-led research). The term 'screen production' has emerged through Australian scholarship—elsewhere, for example, it is known as screen or media practice, filmmaking or video production—and its antecedence comes about through a combination of the film and television industry and the academy.

In line with technological developments that made it possible to create and distribute work online and via mobile media, the Australian industry embraced the term 'screen' in 2008 with the establishment of Screen Australia, the national funding body for screen work. The Screen Australia Act 2008 defines screen production as 'an aggregate of images, or of images and sounds, embodied in any material that can be viewed

C. Batty (✉)
RMIT University, Melbourne, VIC, Australia
e-mail: craig.batty@rmit.edu.au

S. Kerrigan
University of Newcastle, Newcastle, NSW, Australia
e-mail: susan.kerrigan@newcastle.edu.au

© The Author(s) 2018

C. Batty and S. Kerrigan (eds.), *Screen Production Research*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-62837-0_1

on a screen (including, for example, a film)'. The term 'research' comes, of course, from the academy, and research that is conducted about/for/through screen production should comply with the philosophical, intellectual and ethical rigour that all universities uphold in their research processes and quest for new knowledge.

Bringing together screen production and research, under the umbrella of what is widely known as creative practice research, this collection offers a range of insights into and case studies of screen production research, arguing for its place in the academy as not only a legitimate but also an innovate mode of enquiry. The subsequent thirteen chapters of this book use screenwriting, filmmaking, television production, digital media, mobile media and distribution as forms and genres through which the rich and diverse landscape of screen production can be understood and—importantly—practiced. The collection is thus an attempt to put screen production research firmly on the map or in the archive, drawing on new and experienced researchers from around the world to define and defend its territory.

As in other creative disciplines, screen production draws on creative practice research enquiries that are described in a number of different ways, including practice-led research, practice-as-research, practice-based research and research-led practice. But unlike these disciplines, which have undertaken much work to define, defend and develop research modes relevant to their forms and genres, screen production has been slower to start. In art and design, for example, books such as *Practice as Research: Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry* (Barrett and Bolt 2010), *Creative Spaces for Qualitative Researching: Living Research* (Higgs et al. 2011) and *Supervising Practices for Postgraduate Research in Art, Architecture and Design* (Allpress et al. 2012) have found a strong foothold in the academy, often referred to in discussions of methodology in honours, master's and doctoral projects across the creative arts. The same can be said of the performing arts, with Robin Nelson's *Practice as Research in the Arts: Principles, Protocols, Pedagogies, Resistances* (2013) emanating from this discipline, and Brad Haseman's journal article, 'A Manifesto for Performative Research' (2006), being widely cited. Smith and Dean's *Practice-led Research, Research-led Practice in the Creative Arts* (2009) provides a range of excellent chapters about practice research across creative arts disciplines.

Similarly, creative writing research has grown exponentially over the past two decades. Key texts such as *Creative Writing Studies: Practice,*

Research and Pedagogy (Harper and Kroll 2007), *Establishing Creative Writing Studies as an Academic Discipline* (Donnelly 2011), *Research Methods in Creative Writing* (Kroll and Harper 2012) and *Researching Creative Writing* (Webb 2015), as well as journals such as *New Writing: The International Journal for the Practice and Theory of Creative Writing*, and *TEXT: Journal of Writing and Writing Courses*, have provided multiple accounts of creative practice research and are also influencing the methodological thinking of those outside the discipline.

The discipline of screen/media/video production has made some headway, too, with outlets such as the *Journal of Media Practice*, and the establishment in the UK of the Media, Communication and Cultural Studies Association (MeCCSA) Practice Network to champion such matters. Subject-based peak body associations such as the Australian Screen Production Education and Research Association (ASPERA), the University Film and Video Association (UFVA) in the USA, and the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR)'s Media Production Analysis Working Group in Europe, have also contributed to these debates through refereed conference proceedings and journal special issues. The rising popularity of production studies and media industries studies has also ignited interest in the practice aspects of the field, though is more often about studying production from a variety of disciplinary and methodological approaches than actually embracing production as a mode of research. Thus, unlike disciplines such as art, design, creative writing and performance that have defined what creative practice research looks like for them, screen/media/video production has been more tentative in its approach and has a less developed set of research literacies.

This collection, then, was borne out of a desire to put a stamp on what screen production research is and looks like, to provide a global benchmark of sorts from which others can contribute and move the discipline forward. As practitioner-researchers with full-time academic jobs, we have been part of countless debates about what creative practice research is (and is not), and have collectively mentored many students and staff in the area. This mode of research is complex and diverse, and it has taken us a long time to fully understand and appreciate the nature of it, in all of its guises and with all of its intricacies. This book is thus intended to provide a milestone in screen production research, staking a claim for definitions and offering useful case studies in the hope that the discipline can be confident about what it does and inspired about where it is going.

The book is purposely structured in two parts: the first scoping the field and offering definitions and methodologies; the second providing solid examples of these ideas 'in practice', through reflections on research projects (including PhDs) for which screen production has been central. Contributors were invited based on their strong knowledge and appreciation of screen production research, their experience of writing about and supervising creative practice methodologies, and their passion for combining academic research with artistic/aesthetic/industry practice. The result, we hope, is a rich collection of insights into the entangled and contested, yet innovative and empowering space that is screen production research.

The first chapter, 'A 'Logical' Explanation of Screen Production as Method-Led Research' by Susan Kerrigan, explains the importance of research design and how philosophical understandings can help practitioners defend their subjective positions as creative practice researchers. Following this, Leo Berkeley looks at the development of the discipline of screen production in 'Lights, Camera, Research: The Specificity of Research in Screen Production', specifically, how it has methodologically borrowed from other disciplines. Drawing on his own practice as a filmmaking professional and academic, Berkeley explores what makes screen production a distinct field of academic inquiry. Desmond Bell then uses his chapter, 'The Primacy of Practice: Establishing the Terms of Reference of Creative Arts and Media Research', to trace the origins of the terminology currently being used in the academy to describe practice as a mode of research. He argues that 'artistic research' is a more authentic way of speaking to the actual research practices of those working in creative fields.

Craig Batty and Dallas Baker provide a comprehensive overview of the screenplay as research in 'Screenwriting as a Mode of Research, and the Screenplay as a Research Artefact'. They argue that as a growing mode of research in the academy, screenwriting functions as both a method of knowledge enquiry and a performative traditional research. Phillip McIntyre continues to explore the relationship between research enquiry and research artefact in 'Using Practitioner-Based Enquiry (PBE) to Examine Screen Production as a Form of Creative Practice'. Here McIntyre sees screen production research as a creative activity undertaken from the perspectives of the practitioner, which provides insights into the processes of creative actions. Marsha Berry's chapter, 'Ethnography and

Screen Production Research', then explores experiential strategies that can be applied through an ethnographic methodology. Using mobile media screen practice as a lens, Berry explains how writing strategies can be used to illustrate reflections on process as a way of constructing knowledge.

In the second half of the book, authors reflect more specifically on their screen production practices. This begins with Erik Knudsen, whose chapter 'Method in Madness: A Case Study in Practice Research Methods' draws together a number of his filmmaking experiences and reflects on what he sees as a creative research process, and the madness that ensues when a film crew embarks on such a production. Cathy Greenhalgh, in 'Cinematography: Practice as Research, Research into Practice', then highlights the performativity of cinematographers working on film sets or in locations, and how this act relates to research contexts and intentions. She draws on examples of her own and others' cinematographic work to argue for praxis as a useful way of identifying and articulating this mode of research.

Aparna Sharma turns the focus to documentary in 'Practices of Making as Forms of Knowledge: Creative Practice Research as a Mode of Documentary Making in Northeast India'. Here Sharma discusses two of her observational documentary films that are underpinned by her social aesthetic approach to haptic audio-visuality. Bettina Frankham also discusses documentary practices in her chapter, 'Fragments, Form and Photogénie: Using Practice to Research the Intersectional Work of Poetic Documentary'. In this case study Frankham explains how intersectional methodologies provide a poetic approach to documentary, which can provoke diverse knowledges for both makers and spectators.

John Hughes discusses moving image research in 'Peter Kennedy's *The Photographs' Story*: The Dialectical Image as Research'. Focusing on Peter Kennedy's recent installation work, Hughes explores the poetic dimension of art at the heart of Kennedy's work, and how it uses images as a vehicle for transmission. Also reflecting on methodological approaches to moving image research is Smiljana Glisovic, in 'The Naïve Researcher, Resisting Methodology: a Ph.D. Experience'. Glisovic's research explores the relationship between the body and landscape through audio-visual art practice, by describing her experience and how she, as a researcher, becomes attuned to the medium that frames colours, textures, rhythms and sounds.