

A Business of Prestige and Profit

Creative Scotland and Contemporary Scottish Film Industry

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<p>Tämän tutkielman tavoitteena on selvittää miten prestiisi ja voiton tavoittelu kietoutuvat toisiinsa skotlantilaisessa elokuvateollisuudessa ja erityisesti julkisen rahoituksen varassa toimivan kulttuuriteollisuuden instituution, Creative Scotlannin, toiminnassa. Tämän lisäksi tutkielmassa selvitetään mahdollisia syitä sille, miksi Skotlannin naapurimaat ja Iso-Britannian muut alueet houkuttelevat ulkomaisia elokuvaprojekteja luokseen huomattavasti Skotlantia enemmän, syitä skotlantilaisten elokuvatyöntekijöiden maastamuuttoon ja alan rahoituksen vähyteen. Lisäksi huomiota kiinnitetään kotoperäisen- ja kansainvälisen tuotannon välisiin suhteisiin ja ulkomaisen investoinnin merkitykseen skotlantilaiselle elokuvateollisuudelle.</p> <p>Tutkimusaineistona on käytetty pääasiassa Creative Scotlannin omia julkaisuja: markkinointimateriaalia, vuosittaisia suunnitelmia ja tilinpäätöksiä vuodesta 2014 vuoteen 2024. Aineistoa tutkitaan kvalitatiivisen kulttuurintutkimuksen ja elokuvatutkimuksen teorian keinoin, eli analysoidaan tutkimusaineistosta nousevia diskursseja ja sidotaan nämä kulttuurisiin konteksteihin. Apuna käytetään akateemista elokuvakirjallisuutta, kulttuurintutkimuksen teoriaa, sekä kulttuuriteollisuuden toimintaa ja merkitystä selittävää teoriaa. Tämän lisäksi kulttuurialan toimittajien kirjoittamat artikkelit toimivat Creative Scotlannin sisäisiä menettelytapoja kriittisesti tarkastelevina lähteinä.</p> <p>Skotlantilainen elokuva koki ensimmäisen kasvukautensa 90-luvun puolivälissä, uusien rahoitusmenetelmien mahdollistaessa ilmapiirin, jossa kotoperäisten elokuvien tuotanto kukoisti ja ennennäkemätön kansallisylypeys elokuvan saralla oli aistittavissa. Elokuvien rahoitukseen ja tuotantoon panostettiin kuitenkin verrattain vähän: verovaroja ohjattiin riittämättömästi julkiseen kulttuurintuotantoon ja muutkin rahoitusmahdollisuudet olivat rajallisia sekä julkisella, että yksityisellä sektorilla. Skotlantilainen kulttuuriteollisuus ja siihen liittyvä politiikka on kuitenkin kehittynyt viime vuosikymmeninä elokuvatuotantoa arvostavampaan ja tukevampaan suuntaan. Elokuvallinen representaatio on kansakunnan identiteetille merkittävä, sillä elokuvallisen ilmaisun kautta katsojaa voidaan puhutella uniikilla tavalla. Skotlantilaisten elokuvantekijöiden lähtökohdat ja tavoitteet elokuvilleen ovat moninaisia, ja tämän vuoksi Creative Scotland on sitoutunut tukemaan niin taide-elokuvaa, sosiaalista realismia kuvaavaa elokuvaa kuin taloudellisesti kannattavaa viihde-elokuvaakin. Creative Scotlannin yksi merkittävimmistä haasteista on tasapainon löytäminen rahoituksen jakamisessa kotimaisille ja ulkomaisille tuotantoyhtiöille ja elokuvantekijöille, sillä monimuotoiset elokuvan tekemisen tavat tuovat oman arvonsa skotlantilaiselle elokuvateollisuudelle lisääntyvän prestiisin tai taloudellisen kasvun kautta. Kansainvälisen arvostuksen saavuttaminen on tärkeä elementti elinvoimaisen elokuvateollisuuden säilyttämisen kannalta, sillä sen myötä ulkomaalaisten elokuvantuottajien halukkuus työskennellä Skotlannissa lisääntyy. Ulkomaiset investoinnit voivat kuitenkin parhaimmillaan tarjota työtä myös skotlantilaiselle työvoimalle ja mahdollistaa paikallisten elokuvantekijöiden asettumisen Skotlantiin. Vaikka Skotlanti onkin maantieteellisesti kaukana Iso-Britannian päätösvallassa, sen henkeäsalpaavat maisemat ja moneen mukautuvat kaupunkiympäristöt ovat sen suurin valttikortti.</p> <p>Brexitin vaikutus kansainväliseen liikkuvuuteen ja rahoitusmahdollisuuksiin tullaan näkemään lähivuosina. Tutkimuksesta voidaan silti päätellä skotlantilaisen elokuvateollisuuden elävän kasvukautta. Keskeisinä rakennuspalikoina toimivat elokuva- ja tv-tuotannon kehittämiseen keskittyvän yksikön, sekä laaja-alaisen elokuvastudion perustaminen, joiden suurimpana mahdollistajana on toiminut julkisen sektorin rahoituksen lisääntyminen ja Creative Scotlannin yhteistyö paikallisten toimijoiden kanssa.</p>		
Avainsanat Skotlanti, kulttuurintutkimus, elokuvatutkimus, elokuvateollisuus, kulttuuriteollisuus, prestiisi, nationalismi		
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1 Introduction

1.1 Creative Scotland and Film

However, the Scottish failure has not been one primarily of individual will; it has been the failure of institutions to create the conditions for the development of more politically and artistically relevant discourses. –McArthur, *Scotch Reels*, 1982, 67.

The former Head of the Distribution Division of the British Film Institute and author Colin McArthur edited and wrote parts of *Scotch Reels*, a collection of essays about Scottish film and the state of the industry in the beginning of the 1980s. In his writing he evaluates the quality of Scottish film, accusing Scottish filmmakers of a lack of self-definition and the Scottish film institutions of a lack of suitable conditions to make, in his opinion, politically and artistically relevant film.¹ His views have since been challenged by the likes of professor and author Duncan Petrie, claiming that there have been politically relevant and refreshingly different films coming from Scotland since the beginning of film and especially during the artistic “Scottish Renaissance” of the 90s with films such as *Trainspotting* (1996) with its urban environment and working-class realism. Petrie claims that since the 1990’s, the Scottish film industry sector saw a major improvement in indigenous production, while outside sources (including Channel Four and BBC Films) remained important for its continuing support.² However, according to numerous contemporary sources, the industry is still struggling and has hit a rut. As an example, journalist Libby Brooks wrote for *The Guardian* about the “institutional neglect, lack of facilities and talent drain” that characterised the situation the Scottish film industry was faced with in 2015. The article addresses the imbalance between Scotland and its neighbouring Wales, Northern Ireland and Ireland.³ Based on the article, Scottish film professionals are alarmed by the fact that big productions are lost to Scotland’s neighbours and their film industries are thriving, while Scotland is left lagging behind. Some solutions to the problems are called for in order to attract more high-scale projects to Scotland and turn around the decline.

¹ McArthur 1982, 67.

² Petrie 2000, 185-186.

³ Brooks 2015.

The structure of the Scottish film industry has seen some relatively large changes in the past twenty years. The functions of Scottish Screen and the Scottish Arts Council were united to form Creative Scotland in 2010 and this thesis is particularly focused on the last six years of its operation, 2014 to 2020. According to the introduction found on the Creative Scotland website, they are a public body, whose purpose is to support art, creative industries and screen projects everywhere in Scotland. They distribute funding received from the Scottish Government and the National Lottery to individuals and producers working in Scotland in these fields. In relation to film, Creative Scotland supports indigenous film and television production and promotes inward investment, meaning international filmmaking. They work together with entities such as the BFI and the BBC and are aiming to develop a long-term strategy for film together with the different branches of the film sector as well as the Scottish Government.⁴

Based on nationalist remarks, the creative arts are supposedly thriving in Scotland and are a part of awakening nationalistic aspirations in other areas of society such as politics.⁵ In reality, it seems that the area is experiencing a talent drain, at least when it comes to film. More specifically, the most prominent issues that are brought up time and time again whether that be by scholars, journalists or people working in the creative industries, including Creative Scotland, are a) the lack of sufficient funding and opportunities for filmmakers b) the lack of a large-scale studio facility.⁶ These issues are a matter of debate, since not everyone agrees that film, or markedly Scottish film, needs to be supported as much as other faculties of art or at all. Journalist Kevin McKenna, would rather see money donated to more traditional forms of art such as poetry and painting, indicating that the cultural status of Scottish film these days is still discusses and some believe it does not need any more support than it already has.⁷ The Film Sector Review, conducted in 2014, suggest that the missing option to do an A level exam⁸ in film is a clear indication of the low status of film in Scottish society since 16-18-year-olds are not being introduced to film culture as they are in, say, Northern Ireland and Wales and this is in turn reflected in public policy.⁹

⁴ Creative Scotland website 2015.

⁵ Petrie 2004, 1.

⁶ See e.g. Review of the Film Sector in Scotland 2014, 3.

⁷ McKenna 2013.

⁸ A Levels: (Advanced Level qualifications) taken by UK students aged 16 and above and result in qualifications to enter higher education in the UK and beyond.

⁹ Review of the Film Sector in Scotland 2014, 29.

My hypothesis is that since film has not been traditionally considered a significant form of artistic expression, funding for it would also be lacking.¹⁰ I am interested in studying the driving forces behind Creative Scotland's decision making and in what ways the Scottish film industry could benefit from, also international, recognition. Connected to this is the apparent talent drain in Scotland when it comes to Scottish filmmaking. One explanation for the relative "invisibility" of Scottish film could be that many Scottish films are labeled "British" instead of Scottish and many films are made as collaborations between different nations in the Anglo-Saxon community, producing cultural hybrids. Therefore, Scottish talent is hidden, usually under the flag of Great Britain or the machine that is Hollywood. Yet another explanation could be that perhaps the industry is suffering from a lack of creativity due to financial trouble or a shortage in training and education in the field and films are simply not made. Therefore, the objects of study presented here are centered around profit, policy and prestige.

I am hoping that my material will reveal the meanings behind the *discourses* that are connected to Creative Scotland by studying their film sector review, plans and annual reports as well as the aspects of their work they wish to promote to the public. As a hypothesis, I am assuming that at least aspects of prestige, financial gain and nationalism will rise from the study material as some of the building blocks of Creative Scotland. The question that will follow throughout the whole thesis and tie the sections together is: How are prestige and profit constructed in the discourses relating to Creative Scotland and in what ways do prestige and public policy influence the operation of Creative Scotland? I also am aiming to figure out whether the claimed lack of funding for film is possibly a matter of prestige or if there is a lack of funding for the cultural industries in general.

The second chapter of this thesis will focus on the journey from past to present, creating an explanation of what has happened to the structure of the Scottish film industry in the past decades and, most importantly, what the role of Creative Scotland is leading up to today. It also makes comparisons between Scotland and its neighbouring areas in order to find out why the Scottish film industry does not seem to be able to compete with the industries of other socio-economically similar nations. It relies heavily on previous research and the works of Petrie and other film scholars, who offer a timeline of Scottish cinema up to the year 2009, the year before Creative Scotland was created. Institutional changes and material reality are considered as some of the

¹⁰ See e.g. Donald 2008, 1-2.

dimensions that make a difference to the structure of contemporary Scottish film industry. The third chapter examines Creative Scotland and its operation from a cultural industry perspective with an emphasis on the cultural impact of film and the role of awards and international recognition in creating a sustainable film industry. The fourth section deals with issues to do with Creative Scotland's self-marketing and image building, discussed primarily based on their own marketing publications. It is no secret that the iconic Scottish Highland landscape has been used as a backdrop for foreign cinema and their stories. The meaning of locations and landscape in the Scottish context are discussed along with ownership and nationality. Finally, special attention is given to recent changes in the structure of Creative Scotland and prospects for the Scottish film industry are discussed before final thoughts and conclusions are given on the subject.

1.2 Tools of Analysis and Prestige

My aim is to create a qualitative cultural analysis of the study material with the help of previous theory in the field of film, cultural, as well as creative industries studies. By engaging in a theoretical discussion with previous researchers, I hope to examine the study material as neutrally as possible and place the meanings that rise from the discourses, or *texts*, into their cultural context. In order to understand Creative Scotland's documents, I consider what their cultural environment is and what type of theory, terms and tools would draw as much meaning out of them as possible. Geertz and his idea of culture as *webs of significance*, that we as people have created ourselves has acted as a crucial guideline to the formation of this thesis and how prestige is seen to work from both the top down and from the bottom up.¹¹ My analysis will offer an interpretation to the way in which Creative Scotland have wanted to portray their operation and discover the reasons behind their funding decisions for the creative sector.

Theory on the cultural, or creative industries, offers a critical tool with which the study material is analysed further. Justin O'Connor, a pioneer in British study of cultural policy and cultural industries has written extensively on the subject. Based on his literary review I am using sociologist David Hesmondhalgh's *The Cultural Industries* as well as a collection of essays entitled *Making Meaning, Making Money - Directions for the Arts and Cultural Industries in the*

¹¹ Geertz 1973, 5.

Creative Age, which mainly deals with the cultural industries in Australia but also includes an essay by Creative Director Jeremy Sim about the cultural industries in the Scottish Highlands, as a guide to understanding my study material better.¹² “Creative”, “cultural” and “content” industries can be seen as parallel terms in this thesis even though cultural is preferred as they may vary slightly, especially in their emphasis on either cultural or economic aspects of policymaking. The study of cultural industries is focused on the formation of cultural organisations and their policies, the economic, cultural and political aspects of cultural industries. Jeremy Sim lists what industries are seen as “cultural” in the UK: advertising, architecture, the art and antiques market, crafts, design, designer fashion, film, interactive leisure software, music, performing arts, publishing, software and television and radio.¹³ This thesis naturally focuses on the film aspect of the cultural industries in Scotland. Hesmondhalgh notes that cultural studies is “a diverse and fragmented field of study, but, at its core, is the attempt to examine and rethink culture by considering its relationship to social power”.¹⁴ Again, we are reminded of the idea of culture as a web of significance, where culture is influenced by industries and industries in turn by culture. This brings us to prestige and the ways in which prestige influences cultural industries.

Prestige is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as the “influence or reputation derived from achievements, associations, or character, or (esp.) from past success; a person's standing in the estimation of others.” The word “estimation” stands out as it means that when something or someone is labeled or viewed as prestigious, it includes the possibility of bias.¹⁵ There has to be a cultural consensus when it comes to prestige in order for something to be and become prestigious in some niche of society. Since it is merely an evaluation, a perception of someone’s or something’s value and not something concrete and unchanging, prestige is achieved by a common belief, or delusion if you will, and can change over time and place. In this sense it is an interesting tool for a cultural analysis whose subjects are hardly unchanging. It is widely believed in film studies that films, film theory and its researchers have had to earn their footing in the academic world to be taken seriously as a part of humanities, meaning that their work and subjects at least used to be of low cultural prestige.¹⁶ Something has changed in the valuation of film and the people who study them since film studies are spreading as a branch in the humanities and the impact of film is understood better.

¹² Hesmondhalgh 2013; Andersen, Lisa & Oakley, Kate. 2008.

¹³ Sim 2008, 161.

¹⁴ Hesmondhalgh 2013, 40-41.

¹⁵ OED Online, 2020.

¹⁶ Donald, James 2008, 1-2.

Change is at the heart of *Artworld Prestige*, written by Art Professors Van Laar and Diepeveen. To them, prestige is “a system of hierarchies of agreed-upon social value” that is conferred by people to people and things. Prestige functions as a system which can confer value but also just as easily take it away. Van Laar and Diepeveen believe that the system is best described via the loss of status.¹⁷ The artworld is described as a social construction, a construction which is based on conferral and on uses of power and knowledge by groups.¹⁸ Creative Scotland works within this system as does any other institution in the artworld. They use power in order to gain prestige but negative evaluations on their action, for example by the press, can harm the image they wish to create. Van Laar and Diepeveen argue that Bourdieu’s commonly used “cultural capital” lacks the idea of prestige as a process of conferral. To think of prestige as a process makes it less synonymous with wealth and power, although being closely connected to the terms. Prestige is not something that can be acquired such as wealth, it can only be conferred.¹⁹ This means that a person or an institution can act as an active agent in acquiring wealth or power (although power is also at least partly conferred) but prestige can only be achieved through conferral. This makes the subject of conferral vulnerable in the hands of the group or community they wish to gain prestige from.

To Diepeveen and Van Laar there are two activities that enable prestige:

1. Confer prestige → Done by people, usually with lower artworld status. (Power from the bottom up)
2. Generate prestige → Done by objects, lifestyles, actions and some people who usually have higher artworld status. (Power from the top down)²⁰

Therefore, if Creative Scotland wishes to gain higher status and more prestige in the artworld, they are relying on the people of Scotland and the art community to confer prestige onto them. They can generate prestige by creating services and supporting films that have a high cultural status. In this study, prestige is defined as something possessing artistic, instead of monetary value. There may be a correlation between money and prestige but not necessarily. The challenge in this study is to try and measure the value of something that is oftentimes perceived as immeasurable or at least challenging to measure which is also often the case with cultural studies research subjects.

¹⁷ Van Laar & Diepeveen 2013, 5.

¹⁸ Ibid., 13.

¹⁹ Ibid., 15.

²⁰ Ibid., 22.

Alongside prestige, I will touch upon the possibility of nationalism and national pride influencing some of the discourses. Social scientist Michael Billig's renowned work, *Banal Nationalism*, draws attention to the ways in which nations and people are affected by and addressed by institutions and those in power and how banal nationalism seeps into the everyday of common people.²¹ Billig writes how national identities and cultural things related to nations are somehow seen as "natural" when in fact they are always historically and culturally constructed.²² In this case, Scotland and what is meant by Scottishness is constructed in the documents of Creative Scotland other publications that discuss Creative Scotland's role in the Scottish context. Films are also often used as a way of reflecting and constructing national identity utilising landscape, language and themes relating to national discussions. Especially previous research on the subject has focused on the quality and themes of Scottish films which is an important topic but merely touched upon in this thesis.

The reason I chose Creative Scotland as the institution to study was that the merging of Scottish Screen and the Scottish Arts Council coincided with a relatively recent point in time (2010) making the study contemporary and fit my own interests. Furthermore, the Creative Scotland documents that are analysed are all recently published (2014 onwards). I wanted to study a Scottish institution, which, due to receiving its funding from public funds, is supposed to be uninfluenced by investors or third parties in its decision making but that has power over the Scottish film industry and has power over the decisions made in that field. BFI would be a suitable candidate, except it is not local to Scotland nor recently founded. BBC Scotland, on the other hand, does tick both boxes when it comes to locality and funding but has been operating considerably longer than Creative Scotland (since 1952). There are, of course, numerous other institutions, which fund films in Scotland, but these ones mentioned are the largest of them.

As stated before, my aim is to engage in a dialogue between previous research and to offer my personal interpretations on the study material in order to break down the meanings of culture that make up a particular construction of reality, in this case the Scottish film industry, in order to find out how it operates and what type of cultural expressions are supported and why. The documents available on the Creative Scotland website are broken down to find out what type of cultural

²¹ Billig, 1995.

²² *Ibid.*, 37.

valuations relating to prestige can be found, in addition to argumentation based on finance and possible other, such as nationalistic aspirations.

1.3 Creative Scotland Publications and Previous Research

In order to understand how the public Scottish film industry operates, some key publications of Creative Scotland, such as annual reports and marketing documents, are studied. Creative Scotland have made their annual plans as well as annual performance reviews available from the year 2014 to the year 2019. They have also released a 10-Year Plan ranging from 2014 to 2024 and a long-term film strategy from the year 2014 to 2017. By examining the plans and the film strategy year by year, I am hoping to reveal the ambitions Creative Scotland have for developing the Scottish film sector and whether these ambitions are fuelled by prestige or profit. In addition to the annual plans, Creative Scotland have released some marketing publications promoting different aspects of Scottish arts. This study focuses on two marketing publications that are specifically targeted at promoting indigenous Scottish film and the filming locations and landscapes Scotland has to offer. The purpose of examining these publications is to see which aspects of Scottish film Creative Scotland wish to bring up to the limelight and why. Also, a comprehensive Scottish film sector review commissioned by Creative Scotland in 2014 offers the most vital source of information relating to Creative Scotland's operation and how it is seen from the perspective of different bodies and people functioning within the industry. These documents are readily available online for anyone to see and study. As stated earlier, Creative Scotland was formed in 2010 after the unification of the functions of Scottish Screen and the Scottish Arts Council and has been fine tuning and striving to improve its operation since.

In order to place the study into a historical context, research done on Scottish film and the Scottish film industry by McArthur and Petrie set the starting point for this thesis, offering extensive research on Scottish film and the Scottish film industry up to 2010. Whereas McArthur's *Scotch Reels* demonstrates a more critical view on Scottish film and sees the traditions of *kailyard* and *tartanry*²³ as well as a lack of institutional support for indigenous film production as the main

²³ Tartanry is the tradition of using kitsch elements of Scottish culture based on national stereotypes such as the Highlander as a noble savage. Kailyard sentimentalises rural Scottish life and ignores actual societal issues. See e.g. Craig 1982, 7-15.

reasons why Scottish film is failing, Petrie offers a more encouraging and optimistic view of the future of Scottish film and criticises some of McArthur's notions (that nostalgia is unequivocally a bad thing for example).²⁴ Petrie strives to offer a balanced view on both the structure of the film industry as well as an analysis of some individual films and themes. Petrie writes that McArthur's *Scotch Reels* remains "the most influential critical and cultural analysis" on Scottish film, a belief that is somewhat brought into question by his own work on the subject.²⁵ Petrie's *Screening Scotland* and several articles following it are my main frame of reference when it comes to academic film theory on Scottish films.

One of the most recent works on Scottish film came out in 2009, entitled *Scottish Cinema Now*, which is a collection of essays that deals with many of the same issues as this thesis.²⁶ It offers a possibility to compare and contrast views on Scottish film and what is happening in Scotland when it comes to the creative arts today. It is also interesting to note which matters have changed since 2009, meaning the types of changes which have taken place since the creation of Creative Scotland in terms of funding and organisation. It is worth pointing out that, even though found inapplicable for the purposes of this thesis, there have been other notable works on the Scottish film industry since 2009²⁷ and other handbooks on the subject may of course be in the works that are yet to surface. There has also been earlier research on prestige and the arts, although they are more focused on the so-called high arts than popular culture, but they do provide a basis for the formulation of prestige in this thesis in general. *Artworld Prestige: Arguing Cultural Value*, deals with prestige and the changing nature of value in the art world and argues that prestige reaches everywhere as a system of hierarchies and social value that has been established in a mutual understanding.²⁸ *The Economy of Prestige* is more focused on awards and prizes as a measurement of our values.²⁹ Both works will offer their own stamp to the formation of this thesis.

It is impossible to give a concise view on everything to do with contemporary Scottish film industry in this thesis, but it does offer a small peek inside one of the biggest cultural industries institutions in Scotland. Meaning that the focus is on one big institution out of a possible rough 300. Most of the document discussed in this thesis have been released by Creative Scotland,

²⁴ Petrie 2000, 7

²⁵ Ibid., 2.

²⁶ Murray, 2009.

²⁷ See e.g. Meir 2016.

²⁸ Van Laar & Diepeveen 2013, 5.

²⁹ English, 2005.

offering a view from the inside, a mixture of fact-based evidence of the work done by them and of ideas, ambitions and aspirations they have for the Scottish creative sector. These documents should at least be able to offer an idea of what seems to be important to Creative Scotland, the aspects they wish to promote about their work as well as which parts of the organisation need improvement from their own point of view. The Review of the Film Sector in Scotland, however, is written by a foreign body and shall be referred to in every main chapter of this thesis since it deals with ideas of improvement and is filled with invaluable information from all the branches of the film sector in Scotland.³⁰ Some critical assessments written by journalists concerning the actions of the institution will also be addressed and studied as they will help to form a more cohesive picture of Creative Scotland's role in the Scottish film field. The next chapter starts by delving into the past, and by doing so, helps us to understand the sort of challenges Scottish film is faced with now and in the future.

³⁰ Review of the Film Sector in Scotland 2014.

2 Scottish Film Industry Now and Then

2.1 From McArthur to Petrie: Picturing the Past

The sections in this chapter aim to give an overview of the state of the Scottish film industry and its development throughout the decades of filmmaking. The first section focuses mainly on the past since by addressing the past it is possible to understand the present. The second section is more focused on the progression of Creative Scotland, how they are organised and what type of challenges they were faced with during their formative years. Comparisons will be made between the film industries in Scotland, Wales, Ireland and Denmark in order to discover the differences and similarities between the countries and to gain some clarity for the reasons Scottish filmmaking seems to be struggling more than the industries of its neighbours in terms of funding and international recognition.

An underlying theme in all the major releases about the Scottish film industry is worry about the future of Scottish film and seeing the future as challenging due to various reasons at different times. Probably the most quoted and debated work dealing with the Scottish film industry, McArthur's essay in *Scotch Reels* from 1982, an excerpt of which is quoted on the very first page of this thesis, seems a logical place to start. He places most of the blame for an underdeveloped film industry in Scotland on the institutions and their focus on inward investment but without leaving the filmmakers themselves blameless for their lack of effort to break away from traditional, sentimental forms of filmmaking (tartanry and kailyard). However, McArthur saw the industry as an oppressive regime, designed to "lure" filmmakers into old ways of storytelling and forcing Scottish talent to leave Scotland to find more challenging roles and experiment with different modes of acting. The industry's biggest crime, according to McArthur is the lack of a range of representations for Scotland and Scots and the inadequate representation of Scotland's current socio-political complexity as well as history.³¹ What we have to keep in mind is that McArthur was writing his criticism at a time of low film production levels and Petrie, on the other hand, at a time of what can be described as "the Renaissance of Scottish film."

³¹ McArthur 1982, 64-67.

Petrie notes that a heavy line of criticism has always been aimed at the key institutions of Scottish filmmaking since the early 1980s. The main point of critique being the focus of film institutions on the economic aspects of film at the cost of cultural aspects and indigenous storytelling. Meaning, that the even public agencies involved in creating films are more concerned with applying the Hollywood-type, narrative-led, market-driven storylines and strategies at the cost of local practices. This, in turn, has an effect on the cost of films (budgets rise) and clouds any pressing social or cultural questions that are in need of addressing.³² The fear is homogenisation of film and the need for films to fit into the tastes of foreign audiences (mainly the US market) which was also McArthur's concern. In his work, *Screening Scotland*, Petrie ponders upon the term "Scottish film". According to him, even though there have been a great deal of films "which feature Scottish subject-matter, Scottish locations, Scottish actors and even on occasion Scottish directors" ever since there has been any sort of cinema, the financing and production of these films has almost always come from Hollywood or London.³³ Meaning that the industrial and institutional power and influence, or money, has traditionally come from the outside. Creative Scotland and Scottish film institutions before it have, however, somewhat altered the equation.

Professor of Film and Television Studies at the University of Glasgow, John Caughie notes that one of the most meaningful changes influencing the Scottish film scene since *Scotch Reels* was the emergence of Channel Four. This allowed a new platform for indigenous film productions to be born, not only in Scotland but elsewhere in the UK as well. In addition to expansions in production companies, professional associations, funding development, training initiatives as well as legislation, this brought about an aspiration for a stable film infrastructure to be achieved.³⁴ In addition to the emergence of Channel Four, public funds began to be allocated to the Scottish Film Fund in 1982. Professor Ian Lockerbie describes the formation of the Fund as an important step from an economic, but also from a cultural perspective as it sent the message to the art community that film should be valued as much as high arts on the creative sector. "No less than literature, music painting and drama, film can now claim to have a publicly recognised role to play in creating a distinctive Scottish cultural identity".³⁵ Even though the Scottish Film Council was formed as early as 1934, the grant from the Scottish Government did not, bizarrely, include any financial support for the production of films. Therefore, Scottish filmmakers were able to apply for funding

³² Petrie 2000, 183.

³³ Ibid., 15.

³⁴ Caughie 1990, 21-22.

³⁵ Lockerbie 1990, 171.

solely from the BFI, while other arts funding was devolved to Scotland.³⁶ This is why the emergence of Channel Four and the Film Fund can be seen as major institutional changes that began to affect the production of films.

Petrie also claims that the atmosphere involved in Scottish filmmaking shifted in a meaningful way from the 1980's to the latter part of the 90's. Meaning that indigenous film projects began flourishing and filmmaking was not laying on the shoulders of individual directors and projects. This burst of new creativity was somewhat impressive since the "number of feature films made either wholly or partly in Scotland increased dramatically in the 1990s, from the five productions in 1991 to an average of more than ten a year from 1994 onwards." The reasons for this are, of course, numerous and while Petrie notes that while some of the films and their production companies were indeed foreign and attracted by the possibility to film in Scotland's picturesque landscapes, most of the films were indeed low-budget indigenous films such as *Shallow Grave* (1995) and *Trainspotting* (1996). Petrie does not see foreign influence as problematic as McArthur since he highlights films such as *Braveheart* (1995) and *Breaking the Waves* (1996) as success stories wrapped up in a Scottish landscape and subject-matter despite their foreign influence.³⁷ We can see a financially beneficial balancing between indigenous productions and international co-productions take hold.

Petrie himself seems to believe in a balance between the types of films produced in Scotland. That films should vary in storytelling, scenery, budget and so on. There are arguments for both the "cultural" and the "economic" approaches or the prestige and profit approaches. However, to sustain an innovative, lively cinema, Petrie does believe in the support of low-budget indigenous productions as did McArthur in his belief of restricting film budgets and allowing more indigenous productions to enter the scene with their "uncorrupt" forms of storytelling. This is something that was taken into consideration by the Scottish Arts Council and Scottish Screen in their plans for future film projects before merging as Creative Scotland. The 1999 scheme allocated 75 per cent of funds for low-budget projects (under £500 0000).³⁸ Petrie had high hopes but also reservations for the future as

... the necessary conditions for a sustainable national cinema in a small country like Scotland require more than the production of a handful of films, however accomplished

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Petrie 2000, 172.

³⁸ Ibid., 185.

and interesting they may be. Appropriate structures and institutions are needed to provide and maintain the resources for a critical mass of films to be produced, distributed and exhibited on a consistent and regular basis. Without such support structures there can be no national cinema, although there may be isolated film-makers who by default end up carrying the burden of national projection.³⁹

The establishment of Creative Scotland can also be seen as an attempt to stabilise Scottish film production even though opinions vary on how well this has been achieved. Former Director of the Scottish Film Council and Edinburgh International Film Festival David Bruce has been skeptical about the idea of industries being able to control the type of films that are made through budgeting or institutional interference. Since there are so many different factors that go into and influence filmmaking such as “tastes, politics, talents, global issues, the ambitions of filmmakers” in addition to existing infrastructure and budgets, it is impossible to predict what the outcomes may be. However, Bruce is encouraging new infrastructure to be built, making sure filmmakers are offered support, resources, training and education in order to create Scottish films in a changing world.⁴⁰ The idea that the representations and themes in films could be controlled is somewhat outdated. The creative process is too unpredictable for that.

In *Scottish Cinema Now*, 2009, Petrie gave an updated look into the Scottish film industry, it’s changes and future challenges. Petrie writes that

What is much clearer to me now, is the way in which, despite its legitimacy as a category, Scottish cinema, like the Scottish nation, remains a devolved rather than an independent entity, embedded within the larger overarching British context and therefore subject to the same economic, political and ideological forces shaping the latter.⁴¹

Petrie has retracted some of his more nationalistically coloured views, as he believes that Scottish cinema is and will remain under the influence of British power. The increase in institutional funding on the brink of the formation of Creative Scotland was not sufficient in Petrie’s eyes when compared to neighbouring countries and their efforts. As a point of comparison, Petrie notes that the Danish Film Institute and the Danish Government are more driven than Scotland to support film due to financial as well as cultural reasons which will be addressed later.⁴² Petrie also found

³⁹ Ibid., 172, 183.

⁴⁰ Bruce 1996, 6.

⁴¹ Petrie 2009, 154.

⁴² Ibid.

the organisation of funding challenging as filmmakers are usually forced to seek financing from a multitude of sources (especially small independent projects) some of which have their own conditions and demands for filmmakers and can thus influence the filming process.⁴³ The financial support for small film projects is attached with strings, whereas public funding is usually deemed less compromised as a source. This brings us to 2010, the establishment of Creative Scotland and the fine art of balancing between financial gain and cultural aspirations.

2.2 Filmmaking in Scotland: Challenges and Comparisons

In order to assess the key elements and challenges that the Scottish film industry was faced with in 2014, Creative Scotland commissioned a review to be made about the Scottish film sector. A report entitled “Review of the Film Sector in Scotland” (from now on also referred to as “Film Sector Review” or simply as “review” when appropriate) was carried out by BOP Consulting, an international consultancy, who specialise in culture and the creative economy. They reached out to people and groups working in different branches of the sector in order to have a wide understanding of the state of Scottish film. The Film Sector Review offers a brief history of public funding for the Scottish film industry. Funding for Scottish filmmakers separate from the funding sources for the whole of UK began as late as 1982 (Scottish Film Fund referred to in the previous section) with the Scottish Screen created in 1997 as an umbrella organisation to take upon the duties of supporting Scottish film production and culture. Their main aim was to promote film culture and to develop a sustainable film production industry in Scotland which is quite similar to Creative Scotland’s goals for the film industry today. A Scottish Executive Review conducted in 2001 saw that there should be more cooperation between the former Scottish Screen and other agencies in order to maximise the potential Scottish film culture has in an international context.⁴⁴ This review sparked the eventual creation of Creative Scotland. Scottish Screen had the dream

to develop world-class production businesses in Scotland, attract major productions, champion a culture of investment in the screen industries, nurture and develop talent and

⁴³ Ibid., 156.

⁴⁴ Review of the Film Sector in Scotland 2014, 52.

audiences, preserve and present Scottish screen production, encourage and support an international outlook and drive screen policy.⁴⁵

By investing in the development of a multifaceted film industry supporting inward investment as well as domestic production with the help of lottery funding from 1995 onward, Scottish Screen was able to raise film production levels from approximately two films per year up to between six and eight films per year.⁴⁶ The latter years of Scottish Screen saw little development in the amounts invested to film as they concentrated their efforts towards the support of the film enterprise and the skills within. Funding was limited and major investments to singular productions were deemed risky.⁴⁷ The review notes that when Creative Scotland was created in 2010, initiated by the Scottish Government, the institution included in its corporate plan for 2011-2014, an immediate increase in funds for film and television production in the creative sector. However, a loss of status or, to use the terminology of this study, a loss of prestige was felt throughout the screen industry as a sector specific agency was lost (Scottish Screen). This created an atmosphere of doubt and uncertainty in the sector. Due to major shifts in the film sector in Scotland and elsewhere in the UK, an age of stability is warmly welcomed by the people taking part in the review.⁴⁸ There have been some recent, exciting changes in the film sector relating to Creative Scotland's screen structure and these changes will be discussed further later on in the thesis when the most recent developments are discussed.

The review also notes that the production levels for films in Scotland is much lower than in countries of similar size, namely Ireland (an average of 18 films per year) and Denmark (30 films per year). The review allots this difference to a few different factors: the fact that both Ireland and Denmark have their own tax regimes for film (whereas Scotland is tied to the UK) and that especially Denmark operates on a high-tax level, traditionally spending large amounts of money on various kinds of cultural activity including film, whereas Scotland's aim has been to attract inward investment and support small indigenous productions on the side. Some success has been achieved both with inward investment (*Skyfall* (2012) and *World War Z* (2013)) and local productions (*Sunshine on Leith* (2013) and *Filth* (2013)) even though commercial success seems to be more unusual than the norm with Scottish-led productions.⁴⁹ This would suggest that both

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 53.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 31.

Ireland and Denmark are able and willing to spend more money on the cultural sector in general. This, in turn, benefits the film industries of those countries since more investment also translates into more opportunities for indigenous filmmakers and the film industry in general.

As a public institution receiving most of their funding from public funds, Creative Scotland is held accountable for its actions to its main contributors as well as the general public. It depends upon public funding mainly from the National Lottery (40 per cent) and the Scottish Government (60 per cent). As Scottish film productions are usually dependent on some form of public funding, mainly the film production tax relief, the National Lottery and grant-in-aid from the central Government, Creative Scotland is a major source of funding for the Scottish film industry.⁵⁰ When compared to other nations, the review found that similar consistent long-term support from the Government has indeed not been available to Scottish features and their makers as it is in, for example, Ireland and Denmark. It is easy to place blame on Creative Scotland, but the fact of the matter is that funding is simply not available in a similar sense that is in, for example, Denmark. A change in funding needs to happen in policy, on the governmental level. It was also concluded that if a sustainable film industry and competition on an international level is hoped for, “a long-term strategy supporting film development, production and distribution is needed”.⁵¹ Creative Scotland responded to this need with a variety of plans: the Creative Scotland On Screen, Film Strategy 2014-2017 and the Creative Scotland 10-Year Plan for 2014-2024: Unlocking Potential, Embracing Ambition).⁵² The Film Strategy lists goals for the film sector and the 10-Year-Plan is focused on ambitions and a long-term plan based on the ambitions Creative Scotland had and have for the future of the creative industries as a whole in Scotland.

Scotland’s geographical remoteness is another factor that translates into a difficulty for Scottish filmmakers to reach the same level of support achieved in Ireland and Denmark when it comes to receiving funding from the Government. In *The Cinema of Small Nations*, Professor Martin McLoone states that the funding for Irish and Northern Irish film is achieved through collaboration across national borders and a mixture of inward investment as well as national and private investment, including investments in teaching in schools and colleges.⁵³ It seems that the more multifaceted the support for the industry, the better the chances of building a solid, steady base for

⁵⁰ Ibid., 2.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Creative Scotland 10-Year Plan 2014-2024: Unlocking Potential Embracing Ambition; Creative Scotland On Screen, Film Strategy 2014-2017.

⁵³ McLoone 2007, 60.

film are. Creative Scotland has expressed their willingness to work together with the field of education to incorporate film studies into primary and secondary school settings. Both formal and informal routes have been considered in partnership with The Glasgow Film Education Alliance and others.⁵⁴ Again, the incorporation of film studies to the field of education is a monumental task due to the amount of policy involved. It can be argued that because that the Danish and Irish societies are willing to invest more when it comes to film development in education and elsewhere, the cultural sector also enjoys a more prestigious status inside those countries than the sector in Scotland. However, Jonathan Murray, Lecturer in Film and Visual Culture at the Edinburgh College of Art, noted in 2007 that from 1995 to 2005 the Scottish film industry did show signs of becoming “more like the film cultures and industries of comparably small European and Anglophone national cinemas, in terms of the extent, stability and visibility of its feature output”.⁵⁵ Progress in terms of productivity and increase in funding is oftentimes glossed over in the film field when writing about the industry. This is not to say that every challenge has been tackled and there is no need for improvement.

The 2015 Brooks article in *The Guardian* highlights some of the missed opportunities the Scottish film industry has had recently. According to an enquiry conducted by the Scottish Government, there is a shared dissatisfaction in the field towards the way in which the Scottish film industry is organised since the “big- and small-screen gold rush” that has hit the industries in Ireland, Northern Ireland and Wales has not reached Scotland. A lack of funding, strategic commitment, suitable facilities and a talent drain were the main reasons stated why Scotland has not been thriving alongside its neighbours. In the article, Arabella Page-Croft, who is a co-founder for Camel Pictures based in Glasgow, stated that that even productions that wish to come to Scotland cannot because of poor financial incentive and the lack of a proper studio facility. In comparison, it is possible for Creative Scotland to invest £300,000 into one feature film whereas The Northern Ireland Screen Fund, for example, can invest a maximum of £800,000 from a fund that is over £12m (roughly over half the size of Creative Scotland’s fund in 2015). Since the Glasgow Film Fund is no longer operational, the funds from Creative Scotland hold a major importance as a source of public funding. Multi-million-pound productions such as *Generation Z* (2017-) and *Game of Thrones* (2011-2019) have been lost to Scotland’s neighbours on these grounds.⁵⁶ Therefore, it is no wonder that a call for a studio facility, finding a proper space and investors to

⁵⁴ Annual Review 2018-2019, 10.

⁵⁵ Murray 2007, 77.

⁵⁶ Brooks 2015.

run its operation, and to attract high-scale international projects are some of the main priorities to Creative Scotland.

These claims mirror the points raised in the Film Sector Review in 2014. The review notes that there is a “lack of infrastructure, investments and development funding,” which in turn causes Scottish talent to flee to other areas and countries where the film-sector is considered to be more vibrant and there are more opportunities.⁵⁷ In 2014, Creative Scotland promised to work with the Scottish and UK Governments in order to develop improved policies and increased tax incentives to be able to compete with its neighbours in film production.⁵⁸ Even if Creative Scotland and other institutions or investors are able to offer foreign productions a better deal, there is still the issue of fleeing indigenous talent to deal with. This notion has echoes in the past as well as it seems that there has always been a talent drain in Scotland. Petrie writes that the emigration of Scottish talent to London and beyond national borders is not a new phenomenon by any means since from the 18th century onward ambitious Scottish individuals began leaving in great numbers, causing a type of intellectual void in Scotland which was filled by elements of kailyard and tartanry.⁵⁹ It should be noted that observations and claims such as these should be subjected to criticism since the appreciation and labeling of films is subjective. Films can offer a canvas through which it is possible to observe societies. By choosing to create certain type of, arguably sentimental or stereotypical representation of Scotland and Scottishness through notions of tartanry and kailyard, filmmakers have seen something valuable in those representations and chosen to embrace this type of sentimentality and romanticised imagery of the nation.

As noted above, one of the most pressing issues brought up time and time again in research, articles and different documents, is indeed the lack of and a need for a large-scale film studio to be built in Scotland. In 2014, the Film Sector Review tackled the studio facility issue by stating that there are some buildings dedicated to the making of film in Scotland but that these facilities do not cover the need for a purpose-built film studio. The review echoes the claims that the lack of a studio has damaged the country’s ability to compete with its neighbours in attracting big-budget productions. A number of studio shootings have been made possible by converting empty locations to suit the purposes of film production but in these cases additional costs have been applied for temporary

⁵⁷ Review of the Film Sector in Scotland 2014, 32.

⁵⁸ Scotland On Screen, Film Strategy 2014-2017, 27.

⁵⁹ Petrie, 2000, 19.

use.⁶⁰ This, of course, makes Scotland a less cost-effective option for film-production when compared to its neighbouring regions. In the review, it is noted that some concern has been voiced over the fact that investing in and partnering up with the private sector on the building of a studio facility might distract Creative Scotland from supporting indigenous, smaller productions in favour of big-budget productions. On the bright side, Scottish crews have experience working outside of Scotland on large productions and could bring their talent to local studios as well.⁶¹ This concern over inward investment can be interpreted as a type of juxtaposition between money and prestige, between foreign and local. The Scottish film industry has relied upon its ability to offer destinations for location shooting in the past, but this strategy is proving insufficient for the future, especially when considering the oftentimes dismal weather conditions in the country. However, changes are brewing on the studio front and are discussed later on in detail.

Creative Scotland spending plans and annual reviews are public information. Together with the National Lottery, Creative Scotland has allocated more money to film funding each year. Since Creative Scotland published their Film Strategy in 2014, the Government increased their funding for screen incentives. Nearly an extra £5 million was to be used for film/tv-production and skills development. In 2015-2016 over £11 million was invested on the screen sector, including a 4-million-pound investment from the National Lottery. This is a clear, undeniable increase in investment for film as the budget more than doubled. In the plan for 2017-2018, the building of studio facilities was raised as one of the priorities for the future. New purpose-built studio spaces, already existing studio spaces converted for full-time film use and temporary pop-up spaces were all seen to play a role in the plan for a new, improved system.⁶² These new developments reflect the fact that the screen industries have become more and more important, an integral part of the cultural industries in Scotland.

⁶⁰ Review of the Film Sector in Scotland 2014, 3.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 46.

⁶² Creative Scotland Annual Plan 2017-2018, 12.

3 Making Money and Meaning

3.1 Cultural Impact of Film

A self-respecting national culture cannot simply consume the images of others. It needs to produce its own image of self and reflect its own sensibility in what is the major art form of the twentieth century.

-Lockerbie, *From Limelight to Satellite*, 1990, 172.

Lockerbie's statement from 1990 reads as a plea for the preservation of a national film industry. There is no denying that a variety of representations, whether in theatre, literature, arts or film are important to the national image of a nation and to its population. This chapter consists of an analysis of discourses surrounding Creative Scotland and its ability to sustain a culturally and also economically viable film industry. Opinions and views from those who are not themselves closely connected to Creative Scotland take central stage in this chapter as we explore the ideas of the cultural impact of film as well as the value of international success to the industry. These views are contrasted with the reports given by Creative Scotland in order to get a more well-rounded view of their operation.

There seems to be a balancing act going on between art and entertainment and it is debatable whether Creative Scotland should focus more on supporting films that may not be financially successful but hold perceived artistic value or simply support projects that are predicted to have a high entertainment value and bring more money into the industry. Whatever prestige Creative Scotland and the Scottish context holds to foreign filmmakers and production companies may of course influence the decision of more lucrative film projects to bring their production to Scotland. The decision to film at a certain location is complex and not only financial considerations are made when choosing a suitable place for a film-project. At first glance the connection between prestige and finance seems natural but is not absolutely necessary every time. The main focus of the first section of this chapter is on the cultural impact of film and the ways in which films can be seen to influence society. The second section focuses on inward investment and prestige gained from awards and international success. In relation to the aims of this thesis, I am interested in finding out what type of prestige films and the production of films can have in the Scottish context.

The most important thing to understand about the cultural industries from a cultural studies perspective is that they are the producers of texts, in this case, films. These texts open up endless

possibilities to engage in meaningful discussions about the state of societies, their underlying issues, and realities. In his renowned work *The Cultural Industries* Hesmondhalgh states that

cultural industries are those that are most directly involved in the production of social meaning because they make and circulate texts – artefacts that are primarily intended to inform and/or entertain. This is the key to understanding the particular role of the cultural industries in relation to economic, political, social and cultural power.⁶³

Again, we are brought back to the notion of culture as webs of significance. Since films are consumed by audiences, the meanings written in these texts influence the ways in which the surrounding world and its parts are seen. In the Film Sector Review of 2014, commissioned by Creative Scotland, it is stated that cinema-going is a favourite pastime in Scotland. The 2013 Scottish Household Survey reveals that 51 per cent of the Scottish public attended the cinema in 2000 and 54 per cent in 2012 making it the most popular cultural pastime in Scotland. There are also more arthouse cinemas in Scotland than anywhere else in the UK if London is excluded.⁶⁴ What must be remembered is that there exists some inequality in accessing cinemas in the country and peripheries in Scotland tend to go without cultural facilities. *Braveheart* (1995) and *Trainspotting* (1996) are the two films which are seen as having made the most impact on the ways in which Scottishness and Scotland as a place has been perceived in recent decades, not only by a variety of scholars but also by the public. When asked about the films set in Scotland that have had the greatest cultural impact, in BFI's report on the culture of the UK, these two films were the most popular answer. The success of *Trainspotting* (1996) even affected the tourism of Leith, known as the “rundown district” of Edinburgh which has since been tidied up.⁶⁵ Film-goers of Scotland have their part in influencing what is popular when it comes to representations on screen and confer value to certain films while devaluing others by simply attending screening which are deemed worthwhile. Due to the fact that since Scotland has been struggling to sustain a steady, profitable film industry, perhaps the perceived cultural impact of the films that are produced should be prioritised over any other, especially economic, factors. It was stated in the Creative Scotland On Screen, Film Strategy 2014-2017 that film is a “cultural, creative art form as well as a business” and that the creators of film in Scotland have different aims in making films, aims for “critical, public and commercial success” and that this variety needs to be nurtured on the level of support

⁶³ Hesmondhalgh 2013, 307.

⁶⁴ Review of the Film Sector in Scotland 2014, 11.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 18.

given to cultural industries.⁶⁶ The impact of film to people's cultural identities is understood and valued and commercial considerations should go hand in hand with cultural ones. Scotland should, therefore, aim to be capable of producing socially, artistically as well as economically relevant expression in the field of film.

There are also people who believe that there is absolutely no need to keep developing the “film-wing” of Creative Scotland and that the funds could be spend on promoting some other facet of the cultural industries. Kevin McKenna, a journalist for *The Guardian* wrote in 2013 that the film industry should not receive more financial aid than it already does. He was appalled by the news that Creative Scotland wished to spend more money on film than the £4 million that was annually allotted for the sector at the time. He states that the feathers in the film industry's cap such as *Sunshine on Leith* and *Filth* were no more than “irrelevant and sentimental tripe” and the latter “gentrified porn”.⁶⁷ Needless to say both of these views are simply a matter of taste and have to do with what is socially accepted and valued on a personal level. One could also claim that one of the measures of worthwhile art, or film, is its ability to provoke and stir conversation. McKenna also goes on to claim that

Spending more money making films and television is simply a vanity project, a vain exercise in wish fulfilment and trying to make Scotland the Hollywood of the north. And now from next year there will be a lot less money for writers, poets, painters and playwrights to make art in which Scotland currently and historically excels.⁶⁸

Admittedly, Scotland becoming the next Hollywood is simply not realistic. Its goal to increase the film and television budget, nevertheless, came true and continues to be a priority for the Scottish Government and, therefore, for Creative Scotland as well. McKenna's view is that since Scotland has been successful in the field of more traditional arts than cinema, this is what Scotland's focal point should also be in the future. What can be read between the lines is that McKenna does not value the contributions of cinema to Scotland's cultural field as much as painting or poetry simply because the films produced are not to his taste or have less prestige than more traditional facets of the creative arts. Whereas one could just as justifiably argue that the contributions of *Trainspotting* (1996) or *Filth* (2013) to the arts may be appreciated as highly or more by some parts of society

⁶⁶ Creative Scotland On Screen, Film Strategy 2014-2017, 22.

⁶⁷ McKenna, 2013.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

than the works of, let us say, Robert Burns, the Scottish national poet. However, investing in cinema does, at least financially, seem to make sense.

Ever since the 1980s, cultural industries have become a “*prestigious* form of making profits” as the importance of the arts sector grew and the entertainment industry rose as an integral part of the economic sector in Europe.⁶⁹ Hesmondhalgh explains that the cultural industries have been dubbed “the creative industries” when it comes to cultural policy. The British Government of 1997 first established the use of the term in cultural policy to describe the creative arts sector as a whole. It is important to recognise the value of the creative industries as an essential part of the economy, a growing part, which in turn means that filmmakers and other sector workers are a “key source of future employment growth and export earnings”.⁷⁰ The Scottish Government, despite looming budget cuts for the entertainment industry imposed by the UK, has sought to increase the funding for the screen sector.⁷¹ In fact, in 2017, the Scottish Government made public their plans to increase the financial support they offer for the screen sector in Scotland by a staggering £10 million pounds for the following year, meaning a £20 million budget for the screen industries alone for the year 2018-2019 (nearly the same budget has been allocated for the year 2019-2020).⁷² This means that the importance of the creative industries has been registered on the level of policy making. Through policy, films also have their place in politics. Policy influences the making of films and films can have the ability to influence policy. Let’s take the example of *Braveheart* and the use of the film’s imagery in the political campaign literature of the Scottish National Party in 1995.⁷³ Although brimming with historical errors, the SNP found the imagery of the film as well as the historical figure and legend of William Wallace to be potent symbols of Scottish nationalism. This representation of Scots and Scottishness was brought to life on screen and made an impact on the public about what Scottishness is, as was demonstrated earlier, and this impact was used for political gains.

In his essay “Scotland” Murray ponders upon the notion of devolution and compares the political devolution of Scotland with the devolution of Scottish film from the British film industry, separate

⁶⁹ Hesmondhalgh 2013, 92.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 144-145.

⁷¹ Review of the Film Sector in Scotland, 2014, 40.

⁷² Creative Scotland Website, “Screen Unit Proposal Published,” 2017. Creative Scotland Annual Plan 2019-2020, 9.

⁷³ Martin-Jones 2009, 106-107.

but not quite detached.⁷⁴ One could wonder why it is not enough to create film but to be constantly striving towards a unique, identifiable, separate identity based on nation states, something instantly recognisable as Scottish cinema. It could be suggested that a nation's cinema does not need to be determined from the outside but can stand whole as it is in any given time without the need for definition. Murray believes that Scottish film critics and scholars have already adjusted to the idea of moving away from defining Scottish cinema through old, traditional viewpoints and wallowing endlessly on the "state, whether psychological or territorial, of 'Scotland.'"⁷⁵ Nevertheless, this does not mean that national considerations are pointless or that the cinemas of nations cannot have specific identifiable strands of expression or address issues present in contemporary societies. It simply means that there are other ways to approach the subject and that Scottish films deserve to be looked at from different perspectives. The next section approaches Creative Scotland and the film industry from an international angle, touching upon the prestige of awards and festivals, as well as the impact and meaning that inward investment can bring to the screen sector.

3.2 Building Prestige: Awards and International Recognition

Culture often depends on economics, and in no form of expression do money and art come closer than in cinema.

-Bruce, *From Limelight to Satellite*, 1990, 73.

In saying this, Bruce is referring to the way in which making a profit and prestige are intertwined in the cultural industries, it being an industry after all. However, that industry's lifeline is the conferral of prestige. For a film to be considered prestigious, it must gain the respect of the film community by passing the standards of film critics in terms of subject matter, production methods and people involved. Film critics in turn have the power to evaluate films based on their own status as respected members of the industry, meaning that before they can generate prestige, they need to gain the respect of the film community. Van Laar and Diepeveen note that power is distributed unevenly in the artworld and not all critics and awards have the same amount of prestige. It is only a certain group of critics that have access to substantial profits, decision-making authorities and institutions.⁷⁶ There is no denying that having money can help in the process of gaining access to power. Even though a certain amount of corruption is undoubtedly involved, film awards and the

⁷⁴ Murray 2007, 90.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Van Laar & Diepeveen 2013, 24.

valuation of critics is important in considering the prestige of a film or, on a larger scale, the prestige of an entire film scene of a nation.

Professor James F. English, the author of *The Economy of Prestige: Prizes, Awards and the Circulation of Cultural Value* traces the intensification of the awards scene and the desire for awards and award ceremonies to be placed in the same class with the Oscars to the early 1970s.⁷⁷ Film prizes and awards are an essential part of the circulation of prestige in film circles with future success, opportunities and publicity guaranteed for the winners. For a nation with a relatively humble film industry, recognition can offer a needed boost. In *Scotland as We Know It*, Professor Richard Zumkhawala-Cook notes that the success of *Braveheart* (1995), *Rob Roy* (1995) and *Trainspotting* (1996) branded Scotland internationally and created certain images of Scotland and Scottishness, of its legends and history as well as contemporary social reality. Hollywood was delighted and impressed as the films were nominated for 11 Oscars and took “home” 5. Hollywood and its influence has always been present in Scotland, usually through the use of Scottish locations and Scottish legends in foreign productions but also in indigenous film narratives and marketing strategies since most films made in Scotland set their sights on the transatlantic market.⁷⁸ It has been demonstrated earlier on in this thesis how this Americanised approach to filmmaking has been criticised.

The BAFTA’s and Oscars have had their share of scandals and critique, which might mean that they are more meaningful manifestations of appreciation for films than most people realise. English claims that the more prestigious the award, the harsher the people involved and their choices of winners are criticised, usually by the potential prize winners and potential judges themselves.⁷⁹ Therefore, one might suggest that the more attention an award is given, the more meaning and value is being conferred on an award. If the prize is seen as worthless, there is no need for outrage either. The more valuable the prize, the more standards and expectations are placed upon it. The awards sector is positively booming. There are more film awards awarded each year than there are feature films produced.⁸⁰ This admittedly dilutes the value of the awards scene as a whole. Nevertheless, it is worth pondering upon when one considers the perks of foreign influence and being perceived as an influential film nation outside national borders.

⁷⁷ English 2005, 72-74

⁷⁸ Zumkhawala-Cook 2008, 146-147.

⁷⁹ English 2005, 188.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 324.

Awards and international recognition bring publicity and financial gain back to Scotland since the more appreciated Scottish filmmakers and the film industry is, the more foreign projects and foreign money will also flow into the country. Whether this will benefit the local filmmakers is another question since foreign projects tend to travel with their own crew. In 2012, Creative Scotland found itself being heavily criticised by the arts community in Scotland. Local artists claimed that the support Creative Scotland gives out is targeted towards already successful foreign ventures while the domestic front is left without support. The *BBC* reports that a hundred local Scottish artists wrote to the management of Creative Scotland which led to the resignation of the head of the organisation at the time, chief Andrew Dixon. Points raised in the letter included “a confused and intrusive management style” as well as a “lack of empathy and regard for Scottish culture”.⁸¹ They also demanded Creative Scotland simplify their funding, a step which has been taken since. In their 10-Year-Plan 2014-2024, Creative Scotland announced a brand-new funding system for individual projects and organisations, reducing their funding routes to three different strands: open project funding, targeted funding and a regular funding programme, a welcomed change in the funding structure of the public creative sector.⁸² The idea behind this was to simplify the funding process and make funds for projects more accessible.

Marketing publications like the ones presented in the next chapter can be used to further silence the critics and show concrete evidence of the fact that Creative Scotland are, at least now, in fact interested in promoting local arts even if this was not the case before. The following table includes statistical information about indigenous films funded entirely or partly by Creative Scotland or that were shot in Scotland and were listed as examples of inward investment in either “Film in Scotland: Scottish Locations” or “Film in Scotland: Made in Scotland” -marketing publications.

Film	Funding	Awards/Reviews	Gross/Popularity
<i>The Dark Knight Rises</i> (2012)	Several foreign bodies	45 wins, several nominations (success)	1,085 billion (success)
<i>Prometheus</i> (2012)	Several foreign bodies	6 wins, several nominations (success)	400 million dollars (success)
<i>Fast & Furious 6</i> (2013)	Several foreign bodies	8 wins, several nominations (success)	788,7 million dollars (success)
<i>Filth</i> (2013)	Some support from Creative Scotland	9 wins and 12 nominations (success)	8,3 million dollars
<i>For Those in Peril</i> (2013)	Some support from Creative Scotland	6 wins and several nominations (success)	3 900 dollars
<i>The Railway Man</i> (2013)	Creative Scotland and others	7 wins, several other nominations (success)	22 million dollars
<i>Starred Up</i> (2013)	Invest NI and others	16 wins and several nominations (success)	3 million dollars
<i>Sunshine on Leith</i> (2013)	Creative Scotland and others	1 win, several nominations (success)	4,1 million pounds (success)

⁸¹ BBC, 2012.

⁸² Creative Scotland 10-Year Plan 2014-2024: Unlocking Potential Embracing Ambition, 35.

<i>Under the Skin</i> (2013)	Creative Scotland and others	23 wins, several nominations (success)	5,4 million dollars
<i>World War Z</i> (2013)	Several foreign bodies	3 wins, several other nominations (success)	540 million (success)
<i>'71</i> (2014)	Some support from Creative Scotland	9 wins, several nominations (success)	2,9 million dollars
<i>God Help the Girl</i> (2014)	Some UK companies	3 wins 6 nominations (success)	103 thousand dollars
<i>Let Us Prey</i> (2014)	Creative Scotland/Irish Film Board	2 wins and 2 nominations (success)	Not available
<i>What We Did on Our Holiday</i> (2014)	Some support from Creative Scotland	1 win, 3 nominations (success)	8,4 million dollars (success)
<i>Swung</i> (2015)	Creative Scotland	3 nominations (success)	Not available

Table I: Film statistics on films funded by Creative Scotland and/or shot in Scottish Locations.

If we examine Table I, we notice that all of the films have been deemed (also internationally) successful in terms of their cultural value or filmic merit: they have received positive reviews and awards and opened up discussion about the need to develop the Scottish film industry further. Despite most of them being low-budget films that have not exactly boosted the finance of Scotland or that have actually ended up costing more to make than created revenue, Creative Scotland has found it important to include these films on their agenda as examples of films shot in Scotland. Therefore, there must be other reasons for “boasting” about these films than advertising their business sense. Most of the films have also received financial support from Creative Scotland as well as other organisations and funds. This also works as a way of silencing criticism about Creative Scotland being only interested in financial gain and creates a better idea of the range of films Creative Scotland are involved in investing in. However, the most logical explanation for promoting locations has to be to lure in potential inwards investment projects.

Film festivals are naturally involved in location branding and are oftentimes backed up by local governing institutions as well as tourism boards. This is only natural when one considers how inseparable locations are from the events themselves. English refers to phrases such as “to win at Cannes” as an example of location being linked to the prestige generated by festival appraisals. Symbolic profit is shared between filmmakers and cities. Festivals are as much intrinsically linked to the promotion of places as they are to the continuous spreading of prizes and awards.⁸³ Tourism related to film is worth millions of pounds yearly. Films depicting Scottish landscapes or cityscapes is part of this. Disney’s *Brave* (2010) is predicted to bring in over a £140 million profit by the end of 2022, partly thanks to VisitScotland who chose to promote the film in their biggest marketing campaign for 2012. Also, the Edinburgh International Film Festival brings in more than

⁸³ English 2005, 283.

5000 visitors per year, most of whom affluent visitors.⁸⁴ The Highlands and Islands have always been a popular holiday destination for famous people as well as the royalty even before the rise of tourism around film. In addition to being a popular holiday destination, the area has also become the home for screen professionals shooting everything and anything from car commercials to the wildly popular Harry Potter franchise.⁸⁵ In the next chapter, we move on to discussing how Scotland has been promoted by Creative Scotland in their own marketing publications. The meaning of landscape and the socioeconomic shift from rural to industrial has also been featured in depictions of Scotland on film.

⁸⁴ Review of the Film Sector in Scotland 2014, 48.

⁸⁵ Sim 2008, 167.

4 From Marketing to Screen Scotland

4.1 Building an Image of Scotland

Only the arts can fully express our passionate love of place, the layered beauty of our land and townscapes, the rich complexity of our stories, and the contribution we wish to make to our troubled planet at this pivotal twenty first century moment in time.

–Smith, Creative Scotland 10-Year Plan 2014-2024: Unlocking Potential, Embracing Ambition, 2014, 9.

The leader of the Scottish International Storytelling Festival, Donald Smith, was quoted for the 10-Year Plan, 2014-2024, of Creative Scotland entitled “Unlocking Potential, Embracing Ambition”.⁸⁶ This quote reads almost like a testimonial to Scotland. Even though it is not a quote from anyone working within Creative Scotland specifically, it was chosen for a reason as a part of their 10-Year Plan. The emphasis lies on “our”, our land, place, stories and landscapes. It is used to evoke a feeling of national pride in the reader and to combine this pride with a pride for the arts that are produced in Scotland. The emphasis also lies on place, and the meanings places hold in people’s lives. Scottish stories spring from Scottish soil but they are also hoped to spread internationally as Scotland’s contribution to “our troubled planet.”⁸⁷

This chapter is focused on the marketing publications of Creative Scotland, on how they themselves market their work and values to the outside world. Image building and prestige feed on each other since the pursuit of prestige defines the way in which things in the world are presented, meaning the image that is put forward. On the other hand, the surrounding culture dictates what is considered prestigious. The idea of culture as a cycle, a cycle which reinforces, rejects, creates and changes the meaning of things supports the idea of an ever-feeding cycle of prestige and image building. Cultural theorist Stuart Hall defines culture as *systems of meaning* which classify the world into understandable units. According to Hall, these systems of meaning are changing constantly.⁸⁸ This means that what is considered prestigious today or has been deemed prestigious by a majority of some society or group may not be considered prestigious in the future.

⁸⁶ Creative Scotland 10-Year Plan 2014-2024: Unlocking Potential, Embracing Ambition 2014, 9.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Hall 2003, 89.

Hall also writes about the meaning of place and how it creates a sense of cultural cohesion.⁸⁹ It is no wonder that Creative Scotland wants to market Scotland as a country that has a unique feel that only Scotland is able to offer its filmmakers and visiting projects, since the landscape has proved to be an integral part of its core competitive edge. However, what was once considered prestigious may not be anymore. Places and the meanings attached to them are prone to change over time. If one considers the rather classic divide between the countryside and the city, certain changes in the treatment and prestige attached to these places can be identified. Following industrialisation, masses flocked to the cities to chase after increasing job opportunities. While urban life and moving to the cities became popular, there was still a yearning for something simpler, pleasant and safe. The countryside became that safe haven and the need for nostalgia is ever-present in filmmaking as film studies lecturers and authors Gillian Helfield and Catherine Fowler point out. The fast-paced, bright nature of the city and the technology of the cinema have been intrinsically linked together but films that focus on the rural and the land have a place in people's hearts since they represent heritage and cultural tradition.⁹⁰ They can also be valuable to a person's national and personal identity, especially if that person's roots are connected to the countryside.

As has been mentioned before, the remoteness of Scotland can also be seen to affect the functions of the film industry. The Film Sector Review of 2014 notes that when film is concerned, London is the heart and hub of the operation. Some support has been already given to the hypothesis that the relationship Scotland has with the UK affects the funding that is available to Scottish productions. The Governments of both Scotland and the UK have been demonstrated to influence the amount of support that is allocated to the screen sector as well as the cultural industries. Traditionally, Scotland has been seen as a periphery, “the Other”, rural, picturesque yet backward, removed from the metropolis. Petrie goes on to explain Scottish Otherness and rural Scotland seen on film as a place of folklore and legends, as a setting for monster movies (Loch Ness, even aliens) and as a place of isolation through the representation of Scotland as a remote island.⁹¹ In *From Limelight to Satellite* Caughie also notes that if the Scottish film industry is looked at from an international perspective, it is very much situated on a periphery and the heart of funding is very much remote, based in the south. Because of this, Caughie believes that a certain set of expectations are placed on the type of cinematic expression Scottish filmmakers can create. Themes are more often than not centered around small communities, laced with narratives of loss,

⁸⁹ Ibid., 92.

⁹⁰ Helfield & Fowler 2006, 1-2.

⁹¹ Petrie 2000, 32-35.

Highland scenery and a “post-industrial male angst”.⁹² What can be deduced from this that there is always the possibility that shifting from one setting to the other (rural communities to cities) does not remove the problem of narrow representation and that this issue is still cause for concern.

The romantic, tourism-friendly expressions gave way to urban storytelling, spaces and places. Petrie notes that while film representations became more based on people’s actual everyday realities instead of fantasies, filmmakers could also be seen to draw their model of male representation from the tradition of *Clydesidism*, which is rooted in a “masculine culture of industrial labour, hard drinking and violence”. Picturesque country cottages had to make way for pubs, factories and streets of Edinburgh and Glasgow.⁹³ In that sense, the problem of narrow representation persevered. Although, for the most part, a change in filmic scenery has been seen as a positive, refreshing transition. When the Scottish film setting shifted from the rural to the urban, critics celebrated the change. Whereas mythologisation and nostalgia, for example in the tartanry and kailyard traditions have been deemed harmful by some to the Scottish image, the urban, realistic and gritty have been celebrated as something authentic and true.⁹⁴ The transformation of Irvine Welsh’s *Trainspotting* onto the screen in 1996 made it clear that there was more to Scotland than lochs, moors and mountains and that the Scottish cities offered their own stamp to the creative arts. Petrie sees this as a complete transformation in screen images:

a rural and remote setting for romantic or unsettling encounters have given way to a greater focus on an urban post-industrial environment framing narratives concerned with various aspects of contemporary experience and social change.⁹⁵

However, he does not claim that rural depictions would have vanished altogether. Simply that the depictions have changed from the romantic to a darker, more realistic form of expression. Petrie sees a close connection between “the national brand”, culture, as well as tourism, matters related to filmmaking which cultural industries cherish, and commends Scottish filmmakers for creating a wider range of identities and depictions of contemporary society, compared to depictions of the past.⁹⁶ The tourism that grew around Leith is a testament to the power of film and that Scottish filmmakers’ current preoccupation on “the gritty and realistic” has not acted as a deterrent for traveling film enthusiasts.

⁹² Caughie 1990, 25.

⁹³ Petrie 2016, 121.

⁹⁴ Petrie 2000, 199.

⁹⁵ Petrie 2009, 167.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

Despite the change from rural to urban, the charm and draw of the countryside still lives on as we can see in the following section of this thesis. Helfield & Fowler have also noted that there is a sliding value between the urban and the rural. They claim that either are never seen only in a positive or a negative light but that they too struggle with polarities. As an example, the urban may be considered progressive and modern but may also be seen as a morally corrupt or alienating space. The rural, on the other hand, has the potential to be considered freeing with all its open air and vast landscapes but may end up portraying loneliness and isolation.⁹⁷ In addition to this it can also be claimed that the rural countryside may be seen, and is often portrayed, as backward opposed to the urban city setting. In other words, the prestige anchored to these representations of place has a fluctuating nature. The next section of this chapter is dedicated to the marketing publications released by Creative Scotland and to discovering what they reveal about the landscapes and locations promoted for shooting as well as considerations on what can be considered “Scottish cinema” in a situation where film projects are often done in collaboration between multinational institutions and filmmakers, with varying ties to the public and private sectors.

4.2 Film Locations and Local Colour

In order to attract foreign filmmakers and production companies to Scotland, Creative Scotland has released some publications purely for marketing purposes. In 2014, Creative Scotland promoted the Scottish landscape as a “canvas” that is unique and able to fulfil any possible need a filmmaker could have, in their publication “Film in Scotland: Scottish Locations”.⁹⁸ Scotland does indeed boast some unique features when it comes to its landscape. Natural, uninhabited space and wilderness are some of its major selling points and makes it possible for filmmakers to shoot in places that stretch the human imagination. The publication highlights the moors, lakes and mountains as well as one of the longest coastlines that Europe has to offer. It is also mentioned that Scotland has almost 800 islands and the longest daylight hours in the UK during midsummer.⁹⁹ Creative Scotland’s goal in pointing out these opportunities is to promote everything Scotland has to offer its filmmakers and prospective international projects. What they fail to mention is that the

⁹⁷ Helfield & Fowler, 2006, 3.

⁹⁸ Film in Scotland: Scottish Locations 2014.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

weather in Scotland is highly unpredictable, prone to heavy rains and wind and that even though there are 18 hours of daylight during midsummer, the Scottish winters are not exactly ideal for shooting when it comes to optimal outside filming conditions. This is one of the multitude of reasons there has been a demand for the aforementioned film studio in Scotland.¹⁰⁰ Despite the obvious, Scotland is marketed as the perfect place for any kind of shoot, historical or contemporary, urban or rural, with added “famous Scottish hospitality”.¹⁰¹ Phrases like this are a fitting addition to a marketing publication. They evoke feelings of simpler times and play an old stereotype to their own advantage.

Nevertheless, hospitality and portraying a certain image can only get you so far. The Review of the Film Sector in Scotland 2014 highlights the fact that the industry appears to be functioning on an insufficient basis where the level of production is not high enough in order to properly maintain domestic production.¹⁰² Scotland is able to churn out a handful of indigenous films a year. The BOP Consultancy found it crucial to attract more industry to Scotland if the local crews’ talents were to be put to use and more business made. The urban and rural landscapes of Scotland have proven to be quite a draw for international productions since there have been an average of six inward investment films shot at least partly in Scotland every year in the past five years (before 2014) including major Hollywood productions such as *Snow White & The Huntsman* (2012) and *World War Z* (2013). In 2011 it was reported that around £12.7 million was spent locally on film productions of which a large majority because of inward investment features. On the level of a local economy, the impact of such expenditure can be immense. However, since most of the inward investment films are shot on location, the second unit usually does the work. If Scotland had the type of studio facilities to sustain big-budget productions, the situation could be different.¹⁰³ Once again we note how the lack of a studio facility has a negative impact on the growth of the Scottish film industry as it would create more work for Scottish crews and develop their skills as well as help to sustain the local screen sector.

The “Film in Scotland: Scottish Locations” and “Film in Scotland: Made in Scotland” -marketing publications underline the types of locations Scotland has to offer by presenting examples of films

¹⁰⁰ Brooks, 2015.

¹⁰¹ Film in Scotland: Scottish Locations 2014.

¹⁰² Review of the Film Sector in Scotland 2014, 1-9.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 37.

shot on Scottish landscapes. The review argues that there are three types of film that can claim to be Scottish.

The first of these are ‘indigenous’ productions, drawing largely on Scottish funding, talent, source material and locations to tell stories of Scottish life. A group of such films is currently attracting much attention, among them *I Am Breathing*, *Starred Up* and *For Those in Peril*. (...) The second type is film that draws on Scottish material and locations for its story but also uses international funding and talent (at times combined with Scottish talent) to realise it. Examples include *The Railway Man*, *The Illusionist*, *Braveheart* (...) The third type of film is shot (at least in part) in Scotland, but does not present itself as Scottish. A recent example is the Hollywood blockbuster, *World War Z*, starring Brad Pitt, which included an extensive period of location shooting in Glasgow yet is ostensibly set in Philadelphia. Such films can nevertheless make a significant contribution to the Scottish economy.¹⁰⁴

As we can see, the degree of Scottish talent, funding and locations used in films can vary remarkably. It should be noted that the first type of “Scottish film” presented here, the so-called indigenous film can, however, often include writing, directing or producing from somewhere else.¹⁰⁵ To find more than a handful of films that are “purely” Scottish with these standards may prove to be a challenging task, considering the intertwined web of international and national talent surrounding filmmaking.

It is beneficial to take another look at the films listed in Table I with a different set of categories for each. The meaning behind Table II is to map out some of the Scottish talent to be found in films shot, at least partly, in Scotland and reveal the types of films that Creative Scotland wish to promote in their publications as fine examples of films shot in Scotland.

Film	Scottish Landscape Feature	Shooting Location(s)	Director	Producer	Writer	Scottish Leading Actors
<i>The Dark Knight Rises</i> (2012)	Wyvis estate Scottish Highlands, rural	35 locations, 3 Scotland	Christopher Nolan (UK)	Emma + others (UK)	Jonathan and Christopher Nolan (UK)	None Scottish
<i>Prometheus</i> (2012)	Rural, The Old Man of Storr	10 locations, 3 Scotland, 5 in the UK	Ridley Scott (UK)	Ridley Scott (UK)	Several (USA)	None Scottish

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 9-10.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

<i>Fast & Furious 6</i> (2013)	Glasgow streets, urban	16 locations, 1 Scotland	Justin Lin (Taiwan)	Neal H. Moritz (USA)	Chris Morgan, Gary Scott Thompson (USA)	None Scottish
<i>Filth</i> (2013)	Urban	7 locations, 4 in Scotland	Jon S. Baird (Scottish)	Several, some Scottish	Jon S. Baird, Based on novel by Irvine Welsh (Scottish)	James McAvoy
<i>For Those in Peril</i> (2013)	Rural, village of Gourdon	1 location in Scotland	Paul Wright (Scottish)	Molly Stokes (UK) and others	Paul Wright (Scottish)	Kate Dickie
<i>The Railway Man</i> (2013)	Several urban and rural	14 locations, 6 Scotland, 8 in UK	Jonathan Teplitzky (AUS)	Andy Paterson (UK)	Based on novel by Eric Lomax (Scottish)	None Scottish
<i>Starred Up</i> (2013)	Urban (prison environments)	2 locations both in Belfast, Northern Ireland	David Mackenzie UK)	Gillian Berrie (Scottish)	Jonathan Asser (UK)	None Scottish
<i>Sunshine on Leith</i> (2013)	Urban, Edinburgh and Glasgow	2 locations, Scotland	Dexter Fletcher (UK)	Arabella Page-Croft (Scottish)	Stephen Greenhorn (Scottish)	Peter Mullan
<i>Under the Skin</i> (2013)	Several urban and rural locations	21 locations, Scotland	Jonathan Glazer (UK)	Jim Wilson (USA)	Walter Campbell, Jonathan Glazer (UK)	Lynsey Taylor Mackay
<i>World War Z</i> (2013)	Urban, Glasgow	22 locations, 8 Scotland, 18 in the UK	Marc Forster (German)	Several (USA)	Several (USA)	None Scottish
<i>'71</i> (2014)	Urban	3 locations, all in the UK	Yann Demange (French)	Angus Lamont (Scottish)	Gregory Burke (Scottish)	None Scottish
<i>God Help the Girl</i> (2014)	Urban, Glasgow	1 location in Scotland	Stuart Murdoch (Scottish)	Barry Mendel (USA)	Stuart Murdoch (Scottish)	None Scottish
<i>Let Us Prey</i> (2014)	Urban, Falkirk	2, locations, 1 Scotland	Brian O'Malley (UK)	Eddie Dick (Scottish) and others	Fiona Watson, David Cairns (Scottish)	Polyanna McIntosh + others
<i>What We Did on Our Holiday</i> (2014)	Several rural and urban	6 locations, Scotland	Andy Hamilton, Guy Jenkin (UK)	David Thompson (UK)	Andy Hamilton, Guy Jenkin (UK)	David Tennant + others
<i>Swung</i> (2015)	Urban, Glasgow	1 location in Scotland	Colin Kennedy (Scottish)	Brian Coffey (Scottish)	Ewan Morrison (Scottish)	None Scottish

Table II: Film statistics on films shot in Scottish Locations.

What rises most prominently from the table is the significance of international, especially UK and Irish, cooperation with Scottish talent. The only film that can be claimed to be a purely indigenous production, due to having some type of Scottish element in each category, is *Filth*. Gillian Berrie,

the producer of *Starred Up* (2013) states that the making of the film “was a unique and great example of collaboration across the UK. It was made by Scots, set in London and filmed in Ireland”.¹⁰⁶ *Under the Skin* (2013) is also clearly a “win” for the buoyance of Scottish filmmaking and supports the message Creative Scotland wishes to bring forward in both “Film in Scotland” - publications. The producer of the film states that

Filming in Scotland was the best location production experience I’ve had. Our Scottish co-producers and crew were fantastic. We needed a range of locations from dense inner city to rugged coast to edge-of-the world wilderness and we were able to find perfect ones all within a few hours of Glasgow – a great metropolitan hub. You couldn’t do that anywhere else in the UK. Our story is set in Scotland, but even if it wasn’t we would have shot it there and that says it all!¹⁰⁷

Berrie manages to sum up basically all the things that Creative Scotland wish to promote about shooting in Scotland and of the striking differences of landscape on offer. Especially Glasgow is highlighted as a location that has everything a filmmaker could possibly desire and a versatile environment surrounding it. Table II reveals that about a third of actors and actresses in leading roles are Scottish as well as the directors and producers. An impressive half of the writers are Scottish, making it the category where Scottish talent is most prevalent. All of them have been at least partly filmed in Scotland and this is where the “Scottishness” of the films is most dominant even if some categories are lacking local Scottish colour. To be fair, Creative Scotland does not claim that all of these films are of Scottish origin and that they would be fine examples of especially Scottish creativity. However, what is clear is that these are the types of films that are brought forward as sterling examples of films shot on Scottish soil and examples of the types of films that Creative Scotland would like to see gain visibility and that they welcome to Scotland as future projects. Foreign money is welcomed, and the message that is sent is that Scotland is open to foreign projects as well as local creativity. Local creativity tends to escape to foreign lands, though, as the Review of the Film Sector in Scotland notes that Scottish talent is often found outside of Scotland in projects that do not necessarily have any prevalent Scottish element.¹⁰⁸ Perhaps more Scots would take part in more Scottish projects if there was a lively film industry to take part in.

How the Scottish landscape has been used in filmmaking does not always make it clear that these locations are in Scotland. Glasgow streets in *Fast & Furious 6* (2013) are depicting the streets of

¹⁰⁶ Film in Scotland: Made in Scotland 2014.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Review of the Film Sector in Scotland 2014, 9.

London, not Glasgow. In *Scottish Locations*, Creative Scotland wish to promote the flexibility of their city scapes and how easy this transition from Glasgow to London is.¹⁰⁹ If Creative Scotland emphasises flexibility instead of locality and recognition, one cannot easily argue that the motives of these publications are nationalistic. They make sense financially. The already mentioned “famous Scottish hospitality” is brought into question when reading newspaper articles about the annoyance felt by the locals during the filming of some of these foreign blockbusters. Journalist Ben Spencer writes for the *Daily Record* about the reaction in Glasgow over the night-time disturbances: “explosions, car crashes and gun shots that were heard through the night for several weeks. Apparently there were some disagreements between the Glasgow Film Office and local residents whether the locals had been informed about the noise”.¹¹⁰ The same has happened in filming *World War Z* (2013) since Glasgow turns into Philadelphia as the film crew commandeered the entirety of Glasgow city centre. There is no doubt, though, that these ventures have boosted the economy of Scotland, despite the likelihood of production companies bringing their own foreign crews, and helped employ people no matter how temporary and fleeting and brought more money for projects and employment for the future as well.

The films depicted in both publications offer an interesting mixture of urban and rural sceneries, proving that the use of nature in films has not disappeared since the rise of realistic, urban depictions of Scottish life. In these publications, Scotland is promoted as unique. The places and landscapes are described as something close to magical, or, at least as places that can make that magic happen. Anderson writes in *Imagined Communities* that the nation is “an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign”.¹¹¹ However, imagined does not mean that it does not exist. A national identity is constructed through everyday expressions and somewhat dated clichés. This means that Creative Scotland do their part to contribute to the image of Scotland by promoting certain types of films and publishing information that glorifies the landscape and natural beauty of Scotland. In a nutshell, national pride and feel is used for advertising purposes and the prestige of the Scottish landscape remains prevalent. The final section of this chapter focuses on the very latest developments in the Scottish screen sector and discusses some current trends in filmmaking as well.

¹⁰⁹ Film in Scotland: *Scottish Locations* 2014.

¹¹⁰ Spencer, 2012.

¹¹¹ Anderson 2006, 6.

4.3 Latest Screen Sector Developments

While writing this thesis, significant changes have affected the very structure of the screen sector in Scotland. In 2017, a proposal was put forward by Creative Scotland for the establishment of a unit dedicated to supporting and funding film and television production, nurturing local skills, audiences, festivals and education, Screen Scotland. On their webpage, the newly established unit report that they partner with Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Skills Development Scotland and the Scottish Funding Council, while remaining under the supervision of Creative Scotland and receiving their funding from the Scottish Government and the National Lottery. Their core aims are to:

- a) boost production
- b) offer easily accessible advice and support for screen businesses
- c) improve employment opportunities through increased training and development
- d) develop the access of audiences to Scottish film and TV production home and away
- e) develop Scotland's screen infrastructure (including facilities)
- f) develop Scotland's reputation as a destination for international productions and co-productions, supported by local talent, crew, facilities and unique locations¹¹²

This section is focused on these aims and what type of development Screen Scotland has been able to deliver during its first years. In the Review of the Film Sector in Scotland, it has been mentioned that some concern was expressed relating to the use of a possible new film studio if one was to be built. Discussion and debates were had over the studio being used mainly to attract inward investment and that the needs of local talent could be ignored. The type of studio, its location and the impact on indigenous production and charging rates for crew and facilities were matters of concern already in 2014.¹¹³ At that time, Creative Scotland claimed that they would take every effort in order to find a balance between supporting economically and culturally important films. This could signal that Creative Scotland understands their role and the value of their support to the screen industries and hope to remain an important support network for film production and be worthy of the prestige that has been conferred onto them. Screen Scotland has taken on the search for a large-scale national film and TV production studio facility on their shoulders and were searching for a private developer or private developers to take on the challenge. In 2020 it was announced that First Stage Studios Ltd would step up to run the facility, a large-scale studio space

¹¹² Screen Scotland website 2020.

¹¹³ Review of the Film Sector in Scotland 2014, 46.

in the Port of Leith. Some international productions have already used the location before, *Avengers: Infinity War* (2018) for example, and under the new leadership a £1 million refurbishment grant has been offered by Screen Scotland to help kick-start production again in the space. The space itself is big enough to host two productions simultaneously and there are several production companies interested in using the space to shoot right now. The main reason behind building the studio is to attract more high-profile productions to Scotland. Screen Scotland's Executive Director Isabel Davies believes in bringing Scottish production crews, writers, producers and actors back to work and live in Scotland in indigenous as well as foreign productions made possible by the opening of the studio facility. "She added: We are aware that 35% of the crew on *Game of Thrones* came from Scotland, let's have them back".¹¹⁴

Screen content is being consumed more and more as digital platforms have made it possible to enjoy a wide variety of quality programming from the comfort of one's home. This is a part of the film sector as a whole experiencing somewhat of a global production boost period. Creative Scotland's Annual Review for 2016-2017 revealed that £69.4 million altogether was spent on film and TV production in Scotland by producers and production companies in 2016 and that this figure has increased steadily from the year 2007 and the £23 million spent at that point in time.¹¹⁵ Creative Scotland's Screen Fund and Production Growth Fund are one major contributor to the industry and help boost its growth each year. In 2017, the amount of money spent on TV and film production rose yet again to £95.6 million, with Screen Scotland investing in film development and production a total of £6 million alone.¹¹⁶ Davies believes in the impact and future of film and that the rise of streaming services such as Netflix and Amazon have contributed to this rise, even though the total production spend in Scotland fell to £67 million for the year 2018.¹¹⁷ Yearly fluctuations are to be expected, especially taken into consideration the political climate as well as the somewhat unpredictable nature of filmmaking in general. Hit television series and blockbusters are not a yearly occurrence in a nation the size of Scotland, no matter how much one might hope this to be the case.

Jeremy Sim has also written about the role of the EU and immigration in relation to the industry in Scotland. Due to the free flow of human capital within the EU, Scotland has been able to attract

¹¹⁴ *The National* 2020

¹¹⁵ Annual Review 2016-2017, 8.

¹¹⁶ Annual Review 2017-2018, 25.

¹¹⁷ *The National* 2020

a multitude of talented, work-oriented people, not solely filmmakers, to come live and work in Scotland. Ireland and the UK have both managed to attract the best and the brightest immigrants and the region of the Scottish Highlands and Island has, somewhat surprisingly, experienced a substantial increase in its employment rates (close to full employment) thanks to an urban, young crowd moving in from other areas of Britain as well as the Continent. The once economically struggling region is steadily growing, making the largest town in the Highlands and Island, Inverness, one of the fastest growing regions in Europe based on the size of overall population. The main attraction to the area has been thought to be the wide-open space and breathtaking landscapes, seldom found outside of Scotland.¹¹⁸ More and more people are capable of working remotely and choosing their location based on other factors than where their work tied them to physically before. The Scottish tourism board as well as Creative Scotland can take pride in some of these achievements as these developments have undoubtedly been in part achieved through decades of marketing and image building.

People in the industry do, however, have concerns related to Brexit and the limitation to free movement it might raise. In the Annual Plan 2017-2018, Creative Scotland brought up the issues of travel, free movement, job security, connection across borders, loss of support for rural areas, loss of co-production opportunities, difficulties in accessing international exchange, the change in trade regulations and the uncertainty about funding in the future as some of the discussions related to the future in the industry.¹¹⁹ Support for Scotland-based filmmakers and films that have a role in promoting Scottish culture was promised by Creative Scotland already back in 2014 and this will likely grow in importance as the ramifications of the UK leaving the EU are becoming a reality. Creative Scotland also wishes to especially support the production of “high-quality feature films, documentaries and animation from Scottish-based talent”¹²⁰ This raises the question of what exactly is meant by a “high-quality films”. Measuring value can of course be done in several ways. First of all, a film can have high artistic merit in the eyes of the industry and critics. Perhaps what is meant that the film is produced, distributed and written by seasoned professionals or that it is directed by someone renowned in the industry or that it stars actors who have accumulated a certain amount of prestige during their careers. Of course, preferably all of the above.

¹¹⁸ Sim 2008, 165-166.

¹¹⁹ Annual Plan 2017-2018, 3.

¹²⁰ Creative Scotland On Screen, Film Strategy 2014-2017, 22.

What is vitally important for the industry today is to remain flexible and take into account all the challenges that the changing era of digitalisation brings. Already in 2014, BOP Consulting saw that technical advancements have made it exceedingly easier for indigenous filmmakers and individuals to take part in making and distributing films due to lowered costs. A range of “new voices” can be heard through this new era of digital distribution and production.¹²¹ It has been widely agreed that there should be more bold venturing across different film genres and utilisation of the talent and artistic vision that Scottish professionals can offer. However, many also suggest that public funds for production should be geared towards the thriving television industry and that the film industry would find its place alongside it. There are calls for collaboration between the fields of television, film and for example the game industry and a need expressed for annual meetings and collaboration to discuss the future of the creative sector.¹²² This also brings new opportunities for Screen Scotland to reach more audiences. The internet reaches nearly every corner even of the so-called Scottish peripheries. The television industry is indeed changing rapidly and can benefit the film industry in terms of offering more work for crews, who in turn are more likely to stay on Scottish soil.

Finally, the current global pandemic, COVID-19 has created its own set of challenges, especially for those working on small, indigenous productions. Creative Scotland have stepped up to support freelance filmmakers in the field in the form of the Screen Hardship Fund, a part of the Government’s £59 million emergency funding package. Most recently a £700 000 fund has been allocated to be distributed based on applications in September 2020.¹²³ Creative Scotland recognises the role that freelance filmmakers have in the industry and are trying to invest in the future by investing on these individuals and the fund is to be opened again in November. This is only a small part of the support that has been available for cultural industries workers, organisations, institutions and venues and it is to be noted that continuing support will most likely be needed during an unstable time such as this.

¹²¹ Review of the Film Sector in Scotland 2014, 41.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Creative Scotland website 2020.

5 Final Thoughts

One can envision the future possibilities of the Scottish film industry with cautious excitement. Much has happened in ten years in the Scottish screen sector which can also be read as a sign that the field is still struggling to find a stable footing for itself. Looking back at all that has been found about Creative Scotland's 10-year-journey, it is clear that there has been a general agreement across the film sector that the industry is lacking stability and has suffered from a lack of suitable studio facilities, low indigenous levels of production and a notable talent drain due to insufficient education and development opportunities.

My hypothesis when beginning to write this thesis was that due to the fact film and filmmaking has not traditionally been valued as a so-called "serious form of artistic expression" that the funding for it from Creative Scotland via the Scottish Government and the National Lottery would reflect this. What was found was that the public funding for the cultural industries is limited and controlled by the UK and Scottish Governments. Fluctuations rely on yearly budgets allocated for the creative sector as a whole. However, recent years have shown steadily increasing prestige and public support by the Government as well as private investment when it comes to producers bringing their work to Scotland, with or without any additional support from Creative Scotland and Screen Scotland or not. It is to be noted, of course, that public funding and public institutions are not the sole reason and condition for the making of films in Scotland. Private investment and other institutions apart from Creative Scotland and now Screen Scotland have their role to play. The importance of public funding still cannot be ignored as it has been demonstrated that most Scottish film productions are dependent on some form of public funding, the impact of Creative Scotland is immense.

The "invisibility" of Scottish film was one of the issues addressed in the introduction section. What has been established is that the films shot in Scotland are usually cultural hybrids and co-productions and the foreign influence of institutions and forces such as Hollywood is undeniable. Hardly any films produced in Scotland can claim to be entirely made in Scotland by Scots. When examining Creative Scotland's marketing publications, collaboration especially between Scotland, the UK and Ireland rose from the study material quite prominently. Therefore, it is no wonder that Scottish talent in the film field seems invisible at times. Since the funding and producers are more often than not foreign, the films shot in Scotland are not officially deemed as Scottish even if they

would be shot in Scotland and deal with Scottish realities. When comparing Scottish funding from the Government with the support system of other nations, it was found that the funding in Ireland and Denmark for example is more comprehensive and more tax-payer money is allocated in the yearly budgets to support filmmaking. It can be argued that the valuation in Scotland's neighbouring countries for film is higher and that the cultural sector enjoys more prestige than the sector does in Scotland, even though policy and the political system in a country guide the funding of the cultural industries. It was found, though, that the budget for the screen sector has been increased in giant leaps by the Government from 2015 onward and that Creative Scotland has streamlined its funding routes and is also pushing for tax incentives for inward investment in order to level the playing field with its neighbours.

The Scottish film industry's profile-raise in the 1990s caused by international and local success of a handful of films paved the way for the future of Scottish film production. What was achieved was a renewed sense of national pride and belief in the quality of Scottish film. Films in that era managed to break away from representations deemed outdated and sentimental as filmmakers began focusing on social realism. At the same time, a major shift from rural to urban scenery took place with even rural depictions moving away from romanticised imagery. It has been widely recognised that the cultural impact of film, the prestige it may carry to Scotland and to Creative Scotland respectively is massive. Film can be impactful in a variety of ways: they can shape the way in which audiences view their personal, or even national identities, influence the public image of a nation, boost tourism and even influence politics. The importance of the cultural industries and their financial significance has and is continually growing in welfare states. People have more money to spend in their free time. It was also found that Scottish filmmakers have a variety of ambitions when it comes to filmmaking as there are aims at critical, public as well as commercial success. This diversity and artistic aspirations should be encouraged and be taken into consideration when making future strategies and funding allocations in the public sector. Also, the conviction that films have artistic value in addition to being profitable investments can be seen in Creative Scotland's statements, and actions, clearly.

In addition to this it is also important to note that Scottish film being valued at home is not enough since the importance of international success is oftentimes mentioned alongside domestic success in Creative Scotland's documents. The success of Scotland's film industry and the industry of any nation for that matter is connected to international recognition on award platforms and film festivals. The more prestigious the event, the more prestige is conferred upon the winner. Winning,

therefore, ensures future interest in Scotland as a filming location. Furthermore, the 2014 Film Strategy boldly states that “We will be a nation that celebrates the importance of every aspect of film culture”.¹²⁴ This sentence alone reinforces the idea of Scotland as a unit whose goals and ambitions are the same as Creative Scotland’s and is filled with people who all embrace film culture. Even if this would not (and is not) necessarily the case. Nevertheless, especially the marketing materials produced by Creative Scotland reflect a deep-rooted national pride and desire to promote Scottish film beyond national borders. Creative Scotland state that “in addition to the associated cultural and commercial benefits that films bring to Scotland, they also raise the profile of Scotland nationally and internationally”.¹²⁵ This profile raise is thought to boost the industry in general, creating more jobs, bringing back lost talent, bringing in projects, developing skills and bringing more business opportunities for companies dealing with exhibition, distribution as well as production. It has become extremely clear that prestige and profit are intertwined in the documents and actions of Creative Scotland.

Throughout the thesis, one of the main reasons given for the Scottish industry’s failure to attract more foreign projects into Scotland was that there were no appropriate studio facilities to match the outstanding landscape and versatile cityscapes the country has to offer. Typically, a foreign film crew would arrive on location to shoot in Scottish locations and leave shortly after, due to the fact that there are no possibilities to finish the work in Scotland in a studio setting. However, after the establishment of Screen Scotland in 2017 and thanks to a generous raise in funds allocated to the development of film and television production by the Government, Scotland finally has a studio space in Leith, dedicated to the screen sector. Screen Scotland is hoping that this new investment will bring in a diverse set of film projects who will also hire local filmmakers and crew to work on those projects. It remains to be seen whether or not the effort put into the refurbishment of the space will pay off and bring in work for the local workers in the industry. The nature of the industry itself is also changing due to digitalisation and the new opportunities brought on by streaming services such as Netflix.

What could not be achieved in the scope of this thesis is an in-depth look into all of Creative Scotland’s funding decisions, project by project or even sector by sector. All of their decisions are, however, available to be studied by the public. It offers an interesting opportunity for future study

¹²⁴ Creative Scotland On Screen, Film Strategy 2014-2017, 13.

¹²⁵ Creative Scotland On Screen, Film Strategy 2014-2017, 13.

as comparing the sectors and the funding they receive could reveal disparities between the funding offered based on notions of value or economics. It also remains to be seen what type of repercussions Brexit and COVID-19 will bring to the overall socioeconomic situation in Scotland and the funding of the cultural industries. Increased mobility within the EU has enabled a foreign workforce and foreign projects to find their way to Scotland. When and if this piece of the puzzle is removed, the future of Scottish film is faced with new circumstances and challenges yet again.

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