INTRODUCTION TO
BREAKER MORANT

Among the notable directorial talents that emerged in the Australian film revival of the 1970s, to Bruce Beresford belongs the accolade of the most versatile craftsman. It is not as though there are no recurring preoccupations in his work (individuals grappling with blinkered or partial authorities; the interplay of interests in hierarchies of various kinds), but his contribution may be best remembered for its enduring professionalism across a genre range. His 1980 release, *Breaker Morant*, may well be the culmination of his early work, and nearly thirty years later it is still remarkably compelling, equalled, if not surpassed, by only the very best of his international work. Despite the film’s period setting, it was, like a number of the films of the 1970s and 1980s, eloquent in what it had to say in matters such as nationhood and the relationship between Australia and Britain. Neil Sinyard traces its articulation of such matters with subtlety and perception, arguing for its status both as a key work of the revival and as a work of uncommon power.

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