

BORNEO

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THE SETTING:

“The war in Borneo and Malaya between 1962 and 1966 is perhaps the least well known because the terrain and conduct of the war were too tough for the average reporter to contemplate reporting”

Confrontation, the War with Indonesia 1962-1966 . Nick Van Der Bijl

This war has been The only victory over communist aggression.

Ever.

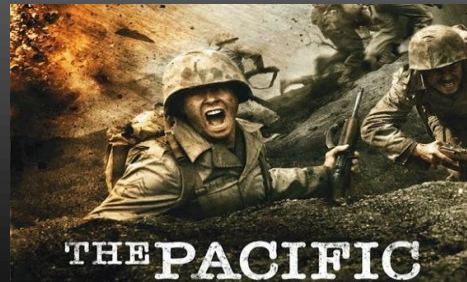
CONTEXT & STYLE

Almost 6,000 civilians, policemen and soldiers throughout East Malaysia and the Peninsula died to win independence .

The bravery of all Malaysians from all ethnic backgrounds, from the peninsula, Sabah and Sarawak are a dramatic backdrop to any narrative. The history of Malaysia is a subject that broadly has been ignored.

The series would dramatize key events in the same way as series like 'Band of Brothers' or 'The Pacific. series that are both hugely involving, informative yet carry incredibly strong emotional elements .

Executionally the unfolding of event could take place through the eyes of an individual or a group of individuals (like a family). While mostly recreated we would also use available documentary footage.



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THE PLAYERS:

Ingram ('Gram) Gold: An Englishman. A freelance Newsreel cameraman. Late 20s. He is Jewish

His Malaysian Friends:

Saidah Binti haji Yusof. A Sarawakian Malay-Muslim woman. A doctor. 25+

Kumar Krishnan . An Sarawakian Indian. A Lieutenant in the Royal Malay Regiment 30

Aziz bin Haaji Yusof. A Sarawakian Malay-Muslim . A Police Captain. Saidah's brother. 28

Kheng Wei Hong. A Sarawakian Chinese. A minor civil servant. 32

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MAIN STORY ARC:

A British news cameraman, Ingram ('Gram) Gold, scours Borneo, documenting one of the most ferocious guerilla wars of the past 50 years, searching for the woman he loves.

BACKSTORY:

Kheng, is actually working undercover with the Malaysian government during the 'Malaysia' negotiations infiltrating the Communist Party in Singapore and on the Sarawak Border with Indonesia.

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PROLOGUE: PRESENT DAY. LONDON & BORNEO DECEMBER 1963

An aging European is running through the busy streets of a large metropolitan city. He is dressed, smartly but a little wearily. He is pursuing an older, and quite elegant Asian woman. As he fights through the milling crowds, in his panic, his heart begins to give out; he falls and as he does the increasingly deafening sound of the traffic, building works etc. meld into the sounds of a ferocious jungle firefight.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

We are in an outpost in **Kalabakan, Tawau, North British Borneo, manned by members of C Company, the 3rd Battalion of the Malay Regiment under the command of Maj Zainal Abidin bin Haji Yaacob, who while performing their Maghrib prayers, are ambushed by "volunteers" of the North Kalimantan Army.**

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OPENING CREDITS

In an exciting and dynamic credit sequence using illustrations and photographs and series clips we will trace the history of Malaysia and the Borneo States from the earliest beginnings in Melaka through the arrival of the Portuguese and Dutch through the Bugis and founding of the Straits Settlements, the East India Company, Rajah Brooke and British Borneo; through World War 2 and the Federation of Malaya to the Alliance and finally to the union with the independent Borneo States and the Independence of Malaya. Interspersed with grainy documentary footage and still photographs of the main players in situ.

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EPS 1-3: 1962-63 KUCHING & BRUNEI

A young 'Gram arrives in Kuching in Sarawak from London; sent to film the anticipated communist troubles. He forges three very strong friendships with Kumar, Aziz and Kheng and falls madly and hopelessly in love with Saidah. But their love is conflicted as he is Jewish and she a Muslim. Aziz, her brother, is violently opposed to their affair; he and Kumar leave for their jungle posting. In the morning Saidah is also gone, overcome by her sense of duty, she has had to go to help during the communist uprising in Brunei. 'Gram rushes there to search for her.

Meanwhile Kheng has left for Singapore as 'Malaysia' is formed and Singapore begins to riot.

Amid the brutal fighting in Brunei, on one beautiful night Saidah and 'Gram tenderly and completely confirm their love for one another. Next day Saidah is moving from house to house tending the soldiers hurt in the conflict. 'Gram, always one step behind her, narrowly misses her as she boards a helicopter carrying the wounded and it vanishes off

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

A black and white photograph of a military aircraft, possibly a transport plane, parked on a grassy field. The aircraft is a four-engine propeller plane with a high-wing configuration. In the background, there is a dense forested hill. The scene appears to be a military airfield or a landing zone in a rural area.

**BRUNEI
REVOLT**

8 DECEMBER 1962

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

In Brunei the first serious manifestation of opposition to Malaysia erupts . In a bold and decisive action, Ghurkhas and combined forces from the peninsula are flown in to support the government. They quell the armed **uprising** of Brunei's pro-communist Parti Rakyat and its 4,000-strong secret army, the Tentera Nasional Kalimantan Utara (TNKU). After a long, tense night of conflict and incident, control is returned to the state.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

KONFRONTASI

20 JANUARY 1963

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

In Jakarta Indonesian Foreign Minister Subandrio announces that Indonesia will pursue a policy of Konfrontasi with the Federation of Malaysia, Sabah and Sarawak. Threatening **armed aggression** against any unified democratic Malaysia. This fear is prompted by President Sukarno's strong sympathies with China and the communists and his, unfounded, fears of western influence.

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EPS 4-6: 1963. KALABAKAN.

‘Gram’s search leads him to an army camp in Kalabakan, North British Borneo to ask their friend Kumar about Saidah. Kumar thinks she may be in Sarawak on the border with Indonesia. Before ‘Gram can leave a large communist force launches a cowardly sneak attack while most of the platoon are at prayers. There followed wave after wave of attacks and long waits between.

Meanwhile Kheng has been sent to meet the Communists at the border between Sarawak and Indonesia. Believing him to really be a communist, Kheng is captured by Aziz and the rag-bag force of police, odd soldiers and fierce Dayak tribesmen he has organized there.

Back in Kalabakan, after a last long and bloody jungle firefight, (the one from the prologue) the small battalion bravely drive off or kill the vastly superior force.

While ‘Gram attempts to film the protracted and horrific firefight Kumar is mortally wounded in the act of saving ‘Gram’s life. ‘Gram makes his way out of the jungle with Kumar’s coffin.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

INCURSION

29 DECEMBER 1963

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

We return to Sabah where the North Kalimantan Army, in the first aggressive act of konfrontasi have attacked the small garrison in Kalabakan. In an act of remarkable bravery and after a brutal **firefight**, C Company heroically repel the superior attacking force. However, 7 members of the company, including Major Zainal Abidin, give up their lives and 16 others are wounded. Here in East Malaysia are the first Malaysians to fight in defense of their new nation .

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EPS 7-9 : 1964. JOHOR STATE, SOUTH MALAYAN PENINSULA.

An Indonesian fighting force parachutes into Johor.

Saidah arrives to help Aziz who is leading a guerilla force of rag tag Malay soldiers, police and farmers. Amid general cruel treatment of captured Indonesian communists, she tries to prevent the execution of Kheng. But Kheng is killed by a stray motor shell. Saidah argues violently with Aziz about his inhumane methods and vanishes angrily into the jungle. 'Gram arrives to learn of both the friend's death and Saidah's disappearance. When it transpires that Kheng was a Malaysian government agent working under cover, Aziz, angry and guilty, lies telling 'Gram that Saidah is also dead, and according to custom, is already buried. He shows 'Gram an unmarked grave site of a dead soldier. 'Gram then confesses that Saidah and he were married in Brunei by a unit CO. Aziz still refuses to admit he was lying and wrong. 'Gram is so hurt and disillusioned, he burns all of the film he has shot of the conflicts during his search. Grief-stricken, he returns home to England, heartbroken. The film burns and splutters.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

INVASION

17 AUGUST 1964

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

In Johor, 108 Indonesian paratroopers and marine **commandos** with strong communist connections assisted by 32 members of the Communist Party of Malaya (CPM) land in three groups at Sanglang, Benut and Pontian Kecil, in south-west Johor. They are instructed to make their way to Gunung Blumut where, allegedly, their sympathisers have developed a base where they are to link up with an airborne group.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

CONFLICT

1 SEPTEMBER 1964

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

key events

Two Indonesian Air Force C130 planes drop 96 paratroopers over Labis. They are to link up with the sea-borne parties at Gunung Blumut. But the landings are quickly discovered. Local Malaysian police, soldiers and even villagers, quickly **unify** and fight together. In a remarkably brave action, they stand up to and capture all but a handful of the invaders. Later 28 more infiltrators land in the general area; three are killed and the rest captured. Konfrontasi has been stopped by simple, ordinary Malaysians.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

EPILOGUE

12 AUGUST 1966

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

In Jakarta, **DPM Tun Abdul Razak** and Indonesian Foreign Minister Adam Malik sign a Peace Agreement after Gen Suharto takes over Indonesia from Sukarno and establishes a normal democratic system. After a fraught time coming into existence, Malaysia is now at peace

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PRESENT DAY: LONDON

Cross-fading through the burning film, we return to the city street from the prologue. And as Gram lies in the street dying he catches the profile of the elegant Asian woman. It is Saidah. As he attempts to call her name, she vanishes into the crowd.

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