

PROPOSAL FORM

NAME NAME



About the Project

Your Name:

Proposed Name of Project: In Search of Norm Parker (and Subsequently the Orang Mawas)

Describe your project using five keywords:

- Fictioning
- Zoology
- Performance
- Folklore
- 'Discovery'

Provide a short summary of the proposed project: (100 words maximum)

I will produce a 15-20 minute film documenting a journey I undertook in the jungles of Malaysia to discover what became of the fictional zoologist and explorer Norm Parker who disappeared in 1973. Half a decade on, I have decided to retrace the same steps Parker took whilst he searched for the Orang Mawas (a great ape prominent within Malay folklore), whilst revealing the artifacts and evidence Parker collected in the years preceding his vanishing. This performative film will encourage the audience to trust their judgment of reality whilst questioning the photograph as empirical evidence and the notion of 'discovery'.

Provide a detailed description of the proposed project: (250 words)

In Search of Norm Parker is a performative film, part of a larger project exploring 'fictioning' as a mode of presenting truthful information within the context of folklore and zoology. The film will act as a satirical take on the idea of 'discovery' in relation to Western science, with the narrative propelled by the tale of a missing explorer and the great ape, known in Malay folklore, as the Orang Mawas. The legend of the Orang Mawas and the backstory of Parker, who went missing in 1973, will be revealed throughout the film via fictionalised documents, letters and AI generated 'evidence', intended to cast doubt on the empiricism of the photograph.

This film will be divided into several chapters merging real encounters and relationships with a fictional narrative performed by myself via a voiceover, interjected by the voices of those I met throughout my trip. These voices will materialise as characters who will drift in and out of the story as I retrace the steps of Parker. The narrative will begin on a remote plot of land in the jungle of Kedah, Malaysia, where I camped for 10 nights before roaming the Malay Peninsula searching for the 'truth'.

Performance is a central element to the film, supported by a wide range of mediums, including writing, AI generations, darkroom prints, moving image, soundscapes and clever editing techniques. Aside from questioning empiricism and science, the film is a playful critique on the notion of 'discovery' and its romantic, masculine associations, whilst its colonial connotations are unpicked in the research document.

Structure

Timeline and Milestones

Start date	End date	Activity or task details:
Jan 2023	Jan 2023	I began forming the premise of the project and started research into the relevant themes.
Feb 2023	June 2023	Using this research, I began to plan a three week trip to Malaysia, reaching out to people to arrange accommodation, including a tent in the jungle in exchange for work.
July 2023	July 2023	Three weeks travelling the Malay Peninsula in which I shot 4K footage and recorded audio
Oct 2023	Oct 2023	Reviewing and categorising all footage and photographs I began experimenting with darkroom printing techniques, developing the fictional narrative and fictionalising documents to support it.
Nov 2023	Nov 2023	Continued to develop narrative and darkroom printing, began AI generating imagery, and began working on sequencing my footage into chapters in Premiere Pro
Dec 2023	Dec 2023	Spent a lot of time in the digital space working on the sequencing of my film as well as continuing to fictionalise documents and imagery. I also contacted a sound designer and began a dialogue.

18 th Jan	1 st Feb	Complete sequencing of footage
18 th Jan	1 st Feb	Write the first draft of a voiceover
18 th Jan	1 st Feb	Incorporate darkroom prints, still photographs and AI imagery into edit
1 st Feb	4 th Feb	Record voiceover and tweak footage to fit
4 th Feb	4 th March	Continue darkroom printing with various processes
4 th Feb	4 th March	Work with a sound designer to create a score and mix audio
4 th Feb	4 th March	Continuously rework footage around audio
4 th March	8 th March	Interim Show
10 th March		Have the first final cut and begin Colour Grading
10 th March	1 st April	Rework first cut based on feedback
10 th March	1 st April	Develop my 'Research Document', adding more pages and making physical hardcover book in Book Making
2 nd April	7 th April	Begin process of selecting work to exhibit, consider scale and layout
10 th April		Contact printers / framers and arrange printing
10 th April	Deadline	Making final adjustments to film / book / exhibition plan

Budget

Description	Amount
Flights (Return to Kuala Lumpur)	£800
Fixer and Jungle Camping	Free
Accommodation and Internal Travel	£300
Food costs	£150
Sony A7C rental (4 weeks) (Quote from hireacamera.com)	£500
Sony FE 24mm Lens Rental (4 weeks) (Quote from hireacamera.com)	£200
Travel insurance including camera cover (Virgin Insurance)	£70
35mm Film (6 rolls of Kodak Gold)	£64
Darkroom Rental (7 days) (Photofusion Brixton)	£224
Darkroom paper (100 Colour + 50 B&W)	£80 + £40
MidJourney Subscription	£60
Yearly Adobe Subscription (Student Price)	£196
Sound Designer Wage (Day Rate x 4)	£780
Materials to produce a hardcover book	£64
Printing Costs (Book pages)	£45

Total Cost = £3,573

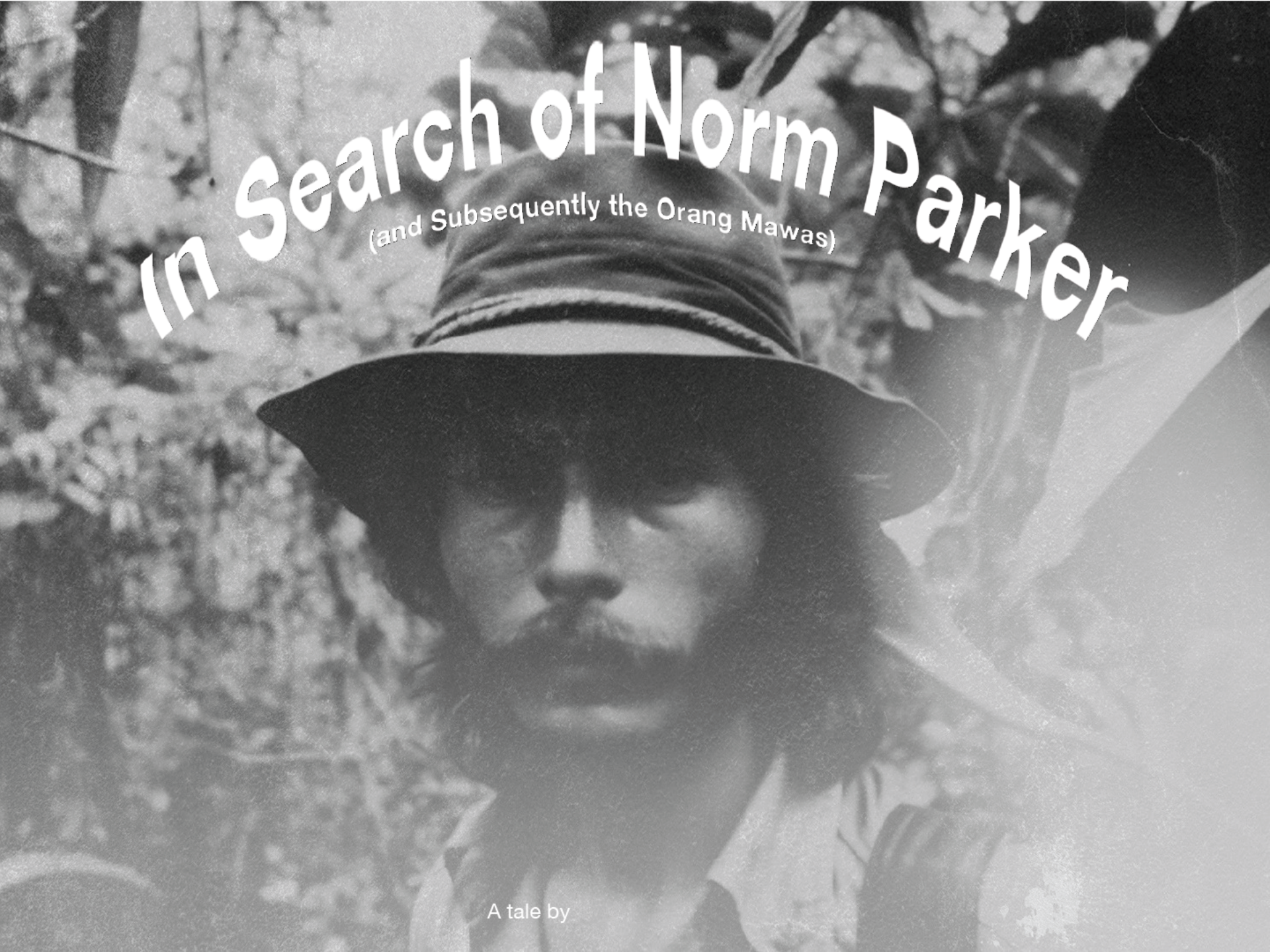
Practice-Based Experiments (200 words maximum)

I have undertaken an ambitious range of experiments with various processes. The initial experiments were with writing. Writing as a fictional character to create essays and letters by Norm Parker, before journaling my own experiences on my trip through Malaysia. These written pieces will support me in writing and performing a voiceover. In terms of visual processes, the most prominent is the moving image 4K footage shot whilst camping and travelling in Malaysia. I decided to experiment with shooting in a 4:3 format, which has influenced my creative decisions in terms of compositions and framing.

As my project is intended to blur the line between reality and fiction, I saw this as an opportunity to develop both my skills in darkroom processes (an analogue medium associated with empirical evidence), and on the flip side, AI image generation. In the darkroom I have used alternative processes such as printing through paper negatives or stretched fabric. Using MidJourney I have developed prompts to generate evidence and ‘photographs’ that carefully straddle realism. Finally, I have experimented in great depth with both Adobe Photoshop (editing real and AI imagery) and Premiere Pro utilising the software to sequence and develop a story out of my footage.

What are the main risks and challenges to your project meeting its aims? What will you do to manage these risks? (100 words maximum)

The main challenge involved in completing this project will be time management. I am in the fortunate position where the majority of my shooting is complete, and it is now about the development of the narrative and post-production. I must keep to my self-set deadlines and be proactive in bringing in a sound designer. When working with external creatives, I should have back-up options ready in the case that they pull out. My other challenge is to ensure that the narrative of the film portrays the meanings I intend it to, whilst dealing with these topics in a sensitive and ethical way.



In Search of Norm Parker

(and Subsequently the Orang Mawas)

A tale by

person
 requires understanding
 of zoology + the
 natural sciences
 don't show
 whole face?

Embody Norm Parker,
 acting as an Anthropologist
 searching for the ape.

How do I
 put myself
 on the screen?

How do I navigate
 temporal differences

(and subsequently
 the orang mawas)

In Search of
 the orang mawas

Norm could
 be a modern day
 'explorer'

create film as
 yourself, searching
 for Norm Parker

'sequel'
 to the
 book

the idea of
 'discovering'
 something

I can then
 person as
 myself on
 screen.

becomes more
 playful and
 abstract

this 'hunting'
 could also be
 satirical

adds an element
 of the self

less pressure
 on using technical
 gear and hunting
 for the orang mawas
 how a scientist would

"ISNP" is a film documenting a journey I undertook in the
 jungles of Malaysia to discover what became of the famed (and
 fictional) zoologist and explorer Norm Parker who disappeared in
 1973. It aims to encourage the audience to question their judgment
 of reality and the photograph as empirical evidence whilst playing
 with the idea of 'discovery'.

The ideas for this project began to form when I became
 interested in an animal within Malay folklore known as the Orang
 Mawas. There seemed to be conflicting opinions regarding its
 appearance, location and mythic status. I have been interested in
 folklore for the past few years and have used several tales as focal
 points for different projects. In 2022 I made a series of photographs
 exploring the origins of the Sasquatch amongst the West Coast First
 Nation tribes of British Columbia. To preface the photobook, I wrote a
 piece as a fictional character named Norm Parker, a zoologist labeled a
 'cryptozoologist' by Western science for his non-conformist views and
 use of native tales in his search for animals considered mythical.

Therefore, when I began researching the Orang Mawas, the
 'cryptid' from the Malay peninsula, it seemed fitting that Norm Parker
 should become involved in this project. Initially the plan was to embody
 Parker and create a film from his perspective as he searched for the
 Mawas. After some consideration and conversations with peers I
 realized that I could explore the themes within the film in a more
 intimate way should I instead act as myself, searching for Parker.

From here his story began to develop, culminating in his
 disappearance in 1973 whilst searching for the Orang Mawas. In the
 research publication I 'curate' Parker's work and research made before
 his disappearance; work which will influence my FMP film where I seek
 to find out what happened to him whilst simultaneously creating a
 dialogue on the ideas of discovery, empiricism and folklore. It will be a
 performance performance of retracing his steps and searching for
 'evidence'.

One of the biggest inspirations for this work is the project
 which had Bieke Depoorter nominated for the Deutsche Börse award at
 the Photographer's Gallery, entitled 'Chance Encounters'. I see my
 work enjoyed by a similar audience in a gallery space due to its
 combination of reality and fiction with a large research element which
 can be displayed in an archival way.

performance questioning: science
the empiricism of
the photography

Artist as
the musical
Historian

conversation

'fake news'
or
forced knowledge

Darwinism
colonialism

'ologies'
- Anthropology
- zoology

'Discovery'

Gravure

Bias

archive

Folklore

Fictioning

(as
research)

'Romanticism'

truth?
reality?

FMP

persona
or
mouthpiece

conspiracy
Theory

what is
my
position?

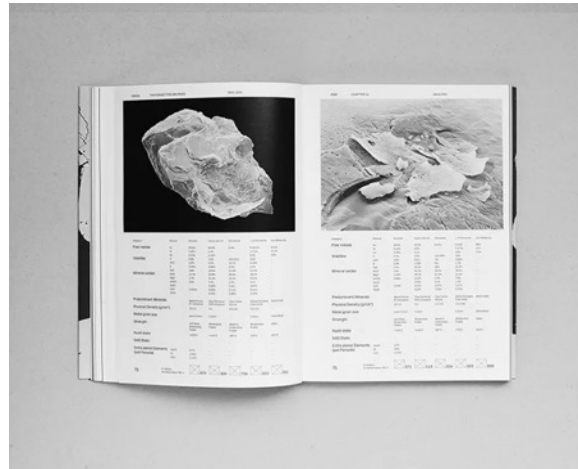
what is
knowledge?

art
writing

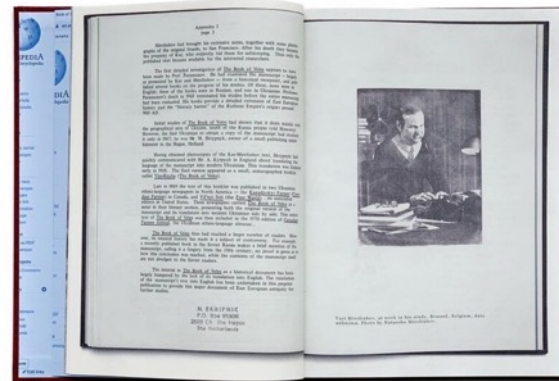
evidence
play

Inspiration

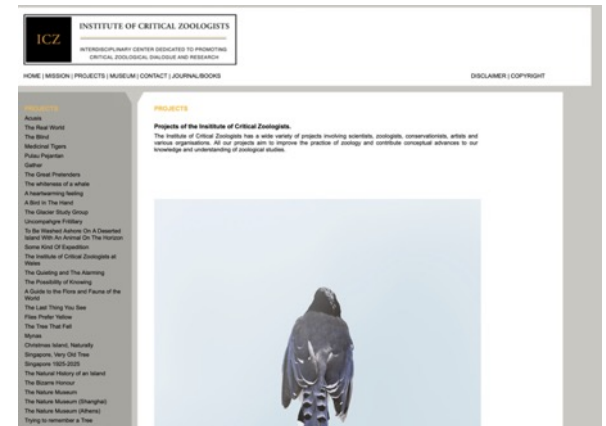
There are a great deal of projects which have been heavily influential in the formation of my FMP. My interest in 'Fictioning' as a mode of artistic research was fueled by Nicolas Poli's book which I picked up at Off-Print 2023. The book acts as a scientific journal documenting the discovery and testing of a series of meteorites discovered in the Swiss alps. Poli worked with a real meteoriticist to ensure that the journal was as realistic as possible, despite the entire thing being made up. My project will stray from this slightly in that I want it to be more playful and balance on the border between fiction and reality like Benediksen's project, 'The Book of Veles'. This book presents a fictional ancient text alongside photographs which he has added 3D models into. This book is more of a satirical exploration into the world of 'fake news' whilst maintaining a convincing front. Renhui's project, ICZ, is again a playful front for deeper rooted issues. It is a fictional institute producing projects in the field of zoology, however the themes of the work have wider implications.



Nicolas Poli – Ferox, The Forgotten Archives
A fictionalised scientific journal documenting the discovery of a meteorite in the Alps



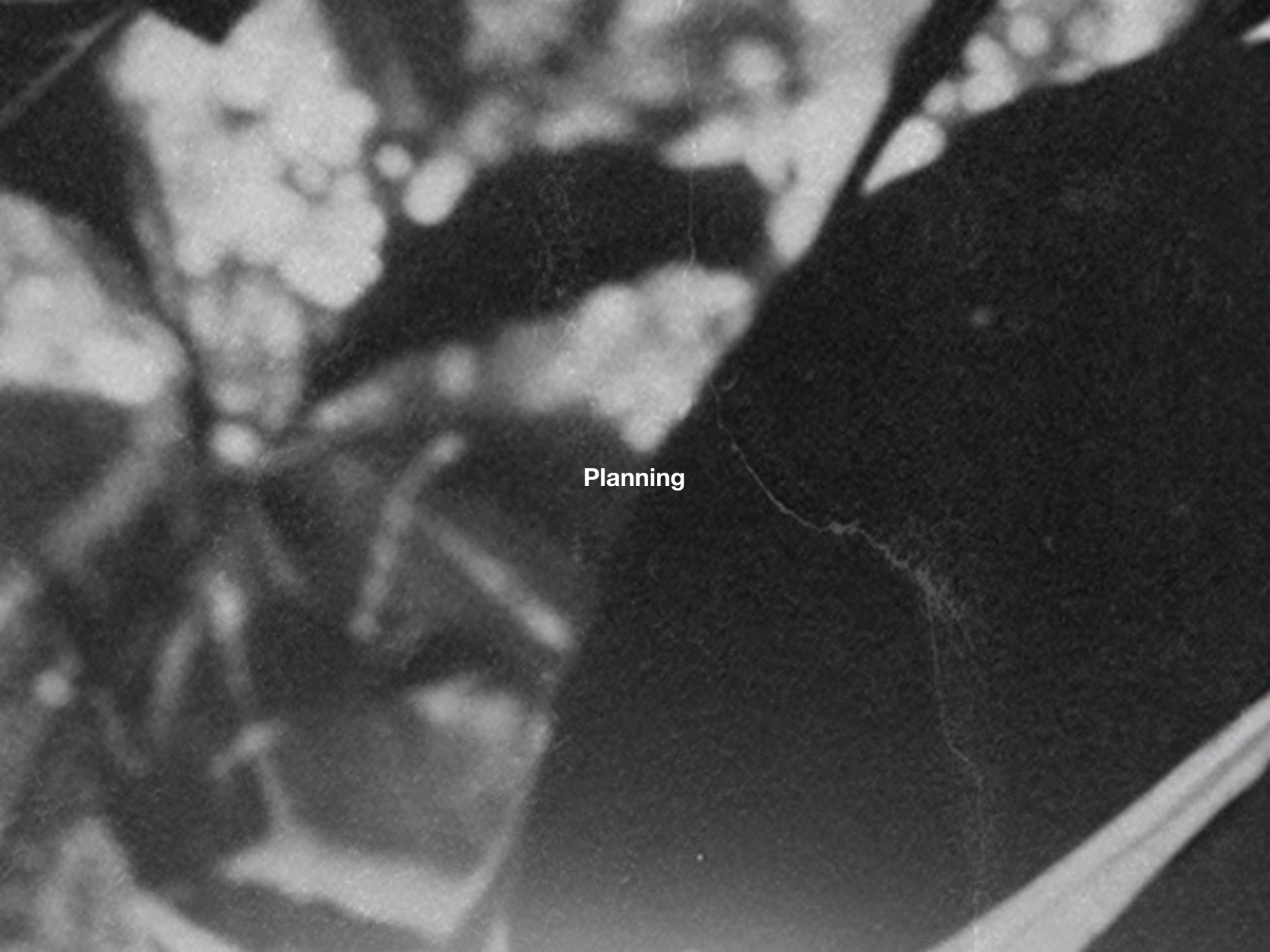
Jonas Bendiksen - The Book of Veles
Another fictionalised book using a 'lost manuscript' of eastern Europe to explore the fake news epidemic



Zhao Renhui – Institute of Critical Zoology
A fictional institute, using zoology as a medium to explore wider global issues



Bieke Depoorter - A Chance Encounter
An exhibition of Depoorter's film, 'Micheal', alongside walls plastered with research and annotated documents



Planning



Tulang mawas literally means, "the bones of the mawas"; *bēsi mawas*, "the iron of the mawas". The *mawas* is the orang-utan (*Simia satyrus*),²³ found in Borneo and Sumatra, and known to Malay mythology as a cannibalistic, semi-human monster with arms of iron and a pot-shaped head in which it cooked its food.²⁴

Andersen,²⁵ wrote in 1894, "According to the Malayan legends, indeed there is a race of wild people said to be found in the interior of Burnam²⁶ the boundary between the states of Perak and Selangor, designated Tuah Zenua²⁷ by the Selangorians, and known at Kedah by the name of Mawas. They are represented as bearing a strong resemblance to the mawa or long armed gibbon, and, instead of having a bone in the lower part of the arm, they have a piece of sharp iron which serves the double purpose of an arm and a cleaver for cutting wood".

Newbold²⁰ wrote in 1839, "There are many idle tales among the Malays of the existence in the woods and mountains of malignant races, half men half monkeys, endowed with supernatural powers; such for instance....the malignant *Mawa* that mocks the laugh of a human being with its iron arm and body covered with shaggy hair".

- (23) Orang-utan, the English name for *Simia tatarus* Linn, is of course derived from the Malay *orang hutan*, but this expression, in Malay, means jungle-men or aborigines, and has no connection with apes.
- (24) See Wilkinson, Malay Dictionary, s.v., *manus*. Can we see in this mythology a distorted representation of iron-age miners, strangers to Malaya, proceeding to their work with rice-pots on their heads, and bearing, suspended by cords from their shoulders, a large *manus* (man) as a *bulang* (man) to be killed? See also my comments *infra*. Dr. van der Hoop informs me that he has never heard the term *ulang manus* used to designate

Appendix on the aboriginal inhabitants, pp. 31-2.

3, in the region of which were found, about one hundred lab-graves often containing *fulang mawai*.

in *Pagan Races*, II, p. 173, suggests that *Tsah Zenua* might be a rendering of *bantu Benua* "the demons of the Benua". According to Wilkinson, Malay Dictionary, meant the aborigines in contradiction to aborigines of the island. Cf., *Tangata* "people of the country", the aborigines whom the Maori, according to P., on their first arrival, found in possession of the northern island. Heine-Geldern, *Art preboudhique*, p. 203, considers characteristics attributed to the *Tangata Whenua* by Maori tradition, partly Melanesian, partly Mongol. The *Tangata Whenua* according to the Maori, were unacquainted with agriculture, and fishing, and on the wild produce of the forest. It is possible that the Maori traditions exaggerated the characteristics of aborigines, and drew a distinction, by way of fabulous tales emanating from the Chinese, the Burmese, and as to the primitiveness (*sauvagerie*) of the mountain and respective countries.

2. II. a.16.

Journal 'Malayan Branch [Vol. XXIV, Pt. III,

JOURNAL OF THE
MALAYAN BRANCH
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

Volume XXXI, Part 1

May, 1958

Miscellaneous Papers

by

Constance M. Turnbull

D. K. Bassett

Guy Arnold

Maurice Freedman

Price to non-members \$5.00

Research has been an integral part of forming the foundations for this project. It was essential that I understand as much as possible regarding the animal known locally as 'Orang Mawas' as well as understanding the world of Western natural science in the 60s and 70s in order to develop Parker's character accurately. The majority of this research is prominent in the publication; however, it has been crucial in inspiring and informing the development of the themes and narrative of my EMP film.

The first mentions of the Orang Mawas are present in ancient manuscripts, which I have found translations for online. These are important in forming an understanding of the ape untouched by the influence of Western thought. The next accounts of the Orang Mawas are those collected by 19th century imperialists, and later referenced by Western academics in Journals such as that by 'Royal Asiatic Society'. The journals are also key to understanding the thinking of Western academia in relation to natural science as a whole, allowing me to place Norm Parker within this world.

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GORILLA-TRACKS

Case 50

When the snake was eaten, and I, the only empty-stomached individual of the company, had sufficiently reflected on the disadvantages of being bred in a Christian country, we began to look about the ruins of the village near which we sat. A deprecatory kind of sugarcane was growing on the very spot where the houses had formerly stood, and I made haste to pick some of this and chew it for the little sweetness it had. But as we were plucking my men perceived what instantly threw us all into the greatest excitement. Here and there the cane was beaten down, torn up by the roots, and lying about in fragments which had evidently been chewed.

I knew that these were fresh tracks of the gorilla, and joy filled my heart. My men looked at each other in silence, and muttered *Ngwila*, which is as much as to say in Mpongwe *Njina*, or, as we say, gorilla.

We followed these traces, and presently came to the footprints of the so-long-departed animal. It was the first time I had ever seen these footprints, and my suspicions were indefeasible. Here was I now, it seemed, on the point of meeting face to face that monster of whose ferocity, strength, and cunning the natives had told me so much; an animal scarce known to the civilized world, and whose no white man before had harmed. My heart beat till I feared its loud pulsations would alarm the gorilla, and my feelings were really excited to a painful degree.

By the tracks it was easy to know that there must have been several gorillas in company. We prepared at once to follow them.

The women were terrified, poor things! and we left them a good escort of two or three men to take care of them and reassure them. Then the rest of us looked once more carefully at our guns—for the gorilla gives you no time to reload, and won't let him who he attacks! We were armed to the teeth. My men were remarkably silent, as they were going on an expedition of more than usual risk; for the male gorilla is literally the king of the African forest. He and the crested lion of Mount Atlas are the two fiercest and strongest beasts of this continent. The lion of South Africa cannot compare with either for strength or courage.

As we departed from the camp, the men and women left behind

1000

RESEARCH CODES: 0

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crowded together, with fear written on their faces. Miengi Makinda, and Ngolai set out in one party, and myself and Yeava formed another, for the hunt. We determined to keep near each other, that in emergency we might be at hand to help each other. And for the rest, silence and a sure aim were the only cautions to be given.

As we followed the tracks we could easily see that there were four or five of them; though none appeared very large. We saw where they had run along on all fours, the usual mode of progression of these animals; and where, from time to time, they had seated themselves to chew the cases they had borne off. The chase began to be very exciting.

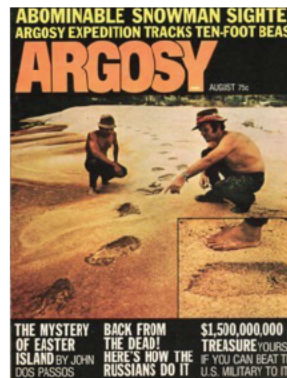
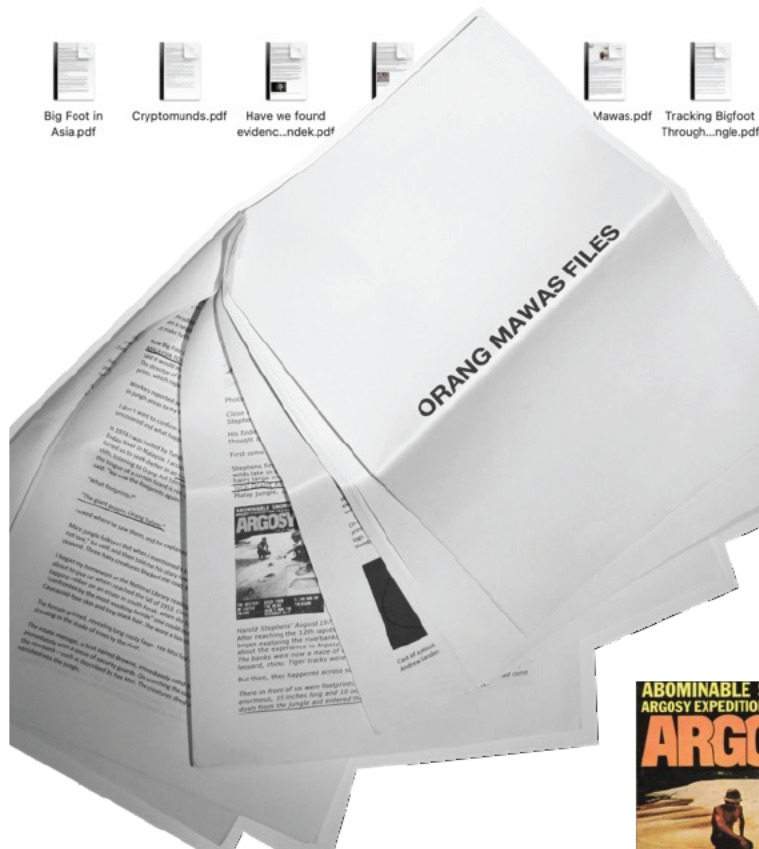
We had agreed to return to the women and their guards, and consult upon final operations, when we should have discovered their probable course; and this was now done. To make sure of not alarming our prey, we moved the whole party forward a little way to where some leafy bents, built by passing traders, served for shelter and concealment. And having here bestowed the women—who have a lively fear of the terrible gorilla, in consequence of various stories current among the tribes of women having been carried off into the woods by the fierce animal—we prepared once more to set out in chase, this time hopeful to catch a great one.

Looking once more to our guns, we started off. I confess that I never was more excited in my life. For years I had heard of the terrible roar of the gorilla, of its vast strength, its fierce courage, if, unhappily, only wounded by a shot. I knew that we were about to pit ourselves against an animal which even the leopard of these mountains fears, and which, perhaps, has driven the lion out of this territory; for the king of beasts, so numerous elsewhere in Africa, is never met in the land of the gorilla. Thus it was with no little emotion that I now turned again toward the prize at which I had been hoping for years to get a shot.

We descended a hill, crossed a stream on a fallen log, and presently approached some huge boulders of granite. Alongside of this granite block lay an immense dead tree, and about this we saw many evidences of the very recent presence of the gorillas.

Our approach was very cautious. We were divided into two

As of today, the Orang Mawas has taken on a different image. **Influenced by Western thinking and 'colonial erasure'** the Mawas has been warped into a creature resembling Western 'Bigfoot'. Adventure writers in the 60's and 70's, such as Harold Stephens, are partly to blame for this morphing and erasing of the original depictions of a 4-foot ape in the North of the peninsula.



Sungai Batu
Ancient settlement, where bones
were used to make kerises
Iron smelting industry from Sungai
Batu to Jeniang is around 1000
square km

Kuala Krai (2015)
Sighting by a hunter
5 feet



Hunting for Malaysia's 'Bigfoot'

By Jonathan Kent
BBC correspondent in Kuala Lumpur

Oleng Mawas (planning a trip)

Mawas	Location / Plan
located in wilderness (jungles) of north west Malaysia	find a way to stay / camp in the jungle. ↳ Kedah? (most Northern State)
Reports of Mawas in central regions (more remote)	Taman Negara is the largest rainforest in central Malaysia - translates to additional park - can I stay here?
(now) The suburbs of Kuala Lumpur are also famous for sightings	Fly to KL and spend time here. See what I can find out from talking to people
Good train routes up west coast between KL and Alor Setar. Need bus to reach TN.	

Hi MD,

I hope this message finds you well. I'm reaching out to inquire about the possibility of staying with you and helping set up your campsite in June. I'm hoping to stay for approximately 10 days, if that suits you, before continuing my travels through Malaysia.

I'm a friendly, hard-working 21 year old from the UK. I'm happy to assist you in any way necessary to set up your campsite, whether it be planting, clearing, or any other tasks that you need help with. Additionally, I'm a photographer by trade and would love to take photographs of your land and the construction process if that would be of interest to you. I also have knowledge of basic DIY, gardening and general maintenance that I can put to good use :)

I'm looking forward to learning more about you and what you're building, as well as the opportunity to spend time outdoors and with new people.

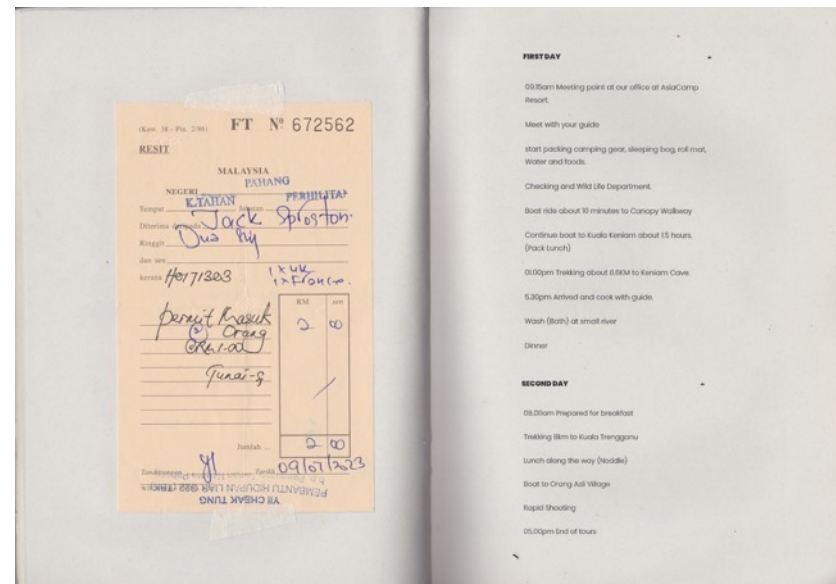
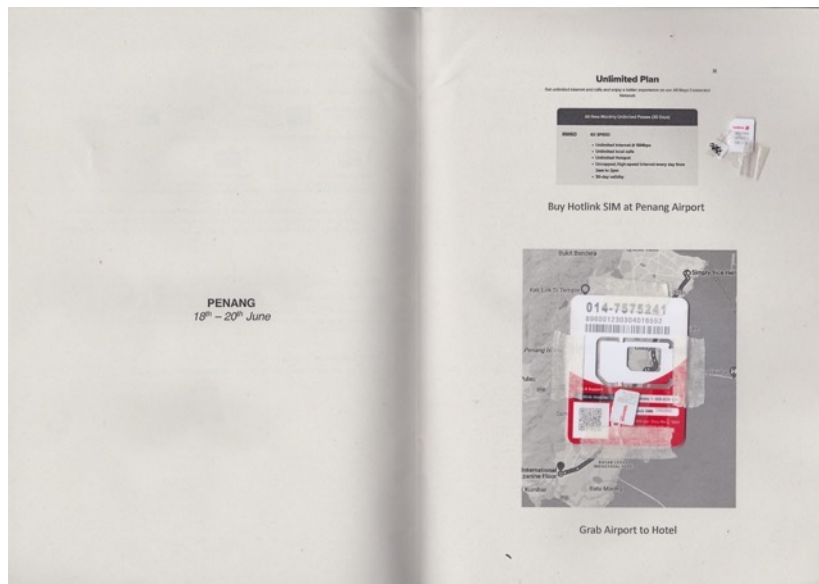
I noticed in a comment that you are able to pick up workawayers from a nearby city, which I am assuming is Alor Setar. Is this still possible, if I were to be there on June 21st?

Planning to Reality. Here you can see a page from my notebook taking my research and plotting potential locations Parker may have visited to observe the Mawas based on his research. The first location of this list is the jungle of Kedah.

The messages on the right show me reaching out to a man who owns a plot of land in the jungle in Kedah and would allow me to camp on it in exchange for helping to turn the land into a campsite.

Bat > Penang	18
2 nights in Penang Explore Georgetown	18-20
Penang > Alor Setar (Ferry then train) https://www.cometto.com.my/Penang/Alor-Setar	20
Picked up from Alor Setar and do 10 nights at Workway in Jungle	20-30
Alor Setar > Langkawi Island (Ferry C5)	30
4 nights on Langkawi Island Hotel 1 night Bed Airside Hotel 3 nights	30-4
Langkawi > Alor Setar > Kuala Kangsar Ferry then Direct Train	4
1 Night Kuala Kangsar	4-5
Kuala Kangsar > Suka Suka 90 Bus Kuala Kangsar Bus Terminal > Kampong Kuak	5
2 nights at Suka Suka Homestay	5-7
Suka Suka > Kuala Kangsar > Kuala Lumpur	7
1 night in Kuala Lumpur (Travel Lodge)	7-8
Kuala Lumpur > Kuala Tahan 888 Van (5.5 hours)	8
4 nights in Kuala Tahan exploring Taman Negara Homestay 2 nights (Jungle Bungalows) 201N Inner Jungle Tour Hotel 1 night	8-12
Kuala Tahan > Kuala Lumpur Transfer	12
2 nights in Kuala Lumpur Stu Cavee Free Entry	12-14
Kuala Lumpur > London	14

MALAYSIA HANDBOOK



Scans from a book I made before embarking on my trip which would allow me to keep track of where I intended to visit and on what dates. The book has since been reworked with ephemera and objects collected along the way.



Camping

The most obscure (but most important) part of the whole trip was the plan to camp in the jungle of Kedah for 10 days and nights, for I intended to shoot the majority of the film in this location. Through a long series of messages and organizing, MD (the man who owned the land) became my fixer, allowing me to camp on his land and create my project. He provided me with a tent, water, more than enough food, and we would regularly go to eat together in the local village restaurant.

Unexpectedly, when I arrived, I discovered I would be living here with three workers. Two from Indonesia and one from Sri Lanka. Despite, our obvious language barrier we became friends. One of them, named Tono, would fetch us all breakfast from the village each morning. It was unexpected encounters like this which provided me with a narrative for the film based on real events as well as the fictionalized plot of searching for Parker.



A high-contrast, black and white photograph of a person's face, mostly in deep shadow. The right side of the face is brightly lit, while the left side is in deep shadow. The word "Production" is centered over the face in a white, sans-serif font.

Production

The Wonderful Story of Henry Sugar (2023)



Wes Anderson has been a large inspiration for me throughout the entire development of the project so far. The way in which he tells stories through a combination of voices, both on and off screen will influence my storytelling. The decision to shoot in a 4:3 format was partly influenced by Anderson; hence I took inspiration from his framing and compositions in my own camerawork.

Michael (2022)



Bieke Derpoorter was a major inspiration for this work. In this film she narrates the story of her search for Michael using clues he left behind. The difference with this film is that it consists only of still photographs, sequenced to fit the spoken narrative. Despite the lack of moving image the film feels exciting, full of life and mystery. In my opinion, Depoorter manages to find the perfect balance between mystery and reality, something I strive to achieve.

Godland (2022)



Godland is another film of adventure and mystery. The way that characters drift in and out of the narrative will be an inspiration for my own film. The aesthetics of the 4:3 format and 8mm film have influenced the way in which I have shot, as well as the central framing of characters.

Grizzly Man (2005)



This Werner Herzog documentary film portrays the story of Timothy Treadwell. A character who has, in part, inspired the development of Norm Parker. The lone adventurer, holding beliefs outside of the societal norm. Herzog, uses Treadwell's own narration to propel the narrative using clips he shot in the Alaskan wilderness. In the same way, Parker's voice will be present through his writing and research.

Equipment

As I would be backpacking around Malaysia using public transport and staying in remote areas it was essential that I carry as little equipment with me as possible. Having said this it was still important that I should be able to capture high quality 4k footage for the film. The camera I decided to take with me was the Sony A7C. It is compact and lightweight, especially when paired with a 'pancake lens', which I also took two of – a 35mm prime lens and a 24mm prime lens. I did not take the large 24-70mm lens in this photograph, to save space in my bag. I would not be taking a laptop so I took 3 128GB SD cards to ensure I would have enough storage for a months worth of shooting. Finally, I took a small tripod to get steady shots and meant I could position myself within some of the frames.

Shot Planning

Before leaving the UK, I began to map out some idea for shots I would like to capture. With the trip being so changeable and with a lot of unknowns, it was impossible to plan specific shots. I decided to instead focus on shooting in three categories.

Performative (self)

Location

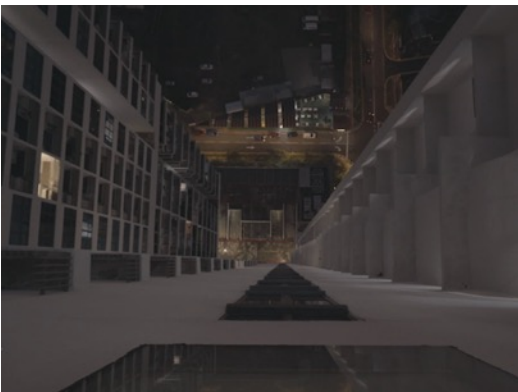
Characters

On the following slide I have sequenced a few of my shots into these categories.





Performance



Location



Characters

Missing in Malaysia

In a thrilling tale of adventure and intrigue, anthropologist and explorer, Norm Parker has disappeared during his expedition to the Malay Peninsula in search of an undiscovered great ape. Parker's background has long been shrouded in mystery with some reports suggesting he was born right here in Victoria. Despite his enigmatic past, Parker's vanishing act has caused quite a stir amongst the scientific community.

Three weeks ago, Parker began his audacious mission: the pursuit of an uncharted great ape rumoured to dwell within the lush jungles of the Malay Peninsula. This elusive primate, Parker claims has been prominent in local folklore for millennia and believes it neither fictitious nor extinct. Previous attempts to uncover it however have all bore fruitless.

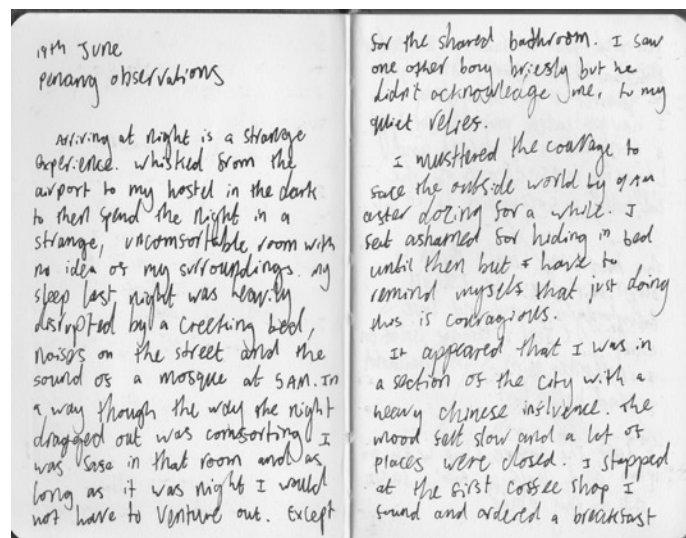
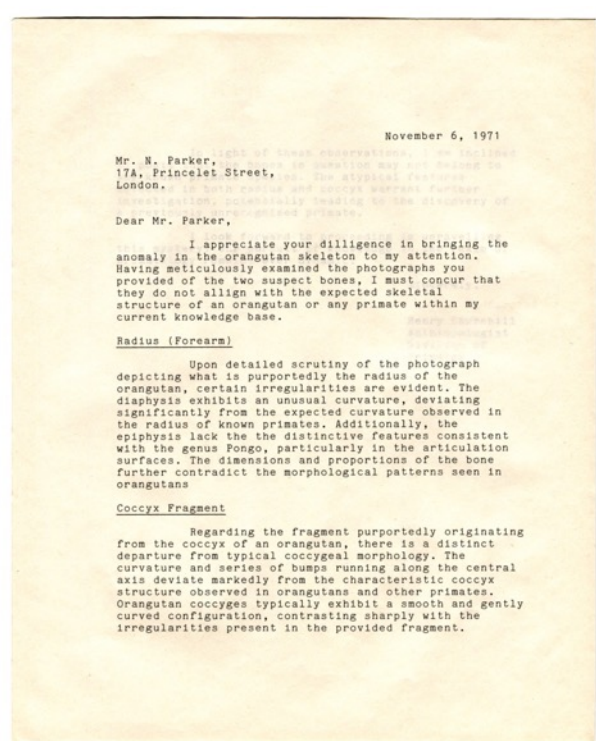
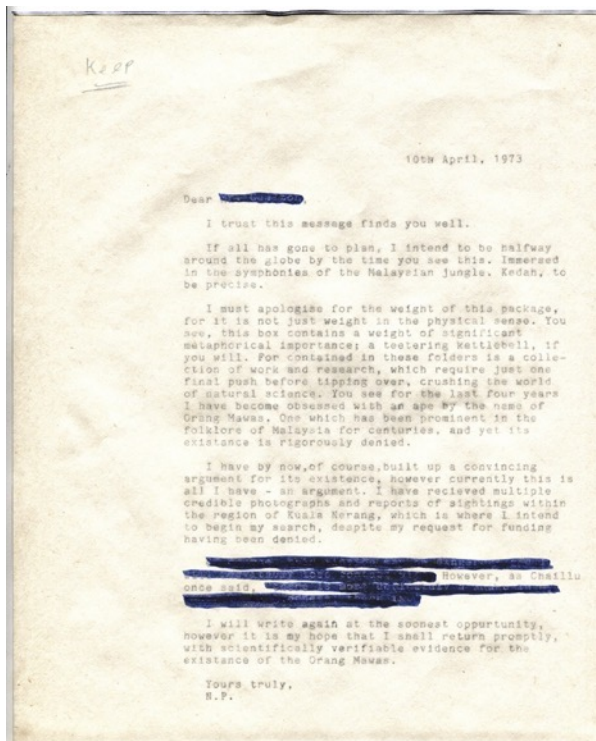
The expedition was not without its controversies, as Parker, branded a pseudoscientist by many in the world of academia, was denied funding by multiple institutes such as the RGS under the guise that his evidence lacked real scientific validity.

Having failed to secure any substantial funding, Parker went in alone. Now it seems his disappearance is leading some to question the true nature of his work. Search efforts, launched by local authorities, have so far yielded no significant leads. As the days pass, the enigma surrounding Norm Parker deepens, leaving the world to speculate whether the treacherous jungles have claimed him, or if there is a more mystifying story behind his sudden disappearance.

Relat- beh- of a exp- in li- its beh- con- or v- It m- tota- thir- dec- mo- retu- foll- imp- The- that- rela- the- beh- of a-

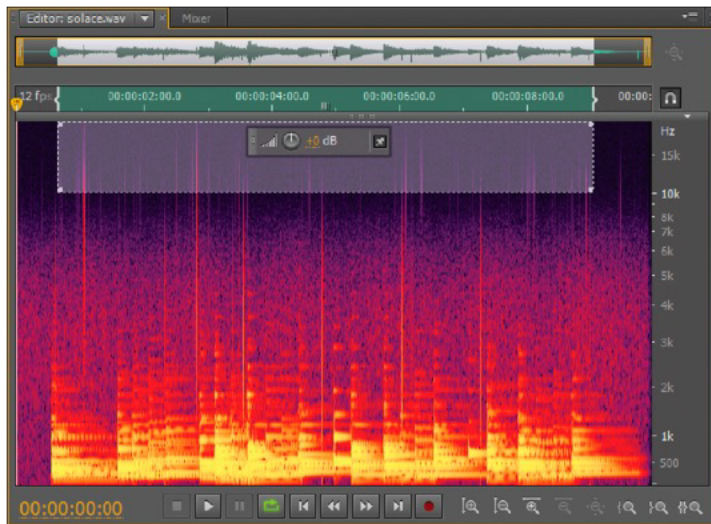
Writing has been a major part of the development of this project. Firstly, to introduce the backstory of Parker and the Orang Mawas at the beginning of the film I have created a series of 'artifacts' to provide substance to the narrative I am relaying. These artifacts take the form of newspaper clippings, letters and documents, all of which have involved me writing from various perspectives and as different characters, including Parker. The process of turning this writing into pieces of empirically believable evidence has required a lot of experimentation combining analogue and digital mediums, for example a typewriter, a scanner and photoshop.

The second type of writing which has been influential in the project is the journal I kept over the month I spent in Malaysia. The journal documents everything from innocuous events to unplanned conversations and meetings. It is these real experiences which have inspired the writing of the voiceover which will drive the fictional narrative along in the film.



Recording audio was a priority for me during the trip. Whether it be conversations I had with strangers or the sounds of monkeys babbling in the trees above my tent, it will all be important in the sound design of my film.

I started out the trip by recording audio using a microphone which plugged into my mobile phone. This was a decision based, again, on space restrictions but I also needed to be able to record easily and quickly, especially during fleeting conversations. The iPhone was perfect for this accessibility. When this microphone stopped working a few days into my journey I was forced to use the microphone built into my iPhone. Having gone back and listened to the recordings made with the iPhone compared to the microphone however there is very little difference in quality.



Jalan Raja Muda Musa 13 Jul 2023 01:55	Jungle sounds 26 Jun 2023 00:44	Evening at Campsite 22 Jun 2023 01:55
Hotel Rain Forest 12 Jul 2023 00:26	Indonesians on TikTok 24 Jun 2023 04:35	Campsite morning / durian falling 22 Jun 2023 04:17
Jerantut 11 Jul 2023 02:57	Fishing 5 23 Jun 2023 00:34	Workers on house 20 Jun 2023 01:16
New Recording 10 10 Jul 2023 04:36	Fishing 4 23 Jun 2023 01:05	Campsite tour and meeting workers 20 Jun 2023 08:23
New Recording 9 9 Jul 2023 09:22	Fishing 3 23 Jun 2023 00:40	Car with MD 20 Jun 2023 03:05
New Recording 8 9 Jul 2023 11:36	Fishing 2 23 Jun 2023 03:13	Wood Shop 20 Jun 2023 00:49
New Recording 7 9 Jul 2023 02:08	Fishing 23 Jun 2023 01:50	MD 20 Jun 2023 04:20
Petaling Street 7 Jul 2023 00:34	Camping raining 2 23 Jun 2023 00:35	Penang Botanical Gardens 19 Jun 2023 01:13
80s music in car 28 Jun 2023 02:00	Campsite raining 23 Jun 2023 00:55	Penang Coffee Shop 19 Jun 2023 09:51
Alor Setar Mosque 27 Jun 2023 06:29	Jitta 22 Jun 2023 05:07	Gurung Batur 6 Jun 2023 00:12
Man shooting monkeys 27 Jun 2023 02:20	Jitta 22 Jun 2023 04:34	Batur Volcano 6 Jun 2023 00:46
Heavy rain 26 Jun 2023 00:15	Convo at Jitta Restaurant 22 Jun 2023 10:20	Top of Batur Volcano 6 Jun 2023 00:48
Rain 26 Jun 2023 01:42		

Sequencing

Having collated all of my footage over the past few months I have begun to sequence it into 'chapters'. These collections of imagery began in a chronological linear way, appearing as things happened on my trip. However, over time I had to rearrange these clips in a way that created smaller stories within the overall narrative.

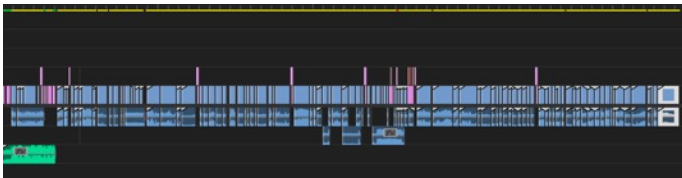
With performance being such a large part of the film, I wanted the opening sequence to be strong and feature the playful energy which would be present throughout the film. I had made crude instruments and 'equipment' whilst in the jungle, and I decided to feature a clip of me playing the 'trumpet' and 'xylophone' in the opening frames before providing some wider shots to give context as to where the film is located.

You can see an edit of the first experimental opening sequence here:

https://youtu.be/m8PPToYx_Bw

I then began creating a short sequence featuring some shots from the jungle which I could show peers and collaborators so as they could get a feel for what I have shot. You can see this here:

<https://youtu.be/uWfMyk5O5P8>





Alternative Imagery

Photographs made with the Sony A7C, with a 24mm prime lens.

As well as shooting moving image with the Sony, I also made photographs. After reviewing them, I feel that I perhaps focused too much attention on shooting moving image so that the still images became more a way of documenting my trip more than making photographs I would be comfortable exhibiting. Having said this, there are many successful images, including these two from my time in the jungle. The first is successful in capturing the character of a fruit farmer I encountered on my third day of camping. The second is an abstract image documenting the Channa fishing tale which will be featured as a chapter in the film.



Man, the fruit farmer who I met in the jungle of Kedah, posing with a rifle.



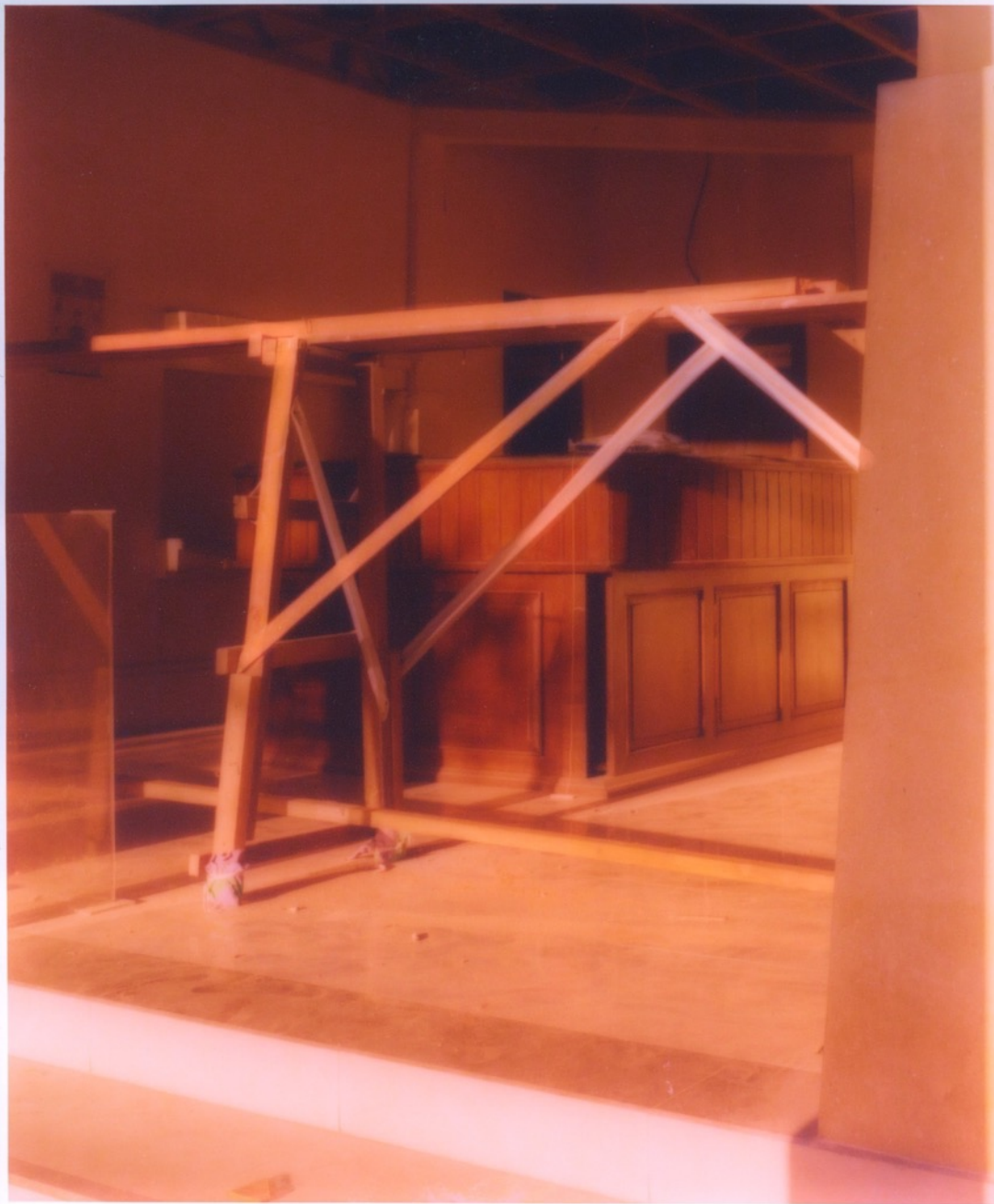
A plastic bottle filled with river fish that local men caught with their hands one night whilst camping in the jungle.



Darkroom Experimentation

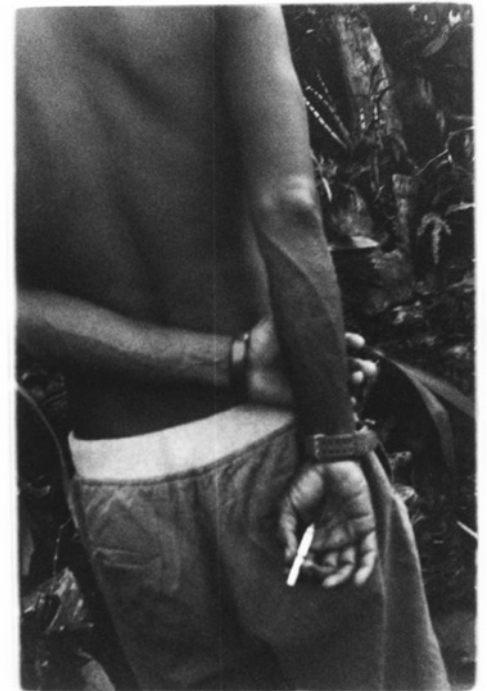
As well as digital photographs, I have also taken to the darkroom to develop my hand in analogue printing. I shot 5 rolls of film in Malaysia which I began working through when I returned to London. I started by scanning it all, so as to have the images digitally before working through the photographs and hand printing them in both the black and white and colour darkroom.

I employed various techniques. The first handprint of the rally car in Penang was a colour negative which I printed in the black and white darkroom. An experiment which I had to play around with to get right. The final print utilized the highest contrast level on the enlarger and a filed down negative holder in order to achieve a rough edge around the image. The same rough edge can be seen in the bottom print. This print is an example of fictionalising evidence in an analogue fashion. The photograph is of a 'Orang Mawas footprint'. By printing it in the darkroom it becomes more authentic as empirical evidence.



This colour darkroom print is an example of a different experimental darkroom process which involved projecting the image through a pair of skin-coloured tights stretched over the enlarger lens. This allowed me to achieve the glowing effect which is present in this image. It blows out both the highlights and the blacks giving a hazy feel to the print.

The image below is a classic black and white darkroom print. When printing recently I have been printing the whole image rather than cropping it with an easel. This is after the advice photographer Alex Messer gave me that if you print the full image every time you can always choose to crop it later.





This darkroom print is actually from a digital image. I have achieved this by using a technique which involves paper negatives. To make these I have inverted photographs on photoshop and inkjet printed them onto 80gsm paper. These paper negatives are then placed over a piece of black and white photopaper under the enlarger. Below you can see another standard black and white darkroom print with the notes made whilst printing.

post strips

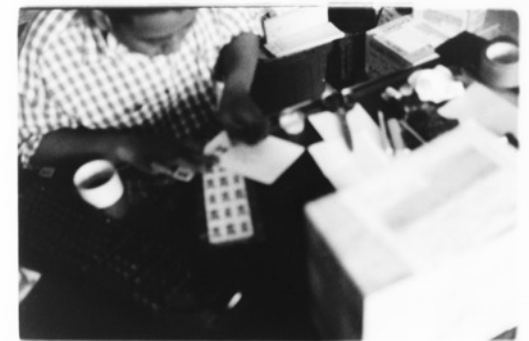
- p56, between 8-16 (increase contrast)
- 6, 8, 10, 12, 14 (increase contrast)
- papers checked but either way 10/12 w, 14 1/2 contrast

print

- 1) f.4 24secs 6 1/2
- 2) f.4 24secs 4 1/2 (4secs dodge)

MISPRINT - TOO LIGHT TRUNK

Final f.4 24secs 4 1/2 (slight dodge)





Midjourney Bot ✓ BOT 1/04/2023 22:34
 A color polaroid photo of a 25 year old explorer in the jungle in the 1970s. The photo should show the explorer, with fair hair and explorer hat wearing beige explorer clothing and holding a machete. He is standing far away in a clearing in the jungle visible through the foliage and you can see his whole body. The photo should be shot from 15 feet away from the subject in a documentary or photojournalistic style and be rendered in a style that mimics the look and feel of a polaroid photograph taken in the 1980s, with a square format, muted colors, and polaroid peel-apart borders with a light leak. --v 5 -



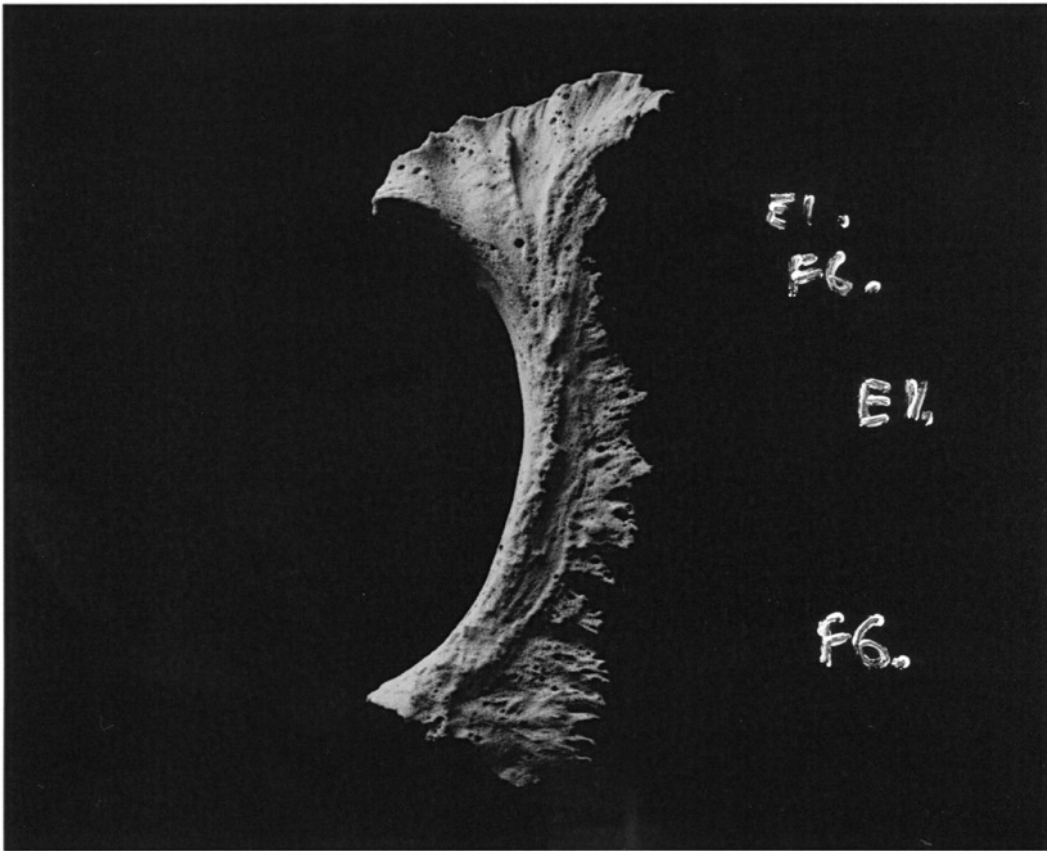
AI Imagery

Another element which will come into play within my film is a use of AI technology to produce imagery for the fictional narrative. All of this imagery has been generated using a range of prompts in the program Midjourney. This image is a portrait of 30-year-old Norm Parker on an expedition to Papua New Guinea in 1965. Generated via experimental text and image prompts, edited with photoshop, printed and written on and then scanned in again.



More AI Imagery

I have also used the same technologies to fictionalize evidence, which will appear throughout the film in various places. The photograph in the top right was 'taken by a local man in Kedah, depicting the remains of a Mawas'. The below image is a photograph of 'one of the bones from an Orangutan skeleton, sent to Parker by the British Museum'. Parker suspected the bone was an anomaly and actually belonged to the Orang Mawas. I have also generated imagery for fictional searches for the Orang Mawas. Using AI I can question the empiricism of the photograph and give visual evidence for the fictional story I am telling.



C0112.MP4

Movie

25.00 fps

00:39:37:23

00:39:47:12

00:00:09:15

00:39:37:23

00:39:47:12

Final Notes

Here is a link to a longer edit of the film, exported on the 15th of January. The edit is very rough and acts simply as a guide to how the footage may be sequenced within the chapters. The sound design and colour grading is still to be added. These sequences will inevitably change to work in tandem with a spoken narrative. I have exported a low-resolution version as I don't have access to the university fast computers right now. I recommend skipping through the edit quickly as it is currently 20+ minutes long.

<https://youtu.be/AWxMSQXdcUI?si=l0reCnf2TxhOX1Es>

My next steps will be to write and record a voiceover narrative and design the footage around this, interweaving more still photographs, AI imagery, fictionalized documents / evidence and sound recordings into the narrative. I will incorporate the voices of the characters I met during my trip so that they interject my own voice to tell the story. I also need a score for the film. For this I will work with musician and sound designer, Matt McConway to produce a soundtrack and mix.

Langwas_1 ⌵ Bin: Timelines Bin: Tam ⌵

Langwas_1.prproj

18 items

Lang 8 items Langkawi 29 items

64 items Journey to Camp 14 items

Full

15:00 00:12:30:00 00:12:45:00 00:13:00:00 00:13: