



OPERATION KINGPIN

27 MINUTES AT SON-TAY

[VIEW TRAILER](#)

"We are going to rescue 70 American prisoners of war, maybe more, from a camp called Son Tay. This is something American prisoners have a right to expect from their fellow soldiers. The target is 23 miles west of Hanoi."

-Colonel Arthur "Bull" Simons"

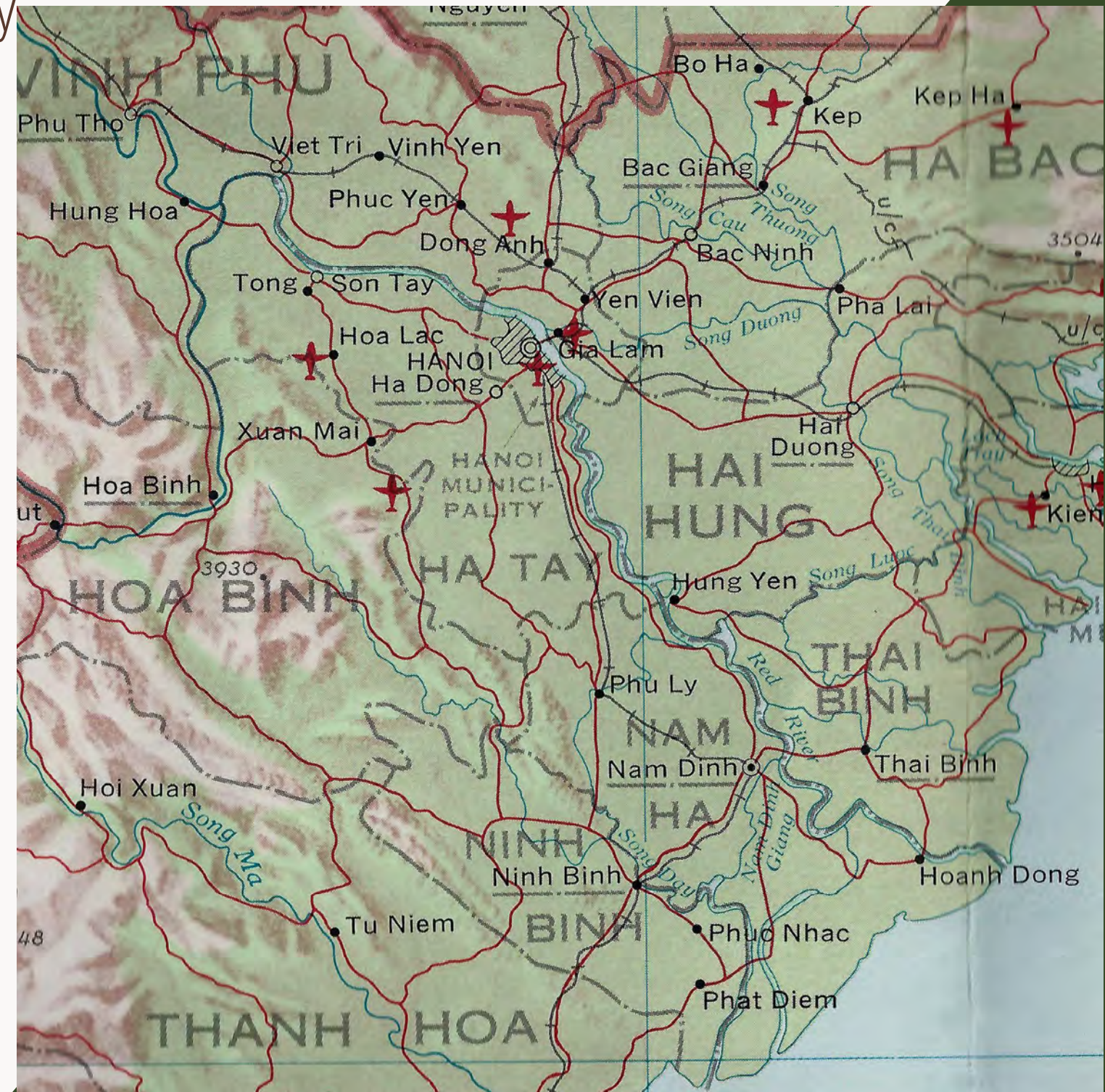
OVERVIEW

“WE HAD NO PROBLEMS GOING IN. COMING OUT WAS A DIFFERENT STORY.”

Operation Kingpin lasted for just 27 heart-stopping minutes. 61 American prisoners of war were being held at the Son Tay Prison Camp just outside of Hanoi. For months, U.S. Special Forces gathered intelligence, made plans for rescuing the prisoners, and trained meticulously for every contingency.

On November 21, 1970, U.S. Special Forces soldiers and airmen executed a swift and stunning raid of the Son Tay prison camp with zero American casualties, while three Navy carriers executed the largest night carrier operation of the entire conflict to suppress the enemy air defenses. The Raiders were 23 miles from Hanoi, within 5 miles of 112,000 N.V.A. regulars, and flying into the teeth of the most heavily defended airspace in the world. Not a single prisoner was found. Despite this, the raid stands as one of the most significant operations in modern military history.

Kingpin: 27 Minutes at Son Tay is the true story of the Raiders the way the Raiders want it told; a thoughtful, compelling first-person account of the planning and execution of a never before attempted rescue mission into the heart of enemy territory.



RELEVANCE

WE ARE STILL A COUNTRY AT WAR.

Throughout the history of our young nation, we have seen our military go bravely into battle, armed with courage and willing to make the ultimate sacrifice. Even more so when they go to rescue their comrades. We are still very much a country at war and these values resonate more than ever.

Practically speaking, the Son Tay Raid is a roadmap for most modern-day special forces operations, including Seal Team 6's historic capture of Osama Bin Laden and the more recent Delta Force raid on ISIS Leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. An in-depth analysis of the events of Nov. 21, 1970 as told by the original participants will continue to benefit current and future leaders of our nation's fighting forces.

It is imperative that we take the opportunity to tell this story in the voice of the original Raiders, so time is a critical factor as members age.





VISION

Rather than a glorified, romanticized vision of war, or a bloody fast paced sequence of death and destruction, Kingpin: 27 Minutes at Son Tay is a thoughtful, compelling account of the extensive planning and execution of a near suicide mission into the heart of North Vietnam.

The film is structured in a chronologically and geographically linear movement, using both the interviews themselves as well as additional images, maps, and facts detailing the sequence of events before, during, and after the raid to provide context as needed.

Not only will the Raiders themselves provide most of the storytelling, Kingpin also utilizes the extraordinary knowledge and insight of professional soldiers who studied the events of November 21, 1970 to discuss lessons learned in the light of current and future conflicts.



COLONEL ARTHUR “BULL” SIMONS

“ You are to let nothing, nothing interfere with the operation. Our mission is to rescue prisoners, not take prisoners. And if we walk into a trap, if it turns out that they know we’re coming, don’t dream about walking out of North Vietnam-unless you’ve got wings on your feet. If it happens, I want to keep this force together. We will back up to the Song Con River and, by Christ , let them come across that God damn open ground. We’ll make them pay for every foot across the sonofabitch.”

TO A MAN, EVERY SOLDIER KNEW THAT TO BE CAUGHT MEANT
CERTAIN DEATH. AND YET, STILL THEY WENT

MISSION CRITICAL NAVY ROLE



PHOTO: USS RANGER.

With Typhoon Patsy barreling down on the North Vietnamese coast, carriers Ranger, Oriskany, and Hancock mounted the largest night carrier air operation of the war in a massive and ultimately successful air defense diversion & suppression operation in Haiphong Harbor, with the Oriskany sailing at top speed across the Pacific Ocean on a moments' notice to support the mission.

The operation, initially involving twenty A-7 Corsairs and A-6 Intruders launched in rolling seas and only dropping flares, prompted a frantic air defense reaction, providing a highly effective diversion for the raiders and completely saturating the North Vietnamese air defense system. Over the Gulf of Tonkin, twenty-four other Naval aircraft in thirteen orbits provided support and protection. Ultimately, three carriers and 59 aircraft were involved in the support of the Son Tay Raid.

US AIR FORCE MISSION

"ONLY THE UNITED STATES COULD DEVELOP
A CAPACITY TO FLY TO THE OUTSKIRTS OF HANOI
AND THEN FREE ITS PRISONERS."



The United States Air Force provided a total of 57 in support of the Son Tay Raid. The primary strike force consisted of 13 aircraft, including the highly classified Combat Talon, multiple HH-53s, and one H3 designated for a controlled crash landing into the compound itself.

After flying 1000+ accident free hours in training, two strike forces departed in the late hours of Nov. 20, flying in a virtually unheard of close hold formation with both fixed and rotary wing aircraft, and pushing the performance envelope of all.

Both strike forces flew undetected to hit time on target within seconds, and remained in the area to safely evacuate all raid participants in a hail of surface to air missiles.

VIDEO SHORTS

The Approach Flight: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oSQpcMa8ns0&feature=youtu.be>

A POW's Story: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ns0RYU96MsU&feature=youtu.be>

The Briefing: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uByWVaDtIYQ&feature=youtu.be>

Roll Call: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uxesbwqokCI&feature=youtu.be>

Moment Before Battle: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7bRz8DhTVDg&feature=youtu.be>

The Secondary School: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ICVDEr00dMo&feature=youtu.be>



VA-113 A-7E on deck of USS *Ranger* 1970–71

TARGET AUDIENCE

“ WE HAD ABOUT A 50% CHANCE
OF SURVIVAL.”



Our primary target audience is threefold: First, we are targeting the approximately 610,000 Americans who served on land in Vietnam or in the air over Vietnam between 1954 and 1975 still alive today, and an additional 164,000 Americans who served at sea in Vietnam waters.

Second, Son Tay highlights the incredible skill and resolve of Special Operations units, units who still deploy over 72,000 people home and abroad, a secondary audience with great potential for academic and training application.

Finally, we view the 2.77 million service members having served in Iraq and Afghanistan since 2001 as a significant part of our potential audience.



TARGET AUDIENCE CONTINUED:

Based on those numbers, there is a significant primary target audience for Kingpin. As a whole, they possess the funds to make a purchase, have authority to make decisions, and exist online in easily reachable platforms.

We will find and develop this audience using targeted social media ads aimed at our core audience, then expanding through veteran groups, military-centric nonprofits, and military-related cultural and educational institutions, starting with the Military Heritage Museum in Punta Gorda, FL, to share the story. This model has been proven by The Hornet's Nest, and we are working with their producers to expand on their current business model.

MARKETING STRATEGY



“WE WERE TO LET NOTHING INTERFERE WITH THE MISSION.”

We currently have verification from film sales agent Billy Sorrentino at Karbonshark that our film is highly suitable for the streaming, VOD and TV windows that currently dominate the documentary film distribution landscape. Additionally, we plan to print DVDs and Blu-Rays to sell online, at screenings and as fundraisers for various military-focused nonprofits. While a major studio theatrical release is not ideal for our film, we plan to utilize a community screening model to bring the film to theaters near military bases around the country. We are also working to find a partner in a private military museum where the film will reside for public consumption in perpetuity.



DISTRIBUTION

We have also identified the following film festivals as “high value targets.” We’ll submit and screen at them prior to our community screenings in order to generate buzz along with social media campaigns tailored to our core audience - veterans and active duty military personnel.

1. San Francisco Veterans Film Festival
2. 29 Palms Military Film Festival
3. GI Film Festival San Diego
4. Omaha Film Festival
5. San Diego International Film Festival
6. Inspire Film Festival
7. Austin Film Festival
8. RISE Film Festival
9. Los Angeles Web Series Festival
10. Sundance Film Festival
11. Newport Beach Film Festival
12. Flyway Film Festival
13. Branson’s Annual Military Film Festival
14. Chicago International Film Festival
15. The LA Film Festival
16. Veterans Film Festival (VFF), Australia
17. Portland Film Festival
18. American Documentary and Animation Film Festival
19. Big Sky Documentary Film Festival
20. Play-Doc International Film Festival

SOCIAL IMPACT

The desired overall impact of Kingpin is to inform targeted audiences about the Son Tay Raid, the experience of the individual Raiders, and the subsequent historical impact on both US and international Special Operations.

Veterans are active and vocal online. By making a film that pays testament to the precision and greatness of the Raiders, their word of mouth approval will directly increase both engagement and impact. We want all viewers to appreciate the dedication and skills required by US military members to conduct the joint, multi-service operation in defense of the United States. We want to make the average American aware of the far-reaching impact of this and other great clandestine military operations.

The Son Tay Raid's greatness lies in the fact that it brought together the separate branches for a greater purpose: to fulfill the pledge of "no man left behind." We want to honor these men, disdained by civilian peers as they returned from the humidity and horror of Vietnam. We want to name them, and tell their stories, connecting them to the veterans and servicemen from the most recent conflicts still struggling to re-acclimatize to the civil society they sacrificed so much to keep free.

"WE ARE GOING INTO NORTH VIETNAM.
A POW CAMP.
IT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO."



An aerial photograph of a military helicopter, likely a Chinook, flying over a vast, open landscape. The helicopter is positioned in the upper half of the frame, with its main rotor blades blurred due to motion. The landscape below is a mix of green and brown fields, with some small structures visible in the distance. The sky is a clear, pale blue. A semi-transparent pink rectangular box is overlaid on the center of the image, containing the text.

PRODUCERS

OUR PRODUCTION TEAM BRINGS A DISTINCTIVE
COMBINATION OF BOTH EXPERIENCE AND
KNOWLEDGE IN FILMMAKING AND THE WORLD
OF SPECIAL OPERATIONS.



JOHN "STAN" STANFIELD: EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

During Stan's 20-year Army career, he served as a non-commissioned and commissioned officer, leading soldiers during both peace-time and combat. He had duty assignments in Europe, the United States, Central America, and the Arabian Gulf, and served in the Fifth Special Forces Group (Airborne), with Navy SEAL Team 5 at sea, and as a Strategic Intelligence Officer for the Supreme Allied Commander Europe and Commander USSTRATCOM.

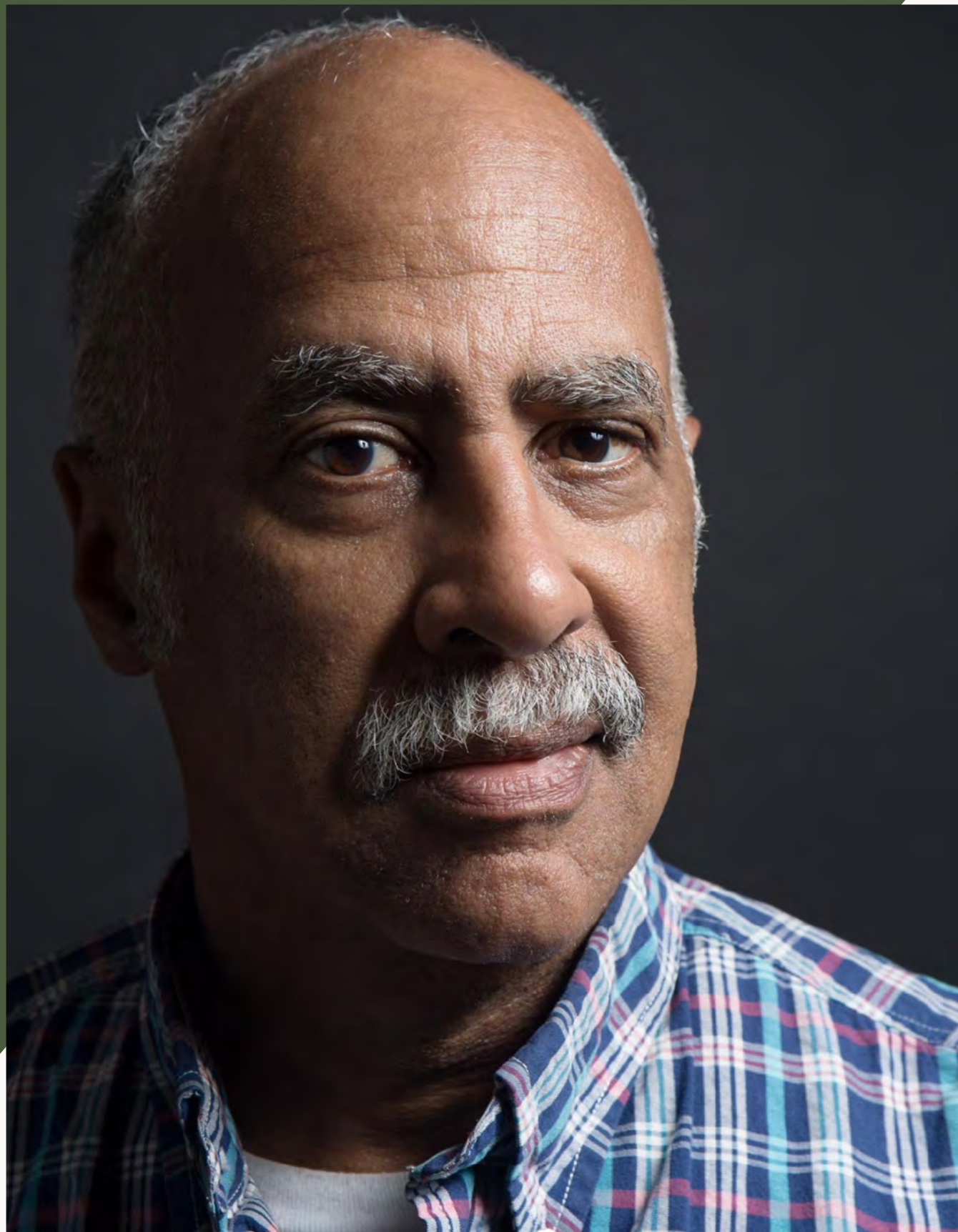
Stan founded Gepadeux Media, LLC in 2016, overseeing every aspect of operations, profitability, and strategic planning. As Executive Producer he leads, guides and directs the production and distribution of motion pictures and videos. He is a graduate of the Omaha Film School, novelist, screen writer, actor, film director and producer. He has produced advertisements, a short documentary for the Department of the Interior and has completed the promotion and distribution of a feature film on behalf of the U.S. Army.



EHREN PARKS: PRODUCER | DIRECTOR

Director & Producer Ehren Parks holds MFA degrees in writing from The New School (Fiction) and UCLA (Screenwriting). He's worked as a writer and producer for ESPN, Fox Sports, TruTV, IMAX, the Baseball Hall of Fame and The Gates Foundation. Parks wrote and produced *My Life in China*, the award-winning documentary that premiered on World Channel's America ReFramed.

He's won the UCLA Screenwriter's Showcase and fellowships from The Smithsonian Institute and National Association of Theater Owners. Currently, he is an instructor of screenwriting at College of Communication, Fine Arts And Media, University of Nebraska Omaha.



DANIEL SMITH: PRODUCER | WRITER

Daniel W. Smith served a total of 33 years in the US Army and Civil Service. After enlistment, Dan served in the 5th Special Forces Group and later commissioned as an Intelligence Officer, with follow on qualifications in the Infantry Branch and subsequently Special Forces. He served as an Infantry Brigade S2, a Special Forces Company Commander, and G2 of the 29th Light Infantry Division, to name a few. In the civil service, Dan represented the US Army on National and DOD committees tasked with developing security policies, exploitation training, research, and development of technology for system capabilities to support tactical and national operations.

Dan holds a MFA in both Screenwriting and Producing from the New York Film Academy in Los Angeles. He is currently in post production for three documentaries highlighting the refugee and migrant crisis in Europe. Kingpin was born of Dan's connection to Pat St Clair, one of the Son Tay Raiders, with whom Dan served in Iraq and Horn of Africa.



MOLLY HUGGINS: ASSOCIATE PRODUCER

Molly Huggins is a 14-year veteran of the Army National Guard, former helicopter pilot, and work-at-home mom to four children ranging in age from 12-4. She has lived the Army life in some form or fashion since the age of 18, joining the TN National Guard at 18 as the first female armament technician ever in the state and completing flight school to become the second female attack pilot in the state.

Now, as a media savvy communications expert with superb writing, editing and design skills, Molly is a storyteller at heart with an artist eye for color and balance. She has years of experience writing across industries in a variety of voice. She is obsessed with grammar, word choice, and policing unnecessary adverb usage. Most recently, Molly has been teaming up with nonprofits and documentary filmmakers to write grant and funding proposals. Her mission is to find out who is making the world better and make that known most effectively.

KEY PERSONNEL



ALEKSANDAR MARINOVICH: EDITOR

Aleksandar 'Al' Marinovich is an editor specializing in documentary content. His work has been shown at film festivals nationwide, including Outfest Film Festival Los Angeles, DOC NYC, Woodstock International Film Festival, UCLA Spotlight, Red Hook International Film Festival, Culver City Film Festival, and has been distributed internationally. He received his B.A. from Hampshire College and M.F.A. from UCLA's School of Theater, Film and Television.

Legal Counsel: Mike Echternacht
<http://meemlegal.com/>

Accountant: Aaron Rubenstein, LA Tax Service
<https://www.lataxservice.com/>



BRYAN SARKINEN: CINEMATOGRAPHER

Bryan is a New York City based cinematographer whose clients have ranged from HBO to Netflix to CNN Films. He is a graduate of NYU with a joint degree in Film Production and Journalism and is noted for having created a movie interview show "The Final Cut" that aired nationally on college campuses, as well as being hip-hop star P. Diddy's personal camera man. Bryan just completed working on Erin Lee Carr's "At the Heart of Gold" and "I Love You, Now Die: The Commonwealth vs. Michelle Carter."

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OPERATION KINGPIN

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