

# Breakfast for Makhanda

The Battle of Grahamstown 1819



A 55 minute dramatised historical documentary

Proposal for the NFVF/Netflix/ Micro Budget Films Project.

**Stream two:** Films @ R6,000,000 Cap: Only eligible for established filmmakers with a minimum of two features [Tier 2 talent]

7 May 2021

Proposed by  
Philip Copeman

Supported by  
Danny Petersen  
Emiliano Gilardi  
Patience Stevens

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## **Brief project summary**

### **Proposition**

Written African history is colonial history. Usually written by journalists in England and Europe, they visit Africa and then pen a colonial history that simply relegates the local population to spectators in their own history. There is little to no history that is written by Africans. Over the last generation, this has begun to be replaced by a narrative that depicts African history as a 400-year struggle of black against white.

Neither of the above is true. African history consists of a rich tapestry of civil conflict and personal ambition. *Breakfast for Mkhanda* takes the monumental Battle of Grahamstown and shines a new lens on our history, which proves to be even more interesting than the current stereotype narratives, struggling to make sense of a web of intrigue.

Piloted at twenty-one minutes, *Breakfast for Makhanda* is easily expanded to fifty-five minutes. If this episode is successful then it creates a template for ten to thirty stories that highlight our history.

### **Logline**

It is indeed history's irony that 200 years ago, White South Africa was saved by a penal unit consisting predominantly of Africans.

### **Synopsis**

Two hundred years ago, on 22 April 1819, in the now sleepy village of Grahamstown, a battle was fought that would, have a profound effect on the history of South Africa.

Some historians have described this as the most important battle of 19th Century South African history, it foretells events like the Battle of Blood River (1838) and the Battle of Rorkes Drift (1879). The Afrikaners launched a National Holiday to commemorate Blood River and 6 Victoria Crosses were awarded for British heroics at Rorkes Drift. In British military history records, Grahamstown is written up as little more than a skirmish. No accolades for the victors of Grahamstown? In due course, this story will explain why.

Makhanda came as close as any Xhosa or any African leaders after that, to sweeping the Colony back from the Frontier. Had he succeeded South African History could have turned out differently. Had Makhanda succeeded at Grahamstown, the Settler immigration would not have secured its first foothold. This was the last time that a possible radical change in direction in South African history could have been engineered by indigenous inhabitants.

British racism dominated the Royal African Corps. At the Battle of Grahamstown, 45 troops and 400 militia saved the Empire in South Africa, but they were servants, thieves and deserters and

worse - they were Black! For their victory, against overwhelming odds at Grahamstown, no medals were awarded and The Royal African Corps was disbanded in 1821!

## **Genre**

The Genre is dramatised historical documentary. Ken Burns movies of American history are a good guideline, However this is 2021. Greenscreen technology, simple animation and video overlays have made it possible to create a far bigger exposition on a far smaller budget.

The film will collage, original footage of the historical areas; interviews with historical experts, greenscreen simulations, stock images with small groups of extras, and cameo parts. The plot will be driven by a percussive original music score.

## **Target Market**

The target market is Netflix viewers who have an interest in history, African history, black history, colonial history.

## **Motivation**

Philip Copeman - I am an avid student of nineteenth-century South African history and fan of film maker Ken Burns. . When I saw that the double centenary of the Battle of Grahamstown was going uncelebrated, I spent the Easter weekend researching the battle and found out astounding facts. We have buried our history in a cloud of racial prejudice and completely missed the rich fabric of characters involved.

I have a thirty-year successful career in software production and have worked two years in Television production. I work on the financial sides of the business and I am familiar with International tax standards In particular I have worked with the old 11(bis) incentives for movie making and I was involved in the parliamentary drafting of 11 (d) research incentives.

Film making is remarkably similar to software production. It is dependent on a good script and the logistics of implementing the production. It shares the same barrier to entry. Costs are upfront and revenues are stochastic and long tailed.

Dramatized South African history is a wonderful opportunity to develop young talent on small budgets. I have intentionally given myself a small roll in this production, Script and budget control. I see this proposal as a means to debut both Gilardi (Direction ) and Daniel Petersen (Musical Score). Gilardi is 35 and Petersen is 19. I am there to mentor them and ensure that this is a successful production.

I have known Patience Stevens and closely watched her production output for 20 years. She has the capital resources, staff and suppliers, to create a quality product with post-production.

The vast majority of this budget goes to young South African film workers.

## Full Script

Pilot Script is to be found at

<https://www.turbocash.net/pages/breakfastformakhand/>

Included is a pilot video. (21:46)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6xxQ4MHtsU>

The script and pilot video were developed single-handedly by Philip Copeman over the Easter Weekend, 2019. This was done on a simple PC and used no filming or complex editing. It should be taken as a story board and **not as an indication of final product quality**. The script is original, but the pilot makes liberal use of google image searches and will certainly attract copyright attention. The pilot is not meant for general release and is only for evaluation and proposal purposes.

- i) The script will be developed further to 55 Minutes (simple extension – adding back what was cut to make the pilot)
- ii) The video will be shot with original and public licenced material
- iii) The sound track will be originally composed and performed.
- iv)



## CVs of the key creatives

Producer Philip Copeman

Writer [Philip Copeman](#)

Scriptwriter, production and research

Director [Emiliano Girbali](#)

Emergent Director with two years commercials experience.

Chosen for his skill in art direction and period styling

Music [Danny Petersen](#) [Video](#)

Petersen will be assisted by his father, Danny Petersen Grammy award winning Musician and producer. [World Record](#)

Post Production [Patience Stevens](#) [Video](#)

Award winning and prolific producer, Creator of Top Billing and the InsiderSA , Patience owns her own camera rigs, production studios, editing stations and brings the staff and experience to post produce a truly African documentary.

Cast will include three eminent history professors/scholars from UCT, Rhodes in interview format

Extra/cameos, 5 each ( four males one female), Xhosa, Khoisan Afrikaners, English Settlers

Voice overs - to be provided by Patience Stevens from her extensive supplier network.



## **Letters of intent**

### **Musical director**

"I am an emergent musical producer. I am a competent drummer, percussionist and electronic composer.

I am most pleased to work on producing a percussion-centred score using modal music and digital and original percussion using African instruments for Breakfast for Makhanda. I will use as a guideline the score of award winning 1917 and the moods of the pilot.

I was the youngest South African student to be accepted at an SA university. I am currently enrolled in Film studies in New York and I work remotely based in Johannesburg. I recently completed a world record non stop percussion with my father, 12 hours playing mostly my own compositions.

In 60 days I am confident we will produce a world class score which we will offer full rights for use in further episodes. This will have myself on percussion supported by local musicians, including my father the grammy winning percussionist."

Danny Petersen

### **Director**

"I am an emergent director, I have been in the film industry for three years, producing international commercials. My core skill is artistic styling and production. This is my direction debut. I am happy that the budget and small cast will allow us to produce a genuine authentic period 1820 look.

Interviews and small back story scenes will not present any difficulty.

Two days studio shooting and a four day trip to Mkanada and the Eastern Cape will give us all the material required."

Emiliano Gilardi

**Post Production notes.**

Budget is acceptable. Will require audit of copyright images and production of original material with stock images to make up shortfalls.

Will require Full score and production materials delivered in advance. Post production and voice over mastering will take 14 days.

Patience Stevens



## Director's Treatment

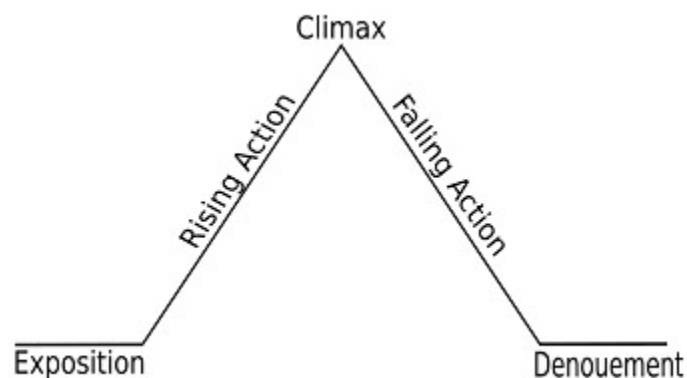
The [pilot](#) gives a solid overview of the production. The script content needs to be reduced and delivered slower. By adding backstories, pertinent musical interludes and expert interviews, this script will easily expand to 55 minutes.

We will need to replicate the fighting scenes with a small extra cast. Much can be done with video mixing to make a small cast to look like 10,000 warriors!

These will be done in studio in Cape town and/or Makhanda. I will expand on the Xhosa component of the Story. This will require original shots as there is little or no stock footage of this period.

We will spend time on digitising original nineteenth century etchings and drawings to create period consistency. I will personally oversee costume design and preparation of props.

Copeman's pilot lacks dramatic structure. I will formalise the structure of the story along classic dramatic lines, using the new original music score to create the necessary story divisions:



While the analogy of Ken Burns is an acceptable jump point, film production has moved on. The pace of the delivery will be much faster and use the imagery and idiom of African storytelling. A strong percussive score will hurry the action.

## Detailed budget

Included Spreadsheet - Amounts to be spent at pre-production, production, and post-production. and Cash Flow.

## Production schedule

The production will be completed within 60 days of agreement.

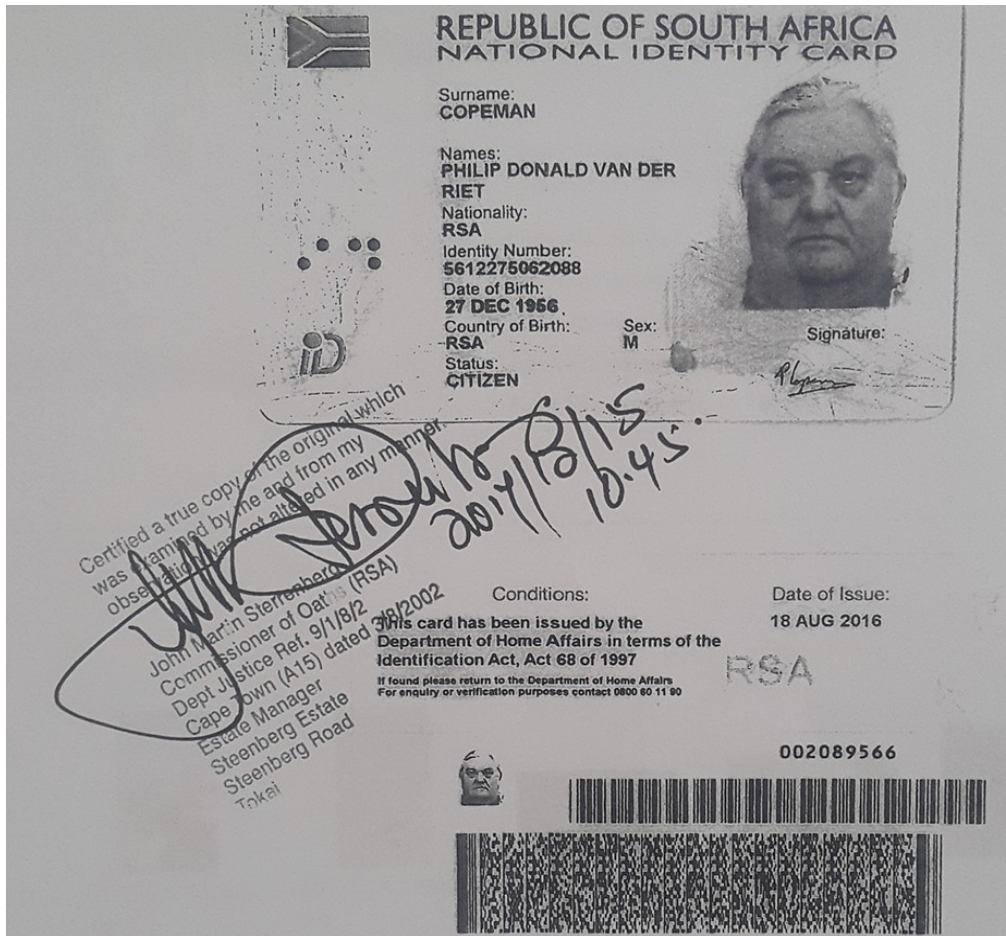
## Admin documentation

### Tax Clearance

My taxes are all up to date, I am fully compliant at SARS. This application and the production are done in my personal capacity. ID 5612275062088 Tax number : 0587071846

I have activated my status for 3<sup>rd</sup> party validation.

### Certified ID



### Company registration

The proposal is in the name of Philip Copeman. I am a sole trader, non vat payer and I am fully up to date with all tax owing. I have not previously had to apply for a tax clearance as all my projects are self financed. I have activated my tax status for 3<sup>rd</sup> party access to show compliance

## **BBBEE Certificate**

I am an SME trader (white male with suspect Jewish ancestry). With a turnover of under R1 Million pa, I am exempt for BEE credential purposes.

All other revenues will be paid to BEE compliant suppliers, the largest suppliers the project being Petersen and Gilardi, who are each BBE level one individuals.

The studio and production services will be provided by Patience Stevens who is BEE compliant

## **Bibliography**

Copeman

Turbocash.net (numerous training and music videos)

[www.turbocash.net](http://www.turbocash.net) – two million downloads in 80 countries, produced in 25 languages. Includes *Accounting Made Easy*, used to train hundreds of thousands of accountants, currently used at Rhodes University Mkhanda

[www.copemacademy.com](http://www.copemacademy.com) Training site for mathematics, includes numerous training videos

[Gods First Fishermen](#) – non fiction book on African Prehistory.

[Ogilvy](#) – A script for film production

[The New Normal](#) – A serial novel produced on Facebook (in progress)

Petersen – musical director

debut

Gilardi - director

debut

Patience Stevens – post production, Non executive producer.

Patience is the most prolific producer of magazine television in South Africa. Her participation in the project is to ensure quality output and provide the required production facilities in a single supplier contract.

Patience has a long history (25 years of [Top Billing](#)) and her recent works, *Tastemaster* and [The InsiderSA](#) using modern equipment is groundbreaking television and cinematography.

## Chain of title documentation

Contracts proving the acquisition of necessary rights (e.g. option contract, script writer's contract, music etc.).

This is simple. All work produced so far is the original work of Philip Copeman or uses public domain historical images. The copyright images used in the pilot will not be used.

The script is licenced as [Creative Commons](#).

Cast and contributors will be subject to standard contracts. (Provided by Stevens)

