

NEWS



NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC HONORS WW2 SOLDIERS OF COLOR WITH TWO NEW SPECIALS

ERASED: WW2'S HEROES OF COLOR, Executive Produced and Narrated by Idris Elba ('Hijack'), the Four-Part Series Reveals the Unsung Stories of People of Color Who Served During the War

THE REAL RED TAILS, Narrated by Sheryl Lee Ralph ('Abbott Elementary'), a One-Hour Special Exploring an 80-Year-Old Mystery Involving a Tuskegee Airman

Both Specials Premiere June 3 on National Geographic and Stream Next Day on Disney+ and Hulu

Trailer Here: <https://youtu.be/lnQMoBvzQeY>

(WASHINGTON, DC – April 17, 2024) Continuing National Geographic's 136-year record of giving viewers access to pivotal historical moments with new breadth and insight, the network will honor the contributions and sacrifices of overlooked Allied soldiers of color with two new specials on Monday, June 3. At 9/8c, **ERASED: WW2'S HEROES OF COLOR**, a four-part docuseries executive produced and narrated by **Idris Elba** ("Hijack"), will premiere, and **THE REAL RED TAILS**, a one-hour documentary narrated by **Sheryl Lee Ralph** ("Abbott Elementary") will kick off the evening at 8/7c. Both specials will stream the next day on Disney+ and Hulu.

Produced by October Films and **Elba's 22Summers**, **ERASED: WW2'S HEROES OF COLOR** uncovers the long-lost legacies of soldiers of color during World War II. This landmark series sheds light on the immense contributions of over eight million individuals who fought heroically for the Allied forces and whose stories have largely gone untold.

The four-part series weaves a blend of historical dramatizations with curated archival footage, bridging the past with the present to highlight new perspectives on established histories. The series showcases the personal narratives of soldiers through their never-before-aired oral testimonies and journal writings, along with powerful accounts from their descendants — stories

passed down the generations. These gripping and emotional testimonies transport viewers back in time to witness bravery unfold in WW2's iconic theatres of war.

Each episode focuses on at least three extraordinary heroes, from a 16-year-old New Yorker to an aristocrat from India:

- **“PEARL HARBOR”**

Premieres June 3 at 9/8c on Nat Geo, Streams June 4 on Disney+ and Hulu

This episode tells the story of three Black sailors who not only miraculously survived the attack on Pearl Harbor but also saved countless lives. Working as messmen below deck on segregated ships, hundreds of Black sailors fought for their lives as Japanese bombs hit, with some performing incredible acts of heroism. It took years before many of these men were properly honored after their return.

- **“D-DAY”**

Premieres June 3 at 10/9c on Nat Geo, Streams June 4 on Disney+ and Hulu

In this episode, we unearth the hidden heroes of the 320th Barrage Balloon Battalion who helped liberate Europe. These American soldiers were the only all-Black combat unit to fight on the D-Day beaches. After valiantly serving their country, they returned home, hoping for the Civil Rights Movement to secure change, only to find a country where their heroics in France were quickly forgotten.

- **“DUNKIRK”**

Premieres June 10 at 9/8c on Nat Geo, Streams June 4 on Disney+ and Hulu

This episode reveals the gripping story of Force K6, a little-known Indian regiment of mule handlers in WW2, with one unit destined to be pivotal in evacuating Allied forces at Dunkirk. Other units who were stranded or captured in Nazi-occupied France had to find ways to escape to safety. Later, their wartime experiences fed the fight to end nearly 200 years of colonial rule in India.

- **“BATTLE OF THE BULGE”**

Premieres June 10 at 10/9c on Nat Geo Streams June 4 on Disney+ and Hulu

This episode explores the untold story of the Black Panthers, an elite African American tank battalion. Unseen diaries and rare interviews chart the unit's action through France, Belgium and Germany, including in the bloodiest American battle of WW2: the Battle of the Bulge. Their experiences inspired not just the fight for civil rights in the U.S. but also battles for freedom worldwide.

Looking beyond the battlefield, **ERASED: WW2'S HEROES OF COLOR** reveals the profound link between the soldiers' wartime struggles and the rise of post-war-inspired movements for freedom that swept the globe. Both shows are a poignant testament to the soldiers' courage, a tribute to their sacrifices, and a powerful reminder that the fight for equality and recognition continues to this day.

ERASED: WW2'S HEROES OF COLOR is produced by October Films and 22Summers. For October Films, Johanna Woolford Gibbon, Jos Cushing, Matt Robins and Chris Muckle are executive producers. Sam Pollard is consulting exec producer; Annabel Hobley is co-executive

producer. For 22Summers, Idris Elba, Jamilla Dumbuya and Khaled Gad are executive producers. For National Geographic, Sean D. Johnson and Simon Raikes are executive producers. Charlie Parsons is senior vice president, Development, and Tom McDonald is executive vice president, Global Factual and Unscripted Content.

Preceding **ERASED: WW2'S HEROES OF COLOR** at 8/7c, **THE REAL RED TAILS** tells of the astonishing discovery of a P-39 airplane in Lake Huron, Michigan, reigniting a story lost to time and triggering one of the most important WW2 archeological missions in the Great Lakes. On the morning of April 11, 1944, Tuskegee pilot 22-year-old Second Lieutenant Frank Moody perished in what should have been a routine training mission when his plane malfunctioned and took a nosedive into the chilly waters. With unprecedented access, the one-hour special, narrated by **Ralph**, will take viewers on a journey to uncover the 80-year-old mystery of how and why Moody's plane ultimately went down. The special enlists teams of underwater archaeologists to recover parts of the downed plane for the first time and weaves in firsthand accounts from fellow airmen along with underwater footage from the wreck to give a final answer to the mystery.

THE REAL RED TAILS is produced by National Geographic's Yellow Border Production Services with Erin M. Reuss as producer, Jeanine I. Butler as executive producer, and Anna Derryberry as director of production. Melanie Sams is vice president of Production and Development for National Geographic.

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About National Geographic Content

Award-winning and critically acclaimed National Geographic Content, part of a joint venture between The Walt Disney Company and the National Geographic Society, creates and delivers riveting stories and experiences in natural history, science, adventure and exploration. The brand is the largest on social media with over three quarters of a billion followers across all major platforms that generate over one billion impressions each month. Inspiring a deeper connection to the world, National Geographic Content reaches 300 million people worldwide in 180 countries and 33 languages as a digital, social and print publisher and across the global National Geographic channels (National Geographic Channel, Nat Geo WILD, Nat Geo MUNDO), National Geographic Documentary Films, and direct-to-consumer platforms Disney+ and Hulu. Its diverse content includes Emmy® Award-winning franchise *Genius*, series *Life Below Zero* and *Secrets of the Whales*, and Oscar®- and BAFTA award-winning film *Free Solo*. In 2022, National Geographic Content was awarded eight News and Documentary Emmys, in addition to *Life Below Zero*'s Emmy win for Outstanding Cinematography for a Reality Program, its sixth Emmy overall. For more information, visit natgeotv.com or nationalgeographic.com, or follow Nat Geo on [Facebook](#), [X](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

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