Bios for Rory Marron

2-line bio:

Rory Marron is a ‘flags and gunsmoke’ historian and fiction author specialising in Japan and Southeast Asia. (www.rorymarron.com.)

Short Bio:

Rory Marron is a ‘flags and gun-smoke’ historian and writer. His doctoral thesis examined British foreign policy in Southeast Asia and relations with Japan immediately after World War II. *Black Sun, Red Moon: A Novel of Java* and *Merdeka Rising* are his first works of fiction. www.rorymarron.com

Medium Bio:

Rory Marron is an unrepentant ‘flags and gun-smoke’ historian. He was born in Lancashire, England. When he was 15 he emigrated to Canada with his family. Rory’s doctoral thesis examined British foreign policy in Southeast Asia and relations with Japan immediately after the Japanese surrender. He lived in Japan, working in the international sales section of a major Japanese company in Tokyo. His interests include Iyengar yoga, *kendo* and *tai-chi*. Rory works for much of the year in Portugal. *Black Sun, Red Moon: A Novel of Java* and *Merdeka Rising* are his first works of fiction. www.rorymarron.com

Long Bio:

Rory Marron is an unrepentant ‘flags and gun-smoke’ historian. He was born in Lancashire, England. When he was 15 he emigrated to Canada with his family. Rory’s doctoral thesis examined British foreign policy in Southeast Asia and relations with Japan immediately after the Japanese surrender. He lived in Japan for over ten years, working in the international sales section of a major Japanese company in Tokyo.

The creative spark that inspired *Black Sun, Red Moon: A Novel of Java* and its conclusion, *Merdeka Rising,* came from a short news article in the (London) *Daily Telegraph* newspaper. A single sentence mentioning the British use of surrendered Japanese troops to rescue mainly European civilian internees from camps in danger of attack by revolutionary mobs first amazed him, then fired his imagination. This astonishing but little known 'alliance' serves as the backdrop to his provocative and controversial story, which reverses the familiar roles of captor and captive in war-torn Southeast Asia.

The situation in Indonesia, the setting of the first, post-war, Islam-influenced nationalist revolution, was complex, tense and deadly. *Black Sun, Red Moon* (and *Merdeka Rising*) is

Rory's fictional take on many events that are a matter of record. In truth there was far more behind the war that began in Java in late 1945. It was a drama played out against a background of three dying empires (Japanese, Dutch and British); a resurgent Islam; a fresh, optimistic Asian nationalism that deeply unsettled the victors of the Second World War, those 'Great Powers'; all of which threatened the fledgling United Nations. The conflict was also a 'forgotten' or at least a largely 'ignored' war, certainly in Britain, where a war-weary populace did not want to hear of British soldiers still fighting. Rory's signal achievement is the weaving of historical and cultural detail in an enthralling, fast-paced adventure of revolution, forbidden love, betrayal and murder.

Rory works for much of the year in Portugal. His interests include Iyengar yoga, Japanese arms and armour and *tai-chi*. *Black Sun, Red Moon: A Novel of Java* and *Merdeka Rising* are his first works of fiction. www.rorymarron.com

Speaker Introduction:

Rory Marron describes himself as an unrepentant 'flags and gun-smoke' historian in a revisionist age. *Black Sun, Red Moon: A Novel of Java* and its sequel, *Merdeka Rising* are an ambitious, arguably controversial, interpretation of the remarkable, little-known and tragic events that took place in (now) Indonesia in 1945-46. Rory's doctoral thesis on Anglo-Japanese relations immediately after the Second World War provided the factual basis of his astonishing, even explosive, story. Many years living in Asia provided him with first-hand experience of the region and its people. Reviews have praised the fast pace of his writing and attention to detail. Certainly, his weaving of historical and cultural detail in an enthralling adventure of revolution, forbidden love, betrayal and murder thrills has surprised and shocked us in turn. He pulls no punches. His history is not black and white but a rumbling, disturbing and ominous grey. This effect has been described by one reviewer as 'role reversal' as readers are taken out of their 'moral comfort zone' and into 'thought-provoking territory'. Today we are very pleased to give a warm welcome into *our territory* to Rory Marron.