# Reminiscing the Legendary P. Ramlee through Data Visualization Technique

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## Article Info

## ABSTRACT

P.Ramlee is a nickname for Tan Sri Datuk Amar Teuku Zakaria bin Teuku Nyak Putih. He is an evergreen and legendary Malaysian film actor, director, singer, songwriter, composer, and producer. Although the films related to him are mostly black and white, they are still the favourite characters of today's youth. To this day, the jokes and the pieces of advice contained in his work are still relevant in the current society. Due to his great contribution to the film industry and music literature, he is regarded as a famous icon of Malaysia entertainment. Acknowledging his contributions, many research works have been conducted and reported in academic journals but most of these works concentrated on the literary perspective of his artefacts. On the contrary, this paper provides additional knowledge on interactive and dynamic visualization techniques of the P.Ramlee unstructured data. The output of the work presented in this paper provides a fundamental knowledge on the design and implementation for effective visual data analytics.

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## 1. Introduction

The name P. Ramlee is still popular even after more than 30 years of his death. His black and white films are still appreciated by young people for his relaxed, unpretentious, charismatic and

talented performances. In his short life, P. Ramlee produced a significant number of creative artefacts with content materials related to the culture, language and lifestyle of the Malays [1]. While acting in the films, he also sings in parallel to the themes and storylines of the films, thus his songs were embedded in his movies that shaped P. Ramlee's music[2]. P. Ramlee has composed and produced more than 300 songs during his musical journey [3]. Up to this century, there is no such person in Malaysia creative industry who can write scripts, act as comedian, perform drama, compose and sing songs as well as direct various films in relation to Malay ethnics.

In fact, P. Ramlee was one of Southeast Asia's most legendary filmmakers. He is considered a multi-faceted artist and has achieved the highest popularity in both Singapore and Malaysia between the 1950's and 1960's. His real name is Teuku Zakaria bin Teuku Nyak Puteh and was born in Penang, Malaysia. Later, he continued his professional career in Singapore. His talents and contributions to the development of cinema and other forms of art in Singapore and Malaysia are undeniably important. Even when he died young (at the age of 44 in 1974), he managed to direct 34 films and appeared in more than 60 films[4].

Using data visualisation techniques, this paper presents analyses of P.Ramlee 's performance. It aims to quantitatively highlight his accomplishments and gain insight into his legendary contributions in terms of patterns and trends. In relation to P.Ramlee 's works, the next section 2 briefly describes previous research on P.Ramlee film analysis. Then, Section 3 presents the methodology followed with the results and analysis presented in Section 4.  Section 5 gives the conclusion remarks.

## 2. Literature Review

The talented P. Ramlee has attracted many research exploring his creative artefacts in terms of themes, issues and social elements. For example, Aljunied[5], critically examined the content of his film called "Seniman Bujang Lapok" from the perpective of Malay entities. Barnard [6], explored the content of film "Ibu Mertuaku" in terms of the use of blindness as a plot in fairly melodramatic film. They highlighted that the plot was relatively common in tragic love stories, appearing in at least 12 films over a 14-year period. Furthermore, the work highlihts the underlying theme that Malays are facing as a threat from their traditional lifestyles to modernizing and demeaning style in Singapore. Similarly in [7], the reseachers investigated role and themes within selected contemporary Malaysian-Malay films that includes P. Ramlee's works.

Muthalib [8] studied the content of Malay directors and writers' films. He analyses how Malay films in Singapore are becoming more realistic about Malay society and modernity, which is perhaps best represented in the work of legendary filmmaker P. Ramlee. Between 1955 and 1957, he directed films that commented on Malays in a socially realistic way and emphasised the rural-urban divide. This work confirms long-standing stereotypes of scenarios between the rich and the poor as P. Ramlee used his films to depict the reality of ordinary Malays in Singapore. On the other hand, Teo [9] studied P. Ramlee's works in relation to finding historical legacy in film industry.

Uhde [4] examined realism as an undeniable element of P. Ramlee's film style, especially in his family dramas. He produced contemporary social drama which reflected the lives of common people and their everyday concerns. From his debut and throughout his entire artistic career, P. Ramlee, he mostly focused on the ordinary citizen. Thus, his films have affected the majority of common people hearts. Thus, attracting commoners was one of the secrets which contributed to the artist's enduring popularity.

Ching [2] examined P. Ramlee's musics and stresses that Western musical instruments, tonalities and harmonies were mainly used in his music. Moreover, through the use and infusion of rhythmic patterns and melodic patterns associated with these communities, his music was also localised to the tastes of the Malay, Chinese, Indian and Arab communities. He came to the conclusion that P. Ramlee's music embodies and expresses local identities that are already diverse in nature. Later, Johan[10] reviewed cosmopolitan sounds and intimate narratives in P. Ramlee's film music. While, Saperah and Mohamed[3] explore P. Ramlee's work in relation to musical instruments. They investigate the possibilities of a modern popular Malay music performed by a duo group, which consists of a flute and a guitar. Then, they examine the two closely related musical instruments: flute and guitar, in performing a new arrangement of music.

In short, most of the research on P. Ramlee's works were viewed from musical, cultural, historical and social perspectives on a content-based basis. The work that analysed the legendary

Ramlee's performance from the perspective of computer scientists, particularly through the use of data visualisation techniques, that is still missing.

## 3. Methodology

This work follows data visualization processes and techniques as established by Andy Kirk [11] that widely used in many fields[12]–[14]. The work divides the processes into two parts: the hidden thinking and the development of design solution. The hidden thinking part described in this paper are formulating brief and working with data. The development of design solution includes data representation, interactivity, annotation, colour and composition.

### 3.1 Formulating Brief

As an initial guidance, brief formulation requires projecting scenarios. This work proposes two scenarios. Firstly, is to present the accomplishments of P. Ramlee to Malaysians through the research perspective and secondly to pay tribute to a P. Ramlee narrative for The P Ramlee Memorial, Kuala Lumpur.

After determining the scenarios, it is important to put curiosities to be answered while exploring P. Ramlee data. The curiosities identified as follows:

- Curiosity 1: What is the total number of films cast, directed, and written by P Ramlee?
- Curiosity 2: What are the songs composed and sang by P. Ramlee?
- Curiosity 3: What are the awards and honours given to P. Ramlee?

The presentation of all visual presentations was designed based on these curiosities. Furthermore, one important step in formulating brief according to Andy Kirk is to construct a purpose map, which is to project the form of the final output. The purpose map of this project is depicted in Figure 1.

| | | Exploratory (highlight key finding) | | Exhibitory (in between) | Exploratory (help the viewer to find their own insight) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Sequence / Drama | Annotate / Describe | Display | Manipulate / Interrogate | Participate / Contribute |
| Reading | Efficient / Precision | | | ● | ● | |
| | | | | | | |
| Feeling | Emotive / Bit picture | | ● | | | |
| | | | | | | |

*Figure 1. The purpose map*

The output elements are:

- Explanatory: *Annotate / Describe* map with *Feeling (Emotive / Bit Picture)*
  This map is to to allow the people in this project to read the annotation on the visualization, which can trigger them to achieve to emotion.
- Exhibitory: *Display* map with *Reading (Efficient / Precision)*

This map is to allow the people in this project to see graphics presentation and read the description for the graphics for further understanding.

- Exploratory: *Manipulate/ Interrogate* map with *Reading (Efficient / Precision)*

This map is to allow the people in this project to explore the insights based on their personal curiosities.

### 3.2. Data Acquisition and Processing

There are four phases of work involved in this phased including data acquisition, data review, data transformation and data exploration. All possible information regarding P Ramlee's filmography, song lists, and P Ramlee 's Achievements & Honours were needed. The data was taken from P. Ramlee's Wikipedia (http://www.sinemamalaysia.com.my/) and online books on the history and bibliography of P. Ramlee. It was also taken from the Internet Movies Online Database (IMDb)[15], [16]. Figure 2 presents an example of data representation from the data acquisition.



# Laksamana Do Re Mi

| | |
|---|---|
| **Pengarah :** | Tan Sri P. Ramlee |
| **Syarikat Penerbit :** | Merdeka Film Productions Sdn. Bhd. |
| **Bahasa :** | Bahasa Melayu |
| **Klasifikasi :** | U - Untuk tontonan umum |
| **Tarikh Tayangan :** | 1972 |

**Pengarah**

Tan Sri P. Ramlee

**Lakonan:**

Tan Sri P. Ramlee : Do (Pelakon Utama)
A.R Tompel : Re (Pelakon Utama)
Ibrahim Din : Mi (Pelakon Utama)
Dayang Sulu : Puteri Buluh Betung (Pelakon Pembantu)
Mak Enon : (Pelakon Tambahan)
Osman Botak : (Pelakon Tambahan)
Bakar Kerinting : (Pelakon Tambahan)
Norizan : (Pelakon Tambahan)
Idris Hashim : (Pelakon Tambahan)
Aminah Yem : (Pelakon Tambahan)
Ainon Chik : (Pelakon Tambahan)

**Krew:**

Hashim Hamzah : (Pembantu Pengarah)
Yew Wah : (Pengarah Fotografi)
Johari Ibrahim : (Penyunting)

Figure 2. Sample data

The extracted data was reviewed and examined in terms of its data type, size, value and condition. Then, the data was converted into table forms. Table 1 and Table 2 presents data about the title of the song and the name of the singer (P. Ramlee and his singing partners).

Table 1. Data examination for movies

| Original title | English title | Release year | Actor | Director | Writer | Composer |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Abu Hassan Penchuri | Abu Hassan the Thief | 1955 | √ | | | √ |
| Ahmad Albab | Ahmad Albab | 1968 | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Ali Baba Bujang Lapok | Ali Baba in Burlesque | 1961 | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Aloha | Aloha | 1950 | √ | | | |
| Anak Bapak | Like Father Like Son | 1968 | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Anak-ku Sazali | My Son, Sazali | 1956 | √ | | | √ |
| Anjuran Nasib | Fate's Hand | 1952 | √ | | | |
| Antara Dua Darjat | Between Two Classes | 1960 | √ | √ | √ | √ |

Table 2. Data examination for songs

| No | Song title | Singer |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Achi Achi Buka Pintu | P Ramlee & Saloma |
| 2 | Ada Ubi Ada Batas | Saloma |
| 3 | Aduh Sayang | P Ramlee |
| 4 | Aduhai Sayang | P Ramlee |
| 5 | Ahmad Albab | P Ramlee |
| 6 | Ai Ai Twist | P Ramlee & Pancha Sitara II |
| 7 | Air Mata di Kuala Lumpur | Saloma |
| 8 | Aku Bermimpi | Pancha Sitara |
| 9 | Aku Debok | Aziz Jaafar & Pancha Sitara |
| 10 | Aku Menangis | Pancha Sitara |

Ail the information that has been extracted need to be compiled, merged and converted into the Tableau Public worksheet. The next process was data transformation that involved data cleaning and data conversion. Data exploration focused on using visual techniques to study the P. Ramlee 's history and achievement. We interested with web apps for data visualisation, such as Tableau Public, which offers online charts and dashboards. Tableau Public is also well known as a free service that allows anyone to publish web visualisations of interactive data.

## 4. Results

The visualization outputs are presented according to the identified curiousity. Figure 3 is related to answer Curiosity 1.
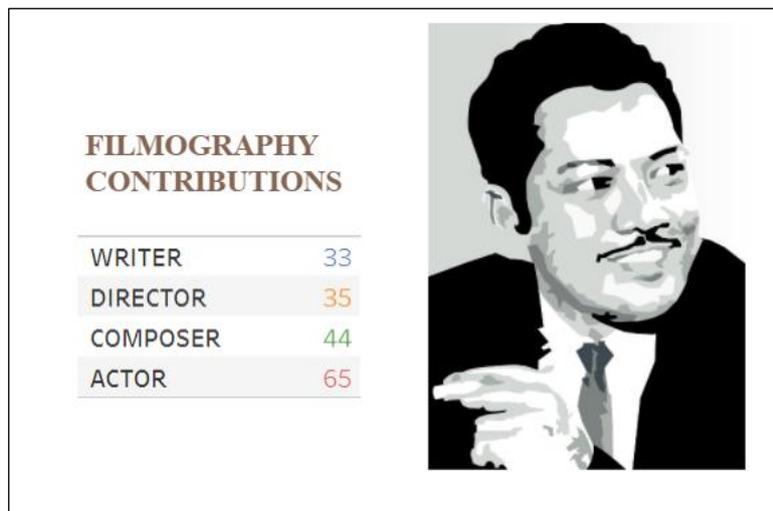
Figure 3. To answer Curiosity 1

Represented on the dashboard of application, the total number of films cast, directed, and written by P Ramlee is presented in Figure 3. Next, Figure 4 allows users to see the filmography through the data of its time series. In order to observe the total number of films produced, directed and written by P. Ramlee, the Gantt Chart (as shown in the figure 5) can be used for the presentation of the distribution of P. Ramlee's movies. This would involve looking at the different dimensions of the measurement that shape the concept of the creative artefact of P. Ramlee in the film. The title of the film, the year of its release and the '1' of Ramlee's participation in the film will be presented by a mouse-over event on each of the points on the Gantt Chart.
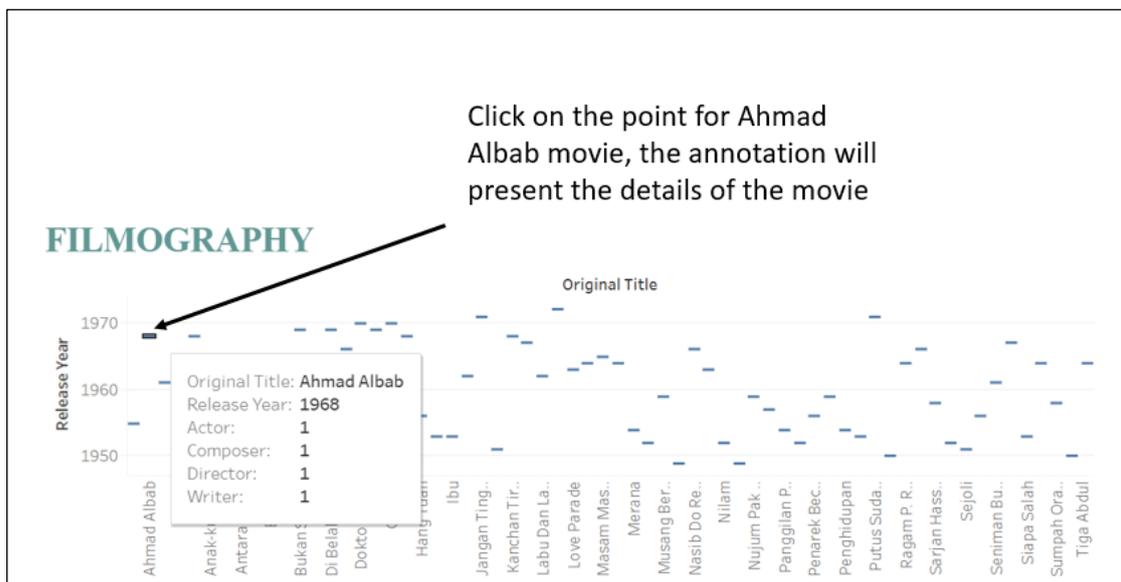


Figure 4. The distribution of P. Ramlee movies across the years

Figure 5 shows the result for the second curiosity, which is to present the songs composed and sang by P. Ramlee.

Figure 5. The distribution of P. Ramlee songs across his partners


P. Ramlee had a huge number of songs written by him and most of the song have been sung by himself and his partner Saloma. Users also can observe the total song that sang by P. Ramlee (Figure 6), Saloma (Figure 7) and both who performed in duet on various songs (Figure 8).
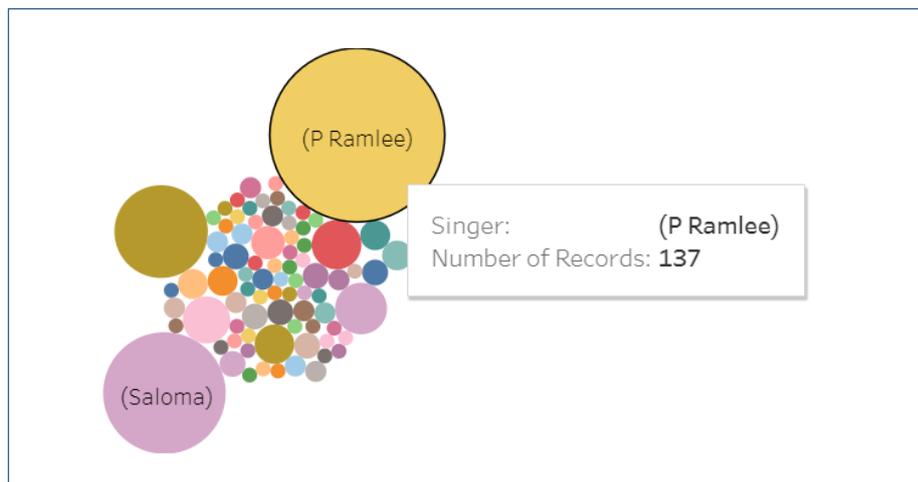


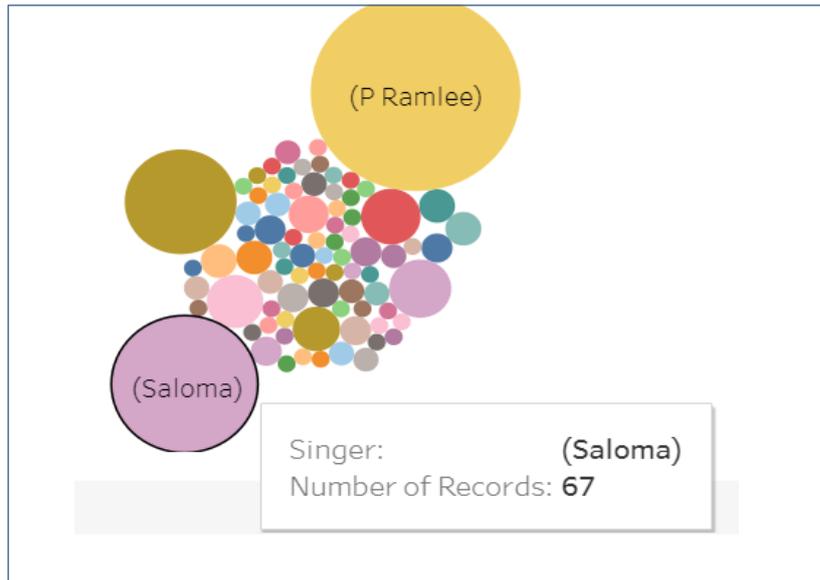Figure 6. Number of songs that sang by P. Ramlee

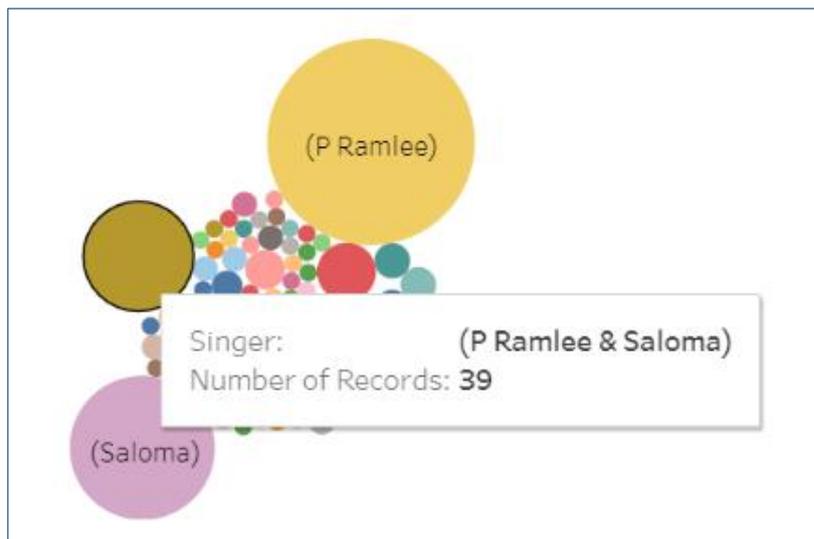Figure 7. Number of songs that sang by Saloma



Figure 8. Number of songs that sang by P. Ramlee duet with Saloma

The third curiosity is to see what the awards and honours of P. Ramlee. The aim is to see the distribution of the awards and honours that P. Ramlee has received throughout the year. Figure 9 shows the general overview of P.Ramlee awards and honours with year information presented in a heatmap visualization. Users who mouse over the year will be presented with details information about the award. Figure 10 shows the output of mouse over the 1963 box.
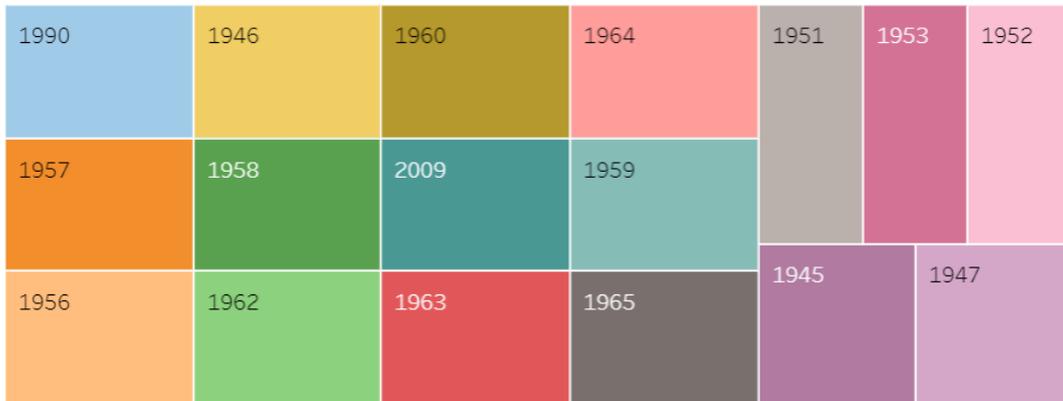
## AWARDS & HONOURS

| 1990 | 1946 | 1960 | 1964 | 1951 | 1953 | 1952 |
| 1957 | 1958 | 2009 | 1959 | | | |
| 1956 | 1962 | 1963 | 1965 | 1945 | 1947 | |

Figure 9. The distribution of P. Ramlee awards and honours across the heatmap representation

## AWARDS & HONOURS

| 1990 | 1946 | 1960 | 1964 | 1951 | 1953 | 1952 |

Awards & Honours: Festival Filem Asia ke-10 Tokyo
1. "Fotografi Hitam dan Putih Terbaik" - Abu Bakar Ali bagi Ibu Mertuaku
2. "Bakat Paling Pelbagai"
Year: 1963
Count of No: 1

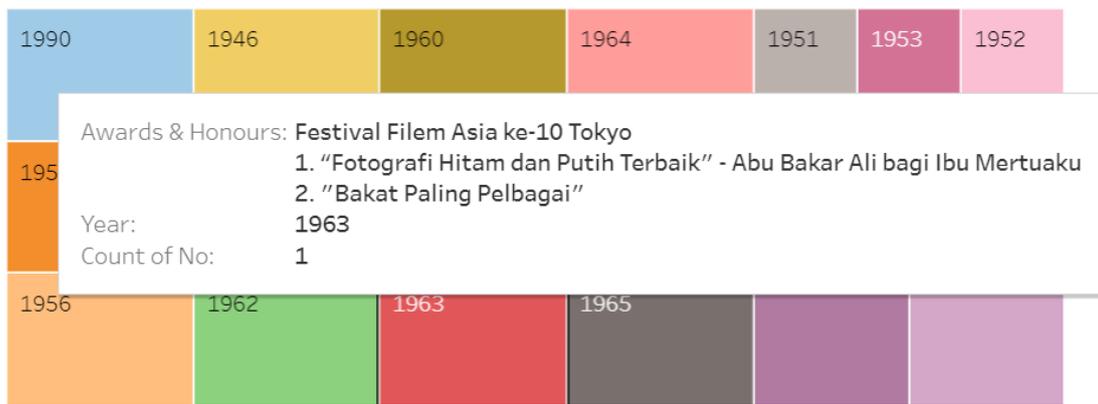| 1956 | 1962 | 1963 | 1965 |

Figure 10. About the details of P. Ramlee rewards and honours when the mouse is over in 1963 box

All the visualizations charts are on displayed on a web dashboard with interactive and dynamic features. The actual exposure can only be viewed on the public repository website of Tableu at https://public.tableau.com/profile/afiqah.norazizi#!/vizhome/PRamlee/DASHBOARD. Figure 11 is the main dashboard on the website.
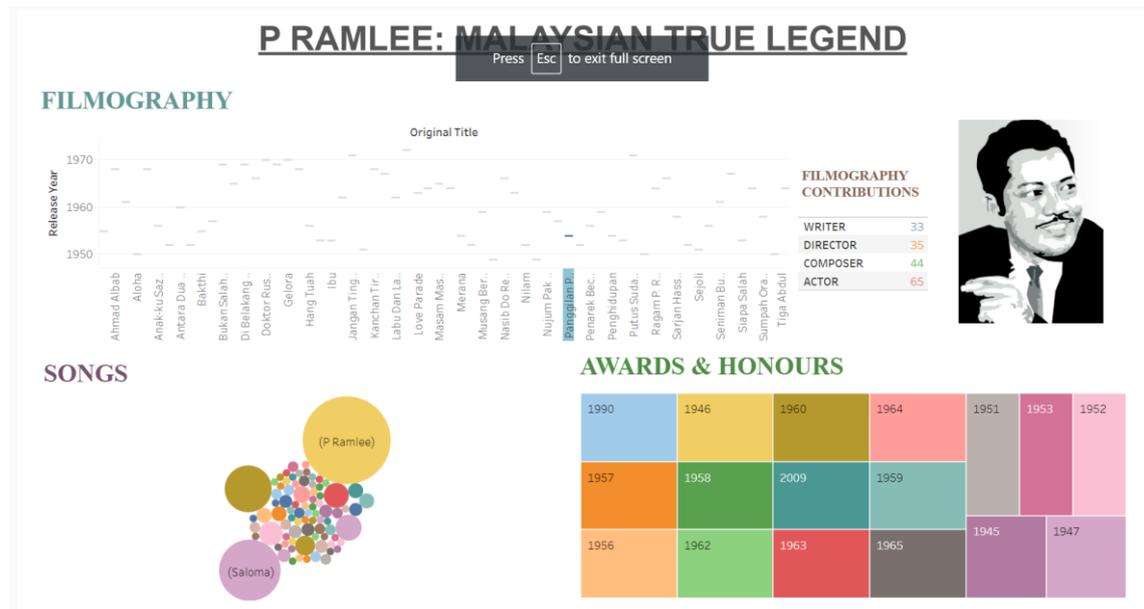
Figure 11. The P. Ramlee dashboard

## 5. Conclusion

The main contribution of this work is the design and development of interactive visualization of information from the unstructured data of the legendary P.Ramlee. The design proses adopted an establish technique introduced by Andy Kirk and the development used Tableu visual analytic platform. The output from this research is the P.Ramlee visualization website, which helps users such as P.Ramlee followers to analyse the accomplishments of P Ramlee through his available quantitative data. This project provides a fundamental knowledge to the design and implementation of interactive and dynamic visualization for different domains of data including on big data analytic.

## Acknowledgements

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