

Sources: 'Hello Americans: Orson Welles Vol. 2' by Simon Callow, 'It's All True: Orson Welles' Pan-American Odyssey' by Catharine L. Beanmou

Origins

- Welles was in the midst of planning post-Kane projects when the spark of It's All True comes about
- It's All True: The Compendium
 - A compendium film (anthology) in four sections: Jam Session, Love Story, Bonito the Bull, & The Captains Chair
 - Originally to be titled Pan-America
 - Bonito & Chair written by To ert Flaherty (Nanook of the North and Man of Aran)
 - Bonito For Reel
 - scenario written from Flaherty story by John Fante & Norman Foster
 - Signed up as a team earlier in 1941 at \$300 a week
 - Almost Ready
 - Toland originally to be cinematographer on the project until he enlisted in Navy's Field Photo (Fords Fox unit of Armed Forces Filmmakers)
 - Welles impulsively , per Callow, moves his sights onto 'Journey Into Fear' and 'Ambersons'
 - Foster Takes The Reigns
 - Welles informally assigns Foster to the directors chair for Bonito.
 - Welles sets down to Mexico with Foster and cameraman Al Gilks for a few days to get Bonito underway.
 - Welles was to supervise project by long distance.
 - Jesús Vasquez as best friend of Bonito & Jesús Solorzáno as the bull fighter in the story.
 - Callow describes building of Foster & Welles Bonito relationship (pg. 32-33): Bonita the Bull meanwhile was approaching the commencement of principal photography. The cast was in place - Jesús Solorzáno as the bull-fighter and Jesús Vasquez (dubbed Hamlet by Welles) as Chico, Bonito's young friend; so were the locations. Foster wrote regularly to Welles from Mexico describing the problems and sending screen tests. The two men had formed the sort of relationship that Welles was always able to inspire in his fellow-workers - one of extraordinary familiarity and affection, playful, rather saucy, but with an unmistakable undertow of real emotion. Foster was fully fifteen years older than Welles - he had been acting since the early twenties and had more experience than Welles in every department of film-making - but he instantly accepted the younger man's leadership. In response a Foster's anxious first telegram, Welles wired back simply: I LOVE YOU. But the crisis was real - difficulties with the weather, the bulls, de locis,

the actors, the cameras. "Personally' Foster writes back, 1 al never feel sorry for a bull in the corrida de tons. I hate the bastands som - we love you so much that it's killing us that we aren't having better luck. But we're doing everything we can and by God and by Jesus we'll get is yer." Welles replied by telegram: WE ALL MISS YOU TERRIBLY, and adds: BELIEVE ME OUR TROUBLES HERE ARE AS NUMEROUS AND AS BETTER AS YOURS WITHOUT THE DIALECT. Money sens to be the main problem. MOSS PROMISES TO SEND MONEY STOP HE IS PRINTING IT THIS AFTERNOON STOP LOVED LAST BATCH OF FILM. MUCH LOVE ORSON. Even in a telegram one catches his electrical effect - the sense of fun and urgency and everything being possible that he generates; as soon as things cease to be possible, it is, naturally, a different story."

- Eventually snags are hit:
 - the funds for Bonito are tapped , with EP José Noriega wiring Welles manager Jack Moss for more money.
 - Cam. Op Gilks is summoned to Washington for Fed. Govt. work. Equally great substitute of Floyd Crosby brought aboard
 - Crosby had worked with Flaherty & Murnau for Tabu
 - Won Oscar for it
- Welles checks in
 - Callow (pg.34) Welles briefly visited the set in mid-October, again with del Rio; he brought back footage with him, and when he showed it to the RKO executives, they were thrilled, YOU ASKED ME TO BE BRUTALLY FRANK, Welles telegraphed Foster. OKAY STOP THE FILM IS ABSOLUTELY WONDERFUL STOP I WILL REPEAT THAT THE FILM IS COMPLETELY MARVELLOUS, VERY VERY EXCITING AND AS BEAUTIFUL AS ANYTHING YOU EVER SAW IN YOUR LIFE STOP FROM NOW ON YOU ARE OFFICIAL CREDITED CO-DIRECTOR OF BONITO & GOD BLESS YOU ORSON. Foster wired back, clearly touched: YOU ARE REALLY A SWEET GUY THANKS FROM ALL OF US. Excitement over rushes is common; but for someone as demanding as Welles - and as concerned about his image as an auteur - to have awarded a co-directing credit to a colleague could scarcely be a greater affirmation of the quality of what Foster was shooting.
 - (pg.38-39): Through all this, Welles continued to co-direct Bonito the Bull at long distance and with high exuberance. CROSBY IS INDULGING IN TOO MUCH REFLECTOR, he wired José Noriega. KISS NORMAN ON ALL FOUR CHEEKS. LOVE ORSON; he joshingly complained that Norman Foster's new wife Sally was coming between them. High-spirited though his missives

were, they contain precise and detailed instructions: RETAKE HEAD-ON CLOSE SHOT OF LITTLE BOY SITTING ON GATE AND GETTING OFF STOP THE BACKGROUND IS TOO FUZZY STOP CROSBY'S TEXTURE IS BEAUTIFUL BUT HE TENDS IN THIS DIRECTION AND MUST BE WATCHED. Sharp definition was the core of the celluloid aesthetic that Welles and Toland had evolved. ALSO LET US HAVE SOME CLOSE-UPS OF HAMLET REACTING TO BRANDING OF BULL WITH SMOKE FROM BRANDING CROSSING FILM STOP ALSO A COUPLE OF SIMILAR SHOTS OF OTHER CHARACTERS INVOLVED IN BRANDING STOP EXTREME CLOSE-UPS I REPEAT EXTREME EXTREME CLOSE-UPS OF SWEATING FACES, SMOKE OF BURNING FLESH YUM YUM STOP I CAN'T STAND IT STOP WHY DON'T I HEAR FROM YOU STOP I CAN'T STAND IT STOP SALLY HAS COME BETWEEN US STOP ORSON. Foster replied in similarly exuberant vein: SENOR ORSON WELLES DEAR PATRON WILL MAKE BRANDING SHOTS WITH SIZZLE DESPITE TREMENDOUS ODDS... SALLY HAS NOT COME BETWEEN US BONITO & HAMLET HAVE LOVE - NORMAN.

- Danger with the bulls
 - Callow (pg. 39): Despite the characteristic hilarity and excitement that Welles generated among his collaborators, filming was very tough. The bull-fighter, Solorzano, was temperamental, as were the rancheros and indeed the bull itself. The shoot was physically dangerous on several levels. One of the fighters got badly gored; then his brother was held up by gangsters, stripped and had his face slashed with a machete. 'Several times we've been afraid we were going to be held up,' wrote Foster. Noriega wrote to Welles proposing to shut the film down over the winter, to resume in February or March, at which point Welles would take the helm to shoot the bull-fight sequence and the scene in which Bonito gets away and rampages through the village. Welles wrote back to reassure them of 'how really and truly beautiful and important is the picture you're making. I hope you believe me.'
- Won't You Be Brazil's Neighbor?
 - 3 days after Pearl Harbor, Welles received telegram from John Hay Whitney , the head of the Inter-American Affairs, and was requested under a sense of urgency to travel to South America as part of a Pan American effort at showing solidarity with South America and in trying to keep the region from falling into Fascist hands (Nazis) . Specifically, they wished Welles to shoot and shape a film surrounding the famous Rio de Janeiro Carnival.
 - Vargas (Brazil's dictat— duh I mean pResident, just regular president) had Nazi Sympathizers in cabinet

- Callow states that filming had wrapped virtually the day before Pearl Harbor
- Callow breaks down IAA office and its goals, pg. 45: One of the first objectives of a shocked America as it swung into action after Pearl Harbor was to secure its relations with South America; several Latin American leaders were energetically pro-fascist, posing a considerable threat to the United States at its own back door. The co-ordinator and prime mover of the Office of Inter-American Affairs (I-AA) was the energetic Nelson Rockefeller, 'the eager beaver to end all eager beavers', in Vice-President Wallace's phrase, who had convinced the administration to transform the Office's budget of \$3.sm per annum to \$14om, a mark not only of his persuasiveness, but of the importance of what came to be known as hemispheric unity. It is more than likely that the suggestion that Welles should direct the proposed film came from him. As a major shareholder in RKO and an early and vigorous supporter of Welles's original contract with the company, Rockefeller had reason to know his work, and would certainly have known of the slated projects, Bonito the Bull, set in Mexico, and the other South American parts of It's All True, whose outline was still quite vague. Rockefeller may also, as Frank Brady suggests, have been helping RKO out at a difficult moment.
- Welles Accepts (Callow (pg.45)): It took Welles twenty-four hours to make up his mind about Jock Whitney's offer. His decision was a popular one. On 11 December, Phil Reismarn was writing to Joseph Breen:They (the Brazilians] feel that the sending of Orson Welles by RKO to cover the Carnival which is so close to them and so near to their hearts, was a most magnificent gesture and it is highly appreciated by the Brazilian people and the Brazilian government... Orson Welles is looked upon by the Brazilian people as one of the great theatre and picture personalities in the United States, and he has in his make-up exactly what these people like. the compliment that we are paying them by sending the best man in Hollywood to cover this, is greatly appreciated
- Welles acceptance puts Journey into Fear on one track with Foster as director while the pressure is on for Welles to finish Ambersons (which completed Jan 20, 1942
- Its All True, carrying production in Mexico, was to now merge into the Brazil project.

Pre- Production

- Early in the month of January, Welles met with Harry Hopkins (WPA creator and then Special Advisor on Foreign Affairs) heads of RKO & Technicolor where he establishes that this film is to be an RKO film subsidized by the Govt. From yhere, other matters are raised
 - Technicolor anxieties are expressed by Welles but an instance is made on filming the Carnival in Technicolor while not confirming in anyway how much of the rest of the film would be shot in Technicolor.

- Worry about use of tech
- Co. had just innovated monopack system using one negative instead of three.
- Film Stock is to be brought by US to South America
- The cost of the production ended falling into 1.2million from RKO with a 300,000 assurance from the US Govt.
- Only matter not brought up is content of film
 - Callow page 54: The one thing not discussed, inevitably, is the film itself. The meeting is adjourned with several major questions unanswered: the matter of the Technicolor technicians, the amount of stock needed, and finally, crucially, the nature of the film they are about to make. Harry Hopkins suggests that they should make an interesting, instructive, visually exciting travelogue, called Orson Welles Sees South America. No comment is recorded Hopkins obviously hadn't got the measure of Welles at all. That the Office of Inter-American Affairs, if not the government, wanted something more than a travelogue is indicated in a memo written to Jock Whitney by the Brazilian division a mere day after Welles had agreed to direct the film. Reporting the great excitement in Brazil at the idea of Welles coming to Rio, the writer suggests as a possible subject the heroic journey recently made by some fishermen (jangadeiros) from Fortaleza, in the far north of the country. They had travelled an astonishing 3,000 miles of rough coastal seas on a raft to deliver a petition to the President, Getúlio Vargas, in Rio de Janeiro, demanding the right to form unions and receive pensions. "These jangadeiros are almost legendary figures in Brazil ...and a well-executed short subject of the type suggested should have an enthusiastic following both in Brazil and in the United States.' How this could fit into the Carnival sequence was unclear, but the idea no doubt sowed a seed in Welles's mind.
- No script in advance
 - Richard Wilson to Sight and Sound, Autumn 1970: script: "No script was possible until Welles had actually seen the carnival...RKO and the Coordinators Office understood this, and these were the ground rules accepted by all."
- Welles arrives and briefed in Washington before immediate departure
 - Benamou surmises that she believes that Welles was likely among the folks sent as Goodwill Ambassadors that were also asked to do intelligence gathering for the US.
- Welles arrived 5 days before the Carnival

Production

- Filming began on February 8th, 1942 with the Carnival
- Total of 27 crew Members
- Welles arrived in Brazil with strictly the Carnival and the Story of the jangadeiros
- By June of 1942, an account of what had been filmed was compiled by International Photographers June issue
 - Three pre-carnival celebrations in Rio and its environs
 - Four nights and three days of the carnival, which required improvised lighting and sound techniques that proved a great success

- Every conceivable scenic attraction in the city and surrounding hills and mountains
- Test footage of the fishermen in Fortaleza
- A three-day Easter ceremony at Ouro Preto
- Every samba nightclub in Rio, with most of the scenes rehearsed and staged
- The reenactment of the arrival of the jangadeiros in Rio harbor
- Two weeks of closeups and orchestra recordings made at the Cinédia studio, which Welles had rented
- Carnival
 - Crew of
 - 12 forming the RKO Technicolor Unit
 - Supplemented by a smaller black and white crew
 - Crew Dispersment
 - Benamou, Pg. 47: Because this was an experimental first use of Technicolor to shoot primary action at a foreign location, a black-and-white crew was necessary during the initial stages as a backup mechanism. It moved on to second-unit work as soon as the Technicolor test reels showed good results. The use of silent black-and-white equipment also provided the crew with more mobility and time flexibility to shoot secondary scenes and locations, which could prove crucial at the editing stage. Coverage of the festivities by the two crews ranged from neighborhood street celebrations in the daytime to dancing in private clubs and the official samba school procession at night). Since the lighting equipment did not arrive in time for the main celebration, the Brazilian air force lent the crews a set of hefty anti-aircraft searchlights for nighttime shooting—a serendipitously symbolic demonstration of Brazil's new, "pro-Allied" stance, and of the strategic importance of culturally oriented filmmaking to the war effort.
 - Lights failed to arrive, so scenes of the Carnival were initially filmed using Anti-Aircraft lights borrowed from Brazilian army.
 - It's in the filming of Carnival that he wishes one emphasis of the piece to be about the birth of Samba
 - Filming the Festivities
 - Recreation
 - From Benamou pg. 47-48: the weeks following the festivities, Welles and crew began using the facilities of the local Cinédia Studio, as well as recognizable urban locations, such as the modest neighborhood of Quintino and the centrally located Teatro Municipal, to orchestrate a reenactment of selected Carnival festivities: the Carnival balls for the elite, the cordões (groups of celebrants) that snaked through neighborhood streets, and the corsos (motorcades) that permeated downtown Rio. These scenes were to be combined with the earlier footage shot "off-the-cuff" to form a loosely woven, double-edged narrative account of Brazilian Carnival in all its social and cultural

dimensions. The spectator would be presented with a panorama that extended from neighborhood samba jamming sessions, amid hanging laundry and unpaved streets, to the most picturesque tourist attractions of Brazil's capital city (the Sugar Loaf Mountain, Christ the Redeemer statue, shorefront casinos).

- The Story of Samba:
 - Benamou on attention to detail, the numbers, and their meaning (Pg.49): The sudden attention to set design and choreography on the visual track, guided by local experts such as musician-composer Herivelto Martins, was echoed by the rerecording of popular da Amélia, "Lero Lero," "Nega do Cabelo Duro") and the scoring and recording of a special big-band finale, "Panamêrica e Folga Nego." These high-profile numbers would be complemented in the film by a more subtle exploration of samba music in its traditional variations, marcha, samba canção, samba enredo, frevo, and partido alto. During Carnival itself, the marcha (marching form) and samba enredo (storytelling samba) are the most frequently heard, while the frevo (a fast-paced dance form in 2/2 rhythm) hails not from Rio but from Carnival celebrations located in the Brazilian North-east. The sociocultural character of each type of samba featured on the sound track was to provide the cue for shifts in location, casting, and mise-en-scène on the visual track. Since even an amateur jazz musician and culturally astute researcher and writer such as Robert Meltzer could only begin to penetrate the complexity of samba culture in such a short span of time, international collaboration involving Brazilian advisers, such as Herivelto Martins, was crucial." Martins had composed the episode's title samba, "Adeus, Praça Onze" ("Farewell, Square Eleven"), with the Afro-Brazilian radio and screen actor Grande Othelo. Cast in the role of the malandro (street dandy), Oth-elo was to link the disparate social milieus of Rio with his ubiquitous presence and spontaneous performance style, much as Louis Armstrong and his New Orleans-based jazz music fused the postabolition South with the whiter, "liberal" North and the soon-to-be-occupied Europe in "The Story of Jazz",
 - Welles additionally assembled a team of Local Journalists and cultural Experts
 - Herivelto Martins acted as an assistant director to Welles and effectively designed & choreographed the Cinédia studios footage.
 - Only piece of the production to utilize sound on location
 - On grabbing SFX (Benamou pg. 50): RKO variable-area sound equipment, shipped down for the occasion and operated by John Cass, was used during the "Praça Onze" and "Symphony of Tambourines" sequences to realistically capture the heterophonic Esperanto of various samba schools performing simultaneously on the Cinédia soundstage. More sedate and "mainstream" numbers, such as the samba canção (lyrical samba) and "Carinhoso" ("Darling," sung by Moraes Netto and

Odete Amaral), were recorded onto disks at the Odeon studio in Rio and performed with different actors in "playback" mode.

- Additional photography was captured in early April of 1942 , with the B/W crew traveling with Meltzer to Ourou Preto (in the state of Minas Gerais) to document religious counterpoints to the Carnival within the Christian calendar (From Good Friday to end of Lent)
- Filming completed in June of 1942
- Jangadeiros
 - Intended initially to be a Technicolor shoot and Welles decided to grab first shots for it with the men arriving on the raft in tandem with their filming of Carnival. This was the reenactment of São Pedros triumphant entry into Guanabara Bay . By the time this was filmed, Schafer had informed Welles his request to film this sequence for Technicolor was denied.
 - The original Jangadeiros themselves were to star.
 - A Historical treatment for the episode was written by Edmar Morel (reporter for the Diários Associados (associated news papers) a native Cearense who commissioned and publish the travel diary of leader Jacaré
 - Benamou pg. 51: Jacaré's diary would serve as the primary source material for the voyage, while other aspects of the fishermen's lives would be related in the film in a series of dialogues, based on Morel's research, taking the form of interviews by an offscreen narrator with the Jangadeiros themselves
 - Schafer & RKO , per Benamou, are summarized as getting nervous between Welles requests to enhance the Brazil shoot in tandem with their unfounded panic attacks over the financial prospects of Ambersons. RKO sends Phil Reisman to inform Welles of his limits
 - in tandem to this , production manager Lynn Shore was sending negatives to RKO (Benamou pg. 52): Lynn Shore had regularly sent negative reports concerning Welles's choice of shooting locations, schedules, casting of nonprofessional Afro-cariocas (black residents of Rio), and unforeseen expenditures back to RKO headquarters in Hollywood—and, incredibly, to representatives of the Brazilian DIP.
 - Jacaré's Death
 - Benamou pg. 52: back to RKO headquarters in Hollywood—and, incredibly, to representatives of the Brazilian DIP.95
 - Then, on 19 May 1942, shortly after Reisman's arrival, Welles and crew were setting up for one of the takes of the jangadeiros' arrival when a motor launch towing the Sao Pedro near Gávea beach went past the shooting location, took a sharp turn toward the beach at Barra da Tijuca, and broke the tow line, provoking an irreparable turn in the life of jangadeiro leader Jacaré, the structuring of the film, and, ultimately, the welfare of the Fortaleza fishing community. All four jangadeiros fell into the ocean when the jangada over-turned, and all resurfaced, yet only Jerônimo, Tatá, and Manuel Preto were rescued: Jacaré tried to swim

ashore but disappeared into the waves. Although years later, Jacaré's children still expressed a desire to see filmic evidence of their father's disappearance, there is no surviving record of this event on film. Welles is quoted in the Brazilian press at the time as saying. "Emotion would not allow us to act. We filmed nothing, absolutely nothing And I am satisfied that this was so."

- Nothing stops or terminates the project. Benamou surmises that Reisman , potentially listening to Welles' overtures, realizes that pulling out would damage RKO international reputation.
- Welles vowed to keep shooting and complete the story in tribute to Jacare.