

I. INTRODUCTION

Five hundred years ago, a journey commenced that would take a great discoverer through elation and through indignity; through triumph and through despair. "1492: Conquest of Paradise" presents the exciting and provocative story of one of the most celebrated, influential and mysterious men in history.

Director Ridley Scott's film written by Roselyne Bosch chronicles more than 20 years in the life of Christopher Columbus and his arduous

struggle to realize his dream. Starring Gerard Depardieu, "1492" was produced by Ridley Scott and Alain Goldman, executive produced by Mimi Polk Sotela and Iain Smith, and co-produced by Marc Boyman and screenwriter Roselyne Bosch. The Percy Main/Legende Production is a presentation of the Motion Picture Group of Paramount Pictures, co-starring Armand Assante and Sigourney Weaver.



THE LOCATIONS

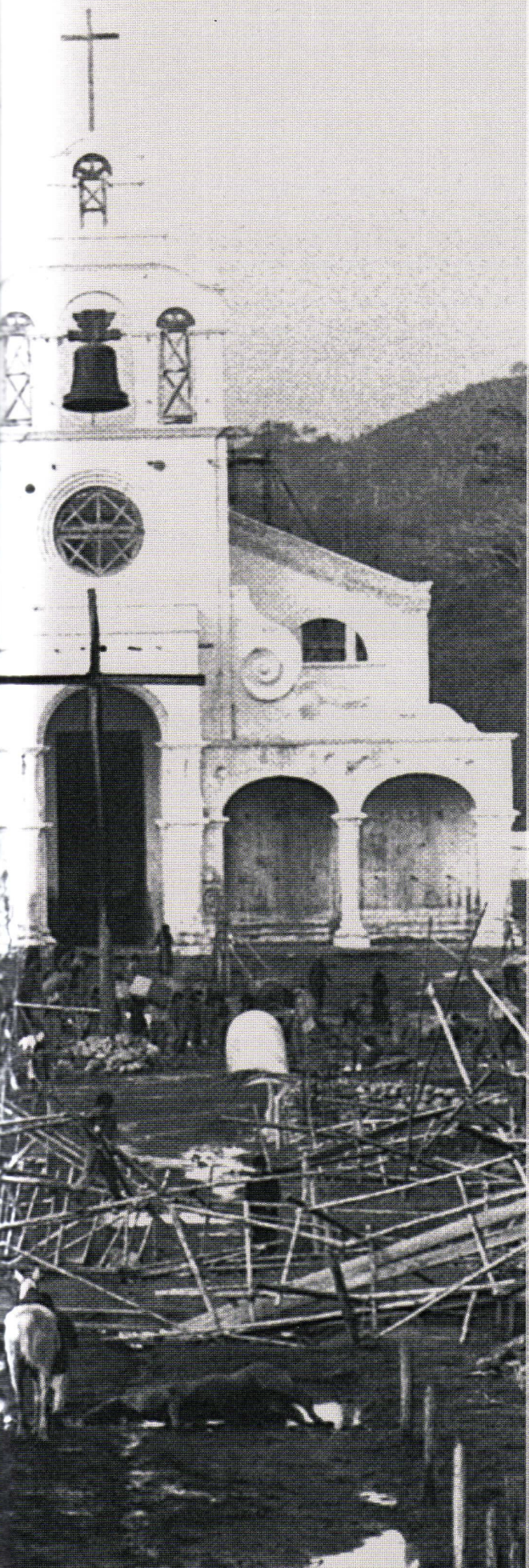
After considering Cuba, Mexico, Panama, the Dominican Republic, and Columbia, Costa Rica was selected as the setting for the scenes from the New World.

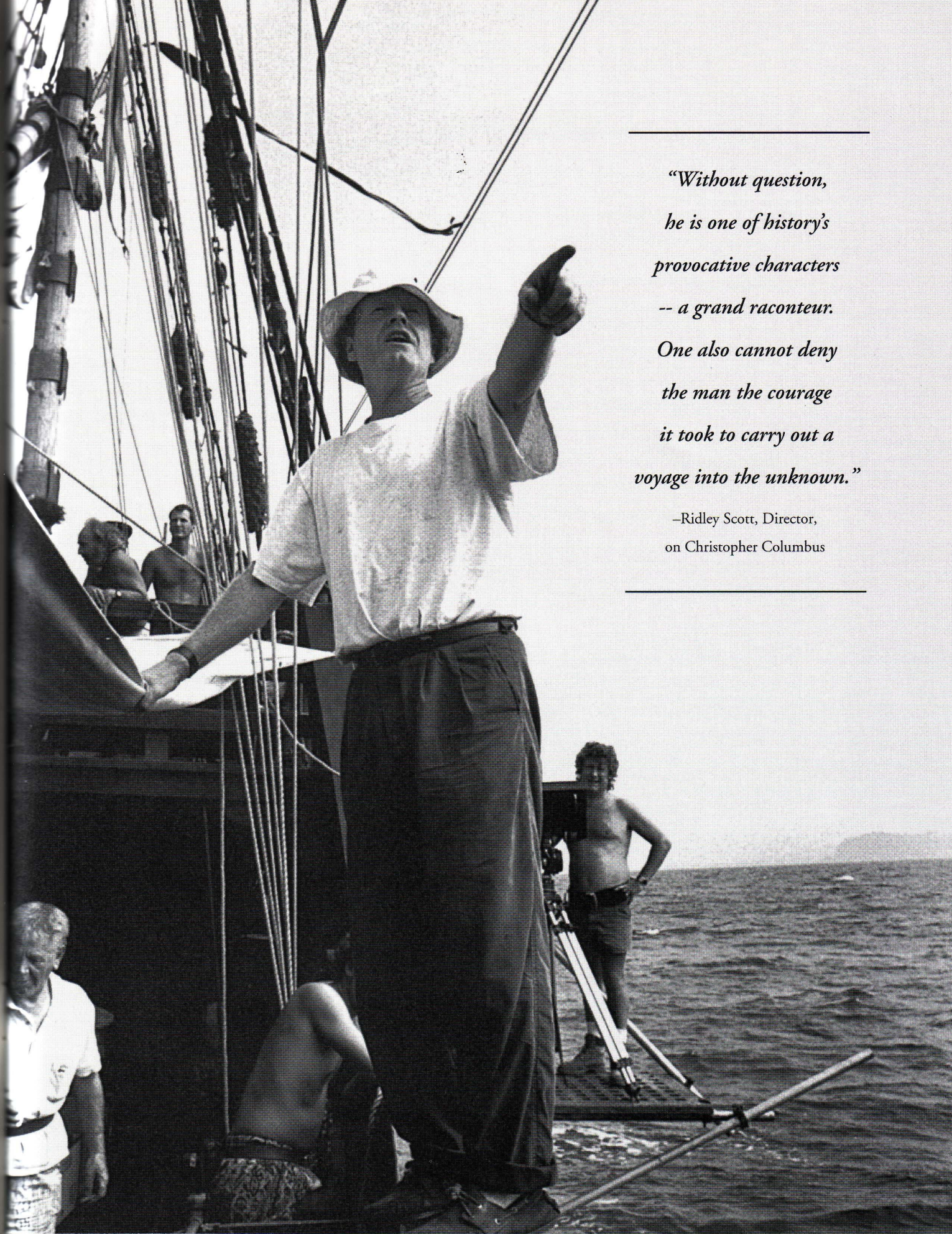
“Costa Rica has been called ‘the Switzerland of the Indies,’” says Scott. “It’s balanced politically, has no army, and has 95% literacy. Apart from that I needed to have islands, beaches, mainlands, and jungle, and I found it all in Costa Rica.”

While in Costa Rica, the production was based in Jaco, a small town frequented by tourists on the Pacific coast. After the bitter cold of the Spanish winter, the filmmakers were suddenly confronted with the heavy humidity and 100+ degree temperatures of the tropics.

The production team had to cope with such unwelcome guests as alligators, scorpions and poisonous snakes. For safety’s sake, a snake handler was employed to divest certain locations of the slithering reptiles. Another memorable part of the jungle experience was the haunting, shrill cry of the cicadas heard each day at sunrise and sunset.

Ten major sets were built in the environs of Jaco by production designer Norris Spencer and his team, including three Indian villages, a gold mine, and a long jetty, where the scene of Columbus’s departure from Spain was filmed. The most spectacular set was Columbus’s city of Isabel, built on what had once been an empty field infested by snakes. In just three months, the barren 20-acre site was transformed into a burgeoning Spanish metropolis, complete with cathedral, city hall, an army barracks, a jail, and a two-story governor’s mansion for Columbus.





*"Without question,
he is one of history's
provocative characters
-- a grand raconteur.
One also cannot deny
the man the courage
it took to carry out a
voyage into the unknown."*

—Ridley Scott, Director,
on Christopher Columbus

IV. ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

Producer/director RIDLEY SCOTT was nominated for a 1991 Best Director Academy Award for "Thelma & Louise," which won the Best Original Screenplay Oscar (Callie Khouri) and was also Oscar-nominated for Best Actress (Geena Davis), Best Actress (Susan Sarandon), Best Cinematography, and Best Editing.

Scott's first film, "The Duellists," won the Jury Prize for Best First Feature at the 1977 Cannes Film Festival. He then directed the high-grossing "Alien," winner of the 1980 Academy Award for Best Special Visual Effects; followed by "Blade Runner," his first American production. "Blade Runner" was recently released in the U.S. in a "director's cut" version.

Scott's other films include "Legend" (1985) starring Tom Cruise, "Someone to Watch Over Me" (1987) starring Tom Berenger and Mimi Rogers, and "Black Rain" (1989) starring Michael Douglas.

Scott was born in England in South Shields, Northumberland. Raised in London, Cumbria, Wales and Germany, he returned to Northeast England to live in Stockton-on-Tees. He studied at West Hartlepool College of Art, excelling in painting and graphic design. He went on to the prestigious Royal College of Art in London (where his contemporaries included David Hockney) and joined the newly-formed film school.

There he made his first film, the 16mm short "Boy on a Bicycle."

Graduating with first-class honors, Scott was awarded a traveling scholarship to the United States for a year. During that time, he was employed by Time-Life, Inc., working with award-winning documentary filmmakers Richard Leacock and D.A. Pennebaker.

Upon his return to the U.K., Scott joined the BBC as a production designer and within a year was promoted into the BBC directing team, where he worked on episodes of such series as "Z Cars" and "The Informer." After three years, he left the BBC to form his own commercials company, Ridley Scott Associates, which soon became one of the most successful production companies in Europe. In ten years, Scott directed more than 2000 commercials, many of which won awards at the Venice and Cannes film festivals and were honored by the New York Art Director's Club.

Recently, Scott formed Percy Main Productions to develop and produce feature films. In addition to his film work, Scott continues to direct commercials and is the managing director of Ridley Scott Associates. With offices in London, New York and Los Angeles, RSA represents some of the most acclaimed directors in the advertising industry.