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Orson Welles's Itineraries in *It's All True*:

From "Lived Topography" to Pan-American Transculturation

Catherine L. Benamou

As with Orson Welles's *oeuvre* in general, the task of retrieving and interpreting *It's All True* is like entering a labyrinth, only to step out into an ever-expanding universe. The project, which was shot in Mexico and Brazil during World War II, consisted of four interlocking parts, spanned three continents, and engaged four film crews at a dozen rural, urban, and coastal locations. Infused with the work of some of the most talented cinematographers, photographers, composers, musicians, and screenwriters in the hemisphere, the film—at times documentary, at times reenactment, at times staged fictional drama—would have covered subjects as diverse as bullraising and bullfighting, jazz and samba music, youthful romance, artisanal fishing, urban renewal, and labor struggles. Over a period of ten months beginning in September 1941, actors were cast and rehearsed, locations were scouted, dialogue written, diegetic music recorded, and scenes choreographed and performed before the cameras. Even though most of the Latin American episodes were shot on Technicolor and black and white film, RKO, the producing studio, decided to suspend the production in mid-1942, which, coupled with Welles's inability to secure the rights to the footage thereafter, left the film in a state of limbo.

The reasons for the suspension of the film are complex, and cannot be disentangled from the limited box office returns for *Citizen Kane* from its U.S. release and the projected losses related to *The Magnificent Ambersons* (after a largely negative response from a preview audience in Pomona, California, March, 1942), and the misrepresentation by RKO executives of *both* Welles's mission as "Good Will" Ambassador to Latin America, concurrent with the location

production of *It's All True*, and the budget and expenditures for the film as of late April 1942, when a proposal was made to revoke Welles's contract at RKO – ironically, on the grounds of “material interference” and “loss of world markets” provoked by the war, when in fact, as of December, 1941, the film had officially become a wartime assignment to be co-produced by the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs.<sup>1</sup> It is also worth noting the studio's discontent with Welles's open-ended, neo-realist approach to shooting the Brazilian episodes, “Carnaval” and “Jangadeiros,” with their deeply embedded elements of social critique, and the adverse reaction by Welles's production manager Lynn Shores, to what he perceived as Welles's repeated filming of “the Negro and low-class element in and around Rio,” **followed** by the concern of at least one RKO executive back at the studio over how the “indiscriminate intermingling” of races in the film might be received by [white] audiences “south of the Mason-Dixon line.”<sup>2</sup>

As a result of its suspension, the precise spatiotemporal dimensions, editing style, and ultimate plot structure that the film would have embodied if it had been completed at the time are a matter of conjecture. Would the film have included a fourth episode on the history of jazz, as viewed through the life story of Louis Armstrong, as outlined in contracts and correspondence? Would Welles have added a transitional sequence between the Mexican episode, “My Friend Bonito,” and the Northeast Brazilian episode “Jangadeiros,” set in the Peruvian Andes and focusing on the anticolonial rebellion of Inca leader Atahualpa, included **in** a late screenplay draft? What survives materially of the project is a 1986 assemblage of a “trailer,” *Four Men on a Raft*, spearheaded by Welles's Associate Producer Richard Wilson; a 1993 documentary reconstruction, *It's All True: Based on an Unfinished Film by Orson Welles* (co-directed by Wilson, Myron Meisel, and Bill Krohn), an eight-minute edited sequence of Technicolor footage

for the “Carnaval” episode,<sup>3</sup> as well as over 200,000 feet of 35mm nitrate negative (most of which has yet to be preserved on safety film), 50,000 feet of sound negative recorded in Rio de Janeiro (still missing from Paramount studio archives), multiple treatments, a handful of screenplays, and hundreds of still photographs.<sup>4</sup> In this chapter, I will be drawing on a few of these surviving materials, along with oral histories I conducted with film participants, to shed new light on the original film event and the immaterial legacy of *It’s All True*: its indelible traces in popular memory, the socially expansive possibilities of Welles’s cinematic interventions, the film’s alignment with, and foreshadowing of, the Latin American neo-realist wave in the 1950s,<sup>5</sup> and the connections between the production strategies and aesthetics of place in this project and Welles’s later works. My book on *It’s All True* was primarily devoted to reconstructing the film text and its historical circumstances as it evolved from a North American to a Latin American version within the general context of World War II, as well as broadening our understanding of **the project** within Welles’s film *oeuvre*. Here, I will be taking a step back to consider the linkage between geographic and textual itineraries pursued by Welles during preproduction and production, so as to highlight the extent to which *It’s All True* served as a “rite of passage” that immersed Welles and crew in a process of transculturation with respect to Latin American cinema and popular culture. In contrast to other U.S. filmmakers working in Latin America at that time, Welles emerged from this experience as a transnational *auteur* with lasting ties to modern film movements in Europe and Latin America. This transnationalism derives not merely from making a film for hemispheric distribution, nor from traveling across borders to shoot it, but from his ability to collaborate intensively with Mexican and Brazilian creative talent so as to produce a dialogical vision of cultural practices and social contrasts within those countries.<sup>6</sup> Welles’s efforts and ability to collaborate and adapt only grew over time as he came into contact

with diverse national cultures and production contexts once he became uprooted and had to reroute his sense of “home” (what Mette Hjort has referred to as a kind of “cosmopolitan transnationalism” that is reflected in the work of migrant or exilic directors) in Ireland, Spain, Yugoslavia, Morocco, Italy, and France.<sup>7</sup> Thus, in a way, *It's All True* can be seen as practical preparation, unbeknownst to Welles at the time, for his semi-exilic, peripatetic existence and experimentation with production techniques on location around the globe after 1947.

The key to this transformation, I will argue, can be found within the process of shooting the “Carnaval” episode in Rio de Janeiro and Minas Gerais between February and June 1942. In describing this as a process involving “dialogical vision,” I am drawing on Mikhail Bakhtin’s concept of dialogism, itself closely related to a theory of the carnivalesque, to refer to a textual representation that results from the cultivation and acknowledgment of the dynamic exchange that takes place between the filmmaker, profilmic protagonist, and creative collaborators, during the creation of the work.<sup>8</sup> In the context of cross-cultural contact, such as the “Good Neighbor” project as a whole, a dialogical approach provides the basis (yet not of course the guarantee) for transculturation. As it was originally formulated by Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz, transculturation occurs when the meeting of different cultural traditions results in the production of hybrid cultural forms.<sup>9</sup> Original cultural forms are not simply “lost” as a result of colonization, but continue to develop in a dynamic of contrast, tension, and hybridization with colonial (or in the twentieth century, “neocolonial”) forms. (For further elaborations of theories of transculturation in literary studies and in ethnographic film, see the work Ángel Rama and David MacDougall, respectively.)<sup>10</sup> Here, I will be using “transculturation” to refer to 1) Welles’s efforts during the making of *It's All True* to spark a process of transculturation as one of the desired outcomes of inter-American dialogue; and 2) the ways in which Welles and crew became

effectively co-inscribed with their film subjects in the work-in-progress, thereby creating “new links based on points of recognition among otherwise separated social groups,” including members of disenfranchised or marginalized communities in both the U.S. and Brazil.<sup>12</sup>

Of the various episodes of *It's All True*, “Carnaval” exhibits most strongly the dialogism that Welles envisioned, and it registers a drift away from the strategies and themes of official wartime propaganda, and towards a more place-based model, or “lived topography,” of cultural exchange and audiovisual expression.<sup>13</sup> According to a late screenplay draft for the film, “Carnaval” would have been the third episode, following “My Friend Bonito” and “Jangadeiros” (aka “Four Men on a Raft”), even though it went into production in February, prior to “Jangadeiros” (which began shooting in mid-March in Rio). Consisting of a series of reenactments based on what Welles was able to document in February and conversations with top local talent, “Carnaval” would have chronicled the various phases and modalities of the annual celebration through a spatial exploration, as well as close attention to the temporality of ritual. The episode also suffered the greatest dismemberment when thousands of feet of Technicolor footage were cast into the Pacific Ocean in the late 1960s. Only 5,481 feet of Technicolor negative and 35,530 feet of black-and-white negative survive, of which only about 7,000 feet have been preserved, necessitating a greater reliance upon oral accounts and the photographic archive for its reconstruction and interpretation.<sup>14</sup>

Transformed by Welles into a city symphony, “Carnaval” underscores his attention to the spatialization of ethnic and class difference in his portrayal of Latin American societies. Its progressively nimble style (the physical displacement and at times, swooping aerial movements and canted angles of the camera, the penetration into different social *milieux*) resonates with the recently rediscovered footage from Welles’s *Too Much Johnson* (shot in 1938 on New York’s

West Side) and it brings into relief Welles's growing interest in reflexively utilizing film to capture and build, in individual sequences and entire episodes, a sociocultural dialogue among and within cities, regions, and nations.<sup>15</sup> For example, in recognition of the ethnic and class distinctions among Carnival performance venues around Rio de Janeiro, Welles set up a "call-and-response" format that would feature Afro-Brazilian artist Grande Othelo, performing at a hilltop samba school rehearsal, calling out the phrase "I love to hear drumming in the hills," answered in reverse-shot by the lighter-skinned, more mainstream vocalist Linda Batista's, "ay, ay, ay," on the stage of the cosmopolitan, shoreline Cassino da Urca.<sup>16</sup> Welles's approach to the portrayal of place and intra-urban relationships in "Carnaval" opened up fertile ground for a new cross-cultural cinematic practice to emerge, but also led to serious challenges and problems. Welles faced what can be called representational and aesthetic crises as he attempted to devise strategies that would help him to link the margins of the city (and later, through "Jangadeiros," the margins of Brazil) to the center. And a further, more concrete crisis arose when during the last month of the filming of "Carnaval" RKO began to withdraw its material and institutional support for the project. By concentrating in what follows on the interrelationship of the production history and the evolving film text I hope to shed new light on Welles's take on the poetics and sociodynamics of place, and his ability, despite the suspension of institutional support for the film, to demonstrate the potential for the cinema to serve as a medium of intercultural dialogue, helping to strengthen hemispheric relations from the "inside-out" rather than the "top-down."

The Changing Vectors of *It's All True*

*It's All True* is best understood by taking multiple pathways to unravel its history and evolving narrative discourse and structure; indeed, Welles himself appears to have resisted adopting a single, programmatic pathway to documenting or understanding “Carnaval.” As he openly acknowledged by devising the multi-part structure of the film, no single event, no matter how “hybrid,” such as Carnaval, could embody the full complexity of Latin American culture as a whole. Here, I will be retracing the itineraries Welles pursued while working in Brazil, from the continental and urban itineraries prescribed for him as he embarked on his trip to Brazil, to his less visible itineraries as he familiarized himself with local cultural practices tied to the yearly Carnaval celebration. By linking literal points on the map to figurative representations, it is possible to capture Welles’s and his crew’s transition out of a state-commissioned, neocolonial framing of events, and into the making of meaning through an interaction with place as a site of sociocultural resilience and remembrance.<sup>17</sup>

In various ways, the analysis of itineraries can help to illuminate the cultural politics and methods of making of *It's All True*. Itineraries can take us beyond manifestations of style and theme in the work-in-progress into the realm of a filmmaker’s engagement with his or her subject matter outside the frame; specifically, they can clue us in to Welles’s profilmic choices, choices that involve ethical considerations and political stances, and that, over time might be indicative of a deeper shift within his creative mindset. As I aim to show, several places along Welles’s itinerary were particularly “charged” with sociocultural meaning, and thus came to occupy a more central position within the plot of “Carnaval.” Most of these places were “off the map” of the agenda provided for Welles by the Office of Inter-American Affairs (OIAA), and were discovered by way of informal networks. The challenge for Welles was how to enhance the significance of those places for North and Latin American audiences without losing the support



of the very institutional structures (in complex wartime negotiations among themselves) that were planning to circulate the finished film under the aegis of the “Good Neighbor” Policy.

Complicating this challenge was the tension among the various forces – individual, local, transnational - shaping the “Carnaval” itineraries. For example, one detractor in a Rio de Janeiro publication faulted Welles with seeking out the “wrong type” of Brazilian advice: “We should exploit the prestige of Orson Welles to show ourselves to the world as a civilized nation . . . Instead of showing him our possibilities, they [the advisors] let him film, to his delight, scenes of no good half-breeds.”<sup>18</sup> Various kinds and amounts of power over the production of “Carnaval” were wielded by John Hay Whitney, Director of the Motion Picture Division of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs; RKO Radio Studio executives (such as VP Phil Reisman), Adhemar Gonzaga, head of Cinédia Studio in Rio de Janeiro; Lourival Fontes, head of Brazil’s Departamento de Imprensa e Propaganda (Department of Press and Propaganda, or D.I.P.); and Welles’s binational team of advisors and collaborators (screenwriter Robert Meltzer, photographer Genevieve Naylor, Brazilian journalist Edmar Morel, musical composers and performers Herivelto Martins and Grande Othelo), in addition to Welles himself. Of central interest is Welles’s growing effort after the Carnaval celebration to find the local meanings and possible narratives within it and to add a new episode (“Jangadeiros”) focused on the plight and courage of the Northeastern *jangadeiros* or raft fishermen as they sailed down to Rio to petition Brazilian President Getúlio Vargas for inclusion in his new social security legislation.<sup>19</sup> The introduction of these new elements began to pull “Carnaval” away from the plan of the original sponsoring institutions and towards Welles and his Mercury collaborators and Brazilian experts, leading to a redefinition of “Good Neighbor” policy in favor of grassroots efforts to achieve democracy, recognition, and cultural affirmation.

*Cidadão* Welles vs. RKO and the OIAA

To appreciate the ramifications of the shift in the project's emphasis, it is important to remember that, for most of its production, *It's All True* was co-sponsored by Nelson A. Rockefeller's Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs, an agency that was expressly established in 1940 to improve relations between the United States and Latin America and stave off Axis economic, political, and ideological influence throughout the hemisphere during World War II.<sup>20</sup> Although Welles and Mercury collaborators Norman Foster, José Noriega, and Dolores del Río launched "My Friend Bonito" during the Good Neighbor policy in September 1941—and, like other U.S.-sponsored projects in Mexico at the time, filming began with the approval and supervision of the Mexican government—production occurred largely in the Central Mexican countryside, off the radar of media scrutiny of both the North and South. The episode, directed by Foster, was to depict the friendship between a bull, "Bonito," and a young *mestizo* boy, Chico (played by non-professional Jesús Vásquez) from childhood to the moment when Bonito demonstrates his formidable bravery and is pardoned in the Plaza El Toreo in Mexico City.<sup>21</sup>

By contrast, "Carnaval" was initiated at the behest of the D.I.P. and John Hay Whitney, head of the Motion Picture Division of the OIAA, as just one of the activities that Welles was to engage in as "Good Will" Ambassador to Latin America following his arrival in Brazil in early February 1942. As he would later tell a BBC reporter, Welles undertook the project of documenting the annual Carnaval as his "patriotic duty" for the war effort, rushing to finish shooting for both *The Magnificent Ambersons* (1942) and *Journey into Fear* (dir. Norman Foster, 1943) in time to attend the festivities in Rio de Janeiro, a battalion of RKO and Mercury film

professionals in tow.<sup>22</sup> He intended to resume production on “My Friend Bonito” upon arriving in Mexico on his way back along the Pacific Coast to the United States, and to complete editing for *The Magnificent Ambersons* while in Rio de Janeiro. The “Carnaval” venture signaled a shift in the geographical emphasis of the multipart *It’s All True* from North to Latin America.<sup>23</sup> It also catapulted the project from relative public obscurity into the limelight of Brazilian, U.S., and hemispheric media. Parallel to working on the film, Welles presented lectures on Shakespeare and painting at the Instituto de Belas Artes in Rio de Janeiro (featured in the *Cinejornal* newsreel of the D.I.P.), broadcast two live Pan-American radio programs on NBC’s Blue network (fig. 1), and gave scores of press interviews in cities across Brazil, followed by stops in South and Central America on his way back to the U.S. in July-August 1942.<sup>24</sup> **[insert: Figure 1: Orson Welles and Brazilian Foreign Minister Oswaldo Aranha on the set of the Pan-American Day broadcast on NBC’s blue network, April 14, 1942. Source: Richard Wilson-Orson Welles Papers, University of Michigan Special Collections Library.]** Footage of Welles setting up the camera and reveling in the Carnaval ball at Rio’s Teatro Municipal, captured by RKO cameras during the festivities, also appeared in a *March of Time* newsreel on the war effort, as well as in stills of the same in a *Life* magazine feature article.<sup>25</sup> Thus, at this juncture, *It’s All True*, together with Welles’s increasingly international presence as a radio personality and film celebrity, began to form part of the OIAA’s “soft power” approach to strengthening relations with Latin America.<sup>26</sup>

The establishment of pre-set itineraries to be followed during hemispheric travel was central to the project of “Good Will” ambassadors initiated by the OIAA in 1941. Itineraries could help to maximize propaganda efforts by **generating media interest and coordinating media contacts in** the southern hemisphere, as well as provide a means of effectively utilizing

limited resources at a time of war: each ambassador was sent on a tour to key destinations, usually the capital cities of the larger Latin American nations, where they would be met by government dignitaries and artistic and scholarly luminaries, with their multiple public appearances documented by an eager and curious local press. Welles's pan-American itinerary, as determined by the Coordinator's office and advisory committee in Rio, was ambitious, partly because of the precedent set by Walt Disney, who had traveled to the southernmost parts of South America and Brazil between August and October, 1941, and partly due to Welles's own notoriety, thanks to the release of *Citizen Kane* in South America in fall of 1941. Indeed, soon after his arrival in Brazil, the local press dubbed him *Cidadão Kane*, easier for lusophones to pronounce than "Orson Welles." When he departed from the U.S. for Brazil on February 4, 1942, Welles was scheduled to travel to San Juan, Puerto Rico, Uruguay, Argentina, Chile, Bolivia, Peru, Colombia, Panama, Guatemala, and Mexico, in addition to Brazil. With the exception of Belém, Brazil (where his plane stopped to refuel) and the Bolivian jungle (where he accompanied a medical team on a special mission to treat leprosy), this was a largely cosmopolitan itinerary, revolving mainly around widely publicized events, such as receiving an award for *Citizen Kane* and attending a *parrillada* in Buenos Aires (in April 1942) or visiting major Carnival venues including the Teatro Municipal, Cinelândia, Avenida Carioca, the Cassino da Urca, and the Yacht Club in Rio de Janeiro. The choice of these venues reflected a "top down" approach to representing the Brazilian public sphere, and a neat avoidance of locations that would bring issues of social inequality, religious diversity, and racial and ethnic "contact zones" to the fore.

While there is little question that Welles was eminently well suited for this multi-faceted public agenda, especially given his background in radio production and his star performance in

and direction of *Citizen Kane* (for which he received “best director” and “best actor” awards in more than one Latin American film competition), his exercise of artistic license and freedom of speech soon led to a strained relationship with RKO representatives in Rio (notably production manager Lynn Shores) and those in power within the Brazilian D.I.P. To begin with, in a synopsis for *It’s All True*, dating most probably from mid-1942, **Welles, reflecting on “Carnaval” and in anticipation of the filming of “Jangadeiros,” boldly stated that** “Brazil is a Democracy in a hemisphere of Democracies, and among the Democracies neither peonage nor starvation need be tolerated by free men.”<sup>27</sup> The inclusion of the *jangadeiros’* story helped Welles to direct attention to the popular struggle for recognition and socioeconomic justice under the populist dictatorship of Getúlio Vargas, while encouraging an appreciation for the dignity of the laborer, a theme that he and his screenwriters had explored in the North American version of *It’s All True*.

While nearly all OIAA-sponsored and produced films placed a rhetorical emphasis on democratic ideals as the basis for Pan-American unity, few referred explicitly to the startling socioeconomic inequalities that persisted in the southern hemisphere, other than to showcase the benefits of U.S.-supported efforts at modernization of agriculture, infrastructure, healthcare, and hygiene. As a rule, modernization efforts were shown spearheaded by an educated, U.S.-friendly Latin American élite, literally relegating the role and position of the laborer, the small farmer, or the newly arrived city dweller to the background of the *mise-en-scène*.<sup>28</sup> Given the headquartering of the OIAA-Hollywood “representational machine” in North America, Latin American participation in the hemispheric flow of audiovisual discourse tended to be limited to the provision of raw talent (such as Carmen Miranda, or Tito Guizar), landscapes, and folkloric traditions for the Hollywood screen and radio airwaves, and the expansion of an enthusiastic

consumer base for North American product.<sup>29</sup> Any Latin American opinions voiced (usually off camera or in animated form) were either official or genteel, usually vetted for inclusion by a local OIAA-appointed committee. Welles, on the other hand, strove to incorporate Latin American voices and opinions into his multi-media agenda, from the voice of pro-Ally Brazilian Foreign Minister Oswaldo Aranha over the airwaves, to radio-turned-screen star Grande Othelo (voicing the lament of the largely Afro-Brazilian *carioca* working class in “Carnaval”), to *jangadeiro* leader Manoel “Jacaré” Olimpio Meira, whose sailing diary of the 1941 voyage was used to guide the plot and initial dialogue for “Jangadeiros.”

What might have been upstaged, or carefully bracketed by the cameras of other OIAA-funded directors such as Julien Bryan or Walt Disney, began to take center stage in *It's All True*.<sup>30</sup> This happened first with Welles's decision to cover peripheral Carnaval festivities—across the bay from Rio in Niterói in the children's **carnaval**, shown in figure 2, at working class dance clubs such as the Teatro da República, in remote hillside neighborhoods (the customary *bandas*, followed by larger groupings, such as *ranchos*), and next, with the decision to reenact and structure a narrative around Carnaval at Cinédia sound studio, focusing on the roots and modern forms of samba music. **[insert: Figure 2: Caboclo and children on beach in Niterói during Children's Carnaval. Source: Richard Wilson-Orson Welles Papers, University of Michigan Special Collections Library.]** At his own initiative, and assisted by various advisors—Robert Meltzer, Genevieve Naylor, Herivelto Martins, Grande Othelo, Anselmo Duarte—Welles rerouted the urban production itineraries in a pattern radiating outward from the sociopolitical center of Rio, which, combined with the staging of scenes at Cinédia Studio in São Cristovão and the decision to reenact the *jandadeiros'* heroic voyage from Fortaleza (originally completed just six months before), significantly **delayed Welles's progress**. The initial “media

event,” soft-propaganda approach to capturing local culture was set aside for the painstaking work of ethnography. To the call for hemispheric and national unity, Welles raised and had his own answers for new questions about the central concerns of *It's All True: whose* Brazil would be represented? and which Americans would the film appeal to?

### Redefining and Representing a Cultural Politics of Ubiquity

Upon witnessing Welles at work on the set of “Carnaval” at Cinédia Studio in Rio de Janeiro, Vinicius de Moraes, Brazilian poet, film critic, and Consul in Los Angeles following World War II, observed:

. . . what energy, what vitality, what *ubiquity* there is in this great *Brazilian!* Brazilian, yes; Orson Welles begins to know Brazil, or at least an important side of the Brazilian soul, better than many sociologists, many novelists, and many critics, than many Brazilian poets out there. His perspective is at times *crude*, but it never errs on the side of injustice.<sup>31</sup>

De Moraes was not alone in this assessment; his sentiments have been echoed by many other Brazilians who met and worked with Welles in 1942, such as Chico Albuquerque (photographer) and Aloysio Pinto (musicologist), who recalled working with Welles in Fortaleza; samba musician Geraldo Caboré, who remembered teaching Welles to play the *pandeiro*, or tambourine, in a *favela* (hillside slum) overlooking Rio de Janeiro; Grande Othelo, and Pery Ribeiro (son of Herivelto Martins), who intimated, in the 1993 documentary *It's All True: Based on an Unfinished Film by Orson Welles*, that Welles's approach to shooting

Carnaval would not have yielded a Hollywoodian version of Brazil, rather a portrayal of Brazil “as it really was.” Welles was, in their view, correcting the misrepresentations that had been made in previous North American audiovisual productions by becoming a dedicated participant observer, willing to sample the cultural riches that “insiders” were eager to share with him.<sup>32</sup> *It’s All True* became, for Welles’s local sympathizers, a bridge from Brazil out to the world, a feat only made possible by a director who had at least one foot planted solidly in Brazilian culture and society. Welles’s “ubiquity” was greatly enhanced by his deviation from the official itinerary and decision to ad lib during and after the annual Carnaval, utilizing the second RKO unit as an exploratory device to document popular dancehalls, peripheral celebrations in the Rio suburbs, and the culmination of Lent in the neighboring state of Minas Gerais. Going further against the original plan, he brought his Technicolor cinematography from Rio’s city center to its coastline to film the reenactment of the *jangadeiros*’ arrival in Guanabara Bay (Rio de Janeiro), ending in a maritime procession of vessels of various types and sizes, from sailboats to fishing and ferry boats, flanking the São Pedro raft from multiple directions to escort it to safe harbor and a (fictive) integration into the Carnaval parade from Praça Mauá to Cinelândia. To the now distended ambassadorial itinerary, Welles added regional production itineraries (Minas Gerais, the coastal Northeast), and sketched a periphery-center construct that would show these regions in active conversation with Rio, the nation’s capital. This structure also included microitineraries showing Carnaval as so many rivulets flowing from the *bandas* down to the massive parade surging like the Amazon down the Avenida Carioca; samba composition and rehearsal reaching from the “fountainhead” in weekly sessions atop the *favela* into an all-city jam session in Praça Onze in downtown Rio (where the samba schools traditionally converged); and the tonal contrast during Carnaval between boisterous whirls and conga lines in dancehalls and a quiet romantic



interlude, shot with *film noir* lighting, in a fictitious “Tennis Clube” (fig. 3). **[insert: Figure 3: “Carinhoso,” romantic couple and band in patio of Rio Tennis Clube. Source: Richard Wilson-Orson Welles Papers, University of Michigan Special Collections Library.]**

Shortly after meeting Jacaré, the leader of the *jangada* expedition and spokesperson of the *jangadeiros*, in March 1942, Welles traveled to Fortaleza to visit the fishing colonies himself and begin planning the reenactment of the *raid* (expedition) to Rio, adding “Good Neighbor” stops in São Luiz (Maranhão), Recife (Pernambuco), and Salvador (Bahia). In April, the black-and-white second unit (cinematographers Harry Wild and Joseph Biroc, screenwriter Robert Meltzer, and Associate Producer Richard Wilson) was dispatched to Minas Gerais to document the Easter festivities (from Holy Thursday through Sunday), quite **probably** as a reminder to the audience that **Carnaval** is the Catholic prelude to Lent (which, from a social as well as spiritual viewpoint, represents a “restoration of order”). Ouro Preto, the site of these festivities, **is** a colonial city known for its baroque culture and architecture, a form of expression that, in Brazil, reflects a deep transcultural process between African and European aesthetic traditions and belief systems, as well as a certain ambivalence towards the erasures of vernacular culture brought about by modernity.

More than a showcase for tourists, then, Brazilian Carnaval could be revealed as having ecumenical value as part of the Christian calendar, while providing a high-profile conduit for the public expression and enjoyment of non-Christian elements of Afro-Brazilian culture, from its Yoruba and Kikongo roots to its modernized, hybrid forms. This in itself posed a challenge for the D.I.P., given the official preference for Catholicism (over other Christian religions) and Kardecist Spiritism over traditional Afro-diasporic religious practices, such as *umbanda*.<sup>33</sup> The plan was then to shoot “Jangadeiros” in Technicolor, so as to complete a multiregional portrait of

Brazil, one that would trace various pathways from the impoverished, yet starkly beautiful beaches of Fortaleza, the cobbled, postcolonial streets of Ouro Preto, and the vibrant hillsides of Rio de Janeiro, to the center of modern prosperity, where a quest for social justice could be joined to an affirmation of cultural continuity in the face of modernization. It was the “ubiquity” of *this* vision, concretized in Welles’s shooting itinerary and screenplay drafts, and bringing the voices, the resilient bodies of the oppressed in center frame, that met with such opprobrium from RKO and sectors of the DIP.

Towards an “Anatomy of Samba”: Sinfônia dos Tamburins, Rio Tennis Clube, Praça Onze, Panamérica e Folga Nêgo

With the branching out of the Brazilian itinerary, and Welles’s transition from international celebrity into participant observer, deep transformations occurred within the work-in-progress that, realized within the text, would likely have enhanced audience engagement for millions of Brazilians, even as they went against the grain of officially authorized documentary practice. The first, and most obvious, was the conversion of Carnaval from **tourist** spectacle into an authentic depiction of ritual activity, with scenes linking neighborhood gatherings to performances at the city center. By the end of March 1942, Welles and his two film crews had gathered enough material to make a straightforward documentary of the Carnaval celebration and Easter, its Lenten complement. Yet rather than print and edit this footage as a travelogue that would have been suggestive of a dichotomy between colonial “tradition” (Ouro Preto) and pluralistic “modernity” (Rio de Janeiro), Welles wanted this part of his film to feature a collaborative reenactment that would spark awareness both of the social significance of Carnaval

in releasing accumulated tensions arising from the persistence of centuries-old class and race relations and of the perennial centrality of musical performance to the formation of urban, ethnic, and national identity, a theme that Welles had wished to explore by focusing on Louis Armstrong's career in "The Story of Jazz."

Welles planned to order the events in a manner that respected the unfolding of the ritual, reflecting the diverse ways in which Carnaval was experienced by the denizens of greater Rio de Janeiro. In addition to the rituals of the Catholic calendar writ large, Welles would incorporate other ritualistic elements stemming from the syncretic *umbanda* and *candomblé*, ranging from a statue of São Jorge (Saint George) on the set of the samba school practice to religious practitioners performing in traditional regalia, thereby ensuring the realism of the cinematic portrayal of Rio Carnaval.<sup>34</sup> It was music, more than visual spectacle that was the driving force for this episode, and the variations of music Welles recorded reflected the diversity in Brazilian urban society in 1942. In contrast to Walt Disney's *Saludos Amigos* (1942), which featured the animated parrot Zé Carioca singing the mass hit "Aquarela do Brasil" (Ary Barroso), Welles's "Carnaval" sequences would be built around the number two seasonal hit "Adeus Praça Onze" (Herivelto Martins and Sebastião de Souza Prata) and local samba jam sessions in addition to the number one hit "Saudades da Amélia" (Ataulpho Alves and Mario Lago) and the romantic standard "Carinhoso" (Pixinguinha).<sup>35</sup> These selections, bearing specific associations with national and urban history and space, and chosen in consultation with Brazilian advisors, reflect Welles's efforts to inscribe a "lived topography" of greater Rio. The alternation between these musical themes had the effect of exposing, rather than effacing, differences within urban and national society, foregrounding Praça Onze (Square Eleven), a place where samba schools and *batuqueiros* (free-form drummers) would congregate, rather than the European-influenced Teatro

Municipal, site of the most prestigious Carnival ball, or the elite Tennis Clube. Moreover, and significantly, the documentary footage was to be interwoven with reenacted sequences, such as Grande Othelo leading a *banda* in the remote neighborhood of Quintino, a creative departure from the usual practice in fictional wartime propaganda of turning “Carnaval” into a series of musical numbers.<sup>36</sup>

Tying this amalgam together was a twofold narrative movement through urban space, with Grande Othelo and Herivelto Martins’s son Pery serving as links among scenes across the city. The inclusion of Pery, in the role of a lost boy in search of his mother, added psychological tension to the episode as well as an intimation of a broad theme of the “restoration of order” in preparation for renewal, and it would have resonated with the story of the young boy, Chico, in “My Friend Bonito,” who tries to save his favorite bull from execution in the ring. Grande Othelo, cast in the allegorical role of “the muse of Carnaval,” helped to resignify the spaces of Carnaval as spaces inspired by, and infused with, Afro-Brazilian culture, highlighting its power as an energizing force within national modernity, much like jazz in “The Jazz Story” (the first of the North American episodes). Neither RKO executives nor, evidently, the OIAA, were receptive towards **the** attention to Afro-diasporic integration coupled with inter-American unity, and they failed to see any meaningful narrative patterns in the midst of “tropical chaos,” yet such an integration is precisely what Meltzer, Welles, Martins, and Othelo had in mind when they developed the blueprints for “Carnaval.”<sup>37</sup>

Fittingly, the urban itineraries of Othelo and Pery finally meet not on the modern boulevard of Cinelândia nor the traffic circle near Teatro Municipal, but in Praça Onze, soon to be razed to make way for Avenida Getúlio Vargas, named after the Brazilian President. From this standpoint, the narrative arc of “Carnaval” can be read as a tale of collective loss (we see the

forlorn Pery with Othelo, alone and adrift after leading crowds into musical “battle”) and recovery through the inscription of popular celebration within a new transnational space of cultural exchange in which Afro-Brazilian and *caboclo* identities and rhythms are to be as valued as Euro-Brazilian forms of culture, favored by the Vargas regime (see fig. 2). The episode ends not with the calendar-bound end of Carnaval, but with a flourishing return to Cassino da Urca, where, past a “big neon sign” and “expensive cars jamming the entrance,” one finds a “big crowd in masquerade,” dancing to “Saudades da Amélia” sung by the Mexican bolero star Chucho Martínez Gil “in serapi [*sic*].” Of this sequence, Welles writes, “Each time we cut back to the Urca—from other Carnaval locations—things should be getting hotter—to finish on the climax of ‘Carnaval Finale,’” specially composed for the film and featuring U.S. bandmaster Ray Ventura and his orchestra. Inside the Urca Grill, we find that the “center glass-paneled platform is still up and now Otello [*sic*] is entertaining . . . Otello will decide which specialty he will do . . .”<sup>38</sup> Othelo is paired with the mainstream vocalist Linda Batista, followed by popular singer Francisco Alves, a *choro* (ragtime number), and a performance of the Northeastern *machiche*. Welles thus creates a musical mosaic within the transnational space of the Cassino, overlaid with a larger, moving mosaic of Carnaval venues across the city, recapping the sites visited in the microitineraries.

Performance itself, then, covering a spectrum from spontaneous, unrehearsed revelry to polished club and theatrical presentations, functioned both as a mechanism for narrative continuity connecting different spaces and modes of representation, and a vehicle for cultural symbolism, a concept that would reemerge in hybrid integrated musicals such as Otto Preminger’s *Carmen Jones* (1954) and Marcel Camus’s *Black Orpheus* (1959), albeit with diminished intercultural content. Beyond the immediate transcultural effects of music and

performance, the juxtaposition of the two primary narrative grids, the ritual and the quest, both of which imply movement in time and across space, formed the foundation for a hybrid aesthetic that could lead to a more locally responsive form of modernity and broadly based democratic process than what was being offered under the Estado N6vo. In Praa Onze, Othelo joins his allegorical quest—to reach beyond the *favela* to Praa Onze, and then the national stage—to that of little Pery; once Othelo reaches the Cassino da Urca (the very location where Carmen Miranda was “discovered” by Broadway impresario Lee Shubert three years earlier), his own quest for recognition can finally be joined to that of the *jangadeiros*. Othelo is embraced by a sophisticated international (albeit largely Brazilian, and by extension hemispheric) audience; the *jangadeiros* are received by the Brazilian President.

These narrative frames are also **present** in “My Friend Bonito,” where the quotidian rhythms of bullraising and post-Lenten ritual of the “Blessing of the Animals” are joined to the quest of a poor, rural *mestizo* citizen (Chico) to be heard and granted a pardon for his bull at the center of national power. Within the larger discursive structure of the multi-part film, these frames serve an important complementary role within Welles's proposal for “Good Neighbor” representation: that ritual (or local cultural tradition) be respected, cordoning it off from the modern democratic process, which, if vigorously embraced, could succeed in deflecting the advance of the Axis powers in the Southern Hemisphere.

### The Consequences of Changing Itineraries

As I hope I have shown, *It's All True* was not so much a film “about Brazil,” as it was a film that placed communities (within and beyond Latin America) in conversation with one

another, so as to launch a process of mutual transformation and understanding. Emblematic of this concept is the use of fictional reenactment to extend the itinerary and narrative of the *jangadeiros*' arrival in Rio into the space of the Carnaval celebration. While the latest script describes the incorporation of the *jangada* São Pedro into the general street parade in city center, there is also photographic evidence of the four smartly dressed *jangadeiros* on the set of the Carnaval reenactment, as shown in this still of the Praça Onze sequence (fig. 4). **[insert: Figure 4: Jangadeiros on the set of "Carnaval." Source: UM Special Collections Library.]** Also effective is the use of Herivelto Martins' composition, *Ave Maria no Morro* (*Ave Maria on the Hill*, adapted from Franz Schubert) to introduce the audience to the *favela* where samba practice will begin (*Sinfonia dos Tamburins*), thereby uplifting, rather than exoticizing or ghettoizing that community.<sup>39</sup> Finally, Welles brings Northeastern Brazilian musical culture (the *forró* and the *frevo*) into the spotlight of the nightclub and into the visual foreground in an exterior shot against a picturesque Rio landscape as in a production still (with the Pão de Açúcar looming boldly in the background).<sup>40</sup> Welles thus utilizes Carnaval, a ritual metaphor for democracy, to focus our attention on the potential for transculturation (following Ramos's definition) *within* Brazilian society.

Welles's portrayal of the places of Carnaval and its ritual aftermath in the Easter celebration would undoubtedly have been familiar and acceptable to Afro-diasporic and Catholic viewers alike, even in the United States. But the allegedly "indiscriminate intermingling" of races and social classes in the public spaces of *It's All True*; his filming of impoverished sites and subjects in Technicolor; his use of precious screen time and space to show nonprofessional performers; and the derisive vocal reaction of the Brazilian sociopolitical elite prompted RKO (and eventually the OIAA) to begin withdrawing their support for the film in May 1942.<sup>41</sup>

Perhaps more than **his break from conventional film style and deviation from the script and plan envisioned by the studio and government agencies**, Welles's rapid embrace of Latin American—here, Brazilian—frameworks of sociality and ethnic interaction, his attention to vernacular musical and dance forms, as well as mass culture, and his exploration, through Praça Onze, of the consequences for Brazilians of U.S.-propelled modernization, prompted suspicion and opposition by studio and government officials, leading to censure and a withdrawal of the support required to complete the film. More than gestures of disapproval, these were in effect acts of destruction. In his essay film *O Signo do Caos* (2005), the fourth of a series on Welles in Brazil, Brazilian filmmaker Rogério Sganzerla dramatizes Welles's troubles with the regime of Getúlio Vargas by showing members of the D.I.P. and metropolitan police previewing, then packing and dumping cans of the film in the Atlantic ocean, a powerful figurative rendering of the fate of *It's All True*.

In conceptualizing Welles's approach in making this film and what energized the opposition to his redirection of the official plan, it is useful to refer to Claude Lévi-Strauss's dichotomy of the "raw" (or "crude") and the "cooked."<sup>42</sup> Welles understood the need for a "raw" vision that would allow the process of culture-making to unfold and the biases of standard camera setups to unravel. Rather than yield a fully "cooked" set of episodes (propaganda) or a film that was too "raw" to serve the purposes of popular education and transnational recognition, Welles sought a balance between these poles, by planning to record a soundtrack back in Hollywood featuring dialogue and narration by the principal performers—Jesús Vásquez and Domingo Soler ("My Friend Bonito"), Grande Othelo (the muse of "Carnaval"), and Francisca Moreira da Silva (the young bride) and surviving *jangadeiros* in ("Jangadeiros"). The sense of place, ritual and habitual activity, and spontaneity rendered by the silent images could thus be



joined to clearly intelligible dialogue and an expertly mixed musical soundtrack, which, among other things, would allow sound bridges to link urban segments in a complex pattern of call and response. That Welles was not able to finalize these plans once he found his production itinerary cut short (both in Mexico and Brazil) and support for the project's completion withdrawn does not diminish the importance and impact of **his** effort or the mapping of this modern-artisanal hybrid aesthetic suited to the cultural practices represented in the film.

Among the casualties of RKO's abandonment of Welles and Mercury in mid-1942 was Welles's ability to make good on plans for the Cassino da Urca finale as well as maintain continuity in shooting techniques for the third episode, "Jangadeiros," which had started shooting in Technicolor on location in Rio in March 1942 parallel to the staged scenes for "Carnaval." In contrast to the previous two episodes, the Northeastern shoot for "Jangadeiros" was carried out with a skeleton crew involving Welles's closest Mercury collaborators, a Rio-based cameraman, George Fanto, his assistant and equipment (a silent Mitchell 35mm camera and sound-on-disk recording equipment) dispatched from Cinédia Studio, and a local *cearense* photographer, Chico Albuquerque. Shot in black-and-white on the beach without electricity, the Northeastern scenes featured an improvised love story that, while it did not overshadow the drama of the *jangadeiros'* heroic journey to Rio de Janeiro by raft, helped to fill the void left by the untimely death of *jangadeiro* leader Jacaré on May 19, 1942.<sup>43</sup> While this institutionally "orphaned" episode marked a shift away from industrial-**scale** filmmaking compared to "My Friend Bonito" and especially "Carnaval," it should be noted that Welles had already experimented with location shooting utilizing non-professional actors during **Carnaval**. In his pursuit of the hidden **Carnaval**, Welles began to use a 8mm camera (fig. 5), with which he was able to shoot at close range, deep in the crowds, a strategy that would be repeated with the use of an Eyemo camera to shoot

fishing scenes from the *jangadas* themselves. [insert: **Figure 5: Orson Welles shooting with an 8mm camera on location during Carnaval in Rio de Janeiro. Source: Orson Welles Manuscripts, Lilly Library, Bloomington, Indiana.**] Striving for spontaneity and authenticity, he also engaged local community members to perform in staged scenes at Cinédia (“Sinfonia dos Tamburins” and “Adeus, Praça Onze” sequences), an effort that would be repeated throughout “Jangadeiros.”

Welles had far-reaching ambitions for his project, and spoke of laying the basis for what Mette Hjort might refer to as “affinitive transnationalism,” such that, in addition to “returning the footage” to Latin America with a finished product on the screen, the U.S. could help Brazil develop its own film industry through technology transfer, much along the lines of the investment in Mexico’s film industry during this same period.<sup>44</sup> The termination Welles’s contract at RKO affected his ability to realize this goal, but even without resulting in a completed film the project did yield some of the transcultural effects he envisioned. His presence was galvanizing and memorable to the communities featured in the film, while the social and aesthetic vectors traced by his itineraries contributed to the renewal of Latin American cinema and in particular can be palpably detected in the Northeastern films of Glauber Rocha (*Barravento*, 1962) and Nelson Pereira dos Santos (*Rio 40 Graus*, 1954, *Rio Zona Norte*, 1958) during the Brazilian Cinema Novo.

*It’s All True* has also had an impact on world cinema outside of Brazil. A new type of inter-regional and hemispheric dialogue emerged through the production of *It’s All True* that pointed in several directions: to the productive role to be played by Afro-diasporic culture in shaping modern popular music and performative circuits, from jazz to samba to mambo and salsa (featured in the Brazilian musical comedy or *chanchada* and the Mexican *cabaretera*); and to the

role of ethnography and place-based scene construction in generating a new type of socially-engaged cinema. Here, one might trace links between *Redes*, dir. Fred Zinnemann (Mexico, 1936) and “Jangadeiros”; between “Carnaval” and *Rio, 40 Graus*, dir. Nelson Pereira dos Santos (Brazil, 1955) and *Rio, Zona Norte*, dir. Nelson Pereira dos Santos (1958), starring Grande Othelo. The shooting methods of *It's All True* arguably helped pave the way for experiments in *cinema vérité* such as *Les Racquetteurs*, dir. Michel Brault and Gilles Groux (Québec, Canada, 1958), and hybrid musical performance, such as *Orfeu Negro* and especially the play *Orfeu da Conceição* (1954), written and directed by Vinicius de Moraes.

#### “Essay” and “Place” in Welles’s Later Works

*It's All True* resonates not only throughout world cinema but also, concomitantly, in Welles’s subsequent work. Instead of treating *It's All True* as a “satellite” project that formed an exception in Welles’s cinematic practice (because it was part-documentary, a government-sponsored project, and involved processes of transculturation), we should consider it as a formative moment in his early film career, and try to identify its influence in terms of both shooting strategy and ethos on his later projects. Even though it remained unfinished, a certain amount of ambiguity, of incompleteness would have been retained *even in the completed work* as an “essay film,” especially involving the relationship between documentary and fictional modes of representation. This is a mode that, as Jonathan Rosenbaum has insightfully argued, Welles would cultivate not only in radio, but also in his later film and television work, notably in *F for Fake* (1973) and *Filming Othello* (1981).<sup>45</sup> Indeed, we might find within the essay format an additional source of tension between *It's All True* as the exploratory enterprise it became and the

official plan for it as part of the “Good Neighbor” mission. As Robert Stam has noted, “one of the salient characteristics of the essay, from Montaigne to Adorno, is the *freedom of invention*, which makes possible an indulgence in a digressive aesthetic in which concerns that are superficially peripheral to the topic come into the foreground.”<sup>46</sup> Once completed, *It’s All True* (as projected) would have likely reflected the process of the discovery and importance of place to cross-cultural representation, with “peripheral” places taking on foundational significance with respect to the national cultural process, as they had in the progressive cinema of the New Deal. It is important to recognize how, with few exceptions, a keen attentiveness to place reoccurs within the *mise-en-scène* and semantics of later projects by Welles, such as *The Stranger* (1945), *Lady from Shanghai* (1948), as well as films produced while in self-imposed exile in Europe, including *Return to Glennascaul* (with Hilton Edwards as the director of record, 1949), *Othello* (1952), which was partially shot by George Fanto, the Hungarian-born cinematographer who filmed “Jangadeiros” on location in Ceará, *Don Quijote* (1958-), *Chimes at Midnight* (1965), and *The Other Side of the Wind* (1970-). What distinguishes these latter projects is that place is less the primary referent or destination of the narrative, than the audiovisual incubator for a representation that, even after postproduction, retains its organicity, its texture.

## Conclusion

While it may seem paradoxical that a project that was designed to serve U.S. and Brazilian national interests became a platform for transnational authorship as well as intercultural and social critique, this is precisely what Welles’s changes of itinerary during the production of *It’s All True* accomplished. Even though the film was not completed by Welles, the effects of

these changes opened up new possibilities for ethnic and social representation within both the Brazilian and U.S. contexts and they were fueled in powerful ways by Welles's abiding interest in the essay form (allowing the blending of documentary and fiction, each mode leading back to place as a site of meaning making) and a **periodic return** to a spontaneous engagement with lived topography in his subsequent film projects, including those shot in the U.S. It is my hope that these relationships can be pursued in future Welles scholarship, and that additional evidence of Welles's accomplishments in *It's All True* can be brought to light through further preservation of the elements, **filmed more than seventy-five years ago**, especially given how central it is to Welles's work and his legacy.

#### Notes

I wish to thank the editors of this volume, James Gilmore and Sidney Gottlieb, as well as an anonymous reader for the Indiana University Press for their helpful suggestions regarding the structure of this essay.

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<sup>1</sup> The statements regarding the war appear in Ross R. Hastings to Mr. Charles W. Koerner, Inter-Department Communication, 27 April 1942, RKO General Archives, 1-3, quoted in Catherine L. Benamou, *It's All True: Orson Welles's Pan-American Odyssey* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2007), 253. According to documents consulted by both Joseph McBride and myself, RKO inflated the actual expenditures made by Welles and Mercury Productions on *It's All True*, stating the film was over budget, and failed to acknowledge openly

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that Welles had estimated the production would cost between \$850,000 and \$1 million to produce, with \$300,000 guaranteed by the OIAA in the event the film incurred losses following its theatrical release. In August 1943, the overall cost, including overhead, was \$832,347; as late as February 1949, the net costs, including overhead, were listed as \$875,502.09, still under the top original estimate; see Joseph McBride, *What Ever Happened to Orson Welles? A Portrait of an Independent Career* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2006), 74; and Benamou, *It's All True*, 252, respectively.

<sup>2</sup> Lynn Shores to Dr. Alfredo Pessôa, Departamento de Imprensa e Propaganda, 11 April 1942, Orson Welles Manuscripts, Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, 1; and William Gordon to Mr. C.W. [Charles]Koerner, RKO Radio Pictures, Inc., 9 July 1942, RKO General Archive, quoted in Benamou, *It's All True: Orson Welles's Pan-American Odyssey*, 237-38. For further observations on RKO's response to Welles's handling of Afro-Brazilian culture and documentary subjects, see Robert P. Stam, *Tropical Multiculturalism: A Comparative History of Race in Brazilian Cinema and Culture* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 107-132. For a discussion of how the indeterminate structure of the film along with a sketch and synopsis, rather than pre-approved shooting script approach by Welles might have factored into RKO's decision to withdraw support from the production, see Benamou, *It's All True*, 231-35.

<sup>3</sup> Until recently, this footage was available at the Paramount Pictures footage library, and appears in the TV documentary, *The Orson Welles Story*, prod. Leslie Megahey and Alan Yentob, "Arena," BBC, 1980.

<sup>4</sup> The 1986 trailer, *Four Men on a Raft*, was co-produced by Richard Wilson and Fred Chandler, and sponsored by the American Film Institute; 1993 version was directed by Richard Wilson,

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Myron Meisel, and Bill Krohn, and produced by Les Films Balenciaga and Paramount Pictures. The surviving film elements reside in a vault at UCLA Film and Television; other materials may be found at in the Orson Welles Manuscripts Collection at Lilly Library, the Orson Welles Archive in the Special Collections Library, University of Michigan, and the Cinemateca Brasileira in São Paulo, Brazil.

<sup>5</sup> For an excellent summary of this period in Latin American cinema, see Paulo Antônio Paranaguá, “Of Periodizations and Paradigms: The Fifties in Comparative Perspective,” *Nuevo Texto Crítico* nos. 21-22 (January-December 1998): 37-43.

<sup>6</sup> In cultural and artistic texts, simple *hybridity* is “the juxtaposition of, and intercutting between, different forms of cultural expression, styles, settings, or moods;” see Benamou, *It’s All True*, 184.

<sup>7</sup> See Mette Hjort, “On the Plurality of Cinematic Transnationalism,” in Nataša Ďuričová and Kathleen Newman, eds., *World Cinema, Transnational Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 2010), 20-24.

<sup>8</sup> Bakhtin notes that “No utterance in general can be attributed to the speaker exclusively; it is the product of the interaction of the interlocutors, and broadly speaking, the product of the whole complex social situation in which it has occurred”; cited in Tzevetan Todorov, *Mikhail Bakhtin: The Dialogical Principle*, trans. Wlad Godzich (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 30.

<sup>9</sup> See Fernando Ortiz, *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar*, trans. Harriet de Onís (New York: Knopf, 1947).

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<sup>10</sup> See David Frye, "Introduction," in Ángel Rama, *Writing Across Cultures: Narrative Transculturation in Latin America* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012), xii-xiv, and David MacDougall, *Transcultural Cinema* (Princeton University Press, 1998), 259-62.

<sup>12</sup> MacDougall, *Transcultural Cinema*, 261.

<sup>13</sup> For further discussion of "lived topography," see Gary Backhaus, "Introduction," in Gary Backhaus and John Murungi, eds., *Lived Topographies and Their Mediatonal Forces* (Oxford: Lexington Books, 2005), xiii.

<sup>14</sup> Based on a 2005 inventory at the UCLA Film and Television Archive, there are 16,793 feet of "My Friend Bonito" in nitrate positive, coupled with 75, 145 feet of nitrate negative, of which 8,000 feet have been preserved; for "Jangadeiros" there are 13,978 feet of nitrate positive, along with 63,950 feet of nitrate negative of which 35, 950 feet have been preserved.

<sup>15</sup> For more on this point, see Benamou, *It's All True*, 190-92, 215-18.

<sup>16</sup> Sebastião Bernardes de Souza Prata, aka "Grande Othelo," interview by author, 8mm videotape recording, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 30 August, 1989.

<sup>17</sup> In a previous publication, I include three maps portraying five separate textual itineraries linked to *It's All True*; see Catherine L. Benamou, "Retrieving Orson Welles's Suspended Inter-American Film, *It's All True*," *Nuevo Texto Crítico* 21/22 (January-December, 1998): 257-58, 260.

<sup>18</sup> Gatinha Angora in *Ciné-Radio-Jornal*, quoted in Stam, *Tropical Multiculturalism*, 129.

<sup>19</sup>For more on the *jangadeiros'* raid or expedition, see Benamou, *It's All True*, 36-39.

<sup>20</sup> For an excellent overview of the OIAA's cultural activities, especially those involving media production and distribution, see Gisela Cramer and Ursula Prutsch, "Nelson A. Rockefeller's Office of Inter-American Affairs and the Quest for Pan-American Unity: An Introductory



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Essay,” in Cramer and Prutsch, eds., *¡Américas Unidas! Nelson A. Rockefeller’s Office of Inter-American Affairs (1940-46)* (Madrid: Iberoamericana; Frankfurt: Vervuert, 2012), 15-51.

<sup>21</sup> Interestingly, Welles’s proposed portrayal of Mexico in a previous project that he planned but never filmed, *The Way to Santiago* (alternately titled *Mexican Melodrama*), which went into development in Spring 1941, met with criticism from both the Mexican government and RKO executives. See, for example, Alejandro Buelna, Jr., Jefe del Departamento de Turismo, Mexico, to William Gordon [RKO], Letter of 13 May 1942, 1-2, Richard Wilson-Orson Welles Papers, Special Collections Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

<sup>22</sup> “The Orson Welles Story,” *Arena*. In addition to a 16-member Technicolor camera and sound crew, RKO dispatched a 3 member black-and-white second unit (which was directed on location by Mercury collaborators Richard Wilson and Robert Meltzer) as safety backup until test reels of the Technicolor footage could be developed.

<sup>23</sup> For information on the other (unproduced) North American episodes, see Benamou, *It’s All True*, 70-79, 119-29.

<sup>24</sup> For more on the importance of radio to the OIAA’s propaganda efforts in Brazil, see Cramer and Prutsch, “Nelson A. Rockefeller’s Office of Inter-American Affairs in Brazil,” 264-65.

<sup>25</sup> This footage is available at the National Archive in Washington, D.C.

<sup>26</sup> On the nuanced parameters of “soft power” in OIAA program implementation, see Cramer and Prutsch, “Nelson A. Rockefeller’s Office of Inter-American Affairs,” 24-28.

<sup>27</sup> Orson Welles, “Synopsis of IT’S ALL TRUE, n.d., 3, microfilm roll 7, “Welles Collection,” RKO General Archives, Richard Wilson-Orson Welles Papers; all capitals in original.

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<sup>28</sup> For more on the thematics and social orientation of OIAA films shot in Latin America, see Pennee Bender, “‘There’s Only One America Now:’ The OIAA Film Programs in the United States,” in Cramer and Prutsch, *¡Américas Unidas!*, 77-105.

<sup>29</sup> “Representational machine” is Ricardo D. Salvatore’s term, applied by Cramer and Prutsch to the OIAA’s media-related initiatives; see Cramer and Prutsch, “Nelson A. Rockefeller’s Office of Inter-American Affairs,” 28, 47n33. On the concern for expanding the consumer market, see Antonio Pedro Tota, “Seductive Imperialism,” 35-36.

<sup>30</sup> See my “Dual-Engined Diplomacy: Walt Disney, Orson Welles, and Pan-American Film Policy during World War II,” in Cramer and Prutsch, eds., *¡Américas Unidas!*, 107-41, for some of the distinctions between Welles and Disney’s approaches to representing Latin American culture and society, specifically in relation to the articulation of “folk culture” with national identity.

<sup>31</sup> Vinícius de Moraes, *O Cinema do Meus Olhos*, ed. Carlos Augusto Calil (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1991), 65.

<sup>32</sup> For a useful discussion of U.S. cinematic misrepresentations of Brazil during the Good Neighbor era, see Adrián Pérez Melgosa, *Cinema and Inter-American Relations, Tracking Transnational Affect* (London: Routledge, 2012), 13-41, 48-64.

<sup>33</sup> In fact, for periods of time under Getúlio Vargas’s *Estado Novo*, the open practice of Afro-Brazilian religion was outlawed; based on documents located in (police chief) Filinto Müller Papers, CHP, SIDS II-1, Centro de Pesquisa e Documentação de História Contemporânea (CPDOC), Setor de Documentação, Fundação Getúlio Vargas, Rio de Janeiro., Brazil.

<sup>34</sup> Interview by author with Herivelto Martins, audiotape recording, Rio de Janeiro, 4 January 1991. The controversy over RKO’s refusal to issue payment for these regalia has been amply

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recounted by Welles himself, in the television series *Orson Welles' Sketch Book* (1955) and elsewhere.

<sup>35</sup> For more on the types of samba music found during Carnaval, see Benamou, *It's All True*, 101.

<sup>36</sup> This is visible in a few shots of the final montage of Technicolor footage in *It's All True: Based on an Unfinished Film by Orson Welles*. Othelo identified the scene in Interview by author with Sebastião de Souza Prata.

<sup>37</sup> On the OIAA's trepidation regarding support for African-American activists and Hispanic victims of discrimination at home, see Cramer and Prutsch, "Nelson A. Rockefeller's Office of Inter-American Affairs and the Quest for Pan-American Unity," 29, 48n40. Ironically, according to Tota, racial segregation in the U.S. was a major target of criticism among the Brazilian intelligentsia prior to Welles's arrival. See "Seductive Imperialism," 30 and 44n20.

<sup>38</sup> "Casino Urca," screenplay fragment, 23 March 1942, 4 pp. Orson Welles-Oja Kodar Papers, Special Collections Library, University of Michigan-Ann Arbor.

<sup>39</sup> Herivelto Martins, interview by author, audiotape recording, Rio de Janeiro, 4 January, 1991.

<sup>40</sup> The still can be found in the Richard Wilson-Orson Welles Papers, Mavericks and Makers Archive, Special Collections Library, University of Michigan-Ann Arbor.

<sup>41</sup> For some of the negative responses in the local Rio press, see Stam, *Tropical Multiculturalism*, 128-29.

<sup>42</sup> Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Le cru et le cuit* (Paris: Plon, 1964).

<sup>43</sup> For details of the accident, see Benamou, *It's All True*, 51-54, 307-309.

<sup>44</sup> Hjort, "On the Plurality of Cinematic Transnationalism," 17-18.

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<sup>45</sup> Jonathan Rosenbaum, “Orson Welles’s Essay Films and Documentary Fictions,” in *Discovering Orson Welles* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2007), 127-62.

<sup>46</sup> Robert Stam, “Do filme-ensaio ao *mockumentary*,” in Francisco Elinaldo Teixeira, ed., *O Ensaio no Cinema* (São Paulo: Hucitec Editora, 2015), 123 (my translation).