



LIGHTS, CAMERA... TRAVEL!

*Alec Baldwin
Brooke Shields
Richard E Grant
Neil LaBute
Bruce Beresford
Sandra Bernhard*



ON-THE-ROAD TALES FROM SCREEN STORYTELLERS

LIGHTS, CAMERA...TRAVEL!

ON-THE-ROAD TALES FROM SCREEN STORYTELLERS



LONELY PLANET PUBLICATIONS
Melbourne • Oakland • London

Lights, Camera...Travel!
On-the-Road Tales from Screen Storytellers

Published by Lonely Planet Publications

Head Office:
90 Maribyrnong Street, Footscray, Vic 3011, Australia
Locked Bag 1, Footscray, Vic 3011, Australia

Branches:
150 Linden Street, Oakland CA 94607, USA
2nd floor, 186 City Rd, London, EC1V 2NT, UK

Published 2011

Printed in China
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Copy edited by Victoria Harrison & Patrick Kinsella
Designed by Seviara Citra
Cover Design by Mark Adams

National Library of Australia Cataloguing-in-Publication entry

Lights, camera...travel! : on-the-road tales from screen storytellers / edited by
Andrew McCarthy & Don George.

ISBN 978 1 74220 493 2 (pbk.)

Travel -- Anecdotes.
Motion picture actors and actresses -- Travel.
Motion picture producers and directors -- Travel.
Screenwriters -- Travel.

McCarthy, Andrew.
George, Donald W.

910.4

© Lonely Planet and contributors 2011.
Cover images © Photolibary & iStockphoto

LONELY PLANET and the Lonely Planet logo are trade marks of
Lonely Planet Publications Pty. Ltd.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a
retrieval system or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical,
photocopying, recording or otherwise, except brief extracts for the purpose
of review, without the written permission of the publisher.

Contents

Introduction – Andrew McCarthy and Don George	7
LA Memories – Alec Baldwin	10
Me, Floot and the Flute – Malcolm McDonald	15
Dolphin Love: A Brazilian Romance – Dana Delany	22
Honeymooning with Sharks – Rick Marin	28
Island Love – Dani Klein Modisett	36
Through Jordan and Syria – Josh Lucas	47
Discovering Armenia, Recovering Myself – Andrea Martin	58
Arctic Adventure – Brooke Shields	67
Non Mia Piacere Siena – Eileen Heisler	77
Miami Diary – Rolf de Heer	83
In Search of a Dolphin's Grave – Bill Bennett	94
Egyptian Magic – Anthony Sattin	105
The Magic Garden of Nek Chand – Paul Cox	114
The Wonders of Whitby – Neil LaBute	119
A Day in Istanbul – Rick Steves	123
A Shaggy Dog Tale – Eilis Kirwan	130
Showdown in Real de Catorce – Bob Balaban	139

Shooting in Romania: What Doesn't Kill You ... – Paulina Porizkova	148
Thai Dyed – Eric Bogosian	155
The King and I – Richard E Grant	161
Behind the Scenes: Filming <i>Tomb Raider</i> at Angkor Wat – Nick Ray	166
Stalking Monks in Thailand – Joe Cummings	175
Sunrise in Balibo – Robert Connolly	186
The Broome Circuit – Aaron Pedersen	191
India: A Family Portrait – Stephanie March	196
The Call of Morocco – Sandra Bernhard	204
Off the Beaten Path in Guatemala – Bruce Beresford	212
Kala – Jim Sharman	217
Goods and Chattels – John Seale	223
Glides Like a Piano – Anthony Edwards	226
Islands in the Storm – Dan Bucatinsky	235
Jenifer – Jace Alexander	241
Life is a River in India – Brett Paesel	247

Introduction

**ANDREW McCARTHY
AND DON GEORGE**

The premise behind this anthology is simple: since the ancient Greeks, actors have been society's storytellers. And ever since Hollywood first left the backlot, these storytellers have been traveling to far-flung corners of the world to tell those tales.

By necessity of the job, and often by nature, these 'Hollywood types' are a nomadic breed. Actors travel always with an eye and an ear – sometimes unconsciously, often deliberately – looking for characters, details of behavior, or inflections of voice, that can be logged away, stored for a future date, only to be recalled and employed for a role at the appropriate time. Writers move about listening for lines of dialogue that will unlock character, and directors bask in atmosphere in order to create a world on screen both specific and authentic. Most filmmakers will tell you that making a movie is easier on the backlot, but richer on the road.

We thought it would be illuminating – and entertaining – to ask some of these peripatetic storytellers to tell us their most personal, inspiring, funny, embarrassing and human stories from their time on the road. The result far surpassed our expectations: thirty-three tales by

Introduction

distinguished actors, directors and screen writers from around the world that are rich, raucous, and intimately revealing. While these stories are multifaceted in setting, voice and subject, one common theme threads through them: contact with the wider world through travel can delight, enlighten, inspire and change lives.

About half of these stories revolve around experiences related to a film. The other half recount travels not related to filming, in some case before careers even got started, in other cases in the troughs between triumphs, and in other cases on temporary career breaks.

In organizing these tales, we tried to follow both a chronological and a thematic structure. We begin with a couple of pieces that take place in the distant past – Alec Baldwin’s wonderfully warm and wistful remembrance of Los Angeles, and Malcolm McDonald’s poignant picturing of an epic journey he took as a youth around the world, accompanied by his flute and a friend named Floom.

These stories segue into further romantic remembrances set in Brazil, Australia and Hawaii. From there we present five stories that revolve around the theme of renewal – renewal through confronting the challenges of the road.

Beginning with Bill Bennett’s evocative ‘In Search of a Dolphin’s Grave,’ we present fourteen stories that focus on film-related experiences. Sitting around on set, actors, writers and directors often regale each other with stories of ‘glory days’ and famous mishaps – often with a showman’s one-upmanship. Our tales capture this atmosphere: some recount adventures and discoveries encountered in the process of doing background research either for the writing of a script or for the making of a film; others focus on the rigors of filming in remote, often undeveloped places – and the unexpected riches and revelations that can result.

Introduction

For the last act in this multi-part epic, we present a suite of family stories – stories that explore themes of bonds made and broken, obstacles encountered and overcome, lessons learned, deaths endured and renewals nurtured. The final story in the book, Brett Paesel’s extraordinary ‘Life is a River in India,’ beautifully illustrates the many-faceted gifts travel can bestow when we are open to and trusting in the world, our loved ones and ourselves.

Whether secure in a backlot or on distant location, working from a script or ‘off book,’ the storytellers in these stories ultimately reveal that they are just like us: human, full of foible, longing and grace – and that, just like us, when they venture into the wide world, that journey can touch and transform them.

LA Memories

ALEC BALDWIN

Alec Baldwin has appeared in over forty films, including *Beetle Juice*, *Working Girl*, *Miami Blues*, *The Hunt for Red October*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *Malice*, *The Juror*, *The Cooler* (National Board of Review Award for Best Supporting Actor; Oscar nomination), *The Aviator*, *The Departed* and *It's Complicated*. On television, Baldwin currently stars with Tina Fey in NBC's *30 Rock*, winner of three Emmy Awards for Outstanding Comedy Series (2007, 2008 and 2009). Baldwin has received five Screen Actors Guild Awards, three Golden Globe Awards, the Television Critics Association Award and two Emmy Awards as Best Actor in a Comedy Series for his performance on the show. He last appeared on stage in the 2010 Guild Hall (East Hampton) production of Peter Shaffer's *Equus*, directed by Tony Walton. Other stage performances include the Roundabout Theatre Company's 2006 production of Joe Orton's *Entertaining Mr Sloane*, directed by Scott Ellis; *Loot* (Broadway, 1986; Theatre World Award); Caryl Churchill's *Serious Money* (Broadway, 1988); *Prelude to a Kiss* (Circle Repertory Company, 1990; Obie Award); *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Broadway, 1992; Tony Award nomination); *Macbeth* (New York Shakespeare Festival, 1998); and *Twentieth Century* (Roundabout Theatre Company, 2004). He is also the author of *A Promise to Ourselves*, which was published in paperback in 2009. In 2011, Alec received his star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

LA Memories

Los Angeles has always been, well, a sore spot in my life. It might be safe to say that the bulk of the bad things in my life happened in LA, while the bulk of the good things happened in New York. It got so bad that I would feel a sense of personal defeat and demoralization whenever I landed there.

I've heard all of the analyses. My uncle Charles said that 'if you really are one in a million, then there are seven other people like you in New York City.' My friend Ken told me that New York is a river, with its own natural currents that seem to pull you in some direction, while LA is a lake. No currents. You've got to row where you want to go. Another said, 'LA will test everything you love, both friends and interests, because you gotta drive so far to get to them!' Another friend instructed me to find the outdoorsman in me. Take up hang-gliding. Hiking in the Angeles National Forest. I gravitated more toward the subway.

I heard more stuff like that. LA's not really a city but 'the chicest suburb in the world.' 'LA has great theater,' they would assure me. So-so pizza. The best sushi. The women. The movies. I have been one of the great LA haters of all time. That traffic. The San Diego Freeway, like some red carpet right into Hell. I recall driving my Karmann Ghia convertible north on the 405 in 1983, heading to an audition in Burbank, the air over the Valley like mustard gas, my eyes tearing. I remember reading in the *LA Weekly* that Santa Monica Bay was so contaminated from runoff that veteran lifeguards were developing cancers. I lived in Venice, full-time, 1983 through 1985. I couldn't wait to get out of there.

Through Jordan and Syria

JOSH LUCAS

Josh Lucas was born in the early 1970s in Arkansas and spent his childhood traveling with his activist parents who organized anti-nuclear protests all over the South. The family finally settled in a small fishing village in Washington State, where Josh's small public school had a nationally ranked, award-winning debating and drama program. He has been traveling and acting ever since.

To be blunt, this ‘entertainment industry’ I have spent over twenty years working in can kick your ass. In the early winter of 2010, I find myself metaphorically lying in the mud, bloody and bruised, and with a nasty headache. The beautiful promise of a great career job has just blown past me, knocking me viciously to the ground. Rejected, I realize that I’ve taken this loss way too hard and that my perspective is off. So I decide a solo trip to somewhere I’ve never been is what I need to get my head together. Wanting a total immersion outside of my comfort zone, I choose the Middle East.

A few days later, I land in Israel. A sleepless zombie, I whisk breezily through the world’s most secure airport. Exiting customs, I feel confused as all my research has prepared me for a cavity search or at the very least a serious interrogation, and here I stand in Israel without anyone having had even a peek at my belongings.

I take a public bus to the closest stop near the old city of Jerusalem. I enter through Damascus Gate and instantly the ancient market engulfs me in color, sensation, and smells. I’m joyfully overwhelmed, lost for a while in the maze of the old city. I reach the Muslim quarter and quickly leave my bags in the 500-year-old marble-floored hostel I’m staying in. Then I walk into the corridor and find myself uttering ‘Oh my God,’ my mouth literally agape as I fall from experience to experience. I wander through the mass of spirituality and emotion that is boiling inside this mind-blowing human creation honoring God: Jerusalem. There is no doubt about the presence of God here. I also feel utter madness. It is instantly obvious to me why this place causes war and death. And salvation.

Arctic Adventure

BROOKE SHIELDS

An accomplished model, author and television, film and theater actress, Brooke Shields began her career at the age of nine. Her acting credits include the films *Pretty Baby*, *The Blue Lagoon* and *Endless Love*, and the TV shows *Suddenly Susan*, *That '70s Show* and *Lipstick Jungle*. She is the author of the *New York Times* bestseller *Down Came the Rain: My Journey Through Postpartum Depression*, and the children's books *Welcome To Your World, Baby* and *It's the Best Day Ever, Dad!* She received a degree in French literature from Princeton University, graduating with honors. She currently lives on the East Coast with her husband and two daughters.

Brooke Shields

Several years ago, I got a call about contributing to *Marie Claire* magazine as a writer. The series of articles they were doing entailed engaging various actresses to go on trips and document their experiences.

Marie Claire chose the locations and matched them with the actresses. They had sent Demi Moore to be alone for a three-day yoga retreat in the mountains of Idaho during the summer. They had sent Gwyneth Paltrow to a deserted, tropical island for three days of solitude. The magazine explained that the article was to document the unique experience the actress was being subjected to. After hearing the locations they had chosen for the other two, I thought, 'Sure, I could handle some R&R.' I was positive I would be sent to some warm, mystical place where I would eat berries and watch multicolored sunsets.

Eager to hear my particular assignment, I called the magazine and said, 'Yes, I'd love to go on a trip for you and write about it. Where are you going to send me?'

The answer was chilling: 'We want you to go to the Arctic and build an igloo by yourself and sleep in it overnight!'

Great, I thought. Send the big girl to the Arctic while the petite ones get warm weather and sand! But never having been a person to back out of a commitment, and buoyed by the prospect of seeing the northern lights, I said, 'I can't wait.'

My best friend had just died suddenly and I had been devastated by the loss. I needed to escape my life in any way possible. I wanted to go someplace where I could be under the radar and have time to think and mourn. Well, I was about to get my chance to do just that and maybe even get a glimpse of

The Wonders of Whitby

NEIL LABUTE

Neil LaBute is a writer and director for film, theater and television. His projects include *In the Company of Men*, *Bash*, *The Shape of Things*, *Your Friends & Neighbors*, *The Distance from Here*, *Filthy Talk for Troubled Times*, *Nurse Betty*, *Fat Pig*, *The Break of Noon*, *Possession*, *Wrecks*, *Autobahn*, *This is How it Goes*, *The Wicker Man*, *The Mercy Seat*, *In a Dark Dark House*, *Lakeview Terrace*, *Death at a Funeral*, *In a Forest*, *Dark and Deep*, and *Some Girl(s)*. He is also the author of the short story collection *Seconds of Pleasure*.

If you happen to find yourself on the northern coast of England making a motion picture (as I did a few years ago), then be sure to put the town of Whitby at the top of your list of 'places I need to visit on the northern coast of England while I make a motion picture.' Or you might want to visit one day for no apparent reason, which I would happily suggest to virtually anyone who enjoys England, the outdoors or any place remotely beautiful.

I was lucky enough to spend a few days in Yorkshire while working on an adaptation of AS Byatt's *Possession*. A good portion of the novel is set in this lovely northern community and we were lucky enough to film various scenes on or near the actual locations suggested in her book.

Whitby is a rugged and handsome community, perched on the mouth of the River Esk as it reaches the North Sea. It is a place of extreme juxtapositions and it is an amazing place to 'people watch' as the locals, tourists and goths mix freely in the streets. The sheer number and variety of 'types' you see walking down the narrow avenues of Whitby is reward enough for stopping there, but there is much more to enjoy for the day visitor or someone who plans to spend a few days in the region.

One of the best places to start is high above the town – 199 steps, to be exact, up a beautifully weathered stone staircase – at the ruins of Whitby Abbey, which was the inspiration for parts of the classic novel *Dracula*. In fact, Bram Stoker stayed in Whitby while writing his most famous work and his attention to local detail is apparent in the pages of his story. The Abbey is now visited by flocks of tourists but it is the huge influx of 'goths' (a wide net that includes vampire enthusiasts, people who are drawn to the clothes and trappings of a 'gothic' lifestyle and many others) who have turned this area into a local mecca for the macabre. Whitby itself has embraced the black-garbed visitors and now has twice-yearly festivals, 'Goth

The King and I

RICHARD E GRANT

Richard E Grant was born and brought up in Swaziland, emigrated to England in 1982, and since his first film *Withnail and I* in 1986, has appeared in forty films and worked with directors Francis Ford Coppola, Martin Scorsese, Jane Campion, Bruce Robinson and Robert Altman. Grant wrote and directed *Wah-Wah* in 2004. He has also published three books, *With Nails: The Film Diaries of Richard E Grant*, *The Wah-Wah Diaries: The Making of a Film* and *By Design: A Hollywood Novel*.

At the tail end of the last century, I scribbled an autobiographical screenplay about my adolescence in Swaziland, Southern Africa, entitled *Wah-Wah* (the toodle-pip and hubbly-jubbly colonial slang of the last gasp of empire). After a couple of years trying to chicken-and-egg it – get it cast and financed – my producer politely withdrew to become a drugs counselor in Barbados. Into the breach stepped a comely French female producer (whom I shall diplomatically refer to by her initials, MC), who promised calm financial passage and clearsailingconditionsahead.com. Despite the invention of phones, faxes, texts and emails, the small matter of answering any of these communications between my office in London and hers in Paris became increasingly infrequent.

There's nothing like the hilarity of hindsight when revisiting the near nervous-breakdown-inducing details of working with the aforementioned foe ...

Having ploughed through four years of rewrites, preproduction collywobbles and yo-yoing financials, we finally find ourselves in Swaziland, only to discover, five days before shooting, that MC has 'neglected' to secure work permits for the hundred-plus crew and cast. She is still in Paris when I am red-carpeted by an incandescent Swazi government minister at 8:30am on June 2, 2004.

He detonates a full-frontal attack: 'WHERE ARE YOUR APPLICATIONS? WHY WAS THERE NO FOLLOW-UP? WHY WAS THERE NO CONTACT? WHERE WERE YOU, GRANT? WHY WERE YOU NOT HERE, GRANT? WHY WAS I NOT INFORMED, GRANT?'

He is unstoppable and implacable.

India: A Family Portrait

STEPHANIE MARCH

Stephanie March is an actress, activist and dedicated traveler. She is best known for her role as Assistant Deputy Attorney Alexandra Cabot on *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit*. Other television appearances include *Grey's Anatomy* and *30 Rock*. She has also appeared in the films *The Treatment*, *Mr & Mrs Smith*, *The Invention of Lying* and *Head of State*, as well as several Broadway and off-Broadway productions. She is a contributing editor of Fathom at www.fathomaway.com, and a graduate of Northwestern University. Stephanie resides in New York City – when she is not plotting her next getaway.

India: A Family Portrait

Three years ago I went on a family vacation. Three fun-loving, cocktail-slugging blondes from Texas indulging in a girls' trip – my mother, sister Charlotte and me. We wanted to shop, have tea, take in a show and make fun of other relatives. We decided to do this in India.

Group travel evolves into the same basic hierarchy no matter the participants or the destination. One of the players is always In Charge. This person chooses the destination and accommodations and maps a basic itinerary of each day's events. The second person is First Mate. This person brings along guidebooks and sunscreen, suggests interesting dinners or sightseeing adventures, and is helpful to In Charge in realizing her perfect vision of the trip. First Mate's secret powers lie in her ability to shape the trip to her liking without ever engaging in direct confrontation with In Charge. Grumbler is the individual who complains in a passive-aggressive fashion throughout the trip without ever actually making an effort to improve things. Grumbler wants vegetarian options. Grumbler is hot/knew we should have turned left/makes a big deal about brushing her teeth with bottled water. This dynamic has even greater meaning when the travelers in question are intimately related and have thirty years of familial power structure embedded in their DNA. Taking a family trip is sort of like this: imagine you are asked to sew a quilt for a king-sized bed. Now imagine the quilt has to be made completely of Saran Wrap. Good luck.

We reconnoitered with an overnight stutter step in Delhi (Charlotte had been in India for three weeks on her own). We took twelve hours to wash the hair, down a few gin and tonics

The Call of Morocco

SANDRA BERNHARD

Sandra Bernhard is an actress and a performer. She has authored three books and her writing has also appeared in numerous publications, among them the *New Yorker*, *Vanity Fair* and *Condé Nast Traveler*. She lives in New York City with her girlfriend and daughter.

The Call of Morocco

What led me to Morocco on three different occasions was a sense of desperation. To go back to a place I had dreamed of, imagined and longed for. Nothing came close to the emotion and desire I felt staring at the map of North Africa. It called to me as if I'd been there in a hundred other lifetimes.

On my second journey to Morocco, things were quite different. In the years since my first carefree, spontaneous trip, I had become a mother. Though still a gypsy at heart (with a strong desire for beautiful sheets and a top-of-the-line mattress), some focus on detail had become paramount. Obsessed with all things organic, I started to panic; what would I feed Cicely (my child) once we arrived in this land without amenities? I checked in with my friend Soumaya, who would be hosting us in her family home in the Kasbah of Tangier.

Soumaya seemed nonplussed by the whole conversation and simply gave me her address. I sent out the troops to gather cases of organic baby food, formula, diapers – you would have thought we were headed into some sort of gulag. We packed all this up in big boxes, carefully wrapping each bottle, then alerted UPS and in they came to haul them away. I ran after them, saying, 'Please be careful. That is precious cargo. It must arrive at its destination safely!'

Then I sat for a while thinking about its journey and my own. This was a huge trip. I was bringing the whole gang: Cicely, her nanny Vicky, who at age ten had found her way up from Guatemala, alone, to rejoin her mother Anita in LA (Anita had left to find work in America a few years earlier so that she could support her children back home, even though she knew

Off the Beaten Path in Guatemala

BRUCE BERESFORD

Bruce Beresford is a film and opera director. He was nominated for an Academy Award for the script of *Breaker Morant* and direction of *Tender Mercies*. He directed *Driving Miss Daisy*, which won the Academy Award for Best Film in 1989. Other films include *Black Robe*, *Crimes of the Heart*, *Double Jeopardy* and *Mao's Last Dancer*. He recently directed André Previn's opera of *A Streetcar Named Desire* for Opera Australia. In 2011 he is directing Carlisle Floyd's opera of John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*, also for Opera Australia.

Off the Beaten Path in Guatemala

Los Angeles, 1982. I was there to direct a film and suddenly found myself, because of a sudden coup in the studio hierarchy, with a spare week. My film was put on hold while the new heads decided (a) whether to proceed with it at all and (b) if the decision was made to proceed, would there be, perhaps, a change of director?

I decided that this was an ideal time to make a visit to Guatemala. I had long wanted to see the Mayan ruins at Tikal. This was before the days when travel bookings were laboriously made on the internet, so I visited my local travel agent and bought three tickets for the following day – for myself, my son (age thirteen) and my daughter (age fifteen).

We turned up in plenty of time in an obscure section of Los Angeles airport. All went smoothly until I was asked for our visas. I had been told, I explained, that visas weren't necessary for Guatemala. Quite wrong. Could I get the visas here at the airport? Impossible. They could only be obtained from the Guatemalan embassy in downtown Los Angeles.

Back to our house in Los Feliz. The next morning I was given the address of the embassy and drove downtown early so that I could be there when it opened at, I assumed, nine o'clock.

The address turned out to be in a particularly run-down part of the city. Every second store sold liquor, the streets were strewn with rubbish and the passersby were sadly down-at-heel. It took me some time to locate the correct number of the embassy building and, when I did, it proved to be a huge hole in the ground. I stared at it for some time in an understandable state of bewilderment as this was unquestionably the address given to me by someone on the embassy staff.