

# 'Christopher Columbus: The Discovery' fails to discover the talents of its crew

By ANAS BEN-MUSA

Staff Writer of THE BATTALION

"Christopher Columbus: The Discovery" Starring Marlon Brando, Tom Selleck, George Corraface, Rachel Ward  
Directed by John Glen  
Rated PG-13  
Playing at Cinema III in Albertson's shopping center

If you are looking for a sweet, innocent, fairy-tale story, then "Christopher Columbus: The Discovery" is everything you would hope for in such a story. "Columbus" never deals with the political and economic implications of Columbus's proposition to travel to the Indies.

Throughout the film, the treachery and deceit inflicted by the various monarchs Columbus petitions for his voyage are never answered. During the first half of "Columbus," the audience is thrust into a surreal world where every adventure and predicament Columbus gets into ends in joyous laughter.

Director John Glen touches lightly on the political landscape that Columbus had to deal with in Spain. During the time Columbus was pleading with Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand for his commission, Spain was fighting the Muslim Empire in southern Spain and expelling the Jews. Yet, Glen only gives the audience a glimpse of these major historical events.

I was not expecting a detailed account of every battle, but more depth would have helped embellish the story. It would have answered many questions about why Columbus had to wait so long for his commission. Instead, Glen shows Columbus waiting around trying to convince people that his plan to sail around the world to the Far East is legitimate.

Of course, Glen overlooked the major religious events of that period, mainly the Spanish Inquisition. The Inquisition affected every single aspect of life,

including the reason it took Columbus several years to get his commission. However Glen blows by that aspect of Spain's history, like Carl Lewis in the 100-meter dash.

When Glen tried to embellish the film with some historical accuracy, he failed miserably. As Bugs Bunny would say, he forgot to take a left at Albuquerque.

In one scene, Columbus makes a deal with the crew that if land is not sighted within three days they can chop off his head. The history books never tell this event in Columbus's life. Nor does history presume Columbus is that confident or stupid to make such a proposition.

Yet, the lack of history can not compare to the lousy acting by some well established actors.

Tom Selleck, playing King Ferdinand, distracts the attention and focus of the story. Jessica Tandy would have been more appropriate to play Ferdinand than Selleck. Selleck moves in and out of his English accent like a yo-yo. My question is why Ferdinand, the Spanish King, would have an English accent?

Furthermore, Rachel Ward's portrayal of Queen Isabella compares with Julie Andrews' portrayal of Mary Poppins. Her character is so sweet and proper, as Wayne would say, "It makes you wanna hurl." Isabella at the time was fighting the Moors in southern Spain and had no problems kicking out the Jews; yet, "Columbus" makes her out to be a spiritual, delicate flower.

However, the most disappointing aspect of the film is Marlon Brando's portrayal of the Spanish Inquisitor, Torquemada.

Brando's character was so dull and obsolete that I saw no purpose in having him around. Unlike the real person, "Columbus's" Torquemada is a slow, stupid man.

If you are looking for a film that deals with fantasy and little reality, then go see "Christopher Columbus: The Discovery." The film dealt with as much history as Walt Disney's "Beauty and The Beast."

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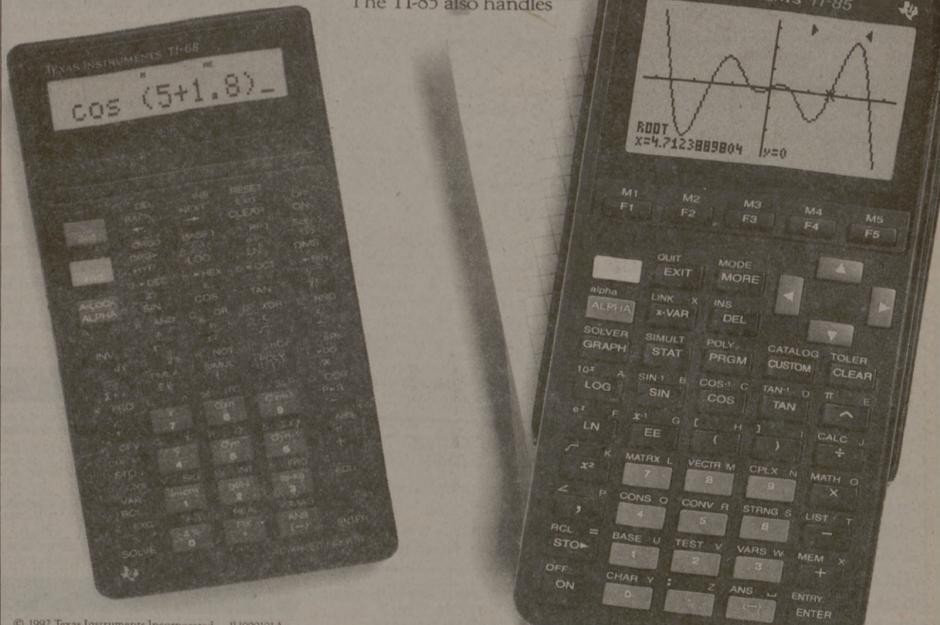
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# 'Material Issue' soars with Destination Universe

By TRICIA MARTINEZ

Reviewer of THE BATTALION

Material Issue  
"Destination Universe"  
Polygram Records

Chicago's Material Issue is known as one of the foremost practitioners of pop/rock and their latest project, "Destination Universe", enhances their reputation.

"Destination Universe" is a great LP which has already spawned a great lead track in "What Girls Want." This tune has a solid, steady, driving beat. It contains amazingly clever lyrics, and Jim Ellison, lead vocals/guitar, belts out strong vocals.

"What Girls Want" is gaining popularity on the record charts with lyrics such as "I want love,

I want drugs, I want sex and affection," sung throughout the tune.

Ellison wrote all the songs for "Destination Universe," and the three member group is able to pull off sounds that would make one think the band is chock-full of members by utilizing their guitar strengths and synthesizer sounds.

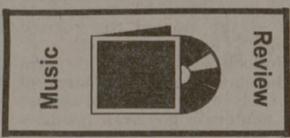
Ted Ansani, bass/vocals, and Mike Zelenko, drums, do a fantastic job in adding individuality to the LP. Ansani is a master at back-up vocals and his harmonizing is one of the best features of "Destination Universe," while Zelenko never misses on his rapid drum beats.

Most of the songs on "Destination Universe" are fast-paced. "Girl From Out Of This World" is a rocking little tune where El-

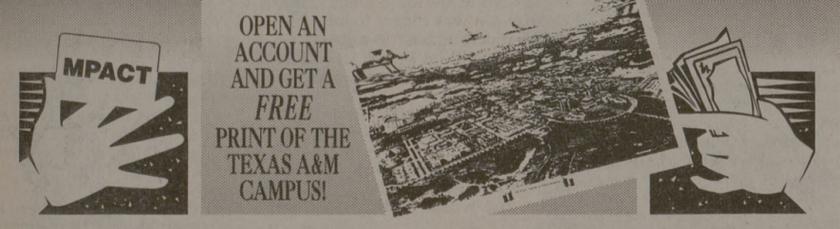
lison really shows his vocal range. When I first heard this one I thought it was a female on vocals because of Ellison's high range. He does, however, pull it off with class.

Material Issue really cranks all the way through "Destination Universe". The group possesses music versatility with crosses between pop, rock and some funk. The LP does contain a few ballads which are not really the band's strong point. "Everything" and "Don't You Think I Know," are good songs, they just aren't great.

Material Issue is known for its fun and crazy lyrics combined with grooving guitars and drums. "Destination Universe" exemplifies this along with a "get-to-the-point" rock and roll sound.



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