



## Walker

Director: Alex Cox

Production Companies:

Walker Film Productions, Incine

Executive Producer: Edward R. Pressman

Producers: Lorenzo O'Brien, Angel Flores Marini

Line Producer: Carlos Alvarez

Associate Producer: Debbie Diaz

Production Manager: Chris Brigham

Production Managers (Tucson): Jack Young, Joe Calk

Production Supervisor: Michael Flynn

Production Co-ordinators: Rosa Maria Roffiel, Maritza Castillo, Francis Solano

Production Co-ordinator (Tucson): Crystal Dowd

Production Co-ordinator (LA): Renée Milliken

Production Controller: Gary Gillingham

Production Assistants: Edgar Suarez, Tracey

Freeman, Julian Gonzales, John Ladd, Felipe

Mariscal, Fermin Lara, David Mastron

2nd Unit Director: Miguel Sandoval

Assistant Directors: Mary Ellen Woods,

Miguel Lima, Fernando Altschul, James O'Brien

Assistant Directors (Tucson): Bob Elliot,

Michelle Pinelli

Assistant Director (LA): Kris Hockmeyer

Casting: Victoria Thomas, Miguel Sandoval,

Nestor Mendez

Extras Casting: Celeste Gonzales

Screenplay: Rudy Wurlitzer

Director of Photography: David Bridges

Additional Photography: Denis Crossan,

Frank Pineda, Steven Fierberg, Tom Richmond,

Rafael Ruiz

Matte Artist: Rocco Giffre

Special Effects Chief:

Marcelino Pacheco Guzmán, Art Brewer

Editors: Carlos Puente, Alex Cox, Todd Darling

Production Designers: Bruno Rubeo, J. Rae Fox

Art Directors: Jorge Sainz, Cecilia Montiel

Set Decorators: Bryce Perrin, Suzie Frishette

Set Dresser: Carlos Gutierrez

Costume Designers: Pam Tait, Theda Deramus

Wardrobe Supervisor: Federico Castillo

Makeup Artists: Morag Ross, Susan Mills,

Marina Torpin

End Title Design: Robert Dawson

Titles and Map Opticals:

Cinema Research Corporation

Opticals: Geoff Axtell

Music: Joe Strummer

Orchestration: Dick Bright

Guitar Orchestration: Zander Schloss

Vocal Orchestrations: Richard Zobel

Music Editor: Patrick O'Sullivan

Music Recording: Samuel Lehmer

Sound Design: Richard Beggs

Sound Recording: Peter Glossop, David Batchelor

2nd Unit Sound Recording: Lucho Fuentes

Sound Recording (Tucson): John Pritchett

Sound Recording (LA): Joseph Geisinger

Sound Re-recording Supervisor: Richard Beggs

Sound Re-recording: David Carroll

Supervising Sound Editor: Gloria S. Borders

Sound Editors: Tim Holland, Melissa Dietz,

Karen Harding

Foley Artist: Dennie Thorpe

Stunt Co-ordinator: Rick Barker

Stunts: J.D. Silvester, Geraldo Moreno Flores

Art Research: J. Rae Fox, Linda Burbank

Animal Handler: Arturo Rosas

## Moviedrome: Bringing the Cult TV Series to the Big Screen

# Walker

*The screening on Saturday 5 July will be introduced by filmmaker and Moviedrome presenter Alex Cox*

'What is a cult film? A cult film is one which has a passionate following but does not appeal to everybody. Just because a movie is a cult movie does not automatically guarantee quality. Some cult films are very bad. Others are very, very good. Some make an awful lot of money at the box office. Others make no money at all. Some are considered quality films. Others are exploitation.'

From 1988 to 2000 *Moviedrome* was presented by Alex Cox and then Mark Cousins. Across that time, more than 200 features were shown, and generations of movie fans and filmmakers would be informed and inspired by the selection, alongside the wit and wisdom of the introductions that preceded each screening. *Moviedrome* was a portal into the world of weird and wonderful cinema. This two-month season features some of the most notable titles screened and wherever possible they are preceded by the original televised introduction.

Nick Freand Jones, season curator and producer of *Moviedrome*

**Alex Cox:** *Walker* is an American film made in Nicaragua. It was written by Rudy Wurlitzer, the author of *Two-Lane Blacktop*, *Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid* and *Candy Mountain*. Wurlitzer has recently worked on a story about the Buddha for Bernardo Bertolucci. Walker is portrayed by Ed Harris, an outstanding American actor who specialises in half-charming, half-psychotic anti-heroes. Harris has also appeared in *Under Fire*, *To Kill a Priest*, *Alamo Bay* and *The Abyss*. He also played the astronaut John Glenn in *The Right Stuff*.

William Walker was an adventurer from Nashville, Tennessee, who in the mid-1850s invaded, and made himself president of, Nicaragua. Walker was something of a renaissance man – newspaper publisher, lawyer, Edinburgh University medical student – and was betrothed to the most beautiful woman in Nashville, who happened to be a deaf mute. He had extraordinary luck in battle, and was reputed to be impervious to gunfire, although he was wounded several times. Walker was funded by the shipping magnate Cornelius Vanderbilt, and for several years was reported to be the most popular man in the United States.

There's not much more I can say about this film, since I am its director. I personally am very fond of it. There are those who are not. For an impartial assessment, why don't we turn, as always, to the BFI's *Monthly Film Bulletin*:

'The contemporary parallels are there for the taking, and the film not only takes them but gleefully tramples all over them. Its leering, loony, comic style at first suggests that the filmmakers, and their expected audience, are so hip to what Manifest Destiny was really all about, that nothing more than a dig in the ribs and a frothingly over-the-top cameo from Peter Boyle as Vanderbilt are sufficient to deal with the subject and, more importantly, to pin the film's politics on its sleeve...

'Ed Harris's performance is contained, fixated and charismatic enough to make sense of Walker's constant switching along the spectrum from liberator to dictator, but the film is too post-Freudian smart either to leave the character alone or really to explore him ("I have a weakness for small men," coos his treacherous Latin *enamorata*: "Small puritans obsessed by power.") Cox's

#### Cast:

Ed Harris (*William Walker*)  
Richard Masur (*Ephraim Squier*)  
René Auberjonois (*Major Siegfried Henningson*)  
Keith Szarabajka (*Timothy Crocker*)  
Sy Richardson (*Captain Hornsby*)  
Xander Berkeley (*Byron Cole*)  
John Diehl (*Stebbins*)  
Peter Boyle (*Cornelius Vanderbilt*)  
Marlee Matlin (*Ellen Martin*)  
Alfonso Arau (*Raousset*)  
Pedro Armendáriz Jr (*Muñoz*)  
Roberto Lopez Espinosa (*Mayorga*)  
Gerrit Graham (*Norvell Walker*)  
William O'Leary (*James Walker*)  
Blanca Guerra (*Yrena*)  
Alan Bolt (*Don Domingo*)  
Miguel Sandoval (*Parker French*)  
René Assa (*Dr Jones*)  
Bennet Guillory (*Achilles Kewen*)  
Norbert Weisser (*Prange*)  
Bruce Wright (*Anderson*)  
Richard Edson (*Turley*)  
Charley Braun (*Bruno Van Namzer*)  
Linda Callahan (*Mrs Bingham*)  
Milton Selzer (*Judge*)  
Richard Zobel (*Lemuel*)  
Ren Woods (*Alta Kewen*)  
Frederick Neumann (*Wiley Marshall*)  
David Hayman (*Father Rossiter*)  
Joe Strummer (*Faucet*)  
Edward Tudor-Pole (*Doubleday*)  
Sharon Barr (*Darlene*)  
Kathy Burke (*Annie Mae*)  
Fox Harris (*district attorney*)  
Enrique Beraza (*Corral*)  
Luis Contreras (*Benito*)  
Ed Pansullo (*Major Angus*)  
Jack Slater (*Sanders*)  
Spider Stacey (*Davenport*)  
Del Zamora (*Padre Vigil*)  
Biff Yeager (*Rudler*)  
William Utay (*Fry*)  
George Belanger (*assistant deputy*)  
Zander Schloss (*Huey*)  
William Rothlein (*Dewey*)  
David Chung (*Lui*)  
Paulino Rodriguez (*Castellon*)  
Dick Rude (*Washburn*)  
Rudy Wurlitzer (*Morgan*)  
Bob Tzudiker (*Garrison*)  
Nestor Mendez Garcia (*Mendez*)  
Rick Barker (*Breckenridge*)  
J.D. Silvester (*Huston*)  
Robert Dickman (*company man*)  
Joe Celeste (*jury foreman*)  
Martin Aylett, Ramon Alvarez,  
Raymond Kettless, Tom Collins (*reporters*)  
Louis Mathews (*priest*)  
Dexter Taylor (*Liverpool*)  
Michele Winstanley (*maid*)  
USA-Mexico 1987  
94 mins  
Digital

Moviedrome transmission date: 16 August 1992

#### With thanks to

Bob Cummins and Sharon Maitland

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directing does a lot of switching of its own, along the spectrum from Peckinpah westerns to the apocalyptic scenarios of Jodorowsky and the visionary excesses of Herzog. Closer to home, *Walker* may have been intended as a political cut-up on Lester lines that has unfortunately come out as *Carry on Contras*.'

Alex Cox's original introduction for *Moviedrome*. Also published in *Moviedrome: The Guide 2* (BBC, 1993). With thanks to [moviedromer.tumblr.com](http://moviedromer.tumblr.com)

Alex Cox first read about Walker in a two-line reference in the left-wing American magazine *Mother Jones*; he was further inspired on a political tour of Nicaragua in 1984 when he saw an inscription on Granada's cathedral stating that Walker had burned it down in 1855. A qualified doctor, lawyer and inflammatory newspaper editor born in Nashville in 1824, the Walker who invaded Nicaragua was an insane product of the doctrine of manifest destiny preaching the USA's inviolable right to annex and rule the rest of the western hemisphere. He had already fought an abortive campaign to colonise Lower California and Sonora in 1853, before his victories at Rivas and Granada enabled him, in 1856, to proclaim himself president of a 'democracy', which he swiftly tyrannised into a model slave state. Ousted in battle in 1857, he unsuccessfully invaded Nicaragua twice more and tried to raise a revolution in Honduras, where he was arrested by the British and shot in September 1860.

Ed Pressman, who had nearly bailed out *Sid and Nancy* at one stage, agreed to back *Walker* when Eric Fellner, producer of Cox's last two pictures, dropped out. His one visit to Nicaragua was to extricate Cox from his row with the completion bond company which was threatening to dump the production halfway through – allegedly at the behest of the CIA, although Cox denies such rumours.

'Ed Harris radiates a very attractive sort of American quality,' says Cox of his leading actor, 'a grey-eyed passionate intensity – the type of guy who mythologises women and murders men. I'm turned on by Walker in this film, whereas before I thought of him as a repulsive thing. Now that I'm shouting for him, I constantly have to remind myself that he's evil. He is the most charismatic man you could ever meet, but he serves only the forces of destruction and darkness.'

Cox's satanic purview of US imperialism through the ages – he cites Walker's as 'number one or two in a list of 16 invasions of Nicaragua' – may shock, tease or amuse its eventual audiences into at least contemplating the morality of Congress' funding of the Contras, although there's an implicit risk that some viewers might take Walker's brutal methods to their bosom. Editor David Martin, an ex-BBC man who remained with Cox in Nicaragua to cut *Walker* even as Colonel North testified in the Iran-Contra Hearings, offered a final rational perspective on the film's importance.

'If you ask a lot of the production crew – particularly the actors – who were apprehensive about coming here, even the most conservative will admit that they are horrified at the lies that are told about Nicaragua. A camaraderie has built out of that and a sense that we are making an allegory that has found its place in time and history. But we're really only here because of Alex Cox, and it makes you think, "Why am I following this crazy guy?" It's difficult to define, but he has amazing enthusiasm and just gets out there and gets things done.'

Graham Fuller, *Sight and Sound*, Autumn 1987