



THE LIVING TABLEAU PR SOUNDBITES TRANSCRIPT

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Armondo Linus Acosta, Director, on Vittorio Storaro and Dante Ferretti

“I learned an old axiom, that works in life also, but it works in film: As soon as you know that you can do it, find somebody that can do it better. Storaro, who I befriended in Rome, his dream was to recreate *The Last Supper* and light it. He’s a master of light. The reason I chose him is that he’s the most important and most artistic cinematographer in the world today.

“So, I got Storaro to do it. Because it’s primarily an architectural work — it’s a room, it’s a dinner with a table and walls and a ceiling and a floor — I also thought of Dante Ferretti. By the way, both of them are three-time Oscar winners and they’ve won Oscars for some of the biggest and best films in history.”

Armondo Linus Acosta, Director, on Directing the Cast

“I can tell you a little secret. The twelve people that built this set, with nails and wood and frames and rope and cable and ladders and everything, are my twelve Apostles. Where does that happen? The actual carpenters, and those that made this set, are the Apostles that play the roles. Including Jesus. So, I just wanted them to whisper and talk to each other. But when His presence comes in you see that they all love Him. They show it in their little gestures. It was challenging, times twelve, and none of them are actors. They don’t even have basic training in acting. So that was challenging. But what contradicted the challenge, was that they were look-alikes. I found in my beautiful group of students, people that are almost identical.”

Armondo Linus Acosta, Director, on the Need for Another Last Supper Today

“Why do we need to see another *Last Supper*? It’s been around for years. Well, I really believe that the world, not to get political on you, but the world is in not such a nice place. And whether you believe in Jesus Christ or Buddha or Moses or Allah, we have to kind of wake up and say, somebody did this. Somebody created all of this. So, I think it’s just a way that the world is needing a form of inspiration. You don’t have to be Catholic to watch my movie. You don’t have to be Jewish to see my movie. I think it’s a time to really realize that there’s something beautiful in the world. And Leonardo, all through his works and his books, makes constant reference to the beauty and the divine construction of the human body and the human spirit.”

Armondo Linus Acosta, Director, on Beauty

“I am accused, I am ridiculed, I am bemused by my insatiable desire for beauty. It’s beyond. Just saying it makes me emotional. It’s very personal for me, because I’d rather not live if I was living a life without beauty.”

**Vittorio Storaro, Cinematographer,
on Seeing Leonardo's *The Last Supper* for the First Time**

“In 1975, I was in Parma, doing [Bertolucci's] *1900* and I knew that an hour by car from Parma was Milano, and there was an important painting by somebody called Leonardo da Vinci. I went to this church, and I was shocked in front of *The Last Supper*. I said, “Oh my God, it's so perfect, it's so perfect that it looks like it was the manifesto, the billboard of the Renaissance.”

Vittorio Storaro, Cinematographer, on Leonardo's Symbolism

“Leonardo had an idea. Very simple. Putting Jesus in the center of this composition. Because he wanted to say something. Jesus is God becoming human. But this human being is the center of the world, is the center of the universe.”

Vittorio Storaro, Cinematographer, on Leonardo's Use of Light

“Practically, in this incredible hall of Santa Maria delle Grazie the entrance is [from the left side], and *The Last Supper* is in the back. And there are windows on the right side. Leonardo lit everybody from the light coming through the windows. And it's very clear. He put the same soft light coming from the right side on the people. Why? Because he wanted to tell the audience, the priests that are there having dinner or lunch, that Jesus and the Apostles are in that place [with them].”

Dante Ferretti, Production Designer, on His Attraction to the Project

“Everything started when Armondo called me in Rome and proposed to me to reconstruct *The Last Supper* of Leonardo and to transform the painting into a living scene with real characters. This sounded very interesting to me. So, I asked questions and immediately said yes. Then I heard that Vittorio Storaro would also be there. All of this is extraordinary.”

**Dante Ferretti, Production Designer, on Working with Armondo Linus Acosta
and Attention to Detail**

“It was a beautiful experience. In fact, at the beginning, it all seemed beautiful and perfect. But because Armondo is someone who pays a lot of attention to every detail, we retouched and even rebuilt many things many times. That way everything ended up very close to the original by Leonardo. So, Armondo seems very joyful and easy, but in fact he is very precise. Everything we did, we had to redo, and now I believe he is happy.”

Francesca Lo Schiavo, Set Decorator, on Delving into the Soul of the Painting

“The idea to have the opportunity to go through the soul of this painting, I really believe is just like the crane movement by Vittorio Storaro that reaches through the set. In the end we do the same thing. We go inside the painting, inside the soul of the Apostles. And we witness the miracle of Jesus. So, I really believe this is of interest to the whole world.”

Francesca Lo Schiavo, Set Decorator, on Vittorio Storaro

“I must say that I was really moved by the idea to participate in this project, in this realization. And I felt even stronger because with us there was also the great Vittorio Storaro. We never had the opportunity to work with him, even though we have known each other for many years. So, the fact that it was him who would light the set provoked a great desire to work on this project.”