

CIPANGO!

A Story of Columbus

One day Jeremy Crow was talking to his friend Washington Irving about history. Washington Irving — called “Washy” by the crow — claimed to know everything about Christopher Columbus.

One day Jeremy Crow gave Washy some surprising news: it seems that a certain crow named Domenico sailed across the Atlantic Ocean with Columbus, and this same crow whispered to his family all sorts of secret information about the famous voyage to America in 1492. This Domenico Crow was the great, great, great, great. . . grandfather of Jeremy Crow.

Washy was excited to think that his friend Jeremy might have secret family stories about Christopher Columbus. He eagerly asked Jeremy to tell him all that Uncle Domenico had learned.

“Say pretty please,” insisted Jeremy.

Washy was impatient, but he said, “Pretty please . . . with ice cream on top.”

So Jeremy told him the story as handed down in the Crow family.

One day, as Christopher Columbus worked in his brother’s map store, he began to dream about the great ocean voyage he wanted to take. He wanted to sail to the great land of Cipango, that country far to the east of Spain. People thought that the only

way to get to Cipango was to travel across the land toward the east, with caravans of animals carrying food to keep you alive on the long journey of many years. Columbus thought he could sail to the west, go around the round world, and come back to Cipango in the east.

As Columbus was thinking about all of this, suddenly the door opened and a strange-looking old lady stalked into the map store. She shook so badly that the shelves in the store began to rattle. She stared at Columbus with her yellow eyes and said in a deep voice:

"Beware, Columbus, of the trip to Cipango. It will take you across the Sea of Darkness."

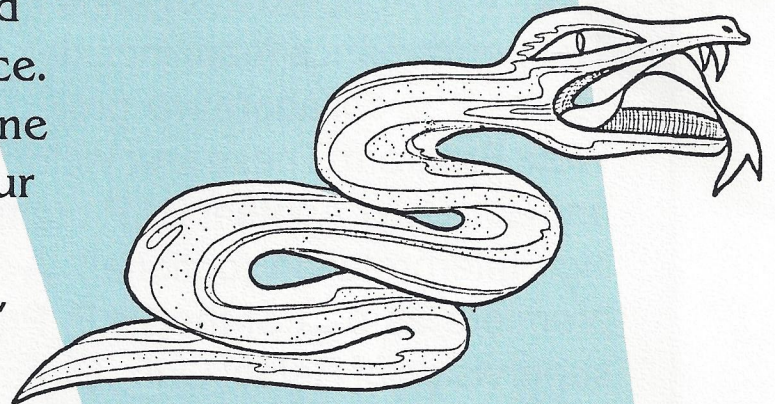
Columbus tried to ignore this warning, but he felt a little nervous.

"There are monsters in the Sea of Darkness," the old lady continued, stepping closer to Columbus and shaking a skinny finger in his face. "They will gobble you down in one big toothy bite. They will use your bones for toothpicks."

"I don't believe in monsters," Columbus said bravely.

The old lady kept on talking. "There are other dangers in the Sea of Darkness. There are many big holes. Your ship will drop into a big hole and be lost forever. You will fall into nada."

She hobbled out the door, then turned for one last warning. "Remember," she growled. "Remember nada."



Columbus put the scary old lady out of his mind and prepared himself for his important visit with Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand. If he could persuade the royal Spanish couple to give him money and ships, he could sail for Cipango right away.

At the palace, Queen Isabella was interested in Columbus' plan, but told him he'd have to wait until she had more money. Columbus was forced to wait. . . six years.

Finally, Columbus was called back to the palace and given the ships and money that he needed.

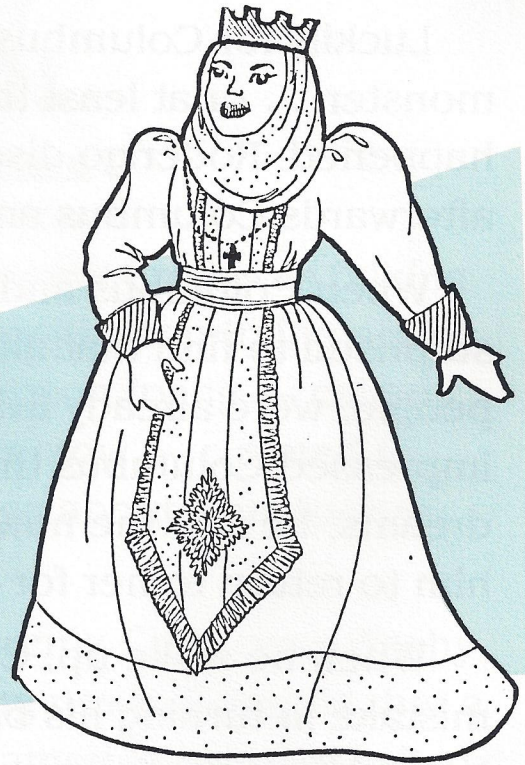
Now Columbus had another problem. The Spanish sailors heard so many scary stories about the Sea of Darkness that they wouldn't sign up to sail with him.

Columbus decided that, if he could sign up a very famous and trusted navigator for his voyage out into the unknown seas, he would have no trouble in finding sailors.

He went to see Martin Pinzon. He knew that Pinzon was a greedy man, so he talked a great deal about the gold and silver to be found in Cipango. Pinzon tried to resist, but the vision of great riches was too much for him. He signed up with Columbus.

Sure enough, after hearing that the famous Martin Pinzon would be the navigator, the Spanish sailors changed their minds and agreed to sail with Columbus.

Columbus set sail across the Atlantic Ocean, heading into the fabled Sea of Darkness. He didn't know that Pinzon had hatched up a scheme — with the help of a mean sailor named Roderigo — to seize control of the ships and throw Columbus into the ocean.



Luckily for Columbus, Roderigo was gobbled up by a sea monster. . . or at least that's what the Crow family said. Whatever happened, Roderigo disappeared during a storm. Soon afterwards Columbus and Pinzon sighted land.

When Columbus and his men set foot ashore, they were surprised to find that all kinds of wild creatures, and even people, were already living there. This exotic new place so impressed Columbus that he dreamed about it at night. In his dreams, he saw the new land as a native woman who called to him to return to her for the rest of his life.

When he woke up, Columbus realized that he'd made a mistake in turning his back on the sneaky Martin Pinzon. Pinzon had taken one of the ships and headed back to Spain.

Columbus also raced back to Spain, and was able to catch Pinzon in the act of telling lies about the voyage to the new world. Pinzon was trying to take all the credit for the discovery of land.

When Queen Isabella found out that Pinzon was lying, she sent him off to prison.

Columbus was hailed as a hero.

Jeremy Crow and his friend Washy agreed that Columbus' voyage had brought the land of America, for the first time, to the attention of the rest of the world. The course of history was changed forever.



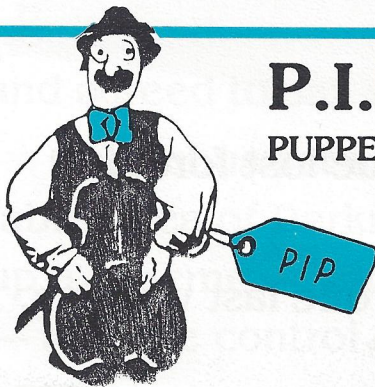
CIPANGO!

by BOB BYRD

adapted for puppet theater from
ANNE PAOLUCCI'S CIPANGO!

"Puppetry in Practice" (P.I.P.), headed by Dr. Tova Ackerman, has made available a puppet adaption of Anne Paolucci's dramatic play about Columbus, Queen Isabella and Martin Pinzon with Washington Irving as Commentator. This entertaining puppet play with audience participation brings the voyage of Columbus into the classroom.

Prepared in collaboration with "Columbus Countdown 1992," this project originated in cooperation with Sia Santa, a puppet theater in Campinas Brazil headed by Jorge Fantini, who designed the original puppets with Alberto Camerera and Jesus Seda. The script was adapted from Anne Paolucci's stage play by Bob Byrd. The performance team includes three actors from "Teacher Actor Teams," a collaborative project between P.I.P. and the Actor's Work Program. These are: Victoria Demtchenko, T. Michael Dalton and Bob Byrd. Another P.I.P. member, George Voyzey, can provide sign interpretation (optional). A Spanish version of the story will premiere as part of the P.I.P. Program in Puerto Rico under the supervision of Rafael Ortiz, Director of El Mundo de Los Muñecos.



P.I.P.

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