

Directly below the imperial balcony is the courtyard where Livia's victory parade takes place. Several crewmen are currently positioning lights and cameras for another angle of the Xena/Augustus confrontation. The art department is also on hand to make sure the courtyard set is dressed for a recreation of the parade, which is necessary as background for the current scene. Amidst palm fronds, banners and miscellaneous decorations, some of the crew allow themselves to rest briefly on their laurels – golden laurels that is, atop the banners soon to be carried by the Roman legionnaires.

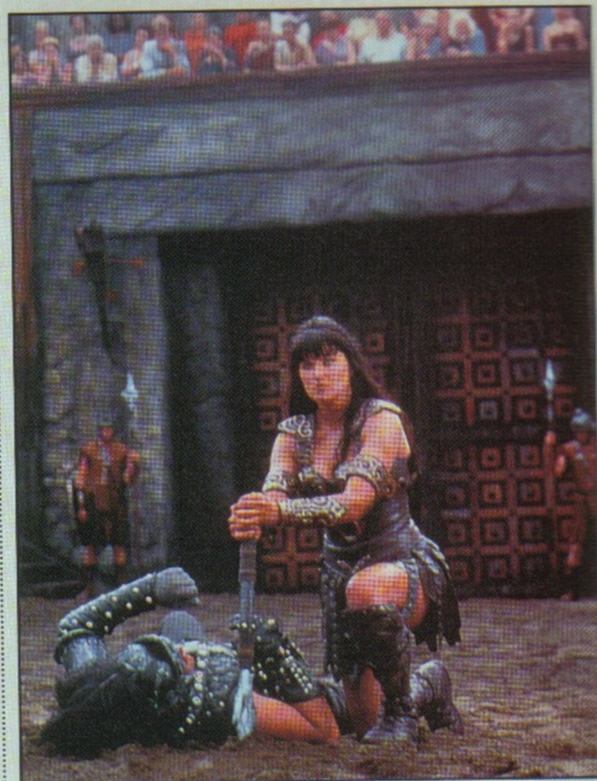
"There'll be more parade soon," a cameraman promises, as wranglers dressed as soldiers lead two magnificent black horses into the sand-covered courtyard. Of course, "soon" in filming language could mean anything from two minutes to two days...

It takes over an hour to set up for a couple of minutes of film inside the sauna-like conditions of the balcony, and that's just shooting

from one angle. A disembodied voice from inside calls out "stand by for a take!", and the sound and motion outside on the battlements momentarily cease.

Each time the word "cut!" is heard, crew members who have been on standby outside rush into the small, enclosed space for adjustments and touch-ups of camera, sound, lighting, wardrobe and make-up.

While this part of the balcony scene is being filmed, there's much more going on around the rest of the area than a casual observer would realise. They're still watering the sand in the gladiatorial arena, as well as setting up a blue screen nearby for the later addition of special effects. In the courtyard, assistant directors are assembling legionnaires, horses and assorted toga-wearing gentry for the miniaturised victory parade after filming on the current scene is complete. Wilkinson as Livia, riding her armoured black horse slowly around the courtyard, looks every bit the conquering hero,



BEGIN



Above: Like her daughter, Xena has also taken centre stage in the Roman arena.

Left: Xena arm wrestles a local Roman legionnaire in *When in Rome*.

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Behind the scenes