

## Hollywood coming to Panama

Written by T. Rob Brown (aka Roberto Chocolate)

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The launch of PANIFF - the Film Festival, coincided with an announcement of Hollywood coming to Panama.

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With a big red carpet and gala worthy of movie stars, famous Hollywood producers and directors were received this November 17 to celebrate the presentation of Films Panawood Trust, an unprecedented event in the country and also brought together distinguished entrepreneurs Panamanian media and senior executives of the Arcus Worldwide Entertainment (AWE), an independent production company in Hollywood.

According to Danny Stepper, who is in the country since Sunday, what Hollywood needs is a strategic partner in Latin America, and Panama have all the conditions for this. Panama can realize the benefits that once was Mexico.

Stepper, Kevin Brody and Matt Rhodes are very impressed with the beauty of places like Gamboa and the Chagres, especially for its proximity to a cosmopolitan, modern and sophisticated as Panama.

Danny Stepper, Ron Shelton, Patricia Rigger, Matt Rhodes and Kevin Brody participated in this great presentation, which was attended by officials from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the Tourism Authority of Panama.

We had expected the arrival of the renowned producer Raffaella De Laurentiis, however, canceled his visit, after the death of his father, Dino De Laurentiis, producer of world-class, with dozens of successful productions, to name a few, King Kong, Orca, Hannibal. Recently, De Laurentiis was in Panama and expressed interest in joining the efforts of AWE pursue film projects in this country, being the first one VIVALDI, which would expose the life of Antonio Vivaldi.

Film Panawood Trust, administered by TRUST Assest represents a solid basis for the establishment of the film industry in the country and the projection of American talent, both in the field of acting and the international production. This also becomes a great opportunity for local economic growth and for the tourist image of Panama.

In that sense, AWE expected to materialize by 2011 many projects, including the shooting of

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five films to be released in movie theaters this year: Our Lady of the Stadium, Missing, Learning Italian, Vivaldi and Vanilla Gorilla. During these films are expected participation of national stakeholders and generating higher incomes for residents of areas where they thrive.