

Panama Film Festival in the news again

Written by T. Rob Brown (aka Roberto Chocolate)

Tuesday, 14 December 2010 13:01 - Last Updated Tuesday, 14 December 2010 13:07

INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCED

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One of the filmmakers helping drive the creation of the International Film Festival of Panama is Abner Benaim.

Henk Van der Kolk, the founder of The Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) hopes to repeat his success in the Isthmus similar to that experienced in Canada

The Panama Film Festival (IFF Panama) will take place between 26 April and on May 2012.

This was announced last weekend Javier Castillo of the Department of Communication and Image of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MITI), one of the organizations that promote what could become the first film festival held in Isthmian territory.

According to Castillo, the film pre-release of this event, which will be called Festival of the Americas, will take place next April.

The initiative arose from a series of meetings held last week Roberto Henriquez, head of the trade portfolio, the producer Henk Van der Kolk, co-founder of the Toronto International Film Festival, Canada, and Robert Brown, co-founder of Arts Marketing Services Inc. and CEO of IFF Panama.

Henríquez reiterated that this 'first film festival in Panama' will have the support of state and local film industry. 'There is the possibility of establishing a National Endowment for the Arts in

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Panama by the National Government to sustainably support arts and culture in our country, such as the recent screening of the movie *Chance*, Abner Benaim, for the Goya Awards in Spain, which received financial support from MTI "; added the minister.

For his part, Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade, José Domingo Arias said that ";for its diversity of locations, telecommunications infrastructure and logistical facilities needed for the shooting of films, Panama continues to arouse the interest of national and international film production companies and television. "; Believes that this trend will be reinforced by the 'incorporation of international film festivals in our country. ";

Van der Kolk The producer hopes to replicate similar success in Panama who has worked with the International Film Festival Toronto, which is considered not only one of the best in North America, but internationally.

Another of the filmmakers who are pushing this project is Abner Benaim, director of *Chance*, a film which has opened new possibilities for the fledgling local film industry, being planned in several countries in the region. ";We're mapping out to be an international festival since its first year,"; said the director.