

By Ruth L. Ratny  
December 3, 2008

**Reid Brody: Movie mogul in the making  
“Nothing Like the Holidays” his first film opens Dec. 12**

Reid Brody's lifelong dream to produce features is being realized with the Dec. 12 opening of “Nothing Like the Holidays,” which his 2DS Productions co-produced with State Street Productions.

The movie shot in Humboldt Park (its original title) early this year and stars Humboldt Park native Freddy Rodriguez and a strong Latino cast.

The story is about the surprises a Puerto Rican family reveals during one eventful week together at home in Chicago.

Reid, president and cofounder of multi-divisional Filmworkers Club (Astro Labs with branches in Dallas and Nashville, Vitamin and Lift) and financier Paul Kim formed 2DS. They formed a partnership with State Street Pictures' Bob Teitel, George Tillman, Jr. and Matt Pritzker.

“This partnership is a chance to gain ownership in the film projects we create together,” said Teitel, co-producer of “Holidays” and co-story writer with Rene M. Rigal.

Brody, Kim, Rigal and Rodriguez were executive producers, Tillman and Teitel producers and Tom Busch co-producer.

Also starring are Alfred Molina, Elizabeth Pena, Luis Guzman, Debra Messing, Jay Hernandez, Manny Perez and Vanessa Ferlito. Director was Alfredo De Villa (“Adrift in Manhattan”).

Brody, Tillman and Teitel's relationship began with “Soul Food.”

The relationship between Brody producer Teitel and director Tillman go back to 1997, when the Columbia College grads produced first feature, “Soul Food,” which launched their Hollywood movie careers and Brody ran Astro Labs (years before it was acquired by Filmworkers).

“We didn't have much money and asked Reid for a lot of favors and he always came through,” recalled Teitel.

Brody reconnected with Teitel and Tillman, who added their Hollywood connections to their first joint venture, “Nothing Like the Holidays.”

The story is very much like “Soul Food,” only with a Latino family, explained Teitel. “It's a story people haven't seen because the studios have neglected [the Latino market]. It's also the reason we were able to put together such a strong cast. The actors felt the same way about it that we did.”

Distributor Overture Films, headed by former MGM chairman Chris McGurk, bought “Holidays” after one reading—a feat almost unheard of in Hollywood.

“It's been a wonderful partnership,” said Teitel, “and it's terrific to come out of the box with a film like this.”

Even as they anticipate the premiere of “Nothing Like the Holidays,” the group has a commitment to making quality films and ambitious plans to roll out a slate of titles over the next few years.

Their ultimate aim is to carve out a niche in the independent film market similar to that of the Weinstein brothers.

Their next feature will be “Julito Maraña,” a drama about Puerto Rican gang life that compares to “City of God,” with Rodriguez, Molina and Guzmán already signed as leads.

“With Filmworkers’ great resources available to us, we can operate like a small film studio. That gives us a lot of latitude to produce the kind of films we believe in,” Brody said.