

## Tourism Authority sends out a Press Release

Written by T. Rob Brown (aka Roberto Chocolate)

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ATP promotes "Panama: The Musical", a new tourist attraction in English

"Panama: The Musical" will be the first Panama musical written in English created to attract tourists from Canada, the United States and Europe and boost the talent of Panamanian actors.

The musical work is being promoted in these international markets under the motto "You have not seen Panama until you have seen Panama: the Musical, the Pride of Panama" and will be presented for the first time in the West End FromPage2Stage Festival in London, next 14 of August.

The official premiere of the work is scheduled for February 1, 2018 at the Ateneo Theater in Ciudad del Saber, under the auspices of the Panama Tourism Authority.

After its premiere in Panama in February 2018, it will be presented in Toronto in November 2018, while in London and the rest of Canada in 2019.

Expected tourism benefits are great, including special flight bookings with visitors from Toronto to the world premiere and Panama's tourist promotion in London and Toronto, Canada.

Rob Brown, co-producer of the play, said: "This is the first show that has been developed for this English-speaking market and we want to teach the world the talent and skills Panama has to offer."

Brown, who co-founded the IFF Panama International Film Festival in 2011, praised the world-class quality of Panama's actors, dancers and singers, as good or better than those in New York. He said that they have sought the best of Panama and that they already have some actors in mind. The auditions will start this month.

He explained that it is necessary to talk to tourists and visitors in the language they understand, so the work will mainly be in English, but will include 25% of words and phrases in Spanish because "there is no language to dance";

Tina Stahl, director of business development, said that they participated in Expoturismo 2017 to promote the work between a large selection of travel agencies, tour operators, magazines and local and foreign media.

"We already have 42 confirmed people coming from Canada and are negotiating a special

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flight with Copa Airlines to visit Panama for a week," he said.

The production of this great musical work is being armed along with the winner of the double Latin Grammy Award, Alberto Gaitán; Renowned international music supervisor David Warrack; And Brown as an arts marketing expert.

Playwright Robert McQueen, who was Associate Director of the musical MAMMA MIA on Broadway, has joined the creative team.

Under the direction of Panamanian Aaron Zebede and a cast of Panamanian artists and musicians, the team works to bring this "wonderful" script to life, featuring Latino dances, the Charleston and the Foxtrot.

The musical is based on a love story between an American composer and a Panamanian musician, which takes place in the Canal Zone and Casco Viejo in 1927.

About the story, co-writer Yolanda van der Kolk-Brown, said: "I feel that many people are related to the premise of history: everyone has their own agenda, but true love is unconditional. Young people should define their ambitions sooner rather than later or others will choose for them."

Brown's spouses, originally from Toronto, have been living in Panama since 2007 and today are co-founders of PaCT (Panama and Coclé Theater Company), a community theater group in Coronado. After 25 years of marriage and almost 5 years of writing together they decided to release "Panama: The Musical", along with their niece Tara Van Der Kolk, co-writer of music and lyrics.

The producers expect the work to be a success, with an estimated 34 presentations from February 1 to March 4, 2018, in an enclosure with capacity for 700 people.

On Saturdays and Sundays there will be two matinees aimed at those tourists who arrive on cruise ships and those who are staying in the resorts of the interior of the country.