

# Roll Out

Velvet Steamroller Opens Doors in Chicago and LA



**Entertainment company** Velvet Steamroller has opened its doors in Chicago and Los Angeles. Founded

by two Chicago natives, siblings Jonathan Bross and Lisette Bross, the production company already has feature film projects in post production and a new album in the works for legendary R & B artist Percy Sledge.

Jonathan Bross' background is in "fixing distressed companies," he says. He was previously with Hilco Capital, a \$100 million fund that invested in middle market companies. Lisette Bross is a producer ("Who Slew Simon Thaddeus Mulberry Pew") and actor. "I get to read the contracts; she gets to read the scripts," says Jonathan Bross. "Sometimes I wonder whether we could trade."

Along with their partners senior V.P. Sophia



**Jonathan Bross**

our primary focus is on film," says Jonathan Bross. The film projects currently underway are "2001 Maniacs," starring Robert Englund, and "There's a God on the Mic," a documentary based on rap legend Kool Mo Dee's controversial book of the same name which categorizes and chronicles the top MCs in hip-hop history.

"2001 Maniacs' is a very interesting project, both creatively and from a business

standpoint," says Jonathan Bross. "It gave us an opportunity to partner with some great established players in the industry." Among those partnered with Velvet Steamroller on the project are Raw Nerve (the horror division of GreeneStreet) and Blood Works (the horror entertainment venture from 'Open Mic' producer Christopher Tuffin and The Steel Company). "2001 Maniacs" is in post production.

so the subject matter was very interesting," says Jonathan Bross. "There's a lot of interest in the urban space [and with] this project being associated with hip-hop it felt very comfortable for us. Working with an established star like Kool Mo Dee [and] knowing he could bring in the A-list hip-hop people and discuss what makes a great MC – it worked from a creative standpoint and from a business standpoint." "There's a God on the Mic" is in production.

Velvet Steamroller hopes to take advantage of its Chicago location for many of its endeavors. "I would very much like to [shoot in Illinois]," says Jonathan Bross. "There's a surprising film community. I think that the film community in Chicago has gone to other places and I would really like to see us bring back Chicago as a major place for film and entertainment. I know [Brenda Sexton of the Illinois Film Office] is working very hard to build up the network [of Illinois alumni] and bring them back to Illinois. I'd like our company to be a big part of that."

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