

Bodo Scriba bringing 'JFK' to Russian screens

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Bodo Scriba, whose Hamburg-based film group Alcor-Capital-Urania holds the eastern European distribution rights to a number of productions released by Warner Bros., has opened headquarters in Moscow and branches in St. Petersburg and Novosibirsk for the release in Russia of Oliver Stone's "JFK" and other major U.S. films.

Stone and Scriba are scheduled to be in Moscow on Jan. 24 for the Russian premiere of "JFK," at which Stone will receive the Sergei Eisenstein Prize, according to a Moscow source.

Later, Stone is set to continue to St. Petersburg for a follow-up "JFK" opening, and from there to Germany for the European launching of "Heaven and Earth," his latest film. Scriba's Russian plans, through

his foreign distribution division Gemini Verleth, call for the release of 16 of his co-financed Hollywood productions at a rate of two films a month.

Following "JFK" in January, "Sommersby" and "Falling Down" are scheduled for February.

According to Scriba spokeswoman Angelika Schumann, "we have a partnership with Warner Bros. All films are class 'A' blockbuster films like 'The Fugitive' and 'The Bodyguard'."

Erich Muller — an old hand at film marketing in the eastern European area — is the general agent for the Gemini operation.

Hitherto, currency exchange regulations with eastern European countries have always been a stumbling block in commercial relations with the West.

The ruble is still not fully convertible, but dollars can be purchased in Moscow.

One U.S. dollar is worth about 900 rubles, evidence of the nation's galloping inflation.

Currency difficulties apart, the Gemini Verleth venture is seen as a long-term investment for the future.

International sales company Capella International, belonging to Bar/Deyhle Holding, has been sounding out distribution possibilities in the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary as well as Russia.