

# Film and TV deal attracts Hollywood magic to SA

*PENELOPE DEBELLE*

SOUTH Australia's screen industry has strengthened its Hollywood ties, with Adelaide's KOJO Entertainment partnering with an independent US movie studio started by a film executive who oversaw the Harry Potter franchise.

In what will be a huge boost for the local film and television sector – currently hosting the Hollywood action feature *Mortal Kombat* – US studio Stampede Ventures and KOJO will develop a slate of Australian feature films and television for the international market.

Stampede was founded by Greg Silverman, the former president of Warner Bros Pictures, who oversaw some of its most profitable films including the Harry Potter franchise, *Crazy Rich Asians* and *The Dark Knight* trilogy.

The company, which wants to deliver "the next generation of blockbuster entertainment", will work with KOJO on fully produced projects that focus on Australian writers and directors, and Australian intellectual property.

KOJO group managing director Dale Roberts hopes to bring as much film and television work as possible to South Australia.

"Absolutely, we see Adelaide and South Australia as the hub of this business," Mr Roberts said.

"Adelaide will be as much in the mix as it possibly can be."

Mr Roberts said driving work to South Australia would help the screen industry further develop its skills base.

Irrespective of where the film or television projects are shot, all intellectual property and post-production work will be based in South Australia.

In a statement, Stampede's head of international content, JP Sarni, said the company was proud to partner with Mr Roberts and his team.

"KOJO has a terrific track record as creative, production and business partners across Australia," Mr Sarni said. "We're thrilled to help expand that vision worldwide with a bold slate of franchise properties from original voices."

While the partnership is a coup for KOJO, the Adelaidebased creative studio already works across a broad range of film and television projects.

KOJO Entertainment's recent output includes this year's Australian rom-com hit, *Top End Wedding*. It also has in train a climate-change dystopian thriller, *2067*, which filmed at Adelaide Studios and starred Adelaide-born Hollywood actor Kodi Smit-McPhee. The time-travel feature film, which was co-produced by Kate Croser – now chief executive of the South Australian Film Corporation – will roll out internationally next year and has a major distribution deal with China's JL Vision Films.

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DALE ROBERTS