

# Filmmaker chronicles journey from Hollywood Ave. to Hollywood

by Jon Minners

It took David five smooth stones to slay the giant Goliath in the inspiring tale of triumph over adversity, and now one local filmmaker hopes the same can work for him as he tries to slay the giant film industry of Hollywood with a unique documentary.

Throggs Neck resident Tishin Padilla, who owns the production company Five Smooth Stones, won various film festival awards for his short film *All You Can Eat*. Padilla is now attempting to make it big with his first full-length movie, a documentary that takes Padilla from his home on Hollywood Avenue to the bright lights and beautiful stars of Hollywood, California.

Padilla, a graduate of Hunter College with a film degree, used all he learned to create the neovangelistic short *All You Can Eat*, which gave the hungry a choice between a bible and food---nourishment for the body or for the soul. The short won first place in the Fade-Up Film Festival and won the God On Film Festival, earning Padilla over \$3,000 to help fund the digitally filmed documentary, which will either be titled *Highwaychild* or *From Hollywood Avenue to Hollywood, California*.

"I have always lived on Hollywood Avenue and my goal has always been to make it to Hollywood with a successful film," said Padilla. "That's the dream of any filmmaker. I played with a number of

ideas, and the most logical choice seemed to be from Hollywood to Hollywood, so I set off to make my film."

The trip started off as a 27-day vacation, but Padilla's thirst for life led him to extend the trip longer to shoot more scenes and enjoy his time off from work. "I met so many interesting people," he said. "When I dropped off a waterfall and sprained my ankle, I met a park ranger named Mike who saved me. In Texas, while I was still on crutches, I met two guys on trucks and I hooked up with them and had a great time. I met Uncle Frank from the *Jimmy Kimmel Live* show and he treated me to some pizza."

Padilla also saw a lot of interesting sites, including those in 50 cities and 25 states, hitting various national parks and traveling 24,000 miles. It became a trip by car, with Padilla driving from one city to another; by airplane, as Padilla flew a bi-plane over Santa Barbara; by foot, as he hiked a mountain and touched the Hollywood sign; and by boat, as he traveled through the Bayou of Louisiana, where he got stuck in the middle of the night. But according to Padilla, it was mostly faith that guided him on the trip.

"Faith was all I could depend," he said. "I was depending on God. The trip was a mission---a self-discovery. I trusted in God and he came through, providing me with signs, and my prayers were answered when I needed



Throggs Neck resident Tishin Padilla will showcase the Bronx in a new documentary he is filming that took him on a journey from Hollywood Avenue to Hollywood, California.

them."

Padilla discovers that he lost his job during the trip and he soon became homeless, but through hard work, he gets a new job, finds ways to make additional money and locates an apartment. Everything is captured on video. "This is real reality, not something a network paid for," he said. "Viewers will see me at various stages. It was a roller-coaster ride. You see me at my worst and my best. I went into the 'hoods of various communities and I felt threatened a couple of times. I ran into trouble in Las Vegas and Santa Barbara, but the biggest danger was myself. Everyone was telling me to come back. They were saying I was

crazy for doing this, but it was something I had to do. I did it against all odds and I am better off for it."

However, Padilla realized he did have to come back and eventually his trip came to a close. "I was ready to stay," he said. "I had an apartment overlooking the L.A. skyline, but I was lonely and I missed my friends. The Bronx is my home. I always wanted to live in California, but when I was there, I realized what was important. My memories and my friends are here and so I came back home."

Padilla looks back at his journey, which he compares to Gulliver's Travels, and through all the good and the bad he encountered, he never

regrets his decisions and looks forward to seeing people's reactions when they view his completed work. Hoping to have it released by the end of the year, Padilla is shooting some additional scenes in the Bronx and then editing it before entering the documentary into film festivals.

"I lived my dream. I did what I always wanted to do," he said. "I had a lot of fun and I learned what is really important in life. It changed my perspective on material things and my life has become simpler now. I have a better perspective. I got rid of a lot of junk, figuratively and mentally. The trip totally changed my life."