CHRIS ROLAND

31 August 2009

Producer, Writer, Director
ZenHQ

Chris Roland emigrated from the US to South Africa in 1995 after a three year backpacking trek around the world at the age of 37! Some said it was a mid-life crisis. Chris responds, *"If this is a mid-life crisis, male menopause is going to be a gas!"* Some 50 countries later Chris settled in Cape Town and has since become a principle player in the South African film industry, having been listed as one of the country's top 'movers and shakers' by Hollywood Reporter. Chris is a multi-talented producer, director and writer, and is as comfortable addressing the nuances of script structure, as he is complex international financing structures.

Chris has been involved in a diverse range of films and TV as a writer/creator, producer, director, financier/consultant, and tea lady, including the $20 million series *Charlie Jade*, which he created, exec produced and directed, *Hotel Rwanda* (Don Cheadle, Sophie Okonedo), *Stander* (Thomas Jane, Deborah Kara-Unger), *Three Needles* (Lucy Liu, Olympia Dukakis), *Man To Man* (Kirsten Scott-Thomas, Joseph Fiennes), and the soon to be released film *Darfur* (Billy Zane, David O'Hara) which Chris also wrote. Recent TV projects include the reality series *Our House*, which Chris created/wrote, directed and produced and which revolves around building 200 houses for the poor in 7 days!

Chris is currently developing the comedies Last African King starring Tracey Morgan (30 Rock), and The Mighty Jungle, a co-production with US based Persistent Entertainment.

Chris has produced, directed or written over 60 projects including the sitcom *Help Wanted* for the Family Channel, the virtual reality ride film *Cape Extreme*, the Sid Shanti music video *Critical Mass*, and has produced 35 commercials for clients including *Met Life, Kellogg's* and *Pepsi*.

The majority of projects and companies Chris has been involved in have achieved both critical and financial success, and have won or been nominated for Oscar, Golden Globe, Toronto People's Choice, DGA, and Genie.

From 1997 to 2006 Chris co-owned The Imaginarium, a Cape Town based production company, and the South African Film Finance Corporation which was responsible for structuring in excess of $110 million of production financing, as well as structuring international co-productions, including a four country co-pro which provided an endless headache! Chris also owned Basecamp Logistics, a unit equipment rental company.

After ending his nine-year partnership and dismantling the above companies, exhausted, Chris fell into a hammock in his backyard and did not wake up for several months. When he did, he launched ZenHQ, a production company aimed at striking a perfect balance between creative needs and the needs of production, and a sales company focused exclusively on the African continent. The company represents over 40 titles.

Chris is as passionate about helping other's achieve their dreams as he is his own. He is the founder of the Dr. Lionel Ngakane Film School Scholarship Fund, and includes a separate training department on most film and TV productions. He has volunteered/produced for LA based Hollywood Heart, proactively supports and trains young and upcoming filmmakers, and is a sought after guest speaker internationally covering a variety of topics. Chris is also a board member and director of the Mylife Foundation, which provides support to street children in South Africa.

ZenHQ's philosophy is one of responsible filmmaking and business management, with an eye towards social upliftment, and green initiatives. Chris loves people and gravitates towards anything that will inspire others in the same way he has been inspired by them. Oh, please!