

CHRIS ROLAND

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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, line producer, showrunner, 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, including the \$20 million series *Charlie Jade*, which he created, produced/showran 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), the Vietnam War film *Tunnel Rats*, and the award winning film *Darfur* (Billy Zane, David O'Hara).

Recent TV projects include the drama series *Clifton Shores* and the reality series *Our House*, both of which Chris produced/showran, directed and wrote. *Our House* was honored with a SAFTA for best reality series.

Chris is currently producing/showrunning the family adventure series *Hatari Dawn*, starring Sam Neill, with ZDF Enterprises and DRG, which Chris also created.

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 37 commercials for clients including *Met Life*, *Kellogg's* and *Pepsi*.

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 Films, a production company aimed at striking a perfect balance between creative needs and the needs of production, with it's main office in Cape Town and a branch in Los Angeles run by John Michaels (13, The Experiment), who served 8 years on the advisory board of VIP Medienfonds. The company provides unparalleled production services, as well as consulting on a wide range of disciplines from project development through financing, international co-productions, production and sales.

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 board chairman of the Mylife Foundation, which provides support for at risk youth 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!