



Resume: Ashley Lazarus.

Ashley has over 40 years experience as a highly respected director/producer of films, documentaries and commercials for American, South African and International clients. He has won over 80 professional awards including Clios and first prizes at the Cannes, London & Tokyo Film festivals.

At the height of the apartheid era in South Africa, he wrote and directed the acclaimed and beloved movie "*e'Lollipop*", which tells the story of the friendship between two boys, one white and one black, growing up in an African village. When released, it was the second highest grossing film in SA's box office history (beaten only by Star Wars). *e'Lollipop* was the first contra-apartheid film of its kind in South Africa and foreshadowed the friendship between Nelson Mandela and President De Klerk that led to full democracy in South Africa.

For over 30 years, Ashley was on Anton Rupert's core branding team, creating and producing cinema commercials for over 14 of his International brands, including Peter Stuyvesant, Dunhill, Lexington, Mainstay, Oudemeester, Paul Revere, Rothmans, Richelieu, and Nederburg. His other South African clients included Ford, General Motors, Volkswagen, Mercedes Benz, Toyota, Caltex, Mobil, BP, Southern Sun, Coca Cola, Old Mutual and SA Breweries amongst others.

In 1985 Ashley moved to New York and soon earned a solid reputation as an expert in brand strategy and creatively executing that strategy into highly effective marketing films and commercials for leading American clients. Among his US clients were Toyota, M&M Mars, General Foods, General Motors, Disney, Mattel, Panasonic, RJ Reynolds, Coca Cola, Sears Roebuck, Honda and Mercedes Benz.

Working with Hal Riney, one of America's leading branding and advertising minds, Ashley directed the 22 minute film for the launch of General Motors new car company "Saturn". The film was broadcast in the half hour before the US Super Bowl. It won 1st prize at the New York Marketing and Advertising Film Festival.

For many years Ashley directed films for Mattel's toys, games and learning products. Gifted in working with children, Ashley created many memorable commercials for their Disney and Sesame Street brands, including "*Winnie the Pooh*" and "*Dr. Seuss*", as well as other national U.S. brands. It was while working with Mattel on their early childhood products, that Ashley was inspired to create a unique interactive early childhood learning program called *TJ & Pals*. This program is now being developed to help the 5 million underserved children in South Africa, ages 6 and under, that presently get no preschool education whatsoever. Working with five established educational NGO's in South Africa, Ashley founded The Early Education Foundation to bring free early childhood education to as many underserved children as possible in South Africa.



Recently, Ashley has returned to his feature film roots and has co-written "Teacher Wanted", a screenplay that won the Nelson Mandela President's Award for the best screenplay in South Africa last year.

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