

# The Loeries Creativity Q&A: Insights from 2014 Cannes Gold winner, Ali Ali

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In this week's exclusive Loeries Creativity Q&A series for Bizcommunity.com, Ilse van den Berg chats to Ali Ali, Film Director and Founder of Elephant, Cairo.

■ ***You recently won a Cannes Gold Lion for directing the two-for-one movie ticket campaign offer from Telecommunications Company, Du. What do you think makes this campaign special?***

**Ali Ali:** I think the campaign touches on an insight we all share - when you go out to watch a movie and end up feeling disappointed. The movie was either too boring (we all know these boring types) or it's too depressing (we don't need that kind of drama in our lives), or too complicated (and you walk out thinking what the .... was that?). We've all been there. What makes this campaign special is that it's based on a basic universal truth that everyone can relate to and it's nicely wrapped in a humorous story.



Ali Ali

■ ***What's the most exciting project or brief you've worked on recently and why?***

**Ali:** I think that would have to be TOUCH - A NEW WORLD, the launch of a new telecommunications company in Lebanon. For some strange reason, when I received that brief, I made a very stupid decision. I decided to do the complete advert all in one shot. I was feeling grand at the time, and boy did I pay for that decision. It was by far the most difficult, time-consuming, challenging job I've done. We spent over two months building the set, and resizing this giant dollhouse with over 24 rooms! But finally the end result was very rewarding and it proved that in advertising, as with everything else, the saying holds true - No pain no gain.

■ ***What has been the most invaluable piece of advice offered to you during your career in advertising?***

**Ali:** "Don't stress it, it's only advertising." I think people who are having the most fun in this business are also the ones doing the best work and they are also the ones that don't take this business seriously.

■ ***What do you think makes award-winning work?***

**Ali:** Freshness - there's a lot of great work out there every year. Year on year you see the work and you think; "How did *that* win?!" Sometimes there's a great level of craft involved - great casting or great story-telling - but in the end it's the fresh element that counts. Think Cadbury gorilla. Think Volvo's epic split. They exemplify freshness. If it's not fresh it's not worth it.

■ ***What was your childhood dream job?***

**Ali:** To work at a gas pump - I just loved the smell.

Don't miss the [DStv Seminar of Creativity](#) at Cape Town City Hall on Friday, 19 September. **Ali Ali** will be joined by other international leaders including Facebook's Rob Newlan, Unilever's Yaw Nsarkoh, McCann Sydney's Executive Creative

Director, Patrick Baron; Arno Lindemann, the Chief Creative Officer of Lukas Lindemann Rosinski; PJ Pereira, CEO and co-founder Pereira and O'Dell, San Francisco and the indomitable Stephen Doyle, Creative Director, Doyle Partners, New York City.

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