



Ashish Kulkarni, Pioneering Creativity -

Ashish Kulkarni embarked on his journey in the field of arts and media in 1995, and since has immersed himself in the pursuit of conceiving sustainable careers in film, animation, visual effects, gaming, visual arts, and graphic design in India. Ashish's presence in the field of the arts commenced with the animation industry, the seed of which, had only been planted in the fertile grounds of the Indian economy at the turn of the century. At this early stage, Ashish jumpstarted the sprouting of the animation industry in India by facilitating outsourcing projects in the country with animation giants such as Disney, Warner Bros., Sony and Dreamworks. By introducing India as a new outsourcing platform for animation, Ashish had created the opportunity for Indian animation services to grow to international standards. During this stage, Ashish produced ad films for All Out, Flying Machine, Max Candy & Max Ice cream for HLL, Nestle, Veneta Cucine and Kelloggs.

As the sapling of the Indian animation industry grew, Ashish envisioned a future in which, India was not caged in the confines of outsourcing, but competed as a global player in the arena of original IP creation. What followed was the development of iconic character brands and shows such as Little Krishna, Krishna Aur Kans, Big Bees and Shaktimaan, by Ashish and his creative team while he served as CEO of Reliance Animation. Currently, Ashish is working on properties such as War Heroes of India, Mary Kom Jr., Amazing Kids, Monkey Creek and Map Jacket.

Amidst the strides towards original IP creation that Ashish triggered, he found himself engulfed by the growing realization that traditional Indian art forms were battling extinction. To fight the death of these art forms, Ashish travelled across the Indian peninsula and brought artists that practiced the art forms from cities like Tenjavur, Mahabalipuram, Chanapatna, Ramnagaram, Krishna Nagar, Kolhapur, Udaipur, Amravati, etc., to his studio to create world class animation. This allowed the artists to have a sustainable livelihood in the arts field, while continuing to nurture the traditional art forms that were passed down through their familial generations. This remarkable initiative has also been documented in the Tom Friedman's international bestselling book *The World is Flat*.

Ashish, as Chairman of the Animation, VFX, Gaming & Comics AVGC forum at FICCI and MCCIA, has been persistently engaged with AVGC policy makers in India at central and state levels. In the last two decades, Ashish's push for state level policies inclusive of AVGC skill development and creation has allowed for their successful implementation under IT ITES policies or independent AVGC policies in the states of Maharashtra, Karnataka, AP, Telangana, Goa, MP, Chattisgarh, West Bengal and Kerala. Moreover, states like UP, Haryana, Rajasthan and Gujarat are actively considering the formation of AVGC policies to promote creative skill development and job creation. Ashish has

created comprehensive policies for the states mentioned and the success of the policies is reflected in the international perception of cities such as Mumbai, Pune, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Chennai, Kochi, Trivandrum, Ahmedabad, Kolkata, Bhopal, New Delhi and Chandigarh as active AVGC and digital skills hubs. The National Centre of Excellence, which will serve as an institute of national importance for Animation, VFX, Gaming & Comics in India is another major project which Ashish is lead managing from the industry side for the Information and Broadcasting Ministry of India. To promote the AVGC sector, Ashish initiated the prestigious FICCI Best Animated Frames Awards at an international level.

Ashish, renowned as an AVGC guru, has developed curriculums and introduced creative career programs in institutes like FTII, Media and Entertainment Skills Council, Whistling Woods International, Lovely Professional University, NITTE, Manipal University, Arena, DSK and University Of Mumbai, Jain University, Chitkara University, Jagannath University and organized workshops for parents and youth in over 70 cities to promote careers in AVGC.

Ashish is the founder of Punnaryug Artvision Pvt. Ltd. and Screenyug Creations Pvt. Ltd. and is developing a unique concept called The Green Butterfly Art Village at Lonavala, which aims to create a holistic and sustainable ecosystem for all creative, performance & sports artists by uniting the institutions, housing projects and production studios that make up their everyday lives. The project is designed to house institutions providing education in fine arts, liberal arts, performing arts, design, architecture, earth science, sustainability studies, culinary arts and sports education and management, in addition to a skills village, performance village and carnival village under the same roof. This project will also focus on restoring traditional Indian art forms through education. Ashish's immense contributions are making the AVGC sector a more viable career option for Indian citizens and through such dedicated investment in India's AVGC sector, he has established himself as the man who is bringing the Creative & Performing Arts, at par with Commerce and Science in India's evolving education system.

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