

Phil Critchlow – Lifetime Achievement

Presented by Richard Allinson

So here's my dilemma. I'm presenting a Lifetime Achievement Award and traditionally, in my best Michael Aspel way, I'm supposed to slowly build up to revealing the person's identity with a series of hints and clues that keep everyone guessing until the last moment.

But the problem is that tonight's winner is just too talented. Almost everything he's done has been so huge and ground-breaking, and has won so many awards that there's almost nothing I can say that won't give the game away.

But I'm going to do my best. So here goes. The winner of this award, who's a very good friend of mine, has no idea that this is about to happen. And when you find out his name, you'll see why that's been quite a challenge. (That's your first clue).

Before we invite him to the stage, let me tell you a bit about him.

Tonight's winner is someone who's a huge champion of the indie sector as well as a big fan of the BBC. And that's because he's played a crucial role in both of them.

He began as a BBC trainee, rose to Studio Manager and was in at the start of BBC Radio 5 before it became 5 live. He was Senior Producer on Weekend Breakfast for a year before striking out into the indie sector in his own 'Unique' way (that's an extra clue by the way).

A little over a decade ago, he had a 'Big Idea'. Or should I say 'The Big Idea'. (That's a massive clue!).

These days the indie that he founded in 2007 produces more than 600 programmes a year, as well as 5 or 6 projects of what he calls 'big stuff'.

And he's not kidding. His big stuff has included re-living the D-Day Landings, the assassination of JFK and the sinking of the Titanic (complete with the band's original play list).

And 50 years to the second after kick-off, he re-created England's 1966 World Cup win with narration, drama, music, FX and inserts all delivered fully live, in a 10,000-seat arena, to BBC Radio 2, Radio 5Live, TV, and over 200 cinemas across the UK.

The company he heads up has been an APA Indie of the Year and has won Production Company of the Year at the New York Festivals 5 years in a row including this year, where he also picked up 6 Golds and 5 Silvers.

At the ARIAS up in Leeds last month he scooped a Gold for Best Specialist Music Show and the year before TBI won Audio Moment of the Year for 'The Boy Who Gave His Heart Away' an astonishing Radio 4 programme which sensitively brought together a mother whose son had died and the boy who received the donor heart.

This man is someone whose legendary attention to detail means he's probably making a list of suggested edits and improvements to my speech right now.

Phil's energy and commitment to getting the absolute best result is nothing short of extraordinary. For TBI's big events he's usually first on site, before the first trucks have even arrived to load in, and after the show he'll be the last one to leave. He can then be working into the early hours editing and fine tuning and – when others around him have dropped from sheer exhaustion – Phil will keep going until the job's done. Not done well. Done to perfection.

Phil also understands the weight of responsibility that comes with telling great stories and treats each and every story he tells with reverence. Phil treats every project the same –as the opportunity to tell the story in the most powerful and compelling way possible.

He inspires those who work with him to constantly strive for better; he inspires those around him with his energy, commitment, passion and utter genius.

So if there's anyone who hasn't guessed, the winner of the Lifetime Achievement Award is...

... yes, tonight Phil Critchlow, founder of TBI Media and Chair of RIG, This is Your Life...time Achievement Award ... come and join us on stage to say a few words....