

MEET THE ROLEX DANCE

AWARDEE: NIGEL LYTHGOE

Nigel Lythgoe is the CEO of Big Red 2 Entertainment, a newly formed company with 19 Entertainment. Lythgoe most recently served as president of 19 Television, and prior to his tenure there, worked at London Weekend Television, where he was Controller of Entertainment and Comedy.

Born in 1949, Mr. Lythgoe developed an interest in dance at an early age. His first professional job was with the Corps de Ballet, and he later went on to choreograph the BBC's Young Generation dance troupe for more than 500 shows. He became the only person to dance in, choreograph, direct, and produce the Royal Variety

Performance for Her Majesty the Queen of England.

He has worked with stars such as Gene Kelly, Bing Crosby, Shirley Bassey and, most prestigiously, the Muppets, and while at London Weekend Television, he commissioned and produced hit shows such as "Gladiators" and "Blind Date."

In 2000 Mr. Lythgoe earned himself the nickname "Nasty Nigel" as a judge on hit show "Popstars" before leaving for Bob Geldof's television company Planet 24, where he executive produced and directed the U.K. version of "Survivor." Additionally, he developed and produced the TV phenomenon "Pop Idol."



(l. to r.) Judith Jamison & Nigel Lythgoe [Photo by Annie Watt]



(l. to r.) Judith Jamison, Nigel Lythgoe & Tracy Inman [Photo by Annie Watt]

Lythgoe has been a driving force in the world of performing arts as the executive producer of the TV juggernaut "American Idol," which has been nominated for more than 40 Emmy Awards, and "Idol Gives Back," which raised more than \$140 million for charity and in 2007 received the prestigious Governors Award, the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences' highest honor. Lythgoe also served as producer and director of the acclaimed Celine Dion/Elvis Presley duet featured in the special. He is the co-creator and executive producer of the Emmy Award-winning series "So You Think You Can Dance." Additionally, he executive produced NBC's "Superstars of Dance" and Fox's "Carrie Underwood: An All-Star Holiday Special."

In 2010, he took "So You Think You Can Dance" to the U.K., where he is reprising his role as judge, and in 2011, he launched "CMT's Next Superstar" along with his son, Simon. In addition, Lythgoe was recently named executive producer on the American version of the popular U.K. game show "Secret Fortune," currently in development.

In the summer of 2009, the U.K.'s University of

Bedfordshire awarded Lythgoe with an honorary Doctor of Arts for his outstanding contribution to the performing arts in television.

Lythgoe is actively involved with numerous charities, serving as the chairman of the British Academy of Film & Television Arts, Los Angeles, and as an honorary national vice president of the Muscular Dystrophy Association. He also sits on the honorary board of Center Dance Arts at the Music Center Performing Arts Center of Los Angeles County.

And in 2009, Lythgoe joined forces with director Adam Shankman, "Dancing with the Stars" judge Carrie Ann Inaba and actress Katie Holmes to found the Dizzy Feet Foundation, a nonprofit organization that provides scholarships to talented young dancers, works to elevate and standardize dance instruction in the U.S., and exposes youth in underprivileged communities to the joys of dance education.

Lythgoe lives in Los Angeles.