

The Brits 2014 - Part One.

Tuesday, 18 February 2014

For those of you with short memories (or, being under 40, none at all)... a long long time ago, the British music world used to be represented by the Daily Mirror Rock and Pop Awards.

Then the industry took over its show, in company with the BBC and the BPI began putting together pretty dull, amateur and uninspiring programmes.

In 1987 I was asked to host and write the show. I was very "big" at the time, with my show Entertainment USA getting over 9 million viewers on BBC2, my No Limits show topping the Channel ratings, a column in The Sun every week about music (in the days when The Sun had millions of readers) and quite a lot more. I'd moved out of direct music into combined TV/Celebrity - pretty well.

My show was a huge success. Big ratings, totally live (there was a BBC strike going on and the outside broadcast truck parked next to the Grosvenor House Hotel was rocked side to side as strikers tried to tip it over; Michael Hurl, my director, did a sterling job rocking and rolling).

My deal had been - I'd do it as long as, if it was a success, I could keep doing it as host and writer.

The BPI reneged on the arrangement, deciding to make much more money in a bigger venue (the Albert Hall) with a far cheaper and more professional host (Noel Edmonds).

1988 was a disaster, over running (Noel hadn't written it; in my host capacity I was in constant talk back touch with Michael, cutting and adding bits to make sure we finished bang on time for the 9 O'Clock News) and witnessing Rick Astley burst into tears as his triumphant walk to collect his award was cut short by the Who striking up early.

I told the BPI they needed me. They decided they didn't and booked Sam Fox, Mick Fleetwood, production house Elephant House. The result in 1989 was a classic disaster.

So the BPI begged me to return, as writer and producer. I agreed as long as I had full control; no interference. They were delighted to wash their hands of it. I named the event The BRITS - standing for British Record Industry Trusts Show. 1990 was a success (I got Maggie Thatcher singing How Much Is That Doggy In The Window - one of the triumphs of my career). 1991 was even better (I actually had unsigned acts on the show). So, in 1992 the BPI tried to take over again, insisting on acts (which I refused), insisting on Awards (which I rejected), insisting on a new Finance person (Lethal Lisa Anderson - a disaster).

So, for 1993 I quit. Despite being offered a lifetime contract of Â£250,000 a year (for 2 months work). I wonder how they would have coped during the Vile Pervert incident?

Ever since I've slagged off The Brits as not doing what they should for the music industry.

Let's see now whether Christian Tattersfield can do what I did.