

Lee McNicholas joins Lifted Entertainment as Creative Director, North

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Angela Jain unveils Lifted Entertainment, the new name for ITV Studios Entertainment, as the label tops off another strong year

Label lands brand new primetime pilot Secret Gameshow for ITV

15th March, 2021 – Lee McNicholas is to join Lifted Entertainment as its Creative Director, North from Syco Entertainment where he has spent the last ten years as Creative Director and Executive Producer. McNicholas joins as Angela Jain, Managing Director, unveils Lifted Entertainment as the new name for the ITV Studios label behind some of the biggest, award-winning entertainment shows, including *I'm A Celebrity... Get Me Out of Here!*, *Love Island*, *Dancing On Ice*, *The Voice*, *Countdown*, *University Challenge* and *Ant & Dec's Saturday Night*

Takeaway.

As Creative Director, North, McNicholas will create and lead production and development to drive commissions. He will be based out of Lifted Entertainment's northern base in MediaCityUK, from which it produces a range of hugely successful, returning shows including *Judge Rinder* for ITV, *University Challenge* for BBC Two and *Countdown* – with new host Anne Robinson – for Channel 4. Last year, the team also produced the documentary *Miscarriage: Our Story* for Channel 5.

McNicholas will work alongside Angela and the impressive creative talent housed within Lifted Entertainment which includes Director of Entertainment, Richard Cowles, Creative Directors Tom Gould and Fiona Clark, and Kat Hebden, Head of Development.

McNicholas has overseen both *Britain's Got Talent* and *The X Factor*, as well as playing an instrumental role in the international rollout of both formats. As Executive Producer, McNicholas held responsibility for all aspects of the production from initial casting, overseeing the UK's biggest touring TV production and managing the live shows.

Prior to Syco, where he also worked with the development teams in creating new formats for the UK and US markets, McNicholas worked across a variety of shows including Channel 4's *How Clean is Your House* and the BBC's *The Apprentice*.

As the label enters its new era, Lifted Entertainment has also been commissioned to produce *Secret Gameshow*, a brand new primetime pilot for ITV hosted by comedian and *The Masked Singer* host Joel Dommett. The show is an entertaining new spin on the hidden camera format, in which celebrities compete for bragging rights as they take on audacious hidden camera stunts to fool unsuspecting members of the public into helping them. For the celebrities, it's a chance to get one over on each other. For the public, it's a chance to win money in a gameshow they didn't know they were part of.

Secret Gameshow joins a slate that includes not only some of the UK's most-watched shows, but also the world's best-known formats, with *Love Island* and *I'm A Celebrity... Get Me Out of Here!* – both created by Lifted Entertainment – having been commissioned in 30 international markets between them.

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[Pictured: Lee McNicholas]

Angela Jain, MD, Lifted Entertainment, said: “Lee brings a wealth of experience and expertise on huge global entertainment shows which, when added to the depth of the brilliant creative team we have here in Manchester, means he is in the perfect position to spearhead the next phase of growth in the North. I have no doubt he will be an inspiring, generous and kind leader who shares our values and vision for the future.

“With hope around the corner, it seems like we all need to be lifted out of our real lives at the moment. So many of the shows we produce bring joy and escapism, something I believe *Secret Gameshow* has in abundance. This past year has given us all the opportunity to focus our minds on the future in what has been a 12 months like no other. We responded to those challenges with creativity, determination, resilience and ability, producing throughout lockdown, something we could not have done without our incredible people. Now the future is about more of these award-winning, returnable global brands and we are excited about the world of opportunity out there.”

Lee McNicholas said: “As a teenager growing up in Liverpool, I remember going on the Granada Studios tour and thinking one day I want to work here. To think after all these years I’ll be joining the incredible team in Manchester, really is a dream come true. I’m a huge fan of everything that Lifted Entertainment produce and hope to add some more hits to their already impressive roster.”

Lifted Entertainment is home to some of the most-watched shows on television. The most recent series of *I’m A Celebrity... Get Me Out of Here!*, which was filmed in the UK for the first time, was the 20th edition of the show and returned record-breaking figures with over 25 million requests on the ITV Hub. *Love Island* is the most watched show on ITV2 ever, while *Ant & Dec’s Saturday Night Takeaway*, produced with Mitre Entertainment, returned for its 17th series last month, with a consolidated audience of 8.5m million viewers tuning in for its launch episode.

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About ITV Studios

ITV Studios is a creator, producer and distributor of world-leading programmes that people can’t get enough of. We connect millions of people every day and shape and reflect the world they live in, we are More Than TV.

ITV Studios is home to some of the best creative minds, crafting over 8,400 hours of original programming across 55 production labels. Our global footprint spans 12 countries including the UK, US, Australia, France, Germany, The Nordics, Italy and the Netherlands and our global distribution business sells our catalogue of 46,000+ hours to broadcasters and platforms around the world.

ITV Studios is part of ITV PLC, which includes the UK's largest commercial broadcaster.

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