

SATURDAY 24 MARCH 2012

SAT 19:00 Lost Cities of the Ancients (b00792v2)
The Cursed Valley of the Pyramids

In the Lambeyeque valley in northern Peru lies a strange lost world - the forgotten ruins of 250 mysterious pyramids, including some of the biggest on the planet, colossal structures made out of mud bricks. Long ago, the Lambeyeque people were haunted by a terrible fear and believed that building pyramids was essential to their survival. Their obsession reached its height at a city called Tucume, an eerie place of 26 pyramids standing side by side, the last pyramids this civilisation created before they vanished forever.

What was the fear that drove these people to build so many pyramids, what were they for and why did the whole civilisation suddenly vanish? This film captures the moments when archaeologists at the site uncovered a mass of bodies of human sacrifice victims, following a trail of clues into the dark story of Tucume. It recreates the strange rituals of the people of the valley, revealing a civilisation whose obsession to build pyramids eventually turned to horror, until Tucume finally vanished in a bloody frenzy of human sacrifice.

SAT 20:00 Monty Don's Italian Gardens (b010nrgf)
Florence

Monty Don is on a grand tour around Italy, this time visiting gardens both in Florence and around the sun-scorched Tuscan countryside. Monty discovers how, like a piece of sculpture, Renaissance gardens were created as works of art, and how a group of Edwardian expats mistakenly reinforced the idea that formal Italian gardens were flowerless.

SAT 21:00 Inspector Montalbano (b01f118x)
The Sense of Touch

The seemingly accidental death of a blind man leads Montalbano to an island off the coast of Sicily. Here the Inspector discovers that both the murder victim and a local fisherman had each deposited huge sums of money in their respective bank accounts.

Following the mysterious demise of a second man, who was also blind, the investigation begins to focus on the operations of a charitable foundation which increasingly looks not so charitable after all.

In Italian with English subtitles.

SAT 22:45 Top of the Pops (b01dprb4)
17/3/77

Tony Blackburn introduces Berni Flint, Billy Ocean, Suzi Quatro, Showaddywaddy, Barclay James Harvest, Cliff Richard, Maxine Nightingale and Manhattan Transfer. Dance sequence by Legs & Co.

SAT 23:20 Lost Cities of the Ancients (b00792v2)
[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 today]

SAT 00:20 Monty Don's Italian Gardens (b010nrgf)
[Repeat of broadcast at 20:00 today]

SAT 02:20 Timothy Spall: All at Sea (b01e152j)
Message in a Bottle

Timothy Spall and his wife Shane are back on board their beloved barge the Princess Matilda as they conclude their trip around the British coast.

Tim takes on Rattray Head in the face of a huge storm. This is the equivalent of Land's End for Scotland and the point where they head south for the first time. The North Sea soon becomes the new enemy as he and Shane struggle to cope with this unrelenting force of nature.

On land they find wonderful Scottish towns - Peterhead, Eyemouth and Stonehaven - but it is the town of Banff that resonates most. They fall in love with it and are sad to leave it behind as they pursue their odyssey of circumnavigating Britain. At the end of the episode, they eventually reach the English sea border, where they launch a message in a bottle.

SAT 02:50 Timothy Spall: All at Sea (b01cqptf)
Stags by the Sea

Timothy Spall and his wife Shane are back on board their beloved barge the Princess Matilda as they conclude their trip around the British coast.

The Spalls visit Northumberland, Newcastle and Hartlepool. Starting in Amble and the neighbouring town of Warkworth, Tim and Shane are in awe of this historic part of England as they visit the beautiful Church of St Lawrence and Warkworth Castle. In Amble, Tim meets a young sailor circumnavigating Britain in the opposite direction who, like Tim, was inspired to take to the sea after surviving leukaemia.

Next stop is Newcastle-upon-Tyne, a place he is truly fond of as he has been welcomed there ever since he played Barry in Auf Wiedersehen, Pet. Along the way he meets actress Melanie Hill, who played Barry's first wife Hazel. Tim says that most of Britain saw Barry as a 'bit of a radish, a prannel', but that the Geordies thought of him as a 'sensitive character' and have always made him welcome. He takes us on a tour of his favourite places in the city.

After Newcastle it's on to Hartlepool, which Tim discovers translates to 'Stags by the Sea'. They soon find themselves trapped there after dramatically aborting a journey to Whitby whilst at sea. The North Sea once again reminds us that it's not to be messed with.

SAT 03:20 Timothy Spall: All at Sea (b01d24t)
God's Own Coast

The Spalls are now in Yorkshire, and had been proudly steaming towards their final destination of London. But on the sea while travelling to Whitby, Tim is deeply troubled by strange engine noises. A failed engine at sea is incredibly dangerous so an engineer is called to Whitby to assess the problem. Tim is keen to see the town as this is where Bram Stoker based the opening of his novel, Dracula. Armed with his treasured antique walking cane, once owned by Stoker, Tim finds the hotel where Stoker stayed and looks for the part of the coastline featured in the novel.

Next is Scarborough, where Tim filmed The Damned United. It's high summer and Britain's first seaside resort is crammed with holidaymakers. Arriving at Spurn Head they are now completely alone - there's no harbour or marina here, no town or access to land. They are moored to a single buoy owned by the local lifeboat crew and are waiting patiently for the perfect sea conditions to take them out of the north of England and into the south. It's a big journey - as well as the North Sea they have to watch out for heavy sea traffic, the turbulence of the Wash and dangerous sandbanks.

In the dark of night arriving at the north Norfolk coast, a pilot boat guides them into the port of Wells-next-the-Sea. They soon discover it's a trip worth making as they explore this stunning coastline.

SAT 03:50 Timothy Spall: All at Sea (b01dc59m)
The Last Splash

Six years ago, Timothy Spall and his wife Shane left London to tour Britain's coast. This final episode of their journey sees them complete their circumnavigation, but not before a dramatic and frightening twist.

They arrive in Suffolk where they moor in Shotley marina, the site of the former naval training camp HMS Ganges. From here they venture into the serene Walton backwaters and then out into the North Sea for a trip to Brightlingsea, Essex. Essex to Kent should have been fairly trouble-free. Tim filled his boat with friends, including actress Frances Barber, before setting off on this celebratory leg.

Chatham is the port where the Spalls spent months learning the art of navigation before venturing out into the sea for the first time all those years ago. They know the area well, but Tim hadn't realised how much the waters of the Medway would change in the blackness of night. After hours at sea they are close to land, but soon become lost. The lights from all the factories and power plants on land add confusion and low tide increases the risk of running aground. After hours of fretting, Tim reluctantly calls the coastguard. The lifeboat crew take them to the nearest port, Queenborough in Sheppey.

The next day they safely make it to Chatham, where both Tim and Shane are emotionally drained and relieved. The final journey up the Thames into London is where he eventually realises why he did this adventure in the first place - 'It's been a celebration of life and a spit in the eye of the audacity of fate trying to kill me, so we went out and tried to kill ourselves.'

SUNDAY 25 MARCH 2012

SUN 19:00 Songwriters' Circle (b01f11dx)
Country

Bill Anderson, Clint Black and Bob DiPiero - three giants of the American country music scene - bring the Nashville 'guitar pull' to London's Bush Hall and showcase their trademark songs.

Whisperin' Bill Anderson is one of the most successful songwriters in the history of country music. Here he performs classics like Give It Away and Tips of My Fingers, and even the original version of Happiness - an unlikely hit in the UK for none other than Ken Dodd.

Clint Black has sold more than 20 million albums. Occupying centre stage in his trademark black hat and clearly revelling in the intimate set-up, he collaborates with ease, performing Killin' Time alongside brand new song Better and Worse.

Bob DiPiero is one of Nashville's most consistent and prolific writers of hits, performed by a whole host of artists including George Strait, Reba McEntire and Alton James. He cuts an amiable figure, performing the likes of Gone and They're Playin' Our Song.

SUN 20:00 She-Wolves: England's Early Queens (b01dpqtx)
Jane, Mary and Elizabeth

In the medieval and Tudor world there was no question in people's minds about the order of God's creation - men ruled and women didn't. A king was a warrior who literally fought to win power then battled to keep it. Yet despite everything that stood in their way, a handful of extraordinary women did attempt to rule medieval and Tudor England. In this series, historian Dr Helen Castor explores seven queens who challenged male power, the fierce reactions they provoked and whether the term 'she wolves' was deserved.

Helen looks at what happened when England was faced not just with inadequate kings, but no kings at all. In 1553, for the first time in English history all the contenders for the crown were female. In the lives of these three Tudor queens - Jane, Mary and Elizabeth - she explores how each woman struggled in turn with wearing a crown that was made for a male head. Elizabeth I seemed to show that not only could a woman rule, but could do so gloriously. But at what cost?

SUN 21:00 Angelic Voices: The Choristers of Salisbury Cathedral (b01f6tb8)

Child choristers have been singing at Salisbury for 900 years. This film - an observational portrait, history and musical immersion in one of Britain's most distinctive and beloved cultural traditions - follows Salisbury Cathedral's choristers over Easter and through the summer term of 2011.

Salisbury Cathedral's separate boy and girl choirs each contain 16 of the most musically gifted eight- to 13-year-olds in the country. Their role, now as always, is to sing some of the most sublime music ever written in one of Britain's most beautiful buildings. Indeed there are many who believe the chorister's pure, clear, treble voice is the finest instrument in all music.

The film spends four months with the choristers as they go about their day-to-day lives, discovering their own history and singing some of the most loved music from a sacred canon spanning six centuries from medieval plainsong to the present day. Under the direction of indefatigable choir master David Halls, they rehearse and perform works by Sheppard, Byrd, Purcell, Handel, Mozart, Stanford, Parry, Alcock and Rutter.

Lining up in his black cloak, ten-year-old Alex says he feels like Harry Potter while Freddie, 12, admits, 'Other children think we are weird and actually we are not.' Yet few children perhaps have the poise or conviction of Susanna, 10, who explains, 'Singing for choristers is part of them. If you said to me "You're not allowed to sing anymore", it would be just like me telling you that you can't see your child anymore.' It is doubtful that Salisbury's early choristers, often so hungry they were forced to beg for bread, thought so fondly of their work. But when plainsong turned to polyphony the choristers' plight was transformed - with the top cathedrals in the late middle ages known to pay Premiership-style transfer fees for the most musically gifted boys, some of whom were even kidnapped by rival cathedrals.

Today's top trebles at Salisbury are seen competing for one of the most famed solos in a chorister's repertoire. Will Finbar, Freddie or Noah be picked for Stanford's Mag in G?

SUN 22:30 The Choir (b0195vs2)
Military Wives: Compilation

Choirmaster Gareth Malone believes singing can help people through the most difficult times of their lives. Gareth has been invited to RMB Chivenor Military base in north Devon, where the troops are about to deploy for a six-month tour of duty in Afghanistan. While the troops are away, Gareth starts a choir with the wives and girlfriends who've been left behind.

With the choir proving such a success at Chivenor, Gareth decides to start a new choir at a base in Plymouth, whose troops are suffering fatalities out in Afghanistan. Gareth has to manage emotions that ride high as the two choirs struggle to combine,

and then he has to persuade them that they are good enough to sing together.

Finally singing as one choir, Gareth sets the Chivenor and Plymouth military wives the biggest challenge of their lives: to perform at the Royal Albert Hall on Remembrance Sunday. The women contribute letters and lyrics to a song that is specially created for them by royal wedding composer Paul Mealor.

After a six-month wait, and agonising reports of multiple injuries and fatalities on the frontline, the choir members' husbands finally return, to joyous reunions. Now Gareth has to make sure his choir members give it their all, for the once-in-a-lifetime Royal Albert Hall performance.

SUN 00:00 Entertaining the Troops (b014v51p)

During World War Two an army of performers from ballerinas to magicians, contortionists to impressionists, set out to help win the war by entertaining the troops far and wide. Risking their lives they ventured into war zones, dodging explosions and performing close to enemy lines. Featuring the memories of this intrepid band of entertainers and with contributions from Dame Vera Lynn, Eric Sykes and Tony Benn, this documentary tells the remarkable story of the World War II performers and hears the memories of some of those troops who were entertained during the dark days of war.

SUN 01:00 When TV Goes to War (b014v43c)

Documentary looking at how war has been dramatised on British television from the Second World War through the Falklands campaign to contemporary conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, examining the challenges - both financial and dramatic - in bringing war to the small screen.

Why have so many of our greatest TV writers been drawn to the subject, and why has so much of their work been controversial? Should writers always respect the historical facts, or can dramatic licence reveal the greater truth about war? And in a world of 24-hour news, can drama tell us anything about war we can't now see for ourselves?

It also looks at the lighter side of war, and why it has inspired some of our most successful sitcoms. Is there something about army life that lends itself to comedy? Soldiers who have had their exploits dramatised for television - Colonel Tim Collins, played by Kenneth Branagh in Ten Days to War, and Robert Lawrence, played by Colin Firth in Tumbledown - talk about the experience.

Other contributors include historians Antony Beevor and Max Hastings, and playwrights Alan Bleasdale (The Monocled Mutineer) and Ian Curteis (The Falklands Play). Ex-MI5 chief Stella Rimington considers television's coverage of the Cold War, and comedy writers Jimmy Perry (Dad's Army) and Greg McHugh (Gary Tank Commander) discuss the rules of the war-based sitcom.

SUN 02:00 Classic Albums (b01r221t)

Peter Gabriel: So

With the release of So in 1986, Peter Gabriel achieved a level of success that had thus far eluded him. Gabriel famously started out leading Genesis, but his four albums of solo work had made him the definition of a cult artist, with flashes that broke through such as Solsbury Hill and Games Without Frontiers. His fifth album, the first not to be titled Peter Gabriel, changed everything and became a massive hit on both sides of the Atlantic.

So includes the singles Don't Give Up, Big Time, Red Rain, In Your Eyes and Sledgehammer, the latter reaching number one in the USA, ironically knocking Genesis's Invisible Touch off the top spot.

The R&B/soul inspired Sledgehammer was propelled to the top by a much-celebrated stop-motion music video, which won numerous awards and set a new standard for art in the music video industry.

By returning to the original multi-tracks, along with musical demonstrations and rare archive footage, we discover how Gabriel's melodic ability to blend African music, jangly pop and soul created a classic.

So stands as one of the greatest records of the 1980s, helping define its time to become a true classic album. The film features interviews with Gabriel himself, co-producer Daniel Lanois, bass players Tony Levin and Larry Klein, performer Laurie Anderson, drummer Manu Katché and Rolling Stone editor David Fricke amongst others.

SUN 03:00 She-Wolves: England's Early Queens (b01dpqtx)

[Repeat of broadcast at 20:00 today]

MONDAY 26 MARCH 2012

MON 19:00 World News Today (b01f13f2)

The latest national and international news, exploring the day's events from a global perspective.

MON 19:30 The Story of Maths (b00dzy91)

The Genius of the East

When ancient Greece fell into decline, mathematical progress stagnated as Europe entered the Dark Ages, but in the east mathematics reached new heights.

Du Sautoy visits China and explores how maths helped build imperial China and was at the heart of such amazing feats of engineering as the Great Wall.

In India, he discovers how the symbol for the number zero was invented and Indian mathematicians' understanding of the new concepts of infinity and negative numbers.

In the Middle East, he looks at the invention of the new language of algebra and the spread of eastern knowledge to the west through mathematicians such as Leonardo Fibonacci, creator of the Fibonacci Sequence.

MON 20:30 Petworth House: The Big Spring Clean (b0109gml)

Putting the House to Bed

Andrew Graham-Dixon becomes an honorary member of the expert conservation team, as they commence the epic task of 'putting the house to bed' for the winter. He gets up close and personal with a Turner painting, does the dishes the National Trust way, vacuums one of Britain's rarest rugs and learns the secrets of a book which predates the invention of printing.

MON 21:00 Storyville (b01f13f6)

Tabloid: Sex in Chains

Documentary which follows the stranger-than-fiction account of a former beauty queen whose single-minded devotion to the man of her dreams became a tabloid sensation. Allegations that Joyce McKinney had kidnapped her estranged lover and held him captive, handcuffed to a bed in a remote cottage, became the stuff of headlines.

Directed by Academy Award-winning filmmaker Errol Morris, the documentary follows Joyce's crusade for love and personal vindication, which takes her through a surreal world of gunpoint abduction, manacled Mormons, oddball accomplices, bondage modelling, magic underwear and dreams of celestial unions.

MON 22:25 Mark Lawson Talks To... (b01f16qm)

Graham Norton

Mark Lawson turns the tables on celebrity interviewer and chat show host Graham Norton and discusses seminal moments from his life and career. From his southern Irish Protestant beginnings, Lawson explores what drove Norton to become one of the biggest names in light entertainment, via a brief stint as an actor and an even briefer stint as a failed rent boy. In this frank and funny interview he discusses growing up in Ireland, his sexuality and a near fatal mugging whilst he was at drama school.

'I started finding my life engaging when I was about 16, when I started having experiences outside of Ireland, that's when I sort of came alive.' Norton's journey out of Ireland first took him to live in a hippy commune in San Francisco before he returned to study acting. One of his earliest roles was in Puss in Boots in Harrogate, an experience which made him realise that a life on the boards was not for him. His TV breakthrough came in 1997 when he filled in as the main presenter for Channel 5's Not the Jack Docherty Show, which led to a best newcomer gong at the British Comedy Awards. In 1998 he was given his own hit show on Channel 4 and in 2005 he transferred to the BBC, where he continues to thrill Friday night audiences with his unique blend of celebrity guests, tongue-in-cheek humour and audience participation.

MON 23:25 Sex and Sensibility: The Allure of Art Nouveau (b01dprb6)

Paris

The delicious objects of Parisian Art Nouveau are explored by cultural correspondent Stephen Smith. Uncovering how the luscious decorative style first erupted into the cityscape, Stephen delves into the city's bohemian past to learn how some of the 19th century's most glamorous and controversial figures inspired this extraordinary movement.

Revealing the story behind Alphonse Mucha's sensual posters of actress Sarah Bernhardt, looking at the exquisite jewellery

designer Renee Lalique and visiting iconic art nouveau locations such as the famous Maxim's restaurant, the programme builds a picture of fin-de-siecle Paris.

But Smith also reveals that the style is more than just veneer deep. Looking further into the work of glassmaker Emile Galle and architect Hector Guimard, he sees how some of art nouveau's stars risked their reputation to give meaning and purpose to work they thought could affect social change.

MON 00:25 The Story of Maths (b00dzy91)

[Repeat of broadcast at 19:30 today]

MON 01:25 Petworth House: The Big Spring Clean (b0109gml)

[Repeat of broadcast at 20:30 today]

MON 01:55 Storyville (b01f13f6)

[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 today]

TUESDAY 27 MARCH 2012

TUE 19:00 World News Today (b01f15zb)

The latest national and international news, exploring the day's events from a global perspective.

TUE 19:30 Great British Railway Journeys (b00qbnd5)

Series 1

Yatton to Weston Super Mare

Michael Portillo takes to the tracks with a copy of George Bradshaw's Victorian Railway Guidebook. In a series of four epic journeys, he travels the length and breadth of the country to see how the railways changed us, and what of Bradshaw's Britain remains.

His journey takes him along the Brunel's Great Western Railway from Swindon to Penzance. This time, Michael samples local Cheddar strawberries, explores Cheddar Gorge and the famous caves, and visits one of the oldest piers in the country at Weston Super Mare.

TUE 20:00 Bombay Railway (b0071367)

Dreams

India is undergoing unprecedented growth and Bombay is its financial powerhouse. The city promotes itself as a positive vision of the future, a place where dreams can come true. Like an extended family, the Bombay railway provides an unending lifeline to the city. This series follows the hope and dreams of some of the people who work for the railway.

Hans Dev Sharma is a senior operations clerk. He works in the timetabling department, which schedules over 2,000 trains a day - under its cultural quota, Hans was talent-spotted as an exceptional actor and dancer and the railways offered him a job. Hans is living the Bollywood dream, with Bombay Railways as his life and his stage. But will he get his big break?

Jagdish Paul Raj was born in Bombay and is as ambitious as the city he lives in. The son of a railway catering officer, Jagdish, like his father, always had an interest in food but none in the railway. He graduated in politics and economics and became a fully qualified chef. Now 31, he is running a successful catering business on the train to Goa. He is tendered for more trains, but will he be successful?

Mumtaz Kazi is Indian Railways' first fully qualified female train driver and has driven trains all over India. Mumtaz was brought up in a traditional Muslim family - a railway family. Now her father has retired and her immediate family live in Canada - Mumtaz is the only member left in Bombay. It will be Mumtaz's responsibility to find a wife for her brother, to get him married and back to Canada in just eight weeks. Can she do it and still drive the train?

TUE 21:00 Talk at the BBC (b01f16qk)

Episode 2

Funny, surreal and extraordinary - extracts from interviews broadcast on the BBC from the 1950s to the 1970s, arguably the golden age of conversation.

TUE 22:00 Parkinson: The Interviews (b01f7x12)

Series 1

Tommy Cooper and Frankie Howerd

Michael Parkinson introduces a recut of two interviews he did

with Frankie Howerd during the Parkinson show series and a Christmas interview with Tommy Cooper.

Frankie Howerd wanted everything scripted, resulting in an unprompted and unrehearsed interview, whilst Tommy Cooper managed to run rings around a delighted Parkinson. Includes clips from Up Pompeii, The Main Attraction and The Bob Monkhouse Show.

TUE 22:40 Entertaining the Troops (b014v51p)
[Repeat of broadcast at 00:00 on Sunday]

TUE 23:40 Bombay Railway (b0071367)
[Repeat of broadcast at 20:00 today]

TUE 00:40 Omnibus (b007brkx)
John Barry: Licence to Thrill

John Barry is the most successful film score composer of the 20th century. From his work on the Bond movies, Born Free, Out of Africa, Dances With Wolves and many more he has produced cinema's most memorable music, winning five Oscars in the process.

But behind all the Hollywood glitz and glamour, Yorkshire born Barry is a private and self-effacing man who talks emotionally about his early childhood, his relationship with his father and the impact of World War II.

This is the first film ever to profile Barry and joining him are Michael Caine, Kevin Costner, and Adam Faith.

TUE 01:30 Great British Railway Journeys (b00qbnd5)
[Repeat of broadcast at 19:30 today]

TUE 02:00 Parkinson: The Interviews (b01f7x12)
[Repeat of broadcast at 22:00 today]

TUE 02:40 Talk at the BBC (b01f16qk)
[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 today]

WEDNESDAY 28 MARCH 2012

WED 19:00 World News Today (b01f17z2)
The latest national and international news, exploring the day's events from a global perspective.

WED 19:30 Francesco's Italy: Top to Toe (b0079238)
The Land of My Mother

Francesco da Mosto visits the south and Sicily, home of his mother's family for more than 500 years. Easter celebrations in the south involve the streets running red with celebrants' blood and the locals indulging in frantic dances to ward off the threat of the tarantula.

On Sicily, the brooding majesty of Etna terrifies Francesco as he stares into the volcano, but there's beauty and art at the Villa Bagheria and an explosion of baroque decadence at Noto. Finally for Francesco, there's an emotional reunion with his family, who have come down from Venice.

WED 20:30 Venice 24/7 (b01f17z4)
The Biennale

With unprecedented access to Venice's emergency and public services, this series goes behind the 15th-century facades to experience the real, living city. From daily emergencies to street sweeping, bridge maintenance to flood defence systems and a death-defying descent across St Mark's Square, this is Venice as you've never seen it before. This is Venice 24/7.

The art world descends on Venice for the Biennale, a six-month long festival. Anish Kapoor attempts to stage his ethereal Ascension in a challenging Palladian church while another artist battles to transport a four-tonne sculpture along the canal. The Venice theatre undergoes critical safety checks, following the devastating fire of 1996 and a 100,000-tonne cruise-liner must execute inch-perfect manoeuvres as it travels perilously close to the historic centre.

WED 21:00 The Man who Discovered Egypt (b01f13f4)
Documentary about English Egyptologist Flinders Petrie, the pioneer of systematic methodology in archaeology. Ancient Egypt was vandalised by tomb raiders and treasure hunters until this Victorian adventurer took them on. Most people have never heard of him, but this maverick undertook a scientific survey of the pyramids, discovered the oldest portraits in the world,

unearthed Egypt's prehistoric roots - and in the process invented modern field archaeology, giving meaning to a whole civilisation.

WED 22:00 Episodes (b00xxj7r)
Series 1

Episode 2

Sean and Beverly Lincoln are a happily married English couple, who are also the creators of a hit British TV show. Their life seems complete. That is until a hugely powerful and charismatic US network president persuades them to move to Los Angeles to recreate their show for American television.

Sean and Beverly are still reeling from the network's decision to cast Matt LeBlanc as the star of their show. However, when they meet him at a swanky LA dinner party at Merc's house, Matt couldn't be more charming or flattering about their show.

Unfortunately, over time the natural animosity between Matt and Beverly rises to the surface, and Beverly learns just how much you don't want the former Friend as an enemy.

WED 22:30 Lowdown (b01f1876)
Who's Your Baddy?

When Alex discovers a dead body while jogging, his article for the Sunday Sun attracts the attention of gangster kingpin Tony Marino and he and Bob soon find themselves blindfolded in a car with two heavies. Shortly after which, Alex has a near death experience.

WED 23:00 Story of Light Entertainment (b00792wn)
Variety

Stephen Fry narrates a series tracing the roots of light entertainment, from variety to Strictly Come Dancing and all points in between. In this episode the focus is on variety shows.

In the past, singers and comedians may have topped bills but it was the 'allied acts' - such as magicians, ventriloquists, tumblers, jugglers, acrobats, paper-tearers and dance acts - that made the shows so memorable.

But by the mid 80s, almost all these skills were banished from our screens. Television talent shows are making a come back though due to the popularity of performers such as David Blaine and the Cirque du Soleil.

Featuring interviews with Paul Daniels, Ray Alan, Simon Cowell, Paul Xenon, Paul Zerdin, Rod Hull's son Toby, The Circus of Horrors, Bruce Forsyth and Jimmy Tarbuck.

WED 00:30 Venice 24/7 (b01f17z4)
[Repeat of broadcast at 20:30 today]

WED 01:00 Inspector Montalbano (b01f118x)
[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 on Saturday]

WED 02:45 Episodes (b00xxj7r)
[Repeat of broadcast at 22:00 today]

WED 03:15 Lowdown (b01f1876)
[Repeat of broadcast at 22:30 today]

WED 03:45 The Man who Discovered Egypt (b01f13f4)
[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 today]

THURSDAY 29 MARCH 2012

THU 19:00 World News Today (b01f1811)
The latest national and international news, exploring the day's events from a global perspective.

THU 19:30 Top of the Pops (b01f1813)
24/3/77

Dave Lee Travis introduces Brendon, Brotherhood of Man, Elkie Brooks, Dead End Kids, T Rex, Graham Parker and the Rumour, Smokie, Marilyn McCoo and Billy Davis Jr and Manhattan Transfer. Dance sequence by Legs and Co.

THU 20:00 Lost Cities of the Ancients (b00792vj)
The Dark Lords of Hattusha

It was one of the greatest vanishing acts in history. More than

3,000 years ago a mysterious and ruthless civilisation rose from nothing, created a brutal and unstoppable army and built an empire that rivalled Egypt and Babylon. Yet, just as it was at the height of its powers, the great empire suddenly vanished from history.

This is the story of the formidable Hittites, a civilisation bent on world domination. Their long-lost capital, Hattusha, which disappeared thousands of years ago, was recently rediscovered, and archaeologists have unearthed one of the most astonishing and ingenious cities of the ancient world, featuring rings of impenetrable walls, secret tunnels, temples, palaces and a vast pyramid-like structure facing Egypt.

Buried in this lost city is one of the greatest libraries of the ancient world. All the secrets of the mysterious Hittite empire were written in two codes - one a unique form of hieroglyphs. Using these deciphered texts, the film recreates the ancient world of the Hittites, telling the story of what happened to them, and what caused an empire built to last forever to vanish so completely from history.

THU 21:00 Sex and Sensibility: The Allure of Art Nouveau (b01f1959)
British Cities

Britain's art nouveau heritage is excavated as cultural correspondent Stephen Smith unearths the bright, controversial but brief career of Aubrey Beardsley.

On a mission to uncover lesser-known stars of Britain's version of this continental fin-de-siècle style, he explores the stunning work of Mary Watts and the massive influence of department store entrepreneur Arthur Liberty.

In Scotland, he celebrates the innovative art nouveau of Charles Rennie Mackintosh, but looks harder at the extraordinary and influential work of Mackintosh's wife, Margaret MacDonald.

THU 22:00 Charles Darwin and the Tree of Life (b00hd5mf)

David Attenborough is a passionate Darwinian, and sees evolution as the cornerstone of all the programmes and series he has ever made. Here, he shares his personal view on Darwin's controversial idea. Taking us on a journey through the last 200 years, he tracks the changes in our understanding of the natural world. Ever since Darwin, major scientific discoveries have helped to underpin and strengthen Darwin's revolutionary idea so that today, the pieces of the puzzle fit together so neatly that there can be little doubt that Darwin was right. As David says: 'Now we can trace the ancestry of all animals in the tree of life and demonstrate the truth of Darwin's basic proposition. All life is related.'

David asks three key questions: how and why did Darwin come up with his theory of evolution? Why do we think he was right? And why is it more important now than ever before?

David starts his journey in Darwin's home at Down House in Kent, where Darwin worried and puzzled over the origins of life. He goes back to his roots in Leicestershire, where he hunted for fossils as a child and where another schoolboy unearthed a significant find in the 1950s, and he revisits Cambridge University, where both he and Darwin studied and where many years later the DNA double helix was discovered, providing the foundations for genetics.

At the end of his journey in the Natural History Museum in London, David concludes that Darwin's great insight revolutionised the way in which we see the world. We now understand why there are so many different species, and why they are distributed in the way they are. But above all, Darwin has shown us that we are not set apart from the natural world and do not have dominion over it. We are subject to its laws and processes, as are all other animals on earth to which, indeed, we are related.

THU 23:00 Talk at the BBC (b01f16qk)
[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 on Tuesday]

THU 00:00 Top of the Pops (b01f1813)
[Repeat of broadcast at 19:30 today]

THU 00:35 The Man who Discovered Egypt (b01f13f4)
[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 on Wednesday]

THU 01:35 Lost Cities of the Ancients (b00792vj)
[Repeat of broadcast at 20:00 today]

THU 02:35 Sex and Sensibility: The Allure of Art Nouveau (b01f1959)
[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 today]

FRIDAY 30 MARCH 2012

FRI 19:00 World News Today (b01f1bsw)

The latest national and international news, exploring the day's events from a global perspective.

FRI 19:30 Handel's Rinaldo from Glyndebourne (b01f1bsy)

From the Glyndebourne Festival 2011, a new staging of Handel's opera Rinaldo, the work with which he made his sensational London debut.

It is the first Italian opera specifically written for the British stage and is given a contemporary twist in this new production. Directed by Robert Carsen, the opera is set as a school boy's dream during a history lesson, in which Rinaldo imagines himself in the holy land at the time of the First Crusade.

The cast is headed by Sonia Prina in the title-role, with Anett Fritsch as his beloved Almirena, Brenda Rae as the seductive Saracen sorceress Armida, and Luca Pisaroni as her duplicitous ally Argante. The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment is conducted by Ottavio Dantone.

FRI 22:20 The Doors - The Story of LA Woman (b01f7y7c)

By 1969, the Doors had found themselves at the forefront of a movement that consisted of a generation of discontents. Operating against a backdrop of the Vietnam War and of social unrest and change in the USA, the Doors were hip, they were dangerous, they were anti-establishment, anti-war and they were hated by middle-America.

Featuring exclusive interviews with surviving band members Ray Manzarek, John Densmore, Robby Kreiger and their closest colleagues and collaborators, along with exclusive performances, archive footage and examination of the original multi-track recording tapes with producer Bruce Botnick, this film tells the amazing story of landmark album LA Woman by one of the most influential bands on the planet.

FRI 23:20 Mark Lawson Talks To... (b01f7y7f)

Noel Gallagher

Mark Lawson talks to former Oasis lynchpin Noel Gallagher about his life, career and becoming one of the most successful songwriters of his generation.

In this fascinating interview Noel talks frankly about his acrimonious relationship with his younger brother, the Oasis front man Liam. He explores his violent relationship with his father, his persistent truancy as a schoolboy and the fact that he was considered a weirdo because of his passion for music. Admitting that he was a control freak, he claims that he was driving force behind Oasis's phenomenal success: 'We were the last, we were the greatest, the end.'

Noel's career in music began in the late 1980's when he toured with Manchester based band Inspiral Carpets, working as their roadie. In 1991 he joined his brother Liam's new band, Oasis, where he established himself as the main songwriter. The band shot to fame after being signed by Creation Records during a gig that they very nearly weren't allowed to play in Glasgow in 1993. Their debut album Definitely Maybe went straight to number one on initial release and became the fastest selling debut album of all time.

Fuelling the Britpop movement, Oasis quickly became one of the biggest bands of the decade and, despite obvious tension between the Gallagher brothers, stayed together until 2009 when Noel quit after an argument with Liam minutes before they were due to appear on stage at a festival near Paris. Since then, Noel has formed his solo project, Noel Gallagher's High Flying Birds.

FRI 00:20 Songwriters' Circle (b01f11dx)

[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 on Sunday]

FRI 01:20 Folk at the BBC (b0074s6b)

The 60s/70s

Compilation of archive performances by some of the 60s folk boom's biggest names, including quirky factual items from the vaults and some newly shot performances from the 60s folk stars. Featuring Donovan, Richard Thompson, Pentangle, Sandy Denny and an Alan Whicker cameo from 1960s.

FRI 02:20 The Doors - The Story of LA Woman (b01f7y7c)

[Repeat of broadcast at 22:20 today]