

SATURDAY 25 NOVEMBER 2017

SAT 19:00 Natural World (b042vptl)
2014-2015

Nature's Misfits

Bill Bailey introduces a delightfully eccentric cast of creatures that have chosen to do things differently. Odd, unconventional and unusual - these are animals that don't normally grab the limelight. They include the parrot that has forgotten how to fly, the bear that has turned vegetarian, a chameleon that is barely bigger than an ant, and a penguin that lives in a forest. Nature's Misfits reveals the extraordinary and rarely seen lives of these evolutionary oddballs along with their strange habitats, unusual forms and the incredible hurdles they overcome.

SAT 20:00 The Mekong River with Sue Perkins (b04t0b30)
Episode 3

Sue reaches Laos, one of the poorest and least developed of all the Mekong nations. It's a country shaped by both Buddhism and Communism and has hardly changed for centuries. Today, the beauty of its landscapes and people is bringing in foreign tourists. Sue meets Bounsom, a fisherman who's turned to tourism. Next, she visits Luang Prabang, once the Royal City of Laos and now a Unesco World Heritage site, famed as the centre of Buddhism. Thought to be the home of more monks than anywhere else in Asia.

Laos is on the verge of huge and irreversible change - massive dams are being built to harness the power of the river. Sue visits the Xayaburi hydroelectric dam, south east Asia's biggest and most controversial engineering project. It's the first dam to be built across the Lower Mekong and will block the flow of the river, changing water levels, blocking fish migration and destroying fish stocks. Sue is told about the merits of the dam by the vice minister for energy and mines. When the waters rise, thousands of people will be forced to leave their homes, so she is given a tour of their new village, complete with electricity. Having seen the effects of damming in Vietnam and Cambodia, Sue grapples with the complexities of projects such as this. While the Xayaburi Dam will bring economic benefits to Laos and beyond, the industrialisation of the Mekong will harm the livelihoods of tens of millions of people downstream.

Foreign investment is coming to Laos on projects beyond the dams. The government has tempted Chinese developers with tax incentives to create tourist playgrounds in an area branded as the Golden Triangle Special Economic Zone. Sue visits a Las Vegas-style casino, built for Chinese VIPs who aren't allowed to gamble in their own country.

SAT 21:00 Witnesses (b09h3nwt)
A Frozen Death

Episode 1

The frozen bodies of 15 men are discovered on an abandoned bus in the middle of the northern French countryside. Detective Sandra Winckler is part of the police investigation into this mysterious find, and soon enough her team discovers the one thing that linked the dead men - all 15 had at some point been involved with a woman named Catherine Keemer. But there's a twist - Catherine Keemer herself disappeared three years ago.

In French with English subtitles.

SAT 21:55 Witnesses (b09hd2p8)
A Frozen Death

Episode 2

Sandra and the investigating team begin to figure out the killer's modus operandi, as Sandra becomes increasingly convinced that Catherine holds the key to the mystery. But can Catherine be trusted? Is she really just an innocent victim? Meanwhile, someone else steps forward claiming to know who the killer is.

In French with English subtitles.

SAT 22:50 The Vietnam War (b096v3f2)
Series 1

Doubt (January 1966-June 1967)

Defying American airpower, North Vietnamese troops and materiel stream down the Ho Chi Minh Trail into the south, while Saigon struggles to 'pacify the countryside'. As an anti-war movement builds back home, hundreds of thousands of soldiers and marines discover that the war they are being asked to fight in Vietnam is nothing like their fathers' war.

SAT 23:50 What a Performance! Pioneers of Popular

Entertainment (b06r7xz4)

Music Hall

Comedian Frank Skinner and music presenter Suzy Klein step out in the first part of this highly entertaining and thought-provoking three-part series which explores a century of popular entertainment from the Victorian age of the music hall, through the golden age of 20th-century variety to the working men's clubs of the 1950s.

The first episode looks at the birth of 19th-century music hall, the colourful and sometimes dangerous world of its entertainers and the audiences whose lives were changed by what was Britain's first mass entertainment industry. Together, Suzy and Frank get under the skin of some of its greatest stars - some of whom, like Marie Lloyd and Champagne Charlie, are household names to this day, while the eccentric Victorian comic Dan Leno, later copied by Charlie Chaplin and Stan Laurel, have fallen into obscurity.

Not only do Frank and Suzy dig into the history of these stars and the world from which they emerged, but they also study their acts and try their hand at performing them at the end of the show.

SAT 00:50 A Blackpool Big Band Boogie: Jools Holland and His Rhythm & Blues Orchestra (b0645530)

Concert specially recorded for BBC Four on 24 June 2015 at the Empress Ballroom Blackpool, where Jools Holland and his band were joined by special guests Rumer, Marc Almond and Ruby Turner.

More than 14,000 people applied for tickets and a lucky 800 were in the audience, and by the end of the concert Jools and his orchestra had almost every one of them on their feet.

The concert celebrates the golden age of big band music from the 1930s to the 1950s and Jools presents his interpretations of standards from the greats such as Count Basie, Louis Armstrong and Woody Herman. Jools's orchestra includes some of the best musicians in the business and the concert combines the incomparable power and sophistication of the big band sound with brilliant individual performances.

Highlights include Rumer's joyful Ac-cent-tchu-ate the Positive, Marc Almond's stunning rendition of Edith Piaf's Hymn Le Amour and singer Ruby Turner's extraordinary vocals.

SAT 01:50 Natural World (b042vptl)
[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 today]

SAT 02:50 The Mekong River with Sue Perkins (b04t0b30)
[Repeat of broadcast at 20:00 today]

SUNDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2017

SUN 19:00 Great Continental Railway Journeys (b08h80hy)
Series 4 - Reversions

Athens to Thessaloniki - Part 2

Armed with his 1913 Continental Railway Guide, Michael Portillo embarks on a Greek odyssey from Athens's port of Piraeus north to the city of Thessaloniki, captured the year before from the Ottoman Turks, who had ruled much of Greece for 400 years.

Exploring the Acropolis and delighting in the tastes of moussaka and baklava, Michael discovers the many influences at play in the creation of modern Greece - from its classical past to the oriental Ottomans and the Great European Powers of Britain, France and Russia.

Along the way, Michael discovers the parlous state of Greek finances at the time of his guidebook. He learns how an aristocratic English poet became a Greek national hero and relives Greek athletic victory at the first modern Olympic games.

Travelling through the Corinth Canal, Michael finds out about the surprisingly ancient origins of the modern railway. In Delphi, he discovers how at the turn of the 20th century an entire village was removed in order to excavate the site of the oracle.

Boarding one of the narrowest gauge railways in the world, the Little Train of Pelion, Michael travels to the village of Milies, where he learns about the place of the Orthodox church in Greek national life. Michael ends his journey in Thessaloniki where, in 1913, Greece's King George I was assassinated.

SUN 19:30 University Challenge (b09gvd14)

2017/18

Episode 18

In the next of the second-round matches, another two teams battle it out for a place in the quarter-finals. Jeremy Paxman asks the questions.

SUN 20:00 Nigel Kennedy at the BBC (b04w0fyx)

Compilation of performances and appearances by Nigel Kennedy from the BBC archive, following his music development and career from a seven-year-old child on Town and Around to his virtuoso showstopper Czardas from the Last Night of the Proms 2013.

Featuring interviews with him through the years, and demonstrating a versatility of styles from classical to experimental to a jazz duet with Stephane Grappelli.

SUN 21:00 Shark (b05wdbyk)
Episode 3

Sharks are among the most misunderstood predators on the planet, but an international team of scientists is trying to change that. Their research is revealing that sharks can be sociable and intelligent, and they could even help solve some of the toughest medical challenges of the 21st century. However, their breakthroughs come just as many sharks face extinction. Science may now be the only way to save them.

SUN 22:00 Natural World (b03dzjx5)
2013-2014

Walrus: Two Tonne Tusker

Sivuqaq is an 18-year-old, larger-than-life captive pacific walrus. By now he should be a dad but things have not worked out. This is where reproduction scientist Holley Muraco comes in.

Holley is taking on the biggest challenge of her career - trying to help Sivuuqaq become a parent. Yet walrus love is a mystery - even pandas have been bred more successfully than walruses. Holley hopes the clues lie in exploring the lives of Sivuuqaq's wild cousins and that she can find the answers by journeying to their breeding grounds in Northern Alaska.

SUN 23:00 Naples '44: A Wartime Diary (b09gvjc2)

In late 1943 Norman Lewis was posted by the British Intelligence Corps to newly liberated Naples. He arrived to witness a city devastated by fascism, bombings, Nazi occupation and the Allied invasion. Written 30 years later, his remarkable memoir evocatively captures the resilience and resourcefulness of the city in the desperate months following the Nazis' withdrawal.

Director Francesco Patierno combines extracts from this account, read by Benedict Cumberbatch, with powerful archival footage and clips from films set in Naples in the 50s and 60s, to portray a war-torn and once-dynamic city returning to life.

SUN 00:20 Nigel Kennedy at the BBC (b04w0fyx)
[Repeat of broadcast at 20:00 today]

SUN 01:20 Shark (b05wdbyk)
[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 today]

SUN 02:20 Natural World (b03dzjx5)
[Repeat of broadcast at 22:00 today]

MONDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2017

MON 19:00 Beyond 100 Days (b09gvfqc)
Series 1

27/11/2017

Katty Kay in Washington and Christian Fraser in London return to report on the events that are shaping the world.

MON 19:30 University Challenge (b06t1211)
Christmas 2015

UCL v Birmingham

Jeremy Paxman asks the questions in the Christmas-themed quiz for distinguished university alumni.

It's the opening match of the Christmas quiz for grown-ups with

two teams doing battle for a place in the semi-finals. The University College London team includes writer Lynne Truss and architecture critic Tom Dyckhoff, and the University of Birmingham team features weather presenter John Hammond and news presenter Joanna Gosling.

MON 20:00 Building the Ancient City: Athens and Rome (b0680lw2)
Rome

Rome was the world's first ancient megacity. At a time when few towns could number more than 10,000 inhabitants, more than a million lived in Rome. But in a world without modern technology, how on earth did the Romans do it? How did they feed their burgeoning population, how did they house them, and how did they get them into town without buses or trains? How on earth did the Romans make their great city work?

In the final episode of the series, Professor Andrew Wallace-Hadrill takes us up ancient tower blocks, down ancient sewers, and above 2,000-year-old harbour basins still filled with water, to find out. He reveals how this city surpassed all those from the ancient world that had gone before.

From the pedestrianisation of the forum to a global transport hub built right next to modern Italy's transport epicentre, Fiumicino Airport, we see how this visionary approach to public projects was not matched for nearly 2,000 years. We discover how Nero - the emperor blamed for fiddling whilst Rome burned - was in fact responsible for the transformation of the finest fire brigade in the ancient world and the creation of the first fire regulations. We uncover made-over Roman apartment blocks complete with piped water, and modern libraries that are in fact ancient Roman buildings constructed two millennia ago.

Last but not least, Professor Wallace-Hadrill uncovers the secret of Rome's success - the planning still captured on pieces of an 1,800-year-old marble map of the city, a map which shows that astonishingly, in many places, the street plan of Ancient Rome mirrors that of the city today in exact detail.

MON 21:00 The Other Pompeii: Life and Death in Herculaneum (b01rrld8)

Professor Andrew Wallace-Hadrill presents a documentary following the scientific investigation that shows what life was like in the small Roman town of Herculaneum, moments before it was destroyed by a volcanic eruption.

Just 10 miles from Pompeii, 12 vaults tell a new story about what life was like before the eruption of Mount Vesuvius. They contain the skeletons of 340 people, 10 per cent of the local population, killed by the volcano. Amongst them are the first new skeletons to be found in the area for 30 years which are now the subject of a ground-breaking scientific investigation. The finds included a toddler holding his dog, a two-year-old girl with silver earrings and a boy embracing his mother.

Those found inside the vaults were nearly all women and children. Those found outside on the shoreline were nearly all men. Why?

It is revealed that the local population went to their deaths not as in often portrayed in Pompeii's popular myth, but more like the passengers of the Titanic, where women and children were put first.

Professor Andrew Wallace-Hadrill takes us to meet the scientists leading the forensic project - Luca Bondioli and Luciano Fattore - and then on a tour of the town. He uncovers houses, wooden furniture (including their beds and the only surviving baby's cradle from the Roman world), and food and human waste, preserved by a layer of ash up to five times deeper than Pompeii, as well as perfectly preserved court transcripts scratched on wooden tablets telling of slaves challenging their status in the town's courts. New scientific analysis has enabled us to unearth not just what they ate, but how they ate it, it seems they had a penchant for eating fish whole including their heads, a tradition, that has survived in Herculaneum to this day.

MON 22:00 Storyville (b09gvjc0)
Last Men in Aleppo

After five years of war in Syria the remaining 350,000 citizens of Aleppo are constantly under siege. Through the eyes of the volunteers of the White Helmets, in this film we experience daily life and death in the streets of Aleppo.

Khalid, Subhi and Mahmoud are founding members of the White Helmets and are the first to enter destroyed buildings, scouring through the rubble in search of bodies and signs of life. They have chosen to stay in Aleppo to help save their people during the never-ending siege.

Many lives including those of countless children and infants are

lost during the bombings. But each day is a dilemma and a conflict for the men - should they stay and risk death themselves, or should they try to get out and save their own families, as other have?

The film is a collaboration with the Aleppo Media Centre, and tells the extraordinary story of real heroes in an epic human tragedy.

The film is directed by Feras Fayyad, co-directed by Steen Johannessen and produced by Soeren Steen Jespersen and Kareem Abeeid.

MON 23:30 From Scotland with Love (b047lx52)

Made entirely of Scottish film archive, a journey into our collective past, the film explores universal themes of love, loss, resistance, migration, work and play. Ordinary people, some long since dead, their names and identities largely forgotten, appear shimmering from the depths of the vaults to take a starring role. These silent individuals become composite characters, who emerge to tell us their stories, given voice by King Creosote's poetic music and lyrics.

MON 00:40 Sir Gawain and the Green Knight (b00kvbny)

Simon Armitage goes on a journey to discover the language and landscape of our first great Arthurian romance, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight. For JRR Tolkien, Gawain is 'a fairy tale for adults', but Armitage finds strong modern relevance in the trials of its stripling hero and a tale of do or die. A marvel of the imagination, Armitage argues that Gawain must take its place alongside Chaucer and Shakespeare at the head of the canon.

MON 01:40 The Other Pompeii: Life and Death in Herculaneum (b01rrld8)

[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 today]

MON 02:40 Building the Ancient City: Athens and Rome (b0680lw2)

[Repeat of broadcast at 20:00 today]

TUESDAY 28 NOVEMBER 2017

TUE 19:00 Beyond 100 Days (b09gvfjq)

Series 1

28/11/2017

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

TUE 19:30 University Challenge (b06t310)

Christmas 2015

Oriel, Oxford v Trinity, Cambridge

Jeremy Paxman asks the questions in the Christmas-themed quiz for distinguished university alumni.

It's the second match of the Christmas quiz with two teams of graduates fighting it out for a place in the semi-finals.

Playing in this episode are the Oriel College, Oxford, team, which includes screenwriter Peter Harness and The Gadget Show presenter Jon Bentley, and Trinity College, Cambridge, featuring Sky News political editor Faisal Islam and food writer Bee Wilson.

TUE 20:00 Darcy Bussell's Looking for Audrey (b04w7mfk)

Behind Audrey Hepburn's dazzling image, Darcy Bussell unravels an epic tale of betrayal, courage, heartache and broken dreams.

For as long as she can remember, Darcy has been fascinated by Audrey Hepburn - style icon, star of Breakfast at Tiffany's and an Oscar winner at 24. Now, Darcy follows in Audrey's footsteps through Holland, London, Rome, Switzerland and Hollywood to find out more. She discovers that Audrey started out as a dancer, risked her life in the Second World War and, although adored the world over, was always looking for love.

TUE 21:00 From Andy Pandy to Zebedee: The Golden Age of Children's Television (b06t3mhm)

Nigel Planer narrates the story of the struggle to make programmes for children in the days before everything went digital.

TUE 22:00 Arena (b0074prh)

Ken Dodd's Happiness

A tribute to Liverpudlian comic Ken Dodd, in which he discusses his career and the influences of his comedy style.

Features film clips of his early performances and footage of him on tour in more recent times.

TUE 23:00 A303: Highway to the Sun (b0116ly6)

The A303 is the road that passes Stonehenge on the way to the beaches of Devon and Cornwall. On the way, it whisks drivers through 5,000 years of remarkable moments in British history. And it is the star of this film made for armchair travellers and history lovers.

Writer Tom Fort drives its 92-mile length in a lovingly restored Morris Traveller. Along the way he has many adventures - he digs up the 1960s master plan for the A303's dreams of superhighway status, meets up with a Neolithic traveller who knew the road like the back of his hand, gets to know a section of the Roman 303, uncovers a medieval murder mystery and discovers what lies at the end of the Highway to the Sun.

TUE 00:00 The Maharajas' Motor Car: The Story of Rolls-Royce in India (b00j4c2s)

Documentary telling the story of Rolls-Royce in India through the fortunes of India's princes.

Combining newly shot high-definition sequences, archive film and photographs, this film follows the princes from the zenith of British imperial power in the early 1900s through to their decline in the aftermath of independence in 1947.

Contributors include: HH Shriji Arvind Singh, the Maharana of Udaipur; Manvendra Barwani, Rana of Barwani; Pranlal Bhogilal, India's foremost Rolls-Royce collector, and Sharada Dwivedi, writer and cultural commentator.

TUE 00:55 Revolution and Romance: Musical Masters of the 19th Century (b07d9rww)

We Can Be Heroes

In the first programme, Suzy Klein tells the story of a creative outpouring unrivalled before or since - the 19th century witnessed the emergence of composers such as Beethoven, Schubert, Berlioz, Chopin, Wagner, Verdi and Liszt, just to name a few of the stellar array whose genius we venerate to this day.

As the aristocracy weakened following the French Revolution, the industrial revolution created new wealth and the middle classes flourished, Suzy shows how it was possible for composers and performers to become the superstars of their age, no longer the servants of kings and princes.

Masters like Paganini and Liszt were idolised, commanded immense fees and had a following as adoring as any of the rock stars and singers of today. Composers tore up the rulebooks, embraced the spirit of Romanticism and poured out their souls in their bold and experimental work. And, freed from the chains of aristocratic patronage, they became entrepreneurs too, organising and profiting from their concerts and winning unprecedented wealth, fame and status.

But with commercial success came a very modern backlash - artistic credibility versus X Factor-style fame. Which would win out? Or could one coexist with the other? As music gained increasing power and influence as the art form of the 19th century, composers started to believe that they could change the world... and remarkably, they really did.

TUE 01:55 Darcy Bussell's Looking for Audrey (b04w7mfk)

[Repeat of broadcast at 20:00 today]

TUE 02:55 Arena (b0074prh)

[Repeat of broadcast at 22:00 today]

WEDNESDAY 29 NOVEMBER 2017

WED 19:00 Beyond 100 Days (b09gvfqp)

Series 1

29/11/2017

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

WED 19:30 University Challenge (b06t3bq)

Christmas 2015

Manchester v UEA

Jeremy Paxman asks the questions in the Christmas-themed quiz for distinguished university alumni.

In the third match, the team from Manchester University, which features comedian Lucy Porter and The Thick of It writer Jesse Armstrong, fight it out for a place in the semis with the University of East Anglia, whose team includes Caroline Flint MP and Tim Bentinck, who plays David in The Archers.

WED 20:00 How the Wild West Was Won with Ray Mears (b044z1k0)
Great Plains

Ray Mears explores how 500,000 square miles of flat, treeless grassland was the setting for some of the Wild West's most dramatic stories of Plains Indians, wagon trains, homesteaders and cattle drives.

Ray joins the Blackfeet Indian Nation as they demonstrate bareback riding skills before a ritual buffalo hunt and sacrifice, and learns how their ancestors were dependent upon the buffalo for their survival. He follows in the wagon ruts of the early pioneers along the Oregon Trail and hitches a ride on a prairie schooner with wagon master Kim Merchant. He discovers the stories of the early homesteaders who lived in sod-houses and farmed the wild grassland around them.

At a cattle auction in Dodge City he explores the story of the railways, cow-towns and the buffalo massacre. His journey across the Great Plains ends at Moore Ranch where he joins a long-horn cattle drive and learns about the life and myth of one of the Wild West's most iconic figures, the cowboy.

WED 21:00 Digging for Britain (b09gvm75)
Series 6

East

Professor Alice Roberts explores some of this year's most exciting archaeological finds from the east of Britain. Each discovery comes straight from the trenches/site, filmed by the archaeologists themselves.

We unearth the biggest collection of Roman writing tablets in Britain, giving insight into what Roman London was really like. Off the coast of Kent, we dive into the English Channel to complete the biggest marine excavation since the Mary Rose - an 18th-century East India Company ship, packed with silver. Also in Kent, we're on the detective trail to find the very first evidence of Julius Caesar's invasion of Britain - an ancient fort scattered with human skulls and weapons.

WED 22:00 Detectoists (b09gvm77)
Series 3

Episode 4

Lance is obsessed with finding the thief that stole his gold, which means he can ignore the melodrama going on at home. Andy's lies are catching up with him too. They decide that camping out is the safest option.

WED 22:30 The League of Gentlemen (p008w1xf)
Series 1

The Beast of Royston Vasey

Black comedy series about small-town life. The schoolchildren get a visit from the incompetent Legz Akimbo Theatre Company and the Denton children get cousin Benjamin in more trouble than he can possibly imagine.

WED 23:00 Premium Bond with Mark Gatiss and Matthew Sweet (p02sx893)

In impeccable evening dress, Mark Gatiss and Matthew Sweet ponder the Bonds we've seen on screen since Dr No in 1962 and ask - which 007 is the best? To date, six actors have portrayed British Secret Service agent James Bond. Was Sean Connery impossible to surpass? Was George Lazenby really that bad? Was Live and Let Die really a blaxploitation movie in disguise? Gatiss and Sweet consider these and many other questions, and raise a martini in honour of their premium Bond.

WED 23:55 Timeshift (b0610v9d)
Series 15

Looking for Mr Bond: 007 at the BBC

After more than 60 years tracking James Bond in print and on screen, the BBC opens up its vaults to reveal the forgotten files on the world's most famous secret agent. Featuring rare and candid interviews with all six actors to play 007, and exclusive behind-the-scenes footage, this is James Bond unguarded,

unrestricted and unseen.

WED 00:55 Revolution and Romance: Musical Masters of the 19th Century (b07f2blk)
Talkin' 'Bout a Revolution

In the 19th century, as Suzy Klein shows in the second episode of the series, music wasn't just a backdrop to life, easing pain and enhancing pleasure. It became a revolutionary force that could - and did - change the world.

As the impact of the violence and turmoil unleashed in the French Revolution reverberated around Europe, it was music that most viscerally carried the message that the people could stand up to kings and emperors. In France during the revolution, La Marseillaise emerged as a rallying cry - sung by the mob as they stormed the royal palace. When Napoleon imposed his grip on the nation it became an anthem of subversion, along with countless songs that pilloried the return to autocracy and the crushing of freedom.

But it was not just on the streets, as Suzy shows, that revolutionary fervour was stoked up. Even opera, intended by the authorities to reinforce the status quo, became politically potent, fanning the flames of nationalism and revolution throughout Europe. One French opera actually helped trigger a revolution when it was performed in Belgium in 1830.

Suzy shows how music came to express not only revolutionary fervour, but also the growing force of nationalism that was sweeping Europe. She discovers how Chopin's music, beneath its lyrical surface, expressed more powerfully than words the defiant spirit of the Polish people suffering under the oppression of a foreign power. And she explores how Carl Weber's lovely work Der Freischutz articulated the longings for nationhood of the Germans and inspired Richard Wagner to attempt the transformation of the human spirit through his work.

But it was Italian opera composer Giuseppe Verdi whose music had the most profound political impact in the 19th century. Suzy travels to Parma, Verdi's home town, to meet the disciples who keep his flame alive to this day, venerating the man whose music embodied the fight for freedom and whose very name came to symbolise Italy's fight for nationhood.

WED 01:55 How the Wild West Was Won with Ray Mears (b044z1k0)
[Repeat of broadcast at 20:00 today]

WED 02:55 Digging for Britain (b09gvm75)
[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 today]

THURSDAY 30 NOVEMBER 2017

THU 19:00 Beyond 100 Days (b09gvm75)
Series 1

30/11/2017

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

THU 19:30 University Challenge (b06t1316)
Christmas 2015

Christ's, Cambridge v Essex

Jeremy Paxman asks the questions in the Christmas-themed quiz for distinguished university alumni.

In the fourth match of the Christmas series, Christ's College, Cambridge, with broadcaster Natalie Haynes and news correspondent James Reynolds, fights it out against the team from the University of Essex with Antiques Roadshow expert Rupert Maas and Radio 5 Live broadcaster Dotun Adebayo. Both teams are playing for a place in the semi-finals.

THU 20:00 Ian Hislop Goes off the Rails (b00drtpj)

Ian Hislop brings his customary humour, analysis and wit to the notorious Beeching Report of 1963, which led to the closure of a third of the nation's railway lines and stations and forced tens of thousands of people into the car and onto the road.

Was author Dr Richard Beeching little more than Genghis Khan with a slide rule, ruthlessly hacking away at Britain's rail network in a misguided quest for profitability, or was he the fall guy for short-sighted government policies that favoured the car over the train?

Ian also investigates the fallout of Beeching's plan, discovering what was lost to the British landscape, communities and ways of

life when the railway map shrank, and recalls the halcyon days of train travel, celebrated by John Betjeman.

Ian travels from Cornwall to the Scottish borders, meeting those responsible and those affected and questioning whether such brutal measures could be justified. Knowing what we know now, with trains far more energy efficient and environmentally sound than cars, perhaps Beeching's plan was the biggest folly of the 1960s?

THU 21:00 Storyville (b09gvnty)

The Farthest: Voyager's Interstellar Journey

12 billion miles away, a tiny spaceship is leaving our solar system and entering the void of deep space. It is the first human-made object ever to do so. Slowly dying within its heart is a plutonium generator that will beat for perhaps another decade before the lights on Voyager finally go out. But this little craft will travel on for millions of years, carrying a golden record bearing recordings and images of life on Earth.

The story of Voyager is an epic of human achievement, personal drama and almost miraculous success. Launched 16 days apart in 1977, the twin Voyager space probes have defied all the odds, survived countless near misses and almost 40 years later continue to beam revolutionary information across unimaginable distances. With less computing power than a modern hearing aid, they have unlocked the stunning secrets of our solar system.

The Farthest - Voyager's Interstellar Journey tells the story of these magnificent machines, the men and women who built them and the vision that propelled them farther than anyone could ever have hoped.

THU 22:30 The Beginning and End of the Universe (b0754t74)
The Beginning

Professor Jim Al-Khalili takes us back in time to tackle the greatest question in science: how did the universe begin? Uncovering the origins of the universe is regarded as humankind's greatest intellectual achievement. By recreating key experiments Jim unravels the cosmic mystery of science's creation story before witnessing a moment, one millionth of a second, after the universe sprang into existence.

THU 23:30 The Beginning and End of the Universe (b075dxsq)
The End

Professor Jim Al-Khalili carries us into the distant future to try to discover how the universe will end - with a bang or a whimper? He reveals a universe far stranger than anyone imagined and, at the frontier of our understanding, encounters a mysterious and enigmatic force that promises to change physics forever.

THU 00:30 SAS: Rogue Warriors (b08g89I7)
Series 1

Episode 3

Stirling is locked away in Hitler's most secure prison - Colditz. Leadership of the SAS passes to Paddy Mayne, a man who has built his reputation on the battlefield as a warrior of the first rank, but has no interest in charming high command. In 1943, the SAS leaves the desert for Europe to enter a darker and far more complex theatre of war, led by a man who is often drunk and disorderly and prone to acts of savagery. They will face the terror of execution and the trauma of civilian casualties. And they will be the first to witness the nightmare of Belsen concentration camp.

THU 01:30 Revolution and Romance: Musical Masters of the 19th Century (b07g9q4w)
Party Like It's 1899

Music was both transformed and transformative in the 19th century. It burst out of court, church and tavern into the world and became a universal soundscape, transcending language and borders. This revolution was made possible by economic and social change, and by a technological revolution.

The 19th century witnessed advances in communication that made the world a smaller place. People could travel by train and steamship with ease across the globe. At the close of the century hundreds of thousands came to the great Paris Exposition of 1889 - the centenary of the French Revolution - to witness the latest inventions and marvel at the strange cultures that came to make music in the temporary halls and theatres on the Champ de Mars.

They heard the music of the Orient, they listened to recording

devices, they saw the future. Composers such as Claude Debussy were profoundly influenced by the sounds of the east, in particular the Balinese gamelan. With its non-European harmony and rhythm, such music offered western composers new musical horizons and a way to innovate and escape from the high romanticism of Richard Wagner.

But it was not only the music of the east that inspired the new composers. Developments in manufacturing were changing instruments and creating new ones - exemplified by the saxophone. Suzy witnesses a 'battle of the bands' in which the new and versatile instrument demonstrates its capabilities and - for the luddites - its threatening versatility. And in the spirit of the new age she makes her first recording on a vintage phonograph, one of the earliest recording machines. To our ears they may lack quality, but they were mind-blowing to those who first heard them - and they presaged a new future of recorded music that is still with us today.

THU 02:30 Moominland Tales: The Life of Tove Jansson (b01pgrk2)

Moomintroll and the Moomin family are characters loved by children and parents worldwide who have grown up listening to Finnish writer Tove Jansson's delightful stories about a group of philosophical trolls who face a range of adventures in Moominland.

This documentary reveals the strong autobiographical slant in the Moomins series as it traces the author's own extraordinary story from living the bohemian life of an artist in war-torn Helsinki to becoming a recluse on a remote island in the Gulf of Finland.

Enjoying unprecedented access to Jansson's personal archive, the film reveals an unconventional, brave and compelling woman whose creative genius extended beyond Moominland to satire, fine art and masterful adult fiction - not least her highly regarded *The Summer Book*. With home movie footage shot by her long-term female lover and companion, it offers a unique glimpse of an uncompromising fun-loving woman who developed love as the central theme of her work.

FRIDAY 01 DECEMBER 2017

FRI 19:00 World News Today (b09gvfr2)

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

FRI 19:30 University Challenge (b06t4hv)

Christmas 2015

Exeter v Magdalen, Oxford

Jeremy Paxman asks the questions in the Christmas-themed quiz for distinguished university alumni.

In the Exeter University team are wildlife presenter Nick Baker and actor Barnaby Edwards, who plays a Dalek in *Doctor Who*. They fight it out for a place in the semis against Magdalen College, Oxford, featuring documentary filmmaker Louis Theroux and writer Matt Ridley.

FRI 20:00 The Good Old Days (b09gvqj7)

Leonard Sachs presents the old-time music hall programme, first broadcast on 6 August 1980. Featuring Max Wall, Denny Willis and Company, Eira Heath, Grace Kennedy, Deryk Parkin, Doreen Hermitage, Bill Drysdale, Christine Cartwright, James Rinehart and members of the Players' Theatre, London.

FRI 21:00 Top of the Pops (b04w0fz1)

1980 - Big Hits

British pop and the BBC's flagship chart show said goodbye to the 70s and trembled on the edge of a new era for the show, for British music and for British society. This meant a continuing love for the nutty boys, Madness, who feature in this compilation with My Girl, and the man with the best cheekbones in pop, Adam Ant, gave us Antmusic.

We get to check out The Pretenders' first number one, Brass in Pocket, alongside Dexys Midnight Runners' tribute to soul legend Geno Washington. There are the early stirrings of new romantic with Spandau Ballet, and it's a veritable mod revival with The Piranhas and 2-Tone with The Beat.

Plus Hot Chocolate, OMD, Motorhead and many more top hits proving the 80s were truly beginning.

FRI 22:00 Gregory Porter's Popular Voices (b09gvqj9)

Series 1

Truth Tellers

Gregory examines how early 20th-century blues growlers like Bessie Smith paved the way for the rhyme and flow of hip-hop, how truth became a quest of rock 'n' roll's greatest poets from Woody Guthrie to Gil Scott-Heron, from Lou Reed to Suzanne Vega, and why great popular voices, including Bob Dylan, Leonard Cohen and Kurt Cobain, don't have to be technically perfect to resonate so deeply and stir our souls. With Dave Grohl, Suzanne Vega and KRS-One.

FRI 23:00 Popular Voices at the BBC (b09gvqjc)

Series 1

Truth Tellers at the BBC

This compilation is a companion piece to the Truth Tellers episode of Gregory Porter's Popular Voices. Join us for a nostalgic look back at some of the most outspoken, thought-provoking and lyrically gifted songsters to have visited the BBC studios. From socially discerning troubadours like Bob Dylan and Joni Mitchell, to modern-day poets Patti Smith and Gil Scott-Heron, and rap disrupters like KRS-One (performing with Boogie Down Productions), as well as more recent social observers Jarvis Cocker, Nick Cave and George the Poet.

Featuring clips from The Old Grey Whistle Test, Top of the Pops, Later with Jools Holland and Britpop Now, these performers show us that you don't need fancy vocal acrobatics or sensuous murmurings if your message is powerful.

FRI 00:00 Live at Eden (b09b4qy0)

Series 1

Bastille

Bastille performing live at Cornwall's Eden Project in June 2017. Their performance was a highlight of the 16th year of the Eden Sessions and they played many of their best known songs including Glory, Good Grief, Icarus and Pompeii. The Eden Sessions began in 2002 and are renowned for the stature of the artists they attract and the unique setting of the Eden arena against the backdrop of the biomes.

FRI 00:55 Top of the Pops (b04w0fz1)

[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 today]

FRI 01:55 The Girl from Ipanema: Brazil, Bossa Nova and the Beach (b07mkzl)

Documentary in which Katie Derham travels to Rio de Janeiro (where her father was born) to explore the story behind Brazil's most famous and enduring song. Written in 1962 by Antonio Carlos Jobim with lyrics by Vinicius de Moraes, and a later English translation by Norman Gimbel, *The Girl from Ipanema* defines the moment Brazil charmed the world with a laid-back song about a haunting woman.

It's a vibrant musical journey to the stunning beaches, majestic mountains and buzzy clubs of Rio, where Katie meets key musicians and architects of bossa nova, including Carlos Lyra, Roberto Menescal, Joyce, Daniel Jobim and Marcos Valle, witnesses intimate musical performances, and uncovers the genesis and story behind Brazil's most successful musical export.

The Girl from Ipanema is quintessential bossa nova and tracing its roots reveals the fascinating story of this unique musical style. Invented by a gang of young bohemians in Rio in the late 50s, bossa grew into a 60s phenomenon, especially in the US where it became a youth craze and later a significant part of the modern jazz repertoire. *The Girl from Ipanema*, as sung by Astrud Gilberto with sax from Stan Getz, went top five in the US and became a major international hit in 1964.

Nothing sums up Rio as well as the simple and seductive lyrics to *The Girl from Ipanema*. What better way to get to understand the city, its people and its mid-60s zeitgeist than through its most famous song?

FRI 02:55 Queens of Jazz: The Joy and Pain of the Jazz Divas (b01sbxqw)

A celebration of some of the greatest female jazz singers of the 20th century. It takes an unflinching and revealing look at what it actually took to be a jazz diva during a turbulent time in America's social history - a time when battle lines were being constantly drawn around issues of race, gender and popular culture.

The documentary tracks the diva's difficult progress as she emerges from the tough, testosterone-fuelled world of the big bands of the 30s and 40s, to fill nightclubs and saloons across the US in the 50s and early 60s as a force in her own right. Looking at the lives and careers of six individual singers (Billie Holiday, Ella Fitzgerald, Peggy Lee, Sarah Vaughan, Nina Simone and Annie Ross), the film not only talks to those who knew and worked with these queens of jazz, but also to

contemporary singers who sit on the shoulders of these trailblazing talents without having to endure the pain and hardship it took for them to make their highly individual voices heard above the prejudice of mid-century America.

This is a documentary about how these women triumphed - always at some personal cost - to become some of the greatest artists of the 20th century, women who chose singing above life itself because singing was their life.