

SATURDAY 23 DECEMBER 2017

SAT 19:00 Timeshift (b00813cn)
Series 7

Stuffed: The Great British Christmas Dinner

It's the season of peace and goodwill to all, when we think of those less fortunate than ourselves. It's also the time of year when we stuff our faces and gorge and drink ourselves silly. Christmas dinner is served. Being the last great feast in the British culinary tradition, what role does it play today?

With contributions from actor Simon Callow, cultural critic Jonathan Meades, food writers Paul Levy, Prue Leith and Diana Henry, and historians Kate Colquhoun and Kathryn Hughes, this fun documentary asks why the British remain so wedded to this meal? What does it say about us as a nation? Can it survive in a rapidly changing and culturally diverse Britain of different faiths, food fads and health concerns?

For many, Christmas dinner means the anxiety and pressure to get it right, the endless advice from every celebrity chef reinventing the wheel and the bizarre traditions that must be maintained at all costs. For others it's a time to savour good food, dine with family and friends and connect with ancient customs and rituals. Either way, we end up completely stuffed.

SAT 20:00 James May's Toy Stories (b04wtd18)
Action Man at the Speed of Sound

James May attempts to rehabilitate one of Britain's most derided toys by seeing if it's possible for Action Man to do what no toy has ever managed - travel faster than the speed of sound.

For decades Action Man, despite his name, has been a disappointment. He promised so much with his eagle eyes, his gripping hands and his natty outfits. But what has he ever achieved? Nothing... yet.

After half a century lazing around the back of the toy cupboard, he must prove that he has The Right Stuff, redeem his shattered reputation and boldly go where no toy has gone before.

The challenge is daunting. Breaking the sound barrier and returning Action Man safely to the earth will test James and the team to the limit.

In an action-packed series of attempts, James battles high-speed physics, unforeseen explosions and catastrophic design setbacks that account for a large number of Action Man volunteers before settling on an experimental supersonic vehicle made entirely from scratch - a vehicle that threatens to send Action Man and the team into oblivion.

In a gripping final act, Action Man must not only succeed and survive intact, but also go faster and higher than a rival supersonic attempt led by his arch-nemesis - Sindy.

Will Action Man redeem himself? Will he survive Mach 1? Or will he lose out?

SAT 21:00 James May: My Sisters' Top Toys (b00812vq)
James May celebrates the toys that made his childhood hell, as he opens the lid on his sisters' toy box. Sandwiched between elder sister Jane and younger one Sarah, many of their favourites he couldn't understand, or stand the sight of, or see the point of. This is both a tale of brotherly revenge, and the story from the other side of the toy room.

Each toy prompts a story - a history told via archive, anecdote and the occasional obsessive collector or inventor. Dolls, dolls' houses, dolls' prams, Tiny Tears, Girls' World, Look and Learn, Major Morgan the electronic organ get the May inspection... and sisters Jane and Sarah dish the dirt on their brother and their toy memories.

James blows up the Tree House Family, races in a converted Silver Cross pram, tries out his hair and make-up skills on Girls World, projects Spirograph on the side of the Royal Festival Hall, and appears in a Fuzzy Felt animated film... all jolly good clean fun.

SAT 22:00 Top of the Pops (b086trr9)
Christmas Hits

The Top of the Pops Christmas Hits compilation is made up of hits down the years, mostly performed on those classic episodes of Christmas Top of the Pops in a seasonal studio. We include songs that reached the charts in December, from Ian Dury & the Blockheads to Madness, East 17 and Coldplay.

There are hits that made the enviable Christmas Number 1 spot from the likes of The Human League & Pet Shop Boys, songs that were pipped to the post and perennial Christmas classics from Slade, Mud and Frankie Goes to Hollywood to name but

three. We also have a special rediscovered rare performance opening the programme from the psychedelic era Rolling Stones from 1967 and not broadcast for over 40 years. Christmas Top of the Pops adorns the studio in tinsel to give a perfect playlist for any festive party.

SAT 23:00 New Power Generation: Black Music Legends of the 1980s (b0177bjb)
Prince: A Purple Reign

Film which explores how Prince - showman, artist, enigma - revolutionised the perception of black music in the 1980s with world-wide hits such as 1999, Kiss, Raspberry Beret and Alphabet Street. He became a global sensation with the release of the Oscar-winning, semi-autobiographical movie Purple Rain in 1984, embarking on an incredible journey of musical self-discovery that continued right up to his passing in April 2016, aged 57.

From the psychedelic Around the World in a Day to his masterpiece album Sign O' the Times and experiments with hip-hop and jazz, Prince was one of most ambitious and prolific songwriters of his generation. He tested the boundaries of taste and decency with explicit sexual lyrics and stage shows during his early career, and in the 1990s fought for ownership of his name and control of his music, played out in a public battle with his former label, Warner. Highly regarded as one of the most flamboyant live performers ever, Prince was a controversial and famously elusive creative force.

Contributors include Revolution guitarist Dez Dickerson, Paisley Park label president Alan Leeds, hip-hop legend Chuck D and Prince 'Mastermind' and UK soul star Beverley Knight.

SAT 00:00 TOTP2 (b0915x53)
Xmas 2017 - Shortened Version

This celebratory Christmas compilation voiced by the wonderfully sardonic - even grumpy - but festive voice of Mark Radcliffe guides us down memory lane with staple Christmas TOTP facts and performances that create the perfect playlist for any Christmas shindig.

This programme of merriment delivers the essential Christmas hits from a tinselled TOTP studio from the likes of Wizzard, Slade, Mariah Carey and The Flying Pickets, along with other vital classics from Kylie and Jason, The Darkness, Abba, The Spice Girls, Coldplay, Ed Sheeran and many more to get one and all in the festive spirit!

SAT 01:00 A Christmas History of Sacred Music (b00wvdcj)

Simon Russell Beale takes a journey through Italy, Britain, Germany and Austria as he explores how the sound of Christmas has evolved in response to changing ideas about the Nativity. His story takes us through two millennia of music, from a fragment of papyrus preserving the earliest known piece of Christian music to the stories behind Hark the Herald Angels Sing, Silent Night and In the Bleak Midwinter, and the work of popular Christmas composer, John Rutter. Music is performed by Harry Christophers and his choir, The Sixteen.

SAT 02:00 Timeshift (b00813cn)
[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 today]

SAT 03:00 James May: My Sisters' Top Toys (b00812vq)
[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 today]

SUNDAY 24 DECEMBER 2017

SUN 19:00 James May: The Reassembler (b0867c9)
Series 2

James May: The Christmas Reassembler

Much like Santa Claus, James May has spent the year in his workshop getting ready for Christmas, in a festive special in which he reassembles his favourite childhood Christmas presents.

But this isn't just any Christmas present, this is the one that changed his life and sent him on to a path of mechanical intrigue and reassembly. This is the Hornby Flying Scotsman with realistic chuffing sounds which James ripped open on Christmas Day 1972.

Laid out in all its 138 tiny component parts, James lovingly reassembles the train as well as his memories of Christmases and toys past. From the exhilarating remagnetising of the motor's magnets to some thrilling wheel-quarterming amidst a backdrop of James's continued bafflement of electricity, we watch as James rebuilds the entire train set and hopes at the end

his Christmas wish will come true and the train will start up and realistically chuff into the night.

SUN 19:30 Top of the Pops (b09161s6)
Christmas 1973

Tony Blackburn and Noel Edmonds present a Christmas edition of the pop chart programme, first broadcast on 25 December 1973. Featuring Suzi Quatro, Slade, Simon Park Orchestra, 10cc, Peters & Lee, Wizzard, Dawn and David Cassidy. Also features a dance sequence from Pan's People.

SUN 20:15 Whatever Happened to the Likely Lads? (b007894q)
A Special Christmas Edition

Bob and Thelma are determined to enjoy the Christmas festivities to the full. Terry passes his driving test and drives Bob and Thelma to a Christmas party as their minicab driver, and waits for them outside. Inevitably, Terry creates a problem or two for Bob which starts the season off on quite the wrong foot.

SUN 21:00 The Lost Ghost Story with Mark Gatiss (b03n2rnc)

Mark Gatiss steps into the mind of MR James, the enigmatic English master of the supernatural story. How did this domish Victorian bachelor, conservative by nature and a devout Anglican, come to create tales that continue to chill readers more than a century on?

Mark attempts to uncover the secrets of James's inspiration, taking an atmospheric journey from James's childhood home in Suffolk to Eton, Cambridge and France, venturing into ancient churches, dark cloisters and echoing libraries along the way.

SUN 22:00 The Tractate Middoth (b03n2rnf)

The chilling story of Dr Rant, whose wicked streak continues from beyond the grave. Based on the festive ghost story by MR James.

When a relative comes to find a particular book at the university library, young student Garrett is drawn into a family feud over a will and its legacy - with terrifying consequences.

SUN 22:40 No.13: A Ghost Story (b007416n)

Dramatisation based on an MR James short story and in the tradition of the BBC's ghost stories for Christmas. Oxbridge academic Anderson settles into The Golden Lion Hotel in a small cathedral city to research its ecclesiastical history, when the subject of his research begins to disturb his slumber.

SUN 23:20 The Signalman (b0074ptz)

Charles Dickens's ghost story in which a lonely signalman is haunted by a hooded figure who seems to warn of danger.

SUN 00:00 Christopher Lee's Ghost Stories for Christmas (b00783cp)
Series 1

The Stalls of Barchester

Christopher Lee reads the disturbing Victorian ghost stories of writer MR James. A century ago, it was James's habit to read one aloud by candlelight every Christmas Eve to a select group of students in his study at King's College, Cambridge. Lee tells the fearful tale of intrigue, murder and the haunted Stalls of Barchester.

SUN 00:30 Christopher Lee's Ghost Stories for Christmas (b00783g2)
Series 1

A Warning to the Curious

Christopher Lee reads a chilling tale by Victorian writer MR James. A horrific account, based on a true story, of the discovery of the last of the legendary East Anglian Crowns.

SUN 01:00 A View from a Hill (b0081j4k)

Adaptation of the classic ghost story by MR James. Ambitious archaeologist Dr Fanshawe is sent to authenticate the collection of his boss's old school friend and finds nothing much of interest except an 'odd couple' squire and servant, a pair of binoculars and a gruesome local legend.

SUN 01:40 Top of the Pops (b09161s6)
[Repeat of broadcast at 19:30 today]

SUN 02:25 James May: The Reassembler (b0867c9)
[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 today]

SUN 02:55 No.13: A Ghost Story (b00746fn)
[Repeat of broadcast at 22:40 today]

MONDAY 25 DECEMBER 2017

MON 19:00 The Royal Opera: Puccini's La boheme (b09kkh47)

Sir Antonio Pappano, music director of the Royal Opera House, conducts a new production of Puccini's popular masterpiece, *La boheme* - a tale of friends and fellowship, love and loss, set in 19th-century Paris. A stellar cast of young singers, including Michael Fabiano, Nicole Car and Mariusz Kwiecien, comes together for this unforgettable story about a group of aspiring artists living in a freezing Parisian garret. Into their world comes a young seamstress, battling with a terrible disease.

Ever since its premiere in Turin in 1896, *La boheme* has been a huge hit with audiences across the world, clocking up over 500 performances at Covent Garden. This is the first new production at the Royal Opera House in over 40 years, created by the acclaimed British theatre director Richard Jones, with designs by Stewart Laing. It is a period production, which pits the poverty of the Bohemians against the shopping arcades and restaurants of Paris, described by one reviewer as 'fresh, beautiful and intelligent' (Rupert Christiansen, *The Telegraph*).

MON 21:00 Christmas Night with the Stars (b09ksvg9)
1972

Ronnie Corbett and Ronnie Barker host a seasonal variety programme, first broadcast on 25 December 1972. With stars including Lulu and Cilla Black, comedy sketches from *The Goodies*, *The Liver Birds*, Mike Yarwood and *Dad's Army*.

MON 22:15 Christmas with Val Doonican (b04vkb37)
From 1986, Val Doonican performs with seasonal music and guest appearances from newsreader Jan Leeming, virtuoso percussionist Evelyn Glennie, snooker star Dennis Taylor and the Arts Educational School Choir.

MON 23:00 Swingin' Christmas (b00wyltw)

Michael Parkinson presents the sensational John Wilson Orchestra in a celebration of festive musical treats from the golden age of swing, with soloists Seth MacFarlane, Anna-Jane Casey and special guest Curtis Stigers. The Christmas classics include *Winter Wonderland*, *Baby It's Cold Outside*, *Let It Snow* and *White Christmas*.

MON 00:10 Top of the Pops (b086trr9)
[Repeat of broadcast at 22:00 on Saturday]

MON 01:40 Christmas Night with the Stars (b09ksvg9)
[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 today]

MON 02:55 Christmas with Val Doonican (b04vkb37)
[Repeat of broadcast at 22:15 today]

TUESDAY 26 DECEMBER 2017

TUE 19:00 Sound of Musicals with Neil Brand (b0888r7n)
Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin'

Series in which composer Neil Brand explores how musical theatre evolved over the last 100 years to become today's global phenomenon. Neil hears the inside story from leading composers and talent past and present, and recreates classic songs, looking in detail at how these work musically and lyrically to captivate the audience.

In the first episode, Neil finds out how the modern shape of the musical was established through a series of pioneering works, from Jerome Kern and Oscar Hammerstein's *Show Boat* in the 1920s with its bold take on America's racial divide and innovative use of songs that further the narrative, to Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe's *My Fair Lady*, which made a star of Julie Andrews in the late 1950s. Neil also reveals the songwriting secrets of some much-loved numbers, including *Ol' Man River*, *Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin'*, and *If I Loved You*.

TUE 20:00 Royal Institution Christmas Lectures (b091191n)
2017: *The Language of Life*

Say It with Sound

From musical mosquitoes to rumbling elephants, *Say It With Sound* explores how humans and other animals use noises to communicate.

Sophie Scott, a professor of neuroscience at University College London, is joined in the theatre by a chorus of chirping crickets, hissing cockroaches and groaning deer to reveal the very different ways that animals have adapted their bodies to send audible messages that are vital to their species. She also explores how and why the human voice evolved to become the most versatile sound producer in the natural world. In a dramatic experiment Professor Scott reveals how our vocal cords can open and close more than a thousand times a second and how we can use our throats for breathing, eating and communicating.

Professor Scott demonstrates what sound actually is and how it travels, not just through air, but water and solid materials. Unpacking the power behind sound, she uses it to shatter glass and reveal how the human body can resonate in a way that amplifies our voices to send our messages further. She also explores how different species use very different frequencies to communicate and why humans can only hear a fraction of these animal messages.

Professor Scott investigates why our voices all sound very different, to the degree that we all have unique vocal prints. She also looks at how computers are learning to recognise these. She further shows how we have developed the biological functions that enable us to create such incredible noises - from the arias of an opera singer to the complex sounds of a beatboxer.

TUE 21:00 Tim Rice: A Life in Song (b04w7rnj)
A Life in Song

A celebration of one of our greatest musical lyricists, Tim Rice, who reminisces in the company of Michael Grade over 40 years of hit songs that conquered the world. Before each one is performed, hear the stories behind some of his best-loved work from Jesus Christ Superstar, *Evita*, *Chess* and *The Lion King*.

On the stage of The Royal Festival Hall are stars Alexander Armstrong, Gemma Arterton, Rob Brydon, Tom Chaplin, Roger Daltrey, Sophie Ellis-Bextor, Cynthia Erivo, James Fox, Seth Lakeman, Andrew Lloyd Webber, Tim Minchin, Laura Mvula, Julian Ovenden, Frances Ruffelle, Diana Vickers and Rufus Wainwright. They are accompanied by the BBC Concert Orchestra conducted by Mike Dixon.

TUE 22:30 Norman Wisdom: His Story (b00vbmqq)

From street urchin to knight of the realm - the story of Norman Wisdom, who used to be one of the biggest film stars in the UK, portraying a man who rarely stepped out of character in public, and whose highly individual comic style hid the private tragedy of his early life.

The actor's life story is told through the people who knew him well - his son and daughter Nick and Jacqui Wisdom, his daughter-in-law Kim, film director Stephen Frears, actors Ricky Tomlinson, Leslie Phillips and Honor Blackman, and singer Dame Vera Lynn.

TUE 23:30 British Sitcom: 60 Years of Laughing at Ourselves (b07vxlml)

Documentary celebrating the British sitcom and taking a look at the social and political context from which our favourite sitcoms grew. We enjoy a trip through the comedy archive in the company of the people who made some of the very best British sitcoms. From *The Likely Lads* to *I'm Alan Partridge*, we find out the inspiration behind some of the most-loved characters and how they reflect the times they were living in.

Narrated by Rebecca Front, with commentary and insider knowledge from Steve Coogan, Richard Curtis, Beryl Vertue, James Corden, Jack Dee and top writing team Dick Clement and Ian La Frenais.

TUE 00:30 Some People with Jokes (b04w80p3)
Some Santas with Jokes

Father Christmases from across Britain take time out of their busy schedules to share their favourite jokes and get the whole nation going 'ho-ho-ho!'.

TUE 01:00 Sound of Musicals with Neil Brand (b0888r7n)
[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 today]

TUE 02:00 Royal Institution Christmas Lectures (b091191n)
[Repeat of broadcast at 20:00 today]

TUE 03:00 Norman Wisdom: His Story (b00vbmqq)
[Repeat of broadcast at 22:30 today]

WEDNESDAY 27 DECEMBER 2017

WED 19:00 Sound of Musicals with Neil Brand (b0888okj)
Something's Coming

Neil Brand explores how a new generation of composers transformed musical theatre by embracing more gritty, challenging subjects, from the mean streets of 1950s New York in *West Side Story*, to the Dickensian London of British blockbuster *Oliver!*. Neil learns the stories behind Broadway hits *Fiddler on the Roof* and *A Chorus Line*, and celebrates the groundbreaking work of Stephen Sondheim. And Neil takes us step by step through the secrets of some classic numbers with the help of star performers Robert Lindsay and Frances Ruffelle.

WED 20:00 Royal Institution Christmas Lectures (b09151g1)
2017: *The Language of Life*

Silent Messages

In this second lecture, Professor Sophie Scott explores the world of silent communication in the animal kingdom and the human world - showing how much we can actually say without ever opening our mouths or making a noise.

Professor Scott's investigation of silent messages begins with the smells that animals and even plants produce to communicate with each other or to send information. She illustrates how a plant can use pheromones to attract predators that will attack the insects eating it and how a snake's forked tongue helps it decipher smell messages in its surroundings. Professor Scott delves into just what dogs learn about each other from smell when they first meet and why their olfactory abilities are far more powerful than ours.

Professor Scott reveals how some species have harnessed bacteria to generate light and how light messages are used by insects and deep-sea fish for a range of reasons including attracting prey.

Exploring how body language communicates huge amounts about us and other species, Professor Scott shows why a dog's wagging tail does not always mean it is happy and how humans can tell a lot about someone's state of mind from their posture alone. She reveals why yawns and smiles are contagious and how this can play a key role in social bonding and cohesion.

With the help of the lecture theatre audience, Professor Scott also unpicks how we use our hugely expressive faces and eyes to communicate. She opens up the concept of microexpressions - brief, uncontrollable facial expressions that may reveal our true state of mind. Could these be a new way to tell if someone isn't really telling the truth?

In a glimpse of how we might send messages silently in the future, Sophie also explores the possibility of direct brain-to-brain communication. Could the science fiction idea of telepathy ever become reality?

WED 21:00 Turtle, Eagle, Cheetah: A Slow Odyssey (b09ksyb3)

Riding onboard with a cheetah, a green turtle and a white-tailed sea eagle as they show us around their respective homes. With natural sounds and elegant embedded graphics delivering information, this is an immersive journey into their world like no other.

Each section rides onboard with one of the animals as it shows us around its world. Revealing how they go through their daily routines, journey across different parts of their homes and introduce us to the other animals they share them with, in this extraordinary immersive show. A trio of cheetahs hunting on the Namibian bushveld, a green turtle cruising the reefs of Indonesia and a white-tailed sea eagle as it soars above the west coast of Scotland.

All the animals are part of ongoing scientific studies or research projects, they are habituated or trained to carry small, lightweight cameras capable of capturing images in high definition. With often bespoke technology developed and pioneered by research scientists and the teams from *Blue Planet II* and forthcoming series *Animals With Cameras*. This is the core of this immersive BBC Four series that reveals the natural world through the perspective of its subjects, and has afforded the scientific community an even deeper understanding of their subjects.

WED 22:30 Concorde: A Supersonic Story (b097vt13)

The life of the most glamorous plane ever built, told by the people whose lives she touched. We uncover rare footage telling the forgotten row between the French and British governments over the name of Concorde that threatened to derail the whole project. On the eve of the opening of Bristol's multi-million-pound aerospace museum, a cast of engineers, flight technicians and frequent fliers tell the supersonic story aided by Lord

Heseltine and Dame Joan Collins - and we meet the passenger who shared an intimate moment with The Rolling Stones.

Narrated by Sophie Okonedo.

WED 23:30 Timeshift (b0803m60)
Series 16

Bridging the Gap: How the Severn Bridge Was Built

2016 saw the 50th anniversary of the Severn Bridge, which completed the motorway link between England and Wales. Timeshift tells the inside story of the design and construction of 'the most perfect suspension bridge in the world', and how its unique slimline structure arose by accident.

WED 00:30 Engineering Giants (b01llr67)
Ferry Strip-Down

Engineer turned comedian Tom Wigglesworth and rising star of mechanical engineering Rob Bell climb on board the Pride of Bruges, a massive 25,000-tonne North Sea ferry as it is brought into dry dock in Newcastle.

It has been ploughing the route from Hull to Zeebrugge for over a quarter of a century and is now in need of the biggest overhaul of its life in an attempt to prolong its seaworthiness for another decade. Tom and Rob also travel to Europe's largest ship-breaking yard in Belgium, to discover what happens to ships at the end of their lives. As they watch massive hulls being torn apart, they gain more insights into how a ship works and how their massive carcasses are recycled.

WED 01:30 Turtle, Eagle, Cheetah: A Slow Odyssey (b09ksyb3)
[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 today]

WED 03:00 Royal Institution Christmas Lectures (b0915lg1)
[Repeat of broadcast at 20:00 today]

THURSDAY 28 DECEMBER 2017

THU 19:00 Sound of Musicals with Neil Brand (b08bqfd2)
Seasons of Love

Series in which composer Neil Brand explores how musical theatre evolved over the last 100 years to become today's global phenomenon. Neil hears the inside story from leading composers and talent past and present, and recreates classic songs, looking in detail at how these work musically and lyrically to captivate the audience.

In the concluding episode, he explores why musical theatre is thriving in the 21st century. He charts the rise of the 'megamusical' phenomenon, with shows like *Cats* and *Les Misérables*, learns the behind-the-scenes story of how Disney transformed *The Lion King* from a cartoon into a record-breaking stage success, and sees how musicals have captured contemporary life in shows like *Rent* and *Avenue Q*. Neil recreates classic numbers to reveal the secrets of their songwriting, including *The Rocky Horror Show's* *Sweet Transvestite*, *Don't Cry for Me Argentina* from *Evita*, and *Les Misérables' Empty Chairs at Empty Tables*. Neil meets a host of top musical theatre talent, including master lyricist Tim Rice, *Lion King* director Julie Taymor, and leading composers Alan Menken (*Beauty and the Beast*) and Robert Lopez (*Avenue Q* and *Frozen*).

THU 20:00 Royal Institution Christmas Lectures (b0915lkh)
2017: The Language of Life

The Word

One skill in particular seems to give humans an advantage over all other animals - our superior talent for language. We have the power to express exactly what's on our minds through speech and writing. This final lecture asks where our incredible linguistic ability comes from and whether any other animals use language in any form at all.

Professor Sophie Scott first explores what language really is, and how close other animals come to having it. Dogs can be very good at following our commands, but do they actually understand any of the words we use? Birds are the only other species that can say human words and Professor Scott reveals how humans and birds share some common brain functions that make this possible. She also shows what happens when this section of our brain cannot function properly. But are birds simply mimicking us or can they comprehend anything of the human words they can be trained to utter?

Professor Scott considers the world of primates and the theory

that some apes may communicate through sign language. Does this contain any form of grammar and how complex are the messages that they can communicate with these gestures?

With large-scale experiments, Professor Scott tests out fresh ideas of how humans have been able to develop such complex language skills - revealing how, even in the womb, we start to practise making the mouth movements needed for speech. She also illustrates how the brain develops to favour the sounds of one's mother tongue and why, at a relatively young age, it becomes impossible to become truly bilingual in a new language.

But language isn't just a power to combine words. Professor Scott explores how we convey a huge amount of information through the tone of voice, our accents and the pace and pitch of our speech. But in a world when we regularly talk to computers, she also shows why scientists need to develop machines that can understand the subtleties of our speech to be able to fully comprehend human language.

Finally, Professor Scott looks at language in the digital age and explores the role that emojis play. Can they put the subtleties of spoken speech into written form by adding an extra level of understanding? With the help of the audience she investigates their true potential and reveals additional emojis that may say far more than words.

THU 21:00 Francis Bacon: A Brush with Violence (b08cwq3v)

Francis Bacon was the loudest, rudest, drunkest, most sought-after British artist of the 20th century. Twenty-five years after his death, his canvases regularly exceed £40 million at auction. Bacon's appeal is rooted in his notoriety - a candid image he presented of himself as Roaring Boy, Lord of Misrule and Conveyor of Artistic Violence. This was true enough, but only part of the truth. He carefully cultivated the facade, protecting the complex and haunted man behind the myth. In this unique, compelling film, those who knew him speak freely, some for the first time, to reveal the many mysteries of Francis Bacon.

THU 22:20 Jonas Kaufmann: Tenor for the Ages (b099tpby)

The German tenor Jonas Kaufmann is one of the hottest properties in the opera world. He captivates audiences with the power, emotion and beauty of his singing, the intelligence of his acting, his matinee-idol delivery, and his extraordinary range - from the heroic stage roles in Wagner to the intimate songs of Schubert on the concert platform.

For this documentary for the BBC's Opera Season, the filmmaker John Bridcut has been given unique and often surprising access to Kaufmann across the last two years, observing him in rehearsal, backstage during performances, and in his off-duty moments. It is by far the most intimate and extensive portrait yet made of Kaufmann, now at the peak of his career. He was filmed behind the scenes at the Last Night of the Proms, when he was the first German to sing *Rule, Britannia*. His schedule was later interrupted for five months because of a vocal injury, but recently he made a triumphant return, notably in the production of Verdi's late opera, *Otello*, at Covent Garden.

Kaufmann is filmed working with the Royal Opera's music director, Sir Antonio Pappano, and the stage director, Keith Warner - and is involved in every aspect of the preparations. He talks freely about his earlier cancellations, about what keeps him going during a run of performances, and about the problems of being a star.

John Bridcut has previously made documentary portraits of Herbert von Karajan, Rudolf Nureyev, Mstislav Rostropovich and Sir Colin Davis (which was named Best Arts Documentary at the Grierson Awards). His clutch of composer-portraits began with the award-winning Britten's Children and continued with films on Elgar, Delius, Parry and Vaughan Williams. Last year he made the BBC One documentary for the Queen's 90th birthday, *Elizabeth at 90 - A Family Tribute*.

THU 23:50 The World's Most Expensive Stolen Paintings (b03n2yzh)

Art critic Alastair Sooke delves into the murky world of art theft. Despite the high stakes - and often daring - involved, many cases are shrouded in mystery and go unnoticed by the media.

Around 47,000 works of art are reported missing each year, yet it is only the heists involving the world's most valuable paintings that hit the headlines. But high-profile or not - once gone, the works are rarely recovered.

THU 00:50 Sound of Musicals with Neil Brand (b08bqfd2)
[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 today]

THU 01:50 Royal Institution Christmas Lectures (b0915lkh)

[Repeat of broadcast at 20:00 today]

THU 02:50 Peaky Blinders (b09hc65q)
Series 4

Blackbird

The Italians launch another attack on the Peaky Blinders. Tommy realises that the Shelbys need to evolve if they are to survive, but some of the family are reluctant to part with tradition.

As the strike takes hold at the Lanchester factory, Tommy pays a personal visit to Jessie Eden, but he is outmanoeuvred when she reveals something she knows about his past.

Changretta plots to continue the vendetta in the most devastating way possible. As well as identifying an enemy of the Shelby family who could help him, Luca makes direct contact with someone at the heart of the Peaky Blinders organisation.

FRIDAY 29 DECEMBER 2017

FRI 19:00 Lucy Worsley: Mozart's London Odyssey (b07hklqx)

Lucy Worsley traces the forgotten and fascinating story of the young Mozart's adventures in Georgian London. Arriving in 1764 as an eight-year-old boy, London held the promise of unrivalled musical opportunity. But in telling the tale of Mozart's strange and unexpected encounters, Lucy reveals how life wasn't easy for the little boy in a big bustling city.

With the demands of a royal performance, the humiliation of playing keyboard tricks in a London pub, a near fatal illness and finding himself heckled on the streets, it was a lot for a child to take. But London would prove pivotal, for it was here that the young Mozart made his musical breakthrough, blossoming from a precocious performer into a powerful new composer.

Lucy reveals that it was on British soil that Mozart composed his first ever symphony and, with the help of a bespoke performance, she explores how Mozart's experiences in London inspired his colossal achievement. But what should have earned him rapturous applause and the highest acclaim ended in suspicion, intrigue and accusations of fraud.

FRI 20:00 Top of the Pops (b09hm54f)

Lenny Henry presents a review of all of the hits from 1984, first broadcast on 27 December 1984. Includes Spandau Ballet, Neil, Ultravox, Shakin' Stevens, Bronski Beat, Bananarama, Flying Pickets, Black Lace, Slade, Chaka Khan, Paul McCartney, Lionel Richie, Joe Fagin and Stevie Wonder.

FRI 21:00 Eric, Ernie and Me (b09ksz61)

For over a decade, the Liverpudlian ex-market stall trader Eddie Braben penned Morecambe and Wise's material, reshaping the double act into the Eric and Ernie that the nation took to its heart. But it wasn't all sunshine.

This comedy-drama follows the story of how The Golden Triangle was formed and celebrates the man behind Morecambe and Wise's greatest successes.

In 1969 Eddie Braben was persuaded by the BBC's then Head of Light Entertainment Bill Cotton to make the journey to London to meet Eric and Ernie and their producer John Ammonds. It wasn't a meeting of the minds. But there was a spark, something different and special that Braben saw in the music hall double act who had yet to crack their on-screen presence. He set out to uncover the essence of what would transform them into television's most beloved entertainers.

What followed was years of dedication, determination and hard graft - comedy comes at a price. With the help and support of his wife Deidree, Eddie dug deep, taking on a huge scripting workload that saw Eric and Ernie take over the living rooms and hearts of the UK population.

Year on year a new series, a new Christmas special, incredible celebrity guests and the never-ending commute from home in Liverpool to work in London saw Eddie work himself to the point of exhaustion. He was a man desperate for a break but driven by perfection and the need to make people laugh.

The film culminates in a journey to the iconic 1977 Christmas Show, celebrates a decade of enormous success for both Braben and Morecambe and Wise, whilst not shying away from the pressure and pain Eddie went through to help create the screen work of Britain's beloved double act.

FRI 22:00 Elvis: The Rebirth of the King (b09kkkbb)

The widely accepted Elvis narrative is that the Vegas period was

the nadir of his career, but this film argues that Elvis reached his peak both as a singer and performer in the first few years of his Vegas period. He became, in those short years, the greatest performer on earth. The film tracks this five-year renaissance with some of his key musical and artistic collaborators of the period, including the creator of his most memorable jumpsuits, to celebrate the greatest pop reinvention of all time.

FRI 23:00 ...Sings Elvis (b00pqcg3)

2011 marked the 75th anniversary of Elvis Presley's birth and was celebrated by a host of performances by artists covering the King's classic songs culled from the BBC archives.

Some of Britain's biggest stars were introduced to rock n roll as teenagers via their idol Elvis, and Cliff Richard, Paul McCartney, Tom Jones and John Cale all pay their tribute. The original songwriters of some of Elvis's greatest hits perform their own versions of classic tracks, including Carl Perkins singing Blue Suede Shoes and Mac Davis doing In the Ghetto.

Other artists paying homage from across five decades include The Deep River Boys, the Stylistics, Boy George, Alison Moyet, Pet Shop Boys and Robbie Williams. There will be jumpsuits, pelvic thrusts, brilliant tunes ... and Glen Campbell's Elvis impersonation.

FRI 00:00 Top of the Pops (b09hm54f)

[Repeat of broadcast at 20:00 today]

FRI 01:00 Top of the Pops (b08skpzg)

1984 - Big Hits

Celebrating the big hits from a big year in British pop. The big hitters in this compilation are performed by the likes of The Smiths, Duran Duran, Sade, The Weather Girls, Wham! and Bronski Beat, to name a few.

Further stellar appearances come from the TOTP debuts of iconic Americans Madonna, Miami Sound Machine and Cyndi Lauper, who runs riot in the studio.

Frankie Goes to Hollywood celebrate their 1984 chart dominance with one of their celebrated renditions of Two Tribes, while we couldn't let you forget a little ditty from Black Lace - you'll be singing this for days... you have been warned!

FRI 02:00 Top of the Pops (b08skpz5)

The Story of 1984

1984 sees Top of the Pops at the height of its 80s pomp - the year of big hair and big tunes. A BBC ban on Frankie Goes to Hollywood's Relax in January leads to an embarrassing Frankie-shaped hole on the show when it reaches No 1. One of the sounds of 1984 is Hi-NRG, that goes overground from the gay club scene into the mainstream charts. And 1984 is perhaps the gayest year in pop, with a trail blazed by Bronski Beat, who are out and proud and on Top of the Pops.

1984 sees the rise of the one-man acts such as Nik Kershaw and Howard Jones. And jazz pop's soaraway star is Sade, who brings a stripped-back soulful vibe to Top of the Pops. Yet 1984 isn't all about smooth sounds. German singer Nena hits the top spot with 99 Red Balloons - shocking Brits with her hairy armpits. And The Special AKA's Free Nelson Mandela combines a political message with an irresistible tune.

And the year ends on a landmark moment when many of the stars of the chart-topping Band Aid single appear in the studio as the climax to the Christmas show. It's a moment that reaffirms Top of the Pops's place at the heart of British pop culture.

Featuring original interviews with Trevor Horn, members of Frankie Goes to Hollywood, Hazell Dean, Howard Jones, Nik Kershaw, Paul Young, Nigel Planer, Nena, Jerry Dammers and Midge Ure.

FRI 03:00 Elvis: The Rebirth of the King (b09kkkbbx)

[Repeat of broadcast at 22:00 today]