

SATURDAY 22 FEBRUARY 2020

SAT 19:00 Rick Stein's Long Weekends (b07bpc4c)
Vienna

This week, Rick Stein visits Vienna - the city that once ran the Austro-Hungarian Empire and continues to be home to comfort dishes like tafelspitz and goulash and which gave its name to one of Europe's most popular dishes - the wiener schnitzel. It even produces its own unique white wine produced in vineyards overlooking the city's imperial architecture.

Whilst enjoying the sights and sounds of the hometown to Klimt and Freud and the rather eccentric architecture of Hundertwasser, Rick also learns the essential etiquette to its coffee house culture and indulges in the city's sweet tooth by enjoying a plate or two of apple strudel and sacher torte. And no visit to Vienna would be complete without a concert of Mozart or Strauss, whose music was undeniably inspired by this unforgettable city.

SAT 20:00 South Pacific (b00kmv11)
Castaways

In the South Pacific there is no such thing as a deserted island. They may be the most isolated in the world, but every one of the region's 20,000 islands has been colonised, from New Guinea - home to birds of paradise and the tribe whose brutal initiation ceremony turns young warriors into 'crocodile' men - to Fiji, French Polynesia and Hawaii.

This is the story of the ultimate castaways - from saltwater crocodiles and giant eels to crested iguanas and weird frogs - who succeeded against all odds to reach islands thousands of miles apart. These journeys are no mean feat. It has been estimated that an average of one species in every 60,000 years makes it to Hawaii. Incredibly, many of these colonisers made it to the islands thanks to some of the most violent forces of nature like cyclones and tsunamis.

The voyages of the South Pacific's first people - the Polynesians - were no less remarkable. Their journeys were some of the greatest acts of navigation ever undertaken, and they changed the nature of the South Pacific forever.

SAT 21:00 Hidden (m000fmjb)
Series 2

Episode 2

Connor feels isolated after the fight with Lee. Mia and Lee catch up with Connor and persuade him to go with them to a rave at the quarry. Reluctantly, Connor agrees to go.

SAT 22:00 Clive James (m000frcd)
Postcard from Rio

Clive James visits Rio de Janeiro, where the poor live by their wits in the city's favelas while wealthy Cariocas live in a world that is very different, making contact with their less fortunate neighbours only when a servant is paid or a millionaire is mugged.

SAT 22:45 The Midwife (m000frcg)

Claire works as a midwife at a maternity hospital, which is soon to be shut down. One day, her late father's former mistress, whom Claire resents for having abandoned him shortly before he died, decides, out of the blue, to come back into her life.

In French with English subtitles

SAT 00:40 Top of the Pops (m000fjbr)

Gary Davies and Bruno Brookes present the pop chart programme, first broadcast on 30 March 1989 and featuring Pat and Mick, Bangles, Roachford, Brother Beyond, Paul Simpson ft Adeva, Transvision Vamp, The The, Guns N' Roses, Fuzzbox, The Cult, Madonna and Kon Kan.

SAT 01:10 Top of the Pops (m000fjbt)

Simon Mayo and Anthea Turner present the pop chart programme, first broadcast on 6 April 1989 and featuring Brother Beyond, Kon Kan, Holly Johnson, Paula Abdul, Colcut ft Lisa Stansfield, Simply Red, Transvision Vamp, Madonna and INXS.

SAT 01:40 Tap America: How a Nation Found Its Feet (b0b396jx)

Clarke Peters, the writer of Five Guys Named Moe and actor in the likes of The Wire and Three Billboards, explores the origins, development and modern significance of the great American vernacular art form he has loved since a child - tap dancing.

From 17th century accounts of the dances performed by African slaves on American soil to celebrated 19th century dance-offs and contests between Irish and African-American dancers, through to the troubled Hollywood heyday of tap in the 1930s and 40s when black dancers were routinely excluded from the film roles their talent deserved.

The Hollywood Greats like Fred Astaire actually owed much of their style to the craft and innovation of unsung black performers such as John Bubbles, Bill Bojangles Robinson, The Nicholas Brothers and Baby Laurence. In the painful years of the 'Great Tap Drought' when audiences abruptly fell out of love with the dance after World War Two - depriving a generation of talented tap dancers of their livelihood. From the 1950s to the 1970s, tap was almost single-handedly kept alive in the mainstream by the genius of Sammy Davis Jr.

Clarke explores the fascinating story of the 'Tap Revival' of the early 1980s - spearheaded by the legendary Gregory Hines - and finds out how tap was made modern again, culminating in the hip-hop-inspired hoofing of Savion Glover and beyond. He ends his journey by meeting some of the biggest stars on today's tap scene, such as Michelle Dorrance and Chloe Arnold's Syncopated Ladies (who happen to be Beyoncé's favourite tap ensemble)!

SAT 03:00 Rick Stein's Long Weekends (b07bpc4c)
[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 today]

SUNDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2020

SUN 19:00 The Women's Football Show (m000frc3)
2019/20

23/02/2020

Reshmin Chowdhury presents highlights of the Women's Super League from Manchester City as they face title rivals Chelsea.

Highlights of the game between Everton and Manchester United also feature, plus all the goals from the rest of the WSL.

SUN 19:30 Iolo's Snowdonia (b09sb00)
Series 1

Episode 4

Over four seasons, Iolo Williams goes to his favourite locations in Snowdonia to look for stunning wildlife and meets people who help him discover the national park's true nature. In this final episode, it's winter and Iolo endures life-threatening wind chill, ice and snow on the Carneddau high peaks. A cold snap takes him to one of his old roaming grounds on the Berwyn moors, where he finds a solitary robin surviving in thick snow. Opposite Portmeirion, the stunning Dwyrd estuary is teeming with winter birds feeding. Crossbills busily eat cone seeds in a forest near Betws-y-Coed. Iolo also heads to Ceunant Llennyrch, a wonderful gorge hidden by an ancient woodland that's existed since trees first colonised Snowdonia after the last ice age. On the foothills of Cadair Idris, he learns that old folk had names for every piece of land.

SUN 20:00 Attenborough: 60 Years in the Wild (p00zsrz4)
Our Fragile Planet

Sir David Attenborough reflects on the dramatic impact that humankind has had on the natural world within his own lifetime. He tells the surprising and deeply personal story of the changes he has seen, of the pioneering conservationists with whom he has worked - and of the global revolution in attitudes towards nature that has taken place within the last six decades.

In a journey that takes him from the London Zoo to the jungles of Borneo, Attenborough reveals what inspired him to become a conservationist. He remembers classic encounters with mountain gorillas, blue whales and the giant tortoise, Lonesome George. These are all characters that have helped to change public attitudes to the natural world.

SUN 21:00 Art on the BBC (m000frc5)
Series 1

Constable: The Rural Rebel

Often dismissed as a chocolate box painter in his day, Constable is now acknowledged to have been a revolutionary. Art historian Rose Balston explores six decades of BBC archive to discover how TV has influenced our understanding of him.

Constable pushed the boundaries of landscape painting to such an extent that he was rejected by the establishment. Perhaps just as surprisingly, he poured his love for one woman onto the canvas as no painter of landscapes had done before. This

programme goes beyond cliché to discover what the BBC archive has to say about a much misunderstood English master.

SUN 22:00 Britain's Lost Masterpieces (b07xt8ww)
Series 1

Aberdeenshire

Haddo House is one of Britain's most northerly stately homes. Tucked away in the wilds of Aberdeenshire, it has been home to prime ministers and earls - but is it also home to some of Scotland's greatest lost paintings?

Nearby, in the storerooms of the Montrose Museum lies a mystery painting with a giant hole in it. The portrait shows Richard Mead, the patron of one of Scotland's most celebrated painters, Allan Ramsay. According to the history books, the painting is a copy of a painting in the National Portrait Gallery in London. But has there been an unfortunate mix-up, and is the painting in London in fact the pretender?

SUN 23:00 Britain's Outlaws: Highwaymen, Pirates and Rogues (b06qgh3w)
Knights of the Road: The Highwayman's Story

Few figures in British history have captured the popular imagination as much as the outlaw. From gentleman highwaymen, via swashbuckling pirates to elusive urban thieves and rogues, the brazen escapades and the flamboyance of the outlaw made them the antihero of their time - feared by the rich, admired by the poor and celebrated by writers and artists.

In this three-part series, historian Dr Sam Willis travels the open roads, the high seas and urban alleyways to explore Britain's 17th- and 18th-century underworld of highwaymen, pirates and rogues, bringing the great age of the British outlaw vividly to life.

Sam shows that, far from being 'outsiders', outlaws were very much a product of their time, shaped by powerful national events. In each episode, he focuses not just on a particular type of outlaw, but a particular era - the series as a whole offers a chronological portrait of the changing face of crime in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Sam begins with the arrival of a new breed of gentleman criminal out of the ashes of the English Civil War - the highwayman. Heavily romanticised in literature, these glamorous gangsters became a social menace on the roads and a political thorn in the side of the creaking British state - threatening to steal our wallets and our hearts. But underneath the dashing image of stylish robbers on horseback lay a far darker reality.

SUN 00:00 Mackintosh: Glasgow's Neglected Genius (b0b5ydcz)

Glasgow artist Lachlan Goudie examines the life, work and legacy of Scotland's most celebrated architect and designer, Charles Rennie Mackintosh - the man Lachlan Goudie calls 'the greatest genius in the history of Scottish art'.

The film examines Mackintosh's iconic buildings, notably the Glasgow School of Art. Interwoven with his architecture, design and watercolours is the personal story of Mackintosh. Little known at home, his work found favour on the continent. In later years he struggled for work, and came to endure real poverty, but continued to create remarkable pieces of art.

SUN 01:00 Saints and Sinners: Britain's Millennium of Monasteries (b052zxhm)
Episode 1

Dr Janina Ramirez explores how monasteries evolved from a cult of extreme isolation and self-deprivation into powerhouse of Anglo-Saxon art, industry and learning.

Janina begins her journey on the desolate rock of Skellig St Michael off the east coast of Ireland, home to the oldest surviving monastery in the British Isles. She investigates the harsh lives led by these early monks, and tells the story of the arrival of hermetic Irish monasticism in Anglo-Saxon Northumberland. Monasteries such as Lindisfarne and Whitby became beacons of civilisation and literature in the barbaric Anglo-Saxon world, creating wondrous works of art including the Lindisfarne Gospels and St Cuthbert's pectoral cross.

A rival form of regimented, communal monasticism was imported into southern Britain from Rome, and Janina reveals the holy struggle that ensued between these two opposing monastic ideals. The victors would transform the culture and landscape of England, until they too were destroyed by a new wave of barbarian invaders.

SUN 02:00 Raiders of the Lost Past with Janina Ramirez

(m0008k83)

Series 1

The Olmec Heads

Janina Ramirez travels to Mexico, where, just before the outbreak of WWII, American husband-and-wife explorer team Matthew and Marion Stirling were lured into the jungle by the legend of a colossal stone head. They found the head – and a lot more than they bargained for – because it turned out to be the first clue in a trail that led to the discovery of a lost civilisation, now known as the Olmecs.

As Janina follows their footsteps through the jungle, she discovers that the go-getting Stirlings embodied the adventurous determination of pre-war archaeological explorers. Breaking new ground, the Stirlings realised that it was the Olmecs – not the much-later Mayans or the Aztecs – who built the very first pyramids, palaces and planned cities for which Central America is now so famous.

Janina's journey takes her to some of the most stunning ancient sites in Mexico, as she pieces together the evidence that led the Stirlings to the controversial conclusion that the Olmecs flourished there 3,500 thousand years ago, the same period as ancient Egypt. It is extraordinary to think, before their finds, that we not only had no idea the Olmecs even existed, but no idea any civilisation this ancient existed in Central America. The Stirlings' work was so important that, very unusually, their expeditions and excavations continued during the war, shot in glorious technicolor by National Geographic. This fantastic archive features throughout the film, intercut with Janina's modern journey.

SUN 03:00 Art on the BBC (m000frc5)

[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 today]

MONDAY 24 FEBRUARY 2020

MON 19:00 Beyond 100 Days (m000frcj)

Series 1

24/02/2020

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

MON 19:30 Francesco's Mediterranean Voyage (b00cp4k0)

The Gulf of Corinth

Architect and historian Francesco da Mosto embarks on a journey across the Mediterranean Sea. Amidst a sea of dolphins, The Black Swan enters the Gulf of Corinth off the coast of Greece as Francesco continues his voyage from Venice to Istanbul. The boat must manoeuvre under the Rio Antirio bridge and then navigate the narrow Corinth Canal, which separates mainland Greece from the Peloponnese.

At Mount Parnassus, Francesco visits the mystical site of the great Delphic Oracle, the greatest prophetess of the ancient world. She would talk in riddles but her pronouncements determined everything from events of state to romance and marriage. Mount Parnassus was also home to the Pythian games, forerunners of the modern Olympic Games.

Next stop is Athens. Often dismissed as a busy, noisy and overcrowded city, the Greeks prefer to see Athens as the biggest village in the country. Athens was the capital of the ancient Classical world and home to the Acropolis. Birthplace of western art, it is also the site of one of Venice's greatest atrocities against art and culture – an attack on the sacred temple of Parthenon that almost destroyed it. The attack also resulted in a massive loss of human life. Francesco sees the damage from the 700 cannonballs, still evident today. Francesco also has a date in Athens – the woman with the greatest singing voice ever to emerge from Greece – Nana Mouskouri. As they stroll through the romantic setting of Athens's National Gardens, can Francesco persuade Nana to serenade him?

MON 20:00 New Zealand: Earth's Mythical Islands

(b07mh601)

Wild Extremes

The most extreme and wild parts of New Zealand are in the South Island, which lie towards Antarctica, in the path of the tempestuous 'roaring forties'. This is home to some of the most rapidly rising mountains in the world, the Southern Alps.

From hyper-intelligent parrots to sinister snails with teeth and magical constellations of glow-worms, this is the story of New Zealand's wildest places and its most resilient pioneers, all of whom must embrace radical solutions to survive.

MON 21:00 Hunting the Nazi Gold Train (b07yc9zf)

In August 2015, two amateur researchers declared they had found a lost Nazi train buried in a railway cutting near Walbrzych, southern Poland. Better still, they believed the train might be loaded with gold, armaments or precious treasure, all left behind by the Nazis at the end of World War II. The claim sparked a global media frenzy. Locals have long believed that at least one train, loaded with looted Nazi gold, left the provincial capital Wrocław in early 1945. But until now, no one has discovered what happened to it.

Dan Snow follows the treasure hunters as they look for the gold train, while also carrying out his own investigation into this story, one that leads all the way to Adolf Hitler himself and his secret plans for this remote corner of the Third Reich during the last months of World War II.

Dan explores the astonishing underground tunnel complex called Riese, built on the fuhrer's orders almost certainly as an underground city to house armaments production beyond the reach of Allied bombing. Nearby, Dan visits the Książ Castle, which at the end of the war was converted into a possible bolthole for Hitler and his high command. A door from the fuhrer's bedroom leads down to tunnels that could have linked the palace with the underground Riese complex.

Dan considers the evidence that Hitler was planning to retreat to this near impregnable complex and fight on. As Dan uncovers Hitler's possible plans for this region, it also lends weight to the theories and stories that there is a hidden tunnel here, a tunnel that could even contain the legendary train full of gold.

Finally, Dan joins the treasure hunters as they begin the excavation itself, and reveals the outcome of the hunt for the Nazi gold train.

MON 22:00 Storyville (m000frcf)

The Rise and Fall of a Porn Superstar

When 23-year-old Israeli Jonathan Agassi arrived with a bang on the gay porn scene in the late 2000s, his rise to fame was stratospheric, revolutionising the industry. After a traumatic childhood growing up gay in the suburbs of Tel Aviv, the man behind the performer claims that porn saved his life, but at a cost.

The Rise and Fall of a Porn Superstar charts Agassi's journey from prolific adult superstar to male escort, battling many demons. Filmed over seven years, this unflinching, emotional and at times funny and shocking film explores the deeper and more devastating reasons for Agassi's self-destructive behaviour with sensitivity and compassion.

The film also provides a rare and intimate insight into an industry that prioritises hedonism and fantasy above all, but at its core, this rollercoaster tale is a rare portrait of a damaged family and its lasting impact on those who are part of it.

MON 23:30 Art of France (b08cgjv7)

Series 1

Plus Ça Change

Art historian and critic Andrew Graham-Dixon opens this series with the dramatic story of French art, a story of the most powerful kings ever to rule in Europe with their glittering palaces and astounding art to go in them. He also reveals how art emerged from a struggle between tradition and revolution, between rulers and a people who didn't always want to be ruled.

Starting with the first great revolution in art, the invention of Gothic architecture, he traces its development up until the arrival of classicism and the Age of Enlightenment – and the very eve of the revolution. Along the way some of the greatest art the world has ever seen was born, including the paintings of Poussin, Watteau and Chardin, the decadent rococo delights of Boucher and the great history paintings of Charles le Brun.

MON 00:35 Saints and Sinners: Britain's Millennium of Monasteries (b053pztv)

Episode 2

The golden age of the British monastery was during the medieval period, when monks transformed British society and rose to a position of immense power. Fighting back after centuries of defeat and neglect, a wave of new monasteries spread across the nation, with over 500 British monastic houses established by the 14th century. Far from the inward-looking recluses of legend, monks were exceptionally creative, and became pioneers in the fields of medicine, science, scholarship, industry, farming, art and music. They didn't turn their back on the medieval world, but helped transform it.

Yet as the monasteries mingled with the world outside their cloisters they began to take on its corruption. They had begun with a vow of poverty, but eventually came to own a third of the

nation's land. This wealth, combined with the sins of individual monks, sealed their fate, and as the medieval period ended the monks were on the brink of a catastrophic and total collapse.

From Viking-ravaged Lindisfarne to the astonishing achievements of Durham and Peterborough cathedrals (both built for monks), from cutting-edge hospitals to the rediscovery of the oldest collection of two-part music in the world, this is a story of astonishing success and spectacular artistic achievement that proved too good to last.

MON 01:35 Rude Britannia (b00srfd2)

A History Most Satirical, Bawdy, Lewd and Offensive

In the early 18th century, Georgian Britain was a nation openly, gloriously and often shockingly rude. This was found in the graphic art of Hogarth, Gillray, Rowlandson and George Cruikshank, and the rude theatrical world of John Gay and Henry Fielding. Singer Lucie Skeaping helps show the Georgian taste for lewd and bawdy ballads, and there is a dip into the literary tradition of rude words via the poetry of Alexander Pope, Jonathan Swift and Lord Byron, and Laurence Sterne's novel Tristram Shandy.

MON 02:35 New Zealand: Earth's Mythical Islands (b07mh601)

[Repeat of broadcast at 20:00 today]

TUESDAY 25 FEBRUARY 2020

TUE 19:00 Beyond 100 Days (m000frcj)

Series 1

25/02/2020

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

TUE 19:30 Handmade (b05tpx11)

Wood

As part of BBC Four Goes Slow, this programme follows the slow and painstaking process of making a classic Windsor chair.

A beautifully simple object, it is in fact anything but. Filmed over five days, the film reveals the complex, time-consuming processes involved in creating the chair, made by Jim Steele in his Warwickshire workshop.

This traditional design features woods chosen for their different qualities – ash, elm and hard-to-source yew.

Jim makes just 12 such chairs each year, using traditional techniques and aided by few modern tools. There are just two screws in the finished chair. From the steam bending of the back to the turning of spindles, the carving of the seat to the planing of the arms, it's a remarkable process to observe.

The bold style of the film, making use of long, static shots with no music or commentary allows the viewer to admire in exquisite detail the painstaking craftsmanship.

TUE 20:00 King Alfred and the Anglo Saxons (b038bd5)

The Lady of the Mercians

In this second episode, Alfred's children continue the family plan to create a kingdom of all the English.

The tale begins with a savage civil war in a bleak decade of snow and famine, culminating in an epic victory over the Vikings near Wolverhampton in 910. Filmed in the Fens and Winchester, Gloucester, Oxford and Rome, the key figure in this episode is Alfred's daughter Aethelflaed, the ruler of Mercia. Michael Wood recovers her story from a copy of a lost chronicle written in Mercia in her lifetime which, in the film, we hear read in Old English.

One of the great forgotten figures in British history, Aethelflaed led armies, built fortresses, campaigned against the Vikings and was a brilliant diplomat. Her fame spread across the British Isles, beloved by her warriors and her people she was known simply as 'the Lady of the Mercians'. Without her, concludes Wood, 'England might never have happened'.

TUE 21:00 Royal History's Biggest Fibs with Lucy Worsley (m000frf0)

Series 1

The Spanish Armada

Lucy Worsley discovers how the history of the Spanish Armada has been manipulated and mythologised by politicians and

artists for generations.

This is an inspiring tale of an underdog English navy defeating an 'invincible' Spanish fleet, the moment that set England on the path to imperial glory. Tales of Sir Francis Drake calmly finishing his game of bowls and Elizabeth I rousing her troops at Tilbury with the 'heart and stomach of a king' have become iconic. This, however, is a story full of fits.

Lucy explores how Elizabethan propaganda spun this as a victory for the Protestant Virgin Queen. She then finds out how the Victorians celebrated it as the start of the British Empire, the point in time when Britain truly began to rule the waves.

Right up to the present day, the defeat of the Spanish Armada has been told and retold to show Britain as an island nation destined for greatness. But what if the story of that victory is built on sand?

TUE 22:00 Elizabeth I's Secret Agents (b09c6q44)
Series 1

Episode 1

In this episode, we find England alone - a Protestant nation in a largely Catholic Europe. Then, 12 years into Elizabeth's reign, the pope declares her a heretic, which in the hearts of England's Catholics gives them permission to kill her. Queen Elizabeth looks to her spymaster William Cecil to stop the Catholic assassins getting through. Cecil establishes a huge espionage network - England's first secret service. His spies break Catholic conspiracies at home and abroad.

Cecil's network is put on high alert by intelligence from a source in Catholic Europe. As a result he catches a courier carrying coded letters that lead Cecil to unravel a plot to assassinate Elizabeth and install her cousin Mary, Queen of Scots on the English throne. Now Cecil will not rest until Mary, the figurehead for every Catholic threat and repository of Catholic hopes, is eliminated. In order to protect a queen, Cecil must kill one.

Cecil now creates an elaborate Elizabethan sting. He incubates a Catholic plot to assassinate the queen and lures Mary into it. But will Mary fall for the bait and seal her fate. Mary does walk right into Cecil's trap, but even then the spymaster's aim is thwarted by a queen who refuses to execute her own cousin. Cecil knows Mary must die if Elizabeth is to live, but now that means he must defy his own queen and risk the end of his career - and perhaps his life.

TUE 23:00 Armada: 12 Days to Save England (p02pkxkm)
Series 1

Episode 1

In the first part of a major three-part drama documentary series, Anita Dobson stars as Elizabeth I, and Dan Snow takes to the sea to tell the story of how England came within a whisker of disaster in summer 1588. Newly discovered documents take us right inside the Spanish Armada for the very first time and reveal a missed opportunity that could have spelled the end of Tudor England.

TUE 00:00 Inside the Medieval Mind (b009wzw3)
Sex

Leading authority on the Middle Ages, Professor Robert Bartlett presents a series which examines the way we thought during medieval times. He unearths remarkable evidence of the complex passions of medieval men and women. The Church preached hatred of the flesh, promoted the cult of virginity and condemned woman as the sinful heir to Eve. Yet this was the era that gave birth to the idea of romantic love.

TUE 01:00 Saints and Sinners: Britain's Millennium of Monasteries (b054fmzl)
Episode 3

In the final episode of the series, Dr Janina Ramirez discovers how the immensely rich and powerful monasteries that had dominated British society for 1,000 were annihilated in less than five years.

In the 15th century, 800 monasteries in England owned one-third of the nation's land. Many monks were living in palatial monasteries and were patrons of the finest art and architecture. Janina examines monastery kitchen records and the bones of a medieval monk to discover the truth behind accusations of monastic gluttony and vice. She also explores how the arrival of the printing press put paid to the monasteries' monopoly of publishing and education.

Janina then traces the story of the dissolution of the monasteries under Henry VIII and Thomas Cromwell. She explores whether

the dissolution was the violent action of a greedy and overbearing monarch or if it was the inevitable 'end of days' for a rotten and outmoded institution.

She uncovers stories of shocking corruption alongside examples of extraordinary pious sacrifice. Although not a single monastery survived the systematic liquidation, Janina shows the lasting impact Britain's millennium of monasteries had on our society and culture.

TUE 02:00 Genius of the Ancient World (b064jf28)
Buddha

Historian Bettany Hughes embarks on an expedition to India, Greece and China on the trail of three giants of ancient philosophy: Buddha, Socrates and Confucius. All three physically travelled great distances philosophising as they went and drawing conclusions from their journeys. With Bettany as our guide, she gets under the skin of these three great minds and shines a light on the overlooked significance of the 5th century BC in shaping modern thought across the world. In this first episode, Bettany investigates the revolutionary ideas of the Buddha.

TUE 03:00 Royal History's Biggest Fibs with Lucy Worsley (m000frf0)

[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 today]

WEDNESDAY 26 FEBRUARY 2020

WED 19:00 Cycling (m000frc8)
Track World Championships 2020

Day 1

Live coverage from the Track Cycling World Championships in Berlin of the men's and women's team sprint finals and the women's 10km scratch race.

WED 21:00 A Very British History (m000f4xy)
Series 2

British Bangladeshis

Dr Aminul Hoque tells the story of the thousands of Bangladeshi families who settled in the UK in the 1970s and 1980s. Their arrival brought new foods, traditions, and workers for British industry. But the families themselves faced hardships and racism while building a new life in Britain.

Using film archive and his own experiences of growing up in east London, Aminul meets and tells the stories of Bengalis who made their homes here over the course of two key decades. He also returns to Bangladesh with his own family, taking his children for their first visit to their grandparents' village to explore their roots in the region of Sylhet.

WED 22:00 Elizabeth I's Secret Agents (b09dcjgk)
Series 1

Episode 2

Robert Cecil is the son of Elizabeth I's original spymaster. He has been groomed since birth to inherit his father's network but when he finally steps into his father's shoes, the queen's enemies are stronger than ever and Cecil must also watch his back. The Earl of Essex has established a rival network and is trying to oust Cecil as Elizabeth's spymaster.

Essex is everything Cecil is not. Cecil is bent-backed and under five foot tall. Essex is an athlete and a war hero who flirts with the queen. But the two men have known each other since childhood. And now they are locked in a battle that is part court theatrical, but which is also a lethal spy war in which people die horrifically violent deaths. The stakes are huge. For the winner, untold power. For the loser a one-way trip to the scaffold.

Cecil is also aware that the sun is setting on the reign of Elizabeth, who is in her sixties. He and Essex are not just battling for control of the queen, but for control over who will be her successor. For the power to select the next king of England. Essex begins a spy war within the spy war by secretly approaching James VI of Scotland and striking a deal to put him on Elizabeth's throne when she has passed away. So Cecil must somehow oust Essex from Elizabeth's court without making an enemy of James, who Cecil also wants to inherit the throne.

This is a secret conflict, involving double agents, coded letters, treachery and treason. It is a world that Cecil proves to be an absolute master of. Cecil ruthlessly manoeuvres Essex to the execution block and becomes the man who puts James on the English throne.

WED 23:00 Blood and Gold: The Making of Spain with Simon Sebag Montefiore (b06rwgp7)
Conquest

In the first episode, Simon explores Spain's early years, its emergence as the battleground of empires and its golden age under the Cordoba Caliphate.

WED 00:00 Treasures of Ancient Greece (b05q11sf)
The Age of Heroes

In the first episode Alastair Sooke explores the surprising roots of Greek art, beginning his journey in Crete at the palace of Knossos, legendary home of the Minotaur. He travels to Santorini to the 'Greek Pompeii', and finds gold in the fabled stronghold of Mycenae and dazzling remains from Greece's Dark Ages. Alastair discovers the beginnings of a defining spirit in Greek art, embracing mythology, a passion for symmetry, and an obsession with the human body.

WED 01:00 Victorian Sensations (m0005pr9)
Series 1

Seeing and Believing

In the final episode of this series, psychotherapist Philippa Perry time-travels back to the 1890s to explore how the late Victorian passion for science co-existed with a deeply held belief in the paranormal. Using a collection of rare and restored Victorian films from the BFI National Archive, she shows how the latest media innovations made use of contemporary ideas of ghosts and the afterlife - and how this 'new media' anticipated today's networked world.

The final years of Queen Victoria's reign were a moment when the old Victorian order rubbed shoulders with the beginnings of our modern world. It was a chaotic, febrile time of discovery and innovation in science and technology, entertainment and art, and the Victorians had to make sense of it all.

Philippa finds out how Marconi's early experiments with wireless telegraphy encouraged speculation amongst the public and scientists that telepathy - communication between minds - would be the next scientific breakthrough. She also replicates eminent physicist Oliver Lodge's pioneering experiment with radio waves and discovers his fascination for exploring the paranormal with the Society for Psychical Research (SPR). This Victorian group of ghost hunters included William James, a pioneer of psychology, biologist Alfred Russel Wallace and even Prime Minister William Gladstone. Buried in the archives of the SPR in Cambridge University Library, Philippa finds an incredible Census of Hallucinations that contains 17,000 ghostly encounters sourced from the Victorian public.

Maybe it's not surprising that people of the age saw so many ghosts because, in a sense, spirits did haunt the Victorian home. Every Victorian innovation - from photography to motion pictures, phonographs to fantasy books - had its own supernatural genre. Arthur Conan Doyle, creator of the hyper-rational Sherlock Holmes, drew on his real-life experience as a ghostbuster to write his ghostly fiction. Philippa learns the art of spirit photography from Almudena Romero and poses for her own ghostly picture as well as exploring a rare private collection of phonographs, the recent craze that allowed Victorians to hear communications from the past and listen to their loved ones after their deaths for the first time.

Philippa also explores the impact of the arrival in 1896 of motion pictures, the decade's greatest and most magical media innovation. BFI curator Bryony Dixon shows her restored Victorian trick films, from the funny and feminist to a disturbing fake execution. Philippa then creates her own homage to the Big Swallow trick film and eats the cameraman.

The boundary between fact and fantasy was often blurred, and sensationalism infused the new tabloid journalism. At Cambridge University's Institute of Astronomy, Philippa learns about other forms of long-distance communication and the flurry of press interest in stories from Mars. Dr Joshua Nall reveals that some of the greatest public figures of the decade, from Nikola Tesla to Sir Francis Galton, were convinced that signalling with Martians was possible. HG Wells's story The Crystal Egg takes up this theme and predicts future media developments and the power of communications. And even Queen Victoria herself took advantage of the globally networked world that was emerging to allow the film cameras in to capture her triumphant Diamond Jubilee procession for all her imperial subjects. The jubilee was the first global mass media event and the footage captures the essence of the 1890s: the old Victorian order with an empire and an empress, rubbing shoulders with a world we recognise - a modern one of film cameras and global communications. This was the decade the future landed.

WED 02:00 Bauhaus Rules with Vic Reeves (m00071qs)
Presented by Jim Moir, aka Vic Reeves, Bauhaus Rules brings

the radical principles of the Bauhaus to a new generation, to discover if the school's groundbreaking approach to training artists still holds its power 100 years on.

Over the course of a week, six Central St Martins graduates - across fine art, fashion, graphic design and architecture - are challenged each day to create a new work of art, design or performance, sticking strictly to rules inspired by the artists who taught at the Bauhaus.

WED 03:00 A Very British History (m000f4xy)
[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 today]

THURSDAY 27 FEBRUARY 2020

THU 19:00 Cycling (m000frd6)
Track World Championships 2020

Day 2

Live coverage from the Track Cycling World Championships in Berlin of the men's team pursuit and keirin finals, and of the women's team pursuit final in which Great Britain is hoping for gold after finishing as runner-up in the previous two competitions.

THU 20:30 Handmade (b05tpv83)
Glass

The first episode in the Handmade series, part of BBC Four Goes Slow, is a filmed portrait of the making of a simple glass jug.

Filmed in real time and without voiceover or music, the focus is entirely on the craft process, an absorbing, repetitive process of blowing and rolling as glass designer Michael Ruh delicately teases and manipulates the molten glass into shape.

Ruh is a designer of contemporary glass objects, but the method by which he creates them is essentially ancient.

Glass is heated in a crucible until it becomes liquid. Ruh's task, shared with his assistant, is to keep the glass hot and in constant motion as he breathes into it and gradually shapes the expanding globe into the form of a jug.

THU 21:00 Pompeii: New Secrets Revealed with Mary Beard (b072nxtm)
With unparalleled access to Pompeii and featuring cutting-edge modern technology, Mary Beard guides us through this amazing slice of the ancient world.

For the first time ever, CT scanning and x-ray equipment bring new light to the secrets of the victims of the 79 AD eruption. Mary unpacks the human stories behind the tragic figures - gladiators, slaves, businesswomen and children.

She goes behind the scenes of the Great Pompeii Project, where restoration teams have gradually removed the layers of time and deterioration from the frescoes and mosaics of houses closed to the public for decades. And with the help of point-cloud scanning technology, Pompeii is seen and explained like never before.

Mary has unprecedented access to hidden storerooms and archaeological labs packed to the hilt with items from daily life: plumbing fittings, pottery, paint pots, foodstuff and fishing nets. As she pieces it all together, Mary presents a film that is a celebratory and unique view of life in this extraordinary town.

THU 22:00 Elizabeth I's Secret Agents (b09fb54t)
Series 1

Episode 3

Elizabeth I is dead and King James of Scotland travels south to take the throne at the invitation of Robert Cecil. Meanwhile, John Gerard, a Catholic priest who has dedicated his life to the destruction of the Protestant state that developed in Elizabeth's England, has escaped and made contact with a splinter cell in the Catholic underground containing an extremist called Guy Fawkes, who has a plan to blow up parliament with the king inside.

Cecil hears about the gunpowder plot, but is unaware of when and how they will strike, and his investigation is hampered as he's also trying to manage King James, who has a wildly ambitious idea of unifying Scotland and England in a new kingdom of Great Britain.

THU 23:00 How We Built Britain (b007w7by)
The North: Full Steam Ahead

David Dimbleby's architectural tour of Britain heads north to Newcastle, home of George and Robert Stephenson, and then west to Manchester, where Dimbleby finds warehouses based on Venetian palaces and a stunning town hall. He explores the sewers that changed the lives of the Victorian poor, the model village of Saltaire, and the grand merchant houses and shopping arcades of Leeds. He ends his journey in Blackpool, where Victorian engineering was put to the serious business of having fun.

THU 00:00 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.

THU 01:00 The Silk Road (p03qb3q4)
Episode 3

In the final episode of his series tracing the story of the most famous trade route in history, Dr Sam Willis continues his journey west in Iran. The first BBC documentary team to be granted entry for nearly a decade, Sam begins in the legendary city of Persepolis - heart of the first Persian Empire.

Following an ancient caravan route through Persia's deserts, he visits a Zoroastrian temple where a holy fire has burned for 1,500 years, and Esfahan, one of the Silk Road's architectural jewels and rival to Sam's next destination - Istanbul. In the ancient capital of Byzantium, Sam discovers how the eastern Roman Empire was ruled through silk and how Venetian merchants cashed in on the wealth and trade it generated.

Sam's last stop takes him full circle to Venice. Visiting Marco Polo's house, Sam reminds us how the great traveller's book was one of the first to link east to west and how the ideas and products that trickled down the Silk Road not only helped to trigger the Renaissance, but set Europe on a path of unstoppable change.

THU 02:00 Pappano's Greatest Arias (m0002w72)
Nothing pulls harder at the heartstrings than an opera aria - that key moment when the action stops and the character draws us right in to the heart of the drama, revealing his or her innermost feelings and thoughts. These are chances for the singers to really show off, to wow an audience with some of the most famous music in opera. In this film, charismatic conductor and music director of the Royal Opera House, Antonio Pappano, shares his personal selection of some of opera's greatest arias. Pappano's choices stretch across the full 400-year operatic canvas and feature some of the most ravishing and famous arias in the repertoire - from show-stopping Baroque to heart-stopping Mozart, the full-blooded Romantics to blood-curdling Verismo via Bel Canto pyrotechnics and new 20th-century techniques. Along the way he identifies the various functions that arias perform in opera - from entrance arias, soliloquies and arias born of crisis to breathless declarations of undying love. Combining hands-on workshops featuring today's international stars - such as Joyce DiDonato, Lucy Crowe, Bryan Hymel and Lawrence Brownlee - along with glorious archive of operatic legends including Plácido Domingo, Gundula Janowitz and Piero Cappuccilli, Pappano shines a fresh new light on the precise characteristics - vocal, musical, psychological and dramatic - that transform these great theatrical moments into timeless masterpieces.

THU 03:00 Pompeii: New Secrets Revealed with Mary Beard (b072nxtm)
[Repeat of broadcast at 21:00 today]

FRIDAY 28 FEBRUARY 2020

FRI 19:00 Cycling (m000frf7)
Track World Championships 2020

Day 3

Live coverage from the Track Cycling World Championships in Berlin, including the women's omnium final.

FRI 21:00 Top of the Pops (m000frf9)
Mark Goodier presents the pop chart programme, first broadcast on 13 April 1989 and featuring Cookie Crew with Edwin Starr, Ten City, T'Pau, INXS, Fine Young Cannibals, U2 and BB King, Paul Simpson ft Adeva, Bangles and Yello.

FRI 21:30 Eric Burdon: Rock 'n' Roll - Animal (m000frfc)
Born in 1941, Eric Burdon was - along with his band The Animals - one of the most important standard bearers of the British Invasion of America, right after The Beatles and ahead of The Rolling Stones, The Who and The Kinks. Their 1964 interpretation of House of the Rising Sun was a global hit and inspired Bob Dylan (who recorded an acoustic version on his first album) to go electric and hit the stage from then on backed by a rock band.

Eric Burdon is a street kid from Newcastle upon Tyne. He burnt the midnight oil in the nightclubs on the docks. Had music not intervened, he might well have slipped into a career as a petty criminal, the kind of English gangster so aptly parodied by Guy Ritchie in films like Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels and Snatch. But Burdon's voice was his ticket to escape that bleak industrial destiny, and his We Gotta Get out of This Place went on to inspire Springsteen's Born to Run.

Burdon was always an incurable hothead, prone to rages and no stranger to breaking contracts, a situation that would make him a lifelong underdog and impede his path to world stardom. By the end of the 70s he was so broke that he was living in a car on Sunset Strip.

Burdon regularly changed both his band and musical style. Alongside his passion for original American blues, he got together in the late 60s with black LA band War - itself a political statement in the Black Panther era - and, inspired by Charlie Parker, John Coltrane and Rahaan Roland Kirk, expanded his musical spectrum with jazz and funk. Burdon was involved in discovering Jimi Hendrix in Greenwich Village and they remained friends right up to the literal end (the pair spent the night before Jimi's death together).

Eric Burdon's creative output has made an important and profoundly authentic contribution to popular culture. Together with Paul McCartney, Bob Dylan and The Rolling Stones, he counts as one of that legendary generation's last men standing. This film will convey the zeitgeist of the 60s and 70s, while revealing Eric Burdon's personal vision and moving us all with his retrospective ruminations on triumph and failure.

FRI 22:30 Guitar, Drum and Bass (m0001y8k)
Series 1

On Drums... Stewart Copeland!

Stewart Copeland explores the drums as the founding instrument of popular modern music. Beats that travelled from Africa via New Orleans and across the world are the consistent force behind musical evolution.

Stewart plays with some of the most inspiring drummers of the last 50 years, including John Densmore of The Doors, Chad Smith of The Red Hot Chili Peppers, Prince's musical director Sheila E, New Order's Stephen Morris and Foo Fighters' Taylor Hawkins. He goes dancing in New Orleans, builds his own bass drum pedal and checks out hot new bands on Santa Monica beach.

FRI 23:30 Burt Bacharach: A Life in Song (b06qnnbz)
A unique concert staged at the Royal Festival Hall celebrating the music of the legendary songwriter and performer Burt Bacharach.

Some of Burt's most famous songs are performed by a stellar line-up of artists including Alfie Boe, Sophie Ellis-Bextor, Shaun Escoffery, Rebecca Ferguson, Justin Hayward, Michael Kiwanuka, Laura Mvula and Joss Stone. Burt himself also performs accompanied by his band. During the concert Burt chats to Michael Grade about the art of songwriting and shares the stories behind some of his best-loved hits.

FRI 01:00 Stunning Soloists at the BBC (b08kggy0)
Solo show-stoppers from the world's greatest musicians in a journey through fifty years of BBC Music. From guitarist John Williams and cellist Jacqueline du Pre to trumpeter Wynton Marsalis and violinist Nigel Kennedy, this is a treasure trove of musical treats and dazzling virtuosity.

Whether it's James Galway's Flight of the Bumblebee performed at superhuman speed, Ravi Shankar's mesmerising Raag Bihag or Dudley Moore's brilliant Colonel Bogey March, every performance has its own star quality and unique appeal. Parkinson, Later with Jools Holland, The Les Dawson Show, Music at Night and Wogan are among the programmes featuring instruments ranging from marimba and kora to harp and flamenco guitar.

Sit back and enjoy.

FRI 02:00 Eric Burdon: Rock 'n' Roll - Animal (m000frfc)
[Repeat of broadcast at 21:30 today]

FRI 03:00 Guitar, Drum and Bass (m0001y8k)
[Repeat of broadcast at 22:30 today]