

**SATURDAY 23 DECEMBER 2023****SAT 19:00 Winterwatch (b01q9d86)**  
1963: The Big Freeze

Chris Packham introduces a classic documentary from the BBC's archive, which takes a look at the worst winter of the 20th century in 1963. He also explores what we now know about how this big freeze affected Britain's wildlife, and how it would cope if we experienced another equally bad winter.

**SAT 20:00 Timeshift (b04c36md)**

Series 14

Killer Storms and Cruel Winters: The History of Extreme Weather

If you think Britain has recently been on the end of some of the worst floods and storms ever experienced, think again. So says solar scientist Dr Lucie Green, as she takes a journey back through our most turbulent and dramatic weather history.

She finds an 18th-century storm surge that killed over a thousand people working in open Somerset fields, a hurricane that drowned a fifth of the British Navy and winters so bitter that the country came close to total shutdown. But she also explores how our reactions to killer storms and cruel winters helped forge a weather science that today allows us to predict - and protect ourselves from - the worst extremes.

**SAT 21:00 Parkinson (m001tv64)**

Parkinson Takes a Christmas Look at Morecambe and Wise 1974

Chat show compilation of previous Morecambe and Wise shows introduced by Michael Parkinson. Those taking part include Eric Morecambe, Ernie Wise, Tom Jones, Andre Previn, Shirley Bassey, Peter Cushing and Glenda Jackson.

**SAT 22:05 Parkinson (m001tv66)**

Parkinson with Michael Crawford and Liberace

Michael Parkinson talks to comic actor Michael Crawford and American entertainer Liberace, who plays a medley of Christmas songs.

**SAT 23:20 Liberace in Concert (m001tv68)**

Liberace, the famous pianist and showman, from the Wembley Conference Centre, accompanied by the London Philharmonic Orchestra.

**SAT 00:15 Cilla in Scandinavia (m001mf9b)**

Cilla Black hosts a show specially recorded in Stockholm on Midsummer's Day and on film locations in Norway, Sweden and Finland. With guest stars Ringo Starr, Sven-Bertil Taube, Basil Brush, Hannu Mikkola and Marvin, Welch & Farrar.

**SAT 01:15 What We Were Watching (m000qpgg)**

Christmas 1995

Grace Dent embarks on a televisual trip back in time by setting the remote control for December 1995 and serving up an irreverent look back at the festive viewing options that faced the nation in the past.

Exploring how much what is shown on our screens has changed involves some deep diving into EastEnders' annual festival of gloom to find that Arthur Fowler is behind bars and Pat Butcher is being lusted after by Roy and Frank. Grace also discovers that TV schedulers of the time appeared to have sex on the brain, with a surprisingly high number of seasonal shows featuring subjects and scenes that would make a family audience in 2020 blush with embarrassment.

There is also an in-depth look at infidelity in the morally questionable sitcom Goodnight Sweetheart, we join Hetty Wainthropp on her very first BBC investigation and go trapezing on a hot-air balloon with a truly spectacular Record Breakers challenge. And we remind ourselves of the genius of the late, great Rik Mayall – here reading Jack and the Beanstalk on Jackanory for an audience of real Young Ones as only he could.

**SAT 02:15 Timeshift (b04c36md)**

[Repeat of broadcast at 20:00 today]

**SUNDAY 24 DECEMBER 2023****SUN 19:00 Last of the Summer Wine (m001tw1y)**

Getting Sam Home

Feature-length edition of the comedy starring Bill Owen, Peter Sallis and Brian Wilde. To fulfil Sam's one last wish, Compo, Clegg and Foggy reluctantly sneak him out of his invalid bed.

**SUN 20:30 Yes, Minister (b0074qsm)**

Series 3

Party Games

Sitcom about a British government minister and the advisers who surround him. The seasonal festivities at the Department of Administrative Affairs are overshadowed by rumours of a cabinet reshuffle. But a leadership election and the Eurosausage affair could lead to great things for Jim Hacker.

**SUN 21:30 One Foot in the Grave (p00d70rc)**

One Foot in the Algarve

The Meldrewo go on holiday to Portugal with Mrs Warboys, who is hoping for romance with her penpal Alfonso. Photographer Martin Trout follows them there, believing they have a roll of film that belongs to him. Guest stars Peter Cook.

**SUN 23:05 Bruce and Ronnie Christmas Special 1988 (m001tw21)**

Bruce Forsyth and Ronnie Corbett come together for the first time in their own special show, combining their talents for comedy and music. With Fiona Fullerton as their special guest star and the Jeff Richer dancers.

**SUN 23:50 The Two Ronnies (b00gfq54)**

An Old-Fashioned Christmas Mystery

Festive fun with Ronnies Corbett and Barker from Christmas 1973. The magnificent two - well, one and a half. What are they doing on Christmas Eve 1874?

**SUN 00:50 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 and 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 and Pet Shop Boys, songs that were piped 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.

**SUN 02:15 Billy Connolly: Made in Scotland (b0bwzhy6)**

Series 1

Episode 1

In British comedy there is a line in the sand and that line is Billy Connolly. Before he found fame on an international level, British comedy was an end-of-the-pier kind of affair - but through sheer talent and force of personality, Connolly ploughed a different and deeply personal yet universal approach to comedy and in doing so he changed the face of British comedy forever.

He has been called the Beatles and Jesus of comedy by his peers and an immature 'manure mouth' by the leader of the Scottish Zion Baptist Church. So say what you like about him but you can't deny everyone wants to know him. And that is what Made In Scotland is about - it is Billy as you have never seen him before - intimate, deeply personal and very funny.

Weaved around personal accounts and interviews from famous faces, Billy's life is revealed in all its glory - a shaggy dog story approach to his work - and one that has turned him from Billy Connolly the welder into Billy Connolly - The Big Yin.

Part one of two one-hour specials features Eddie Izzard, Ross Noble, Micky Flanagan, Lord Grade, Tracey Ullman, AL Kennedy, Val McDermid, Sharleen Spiteri and Eddi Reader. The film shows a true reflection of his far influence and still maintaining his unique but personal approach to comedy.

**MONDAY 25 DECEMBER 2023****MON 19:00 Storyville (m001tv79)**

Songs of Earth

The dizzyingly beautiful mountainous landscapes of Norway provide the backdrop for this immersive story of a family whose lives are linked intrinsically to their environment. Set in the valley of the Jostedalbreen Glacier, in the north of Norway, it is a portrait of the director Margreth Olin's parents, in particular her father and his life-long and intimate relationship to the land he lives in. Filmed across the seasons, she takes the viewer on an existential journey, from family folklore to the best place to plant a Christmas tree.

**MON 20:30 Inside Classical (m001tv7c)**

Series 1

The Hound of the Baskervilles

Mark Gatiss as Sherlock Holmes and Sanjeev Bhaskar as Dr Watson lead the cast in this stage adaptation of Arthur Conan Doyle's best-selling mystery, The Hound of the Baskervilles.

Written and composed by Neil Brand, the BBC Symphony Orchestra provide the soundtrack to accompany this chilling and gripping thriller.

With no theatrical set or props, our imagination is transported through music and drama from the stage of the Barbican Hall in London to the Baskerville Hall estate, located on a vast, desolate and even dangerous moor, to experience the mystery that surrounds the tale of a supernatural and vicious killer hound that roams the land.

**MON 21:50 Miss Marple (p03rdrc)**

The Murder at the Vicarage

When the Colonel is found murdered in the vicar's study, Miss Marple has to whittle down her long list of suspects. After all, the Colonel was not a popular man.

**MON 23:20 West Side Story (m0005hx1)**

Classic Broadway musical.

The tensions between rival gangs the Jets, whose members include 'white' Americans, and a Puerto Rican gang, the Sharks, reach boiling point in a hot New York summer. At a neighbourhood dance, Tony, the co-founder of the Jets, meets Maria, the sister of Bernardo, the leader of the Sharks. Their romance is thwarted by the gang rivalries.

**MON 01:40 The Sky at Night (b06t3wst)**

The Real Star of Bethlehem: A Christmas Special

Astronomers have been fascinated by the idea of the Star of Bethlehem for centuries. Did it exist? And if so, what was it?

The list of candidates includes some of the most exciting objects in the night sky - supernovae, comets, meteors and unusual alignments of the giant planets.

In this surprising and entertaining Christmas special the Sky at Night team go in search of the potential causes of the Star of Bethlehem.

The team explore the possibilities, investigating the nature of the phenomena and digging through the historical records including Babylonian clay tablets and ancient Chinese manuscripts, to reconstruct events in the night sky 2,000 years ago.

Maggie Aderin-Pocock goes hunting for supernovae using the most powerful laser in Britain, and discovers that these mighty explosions caused by the death of stars can shine brighter than the moon in our sky.

Chris Lintott reconstructs the night sky over Jerusalem at the time of Jesus's birth, discovering a once-in-a-millennium conjunction of Saturn and Jupiter that was first suggested as a cause of the star by the great astronomer Johannes Kepler in 1604.

Armed with his telescope, Pete Lawrence searches out the features of the night sky we can observe today that may provide clues to the origin of the Star of Bethlehem.

Professor Alan Fitzsimmons explains why the sudden appearance of a comet in the night sky has always been seen as an omen of great events on Earth.

Dallas Campbell goes in search of the historical and archaeological records that can shed light on the identity of the star. Finding Babylonian tablets in the vaults of the British Museum and ancient Chinese texts that record all the unusual events in the night sky 2,000 years ago, including a bright new star that appeared for 70 days in the year 5BC.

**MON 02:40 Billy Connolly: Made in Scotland (b0bwzwof)**

Series 1

Episode 2

In British comedy there is a line in the sand and that line is Billy Connolly. Before he found fame on an international level, British comedy was an end-of-the-pier kind of affair - but through sheer talent and force of personality, Connolly ploughed a different and deeply personal yet universal approach to comedy and in doing so he changed the face of British comedy forever.

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Weaved around personal accounts and interviews from famous faces, Billy's life is revealed in all its glory - a shaggy dog story approach to his work - and one that has turned him from Billy Connolly the welder into Billy Connolly - The Big Yin.

This final instalment (featuring Eddie Izzard, Ross Noble, Micky Flanagan, AL Kennedy, Tracey Ullman, Val McDermid, Sharleen Spiteri and Eddi Reader) finds Billy back in the Scotland of his childhood, where he reveals that knitted woolly swimming trunks were not a figment of his imagination.

**TUESDAY 26 DECEMBER 2023**

**TUE 19:00 Earth's Tropical Islands (m000cs03)**  
Series 1

Madagascar

Journey across the tropical island of Madagascar and explore the unique and incredible wildlife it has to offer - from its famed lemurs to chameleons.

As the oldest island on Earth, life has had time to evolve, and there are now more unique plants and animals on Madagascar than any other island.

It was formed nearly 90 million years ago when a giant landmass split apart, and Madagascar was cast adrift from east Africa. Braving the 400-mile ocean crossing from Africa, the first castaways arrived on the arid west of the island, and were met with vast deserts.

Ring-tailed lemurs are the direct descendants of one of the very first mammals to arrive, and they are thriving despite the arid conditions. They spend up to eight hours a day foraging in the Spiny Forest. Their plant-based diet includes plants with caustic sap that would burn human skin.

When humans arrived on the west coast, they too faced the hostile desert, high temperatures and droughts that can last a year. In the village of Ampotaka, the people have learnt to use baobab trees to help them survive. The trees grow up to 30 metres high and stores vast quantities of water in their trunks. By hollowing out the inside of the trunk, the people create huge water tanks storing thousands of litres of water, which they can use when times are tough.

Tiny labord's chameleons are unique to Madagascar and have the shortest lifespan of any land vertebrate – living for just four months. They time their hatching with the start of the rainy season when the going is good, and then the race is on for them to grow, mate and lay eggs before the dry season comes round once again.

One of the most dramatic places in Madagascar is known as the Grand Tsingy – 500 square miles of sharp limestone pinnacles sheltering small pockets of forest. To survive here, Decken's sifakas must climb these shards of rock, sharp enough to shred human skin, and leap 30 feet between them.

A series of even higher peaks forms a mountainous spine running down the middle of Madagascar. Just a few thousand years ago, human settlers from Asia brought the skills to turn the steep mountainsides into rice paddies. By digging terraces into the slopes, even the steepest gradients can be farmed, producing more than a million tonnes of rice every year. But only if they can keep their crop safe from the devastating plagues of locusts in their billions.

Madagascar's mountain range defines the islands' climate. It blocks warm, wet air blown in off the Indian Ocean to the east, creating the arid deserts of the west. But keeping all this moisture to the eastern side of the island makes rainfall high there, and this creates bountiful rainforests.

Most of the island's incredible wildlife can be found within these tropical rainforests, including tenrecs, Madagascar's own unique version of a hedgehog. They give birth to more babies

than any mammals – as many as 32 in a litter. The streaked tenrec rubs together modified spines on her back to make a squeaking noise to warn all her babies of danger.

The extraordinary pelican spider twangs the threads of an orb web spider to lure it into its giant jaws. The aye-aye is one of Madagascar's weirdest creatures, found hunting for insect larvae at night. It uses its bizarre 9cm-long middle finger to tap tree branches for hollow bits, before scraping away the bark and deploying its super-sized finger to fish out the grubs.

Madagascar's unique wildlife has slowly been evolving for millions of years, but since humans arrived the pace of change has been faster than many animals can cope with. As little as 20 per cent of the island's original forest remains, and 95 per cent of lemurs are now threatened with extinction.

The greater bamboo lemur is a story of how efforts to protect Madagascar's wildlife can save a species from being wiped out entirely. These lemurs were thought to have gone extinct, thanks to the clearance of the bamboo forests they rely on for food. The bamboo lemurs are now protected and in the last year, a record number of babies were born. Madagascar is at a critical point, but with the right efforts, there is some hope for its wildlife in the future.

**TUE 20:00 Royal Institution Christmas Lectures (m001tv7s)**

2023: Professor Mike Wooldridge - The Truth about AI

How to Build an Intelligent Machine

Professor Mike Wooldridge asks: what is artificial intelligence? He compares how AI works and learns with how the human brain functions.

Exploring the roots of AI, Mike reveals how Alan Turing devised the Imitation Game – a test of whether a machine answering a series of questions could pass as a human. The audience in the lecture theatre play a real-life version of the game to find out if AI can pass this test today.

In this lecture, Mike examines real-life neurons in action and explains how artificial neural networks are inspired by neural structures in the brain. To demonstrate how AI learns, we watch drones as they are trained to recognise and fly through structures in the lecture theatre autonomously.

AI exploded into the public consciousness in 2022 with the release of ChatGPT and boasts around 100 million monthly users. Mike unravels the mystery of how large language models like ChatGPT work, and he finds out if one day this technology - along with a whole suite of different AI tools - will allow us to understand the animals we share this planet with.

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**TUE 21:00 Digging for Britain (m000c5yk)**

Series 8

WWII Special

The team are on an archaeological hunt of our more recent past as they follow the search for artefacts from World War II. They join marine archaeologists in the Solent as they raise the once-in-a-lifetime find of a Fairey Barracuda dive-bomber. More than 2,500 Barracudas were in service during the war, but not a single complete plane survives today. Naïse Mac Sweeney joins the post-excavation to reveal how the find could help bring this rare aircraft back to life.

Also featured, a dig in the Lake District that tells the moving story of the Windermere Boys and the role the area played in rehabilitating these children liberated from the Nazi concentration camps after World War II.

In Aldbourne, Wiltshire, the search is on for the most famous American unit of the US army, 'Easy Company', who were stationed here in 1943 and 1944. Archaeologists are particularly looking for any personal items of this renowned regiment to gain insight into their lives in the months and days leading up to the D-Day invasion.

And off a beautiful beach in Devon, divers plumb the depths to discover more about a secret wartime military exercise that may have remained buried from view if it wasn't for the curiosity of a local amateur archaeologist.

**TUE 22:00 The Two Ronnies: The Studio Recordings (h00wyj3x)**

The unedited takes and studio rushes from some famous and

not-so-famous sketches from the classic comedy show, The Two Ronnies.

**TUE 22:30 Playhouse (p00zyc1q)**  
A Song at Twilight

Enormously successful writer Sir Hugo Latymer has a tryst with the past not altogether to his liking.

**TUE 23:55 The Wednesday Play (m001tv7z)**  
The Vortex

A mother and son face the truth about one another during a weekend house party in Noël Coward's brilliantly merciless portrait of the darker side of the Jazz Age.

**TUE 01:05 Towards Tomorrow: Robot (b0bjdgg7)**  
Documentary from 1967 on how robotics could shape human society. Your future is being created now - for better or for worse?

How close are we to constructing the robot of the future? Will there be one in every house? How human will it look? These are some of the questions this programme tries to answer.

Isaac Asimov, science fiction writer and prophet of the robot age, introduces the programme and predicts a future in which man and robots form a combined culture. A culture in which, to use his own words, 'mankind may want robots not only as helpers and servants but also as friends, as something with which they can identify'.

Towards Tomorrow explores laboratories in England and America to discover how near scientists and engineers are to turning Asimov's science fiction into science fact.

**TUE 01:55 Horizon (m001tv81)**  
1977-1978

Now the Chips Are Down

First transmitted in 1978, Horizon examines the rise of the microprocessor and asks if automation presents a problem for the future of British industry.

**TUE 02:50 Earth's Tropical Islands (m000cs03)**  
[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 today]

**WEDNESDAY 27 DECEMBER 2023**

**WED 19:00 Earth's Tropical Islands (m000cs0p)**  
Series 1

Borneo

In the heart of south east Asia lies the tropical island of Borneo. Twice the size of the British Isles, it is the third largest island on earth and home to possibly the greatest diversity of life of any island - from flying lizards sun bears to orangutans. Its huge variety of habitats, from bustling coral reefs and ancient jungles to towering mountains, has given rise to over 60,000 species of plants and animals - many found nowhere else on earth.

Borneo's shoreline is fringed by a tangle of mangroves and flooded forests, home to an extraordinary creature – the proboscis monkey. Their unique pot bellies allow them to survive on the nutrient-poor leaves, but even so, they must continually search for the freshest shoots. This means the whole family must cross one of many rivers that cut through the forest – patrolled by giant crocodiles. It is a drama rarely seen.

The island of Borneo is surrounded by some of the richest coral reefs in the world – a single reef can support more species of coral than the entire Caribbean Sea! This remarkable abundance attracted seafaring nomads, the Bajau Laut, 'people of the sea'. Over generations their bodies have transformed, making them the ultimate human divers – but they are having to adapt to the modern world – using ingenuity to turn plastic waste that washes up on the beach to their advantage.

Heading inland are ancient forests, home to giants – the dipterocarps. Towering up to 100 metres high, they are the tallest rainforest trees in the world. A single tree can hold a thousand different species, and this intense competition has driven many animals to evolve in wondrous ways – on this island reptiles can fly.

At night, this competition in the jungle intensifies as many of Borneo's 180 species of frog call for a mate. The bigger the frog, the louder the call: a problem for one of the smallest frogs on the island. In this never-before-filmed sequence, a male tree-hole frog, barely larger than a thumbnail, has come up with an

ingenious solution to being heard above the noise.

Compared to the abundance of life in the treetops, the forest floor is an impoverished world. With little to eat, many of Borneo's terrestrial mammals are smaller than on the mainland – including the exceedingly rare Bornean sun bear. At just over 1m long, it is the smallest bear in the world. To survive, they have developed a surprising skill – they are expert climbers, able to climb higher than any other bear, to feed on honey and fruits high up in the canopy.

For those confined to the forest floor, more ingenious methods are required. The Penan are indigenous hunters that have lived in Borneo's forests for over 4,000 years. They use a remarkable sign language, known as Oroo', to communicate through the jungle. A long stick is adorned with intricately folded vegetation and shaped bark, to tell a complex story.

In the heart of the island, looming above the rainforest, lies another of Borneo's diverse habitats – mountains. Their range runs over 500 miles through the centre of the island. At over 4,000 metres, Mount Kinabalu is one of the highest peaks in south east Asia. It rains here almost every day, the water washing away any goodness in the soil. To get the nutrients they need to survive, one group of plants have gone to extreme lengths, becoming carnivores. The modified leaves of pitcher plants form pitfall traps. Insects are lured to the trap's edge with sweet nectar, before slipping into a lethal pool of digestive enzymes. Borneo holds the greatest collection of pitcher plants in the world, including one that is after something much bigger than insects. *Nepenthes hemsleyana* is a pitcher plant that has evolved to attract woolly bats. Its traps are perfectly adapted to provide a sheltered roost for the bat. In return the plant gains nutrition from the bats droppings, a remarkable relationship, only recently discovered.

Borneo's intense rain has carved out vast cave systems through the island. Deer cave is so large you could fly a jumbo jet through it. They are home to millions of bats whose guano forms the basis of an entire ecosystem – sustaining some of the largest concentrations of cockroaches in the world, as well a wealth of other cave critters.

Thanks to the bats, even in this most extreme habitat, Borneo harbours an extraordinary array of life.

For 10,000 years, Borneo's staggering diversity has been protected by its isolation, but with the arrival of industrial logging, all that has changed. Only half of its ancient forests are left, and much of its unique wildlife is under threat, including the iconic orangutan. Scientists are only just discovering the true scale of their intelligence – recently capturing footage of a mother orangutan using forest leaves to create an anti-inflammatory treatment for her aching joints. But with their forest home being destroyed, how much longer can these remarkable animals survive?

**WED 20:00 Royal Institution Christmas Lectures (m001tv98)**

2023: Professor Mike Wooldridge - The Truth about AI

**My AI Life**

Professor Mike Wooldridge reveals the huge role AI already plays in our daily lives – sometimes without us even realising its role.

Mike investigates how games like chess and Go have become a training ground for AI, helping to bring about key advances we are now seeing in the field, and he reveals how simple methods of learning, like rewarding success, have been used to train AI in spectacular ways. We also feature some of the revolutionary innovations that AI has brought about in healthcare, from the use of AI tools in planning cancer treatment, to monitoring Parkinson's.

Mike is joined by members of DeepMind's AlphaFold team, who use AI to predict the structures of large numbers of proteins, which will revolutionise the creation of new drugs across the world.

We also reveal the huge impact AI has had on our creative lives – as it is able to write songs and create artworks in seconds. With the help of artist Eric Drass (aka shardcore), the audience creates a collaborative artwork and discovers how image generation works. Mike explores the thorny question of who the creator is – the AI itself, the human who set it to work, or the creators of the art that AI has learned from?

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**WED 21:00 The Magical World of Moss (m001hqth)**  
Mosses have colonised almost every corner of the earth's

surface. Evolving from oceanic algae that emerged onto the land 450 million years ago, these very first terrestrial plants became one of the main sources of oxygen for our evolving planet, helping to transform it from an arid rock into a lush world.

This documentary travels to some of the most beautiful moss-covered landscapes in the world, including Japan, Iceland, France and Denmark, to meet the experts investigating its astonishing properties and potential.

Science is only beginning to understand the secrets and possibilities of these remarkable plants.

**WED 21:55 Goodness Gracious Me (b0077nx4)**  
Christmas Special

The Asian comedy sketch show features the Coopers sitting down to their Christmas dinner and the staging of the very cosmopolitan Hounslow nativity play.

**WED 22:40 Alison Steadman Remembers... The Singing Detective (m001fpw6)**

Alison Steadman looks back at Dennis Potter's *The Singing Detective*, hailed as one of the most important and influential TV dramas ever made, and once described by Stephen King as 'television's *Citizen Kane*'.

From memories of happy times working with leading man Michael Gambon, and the pride of being involved in a piece that got the whole nation talking, to the stresses of being caught up in the controversy surrounding her character's notorious outdoor sex scene, Alison brings her unique perspective to a series she ranks amongst her favourites.

**WED 22:50 The Singing Detective (b0074qxt)**  
Skin

Dennis Potter's classic drama serial with music. Pulp thriller writer Philip Marlow is in hospital with the skin complaint psoriasis, tormented by his past and threatened by his future. His memories, his 1930s-style gumshoe fiction and his disease weave him an altered reality.

**WED 00:00 The Singing Detective (b0074qyv)**  
Heat

Marlow faces his personal misery of the talking cure with the psychologist who wants to help him with his psychosomatic psoriasis and has actually read Marlow's novel. Nicola, an ambitious and demanding actress, appears in Marlow's hospital ward just as he is thinking about her. Marlow is suspicious of his former wife, and his wretched state exposes his vulnerability. Only the fact that his imagination is running riot keeps him occupied.

**WED 01:10 The Singing Detective (b0074qy3)**  
Lovely Days

While in hospital with psoriasis, Marlow thinks back to the war when he was a little boy, and remembers seeing his mother having illicit sex in the Forest of Dean. His memories, his 30s style gumshoe fiction and his disease weave him an altered reality.

**WED 02:15 The Singing Detective (b0074qy4)**  
Clues

Marlow as a child visits London, but is not impressed. A film option on Marlow's novel thickens the plot. His memories, his 30s style gumshoe fiction and his disease weave him an altered reality.

**THURSDAY 28 DECEMBER 2023**

**THU 19:00 Earth's Tropical Islands (m000cslp)**  
Series 1

**Hawaii**

This is a journey across Hawaii's varied islands, discovering how they were made and the incredible wildlife that thrives there.

Hawaii is the most remote island chain on earth, and its tropical shores are hard to reach. But for the hardy creatures that can make it here, like the waterfall-climbing fish, carnivorous caterpillar and Laysan albatross, a land of opportunity awaits. From newly formed lava fields to lush jungles and vibrant coral reefs, these diverse and beautiful islands have it all.

Packed with surprising stories, the hidden gems of this tropical paradise are uncovered using stunning photography. Dramatic footage of the humpback whale heat run – the biggest courtship battle in the world – and intimate views of the world's oldest known bird feeding its chick are just some of the highlights of what Hawaii has to offer.

The islands are so isolated that it used to be that one new species arrived every 100,000 years, but the arrival of people has radically changed the face of Hawaii. Now it gains around 20 new species every year. The remarkable Jackson's chameleon is one of the animals recently introduced. Showing off its voracious appetite, the programme reveals how it is eating its way through the native animals and contributing to wiping them out entirely.

But this is a place where people are looking to the future and attempting to bring wildlife back from the brink of extinction. White terns, once extinct on the main islands of Hawaii, have gone from a single pair to over 2,000 birds in the last 60 years. It is a huge challenge, but people are seeking progressive new ways to live alongside nature to allow Hawaii's wildlife to continue to thrive.

**THU 20:00 Royal Institution Christmas Lectures (m001tv91)**

2023: Professor Mike Wooldridge - The Truth about AI

**The Future of AI: Dream or a Nightmare?**

Professor Mike Wooldridge grapples with the future of AI in the third and final Christmas lecture.

Mike takes a ride in a driverless car. Autonomous vehicles, once a science fiction dream, are now a reality. Many AI researchers believe removing human drivers will eventually make our streets much safer. Mike explores how the car 'sees' and perceives the world – and how with the help of AI, it gets better the more it drives.

Although AI will create many exciting opportunities, advances in AI have raised fears – some justified, others not. With the help of expert guests, Mike talks us through some of the risks AI poses. He unpacks the very real danger of bias in AI, asking how we avoid creating AI that favours those who resemble its creators, and he explores the dangers of 'fake news' and how AI algorithms can lead to dangerous online 'echo chambers', helping to foment extreme views. Mike also demonstrates deepfake technology and asks if AI means we simply can't trust our eyes any more?

The prospect of super-intelligent AI means that in the future we may be able to mobilise AI to uncover radical large-scale solutions to the biggest problems facing humanity, such as climate change. But we need to think carefully about what we want to let AI control. Could AI in charge of weapons accidentally begin wars – and present a risk to our survival?

And, as AI gets ever more intelligent, how should we treat it? How does our audience feel about kicking an AI robot dog? This lecture addresses the big question of AI: can it ever truly be like us, or are humans unique? As AI advances, it seems these ethical questions are destined to get ever more complex...

The Christmas Lectures are the most prestigious event in the Royal Institution calendar, dating from 1825 when Michael Faraday founded the series. They are the world's longest running science television series, and always promise to inspire and amaze each year through explosive demonstrations and interactive experiments with the live theatre audience.

**THU 21:00 Bob Monkhouse: The Last Stand (b086tw3q)**

Summer 2003: Bob Monkhouse entertains a room full of comedians with stand-up, chat and a comedy masterclass. The night became the stuff of legend among comedians but was not transmitted until much later.

**THU 22:00 Talking Comedy (b05qt2b7)**

Bob Monkhouse

A laughter-filled look back at gag-master Bob Monkhouse's appearances over the years on a selection of the BBC's best-loved talk shows.

**THU 22:30 Nine to Five (m001tv94)**

Three savvy office workers, Violet, Doralee and Judy, have one thing in common – they hate their boss, Hart Jnr. He's a petty, tyrannical, womanising, idiot, and the girls have had enough. They inadvertently find a way to take revenge.

**THU 00:15 The Singing Detective (b0074qy7)**

Pitter Patter

Marlow is getting better and the different strands of his fiction

and reality begin to occupy the same time and place.

**THU 01:15 The Singing Detective (b0074qy8)**

Who Done It

The young Philip Marlow returns to the country railway station following his mother's death in London. Forty years on, Marlow the hospital patient still dreams about the homecoming and the frightening figure of the scarecrow that now erupts into the ward.

**THU 02:30 Earth's Tropical Islands (m000cs0p)**

[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 on Wednesday]

**FRIDAY 29 DECEMBER 2023**

**FRI 19:00 Top of the Pops (b08rc78m)**

Peter Powell, Tommy Vance, Richard Skinner, Gary Davies and Adrian John present the pop chart programme, first broadcast on 29 December 1983. Features JoBoxers, Mike Oldfield, Thompson Twins, Tracey Ullman, The Cure, Phil Collins, The Belle Stars, Paul Young, Siouxsie & The Banshees, Spandau Ballet, Howard Jones, Rod Stewart, The Style Council and Culture Club.

**FRI 19:50 Frank Sinatra: At the Royal Festival Hall (m001krxj)**

A concert of songs by Frank Sinatra, recorded at the Royal Festival Hall in 1970. Including I've Got You Under My Skin, My Kind of Town and My Way.

**FRI 20:45 Arena (b00rs3w6)**

Frank Sinatra: The Voice of the Century

Arena explores the rise of the legendary crooner Frank Sinatra from his early family background to overwhelming showbusiness success. Interviews with friends, family and associates reveal a star-studded career in music and film alongside a fascinating private life of four marriages, liaison with the Kennedy family, Las Vegas business interests and an alleged association with the mafia.

**FRI 22:20 Frank Sinatra: A Man and His Music + Ella + Jobim (m001krx3)**

Two great singers and a famous guitarist entertain with songs including Ole Man River, Body and Soul, The Lady is a Tramp, The Girl from Ipanema, What Now My Love. First broadcast 1967.

**FRI 23:10 High Society (m000pyh8)**

Musical comedy. Time is short if playboy CK Dexter-Haven is to reclaim his former wife before she remarries. Cynical reporter Mike Connor is covering the wedding.

**FRI 00:55 Arena (b0074lx2)**

My Way

An investigation of the appeal and power of the popular song My Way, which was written by Paul Anka and was recorded by many artists, including Frank Sinatra, Shirley Bassey, Elvis Presley and Sid Vicious. Contributors include Paul Anka, George Brown, Barry John and Dorothy Squires.

**FRI 01:35 Frank Sinatra: At the Royal Festival Hall (m001krxj)**

[Repeat of broadcast at 19:50 today]

**FRI 02:25 Top of the Pops (b08rc78m)**

[Repeat of broadcast at 19:00 today]