

Q&A

film & music



Eyes on the prize
The galactic rise
of Oscar Isaac



Lost in showbiz
Marina Hyde

Block busters
Pop eats estates

Kendrick Lamar
Damn verdict

Their Finest
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He should be so lucky: is Prince Andrew really dating Kylie, the princess of pop?

By Marina Hyde



As a devotee of high-camp drama, I am thrilled the royal family are now dating the sort of people who might cameo as royal dates in *The Royals*. This is the equivalent of Cameron Diaz being reduced to taking scripts calling for “a Cameron Diaz type”. If you’re Cameron’s agent, you’re far from happy about it, of course - but then, neither you nor I rep the Windsors, and can simply enjoy the show.

There is Prince Harry’s Meghan Markle, who in *The Royals* would play a brilliant neurosurgeon who captivates the prince, but in real life is going to remind us that American women and their American ways don’t always foreshadow a crisis for the Windsors, and amusement for the rest of us.

Meanwhile, the latest batshit rumour to attend the actual royal family has surfaced in Australia, where a magazine asserts that Prince Andrew has been quietly dating none other than Kylie Minogue.

1. Can this possibly be true?
2. Does a desperate nation staring

Can’t get her out of his head: Prince Andrew, Kylie, Meghan and the royals

Perhaps Kylie can get some ‘help’ with Prince Andrew’s manscaping

down the barrel of yet another election really have to establish veracity before pinning its every hope of diversion on it?

Probably not. So while none of the political parties has yet made a manifesto commitment to put a tax on dreaming, let us place all our faith in ... hang on, let me get my reading glasses on ... ah yes, *New Idea* magazine, which assures its readers that Prince Andrew has broken off from being choppered between golf courses at your expense to form an intense romantic bond with Kylie Minogue. It has been going on for months, apparently.

“At the moment they’re inseparable,” says an anonymous source. “Andrew is 100% smitten.” As well he might be. Even for a man who always grins like he’s just won a competition to be Prince Andrew, this would be the big one. Not only is it Kylie - KYLIE! - but as a serious Princess of Pop, she is probably the ranking royal here.

Unbelievably, there’s only a nine-year-age gap, which in any normal circumstances would make you look at Andrew and say: “Oof, he must have

had a hard paper round.” Not in this case, obviously. Perhaps Kylie can get him some “help” with his manscaping, like Liz Hurley did with Shane Warne.

I think my favourite confected quote in the entire story is from the “Palace insider”, who apparently tells the magazine: “Kylie is someone that Her Majesty would welcome into the royal family with open arms. Everyone’s hoping this romance goes the distance.”

Majestic. More realistically, you can see Kylie getting a three-episode story arc, before being downgraded to someone who might be required to Facetime a fuming Princess Anne for Unicef sometime in the early 2020s.

For now, Prince William is using the family Facetime terminal, and was this week shown contacting Lady Gaga through it to discuss mental health, as part of the #oktosay campaign to encourage talking, which is being supported by him, his wife and Prince Harry. Gaga was in her kitchen; William was in the drawing room he and Kate entertained President Obama



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in (you know, the one with the big painting bearing the label The Negro Page). I couldn't get through the entire William/Gaga exchange, I'm afraid, lacking the requisite mental fortitude. But at least I'm not as unsupportive as Theresa May, who - about 10 minutes after the video had dropped - thought it was #oktosay there was going to be a snap election, thus drowning it in a tide of political news.

All in all, though, a lively week in celebrity for the royals. It must all be getting a bit *après moi le déluge* for the Queen, of course, but perhaps the youngsters know best.

Frankly my dear ... why De Havilland won't feud over Feud

To Paris, France, where Proper Hollywood Legend Olivia de Havilland still lives, aged 100. As always with someone of that impressive vintage, the questions with which we bother them are so important. Full credit to the Hollywood Reporter, then, which this week asked Ms de Havilland a big one: what does she reckon to Feud, Ryan Murphy's FX series documenting the tension between Bette Davis and Joan Crawford, in which she was a supporting player?

As far as trying to get her take on events when he was writing the show, Murphy himself decided against, telling the Hollywood Reporter in an earlier interview: "I didn't want to intrude on Ms de Havilland."

Still, now she has been bothered, what does she have to say? "I have received your email with its two questions," runs her response to the Hollywood Reporter. "I would like to reply first to the second of these, which inquires of me the accuracy of a current television series entitled Feud, which concerns Bette Davis and Joan Crawford and their supposed animosity toward each other. Having not seen the show, I cannot make a valid comment about it. However, in principle, I am opposed to any representation of personages who are no longer alive to judge the accuracy of any incident depicted as involving themselves."

Oh dear. But what of the show's meticulous big-budget set piece, a scene at the Academy Awards when Davis won for *Whatever Happened To Baby Jane?*, with Crawford not even nominated? "As to the 1963 Oscar ceremony, which took place over half a century ago, I regret to say that I have no memory of it whatsoever and therefore cannot vouch for its accuracy."

Yowch. Thank you, Ms de Havilland. Now, if we could just trouble you for a view on whether the dress is blue and black or white and gold?



No love lost: Jessica Lange as Joan Crawford (left) and Susan Sarandon as Bette Davis in Feud

The Chuckle Brothers' big wedding-day mystery

Comedy Court and Social, now, and the major announcement of the day is news of a wedding for what The Sun describes as the "third Chuckle brother". In fact, there are four brothers - none of whose surname is technically Chuckle. There are brothers Barry Elliott and Paul Elliott, who are the Chuckle Brothers. And then there are their elder brothers Jimmy Elliott and Brian Elliott. They perform as The Patton Brothers. Jimmy and Paul also appeared in the Chuckle Brothers' act, as No Slacking and Geroutofit respectively.

That being cleared up, we must offer congratulations to Jimmy, 85, who has married his fiancée Amy Phillips, 26. They met on Facebook. "Amy has been a fan of Chucklevision all her life," says Jimmy, "and commented on something I posted. It just went from there."

As for the ceremony itself, there do seem to have been a couple of notable no-shows. Bobby Dennis was there. Bernie Clifton was there (though the attendance of Oswald the ostrich is not specified). Brian Elliott - the other half of the Patton Brothers - was there. But the Chuckles were not. "Supposedly Barry was ill," Amy's dad tells the Sun. "That's all I know."

But is that all there is to know? You'd have expected them to do the "to me, to you" routine with the rings, at the very least, and the pointed failure to do so suggests we can't rule out hearing more on this subject in due course.

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Oscar Isaac had such a nomadic childhood that at one point he thought he was Russian. It was the perfect upbringing, he tells **Tom Shone**, to become modern Hollywood's 'global human'

Oscar



Much is made in Hollywood of chameleons - actors who have the ability to “disappear” into a role, appearing “unrecognisable” - while less is said about versatility. At rest, the faces of the best movie actors contain multitudes. Robert Mitchum had the broken-nosed face of a brute but the sleepy, languid eyes of an angel - “Bing Crosby on barbiturates”, in film critic James Agee’s phrase. Bette Davis could switch from glam to dowdy with the angle of her head and a couple of fill lights. And Robert De Niro’s ability to frown and smile simultaneously is legendary.

Oscar Isaac has that kind of face. His low-lidded eyes can smoulder, but there is also a quickness behind

them, and a touch of disappointed calculation. It made him perfect for the hapless, couch-surfing folk musician soaking up disappointments like a wet sock in the Coen brothers’ *Inside Llewyn Davis*, the 2013 film that put him on the map at the age of 35. He has been working since, playing the hotshot pilot Poe Dameron in *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* and the slinky, tactile, tech-era Mephistopheles in Alex Garland’s *Ex Machina*.

He is at his best playing ambitious, slightly myopic men whose own movement quickens their fall: a Queens oil importer struggling to stay the right side of the law in JC Chandor’s excellent *A Most Violent Year*, a doomed politician brutally felled by civic machination in HBO’s *Show*

Me a Hero. He has made a career playing men for whom careerism doesn’t work.

“You know what it makes me think about,” asks Isaac when I put this to him. “I just read in the *New York Times* about how to throw a ball. There was a thing in it from JD Salinger’s *Seymour: An Introduction*, about aiming. They’re playing marbles, and one of them goes: ‘Don’t aim.’ Isn’t that the point, that you want to aim? He’s like: ‘No, because if you hit him when you aim, it’ll just be luck.’ ‘How can it be luck if I aim?’ ‘If you’re glad when you hit somebody’s marble, then you secretly didn’t expect to hit it.’ You just do the thing, and so that when you get accolades and all this stuff, it feels good but it doesn’t make



favourite



Oscar Isaac and (from left) in *Inside Llewyn Davis*, *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, and in *Promise* with Charlotte Le Bon and Christian Bale



‘I have a love for Guatemala, for Cuba as well, but I don’t represent anybody’

Isaac with Domhnall Gleeson in *Ex Machina* and (below) in *X-Men: Apocalypse*

« you glad because you're like: 'This just as easily could have not been.' It's that kind of thing."

Isaac still lives in Williamsburg in Brooklyn, in the same one-bedroom apartment he had before he caught the Coen brothers' attention - but meets me in a suite at the Crosby Street hotel in Manhattan to talk about his new movie *The Promise*, a first world war period drama in which he plays an apothecary swept up in the Armenian genocide. It is the first time in the modern period that Hollywood has approached the genocide on screen, and director Terry George, whose taste for geopolitical injustice was honed on *In the Name of the Father* and *Hotel Rwanda*, invokes it through our memory of other onscreen cataclysms. There is a love triangle with the beautiful Ana (Charlotte Le Bon) and an American journalist (Christian Bale) that recalls *Doctor Zhivago*, the three of them struggling to make their hearts heard against a backdrop of trains and dead bodies straight out of *Schindler's List*. The film is, to be frank, something of a clunker, but the role is a slam dunk for Isaac, who broods like Omar Sharif and vents impassioned, politically on-point heartbreak about the fate of refugees.

They are his favourite type of role: the ones where you get to see "a lot more of the beauty and cruelty of life ... The emotional hook of it was reading the scene when he finds his family killed. This wasn't just war as usual, this was a systematic execution of



people of Armenian descent. It's very clear - you go back, and it's like the Turkish government was saying: 'No, now it's going to be Turkey for the Turks. Turkey first? Unfortunately, you hear a lot of the same kind of rhetoric again and again and again - about refugees, about immigrants, about silencing the press. None of it's new.'

Isaac himself is chipper, energetic, charming - about as undoomed a man as you could imagine. He has the crisp lines of someone who knows himself well. He plays well with others. A recent clip reel at Vanity Fair invited readers to "Watch Oscar Isaac charm

the pants off every single Star Wars: The Force Awakens cast member." He completed shooting on the new Star Wars movie, *The*



Last Jedi, last year, and can offer only the usual heavily redacted clues. "The characters that you know already: their specific character flaws or their weaknesses get tested. And out of that, I think, you get to see a bit more of who they are. The best way to learn about somebody is to see them in a crisis."

One of the more interesting features of Isaac's career is that, thus far, he has avoided the typecasting that can befall actors of Latino heritage. His Wikipedia page lists the nationalities he has played: European, Egyptian, Polish, English, French, Mexican, East Timorese, Welsh, Indonesian, Greek, Cuban, Israeli, and Armenian. *X-Men: Apocalypse* director Bryan Singer has called him a "global human". He is actually Guatemalan, born to a Guatemalan mother and Cuban father, who brought Isaac to the US when he was five months old.

His full name is Óscar Isaac Hernández Estrada but he changed his

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'You hear the same kind of rhetoric again and again about refugees - none of it's new'

name to Isaac in his teens as his acting career took shape - "for any number of reasons but also because the marquee, you know, it's a little easier," he says, simplifying what must have been a complicated renegotiation of his identity. I ask if he has ever felt under any pressure to "represent" either his Guatemalan or Cuban background.

"No, I don't want to represent," he says. "I don't represent anybody except this organism that I happen to be. I have a love for Guatemala, a love for my family there, a love for a place that I was born, a place where my mother was born. For Cuba, as well. But, yeah, I'm always wary of people that say they speak for a large group of people because I'm always like: 'Really? How do you know?' To speak for a group of people is not something I've ever felt comfortable doing."

His upbringing was so peripatetic that it practically screams "actor". As his father completed his medical training, the family moved from Baltimore to New Orleans, where in kindergarten in Louisiana, he got it into his head that his family had come from the Soviet Union. "I don't know why. This was in the 1980s. I remember going to the playground and being like: 'Hey, guys, I'm Russian! Let's play, you guys are the Americans and I'll be the Russian.' I remember I went home and I was like, 'So Dad, we're Russian, right?' and he was like: 'What?' 'We're Russian.' 'We're rushin' in the morning.' Such a dad joke. 'But that's about it.' And I was: 'Aww!' It was a weird kind of Dylan-esque thing that I just kept changing the story of where I was from or what we were. It was a form of storytelling, or a form of excitement, or a form of fun, mixed with this sense of something missing, which is a sense of place. We were never in one place for more than, I would say, three to four years."

After their house in New Orleans was destroyed by Hurricane Andrew - "I remember having dreams about that house," he says - they resettled again in Miami, where Isaac funnelled his

Dylan-esque longings into music, joined a Florida ska-punk band, and acted. "It just hit in a very specific way that when I found play-acting - mimesis, imitation - suddenly, that felt like a way of understanding the world. Even now, the play's the thing, always. As soon as things get really confusing emotionally, or personally, when I look at a play, it suddenly makes sense. I don't know if it's right, I don't know if it's healthy, but I know myself enough to know it's definitely a necessity. That's what I do. I go to that stuff to help me understand. Or for solace. And maybe it is a form of hiding. Music can have that a little bit, but lately it hasn't as much."

Last October, his mother became ill, and he took time off work to be with her for what turned out to be the final six months of her life.

"I was really fortunate to be able to just be with her the entire time and not be off on some set somewhere. At first, we didn't know how ill she was, and she didn't either, but as things progressed, it was much easier to say no to things. At a certain point, it was like, clearly: 'I'm not going to be doing anything.'"

She died in February, although not before he had taken her to the Golden Globes as his date, flying her to Madrid to see *The Promise* being shot and showing her a cut of the movie. "It's like a great movie for moms. I have to say when I first watched it, I said: 'I think moms are really going to like the movie. I showed it to her, and sure enough, she's like: 'I love it, Oscar. I love it.'"

He has since returned to work, appearing in Dan Fogelman's *Life Itself*, a multigenerational love story, spanning decades and continents, in which Isaac's character deals with the loss of his wife. "It was just a two-and-a-half-week shoot," he says. "It was my first thing back, and we shot here in New York. I was very nervous about it because I was like: 'I don't know if I can get it up for anybody.' You know? Or if I want to, and it ended up being so necessary in much the way that I said to you - the mirroring my own life. It's very dark and yet I found joy in it."

Which of his roles does he feel closest to? "They're all pretty close to me," he says. What would his friends say? "Maybe Nathan in *Ex Machina*," he says, but quickly retracts it. "I think they would say none of these were actually like me. Maybe this last one." He pauses. "Possibly."

The Promise is released in the UK on 28 April.

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Stevie Parker, the 'Kristen Stewart of music', explores depression and heartbreak in her debut record. She tells **Hannah J Davies** how pop music changed her life

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”



What better way to start an interview with an up-and-coming pop star than to sit for two hours in complete darkness, thinking about the end of the world?

According to Stevie Parker, there is no better way. She has invited me to the Barbican for a screening of Lars Von Trier's *Melancholia*. The sad, surreal sci-fi drama about a planet on a collision course with the Earth is, she says, one of the most accurate on-screen portrayals of a mental health crisis she has ever seen. You can see why the 24-year-old, as someone who has dealt with anxiety and depression, relates to it. In fact, she says, watching it helped to spark her creativity around such difficult issues. Parker's mum, a counsellor, recommended it to her when she was a teenager, and the singer has watched it at home more times than she can remember. Seeing it on the big screen for the first time, however, was "fucking intense".

"I think it kind of represents oblivion, doesn't it?" she says of the rogue planet. "Everyone is ultimately scared of oblivion and the unknown. But I think it's a giant metaphor for depression as well, because that's what it feels like: suddenly, you're faced with this sense of complete distance from yourself."

Talking to Parker, you get the sense that these are the sorts of existential wranglings that she considers on a regular basis. Her press material describes her as the Kristen Stewart of music, which may sound trite, but encapsulates her quite well - intelligent, introspective, softly spoken, nervous, unintentionally deadpan at times, unconcerned with fame. The most obvious clue to her lack of pretension is visual: like Steve Jobs, Parker wears the same uniform each day - a black or grey jumper, jeans and trainers. "Lack of image could be perceived as a gimmick," she concedes. "But that's just me being me. It's how I've dressed since I was six."

Her look, while rare in the bells-and-whistles world of pop, goes hand in hand with her sound: mournful, fragile and real, meshing the ambient soundscapes of the xx or her heroes, Massive Attack, with an attractive, endearingly fragile vocal à la early Ellie Goulding or Lorde. On her upcoming debut album *The Cure*, she's full of candour, as she explores sadness, heartache and moving on from her first serious girlfriend ("It all culminated with me getting ghosted, basically," she says).

This isn't the sort of music Parker always thought she would be making. "My dream was to write jangly electric

guitar music, join a band and sign to an indie label,” she says. “Then somewhere along the line I just fell in love with pop music and got very much redirected”. Parker grew up in Frome, Somerset, where she “never really partied” as a teen. She began singing in her sixth form, when she entered a school talent contest on a whim with an acoustic cover of Wonderwall.

“It sounds a very X Factor backstory,” she laughs. “I kind of realised: ‘Oh shit, maybe I’ve got something here.’”

At university in Bath she studied for a degree in music, but became disillusioned with the notion of being taught something that came to her intuitively, instead throwing herself into her own projects. Her depression and anxiety was another reason for being apart from the crowd. “I wasn’t really mingling with anyone. I was very isolated and going through a bit of a weird time,” she says. Parker seems a little hesitant to get into the specifics, understandably, so uses the film as an example. “It’s like when Justine’s husband says to her: ‘Maybe in the future, when you’re not having one of your sad days.’ It’s not really

sadness, it’s different. It’s not really an emotion, it’s a lack of it.”

Parker found a manager while at university, so decided to drop out in 2012 to try to make a go of things, playing small venues around the south-west. It was that manager who introduced her to Rough Trade’s Jeanette Lee, who would go from a mentor figure to Parker’s new manager (apart from Jarvis Cocker, she’s the only act Lee manages). Parker inked a major label deal in 2014, and - taking things slowly - released her debut EP last year.

Has Parker felt any untoward expectations on her, as a young, female singer making music that would fit comfortably on the Radio 1 A list? “I’ve never felt any pressure to write or not to write about certain things,” she says. “But sometimes I’ve felt like actually maybe I did write a song trying to please people a little bit more, and actually it didn’t feel authentic enough. I generally do write better if I’m coming from a place of sadness, or ambiguity, or emptiness.”

These are themes that The Cure tackles in a variety of ways. Blue is a stripped-back, arthousey piece of

‘Lack of image could be seen as a gimmick, but that’s just me being me’

near-EDM about being hung up on her ex, while Without You is drum-propelled, Rolling in the Deep-style pop that swells to a climax as Parker tries to convince herself - and her listeners - that she’s better off alone. Elsewhere, the title track is a delicate, London Grammar-ish lament on needing someone to “save me from myself again”.

“It kind of moves from a place of anxiety into a place of sadness and then back into strength,” Parker says of the record. Somewhat ironically, as her vulnerabilities and formative heartaches get an outing, Parker’s personal life is more settled. She and her girlfriend recently moved into a new house in Bristol, and she is getting more comfortable with performing live. “It kind of doesn’t do much for my anxiety levels, but it does a lot for my soul and my sense of self-worth.” Laughing, she adds: “I do the bare minimum in terms of audience interaction, though - I don’t have the gift of the gab.”

It’s fine, though, because Parker has a few other things besides: a knack for smart, raw pop and - of course - a sweatshirt for every occasion. *The Cure is out on 19 May on Virgin*

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Old enough to

Hollywood's latest staple, the geriatric buddy movie, is well past its sell-by date, says **Joe Queenan**. And why do so many of them have to star Michael Caine?

In the predictably inert, if not explicitly vile, geriatric buddy movie *Going in Style*, Michael Caine plays an octogenarian prole who is about to lose his home to a heartless bank. His cashflow problems necessitate the obligatory senior tete-a-tete with the obligatory insensitive bank manager, a stock character previously seen in *Saint Vincent* and *Drag Me to Hell*. Dissatisfied with the result of their little chinwag, Caine and his fellow retirees Morgan Freeman and Alan Arkin decide to rob the bank.

Going in Style was co-produced by Steven Mnuchin, a hedge-fund manager recently named secretary of the US treasury by the irrepressible Donald Trump. During the financial crisis of 2009, Mnuchin made a fortune by investing in a mortgage bank that had a nasty habit of foreclosing on peoples' homes. In fact, he invested in several of these enterprises. Anyone who thinks the Age of Irony is dead should think again.

Going in Style, a drab remake of a 1979 film that was equally pointless but somewhat less flabby, is the latest entry in a genre that includes everything from *Secondhand Lions* to *A Man Called Ove* to *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel*. That is, the sort of manipulative, nauseatingly heartwarming films that always seem to star Michael Caine and Maggie Smith, even when they do not.

The themes of these films about grumpy geriatrics are interchangeable. The world I knew is gone; nobody respects me any more; I can't figure out how to delete my email; I'm having trouble with my plumbing; it's time for me to go out and hang myself or rob a bank or shoot somebody. And, oh yeah, what's an avatar?



Such films profess to be sympathetic toward older people while subjecting them to merciless ridicule. At their best (the assorted *Marigold Hotels*), they are sappy and contrived; at worst, they are vulgar and stupid (*Dirty Grandpa*). Their very existence calls to mind the old chestnut: "Those whom the gods would destroy, they first make mad." For there is nothing in the world madder than paying to see a film about factory workers losing their homes when you know that the film was funded by a man who helped to put factory workers out on the street. Unless you yourself are one of the factory workers who lost their home, which makes things really nutty and postmodern. All of this suggests that there are depths to Hollywood's odiousness that have not yet been plumbed. But they will be. Just wait till Mnuchin gets back from Washington.

Films in this repellent genre exist because the moviegoing public is intoxicated by the concept

At best, these films are sappy and contrived; at worst, they are vulgar and stupid

of ersatz empowerment: if you can't work up the nerve to tell the bank to go screw itself, get Morgan Freeman to do it for you instead. It also helps that there are loads of classy, mostly British, actors who are more than happy to go through the motions in these no-heavy-lifting dramas. In the history of going through the motions, few actors have done so more consistently, more reliably and more motionlessly than Caine. But these days, Freeman is definitely giving him a run for his money.

"Sayonara senior films", as those of us past the age of 65 refer to them, are easy to make, as they require no special effects, no CGI, no stunts, no director, no screenwriter and not much in the way of costume changes. Assembled modularly and completely interchangeable, they are like a King Lear Lego set. Their only assets are the curmudgeonly types that populate them: Judi Dench, Bill Nighy, Maggie Smith, Tom Wilkinson, veteran thespians



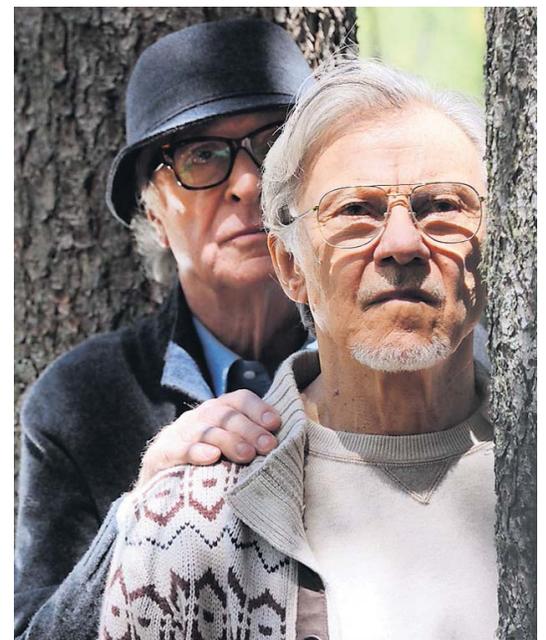
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who acquit themselves well no matter how dismal the material is.

Films that fall into the game-but-geriatric genre come in various formats. There is the Golden Girls version (*I'll See You in My Dreams*), the grumpy old middle-aged men version (*Last Vegas*), the gimpy gangsters version (*Righteous Kill*, *Knockaround Guys*), the not-for-hoi-polloi version (*A Late Quartet*, *Youth*) and the intergalactic geriatric version (*Space Cowboys*). There is also the senior Scandinavian sign-off saga, of which *A Man Called Ove* is a sterling example. With its affectionate portrayal of a crusty old bigot whose ice-cold heart is melted by the arrival of cuddly immigrant neighbours, *A Man Called Ove* is best thought of as Gran Swedish Torino. Or maybe just Gran Saab.

This alarming trend is not going to end any time soon. And even if Hollywood does stop using the emphatically elderly for target practice, it will simply lower the age at which the recently young and the previously beautiful become suitable objects of derision. First came *Hot Tub Time Machine*, which targeted baby boomers desperate to relive their misspent youth. Not to mention the *Hangover* trilogy. There is a whole bevy of films about people who view themselves as over the hill while still only in their 30s (*Bad Moms*). Cognisant of the industry's ability to tailor condescending films to ever-more-segmented, ever-more-specific age groups, ethnic groups and genders, there is sure to be an old-school Asian buddy film, where ageing alumni of the *Khmer Rouge* get together at the bingo hall every Saturday to reminisce about the good old days when Pol Pot was running the show. >>



Old and in the way (clockwise from main): **Michael Caine stars in *Going in Style* (with Alan Arkin and Morgan Freeman), *Secondhand***

Lions (with Robert Duvall) and **Youth** (with Harvey Keitel); **Robert De Niro in *Dirty Grandpa*; *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel*; and *The Sense of an Ending***





« Indeed, the worst thing about going to see films about hapless seniors may be having to sit through the previews for all the other films about hapless seniors. The day I went to see *Going in Style*, there was a preview for a film about a washed-up middle-aged gigolo trying to regain his stroke, as well as a film in which a very scary-looking Goldie Hawn is abducted by terrorists, along with the glamour-free Amy Schumer. In this case, Hollywood has synthesised the dreaded girls' night out flick (*Sisters*) with the equally bloodcurdling trash-talking senior chick flick (*Grandma*) to create something even more horrifying: the multi-generational bonding film.

There is a widespread belief that films come in cycles. Super-low-budget horror films go in and out of style, as do films about time travel or psychopathic roommates or blind nuns or morally compromised architects or hit men mourning the death of a lovable puppy. Alas, the 85-but-energised film fad seems to have plenty of life left in it. In addition to *Sense of an Ending*, *Hampstead* and *The Hatton Garden Job*, there is the impending William Shatner vehicle

Senior Moment, as well as new British film *Finding Your Feet*, in which retiree Imelda Staunton is forced to live on a council estate. Joanna Lumley also appears in the film, presumably as punishment for starring in the dead-before-arrival *Absolutely Fabulous: The Movie*, perhaps the worst film about rambunctious retirees ever made. Actually, there's no "perhaps" about it. The *Ab Fab* movie is appalling.

An interesting subset of the geriatric genre is the superannuated art film (*Sense of an Ending*, *Iris*, *45 Years*), all of which look classy and original on the surface but, at heart, have a message that is no different from all the others: What? You're still here? An exception is the remarkable Michael Haneke film



Alas, the geriatric film fad seems to have plenty of life left in it

Past it: Christopher Plummer in *Remember*; Absolutely Fabulous: The Movie (top)

Amour, whose subject is not so much love as the determination to preserve your lover's dignity. It is a universal human imperative to try to get through your life with your dignity intact. Hollywood does everything in its power to make sure this does not happen. See *Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?* Or *Sunset Boulevard*. Or take a look at Kirk Douglas's last few films.

No discussion of what the Italians might refer to as *la cinevecchia* or *il cinemantico* would be complete without mentioning *Remember*. This is the bizarre 2015 Atom Egoyan film about a dementia-plagued Holocaust survivor who escapes from a nursing home and then goes gunning for the concentration camp guard who tormented him as a youth. The cruel joke - on the audience, as well as on the addled avenger - is that he himself is the Nazi guard he has been hunting. The addled Aryan doesn't realise this until the very end of the film because, well, he's got Alzheimer's, and when you have got Alzheimer's, you tend to forget little things such as your role in the Holocaust.

I think movie-makers need to let this genre go.

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It is 1914. As the Great War looms, the mighty Ottoman Empire is crumbling. Constantinople, the once vibrant, multicultural capital on the shores of the Bosphorus, is about to be consumed by chaos.

Michael Boghosian (Oscar Isaac), arrives in the cosmopolitan hub as a medical student determined to bring modern medicine back to Siroun, his ancestral village in Southern Turkey where Turkish Muslims and Armenian Christians have lived side by side for centuries.

Photo-journalist Chris Myers (Christian Bale), has come here only partly to cover geo-politics. He is mesmerized by his love for Ana (Charlotte le Bon), an Armenian artist he has accompanied from Paris after the sudden death of her father.

When Michael meets Ana, their shared Armenian heritage sparks an attraction that explodes into a romantic rivalry between the two men. As the Turks form an alliance with Germany and the Empire turns violently against its own ethnic minorities, their conflicting passions must be deferred while they join forces to survive even as events threaten to overwhelm them.

The one promise that must be kept is to live on and tell the story.

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12A MODERATE VIOLENCE OCCASIONAL BLOODY IMAGES

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The original ...
Skepta's
Shutdown
filmed at the
Barbican

Attack the block

The rough, grainy style of early grime videos made perfect sense for a genre that prided itself on gritty realism. But what do the originators make of the imagery being co-opted by pop stars such as Charli XCX and Dua Lipa? **Dan Hancox** reports



... to the
mainstream
Dua Lipa's Blow
Your Mind, also
filmed at the
Barbican

With grime's recent and unexpected acceptance into the mainstream, it's no surprise that stylistic accoutrements and cash-ins followed. In 2017, you can buy T-shirts in H&M with "GRIME" emblazoned on them, catch Ghetts popping up on your Instagram feed in sponsored posts advertising Clarks shoes, or head to Airbnb for a £190, three-day "grime

experience" in London with a dedicated tour guide. The moment in *Withnail and I* when Danny intones sadly, "They're selling hippy wigs in Woolworths, man," has arrived for grime, as it does for all genres.

One unexpected consequence of this has been an increase in popularity of the video iconography that used to be consigned to cheap-and-cheerful DIY grime DVDs, or the late, lamented UK urban-music station Channel

U: a vision of the British capital dominated not by Big Ben and Buckingham Palace, but brutalist tower blocks, chicken shops, off-licences, bus stops and bored teenagers mucking about on council estates. A bit of borrowed urban grit is not a new thing in music videos - think of Aphex Twin (and Chris Cunningham's) dystopian Thamesmead in *Come to Daddy* - but tower blocks now seem to be everywhere, often without any obvious reason.

They are there in the video for Mura Masa's first hit from late last year, the wonky electronic pop anthem *Love\$ick*, featuring a star turn from A\$AP Rocky. The video tells the story of three teenage boys on a London council estate partying, smoking weed, stealing a pizza delivery bike, letting off fireworks and generally getting up to things they shouldn't. It was shot in Clapton in north-east London on grainy 35mm - an interesting location, given



◀ that Mura Masa is from Guernsey, and A\$AP Rocky is from New York.

This London is there in the follow-up, too, Mura Masa's single with Charli XCX, 1 Night: humble lighting, bold colours, and stylish teens mooching around on, yes, a council estate. The video for Dua Lipa's Blow Your Mind is shot in the Barbican, the same brutalist location used in Skepta's seminal Shutdown video, perhaps a turning point for grime's visuals making their way into the mainstream. Mabel's summery 2016 pop single, Thinking of You, sees flashes of interior colour contrasted with council-block walkways and exterior shots in front of Ernő Goldfinger's huge grey-yellow Trellick tower. The Trellick is a backdrop in numerous grime videos, along with its partner in east London, the Balfon tower, and the Alexandra Road estate (backdrop for both the 1975's Somebody Else video last year, and Slewdem Mafia's Nothing Like Yours).

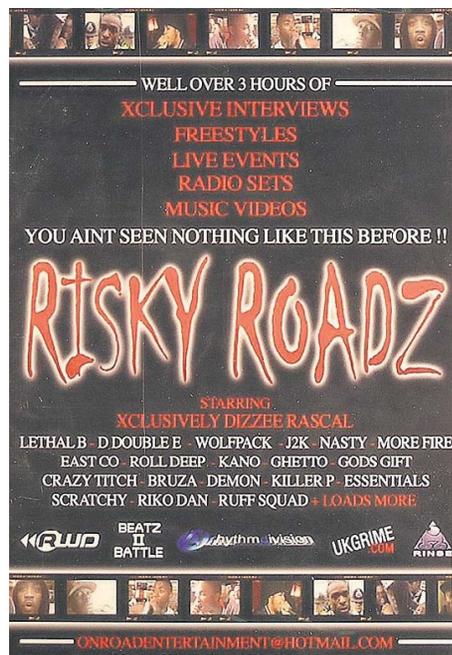
The grime-video aesthetic has its roots in practicality. When grime started in the early 2000s, it wasn't really a visual genre: digital cameras had not been widely adopted, smartphones didn't exist and press interest was limited. The hub for all grime activity was pirate radio, which - being illegal and with the stations constantly having to move location to evade the authorities - was hidden from view by necessity. Roony Keefe, creator of the seminal Risky Roadz DVD series in 2004, and now a music video director and black-cab driver, was working in east London's legendary Rhythm Division record shop when he had the idea to put some visuals to the sounds coming out of the local pirates.

"There weren't many music videos from grime artists at all

back then," he says. "It was all semi-anonymous. MCs would come into Rhythm Division, and I remember saying quietly to my colleague: 'Oh, is that so-and-so?'" Keefe borrowed some money from his nan to buy a camcorder, and Risky Roadz was born - he would travel around London to meet MCs in their local area, leading to memorable scenes such as Kano, late at night, wearing a dressing gown and holding a cup of tea, spitting his lyrics a cappella in the street. Or God's Gift freestyling while sitting on a wall, as children play on bikes and a London bus rolls past in the background.

This was partly for convenience, but it worked stylistically, too. Grime isn't escapist music with an escapist style - it is not about artistic camouflage or fantasy. It is about the very real places it came from: the genre abounds with neighbourhood anthems, from SLK's North Weezy or Hectic Squad's What Do You Know About Ips (Ipswich) in

'We wanted to show what the scene was about ... London as we knew it'



Balfon tower, Trellick tower and a Risky Roadz flyer

the early days, to, more recently, The Square's Lewisham McDeez or Harlem Spartans' Kennington Where It Started.

"It's a DIY style," Keefe says of the Risky Roadz approach. "It was birthed from wanting to get something done, and making it happen, regardless of budgets or camera quality. We just wanted to show what the scene was about, and show London as we knew it - not just what people think London is, because there are misconceptions that it's all china teaware and crumpets. There's a lot more to it than that."

Keefe is now making music videos for the same artists he originally filmed on the camera his nan loaned him the money for - and is finding there is a real desire to capture grime's original visual style from the early 2000s, as well as its musical essence. The likes of Kano and Skepta, in going back to their roots with their most recent albums, have been pulling in Keefe to make their music videos look like old-school grime, as well as sound like it.

"They have to come on my wave," Skepta told me in 2015, talking about the sudden interest from US rap stars in grime. "I understand the objective now, and like, I ain't going to fucking America to shoot a video. They need to come to the roads with me." This was exactly what happened with the video for It Ain't Safe, which was shot on location on Meridian Walk, the Tottenham estate Skepta had grown up on. The guest rapper, A\$AP Mob's Young Lord, came to north London, donned a track-suit and hung out on a London estate. "That video has become

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kind of iconic,” Keefe recalls. “Skeptta wanted it shot on my old Risky Roadz original camera, same with the video for Man. It’s kind of crazy that since those, there has been a resurgence of VHS-looking videos.”

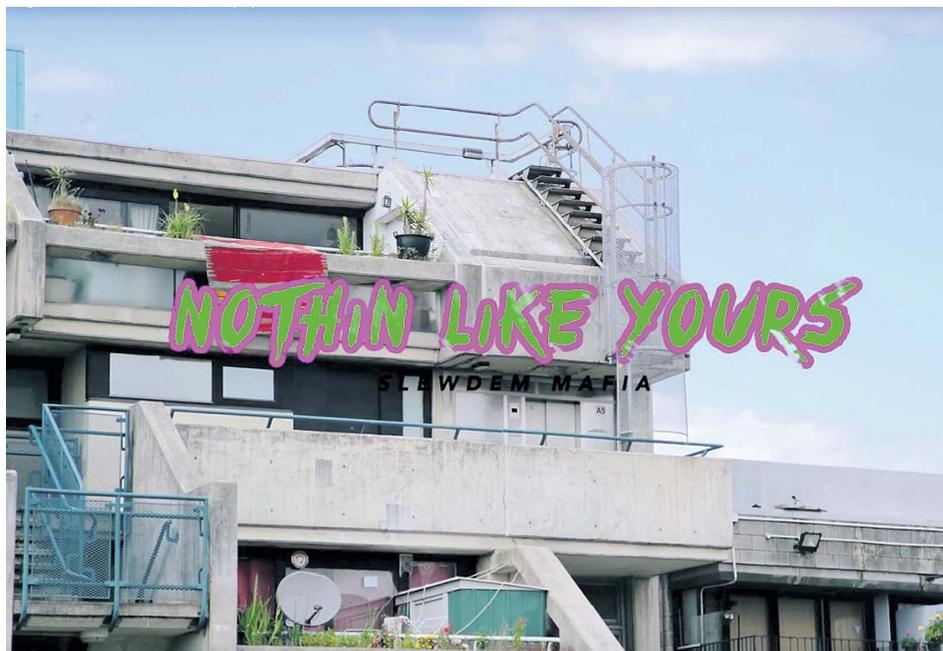
“It’s kind of rebellious because it’s not conforming to this 4K [resolution] gloss. You can hide behind crazy studio lighting, but put someone in front of a VHS camera and a standard lens, and you’re going to get something a lot more real.”

Keefe is amused that the style has seeped into the mainstream. It’s a jarring combination when the songs don’t sound grimey, aren’t about London and don’t even try to conjure its atmosphere. “When you put our kind of grimey visuals to a really pop tune, they instantaneously become a little bit rebellious, I think. Because there’s that sense of being in places they shouldn’t be, or maybe there’s a kind of yin and yang to it; polished music and an unpolished backdrop.”

Sarah Boardman at the production company Pulse Films first spotted the romanticising of council estates several years ago. “Nowadays, when it’s a London video, it’s going to be a bit grimey, you’ll have a sort of generic Trellick tower shot - we have seen it so much that on our end, on the directors’ side, we’re very much wary of that now.”

Nevertheless, it’s an opportune moment for brutalist tower blocks such as Trellick and Balfron to be cropping up in mainstream

‘You can argue there is a certain brutalist quality to grime as a genre’



Mura Masa’s Love\$ick, filmed in east London; Mabel’s Thinking of You, filmed at Trellick tower; Charli XCX’s 1 Night; Slewdem Mafia’s Nothing Like Yours, filmed at Alexandra Road in north-west London

pop videos - the last decade has seen the postwar architectural style become ever more fashionable; you can buy Trellick tower mugs, plates, T-shirts - even a £150 model for your mantelpiece. The absurdity is that this has coincided with a crisis of affordable housing, and waves of gentrification that have meant the very estates being fetishised for their urban edge are more likely to provide the home for an immersive theatrical experience or a supper club, than for the kinds of working-class Londoners who might listen to, or indeed make, grime.

Last month, Charlie Clemoes, an associate editor at Failed Architecture, presented a series of videos at the Royal Institute of British Architects making the connection between brutalist estates and grime and rap. “Even going back to earlier in hip-hop, it’s so architectural,” Clemoes says: “It comes from the built environment. I don’t think it’s a superficial thing when these videos look this way. You can argue there is a certain brutalist quality to grime as a genre. Like the architecture, it’s very stripped down. It’s saying: we’re not going to embellish or decorate. It’s a very radical gesture in a way.”

Clemoes is ambivalent about the ubiquity of these estates in mainstream pop culture. “I think maybe people like the aesthetic, and also the fact that, whoa, there were these huge social housing blocks that were really respectful of the intellect of the people living there, saying ordinary people deserve this clever stuff. But why is everyone into it now? Is it because we miss something profound about that kind of housing, that collectivity, or is it just kind of proto-ruin ‘porn’, before it has actually become a ruin?”

The idea of buildings such as the Trellick tower becoming empty icons of cool, with no consideration of who is (or isn’t) living in them, may seem pretty distasteful. But then music videos didn’t cause the housing crisis. If grime has achieved one thing with its ascension into popular consciousness, maybe it’s that it has made the look of Britain’s urban centres seem worthy of being on camera, and broadcast to the world. And if everyone else wants a piece of that too, well, they can always buy a tea towel.

Conductor John Wilson is best known for his Hollywood-themed concerts, but he will also be turning his hand to some of Britain's greatest classical composers at this year's Proms. By **Stephen Moss**

Oklahoma! or bust

'Nourish that a little more, really make it sing," says John Wilson. "Keep those quavers purposeful." The conductor and the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra are rehearsing Mendelssohn's Hebrides Overture, a piece the orchestra could play perfectly adequately in its sleep, but there will be no slumber here. With Wilson at the helm, this ship will rock.

The conductor is best known for his Hollywood-themed concerts at the Proms - a staple of the festival for the best part of a decade. And so it came as a surprise to some when, in February, he stepped in at the last moment to conduct the premiere of a trumpet concerto by Mark-Anthony Turnage and Rachmaninov's second symphony with the London Symphony Orchestra, and received rave reviews. It's clear there is more to Wilson than an intimate knowledge of the Great American Songbook.

The BBCSSO, with whom he has had a long association, certainly know this - the orchestra recently made the 45-year-old its associate guest conductor, and the concert he is rehearsing today in Glasgow is his first with it in his new role. He will also conduct them at the Proms this summer, and makes a second visit to the Royal Albert Hall the following month to perform Oklahoma! - he isn't about to abandon Hollywood - with his own hand-picked orchestra.

After six hours of rehearsal, during which he has relentlessly rooted out anonymous quavers and inimical minims - "I may be doing it right or I may be doing it tastelessly, but let me do it my way," he says - we talk on the stage where he has just been rehearsing. A public conversation with no public.

Wilson started working with the BBCSSO in 2002, initially doing mainly light music. "I've always done that and I've never apologised for it, but they gradually

John Wilson on the podium ... 'The Planets is a party piece of mine'

'I may be doing it right or I may be doing it tastelessly, but let me do it my way'

let me spread my wings. I'm grateful to them for not pigeonholing me." He will conduct Vaughan Williams and Holst's The Planets with the orchestra at the Proms - another standard repertoire piece that he promises to breathe fresh life into. "The Planets is a party piece of mine; I do it differently every time. A performance is only ever a snapshot of how you feel about a piece on any particular day," he says.

Last year, he conducted Madama Butterfly for Glyndebourne Touring Opera, and is in discussion with the festival for a future project - he won't say what. He also has three other operas lined up. "My work is guest-conducting symphony orchestras in standard repertoire," he says. "I'm never going to moan about the fact that there are some people who think I only do one thing - better to be pigeonholed in the eyes of the public for something than to sit at home twiddling your thumbs, but my musical diet is very varied."

A working-class boy from Gateshead, he fell in love with music (and Hollywood musicals in particular), taught himself to play the piano with the help of a musical mother, and formed his first orchestra at the age of 16.

"I had a good school music teacher who took me under his wing," he recalls. "There was a lot of amateur music-making - brass bands, orchestras, choirs and operatic societies doing Gilbert and Sullivan. I cut my teeth doing all of that and loved every minute

of it, which is probably why I've always been a practical musician. I've always known I was going to be in music. There was a fire in my belly. I still get thrilled if anybody rings me up and offers me a gig.

"I never wanted to just do one thing," he says. "I guess that comes from the fact that I'm largely self-taught, and when you're 10 or 11 and just listening to music because you love it you've got nobody to tell you what you should or shouldn't be listening to. That manifests itself in a rather zany repertoire list - I have done lots of things that other conductors might not touch."

Wilson went on to the Royal College of Music, joining as what he calls a "reluctant and not very good percussion player" but switched to composition and, later, conducting. "I had a couple of professors who ensured I was given the time and encouragement to blossom, and I went from being almost thrown out at the end of my first year to winning the Tagore Gold Medal [the college's foremost award for students]. They just let me do my thing."

He started his own eponymous orchestra when he was just 22. "It happened by accident," he says. "I was playing the piano at the Grosvenor House hotel when I was still a student. I did afternoon tea with a violinist and evening concerts with a jazz trio. So I ended up having two sets of friends - Royal College of Music classical musicians, and friends from the Guildhall and the Academy who were jazz players, and it was the fusion of those two sets of enthusiasms that led us to play this jazz-tinged orchestral music. We did it for fun, and then it went from being fun to being something that people outside of us were interested in, and we got offered gigs and residencies." The John Wilson Orchestra was born, and is still touring, and wowing audiences at the Proms each year where their concert is always one of the first to sell out.

"What I am interested in is songs, whether they be by Schubert or Cole Porter or Harold Arlen or Jerome Kern," he says. He is a one-man scourge of musical barriers. "What is the division? Why is it there? Why is Schubert any different from the best songs of Arlen, which are in themselves complete emotional worlds and take just as much care and attention to detail in interpretation and delivery? It's either worth doing or it's not."



i The Proms begin on 14 July. John Wilson conducts the BBCSSO on 25 July and Rodgers and Hammerstein's Oklahoma! with the John Wilson Orchestra on 11 August.

Reviews



Film Pop Jazz Classical Streaming Television

Sheryl Crow Page 23



LA MELTDOWN

Dan Lindsay's documentary LA92 compiles grim and powerful archive footage of the riots that erupted in the wake of the beating of Rodney King 25 years ago. Review, page 21

The F&M Playlist

Lust for Life
Lana Del Rey feat the Weeknd
Slow burning, smoky doo-wop pop from the queen of troubled Hollywood glamour and her equally melancholy guest.

Out the Way
Nadine Shah
Rusty and malevolent post-punk scores the Tyneside songwriter's furious narrative about nationalism and narrow-mindedness.

Harry Styles
Ever Since New York
Empty swimming pools and whispered prayers - the solo star's second song is pure whisky-soaked, tortured-heart Americana.

Paramore
Hard Times
The Tennessee group have evolved from teen-angst stadium fillers to tropical, 80s pop revivalists who write about hitting rock bottom.



Prince
Deliverance
A euphoric eruption of gospel-infused blues from the late star's vaults, part of his posthumous, newly mastered EP.



By Peter Bradshaw



A very British kind of magic

Gemma Arterton shines as a member of the Ministry of Information's film unit tasked with keeping wartime spirits up. But Bill Nighy, playing a past-his-prime thespian, steals every scene

Tom Buckley (Sam Claflin) thinks he's found one: twin sisters who live on the coast and pinched their boozy old dad's boat to join in the heroic Dunkirk rescue. Catrin goes to interview them and finds it not quite as heroic as all that, but she spins the story into golden schmaltz and finds that grumpy Tom might just be falling in love with her. Her own situation is complicated, and then the men from the ministry chuck a spanner in the works by declaring the story needs a lantern-jawed American character to help persuade Uncle Sam to join the war.

It's a film unashamedly and cheerfully in love with the conjuring tricks and artifice of cinema. There's a showstopping matte shot of massed troops on the Dunkirk beach, painted on to glass, and a demonstration of how dubbing and editing can create an illusion of physical presence. Truffaut talked about *la nuit americaine* - here's a film about *la nuit britannique*, a very British kind of film magic. In an earlier scene, Amanda Root plays an actress wearing a hat that recalls Celia Johnson in *Brief Encounter*, and later there's a scene next to a mocked-up third-class railway carriage.

Arterton brings a rather beautiful kind of restraint to her role; it's a part to inspire gallantry and Claflin's Tom rises to the occasion in his maladroit male way. But Nighy, inevitably, owns every scene he's in. When Sammy's sister Sophie (Helen McCrory) tells him he's still a handsome man, Nighy does a subtle series of bird-like head movements before answering simply: "Yes."

Rules Don't Apply

★★★★★

Dir: Warren Beatty. With: Warren Beatty, Lily Collins, Alden Ehrenreich. 127 mins. Cert: 12A

Ludwig Wittgenstein once said that we cannot experience death because death is not an event in life. But then Wittgenstein never had to sit through this unbearable new film from Warren Beatty (*left*), his first in 15 years, co-written, produced and directed by its star: Warren Beatty, who may well be affecting a kind of kinship with his subject, the crazy but allegedly lovable billionaire recluse Howard Hughes. Beatty may also like the low lighting Hughes favoured. It's a plodding, plonking,

Their Finest

★★★★★

Dir: Lone Scherfig. With: Gemma Arterton, Bill Nighy, Sam Claflin. 117 mins. Cert: 12A

You'd need a heart of stone and a funny bone of porridge not to enjoy this sweet-natured and eminently lovable British film - a 1940s adventure, with moments of brashness and poignancy. It's all about the love that flowers in the ruins of blitz-hit London and in the dusty offices of the Ministry of Information's film unit as various high-minded creative types use the magic of cinema to keep the nation's pecker up.

These people are looking for real stories of plucky civilian defiance to inspire the population and keep them undaunted in the face of Adolf's aggression. And they're applying the Liberty Valance rules about printing the legend when the truth isn't sufficiently rousing.

It's about romance in a setting of wartime propaganda - actually, it's about the romance of wartime propaganda - adapted by Gaby Chiappe from Lissa Evans's novel *Their Finest Hour and a Half*, and directed by Lone Scherfig. They have created a tasty array of roles in period garb with period chat, for both the lead and supporting characters, in which latter category there's a simply outrageous part for

Beautiful kind of restraint ... Gemma Arterton

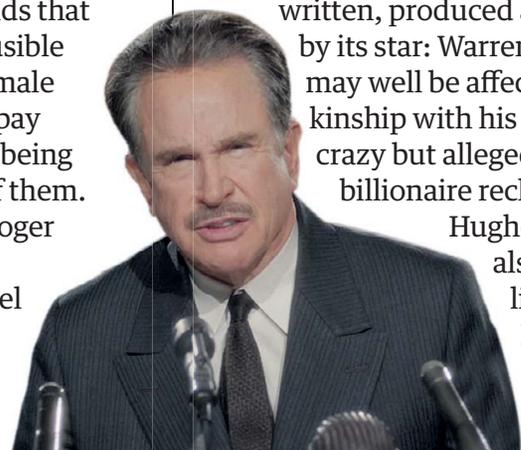
Bill Nighy: a colossally proportioned scene-stealer.

Nighy plays Ambrose Hilliard, a cravat-wearing actor of a certain age whose finest hour, professionally speaking, was 10 years before the war, when he was cast as a brilliant police inspector in a popular series of thrillers. Now he is a thespian of advancing years and retreating fame who is livid when his agent Sammy, tremendously played by Eddie Marsan, suggests over lunch that he should be playing the drunk old uncle and not the romantic lead in a new film about Dunkirk. Sammy implores Ambrose to remain calm and his client replies, with jaw-clenching restraint: "I am calm. What you are seeing is controlled anger, tempered with icy detachment."

Gemma Arterton plays the clever and industrious Catrin Cole, who has been seconded to war work in the film unit on the condescending grounds that she can turn out "slop": plausible women's dialogue for the female characters. She's on a lower pay grade than the men, despite being more talented than the lot of them.

Sharp-faced bureaucrat Roger Swain (Richard E Grant) and Korda-esque producer Gabriel Baker (Henry Goodman) are yearning for a real story to light a fire in the nation's hearts, and head writer

The film is cheerfully in love with the conjuring tricks and artifice of cinema



clonking, clanking vanity project, watching which is like drowning in suet or being alone for two hours in the kind of airless hotel room that Hughes reputedly holed up in: a lumpily unformed, unwieldy film with a kind of picturesque Old Hollywood setting that Woody Allen could have dashed off in six months. But I think even Woody Allen would not have awarded himself a sex scene with his twentysomething directee. Yeeeeeshh. And to crank up the emotion, Beatty will keep slathering the adagietto from Mahler's fifth all over the soundtrack, often at deafening volume. Alden Ehrenreich - recently so terrific in the Coens' *Hail, Caesar!* - is lifeless and boring in the fictional role of Frank, one of Hughes's army of drivers, employed to chauffeur around the pert but bewildered wannabe female stars that Hughes signed up on retainer contracts, set up in apartments, and kept waiting around for the promised screen test. One of these is fresh-faced Baptist Marla Mabrey, played by Lily Collins, who is every bit as lost in this film as Ehrenreich. Defying the company rule that Hughes employees are not allowed to date, the pair naturally fall in love, but then Hughes takes an intrusive interest in their lives, and in tandem with this creepy development, Beatty himself takes a much, much bigger role in the film than had hitherto seemed likely. We had, to paraphrase Carly Simon, been betting the film wasn't about him. We were wrong. It's an unendurable exercise in narcissism. **PB**

Clash

★★★★★

Dir: Mohamed Diab. With: Nelly Karim, Hani Adel, El Sabeii Mohamed. 98 mins. Cert: 15

The Egyptian revolution that dislodged Hosni Mubarak in 2011 and its chaotic aftermath continues to give us some fascinating films. Here is the latest, a rather amazing New Wave-style drama that combines claustrophobic intimacy



with some logistically epic scene-setting. The year is 2013, the army has just unseated Mohamed Morsi's Muslim Brotherhood, and pro-army and pro-MB factions clash on the streets. A reporter and photographer are arrested and thrown into the back of a police van, which is the sole camera setting; soon, other demonstrators from both sides are chucked in - along with, in one particularly chaotic scene, a lenient cop. They are crowded in there for hours in the boiling heat with no water and only a plastic bottle to pee in. Through the grille-meshed window they get glimpses of the turmoil on the city streets. At first, it looks like a no-budget movie with about a dozen people shot in a single location, but the director, Mohamed Diab, stages some spectacular riot scenes outside, which are all the more staggering for intruding on this enclosed space so unexpectedly. The movie stunningly replicates that sense of inside and outside that must be felt by witnesses to any historic moment: the private debate, the enclosed conflict, and the theatre of confrontation unfolding beyond. What a dynamic piece of cinema. **PB**

Unforgettable

★★★★★

Dir: Denise Di Novi. With: Katherine Heigl, Rosario Dawson. 100 mins. Cert: 15

Here is the week's entirely innocent pleasure: a cheerfully outrageous gloss-trash erotic noir in the style that screenwriter Joe Eszterhas used to crank out so lucratively in the 80s and 90s. Katherine Heigl takes the creepy blondeopath role playing Tessa, who has been divorced on

Noirish fun ... Katherine Heigl, left, confronts Rosario Dawson in *Unforgettable*; below, *The Happiest Day in the Life of Olli Mäki*

grounds of infidelity and lives near her ex-husband David (Geoff Stults). He has remarried online publishing editor Julia (Rosario Dawson). Tessa is furious that David and Julia get custody of her mini-me daughter two days a week and, by posing as a nice, neighbourly person, she plots to send Julia round the bend and get her claws back into her husband. There is something horribly enjoyable in Heigl's villainous performance, along with Cheryl Ladd as her equally unsettling mother. No awards silverware for this. But a bit of fun. **PB**

The Happiest Day in the Life of Olli Mäki

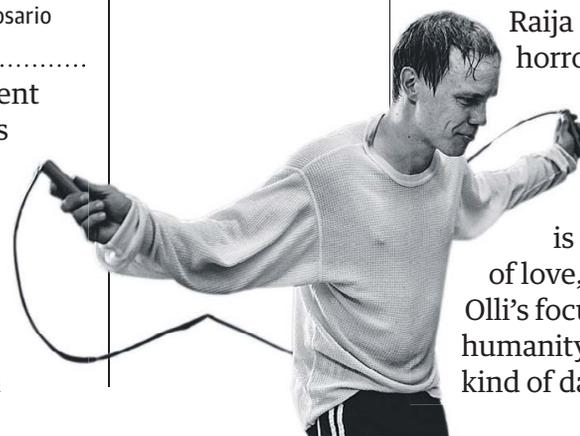
★★★★★

Dir: Juho Kuosmanen. With: Jarkki Lahti, Oona Airola, Eero Milonoff. 93 mins. Cert: 12A

Here is a treat and a delight: this lovely film from Finnish director Juho Kuosmanen is a gentle, shrewd, somehow mysterious love story, based on real life, beautifully photographed in luminous black-and-white and drawing inspiration from Scorsese and Truffaut. It is inspired by the Finnish boxer Olli Mäki, who electrified fans in 1962 by getting a shot at the world featherweight title, fighting on home turf against visiting American star Davey Moore. It is to be the greatest day of his life - but not for the reasons he might once have thought. The movie has Jarkki Lahti playing the intense, wiry Olli, who finds that as the big fight approaches, he has fallen in love with a beautiful young schoolteacher,

Raija (Oona Airola) - to the horror of his tightly wound

trainer and manager, Elis, played by Eero Milonoff. Elis's marriage appears to be crumbling, and he is aghast at the distractions of love, which might mess with Olli's focus. It is a film of immense humanity and charm: the very best kind of date movie. **PB**



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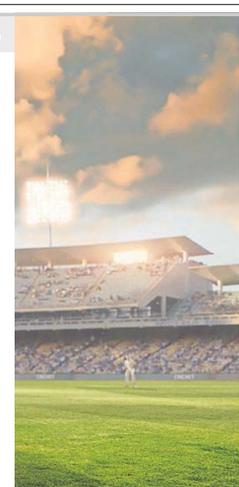
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QANTAS Spirit of Australia



Bunch of Kunst

★★★★★

Dir: Christine Franz. 103 mins. Cert: 18

We know about British bands making it big in their 20s - but what about in their 40s? Christine Franz's excellent documentary about Sleaford Mods shows us middle-aged men whose dedication, creativity and relative lack of success helped them keep it real until they blew up - as they say - in the last few years. Refreshingly, even gloriously, they've got the maturity and sense of humour to get a handle on it all. Jason Williamson - who, like Joy Division's Ian Curtis, once worked in a benefits office - rips Austerity Britain a fresh one with his uncompromisingly aggressive, funny post-punk stream-of-rap-consciousness. His glamorous wife Claire is a star turn, drolly telling us about the "cunt flu" Jason suffers for a week after returning home after touring, grumpy about being made to load the dishwasher. Bad language is what incidentally earned this an 18 certificate: "kunst" is German for "art". **PB**

Finding Fatimah

★★★★★

Dir: Oz Arshad. With: Danny Ashok, Asmara Gabrielle, Nina Wadia. 99 mins. Cert 12A

There's something desperate in this indie comedy about the British Muslim dating scene; the cast are lumbered with a leaden script and plodding direction that wouldn't pass muster for TV in a thousand years. In a gallery of not-funny cartoon characters, two people are supposed to stand out. Danny Ashok plays Shahid, a shy, nice guy who is divorced (a real no-no in his community) and looking for love. He has a day job selling computer printers, but is supposed to be a standup comic competing for the imaginary TV show Muslims With Talent. Asmara Gabrielle plays Fatimah, a hardworking GP who is lonely and struggling with an anger-management problem - which is as unfunny and unconvincing as everything else in the film. It's nice to see Nina Wadia here in the small role of Shahid's mum, but her talent is wasted. **PB**

**Life-saver ...
Jessica Chastain
in The
Zookeeper's Wife**

The Zookeeper's Wife

★★★★★

Dir: Niki Caro. With: Jessica Chastain, Johan Heldenbergh, Daniel Brühl. 127 mins. Cert: 12A

When zookeeper Jan Zabinski (Johan Heldenbergh), explains to his wife, Antonina (Jessica Chastain), how they can use the tunnels in their now-empty zoo to help Jews escape the Warsaw ghetto during the second world war, she nods, gives a faraway look and says: "A human zoo." It's a flabber-gasting bit of writing, and there are simply too many moments like it here. Chastain polishes her Polish accent to the point of distraction, while Heldenbergh and Daniel Brühl pump the brakes a bit on their inflection. The movie works best, though, when Caro keeps things dialogue-free. The scenes in the ghetto are horrifying, and find corners of life that haven't been explored in the myriad Holocaust films that have come before - despite starvation



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and terror, for instance, there are still teachers and pupils. More than 300 Jews were rescued via the zoo, and *The Zookeeper's Wife* is a story worth telling. **Jordan Hoffman**

The Transfiguration
★★★★★

Dir: Michael O'Shea. With: Eric Ruffin, Chloe Levine, Jelly Bean, Dangelo Bonneli. 97 mins. Cert: 15

The *Transfiguration* opens tantalisingly in a public restroom as a middle-aged man, perturbed by the sounds coming from the next stall, hurries out. It's then that we're introduced to 14-year-old vampire Milo (Eric Ruffin), sucking the last drops of blood from the neck of his latest victim. A loner, living in a rundown New York housing project, Milo is constantly bullied by gang members for his steely reticence. Haunted by the death of his mother, who killed herself in their apartment, he spends his days in his room, watching gruesome nature videos online and VHS tapes of vampire films. When he meets Sophia (Chloe Levine), a deeply troubled girl, he's visibly tempted to snack on her. Instead, he opts to ask her out: their first date is to a screening of Murnau's *Nosferatu*. The *Transfiguration* is a character study first and foremost, spending all of its time with Milo. Problem is, he's so opaque that as a protagonist, he's completely impenetrable. **Nigel M Smith**

The Belko Experiment
★★★★★

Dir: Greg McLean. With: John Gallagher Jr, Adria Arjona, Michael Rooker. 89 mins. Cert: 18

Ever had one of those days when you felt like killing all your co-workers in a creative array of graphically violent ways? Then you'll probably get a kick out of this nasty little horror. In the Colombian branch of American corporation Belko, it seems like just another day at the office until something strange starts going on with security. Who are all these new guards and why are they sending the locals home? Before long, the employees are listening to a message via the company's intercom, ordering them to kill one another in order to survive. The *Belko Experiment* has a whiff of familiarity, bringing to mind *Battle Royale* and *The Hunger Games*, and though James Gunn's script is hardly a work of groundbreaking originality, it's a lot more fun than most horror films at the moment. **Benjamin Lee**

This nasty tale of co-workers forced to kill each other is more fun than most horror films today

Letters from Baghdad
★★★★★

Dirs: Zeva Oelbaum, Sabine Krayenbuhl. With: Tilda Swinton. 93 mins. Cert: PG.

It is one of the injustices of the universe that the fame of TE Lawrence, AKA Lawrence of Arabia, lives on, while far fewer people are familiar with the biography of his contemporary and comrade-in-diplomacy, Gertrude Bell (1868-1926), a character no less charismatic and compelling. This finely wrought documentary serves as a handy summary for those who want a cinematic introduction to her sprawling, singular story. An unseen Tilda Swinton reads extracts from the many elegantly written letters Bell sent while she was finding her feet in the Middle East, learning Farsi and Arabic, and then later exploring the desert, where she developed a particular bond with its people. Eventually, along with Lawrence, she would help to shape the modern states we have today - especially Iraq - before moving into the field of archaeology. **Leslie Felperin**

LA 92
★★★★★

Dirs: Dan Lindsay, TJ Martin. 114 mins. Cert: n/a
It is 25 years since civil unrest convulsed LA in the wake of the beating of Rodney King, and five documentaries are being released to coincide with the anniversary. *LA 92* comprises nothing but archival footage of events: it is a fitting way of telling the story. From King's beating, captured on camcorder by a member of the public, to the scenes of looting, violence and disorder that followed, this was an occasion defined by video footage. Shorn of narration and talking-head commentary, the images speak grimly and potently for themselves. Yet *LA 92*'s reliance on news and eyewitness footage leaves it vulnerable to the same limitations as that footage, namely the prioritising of sensationalism over insight. At times, the film resembles little more than a highlights reel of the riots' most graphic moments. Arresting, certainly, but also something of a missed opportunity. **Gwilym Mumford**



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By Alexis Petridis



Game raised

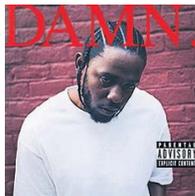
Luscious harmonies, psychedelic soul, guests including Rihanna and Bono, brilliantly edgy storytelling ... this is an artist in career-best form

Kendrick Lamar

Damn

INTERSCOPE/TOP DAWG ENTERTAINMENT

★★★★★



In the weeks before the release of Kendrick Lamar's fourth album, rumours circulated about its contents. Sources informed the world that *To Pimp a Butterfly*'s follow-up proper would be more commercial, involve "African tribal elements and sounds" and be an album based not around the funk and jazz influences in which *To Pimp a Butterfly* and the outtakes collection, untitled unmastered, were rooted, but the harsh, spare sound of trap. But the most intriguing suggestion came from Lamar himself, who told the *New York Times* it wasn't going to be another state-of-the-nation address: "To Pimp a Butterfly was addressing the problem. I'm in a space now where I'm not addressing the problem any more."

Like a lot of things Lamar has done, that seemed like an exercise in deflating expectations. Since *To Pimp a Butterfly* was acclaimed not merely as a great album but a work of vast social importance, Lamar has seemed conflicted about shouldering the voice-of-a-generation tag. Understandably so: it's one thing being compared to Marvin Gaye or even John Coltrane, quite another being compared to Mahatma Gandhi, as happened in one overheated broadsheet profile.

The sense that Lamar has been trying to shake off some of that earnestness - by handing out verses not just to Beyoncé and Kanye West but also to Maroon 5 and Sia - has been hard to avoid. As if to underline it, *Damn* arrives bearing an old-fashioned backwards message. Played back-



wards, a track called Fear finds Lamar bemoaning "the pain in my heart carrying the burden for the struggle".

And yet the main differences between *Damn* and *To Pimp a Butterfly* seem more musical than lyrical. It takes less than two minutes to reference the Fox News-generated controversy about his performance of *Alright*, and a couple more to home in on the subjects of black empowerment. Later, there are suggestions America is teetering on the brink of apocalypse, that Trump's victory has left "all of us buried", talk of "race barriers" and calls for the disenfranchised to "parade the streets with your voice proudly". It has to be said, for an album that's

Still feels episodic and expansive ... Kendrick Lamar

supposed to be not addressing the problem, it does a pretty good job of addressing the problem.

Despite the presence of post-bop quartet Badbadnotgood amid a supporting cast that also includes Rihanna and U2, the jazz interludes sprinkled through *To Pimp a Butterfly* are noticeable by their absence. Badbadnotgood's contribution to *Lust* seems restricted to providing a spectral guitar figure, beautiful but restrained.

Damn still sounds rooted in early-70s soul. There are nods towards the luscious, harmony-laden mellowness of the Stylistics and the Chi-Lites, to the stentorian bellow that opens Curtis Mayfield's *If There's a Hell Below We're All Gonna Go* and to the dense sound of psychedelic soul on *Pride*.

If it seems a more straightforward listen than *To Pimp a Butterfly*, there's a cheering sense that this doesn't equate to a lessening of musical ambition. There's none of that album's wilfully jarring quality - its sudden, anxious lurches and abrupt leaps between genres - but the tracks on *Damn* still feel episodic and expansive: *XXX* goes from massed harmony vocals to a downbeat rap over glitching, stuttering samples, to a thrilling moment where it explodes in a mass of sirens, screeching tyres and heaving basslines, to a dramatic drop in tempo and an understated guest vocal from Bono, all in four minutes.

Rather than angsty disruptions, there's a subtle sense of disquiet. The heavy-lidded drift of *Yah* would sound relaxed were it not for two grating bass notes that fit with the lyrics' prickly unease. Meanwhile, on the brilliant *Pride*, troubled lyrical shifts from modesty to self-belief - "I can't fake humble because your ass is insecure" - are mirrored by a rap electronically treated so that its pitch speeds and slows amid the woozy atmospherics.

Elsewhere, there's brilliant, dexterous storytelling on *Duckworth* - the saga of how Lamar's father avoided being murdered, complete with an eye-popping twist - and another demonstration of Lamar's nonpareil ability to write songs about the pressures of success that somehow manage to elicit sympathy rather than a roll of the eyes. *Fear* deals in context, tracing the genesis of his mass of neuroses through the ages.

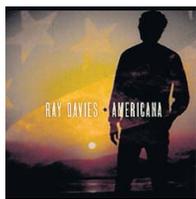
Whether *Damn* will have the same epochal impact as *To Pimp a Butterfly* remains to be seen, but either way it sounds like the work of a supremely confident artist at the top of his game. Kendrick Lamar, it seems, is going to have to live with raised expectations for the foreseeable future.

Ray Davies

Americana

LEGACY

★★★★★



Americana presents itself as Ray Davies' late-flowering masterwork, exploring his lifelong love-hate relationship with the US, with the Jayhawks as his backing band. Strip away this biography, though, and these songs shrivel like raisins. The Deal is a young man's fantasy of groovy hotels and suntans that lumbers like a first-timer's attempt. The weedy Good Time Gals sees a wife kindly shrugging away her husband's Stateside shagabouts. Sha-la-las and bluesy riffs, shoehorned in to sound reflective, just sound naff. There are a few moving moments: The Great Highway's girl with "bright eyes like wishing wells" reminding you of Davies' lyrical delicacy, plus Silent Movie's spoken-word eulogy to Big Star's Alex Chilton (Chilton told Davies a good song "cheats time and makes you feel safe"). The general mood, though, is one of an Alan Partridge-presented country happy hour, unsuitable all of the day and all of the night. **Jude Rogers**

Sheryl Crow

Be Myself

WARNER BROTHERS

★★★★★



After a short-lived dabble in country music, Be Myself reunites Sheryl Crow with 1990s collaborators Jeff Trott and Tchad Blake and returns to the sassy, carefree, stripped down folk-pop-rock that brought her massive success in that era. However, at 55 and with a cancer scare behind her, Crow has, as she herself says: "Seen more of this life than most have seen and it's taken its toll on me." The subject matter here is darker than on her early albums, but the songs see her "getting back in the ring" to battle everything from a kiss-and-teller to depression. There's pithy humour, too, in songs which address Twitter "butts", selfies, indie bands with fake followers, Trump and ill-fitting high heels. Love Will Save the Day is touching, not trite, and if there isn't an obvious smash in the mould of All I Wanna Do or If It Makes You Happy, Be Myself certainly punches its weight in sass.

Dave Simpson



A feast of melodic rock ... BNQT;
below
Sheryl Crow

BNQT

Volume 1

BELLA UNION

★★★★★



Like every successful collaboration, BNQT's Volume 1 - a title that echoes supergroup forebears the Traveling Wilburys - is much more than the sum of its parts. BNQT (we're supposed to say "Banquet") is the result of what happened when Eric Pulido of Midlake brought together Ben Bridwell of Band of Horses, Alex Kapranos of Franz Ferdinand, Fran Healy of Travis and Jason Lytle of Grandaddy. Backed by Pulido's Midlake bandmates, egos are set aside for the greater good. All provide great tunes - they write and sing two each - and they entertain rather than indulge in introspection.

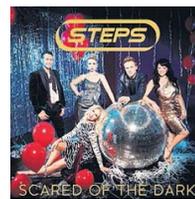
The prevailing style is melodic 70s soft rock, with 10cc, the Electric Light Orchestra and Crosby, Stills & Nash among the references. High points include Lytle's impossibly lovely Failing at Feeling, which conjures John Lennon's Number 9 Dream; Restart, whose glam-rock crunch is reached via Tame Impala's Elephant; the arch stylings of Kapranos on Hey Banana; and Real Love, a gorgeous cascade of harmonies and trumpets. **Jon Dennis**

Steps

Tears on the Dancefloor

STEPS MUSIC LLP

★★★★★



From starting a teenybop line-dancing trend with 5, 6, 7, 8 to sampling the Bee Gees, Faye, Lee, H, Claire and Lisa always added a kitsch edge to their pop polish. In 2011 they reunited for a TV reunion series, which served as excellent promo for their chart-topping Best of collection. A Christmas comeback album, Light Up the World, followed, full of schmaltz but light on original material. However, five years later, Steps are back doing what they do best: unfashionable, bolshy pop. Opener Scared of the Dark begins with the tense strings of an ITV gameshow theme tune, before launching in to their disco-lite sound of old with a renewed sense of energy. Elsewhere, You Make Me Whole sees the band successfully flirt with the EDM trend that's dominated the charts since their heyday. Some tracks feel flabby, such as Story of a Heart - a crooning cover of an already crooning number by Abba's Benny and Björn - but overall this is very much a step in the right direction.

Hannah J Davies

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Joe Goddard

Electric Lines

GRECO-ROMAN/DOMINO

★★★★★



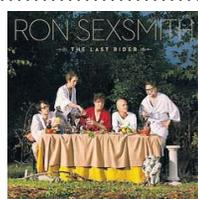
Hot Chip are one of the great singles bands of the last decade, which is a nice way of saying their albums are full of pointless filler; so it continues with singer-keyboardist Joe Goddard's solo LP. Pop ballads are Hot Chip's strength, and Goddard creates some affecting examples on Ordinary Madness, Human Heart and the title track, using the milky sun palette currently beloved by the likes of Shura, Låpsley and Maggie Rogers. Home and Lose Your Love are pleasant, if earth-bound, disco-house tracks bolstered by cut-and-shut samples of Brainstorm's We're on Our Way Home and the Emotions' I Don't Wanna Lose Your Love (which also gave Primal Scream's Loaded its gospel heft). But Truth Is Light is UK garage on non-alcoholic cava, and the dance tracks, with their interminable cosmic arpeggiation, have less poke than a 1980s hand-dryer. **Ben Beaumont-Thomas**

Ron Sexsmith

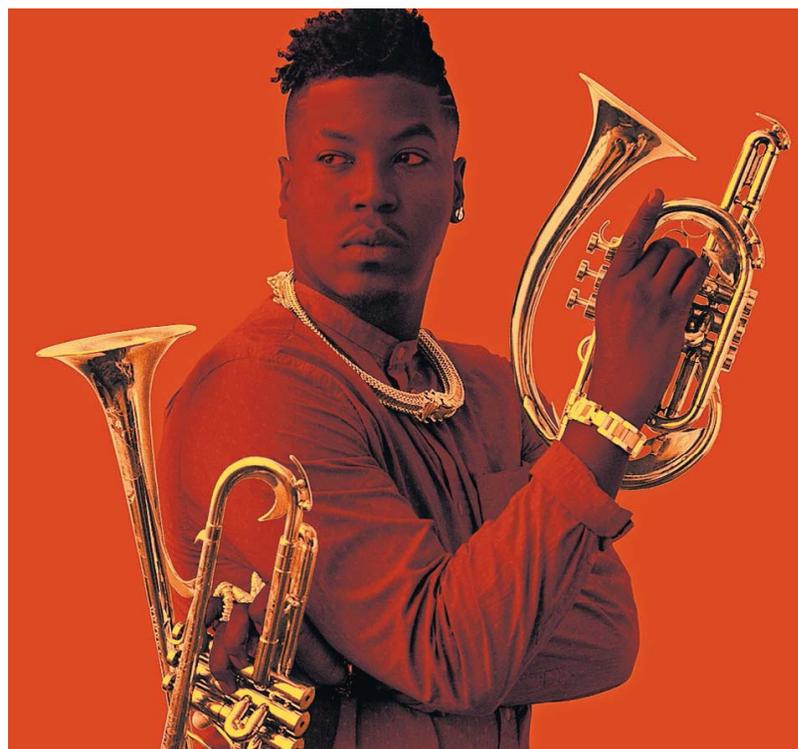
The Last Rider

COOKING VINYL

★★★★★



After producing 14 albums of well-crafted, heartfelt guitar pop - and never quite gaining commercial success to match his critical acclaim - Canadian troubadour Ron Sexsmith is considering calling it a day. The clue is in the title, of course, and he has spoken of feeling adrift in today's music industry. But in truth, Sexsmith has never fitted in, and The Last Rider is no exception - there are no sonic fireworks here, nor bold, ear-grabbing melodies. Rather, the 53-year-old trades in elegant



Hip-hop genius ... Christian Scott

songcraft and romantic ruminations, completely out of step with modern trends: Our Way and Upward Dog sound like the kind of records you'd like Paul McCartney (a Sexsmith fan) to be making now; West Gwillimbury boasts a Costello-esque melody, and is as zeitgeisty as a song about a town in south-central Ontario is ever likely to be. If Sexsmith really is calling it a day, the music world will keep on turning - but it will be a lesser place. **Tim Jonze**

Saltfishforty

Bere

SALTFISHFORTY

★★★★★



Celtic musicians dominated the BBC folk awards this year, even depriving Shirley Collins of an expected win. And here is another reminder of the vitality and confidence in the current Scottish folk scene. Saltfishforty are a duo from the Orkney islands who play fiddle and guitar, and kick off their new album with Whisky, a jaunty set of instrumental reels. That may sound

predictable, but what makes Douglas Montgomery and Brian Cromarty distinctive is the quality of their playing and singing, and the way they weave other influences into the mix. Along with the fresh and often delicate instrumentals, there's a rousing burst of prewar American swing by Buddy DeSylva, a country-edged weepie by the Canadian singer Old Man Luedecke and Orkney history lessons from Cromarty. I'm intrigued to learn that a short-eared owl is known locally as a cattie-face. **Robin Denselow**

Christian Scott

Ruler Rebel

STRETCH/ROPEADOPE

★★★★★



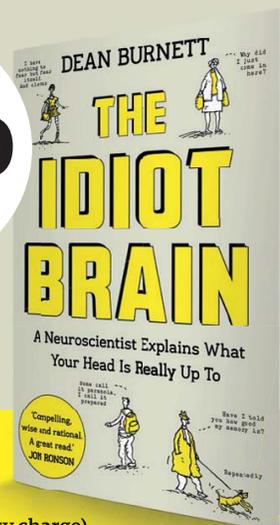
Ruler Rebel is the first of a trilogy to be released this year by the imaginative and popular 33-year-old New Orleans trumpeter Christian Scott - as a commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the first jazz record in 1917, and a typical Scott genre-mash with a political subtext. Scott's reverence for Miles Davis is plain in his softly exhaled, muted sounds against the silky orchestral synth textures on the title track. Two New Orleanian Love Songs embrace open-trumpet sweeps over keys loops and hip-hop grooves. The soul-jazz sound of vocalist Sarah Elizabeth Charles (for whom Scott has previously produced) mingles with ghostly brass tones on Phases, and the sensational jazz flautist Elena Pinderhughes commandingly swoops through the handclap-driven Encryption and the church-bell synth mimicry and terse percussion of The Coronation of X aTunde Adjuah. It's imaginative, studio-produced jazz in the tradition of Marcus Miller's 1980s work with Davis, but in its references it feels as contemporary as today's date. **John Fordham**

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Ravel: Antar; Shéhérazade
Dussollier/Druet/
ON de Lyon/Slatkin

NAXOS
★★★★★



In 1910, Ravel was commissioned by Paris's Théâtre de l'Odéon to provide the incidental music for a new play based on The Romance of Antar, a 12th-century Arabic epic about the exploits of the pre-Islamic poet and knight Antarah ibn Shaddad. The source of the score was to be Rimsky-Korsakov's Antar, which had begun life as a programmatic symphony in 1868 on the same theme.

Ravel made cavalier cuts and reorderings. He imported much of the witches' sabbath scene from Rimsky's opera Mlada, and added interludes and links of his own - sometimes in his own style, sometimes pastiches of Rimsky. The whole score was reconstructed for the 2014 concert performances in Lyon that were the source of this recording, with a new text by the author Amin Maalouf.

Maalouf has retold the Antar legend "guided by the emotions suggested by the music", he says, and most of his words are delivered by the actor André Dussollier as melodrama over the music - although sometimes it would have been better to hear Ravel's contribution more clearly. There is, however, something appropriately exotic about the cocktail of styles. Rimsky's original mixes Russian nationalism with a first shot at the brand of orientalism he would perfect in Scheherazade, while on to that Ravel layers his very French sensibility and exquisite textural imagination.

Ravel's own perfumed foray into the world of Arabic legend, the three orchestral songs of his Shéhérazade, is the obvious pairing for this. Leonard Slatkin's performances of both works with the Lyon orchestra haven't always got the luminosity they need, and Isabelle Druet isn't quite the de luxe mezzo needed for Shéhérazade, but this is a useful first recording of an intriguing historical curiosity. **Andrew Clements**

Schumann: Leider
Goerne/Hinterhäuser

HARMONIA MUNDI
★★★★★



"Einsamkeit" - loneliness - is the title of baritone Matthias Goerne's Schumann recital, and there is a sense of sombre introspection about all the songs he has chosen. The selection ranges right



across Schumann's output, from the 26 settings of Myrthen, Op 25, onwards, but the most substantial sequences are taken from sets composed in 1850, near the end of Schumann's creative life. Six of the strikingly dark Sechs Gedichte und Requiem, Op 90 - based on poems by Nikolaus Lenau - open the disc, while the rather unconvincing songs of Op 89 - settings of far less distinguished verse by one Wilfried von der Neun - balance them. With the exception of the three Heine songs taken from Myrthen, nothing here is especially well known. But the combination of Goerne's distinctively veiled tone and care over every word and nuance, with Markus Hinterhäuser's equally punctilious accompaniments, turns them into a compelling sequence. Even ardent Schumann devotees should find something new here. **AC**

Graun: Arias
Lezhneva/Concerto
Köln/Antonenko

DECCA
★★★★★



Another impressive recital from soprano Julia Lezhneva - and this time she turns her spotlight on a composer who needs the exposure. A generation before Handel, Carl Heinrich Graun was writing Italian operas for the canary-fancying Prussian court, and excelled at virtuoso display pieces. Of Lezhneva's 11 arias, only the furious Mi Paventi has been recorded before - but not as fast as this. Indeed, conductor Mikhail Antonenko and his energetic Concerto Köln set mercilessly swift tempos throughout.

Lezhneva, for her part, dispatches barrages of notes as fluently as if she were sitting picking them out on the piano. In a rare slow number, Piangete,

from the opera Mithridate, one can admire the long, supple lines of melody even while wishing that Lezhneva had more depth to draw on, to vary her pastel-coloured tone. Yet she's expressive throughout; she may not sing the text very clearly, but she's still responsive to it. **Erica Jeal**

Schumann; Liszt; Janáček; Brahms
Haochen Zhang

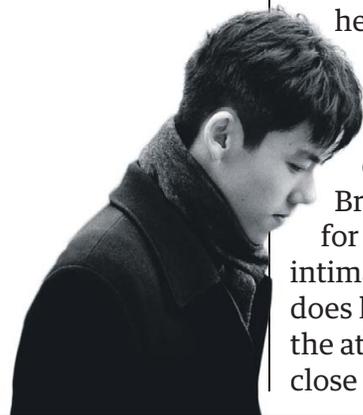
BIS
★★★★★



Haochen Zhang is both a prodigiously award-winning pianist and a self-confessed introvert, and the wide-ranging choice of repertoire on his first studio disc reflects this. He captures the childish, quickly dissipating seriousness of Schumann's Kinderszenen, and plays it with the kind of artistry that sounds sincerely artless. Liszt's Ballade No 2 finds him creating great rumbling waves in the left hand, then closing in an atmosphere of hard-won peace. In this, and in Janáček's Sonata 1 X 1905,

he excels in conveying the larger shape of the piece, knitting the phrases together into long paragraphs, yet he doesn't short-change the showier passages.

Brahms's Three Intermezzos make for an understated close to an intimate, inward-looking disc. Rarely does his playing make a forceful bid for the attention, but it certainly rewards close listening. **EJ**



A foray into perfumed legend ... conductor Leonard Slatkin; below, pianist Haochen Zhang



| | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| THURSDAY 12 OCTOBER 2017 BRIGHTON CONCORDE 2 | FRIDAY 13 OCTOBER 2017 LONDON O2 SHEPHERD'S BUSH EMPIRE | MONDAY 16 OCTOBER 2017 MANCHESTER CATHEDRAL | TUESDAY 17 OCTOBER 2017 BRISTOL TRINITY |
|--|--|---|---|

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A CROSTOWN CONCERTS & SJM CONCERTS PRESENTATION BY ARRANGEMENT WITH PRIMARY TALENT INTERNATIONAL

TICKETS ON SALE TODAY AT 9AM

Overindulged horror-show ... Britt Robertson in *Girlboss*



Stream on
Girlboss
Netflix

What is it? A girlboss is a spoiled, egocentric vacuum with a tiny bottom and no empathy.

Why you'll love it: If you watch *Girlboss* and love it, I want you to get help. It is a "comedy" loosely based on the autobiography of startup millionaire Sophia Amoruso who made her fortune a decade ago (when this is set) with her vintage fashion brand, Nasty Gal. They have since filed for bankruptcy.

It all starts with a girl in a bedroom in San Francisco, wishing she could opt out of adulthood and just please herself all day. We meet her pushing a clapped-out car up a hill while wearing an outfit barely covering her butt-cheeks. If real Sophia is anything like fictional Sophia (played by the otherwise excellent Britt Robertson, the spunky teen from *Tomorrowland*) then she deserves none of her success and should immediately hand over every cent to charity for crimes against humanity.

Fictional Sophia is a walking selfie, whining about having to work for a living. She says, "Love you in case I die!" whenever she bids farewell to her best friend. And she inexplicably steals food out of dumpsters, despite having a dad who offers to help her out financially. It's a show that fully mistakes being an overindulged horror-show for being an assertive millennial role model.

According to show creator and writer Kay Cannon, a girlboss is "opinionated, confident, feisty" and, you know, strong or something. She and her co-producers (of whom Charlize

Theron is one) are trying to make *Girlboss* the new Girl Power: the same vapid, non-specific, something-to-do-with-feminism-in-hot pants fluff, but with added narcissism and less of a sense of humour. *Girlboss* is so tone-deaf to the human condition it's hard to know where to start. It purports to be not only Sophia's story but a rallying cry to dyspeptic, wasteful goons everywhere who think the world owes them a lovely time with zero effort expended.

Sophia's epiphany here isn't one of self-knowledge. She just finds an expensive jacket going cheap in a thrift store, sells it on eBay for hundreds, and cries. Money makes her cry. It's everything wrong with the world today, distilled into a single, selfish tear.

Trying to drag a romantic subplot over the top of it only serves to highlight her dreadfulness further. When Sophia has a sleepover with a boy and he remarks afterwards that he doesn't know why, but he likes her, she smirks back, "You'll figure it out", before forcing him to make ocean sounds to help her sleep. She is unrootable-for.

An impressive supporting cast including RuPaul Charles as Sophia's pot-smoking neighbour and Dean Norris from *Breaking Bad* as her concerned dad, cannot help this hammeringly unfunny script.

"Adulthood is where dreams go to die," whinges Sophia to a random old woman on a park bench who she sometimes uses as a sounding board. *Girlboss* is a show that could do with a grown-up in charge, because these kids have made a real mess of it.

Length: Thirteen 30-minute episodes, available to stream now.

Standout episode: Watch the tension headache that is episode one and tell me if you made it any further.

If you liked *Girlboss*, watch: *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend* (Netflix), *Don't Trust the Bitch in Apartment 23* (Netflix).

Julia Raeside



ON WITH THE WIGS

The return of Versailles - and the silliest period dramas ever:
theguardian.com/tv-and-radio



Pod complex
First Day Back
Hannah Verdier

How do you come back from the worst thing you have ever done? In the new season of *First Day Back* (iTunes), Tally Abecassis poses that complicated question in relation to Lucie Paquette, who was charged with killing her husband.

Last season, Abecassis focused on her own first day back and her struggle to find balance when she returned to work after having children. Now, she's looking at a more extreme form of return as she tells Lucie's story, and wastes no time hooking her listeners in. "A first day back is different from a first day at something," says Abecassis. "You're trying to return to some semblance of your old life. Except you're not the same person any more."

That's certainly the case for Lucie. She served five years of a seven-year sentence for manslaughter, and doesn't remember what happened on the night her partner was killed. Details of the crime are horrific, but only briefly covered at first. Gerry had been sitting at the computer when he was shot through the head, leaving Lucie covered in brain matter.

The couple had been together for 13 years and were known among friends as "lovebirds", but as Abecassis unfurls their story, all is not as rosy as it seems. Lucie is an "ordinary person, but not so ordinary criminal". When she called 911 to report the crime, she was speaking to Gerry as if he was still alive.

Abecassis is sympathetic to Lucie, but not afraid to admit she may not be the most credible witness. "Lucie is quick to smile, but when she isn't smiling her face falls as if a puppeteer has let go of the strings," she says. Lucie describes her memory loss on that night as like "falling asleep during a movie". It emerges the couple were alcoholics and she had drunk eight beers, which could have led to her blackout. There's much evidence to be waded through. Each episode reveals a new detail, which, combined with the host's incredible way with words, is enough to make *First Day Back* quietly absorbing and gripping.

If you like this, try: *Actual Innocence*.

Tally Abecassis tells the story of 'an ordinary person, but not so ordinary criminal'



PHOTOGRAPHS: KAREN BALLARD/NETFLIX; CLAUDINE SAUVÉ; WARREN ORCHARD/CHANNEL 4

Sam seems like a nice boy. He's handsome, polite, kind and helpful to his single mum Jenny who dotes on him. On the school bus, when a boy named Oscar is being beaten up by a couple of bullies, Sam steps in when no one else - bus driver included - will. Then, at school, after new girl Chrissy gets into trouble for trying to burn down the science lab, Sam puts his hand up, says it was him (though that may have more to do with his interest in Chrissy than anything else).

But there's something a bit strange about Sam. Hard to put a finger on it, but it may have something to do with him practising telling the (untrue) story of his father's heroic death in Afghanistan in the mirror and filming it on his phone; or the spying; or the underwater flashbacks to something really bad that happened in the past; or his inability - actually more like reluctance - to form friendships; or the way he hangs around the geriatric hospital ward where his mother works as a nurse; or his obsession with death and the fact he hangs around the geriatrics even after they die, in the morgue, and takes things from them, which he keeps in a tin in the woods ... Got it! He's a psychopath. We Need to Talk About Sam it could be called. In fact it's **Born to Kill** (Channel 4). Ah, you see, there's a clue there too.

It's a lovely performance from Jack Rowan, who would almost certainly have been in *Skins* if he had been born a few years earlier. No, "lovely" clearly isn't right; more like utterly, convincingly chilling. Cold eyes, which Tracey Malone and Kate Ashfield's writing burrows into to explore the dark mind beyond. This is psychological thriller with a capital PSYCHO, which I think will go on to ask questions about whether psychopathy is inherited.

Sam's not the only one with issues. Jenny (Romola Garai, as human as ever, but quite young to be Sam's



Last night's TV

This chilling thriller delves into the dark mind of a young killer

By Sam Wollaston



mum) is not at all pleased that someone - almost certainly Sam's not-dead dad, who did something really bad in the past, possibly involving water and the cause of the flashbacks - may just be about to come out of prison. This is making Jenny really frightened.

Chrissy (Lara Peake) the pyro doesn't seem to be frightened of anything. She's also being single-parented, by dad Bill (Daniel Mays); though like Sam, she has reached an age where it's not clear who needs whom more, parent or child. Coming-of-age psychodrama - that's what it is. They are good, the parent-child relationships in *Born to Kill*.

Anyway, too-cool-for-school Chrissy doesn't need Sam to fight her battles for her, but she does start to show a

Coming-of-age psychodrama ... Jack Rowan and Romola Garai in *Born to Kill*

flicker (probably self-ignited, with her box of matches) of interest in him. Maybe if he shows her his tin of death in the woods, that will win her over. Speaking of tins, I thought the one on the shelf at Chrissy's gran's place was going to contain someone's ashes, but it turns out to be a stash of money. The creepiness is not overdone; it's understated, and more powerful for it. A thoughtfully selected soundtrack of apposite music - Radiohead, The Smiths and Magazine - helps to slowly ramp up the menace.

Chrissy's gran is in Jenny's geriatric ward, following a hip operation. That's not a good place to be, I'm thinking, with volatile Sam lurking around all the time.

There you go! He's gone and killed someone. Not Chrissy's gran, as it happens, but nice old Mr Williams. I don't think it matters who it was, Sam just needs to kill, and Mr Williams becomes available. One minute Sam's reading *Treasure Island* to him, the next tampering with the medical equipment, holding him down as he overdoses on drugs. One teenager on the dead man's chest, yo-ho-ho and a bottle of rum.

After which **Mind over Marathon** (BBC1) is, if not exactly cheery, then at least positive. Ten people with a range of mental health issues are training together for the London Marathon. I don't know how Rhian, who lost her one-year-old son to pneumonia and immediately afterwards her husband to suicide, even gets up in the morning, let alone puts on her running shoes. But by the end of the first part she's up to 16 miles.

She's amazing; they all are. And next week they have got a royal visit - the new generation thankfully, the talky, huggy ones - for further encouragement. Brilliant.



AND ANOTHER THING

I'm sure he had it ready but still, respect to BT Sport's Ian Darke for getting a timely "The Old Lady's Not For Turning" into his commentary of the Juventus game on Wednesday.



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Film of the day

The Legend of Tarzan (12.55pm, Sky Cinema)
Worth watching for tree-swinging Alexander Skarsgård's admirable abs alone, but director David Yates also employs some cracking CGI



Versailles, BBC2

Watch this

Versailles

9.30pm, BBC2
The historical drama set in the court of Louis XIV returns. A decent interval having passed since the death of Henriette, it surely won't be long before Louis is twirling his small moustache at a new companion. Meanwhile, chevalier or no chevalier, the widowed Philippe must marry again. Followed later by Inside Versailles, in which Prof Kate Williams and Greg Jenner attest to the historical truths behind all the gore and heavy breathing. *John Robinson*

Posh Pawn

8pm, Channel 4
We return to the world of high-end pawnbroking with James Constantinou taking a spin in an ostentatious supercar belonging to an aspiring fitness guru (the price tag is a sturdy £80,000). Later, he has a dilemma to mull when he receives an offer for one of his favourite impulse buys. Elsewhere, another car enthusiast gets in touch with memorabilia expert Lawrence to try to punt a helmet that once belonged to land speed legend Donald Campbell. *Ben Arnold*

Springwatch in Japan: Cherry Blossom Time

8.30pm, BBC2
We may swoon at suburban blossoms in British springtime, but Japan takes things to a whole other level with the floral bacchanal that is its cherry blossom festival. In this Springwatch special, Chris Packham, Michaela Strachan and James Wong explore the phenomenon of hanami flower-watching. Delights include meetings with tree doctors and blossom bees, plus a trip to Yoshino's staggeringly lovely Pink Mountain. *Sophie Harris*

Have I Got News for You

9pm, BBC1
While HIGNFY has lost a good deal of its bite, this new series will be intriguing. Will hitherto regular Ken Livingstone be invited on to burble about Hitler? Will any Labour MPs subject themselves to Corbyn-related derision? And, with impartiality more contested than ever, what will be the Brexit angle? Socialist luvvie Patrick Stewart chairs this opener, presumably to the bloviating chagrin of right-wing newspaper columnists everywhere. *Phil Harrison*

Lethal Weapon

9pm, ITV
This none-too-serious adaptation of the 80s film franchise is superficially updated in style, but in terms of its action-packed slickness and wry buddy-buddy shtick still sports a spiritual mullet and rolled-up jacket sleeves. Tonight, Murtaugh (Damon Wayans) gets all mid-life crisis as he reveals his motorcycling past, while it falls to Riggs (Clayne Crawford) to look after an eight-year-old traumatised after he witnesses a deadly, albeit comedically daft, casino heist. *David Stubbs*



Springwatch in Japan, BBC2

BBC1

6.0 **Breakfast** 9.15 Fake Britain (R) 10.0 Homes Under the Hammer (R) 11.0 The Sheriffs Are Coming (R) 11.45 Claimed and Shamed 12.15 Bargain Hunt 1.0 News; Weather 1.30 Regional News; Weather 1.45 Doctors (T) 2.15 The Code (T) 3.0 Escape to the Country (T) (R) 3.45 Money for Nothing (T) (R) 4.30 Flog It! (T) (R) 5.15 Pointless (T) 6.0 News; Weather (T) 6.30 Regional News; Weather (T) 6.55 Party Election Broadcast (T) (R) 7.0 One Show (T) 7.30 Question of Sport (T) (R)

8.0 **EastEnders** (T) The Carters are unable to order stock for the Vic. 8.30 **MasterChef** (T) The fourth quarter-final. 9.0 **Have I Got News for You** (T) New series. Patrick Stewart guest-hosts. 9.30 **Hospital People** (T) New series. Comedy following the lives of the staff of Brimlington hospital.

10.0 **BBC News at Ten** (T) 10.25 **BBC Regional News and Weather** (T) Lottery Update 10.35 **The Graham Norton Show** (T) Harry Styles, Brendan O'Carroll and Rob Brydon. 11.25 **Witless** (T) 11.50 **FILM Dinner for Schmucks** (Jay Roach, 2010) (T) Comedy, with Steve Carell and Paul Rudd. 1.40 **Weather** (T) 1.45 News (T)

BBC2

6.0 **Countryside 999** (T) (R) 6.45 Flog It! Trade Secrets (T) (R) 7.15 Bargain Hunt (T) (R) 8.0 Sign Zone. DIY SOS: The Big Build (T) (R) 9.0 Victoria Derbyshire (T) 10.0 Live Snooker: The World Championship (T) 12.0 Daily Politics (T) 1.0 Live Snooker: The World Championship (T) 6.0 Eggheads (T) 6.30 Debatable (T) 7.0 Great American Railroad Journeys (T)

8.0 **Gardeners' World** (T) Monty Don continues work in his courtyard. Including Weather. 8.30 **Springwatch in Japan: Cherry Blossom Time** (T) A report on hanami - the national tradition of flower-watching. 9.30 **Versailles** (T) New series. A high-profile poisoning leaves a coveted vacancy.

10.30 **Newsnight; Weather** (T) 11.05 **Later - With Jools Holland** (T) Ed Sheeran, Michael Chapman, Valerie June, Syd, Daymé Arocena, Marian Hill. 12.05 **Snooker: The World Championship** 12.55 Snooker: World Championship Extra 2.55 Amazing Hotels: Life Beyond the Lobby (R) 3.55 Doctor Who (R) 4.45 This Is BBC Two

Other channels

CBBC

7.0am Arthur 7.15 League of Super Evil 7.25 Dennis the Menace and Gnasher 7.35 MOTD Kickabout: Build-Up 7.40 Newsround 7.45 Matilda and the Ramsay Bunch 8.0 Odd Squad 8.15 Newsround 8.20 Blue Peter Bite: Lindsey in the London Sewers 8.30 Horrible Histories: Magna Carta Special 9.0 The Next Step 9.0 Zig and Zag's Zogcasts 9.30 So Awkward 10.0 Sam & Mark's Big Friday Wind Up 10.55 Wallace & Gromit: The Wrong Trousers 11.25 Class Dismissed 2.30 Horrible Histories: Magna Carta Special 3.0 So Awkward 3.25 Zig and Zag 3.40 Dennis the Menace and Gnasher 3.50 HH: Gory Games Play Along 4.20 Newsround 4.20 Ooglies Funsie 4.35 Secret Life of Boys 5.0 Secret Life of Boys 5.0 Help! My Mini School Trip Is Magic 5.30 Ultimate Brain 6.0 Scream Street 6.10 Dragons: Defenders of Berk 6.35 Dennis the Menace and Gnasher 6.45 Danger Mouse 7.0 Horrible Histories 7.30 Ultimate Brain 8.0 The Dumping Ground 8.30 The Dumping Ground Survival Files

E4

6.0am Hollyoaks 6.30 Coach Trip: Road to Ibiza 6.55 Baby Daddy 7.55 Rules of Engagement 8.55 Brooklyn Nine-Nine 10.0 Melissa & Joey 11.0 Baby Daddy 11.30 Baby Daddy 12.0 How I Met Your Mother 12.30 How I Met Your Mother 1.0 The Goldbergs 1.30 The Goldbergs 2.0 The Big Bang Theory 2.30 The Big Bang Theory 3.0 How I Met Your Mother 3.30 How I Met Your Mother 4.0 Brooklyn Nine-Nine 4.30 Brooklyn Nine-Nine 5.0 The Goldbergs 5.30 The Goldbergs 6.0 The Big Bang Theory 6.30 The Big Bang Theory 7.0 Hollyoaks 7.30 Brooklyn Nine-Nine 8.0 The Big Bang Theory 8.30 The Big Bang Theory 9.0 **FILM** Taken 2 (2012) 10.50 The Big Bang Theory 11.20 The Big Bang Theory 11.50 The Big Bang Theory 12.20 Tattoo Fixers 1.20 Tattoo Fixers 2.20 E4's Tattoo Artist of the Year 3.15 Rude Tube: Animal Madness 4.05 Rules of Engagement 4.45 Melissa & Joey **Film4** 11.0am **FILM** Muppet Treasure Island (1996) 1.05 **FILM** Paddington (2014) 2.55 **FILM** Honey,

I Shrank the Kids (1989) 4.45 **FILM** Home Alone (1990) 6.50 **FILM** The River Wild (1994) 9.0 **FILM** Transcendence (2014) 11.20 **FILM** Extraterrestrial (2014) 1.25 **FILM** The Crazies (2010)

ITV2

6.0am Planet's Funniest Animals 6.20 You've Been Framed! Gold 6.50 You've Been Framed! Gold 7.15 The Ellen DeGeneres Show 8.0 Emmerdale 8.30 Emmerdale 9.0 You've Been Framed! Gold 9.30 Britain's Got Talent: Top 10 Daredevils 10.30 **FILM** See Spot Run (2001) 11.30 FYI Daily 11.35 **FILM** See Spot Run (2001) 12.25 Emmerdale 12.55 Emmerdale 1.30 You've Been Framed! Gold 2.0 The Ellen DeGeneres Show 2.50 The Jeremy Kyle Show 3.55 The Jeremy Kyle Show 5.0 Judge Rinder 6.0 100% You've Been Framed! 7.0 Funniest Ever You've Been Framed! Gold 8.0 Two and a Half Men 8.30 Two and a Half Men 9.0 **FILM** Run Fat Boy Run (2007) 11.0 Family Guy 11.30 Family Guy 12.05 Family Guy 12.30 American Dad! 12.55 American Dad! 1.25 American Dad! 1.55 Dads 2.15 Teleshopping 5.45 ITV2 Nightscreen

More4

8.55am A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun 10.0 A

Place in the Sun: Winter Sun 11.0 Four in a Bed 11.35 Four in a Bed 12.05 Four in a Bed 12.35 Four in a Bed 1.05 Four in a Bed 1.40 Time Team 2.40 Time Team 3.45 Car SOS 4.50 Car SOS 5.50 Vet on the Hill 6.55 The Secret Life of the Zoo 7.55 Grand Designs 9.0 Spin 10.05 24 Hours in A&E 11.10 24 Hours in A&E 12.15 8 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown 1.15 Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA 2.15 24 Hours in A&E 3.15 8 Out of 10 Cats Uncut

Sky1

6.0am Hawaii Five-0 7.0 Animal House 8.0 Monkey Life 8.30 Monkey Life 9.0 David Attenborough's Wild City 10.0 Modern Family 10.30 Modern Family 11.0 Modern Family 11.30 Modern Family 12.0 NCIS: Los Angeles 1.0 Hawaii Five-0 2.0 Hawaii Five-0 3.0 NCIS: Los Angeles 4.0 The Simpsons 4.30 Modern Family 5.0 Modern Family 5.30 Modern Family 6.0 Modern Family 6.30 The Simpsons 7.0 The Simpsons 7.30 The Simpsons 8.0 Carters Get Rich 8.30 Modern Family 9.0 Stan Lee's Lucky Man 10.0 Micky Flanagan Thinking Aloud 11.0 The Blacklist: Redemption 12.0 Duck Quacks Don't Echo 1.0 Hawaii Five-0 2.0 Revolution 3.0 Arrow 4.0 Animal House 5.0 Road Wars



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| ITV | Channel 4 | Channel 5 | BBC4 |
|---|--|--|---|
| <p>6.0 Good Morning Britain (T) 8.30 Lorraine (T) 9.25 The Jeremy Kyle Show (T) 10.30 This Morning (T) 12.30 Loose Women (T) 1.30 ITV Lunchtime News (T) 1.55 Local News (T) 2.0 Judge Rinder (T) 3.0 Culinary Genius (T) 3.59 Local News/Weather (T) 4.0 Tipping Point (T) 5.0 The Chase (T) 6.0 Local News (T) 6.25 Party Election Broadcast (T) 6.30 ITV Evening News (T) 7.0 Emmerdale (T) 7.30 Coronation Street (T)</p> | <p>6.0 Countdown (T) (R) 6.45 Will & Grace (T) (R) 7.35 Everybody Loves Raymond (T) (R) 9.05 Frasier (T) (R) 9.35 Frasier (T) (R) 10.05 Undercover Boss USA (T) (R) 11.0 Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA (T) (R) 12.0 News (T) 12.05 The Question Jury (T) (R) 1.05 Posh Pawnbrokers (T) (R) 2.10 Countdown (T) 3.0 Fifteen to One (T) 4.0 French Collection (T) 5.0 Couples Come Dine With Me (T) 6.0 The Simpsons (T) (R) 6.30 Hollyoaks (T) 7.0 News (T) 7.30 Unreported World (T)</p> | <p>6.0 Milkshake! 9.15 The Wright Stuff 11.15 GPs: Behind Closed Doors (T) (R) 12.10 5 News Lunchtime (T) 12.15 On Benefits: Life on the Dole (T) (R) 1.15 Home and Away (T) 1.45 Neighbours (T) 2.15 NCIS (T) (R) 3.15 FILM Deadly Revenge (Michael Feifer, 2013) (T) 5.0 5 News at 5 (T) 5.30 Neighbours (T) (R) 6.0 Home and Away (T) (R) 6.30 5 News Tonight (T) 7.0 The Gadget Show (T)</p> | <p>7.0 World News Today (T) 7.30 Top of the Pops: 1983 (T)</p> |
| <p>8.0 Judge Rinder's Crime Stories (T) A vicious attack on a security guard. 8.30 Coronation Street (T) Tracy starts to secretly worry that Amy might be covering her own tracks. 9.0 Lethal Weapon (T) When a million-dollar casino heist takes a deadly turn, Riggs befriends the only witness - an eight-year-old boy.</p> | <p>8.0 Posh Pawn (T) New series. James Constantinou takes a ride around London in an eye-catching supercar supposedly worth £80,000, and faces a dilemma when he gets an offer for one of his favourite impulse buys. 9.0 Gogglebox (T) Capturing the households' instant reactions to what they are watching on TV.</p> | <p>8.0 Tony Robinson: Coast to Coast (T) The presenter tours North Yorkshire, visiting RAF Fylingdales. 5 News Update 9.0 Spectacular Spain With Alex Polizzi (T) The presenter stays at the feted Marbella Beach Club, where she meets the man who has played host to A-list jetsetters for decades.</p> | <p>8.0 The Good Old Days (T) (R) Leonard Sachs invites Roy Castle, Barbara Windsor, Robert Tear, Benjamin Luxon, Ted Durante & Hilda to entertain an audience. 8.50 Sounds of the Seventies (T) (R) Archive performances. 9.0 The Story of Funk: One Nation Under a Groove (T) (R) The history of the funk genre.</p> |
| <p>10.0 The Nightly Show With Dermot O'Leary (T) Last in the series. 10.30 ITV News (T) 11.0 Local News (T) 11.15 Billy Connolly & Me: A Celebration (T) (R) 12.15 The Nightly Show With Dermot O'Leary (T) (R) 12.40 Jackpot247 3.0 Storage Hoarders (T) (R) 3.50 ITV Nightscreen</p> | <p>10.0 The Last Leg (T) With Alan Carr and Tinie Tempah 11.05 First Dates (T) (R) 12.05 FILM The Ladykillers (Ethan Coen, Joel Coen, 2004) (T) Comedy remake, starring Tom Hanks. 2.05 The Ballroom Boys (T) (R) 3.0 National Treasure (T) (R) 3.55 Shipping Wars UK (T) (R) 4.20 Building the Dream (T)</p> | <p>10.0 The World's Most Luxurious Cruise Ship (T) (R) Part two of two. 11.05 Cruising with Jane McDonald (T) (R) 12.0 SuperCasino 3.10 FILM Half Past Dead (Don Michael Paul, 2002) (T) Action adventure, starring Steven Seagal. 4.45 House Doctor (T) (R) 5.10 Great Artists (T) (R) 5.35 Nick's Quest (T) (R)</p> | <p>10.0 The Genius of Funk (T) (R) Earth, Wind & Fire, Kool & the Gang, Average White Band and Herbie Hancock. 11.0 Music for Misfits: The Story of Indie (T) (R) 12.0 Top of the Pops: 1983 (T) (R) 12.45 The Story of Funk: One Nation Under a Groove (T) (R) 1.45 The Genius of Funk (T) (R) 2.30 Music for Misfits (T) (R)</p> |

Sky Arts

6.0am Treasures of the British Library **7.0** Auction **7.30** Auction **8.0** Tales of the Unexpected **8.30** Tales of the Unexpected **9.0** Discovering: Doris Day **10.0** Portrait Artist of the Year 2017 **11.0** Andrea Bocelli: Cinema **1.0** Tales of the Unexpected **1.30** Tales of the Unexpected **2.0** Auction **2.30** Auction **3.0** Treasures of the British Library **4.0** Portrait Artist of the Year 2017 **5.0** Tales of the Unexpected **5.30** Tales of the Unexpected **6.0** Discovering: Errol Flynn **7.0** Soundbreaking **8.0** Classic Albums **9.0** The Seventies **10.0** Manic Street Preachers: Escape from History **11.40** Noel Gallagher's High Flying Birds at Hurricane Festival 2015 **12.45** REM by MTV **2.45** Trailblazers: Gothic Rock **3.45** South Bank Masterclasses: Evelyn Glennie **4.0** Eras of Music History **5.0** The South Bank Show Originals **5.30** The South Bank Show Originals

Sky Atlantic

6.0am Richard E Grant's Hotel Secrets **7.0** Richard E Grant's Hotel Secrets **8.0** Richard E Grant's Hotel Secrets **9.0** The West Wing **10.0** The West Wing **11.0** Cold Case **12.0** House **1.0** Blue Bloods **2.0** Storm City **3.0** The West Wing **4.0** The West

Wing **5.0** Cold Case **6.0** House **7.0** Blue Bloods **8.0** Blue Bloods **9.0** Game of Thrones **10.0** Game of Thrones **11.05** Dexter **12.15** Deadwood **1.15** Deadwood **2.20** Silicon Valley **4.05** Urban Secrets

TCM

6.0am Hollywood's Best Film Directors: Joel Schumacher **6.35** Rawhide: Incident of the Death Dancer **7.45** Rawhide: Incident of the Wild Deuces **8.50** **FILM** Detective Story (1951) **10.55** **FILM** Murder Ahoy (1964) **12.45** Rawhide: Incident of the Prophecy **1.50** Rawhide: Incident at Confidence Creek **3.0** **FILM** Birdman of Alcatraz (1962) **6.05** **FILM** The Longhorn (1951) **7.30** **FILM** Kansas Pacific (1953) **9.0** **FILM** Star Trek III: The Search for Spock (1984) **11.25** **FILM** Kill Switch (2008) **1.25** Conspiracy Theory with Jesse Ventura: The Worldwide Water Conspiracy **2.25** Conspiracy Theory with Jesse Ventura **3.25** Hollywood's Best Film Directors: Wes Craven **4.0** Hollywood's Best Film Directors: John Landis **4.30** Hollywood's Best Film Directors: Roland Emmerich **5.0** Hollywood's Best Film Directors: Andrew Davis **5.30** Hollywood's Best Film Directors: Jan de Bont

Radio

Radio 1

97.6-99.8 MHz
6.33 The Radio 1 Breakfast Show with Nick Grimshaw **10.0** Clara Amfo **12.45** Newsbeat **1.0** Scott Mills **4.0** The Official Chart with Greg James **5.45** Newsbeat **6.0** Radio 1's Dance Anthems with Greg James **7.0** Danny Howard **10.0** Pete Tong **1.0** B.Traits **4.0** Radio 1's Essential Mix

Radio 2

88-91 MHz
6.30 Chris Evans **9.30** Ken Bruce **12.0** Jeremy Vine **2.0** Al Murray **5.0** Simon Mayo **7.0** Tony Blackburn's Golden Hour **8.0** Young Brass Award Final **10.0** Sounds of the 80s **12.0** Anneka Rice: The Happening **2.0** Radio 2's Funky Soul Playlist **3.0** Radio 2 Playlist: Today's Top Hits **4.0** Radio 2 Playlist: 21st Century Songs **5.0** Huey on Saturday

Radio 3

90.2-92.4 MHz
6.30 Breakfast **9.0** Essential Classics **12.0** Composer of the Week: Schumann - Ghost Variations. Donald McLeod completes his examination of music from Schumann's Düsseldorf years. (5/5) **1.0** News **1.02** Radio 3

Lunchtime Concert. John Toal presents the final recital from the Northern Ireland Opera Festival of Voice, recorded at St Patrick's Church of Ireland in Glenarm, Co Antrim. Dominick Argento: Six Elizabethan Songs. Aoife Miskelly (soprano), Will Vann (piano). Berlioz: Nuits d'Été. Clara Mouriz (mezzo-soprano), Simon Lepper (piano). **2.0** Afternoon on 3. Katie Derham with music by the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande. **4.30** In Tune. Suzy Klein presents the show live from Chetham's School of Music. **6.30** Composer of the Week: Schumann - Ghost Variations (R) **7.30** Radio 3 in Concert. Vocal ensemble Voces8 are joined by the period instruments of Les Inventiones and pianist Jonathan Dove in a concert recorded last week at the inaugural Holy Week festival at St John's Smith Square, London. **10.0** The Verb: Truth and Poetry. Truth in poetry and song lyrics. **10.45** The Essay: Hanging On: The Sex Shop. Author Andrew Martin toasts "social phenomena" that are scarcely relevant

today. (5/5) **11.0** World on 3. A concert by desert rock band Tinariwen. **1.0** Through the Night

Radio 4

92.4-94.6 MHz; 198kHz
6.0 Today **8.30** (LW) Yesterday in Parliament **9.0** The Reunion: Women of Punk (R) **9.45** (LW) Daily Service **9.45** (FM) The Odyssey Project: My Name Is Nobody - Night Shift. Karen McCarthy Woolf's poem inspired by Odysseus's journey into the underworld. (5/10) **10.0** Woman's Hour **11.0** Copyright or Wrong. Richard Taylor explores the history of copyright. **11.30** Gloombsbury: Honestly, Darling. Comedy, by Sue Limb. (3/6) **12.0** News **12.01** (LW) Shipping Forecast **12.04** Home Front: 21 April 1917 - Sylvia Graham. Sylvia Graham's patriotism is invigorated. (5/40) **12.15** You and Yours **1.0** The World at One **1.45** The Ideas That Make Us: Chaos. Bettany Hughes explores the concept of chaos. Last in the series. (5/5) **2.0** The Archers. Everyone is celebrating at The Bull. **2.15** Drama: Far Side of the Moore. By Sean Grundy. **3.0** Gardeners' Question Time: The Savill Garden, Windsor Great Park - Correspondence Edition **3.45** Short Works: Tonight, for the First Time. By Zoe Strachan. **4.0** Last Word

4.30 More or Less (2/7) **4.55** The Listening Project: Erica and Lloyd - The Importance of Art. Retired art teachers recall the motivational techniques they employed. **5.0** PM **5.54** (LW) Shipping Forecast **5.57** (FM) Weather **6.0** Six O'Clock News **6.30** The News Quiz. New series. With Jeremy Hardy, Andy Hamilton, Helen Lewis and Susan Calman. (1/8) **7.0** The Archers. Lily takes charge. **7.15** Front Row **7.45** The Amateur Marriage: 2001, An Extra Marriage. By Anne Tyler. (R) (10/10) **8.0** Any Questions? **8.50** A Point of View **9.0** Home Front Omnibus: 17-12 April 1917. Parts 1-5. **10.0** The World Tonight **10.45** Book at Bedtime: Rabbit, Run. By John Updike. (5/10) **11.0** Great Lives: Ermonela Jaho on Mother Teresa (R) **11.30** Today in Parliament **11.55** The Listening Project: Brenda and Joan - The Retired PE Teachers' Home **12.0** News and Weather **12.30** The Odyssey Project: My Name Is Nobody: Night Shift (R) **12.48** Shipping Forecast **1.0** As World Service **5.20** Shipping Forecast **5.30** News Briefing **5.43** Prayer for the Day **5.45** iPM

Radio 4 Extra

Digital only
6.0 The Blackburn Files (5/5) **6.30** An Actor in

His Time (10/11) **7.0** Old Dog and Partridge (3/6) **7.30** Hal (2/4) **8.0** I'm Sorry I'll Read That Again (1/13) **8.30** The Goon Show **9.0** Who Goes There? (3/6) **9.30** No Commitments (1/6) **10.0** Geoffrey Parkinson: The Annunciation **11.0** Brian Friel Stories (5/5) **11.15** An Unchoreographed World **12.0** I'm Sorry I'll Read That Again (1/13) **12.30** The Goon Show **1.0** The Blackburn Files (5/5) **1.30** An Actor in His Time (10/11) **2.0** Aunts Aren't Gentlemen (5/5) **2.15** Our Dreams: Our Selves (5/5) **2.30** The Reef (5/10) **2.45** My Autobiography (5/10) **3.0** Geoffrey Parkinson: The Annunciation **4.0** Who Goes There? (3/6) **4.30** No Commitments (1/6) **5.0** Old Dog and Partridge (3/6) **5.30** Hal (2/4) **6.0** Thou Shalt Not Suffer a Witch (5/5) **6.15** Chronicles of Ait: The Lotos Effect (5/5) **6.30** Richard Baker Compares Notes **7.0** I'm Sorry I'll Read That Again (1/13) **7.30** The Goon Show **8.0** The Blackburn Files (5/5) **8.30** An Actor in His Time (10/11) **9.0** Brian Friel Stories (5/5) **9.15** An Unchoreographed World **10.0** Comedy Club: Hal (2/4) **10.30** That Mitchell and Webb Sound (3/5) **10.55** The Comedy Club Interview **11.0** Bleak Expectations (2/6) **11.30** Little Britain (1/4) **12.0** Thou Shalt Not Suffer

a Witch (5/5) **12.15** Chronicles of Ait: The Lotos Effect (5/5) **12.30** Richard Baker Compares Notes **1.0** The Blackburn Files (5/5) **1.30** An Actor in His Time (10/11) **2.0** Aunts Aren't Gentlemen (5/5) **2.15** Our Dreams: Our Selves (5/5) **2.30** The Reef (5/10) **2.45** My Autobiography (5/10) **3.0** Geoffrey Parkinson: The Annunciation **4.0** Who Goes There? (3/6) **4.30** No Commitments (1/6) **5.0** Old Dog and Partridge (3/6) **5.30** Hal (2/4)

5 Live

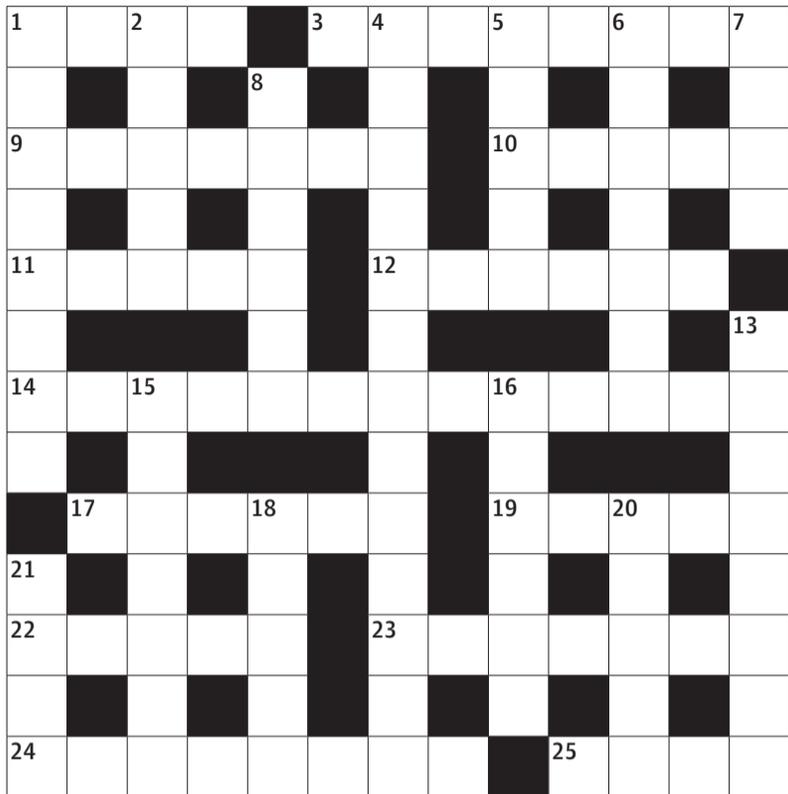
693, 909 kHz
6.0 Breakfast **10.0** Daily with Sam Walker **1.0** The Friday Sports Panel **2.0** Kermodie and Mayo's Film Review **4.0** Drive **7.0** The Friday Football Social **10.0** Stephen Nolan **1.0** Up All Night **5.0** Boxing with Costello & Bunce **5.30** The Friday Football Social

6 Music

Digital only
7.0 Shaun Keaveny **10.0** Lauren Laverne **1.0** Mark Radcliffe and Stuart Maconie **4.0** Steve Lamacq **7.0** Iggy Pop **9.0** Tom Ravenscroft **12.0** Nemone's Electric Ladyland **2.0** 6 Music Classic Concert **3.0** 6 Music Live Hour **4.0** From Edison to iTunes: A History of the Record Label (1/4) **5.0** Chris Hawkins



Quick crossword no 14,650



Across

- 1 Jason's ship (4)
- 3 Motorway exit or entrance (4,4)
- 9 Legendary Arabian bird (7)
- 10 Circular frame with spokes (5)
- 11 Supermarket section (5)
- 12 Free-and-easy (6)
- 14 Cold Comfort Farm author – blog in stables (anag) (6,7)
- 17 Largest US state (6)
- 19 Little (5)
- 22 Slum dwelling (5)
- 23 Place to lie low (7)
- 24 Government department (8)
- 25 Legal document for transfer of property (4)

Down

- 1 Evaluate (8)
- 2 Horribly large (5)
- 4 Dictionary compiler (13)
- 5 Welsh county (5)
- 6 Herb – a no-goer (anag) (7)
- 7 Specialist food shop (4)
- 8 Show for the first time (6)
- 13 Off the beaten track (8)

- 15 Invigorate (7)
- 16 Next to (6)
- 18 Business department – retail events (5)
- 20 Domicile (5)
- 21 Bogus (4)

Stuck? For help call 0906 200 83 83 or text GUARDIANQ followed by a space, the day and date the crossword appeared another space and the CLUE reference (e.g. GUARDIANQ Wednesday24 Down20) to 88010. Calls cost £1.10 per minute, plus your phone company's access charge. Texts cost £1 per clue plus standard network charges. Service supplied by ATS. Call 0330 333 6946 for customer service (charged at standard rate).

Solution no 14,649

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| F | L | A | T | P | A | C | K | A | G | E | D |
| I | V | O | U | U | A | I | | | | | |
| S | P | I | E | L | T | U | N | E | F | U | L |
| H | G | Y | O | S | F | A | | | | | |
| I | N | S | U | F | F | I | C | I | E | N | T |
| W | O | R | F | R | O | | | | | | |
| R | E | N | N | E | T | G | U | T | T | E | R |
| A | T | A | P | R | Y | | | | | | |
| T | I | M | E | H | O | N | O | U | R | E | D |
| H | E | A | T | L | F | M | | | | | |
| F | L | A | N | N | E | L | O | Z | O | N | E |
| U | N | E | E | U | I | S | | | | | |
| L | O | T | S | B | R | I | S | T | L | E | S |

Sudoku no 3,728

Hard. Fill the grid so that each row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9. Printable version at theguardian.com/sudoku

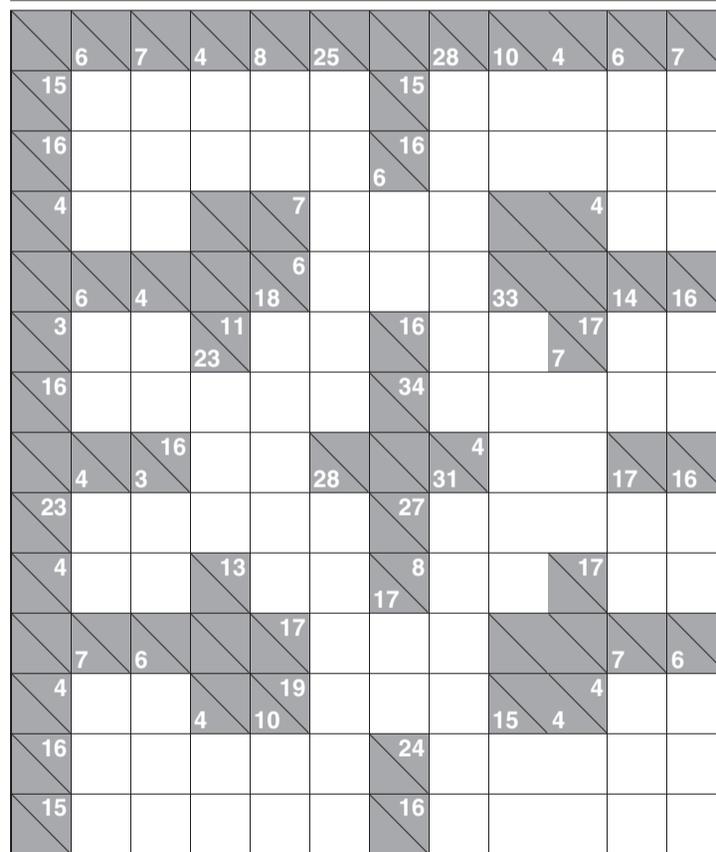
Stuck? For help call 0906 200 83 83. Calls cost £1.10, plus your phone company's access charge. Service supplied by ATS. Call 0330 333 6946 for customer service (charged at standard rate). Free tough puzzles at www.puzzler.com/guardian

Solution to no 3,727

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | 1 | 6 | 4 | 7 | 9 | 8 | 2 | 5 |
| 9 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 8 | 3 | 6 | 1 | 7 |
| 7 | 8 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 5 | 9 | 4 | 3 |
| 1 | 6 | 8 | 3 | 9 | 7 | 2 | 5 | 4 |
| 2 | 3 | 7 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 1 | 8 | 9 |
| 5 | 4 | 9 | 1 | 2 | 8 | 7 | 3 | 6 |
| 8 | 7 | 5 | 9 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 1 |
| 6 | 2 | 3 | 7 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 9 | 8 |
| 4 | 9 | 1 | 8 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 7 | 2 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | 7 | | 3 | | 8 | |
| 9 | 1 | 6 | | | 4 | 5 | | |
| | | 9 | 8 | 1 | | 7 | | |
| | | | | | 7 | | 6 | |
| | | 3 | 6 | 4 | | 8 | | |
| 6 | 9 | 8 | | | | 1 | 2 | |
| | | | 5 | | | 2 | | 1 |
| | | | | | | | | |

Kakuro no 1,548



Hard. Fill in the grid so that each run of squares adds up to the total in the box above or to the left. Use only numbers 1-9, and never use a number more than once per run (a number may recur in the same row, in a separate run). Printable version at theguardian.com/kakuro

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Solution to no 1,547

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 3 | 6 | | 7 | 9 | | 3 | 9 | | |
| 2 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 9 | 8 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 4 | |
| | | 2 | 1 | | | 7 | 6 | 5 | 8 | 9 |
| 9 | 8 | 5 | | 1 | 5 | 9 | 8 | | 1 | 3 |
| 7 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | 9 | 3 | | |
| | 9 | 3 | 7 | | 1 | 3 | | 1 | 4 | 3 |
| 9 | 7 | | 3 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 4 | | 2 | 1 |
| 8 | 6 | 9 | | 1 | 3 | | 9 | 8 | 5 | |
| | | 7 | 8 | | 8 | 9 | 7 | 5 | 1 | 2 |
| 9 | 7 | | 9 | 8 | 6 | 7 | | 9 | 3 | 7 |
| 8 | 9 | 3 | 7 | 6 | | | 9 | 7 | | |
| 4 | 1 | 2 | | 5 | 1 | 2 | 8 | 6 | 9 | 7 |
| | 3 | 1 | | | 3 | 1 | | 4 | 8 | 9 |

Doonesbury classic

Garry Trudeau

