



Comedy

Late Night For Glastonbury **Wednesday and Thursday,** **30 June – 1 July, 11.00-11.30pm** **Two parts**

Stand-up comedian and novelist Jenny Éclair presents two programmes recorded at the Glastonbury Festival.

Jenny returns to the Glastonbury Festival after a break of many years. Her first foray was a miserable experience. She was a new stand-up comedian who performed poetry to a small crowd of stoned spectators, but hated it so much she paid other people to do her remaining slots. Her boyfriend drove her there in his Jag and tried to drive round the site really fast so his wheels didn't get stuck in the mud. He threw the tent out of the car and spent the weekend trying to avoid scary, hairy women.

Jenny recalls her first experience of the festival and takes to the stage again to perform a 20-minute set in the comedy marquee, which has a capacity of over 2,000. She may even try the poetry again, with the inevitable conclusion that some things don't improve with age.

The programmes also features interviews with comedians, festival-goers, healers, people manning the food vans, organisers and whoever else Jenny wants to talk to as she wanders around. The programmes are punctuated with stand-up comedy recorded in the comedy marquee. The shows include some musical acts and familiar names from the British comedy circuit.

Presenter/Jenny Éclair, Producer/Helen Williams

Ayres On Air **Mondays starting 5 July** **11.30am-12noon** **Four parts**

Pam Ayres has recently gone down a storm on Radio 4, as a panellist on *Just A Minute*, an entertaining anecdotalist on *That Reminds Me* and a warmly received member of the sketch team on *The Right Time*.

Pam now returns to Radio 4 with her own series in which she looks at four themes: holidays, children, the country and deterioration.

Alongside her are two outstanding actors: Geoffrey Whitehead (recently the beleaguered father-in-law in *The Worst Week Of My Life* on BBC1) and Felicity Montagu (best known as Alan Partridge's assistant Lynn).

The first show looks at the subject of deterioration of eyesight, figure, memory ... the list goes on. There are poems about being too fat and buying a Wonderbra. There are also sketches about being topless at 60 and how to spice up your love life with a little celebrity fantasy in a sketch called *Me And Michael Aspel*.

The sketches are written by Pam Ayres, Chris Thompson, Peter Reynolds and Jan Etherington.

The shows are recorded at The Everyman Theatre in Cheltenham.

Producer/Claire Jones



Trevor's World Of Sport Fridays starting 20 August 6.30-7.00pm Six parts

Trevor's World Of Sport, written by Andy Hamilton, is a comedy about a sports agent (played by Neil Pearson) who is desperately struggling to retain his decency in an indecent world.

Andy Hamilton's critically acclaimed TV series is coming to Radio 4 with six new episodes (written especially for radio), starring Neil Pearson as Trevor, the sports agent who is trying to tiptoe his way through the minefield of his personal and professional life.

In his professional life, Trevor is increasingly besieged by cut-throats, and the biggest cut-throat of them all is his own business partner, Sammy (Paul Reynolds). He has a nice, reliable PA who just happens to be a religious fundamentalist (played by Rosalind Ayres), and a receptionist, Heidrun, who is a German lesbian of considerable intellect (Cosima Shaw). Most problematical of all, he has his clients; a dysfunctional bunch of egomaniacs – including Ralph (Michael Fenton Stevens), a failed sports presenter and serial attention-seeker.

Trevor's home life is no less chaotic. He's temporarily (he hopes) separated from his wife, Meryl (Claire Skinner), a woman who's on a journey to find herself but isn't sure where to look. To make matters more complicated they have a teenage son, with all that that entails.

Featuring the original cast from the TV series *Trevor's World Of Sport* follows Trevor's darkly comic adventures as he swims through the shark tank of his life.

Producer/Andy Hamilton

The Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy Tuesdays from 21 September 6.30-7.00pm Six parts

Don't panic! *Hitchhiker's* returns to radio for a brand new series.

Twenty-five years after the original radio series of Douglas Adams's *The Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy* exploded into the public consciousness, the further exploits of its bewildered hero, Arthur Dent, are being brought to life in their original medium and with the (mainly) original cast.

This dramatisation of the last three books, *Life, The Universe And Everything*; *So Long And Thanks For All The Fish* and *Mostly Harmless* (none of which were originally produced), features Douglas Adams himself, thanks to the wonders of digital technology. Douglas always intended to play the part of Agrajag and, in fact, recorded himself in the part a few years ago.

The programmes are adapted and directed by Douglas Adams's original choice for the job, award-winning audio director Dirk Maggs, following Douglas's instructions and notes, which he made in preparation for these productions.

The original *Hitchhiker's* radio cast returns: Simon Jones as Arthur Dent, Geoffrey McGivern as Ford Prefect, Susan Sheridan as Trillian, Mark Wing-Davey as Zaphod Beeblebrox and Stephen Moore as Marvin The Paranoid Android. The late Peter Jones's great friend, William Franklyn, replaces him as The Voice Of The Book.

Music for the new series is by Paul "Wix" Wickens (Paul McCartney's musical director) and Phil Pope.



(The second of the new series is due in spring 2005).

Director/Dirk Maggs, Producer/Bruce Hyman

It's That Jo Caulfield Again **Thursdays starting 7 October** **6.30-7.00pm** **Four parts**

Radio 4 presents a new sketch show starring stand-up comedian and *So Graham Norton* writer Jo Caulfield. Jo turns her acerbic wit on the irritating things that get under her skin and asks the really important questions. She tackles those all-important subjects such as hobbies, holidays and jobs: Why don't people who do 'extreme' sports just kill themselves and save a lot of money and effort;; why are there never any Roman ruins at Roman ruins;; and do people who work in IT actually know what it is?

Jo is joined by Simon Greenall (*I'm Alan Partridge*), Vicki Pepperdine (*Nighty Night*) and Dave Mounfield.

Jo Caulfield is one of the most popular comedians on the comedy circuit and has been nominated as one of the best female comics in the country. She is in demand at all major UK comedy clubs and has completed three nationwide tours. She has supported *Graham Norton Live*, *Puppetry Of The Penis*, and *Bremner, Bird And Fortune*. Recent international comedy performances include Paris, Amsterdam, Dublin, Belgium, Berlin, Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Hong Kong, Singapore, Los Angeles and New York.

For the last three years, Jo has taken her solo stand-up show to the Edinburgh Festival to critical acclaim. Due to public demand she has moved to a bigger venue each year and has

become one of a rare group in Edinburgh – a comedian who is a guaranteed sell-out.

Producer/Helen Williams

Fifteen Minute Musicals **Wednesdays starting 27 October** **11.00-11.15pm** **Six parts**

With over 30 musicals selling out in the West End night after night, the British public cannot get enough of them. In true West End style, artistic licence is taken and stretched ridiculously, as easily identifiable public figures are dressed up, gilded, fabricated and placed against the backdrop of a random period of history for sugar-coated consumption.

The stories are simple and engaging but the writing allows the audience to enjoy all the conventions of a musical (huge production numbers, tender ballads and emotional reprises) whilst completely re-interpreting events in major celebrities' lives ... all in 15 minutes!

Brothers In Arms tells the story of Blair and Brown. In the form of a rock musical, set against the backdrop of Medieval England, listeners join them as they leave squire school.

Bollywindsor! is a Bhangratic right Royal romp as a young handsome Prince (William) goes undercover to prove he is fit to be heir, in a blend of riotous Bollywood tunes and regal shenanigans.

Jeffrey is the rags to riches (to rags to riches to etc) tale of Jeffrey Archer, who came from nowhere to assume the greatest offices in the land and then went back to nowhere ... a Gilbert and Sullivan style musical with Dickensian influences.



Horror Tory is a Gothic Sixties rock musical set in Castle Howard with Frankentory. The Tory family is desperate to get back into power and attempt to build the perfect Tory leader.

Posh And Becks is set in the Wild West in an "Ohhhhhh-klahoma" style setting, telling the story of how Posh and Becks meet as childhood sweethearts.

Finally, *Ben Elton* tells the story of a comedian and writer who sells his soul to the devil, Andrew Lloyd Webber, in exchange for success. But the price is high.

Producer/Katie Tyrrell

The Pits

Tuesdays starting 2 November

6.30-7.00pm

Six parts

From the creator of the award-winning *Think The Unthinkable* comes a brand-new sitcom set in the orchestra pits of London's West End and The White Rose, a musicians' drinking den just off Drury Lane. In concerts and shows, Maggie, Baz, Rosie and Alec play beautifully sublime music – in the pub they relate details of their bizarre, selfish and ramshackle lives. Maggie is the elitist snob; Baz, the compulsive gambler who tries to place bets on the dogs during the boring bits in Wagner; Rosie, the naïve optimist just out of college; her brother, Alec, now a cynical twenty-something having been that precocious six-year-old who played the *Flight Of The Bumble Bee* on *Wogan* – an event he says ruined his life.

Life would be much easier if they hadn't just been fired from the same production for going on strike about plans to reduce the in-house orchestra. *The Pits* shows their attempts at trying to find alternative musical employment, from being a token on-stage cellist for Robbie

Williams and learning Latvian to get into Latvia's Philharmonic, to worrying flirtations with folk and be-bop jazz.

The series is written by James Carey.

Producer/Adam Bromley

Clare In The Community

Fridays starting 26 November

11.30am-12noon

Six parts

Like plenty before her, Clare Barker has entered a caring profession so that she can sort out other people's problems rather than deal with her own. A control freak, Clare likes nothing better than interfering in other people's lives on both a professional and personal basis.

Secretly regarding herself as a cross between Mother Teresa and Wonder Woman, Clare tends towards self-importance and considers most other professions as trivial.

She is in her early thirties, white, middle class and heterosexual, all of which are occasional causes of discomfort to her. Each week, Radio 4 joins Clare in her continued struggle to control both her professional and private life.

Brian Dixon is Clare's partner of 10 years. Brian has a capacity for self-pity which is of almost heroic proportions, and this is further fuelled by Clare's continual disinterest and neglect.

An English and drama teacher, Brian harbours ambitions as a playwright. He feels that his Byronic spirit is being stifled in his relationship with Clare and longs for the opportunity to release the wild passions continually frustrated at home.



The writers are Harry Venning and Dave Ramsden.

Producer/Katie Tyrrell

The Consultants

Tuesdays starting 15 December

6.30-7.00pm

Six parts

Justin Edwards, Neil Edmonds and James Rawlings make a triumphant return to Radio 4 in the guise of *The Consultants*.

In 2002, *The Consultants* won the Perrier Best Newcomer Award for their Edinburgh sketch show. In November 2002, they made their pilot show for BBC Radio 4. Their first Radio 4 series in February 2003 was greeted with critical acclaim.

Now they are back with a winning mix of comic sketches and music, including *The Consultants Radio Archive*, harking back to the earliest days of radio. Who could miss the thwack-happy headmaster in the Consultant's own version of a boarding school romp?

Producer/Will Saunders