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International Match Of The Day - Northern Ireland v Norway

Wednesday, February 29, BBC One NI 11.15pm

Stephen Watson presents highlights of the friendly international at Windsor Park where Michael O’Neill, a former Northern Ireland midfielder, makes his debut as manager. Jackie Fullerton (pictured) is the commentator, and there’s expert analysis on the first game under the new coach.

Ulster Rugby Live - Ulster v Edinburgh

Friday, March 02, BBC Two NI, 7pm

Stephen Watson (pictured) presents live coverage of Ulster v Edinburgh from Ravenhill in Round 17 of the Pro 12. These sides met in January this year with Ulster running out convincing winners, earning a bonus point at Murrayfield. Jim Neilly is joined by Ryan Constable on commentary.
6Degrees

New drama follows the lives of six freshers in their first term in University in Belfast

6Degrees begins with the first two episodes on BBC Two Northern Ireland, Tuesday, February 28, 9.30pm

6Degrees is a brand new six-part drama from Stirling Productions for BBC Northern Ireland.

Over six half hour episodes, beginning on BBC Two Northern Ireland on Tuesday, February 28 at 9.30pm, the series follows six freshers arriving from throughout the UK and Ireland as they crash through their first term at university.

Descending on Belfast, the lives of Jess (Georgia Maguire), Danny (Niall Wright), Conor (Cillian O’Sullivan), Sandie (Jayne Wisener), Leech (Ryan McParland) and Eva (Jamie Lee O’Donnell), are about to change forever.

In a city with no limits, they're breaking away from everything they've known and are here to make their mark. Hearts will be broken, friendships made and trust betrayed, but within all the madness and mistakes, our students are learning the invaluable life lessons that books just can't teach.

This is a show about relationships - a crash course to adulthood. Six students, brought together by six degrees who are about to become friends for life.

As well as award winning local freelance talent, 6Degrees has also given opportunities to first time local TV writers, Bronagh Taggart, Michael Shannon, Eoin Cleland and Aaron Archer.

At back, from left to right: Jess (Georgia Maguire), Danny (Niall Wright), Conor (Cillian O’Sullivan) and Sandie (Jayne Wisener). At front: Chris (Ryan McParland) and Eva (Jamie-Lee O’Donnell)

Ailsa Orr, BBC Northern Ireland Head of Programmes, said: “We are absolutely delighted to have 6Degrees as part of our original home grown drama season. It offers a fascinating insight into student life and some of the important themes and issues relevant to young people today.

“It’s also a showcase for some brilliant new acting talent, and has offered an important opportunity for local writers and upcoming production talent. We very much hope it will be enjoyed by a whole new generation of BBC Northern Ireland viewers.”

Anne Stirling of Stirling Productions, added: “This is a wonderful opportunity for a local company to show that good drama can be made in and about Northern Ireland.”

6Degrees begins on BBC Two Northern Ireland on Tuesday, February 28 at 9.30pm and will continue from Tuesday, March 06 at 10pm. This has been produced with support from Northern Ireland Screen.
JESS GREEN, played by GEORGIA MAGUIRE

Studious, straightforward and down to earth, what you see is what you get with Jess Green. Having repeated her A-levels, she's worked extra-hard to get here and is determined to prove to her parents that she's not a complete failure. From London, Jess arrives in Belfast with long-term boyfriend, Jack, but with all Belfast has to offer, how will she manage her studies and a long-distance relationship?

DANNY BURNS, played by NIALL WRIGHT (Mickey-Bo and Me)

Loveable film fanatic, Danny Burns is eager to get his teeth into student life. This isn’t just about the letters after his name; it’s Danny’s first taste of freedom and he relishes it. A Belfast lad, he’s a sensitive soul who’s here to make friends and try to forget about his troubled home life. It’s against Danny’s nature, but in order to help his alcoholic mum, he’s going to have to be cruel to be kind.

SANDIE MORROW, played by JAYNE WISENER (Sweeney Todd, Inbetweeners)

Hailing from the Causeway Coast, glamour girl Sandie Morrow’s the innocent optimist of the group. An idealist in every way, she believes the best in everyone, but when she falls in with the football lads, Sandie’s naivety comes back to bite her.

CONOR MARTIN, played by CILLIAN O’SULLIVAN (The Running Mate, Single-handed)

Handsome, successful and charming Conor is revered by the lads and adored by the ladies. Leader of the group and captain of the university Gaelic team, this is a young man who’s used to winning; both on and off the field. He’s left his home in Cork for the anonymity of a new city.

CHRISTOPHER LEECH, played by RYAN MCPARLAND (Good Vibrations)

Delusional and sex-obsessed, Chris Leech is a complete liability. Arriving into Belfast, from Portadown, he’s a closet IT geek who’s determined to fit in with the crowd. As the gang’s about to find out, joker Leech leaves a trail of destruction wherever he goes.

EVA MAGUIRE, played by JAMIE LEE O’DONNELL

Derry girl Eva’s confident, spontaneous, opinionated and hedonistic. She’s so busy running from one adventure to the next, her tendency to never look before she leaps causes havoc with the lives of her friends. Life with Eva’s never dull, but she’s going to have to face up to a trauma of her past before things seriously spiral out of control.

This core cast is supported by Andrea Irvine (Five Minutes of Heaven, The Clinic) playing Danny’s mum, Ben Peel (Hunger, Spooks, United) as Eva’s friend Justin, introducing Lauren Ellis Steele playing Leech’s girlfriend and Peter Campion (Love/Hate, Raw) playing Ronan McCann, Conor’s cousin from Dublin.
Primetime
Homegrown drama from BBC Northern Ireland

Primetime - At Water’s Edge, BBC Two Northern Ireland, Sunday, February 26, 9pm.
Primetime - A Year Of Greater Love, BBC Two Northern Ireland, Sunday, March 4, 9pm

BBC Northern Ireland and Northern Ireland Screen bring viewers Primetime, two original dramas penned by new local writers.

The two 60-minute dramas, filmed on locations in Northern Ireland, by Mammoth Screen are on BBC Two Northern Ireland on Sunday, February 26 and March 4 at 9pm.

The first, Primetime - At Water’s Edge, tells the story of Beth (Andrea Irvine) who has been trying for years to have a baby. As another birthday approaches she decides to give IVF treatment one final try but a fatal car accident spins her life into a new direction.

At Water’s Edge was written by first time TV writers Dean and Glynis Hagan and is on BBC Two Northern on Sunday, February 26 at 9pm.

Dean has been writing for years but this is the first time he has teamed up with his wife Glynis.

Living in Newtownabbey, Dean and Glynis felt dramas reflecting the true experience of family life in Northern Ireland were missing from our screens.

Dean said: “We feel that there is much about our culture that is universal in life experience, but what is unique to us is our biting wit and our ability to cry, laugh and survive adversity.”

In Primetime - A Year Of Greater Love on BBC Two Northern Ireland on Sunday, March 4 at 9pm, Emma discovers her
daughter Alice has a degenerative kidney disease and needs a donor. She decides against her sister’s wishes to dredge up the family past and track down her adopted brother.

Patrick FitzSymons is the writer behind the script A Year Of Greater Love and lives near Dunseverick on the North Coast. He already has an extensive career as an actor for TV, radio and film including BBC Northern Ireland dramas Brendan Smyth: Betrayal Of Trust and Scapegoat.

He was inspired to start writing to get back to what motivated him in the first place - good stories.

Patrick said: “In writing A Year Of Greater Love I hoped to examine the impact of abnormal circumstances on normal family life, to create a situation in which those senses of duty and obligation felt between those related by blood are stretched to the limit. Where does our duty to family end and our duty to our fellow human beings begin?”

Ailsa Orr, Head of Programmes BBC Northern Ireland, said: “We are delighted to broadcast the two Primetime films as part of our original homegrown drama season on BBC NI. They are both great films, written, produced and filmed here in Northern Ireland, starring local actors. We hope our audiences enjoy them.”

Andrew Reid, Head of Production at Northern Ireland Screen, added: “The quantity and quality of applications that we received for Primetime when it launched in November 2010 proves that new writing talent is alive and flourishing in Northern Ireland.

“Primetime has offered Patrick, Dean and Glynis a unique opportunity to get their work produced by one of the UK’s top independent drama companies, Mammoth Screen and broadcast on BBC Northern Ireland. We are very excited to see the results on-screen now, I’m sure they will be a testimony to our belief in the creative talent within Northern Ireland.”

Michele Buck, Joint Managing Director, Mammoth Screen and Executive Producer of Primetime said: “Primetime has been instrumental in strengthening our on-going relationship with Northern Ireland. We thoroughly enjoyed working with the considerable creative expertise that already exists along with discovering some new and exciting emerging talent.”
It’s Back And In Your Corner

Six-part series, In Your Corner, returns

In Your Corner, Starts Monday, February 27 on BBC One Northern Ireland at 7.30pm

The In Your Corner team: Wendy Austin, centre, is joined by Chris Moore and Claire McCollum for the new six-part series of In Your Corner which returns on Monday, February 27 at 7.30pm on BBC One Northern Ireland.

It’s back, it’s live, it’s tackling the issues that matter to local communities and it’s In Your Corner.

Wendy Austin and the In Your Corner team return for a new six-part series on BBC One Northern Ireland starting on Monday, February 27 at 7.30pm. Wendy will be joined in studio again by Claire McCollum, visiting each county in Northern Ireland during the six weeks. There is also a new face in the In Your Corner team with award-winning reporter Chris Moore investigating issues on behalf of viewers.

This time the programme will be broadcast live from the heart of communities across Northern Ireland tackling the topics, concerns and problems of local people – no matter how big or how small – whether it’s social, health, financial; a personal matter or an issue that’s affecting the whole community or the entire country.

The first stop for In Your Corner, made for BBC Northern Ireland by independent production company, Below The Radar, is the Roe Valley Arts Centre, Limavady, Co Londonderry on Monday, February 27. Next up is Portadown Health Centre, Portadown, Co Armagh on Monday, March 05, followed by Burnavon Theatre, Cookstown, Co Tyrone on Monday, March 12. The programme on Monday, March 19 from The Theatre at The Mill Museum, Newtownabbey, Co An-
The In Your Corner team: Wendy Austin, centre, is joined by Chris Moore and Claire McCollum for the new six-part series of In Your Corner which returns on Monday, February 27 at 7.30pm on BBC One Northern Ireland.

Special trim will be recorded in advance, on Thursday, March 15. Programme five will be live from Waterways Ireland, Enniskillen, Co Fermanagh on Monday, March 26 with the final programme coming from Tollymore Activity Centre, Bryansford/Newcastle, Co Down on Monday, April 02.

Viewers can get in touch with the In Your Corner team if they have an issue they’d like investigated - from a minor irritation right through to hard-hitting social topics. Viewers can email: inyourcorner@bbc.co.uk, follow the programme on Facebook or on Twitter: @BBCInYourCorner and #BBCIYC.

Presenter Wendy Austin said: “I’m really looking forward to getting back on the road with In Your Corner - right in the heart of communities, hearing about and hopefully resolving some of their problems. Over the six weeks of the series we really aim to be ‘in their corner’, whether it’s for someone with a personal plight, or a group hoping to find a solution to a wider problem. We’ve already got some great stories to tell - but it’s not too late to get in touch if you’d like us to be in YOUR corner!”

Claire said: “I’m delighted to be back on the road again with ‘In Your Corner’ travelling all over Northern Ireland investigating issues that affect us all. Working on the series has really given me an insight into the challenges people face here and over the next six weeks we’re aiming to help find some resolution to their problems be they big or small.”

Series producer Michael Fanning, from Below The Radar said: “The In Your Corner team is back on the road again. Over six weeks we’ll be broadcasting from towns and villages right across Northern Ireland examining the stories that are important to local communities. This time we’re going live and we want the audience to get in touch with us and let us know what the story is, In Your Corner.”

The six-part In Your Corner series, made by independent production company, Below The Radar for BBC Northern Ireland, starts on Monday, February 27 at 7.30pm on BBC One Northern Ireland.

[Note to editor: The programme on Monday, March 19 from The Theatre at The Mill Museum, Newtownabbey, Co Antrim will be recorded in advance, on Thursday, March 15]
New series of Imeall Geal

BBC NI’s Irish language music and chat show Imeall Geal is back

**Imeall Geal**, Monday, February 27, BBC Two NI, 10pm

BBC NI’s Irish language music and chat show Imeall Geal is back on our screens from Monday February 27 with presenters Tomaí Ó Conghaile and Gráinne McElwain. The first programme in the new series, filmed in the Sean Hollywood Arts Centre in Newry, will be on BBC Two NI at 10pm.

The 10 part series recorded over five days in Newry throughout November features the best of musicians and personalities from all parts of Ireland including The Coronas, Pugwash, John Spillane, T with the Maggies, 4 Men and A Dog, Dónal Luny, Royseven, Gareth Dunlop, Julie Feeney and Gráinne Holland. A special rendition of Brel songs performed in Irish also features.

Guests in the series include the stalwart of GAA commentary, Micheál Ó Muircheartaigh; former member of Irish girlband Wonderland, Leigh Learmont; founder of the Cabaret Craiceáilte and Irish radio broadcaster Rónán Mac Aodh Bhui (with a special guest!); broadcaster Cathal Mac Coille and Oireachtas regulars Ray Mac Mánais and Joe Ó Dónaill…among many others!

Throughout the series members of the audience get the opportunity to pose their own questions to the guests and to subject them to a ‘quiz’, testing their knowledge on all kinds of things from the origins of tea to the creation of the suspender belt!

Each episode of iG is brimming with stories and reports recorded out-and-about by roving reporters Ali Mac Aindreasa, and former Rose of Tralee finalist Siobhéal Nic Eochaidh. Stories from supper clubs, being Belfast’s Lord Mayor, how to walk on stilts to what hypnotherapy is like, are all given the Imeall Geal treatment.

Series Producer Karen Kirby says of this series: “Walking into the auditorium in the Sean Hollywood Arts Centre of a night put the audience right at the heart of the show with a new seating arrangement for the guests on the ‘studio’ floor. We made it seem like you could lean over, tap Micheál Ó Muircheartaigh on the shoulder, and ask him about his fascination with greyhounds!

“The lucky few in the audience got to do just that, and Tomaí and Gráinne asked the questions for everyone else! The result was a fantastic atmosphere with the mix of music, chat and craic making the series one to watch out for.”

In the first programme Tomaí and Gráinne are joined by leading Irish rock band The Coronas, Rossa Ó Snodaigh and John Spillane.

Imeall Geal is a Big Mountain production for BBC NI with support from Northern Ireland Screen’s Irish Language Broadcast Fund. It will be broadcast on BBC Two NI each Monday night at 10pm, beginning from Monday, 27 February.
The Shore

BBC Northern Ireland broadcasts Oscar-nominated Short Film The Shore

**The Shore**, BBC One NI, Sunday, February 26 at 10.25pm

Ciaran Hinds stars in The Shore, to be broadcast on BBC One NI on Sunday, February 26 at 10.25pm

BBC Northern Ireland will broadcast the Oscar-nominated film The Shore on the same evening at the 84th Academy Awards take place across the Atlantic.

The film, written and directed by Terry George and starring Ciaran Hinds and Conleth Hill has been nominated in the Short Film (Live Action) category at this year’s Academy Awards and will be shown on BBC One NI on Sunday, February 26 at 10.25pm.

The Shore is the uplifting story of two boyhood best friends – Joe (Hinds) and Paddy (Hill) divided for 25 years by the tumult of The Troubles. When Joe returns home to Northern Ireland, his daughter Patricia brings the two men together for a reunion, with unexpected results.

What happened all those years ago? Can old wounds be healed? The answer is both funny and moving.

The Shore was written and directed by Belfast native and three-time Oscar-nominated screenwriter and director...
Terry George and was produced by his daughter Oorlagh George. It was filmed in the bay next to Terry’s home in Killough, Co Down.

As well as starring Belfast-born Ciaran Hinds and Ballycastle’s Conleth Hill, The Shore also features performances from Irish actresses Kerry Condon and Maggie Cronin.

Ailsa Orr, Head of Programmes, BBC Northern Ireland, says: “We are delighted to broadcast this beautiful short film on BBC Northern Ireland on Oscar night, when it is being considered for a prestigious Academy Award. It is a showcase of Northern Ireland and its considerable talent, and we are proud to have it in our schedule for its television debut.”

Richard Williams, Chief Executive of Northern Ireland Screen says: “We were delighted to welcome Terry George back home to make The Shore, it is a fantastic indigenous project - a local story featuring a wealth of local talent both in front of and behind the cameras. I’m sure it will be a firm favourite with viewers when broadcast on BBC Northern Ireland on Oscar night.”
History and Broadcasting come under the spotlight in a series of illustrated talks, conversations, discussions and preview screenings in the company of some of today’s most prominent historians and programme-makers. They’ll be exploring what history means to us, and why it matters.

The Festival of History and Broadcasting will be hosted by William Crawley and will take place from Tuesday, February 21 to Thursday, February 23 in BBC Broadcasting House.

Already confirmed to take part in the three-day festival are writer, historian and presenter, Dan Cruickshank (BBC’s ‘Britain’s Best Buildings’) who will talk about the way in which buildings give us an insight into the past.

Mary Beard, historian, broadcaster and author (presenter of BBC’s ‘Pompeii’ and ‘Rome with Mary Beard’), chats about the lessons which the past can provide for everyday living, while Dame Jenny Abramsky, chair of the Heritage Lottery Fund and formerly Head of Audio and Music for the BBC, will reflect on the issues and events which have shaped her career.

Award-winning producer and history enthusiast Richard Bradley from Lion Television offers an insight into his work on the hugely successful CBBC series, ‘Horrible Histories’, discussing the making of the series and sharing some of his favourite clips and highlights and the considerations involved in creating history programmes for younger viewers.

One of the festival highlights will be a short illustrated talk about the Queen’s historian, Professor JC Beckett, coinciding with the centenary of his birth. This will be delivered by Professor Alvin Jackson from Edinburgh University.

There’ll also be opportunities to chat about our island stories, ancient and classical history, the history of religion, heritage and architecture, archives and changing approaches to the teaching of history, as well as the history of broadcasting itself and whether its lessons are a useful guide to present difficulties at home and around the world.

Booking has now opened for the festival. As demand is expected to be high for sessions involving well known speakers, book a place today by logging on to: www.bbc.co.uk/events