



ANNUAL AFTER WORK COMPILATION



Dear friends, colleagues and viewers,

What a year!

Chances are you didn't get to watch all the shows we raved about in our newsletter. But fear not...

After the love (and flattery) you showered us with last year, we had to bring back our annual "After Work" compilation so you can catch up in the holidays.

Last year, one avid reader colour-coded the guide based on the shows she could watch with her hubby and the ones she saved for when he was out. Now that's commitment!

As well as our "shows of the year" we've introduced categories, so you can make your picks based on what you like, your mood, and who you have to negotiate with for the remote control.

Have a wonderful holiday season and happy viewing!

**Cheers,
Jen**



- Rivals (Disney+)
- Slow Horses (Apple TV+)
- The Diplomat (Netflix)
- Boy Swallows Universe (Netflix)
- The Emperor of Ocean Park (Binge/Foxtel)
- The Day of the Jackal (Binge/Foxtel)
- Plum (ABC iview)
- After The Party (ABC iview)
- Fisk (ABC iview)
- Hacks (Stan)

Best RETURNING SHOWS



SHOWS WE LOVE THAT RETURNED WITH NEW SEASONS IN 2024

Phil Collins was right. "You can't hurry love". Start from Season 1!

Drama

- Slow Horses (Apple TV+)
- The Bear (Disney+)
- The Diplomat (Netflix)
- Bridgerton (Netflix)
- Yellowstone (Stan))
- The Lincoln Lawyer (Netflix)
- Reasonable Doubt (Disney+)
- Blue Lights (SBS)
- Trigger Point (Stan)
- Fire Country (Paramount)
- Station 19 (Disney+) Grey's
- Anatomy (Disney+) The
- Gilded Age (Paramount)

Comedy/Drama-dy

- Fisk (ABC iview)
- Hacks (Stan)
- Emily In Paris (Netflix)
- Shrinking (Apple TV+)
- Bad Sisters (Apple TV+)

Doco

- Drive to Survive (Netflix)

Oh!

THE DRAMA!



AUSSIE DRAMA

Boy Swallows Universe: I inhaled this 7 episode series based on the book by the same name. Outstanding cast. Brilliant script. Great 80's soundtrack (Netflix).

Territory: drama about the world's largest cattle station at Australia's top end. Think "Yellowstone" meets "Succession". It hit number 1 on Netflix for a reason (Netflix).

Plum: Anything starring Brendan Cowell or Asher Keddie is compulsory viewing. They are both in "Plum" - a brilliant 6 part series based on Cowell's novel about a retired rugby league legend Peter "The Plum" Lum. Plum is diagnosed with a brain disorder. You'll laugh, you'll cry and won't want it to end (even if you don't like footy) (ABC iview).

Human Error: Based on a true story, a homicide Detective trusts her gut and follows the twists and turns in a tricky murder case (9Now).

Ladies in Black: An Australian series based on the 2018 movie of the same name. Set in the dress department of a posh department store (think David Jones). Great cast (including Miranda Otto, Debi Mazar), fabulous set, and an interesting (terrifying) look at 1961 Australia (ABC iview).

How to Make Gravy: A film adaptation of Paul Kelly's Christmas song. It has a stellar Aussie cast (Binge/Foxtel).

BRITISH DRAMA

The Day of the Jackal: Many are calling it the "best show of the year". If you are into Eddie Redmayne, snipers, and MI6 you will love this one (Binge/Foxtel).

Douglas Is Cancelled: This is a 4 part series about a tv presenter who is accused of making a sexist joke at a family wedding. He can't remember doing it but that doesn't stop Twitter going bonkers. Will Douglas' career survive? An addictive watch (once your mind computes that in this show, its star, Hugh Bonneville, is not the Earl of Grantham from "Downton Abbey") (ABC iview).

AMERICAN DRAMA

The Diplomat: Season 2 lived up to the hype. The addition of the incredible Allison Janney as US Vice President had all of us “The West Wing” fans positively giddy. CJ, I mean the VP, and the season’s cliff hanger did not disappoint. Bring on season 3 (Netflix).

Yellowstone: After the longest of waits, the final six episodes started dropping from 11 November. Unless you have a photographic memory, go back and watch the last episode of season 5 part 1, so you can enjoy your remaining time with the Duttons to the max (Stan).

Landman: “Yellowstone” creator Taylor Sheridan is nothing if not prolific. His latest, “Landman” is sans horses. It is all about the Texas oil industry. Billy Bob Thornton is hilarious (in a good way). Jon Hamm and Demi Moore also pop in and out. I’m kinda hooked (Paramount).

HISTORICAL DRAMAS

Franklin: Michael Douglas stars as founding father Benjamin Franklin in, you guessed it, “Franklin”. You don’t get your face on a \$100 bill for no reason. In 1788, Franklin convinced France to fund America’s war with Britain. Beautifully filmed on location in Paris and Versailles. Sadly, no random raps from Lin Manuel Miranda, but watch anyway (Apple TV+).

Bridgerton: After a tortuous 2 year wait, season 3 of “Bridgerton” dropped. Penelope Featherington (aka Lady Whistledown) was looking for a husband. Will she find him (Netflix)?

The Gilded Age: In season 2 of this period drama, “Downton Abbey” creator Julian Fellowes brings back the fancy frocks and flashy homes of NYC in the 1880’s. Christine Baranski’s sarcastic wit is wonderful (Paramount).

Best THRILLERS AND COP SHOWS



THRILLERS

The Emperor of Ocean Park: One of the best shows of the year. Nothing to do with emperors or ocean parks. This 10 episode series based in Chicago is a gripping thriller about a Judge and his family and ...no spoilers. Just watch (Binge/Foxtel).

After the Flood: A crime mystery thriller set in a small English town. Police investigate the death of an unidentified man found in a lift after a flash flood. It's better than it sounds. Really (Britbox).

Trigger Point: You think you have a stressful job? Try detonating bombs for a living! Watched the 6 episodes of season 2 behind my fingers and under the covers (Stan).

Fool Me Once: Totally binge-worthy 8 episode British thriller. Joanna Lumley stars. Enough said (Netflix).

Miss Sloane: I'm a sucker for Washington political thrillers about lobbyists played by Jessica Chastain. Gripping movie from start to finish (Netflix).

The Suspect: A London based thriller about a psychologist with a secret. I could tell you more... but it's a secret (ABC iview).

Mrs Wilson: Based on a true story. (In fact, the lead actress plays her real life grandmother). After spy and novelist Alec Wilson unexpectedly dies in 1963, his devoted wife is forced down many rabbit holes when another Mrs Wilson arrives on her doorstep. Lots of secrets. Loved it. Much Googling ensued once finished (Britbox).

The Vanishing Triangle: is a 6 episode thriller set in Ireland in the 90s. A newspaper reporter believes the person who murdered her mother 20 years ago may be responsible for a spate of killings of young women. She convinces a Detective (Tom from "Downton Abbey") to help her investigate. Based on a true story. Divine Irish accents (SBS).

The Agency: I'm not brave enough to be a law enforcement officer, but I do love shows about them. "The Agency" is a spy thriller about a CIA branch in London. It's based on the French series "Le Bureau des Légendes". Not sure it's in the same league, but it's produced by George Clooney and Richard Gere is in it, so that counts for something, right (Paramount)?

COP SHOWS

Criminal Record: A series about two London detectives who clash over an old murder case. "Dr Who" alum Peter Capaldi and Cush Jumbo are brilliant (Apple TV+).

True Detective 4: The "True Detective" seasons are stand alone, so if you missed 1- 3, you can (and should) leap into season 4. Sure, it's bleak and gruesome - multiple murders in the Alaskan winter. But..."the Jodie Foster effect" will have you bingeing all 6 eps faster than you can say "is it 2:00 am already" (Binge/Foxtel)?

Blue Lights: Season 2 of my favourite police show set in Belfast dropped. I've fallen in love with the characters... and their accents (SBS).

Bodkin: An American podcaster travels to a small Irish town to investigate a cold case. He gets more than he bargained for when he is joined by a feisty London based journalist. For those who love murder mysteries told through divine Irish accents (Netflix).

FBI (multiple franchises): I am not brave enough (or American enough) to be a member of the FBI, but I have always been fascinated by those who are. Sometimes, at the end of a long day, I just need to escape to the streets of NYC and watch baddies get caught on "FBI" (Paramount).

Human Error: Fans of Aussie drama and cop shows will love "Human Error". Based on a true story, a homicide Detective trusts her gut and follows the twists and turns in a tricky murder case (9Now).

Cross: A gripping crime thriller about a Washington DC Detective who takes on a serial killer. Sure I watched some of it through one eye and a few fingers, but that's a good thing. Couldn't turn it off (Prime).



COMEDY

Hacks: Is an under-rated, under the radar show. It's hilarious – which is fortunate given that it is about a fabulous female stand-up comedian. Jean Smart is simply awesome (Stan)!

Fisk: Comedic genius Kitty Flanagan returns as our favourite brown suit wearing suburban solicitor Helen Tudor-Fisk (ABC iview).

The Franchise: Ever wondered what it would be like to work on a lame superhero movie? "The Franchise" is a fabulous satire from HBO/Sam Mendes. Brilliantly written and acted. An effortless watch with laugh out loud moments (Binge/Foxtel).

Shrinking: This dramedy about psychotherapists returns with Harrison Ford continuing to be a comic genius. (Who knew) (Apple TV+)?

Big Mood: is a laugh out loud (and at times dark) comedy starring the fabulous Nicola Coughlan ("Bridgerton" and "Derry Girls"). Two besties from East London juggle life in their 20s, career issues and bipolar disorder (Stan).

Loudermilk: A comedy about a Seattle based substance abuse counsellor (recovering alcoholic and former music critic). [Fun fact. Sam Loudermilk is played by the actor who was Berger in "Sex And The City", and whilst I'm still cross with him for dumping Carrie via post-it, he's terrific in this show] (Netflix).

Mike Birbiglia: The Old Man & the Pool: Want to watch some stand-up that is clever and doesn't rely on F-bombs for laughs? Check out this special (Netflix).

DYSFUNCTIONAL RICH PEOPLE

Prosper: I love shows about dysfunctional wealthy families (think "Succession"). In "Prosper" we have one such family – who also happen to run an evangelical megachurch. Richard Roxburgh, Rebecca Gibney and a magnificent clifftop mansion shine in this 8 episode drama (Stan).

DYSFUNCTIONAL RICH PEOPLE (CONTINUED)

Territory: drama about the world's largest cattle station at Australia's top end. Think "Yellowstone" meets "Succession". It hit number 1 on Netflix for a reason (Netflix).

A Man In Full: I inhaled this David E Kelley adaptation of the Tom Wolfe novel about a flawed Atlanta property tycoon and those who dare to get in his way. Stars Jeff Daniels and Diane Lane... and the divine Lucy Liu (Netflix).

La Maison: A tres fabulous drama series about a scandalous French family behind a couture house. Fashion, Paris, a castle in Brittany, and horrible people, make having to endure sub-titles totally worth it (Apple TV+).

Apples Never Fall: A 7 episode mystery based on Liane Moriarty's novel. Set in West Palm Beach with a "tennis is life/dysfunctional family" theme, matriarch and retired tennis academy owner (Annette Bening) disappears suddenly. Her four children are baffled. Is their father (Sam Neill) involved (Binge/Foxtel)?

The Gentlemen: Ever wondered what it would be like to inherit the family estate and find that it's home to an enormous weed empire run by people who have no plans to leave? Guy Ritchie sheds light on this pesky dilemma in his latest series (Netflix).

Feud: Capote vs the Swans: A Ryan Murphy series about writer Truman Capote and the rich and glamorous Manhattan women he betrays. Stars Tom Hollander, Naomi Watts, Diane Lane, Calista Flockhart and NYC (Binge/Foxtel).

GUILTY PLEASURES

Rivals: Best show of the year. An 8 episode adaptation of Jilly Cooper's novel about an English TV station in the 1980's. A hilarious romp set in the Cotswolds, complete with Lords, TV stars, stately manors... and naked tennis. Brilliant cast, including David Tennant (who does not indulge in naked tennis). Once finished, head over to the companion podcast "Rivals: The Official Podcast". You're welcome (Disney+).

America's Sweethearts: Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders: This show bumped "Bridgerton" from top of the Netflix charts. Australians love 'only in America' shows that combine extreme athleticism with cultish tendencies. Warning: a deep dive on Google about cheerleader pay rates will follow consumption of this series (Netflix).

Scoop: A movie about Prince Andrew's misguided (ahem, career ending) interview on the BBC in 2019. Rufus Sewell and Gillian Anderson are brilliant, as are the very talented hair and make-up team (Netflix).

SILLY BUT WATCH ANYWAY

The Idea of You: Stars Anne Hathaway as a 40 year old single mum. She meets a 24 year old Harry Styles-like character at Coachella whilst chaperoning her teen daughter. Will they fall in love, and if so, will it last? Is this movie as lame as it sounds? Yes. But sometimes a rom-com is exactly what we need (Amazon Prime).

Death and Other Details: who knew my life was missing a comedic murder mystery, set on a cruise ship, featuring Mandy Patinkin as the “world’s greatest detective”. Is this show a little silly? Yes. Was I desperate to see how it ends? Also yes (Disney+).

Elsbeth: I always loved the kooky lawyer Elsbeth Tascioni in "The Good Wife" so imagine my joy when I discovered there's a whole show called, you guessed it, "Elsbeth". Now working as a consultant in NYC (but still carrying 3 tote bags) our heroine is showing the NYPD a thing or two (Paramount).

Geek Girl: Aimed at "teens" and "young adults", but I am ageless, and loved this series about an awkward teen who is scouted by a top London model agent. Is it silly? Yes. Can you watch it with or without kids Absolutely. Escapism has no age barrier (Netflix).

Physical 100: Season 2 of this ridiculous Korean reality show has athletes competing in indoor “Survivor-like” quests to determine who has the "most perfect physique”. It’s badly dubbed. It’s slow. The host is an electronic-talking eye. And yet, for reasons I do not remotely understand, I watch (Netflix).

FOR THE FRANCOPHILES

La Maison: A tres fabulous drama series about a scandalous French family behind a couture house. Fashion, Paris, a castle in Brittany, and horrible people, make having to endure sub-titles totally worth it (Apple TV+).

The New Look: Fashion lovers will adore Ben Mendelsohn and Juliette Binoche as Christian Dior and Coco Chanel in this period series (Apple TV+).

Tour de France: Unchained: The best French travel show of the year (otherwise known as the Tour de France). It’s “Formula 1: Drive to Survive” with two less wheels and no engines (Netflix).



GOOD EVENING SPORTS FANS

Formula 1: Drive to Survive: Vroooooommm! Oh the joy [Warning: Watching this show leads to a subsequent compulsion to get up at 'stupid o'clock' on race weekends to watch practice, 'quali' and races (Netflix).

Senna: F1 fans are in for a treat with this one. I haven't watched it yet but I have a nagging feeling that we may not like the ending (Netflix).

Tour de France: Unchained: The best French travel show of the year (otherwise known as the Tour de France). It's "Formula 1: Drive to Survive" with two less wheels and no engines (Netflix).

Sprint: The 100m running race equivalent of "Formula 1: Drive to Survive". A fascinating look at what it takes to run really fast in a straight line. [Spoiler: freakish legs and unbearable ego] (Netflix).

Simone Biles Rising: This (unfortunately named) doco tells the story of gymnastics' G.O.A.T. From the early years through to her Paris Olympic journey. [Spoiler alert, despite being a doco, Biles and Netflix could not have scripted the ending any better] (Netflix).

Trailblazers: A doco film about the fight for equality by Australia's female soccer players. One for the Tillies fans (Stan).

Untold: Hope Solo vs US Soccer: Soccer fans will be fascinated by this doco about controversial US goalkeeper Hope Solo (Netflix).

Clipped: is a series based on the true story of the controversial owner of the Los Angeles Clippers basketball team, Donald Sterling. Tapes of his racist comments are released, impacting the team's players and the NBA and America as a whole. The fabulous Jacki Weaver plays Sterling's wife. A must watch – even if you're not a basketball fan (Disney+).

The Boys In The Boat: It's been ages since I watched a great rowing movie, so imagine my excitement when I heard that George Clooney was directing this movie. Based on a true story. Stars our own Joel Edgerton (Amazon Prime).

Best DOCUMENTARY SHOWS



DOCOS – THE SUPERB, THE SAD, AND THE SILLY

I Was Actually There: A 6 part docu-series created by the makers of “You Can’t Ask That”. Each episode provides never before seen content about defining events in Australian history, such as the Port Arthur tragedy and the Boxing Day tsunami. A tough watch but brilliantly done (ABC iview).

Maggie Beer’s Big Mission: National treasure Maggie Beer conducted an experiment to transform the food and lifestyle experience of seniors in aged care. I didn't think it was possible to love Maggie Beer any more than I do, but... (ABC iview).

The Assembly: A documentary series hosted by Leigh Sales, featuring a group of autistic people interested in pursuing careers in journalism, who interview the likes of Hamish Blake, Anthony Albanese and Adam Goodes. Wonderful (ABC iview).

Dance Life: A ‘fly on the wall’ docu-series that follows Brent Street dancing students on their quest for Fame. I became so invested, I cried during the graduation scenes (Prime).

Thank You, Goodnight: The Bon Jovi Story: This 4 part docu-series tells the story of (spoiler alert) Bon Jovi. After 40 years of screaming (I mean singing) Jon wants to keep performing but “*aint gonna be Fat Elvis*”. I’ve never been so anxious about the outcome of vocal cord surgery. Found myself Livin’ on a Prayer (Disney+).

Ashley Madison: Sex Lies & Scandal: A doco about the Canadian dating website created for married people seeking affairs with other married people, and the fall out when the site is hacked. I’ll never understand why people agree to be interviewed for these shows but am so glad they do (Netflix).

DOCOS – THE SUPERB, THE SAD, AND THE SILLY (CONTINUED)

The Man With 1000 Kids: This is one of those docos you don't want to watch, but you do, then spend the next few hours wondering "how could this happen?". Cue, deep dive on Google. Heart breaking. Mind blowing. Wow (Netflix)!

In Vogue: The 90's: As a serious history buff (ahem), I adored this documentary. [I've heard a rumour she can be a tad grumpy, but I am obsessed with the career longevity of Anna Wintour] (Disney+).

Brats: Andrew McCarthy catches up with fellow iconic 80's movie stars (Emilio Estevez, Ally Sheedy, Rob Lowe and Demi Moore) to talk about what it was like to be a member of the 'Brat Pack'. Warning: very hard to get "Don't You (Forget About Me)" out of your Simple Mind afterwards (Disney+).

Inside the Shein Machine: A doco that lifts the lid on this online fast fashion retailer whose business model is exploitation. I may have yelled at the tv a few times. Shame Shein, shame (Binge/Foxtel)!

See also reviews of sports docos under **GOOD EVENING SPORTS FANS.**

Best HEARTWARMING SHOWS



HEARTWARMING (WITH SOME UGLY CRYING THROWN IN)

One Day: The book and movie are now a 14 part series watched by over 10 million people (OK, 10 million women) worldwide. Emma and Dexter met at the University of Edinburgh Grad Ball on 15 July 1988. Want to know what they were doing on 15 July for the next 20 years? Be prepared to laugh and ugly cry (Netflix).

Sullivan's Crossing: Maggie Sullivan can't decide if she wants to be a neurosurgeon in Boston or hang out in Nova Scotia with Chad Michael Murray. I can relate. Don't know why I haven't watched this until now, but it's easy viewing. Canada is really pretty. So is Chad Michael Murray. Made by the same creators as "Virgin River" (but "Sullivan's" hasn't jumped the shark... yet) (Stan).

Eric: I can't remember the last time a show about a puppeteer was atop the Netflix charts, but alas, everyone watched "Eric". Benedict Cumberbatch plays a dysfunctional father whose son goes missing in New York City in the 1980s. Couldn't stop watching (Netflix).

A Million Little Things: One of the best kept secrets on TV. Five seasons. A modern day "The Big Chill". A tight knit group of friends in Boston is reminded that life is precious after... I miss them already (Stan).

Best ON THE JOB SHOWS



MEDICAL DRAMA

Grey's Anatomy: 21st season. Enough said (Disney+).

Chicago Med: This is a quality show but it has never found a permanent home on Australian TV and so channel hopping is required to get through the 9 seasons that have dropped in Australia (Prime/9Now/7plus).

Malpractice: Despite having to endure ads and the stress of trying to help Dr Lucinda Edwards from my loungeroom, I thoroughly enjoyed this UK medical drama (7plus).

MUSIC DOCO

Thank You, Goodnight: The Bon Jovi Story: This 4 part docu-series tells the story of (spoiler alert) Bon Jovi. After 40 years of screaming (I mean singing) Jon wants to keep performing but "*aint gonna be Fat Elvis*". I've never been so anxious about the outcome of vocal cord surgery. Found myself Livin' on a Prayer (Disney+).

PROPERTY P*RN

Owning Manhattan: Ryan Serhant ("Million Dollar Listing New York") and his team show us plenty of ahh-mazing NYC real estate...in amongst Kardashian-like drama. Not for everyone, but if you can stomach the Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders show, you will like this (Netflix).

Buying London: The British version of "Selling Sunset". Will it win a BAFTA? Heck no, but sometimes I want nothing more than to check out what that lazy 500,000,000 pounds I have lying in the bank can buy me (Netflix).

Grand Designs Australia: The latest season of "Grand Designs Australia" features the original property p*rn star Kevin McCloud in the season opener followed by episodes featuring beautiful homes (and the bumpy ride it took to build them) (ABC iview).

FIREFIGHTERS

Fire Country: My favourite show about prisoners who fight Californian wildfires – returned. Hooray (Paramount)!

Station 19: Sadly this Shonda Rhimes “Grey’s Anatomy” adjacent show came to an end this year. I will miss them. As will the pretend people whose properties catch fire in Seattle (Disney+).

Best LEGAL EAGLES



The Emperor of Ocean Park: One of the best shows of the year. Nothing to do with emperors or ocean parks. This 10 episode series based in Chicago is a gripping thriller about a Judge and his family and ...no spoilers. Just watch (Binge/Foxtel).

Reasonable Doubt: Loved the second season as much as the first. Jax Stewart is the criminal defence attorney I would want to defend me if I found myself locked up in LA (not that it would ever happen) (Disney+).



AWESOME SHOWS YOU MAY HAVE MISSED

Masters of the Air: A 9 episode series that tells the story of the US 100th Bomb Group that flew dangerous missions over Germany during WWII. Based on real heroes and battles. Cannot recommend highly enough. The fact that it stars Austin Butler (Elvis) is a bonus (Apple TV+).

After The Party: This award winning NZ drama is without a doubt one of the best shows of the year. Yes, it is about the difficult topics of alleged abuse and the breakdown of a family – but it is so brilliantly written and acted that it is impossible to turn it off (ABC iview).

The Tattooist of Auschwitz: Based on the real life story of a Jewish prisoner required to tattoo ID numbers on prisoners in a concentration camp in WWII. It's also a story of love and resilience and hope. A hard, yet beautiful watch (Stan).
