

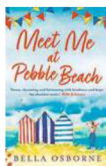
## WEEKENDING

## Home events



**STYLE COUNSEL** Thinking of updating your wardrobe – enlist help from the team at John Lewis

Osborne, a seaside community comes to the rescue when a prank goes wrong. *Imperfect Arrangements* by Frances Mensah Williams, set in Ghana, tells the beautifully observed, intertwined stories of three couples, each trying to work out what a happy marriage means. Then there's *Cow Girl* by Kirsty Eyre, where a city girl leaves her job and a glamorous girlfriend to go home to save the family farm. Also recommended are Sue Moorcroft's *Summer on a Sunny Island*, a feelgood, will-they-won't-they set in Malta, and *Just Saying* by Sophie Ranald, a laugh-out-loud



page-turner about a boyfriend who seems perfect, until his ex moves in.

**8 See Nigel Slater's *Toast***  
Based on his award-winning autobiography, Nigel Slater's play *Toast* was a hit in London's West End and on tour. Now it's become part radio play and part animated film that you can watch or listen to online. And because the stage production conjured up an atmosphere with the smells of food cooking, every ticket purchase comes with a Nigel Slater recipe card, so you can cook up your own ambience! The production features the original West End cast, who recorded their parts from home. Available until 31 July at the**bt.org**.

**9 Gift yourself a makeover**  
Has working from home and having no social life got you longing to dress up again – or at least put on a pair of shoes and something with a waistband? Then treat yourself to that summer outfit you haven't had the opportunity to buy. If you could do with a fresh eye and some new ideas, book a free virtual appointment with a stylist at John Lewis & Partners. You can view the stylist team at [johnlewis.com](http://johnlewis.com), follow them on Instagram and message the one whose ideas appeal to you. They will talk through your existing wardrobe on a video call, then make suggestions for a new summer look.

**10 Do Henley Festival**  
It's usually the most glamorous of the summer festivals, with a riverside setting, black-tie dress code and gourmet food, so it would be a shame to watch the digital version of the Henley Festival in your pyjamas. The one-night livestreamed show on 12 July has music from Beverley Knight, Will Young, Joe Stilgoe and classical pianist Hao Zi Yoh, plus comedy from Rory Bremner. Your host is former England cricketer David Gower, so if you fancy a big night in, put your gladrag on, get some Champagne on ice and buy your tickets at [henley-festival.co.uk](http://henley-festival.co.uk).

**SOUL SINGER** Beverley Knight will be among the stars at Henley Festival

## WATCH IT NOW

## Paul Kirkley



A round-up of the week's TV



**HOME GUARD** Cate Blanchett is anti-feminist Phyllis Schlafly in *Mrs. America*

**MRS. AMERICA** BBC TWO/IPLAYER

While US troops were losing the war in Vietnam, on the home front new battle lines were being drawn in 1970s America – this time between opposing armies of women. On one side were the feminist champions of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), on the other an army of conservative 'homemakers' led by Phyllis Schlafly, a high-flying Republican who berated women's libbers for their "negative" attitude, which she considered to be "downright un-American".

A force of nature with an immovable Margaret Thatcher hairdo (and a fair bit of her immovable personality), Schlafly – at least as played by Cate Blanchett in *Mrs. America* – manages to be both the smartest person in any room and terminally deluded. "I've never been discriminated against," she insists. "Some women like to blame sexism for their own failures instead of admitting they didn't try hard enough." And yet she is constantly sidelined and patronised by men, whether being forced to take the minutes of meetings, or paraded in a Stars and Stripes bikini as a literal Republican trophy wife. At times, you sense a flicker of doubt and self-awareness behind the eyes, but it's always too fleeting to bring about any serious course correction.

All this is a gift of a role for Blanchett, leading a powerhouse female cast that also includes Tracey Ullman as activist Betty Friedan and Uzo Aduba as Shirley Chisholm, the first African-American congresswoman. Then there's Rose Byrne as Gloria Steinem, the bestselling writer who, with no small irony, is badgered into becoming a poster girl for the feminist movement because, as one of her fellow campaigners puts it, "we need a pretty face".

Created by Dahvi Waller, *Mrs. America* tells what could be a depressing story (spoiler: 50 years on, the ERA *still* hasn't been passed) with great energy and vim, not to mention a seriously funkadelic 70s soundtrack and a great eye for period detail – think *Mad Men* with more swirly orange and brown wallpaper, and rattan furniture. (And fewer men, obviously.)

**THE KEMPS: ALL TRUE** BBC TWO/IPLAYER

The problem with making a mockumentary about 80s pop siblings is that it's going to struggle to compete with 2018's (unintentionally) hilarious *Bros: After the Screaming Stops*. But writer-director Rhys Thomas has a very good go, assisted by a brilliantly deadpan Gary and Martin Kemp, late of Spandau Ballet, gamely playing cartoon versions of themselves. Highlights include Gary's bitter grudge against Tony Hadley and the revelation that Martin is actually married to Pepsi and Shirlee. Gloriously daft fun.

**HOW THE BEATLES CHANGED THE WORLD**

YESTERDAY/YOUVIEW

With so many good documentaries about The Beatles (some of them *by* The Beatles) you need a pretty good reason to add to the slush pile. This one sets out to prove they were four lads who shook not just the world of music, but art, fashion, politics and even the class system. It isn't entirely convincing – The Beatles surely stole as much from the counterculture as they gave back – but the soundtrack is terrific (obviously).