

# Saturday 2

Viewing guide | David Chater

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## Secrets of the Pop Song

BBC Two, 9.45pm

*THE* TIMES

### Pick of the day

Each episode in this tremendous new series contains two strands. Tonight the great and the good of the pop world — such as Sting, Brian May, Boy George, Don Black, Neil Tennant and Diane Warren — provide a personal view of what makes a great pop ballad. At the same time the songwriter Guy Chambers (whose partnership with Robbie Williams resulted in 40 million album sales) teams up with Rufus Wainwright, above, to write a hit ballad — a process that is a revelation to watch. Ballads, according to Warren, are songs about “finding love and losing it and everything in between. And feeling horrible and wanting to jump off a cliff”. But, as Boy George points out, you can’t just whinge — there is an art to feeling sorry for yourself. Other contributors talk about the importance of combining the hard and the soft; about writing something intensely personal that also has universal appeal, and about finding a fresh and simple way to say something that has been said a million times before. Will Hodgkinson, *The Times* music critic, will also be delving into the archive to investigate old ballads.

## Live Wimbledon 2011

BBC One, 1pm

Maria Sharapova won the Wimbledon singles title in 2004 as a 17-year-old and was expected to dominate the Centre Court for years to come. But inconsistency, injury and the Williams sisters have conspired to keep her name off the Rosewater Dish for the past seven years. Now she is back in the final and starts as favourite to claim her second title. But her opponent, Petra Kvitová, the No 8 seed from the Czech Republic, has played some blistering tennis in the past couple of weeks and could spoil Sharapova’s fairytale ending. Tomorrow it’s the turn of the men. Coverage of the final starts at 1.05pm.

## Camelot

Channel 4, 9pm

King Arthur is determined to establish the rule of law throughout the kingdom, so he has taken to standing with his legs apart and wearing his hair tied back in a ponytail. That should do it. Guinevere tells a village girl that she goes down to the beach whenever she wants to think, but we know the real reason why she goes down there. Morgan — the Sarah Palin of Never-Never Land — appeals for grassroots support from ordinary men and women disillusioned with big government, having already won the backing of the Religious Right. And Merlin has stopped making any sense at all.