

Video

French videos zooming on forgotten cities

"Mahasthan, the Forgotten City of Bangladesh" and 16 other archaeological video films to be shown at Alliance Francaise next month

FAYZA HAQ

Of the seventeen video films on architecture that are due to be viewed next month at Alliance Francaise, the most fascinating will perhaps be the one on Mahasthangarh, in the heart of Bangladesh. This is a venture to revive the ancient capital of North

directed by Severine Sanz since 1968 (helped by Geraldine Pitoun in 1998). The project was temporarily set aside in 1999, a basic report of the excavation is being prepared (to be published in "Mahasthan Excavation, 1993-1999, Second Interim report) before the field work is resumed.

An effective study of the archae-

Archaeological Department of West Bengal, and several papers are being made ready in by experts on the subject in collaboration with each other. A member of the French team, Marilyne Bovagne, is preparing a PhD thesis on the relations which might have existed between North Bengal and

the city being the main focus of the endeavour (this latter portion is under the responsibility of Prof. Antigone Marangou-Lerat(University of Rennes) after a ground work done by Dr Klaus Rotzer in 1993, it would be like discovering Utopia if one could find the spatial organization of the city by

around Mahasthangarh which would add to the knowledge of the 'garh' itself. It is vital to immediately undertake a survey and restoration, as many of the areas on focus are badly ruined and modern developments further endanger them.

Altogether 13 types of pottery have been identified including bowl,

of a break-water in the Bay of Alexandria threatens to bury the remains of its lighthouse for all time. This lighthouse is considered the seventh wonder of the ancient times. Jean-Yves Empereur, who heads the Alexandrian Study Centre, begins an underwater digging with a group of divers who

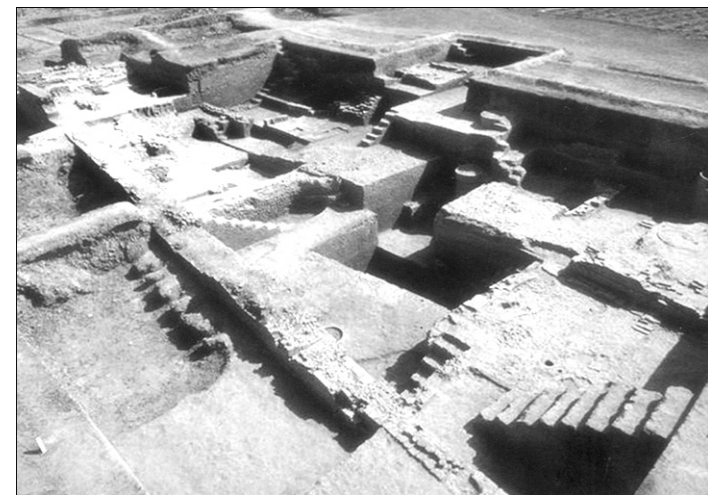
idea of the hands that went into the making of the deities that were found there. Even though jungles were removed to show up the ruins the secret of the Maya were totally unknown. It was only by the 20th century that castings, photos and diggings threw some light of the people who lived in these lost cities.

Not to be ignored is "Once There Was Mesopotamia", written by Jean Botter, directed by Jean-Claude Lubtchansky and produced by Jean-Pierre Gibrat. This French version is subtitled in English and Spanish. For five thousands years, desert sands have covered and removed the Mesopotamian civilization that once invented writing, science and literature. The archaeological diggings are being done side by side with irrigated lands and their inhabitants. The priceless findings from this land have years ago been dispersed to scattered museums.

Also equally fascinating is "The Origins of Man; Abel's Trail" which has an English dubbed version. Thierry Ragobert is the writer and director. In Chad, in 1995, the discovery of the mandible of Australopithecus called Abel upset the old theory of 'Lucy' which Yves Coppens claimed was man's origin found in East Africa. Michael Brunet, professor of the University of Poitiers, does a palaeontological research on Chad remains to take out the remains of the older Abel. Thus there is the question of the cradle of mankind.

These video films are to celebrate the Fete de la Science 2001 and enhance the importance of archaeology which originated in the 19th century, in Egypt, when Auguste Mariette made a research of historical writings. Later, various researchers took part in the movement and established the French schools for archaeology at Athens, Rome and Cairo.

For fifty years now, modern technology has been used with archaeology which comprises of computerized simulation, satellite spotting, nuclear study in their aim to save the important ancient sites, keeping roadwork, houses, and city walls. Thus the French network overseas reveals the vital essence of items like "Abel", conservation of Khmer or Maya temples, stone Colossus etc.



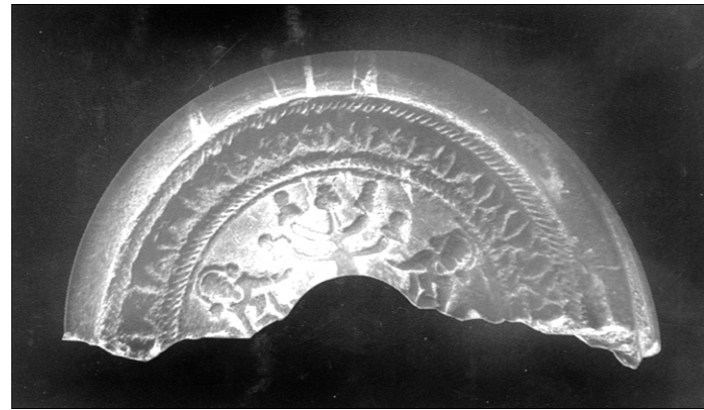
An aerial view of the Mahasthangarh excavations

Bengal, which was built in the 4th century BC. With Lean-Francoise Salles to guide them, the project is gradually recreating history of this area where no Western team has been able to dig for over 50 years. According to Md Shafiqul Alam and Jean-Francois Salles, due to almost non-availability of published information on the regular excavations carried out in the 30s, 60s, and in the 80s, the actual knowledge of Mahasthangarh monuments is almost non-existent; the architectural details given by N Ahmed in his 'Mahstan' (1975) suggest more than they depict the plans which the local scholar has seen and studied carefully, but there are no comments made as there are no plans available at that time. The purpose is not to "re-excavate" the area, and the true purpose will be to make new plans of the monuments still seen in erect shape below the grass cover.

In 1995, Laurent Volay (architect, Lyon) drew a new plan of the site called "Parasuram's Palace" and which was finished in 1998 by Olivier Maynard. Certain unusual features of the layout of the building as well as the variances and some incongruities of brief written reports on the site brought in a test-excavation

ology of Mahasthan would be incomplete without a detailed survey and catalogue of all the material previously excavated on the site and now stored in the museums and collections of Bangladesh, India and Europe. Hundreds of these objects are totally unknown and it is vital that they should be brought to the knowledge of the scientific community. On the French section, Geraldine Pitoun(Paris) is entitled for the programme, while Prof. Marie-Francoise Bouscace and Dr Md. Shafiqul Alam are reviewing the coin finds of the early periods of Bangladesh.

Historical sources should be re-questioned and examined as well; in this field a basic work was done by Severine Sanz(Lyon) and is now under the care of Sandrine Gill(Pairs). In this manner an updated and revised survey of the epigraphical data of North Bengal is urgently required: so far no specialist has been ready to handle this subject. It is strongly recommended that the archaeology of Mahasthan is connected with the archaeological and historical background of the neighbouring countries. The French team has established close contacts with Prof. Gautam Sengupta, State



A remnant of archaeological findings at Mahasthangarh



Detail from "Once there was Mesopotamia"

Orissa/Andhra(the western coast of the Bay of Bengal) in ancient times.

Two other projects need to be developed and these require more difficult preparations before they can be finalised. This would be to investigate the "urbanization" of Mahasthan: how was the area occupied in ancient times—Open areas such as public squares or gardens, roads and circulation tracks, specialized sectors for religious constructions, private houses, shopping areas, and industrial sections, the surrounding wall of

an extensive excavation of the site. However, there are other sources available e.g. electro-magnetic scanning of the site, which could reveal large masses of structures buried underneath and allow a general mapping to be later ratified by short-scale excavations. Europe has developed these methods but so far they appear unsuitable for brick constructions.

Again, although one is focusing on the site inside the surrounding city wall, one cannot ignore the numerous unexplored sites all

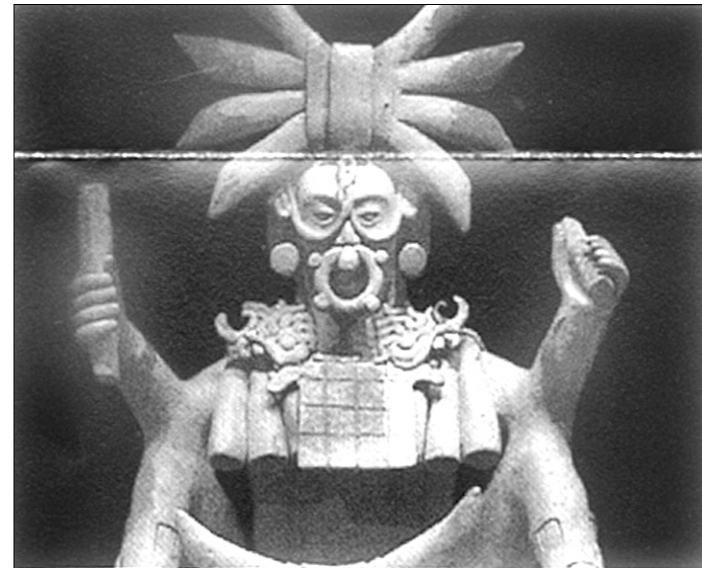


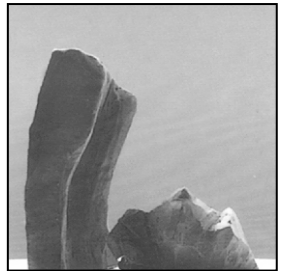
Image from "Lost Cities of the Mayas"

are archaeologists, Egyptologists and to pographers themselves. We are left with the question as to whether one is really dealing with there remains of the Pharaohs of Alexandria.

There is then the item "Beyond Angkor, the Threat to the Cambodian Treasures", This has versions dubbed in English and Spanish. Pierre Stine is the director and writer. Faced with terrible emergency, Claude Jacques, and archaeologist and an authority in Khmer art, undertakes a discovery mission with the backing of UNESCO, his aim being to enumerate the sites, calculate the measure of damage and bring these ancient pieces out of the unknown so that they may no longer be pilfered and pillaged.

Yet another exciting video film is "The Lost Cities of the Maya" with a French version, dubbed in English. Claude Baudes and Sydney Picasso are the writers, while Jean-Daude Lubtchansky is the director. The early European who pillaged the Central American jungles had no

RECOMMENDATIONS



Sculpture show

A group sculpture show is now being held at the gallery of National Museum at Shahbagh. The show showcases recent work by Hamiduzzaman, Ivy Zaman and Rowen Aziz. Open to all, the show runs till January 15.



Dhaka Art Circle

Dhaka Art Circle, an informal group of artists, holds its latest art show at Gallery Chittrak (house# 21, Road # 4, Dhanmandi) now. The exhibition open to all from 10 am to 8 pm every day will run until January 6, 2002.



Nriyanchal Festival 2002

Nriyanchal, a front ranking organisation in the country to institutionalise dance as a popular form of art, is organising a five-day long dance festival from January 10 to 14 at Bangladesh Shishu Academy Auditorium.

TV GUIDE

ATN BANGLA

- 5:30 Islamic prog.
- 7:00 Child prog.: Shapla Saluk
- 7:35 Viewers request film songs prog.: Anurodher Assor
- 8:00 ATN Bangla News
- 8:25 Musical prog.
- 9:00 Reporting Magazine: Gotona Probaha
- 9:35 Drama serial: Chomok Vila
- 10:10 Pakistani feature film "Baje" (On occasion of SAARC Summit)
- 12:00 ATN Bangla News
- 3:00 Indian feature film: Boumoni (On occasion of SAARC Summit)
- 6:07 New singer competition prog.: Nabin Boron
- 7:00 ATN Bangla Evening News
- 7:35 Musical prog.
- 8:10 Musical prog.: Ganer Mela
- 8:45 Film base prog.: Cine Songlap
- 9:20 Drama serial: Jibon Nodir Jowar Vata
- 10:00 ATN Bangla News
- 10:30 Bengali film: Miss Longka (On occasion of SAARC Summit)
- 11:30 ATN Bangla News

ALPHA TV BANGLA

- 6:00 Chokher Bali/Football
- 6:30 Bedeshini Bodhu
- 7:00 Nayantara
- 7:30 News in Bengali
- 8:00 Surer Ei Dharama Dharay
- 8:30 Kichu Smriti Kichu Gaan
- 9:00 News
- 9:05 Bharat Bhraman
- 9:30 Nijei Nayak
- 10:00 Talk Jhaal Misti
- 10:30 Trityo Purush
- 11:00 Nayantara
- 11:30 Ebar Jombe Moja
- 12:00 Dour
- 12:30 Chena Mukher Shari
- 1:00 Ingit
- 1:30 Ek Akasher Niche
- 2:00 Pratibimba
- 2:30 Ke Tumi-Feature Film
- 3:00 Surer Ei Jhamadhara
- 3:30 Gandharbi
- 4:00 News in Bengali
- 4:30 Chokher Bali/De Re
- 5:00 Nayantara
- 5:30 Kri Likhil Tomai
- 6:00 Pratibimba
- 6:30 Ek Akasher Niche
- 7:00 Chena Mukher Shari
- 7:30 Ingit
- 8:00 Footbal
- 8:30 Mahanagar
- 9:00 Bangla News Bulletin
- 9:30 Ek Palake
- 10:00 News in Bengali
- 10:30 Trityo Purush
- 11:00 Ek Palake
- 11:30 Chokher Bali/De Re
- 12:25 Ek Palake
- 12:30 Bengali Feature Film
- 3:00 Surer Ei Jhamadhara
- 3:30 Pratibimba
- 4:00 Ek Akasher Niche
- 5:00 Chena Mukher Shari
- 5:30 Football

HBO

- 7:00 Biloxi Blues
- 9:15 Blue Chips
- 11:30 Jett Jackson
- 1:15 Rumpelstiltskin
- 3:00 Operation Sandman
- 4:45 Parenthood
- 7:15 Masters of the Universe
- 9:30 Boys on the Side
- 11:45 Allan Quatermain and the Lost City of Gold
- 1:45 Rag and Bone
- 3:30 Rumpelstiltskin
- 5:15 Problem Child

STAR MOVIES

- 6:30 Prime Target
- 8:15 Thirteenth Warrior
- 10:00 Managua
- 12:00 Warlock 3
- 1:45 Me Myself and Irene
- 3:45 Total Recall
- 5:30 Clown at Midnight
- 7:00 U-571
- 9:00 World is not Enough
- 11:15 Thirteenth Warrior
- 1:00 Secret Diary of Sigmund Freud
- 2:45 Little Richard
- 4:30 Prime Target

BBC WORLD

- 6:00 BBC News
- 6:30 This Week
- 7:00 BBC News
- 7:30 Holiday
- 8:00 BBC News
- 8:30 Simpson/Directs ex Mars Weekend World
- Review
- 9:00 BBC News
- 9:30 Correspondent ex World Rev
- 10:00 BBC News
- 10:30 Mastermind India
- 11:00 BBC News
- 11:30 India Business Report
- 12:00 BBC News
- 12:30 Commando!
- 1:00 BBC News
- 1:30 Face to Face
- 2:00 BBC News
- 2:30 This Week
- 3:00 BBC News
- 3:15 Stephen Hawking's Universe
- 3:30 Horizon
- 4:00 BBC News

Click Online

- 5:00 BBC News
- 5:30 Simpson's World
- Directs ex World
- Review
- 6:00 BBC News
- 6:15 Leprosy
- 7:00 BBC News
- 7:30 Dateline London
- 8:00 BBC News
- 8:30 The Car's The Star ex Top Gear
- 9:00 BBC News
- 9:15 The Firing Line
- 10:00 BBC News
- 10:30 India Business Report
- 11:00 BBC News
- 11:30 Holiday
- 12:00 BBC News
- 12:15 Stephen Hawking's Universe
- 12:30 Horizon
- 1:00 BBC News
- 1:30 Simpson's World
- Directs ex World
- Review
- 2:00 BBC News
- 2:15 Leprosy
- 3:00 BBC News
- 3:30 The Car's The Star ex Top Gear
- 4:00 BBC News
- 4:30 Asia Business Report/Asia Today
- Review
- 5:00 BBC News
- 5:30 Asia Business Report/As4ia Today
- 10:30 Geet Bahar
- 11:00 Geet Bahar
- 11:30 Geet Gata Chal
- 12:00 Rahein Na Rahein Hum
- 1:00 Roswell
- 2:00 Temptation Island
- 3:00 Crown And Country
- 3:30 Travel Asia
- 4:00 Baywatch Hawaii
- 5:00 The Simpsons
- 5:30 3rd Rock From The Sun
- 6:00 Star News Focus Asia
- 7:00 The X Files
- 8:00 Star Trek The Next Generation
- 9:00 Rendezvous With Simi Garewal
- 9:30 Star News Focus Asia
- 12:30 Gopichand Jasoo's

TODAY'S HIGHLIGHTS



ATN BANGLA: 8:10 p.m. **Gaaner Mela.** Produced by Mohananda Telenet and directed by Shahabuddin Nagori the artists of this week's 'Gaaner Mela' are Rukhsana Momtaj, Shimul, Robi Chowdhury and Shahabuddin Nagori himself.



AXN: 9:30 p.m. **True Lies.** Harry Tasker is the United States' top secret agent - so secret that even his wife doesn't know his occupation; she thinks he is a computer salesman. Misunderstandings commence as a result, complicating the plot and heating up the action as Harry takes on his wife and nuclear terrorists... at the same time!



STAR WORLD: 10:30 p.m. **The X Files.** The most celebrated television series, winner of the 1995 and 1997 Golden Globe Award for the Best Drama Series 'The X Files' starts its seventh season. In today's episode Moulder and Scully finds themselves trapped in the exciting virtual world.

- (contd)
- 3:00 Geet Bahar
- 3:30 Ek Muthi Aasmaan (Vijay Arora, Radha Saluja)
- 7:00 Sajjan (Manoj Kumar, Asha Parekh)
- 10:00 IHT World
- 10:30 The X Files
- 11:30 Star Trek The Next Generation
- 12:30 Star News Focus Asia
- 1:00 IHT World

STAR WORLD

- 6:00 JAG
- 7:00 Nash Bridges
- 8:00 The Pretender
- 9:00 Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's The Lost World
- 10:00 Ally McBeal
- 11:00 The Practice
- 12:00 First Wave
- 1:00 Roswell
- 2:00 Temptation Island
- 3:00 Crown And Country
- 3:30 Travel Asia
- 4:00 Baywatch Hawaii
- 5:00 The Simpsons
- 5:30 3rd Rock From The Sun
- 6:00 Star News Focus Asia
- 7:00 The X Files
- 8:00 Star Trek The Next Generation
- 9:00 Rendezvous With Simi Garewal
- 9:30 Star News Focus Asia

PICK OF THE DAY



Boys on the Side
On HBO at 9:30 p.m.
Three of Hollywood's finest actresses in a comedy drama about three very different women traveling cross-country together. Whoopi Goldberg plays a cynical singer looking for a life anywhere but in New York. Mary-Louise Parker is an uptight real-estate agent longing to see her childhood home. And Drew Barrymore is a charming airhead escaping from an abusive relationship.

- 3:00 The X Files
- 2:30 3rd Rock From The Sun
- 3:00 Creflo Dollar Daily
- 3:30 Keeneth Cope land Ministries
- 4:00 Joyce Meyer Ministries
- 4:30 World News
- 5:00 Fashion TV
- 5:30 Mork And Mindy
- 6:00 Mirch Masala

STAR PLUS

- 6:00 Big East Conference Basketball New Brunswick, NJ USA
- 8:00 English Premier Football League 2001/02 Leeds, England Derby County @ Leeds United
- 10:00 English Premier Football League 2001/02 Ipswich, England Blackburn Rovers @ Ipswich Town
- 12:00 South Africa Cricket South Africa Tri Series Benoni, South Africa Kenya @ South Africa 2nd Odi, Highlights
- 1:30 English Premier Football League 2001/02 Southampton, England Chelsea @ Southampton
- 3:30 Winter X Games Classic 2001 Winter X Games V Classic Years of Best Mt. Snow, VT USA
- 4:00 Women's College Basketball 2001 Big 10 Women's Basketball Iowa City, IA USA Purdue @ Iowa
- 5:57 Australia Cricket Orange Test Series Sydney, Australia South Africa @ Australia 3rd Test, Day 5, 1st Session
- 8:00 Golf Programming Global Golf Spotlights Jesper Parnevik
- 8:30 Australia Cricket Orange Test Series Sydney, Australia South Africa @ Australia 3rd Test, Day 5, Highlights
- 12:00 Golf Classics Arnold Palmer Signing Off
- 1:00 Cricket Programming Super Selector December Winners
- 2:00 World Cup Mix Sports Unlimited
- 2:30 Rally Racing On The Limit 2001 Jgic Sepang
- 4:00 Rally Racing Total Dakar 2002 Day 8 Highlights
- 4:30 Australia Cricket Orange Test Series Sydney, Australia South Africa @ Australia 3rd Test, Day 5, 1st Session
- 6:00 Australia Cricket Orange Test Series Sydney,

- 6:30 Star Geetmala
- 7:30 Aatma
- 8:30 Dharam Aur Hum
- 9:30 Amul Best of Surabhi
- 10:00 Family Fortunes
- 10:30 Bol Baby Bol
- 11:00 Yeh Hai Right Price
- 11:30 Chalti Ka Naam Antakshiri
- 12:30 Chhupa Rustam
- 1:00 Musafir Hoon Yaron
- 1:30 Mirch Masala
- 2:00 Hit Filmein Hit Sangeet
- 2:30 Mail Milap
- 2:40 Star Sunday Matinee Phool Bane Angaaray (Raj Kumar, Mala Sinha)
- 6:00 Hit Filmein Hit Sangeet
- 6:30 Fox Kids Sunday
- 7:30 Sonpari
- 7:55 Jubilee Plus
- 8:30 Star Event Indian Television Academy Awards
- 12:00 Hit Filmein Hit Sangeet
- 12:30 Shagun
- 1:00 Sonpari
- 1:30 Kalash
- 2:00 Kaahin Kissii Roz
- 2:30 Eena Meena Deeka

STAR NEWS

- 8:30 Star News English
- 9:00 Star News Hindi
- 11:30 Star News English
- 12:00 Star Business Week
- 12:30 Star News English
- 1:00 Reality Bites
- 3:00 Lighthouse Hindi
- 6:30 The Big Fight
- 8:00 Star Talk
- 8:30 We the People
- 9:30 Star News Sunday
- 10:30 Star News Ravivaar
- 11:30 Star News English
- 12:30 Star Business Week

AXN

- 6:30 Exploring the Unknown
- 7:30 Grandeur Musashi RV
- 8:30 Curious Play
- 9:30 Outdoor Quest
- 10:30 The Amazing Race
- 11:30 Who Dares Wins II
- 12:30 Survivor: Africa
- 1:30 Exploring the Unknown
- 2:30 Movie: Legends of the Fall
- 4:30 AXN Speed India
- 5:30 Who Dears Wins II
- 6:30 World's Most Amazing Videos II
- 7:30 Survivor: Africa
- 8:30 Exploring the Unknown
- 9:30 Sun Action Heroes Movie: True Lies
- 12:30 Movie: Standoff
- 2:30 Rollerjam
- 3:30 Boardwild

ZEE MUSIC

- 12:35 Phoren Maal
- 1:05 Zee Music Box
- 1:30 Jharokha
- 2:00 Hit Pe Hit
- 3:00 Just Jammin
- 3:30 Tara Rum
- 4:30 Phoren Maal
- 5:30 Sizzlers
- 6:00 Music Plus
- 7:00 Aalaap
- 7:30 Tara Rum
- 8:30 Hit Pe Hit
- 10:30 Hit Mix
- 11:00 Just Jammin
- 11:30 Music Box
- 12:00 Music Plus
- 1:00 Hit Pe Hit
- 2:00 Jharokha
- 2:35 Cool Age
- 3:00 Tara Rum
- 4:00 Hit Pe Hit
- 5:00 Music Box
- 5:30 Hit Mix
- 6:00 Blue
- 6:30 Music Plus
- 7:30 Hit Pe Hit
- 8:30 Pyaar Mohabbat Etc
- 9:00 Artist of the Fortnight
- 9:30 Music Box
- 10:00 Sizzlers
- 10:30 Jharokha
- 11:05 Dil Se
- 11:35 Phoren Maal
- 12:35 Shabbab
- 1:05 Music Box
- 1:30 Jharokha

ZEE CINEMA

- 7:00 Dadamoni
- 7:30 Bad Aur Badnam - Feature Film
- 10:15 Kuch Lamhe Kuch Nagme
- 10:30 Yeh Zindagi Kitni Haseen Hai - Feature Film
- 12:15 Madhyantar (Exposure)
- 1:30 Neend Hamari Khwab Tumhare - Feature Film
- 5:00 Darpan (Exposure)
- 5:15 Tara Rum (Zcn)
- 5:45 Film Time (Exposure)
- 6:00 Shaitani Ilaka-Feature Film
- 9:15 Kuch Lamhe Kuch

HALL MARK

- 6:30 The Prisoner of Zenda. Inc
- 8:30 Ghost Writer
- 9:00 Wishbone
- 9:30 Sesame Street
- 10:30 Maybe Baby
- 12:30 Out of Time
- 2:30 The Prisoner of Zenda
- 4:30 Chance of Snow
- 6:30 Touched by an Angel V
- 7:30 Life With Judy Garland: Me and My Shadows
- 9:30 They Call Me Sirr
- 11:30 William Faulkner's Old Man
- 1:30 Maybe Baby
- 3:30 Out of Time