

What to watch



Impressive performers: Debra Stephenson and Jon Culshaw

The Impression Show with Culshaw and Stephenson

BBC ONE, 9.45PM

Jon Culshaw (*Dead Ringers*) and Debra Stephenson (Frankie Baldwin in *Coronation Street*) join forces in this new sketch show featuring their range of almost flawless impersonations. With his brilliant George W Bush on *Dead Ringers*, Culshaw has already established himself as a John Sessions for the Noughties. It's remarkable, though, that Stephenson hasn't unveiled her impersonating skill until now. She does a mean (in both senses) Anne Robinson, and performs some impressive facial gymnastics as a hyperventilating Davina McCall getting so excited over a bedtime story she ends up upside down. As is eternally the way with these shows, the quality of the jokes lags behind the success of the impressions themselves. The sight of Culshaw and Stephenson as Adrian Chiles and Christine Bleakley on the sofa of *The One Show* is as banal as the original – though it's made up for by Culshaw's superbly dead-eyed Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall barbecuing a polecat on *Autumnwatch* in front of Stephenson's Kate Humble. Most impressively of all, Stephenson nails the voices of not just one but both Minogues – Kylie as an irrepressibly sunny little pixie, and Dannii a steely, glacial automaton. **Robert Collins**

Strictly Come Dancing

BBC ONE, 6.50PM

The X Factor

ITV1, 8.00PM

Brucie and Tess go head to head with Cheryl, Simon, Dannii and Louis as the two rival talent competitions continue to whittle down their starry contestants. Ten celebrities remain in *Strictly*, with nine wannabes still standing in *The X Factor*. Tonight on *Strictly*, the Bee Gees perform their hit *You Should Be Dancing*.

Piers Morgan's Life Stories: Dannii Minogue

ITV1, 9.45PM

In what must surely have been concocted as a piece of free publicity for *The X Factor*, Piers Morgan sits down to interview Dannii Minogue on her long and, er, varied career, from her days on *Home and Away* to the judge's chair on *The X Factor*.

The Thick of It

BBC TWO, 10.10PM

The new series continues of the fizzing, potty-mouthed political comedy created by Armando Iannucci. A week into her new job as secretary of state for the Department of Social Affairs and Citizenship, Nicola Murray MP (Rebecca Front) sends the government's communications team into a spin. Her department's computer system has wiped the immigration records of 170,672 people, presenting her with two daunting tasks: keeping the fact from the press, and breaking the news to the irascible Tucker (Peter Capaldi). Handling these duties of office, Murray has to



Back in government: Joanna Scanlan in *The Thick of It*

sit through lunch with the staff of *The Guardian* without letting her department's mishap slip.

Wonderland: the Ghostman of Skye

BBC TWO, 10.40PM

In homage to Hallowe'en, the documentary series *Wonderland*, which tonight comes from the Isle of Skye, gathers together the islanders' ghost stories. Listening to the reported hauntings is Donald Angus Maclean, a former missionary who recently lost his wife, Nina. He hears the tales of the "ghost child", the "headless woman" and – bizarrely – accounts of "the car that wasn't there". Like a spine-chilling storyteller, Maclean tries to convince us that these spooks may be real. "The curtain that separates us from the beyond is so very thin," he says. "The beyond is not nearly as dark as we take it to be." Movingly, it becomes clear that, in reality, Maclean is being haunted by memories of his deceased wife. **RC**

