Mediascape: Network television's bland decline offset by vibrant streaming offerings YouTube content, paid streaming services will keep you tuned in

Television's traditional terrestrial netthese days, at least

works have offered a lot less "must-see TV" from the confines of my home.

Apart from the immediacy that ABC, CBS, Fox and NBC provide with their coverage of breaking news and wall-to-wall sports, the drama and comedic storylines they pitch to the American viewing public are mostly banal and well-tread. PBS's slate of dramas and documentaries is the exception among the nets; shows such as the expertly crafted "Frontline" and "Nova" series continue to shine with well-considered and provocative efforts that the commercial Big Four rarely match.

Broadcast networks are steadily becoming an electronic afterthought due to the hordes of quality programming now offered by paid streaming services such as Netflix, Hulu and Amazon Prime. As demonstrated over the past decade by the overlords of traditional network television, the practice of appealing to the broadest possible audience with lame, bland and inoffensive programming no longer cuts it. Instead, television viewers today are provided a cornucopia of literally thousands of quality choices that invariably have fragmented audience share and, as a result, have upended network television's economic apple cart.

Streaming services offer a televised menu that, for viewers, is much like that passed out by a busy Chinese restaurant: selections almost too numerous to consider and too few hours in which to digest them. Do you want a rom-com show with a touch of scandal? It's there in a dozen different scenarios. Enjoy outlandish absurdity for your comedy? It's there among the thousands of programs for the choosing.

For me, though, I find myself consumed more evenings than I'd like to admit by the television bibliography that is YouTube. It's a repository of unfiltered television content on just about every subject under the sun. If you're itching for a look back at how the television news networks covered JFK's assassination nearly 60 years ago, you'll easily find Walter Cronkite's frantic bulletin (more vaguely referred to these days as





a "special report") interrupting "As The World Turns" on CBS television stations nationwide repeating wire copy reports by UPI and the Associated Press from Dallas

There's also a plethora of music videos,

organic vlogs by average folks, and content producers who have created travelogs pieced together from their world travels. And there's the weird content that draws viewing audiences by the hundreds of thousands: tours of abandoned theme parks, reconstructed plotlines by serial killers, and thrill-seekers who have documented their latest adventures in dangling from the top of tall buildings and construction cranes. All are capable of providing you a dose of chills and thrills.

Admittedly less provocative and more mainstream than the previous examples shared above, here is a sampling of vlogs and productions nested on YouTube that has lately captured my viewing attention:

Noel Philips in-flight vlog

This Brit is either an extremely fortunate air traveler who flies to exotic global destinations — or a glutton for punishment and willing participant as he willingly stuffs himself into impossibly cramped seats on antiquated aircraft that shakily take to the skies on a wing and a prayer.

In this segment, Philips climbs aboard a nearly half-century-old Soviet-era YAK-45 airliner for an interminably long flight across Russia. Having myself taken several flights in past years aboard Russian planes that could best be described as ancient, rattling airborne tin cans, thanks to Philips, I relived those experiences while thankfully ensconced on terra firma.

New York Philharmonic's 2009 performance in North Korea

This mashup of conflicting culture, presented in (alas, maddingly) short segments by TheKoreanMario, is as fascinating as it is perplexing. Musical director Lorin Maazel conducts the 106-member orchestra in front of a Pyongyang audience comprised mostly of men dressed in ill-



Digital vlogger Noel Philips almost always seems to be airborne in his quest to experience the good — and the bad of air travel.

fitting drab suits, presumably highranking party members with enough pull to score tickets to this rare cultural event. There's no common citizenry among audience members in the East Pyongyang Grand Theatre, just the aforementioned government elite and an assortment of what appear to be foreign diplomats.

Arranged during a stretch of relaxed, if fleeting, relations between the Democratic People's Republic of North Korea and the U.S. government, Philharmonic officials insisted that the performance be presented in its entirety on North Koren television. It was the first significant cultural visit from the United States to North Korea since the Korean conflict in the early 1950s.

Set your YouTube setting so that TheKoreanMario series can flow seamlessly in front of you from start to finish; the talented musicians share renditions of Gershwin's "An American in Paris," Dvorak's Symphony No. 9 "From the New World," "Largo," and, in the beginning, the national anthems of both nations. It's interesting to note that most of those in the audience, even the elite, privileged few, likely heard the "Star-Spangled Banner" for the first time in their lives. Also of note: the sprinkling of Philharmonic musicians of Korean ancestry.

This segment features the New York Philharmonic's lovely performance of "Arirang," a folk song of deep significance among people on both sides of the Korean border. It's particularly poignant at the close of the arrangement when the buttonedup audience finally loosened up and gave a standing ovation and shared hand waves with the orchestral members.

ATLYS String Quartet — "Fall's Calling"

This charismatic American female musical crossover string quartet (which performed earlier this month at the spectacular Gorge Amphitheater in George, Washington) was grounded professionally and spiritually by the pandemic, as were the vast majority of folks across the globe during the past 18 months. Unable to publicly perform, these personable musicians found a way to share their creative spirit virtually by creating a series of original and covered musical arrangements that were shot remotely and collated under the umbrella title of "Quilted ATLYS."

One such segment includes an intimate, beautiful performance of "Fall's Calling," an arrangement the

supremely talented musicians effortlessly perform that's reminiscent of a "Renaissance neo-classical fantasy fairytale," as described in the quartet's video liner notes. There are many other performances under the virtual YouTube quilt, enough to whet the tastes of just about every listener. The ATLYS quartet is refreshingly unconstrained and untethered to the familiar, reserved anonymity demonstrated on video by most classical musicians.

From performing spirited renditions of Billie Eilish's haunting "Everything I Wanted" and Sia's "Chandelier" to MIA's "Bad Girls," these four women are also unafraid to stray from their musical backyard by playing music starkly dissimilar from the traditional classics played by their contemporaries. Most recently, ATLYS stepped into the strange, unsettled world of Norwegian composer and musician Frode Andresen with a virtual foray into the spooky (perfect for Halloween) with an imaginative piece titled "The Strange Case of the Missing Circus Wolf."

Kitsap News Group executive editor Bob Smith takes a periodic look at trends in social media, digital platforms and entertainment options for 2021 in his column "Mediascape."

Continued from previous page....

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presented within this claim is not presented time frame, the claim is within this time frame, forever barred, except the claim is forever as otherwise provided in barred, except as other-RCW 11.40.051 and wise provided in RCW RCW 11.40.060. This 11.40.051 and bar is effective as to 11.40.060. This bar is claims against both the effective as to claims 9/10/2021 Personal DATE OF FILING NO-Representative: BETTY SUSAN ERATH Attorney for Personal Court: September 13, JESSICA M. JETTER Address for Mailing or CATION: September 17. Service: PO Box 163 10801 NE State Hwy 104, Suite 151 Kingston, WA 98346 Court of Probate Proceedings and cause SOCIETY number: Kitsap County Court, Washington State, Cause #: 21-4-00828-18 Date of first publication: September 10, 2021 Date of last publication: September 24, 2021 (POI937656)

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(POI938110)

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Commission Telephone: Date of first publication: September 3, 2021 Date of last publication: September 24, 2021 (POI929538)



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