

MASTERPIECE

Annika

Nicola Walker stars as the dry-witted skipper of Glasgow's Marine Homicide Unit
in a new series on MASTERPIECE
Premieres on PBS Passport & the PBS MASTERPIECE Prime Video Channel on April 17, 2022

Set on a scenic river amid stunning Scottish lochs, Glasgow has an unusually high rate of slayings connected to water. At least, it does in MASTERPIECE's gorgeous new crime series starring Nicola Walker (*Unforgotten*, *Last Tango in Halifax*) as DI Annika Strandhed, the speedboat-driving head of the city's newly-formed Marine Homicide Unit. *Annika*'s six suspenseful episodes will have a special premiere on PBS Passport, an added member benefit which provides extended access to a digital, on-demand library of PBS programs, and the PBS MASTERPIECE Prime Video Channel on April 17, 2022. The series will have a television broadcast in Fall 2022.

A police procedural with wit, *Annika* delighted critics during its recent UK broadcast. "The dialogue is so droll and the performances so charming I'm in for what fisherfolk call the long haul," enthused the reviewer for *The Guardian* and *The Times* offered this praise, "*Annika* allows Walker to let loose a warm sense of humor."

MASTERPIECE Executive Producer Susanne Simpson said, "Annika is a terrifically complicated, funny, one-of-a kind character brought brilliantly to life by Nicola Walker. Fans of *Unforgotten* and *Last Tango in Halifax* have a lot to look forward to in *Annika*."

Arabella Page Croft, producer for Black Camel Pictures says, "I am absolutely delighted to see this hit Scottish show arrive stateside! We are thrilled to bring our irrepressible marine homicide squad chief Annika, played by the amazing Nicola Walker, to a new audience who we hope will delight in her literary life-musings and crime-solving prowess as much as the UK audience have loved it."

Walker is joined by Jamie Sives (*Guilt*) as DS Michael McAndrews, Annika's old colleague, who resents being passed over for the DI job but performs at full throttle as her second-in-command; Katie Leung (*Harry Potter*) as DC Blair Ferguson, the forensic brains behind the unit; and Ukweli Roach (*Grantchester*) as DS Tyrone Clarke, the new cop at the station, who requested a posting with the legendary Annika.

Also appearing are Silvie Furneaux (*Limbo*) as Morgan, Annika's rebellious teenage daughter, and Paul McGann (*Luther*) as Morgan's therapist Jake Strathearn, who develops into something of a soul mate for single mom Annika.

While other TV detectives discuss the case exclusively with their team, Annika addresses viewers directly, “breaking the fourth wall” that separates the action from the audience. “With most characters there is so much subtext,” notes Walker. “But there is no subtext with Annika because the subtext is her talking directly to you and telling you what she feels. By the end, we are going to know her as well as she knows herself.”

Annika’s strikingly effective M.O. is to link the crime under investigation to her obsessive reading of literature and mythology. For example, the harpoon manner of death in Episode One starts her musing about Herman Melville’s *Moby Dick* and its ruinous quest for a white whale, which provides an oblique clue to the murderer’s motive.

Similarly, Episode Two features the discovery of a corpse on the boat Valkyrie, linking the crime—in Annika’s mind—to the female warrior deities who gave the vessel its name. As Annika closes in on the fugitive killer, it suddenly occurs to her that Valkyries “don’t run; they fly.”

Uncannily real, Walker’s interpretation of Annika draws on the popular radio drama *Annika Stranded*, which aired in 31 episodes on BBC Radio 4 between 2013 and 2020. Walker was the one-woman star of that series, with scripts by Nick Walker (no relation). The two Walkers have now teamed up again to bring Annika to television in all her complexity, vulnerability, and eccentric affability.

“I’ve been Annika a long time now,” says Nicola Walker, “and if there was a chance of getting her fully fleshed out in a real-world environment, I wanted to be part of it.”

Series Description

Fishing bodies from the waters around Glasgow, Scotland, DI Annika Strandhed and her newly-formed Marine Homicide Unit face a steady stream of murders in this new series, starring Nicola Walker as the title character. Confiding her thoughts directly to viewers, Annika juggles baffling cases and a rebellious teenage daughter. The former are easier to solve than the latter. “Droll and...charming,” praised *The Guardian* (London).

Episode One

Annika assembles her team to solve murders in the waters around Glasgow. Their first case looks a lot like a whale hunt gone wrong.

Episode Two

Annika’s teenage daughter, Morgan, gets mixed up with suspects in a revenge slaying. Norse saga comes to life as Annika’s team closes in.

Episode Three

Annika sees one of playwright Ibsen’s plots play out in a homicide. Meanwhile, she takes more than a parental interest in Morgan’s therapist, Jake.

Episode Four

An author who has ruined lives has her own ruined—permanently. Blair finds a friend for Morgan. Annika and Jake go to a museum exhibit.

Episode Five

Arriving at a murder scene on a party boat, Annika thinks of the Greek god of unrestrained celebration. From there, things only get more chaotic.

Episode Six

Michael's brother is the prime suspect in his ex's murder. Annika goes for what looks like a one-way ride. A secret about Michael comes out.

Annika is a UKTV Original Production by Black Camel Pictures in co-production with MASTERPIECE and in association with All3Media International, and Screen Scotland. The executive producers are Nicole Fitzpatrick, Jennifer Armitage, Susanne Simpson, David Swetman, Philippa Collie Cousins, and Arabella Page Croft. The producer is Kieran Parker. The series is created and written by Nick Walker. The writers are Lucia Haynes and Frances Poet. The directors are Philip John and Fiona Walton.

About MASTERPIECE

Winner of 83 Primetime Emmys® and 18 Peabody Awards, MASTERPIECE has been essential Sunday night viewing for millions of fans since 1971. Susanne Simpson is the executive producer and Rebecca Eaton is the executive producer-at-large for the series. Series funding for MASTERPIECE is provided by Viking Cruises, Raymond James, The MASTERPIECE Trust, and public television viewers. Produced for PBS by GBH Boston, MASTERPIECE is known for hits such as *All Creatures Great and Small*, *Sherlock*, *Downton Abbey* and *Victoria*, and beloved classics such as *Upstairs Downstairs*, *Prime Suspect*, *The Forsyte Saga* and *Poldark*.

pbs.org/masterpiece

Press Contacts

Ellen Dockser: ellen_dockser@wgbh.org

Laura Garvey: laura_garvey@wgbh.org