

# MASTERPIECE

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## MASTERPIECE MARKS 50 YEARS OF INCREDIBLE TELEVISION

**The longest-running primetime drama series on TV celebrates with new shows starring Glenda Jackson, Diana Rigg, Kristin Scott Thomas, Martin Freeman, Tamara Lawrance, Hayley Atwell, Samuel West, Tom Hollander, Kate Phillips, and Kyle MacLachlan**

Boston, MA; October 15–January 10, 2021 marks the 50th anniversary of MASTERPIECE, the iconic PBS drama series that sparked America’s infatuation with British television. While celebrating five decades of award-winning television, MASTERPIECE unveils its slate of the next unforgettable dramas that viewers won’t want to miss.

Leading off the anniversary season on January 3 is Glenda Jackson’s BAFTA-winning performance in *Elizabeth Is Missing*, followed on January 10 by a heartwarming new adaptation of *All Creatures Great and Small* based on James Herriot’s best-selling books.

“Fifty years in, MASTERPIECE remains the true home for acting royalty,” said MASTERPIECE Executive Producer Susanne Simpson. “Whether it’s elegant costume dramas, addictive mysteries, or edgy contemporary programs that appeal to an audience of streamers, we have stunning new shows for our anniversary year.” MASTERPIECE is produced for PBS by GBH Boston.

Renowned for consistently high-quality productions, MASTERPIECE has amassed an impressive 83 Primetime Emmys®, 18 Peabody Awards, 7 Golden Globes®, and 2 Academy Award® nominations. Mega hits such as *Upstairs Downstairs*, *Sherlock* and *Downton Abbey* found pop culture status. MASTERPIECE also sought out ground-breaking shows such as *Prime Suspect* and the original *House of Cards*. But it’s the literary classics such as *Bleak House*, *Wolf Hall* and *The Forsyte Saga*, as well as detective-led mysteries like *Foyle’s War*, *Inspector Morse*, and *Grantchester* that have consistently drawn an audience of millions each week to the series.

Viewers have been treated to the world’s greatest acting talent, including many British actors who later became international stars, such as Glenda Jackson, Kenneth Branagh, Keira Knightley, Daniel Radcliffe, Benedict Cumberbatch, Claire Foy, Rufus Sewell, and Michelle Dockery, among others.

The continued support of Viking, Raymond James and The MASTERPIECE Trust provide funding for the series’ programs.

Simpson notes, "We know what our audience expects from MASTERPIECE: A-list talent, brilliant storytelling, and spectacular settings. We're excited that our anniversary slate of programming delivers all of that."

## **MASTERPIECE 50th SEASON:**

### **WINTER 2021**

#### **ELIZABETH IS MISSING (January 3 at 9pm)**

Glenda Jackson (*A Touch of Class*) won a coveted BAFTA award for her role as a woman in the grip of dementia, searching for her missing friend. *The Guardian* (London) described her performance as "compelling, unsentimental and altogether magnificent."

*Elizabeth Is Missing* is produced by STV Studios, and co-funded by Sky Studios, for BBC One and MASTERPIECE.

#### **ALL CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL (January 10 at 9pm)**

This seven-part adaptation of James Herriot's beloved books about a rural veterinarian drew record-breaking UK audiences, as well as praise such as this from *The Times* (London): "A charming antidote to all the doom and gloom." In addition to the esteemed ensemble cast led by newcomer Nicholas Ralph and Samuel West, the series features Dame Diana Rigg in one of her last appearances.

*All Creatures Great and Small* is a Playground production for MASTERPIECE and Channel 5 in association with All3Media and Screen Yorkshire.

#### **MISS SCARLET & THE DUKE (January 17 at 8pm)**

Kate Phillips (*Peaky Blinders*) stars in a six-part mystery as the headstrong, first-ever female detective in Victorian London. Stuart Martin (*Jamestown*) plays her childhood friend, professional colleague, and potential love interest, Scotland Yard Detective Inspector William Wellington, a.k.a., The Duke.

*Miss Scarlet & The Duke* is an A+E NETWORKS INTERNATIONAL and ELEMENT 8 ENTERTAINMENT production co-produced with MASTERPIECE in association with Eighty Seven Films and Bandidos Yanquis.

#### **THE LONG SONG (January 31 at 10pm)**

This three-part miniseries based on Andrea Levy's award-winning novel about the end of slavery in Jamaica follows July (Tamara Lawrance, *King Charles III*), an indomitable, young slave who works on a sugarcane plantation with her detestable mistress, Caroline Mortimer (Hayley Atwell, *The Avengers*). Their lives change with the arrival of the charming new overseer, Robert Goodwin (Jack Lowden, *Dunkirk*) who sets out to improve the plantation for both the slaves and the mistress. "A beautiful, moving, horrifying adaptation of Levy's unsimple tale." –*The Guardian* (London)

*The Long Song* is produced by Heyday Television and NBCUniversal International Studios, a division of Universal Studio Group, for the BBC.

## SPRING 2021

### ATLANTIC CROSSING

A princess steals the heart of the president of the United States in an epic drama based on the World War II relationship of Franklin D. Roosevelt and Norwegian Crown Princess Martha. Two-time Emmy® nominee Kyle MacLachlan (*Twin Peaks*) stars as Roosevelt, opposite Swedish actress Sofia Helin (*The Bridge*) as the beautiful, politically astute Martha, who flees the Nazis with her three young children and lives under Roosevelt's increasingly dotting protection. The eight-part series ranges back and forth across the Atlantic as diplomacy, romance, and jealousy embroil Norwegians and Americans alike.

*Atlantic Crossing* is from Cinenord in co-production with Beta Film for NRK and MASTERPIECE.

### TALKING HEADS

An ensemble of great British actors perform Alan Bennett's classic dramatic monologues. Each story depicts a single ordinary character in a homey setting, whose life has been disrupted by banal, scandalous, criminal, and even miraculous events. "A masterclass in writing and acting ... perilously close to magic." – *The Guardian* (London)

*Talking Heads* is a London Theatre Company Production for BBC and MASTERPIECE.

*Talking Heads* episodes airing on MASTERPIECE in Spring 2021:

#### ***Talking Heads: The Hand of God***

Kristin Scott Thomas (*Fleabag*) plays Celia, an antique shop owner who takes pride in keeping her marginal business afloat. Then she lucks into a sale and lands on the evening news.

#### ***Talking Heads: A Chip in the Sugar***

Martin Freeman (*Sherlock*) is Graham, a mild-mannered bachelor living with his widowed mother. One day they run into mom's old flame, who rekindles a fire that Graham struggles mightily to put out.

## SUMMER 2021

### US

In a drama tinged with humor and heartbreak, Tom Hollander (*Baptiste, The Night Manager*) and Saskia Reeves (*Luther*) play a couple who embark on a long-planned grand tour of Europe, despite the wife's wrenching proclamation that she wants to leave the marriage. The four-part series is based on a novel by best-selling author David Nicholls. *The Daily Telegraph* called it a "brilliantly witty and heartfelt drama about a family on the edge."

*Us* is a Drama Republic and Bandstand Productions for BBC and MASTERPIECE.

## FALL 2021

The 50th season closes out with the return of some of MASTERPIECE's most popular mysteries. Anticipated titles include *Baptiste*, Season 2, *Grantchester*, Season 6, *Van der Valk*, Season 2, and *Unforgotten*, Season 4.

[pbs.org/masterpiece](https://pbs.org/masterpiece)

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### About MASTERPIECE

Winner of 83 Primetime Emmys® and 16 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. Funding for MASTERPIECE is provided by Viking and Raymond James with additional support from public television viewers and contributors to The MASTERPIECE Trust. Produced for PBS by GBH Boston, MASTERPIECE is known for recent hits such as *Sherlock*, *Downton Abbey* and *Victoria*, and beloved classics such as *Upstairs Downstairs*, *Prime Suspect*, *The Forsyte Saga* and *Poldark*.