

## MASTERPIECE. MYSTERY!

...with the knife, in the sleeping car  
**Hercule Poirot: Series X**  
on MASTERPIECE MYSTERY!  
Sundays July 11, 18, and 25, 2010 at 9pm ET on PBS  
Hosted by Alan Cumming

Actor David Suchet reaches the pinnacle of his remarkable twenty-one-year career as Belgian sleuth Hercule Poirot by taking on the great detective's most celebrated case, *Murder on the Orient Express*. The classic tale headlines **Hercule Poirot: Series X**, three new Poirot whodunits by Agatha Christie on MASTERPIECE Mystery!, airing Sundays, July 11, 18, and 25, 2010, at 9pm ET on PBS (check local listings).

Suchet describes *Murder on the Orient Express* (July 11) as “a psychological journey for Poirot, one that absolutely breaks him.”

Suchet is joined by a galaxy of international stars playing passengers aboard the glamorous Istanbul-to-Calais run—where a shocking stabbing launches Christie's most intricate and clever plot. The co-stars include Eileen Atkins (*Cranford*), Hugh Bonneville (*Iris*), Barbara Hershey (Oscar nominated for *The Portrait of a Lady*), Toby Jones (*W.*), David Morrissey (*Sense and Sensibility*), and Samuel West (*Howard's End*).

Airing on many stations in advance of the program, on Wednesday, July 7 at 8pm ET (check local listings), is *David Suchet on the Orient Express: A Masterpiece Special*. This enchanting travelogue follows Suchet on the present-day Orient Express across Europe and back in time, riding restored original cars from the 1920s, and reliving the past glories of the fabled line.

The Poirot season continues with *Third Girl* (July 18), a taut psychological thriller co-starring Zoë Wanamaker (*The Old Curiosity Shop*) as eccentric crime novelist Ariadne Oliver, said to be modeled on Christie herself; followed by *Appointment with Death* (July 25), a mystery set at an archaeological site in Syria, where a family's dark past is the real subject of excavation.

Starting with a suicide in the Middle East on *Murder on the Orient Express* and ending in the same locale with the homicide in *Appointment with Death*, **Hercule Poirot: Series X** plumbs new depths of forensic insight by the detective often dismissed as “the funny little man.”

**Hercule Poirot: Series X** features the following:

*David Suchet on the Orient Express*—Wednesday, July 7 at 8pm

David Suchet rides the meticulously restored modern version of the Orient Express, seeing the sights, meeting staff and fellow passengers, and luxuriating in bygone elegance. Along the way, he learns that Agatha Christie recreated the precise layout and cabin details of the train in *Murder on the Orient Express*, while drawing on an actual incident in the snow to provide the perfect setting for Poirot's supreme test of skill.

# MASTERPIECE™

*Murder on the Orient Express*—Sunday, July 11 at 9pm

Suddenly recalled to London, Poirot barely makes it aboard the Calais-bound Orient Express, only to find that his services are needed when a wealthy passenger (Jones) is murdered. As clues mount, it becomes clear that a devious mastermind is at work. Could it be the victim's butler (Bonneville), the imperious Russian princess (Atkins), the histrionic American (Hershey), the stiff-upper-lipped colonel (Morrissey), or one of a train full of other suspects? As pressure mounts on Poirot to solve the crime before the local police arrive, he finds that his most deeply held beliefs about justice are tested.

*Third Girl*—Sunday, July 18 at 9pm

Referred by Poirot's friend Ariadne Oliver (Wanamaker), troubled heiress Norma Restarick (Jemima Rooper, *Lost in Austen*) calls on Poirot to confess that she might have committed a murder. But then she flees; no details given. Who might have been murdered is solved when the body of Norma's nanny is found in the building where Norma shares a flat with two other young women (Clemency Burton-Hill and Matilda Sturridge). Pursuing parallel investigations, Poirot interviews Norma's great-uncle (Peter Bowles, *To the Manor Born*), his secretary/fiancée (Lucy Liemann), and Norma's father (James Wilby, *Gosford Park*); while Ariadne discovers a clue that puts her life in danger.

*Appointment with Death*—Sunday, July 25 at 9pm

An obsessed archaeologist (Tim Curry, *Rocky Horror Picture Show*) searching for the head of John the Baptist has a more modern murder on his hands when a member of his entourage dies violently. The vacationing Poirot digs into the mystery and discovers no shortage of suspects: an unconventional travel writer (Elizabeth McGovern, *Once Upon a Time in America*), a witty psychiatrist (John Hannah, *Four Weddings and a Funeral*), the archaeologist's son (Mark Gatiss, *The League of Gentlemen*), even a nun on a pilgrimage (Beth Goddard, *Lewis*)—plus other questionable types. All have a motive, but only Poirot can untangle the fiendishly clever plot and reveal who arranged the *Appointment with Death*.

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*David Suchet on the Orient Express* is an ITV Studios production and is presented on PBS by WGBH Boston. Agatha Christie's *Hercule Poirot* is a co-production of ITV Studios and MASTERPIECE, in association with Agatha Christie Limited. MASTERPIECE is presented on PBS by WGBH Boston. Rebecca Eaton is executive producer. Funding for the series is provided by public television viewers.

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