

PRESS RELEASE

A ROOM WITH A VIEW

Adapted by Andrew Davies
on MASTERPIECE CLASSIC

Sunday, April 13 at 9pm ET on PBS

A young Englishwoman falls in love but doesn't realize it, in E. M. Forster's gently satirical romance set in Italy and England in the early twentieth century. **MASTERPIECE CLASSIC** presents *A Room with a View*, airing Sunday, April 13, 2008, 9 to 10:30pm ET on PBS.

Forster's most popular novel appears in a new adaptation by Andrew Davies (*The Complete Jane Austen: 4 films*; *Bleak House*), who adds a coda to the author's tender love story by imagining the poignant aftermath that must have been.

Elaine Cassidy (*Ghost Squad*) stars as Lucy Honeychurch, a passionate but inexperienced young woman on the Grand Tour with her prim, unmarried chaperone Charlotte Bartlett (*Sophie Thompson, Gosford Park*).

Father/son actors Timothy (*Sweeney Todd*) and Rafe (*Hot Fuzz*) Spall play Mr. Emerson and his son George, also on the Grand Tour, but out-of-place among their fellow English tourists due to their working class origin and socialist views.

Also appearing are Laurence Fox (*Lewis*) as Lucy's fiancé, Cecil Vyse, and Mark Williams (*Sense and Sensibility*) as the oracular Mr. Beebe, a clergyman who observes of Cecil that he is, "like me, not the sort of man who should marry."

The cast also includes Sinéad Cusack (*Eastern Promises*) as Eleanor Lavish, an intrepid novelist; Elizabeth McGovern (*The House of Mirth*) as Mrs. Honeychurch; and Timothy West (*Bleak House*) as Mr. Eager, another clergyman.

The story opens in Florence, where Lucy and Charlotte arrive at their pensione to discover that they have not been given rooms with a view, as promised. Mr. Emerson and George graciously offer to vacate their rooms, which have splendid views. This forthright act of kindness fills Charlotte with distress and Lucy with intrigue.

Lucy's acquaintance with George deepens when he rescues her from a dead faint after she witnesses a street murder. And the plot further thickens when he impulsively kisses her in a field of violets overlooking Florence—an outrage witnessed by Charlotte who immediately decamps with Lucy for Rome.

The action then moves to Windy Corner, the Honeychurch home in England, where Cecil is a houseguest, having just announced his engagement to Lucy. Fate brings the Emersons back into the picture when they rent a nearby cottage. George soon repeats his original outrage, and Lucy is thrown into a quandary: Should she go through with the marriage to Cecil, an insufferable snob? Or should she listen to what she thinks her heart is telling her about George?

Originally published in 1908, *A Room with a View* is a lighthearted tribute to all that Forster loved about Italy and family life in England, with the less cherished aspects of English society veiled in parody, much in the spirit of Jane Austen.

Screenwriter Andrew Davies notes that Forster briefly revisited the story in 1958, fifty years after writing the book, imagining what might have happened to the characters. This encouraged Davies to add a new ending in which the decorum and frivolity of the Edwardian era are seen in light of the tragedy that was about to overtake Europe.

Filmed entirely on location in Florence and London, *A Room with A View* is an ITV co-production with WGBH Boston. It was adapted by Andrew Davies from the novel by E.M. Forster. The producers are Eileen Quinn and Dave Edwards. The director is Nicholas Renton (*Wives and Daughters*). The executive producers are Rebecca Eaton for WGBH and Sue Oriel for ITV.

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