

MASTERPIECE™

MASTERPIECE™  
*Classic*

*A magical tale of a boy against the world*  
THE TALES OF  
CHARLES DICKENS  
DAVID COPPERFIELD

*starring Daniel Radcliffe*

On MASTERPIECE CLASSIC

March 2009 on PBS

Charles Dickens's beloved novel based on his own difficult journey from boy to man comes to MASTERPIECE CLASSIC in an acclaimed all-star production of *David Copperfield*. Starring Daniel Radcliffe in the role that led him to *Harry Potter*, *David Copperfield* premiered on MASTERPIECE in 2000 and now airs as part of MASTERPIECE CLASSIC's "The Tales of Charles Dickens". The acclaimed miniseries will be broadcast in March 2009 on PBS (check local listings).

Joining Radcliffe in the cast are Bob Hoskins (*Who Framed Roger Rabbit*) as the ever-optimistic Mr. Micawber, Maggie Smith (*The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*) nominated for an Emmy for her performance as David's upstanding Aunt Betsey, and Ian McKellen (*Harry Potter*) as the sadistic schoolmaster Mr. Creakle.

The ten year-old Daniel Radcliffe plays the imperturbable young David, with Ciaran McMenamin as the hero in manhood.

Britain's top television actors fill out the extraordinary cast, including Nicholas Lyndhurst (*To Serve Them All My Days*) as the ingratiating villain Uriah Heep; Pauline Quirke (*The Sculptress*) as David's nanny and lifelong friend, Peggotty; Emilia Fox (*Rebecca, Shooting the Past*) as the boy's clueless, doomed mother; and Trevor Eve (*The Politician's Wife, Heat of the Sun*) as his terrifying stepfather, Murdstone.

Harry Lloyd—the 15-year-old descendant of Charles Dickens himself—plays young Steerforth, who befriends David at his darkest hour. Oliver Milburn portrays the grown-up Steerforth, one of Dickens's most morally compromised characters.

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Also starring are Alun Armstrong (*Little Dorrit*) as the merry fisherman Daniel Peggotty; Imelda Staunton (*Cranford*) as the ever-loyal Mrs. Micawber; Amanda Ryan (*Elizabeth*) as the radiant Agnes; Michael Elphick as the always “willin” Mr. Barkis; and Ian McNeice (*Valkyrie*) as the loopy Mr. Dick.

And as Dickens fans know, that’s just the beginning.

Biographers have long noted that David Copperfield’s story is the author’s: in the traumatic child-labor experience, the first romance, the aborted legal career, and the early efforts at writing. Indeed as David matures in the course of the film, he grew to look even more like historical photographs of Dickens.

The characters, too, are drawn from life. Mr. Micawber is based on Dickens’s own father. Dora is his first flame. Even Uriah Heep resembles someone Dickens knew—Danish poet Hans Christian Andersen, who had the same reptilian affect.

In 1869, the year before his death, Charles Dickens looked back on a lifetime of marvelous literary creations and singled out *David Copperfield* as his “favorite child.” “Of all my books,” he wrote, “I like this the best.”

*David Copperfield* is a BBC AMERICA and WGBH Boston coproduction. It was adapted by Adrian Hodges from the novel by Charles Dickens. The producer is Kate Harwood. The director is Simon Curtis. The executive producers are Jane Tranter for the BBC and Rebecca Eaton for WGBH Boston.

MASTERPIECE has been presented on PBS by WGBH since 1971. Rebecca Eaton is executive producer. Laura Linney is the host of MASTERPIECE CLASSIC. Funding for MASTERPIECE is provided by public television viewers.

January 2009

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