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## **Royal Shakespeare Company's Production of *Hamlet* Airs on THIRTEEN'S *Great Performances* coinciding with the Bard of Avon's 446<sup>th</sup> birthday**

**David Tennant and Sir Patrick Stewart reprise their stage  
roles as "Hamlet" and "Claudius" in television adaptation**

(New York, NY – March 22, 2010) Shakespeare's immortal "To be, or not to be" takes on a whole new meaning (and medium) as classical stage and screen actors David Tennant and (recently-knighted) Sir Patrick Stewart reprise their roles for a modern-dress, film-for-television adaptation of the Royal Shakespeare Company's (RSC) 2008 stage production of *Hamlet*. The production will be presented on PBS by the ***Great Performances*** series on Wednesday, April 28, 2010, at 8 p.m. EST (check local listings). Immediately following the broadcast, the film will be available online in its entirety at [www.pbs.org/gperf](http://www.pbs.org/gperf).

***Great Performances*** is a production of THIRTEEN in association with WNET.ORG – one of America's most prolific and respected public media providers.

*Hamlet* aired in the UK on Boxing Day at Christmastime 2009, and more than 900,000 viewers tuned in for the BBC broadcast. In an article in *The Observer*, Britain's Prime Minister Gordon Brown wrote: "Like many people, I had my love of Shakespeare reawakened by David Tennant's TV portrayal of Hamlet over Christmas."

Best known for his performance in the title role of the popular British TV series *Doctor Who* since 2005, Tennant made his debut in October as the host of

MASTERPIECE CONTEMPORARY on PBS. His many other credits include his recent portrayal of Barty Crouch Junior in the big-screen blockbuster *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*. Tennant has also received numerous awards from the theatre community for his lead roles in several Shakespearean productions and other classic plays.

Veteran stage and screen actor Sir Patrick Stewart reprises his 2009 Laurence Olivier Award-winning role of Claudius in the screen version, which is directed by Gregory Doran, who also returns to reprise his stage direction of the production. Co-produced by Illuminations Television and the RSC for the BBC, in association with Thirteen for WNET.ORG and NHK, the adaptation recreates the tone and atmosphere of the stage production in a film-style interpretation shot in HD on location at St. Joseph's College in Mill Hill, London. The production is produced for television by John Wyver and Sebastian Grant.

To complement the film, WNET.ORG, in partnership with the RSC, will offer a Teachers' Guide for educators to utilize the PBS broadcast in classrooms around the country. Hosted on [www.pbs.org/gperf](http://www.pbs.org/gperf), the activity-based analysis of the play will be supported by links to various scenes throughout the film.

**Great Performances** is funded by the Irene Diamond Fund, the National Endowment for the Arts, Vivian Milstein, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, public television viewers, and PBS. Major support for the telecast is also provided by the LuEsther T. Mertz Charitable Trust. For **Great Performances**, Bill O'Donnell is series producer; David Horn is executive producer.

Visit **Great Performances Online** at [www.pbs.org/gperf](http://www.pbs.org/gperf) for additional information about this and other programs.

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