

Art for all!

Framed

Based on the bestselling children's novel by Frank Cottrell Boyce

On MASTERPIECE CONTEMPORARY

Sunday, December 26, 2010 at 9pm ET on PBS

A forlorn art curator tries to hide the entire collection of London's National Gallery near an eccentric, inquisitive Welsh village, on *Framed*, adapted by Frank Cottrell Boyce from his best-selling children's novel about art, love, life, and Ninja Turtles, airing on MASTERPIECE CONTEMPORARY, Sunday, December 26 from 9 to 10:30pm ET on PBS (check local listings).

Boyce, who also wrote MASTERPIECE's powerful Holocaust drama *God on Trial*, was inspired by the relocation of the National Gallery's treasures to the Manod slate mine in Wales during World War II. In *Framed*, he depicts a similar emergency—this time due to catastrophically deteriorating plumbing at the museum—which ends up sparking a clash of cultures that is humorous, heart-warming, and romantically satisfying.

Framed stars Trevor Eve (*Heat of the Sun*, *The Politician's Wife*) as Quentin Lester, the man in charge of moving the National Gallery's holdings to Manod and keeping it secret. Eve Myles (*Little Dorrit*, *Torchwood*) costars as vivacious local teacher Angharad Stannard, whose students solve the mystery in no time.

Quentin's initial suspicion of Angharad soon melts, but it takes all her skill to reform his peculiar view of art. He thinks it is about composition, genre, and genius, but she believes that art is nothing without people to appreciate it and maybe have their lives changed in the process.

The film also features Welsh child actors Sam Davies (*Doctor Who*) and Mari Ann Bull as Dylan and Minnie Hughes, siblings and star pupils in Angharad's classroom. Their father, Daffyd (Mark Lewis Jones, *Robin Hood*), runs a gas station and lovingly restores old cars—an extravagance that lands the family in financial straits. When Daffyd disappears, it's up to the youngsters to save the family business, which they proceed to do by outwitting the security system at Quentin's art storage facility—with its priceless Monets, Van Eycks, Leonardos, Raphaels, Donatellos, and much more.

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The last three names are the occasion for some confusion between Quentin and Dylan. When they chat about these figures, Quentin is referring to the artists while Dylan is thinking of the reptiles—Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles—who, as all the world except Quentin knows, bear the same names. Dylan’s well-honed opinions, such as “Raphael is an idiot,” lead Quentin to conclude that he is a remarkably astute young art connoisseur, when, in fact, he is remarkable for quite different reasons ... as becomes clear.

Manod is an endlessly diverting gallery of interesting characters, from the Elvis-obsessed butcher (Robert Pugh, *Prime Suspect: The Final Act*) who won’t sell liver because “it’s alive!” to Dylan and Minnie’s baby brother, Max, who becomes the photo model for a collage that ends up hanging in the National Gallery, where it attracts one very special admirer.

And as great art should, the National Gallery’s masterpieces can’t help but vitalize and inspire the residents of this remote Welsh outpost, Quentin included. Indeed, like liver, you might say that these grand old works are alive.

Framed is a BBC/WGBH Boston co-production. The screenwriter is Frank Cottrell Boyce (*God on Trial*), adapted from his best-selling novel. The director is Andy De Emmony (*God on Trial, Filth*). The producer is Richard Burrell. The executive producers are Jessica Pope for the BBC and Rebecca Eaton for MASTERPIECE on PBS.

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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WGBH Press Contacts

Ellen Dockser, ellen_dockser@wgbh.org, 617-300-5338

Olivia Wong, olivia_wong@wgbh.org, 617-300-5349

