

PRESS RELEASE

Upstairs and down, the saga continues...

Upstairs Downstairs

On MASTERPIECE Classic

Sundays, April 10, 17, and 24, 2011 at 9pm ET on PBS

It's 1936 and, sweeping away the cobwebs from the most famous address in MASTERPIECE history, a new couple moves into 165 Eaton Place. Thus resumes the romantic, moving, and epic story of *Upstairs Downstairs*, more than three decades after its last episode on PBS. Lavishly produced, beautifully acted, and eagerly awaited by millions of fans, *Upstairs Downstairs* is one of the jewels in the crown of MASTERPIECE's 40th season. It airs in three one-hour episodes on MASTERPIECE Classic, Sundays, April 10, 17, and 24, 2011 at 9pm ET on PBS (check local listings).

"I'm so happy that we can offer our MASTERPIECE viewers this 40th anniversary gift of *Upstairs Downstairs*," says executive producer Rebecca Eaton. "This 2011 version is charming, romantic, touching, and fresh. I think it will entrance a whole new audience."

The stellar cast includes the original series creators Dame Eileen Atkins (*Cranford*, *Murder on the Orient Express*) and Jean Marsh (*Sense and Sensibility*, *Willow*), with Marsh reprising her Emmy Award-winning role as Rose Buck, now promoted from parlormaid to housekeeper, and Atkins appearing as the aristocratic Lady Maud.

With a script by acclaimed screenwriter Heidi Thomas (*Cranford*), the sequel also stars Keeley Hawes (*Wives and Daughters*), Ed Stoppard (*Brideshead Revisited*), Anne Reid (*Bleak House*), Claire Foy (*Little Dorrit*), Adrian Scarborough (*Cranford*), Art Malik (*The Jewel in the Crown*), and Ellie Kendrick (*The Diary of Anne Frank*).

The story opens in 1936, six years after the Bellamy family moved out of 165 Eaton Place at the end of the original series. Recently inherited by young Sir Hallam Holland (Stoppard), the house has been long vacant and its considerable needs are taken in hand by Hallam's vivacious wife, Agnes (Hawes).

Her first order of business is to hire servants, for which she retains Rose (Marsh), the proprietor of a domestic employment agency, although Agnes is unaware of Rose's previous association with 165. After lining up a butler (Scarborough), a cook (Reid), a housemaid (Kendrick), and other staff, Rose realizes she may be of no further use to the new family. Our story begins...

MASTERPIECETM 40 YEARS

And so it continues, just as it did thirty-odd years ago, with stories of the upper-class and working-class intertwining in complex and interesting ways against a backdrop of world events—in this case, the abdication crisis of Edward VIII, the growing belligerence of Hitler and Mussolini on the continent, and the rise of the British Union of Fascists under Sir Oswald Mosley.

Amid the triumphs, disasters, joys, and tears, it's just like old times at 165 Eaton Place.

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Upstairs Downstairs is a coproduction of the BBC and MASTERPIECE on PBS. Made by BBC Cymru Wales Drama, *Upstairs Downstairs* was filmed primarily in South Wales. The exterior location for 165 Eaton Place was filmed in Leamington Spa in Warwickshire. It was written by Heidi Thomas (*Cranford*). The director of episode one and two is Euros Lyn (*Torchwood*, *Doctor Who*). Saul Metzstein directed episode three. The producer is Nikki Wilson (*Doctor Who*). The executive producers are Piers Wenger, Heidi Thomas, Kate Harwood, and Rebecca Eaton for MASTERPIECE.

MASTERPIECE on PBS is presented by WGBH Boston. Rebecca Eaton is executive producer. Funding for the series is provided by public television viewers with additional support from contributors to The MASTERPIECE Trust, created to help ensure the series' future.

The host of MASTERPIECE Classic is Laura Linney.

Acorn Media is releasing *Upstairs, Downstairs Complete Series: 40th Anniversary Edition* on DVD on March 29, 2011. The 21-disc collection contains all five series, in addition to more than 25 hours of never-before-seen extras; <http://www.AcornOnline.com>. Available to press upon request.

pbs.org/masterpiece

Online press materials available at **pbs.org/pressroom** and **pressroom.wgbh.org**

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