

## MASTERPIECE<sup>TM</sup> MYSTERY!

**Just What the Doctor Ordered**

***Breathless***

**On MASTERPIECE MYSTERY!**

**Sundays, August 24 - September 7, 2014 at 9pm ET on PBS**

Jack Davenport (*Pirates of the Caribbean*, *Smash*), Zoe Boyle (*Downton Abbey*), and Catherine Steadman (*Mansfield Park*) team up for a medical series with astounding suspense, supreme satire, and smart sixties style on *Breathless*, airing in three parts on MASTERPIECE MYSTERY!, Sundays, August 24 - September 7, 2014 at 9pm ET on PBS (check local listings).

Also starring in this compelling drama about a vanished era and sensibility are Iain Glen (*Downton Abbey*), Natasha Little (*Case Histories*), Oliver Chris (*Sharpe's Challenge*), Joanna Page (*Love Actually*), and Shaun Dingwall (*Touching Evil*).

Critics were hooked on *Breathless* during its UK broadcast. *The Times* (London) marveled, "Jack Davenport [is] a suave gynecologist with a glint in his eye, a revolver in his pocket, and a hospital full of nurses ready to start swinging as the 1960s hit Britain." And *The Independent* (London) gasped, "*Breathless* looks absolutely lovely—it takes our breath away."

Set in London in 1961, *Breathless* follows the exploits of doctors, nurses, and spouses connected with a busy obstetrics ward at a National Health Service hospital. It's a time when gynecologists are all men and nurses aspire to a trip down the aisle with a good-looking doctor. Abortion is illegal, the Beatles are still nobodies, and society is on the cusp of profound change.

No one seems to have more going for him than Otto Powell (Davenport), a well-off gynecologist who can perform miracles in the operating room and has a trophy wife (Little) and a bright, well-mannered son (Rudi Goodman). Otto also has a wandering eye, which alights most recently on new nurse Angela Wilson (Steadman), who plays uncommonly hard-to-get.

Unknown to all, Angela is already married—although abandoned years earlier—and is the sister of another of Otto's nurse conquests, Jean (Boyle). Jean is now engaged to Otto's posh colleague Richard Truscott (Chris), due to failure to take contraceptive precautions. Angela and Jean hide their relationship in order to aid Jean's climb up the social ladder.

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Both sisters are mixed up in Otto's occasional "specials"—secret abortions that he performs with anesthesiologist Charlie Enderbury (Dingwall) out of concern for the health of women in dire straits. All risk imprisonment for their deeds—a prospect that is increasingly worrying to Charlie. Meanwhile Charlie's wife, Lily (Page), cheerily tries to cope with his strange moods, not helped by the arrival of an officious new anesthesiologist, Omprakash Mehta (Ronny Jhutti), who is suspicious of Charlie's moonlighting.

The plot thickens considerably with the appearance of Chief Inspector Ronald Mulligan (Glen), an obsessed detective who thinks out-of-the-box. The dots he is connecting link some of the characters to events in another country and a different decade. It's an inquiry that leaves protagonists, not to mention viewers...breathless.

*Breathless* is a Co-Production of ITV Studios and MASTERPIECE. The Co-creators are Paul Unwin and Peter Grimsdale. The Executive Producers are Kate Bartlett and Paul Unwin. The Executive Producer for MASTERPIECE is Rebecca Eaton. The Producer is Jolyon Symonds. The writers are Paul Unwin (Parts One, Two and Three), Peter Grimsdale (Part One), and Simon Tyrrell (Part Three). The Directors are Paul Unwin (Part One), Marek Losey (Part Two), and Philippa Langdale (Part Three).

MASTERPIECE is presented on PBS by WGBH Boston. Rebecca Eaton is Executive Producer. Funding for the series is provided by Viking River Cruises and Ralph Lauren Corporation with additional support from public television viewers and contributors to The MASTERPIECE Trust, created to help ensure the series' future.

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