

EPIC DRAMA BEECHAM HOUSE TO AIR ON MASTERPIECE ON PBS

Fremantle secures U.S. deal for Gurinder Chadha's upcoming series set in India

London, Tuesday 5 March 2019 – Gurinder Chadha's ambitious new six-part drama series *Beecham House* will launch in the U.S. on MASTERPIECE on PBS, following a deal with Fremantle. From award-winning production company Bend It TV, part of the Fremantle production family, *Beecham House* is set on the cusp of the 19th century in Delhi before the British ruled in that region.

Beecham House is created by Gurinder Chadha, the writer, director and producer responsible for numerous internationally successful films including *Bend It Like Beckham*, *Bride & Prejudice* and *Viceroy's House*. Her latest film, *Blinded By The Light*, recently had its world premiere at The Sundance Film Festival 2019 to much critical acclaim.

The drama depicts the fortunes of the residents of an imposing mansion surrounded by acres of exotic woods and pristine lawns. Tom Bateman (*Vanity Fair*, *Jekyll and Hyde*, *Murder on the Orient Express*) takes the role of enigmatic, soulful John Beecham, a handsome former soldier who has purchased the magnificent mansion, Beecham House, to begin a new life with his family.

The ensemble cast includes Lesley Nicol (*Downton Abbey*), Gregory Fitoussi (*Mr. Selfridge*, *Spiral*), Adil Ray (*Citizen Khan*, *Ackley Bridge*), Pallavi Sharda (*Lion*), Dakota Blue Richards (*Endeavour*), Leo Suter (*Clique*, *Victoria*), Bessie Carter (*Howard's End*), Viveik Kalra (*Blinded By The Light*) and Marc Warren (*Safe*, *Hustle*).

Lisa Honig, EVP Distribution North America, International, Fremantle, said: "Gurinder Chadha really delivers on this epic family saga. It has everything: gorgeous locations, exquisite costumes, rich diverse characters and a compelling script. We're thrilled to be partnering with PBS to bring *Beecham House* to the widest possible audience in the US."

Rebecca Eaton, MASTERPIECE Executive Producer, said: "I haven't seen a series as visually sumptuous as *Beecham House* in a long time. This is a new time and place for our audience...India in 1795, before the Raj. There is love and passion, too, and a storyline full of deepening mystery." MASTERPIECE is presented on PBS by WGBH Boston.

Beecham House is created and written by Gurinder Chadha (*Bend It Like Beckham*, *Viceroy's House*, *Bride & Prejudice*), Paul Mayeda Berges (*Viceroy's House*), and Shahrukh Husain (*In Custody*). Victor Levin (*Mad Men*) also serves as writer on the series. *Beecham House* was originally commissioned by ITV (UK). ITV's Head of Drama, Polly Hill, has commissioned *Beecham House* for ITV in the UK and oversees production of the drama on behalf of the broadcaster. Rebecca Eaton will serve as Executive Producer for MASTERPIECE.

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ABOUT FREMANTLE

Fremantle is one of the largest and most successful creators, producers and distributors of scripted and unscripted content in the world. A global entertainment powerhouse, Fremantle has an outstanding international network of production teams, companies and labels in over 30 countries. We produce in excess of 12,000 hours of original programming, roll out more than 60 formats and air 450 programmes a year worldwide. The group distributes over 20,000 hours of content in more than 200 territories. We are also a world leader in digital and branded entertainment, with more than 300 million subscribers across 1,400 social channels and over 100 billion views across all platforms.

We are part of RTL Group, a global leader across broadcast, content and digital, itself a division of the international media giant Bertelsmann.

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About MASTERPIECE

Winner of 83 Primetime Emmys® and 16 Peabody Awards, MASTERPIECE has been essential Sunday night viewing for millions of fans since 1971. Rebecca Eaton is the executive producer of the series. Funding for MASTERPIECE is provided by Viking with additional support from public television viewers and contributors to The MASTERPIECE Trust. Presented on PBS by WGBH Boston, MASTERPIECE is known for recent hits such as *Sherlock*, *Downton Abbey* and *Victoria*, and beloved classics such as *Upstairs Downstairs*, *Prime Suspect*, *The Forsyte Saga* and *Poldark*.