

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES



Kenneth Branagh

Kurt Wallander in *Wallander*

Renowned for his portrayal of another melancholy Scandinavian—Prince Hamlet—Kenneth Branagh brings new depths of insight to the existential Nordic outlook as dour Swedish sleuth, Kurt Wallander, based on the bestselling thrillers by Henning Mankell. One of the world's most admired actors, directors, and screenwriters, Branagh was recently knighted by Queen Elizabeth II for “services to Drama and to the community in Northern Ireland”—which is where he grew up. After breaking into British theater as a young actor, his first venture into film met instant success: a 1989 production of Shakespeare’s *Henry V* that won a score of international awards including Academy Award® nominations for Best Actor and Best Director. Four critically acclaimed Shakespeare films followed, including his spectacular four-hour version of *Hamlet* in 1996, which included every line of the play that Shakespeare wrote. In an astonishingly wide-ranging career, Branagh has directed DeNiro and Gielgud, acted under Altman and Woody Allen, and played everyone from Victor Frankenstein in Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* (which he also directed) to polar explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton in A&E’s *Shackleton*, to Sir Laurence Olivier in *My Week With Marilyn*, which won him his fifth career Academy Award® nomination, making him the first actor to receive five nominations in five separate categories (Actor, Supporting Actor, Director, Screenplay, and Short). Branagh is currently set to direct the newest installment of Tom Clancy’s Jack Ryan franchise for Paramount.



Hugh Bonneville

Robert, Earl of Grantham in *Downton Abbey*

A familiar face on MASTERPIECE, Hugh Bonneville has been seen in programs as varied as *Take a Girl Like You*, in which he played a charmingly superficial ladies’ man, to *Daniel Deronda*, where he was a marital monster—worlds apart from his approachable patriarch in *Downton Abbey*. His other MASTERPIECE credits includes *The Cazalets*, *Miss Austen Regrets*, *Filth*, and on MYSTERY! *Poirot: Murder On The Orient Express* and *Miss Marple: The Mirror Crack’d From Side To Side*. In feature films, he made his debut with Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*, directed by Kenneth Branagh, and has since appeared in more than a dozen films, including *Notting Hill*, *Mansfield Park*, *Stage Beauty*, *Asylum*, *Scenes of a Sexual Nature*, *Man To Man*, *From Time To Time*, *Glorious 39*, *Burke & Hare*, *Third Star*, and *Shanghai*. In 2002, he won the New Talent Award at the Berlin Film Festival and a BAFTA Best Supporting Actor nomination for his portrayal of the young John Bayley in *Iris*, and in 2008 he won Best Actor at the Monte Carlo Film Festival for his performance in *French Film*. In 2012 Hugh was nominated for a Golden Globe® for his performance in *Downton Abbey* and also received a BAFTA and British Comedy Award nomination as Best Comedy Actor for his role in *Twenty Twelve*, which is currently showing on BBC America. In the mid 1990s, Bonneville co-produced *Beautiful Thing* at the Duke of York’s Theatre and wrote *Half Time* with Christopher Luscombe, which he also directed. With development funding from BBC Films, he is currently producing his first feature, based on the autobiography of journalist Byron Rogers with a screenplay by Aschlin Ditta (*Scenes of a Sexual Nature*, *French Film*).

MASTERPIECE



Brendan Coyle

John Bates, head valet, in *Downton Abbey*

Inspiring T-shirts and a web campaign to free a fictional character from make-believe incarceration takes pretty good acting. But for millions of viewers, Brendan Coyle is Bates, the moody head valet at Downton Abbey who can't seem to get an even break from Britain's criminal justice system, leading loyal fans to petition Parliament to "Free Bates!" Nominated for a BAFTA for Best Supporting Actor for his *Downton Abbey* performance, Coyle has garnered other accolades, winning a Laurence Olivier Award in 1999 for his role in Conor McPherson's *The Weir* and a New York Critics Theater World Award for Outstanding Broadway Debut for the same play in its New York production. Coyle has been a

charismatic fixture in British film, television, and theater for two decades. In 2001, he appeared in the film *Conspiracy* as Gestapo chief Heinrich Müller. He was millworker Nicholas Higgins in the BBC's acclaimed 2004 adaptation of *North and South* by Victorian novelist Elizabeth Gaskell. MASTERPIECE viewers first saw him in 2001 in *The Inspector Lynley Mysteries: A Great Deliverance*, and again in 2006 in *Prime Suspect, The Final Act*, Helen Mirren's swan song as DS Tennison, in which Coyle played her corporate-minded boss. Recently, he joined forces with Lesley Sharp to play an upbeat married couple in the new British sitcom *Starlings*. "It was a relief when this came along," Coyle confided to a UK reporter. "It's a breath of fresh air because I was getting a lot of offers to play moody men."



Michelle Dockery

Lady Mary Crawley in *Downton Abbey*

Michelle Dockery recently landed on the cover of *Vanity Fair* with a trio of television's other leading ladies—testimony to her sizzling hot career thanks to her role at the center of *Downton Abbey*'s most intensely watched romance. She recently co-starred as Princess Myagkaya in Joe Wright's soon-to-be-released movie version of Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*, with Keira Knightley, Jude Law, Emily Watson, and Matthew Macfadyen, and will soon be seen in Richard Eyre's production of Shakespeare's *Henry IV, Part 1*, with Simon Russell Beale, Jeremy Irons, and Tom Hiddleston. Dockery will also appear in the new spy series *Restless*, along with Hayley Atwell, Rufus

Sewell, Charlotte Rampling, and Michael Gambon. A graduate of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Dockery was nominated for the Ian Charleson Award in 2006 for her performance in *Pillars of the Community* at the National Theatre. In 2007, she won second prize at the Ian Charleson Awards for her portrayal of Eliza Doolittle in Sir Peter Hall's production of *Pygmalion* at the Theatre Royal, Bath, which also earned her a nomination for Best Newcomer at the *Evening Standard* Awards. In 2009, she appeared in *Burnt by the Sun* at the National Theatre, for which she received an Olivier Award nomination for Best Supporting Actress.

MASTERPIECE



Julian Fellowes

Creator, Writer and Executive Producer, *Downton Abbey*

Julian Fellowes was catapulted onto Hollywood's A-list of writers when he won the Academy Award® for Best Original Screenplay in 2002 for the English country house mystery, *Gosford Park*, which was as much about 1930s social mores as murder. In *Downton Abbey*, he mines the dramatic riches of a similar setting, where masters and servants play out traditional roles that the modern world is rendering increasingly obsolete. Like *Gosford Park*, *Downton Abbey* earned a shelf full of major awards, among them six Primetime Emmys®, including Outstanding Miniseries or Movie and writing kudos for Fellowes. And with the series about to enter its third season, the accolades are doubtless far from over. MASTERPIECE fans had a glimpse of the acting side of Fellowes' career in the scandalous family saga *Aristocrats*, in which he played the 2nd Duke of Richmond. His many

recent projects include the script for the four-hour mini series *Titanic*, which aired internationally last spring for the centennial of the great ship's maiden—and final—voyage. He has also scripted a new production of *Romeo and Juliet*, starring Hailee Steinfeld and Douglas Booth (star of MASTERPIECE's *Great Expectations*). In 2005, Fellowes made his directorial debut with the critically acclaimed *Separate Lies*, for which he received the Best Directorial Debut award from the National Board of Review. His second feature as both writer and director was *From Time to Time*, starring Maggie Smith.



Joanne Froggatt

Anna Smith, head housemaid, in *Downton Abbey*

As Anna Smith, *Downton Abbey*'s head housemaid, Joanne Froggatt plays the female lead in *Downton*'s major downstairs romance (there are several upstairs and between stairs). Resolutely loyal, her character goes through thick and thin with the stoical head valet, Bates (played by Brendan Coyle). For something completely different, Joanne recently filmed a leading part in another feature film *Still Life* opposite Eddie Marsan, directed by Uberto Pasolini (*The Full Monty*). Furthermore, later this year, she is due to star in two other features, *Filth* alongside James McAvoy and Jamie Bell and *uwantme2killhim?* by *Amityville Horror*-remake director Andrew Douglas. She also recently featured in *True Love*, a five-part series for the BBC, in which she starred with David Tennant and Vicky McClure. In 2010 she delivered a hard-hitting performance as a female soldier returning from the Iraq war in the

independent film *In Our Name*, earning the Best Newcomer Award at the British Independent Film Awards. On stage, Froggatt recently starred in a run of *The Knowledge/Little Platoons* at London's Bush Theatre, earning rave reviews and in December 2010 she took a guest role in the Christmas special of the acclaimed comedy series *The Royle Family*. Her other television work includes *Danielle Cable: Eye Witness* (Best Actress nominee Royal Television Society Awards), the BAFTA award-winning *See No Evil—The Moors Murders*, *Murder in the Outback*, *Island at War*, and the multi-award-winning series for the BBC: *Life on Mars* and *The Street*.

MASTERPIECE



Shirley MacLaine

Martha Levinson in *Downton Abbey*

Shirley MacLaine's legendary career comprises more than 50 feature films highlighted by an Academy Award® win and six nominations, six Emmy® Awards nominations, seven Golden Globe® Awards, including the Cecil B. DeMille Lifetime Achievement Award, the AFI Lifetime Achievement Award in 2012, and the title of international best-selling author. What better actress to play the formidable American mother of *Downton Abbey*'s New York-bred Cora Crawley, Countess of Grantham (portrayed by Elizabeth McGovern)? MacLaine recently starred in *Bernie*, alongside Jack Black and Matthew McConaughey and will appear in Ben Stiller's forthcoming *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty*. MacLaine can also be seen on stage during her one-woman show tour as it hits cities across the globe, combining a montage of memorable film moments with private revelations about her extraordinary life, career, and spiritual journey. In the fall of 2011, MacLaine received France's most prestigious cultural award, the Legion of Honor, presented by France's Minister of Culture and Communication, Frederic Mitterrand, at the French Cinematheque. She released her best-selling book *Sage-ing While Age-ing* in 2008, followed by her latest *New York Times* best-seller, *I'm Over All That—And Other Confessions*, released on April 5th, 2011. She recently appeared in the ensemble film, *Valentine's Day*, and the Lifetime made-for-TV movie *Coco Chanel*, for which she was nominated for a Golden Globe® and SAG Award®.



Elizabeth McGovern

Cora, Countess of Grantham, in *Downton Abbey*

Garnering Emmy® and Golden Globe® nominations for her role in *Downton Abbey*, Elizabeth McGovern is also a past Academy Award® nominee—for her performance in Miloš Forman's 1981 film *Ragtime*, in which she played notorious chorus girl Evelyn Nesbit. McGovern's other MASTERPIECE work includes *Broken Glass*, *A Room with a View*, and *Poirot*. Her impressive career dates to her starring role opposite Timothy Hutton in *Ordinary People*, directed by Robert Redford, which she landed while studying at the Juilliard School in New York City. In 1984, she starred with Robert De Niro and James Woods in Sergio Leone's cult gangster movie *Once Upon a Time in America*, and later opposite Mickey Rourke in *Johnny Handsome*. Since moving to England and starting a family of her own, McGovern continues to work in theater and television. In 2010, she was featured in both *Clash of the Titans* and *Kick-Ass*. Most recently, she starred in *Angel's Crest*, opposite Kate Walsh and Jeremy Piven, and *Cheerful Weather for the Wedding*, opposite Felicity Jones. Born in Illinois, McGovern is also a singer-songwriter and has just recorded her second album with the band she formed and fronts, Sadie and the Hotheads.

MASTERPIECE



Gareth Neame

Executive Producer of *Downton Abbey*

Gareth Neame is Managing Director UK for NBCUniversal International, expanding on his role running Carnival Films, the independent production company that he sold to NBCU in 2008. Carnival is one of the UK's leading producers. In addition to *Downton Abbey*, the company has recently co-produced adaptations of Shakespeare's history plays *The Hollow Crown*; *Richard II*, *Henry IV Part 1 & 2* and *Henry V*. Currently broadcasting on BBC, the films are garnering much critical acclaim. Carnival has also produced award-winning *Page Eight* and *Any Human Heart*, which aired to wide acclaim on MASTERPIECE. Carnival has been the producer of many popular shows over the years such as *Poirot*, *Jeeves & Wooster*, *Hotel Babylon*, *Whitechapel*, *Traffik* and *Rosemary & Thyme*. Before joining Carnival, he had a long association with the BBC, where he rose to Head of Drama Commissioning, responsible

for many award-winning and popular shows such as *Spooks*, *Bodies*, *Hustle*, *New Tricks*, *Tipping the Velvet* and *Clocking Off*. Neame has produced many memorable productions such as *All the King's Men*, *Take a Girl Like You*, *The Woman in White*, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, *State of Play*, *Warriors*, *20,000 Streets Under the Sky*, *Lorna Doone* and *Cambridge Spies*. US productions include *Rome*, *The Philanthropist* and *The Grid*. Neame is the 4th generation of a remarkable dynasty that embodies movie history. His great-grandmother was a silent film star and beauty queen (well known at the time of *Downton Abbey*!) and his great-grandfather a pioneer director. His grandfather Ronald Neame produced and directed more than 70 films including *The Poseidon Adventure* and *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie*, for which Maggie Smith received her first Academy Award®. He also directed Shirley Maclaine in *Gambit* in 1966. And his film & TV producer father, Christopher, produced *Danger* *UXB* and *The Flame Trees of Thika*, both of which aired on MASTERPIECE in the early 1980s.



Rebecca Eaton

Executive Producer, MASTERPIECE

Named one of TIME Magazine's Most Influential People of 2011, Rebecca Eaton took over the helm of the PBS series MASTERPIECE THEATRE and MYSTERY! in 1985, and oversaw the highly successful relaunch of MASTERPIECE in 2008 that has attracted a larger, more diverse audience to the series. Eaton has brought American audiences such high-profile titles as *Prime Suspect*, *Bleak House*, *The Lost Prince*, *Inspector Morse*, *Miss Marple*, *The Complete Jane Austen*, *Cranford*, *Wallander*, *Little Dorrit*, and the recent hits *Sherlock* and *Downton Abbey*, which drew more than 17 million viewers during its second season. Under her leadership, MASTERPIECE has won 34 Primetime Emmy® Awards (including six for *Downton Abbey*), 17 Peabody Awards, two Golden Globes®, and two Academy Award® nominations. Eaton's distinguished career has earned her the

official recognition of Queen Elizabeth II—with an honorary OBE (Officer, Order of the British Empire).