

The heat is on in British India.

Indian Summers, Season 2

**Julie Walters and a remarkable cast return
for a second action-packed and passionate season**

Sundays, September 11 - October 2 & October 16 - November 20, 2016

at 10pm ET on MASTERPIECE PBS

Preempted October 9, Presidential Debate

As a nation of 300 million vies for independence, India's colonial rulers soldier on. MASTERPIECE continues its story of love, death, and unbridled ambition, set in British India's exotic summer capital in the 1930s. Hailed by the *San Francisco Chronicle* as "a terrific melodrama with brains," *Indian Summers* returns with Season 2, airing in ten enthralling new episodes, Sundays, September 11 - October 2 and October 16 - November 20, 2016 at 10pm ET on PBS.

The series stars Julie Walters (Oscar® nominee for *Billy Elliot* and *Educating Rita*) plus "a constellation of strong performances" (*Los Angeles Times*)—among them Henry Lloyd-Hughes (*Madame Bovary*), Nikesh Patel (*Bedlam*), and Jemima West (*The Borgias*).

New this season are Art Malik (*Arthur & George*), Rachel Griffiths (*Six Feet Under*), Blake Ritson (*Upstairs Downstairs*), and James Fleet (*Death Comes to Pemberley*).

Critics were awed by Season 1, calling it "visually stunning" (*Boston Globe*), "all the romance and intrigue anyone could wish for" (*Philadelphia Daily News*), "a new jewel in the MASTERPIECE crown" (*TV Guide*), and "a perfect fix for Downton addicts" (*Vanity Fair*).

Viewers will recall that last season ends with colonial official Ralph Whelan (Lloyd-Hughes) deftly playing his hand to be the next Viceroy of India and engaged to American socialite Madeline Mathers (Olivia Grant). Learning that Madeline is penniless, he decides to marry her anyway since she impresses all the right people. However, Madeline doesn't know that Ralph has a mixed-race son, Adam, by his former lover Jaya, or that Ralph was complicit in hanging an innocent man for Jaya's murder.

In other action, Ralph's sister, Alice (West), is secretly having an affair with Ralph's Indian head clerk, Aafrin Delal (Patel), while Aafrin is clandestinely aiding the Indian independence movement. All of these events revolve around the social scene in India's summer capital, Simla, presided over by crafty military widow Cynthia Coffin (Walters).

As Season 2 opens, it is three years later, 1935. Ralph and Madeline are married. Aafrin has just returned from an official posting in Bengal, where he has fallen in love with freedom-fighter Kaira Das (Sugandha Garg, *Tere Bin Laden*) and also befriended firebrand nationalist Naresh Banerjee (Arjun Mathur, *My Name Is Khan*), who is menacingly paranoid. Just as unbalanced is Alice's estranged husband, Charlie Havistock (Ritson), who has shown up from England, determined to humiliate her for deserting him with their young son.

Adding to the intrigue is the Maharajah of Amritpur (Malik), the fabulously wealthy ruler of one of India's princely states. A man of influence and strong appetites, he holds the key to Ralph's future—in concert with his sensual English mistress, Sirene (Griffiths), whose face is strangely familiar to Simla's expats.

And then there is Ralph's rival, Lord Hawthorne (Fleet), who has the aristocratic lineage for the viceroy's job but is having trouble adapting to the culture of the subcontinent. Still, he has no problem turning on the charm to Leena Prasad (Amber Rose Revah), the attractive former teacher at Simla's mission school.

Enriching the new season is the dilemma faced by Aafrin's sister Sooni (Aysha Kala), who wants to use her law degree to benefit the people but faces family pressure to submit to an arranged marriage. Fate intervenes to give her the choice of three very different suitors.

Of course, the big story is the inexorable push toward Indian independence, which is being promoted peacefully by Gandhi and less temperately by someone who promises "to blow them all up until it is raining hands and bloody feet!"

Indian Summers, Season 2, is produced by New Pictures for Channel 4 and MASTERPIECE in association with all3meda International. It is created and written by Paul Rutman. The Co-Writer of Episode Two and the Writer of Episode Four is Lisa McGee. The Executive Producers are Charles Pattinson, Elaine Pyke, Willow Grylls, Simon Curtis, Paul Rutman and Rebecca Eaton for MASTERPIECE. The Co-Executive Producer is Indira Varma. The Producer is Dan Winch. The Directors are John Alexander, Jonathan Teplitzky, and Paul Wilmshurst.

About MASTERPIECE

The top-rated primetime show on PBS, MASTERPIECE is celebrating its 45th anniversary in 2016. MASTERPIECE is presented on PBS by WGBH Boston. Rebecca Eaton is Executive Producer. Funding for *Indian Summers*, Season 2 is provided by Viking River Cruises and POM Wonderful with additional support from public television viewers and contributors to The MASTERPIECE Trust. MASTERPIECE is known for presenting iconic shows such as *Upstairs Downstairs*, *Prime Suspect*, *The Forsyte Saga*, *Poldark*, *Sherlock*, and *Downton Abbey*.

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