

MASTERPIECE

The mysteries multiply *Magpie Murders* Lesley Manville stars in Anthony Horowitz's adaptation of his thrilling, bestselling novel Sundays, October 16 – November 20, 2022 on PBS

A dead mystery author. An incomplete manuscript. Suspects galore. This juicy setup for Anthony Horowitz's (*Foyle's War*) bestselling novel, *Magpie Murders*, is coming to MASTERPIECE in an adaptation by Horowitz himself starring Academy Award®-nominee Lesley Manville (*The Crown*, *Phantom Thread*). *Magpie Murders* airs in six spellbinding episodes, Sundays, October 16 – November 20, 2022 at 9/8c on PBS.

Critics were transfixed during the show's UK broadcast. "A satisfying dose of armchair detective fun," applauded *The Guardian*. "Yikes, this is excellent," raved *The Times*. And *The Telegraph* was dazzled: "In a grey TV landscape crammed with humdrum whodunits, *Magpie Murders* is a splash of vivid color."

"There's never been a TV mystery like this," notes MASTERPIECE Executive Producer Susanne Simpson. "Anthony Horowitz weaves together a real world with an imaginary one, giving viewers multiple murders to solve and keeping them guessing right up to the end." MASTERPIECE is presented on PBS by GBH Boston.

Jill Green, Executive Producer for Eleventh Hour Films says, "Nothing else like this has ever been done in the world of murder mystery—it's ingenious and playful at the same time."

"I am so happy with this wonderful production of my novel—and audiences have loved it," says Horowitz.

Also starring is Tim McMullan (*The Crown*, *Patrick Melrose*) as Atticus Pünd, the Poirot-like hero of the fictional series penned by irascible author Alan Conway, played by Conleth Hill (*Game of Thrones*). Michael Maloney (*The Crown*) is Alan's astute publisher, Charles Clover. And Lesley Manville is Alan's longtime editor, Susan Ryeland, who has thwarted his ambition to compose great literature, channeling his talents into compulsively readable whodunits. A very wealthy man, Alan nonetheless resents Susan's heavy editorial hand.

Alexandros Logothetis (*The Durrells in Corfu*) costars as Susan's Greek-teaching lover, Andreas; and Claire Rushbrook (*Sherwood*) is her suburban sister, Katie. Both Katie and Andreas knew Alan when he was a poor instructor at a private school with unlikely dreams of becoming a published author. Little did anyone know...

But shortly after turning in his latest Atticus Pünd blockbuster, Alan dies under suspicious circumstances. Plus the manuscript is missing its crucial last chapter! Since Charles is in negotiations to sell his publishing company, and Alan is its greatest asset, financial ruin looms for both Charles and Susan, who is in line to become the next CEO, if she chooses.

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Thus, *Magpie Murders* presents two mysteries: What happened to Alan, and what happens in the last chapter of his new book, titled *Magpie Murders*? Susan informally heads the first investigation, taking place in the here and now. Meanwhile, Pünd and the characters in Alan's novel enact a separate mystery plot, set in 1955.

In a clever blending of present and past, fact and fiction, some of the characters in Susan's world are portrayed by the same actors in Pünd's. This is because Alan wrote thinly disguised real people into his books, usually to even scores. Therefore, Daniel Mays (*Line of Duty*) doubles as Detective Superintendent Locke in Susan's world and the dull-witted D.I. Chubb in Pünd's. Matthew Beard (*Vienna Blood*) is Alan's lover, James Taylor, and also Pünd's slow-on-the-uptake sidekick, James Fraser. Pippa Haywood (*Mr. Selfridge*) is Alan's underachieving sister, Claire, as well as the resentful Clarissa, sister of the brutally murdered Sir Magnus Pye (Lorcan Cranitch, *Trigger Point*).

"It's like solving two puzzles," says MASTERPIECE's Simpson, "and Anthony and the director, Peter Cattaneo (two-time Academy Award®-nominee for *The Full Monty* and *Dear Rosalie*), pull it off brilliantly."

One final mystery: Alan vehemently insists that the title of his book is *Magpie Murders*, not *The Magpie Murders*. Could that be a clue?

Magpie Murders: Program Description

A mystery author dies under suspicious circumstance, with his last book seemingly unfinished. This leaves two mysteries: What happened to him? And how does his latest potboiler end? Oscar®-nominee Lesley Manville (*The Crown*, *Phantom Thread*) stars as the author's editor, Susan Ryeland, who assumes the role of detective in the case. Meanwhile, Tim McMullan (*Patrick Melrose*) plays the fictional sleuth in the incomplete novel, whose investigation parallels Susan's. Based on Anthony Horowitz's (*Foyle's War*) ingenious bestselling novel, the six-part series also stars Conleth Hill, Michael Maloney, Alexandros Logothetis, and Claire Rushbrook. "There is true satisfaction in watching the pieces of Horowitz's puzzle click into place," applauded *The Telegraph* (London). In addition, *The Sunday Times* (London) declared, "Yikes, this is excellent."

Episode One

Sunday, October 16, 2022; 9-10pm ET on PBS

A mystery author turns in the manuscript for his latest book, but the last chapter is missing. His editor investigates and is soon on the trail of a suspicious death.

Episode Two

Sunday, October 23, 2022; 9-10pm ET on PBS

Everyone he knew had reason to kill mystery author Alan Conway. But was his fatal fall actually murder? The missing last chapter of his new book may hold the secret.

Episode Three

Sunday, October 30, 2022; 9-10pm ET on PBS

Angling to sell his publishing firm and retire, Charles leans on Susan to take over as CEO. In a parallel story, the detective plot in Alan's last novel unfolds.

Episode Four

Sunday, November 6, 2022; 9-10pm ET on PBS

The puzzle pieces of Alan's death get more and more jumbled. At the same time, the plot of his new book and the lives of his acquaintances start to converge.

Episode Five

Sunday, November 13, 2022; 9-10pm ET on PBS

Susan's sister and Andreas have unexpected connections to Alan. Meanwhile, Pünd wraps up his investigation, promising, "Very soon all will be made clear!"

Episode Six

Sunday, November 20, 2022; 9-10pm ET on PBS

Susan cracks her case—not without mishap—then accompanies Pünd as he lays out the solution to Alan's final book, as magpies watch from above.

Magpie Murders is an Eleventh Hour Films production for MASTERPIECE and BritBox UK and distributed worldwide by Sony Pictures Television. The executive producers are Susanne Simpson, Lesley Manville, Peter Cattaneo, Suzanne McAuley, Jill Green and Anthony Horowitz. The director is Peter Cattaneo. The series is adapted by Anthony Horowitz.

About MASTERPIECE

Winner of 83 Primetime Emmys® and 18 Peabody Awards, MASTERPIECE has been essential Sunday night viewing for millions of fans since 1971. Susanne Simpson is the executive producer and Rebecca Eaton is the executive producer-at-large for the series. Series funding for MASTERPIECE is provided by Viking Cruises, Raymond James, The MASTERPIECE Trust, and public television viewers. Produced for PBS by GBH Boston, MASTERPIECE is known for hits such as *All Creatures Great and Small*, *Sherlock*, *Downton Abbey* and *Victoria*, and beloved classics such as *Upstairs Downstairs*, *Prime Suspect*, *The Forsyte Saga* and *Poldark*.

pbs.org/masterpiece

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