

MASTERPIECE

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Ross Poldark Rides Again!

Poldark

An all-new version of the vintage MASTERPIECE series
Sundays, June 21 - August 2, 2015 at 9pm ET on PBS

Almost 40 years ago Captain Ross Poldark galloped across the TV screens of millions of PBS viewers, vexing villains and winning female hearts in one of MASTERPIECE's earliest hit series, *Poldark*. Now the gallant captain rides again in a thrilling new version with all the action, adventure, and romance of the original, plus even more spectacular Cornish scenery and rousing local color. A Mammoth Screen production for MASTERPIECE and the BBC, the new *Poldark* airs in seven exciting episodes starting June 21, 2015 on MASTERPIECE on PBS.

Aidan Turner (*The Hobbit*) stars as Ross Poldark, a redcoat who returns to Cornwall after the American Revolutionary War to discover that his father is dead, his lands are ruined, and his true love is about to marry his first cousin.

A ratings hit when it aired on the BBC, *Poldark* was warmly received by the British press: "An intoxicating cocktail of lusty romance and historical drama, set among the crashing ocean waves and savage beauty of Cornwall" (*Mail on Sunday*); "A beautifully filmed Sunday night romp" (*The Times*); "An absolute must-see" (*TV Times*); and from *The Guardian*: "You need look no further for your next guilty pleasure."

Also starring is Eleanor Tomlinson (*Death Comes to Pemberley*) as the fiery servant Demelza, a strong-willed miner's daughter who runs away from home and finds refuge in Poldark's enlightened household.

In a special appearance, Robin Ellis, who starred as Ross Poldark in MASTERPIECE's original adaptation, plays Reverend Halse, the village's sin-obsessed parson.

Co-starring are *Bleak House*'s Warren Clarke as Poldark's prosperous, duplicitous Uncle Charles; Ruby Bentall (*The Paradise*) as Charles's tenderhearted daughter, Verity; Kyle Soller (*The Hollow Crown*) as Verity's ineffectual brother, Francis; and Heida Reed (*DCI Banks*) as Francis's fiancée, Elizabeth Chenoweth, the beautiful young woman who gave Poldark her ring as a love token before he left for America.

Also appearing are Phil Davis (*Bleak House*) and Beatie Edney (*Inspector Lewis*) as Judd and Prudie Paynter, Poldark's comical hired hands; and Jack Farthing (*Poirot*) as George Warleggan, a rapacious young businessman who challenges everything the principled Poldark stands for.

Poldark is based on a beloved series of novels by Winston Graham. The first, *Ross Poldark*, was published in 1945; the last, *Bella Poldark*, appeared in 2002, the year before Graham's death. All twelve are subtitled *A Novel of Cornwall* and trace the fortunes of a landed, mine-owning family in windswept Cornwall two centuries ago.

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Funding for MASTERPIECE provided by



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MASTERPIECE's new series opens with a prologue in Virginia in 1781, when Captain Poldark's regiment is ambushed by the local militia fighting for independence. After the war and with a scar across his face as a souvenir, he goes home to Cornwall, where his real struggle begins.

For one thing, everyone assumes Poldark has been killed in action. On seeing him, they react as if meeting a ghost. And he might as well be dead, since his inheritance from his father is almost worthless, Elizabeth has forsaken him, and all the local gentry urge him to leave the region to make his fortune elsewhere.

How little they know this headstrong adventurer! Poldark immediately goes to work paying off his father's debts, repairing his property, and reopening his abandoned copper mine, which either holds his salvation or his ruin. And he finds someone just as impulsive as he is to share the twists and turns of this eventful new life.

Small wonder that viewers voted the original *Poldark* series one of the top ten programs in MASTERPIECE's first 35 years. Now a new generation can delight in the exploits of a romantic hero like no other.

Poldark is a Mammoth Screen production for MASTERPIECE and the BBC. Based on the novels by Winston Graham, it is written and created for television by Debbie Horsfield, produced by Eliza Mellor and directed by Ed Bazalgette and William McGregor. The executive producers are Debbie Horsfield, Karen Thrussell and Damien Timmer for Mammoth Screen, Polly Hill for the BBC and Rebecca Eaton for MASTERPIECE.

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.

pbs.org/masterpiece

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