

MASTERPIECE on PBS to Co-Produce *The Miniaturist* Gripping Adaptation of Jessie Burton's Best-Seller Stars Anya Taylor-Joy and Romola Garai

Boston, MA; April 7, 2017—MASTERPIECE on PBS has announced that it will co-produce *The Miniaturist*, based on the novel by Jessie Burton. The ravishing three-part period thriller, a Forge production for the BBC, is adapted by John Brownlow and will star Anya Taylor-Joy (*Split*, *The Witch*), Romola Garai (*Churchill's Secret*, *The Hour*) and Alex Hassell (*Suburbicon*, *Anonymous*), alongside Paapa Essiedu (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Utopia*), Hayley Squires (*I, Daniel Blake*, *Call the Midwife*) and Emily Berrington (*Humans*, *The Inbetweeners 2*). Filming in the Netherlands has begun.

In 1686, eighteen-year-old Nella Oortman (Taylor-Joy) knocks at the door of a grand house in the wealthiest quarter of Amsterdam. Full of hopes and dreams, she has come from the country to begin a new life as the wife of wealthy merchant Johannes Brandt (Hassell). But instead of Johannes, she's met by his cold sister Marin (Garai) and their servants (Squires, Essiedu) and quickly realizes that nothing is as it seems in the Brandt household. When Johannes finally appears he presents her with an extraordinary wedding gift: a cabinet that is a miniature replica of their home. It is to be furnished by an elusive Miniaturist, whose tiny creations mirror what is happening within the house in unexpected ways and seem to be predicting and unravelling the future with unsettling precision.

As Nella begins to uncover its secrets and those of the Brandt household she realizes the escalating dangers that await them all. Does the Miniaturist hold their fate in her hands? And will she be the key to their salvation or the architect of their downfall?

MASTERPIECE Executive Producer Rebecca Eaton said, "*The Miniaturist* is a riveting book and this adaptation seems to have all the ingredients of the best MASTERPIECE productions: a page-turning plot, complex characters portrayed by gifted actors, and a vivid setting ... 17th-century Amsterdam." MASTERPIECE is presented on PBS by WGBH Boston.

Jessie Burton adds: "This is an adventure for my book I never dreamed possible, and I'm so happy that *The Miniaturist* is in such capable and creative hands. The assembled cast is perfect to the vision I had in my mind's eye in every way, and I know they'll make magic. Kate Sinclair has created an exciting and powerful framework for the story to be told – and, quite simply, I cannot wait to see it on the screen."

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John Brownlow says: "Jessie's entrancing novel was a joy to adapt. The depth of her research, the layers of her characters and the way she wove the most modern of themes into a deep period setting to produce a page-turner of a thriller made my work an absolute pleasure and meant I was able to follow the contours of her story much more faithfully than is sometimes the case. What is so special about *The Miniaturist* is that despite its delicious and unfamiliar period setting, its concerns are absolutely modern: privacy, sexuality, corruption, commerce, hypocrisy, race, public shaming... all woven into a tightly plotted story full of surprising twists."

Kate Sinclair, Executive Producer for The Forge, says: "From the moment I read *The Miniaturist* in manuscript, I knew in my gut it was something truly unique - an exquisite mix of another world with the resonances of our own, not to mention characters to die for. I'm truly privileged that Jessie chose to entrust her extraordinary book to me and feel that along with the totally A list cast, and John Brownlow's superb scripts, we can create something together that will do justice to the utter brilliance of her novel."

Elizabeth Kilgarriff, Executive Producer for the BBC, says: "Jessie Burton's story of secrets, intrigue and delicious twists and turns is peopled with the most wonderful characters and it's no surprise that they - brought to life in John's fantastic scripts - have enticed such an exciting and talented cast."

The Miniaturist is a Forge production for the BBC co-produced with MASTERPIECE. Adapted by John Brownlow and directed by Guillem Morales, Gethin Scourfield is the producer. The Executive Producers are Kate Sinclair and George Faber for The Forge, Elizabeth Kilgarriff for the BBC and Rebecca Eaton for MASTERPIECE. Filming is taking place in both Holland and the UK. It is distributed internationally by all3media.

About MASTERPIECE

The top-rated primetime show on PBS, MASTERPIECE celebrated its 45th anniversary in 2016. MASTERPIECE is presented on PBS by WGBH Boston. Rebecca Eaton is executive producer. Funding for the series is provided by Viking Cruises and Farmers Insurance® 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*, *Downton Abbey*, and *Victoria*.

pbs.org/masterpiece

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