

MASTERPIECE

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Those Who Are Made Can Be Unmade

Wolf Hall

Based on Hilary Mantel's Booker Prize-winning novels

And starring Mark Rylance and Damian Lewis

On MASTERPIECE

Sundays, April 5-May 10, 2015 at 10pm ET on PBS

Tony® Award-winning actor Mark Rylance (*Twelfth Night*) and Emmy® and Golden Globe® Award-winner Damian Lewis (*Homeland*) star in the six-hour television miniseries adapted from Hilary Mantel's best-selling Booker Prize-winning novels: *Wolf Hall* and its sequel, *Bring Up the Bodies*. The television event presents an intimate and provocative portrait of Thomas Cromwell, the brilliant and enigmatic consigliere to King Henry VIII, as he maneuvers the corridors of power at the Tudor court. MASTERPIECE brings both of these works to life in *Wolf Hall*, airing on Sundays, April 5-May 10, 2015 at 10pm ET on PBS.

BAFTA Award-winner Peter Kosminsky (*White Oleander*, *The Government Inspector*) directs this flagship MASTERPIECE production adapted by Oscar® nominee Peter Straughan (*Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*). Filmed entirely on location in England at National Trust properties, *Wolf Hall* is a Playground Entertainment and Company Pictures production for BBC and MASTERPIECE in association with BBC Worldwide, Altus Media and Prescience. MASTERPIECE is presented by WGBH Boston. Viking River Cruises is the exclusive corporate funder of *Wolf Hall* on MASTERPIECE.

Mark Rylance is Thomas Cromwell, a brutal blacksmith's son who rises from the ashes of personal disaster, and deftly picks his way through a court where 'man is wolf to man.' Damian Lewis is King Henry VIII, haunted by his brother's premature death and obsessed with protecting the Tudor dynasty by securing his succession with a male heir to the throne.

Told from Cromwell's perspective, *Wolf Hall* follows the complex machinations and back room dealings of this pragmatic and accomplished power broker – from humble beginnings and with an enigmatic past – who must serve king and country while dealing with deadly political intrigue, Henry VIII's tempestuous relationship with Anne Boleyn and the religious upheavals of the Protestant reformation.

A historical drama for a modern audience, this unromanticized re-telling lifts the veil on the Tudor middle class and the internal struggles England faced on the brink of Reformation. At the center of it all is Cromwell, navigating the moral complexities that accompany the exercise of power, trapped between his desire to do what is right and his instinct to survive.

The cast also includes Claire Foy (*Little Dorrit*) as the future queen Anne Boleyn, Bernard Hill (*Five Days*) as the king's military commander the Duke of Norfolk, Anton Lesser (*Endeavour*) as Thomas More, Mark Gatiss (*Sherlock*) as Cromwell's rival advisor Stephen Gardiner, Joanne Whalley (*The Borgias*) as Henry's spurned first wife, Katherine of Aragon, and Jonathan Pryce (*Cranford*) as Cardinal Wolsey, the powerful Lord Chancellor who recognized Cromwell's potential.

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Also appearing are Mathieu Amalric (*The Grand Budapest Hotel*) as the Spanish ambassador Eustace Chapuys, Charity Wakefield (*Sense & Sensibility*) as Anne Boleyn's sister Mary, Richard Dillane (*The Dark Knight*) as the king's brother-in-law the Duke of Suffolk, Thomas Brodie-Sangster (*Game of Thrones*) as Cromwell's ward Rafe Sadler, Natasha Little (*Breathless*) as Cromwell's wife, Liz, and Saskia Reeves (*Worricker*) as her sister Johane.

The novel *Wolf Hall* was hailed as “dazzling...historical fiction at its finest” (*Bloomberg.com*), “spellbinding” (*The New York Times*) and “a brilliant portrait of a society in the throes of disorienting change” (*Washington Post*). And *Bring Up the Bodies* inspired the following: “(Mantel’s) characters are real and vivid people who bring to life the clash of ideals that gripped England at the time. She makes the past present and vital” (*The Economist*).

Wolf Hall is a Playground Entertainment and Company Pictures production for BBC and MASTERPIECE in association with BBC Worldwide, Altus Media and Prescience. Executive producers are John Yorke for Company Pictures, Polly Hill, BBC Head of Independent Drama, for BBC TWO, Rebecca Eaton for MASTERPIECE, Martin Rakusen and Ben Donald for BBC Worldwide and Tim Smith for Prescience. Executive Producer is Colin Callender. Producer is Mark Pybus. The writer is Peter Straughan. The director is Peter Kosminsky.

MASTERPIECE is presented on PBS by WGBH Boston. Rebecca Eaton is Executive Producer. Viking River Cruises is the exclusive corporate funder of *Wolf Hall* on MASTERPIECE on PBS, with additional funding provided by The MASTERPIECE Trust.

PBS is the home for drama on Sunday nights this winter/spring season. Viewers are transported back to the 1960s for heartwarming tales of the nuns and midwives of Poplar's neighborhood, when season four of *Call the Midwife* returns on March 29 at 8:00pm ET. Also premiering that same night at 9:00pm is MASTERPIECE's *Mr. Selfridge*, Season 3, starring Jeremy Piven as the flamboyant American entrepreneur of London department store fame.

ABOUT PLAYGROUND

PLAYGROUND is an independent theater and television company founded by Emmy and Tony Award-winning producer Colin Callender in 2012. Last year Playground received five Emmy and six Golden Globes nominations, with Jacqueline Bisset winning Best Supporting Actress for Stephen Poliakoff's *DANCING ON THE EDGE*.

Productions this year include the critically acclaimed Golden Globe- nominated *THE MISSING* starring James Nesbitt and Frances O'Connor for BBC and Starz, and the BBC/Masterpiece mini-series *WOLF HALL* based on Hilary Mantel's best-selling novels starring Mark Rylance, Damian Lewis and Claire Foy. Playground is currently in pre-production on the television adaptation of Ronald Harwood's *THE DRESSER* starring Anthony Hopkins and Ian McKellen directed by Richard Eyre for BBC.

On Broadway, Playground produced Nora Ephron's multiple Tony-nominated *LUCKY GUY* starring Tom Hanks, this season's Tony nominated *CASA VALENTINA* by Harvey Fierstein and Ken Branagh's New York debut in *MACBETH*. Currently on Broadway are Jez Butterworth's *THE RIVER* starring Hugh Jackman and *HEDWIG AND THE ANGRY INCH*, winning Callender a Tony Award for Best Musical Revival.

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