



PROGRAM AND EPISODE DESCRIPTIONS

The prince the world forgot

THE LOST PRINCE

on MASTERPIECE THEATRE

Sundays, October 17 and 24, 2004, 9 to 11pm ET on PBS

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Thirty-fourth season premiere. A forgotten prince comes into his own in a powerful, two-part drama about Prince John, the present Queen of England's uncle, who was shut away as a young boy due to epilepsy and a learning disability. The prince watched as the glittering world of European royalty tore itself apart in the cataclysm of World War I. Written and directed by Stephen Poliakoff (*Shooting the Past*), the real-life story stars Gina McKee (*The Forsyte Saga*), Michael Gambon (*Gosford Park*), Miranda Richardson (*The Hours*), Tom Hollander (*Wives & Daughters*), Bill Nighy (*Love Actually, State of Play*) and Bibi Andersson (*The Seventh Seal*), with Matthew Thomas as the teenage prince.

EPISODE ONE

Sunday, October 17, 2004, 9 to 11pm on PBS

In 1909 Queen Alexandra of England (Bibi Andersson) celebrates her birthday with an elaborate party that enchants her young grandson, Prince John (Daniel Williams). The next summer the Russian royal family comes to visit, providing more exotic enjoyment for the young prince, who is cherished for his charming, uninhibited observations, especially by his ailing grandfather, Edward VII (Michael Gambon). Only Johnnie's nanny, Lalla (Gina McKee), suspects that something may be seriously wrong with him. During Edward VII's funeral, which is attended by European heads of state, including the sinister Kaiser Wilhelm (David Barrass), Johnnie succumbs to an epileptic fit. Queen Mary (Miranda Richardson), his mother, has doctors examine him. Worried that Johnnie's unpredictable illness will embarrass the family, she and her husband George V (Tom Hollander) exile him to the care of Lalla and Mr. Hansell (John Sessions), a morose tutor. But Johnnie's sibling Prince George (Brock Everitt-Elwick) swears to stand by him always. The time shifts from 1910 to 1914. Now older, Johnnie (Matthew Thomas) is a devoted gardener on the palace grounds and manages occasional escapes from his forced isolation. On one outing, he speaks his mind at a tea party held for Prime Minister Asquith (Frank Finlay) and his Foreign Secretary, Lloyd George (Ron Cook). On another, he chases a parrot through the palace and, over-stimulated, goes into severe seizures. Meanwhile the adults are preoccupied with the assassination of the Austrian crown prince, which threatens to plunge the nations of Europe into war.

Presented on PBS
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EPISODE TWO

Sunday, October 24, 2004, 9 to 11pm on PBS

Prince George (Rollo Weeks) witnesses the frantic attempts of George V and his ministers to avert war. But then the weak, vacillating Tsar of Russia (Ivan Marevich), first cousin and military ally of George V, mobilizes his troops and inadvertently sparks World War I. Their principal opponent: another first cousin, Kaiser Wilhelm. Meanwhile, Prince George is sent to the Naval Academy, where he rebels against the harsh discipline and anti-German propaganda. The trauma of war is even felt by Johnnie and Lalla, who are forced to live in increased isolation on the Sandringham estate. Determined to maintain contact with his brother, Prince George arrives to relay the news that the royal family is changing its name to Windsor to obscure its German origins and that the Tsar of Russia has abdicated and is to be exiled to Britain by the Bolshevik revolutionaries. Concerned at public feeling against the tsar, George V persuades his advisor Lord Stamfordham (Bill Nighy) to press Lloyd George to rescind the offer of asylum. Meanwhile, Johnnie dreams of his Russian cousins coming to live with him, little suspecting that they are about to be murdered by the Bolsheviks. Weighed down by the cares of the war, George V and Mary find unexpected solace in a recital that Johnnie insists on performing. But soon they must confront a final tragedy.

The Lost Prince is a Talkback production (a Fremantle Company), in association with co-producers BBC Films and WGBH Boston. It was written and directed by Stephen Poliakoff. The producer is John Chapman. Peter Fincham, David Thompson, and Joanna Beresford are executive producers for BBC. Rebecca Eaton is executive producer for WGBH.

MASTERPIECE THEATRE has been presented on PBS by WGBH since 1971. Rebecca Eaton is executive producer. Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Russell Baker is program host. *The Lost Prince* will be available on DVD from BBC Video on October 28, 2004.

MASTERPIECE THEATRE is closed captioned for deaf and hard-of-hearing viewers, and described for people who are blind or visually impaired by the Media Access Group at WGBH. The descriptive narration is available on the SAP channel of stereo TVs and VCRs. For more information about MASTERPIECE THEATRE, visit the series Web site at pbs.org/masterpiece.

WGBH Boston is America's preeminent public broadcasting producer. One-third of PBS's primetime lineup and companion Web content, as well as many public radio favorites, are produced by WGBH. The station also is a pioneer in educational multimedia and in access technologies for people with disabilities.

Press materials and photography are available at pbs.org/pressroom and pressroom.wgbh.org.

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