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MASTERPIECE on PBS/WGBH and ITV Studios Announce Co-Production Deal For *Breathless* 1960s Medical Drama Stars Jack Davenport

Boston, MA, June 20, 2013—ITV Studios and MASTERPIECE on PBS/WGBH have announced a co-production agreement for *Breathless*, a stylish and compelling new medical drama set in London in 1961, starring Jack Davenport (*Smash*, *Pirates of the Caribbean*) as a brilliant surgeon who believes he can make a difference in womens' lives. The deal was brokered by ITV Studios Global Entertainment.

Breathless follows the lives of a group of doctors and nurses working in a London hospital, a world in which everything and everyone has their place. But underneath this veneer simmers a cauldron of lies and guilty secrets, driven by love, ambition and sex. Other cast members include Zoe Boyle and Iain Glen of *Downton Abbey* and Natasha Little (*Any Human Heart*, *Case Histories*).

Tobias de Graaff, Director of Global Television Distribution, ITV Studios Global Entertainment, said: "*Breathless* has all the characteristics of a drama with strong global appeal: a captivating story, a charismatic and talented cast, including the internationally-renowned Jack Davenport, and sumptuous production values. We're delighted to be working with MASTERPIECE and we look forward to huge interest from international clients eager to get their hands on ITV Studios and MASTERPIECE's highly anticipated new drama."

MASTERPIECE on PBS executive producer Rebecca Eaton said: "Television dramas that tell good stories about womens' lives in the 20th century are endlessly interesting to me...and apparently to lots of other people—look at the appeal of *Call the Midwife* and *Mad Men*. We're all fascinated by the enormous changes that happened just a short time ago. *Breathless* is a sharp, visually-rich portrait of a group of people on the cusp of change - the 1960's."

Breathless opens in 1961, a time when Britain was on the brink of the '60s revolution – abortion is illegal and the contraceptive pill is only just available to married women. Set in and around a busy gynecology unit, medicine becomes the perfect stage to play out the shifting and complex moral codes of early 1960s society.

Breathless has been co-created and written by Paul Unwin (*Shameless*, *Agatha Christie's Miss Marple* and *Poirot*), who will also direct the first two episodes of the series. It is executive produced by Kate Bartlett for ITV Studios and Rebecca Eaton for MASTERPIECE with Paul Unwin. ITV Studios Global Entertainment distributes *Breathless* internationally.

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MASTERPIECE is presented on PBS by WGBH Boston. Rebecca Eaton is executive producer for MASTERPIECE. 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.

ITV Studios Global Entertainment (ITVS GE) is one of the world's leading international TV distribution, home entertainment, publishing, merchandising and licensing businesses. ITVS GE distributes celebrated content across all genres from both its in-house production business, ITV Studios, and in collaboration with leading producers from around the world. Part of ITV PLC, which includes the UK's largest commercial broadcaster, ITV Studios Global Entertainment has offices in London, Cologne, Hong Kong, Los Angeles and Sydney.

pbs.org/masterpiece

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