

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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WEDU PBS Announces Downton Abbey, Season 5 Premiere Advance Screening Road Trip

Venues in Wesley Chapel, St. Petersburg, Tampa, Lakeland, Sarasota will host the themed receptions and screening events for the wildly popular PBS series



Tampa Bay, FL – *Downton Abbey* returns January 4, 2015 for an epic fifth season of intimately interlaced stories centered on an English country estate—a deliciously entertaining formula that has made it the highest-rated drama in PBS history.

For fans that just can't wait, **WEDU PBS** announced a series of advanced premiere screenings and themed reception events. WEDU's *Downton Abbey* road trip will make stops in **Wesley Chapel, St. Petersburg, Tampa, Lakeland, and Sarasota**.

"This is the third year that WEDU has hosted events ahead of the on-air premiere of *Downton Abbey on Masterpiece*. Many fans come out dressed in period attire and are in full character for the event. Everyone has a great time with all of other fans of the show," stated **Allison Hedrick**, WEDU Vice President of Communications. "This year, we're visiting 5 cities with themed receptions that will include food, drinks, themed entertainment, and reserved seating to the premiere screening."

While the receptions will require a ticket purchase, with proceeds supporting programs like fan favorite *Downton Abbey* on WEDU, there will be a premiere screening that is free and open to the public. Details and tickets to all the events can be reserved online at: www.wedu.org/downtonabbey.

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EVENT LISTING:

DECEMBER 8

Pasco-Hernando State College Porter Campus at Wiregrass, Wesley Chapel

8:00pm – 9:30pm Free Premiere Screening (Doors open at 7:30pm)
Honorary Host: Commissioner **Camille Hernandez**, Mayor of Dade City
Guest Speaker: **Dr. Dennis Feltwell**, PHSC Humanities instructor will discuss 1920's England as it relates to the world of *Downton Abbey*.

DECEMBER 9

The Palladium and Side Door Cabaret, St. Petersburg

6:00pm – 7:30pm VIP Premiere Reception
Tickets: \$65.00 per person. Includes themed food, beer and wine from Amici's Catering, 1920's era cabaret performance by **Paul Wilborn**, *Downton Abbey* trivia, VIP reserved seating to the 8:00pm screening and more.*

8:00pm – 9:30pm Free Premiere Screening (Doors open at 7:30pm)
Open to the public, tickets required

DECEMBER 11

Tampa Theatre, Tampa

6:00pm – 7:30pm VIP Premiere Reception
Tickets: \$65.00 per person. Includes themed food, beer and wine, themed entertainment, *Downton Abbey* trivia, VIP reserved seating to the 8:00pm screening and more.*

8:00pm – 9:30pm Free Premiere Screening (Doors open at 7:30pm)
Open to the public, tickets required

DECEMBER 12

Polk Theatre, Lakeland

6:00pm – 7:30pm VIP Premiere Reception
Tickets: \$65.00 per person. Includes themed food, beer and wine, themed entertainment, *Downton Abbey* trivia, VIP reserved seating to the 8:00pm screening and more.*

8:00pm – 9:30pm Free Premiere Screening (Doors open at 7:30pm)
Open to the public, tickets required

DECEMBER 15

Sarasota Opera House, Sarasota

6:00pm – 7:30pm VIP Premiere Reception
Tickets: \$65.00 per person. Includes themed food, beer and wine, themed entertainment, *Downton Abbey* trivia, VIP reserved seating to the 8:00pm screening and more.*

8:00pm – 9:30pm Free Premiere Screening (Doors open at 7:30pm)
Open to the public, tickets required

Downton Abbey Season 5 features returning stars Maggie Smith, Hugh Bonneville, Michelle Dockery, Elizabeth McGovern, Jim Carter, Laura Carmichael, Joanne Froggatt, Allen Leech, Robert James-Collier, Penelope Wilton, Phyllis Logan, Lily James, Brendan Coyle, Lesley Nicol, Sophie McShera, Samantha Bond, Ed Speleers, Kevin Doyle, Raquel Cassidy, David Robb, Tom Cullen, Julian Ovenden, Daisy Lewis, Douglas Reith, Jeremy Swift, and Andrew Scarborough.

This acclaimed ensemble is joined by guest stars Harriet Walter (*Atonement*), reprising her role as Lady Shackleton, and Peter Egan (*Death at a Funeral*), who returns as Lord Flintshire, together with completely new characters played by Richard E. Grant (*Girls*), Anna Chancellor (*The Hour*), and Rade Sherbedgia (24).

*(*Additional themed entertainment, raffle and doors prize items to be determined and may vary per event location.)*

ABOUT WEDU PBS

WEDU is West Central Florida's leading PBS station and public media company reaching 16 counties through media platforms including on-air programming and online experiences that broaden horizons, transport and transform and open gateways to new ideas and new worlds. Financially supported by the community, the organization offers a wealth of award-winning inspirational, educational and enlightening content over a variety of multi-media platforms including: television programming, station website, www.wedu.org and various social media platforms, monthly member magazine *Premiere*, educational outreach activities and a myriad of special events. WEDU's focus on the local community has resulted in the station being regarded as a beacon of trust for men, women and children of every walk of life no matter their age, ethnicity or socio-economic status. WEDU is a treasured community resource; a window to the world for the homebound and a vital educational source for the youngest members of society. WEDU prides itself on its position in the Tampa Bay community as a leader, partner, informed citizen and a member of PBS, the most trusted institution in America (ORC International's DualFrame CARAVAN, January 2014). For more information, program schedules or to support WEDU visit www.wedu.org; WEDU Public Media on Facebook and Twitter (@wedupbs) or call (813) 254-9338.

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