



TCA WINTER 2012

THE BORGIAS – Season 2

Panelists:

Jeremy Irons
François Arnaud
Holliday Grainger
Joanne Whalley
James Flynn

Episodes – 10, One-Hour Episodes

Season 2 Synopsis

THE BORGIAS is a complex, unvarnished portrait of one of history's most intriguing and infamous dynastic families. Oscar®-winning actor Jeremy Irons returns in his Golden Globe®-nominated role as the cunning, manipulative patriarch of the Borgia family who ascends to the highest circles of power within Renaissance-era Italy to become Pope Alexander VI. Seeking to consolidate his power, Alexander enlists his family to take an oath of revenge on the great noble houses that dared to stand against him, causing his Papacy to face political turmoil once again. But Alexander's real problems lie with his children, all of whom are growing up and defying his authority. Lucrezia forges an unlikely alliance between Vanozza and Giulia, and together they plot to battle Vatican corruption. The sibling rivalry between Cesare and Juan will soon turn to hatred as their father's unwavering favoritism toward Juan triggers Cesare to engage his dark side. Elsewhere in Rome, Alexander's old enemy Della Rovere has entered the city incognito and conspires to assassinate him.

BIOS

**JEREMY IRONS
(Pope Alexander)**

Jeremy Irons won the Academy Award® for Best Actor for his performance as Claus von Bulow in *Reversal of Fortune*. He is also a Golden Globe® Award, Primetime Emmy® Award, Tony Award®, and SAG Award® winner.

The British Irons has an extraordinary legacy of film, television and theatre performances, including: *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, in which he starred

opposite Meryl Streep; *The Mission*; and David Cronenberg's *Dead Ringers*. Irons starred in *Damage* and *M. Butterfly* before he made pop culture history as the voice of the evil lion "Scar" in Disney's classic *The Lion King*. Irons showed his grasp of the action genre starring opposite Bruce Willis in *Die Hard: With a Vengeance*, and also starred as Humbert Humbert in Adrian Lyne's *Lolita*. Other career highlights include: *Being Julia* with Annette Bening; *Appaloosa* with Ed Harris and Viggo Mortensen; and Bertolucci's *Stealing Beauty*. Irons received a Tony® Award for his performance in Tom Stoppard's *The Real Thing* and most recently appeared in London in the National Theatre's *Never So Good* and in the Royal Shakespeare Company's *The Gods Weep*. Irons is probably best known for his role as Charles Ryder in the cult TV serial *Brideshead Revisited*. In 2005, Irons joined Helen Mirren and director, Tom Hooper in the award-winning television miniseries *Elizabeth I*. He was also recently lauded for his portrayal of iconic photographer Alfred Stieglitz in the award-winning biographical picture *Georgia O'Keefe*.

Most recently, Irons starred in the feature film *Margin Call*, opposite Kevin Spacey, while his next movie, *The Words*, with Bradley Cooper will be released in 2012. Later this year, Irons will play Henry IV in a new BBC2 adaptation that will form part of a Shakespeare season being made in collaboration with Oscar®-winning filmmaker, Sam Mendes. Irons also begins filming *The Night Train to Lisbon*, directed by Bille August, in spring 2012.

FRANÇOIS ARNAUD (Cesare Borgia)

François Arnaud was born in Montreal, Quebec. At the age of 19, he attended the prestigious Conservatoire National d'Art Dramatique de Montreal for three years. During this time, he and other classmates founded a theatre company for young audiences called "Theatre Juré Craché," which toured in France in the summer of 2007. During that same year, he soon landed a co-starring role as "Marc-Andre" in the television comedy *TAXI 0-22* opposite Patrick Huard as his father. He was then cast in the play *Moliere* for the Shakespeare in the Park touring company. Arnaud has also appeared in *Awake & Sing*; *L'Heure du lynx* and works by Goldoni at Théâtre du Nouveau Monde.

In 2009, he starred in the film *Les Grandes Chaleurs (Heat Waves)*, an adaptation of a play by Michel Marc Bouchard. In 2010, he starred in a film called *I Killed My Mother* directed by Xavier Dolan and was awarded the Vancouver Film Critics award for Best Supporting Actor. That same year, he was nominated for a Gemini Award as Best Actor in a Dramatic Series for his role of "Theo" in the drama *Yamaska*, a long-running, one-hour television series starring Anne Marie Cadieux and Elise Guilbaut.

HOLLIDAY GRAINGER **(Lucrezia Borgia)**

Holliday Grainger is currently filming the pivotal role of 'Estella' in a highly anticipated new adaptation of the Charles Dickens classic *Great Expectations*, opposite Helena Bonham Carter and Ralph Fiennes and set for release next year. Grainger will next be seen in the lead role of 'Suzanne Rousett' in *Bel Ami*, a film also starring Robert Pattinson, Uma Thurman and Kristin Scott Thomas. She first garnered attention when she took on the role of 'Emily' in *The Scouting Book for Boys*, a film previewed to critical acclaim at the London Film Festival and winner of the Best British Newcomer Award for its writer, Jack Thorne. That same year, she played the role of 'Mollie' in Pat Holden's feature *Away Days*, written by Kevin Sampson and starring Stephen Graham. In 2011, she was seen in a much lauded adaptation of Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* accompanied by a stellar cast including Dame Judi Dench, Jamie Bell, Mia Wasikowska and Michael Fassbender.

In addition to her film and stage credits, Grainger's television portfolio is extensive. She starred in the BBC's drama *Five Daughters* as well as reprising her role as 'Sharon Bilkin' in the second season of *Above Suspicion*, based on the adaptation of Lynda La Plante's best-selling crime novels. She also starred as 'Dirty Debbie' in the BBC Three pilot *Stanley Park* and has also taken on roles in the U.K. television series *Demons*, *Merlin*, *Robin Hood* and *Blue Murder*. Grainger was also recognized for her character of 'Charlie Cooper' in a one-off television adaptation of Kate Long's novel *The Bad Mother's Handbook*; Grainger starred opposite Catherine Tate, Anne Reid and Robert Pattinson in this popular comedy drama. Other television credits include *Waking the Dead* and *Waterloo Road* for the BBC and *Where the Heart Is* for ITV.

Grainger made her stage debut in the four-handed play *Dimetos* alongside Jonathan Pryce, Anne Reid and Alex Lanipekun as the role of "Lydia" in Athol Fugard's 1975 tale of a reclusive engineer harboring a destructive passion for his niece.

JOANNE WHALLEY **(Vanozza)**

Joanne Whalley was born in Salford, trained at the Braeside School of Speech and Drama and first appeared as a child in *How We Used to Live*. Whalley started her career on television with early roles in *A Kind of Loving*, *The Singing Detective* and *Edge of Darkness* – the latter of which saw Whalley nominated for a Best Actress BAFTA.

Between 1988 and 1994, Whalley was cast as 'Sorsha' in Ron Howard's *Willow*, 'Christine Keeler' in John Dahl's *Scandal* and played 'Scarlett O'Hara' in the TV mini-series *Scarlett*. Whalley has appeared in numerous stage productions including Danny Boyle's *The Genius*, *Crimes of Vautrin* and *Peter Pan*, all at The

Royal Court. Whalley was nominated for a Best Actress Olivier for her work in *The Edward Bond Season: The Pop's Wedding & Saved*. In 2000, Whalley played 'Jackie Bouvier Kennedy Onassis' in the TV movie of the same name and appeared in TV series' *Criminal Minds*, *Justice League* and *Unknown Sender*.

More recently, Whalley was cast in Francis Ford Coppola's *Twixt* and currently plays "Princess Sophie Grimaldi" in the hugely popular television series, *Gossip Girl*.

JAMES FLYNN
Executive Producer

James Flynn is an independent producer of feature films and television series, and is the principal of Octagon Films.

In addition to receiving two Academy Award nominations in 2010 for *The Door* and *The Secret Of Kells*, Octagon's recent production credits include *As If I Am Not There*, directed by Juanita Wilson; *Ondine* by Neil Jordan; and *Love/Hate Series 1 and 2* by Stuart Carolan and David Caffrey. In addition to *The Borgias*, Octagon Films produced *Camelot*, written by Chris Chibnall and produced by Morgan O'Sullivan. Flynn was also one of the executive producers on the SHOWTIME series *The Tudors* on all four seasons.