

PRESS RELEASE

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BBC
FIRST

ANDREW DAVIES' EPIC ADAPTATION OF WAR AND PEACE COMES TO BBC FIRST

Andrew Davies' landmark adaptation of Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, starring **Lily James** (*Cinderella*, *Downton Abbey*) **Paul Dano** (*Love and Mercy*) and **James Norton** (*Happy Valley*) will screen on BBC First in 2016.

The ambitious six-part series will bring the book to life on a truly epic scale and has been filmed on location in Russia, Latvia and Lithuania with a cast which also includes **Jim Broadbent**, **Gillian Anderson**, **Greta Scacchi**, **Stephen Rea**, **Ken Stott** and **Ade Edmondson**.



The first images from the show have been released showing Lily James as the impulsive Natasha Rostova. James made her name as Lady Rose in *Downton Abbey* before taking the title role in the recent Disney remake of *Cinderella*.



Paul Dano, who has most recently been seen on the big screen in the role of legendary Beach Boys songwriter and musician Brian Wilson in *Love and Mercy*, plays Pierre Bezukhov, the illegitimate son of a rich count who inherits a fortune.

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James Norton who went from playing a psychopathic kidnapper in *Happy Valley* to a vicar in *Grantchester* takes on the role of the intellectual and high-achieving Prince Andrei Bolkonsky.

War and Peace is widely regarded as one of the greatest novels of all time with over 36 million copies sold worldwide. The script is written by Andrew Davies, widely recognised as one of the world's greatest adapters of classic literature for his acclaimed adaptations of *Pride and Prejudice* and *Bleak House*.

Andrew Davies says: "*War and Peace* is not just a great novel it's a wonderful read and it'll make a wonderful serial - a thrilling, funny and heartbreaking story of love, war and family life. The characters are so natural and human and easy to identify with and Natasha Rostova just beats Lizzy Bennet as the most lovable heroine in literature."

Tim Christlieb, Director of Channels, BBC Worldwide Australia and New Zealand, said: "This is one of the most ambitious event dramas ever-produced for the BBC and we're delighted to bring it to Australian audiences on BBC First."

War and Peace is directed by Tom Harper and is being produced by BBC Cymru Wales Drama, in partnership with The Weinstein Company and BBC Worldwide/Lookout Point.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About BBC Worldwide Australia & New Zealand

Australia & New Zealand (ANZ) is a priority territory for BBC Worldwide, focusing on growth across all its core business areas. Recently relocated to McMahons Point, BBC Worldwide ANZ wholly owns six channels: BBC First, UKTV, BBC Knowledge and CBeebies on Foxtel and Fetch TV in Australia; UKTV and BBC Knowledge on Sky TV in New Zealand; and is responsible for the distribution and promotion of BBC World News which transmits in both countries. BBC Worldwide ANZ distributes great British content from the BBC and other producers to free-to-air, subscription channels and SVOD platforms in Australia and New Zealand. It works with partners to bring BBC Worldwide DVDs, consumer products, entertainment formats and live events to the local market, as well as offering advertising opportunities for the BBC's world renowned bbc.com news site. In 2014/15, it generated headline sales of £81.9m, up 7.8% year-on-year.

The logo for Foxtel, featuring the word "FOXTEL" in a bold, orange-to-red gradient font.

