

= Sense and Sensibility (2008 miniseries) =

Sense and Sensibility is a 2008 British television drama adaptation of Jane Austen 's 1811 novel Sense and Sensibility . The screenplay was written by Andrew Davies , who revealed that the aim of the series was to make viewers forget Ang Lee 's 1995 film Sense and Sensibility . The series was " more overtly sexual " than previous Austen adaptations , and Davies included scenes featuring a seduction and a duel that were absent from the feature film . Sense and Sensibility was directed by John Alexander and produced by Anne Pivcevic . Hattie Morahan and Charity Wakefield star as Elinor and Marianne Dashwood , two sisters who go on " a voyage of burgeoning sexual and romantic discovery " .

The series was shot on location in the English counties of Berkshire , Surrey , Buckinghamshire and Devon for two months from April 2007 . Sense and Sensibility was co -@-@ produced by the BBC and American studio WGBH Boston . It was aired in three parts from 1 January 2008 in the United Kingdom and attracted an average of 6 million viewers per episode . The first episode also became one of the top ten most streamed programmes on the BBC iPlayer . Sense and Sensibility garnered mostly positive reviews from television critics , while the cast and crew earned several award nominations for their work . It was released on a two @-@ disc DVD in the UK on 14 January 2008 .

= = Plot = =

When Henry Dashwood (Simon Williams) dies , he leaves his entire fortune and his home , Norland Park , to his son John (Mark Gatiss) . John promises that he will provide for his stepmother , Mrs. Dashwood (Janet McTeer) , and half @-@ sisters Elinor (Hattie Morahan) , Marianne (Charity Wakefield) , and Margaret (Lucy Boynton) . However , John 's wife , Fanny (Claire Skinner) , convinces him to give the family a smaller inheritance than he had intended . Fanny 's brother , Edward Ferrars (Dan Stevens) , comes to visit , and he quickly befriends Elinor . While Mrs. Dashwood hopes they will become engaged , Fanny informs her that his mother will not approve the match . Mrs. Dashwood receives a letter from her cousin , Sir John Middleton (Mark Williams) , offering her a small cottage house on his estate , Barton Park in Devonshire . She and her daughters decide to leave Norland immediately .

During a welcome dinner at Barton Park , Sir John introduces the Dashwoods to his wife , Lady Middleton (Rosanna Lavelle) ; her mother , Mrs. Jennings (Linda Bassett) ; and their family friend , Colonel Brandon (David Morrissey) . Brandon instantly falls in love with Marianne , but she believes he is too old for her . While out walking with Margaret , Marianne falls and twists her ankle . She is rescued by a young man , who carries her back to the cottage . He introduces himself as John Willoughby (Dominic Cooper) , and states that he will return to check on Marianne the following day . Brandon also comes to visit , but upon seeing Willoughby , he quickly departs . Willoughby and Marianne grow close through their mutual love of poetry , and he later takes a lock of her hair . Mrs. Dashwood and Elinor begin to speculate on whether they have become secretly engaged .

Brandon invites the Dashwoods and the Middletons to a party on his estate at Delaford , but before the trip can take place , he is called away on urgent business . Willoughby requests a private audience with both Mrs. Dashwood and Marianne , leading them both to expect that he will propose . However , Willoughby reveals that his aunt is sending him on business to London , and he may not be able to return to Devonshire for at least a year . Shortly after Willoughby 's departure , Edward comes to visit , and the Dashwoods notice that he appears to be unhappy and distant . Mrs. Jennings ' nieces , Lucy (Anna Madeley) and Anne Steele (Daisy Haggard) , come to Barton Park . When Lucy learns that the Dashwoods are acquainted with the Ferrars , Lucy confides in Elinor that she and Edward have been secretly engaged for four years , news that devastates Elinor . Mrs. Jennings invites Elinor and Marianne to spend some time with her in London , and Marianne hopes she will see Willoughby . However , he does not visit or reply to her letters .

During a party , Marianne finds Willoughby , but he barely acknowledges their acquaintance .

Marianne later learns that he is engaged to the wealthy Miss Grey and becomes inconsolable . Brandon calls on the Dashwoods and explains to Elinor that Willoughby seduced then abandoned his young ward , Eliza Williams , who has given birth to his child . Mrs. Ferrars (Jean Marsh) learns of Edward 's engagement to Lucy and threatens to disinherit him unless he calls it off , but Edward refuses . Brandon later offers him a living on his estate at Delaford , which Edward gladly accepts . While staying with Mrs. Jennings ' daughter , Marianne goes walking in a storm and collapses . Brandon finds her and brings her home , where she falls seriously ill with a fever . During Marianne 's recovery , Willoughby comes to talk with Elinor . He insists that he loved Marianne and would have married her , but he had to marry a rich woman because his aunt disowned him after learning of his behaviour toward Eliza . After Marianne recovers , the sisters return home and Marianne begins spending time at Delaford , eventually falling in love with Brandon . Elinor learns that Lucy Steele has become Mrs. Ferrars , and assumes that Lucy and Edward have married . However , Edward arrives at the cottage and explains to the Dashwoods that Lucy has wed his brother Robert (Leo Bill) . Edward then declares his love to Elinor and proposes . They marry , as do Marianne and Brandon .

= = Production = =

= = = Conception and adaptation = = =

On 5 October 2005 , a reporter for the BBC News revealed that writer Andrew Davies was planning to adapt Jane Austen 's *Sense and Sensibility* into a major television drama due to be broadcast on the BBC in two years . Davies commented , " When they are great stories , you keep on coming back to them and doing them in different ways with different people at different lengths . " Davies explained that his script was in the early stages and that no actors had yet been cast . The writer later expressed his delight at adapting the novel during an interview with Paul Carey from the *Western Mail* , calling Austen his " favourite novelist " . He also admitted that due to the acclaim he received for his adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice* , there was pressure on him to get *Sense and Sensibility* right . Davies later stated that the aim of the miniseries was to make viewers forget about Ang Lee 's 1995 film adaptation of the novel .

The opening episode of *Sense and Sensibility* features the moment Willoughby seduces Eliza , a young schoolgirl . Davies told Carey and Claire Hill from the *Western Mail* that he wanted " to do justice " to Willoughby 's back story , saying that it is " quite interesting and steamy stuff like a lot of underage sex that goes on and is just talked about . I want to put it on the screen . " Davies elaborated on this further in an interview with *The Independent* 's Peter Chapman , saying that the seduction and abandonment of a schoolgirl in the novel needed dramatising . He believed readers " hardly notice " the moment , which he felt was very important . The writer noted that the series was " more overtly sexual " than previous adaptations of Austen 's works and added , " The novel is as much about sex and money as social conventions . " Davies also included a duel between Colonel Brandon and Willoughby in his screenplay , an event that was absent from Lee 's film adaptation of the novel .

Davies believed that Lee 's film did not overcome " the problem of the guys who get the girls not seeming quite good enough " , and set out to try to find a way of making them into heroes in his script . He said that Austen should have made the reader feel that Edward was worthy of Elinor and explained how Marianne falls in love with Colonel Brandon , after having her heart broken by Willoughby . The writer increased the male roles , so they could be turned into stronger characters . Davies told Hill that the team " worked very hard " on the men . Brandon is seen rescuing people and doing a lot of fast horse riding , while Edward was given a wood @-@ chopping scene where he vents his frustrations about his engagement . Davies also made the Dashwood sisters younger and " more vulnerable " than how they were portrayed in Lee 's film . Hattie Morahan , who portrayed Elinor in the drama , stated , " We are trying to play the story as it was written . In the novel the girls are 19 and 17 , so these romantic relationships are real rites of passage for them . "

== = Casting = = =

Davies commented that he would have liked to have been in charge of the casting . He revealed that he had initially objected to Hattie Morahan being cast in the role of the eldest Dashwood sister , Elinor . However , he was glad that his objections were ignored , because he fell in love with her performance . Morahan told The Daily Telegraph 's Jasper Rees that she deliberately chose not to watch the 1995 film adaptation of Sense and Sensibility or think about Emma Thompson 's portrayal of the character . She explained that she had not " [b] ecause you would go mad . It would distort your work . I thought , it 'll be original by virtue of the fact that it 's me doing it and there is only one me . "

Charity Wakefield successfully auditioned for the role of Marianne Dashwood . The actress revealed , " Marianne is the embodiment of youth and hope . I was so excited to be offered the part because I felt that it was a role which I could really attack . I understand her character and feel that we have lots in common . " Dan Stevens was chosen to play Edward Ferrars , Elinor 's love interest . The actor revealed to a BBC journalist that he had really wanted the part and was excited by the challenge of the character . Stevens became ill with tonsillitis during the shoot , and quipped that there are very few shots of him in full health still in the series .

David Morrissey portrayed Colonel Brandon . The actor was sent the script by his agent , and he initially questioned whether another Austen adaptation was needed . However , he then read the script and thought it was " just brilliant " , especially as Davies had added more scenes featuring the male characters . Dominic Cooper took on the role of John Willoughby , Brandon 's rival for Marianne 's affections . Describing his character , Cooper said " The way I tried to persuade myself he wasn 't too bad was that he 's a 25 @-@ year @-@ old young guy and he genuinely falls in love with Marianne ? he 's not just doing it for one moment in time . " Cooper said that he had fun working on the project .

Janet McTeer and Lucy Boynton were cast as Mrs Dashwood and Margaret Dashwood respectively . Mark Gatiss portrayed John Dashwood ; his casting was revealed in June 2007 . Claire Skinner received the role of John 's wife , Fanny , while Mark Williams was cast as Sir John Middleton . Linda Bassett and Jean Marsh were given the roles of Mrs Jennings and Mrs Ferrars respectively . Robert Bianco from USA Today commented that both women were " wonderfully cast " . Actresses Anna Madeley and Daisy Haggard portrayed Lucy Steele and her sister Anne , a character who was omitted from the 1995 film .

== = Filming = = =

Sense and Sensibility was shot entirely on location within England , mostly in the counties of Berkshire , Surrey , Buckinghamshire , and Devon . Filming began in April 2007 and lasted until early June . Blackpool Mill , a fifteenth @-@ century cottage in north Devon , was turned into Barton Cottage , the home of the Dashwood girls . The art director for the series , James Merifield , had walked past the cottage in 2006 and thought it would be an ideal setting for a film . He was later sent back to the cottage by the location manager for Sense and Sensibility , and he decided the place would be right for the production . The owners of Blackpool Mill , Sir Hugh and Lady Stucley , were contacted in February 2007 by the BBC who inquired about the possibility of filming there . Caroline Gammell from The Daily Telegraph reported that " camera crews , production assistants , directors and actors swarmed over Blackpool Mill , turning the rustic four @-@ bedroom home into the romantic hub of Jane Austen 's novel . Set designers took the cottage more firmly into the 19th century , adding a porch at the front as well as dormer windows , fake shutters and an extra chimney . " The interior of cottage was " a little scruffy " for Mrs Dashwood 's status , so scenes featuring the inside of the cottage were filmed in a studio . Filming took place at the cottage over eight days in May .

Wakefield revealed that it rained constantly during filming , often soaking the cast and crew . However , the bad weather led to Davies writing in a scene featuring Edward in a wet shirt chopping

logs in the rain , which rivalled the famous lake scene in *Pride and Prejudice* . Cooper told *The Birmingham Post* 's Georgina Rodgers that the bad weather affected his first scene , in which Willoughby carries an injured Marianne home . He explained that the scene was shot on a vertical slope with a rain machine , as the natural rain does not show up on camera . His cloak also kept getting caught under his foot , which made picking up Wakefield even harder . Cooper added , " I couldn 't move and I just kept falling head over heels . " Wrotham Park served as the exterior to Norland , the Dashwood family 's home . Ham House in Richmond was used for Norland 's interior shots , while the grounds were used for exterior scenes . The National Trust was asked not to cut the grass for several weeks before filming began . Ham House also doubled for Cleveland . Loseley Park was chosen for the exterior shots of Sir John Middleton 's home , Barton Park . The library doubled for Colonel Brandon 's own , while the entrance was used for scenes featuring a gathering of guests for a day out . The Oak Room was also used for the scenes involving Marianne , after she falls sick . Other filming locations included Dorney Court , Hall Barn , Lincoln 's Inn and Clovelly Pier .

= = = Costumes and make @-@ up = = =

The costume designer for *Sense and Sensibility* was Michele Clapton . She and assistant costume designer Alex Fordham undertook a large amount of research looking for inspiration . They spent hours looking at paintings and books from the time period , while also visiting art galleries and the Victoria and Albert Museum . During an interview for the drama 's BBC Online website , Fordham revealed that they tried to find references from every area , including eighteenth @-@ century cartoons . Clapton stated that the team wanted to make a lot of the costumes , rather than re @-@ use what was already available from other productions . To get the sense of colour that they wanted , they had to dye and create a lot of the pieces . The wardrobe team worked closely with the make @-@ up department and the production designer . After their first meeting , they came up with a colour palette for the whole show . Clapton chose to give Elinor and Marianne contrasting wardrobes . The " flighty " and " artistic " Marianne wears strong colours compared to Elinor , who has a different personality and complexion . Fordham revealed that with Marianne being younger and a " wild child " , her wardrobe contains a lot of Buttercup yellows , which suited Wakefield 's complexion and her character 's freshness .

Willoughby 's wardrobe was designed to reflect his " poetic " and " fashionable " nature , while Fordham believed Edward was more suited to the eighteenth @-@ century rural colours . With Colonel Brandon being a stronger character , his costumes were half way between the two . His clothes were designed to be out of date and firm , using more heathers instead of the rural colours . The production had an emphasis on youth and passion , which Clapton incorporated into her work . The designer said , " Ten years ago , female characters in 19th @-@ century dramas would all have their hair done in very precise ringlets , all neat and perfect just like in the portraits . Now we 're trying to achieve a more believable , natural look , especially when the Dashwoods are at home . " She added that the director had wanted the characters to " feel more human . " Morrissey commented that the period costumes were " slightly uncomfortable " for modern life , but as soon as the cast were riding horses or walking across fields , they realised why they were made that way . He added , " When you 're dancing , they 're quite restrictive , but that 's quite good for posture ? posture was different then , and that 's important . But they give you a feel for the character which is really an advantage to you as an actor . "

Karen Hartley @-@ Thomas was the hair and make @-@ up designer for the production . She began prepping a couple of months before filming began , and she met with the director and producer early on to discuss the whole look of the film . Like the costumers , she read books and went to art galleries during her research . The female characters in *Sense and Sensibility* wear a " no make @-@ up look " because in the time period in which the film is set , only the lower classes would have worn white and pink make @-@ up . The Dashwood sisters wore no mascara and only a little corrective and blush . Hartley @-@ Thomas also used very little make @-@ up on the men , as she does not like them looking made up . Discussing the hair , Hartley @-@ Thomas said " Elinor

's hair is always quite neat and done , where Marianne , being a freer character and more rebellious , she has lots of different looks and lots of wild looks with the hair loose . " She also explained that some of the male actors wore wigs because the men in those days would have had a lot more volume to their hair , whereas the modern styles tend to be shorter and clipped . John Dashwood and his son were given red hair , as Hartley @-@ Thomas wanted them to stand out amongst the more natural colours of the other male characters .

= = Broadcast = =

Sense and Sensibility was aired in three parts , with the first shown on 1 January 2008 . The other two episodes were broadcast on 6 and 13 January . The first episode of Sense and Sensibility became one of the top ten streamed programmes on the BBC iPlayer following its broadcast . In the United States , Sense and Sensibility was broadcast on PBS , as part of their Austen Masterpiece Theatre series . The drama was split into two episodes , which aired on 30 March and 6 April 2008 . Sense and Sensibility began airing from 26 June 2008 on the UKTV channel in Australia .

= = = Home media = = =

Sense and Sensibility was released on a two @-@ disc DVD in the UK on 14 January 2008 . All three episodes were given away free with a copy of the Daily Mail in 2009 . The offer was part of the newspaper 's British Classics collection . The Region 1 DVD was released a few days after its premiere on PBS . The two @-@ disc set also included the BBC 's Miss Austen Regrets , as well as commentary and interviews from the cast and crew .

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

The first episode of Sense and Sensibility attracted 5 @.@ 54 million viewers upon its first broadcast in the United Kingdom , giving it twenty per cent of the audience share for its broadcast time . The second episode posted a small increase of 5 @.@ 74 million viewers , while the concluding part attracted an audience of 6 @.@ 76 million .

= = = Critical response = = =

Sense and Sensibility received mostly positive reviews from critics . However , the Jane Austen Society criticised it for being " too raunchy " and accused Davies of " degrading fine English literature " , after he included a seduction scene in the opening episode . The chairman of the society , Patrick Stokes , stated , " Sexing this story up says more about the BBC than Jane Austen . It is lowering itself by degrading fine English literature in the battle for ratings . While it is good that it draws people 's attention to her works , there is not a lot you can do if someone makes a hash of it . " A BBC spokesman believed the drama was not overtly sexual and stated that they had received no complaints about it , though they did get several calls from viewers expressing their appreciation for the series .

Melinda Houston , writing for The Age , called Sense and Sensibility " a gorgeous adaptation of her most frivolous work " and added , " It 's all beautifully made , beautifully cast , and the script snaps and crackles . Maybe Eleanor isn 't quite as flawed as originally drawn but that 's unlikely to detract from your enjoyment . " Lenny Ann Low from The Sydney Morning Herald stated , " The locations , costumes and acting are excellent , with a particularly striking use of light ? cold and grey skies foretelling doom through to rich candlelight signalling new passions . " The New York Times critic Ginia Bellafante said , " There 's nothing glaringly wrong with this new Sense and Sensibility , the last in Masterpiece 's winter @-@ long homage to Austen ; it is both lush and tidy . But it alters the

emotional chemistry , and the result is an adaptation that feels more arid than Mr. Lee 's effort . "

Nancy Banks @-@ Smith from The Guardian called Sense and Sensibility " a charmingly domestic and spontaneous treatment of the story " , adding that it had become " a younger sister " of Lee 's 1995 film . Variety 's Brian Lowry commented , " this latest Sense & Sensibility has done a splendid job casting its various roles , despite an inevitable wattage deficit compared with the most recent theatrical version . Davies and director John Alexander have also taken some liberties by crafting scenes of the men together (something Austen herself never did) ? having the steely Brandon , for example , pull Willoughby aside to question his intentions toward Marianne . Featuring a top @-@ drawer cast , the filmmakers create several delicate moments ? from Willoughby 's elegant seduction of Marianne to the stoic Elinor 's pining for the elusive Edward who , as played by Stevens , adorably stammers in a Hugh Grant @-@ like way . "

Serena Davies from The Daily Telegraph praised the first episode , calling it " faithful to the spirit of the book " and stating that the series " deftly stepped out of the shadows of two formidable predecessors : Ang Lee 's gorgeous 1995 film version of the novel , and scriptwriter Andrew Davies 's own masterpiece , Pride and Prejudice . " Davies enjoyed Morahan 's " luminous " performance as Elinor , as well as Williams and Morrissey 's turns as Sir John and Colonel Brandon respectively , although she thought the opening scene was " misconceived " . Davies ' colleague , James Walton , proclaimed , " In the end , this Sense and Sensibility was perhaps brilliantly competent rather than surpassingly brilliant . Nevertheless , it still proved easily good enough to get the costume @-@ drama year off to a hugely enjoyable start . "

= = = Awards and nominations = = =

The crew of Sense and Sensibility garnered several award nominations for their work on the drama . At the 14th Shanghai Television Festival , the series was nominated for Magnolia Award for Best Television Film or Miniseries , Alexander won the Best Television Film Director award , while Morahan won Best Performance by an Actress in a Television Film for her turn as Elinor Dashwood . Davies was nominated in the Writer 's Award category at the 35th Broadcasting Press Guild Awards for his screenplay , and Clapton received a nomination for Outstanding Costume Design for a Television Movie or Mini @-@ Series at the Costume Designers Guild Awards . For his work on the score , Phipps earned nominations for a BAFTA Television Craft Award for Best Original Television Music and a Creative Arts Emmy Award for Outstanding Music Composition for a Miniseries , Movie or Special . Cinematographer Sean Bobbitt was also nominated for an Emmy Award in the Cinematography for a Miniseries , Movie or Special category .