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[Drama](#), [ITVX](#)

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ITV commissions, Archie, to premiere on ITVX, the story of Cary Grant's life, starring Jason Isaacs in the leading role, written by BAFTA award winning screenwriter Jeff Pope, and produced by ITV Studios

****with BritBox international as co-production partners****

"I have something to confess. You see, I've always been someone else. I made up Cary Grant as I went along."

The life of Hollywood's greatest leading man, Cary Grant, is to be depicted in a four-part drama, Archie, written by award winning screenwriter, Jeff Pope, and

starring Jason Isaacs in the leading role.

The drama will be produced by ITV Studios, with BritBox International as co-production partners, and with the blessing of Cary Grant's daughter, Jennifer Grant, and ex-wife Dyan Cannon. Amongst many sources, Jeff has interviewed both women extensively. Dyan and Jennifer are Executive Producers on the drama.

Archie will premiere on ITV's new, free streaming service, ITVX, which launches later this year. The drama will air on ITV months later.

Commented Jason Isaacs:

"There was only one Cary Grant and I'd never be foolish enough to try to step into his iconic shoes. Archie Leach, on the other hand, couldn't be further from the character he invented to save himself. Jeff's brilliant scripts bring to life his relentless struggle to escape the demons that plagued him, his obsessive need for control, his fears, his weaknesses, his loves and his losses. It's the story of a man, not a legend, and those are shoes I can't wait to walk in."

Commented Dyan Cannon:

"Cary Grant touched the world with his charm, his grace and enduring vivacity, but few knew Archie Leach, the man I was fortunate to know intimately and marry. I'm so grateful Jeff Pope has captured him so brilliantly on the page, and that Jason Isaacs will do the same on screen!"

Commented Jennifer Grant:

"My father was an extremely private man, so naturally, when Jeff Pope approached me with the idea to write Dad's life story, I was trepidatious at best. Jeff's thoughtfully intelligent understanding of Dad's boyhood won me over. My father's formative years as Archie Leach in Bristol, England, and the extraordinary challenges he faced, lie at the heart of 'Archie'. Cary Grant is emblematic of charm, wit and grace, but unknown to most are the enormous challenges he overcame to create himself."

Commented screenwriter Jeff Pope:

"As with many of my projects, I started at the end and worked backwards. I discovered that, at the height of his fame, Cary Grant retired to look after his young daughter. Intrigued, I started to dig into why he had become a single father. What had happened? My journey led me to Bristol, and a young boy called

Archie Leach. Cary Grant became one of the most iconic figures of the twentieth century, beloved by presidents and paupers. The key to everything, lay in his childhood."

Paul Andrew Williams, who has previously worked with Jeff on A Confession will direct the series. Paul's credits also include London to Brighton, Song for Marion and Murdered for Being Different.

Rebecca Hodgson (Sherwood, The Irregulars, Deep Water, The Road to Coronation Street) will produce Archie.

Archie has been commissioned for ITV by Head of Drama, Polly Hill. Polly will oversee production of the drama for ITVX.

Commented Polly Hill:

"Jeff's scripts beautifully tell the story of Archie, the Bristol boy who was abandoned by his father and ran away to Hollywood, where remarkably he transformed and became Cary Grant. His story is emotional and surprising and Jeff's scripts brilliantly explore the man behind the Hollywood legend who will be played by the amazing Jason Isaacs. I am delighted to be working with Jeff and director Paul Andrew Williams once again on what will be a real treat for ITVX audiences."

Jason Isaacs is known for his extensive film, theatre and television career and most notably his roles in multi award winning, Mass, The Death of Stalin the Harry Potter franchise, The Patriot, Operation Mincemeat and Black Hawk Down.

He has also appeared in a number of television series including Good Sam, The OA, Star Trek Discovery, Case Histories, Civvies and Brotherhood.

Born in Bristol, England in 1904, to parents Elsie and Elias, Archie narrates the story of a young Archibald Alexander Leach's troubled childhood and how extreme poverty, his father's adultery and the loss of his older brother, John, tore the family apart and sent his loving mother into a downward spiral of grief and depression.

Jeff Pope's scripts reveal how deceit, cruelty and one, overpowering lie shaped Archie's life.

At 14 he auditioned for the music hall act, the Bob Pender Troupe, a band of acrobats, stilt walkers, clown and comedians after seeing them perform at the Bristol Hippodrome. Lean and athletic, he learned the art of stilt walking, and

when the troupe went on tour to the US, teenage Archie was intoxicated by the land of opportunity. Believing he had no family to return to in the UK, he decided to stay in the US to try to make his way in showbusiness.

With no thoughts of acting, a chance meeting with the comedian George Burns helped him find his first footing on the acting ladder and a contract with a movie studio who felt he needed to change his name, and Cary Grant was born.

The drama intercuts with scenes from 1961 when at the height of his fame, living in Benedict Canyon, Los Angeles, the legendary actor was breaking all box office records, but desperately unhappy in his private life.

With two failed marriages behind him, he began to woo a young actress he'd seen on a TV show, Dyan Cannon. Thirty three years his junior, Dyan, didn't initially fall for his charms turning down his attempts to meet, because she didn't feel they could ever be a match.

Dashingly handsome, suave and sophisticated, Cary continued to pursue her, with introductions to his famous friends, Alfred Hitchcock and Doris Day until they eventually wed in Las Vegas in 1965.

Jeff Pope will executive produce the series on behalf of ITV Studios with Diederick Santer executive producing for BritBox International.

Commented Diederick Santer on behalf of BritBox International:

"We are truly thrilled to be working with Jeff and Jason, and ITV, on this extraordinary story, and are proud to be collaborating with these world-class talents. Jeff's scripts are ambitious, surprising, and hugely entertaining - qualities which will make Archie a delight for BritBox audiences all around the world."

Jeff Pope is known for writing critically acclaimed dramas The Widower, Mrs Biggs, A Confession and the Oscar nominated films Philomena and Stan & Ollie.

Further details of casting will be announced closer to filming commencing.

ITV Studios will be responsible for the international distribution of Archie.

Press Contacts

janice.troup@itv.com

Picture Contacts

patrick.smith@itv.com

Viewer enquiries

<https://www.itv.com/contact/how-to-get-in-touch>