

# Harriet Walter, Laura Aikman and Kara Tointon join Jason Isaacs in ITV drama, Archie, the story of Cary Grant's life

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

**Harriet Walter, Laura Aikman and Kara Tointon join Jason Isaacs in ITV drama, Archie, the story of Cary Grant's life, written by BAFTA award winning screenwriter Jeff Pope, produced by Etta Pictures and premiering on ITVX**

**\*\*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."*

ITV has announced further casting for four-part drama Archie, depicting the life of Hollywood's greatest leading man, Cary Grant and starring Jason Isaacs in the

leading role.

Written by award winning screenwriter, Jeff Pope, and produced by Etta Pictures, Pope's rebranded ITV Studios label, with Britbox International as co-production partners, the drama will star Laura Aikman (Bluestone 42, Gavin and Stacey) as Cary's ex-wife Dyan Cannon with Harriet Walter (Succession, Ted Lasso, Killing Eve) as Elsie Leach, Cary's mother. Danton Anderson (Patrick Melrose), Calam Lynch (Bridgerton) and Oaklee Pendergast (Home) will play young versions of Archie Leach and Kara Tointon (Mr Selfridge, The Halcyon, Sound of Music Live) will play young Elsie.

The stellar ensemble cast also stars Henry Lloyd-Hughes (Ragdoll), Ian Puleston-Davies (DI Ray, Coronation Street), Ian McNeice (Doc Martin), Jason Watkins (McDonald & Dodds, Des), Lisa Faulkner (EastEnders) and Niamh Cusack (The Virtues).

Archie will premiere on ITVX, the new, free streaming platform available to viewers later this year. The drama will air on ITV months later.

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, until they eventually wed in Las Vegas in 1965.

The drama is being produced 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.

Paul Andrew Williams, who has previously worked with Jeff on *A Confession* and *The Walk-In* 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*) produces *Archie*, which is currently filming on location in Manchester, Chester and Liverpool.

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

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*.

Jeff Pope will executive produce the series for Etta Pictures with Diederick Santer executive producing for BritBox International.

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

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

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