



MR SELFRIDGE



SERIES II



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MR SELFDRIDGE



Polly Walker, Aidan McArdle and Cal MacAninch star alongside lead actors Jeremy Piven, Katherine Kelly, Aisling Loftus and Frances O'Connor in the new second series of Mr Selfridge

Following the ratings success of the first series of *Mr Selfridge* ten new episodes have been produced by ITV Studios for ITV.

Based upon the life of flamboyant American entrepreneur Harry Gordon Selfridge, who founded the world-renowned store on London's Oxford Street in 1909, the second series picks up the story in 1914 as the store celebrates its 5th anniversary of trading.

Harry, played by Emmy award-winning American actor, Jeremy Piven (*Entourage*), is proud of the store's success but there is no time to rest on his laurels. With rumours rife with talk of war in Europe, he prepares staff for challenging times ahead. The store must play its own part in the war effort and help keep morale high on the home front.

Now more than ever Harry needs his wife, Rose, played by Frances O'Connor (*AI: Artificial Intelligence, Piccadilly Jim*), by his side. But in the last five years, they have become increasingly estranged. Whilst Rose has been spending long periods in America with the couple's daughters and their son Gordon attends school in Winchester, Harry lives the life of a single man in London.

In the first episode of the new series, Rose returns to support her husband during the anniversary celebrations. Surprised and thrilled to have her back, Harry embarks on a campaign to win her back and reunite the family. But Rose is caught up with an exciting new friendship with Bohemian novelist and business woman, Delphine Day, played by Polly Walker (*John Carter, Clash of the Titans*) whom she met on the boat home from New York. Delphine is self-assured, inspiring and a breath of fresh air for Rose. As the owner of the infamous Delphine's Club in Soho, she begins to empower Rose and leaves Harry feeling beleaguered and sidelined.

Lady Mae Loxley, played by Katherine Kelly (*Coronation Street, She Stoops to Conquer*) is also thrown off stride by the unexpected return to London of her husband, Lord Loxley, played by Aidan McArdle (*Garrow's Law, The Reckoning*). Loxley is an alpha male who creates tensions and animosity at every turn and his unsettling presence threatens to drive a wedge between Harry and Lady Mae.

Arrival of a flamboyant new Head of Fashion, Mr Thackeray, played by Cal MacAninch (*Downton Abbey, Wild at Heart*), also sets a cat amongst the pigeons. Mr Thackeray spent his formative years working in Paris and relishes the opportunity to remind his colleagues of his illustrious training. He considers himself a cut above the other staff, especially Agnes Towler, played by Aisling Loftus (*The Borrowers, Dive*), who he views as competition from the outset.

Agnes has been working in Paris and returns to London in episode one to work for Harry as Selfridge's new Head of Display. With the fashion and style influence of the Parisians, Agnes turns heads with her sophisticated new look. Old flame, Victor Colleano, played by Trystan Gravelle (*Anonymous*), has been promoted to manage Selfridge's restaurant the Palm Court and has moved on with his life in Agnes' absence. That is until Victor's sparky young cousin and newly appointed waiter in the Palm Court, Franco, played by Sean Teale, decides to cause some mischief. And Henri Leclair, played by Gregory Fitoussi (*Spiral*), returns from America a changed man.

Other key characters also return and we pick up with their stories 4 years on. These include Miss Josie Mardle, played by Amanda Abbington, (*Married, Single, Other*), Tom Goodman-Hill (*Spy, The Hollow Crown*) as Harry's Chief of Staff Mr Roger Grove, Ron Cook as Harry's ever-faithful right hand man, Mr Crabb, Samuel West as journalist Frank Edwards, Amy Beth Hayes as ambitious shop girl Kitty Hawkins and Calum Callaghan as George Towler.

With World War One imminent and set to be the greatest and most devastating in history, it will inevitably affect the lives of everyone in the store. Throughout these troubled times, Harry will turn to his family and friends and try and heal the rifts of the past.

The second series of *Mr Selfridge* is written by Kate Brooke (*Case Sensitive, Making of a Lady, Ice Cream Girls*), Andrew Davies (*Bleak House, Pride and Prejudice*), Kate

O’Riordan (*The Bad Mother’s Handbook*, *The Kindness of Strangers*) and Dan Sefton (*Holby City*, *Death in Paradise*).

In January 2013, the first episode of *Mr Selfridge* achieved a peak audience of 9.4 million viewers. This made it the highest launch audience for a new ITV drama series since *Scott and Bailey* in May 2011.

Lindy Woodhead, author of *Shopping Seduction and Mr Selfridge*, continues in her role as advisor on retail history alongside British historian, Juliet Gardiner who joins the team at ITV Studios as historical advisor.

Mr Selfridge has been recommissioned for ITV by Director of Drama Commissioning Steve November.

The series is produced by Cherry Gould (*Lightfields*, *Above Suspicion*), and executive produced by Kate Lewis for ITV Studios, Rebecca Eaton for WGBH, Andrew Davies, Kate Brooke and Kate O’Riordan. The director of the first two episodes is Anthony Byrne (*Silent Witness*, *Single Handed*) who returns to *Mr Selfridge* having directed episodes for the first series. Rob Evans and Lawrence Till also direct episodes during the series.

Kate Lewis, executive producer for ITV Studios said: "ITV Studios is thrilled to be making a second series of *Mr Selfridge*. The story of Harry Selfridge, his family and colleagues has drawn in a strong drama audience and we are delighted by the response. The second series will allow us to build on this success and it is a fantastic opportunity to focus on 1914 during the centenary of the Great War."

Mr Selfridge will be distributed internationally by ITV Studios Global Entertainment.

Foreword
by Writer & Executive Producer, Kate Brooke

Having written for series 1 of Mr Selfridge, I have been delighted to have the opportunity to move the show on into series two. The wonderful Andrew Davies created an immensely likeable world and a tremendous array of characters. That world and those characters return but four years have passed, Harry Selfridge is busy trying to mend fences with his wife Rose, Lady Mae is horrified to discover that Lord Loxley is back in town, and Agnes has to decide which man she really loves – Victor Colleano or Henri Leclair. Meanwhile the exotic Delphine, proprietor of a glamorous nightclub, is meddling in everybody's lives...

And Selfridges the store, with its Heads of Department and Management staff intact, is now a much loved London institution - according to Harry Selfridge himself, "the third most famous tourist attraction in town, after Buckingham Palace and the Tower of London." Beauty and Make-up, a single counter in 1909, has taken off, and Women's Fashion has expanded to incorporate a whole floor. The store anticipates and supplies the product demands of the Age: saucy novels, bust cream, and then as War hits the country, British made goods and dried food.

Because it's 1914, Duke Ferdinand is assassinated in Sarajevo, and the country finds itself at War. As Selfridge lads enthusiastically sign up to fight, women take the depot jobs vacated by the men, and the American community in London scramble onto the boats home, Harry is eager to help the War Effort. His good intentions, however, land him and the store in all sorts of trouble.

One of the reasons why I particularly enjoy writing Mr Selfridge is the unique combination of fact and fiction, which the show incorporates. Selfridges is a real store, Harry was the real founder, and many of our stories are inspired by nuggets of biographical gold dust, unearthed by Lindy Woodhouse (author of Shopping, Seduction and Mr Selfridge). How did Selfridges, the store, survive the war so successfully? Why did Harry choose to visit Germany, bringing antagonism and hostility down upon himself? Our responses to these questions are sometimes leaps of imagination, because we cannot know the answers for certain – but we have massively enjoyed making those leaps.

The social history of life on the Home Front at the beginning of the War has also been an immensely rich source of story: Nationalistic fervour, fear of spying, hostility to Americans, all these trends impact on our characters, creating conflict and jeopardy for them in a fast changing world. The series spans the initial jubilation that the War evokes to the gradual sobering realisation that the troops will not be home by Christmas. Researching and writing the show in the build up to the

Centenary of the First World War has felt very special, and at times extremely moving. I very much hope that you enjoy the result.

Kate Brooke

Kate Lewis, Executive Producer ITV Studios

“The response to *Mr Selfridge* has been wonderful and the second series promises to be a real treat for our audience,” explains Kate Lewis.

“Harry Selfridge is back for a vibrant new chapter in both his own story and that of the store, along with the characters we love and some colorful new additions to the cast.”

Millions of viewers in both Britain and around the world were enthralled by the first series of *Mr Selfridge*.

“We had a strong and loyal audience who stayed with us over 10 episodes, which is fantastic. I think we’re giving them even more to enjoy and sink their teeth into in this second series - and a few surprises along the way!

“To have the opportunity to build on what has already been achieved is an exciting opportunity. You always want to make the next series bigger and better. Cherry Gould, our new producer, and everyone else working on the show have really risen to this challenge.

“We wanted our stories in series 2 to be more dramatic and moving, funnier - and all more grounded in a sense of the time.

“We also wanted to enrich the visual experience with more of what the audience love - the store, the costumes, the products, the hairstyles, the fashion of the time.

“Our store set has been developed and we have also built a brand new set, Delphine’s Club, which has a very distinctive Bohemian feel to it. This new set really helps plant us firmly in a world on the cusp of great change.”

New to the *Mr Selfridge* team for the second series is production designer, Sonja Klaus.

“Sonja was Ridley Scott’s set dresser for many years and her attention to detail and design is phenomenal.

“In collaboration with our lead director, Anthony Byrne, Sonja has made the store an even more lush and exciting place to be, as it would have been in 1914 because Harry Selfridge himself was developing his business.

“We also have new exterior locations and will see the back of the building for the first time, giving a broader sense of its scale. It’s as if the shop floor is the stage and then you see behind the scenes and how the show comes together.”

Jeremy Piven returns to the title role along with Frances O'Connor as his wife Rose, who is both estranged from her husband and dutifully by his side when appearances matter.

"Jeremy is passionate about the show and totally obsessed by the character of Harry. It's very infectious. It's a joy to develop the scripts when he is so immersed in it.

"He is also a producer and has a sharp, objective eye on the scripts and in the edit. He is very insightful about Harry.

"Jeremy has really enjoyed digging deeper with the character of Harry Selfridge and building on what we did in the first series. Harry has grown up a bit in this second series and his priorities have changed. We put his character through the mill and there are some dramatic storylines for him.

"We really get under the skin of the Selfridge marriage in this series. Watching as Harry tentatively tries to repair their marriage is very moving."

Harry, Rose and their family were, of course, real people with their own histories.

"That's quite a responsibility. But being constrained by the truth forces you to be creative too.

"There was a real Mr Selfridge and family and you have to find a respectful and intelligent way to interpret that."

"But most of our other characters are fictionalised and with them you have free rein to really have some fun.

"One of my favourite stories in this second series is the love triangle that has developed from series one involving Agnes (*Aisling Loftus*), Victor (*Trystan Gravelle*) and Henri (*Gregory Fitoussi*). You can tell love stories in period drama that have an intensity that is difficult to achieve within contemporary drama.

"The audience will hopefully enjoy this journey - and be as divided about who Agnes should end up with as we were in the writers' room.

"Agnes and Victor are initially reunited after a few years apart but then Henri returns to London under very mysterious circumstances to stir things up."

Time has moved on since we last visited the store.

"The second series is set in 1914, a time of great change with the First World War looming. I think the show is at its best when there is a key moment of history to reflect upon and to provide challenges for both the characters and the store.

"We were, of course, mindful that this second series would be screened in 2014 which is the 100th anniversary of the start of the First World War and wanted to pay our own respects to that.

"But it's not really about the war itself, rather the ordinary men and women left behind on the Home Front in London. It's a moment in history that should feel very relevant to the audience and we've tried to look at it from a really fresh and accessible angle.

"It was poignant for us when we were doing our research that people were genuinely excited about the prospect of going to war, and about Britain showing off its might. But then the reality gradually dawns that the war won't be over by Christmas and that news from the Front is a lot worse than anybody anticipated.

"1914 also throws up many challenges for Harry himself. There was huge anti-American sentiment at this time. Harry tries to help out with the war effort but the establishment don't make things easy for him.

"But though the historical backdrop is important, the drama as ever plays out within the store. It's always comes down to the lives of our characters and their lives and loves."

Added Kate: "The second series has given us an opportunity to consolidate and develop how our 'writers' room' works. We don't quite work in the way they do in the US. It's our own British version.

"This series has been headed up by writer, Kate Brooke, who wrote on the last series. Kate co-wrote the first episode with Andrew Davies who has also acted an executive producer on this second series.

"It's a very collaborative story lining process. There is a small core group of writers, including Kate Brooke, Andrew Davies and the writer/co-executive producer, Kate O'Riordan, who work closely with me and a couple of script editors.

"One of the key strengths of the show is that we all know each other very well. We have an office within the studio set up in North London so we spend a lot of time there and then pop down to set to grab a coffee and chat with the cast and crew. It's a very organic creative experience.

"Music is crucial to the series and we were delighted that composer Charlie Mole was deservedly nominated for an Emmy for series one.

"Charlie never stands still and the music is constantly evolving and moving forward to suit the new era and mood of each series. He has some real treats in store for the audience this year."

Concludes Kate: "It was great to see the positive reaction to the first series and the way viewers engaged with our drama.

"There's more drama, colour and humour to enjoy in series 2. It's a roller coaster new journey for Harry and for the show. I hope the audience enjoys the ride!"



Jeremy Piven is Harry Selfridge

Wild horses could not drag millions of viewers away from the first hit series of *Mr Selfridge*.

Including a Rolling Stone.

“Ronnie Wood watches the series and calls me Mr Selfridge. That’s awesome,” laughs Jeremy Piven, who plays store-owner and retail showman, Harry Selfridge.

The American actor was best known for his Golden Globe and Emmy-award winning role as Ari Gold in *Entourage*. But now he’s stopped off screen by fans who cannot wait for Harry to return in the second series of the ITV drama.

“When I hear someone say, ‘Excuse me Mr Selfridge,’ it’s both very surreal and really gratifying. We spend six months making the series in virtual seclusion, very much under the radar in London.

“It’s a very lonely process and almost like how a musician must feel. You’re writing a song in the dark somewhere and then suddenly people are singing your words back to you.

“The fact that Mr Selfridge was so well received is overwhelming to me. It means a lot to come to Britain, where period drama is done so well, and be accepted. It’s very humbling that people loved the show and really got involved in it. I’m incredibly grateful for that.

"The series has also been sold to 100 countries, so it's fun to share it with the world. And I know the people who watched it in America really liked it and the numbers continued to grow. Word of mouth was very strong.

"My mother has been my acting teacher since I was eight-years-old and so has seen it all. But it was the first time her response to anything I've ever done was, 'I can't wait to see what happens next.'

"And for the first time I have the attention of my nieces. My eight-year-old niece Pearl and her sister Lily Rose, who is 13, love all things British. They have High Tea. I've earned a little street cred with them because of Mr Selfridge. So Uncle Jeremy is now more than just the guy that brings multiple presents for Hanukkah and Christmas."

Some viewers become so drawn into the drama that they forget Jeremy is playing a role.

"I did have one woman come up to me and tell me that I really did need to speak to my staff because she had a manicure and pedicure and it only lasted her a couple of events. She wanted me to speak to my staff immediately but I think she was confused as to the time period. Maybe she didn't realise that we're in the present day and I'm an actor from Chicago. But the idea that we fooled her was exciting."

Harry has been mostly living apart from wife Rose (*Frances O'Connor*) in the five years that have passed since we last saw him in 1909.

At the end of the first series viewers saw Rose take their children back to America after the humiliation of enduring her husband's latest affair.

Harry still loves Rose and is desperate to win her back. And she has feelings for him. But the most Rose can offer is to be there when the outside world expects to see a dutiful wife by his side.

"Rose is, rightfully, being quite stubborn about it because Harry has put her through a lot. Frances plays it so beautifully. She's such a great actress and has navigated that part so well. You can see why Harry would be in love with her. His love for Rose is much more apparent in this series. At the same time he's still obviously a very ambitious guy."

Filming took place between April and October 2013.

"I was really looking forward to filming this second series. It feels like we're firing on even more cylinders. We've introduced a lot of humour and yet the drama has also deepened, along with the relationships within Harry's world.

"That's one of the great things about doing a series that you obviously can't do in a film. You get a chance to continuously explore the arcs of characters, relationships,

the world, everything. The show benefits and is even better now than it was because of that.

"It's more dramatic than it was in the first season and yet it's funnier. When I was growing up I was studying at the Piven Theatre, my parents' place, and we never separated comedy from drama. We've always felt like they can live moment to moment and you can have both of them. I really do believe that."

Adds Jeremy: "Playing the role of Harry is even more satisfying than the first season. I'm also lucky enough to be a producer so I see the episodes early on and the overwhelming feeling is you do want to see what comes next. I think that's a great sign.

"You are always learning. There isn't a scene that goes by where you don't feel, whether consciously or unconsciously, you've learned something. So logging all those hours in front of the camera will, hopefully, make you better.

"But I'm someone that can learn from watching the work as well. You can see the progression in our episodes. I was already really pleased with the series but this year it's even better. I feel very lucky because we have people's attention and we have a responsibility to deliver. I think we're going to do that."

Viewers latched on to the characters in the first series and have their own favourites.

"They definitely have their favourites. It's divided. You talk to some women and their favourite character is Rose and they don't like to see what Harry's done to Rose.

"Some wanted her to end up with Roderick the painter, just to spite Harry. I don't like hearing that. Oliver Jackson-Cohen who played Roddy was too tall, too good-looking and too young. It's a vicious combination," he smiles.

Harry, Rose and their family are based on real life characters and the drama aims to stay true to their historical destinies.

Having transformed Chicago's Marshall Field's into a modern department store, Harry came to Britain to found Selfridge's.

"He didn't want to compete against Marshall Field's so he got on a boat and came here, to this beautiful country. His entire world was about proving himself and proving that he could do it. He did embrace that American spirit and that's what made for such a fascinating story.

"In 1909 he put \$400,000 of his own money into the store which would be a huge amount today. So almost his entire focus was on succeeding.

"When we return to him in 1914 Harry is celebrated for five years of Selfridge's doing so well. But without the love of his wife it is a very hollow victory.

“So things have come into perspective for him. He knows what is important in his life and the weight of that is on his shoulders. That’s even more interesting to play as an actor than a guy who’s just driven for success.”

As series two begins, the First World War is nearing.

“With the Great War as a backdrop it helps to put Harry and Rose’s lives in perspective because the stakes are so incredibly high. England has become their home and they are very loyal. Their entire family is. And they’re willing to do whatever it takes to help in the war effort.”

Some 85 per cent of the 949 male staff in Harry’s Oxford Street store are eligible to sign up to the Army and fight in the war.

“It’s tragic. They thought they were going to go over and bloody some German noses and then come back and take a victory lap. No-one knew of the horrors ahead.”

New regular characters include Lady Mae’s (*Katherine Kelly*) husband Lord Loxley (*Aidan McArdle*), returned to London from the country.

“We think we know Lady Mae and have got her pegged. And then suddenly you see her other half and you realise where she comes from, why she is the way she is and just what a nasty piece of work Lord Loxley is. Aidan is a genius. He’s like a baby-faced assassin. It’s a pleasure to work with him.

“Cal MacAninch is a new face in the store as Head of Fashion Mr Thackeray and provides a brilliant foil for Agnes Towler, played by Aisling Loftus. He’s wildly ambitious and has his own agenda. Mr Thackeray is villainous in his own strangely arrogant, aggressive and androgynous way.”

Polly Walker also arrives as club owner and author Delphine Day.

“Delphine is a fascinating character for the time. She’s a woman who isn’t afraid to be exactly who she is. A very self-empowered woman who embraces her freedom, takes on many lovers and writes about them - and also has her own club.

“She wants to help Harry, to connect him with people so he can be taken seriously in helping with the war effort. Polly Walker is amazing in the role.”

Fans of Henri Leclair (Gregory Fitoussi) - Harry’s best friend and right-hand man - will also be pleased to know that he returns to the series. But not as they remember him.

“Not at all. We remember Henri as this incredibly stylish Frenchman who steals women’s hearts. And now you’ve got a guy who is a little bit lost. He doesn’t even

look the same. He's got a beard and you don't know what's happened to him. Henri's dark past has come back to haunt him but we don't know exactly what it is."

Harry's son and heir Gordon (*Greg Austin*) is now 15 and anxious to join his father at the store.

Explains Jeremy: "Harry is one of these guys who started in the loading bay and worked his way up through every department. So there's that duality of wanting your son to be taken care of but at the same time wanting them to know what it's like to really work and earn something.

"It's not easy for Harry but that's what he wants for his son. Gordon can't understand why he can't start with a cushy desk job. Why does he have to push a broom? But learning work ethic is invaluable."

If Jeremy could play any other character in *Mr Selfridge*, who would it be?

"I happen to think Ron Cook, who is playing Chief Accountant Mr Crabb, is just the best. The writers and producers have also seen how good Mr Crabb and Chief of Staff Mr Grove (*Tom Goodman-Hill*) are on screen. Both of those actors are so well equipped with both drama and comedy, so now they're putting them together and making full use of them.

"But everyone in the cast is brilliant. It's a testament to the actors in this country and season two gives them a huge chance to really show what they're capable of doing."

Tennis fan Jeremy has enjoyed his latest stay in London. He and co-star Katherine Kelly went to the French Open at Roland Garros in Paris and Jeremy was watching on Centre Court when Andy Murray won his first Wimbledon Men's Singles title.

Having studied at the National Theatre in London as part of an exchange programme when he was younger, Jeremy knows the city well.

"I'm now here for six or seven months of the year filming each series of *Mr Selfridge* so I do feel like a Londoner in that time. It means the world to me to be accepted here.

"Any time I've had a weekend off I've seen a play or taken in the sights. But then it's back to work on set. Much like Harry is responsible for his store, I feel a responsibility for the show and I'm honoured to have it.

"I love going to the real Selfridges in Oxford Street or driving past it. I feel like I have a connection. I really do. You're stirring up the past and celebrating it. Harry lived a very full life and it's extremely fertile ground for a series."

Not that he gets recognised in the store.

"My own look is so completely different to Harry's on screen. I'm a very casual dresser and I usually wear glasses and a hat. So I get a lot of double takes and confusion."

The fictional store set looks even more impressive this year.

"What we've created on these sets really interests me. Growing up in Chicago, I went to Marshall Field's where Harry Selfridge began and the influence of that is everywhere.

"I really love the fact that, without it being intentional, I was somehow maybe meant to play Harry in some way, growing up and going to that store.

"Also having my mother - and her mother - go there. And me asking about what it was like to go there back in the day. They said they felt special when they walked in those doors. There was a real atmosphere and they were treated so well.

"So everything you read and hear about Harry he was actualising back then. That's very comforting to me. Because you're looking for different things to hang your hat on as an actor.

"I guess it's easy for some to judge him. He wasn't faithful to his wife, he had a lot of demons. But there was so much goodness in him as well.

"I think you have to embrace and love someone's imperfections, because we're all imperfect. And they certainly make great characters to play."

Jeremy admits he's constantly surprised at the people who watch him on screen.

"My buddy Mark Schulman, who is the drummer for Pink, is a pretty tough guy and he's just addicted to *Mr Selfridge*.

"I was lucky enough to get out on the road and work for President Obama - we call it stumping - in the Midwest and go to Indiana and all these interesting places.

"He told me that *Entourage* was his favourite show. And I thought, 'What a great politician. He must have an aide that whispers in his ear - he's in *Entourage*.' And then he goes, '...is my favourite show.' So I just thought, 'Oh man, he's good!'

"But I did a little research and, sure enough, his head of security confirmed it. He said, 'Yeah, actually Barack loves *Entourage*. That's his show.'

"So you never know. One day he might ask for a box set of *Mr Selfridge*..."

Jeremy's credits include: *Entourage*; *Ellen*; *Cupid*; *The Larry Sanders Show*.



Frances O'Connor is Rose Selfridge

Frances O'Connor can recall many special moments during the filming of the second series of *Mr Selfridge*. Including a guest appearance by acclaimed English tenor Alfie Boe as Richard Chapman, a singer who used to top the bill at The Gaiety. He is an old friend of former Gaiety girl Lady Mae Loxley (*Katherine Kelly*) and agrees to perform at a Selfridge's charity concert.

"Rose Selfridge and Mr Crabb, played by Ron Cook, arrange the charity event at the store to raise money for soldiers on the front line in World War One," explains Frances.

"It was incredible to film. We had front row seats to Alfie Boe and he was amazing. His singing was so beautiful it made you cry. And he was a fan of the series."

Rose returns to London in 1914 on the eve of the Great War. Although still estranged from womanising husband Harry, she agrees to keep up appearances by his side.

"It's five years on and I think Rose has grown up a lot. She decided that she couldn't get back with Harry so she has been going back and forth from Chicago to London. Their daughters are in Chicago and their son Gordon is at boarding school.

"She's really just in London in a public capacity as his wife, to be Mrs Selfridge to the outside world. But that's as much as she can do. The relationship is not frosty but it's perfunctory in a way. Harry has a lot of work to do to try and win her back and he still has lovers on the side.

"Underneath it all Rose is still totally in love with him and it's been a long five years for her. But she's become a lot stronger and surer of herself. She is still the same person but has worked out what she wants from life. Rose knows what she is prepared to put up with - and what she's not.

“People seemed to really like Rose as a character in the first series. I don’t think I’ve ever played anyone quite that gentle. She was tested and challenged, which was very satisfying to play. And women identified with her at the end when she felt compelled to leave, although they understood both Rose’s and Harry’s perspectives.”

Frances was born in Oxfordshire, raised in Perth, Australia and is mainly based in Los Angeles.

She was delighted to return to the role of Rose, a real person who before marrying Harry was Rosalie Buckingham and came from a leading Chicago family.

“I’ve never done something where I’ve returned to a character before. So it’s really lovely to come back and work on the same sets with the same crew and cast. They’re such a lovely group of people and creatively it’s fun to come back to work here.

“The first series was like champagne bubbles and we’re living the dream making this amazing store. But now it’s about getting deeper into these characters and getting to know them even better.

“Rose’s look is different from before. It’s a little softer than the Edwardian look and slightly less structured. So it’s got more flow to it. I think it’s very pretty in what was quite a glamorous era.

“They’ve also done a really great job this series in terms of how they’ve dressed the sets, with the store now five years on. The decor in all of the sets is really beautiful and they are so detailed. It helps you believe in the world.”

Rose has a new friend - London club owner and author Delphine Day, played by Polly Walker.

“They met on the boat from America to England and are a bit of Yin and Yang. They see the opposites in each other. Rose views Delphine as a real go-getter, living her life to the full. They are an unlikely pair but they actually get on very well.

“I love Polly. She lives in LA and we have a lot of similarities in terms of our lives. She’s a really great actress and just gets on with it. She’s a lot of fun with a great character to play.

“I also love filming on the Delphine’s club set. Usually it’s a party scene and you’re drinking a fake glass of champagne and it just feels very fun.”

Delphine’s arrival complicates the relationship between Rose and Lady Mae.

"There are some great scenes between the three of us with Delphine and Lady Mae vying for Rose's affections. It's this weird triangle and Rose is stuck in the middle, trying to really like both of them at the same time.

"But Lady Mae's storyline is a lot more serious this series and Rose takes her eye off the ball a little bit when it comes to her. Because she's so into her new friendship with Delphine she misses some of the signs that Lady Mae is actually in trouble.

"All the women in the show are different but they're all quite strong characters. That's good because sometimes in a period piece everyone can be demure. But they're really not. None of the women put up with anything," she laughs.

Young actor Greg Austin, who trained at the Arts Educational Schools in London, joins the regular cast as Harry and Rose's 16-year-old son Gordon, who is heir to the Selfridge empire.

"They cast an English actor because Gordon would have been in England for so long he would have adopted an English accent. And Greg is really good. Gordon gets on better with Harry - Rose loves him but she doesn't quite know how to handle him."

World War One is just over the horizon as the second series begins with many male Selfridge's employees eligible to sign up to fight.

"The war is not the main focus of the series but, of course, it impacts on everybody. It's very poignant to see the young men going off to the trenches.

"In the first series Rose had a sense of feeling redundant and not having a real use. But now she is needed to help. And she jumps at it, helping to take up the cause of women who are drafted in to replace the men who have left."

Has Frances been back to the real Selfridge's in London's Oxford Street since the first series was screened?

"I haven't had time but I'm a little embarrassed to go now, in case people think it's Mrs Selfridge in Selfridge's. But I think I'm going to have to brave it at some stage.

"I have been recognised quite a lot from playing Rose, mostly when I'm dressed up. People are usually very nice and say they love the show. It's very complimentary. But British people are normally very laid back."

So how would she sum up her Mr Selfridge experience so far?

"It's been brilliant. I've really loved my character and working with this calibre of actors. It's been really special and the crew have been amazing - and the directors we've had. It's such a great production team. It's just been such a joy to work on."

Frances' credits include: *The Hunter*; *Bedazzled*; *Timeline*; *Piccadilly Jim*.



Aisling Loftus is Agnes Towler

There was a surprise in store when Aisling Loftus paid a visit to the real Selfridges in Oxford Street.

“My mum had come to London and we popped in,” explains the actress who plays former shop assistant Agnes Towler, newly promoted to Head of Display.

“And my mum went, ‘Ooh, Ashy!’ Because she saw all the Mr Selfridge DVDs and books with a little picture of me on the front.

“She was so surprised she just couldn’t help it. But I said, ‘Mum, we cannot be seen loitering near these. We need to move on!’

“At which point a woman who had one of the DVDs in her hands turned to me and said, ‘Would you mind signing it?’ And I thought, ‘I don’t know if I’m allowed to! I don’t think I can just scrawl on one of their DVDs.’”

Laughs Aisling: “So that was a very cringe-worthy moment. But it was really lovely for my mum. Such a surreal thing for her.

“And I did sign it in the end but it was really embarrassing. As if I’d gone into the store especially to autograph a DVD with people thinking, ‘Who is this jumped up nobody?’”

Viewers fell in love with innocent “Aggie” in the first series as she made her way in the world and eventually into the arms of Frenchman Henri Leclair (*Gregory Fitoussi*).

Her creative talents shone through and were recognised by Harry Selfridge (*Jeremy Piven*) who has since sent Agnes off to Paris to continue her artistic and retail education.

The store has moved on in the last five years and so has the East End ingenue.

“Agnes has been on secondment to the Galeries Lafayette, the legendary department store in Paris, and has learned her craft, returning to London with a real sense of confidence and creativity.

“She has also been living as a single independent woman and knows exactly who she is, not just in relation to someone else. Or at least feels like she does. She doesn’t question herself as much.

“Agnes has a more sophisticated look but I don’t think it’s contrived. She always had class and made little flourishes to her outfits in the first series. But there’s a real air of self-confidence now. She has been influenced by Parisien style and brought her own creativity to it.”

Aisling visited the French capital for herself at the start of filming for the second series.

“I went to Paris with my boyfriend and I thought I really should go to Galeries Lafayette. And I would have gone. Only he wanted to go to Disneyland Paris, which was great. So instead I did a fair bit of online research on the store - but I’d love to go one day.”

The Nottingham-born actress was delighted by the reaction to the first series of Mr Selfridge.

“We were all excited for it to be seen and people really got behind it. It was a real joy having people watch it and like it. It’s nice to play someone like Agnes who is so likeable. She’s a bit of an underdog and a trier, facing her fair share of hardships.

“I was also quite excited to see that Sara Cox and Zoe Ball both watched it and liked Agnes - because I like them an awful lot.

“But more than anything I was really happy that my friends and family enjoyed it. It was interesting that my ‘lad’ mates from home watched Mr Selfridge and enjoyed it. I didn’t expect that. I knew my mum would love it - that was a dead cert. But it was really interesting to see that it had such an appeal across the board.”

Was she recognised off screen from the role of Agnes?

“Yes. It seems to happen if I am looking a bit rubbish and haven’t got much make-up on and I’ve got my hair up. Or generally in shops. There seem to be a lot of people working in retail who are watching the show.”

Aisling recalls her first day back on the massive store set as the start of filming for this second series.

“It was overwhelming. Because in those five years Selfridge’s has developed a fair amount and is definitely a more glamorous place. It’s a real spectacle. It’s the same feeling I get when I walk into the real Selfridge store today, especially the really posh bits.

“My favourite part of the set is Agnes’ studio, which is beautiful and has a lovely little balcony. I’ve only been on it for about 20 seconds of filming so far but I’m hoping that at some point Agnes will maybe have a cup of tea out there. She’s definitely done a lot more with the studio that Mr Leclair ever did.”

And what of her former love, Creative Director Henri (*Gregory Fitoussi*), who left to join old flame Valerie in New York?

“I think Agnes handled that relationship in the last series with real class and dignity. It was very mature. In the end she was rejected but she had to make peace with that.

“But then it isn’t a conclusion because he is back, looking dishevelled and with a secret.

“It’s a huge shock for her. There’s something emotionally dangerous about him being back on the scene and Agnes is now in a position to help him, rather than the other way around. So their roles have slightly reversed.

“Agnes is protective of Henri in a way that she was never given a chance to be in the last series because he was a very strong, masculine presence that she gravitated towards and leant on. So it’s quite interesting to have her be slightly more stable and less needy.”

Agnes was also courted by waiter Victor Colleano (*Trystan Gravelle*), who is now in charge of Selfridge’s Palm Court Restaurant.

“There is a resentment on Victor’s behalf that her priorities lay in her career and her energies were focused into Agnes as a career woman, not Agnes as a potential wife. He found her going to Paris difficult to swallow.

“When she returns the relationship has changed a little because she’s a different person now. So there’s some re-adjustment and re-learning to be done of each other at the beginning of this series.”

Harry is keen that spirited Agnes makes her mark again in the store but new Head of Fashion Mr Thackeray (*Cal MacAninch*) does not like his territory being invaded.

“He is her self-doubt personified. Mr Thackeray is undermining and quite acerbic, always ready to stick the knife in at a time when Agnes is really trying to show what she has learned.

“And as much as she comes back with verve and confidence, she does have hurdles to face like Thackeray and just the daunting task of applying what she has learned. Nothing is made easy for her. She is under pressure with a heavy workload and struggles at times.”

Her younger brother George (*Calum Callaghan*) has also gone up in the world, gaining promotion in the Loading Bay.

But the First World War is looming with young men like George encouraged to sign up to march off to fight.

“As much as Agnes has come back with all this confidence and tenacity, George is at the foundation of her whole life. He’s the one person that has been reliable. She cares about him deeply and is very protective. So the prospect of him going to war is deeply upsetting and unsettling.”

A friendship also develops between Agnes and her former departmental boss Miss Mardle (*Amanda Abbington*).

“I think they would have been friends in the first series but for the fact that Miss Mardle was her superior and there was a certain amount of professionalism to uphold. But they’re now good friends. Miss Mardle is a real support to Agnes. It’s a lovely relationship.”

Aisling thinks fans of Mr Selfridge are in for a treat.

“The first series was all about establishing the store and the characters. Now there’s more focus on how life would be playing out at this moment in history and I think the series itself is deeper and richer.

“People think they know who these characters are but they can contradict themselves and what we know of them. Things can be revealed that will maybe surprise.”

Aisling’s credits include: *Good Cop*; *Public Enemies*; *Five Daughters*; *Dive*; *The Fattest Man In Britain*; *The Borrowers*.



Katherine Kelly is Lady Mae Loxley

"If you please, my lady. Lord Loxley's downstairs. He's brought luggage."

Lady Mae's maid Pimble (*Amanda Lawrence*) announces the news that spells trouble for her mistress.

"I started talking to executive producer Kate Lewis about series two of *Mr Selfridge* before we'd even finished series one," reveals Katherine Kelly, who plays Lady Mae Loxley.

"The first thing Kate said was, 'We're going to bring your husband in and he's not going to be who people expect.'

"Lady Mae has painted him out to be this old, weary gentleman who spends his time shooting in the country. But actually he's the complete opposite. A bit of a devil.

"Instantly the tables turn for Lady Mae. You can see Lord Loxley is a nasty piece of work. The fear of God is in Pimble's eyes when he comes back and the whole household trembles.

"It's an exceptional storyline that will come as a shock to the audience. In series one you saw Lady Mae when she wanted to be seen. She treated *Selfridge's* as her own catwalk and red carpet. When you were in her house it was always on her terms. It was her party that she was throwing.

"But now in series two you see Lady Mae when she wouldn't want you to see her. It really is that thing of not knowing what goes on behind closed doors. Although you will know by the end of this series.

"You get to know a lot more about Lady Mae and what makes her tick and the kind of woman she really is, rather than the woman she wants you to believe she is. They are two *very* different things.

"Lady Mae is a celebrity of the day in a way and you see what celebrity is really like when there is no red carpet. You see her vulnerable side for the first time."

Lord Loxley, played by Aidan McArdle, is in big financial trouble and aiming to save himself by returning to London to cash in on the coming First World War.

"Loxley is the landed gentry and Lady Mae is a former Gaiety Girl who married into his money. Once upon a time when they first got together there would have been some good times.

"They've got a love-hate relationship and it's very much hate now. His money problems also impact on her lifestyle. At the outset Loxley closes her Selfridge's account in a very public way and really makes a fool of her.

"This year hard times have hit. She's not the shopaholic that she was in series one. Loxley has definitely dampened her fun. But that's just one of the things he does."

Loxley is physically violent to his wife.

"It's almost like a gut reaction from him, like a cat lashing out when they think they're in danger. You just know from watching him that it's a regular occurrence - and now you see why Lord Loxley was always in the country and she was always in the town.

"Although the subject matter may be shocking I really enjoy filming scenes like that, to be honest. I've done enough stage fights in my time. I find them challenging and it's important to get them right, both technically and in terms of the story.

"He threatens to send Lady Mae back to the 'gutter of the Gaiety,' so it's war. This is a battle between Lord and Lady Loxley."

Adds Katherine: "Lady Mae is in a very tricky position. In 1914 a wife had to obey her husband. He could do what he wanted to do in the eyes of the law. Divorces weren't that common and she still could not vote. A woman had no voice, really. Certainly nowhere near the power and rights women have today.

"I really enjoyed that Lady Mae has a huge range of emotions to go through in this series. You want to move forward with a character. So we now investigate something else about her.

"It's been a really satisfying series for me. When the writers write those kind of things for you it's a big compliment. The fact that they've taken what you did in the

first series and let you go from somebody being at the top of the tree and then knocked her down to the bottom.

"I love playing extremes like that, especially when they come within the same character.

"It was the same when I played Becky in Coronation Street. One week they'd give me a whole lot of comedy and the next week she might as well have been given a bucket for all the tears she shed."

RADA-trained and former Royal Shakespeare Company actress Katherine pays tribute to her Mr Selfridge co-stars.

"The cast is full of awesome actors. Frances O'Connor (Rose Selfridge) is one of the best actresses I've ever worked with. Outstanding. She's a movie star. It's incredible what she does and it's effortless.

"And Aidan, of course. He's one of my dad's favourite actors. So when I heard he was coming to play my husband he was thrilled. He thinks he's phenomenal.

"I'd never worked with Aidan before but he's a RADA boy so we hit it off straight away. Obviously we knew so many of the same people and we had the same teachers. I know people find this from other drama schools, you have a bit of a shorthand if you've gone to the same one.

"Aidan is just a joy to work with. He brings such an energy and loads of ideas. And all the directors seem excited when we go up to the Loxleys' house and film scenes.

"We use Wrotham Park in Hertfordshire for their home and it's just such a beautiful house. It was a glorious summer and we had some really nice days there with some memorable scenes.

"I love Lady Mae because she makes the best of what life has thrown at her. In another time her and Harry Selfridge would probably have been business partners. But she couldn't do that because she was a woman. So she does the best she can, even in the bad situation she now finds herself in."

Katherine and co-star Jeremy Piven, who plays Harry Selfridge, took a short break from filming to visit the French Open tennis at Roland Garros in Paris.

Then during a planned two-week mid-series break for the entire production, she sealed a love match by marrying partner Ryan Clark in Las Vegas. The couple are expecting their first child next year.

"Jeremy loves sport and both my husband and I are the same. So Jeremy and Ryan really get on. They can talk about basketball, boxing or whatever all day long."

Award-winning Katherine believes the bar has been raised for the second series of Mr Selfridge.

"I don't want to speak too soon because when you're filming you just keep your head down and get on with it. But I definitely get that feeling. I think this series is even better.

"I always get asked when the series is coming back and what I really like is that Mr Selfridge is very popular with men, as well as women.

"I can only speak for my own family but I cannot get my husband or my two brothers to sit and watch period drama. But this is different. And not just because I'm in it because my brothers won't watch if I'm in anything - they're quite happy to tell me that too," she laughs.

"But they're both businessmen and they really like to see how Harry made his empire. It's a fantastic true story and that's what the show has going for it. Obviously some of the characters are invented but I don't think people fully realise how true it is."

Katherine's credits include: *The Guilty*; *The Last Witch*; *The Field Of Blood*; *Coronation Street*; *Life On Mars*; *The Best Possible Taste*.



Amanda Abbington is Miss Mardle

Conflict is nearing as the new series of Mr Selfridge begins on screen, 100 years after the start of the First World War in 1914.

With an uncertain future looming on the battlefields for the young men in the store who sign up to fight.

"It was very moving when we did the read-through for those scenes and also during filming. We forget how optimistic these young men were.

"Young boys who thought they were going off to fight in a glorious campaign and be back before they knew it," says Amanda Abbington, who plays Miss Josie Mardle.

"They didn't realise the huge consequences. Looking at it in retrospect it's heartbreaking. Some of them were just 17. And once they'd gone off to fight that was it. You didn't know what had happened to them unless you got a letter or telegram.

"It made me think of my own two children. As a mother I pray that neither one of them wants to be in the Army. So God knows what the mums of those boys would have felt like."

Head of Accessories Miss Mardle won the hearts of viewers in the first series after she loved and lost.

"I was really pleased they liked Miss Mardle because, aside from everything else, she was the mistress of married Chief of Staff Mr Roger Grove (*Tom Goodman-Hill*). So that could have led some people to think she was not a nice character."

Lonely Miss Mardle lived for her secret stolen moments with Mr Grove, including their Tuesday night bath nights.

His wife had been sick for a long time and Miss Mardle gave up the chance of having a family with someone else to be with him.

But when Mr Grove's wife died, he chose to marry shop assistant Doris (*Lauren Crace*), reasoning she was young enough to give him the children he wanted.

"People had real sympathy for Miss Mardle. They came up to me in the street and said, 'I loved your character in Mr Selfridge and we all wanted her to be all right.' I also had a lot of men coming up to me and saying, 'I wouldn't treat you like that!'

"They also liked the fact that she did the right thing at the end when Roger asked her to carry on their affair, even when he was married to Doris. She refused to do that to Doris. I think a lot of women would have identified with that," explains Amanda.

So Miss Mardle has been alone again in the five years that have passed since we last saw her?

"She has. She obviously remains in close contact with Mr Grove at work and has seen him get married to Doris and have babies. And that will obviously have had some impact on her, having had the heartbreak of losing the chance to have a child with him.

"Miss Mardle still has feelings for him. Roger was the love of her life. She gave her heart to him and her time. So it was a big blow for her that she lost him. But she kept her dignity.

"He also has some regret about what he did. Which is good. Marry in haste. Never has a truer word been spoken in Roger's case.

"It is so well written and great to play as well. Miss Mardle has a good soul but she doesn't get any luck. Perhaps in this series light will shine on her."

There is bad news for Miss Mardle in the opening episode.

"Her brother lives in Geneva and she receives a telegram to say he is dying. So she has to go over to see him.

"When she returns she has seen all these men in military uniforms on trains across Europe and has an idea of the reality of the coming war and how it is going to change everybody's lives and the store. How the young men working there will go off to fight."

Adds Amanda: "Miss Mardle inherits her brother's house in London and has a disposable income. So she becomes a lady who could choose not to work if she wanted to. But she loves working at Selfridge's so much that she decides to stay.

"It means she is free to enjoy her life more, having not done so before. To broaden her horizons. As Harry Selfridge (*Jeremy Piven*) tells her, 'You have to learn to enjoy the money.' You see her spread her wings a little bit and turn into more of a butterfly.

"The house we filmed in is near Spitalfields in London, a beautiful 16th century house, which is stunning. You can't help but feel the history when you walk in."

Miss Mardle's friendship with former shop assistant turned Head of Display Agnes Towler (*Aisling Loftus*) also grows.

"Agnes has really blossomed and she is now this beautiful, independent career girl. But like Miss Mardle she also wants a man to love. It becomes almost a mother and daughter type relationship. Aisling and I are also good friends off screen so it's lovely to do scenes with her."

But Miss Mardle isn't enamoured with new Head of Fashion Mr Thackeray, played by Cal MacAninch.

"She doesn't particularly like Mr Thackeray and is a bit sniffy about him, as she is about other departments. She thinks her department is the most important one."

One episode features Belgian chocolate pioneer Jean Neuhaus who flirts in store with Miss Mardle.

"She's a bit of a dark horse, isn't she?" laughs Amanda. "Miss Mardle pretends she's quite austere but there's a bit of spark underneath the surface where men are concerned. I like playing that."

Amanda also thought she would enjoy filming a scene where a luxury chocolate was popped into her character's mouth.

"I love chocolate. But by the fifth take I said, 'I can't actually do this any more. I feel really sick.'"

The second series includes a guest appearance by English tenor Alfie Boe as Richard Chapman, a singer who used to top the bill at The Gaiety, who performs at a charity concert.

"He was such a delight. All the girls fell in love with him a little bit. Not only is he a really good singer, he's one of the sweetest men you could ever meet.

"How many people get to watch Alfie Boe singing to you in that close proximity? We now follow each other on Twitter and I'm determined to make him my best friend," laughs Amanda.

At one stage Amanda was filming Mr Selfridge and her role in the third series of BBC1's Sherlock, alongside real life partner and The Hobbit star Martin Freeman as Dr Watson and Benedict Cumberbatch in the title role.

"By the time we got to the third episode of Sherlock I was filming both on different days. It was a hard five weeks. I wouldn't want to do it too often but it was fine. You simply put one in a box when you go to do the other, so it's pretty easy dividing the two in your mind."

Mr Selfridge fans will be hoping to detect some romantic happiness for Miss Mardle in this second series. Can she ever be lucky in love?

"You'll have to wait and see. I'm really glad that people like the series. It's a joyful job and the store this year looks even more amazing. You walk on the shop floor and it's like stepping back in time. I've never known a show like it.

"There's so much pride and care taken with making Mr Selfridge and I think you can see that love and attention when you watch it.

"It's obvious that all those involved in bringing it to the screen have loved and cherished it. So you are happy to invest your own time in watching it."

Amanda's credits include: *Sherlock*; *Case Histories*; *Married Single Other*; *After You've Gone*.



Amy Beth Hayes is Kitty Hawkins

It wasn't quite murder on the dance floor for Amy Beth Hayes. But there was plenty of Tango terror.

Amy plays former shop assistant Kitty, now promoted to Head of Beauty, who is under the spotlight when she dances at a Selfridge's staff party.

"It was absolutely terrifying because I'd never danced before," explains Amy, who takes on the Tango at Delphine's Club.

"I met with executive producer Kate Lewis and she said, 'Do you dance the Tango?' And I said, 'No.' Then she said, 'Right. But you can dance?' And I said, 'No, never. I've never had any dance training whatsoever,'" laughs Amy.

"So I went out and had a few Tango lessons. I was very lucky to have an incredible dance partner called Amir Giles, who is one of the leading Tango guys in the UK. He worked with me and taught me the routine. I was very lucky to have him.

"I think he was even more terrified than I was because he had never acted before and had to say some lines. So we were bonded in mutual fear and terror and went through that together.

"But it was a good experience. I wouldn't have changed it. In fact I loved it so much that I've carried on doing it. I've got a bit of Tango fever. It's unleashed something.

"I have classes once a week and have been meeting lots of nice new people who are part of the Tango community.

"I've always wanted to have a go at ballroom dancing but I found the thought of turning up to a class not knowing anyone quite overwhelming.

“They say most dances are for people who are in love. The Tango is for those that have survived it. It is supposed to be more of a realistic, mature, assured, confident dance for worldly people.

“You can see it has a real definite story to it. There are lots of different Tangos you can do and each one has its own style and story and I am drawn into that when I watch it.”

Kitty has done well since we last saw met her.

“She has been promoted to run beauty which was emerging as a major change in the face of shopping. So it’s an exciting position for Kitty and a challenge she relishes. She’s found her calling in life and is very good at it. She knows how to sell beauty products and Mr Selfridge recognises that.

“Kitty has also matured and is much more of a woman of the world now. At least that’s how she sees herself.”

Her initial first series rivalry with Agnes (*Aisling Loftus*) and Doris (*Lauren Crace*) is now long in the past.

“She’s got bigger fish to fry now. Kitty has been given a big promotion and that takes up a lot of her time and energy. She’s less concerned with trivial, petty arguments. But she’s still got a sting in her tail.

“I got some amazing feedback after the first series. I was surprised that so many different types of people loved it, including the number of men who have really got into watching *Mr Selfridge* and are hooked.

“It was fantastic coming back to film the second series. I just adore this job. It’s a nice feeling to be here with the family of people I work with. And I get to leave the store a bit this time, away from the counter, including those dance scenes in Delphine’s.”

Journalist Frank Edwards (*Samuel West*) also takes Kitty to the club on a date.

“Frank maybe mis-reads Kitty and has bitten off more than he can chew. He realises there’s a lot more to her than he thought. I think they’re really quite suited to each other. They’re both very strong, individual and don’t like dishonesty. They also stand up for what they believe in, in their own different ways.

“Kitty is quite clever and streetwise and Frank is as well. They’re both masters at flirting. So they’ve met each other’s match. Things are bubbling along with her and Frank but I don’t know where it’s going to lead them.”

So where does that leave store loading bay worker George Towler (*Calum Callaghan*) who Kitty finally gave some encouragement to in the first series?

"In the beginning she didn't even consider George. But he showed his mettle in persevering and every woman loves a trier - if you keep going for long enough you might get a date out of it. So I think she liked that perseverance and was touched."

Young men working in Selfridge's flock to join up to fight when war is declared in 1914.

"I don't think any of them really contemplate what might happen. They were all so excited to go and thought it would all be over by Christmas."

"So those scenes of them going off are very poignant from our perspective looking back. It's all so innocent. I started off playing one scene a little bit somberly. But then Kitty wouldn't have known what was going on when a man appears in the store banging a drum."

"That touched me because I thought, 'They've got no idea what that means - it's actually the death knell for thousands of young boys.'"

"It's been good to delve further into all the characters and see how they have changed five years on in a very interesting period of history that's obviously tinged with a lot of tragedy."

When she's not filming on the store set, Amy is a regular visitor to the real Selfridges in London's Oxford Street.

"I was always in there anyway," she smiles. "Obviously you look very different on screen with the costume and hair in a period drama but I have been recognised in Selfridges. I think a lot of the staff watch the series because, of course, it's about their store."

And Amy's favourite scene of this series?

"One would have to be a picnic Kitty goes on with Frank Edwards. Samuel and I filmed in Green Park first thing in the morning. It was very early with just a few people around doing boot camp and walking dogs."

"And there we were, sat on deckchairs in our period costumes, drinking champagne. That was fun!"

Amy's credits include: *The Syndicate*; *Sirens*; *Lilyhammer*; *Eva*; *Micro Men*; *Misfits*.



Polly Walker is Delphine Day

“It’s just gorgeous. I’d come to a place like this,” smiles Polly Walker as she sits in a booth at glamorous Delphine’s Club.

Married and divorced three times, Delphine Day is a modern woman who writes racy erotic novels and owns an infamous club in London’s Soho.

“They’ve done an amazing job with the set for the club. It’s beautiful. As is the huge store set. It blew my mind when I first saw them. It’s like real life,” says Polly.

“Filming on the club set is cool when it’s full of people. It feels so authentic and a lot of fun. I think people will really enjoy Delphine’s when they see it.”

Rose Selfridge (*Frances O’Connor*) and bohemian Delphine become firm friends when they meet on the boat over from America to England.

“Delphine oozes glamour and she’s also artistic, a businesswoman and supporting herself without the help of a man. She’s fairly unconventional and emancipated. The sort of woman that will go for what she wants.

“Rose loves painting and art so she is attracted to that bohemian life that Delphine represents. They get on very well.”

Delphine’s is a club with a certain reputation.

“She doesn’t do anything to discourage that reputation. It’s the alternative to all the establishment clubs of the time. A place where you would probably bring your mistress. A cool club but also a discreet place.”

Adds Polly: "Her books are very modern, raunchy and suggestive for the time. But she strikes a chord with women and seems to have an uncanny knack of being at the forefront of what is happening.

"Delphine also knows everyone. She has a lot of friends everywhere. Important friends."

They eventually include Harry Selfridge (*Jeremy Piven*) after a wary start. "Harry is distrustful of Delphine and concerned about what her motives might be. He's also not used to such a direct woman. So he's cautious.

"But eventually he gains respect for her. He recognises that she has real business nous and is clever. She can also be useful to him. Even so, I think Harry is always slightly confused by her."

Not least when Delphine introduces Harry and Rose to a jellied eels stall.

"She tries to show them a good time and what some of Harry's staff might eat. Jellied eels are an acquired taste but they used Elderflower jelly for the filming, so it was fine."

And what of Delphine and Lady Mae Loxley, played by Katherine Kelly?

"Lady Mae also feels unsure about Delphine, who couldn't give two hoots about her. As long as Lady Mae stays out of her way, Delphine doesn't care. And I don't think she minces her words in making that clear."

Anxious to please his wife, Harry arranges for Delphine to launch her latest book - *The Summer House* - in his store.

She also helps organise a Selfridge's charity event involving Belgian chocolatier, Jean Neuhaus.

"Delphine does it very well and that's when Harry sees what a great businesswoman and seller she is. So she earns a little more of his trust and the devotion of Rose."

Was it daunting joining the *Mr Selfridge* regulars for the second series?

"To some extent, yes. I thought the first series was gorgeous and I loved all the actors in it. Then when you join the cast you're getting used to the costumes, the location and period. But as an actor you get used to being the new girl all the time.

"The costumes for Delphine are beautifully made. I'm mainly in greens with a bit of mauve. And some crazy hats.

"It does help in playing the role. You've got a corset on for a start, which means you hold yourself in a particular way. It does influence things. It forces you into the body language, which can only help.

"It was boiling hot filming last summer, especially having to wear coats with all the layers underneath - petticoat, corset, the list goes on. But if you're wearing a hat the heat can't escape. You can't even drink lots of water because I don't think anyone would talk to you if you kept on having to disappear every ten minutes. It's a bit of a stamina test."

When the news breaks, it falls to Delphine to announce the outbreak of war.

"What was interesting was how optimistic everyone was. The young men had no idea what was about to happen to them. So everyone was excited. They saw it as an opportunity to see the world. Obviously in retrospect it is sad and poignant."

The Cheshire-born actress is now based in America when she's not filming in Britain and thinks viewers across the Atlantic will also enjoy their nights in Delphine's.

As a young drama student she gained some experience of the licensing trade, employed behind the bar of a London pub. But it didn't work out.

"My dad had given me a car that used to be owned by my grandfather. It was bright yellow and not best. But it was my car. My dad kept on saying to me, 'Have you checked the oil?' And I kept saying, 'Yeah.' Of course I hadn't and the engine exploded.

"I got an evening job in the pub after drama school in the day so I could offer to pay for the repairs. But I couldn't do the maths and it lasted two weeks."

Polly's credits include: *Prisoners' Wives*; *Rome*; *State of Play*; *Caprica*; *Cane*; *John Carter*; *Clash of the Titans*; *Warehouse 13*.



Aidan McArdle is Lord Loxley

Aidan McArdle is ready for the audience verdict on his character in *Mr Selfridge*.

"I think viewers will absolutely despise Lord Loxley. I don't think it's complicated. If I'm not hated, I've really failed," he laughs.

"Loxley is incredibly ruthless and the embodiment of entitlement. He thinks there's absolutely no reason why he shouldn't get what he wants and the devil can take anyone who gets in his way."

Lord Loxley's arrival back in London is a shock for his wife Lady Mae (Katherine Kelly) after her husband had spent the entire first series out of sight in the country.

He is in big financial trouble and has returned to take up his seat again in the House of Lords with the aim of cashing in on the forthcoming First World War.

"Loxley is in trouble and plans to use his position as a peer to make some quick money. His return also spells major trouble for his wife.

"They had previously come to an arrangement where he allowed Lady Mae her infidelities and to live in London while he stayed in the country seat.

"But because he finds himself in huge financial difficulty he is forced to stake his claim in London. Loxley is a major problem for how Lady Mae lives her life. She suddenly realises that the control she thought she had over her destiny isn't there at all.

"One can imagine there was something quite dangerous about them when they first got together, almost like two panthers circling around each other.

"Lady Mae thought she would be in complete control and would be able to manipulate him to her own ends. But to her horror she finds out that she is wrong.

"This is something that is going to provide her with almost a taste of her own medicine. He's a very controlling man and she finds herself with a massive battle on her hands against somebody who she doesn't really have much control over at all.

"No matter what level of society you are in, if you're a woman you're still going to be second best. Loxley immediately closes her account at the Selfridge store. He's basically saying, 'This is no longer your domain and I will humiliate you in front of your set.'

"He tries to make out that Mr Selfridge has been ripping his wife off in some way, lulling her into buying lots of stuff - and he is going to change that.

"But he doesn't play a very clever game. He dismisses Harry Selfridge (*Jeremy Piven*) as a 'shopkeeper'. Harry is a big showman so Loxley regards him as a little bit vulgar. And he's American! But they're both alpha males.

"Loxley underestimates Harry. He's been in the country and is out of touch. He doesn't realise there's a new breed of powerful middle class merchants in the City and that has changed the political background.

"So he's come in with his landed gentry privilege and size 10s and destroyed potential alliances. He's a very destructive person."

Loxley sees the war as an opportunity to make money - by any means necessary and whatever the cost to others.

"He's not above a spot of blackmail, even when it comes to old school friends. He wants to get on to the Military Procurement Committee handing out contracts because he knows that whenever there is war, there is money."

Did Aidan find any redeeming qualities in his character?

"Just that it's great fun to be that bad. A fun part to play. The redeeming quality is that he doesn't care about what anybody thinks. I think that's something we could all do a little bit of. Of course he takes it to the extreme. But I do enjoy the fact he just doesn't care."

Aidan also enjoyed dressing for the part.

"All you need is a collar. It means you can't actually slouch. A tall collar does give you an imperial gait. You can't help but look down at people because you can't actually tilt your head at all."

He was a fan of the first series before the role of Loxley came along.

"I had been following *Mr Selfridge*. It was very addictive. So I was keen to take the part, especially because of who he was and some lovely set piece scenes where you get to be completely bad.

"The first time I walked on to the store set I thought it was amazing. It's huge. We use Wrotham Park in Hertfordshire for scenes inside the Loxleys' London house and that's impressive too, with lots of incredible paintings on the walls. It was great fun to think, 'Ah, this is my house.'

"It was brilliant working with Katherine Kelly. On our very first day of filming I had to be pretty rough on her but she made me feel at ease. I was the new boy coming in and she was the one who was absolutely supportive."

Loxley threatens to send his wife back to the "gutter of the Gaiety" and even resorts to physical violence.

"She is scared of him, which is a shock for viewers used to seeing Lady Mae using her power and influence to get attractive men to do what she wants.

"But she is married to this man and had few rights. It was difficult for a woman to get anything upheld against her husband in those days. So you see what a compromised position she is in.

"He gets a great thrill from the power he has over her and says, 'You might not think this but you're as bad as I am and we belong together.' And she has to face up to that and ask, 'Am I? Is that really true?'

"Katherine and I agreed that their relationship would have been pretty fiery from the start. Mae is clever and Loxley found her attractive. He needs her as well. It's not completely black and white - the villain and the innocent.

"There's a very grown up, passionate, murky, grit in the oyster element to the whole story where she knew what she was getting into. She just didn't realise it was going to be over her head.

"She married him for his money and I'm sure there was some sort of excitement at the beginning.

"Their relationship is incredibly toxic. The attraction isn't based on love, it's almost like narcissistic attraction. That you've met your partner in crime.

"But he no longer trusts her and has cut her off from him in an emotional way. Now she's got to toe the line and he's going to be the boss."

Aidan's credits include: *Quirke*; *Poirot*; *The Mill*; *Law and Order:UK*; *Not Only But Always*; *Garrow's Law*; *Beautiful People*.



Cal MacAninch is Mr Thackeray

Cal MacAninch cuts quite a dash as new Head of Fashion Mr Thackeray.

“My wife thought it was quite funny, the idea that I was playing a fashion expert. I think it’s quite funny too.

“I have three children. I don’t get new clothes, unless it’s for a special night out,” he smiles.

“Mr Thackeray looks delicious. Even though there’s a certain uniform he would have to wear for work in the store, he adds a number of flamboyant touches.

“For example, he almost always has a little bow tie on and a little splash of colour. I like to think of him being fragrant.

“He’s quite elegant in the way he walks. He moves like a dancer. He has got that elegance and was trained by Paul Poiret, the great fashion designer who transformed ladies’ fashion in Paris and across Europe in the early 1900s.

“Mr Thackeray is a man of exacting standards. He’s been poached from Harrods by Mr Selfridge to come and revamp his fashion department.

“When I first walked on to the store set I couldn’t believe it. The fashion department looks so beautiful and sumptuous - the dresses, gloves and hats. Fashion may not be my forte but even I could tell it was stunningly dressed. An amazing set.

“So Mr Thackeray has his own floor at Selfridge’s and he hates it when people come in and try and take it over.”

That leads to conflict with Agnes Towler, (*Aisling Loftus*), now promoted to Head of Display when she is asked by Harry Selfridge (*Jeremy Piven*) to work her magic for special events.

“A young woman having authority over Mr Thackeray on his floor is not on. And neither is having the ear of Harry Selfridge. He feels undermined by Agnes, especially as she can’t seem to do anything wrong by Harry.

“Some may see him as a bit of a schemer but I view him as trying his best to show the exquisite fashion he can bring to Harry’s store and how he can raise the standards.

“Mr Thackeray has an extremely important job and is very proud of what he does and what he has brought to Selfridge’s. He thinks the tastes of others in the store, like Agnes, are inferior.”

The mysterious return to London of former creative director Henri Leclair (*Gregory Fitoussi*) does little to improve Mr Thackeray’s humour.

“Henri is, of course, close to Agnes and an ally of hers. So it’s infuriating from his perspective. But that’s not quite the end of the story..!”

Glasgow-born Cal was impressed with the first series of *Mr Selfridge*.

“I thought it was a great drama and I liked the idea that I was going to bring something a bit different to it. The producers said, ‘Mr Thackeray has got a secret.’ So I asked, ‘What’s that secret?’ And they replied, ‘It’s a secret!’” So we’ll have to wait and see.”

Was it daunting joining an established cast?

“Yes, definitely. There is a certain acting style. You want to bring your own thing but you also have to complement the style of the piece.

So, of course, on your first day on set you don’t know what you’re doing. You’ve no idea how to speak, how to walk, how to wear the clothes. There’s no rehearsal so you’re straight in.

“Absolutely, it is daunting. But every single person I’ve met on the set has been fantastic and really welcoming. The whole experience has been great fun.”

Locations in this series include Victoria House in London’s Bloomsbury Square.

“That is used in part for the staff entrance and it looks incredible. Just like Selfridge’s.

“I used to be a regular at the Oxford Street store when I lived in London. I’d pop in from time to time.

“So I know just how incredible the sets are for *Mr Selfridge*. When you walk around them you really believe you’re in the store.

“I heard some viewers thought we filmed overnight inside the real Selfridges after it had closed its doors to customers. Because it looks that realistic.”

Cal’s credits include: *Downton Abbey*; *Wild At Heart*; *Silent Witness*; *The Awakening*; *Holby Blue*.

Mr Selfridge II Synopses

Episode one



LONDON, 1914

It's the 5-year anniversary of the store's opening and Harry (*Jeremy Piven*) is proud that Selfridge's has gone from strength to strength. It's now the third biggest attraction in town, behind Buckingham Palace and the Tower of London!

Harry arrives at the store and is surprised to find all the staff assembled in the Palm Court. They have clubbed together to commission a sculptured bust of The Chief in tribute to his leadership. Harry is truly moved; he values his staff more than ever. It's clear that they value him, too.

Chief of Staff Mr Grove (*Tom Goodman Hill*) bemoans the sleepless life of a parent of several children, whilst Miss Mardle (*Amanda Abbington*) requests formal leave. Her brother is dying in Geneva, and she must go to be with him.

Meanwhile, Agnes Towler (*Aisling Loftus*) steps tentatively into the store. Looking remarkably chic and sophisticated, Agnes has just returned from a 2-year secondment in Paris to take up the job of Head of Display in store. It's news Kitty (*Amy Beth Hayes*) - the new Head of Cosmetics - wasn't expecting, and Victor (*Trystan Gravelle*) looks on, surprised by Agnes' return.

Lady Mae Loxley (*Katherine Kelly*) is preparing to go shopping when her peace is shattered. Lord Loxley (*Aidan McArdle*) has arrived downstairs – and he's brought luggage.

At the store, Harry has his next surprise, Rose, who has returned early from America especially for the store's anniversary - but things aren't the same between them. Harry misses her but Rose is resolute. They made an agreement. She is happy to be Mrs Selfridge in public, but privately it's clear there's still a rift between them. Their intimate conversation is interrupted, to Harry's frustration, by Rose's new best friend Delphine Day (*Polly Walker*). Notorious nightclub owner and saucy writer, Delphine has a new book out, 'The Summer House'.

Lady Mae arrives in store with a grumpy Lord Loxley in tow. Loxley won't let her buy anything, and, to her muted horror and astonishment, makes a show of closing down her account. Loxley and Harry definitely get off on the wrong foot, and it's clear Loxley is going to cause trouble for Lady Mae.

Gordon (*Greg Austin*) returns home from school with news that he won't be going back. He wants to start work in the store, after all, it'll be his one day. However, Gordon gets more than he bargained for when Harry has him start in the loading bay with Gordon.

AGNES finds herself in confrontation with the waspish Mr Thackeray (*Cal MacAninch*), the new Head of Fashion when she has to arrange a display for the launch of Delphine's book in his department. But the display and launch are a big success.

Lady Mae is increasingly unnerved by Loxley's prolonged presence in town. She doesn't trust him an inch. And when she overhears him blackmail his way onto a government military committee, she knows he's up to something...especially with all this talk of war.

Harry offers to take Rose out to the cinema, but she goes to a party at Delphine's club, so Harry takes Gordon out instead. In the club, Rose is having a blast. Kitty is on a date with journalist Frank Edwards (*Samuel West*) but has to reject his scurrilous romantic advance!

Harry stops by Delphine's to walk Rose home, but when he sees her in her element having fun he just lets her be. Unseen by Harry, stepping onto the street, bearded and scruffy is former Selfridge's employee Henri Leclair (*Gregory Fitoussi*). A far cry from the suave Henri who left for New York years before, he lights a cigarette and moves off into the darkness.

As Harry and Gordon walk home Harry steps on a discarded, grubby newspaper with an ominous and now infamous headline: ARCHDUKE FRANZ FERDINAND ASSASSINATED.

Life will never be the same again. War is coming.

Episode Two



As the Selfridge's staff arrive for work they have to cross a trade union protest at the staff entrance. Demanding better rights and protections for workers, the protest is stirring up emotions with the staff – especially with all the talk of war. Grace (*Amy Morgan*) and Jessie (*Sai Bennett*) wonder if Mr Selfridge will go back to America if war comes? Will their jobs be safe?

Harry (*Jeremy Piven*) wants to reassure the staff and the public that he isn't going anywhere. Kitty (*Amy Beth Hayes*) has the idea of holding a tango demonstration for the staff, to thank them for all their hard work. Tango's all the rage, and Delphine's club has some tango dancers currently in residence. Harry loves the idea, but wants to reassure the public too by having some sort of Celebration of the Empire within the store. Mr Thackeray (*Cal MacAninch*) devilishly suggests the Empire Celebration last a whole week, across *all* departments, just to put pressure on Agnes (*Aisling Loftus*).

Lady Mae (*Katherine Kelly*) is escaping to the country, without Lord Loxley (*Aidan McArdle*). But her plans are thwarted when Loxley reveals he's leased the country estate out. Meanwhile, Rose (*Frances O'Connor*) is convinced she saw Henri (*Gregory Fitoussi*) at the club last time she was there, and asks Delphine (*Polly Walker*) if she has an address for him.

Rose persuades Harry to think about holding the staff tango party at Delphine's club. After checking out Delphine's club for himself, he agrees, and hopes it'll help him win Rose back. Harry sends Lady Mae an invite to the tango party, and Loxley invites himself along too – much to Mae's frustrated displeasure.

Trade unionist Arnold Huxton (*Iain McKee*) stops by the loading bay to rustle up support. Being a member of a union is banned at Selfridge's as they have an active staff council, and many other benefits. Despite this, Ed (*Jonathan Howard*) and Dave (*Daniel Kendrick*) are still interested in the union. They arrange a secret meeting with Huxton the night of the tango party, but Harry's son Gordon (*Greg Austin*) has overheard their plans...

Rose visits Henri, who is living in squalor, unkempt and a far cry from the elegant Henri who left for New York four years ago. Although Rose wants Henri to make up with Harry, who needs him more than ever, Henri is disinterested and tells her to leave.

The tango party at Delphine's is a big success, and the staff dance in the face of war. The sultry, sensual demonstration sets pulses racing – not least Frank's (*Samuel West*) who can't believe how brilliant Kitty is when she volunteers to dance in front of everyone! Victor (*Trystan Gravelle*) and Agnes (*Aisling Loftus*) share a refreshed flirtation until Agnes says there's nothing left between them. Soon enough, The Loxleys arrive, and when Lord Loxley approaches Harry to talk business, Harry rebuffs him. Mr Grove (*Tom Goodman Hill*) has got himself drunk, admitting to Crabb (*Ron Cook*) that he feels overwhelmed by work and family life. He worries about the prospect of war, and the impact it'll have on his children.

Meanwhile, Gordon has sneaked into the secret trade union meeting in the loading bay. When Selfridge's staff start realising how good they've got it, with a staff dentist and doctor, schemes for betterment and such like - the unionists get agitated and a fight breaks out, with Gordon in the middle of it.

There's big trouble between Harry and Rose when Delphine lets slip about Rose visiting Henri. Harry can't believe Rose didn't tell him Henri was in London. Their marriage remains fragile, strained, and incredibly complicated. This is mirrored in the Loxley household: when Mae mocks Loxley about being rebuffed by Harry – a lowly shopkeeper in his eyes – he hits her hard across the face. Mae lies on the floor, shocked and scared.

*****Please contact the ITV Press office for further synopsis*****

Cast Credits

Harry Selfridge	JEREMY PIVEN
Rose Selfridge	FRANCES O'CONNOR
Agnes Towler	AISLING LOFTUS
Lady Mae	KATHERINE KELLY
Mr Grove	TOM GOODMAN-HILL
Miss Mardle	AMANDA ABBINGTON
Mr Crabb.....	RON COOK
Victor	TRYSTAN GRAVELLE
Henri Leclair.....	GRÉGORY FITOUSSI
Kitty	AMY BETH HAYES
Frank Edwards	SAMUEL WEST
Delphine Day	POLLY WALKER
Lord Loxley	AIDAN MCARDLE
Mr Thackeray.....	CAL MACANINCH
Fraser	MALCOLM RENNIE
Miss Plunkett.....	SADIE SHIMMIN
George Towler	CALUM CALLAGHAN
Gordon Selfridge (15)	GREG AUSTIN
Jessie Pertree.....	SAI BENNETT
Grace Calthorpe.....	AMY MORGAN
Franco Colleano	SEAN TEALE
Gabriella	CRYSTAL LEAITY
Uncle Giovanni	VINCENZO NICOLI
Doris	LAUREN CRACE
Pimble.....	AMANDA LAWRENCE
Ed.....	JONATHAN HOWARD
Dave.....	DANIEL KENDRICK
Miles Edgerton	RAYMOND COULTHARD
Jim	VICTOR GARDENER
Journalist	MAX GELL
Susie Spender	GINA BRAMHILL

Sr. GomerezAMIR GILES
 Arnold Huxton IAIN MCKEE
 Jeremy Richardson JACK FOX
 Newspaper Seller..... KELL WARD
 Mr Webb PHILIP ROSCH
 William Pratt.....MATTHEW WILSON
 Monsieur Jean Neuhaus ANTHONY HOWELL
 Mr KingSHAUN HENNESSY
 Florian Dupont..... OLIVER FARNWORTH
 Miss EllisRIA ZMITROWICZ
 Mrs Bull JOANNA BROOKES
 Bill Summertime JAY VILLIERS
 Mrs Crabb WENDY NOTTINGHAM
 Richard Chapman ALFIE BOE
 Crawford Jameson CHRISTOPHER HUNTER
 Mabel Normand ANDREA DECK
 Mack Sennett..... JOSEPH BEATTIE
 German Police OfficerALAN TURKINGTON
 Reporter No.1 ALI COOK
 Winifred Bonfils Black..... SARA STEWART
 Miss Blenkinsop DEBORAH CORNELIUS
 Valerie Maurel JOSEPHINE DE LA BAUME
 Walter Hines Page KERRY SHALE
 Lois..... KIKA MARKHAM
 Beatrice SelfridgeALANA BODEN
 Violette Selfridge MILLIE BRADY
 Rosalie Selfridge POPPY LEE FRIAR
 Tom Regan.....JALAAL HARTLEY
 Dr Mann..... TERENCE HARVEY
 Hattie Starlet SOPHIA CARR-GOMM
 Roxy Starlet DAISY RIDLEY

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Executive Producer & Writer Episodes 1, 3, 6, 8KATE BROOKE
Co-Executive Producer & Writer Episodes 2, 5, 10..... KATE O’RIORDAN
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Director, Episodes 3, 4, 8, 9, 10ROB EVANS
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Director of Photography, Episodes 5, 6, 7 DAVID ROM
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