



Jekyll and Hyde Production Notes

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Jekyll and Hyde

**TOM BATEMAN, RICHARD E GRANT AND NATALIE GUMEDE TO STAR IN
ITV DRAMA JEKYLL AND HYDE WRITTEN BY CHARLIE HIGSON**

“Man is not truly one, but truly two”

Tom Bateman (*Da Vinci's Demons, The Tunnel*), Richard E Grant (*Downton Abbey, Dr Who*) and Natalie Gumede (*Coronation Street, Death In Paradise*) join forces to star in *Jekyll and Hyde*, a brand new, ten-part action adventure drama, dramatised by ITV Studios.

From an idea conceived by acclaimed novelist Charlie Higson, the action and fantasy series has been inspired by *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson. Higson has written and will executive produce the drama which exudes mystery, fantasy, horror and sci-fi.

Tom Bateman takes the lead role as Robert Jekyll, Richard E Grant plays Bulstrode who heads the secret government department M10 known as 'The Invisible Men' and Natalie is Bella who forms part of a love triangle with Robert.

ITV Studios Director of Drama Francis Hopkinson (*Lucan, Wallander, Home Fires*) will also executive produce with Foz Allan (*Wolfblood, The Dumping Ground, Robin Hood*) as Series Producer. Set in 1930's London at a time of Hollywood glamour, aerodynamic cars and monster movies, the drama will pay homage to the Stevenson novel, and focus on the young, attractive, troubled hero, Robert Jekyll, the grandson of the original doctor.

At the heart of the drama is Robert Jekyll's quest to discover his real identity, his true family history and the nature of his 'curse'. Jekyll transforms into Hyde in moments of extreme anger, stress and when his or the lives of others are threatened.

Higson's Jekyll is a young, sensitive and naïve man of intellect and morality, a well meaning if slightly repressed character who slips between his two personas unwillingly. Hyde is a totally different person;



a superhero with super powers, great strength, speed and invulnerability. He is confident, risk-taking and lives life on the edge. His self-destructive nature gets him into trouble, and yet he is an incredibly powerful force. He is a man of action who gets things done despite the consequences! Throughout the series we will witness Jekyll wrestling with the dark, brooding personality of Hyde as he struggles to come to terms with his superhero alter ego.

In the opening episode Jekyll is a newly qualified doctor living with his foster parents in Ceylon. He knows nothing of his family history or his inherited condition, which his foster father, Dr Vishal Najaran, is controlling with medication. The drama follows his path to discovery, which coincides with the transformative powers of his condition growing stronger and more disruptive. His journey will take him into a dark and unforgiving place, as his alter ego seems capable of anything. At the same time there are shadowy forces trying to find Jekyll and the source of his powers.

Further cast includes Stephanie Hyam (*Murdered By My Boyfriend*), Donald Sumpter (*Game Of Thrones*, *Being Human*), Amit Shah (*The Smoke*, *Hustle*), Phil McKee (*Ripper Street*, *Dracula*), Christian McKay (*Rush*, *Theory of Everything*), Ruby Bentall (*Poldark*, *Lark Rise to Candleford*), Enzo Cilenti (*Game of Thrones*, *Dr Norrell and Mr Strange*), Lolita Chakrabarti (*The Smoke*, *Death in Paradise*), Michael Karim (*Inspector Lewis*) and Ace Bhatti (*Silk*, *Eastenders*).

CGI plays a huge part in the main character's transformation from Jekyll into Hyde and the subsequent superhero sequences when the darker side of our hero emerges and demonstrates extraordinary strength and agility. Certain characters will also be created by CGI techniques.

Jekyll and Hyde features several recurring characters, some human, and some freaks of nature. Monsters will thrive throughout the series and there'll be spooky creatures, ghouls, zombies, werewolves and vampires.



Introduction

Charlie Higson, writer and executive producer

I must confess that this series happened almost by accident. I was asked by ITV Studios if I had any ideas for a slot they wanted to develop. They told me they were looking for something that had elements of action, adventure, horror, romance and a bit of humour - all things that are right up my street - but I had to explain that I was very busy and hadn't really been thinking of ideas in this area. Only a fool would walk out on a broadcaster who wanted you to write something for them, however, so I asked them to explain more, just in case I had anything that might fit the bill in the future.

They ideally wanted something that was a recognisable name there would be some inbuilt recognition, but it had to be an idea that you could do something completely new and different with, something quintessentially British, that could perhaps be done as a period piece. Trying to make sense of this I said in passing... "So, something like Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde?" At which point a boulder was set rolling that hasn't stopped yet.

It seemed this was exactly what they were looking for and they asked for a treatment almost there and then. So I had a commission. But I also had a problem. How do you do something new with a story that has been told so many times, in so many different ways, a character who is so well known (and, let's face it, oft parodied)? Indeed the story has been told so many times that Dr Jekyll (and of course, Mr Hyde) is the third most filmed character of all time (see if you can guess who number 1 and number 2 are*).

So, the first thing I did was read the book. Yes, that's right, I had accidentally pitched a remake of a book that I'd never actually read. It's one of those books that you think you know really well, but which is very different when you actually bother to open its pages. It's dark and murky and peculiar and it gets under your skin. And two things struck me very forcefully about it.

Firstly, it is very much one of the late 19th century books that brought horror into the modern world. It brought it out of Gothic medieval Europe, with its ruined abbeys, crumbling castles and dank dungeons, populated by mad monks and depraved counts, and into contemporary London. It tells a tale of psychological horror. It is the universal story of the monster within us all. As relevant today as when it was written.

Secondly, it struck me that it was in many ways a prototype superhero story. The idea that you could have a secret alter ego who can do all things you can't do as your ordinary self, was seized on by the likes of Stan Lee in creating his comic book superheroes - most explicitly with the Incredible Hulk. So I settled on the idea of telling the story of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde as a superhero story, a story that would sit happily in the world of the X-Men, the Avengers and Batman. My mister Hyde would have enhanced powers - he would be immensely strong and fast, and almost invulnerable. He would hold his own with other super-powered monsters, like Dracula and the Wolf Man. And, just like Dracula, he would be a sexy bad boy.

My next decision was when to set my story. I figured I had three choices - I could do it as a gothic, foggy, top-hatted, steam-punk Victorian adventure, like Guy Ritchie's Sherlock Holmes. I could make it very contemporary and cool, like Steven Moffat's Sherlock Holmes. Or I could put it somewhere in between, somewhere unexpected. In the end I chose the latter. I wanted to open out the world, add in action and adventure, and bring in a level of fantasy that I thought would be hard to pull off if I set the story in contemporary London (and how can you have an alter ego in a city that's plastered with CCTV?). Plus, Victorian gothic isn't really my thing. I wanted to avoid those top hats and ladies of the night under the gas lamps... "Hello, Dearie, fancy a good time?" I'd really enjoyed writing about the 1930s when I wrote a series of Young James Bond novels a few years ago. It's such a rich era historically and is recent enough for people to behave and talk in a recognisably modern manner, but distant enough for me to be able to treat it as a



Introduction

Charlie Higson continued

sort of fantasy playground (although I am expecting the usual complaints about the wrong sort of buttons on the soldiers' uniforms). This was a stylish era of men in nice hats and suits, when women's fashion were very sexy, but they were also allowed to be tomboyish, funny and tough. It was an era of modernism and streamlining and swing. In a nutshell - the 30s were cool. If we made our central character young then hopefully he would be cool as well. So I didn't want him to be the original middle-aged Dr Jekyll, I wanted him to be innocent and likeable, someone you could identify with. And Hyde? Hyde is the ultimate bad boy. Dangerous, amoral, hungry, half mad, fully sexy, fearless and powerful - he's who we all think we are when we're drunk.

The 30s was also the era of the first great cycle of Hollywood monster movies - mostly made by Universal - Frankenstein and Dracula, the Wolfman, the Mummy White Zombie, and I really wanted to do my own versions of all these monsters. What the hell, if I was asking the audience to accept one monster - in the central role - why not give them a whole world of monsters?

The main thing I changed from the original book is the concept that the ability to turn into Hyde is passed on genetically. I came up with the idea that unwittingly the original Dr Jekyll woke something that was latent within him when he took his fateful potion. What if he then fathered an illegitimate son when he was in his Hyde persona? And what if his son inherited his shape-shifting abilities? And he then had another a son of his own... and called him Robert?

So, I had all my elements in place. What story was I going to tell? The details sort of decided themselves...

As our story opens, Dr Robert Jekyll is a young, newly qualified, doctor who has been brought up by foster parents in Ceylon. He is the grandson of the original Dr Henry Jekyll, but has no idea of his past, and the 'family curse'. Events quickly conspire against him, however, the past catches up with him and long buried family secrets rise. The series is about Robert trying to find out who he is, and why he is like he is and trying to survive in a world where two opposing 'Jekyll & Hyde' forces are fighting for his soul.

MIO are a secret government organisation dedicated to removing monsters from our streets. They are a 'Jekyll' organisation, the forces of repression and denial. Tenebrae are the 'Hyde' organisation. An organisation of the very monsters MIO are trying to destroy.

Both sides want him for their own. Which way will Robert turn?

*Sherlock Holmes takes the number 1 slot, and Dracula is number 2.

Character profiles

Robert Jekyll played by Tom Bateman

Robert is the grandson of the original Doctor Jekyll and has grown up completely ignorant of his past, and the family curse he has inherited. As the series opens he is an earnest, thoughtful, slightly naïve young man, newly qualified as a doctor, and living with his foster family in Ceylon. He is rather buttoned up and repressed, but soon becomes aware that there is someone nasty lurking inside him...

Hyde played by Tom Bateman

Hyde, as you would expect, is the opposite of Jekyll - unbuttoned, uninhibited, unprincipled and dangerously out of control. He is not a thinker he is a doer, and physically very threatening. He has huge appetites and passions and no moral sense. Robert has to struggle to first understand and then control his dark impulses. But this is something of a superhero take on the characters and Hyde has the equivalent of 'superpowers' - he's immensely strong, very fast and almost invulnerable.

Max Utterson played by Christian McKay

Max Utterson is the lawyer who first alerts Robert to the fact that he is due an inheritance from his grandfather's estate. Max summons Robert to London where the two of them begin to piece together the mystery of who Robert is. He becomes first Robert's adviser and then his best friend. Max is warm and funny and down to earth. He likes to present the image of a raffish man about town, but is actually rather cautious and timid, which is why he is so startled by what he learns about Robert and the monsters that share his world.

Garson played by Donald Sumpter

As an 18-year-old lad from the slums of the East End, Garson worked in The Empire Music Hall, where he was found by Doctor Henry Jekyll, who recruited him to work as his assistant. He helped the mad doctor with his experiments and after his death moved on. Now an old man, he has made his way back to The Empire, where he works for Bella. He is the only person in London who knows what really happened 50 years ago, and is reluctant to go back there and uncover hidden secrets when Robert comes looking for clues to his past. He sees, however, that Robert is not like his grandfather and genuinely wants rid of Hyde, so he grudgingly comes on board as Robert's adviser and protector and becomes Alfred to Jekyll's Batman.

Lily Clarke played by Stephanie Hyam

The first person Robert meets in England is the beautiful young Lily Clarke and it is a classic case of love at first sight. Lily represents for Robert everything that is pure and good in the world – everything that is at threat from Hyde. She selflessly looks after her invalid mother and is very kind and understanding, with a sophisticated metropolitan side that Robert at first finds unnerving – but nevertheless highly alluring.

Bella played by Natalie Gumede

If Lily is the classic good girl, then Bella is the classic bad girl. When Robert first fully turns into Hyde he finds himself in a seedy East End pub 'The Empire', and meets its proprietor, Bella Charming, who runs a criminal gang on the side. She is more than a match for the unruly, supercharged Hyde. She's had a tough life and it shows. She's beautiful, dangerous, self-reliant, clever but ultimately falls hard for the dangerous charms of Hyde.

Bulstrode played by Richard E Grant

Bulstrode runs MIO (Military Intelligence Other), a government department that officially doesn't exist. Their job is to track down anything supernatural and monstrous and get rid of it. If the world appears mundane, grey and all too ordinary, that's because Bulstrode and his team have been doing their job well. Bulstrode knows quite a lot about Jekyll/Hyde and ultimately wants to recruit him, but first uses him as a bait to draw the series villains into his trap. Bulstrode is an M figure, but there is something amoral and unhinged about him. He is running his department primarily for himself and only paying lip service to his government masters.

Captain Dance played by Enzo Cilenti

Captain Dance is the main villain of the series. Suave, sinister, ruthless, and with a wicked sense of humour, Dance is Bulstrode's chief rival. He is a senior officer for an organisation of monsters known as Tenebrae. He is one of the living dead, able to regenerate after being killed, although it takes a terrible toll on him. Outwardly he is pristine, in his beautifully-tailored military uniform, underneath he's a rotting corpse.

Fedora played by Natasha O'Keefe

Fedora is Dance's sidekick and lover. She looks after him and helps to revive him when he 'dies'. She's a black widow figure – seductive, ruthless and deadly.

Hilary 'Hils' Barnstaple played by Ruby Bentall

Hils is Max Utterson's devoted assistant, a no-nonsense, jolly hockey sticks kind of a gal, good at paperwork and good in a fight. Nothing flusters her and she takes everything in her stride. She can take a drink, drives too fast and is a pretty decent shot.

Ravi played by Michael Karim

Ravi is Robert's half-brother. Sixteen years old, and very smart. He escapes an attack and imprisonment in Ceylon to come to England and help his big brother. The two of them get into many scrapes together, and it's not clear just who is supposed to be looking after who.

THE MONSTERS

The Vetala - The zombie-like reanimated corpses of Captain Dance's enemies, they become his ghoulish slaves.

The Harbinger - Half man, half dog, he brings dire warnings of the future.

The Black Dog - When under pressure Robert turns into Hyde. During the series he meets a branch of his family who when under similar pressure turn into monstrous black dogs.

The Cutter - 7'6" tall and with a lobster claw for an arm. He may not be very bright but he's extremely destructive.

The Moroii - Hideous leech-like creatures who help Captain Dance to regenerate, but when let loose into the sewers they grow to monstrous proportions.

The Reaper Bug - A parasite that gets inside you and controls your every action.

The Incubus - A demon who takes on the form of the person you love most in the world in order to eat your soul...

Cast interviews

Tom Bateman is Robert Jekyll and Hyde



Q: What were your thoughts when you heard about this series?

"I absolutely loved the idea and the 1930s setting. I had read the original Robert Louis Stevenson novel and thought the re-imagining writer Charlie Higson created is so much fun. It's something we haven't seen on TV and I had never read anything like it. I loved the dual character and Robert's struggle to come to grips with this evil - or liberated - side. The auditions were great because I got to keep doing these really fun Hyde scenes. There's nothing else like it on TV. The way we're shooting it is so cool and original. We've got the fight guy from Star Wars doing our fights and the director of photography from Peaky Blinders. There's an A-team on this. Everyone coming together and creating this amazing world. A really fun adventure."

Q: Who - or what - is Dr Robert Jekyll?

"Robert is a young doctor who has grown up in Ceylon. He has spent his entire life there with his foster mother and father. Although he obviously knows he is not from that world he doesn't know anything about his past, aside from that he has this hormonal imbalance that makes him go a bit funny. But he's got pills that can keep him under control. Hidden away in Ceylon he's slightly naive of the world and has concentrated on being a doctor and a good man. He's aware of the Hyde part of his character but he doesn't really know what it is yet or about his family history in London."

Q: Tell us about the accident which reveals he is not like other men?

"Robert is busy vaccinating children at a local clinic when a lorry drives off the road and smashes through the medical centre. He sees a young girl has been pinned underneath the lorry and the good side of Robert tells him he needs to help and he runs straight into the centre without a thought for his own safety. When he tries to lift this truck Hyde kicks in, because Robert is under extreme pressure. Just when you think he's a good guy and he starts to lift the lorry, Hyde takes over and actually threatens the child's life. It's pretty shocking and dark. But then the audience will see Hyde isn't truly evil as he just out to enjoy himself and have fun."

Cast interviews

Tom Bateman interview continued:

Q: So the locals think you have real super powers?

“We filmed in Sri Lanka and the local people were very interested in the filming. The scene where I lift the truck is done with the help of a crane but the roof of the clinic also collapses. The villagers watched filming all day and they saw the crane but thought that was only to lift the roof off and on. So when I was lifting the truck, obviously acting as if it was heavy, they thought I was doing it for real. In between takes the kids were running up trying to lift the lorry as they thought it was fake and really light. Which is when they discovered it was real and thought I must have superhuman strength.”

Q: How did you enjoy filming on location in Sri Lanka?

“That was absolutely amazing. I did a TV show set in Florence and we filmed in Swansea. So as soon as they said, ‘You’re going to Sri Lanka,’ I thought, ‘This job has just got even better.’ It’s brilliant for the show because the audience is expecting a dark, grim, smoggy London. Which they get, but then suddenly we cut to these huge open skies and beautiful countryside on the other side of the world. There’s a different energy and tempo about filming in Sri Lanka. It’s hot, you move slower and the surroundings are breathtaking. There are also elephants everywhere. It’s a different universe and people have a different mentality. You can imagine how Robert feels when he leaves there, arrives in London and thinks, ‘What is this place?’ We were in Kandy which is out in the mountains. We also filmed with a beautiful old steam train in a working train station. I had to jump on the train as it was pulling away. That was a real Indiana Jones moment with my trilby hat flapping in the wind. It was an amazing day.”

Q: Are we right to think Jekyll is on a journey of discovery because he doesn’t know the full truth?

“Yes. He is discovering things as he goes along. Robert doesn’t know anything about the monsters that exist. He’s been hidden away in Ceylon and then comes into this world where everyone is clued up and also knows everything about him. I discover secrets episode by episode, with the audience.”

Q: What triggers Jekyll’s transformation into Hyde?

“Stress, anger, rage, jealousy, lust provide the trigger for the transformation from Jekyll into Hyde. Mostly it’s anger when he just loses it. Charlie Higson has brilliantly explored the frustration of this character. Hyde is stronger than Jekyll and Hyde is a necessary ‘evil’ because he can do things others can’t. Robert can think and plan, but it’s Hyde’s strength and boldness that is actually required. He’s really struggling to hold everything together. All these secrets and double lives. It’s wonderful setting the story in the 1930s because of the very British way people behaved.”

Q: How do you approach that transformation as an actor?

“Before we started filming I had camera tests with the director Colin Teague, the designers and the CGI team. That was brilliantly useful because they were trying to create a language for Hyde. The producers showed me what I was going to look and feel like which was great to see. So I can have in my mind what this creature is. We’ve got five stages of Hyde and a lot of it is through make-up. Five being the big CGI monster who we only really see in flashes. One, two and three are him fevering in and out. The audience will know something is wrong before I become Hyde. Stage four is when Robert has completely gone and Hyde has taken over. He can still pass as a normal person until the monster at stage five. And you really don’t want to come across that guy!!”

Cast interviews

Tom Bateman interview continued:

Q: Tell us about the links to the past?

“It’s very clever. Donald Sumpter’s character Garson is the link. He in the beginning with Jekyll’s grandfather and here he is now guiding his grandson. He knows everything.”

Q: Is Hyde necessarily a bad man?

“The writer Charlie Higson gave me a book about the Greek god Pan to read. Everybody hated Pan. Traditionally they were very threatened by him because he was an evil, powerful guy no-one really understood. But actually he’s the god of mischief. So Hyde is a nasty piece of work but, as he says in the series, ‘All I want to do is have fun.’ And when you’re that powerful it’s very easy to have fun. As an actor you can’t approach anyone thinking they are evil. You have to understand how they operate. It’s for the audience to make their mind up about whether Hyde is bad or good. Me, as an actor? I have to look why he does the things he does. Why he behaves that way. Why he has no regard for anyone. Hyde does have a place and a function. There are evil forces at work and Hyde isn’t one of them. He saves the day a lot of the time and is the key to solving things. It’s very interesting to have a ‘bad’ superhero. Superman and Spiderman are almost infallibly good. Having a bad, malicious or just a fun hero is more accessible to people. How would you behave if you had superpowers? You wouldn’t really want to hide it. You would want to go around the world going, ‘Look at me. Look at what I can do!’ I think people will enjoy watching it. He’s a maverick and works for no-one.”

Q: Did you have to trash a posh hotel room during filming?

“That was my first outing as Hyde and also the most fun day on set in my career so far. They gave me a beautiful hotel room and everything was breakable. It’s all about this monster coming out. Robert hates his reflection as Hyde because he’s a monster. He’s trying to fight it and destroy those reflections, but then he just fully embraces it. It was wonderful to shoot because suddenly we’ll understand why he decides to ‘accept’ Hyde. It’s not just a character trashing the room although it was fantastic fun. I knew I only had one go at doing most of it. I smash mirrors, break chairs, blow doors off their hinges. There was a big wardrobe with a mirror and that got absolutely destroyed. Hyde also destroys the Empire drinking hall when he is fully transformed. That was three days of shooting. The set designers are amazing and it looks so beautiful but by the end of the third day everything was broken. They had to re-build it from scratch. They were like, ‘Please don’t break anything else.’”

Q: Tell us about the Jekyll and Hyde sets?

“I remember walking in and seeing the lab for the first time. It’s so amazing. I couldn’t wait to get started on filming. Jekyll’s house is also beautiful and steeped in history. A lot of these places have been left abandoned for decades because of the original Jekyll and Hyde. There’s a nice time lapse difference of modern versus the old which is really interesting. I love all the sets.”

Q: Can you explain the darkness and humour in the series?

“The humour is what brings people in. Even if a film is absolutely incredible, if it doesn’t have any humour it doesn’t quite draw you in as much. There are actually really funny moments in a film like Jaws, for example. Humour makes the characters more human. It also keeps you on the rollercoaster because it can get a bit repetitive if it’s always tense and dark.”



Cast interviews

Tom Bateman interview continued:

Q: Tell us about the look of Jekyll...and Hyde?

“The costumes help tremendously. They hold you in a certain way. I love the coat I wear. I tried on loads of things to see what worked and what didn’t. The costume designer Howard Burden came up with this one coat and as soon as I put it on it felt completely right.”

Q: Is Captain Dance, played by Enzo Cilenti, a major foe?

“Enzo is brilliant. I was sat next to him at the first script readthrough and he blew me away. He gets the brilliance of the comedy and is funny but also dark. Captain Dance is a proper evil character. He’s a monster but we don’t know what he is or where he comes from. Bit by bit Charlie teases us and lets us find out more about him. You will want to know more.”

Q: Tell us about working with Richard E Grant, who plays Bulstrode?

“Richard is amazing. My mum said, ‘What are you doing today?’ I said, ‘Today I’m pushing Withnail up against a wall.’ He’s a lovely, warm, generous man. And I get to act alongside him.”

Q: Tell us about Jekyll’s relationship with Lily (Stephanie Hyam) and Hyde’s with Bella (Natalie Gumede)?

“Robert is trying to be an upstanding member of society. So Lily is the perfect candidate for him. There’s an instant spark and it’s love at first sight. Whereas Bella appears to be the only person able to handle Hyde. Everyone else just runs away screaming or gets beaten up. She meets him toe to toe and he really likes that. Bella is a kick-ass character. It’s interesting because he is not cheating. He is a different person so Hyde will be with Bella and then when he is back to being Robert he will be with Lily.”

Q: Do you think we all have a good and a bad side?

“Everyone has a Hyde in them. Sometimes you have to behave in a certain way. An example of that is when you come across someone you don’t like. I’ve been brought up to be very polite and I’m not very confrontational at all. And then walk away and think, ‘If only I’d said or done that.’ We’re working very hard on this series and you want to go crazy, let your hair down and feel like you’re not tied down to things or you have to behave in a certain way. It’s quite nice to go out and be a bit crazy. But I don’t go around trashing bars!”

Q: What was the reaction of your family when you got this role?

“They are all very proud. I’ve got a wonderful family. They’re so non-showbiz. My mum is a primary school teacher and my dad is a music teacher and I’ve got loads of brothers and sisters. They’re really excited for me and supportive but also stuff happening in their own lives which is nice and grounding. Also my mum and dad can actually see this series. They live in the dark ages and don’t have all the channels. So the TV stuff I’ve done before, they’ve never seen because it’s been on American channels or Sky. But they can tune in to ITV every week and see this.”



Cast interviews

Tom Bateman interview continued:

Q: You have a twin brother?

“We’re not identical twins. He’s called Merlin and he came to visit me on set for Da Vinci’s Demons. We’d been given these swanky flats and a posh car comes to drive you to work. So he thought, ‘This is quite nice.’ Then he saw that you get your own trailer and people bring you food and stuff. Then you dress up and walk on set. The day he visited I did a fight scene and he went, ‘I think I want to do this. It looks really fun.’ And I said, ‘If you’d have come on a different day you might not think that because it can be hard work. He asked to come on the Jekyll and Hyde set and wanted to be an extra. But, again, I had to warn him, ‘Look, it’ll be fun for about an hour. After eight hours you’re going to be saying - Tom, can we go home now? And the answer will be no, because you’re in the shot. You can’t just disappear.’”

Q: Have you ever been really spooked by anything or had an unexplained experience?

“I have actually. I don’t think I’ve told anyone this before. When I was 16 or 17 I was doing some work with the father of my girlfriend at the time. He was an archeologist and we were working and camping in the fields. I was in a tent in the middle of the night when suddenly this bright light appeared. I thought it was a helicopter but it was absolutely silent. I stuck my head out of the tent, blinded by this light with still no noise at all. And then it just disappeared. And we were in the middle of a field. I woke up in the morning and thought, ‘That was weird. I definitely didn’t dream that.’”

Cast interviews

Richard E Grant is Bulstrode



Q: Can you tell us who Bulstrode is?

“Sir Roger Bulstrode is the head of the secret service department called MIO - Military Intelligence Other - which, itself, is a secret. It deals with supernatural threats. While people are sleeping by night, the nightmares they dream of are, in fact, a real threat. It’s Bulstrode’s job to ensure that when the people of Britain wake up their dreams remain nightmares and are not reality. He is a megalomaniac and power crazy. Bulstrode works for the Home Secretary and has to tolerate him and the way he works. But basically he follows his own route, and is always flouting rules. He has some of the madness and obsession of Jekyll and Hyde. He is chasing someone constantly which has become an all-encompassing 24-7 obsession. That’s what fires Bulstrode. He orders people around and doesn’t get his hands dirty. It’s his way or no way. His life has been dedicated to eliminating monsters, and he is completely obsessive. His character lives alone in a bubble to ensure he’s not going to be betrayed by someone else. You can’t get at him through emotional blackmail.”

Q: What was your initial reaction when you were first approached about the role?

“I thought it was going to be the original story from 1886. I didn’t realise it was to be re-booted and re-located into the 1930s and with the focus upon Jekyll’s grandson. Writer and creator Charlie Higson is a master, having written the young James Bond novels. Basing the story on Jekyll’s grandson means you can go in all sorts of directions.”

Q: Can you give us an insight into Charlie Higson’s scripts?

“It’s in the British DNA. In spite of the darkness there’s this filigree of humour running through the whole thing, which is what makes Jekyll and Hyde buoyant and implausibly plausible.”

Q: There seems to be a theme of everyone having two sides throughout the series – do you think this is the same in real life?

“We all have a thin veneer of civilisation. There’s a list of people I don’t like but equally there are people I absolutely love and adore but that’s just the nature of being a human. You have to learn to be unselfish,

Cast interviews

Richard E Grant interview continued:

compassionate, and kind to other people. As for Bulstrode, he's just a real odd cove. He dresses fairly extravagantly and is a collector of all sorts of peculiar things in bottles. Monstrous curiosities. Anything out of the ordinary is what attracts him. I think anybody who spends their life going down that route ends up becoming as peculiar as the thing they obsessively collect."

Q: Do you collect things?

"Yes but not of monstrous curiosities. I collect puppets, tiny toys, antique fabric. All sorts. I'm a complete hoarder. A maximalist rather than a minimalist."

Q: Can you tell us about Bulstrode's extravagant look?

"All the men have one costume. So I am in a three-piece tweed suit. Then I have this cashmere camel coat with leather gloves, tan hat and a fake fur collar. And that's the costume he wears throughout."

Q: Can you tell us about Bulstrode's magnificent office at MIO which is linked to an underground bunker?

"He has a very big desk to sit behind. Bulstrode doesn't stand up for many people. There's a large deco brass Sun motif behind his desk so he looks like he's sitting on his own self-appointed throne. This man has a very large ego. At one end of the office is a lift that takes you down to an underground bunker and lab which is very long with a low ceiling. It's like a Thirties' prototype of the James Bond back room. It's the 1930s art deco version of espionage as we subsequently know it from the movies."

Q: What does the 1930s setting bring to the series?

"You can shamelessly crib anything that Orson Welles did much later in Citizen Kane. Low angles, high angles and with a nod to Dr Caligari and those expressionist films of the 1920s. Going in at odd angles is justified. And because art deco was so curvy and angular by turn, it fits that style. People smoked as well. So you can pump smoke into every scene. That immediately gives it a period atmosphere."

Q: What can you divulge about the monsters?

"There are giants, vampires and a man whose face is made of wax that you can physically mould. A treasure trove of monsters, cyclops from Greek mythology. And the premise is that all of them have always been with us. Sometimes you get elements of the monster, half in make-up, when you're filming. But the magic happens inside the heads of Charlie Higson, computer graphic artists and animators."

Q: Have you ever had an experience you cannot explain?

"No. I am a Darwinian rationalist. I believe in the here and the now. I am reassured by the fact that this is it. You have one go in life and that's it."

Q: What do you think the enduring appeal of Jekyll and Hyde is?

"Every day in the newspapers you will read about somebody who has said, 'We had no idea he was like that.' People can seem perfectly normal and you find out they are not. It's that. You think you know people and you don't really know anything."

Cast interviews

Richard E Grant interview continued:

Q: MIO officers have to avoid public attention. Are you recognised a lot off screen?

“I travel on the tube and the bus every day. In America people are much more direct about saying, ‘Hey, you’re that guy.’ I’m for the most part oblivious if anybody recognises me, but I know from my wife and daughter, as they will nudge me or say if someone has recognised me. If you are at the opening of something or in a queue, that’s when I notice people with cameras on mobile phones. Also you see people on the tube who pick up their phone and point it towards you.”

Q: Tell us about working with Tom Bateman?

“I saw Tom in Shakespeare In Love in the theatre and he made such a powerful impression. This is a fantastic part for him and he has absolutely nailed it. He manages the switch from being charming Jekyll into monstrous Hyde with great ease and believability. He’s got charm and danger in one and he combines these two things and has made it seem effortless.”

Q: And what about the other cast members?

I’ve just worked with Tim Woodward, who I’d met before. I worked with his father Edward Woodward in Codename Kyril in 1987. And I’d worked with his brother Peter Woodward at Regent’s Park in 1984. Apart from Donald Sumpter, who plays Garson, I am the oldest person in the cast. And older than all the crew!”

Q: Do you get to drive any period cars in the series?

“I’ve just done a scene in a Rolls Royce. It was gorgeous. I love cars and I especially love old cars. My character is always driven. Driven and driven by people, in both senses. It’s luxurious. You can pretend you’re back in the 1930s being driven around in a fabulous Rolls Royce. These cars smell so beautiful inside, wonderfully designed and maintained. There’s nothing like them.”

Cast interviews

Natalie Gumede is Bella



Q: Tell us about Bella - full name Isabella Charming?

“What a fabulous name! Bella is the landlady of the Empire drinking hall, which used to be a music hall. It provides a facade for her criminal activity. Bella is the Empress of the criminal underworld in that area of London. She rules the bar and is a real good time girl. We first meet her in the throng of celebration, drinks and much mirth. But as soon as trouble brews she has the strength to bring it back under control. And there is plenty of trouble when Hyde comes along. Bella is a wonderful role to play. A strong, funky, feisty woman who can deck a sailor. Opportunities like this are so rare. All the women in Jekyll and Hyde are very strong and have ways of making their impact.”

Q: What do you think of Charlie Higson’s scripts?

“Charlie is a genius. I grew up loving The Fast Show. It’s all I’ve been able to do not to be that person who is quoting back all the different catchphrases to him. Sad as that is. But I’ve held back. I love his brand of humour anyway. So when I auditioned for this I had every digit crossed to get the role and was so pleased when I did. The humour is very important because there’s a lot of high drama as well. There’s a slight campness to Bella, which I love indulging in. When you get a comedy line you have a little fist pump to yourself, ‘Yes!’.”

Q: So how does the character of Bella first meet Hyde?

“Hyde literally crashes into her world and turns it upside down. He goes to the Empire because he’s been given the poster of when it was a music hall and he doesn’t yet know what the connection to him is. He starts a massive fight in his Hyde mode and is very destructive, aggressive and violent in the drinking hall. At first Bella just thinks this guy is trouble. Until he gets injured and we think he might die. Then he wakes up three days later as Robert, who is the same person but a completely different character. He’s meek, mild, polite and introverted. Bella mainly sees Hyde and there’s something about him and his dual aspect that keeps her coming back for more. There’s something about him that’s different to everybody else and she feels she can relate to him because of this. Bella doesn’t have an equal. She’s the boss and he’s not intimidated by her in a way a lot of other men would be. So he cuts through all of her barriers. Bella is totally intrigued by him. Completely drawn in from the outset.”

Cast interviews

Natalie Gumede interview continued:

Q: What's it like working with Tom Bateman?

"He is so charismatic, both as an actor and a person. His talent is explosive and this series showcases that. I think a lot of people are going to be really charmed by him. Most of my scenes are with Tom, which has been lovely. He is also a great leader as he's got a lot on his shoulders but he's always so laid back. We've got a lovely chemistry and it's been a pleasure working with him. Bella normally sees him as Hyde, not Jekyll and I wondered how he was going to do the transformation. Obviously there are a couple of physical costume and make-up changes but mostly it's done with his presence. Tom makes such a definite contrast between the two that's there's no mistaking who he is. He makes it very clear and you definitely know which one is which."

Q: Having two sides is a theme running through the series. How does that manifest itself in Bella?

"Bella is quite brassy, bolshy and feisty because she's in a man's world. She's at the head of this criminal empire and runs a bar full of down and outs, layabouts, drunkards, thieves and drug dealers. She knows how to manage herself. That facade overlaps into other worlds and so she's quite hard faced a lot of the time. But her other side is her vulnerability. She has never let her guard down before and Hyde is the first person who gets under her skin in a long time."

Q: Didn't Coronation Street's Kirsty Soames have two sides?

"I wish I'd seen it earlier, actually. The fact it's the type of role that suits me. It's not a reflection of me. It's just when, as an actor, you understand your type then you're probably going to work a lot more because you can play to your strengths. So I think Kirsty was a gift because it made me realise what I'm strongest at. And what I'm strongest at is strong women with a bit of a dark underbelly."

Q: What do you think the appeal is with Jekyll and Hyde?

"I think we are fascinated by Jekyll and Hyde because all of us have two sides. Writer Charlie Higson said something to me about Bella. That we're all drawn to a thing we shouldn't do or we shouldn't be attracted to. We're all drawn to a darker side. Obviously there's a spectrum of that. From a tame end to a severe, extreme end. We all recognise that and can see the best and the worst of ourselves. Bella is very much drawn to that dark side of Hyde because she probably recognises that in herself. It's a very human story. We've all got our public mask and how we personally deal with things. I'm probably a lot quieter and more reserved in real life. It's a difference between being an actor and being a TV personality. Sometimes people expect 'TV personality' because they are seeing you on television. But the two don't necessarily marry."

Q: How long does it take to achieve Bella's look?

"Hair and make-up for Bella takes two hours. We have an amazing team. At the beginning we were talking about hair styles for the character and because I'm quite precious about my hair I didn't want it heat styled. We had to use hair pieces and I'd never experienced that before. I've used a wig very briefly in Strictly but it was just a pull on. In order to make this look as realistic as possible they needed to make two hair pieces for me so with the hair and make-up together it's two hours. If there's an early call I'm in by 6am which means I'm up at 4:30am. But, of course, the ladies in hair and make-up have to be in before me and are there longer than I am. It's the same with all the crew, they're on site every day, there's so much that goes into making a series like this."



Cast interviews

Natalie Gumede interview continued:

Q: Isn't Bella is an exception to the rule that most of the characters only have one outfit?

"Yes. Each character has an iconic outfit. But Bella has a few more than most. My main dress is a fabulous green velvet gown but she's in different situations, including a spot of high kicking, so they had to make me something else. I'm not complaining. I wouldn't say Bella has delusions of grandeur but she hopes for something better. You can see that in the way she dresses. Most of my outfits have jewels and diamonds incorporated - I'm very lucky. They've given me that 1930s glamour element and dressed me up beautifully. Always, with any character you're playing, it really helps if you have the right shoes and the right outfits. It changes your walk, your attitude. You have so much more of an understanding. It helps you give a better performance."

Q: Tell us about the Jekyll and Hyde world that's been created?

"The sets on Jekyll and Hyde are amazing. They've done an incredible job with the faded grandeur of the Empire bar. It still has elements of the music hall days with the big velvet drapes and the beautiful stage with footlights. But everything is starting to go to rack and ruin. It's what you would expect to see in east London, having got quite dilapidated in the 30 years or so since the turn of the century. Bella's living quarters are a complete contrast. That was the first set I saw. I was like, 'Wow!' It is a really grand room and a reflection of her dreams and aspirations for her life. She probably knows she is stuck and may never achieve them. But when she goes back to that room she escapes from the dark side of her life. It's very art deco. A grand black and white Hollywood movie kind of a set, which is stunning. I'm normally in there in a bright coloured gown, swanning my way through. It's fabulous."

Q: Can you tell us about the scene where Bella does some kick boxing?

"It involves thugs who descend on Bella's Empire bar. The fight director wanted to make it quite dynamic. I was quite nervous because I think he'd seen me on Strictly and thought I was still at that level of fitness. And, of course, I haven't tried to high kick for two years so it wasn't easy! You always think you've got more energy than you have. My kicks started at a reasonable height, about shoulder height. And then gradually throughout the day, I was seizing up and my kicks got lower and lower. But it all went really well and we had a great day. It's so adrenaline-fuelled."

Q: Did you have to do anything else whilst filming that was unusual for you?

"Yes, Bella sings on stage at the Empire. Singing is not what I would call a talent of mine so new challenges were presented to me, which is always frightening but a good thing. You feel it's impossible until it's done. I thrive on that even though it's truly terrifying. I had to sing a bit at college because it was part of my course but I really wasn't a singer and have never sung professionally. I've just avoided it. Until now. But I said I would do it because it was so frightening to me that I thought it was important to get past it. Bella sings Try A Little Tenderness, which most people associate with Otis Redding. But it was first recorded in 1933 by Ruth Etting and I sing a jazzy, bluesier, slower version. I also had to down a pint in one! The director said, 'Are you OK with this?' It was written in but he was concerned that maybe it might be a bit much to do. I said, 'Well, I haven't done it before but I'll have a go.' It turns out I'm a champion at it. It must be the northerner in me! It was actually a disgusting blend of watered-down cola with a non-alcoholic lager top for the foam. So it was pretty vile. We had to do four takes which is not good whilst wearing a really tight dress!"

Cast interviews

Stephanie Hyam is Lily Clarke



Q: How did you become involved with Jekyll and Hyde?

“It was all rather sudden. I was in a play at the time and I hadn’t really done much TV. The casting director Kate Rhodes James came to the shows and said, ‘There’s a part in a new show called Jekyll and Hyde. Come and read for it.’ So I went, then it just rolled on and that’s how I ended up as Lily.”

Q: What was your initial reaction to the series?

“Jekyll and Hyde came across as really cool, fun and different. It’s not just another usual TV series. I was sent the first scenes and got a feel for the character of Lily, so then I could go in to the audition knowing what I would do with that part. It’s a high energy period drama that’s also romantic, sexy, and a bit Gothic. It just looks gorgeous.”

Q: Who is Lily Clarke?

“Lily is a young woman who bumps into Robert Jekyll when he arrives in England from Ceylon. She is an independent 1930s young woman around the same age as him. She’s confident, intelligent and quite a free spirit. Lily is a sassy girl-about-town who knows what she is talking about.”

Q: Does Lily have many action scenes?

“You’ll have to wait and see. There was a stage at the start when I was hearing about people riding elephants in Sri Lanka and getting to jump off things and do cool stuff and I felt really quite envious. But keep watching. We find out more about Lily as the series unfolds. There is one scene when I had to slap poor Tom and we had to do it many times. Tom had a very red face afterwards and I felt awful. Because initially Tom thought, ‘Steph is tiny, she couldn’t hurt me.’ So he said, ‘Just go for it, Steph. We’ll make it look really real.’ I was like, ‘OK, great.’ And I had these leather gloves on as well so the noise was like a real whack. But it was very satisfying. I quite enjoyed it. The stunt co-ordinator Nick Gillard was laughing because Tom did say to go for it.”

Cast interviews

Stephanie Hyam interview continued:

Q: Tell us about Lily's relationship with Robert?

"Lily and Robert's relationship is a bit of a rollercoaster throughout the series. They definitely connect on one level because they're quite similar. She genuinely cares and wants to help him. Robert, to her, seems a bit lost, confused and frequently upset. That's obviously difficult for her to deal with. But, then again, she doesn't know him that well so she does still have that guarded boundary. She puts up a wall that you see quite regularly. That comes in the form of sarcasm and wit."

Q: What's it like working with Tom Bateman?

"He is completely brilliant in this role. I sometimes watch him on the monitor when he's working and when he does repeat takes and I think, 'how are you doing that?' It's amazing. Especially the transformations from Jekyll to Hyde. Watching him has been a real lesson for me in so many ways. The whole series has been. Tom has been a complete joy to watch and work with. And he's so kind. Because I hadn't done that much and he's obviously done a few TV series before me. So he's been so generous with everything and tells me how to do stuff."

Q: You've appeared on stage at the National Theatre and filmed roles in *Murdered By My Boyfriend* and a forthcoming *Sherlock* special. How did you become an actor?

"I'm from Dorking in Surrey and there was no history of acting in my family. I don't know where it came from. I never thought I would go into acting. It was like a secret thing I liked doing. I loved entertaining people and just messing around and doing impressions of people. I had an amazing drama teacher at school and not many people wanted to act so I had quite a close relationship with him as far as he would cast me in a great role in something he had written so my passion for acting started then. I did the Edinburgh Fringe Festival and then thought I'd try drama school. Because why not? Lots of people said, 'Unless you absolutely have to, don't do it. It's so difficult.' I know that. And I also know I'm willing to work very hard and I've been really lucky. So I'm thankful to lots of people along the way."

Q: What's it been like working on a big series?

"It's so eye-opening. I just had no idea. I really didn't. The bit of *Sherlock* I did, I had a couple of scenes. And even then I was like, 'Whoah.' There were so many people buzzing around on *Jekyll and Hyde*. Every little detail is looked at and someone has got a job for even a tiny little movement of a glass on a table or whatever. And I'm like, 'Oh my God, I need to move here and I need to step there and say it like this.' It was tough to get my head around at the beginning. It was only towards the end of filming that everything drops into place and you go, 'Oh, why didn't I do it like that from the start?'. The director Colin Teague was absolutely amazing and I learnt so much from him and I'm forever grateful."

Q: Did the period costumes and hair help you get into the character of Lily?

"They did. The costumes are beautiful. Like most of the characters Lily has one iconic costume and one look. They also cut my hair just before we started filming because 1930s girls had short hair. And I was like, 'Yeah, do it.' Later on I saw a photo of my grandmother at home and she has, basically, the exact same hair as Lily. Which is cool."



Cast interviews

Donald Sumpter is Garson



Q: How is Garson a link to the past for Jekyll?

“When he was a young man Garson was an assistant to Jekyll’s grandfather - the original Jekyll. Obviously it completely freaked him out and he’s been isolated since that experience in his youth. Who could you tell? Who could you talk to about it? For most of his lifetime that has been locked inside his head. There’s a darkness, a sadness about him. His only relationship is with Bella. He feels like Bella is a daughter and they are very close. Garson would be protective of her in any kind of situation that required it. He has spent his life around the Empire, which was once a music hall and is now a drinking establishment. He has all this craziness inside his head.”

Q: What is his reaction when Jekyll arrives at the Empire?

“It’s his worst fears confirmed. The thing he’s been having nightmares about for 50 years. This madness that happened when he was 18 years of age. A crazy, weird, terrifying thing. And suddenly now there’s another one. He loathes Hyde. Absolutely despises him.”

Q: What happens when Hyde’s life is threatened in the first episode?

“Garson is immediately faced with a horrible decision. If he did nothing Hyde and Robert would die. So he’s faced with a choice of whether or not to save someone he hates. A human being is capable of so many emotions, both good and bad. In a way that’s what the Jekyll and Hyde story is about. Living between those two opposite sides and keeping them in balance. This is what we do as human beings. And I think that’s why Jekyll and Hyde is so endlessly interesting. It’s because every one of us is working through that. The exact same dichotomy and contradiction. That we can be evil and also wonderful, beautiful and full of love and joy. So Garson has that choice. He could let him die. He doesn’t want another Hyde back in his life. But because he is on the side of the angels he has to help him.”

Q: What do you think of Tom Bateman playing Jekyll and Hyde?

“He’s just a kind, delightful, talented guy. I think he will go far. And he’s definitely the right man. Tom’s just got it. I think he had an intuitive response to the role. He changes between this English, slightly foppish, man into this beast. It’s subtle...and terrific.”

Cast interviews

Donald Sumpter interview continued:

Q: What theme runs most strongly throughout the series?

"I think it's that all the characters have two sides, which is really interesting. And why it touches us. Beyond all the wonderful madness and the barking quality of the glorious imagination and the outrageous characters. Underneath it all is this drama being played out between good and evil. For all of us. This is why people constantly respond to it. We're working our Jekyll and Hyde all the time. So it's great to have that. And then all this madness, wit and humour. It's terrific."

Q: You've faced a number of monsters in your career and played people perceived as monsters?

"Yes, I've played a few monsters. And the monsters are fantastic in this. Very imaginative. They are wonderfully varied, interesting and off the wall. Taken from all traditions. It's very clever of the writer Charlie Higson. It's really eclectic. From all myths. Which is great, because they're all there serving the same purpose. They're all part of working out this balance, this harmony. There's something really powerful, strong and true at the underlying heart of this series underpinning all the fun. An exploration of the beast. It has the seriousness along with outrageous characters and lots of wit. I absolutely love it. Charlie is also wonderfully open to ideas and it's great working with someone like that."

Q: Tell us about the fact Garson works at the Empire bar, a former music hall?

The Empire looks fantastic. They are the best sets I've worked on. Not only do they look great but they are absolutely solid. The laboratory is made of cast iron. It's just like being there. You can climb it, you can kick it. That helps enormously as an actor because it gives you the feeling of being there."

Q: Garson was 18 when he was assistant to the original Jekyll. What were you doing at that age?

"That's before I went to drama school. I was probably selling stuff on the telephone. Something really dull and boring. I did a lot of jobs before I went to drama school when I was 19. I was doing lots of amateur theatre, rehearsing a different show every night. That was my life then. And the day job was just filling in."

Q: How do you feel about the fact you've had a long and successful career?

"I've been incredibly fortunate. I remember when I was younger I heard that quote from some great Hollywood actress who said, 'Show me an actor who isn't typecast and I'll show you an actor out of work.' I thought, 'Oh, really?' Because I never liked doing the same kind of thing. I've not found that to be so. It has been such a varied career. That's what I've chosen. And it's paid off because I'm still working."

Q: Why are we so fascinated by superheroes?

"I suspect it's something to do with our own frailty. Because basically we're all frightened. Most of our lives are governed by controlling and dealing with fear. But can you imagine being invulnerable and not having any fear? It might be terrible in the long run. Maybe our vulnerability is what saves us. Otherwise we would just react all the time. You'd think nothing could touch you. And we all know the dark side is the strongest."

Q: Did you have a favourite superhero growing up?

"I was into Batman. I liked the darkness. That was my favourite."



Cast interviews

Francis Hopkinson – Executive Producer

Q: Can you explain how you brought Jekyll and Hyde to the screen?

“ITV was looking for a new series and I thought of Charlie Higson. He writes screenplays and the Young Bond novels and understands this genre. So I said, ‘Let’s get in touch with Charlie and see what he’s got.’ And he said, ‘Oh, I’ve been thinking about Jekyll and Hyde and I can’t really decide what it is.’ He then sent a document of eight pages and it was brilliant. Then in early 2014 he sent over a draft of the first script. Everyone loved it and ITV’s Director of Drama Steve November commissioned it from that first draft. I had to ring up Charlie and say, ‘What have you got planned for the next year? Because you’ve got to write 10 episodes.’ Charlie had a vision and this world in his head. He was very intrigued by the Thirties, where one of his Young Bond books was set. So that’s how it came about.”

Q: What is the premise of the series?

“Our Jekyll is the grandson of the original Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde. He has been hidden out in Ceylon, which today is Sri Lanka. When the curse reappears, people in London realise where this young man is. Meanwhile he goes back to London to look for answers about why he is the way he is and to try and uncover the secrets of his family.”

Q: Did you film in both London and Sri Lanka?

“This is a very ambitious series. We’re now competing with drama from across the world and you’ve got to have scale and ambition. We had that right from the start, including the decision to film part of it in Sri Lanka. One of the the last things filmed there with a British crew was The Bridge On The River Kwai. We went up to this old planters’ house which is now a hotel and the woman running it said, ‘Oh yes, the last crew we had here was David Lean’s.’ So I thought, ‘We’re in pretty good company.’ Sri Lanka is the most extraordinarily beautiful country and a fantastic place to film. It gave us real scope, vision and wide vistas.”

Q: Do you feel the drama has a very British sensibility?

“Yes. Charlie Higson enjoys those sorts of British wisecracks. And we have Richard E Grant playing a very British character called Bulstrode. It’s that slightly alternate universe. I’m not sure we’ve ever seen anything quite like this before. It’s an action adventure drama with a little bit of horror and some fairly scary monsters. And there’s a lot of back story for people who want to find it. Charlie is brilliant at layering all that in. There are all sorts of levels to it from an adventure story to an exploration of a character. Our slightly alternate 1930s is very art deco, sleek and modernist with competing forces of good and evil. Which, of course, happened in the Thirties with the rise of Nazi Germany. So there is a sub-text running through it. That battle of good versus evil is always with us. Also everyone can appreciate there are different facets to their personality and some mornings you are more Hyde than Jekyll. It’s a universal thing.”

Q: Tell us about the casting of Tom Bateman as Jekyll and Hyde?

“We saw over 50 people in a three month period and Charlie Higson said when he first met Tom, ‘He’s our guy.’ We were looking for someone who can play both nasty and nice. Tom has proved to be absolutely brilliant. He’s physically strong, which is important because he has to do a lot of physical things. But he’s also a very intelligent actor. He has really thought through how the transformation happens. It’s physical in terms of how his demeanor changes but it’s not physical in terms of lots of make-up or fangs.”



Cast interviews

Francis Hopkinson interview continued:

It's an internal character change. The amazing thing is you watch him and know exactly who he is each time. Tom has exceeded all our expectations. And he's also a very nice man, which helps."

Q: Can you expand on Richard E. Grant's role as Bulstrode?

"Bulstrode is brilliant, devious and eccentric, possibly veering on madness. We really wanted someone who could capture all of that. Richard was always the person we had in mind and we were very lucky to get him. I think he's having a ball playing the role."

Q: Please tell us about the Jekyll and Hyde world?

"The sets are as extraordinary as the locations. We felt the 1930s was an era no-one had done recently and it also fitted with the time frame of this story. We've filmed at places like Eltham Palace, while Ingatestone Hall in Essex features as a haunted house. Mostly we've been shooting in London streets that can still play as being in the 1930s. And one of our most spectacular locations has been an old Victorian pumping station with huge ornate pipes. We've tried to find the type of location you haven't seen a hundred times before."

Q: You used classic cars from the 1930s?

"One of the period cars we used was insured for £1.5 million and we had a number of other vintage cars, including a Rolls Royce. It was a period when car design was going from the very practical to the idea that cars could be rather beautiful."

Q: Is this a series you could have made five years ago, in terms of the CGI and special effects?

"No, I don't think so. Certainly not for television in terms of making it look this good. The special effects are being done by Dneg (Double Negative) who did Godzilla and Man of Steel, among many others. The monsters are spectacular, strange and creepy. Charlie Higson comes up with some that are deceptively simple. There's a woman with an upside down face and if you look at her for too long you will go mad. Then there's Mr Wax who can re-mould his face into other people's faces. There's also a monster who appears as the person you love the most. And many more."

Q: The series provided one of the highlights of the 2015 London Comic Con while filming was still underway?

"We showed a trailer there and took part in a panel Q&A session. The first ITV show to go to Comic Con. Jekyll and Hyde really excited the audience. A 10-part series is a hard slog for the cast and crew but it's also been a very exciting production for us. And Charlie Higson has filmed a cameo role. There is a prize for the first person who spots him."



Cast interviews

Foz Allan – Series Producer

Q: How did you create the Jekyll and Hyde world?

“We built the Jekyll and Hyde world at 3 Mills Studios in Bow, east London. The show was set up to be filmed 60 per cent in studio and 40 per cent out on location. We have great location teams who have found us some fantastic places to film. We’ve been to Ingatestone Hall in Essex and spent a lot of time in the dockyards and warehouses in Chatham in Kent. Also down in the Medway is Fort Amherst, an old military establishment with lots of tunnels. Our high street is actually Rochester High Street. That’s where the Empire drinking hall sits. All of that plays for London in the 1930s.”

Q: Tell us about filming in Sri Lanka?

“The series opens with a pre-titles chase through Victorian London streets. Then we cut to Ceylon - now Sri Lanka - some 50 years later as the story unfolds about Robert Jekyll being hidden by an Indian doctor. We wanted people to think again about the Jekyll and Hyde story. So setting it somewhere completely different and then following his journey back to London, along with other storylines, makes you sit up. We went through the whole process of how we could film the Ceylon scenes somewhere else. Then we decided that was nonsense and we should film in the actual location. Including a period steam train that runs from Colombo to Kandy, which we hired. And we had elephants. Filming there was breathtaking. It was a complex shoot but we had a fantastic time and the Sri Lankans were very welcoming.”

Q: What is the premise for this series?

“Our Dr Jekyll is the grandson of the original Dr Jekyll and he has been hidden away from evil forces in Ceylon. He performs a heroic deed that gets reported in the newspapers. That alerts certain organisations and the lawyer back in London looking to dispose of the Jekyll estate. And so Robert comes to London and discovers his grandfather’s house and lab. It’s a journey of discovery set in the 1930s and also the story of his struggle to control the monster within him. We have a group called Tenebrae, which is the organisation of the gods, demons, creatures and monsters that has existed for thousands of years. They are the lords of misrule. The people who protect us from them are MIO - Military Intelligence Other - as in MI5 and MI6. They are the nightmare police whose job is to make us all believe these monsters don’t exist while getting rid of them from the streets of London. They are headed by a character called Bulstrode, played by Richard E Grant, and they wish to use Hyde for their own purposes.”

Q: Jekyll and Hyde is not like anything we’ve seen on ITV before is it?

“That’s right. I don’t think there’s anything quite like it. This clashing of action and fantasy with a very British tone. We’re absolutely clear it’s a British show. If you look at all the Marvel and DC heroes, they’re all very American. They are great, successful and we all love them but Jekyll and Hyde is the grandfather of all of those shows. Jekyll and Hyde is The Hulk, he is Clark Kent. This split personality thing - Spiderman and Peter Parker. So we found a way to put those elements back into our world with some very British humour. Charlie Higson has done some extraordinary work on this series. This shows British television can be fun too. Humour is vital. Whenever there’s a fight, you have to play those scenes seriously and with purpose. But if you keep doing that they become difficult. So those visual gags just let the steam out. They remind you that you’re watching fun. That’s very important for an action adventure show.”



Cast interviews

Foz Allan interview continued:

Q: How perfectly cast is Tom Bateman as Jekyll and Hyde?

“Tom is very personable and engaging. He has found a fantastic way to play Hyde and was a slam dunk for the role. Tom came in on the first day of auditions and set the benchmark. Nobody got anywhere near him. As a person he’s warm and charming and the camera loves him. His ability to move between Jekyll and Hyde is extraordinary. It’s a very complex acting challenge to keep the line of thinking and emotion clear and he’s in 80 per cent of the scenes. When he changes from Jekyll into Hyde he feels completely different. Hyde is a degrading, heinous figure who does cruel and horrible things. So we had to find a way of personifying evil. Jekyll is the diffident, charming, quiet rural country doctor whose life is shaken up by this beast within him. And when he becomes the beast he is the most charismatic man in the room.”

Q: And what about Jekyll’s battle with his two sides?

“At the heart of this series is the struggle of Jekyll to control his Hyde. Writer Charlie Higson has also ensured that everybody else has a twist. Hyde’s ‘squeeze’ is a woman called Bella, played by Natalie Gumede. She runs the rather faded Empire drinking hall. But upstairs her boudoir is full of Hollywood glamour and she’s much more sophisticated than she looks downstairs in the bar. Lily, played by Stephanie Hyam, is Jekyll’s love interest and she seems very sweet, lovely and innocent. But there is also a twist to her. We also tried to mirror that in the sets. So the lab is half man made, half cut into the rock of the London basin. Our production designer Catrin Meredydd is a genuinely extraordinary talent and has previously worked on Poldark, Broadchurch and The Fades. She built on Charlie’s imagination to create our Jekyll and Hyde world. The show is set in the 1930s so we’re trying to capture a lot of that decade. But the original Dr Jekyll was set in the 1880s and that’s the house and lab his grandson inherits.”

Q: What can you tell us about the monsters that appear in the series?

“The idea that monsters are with us is universal. Everywhere has them. And we in our particularly rational 21st century way, in our digital way, are forgetting these creatures. They’ve defined the world for so long and I don’t think they’re going away. They’re there in the shadows. We have all sorts of strange monsters. A mixture of make-up, prosthetics, costume and CGI. We have The Harbinger, who has a man’s head and a dog’s body. We have The Cutter who is seven foot tall with a lobster clawed hand. We have upside down face lady. We have living skeletons - an army of the dead. But given our spin, our angle, which is about the humour.”

Q: And what about the costumes that feature?

“Jekyll’s wardrobe remains exactly the same and most of the characters have one iconic costume. Rather than having everyone change on a regular basis. What you see is what you get. So villains look like villains. Silas Parnell, known as cyclops, has an eye patch. As do all of his gang. So it’s a one-eyed gang. Which is both silly, fun and also quite threatening. Bella is the only character who has more costumes. She is Hyde’s sophisticated love interest and it became very hard to imagine her in just the one frock.”

Q: And can you explain the figures in Bulstrode’s office?

“There is a cabinet of curios in Bulstrode’s office. Monster carvings from around the world. We picked up some of those while we were in Sri Lanka. A dozen or so small masked faces, mounted. Each of which is showing a type of demon.”



Episode Guide

Episode one synopsis



Episode One synopsis

It's 1885 and Edward Hyde gets into an altercation in the street with his patron, Sir Danvers Carew – and murders him. Fast forward to 1935, in Ceylon, where Hyde's grandson, the orphaned Robert Jekyll, is a young doctor and completely unaware of his ancestry. Here Robert saves a young girl with a superhuman show of strength. This strength is a side effect of his mysterious 'condition', for which he has always taken pills. But this time the incident gets into the newspapers. The report reveals his whereabouts to a lawyer, one Max Utterson in London. So, Utterson summons Jekyll to England and Robert learns he is the sole heir to a large estate. There's only one snag, Robert wants nothing to do with the dark story.

However, Robert has also been spotted on the radar by two other organisations. The first is MIO, a government department headed up by Mr. Bulstrode. MIO's mission is to combat monsters. For them Robert's appearance is a harbinger of increasing enemy action. Tenebrae are the enemy: an ancient and sinister organization with a keen interest in recruiting shape-shifters like Robert. Sure enough Tenebrae and their top agent, Captain Dance, arrive in Ceylon and descends upon Robert's family.

Now Robert is adrift in London, with only Utterson and a new friend, Lily, to guide him. At which point news of event's with his foster family reaches him. Right now, right when he needs them most, Robert discovers his pills are missing and he suffers his first full blown transformation into another personality - Hyde. In contrast to the sensitive, considerate Robert Jekyll, Hyde is a selfish, uninhibited, muscle-bound brute. He goes out on the town looking for trouble, and finds it. At 'The Empire' bar, an old watering hole of Edward Hyde's, Robert's drunken antics start a fight and he gets injured. An old man called Garson and the lovely bar owner, Bella, save his life.

Episode Guide

Episode two synopsis



Episode Two synopsis

Flashback to Ceylon: Captain Dance interrogates Robert's foster parents, demanding to know where Robert is? When Dance has his answer, he kills them both. In the chaos Ravi, Robert's younger brother, escapes into the night and straight into the arms of the Police – who arrest him.

Robert wakes up in Bella's room in The Empire, not as Hyde, but as Jekyll. His wound has miraculously healed. Not knowing where to turn to he visits Lily. She persuades him that the answers to his personal mystery may lie with his inheritance. So they explore the old Jekyll house with Max Utterson.

In Ceylon Ravi trusts no one and refuses to cooperate with the Police. Now his one purpose is to get to England and fulfill his father's promise to give Robert his true family history. So when a fellow prisoner escapes – naturally enough Ravi escapes too. Meanwhile, Bulstrode and MIO have news of Dance's outrage in Ceylon. They know the Captain is en route for London and hatch a plan to use Robert as bait in a Tenebrae trap. Dance, for his part, has his focus firmly on Jekyll and is determined to kill anyone who might help the confused young hero.

When Robert shares his tales of the previous night, Max is determined to go and play detective. He escorts Robert to 'The Empire' and uncovers the fact that 'Garson' was lab assistant to Robert's grandfather. Garson refuses to crack under questioning, but when he heads home after work he's cornered by Dance's hired assassins. Hyde swoops in to save the old man, but not out of charity: Hyde wants answers. He drags Garson back to the old Jekyll house and the old man reveals the secret of Jekyll senior's experiments – and the basement laboratory he conducted them in.

Cast and Production Credits

Cast Credits

Robert Jekyll and Hyde

Garson

Lily Clarke

Bella

Bullstrode

Max Utterson

Captain Dance

Ravi

Hannigan

Brannigan

Mr Wax

Sackler

Hils

Fedora

Lord Protheroe

1st Thug

Harbinger

Adelie

Bellboy

Hotel Manager

Tramp

Silas Parnell

Renata Jezequiel

Young Robert

Edward Hyde

Henry Jekyll

Young Garson

Young Maggie Kendal

The Cutter

Gabriel Utterson

Margaret Hope (Elder Maggie Kendall)

One Eyed Chauffeur

One Eye

Ollala

Sir Marian Carew

Keres

Young Woman at window

Landlord at the Black Dog

Wiillard Neysmith

Brant/Black Dog

Lord George Walls

Young Olalla

Gideon Jezequel

Lilly's Mother

Harry

Billy 'Beef' Wellington

TOM BATEMAN

DONALD SUMPTER

STEPHANIE HYAM

NATALIE GUMEDE

RICHARD E GRANT

CHRISTIAN MCKAY

ENZO CILENTI

MICHAEL KARIM

PHIL MCKEE

AMITH SHAH

OLIVER GILBERT

TOM RHYS HARRIES

RUBY BENTALL

NATASHA O'KEEFE

MARK BONNAR

CARL MCCRYSTAL

DEE TAILS

AMY BOWDEN

RHYS ISAAC-JONES

ROBERT WILFORT

MICHAEL BALLARD

TONY WAY

AMELIA BULLMORE

RUPERT CUNNINGHAM-DAY

THOMAS COOMBS

DAVID BARK JONES

SAM SWANN

INIAMH WALSH

JASON LA SHARD

ANGUS UTTERSON

SINEAD CUSACK

NICK MOSS

RICKY CHAMP

WALLIS DAY

TIM WOODWARD

KIRSTEN FOSTER

MELANIE WILDER

KEVIN ELDON

TIM DOWNIE

DURAN FULTON BROWN

JEREMY NEUMARK WALLS

GRETEL MONGER

CLIVE MANTLE

JANE LOWE

HUBERT BURTON

TOM DAVIS



Cast and Production Credits

Cast Credits continued

Emilia
Georgie Collins
Dr Najaran
Gurinder Najaran
Small girl in clinic
Postman
Beggar
Channing
Tattooed Prisoner
Weasel
Herath Banda
Cell Guard
Colonial Police Officer

ROSA CODURI
RYAN CALAIS CAMERON
ACE BHATTI
LOLITA CHAKRABARTI
KASUNI NAMADA KURULUGAMA
RAJA GANESHAN
NATHALY NANAYAKKARA
EDMUND KINGSLEY
LIONEL SAMPATH
MOHAMED ADAMALY
ADIKA ALUWIHARE
COHEN WILLIAMS
JONATHAN WRIGHT

Cast and Production Credits

Production Credits

Executive Producer	FRANCIS HOPKINSON
Creator, Executive Producer & Writer, Episodes 1-4 & 10	CHARLIE HIGSON
Series Producer	FOZ ALLEN
Writer, Episode 5	GUY BURT
Writer, Episode 6	JASON SUTTON
Writer, Episode 7	SIMON J ASHFORD
Writer, Episode 8	SOPHIE PETZAL
Writer, Episode 9	GARETH ROBERTS
Producer, Episodes 5-8 & 10	GUY BURT
Line Producer	EMILY RUSSELL
Director, Episodes 1-3	COLIN TEAGUE
Director, Episodes 5 & 8	ROBERT QUINN
Director, Episodes 4 & 9	JOSS AGNEW
Director, Episodes 6, 7 & 10	STEWART SVAASAND
Director of Photography, Episodes 1-3	SIMON DENNIS
Director of Photography, Episodes 5 & 8	MARK WATERS
Director of Photography, Episodes 4 & 9	NIC MORRIS
Director, Episodes 6, 7 & 10	STEWART SVAASAND
Production Designer	CATRIN MEREDYDD
Costume Designer	HOWARD BURDEN
Make up and Hair Designer	ANNE 'NOSH' OLDHAM
Location Manager	JOEL HOLMES
Sound Recordist	JOHN MOONEY
Editor, Episodes 1-3	PHIL HOOKWAY
Editor, Episodes 5 & 8	MARK THORNTON
Editor, Episodes 4 & 9	SAM WILLIAMS
Editor, Episodes 6, 7 & 10	SELINA MACARTHUR
Composer	DAVID ARNOLD
Composer	MICHAEL PRICE
SFX Producer	ED SMITH
VFX Producer	LOUISE HUSSEY
Stunt Co-ordinator	NICK GILLARD
Casting Director	KATE RHODES JAMES
Casting Director ITV	JAMES BAIN

