

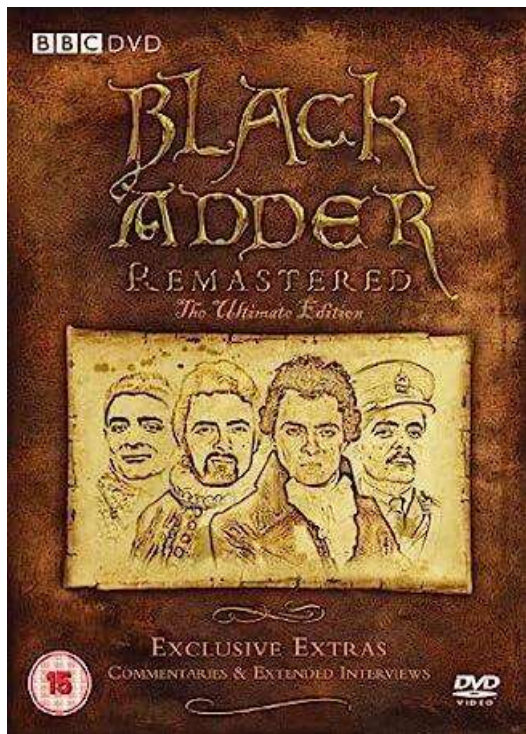
REF: 199

The Paragon Multimedia DVD, VHS Collection

Title: **Black Adder – Remastered Edition**

(6 Discs)

Library Image



ISBN: 5051561028168

Information

Release **Title:** **Black Adder** TV Series 1982–1983 (United Kingdom) (See below for Episode Dates)

Publication date: BBC Production

Origin: United Kingdom,

AKA:

Release date: See Below

Genres: Comedy, War

Disc Nos. – 6

Certification: 15

Duration: 13h 55m (Full Duration)

Region Code:

Region:

Product Code:

MPN:

EAN:

UPC:

Languages: English,

Filming locations: UK (on location)

Sound mix: Stereo

Colour: PAL

Aspect Ratio:1.33:1

Title: Black Adder

1. Storyline

Series 1: The Black Adder

Main article: The Black Adder



The Black Adder, the first series of Blackadder, was written by Richard Curtis and Rowan Atkinson and produced by John Lloyd. It originally aired on BBC1 from 15 June 1983 to 20 July 1983, and was a joint production with the Australian Seven Network.

Set in 1485 at the end of the British Middle Ages, the series is written as an alternative history in which Richard III won the Battle of Bosworth Field only to be mistaken for someone else and murdered, and is succeeded by Richard IV (Brian Blessed), one of the Princes in the Tower. The series follows the exploits of Richard IV's unfavoured second son Edmund, the Duke of Edinburgh (who calls himself "The Black Adder") in his various attempts to increase his standing with

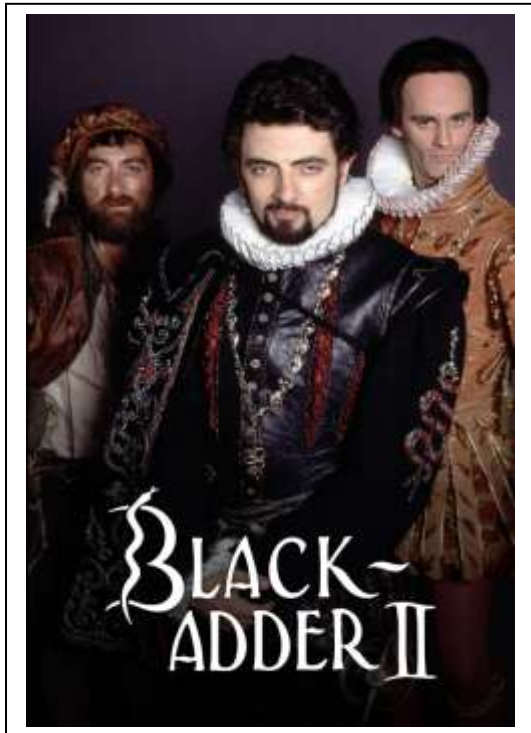
his father and his eventual quest to overthrow him. Guest appearances in this series include Peter Cook as King Richard III, Russell Enoch as the Duke of Winchester, Miriam Margolyes as the Infanta Maria Escalosa of Spain (with Jim Broadbent as her interpreter), Frank Finlay as the Witchsmeller Pursuivant, Valentine Dyall as Lord Angus, Stephen Frost and Mark Arden as guards, and Rik Mayall as Mad Gerald.

Conceived while Atkinson and Curtis were working on Not the Nine O'clock News, the series dealt comically with a number of aspects of medieval life in Britain: witchcraft, royal succession, European relations, the Crusades, and the conflict between the Church and the Crown. Along with the secret history, many historical events portrayed in the series were anachronistic (for example, Constantinople had already fallen to the Ottoman Empire in 1453, predating the events in the episode by 33 years); this dramatic license would continue in the subsequent Blackadders. The filming of the series was highly ambitious, with a large cast and much location shooting. The series also featured Shakespearean dialogue, often adapted for comic effect; the end credits featured the words "Additional Dialogue by William Shakespeare".

The Black Adder	
	Title screen, showing <i>Alnwick Castle</i> in Northumberland, a main location for the series.
Written by	Richard Curtis Rowan Atkinson
Directed by	Martin Shardlow
Starring	Rowan Atkinson Tony Robinson Tim McInnerny Brian Blessed Elspet Gray Robert East
Narrated by	Patrick Allen
Theme music composer	Howard Goodall
Country of origin	United Kingdom Australia
Original language	English
No. of episodes	6
Production	
Producer	John Lloyd
Running time	33 minutes (approx)
Production companies	BBC Seven Network
Release	
Original network	BBC 1
Picture format	PAL
Audio format	Mono
Original release	15 June – 20 July 1983
Related	
Unaired pilot <i>Blackadder II</i>	

Additional Information – see below.....

2. Series 2: Blackadder II



Main article: Blackadder II

Blackadder II is set in England during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1558–1603), who is portrayed by Miranda Richardson. The principal character is Edmund, Lord Blackadder, the great-grandson of the original Black Adder. During the series, he regularly deals with the Queen, her obsequious Lord Chamberlain Lord Melchett (Stephen Fry) – his rival for the Queen's affections – and the Queen's demented former nanny Nursie (Patsy Byrne). Guest appearances in the series include Tom Baker as Captain Redbeard Rum, Simon Jones as Sir Walter Raleigh, Ronald Lacey as the Bishop of Bath and Wells, and Miriam Margoyles as Blackadder's aunt, Lady Whiteadder. The series also features two appearances by Hugh Laurie (as Simon Partridge, a friend of Blackadder's, in the episode "Beer";

and as Prince Ludwig the Indestructible in the series' finale "Chains"), as well as the first appearance of Gabrielle Glaister as "Bob", and of Rik Mayall as Lord Flashheart.

Following the BBC's request for improvements (and a severe budget reduction), several changes were made. The second series was the first to establish the familiar Blackadder character: cunning, shrewd and witty, in sharp contrast to the first series' bumbling Prince Edmund. To reduce the cost of production, it was shot with virtually no outdoor scenes (the first series was shot largely on location) and several frequently used indoor sets, such as the Queen's throne room and Blackadder's front room.

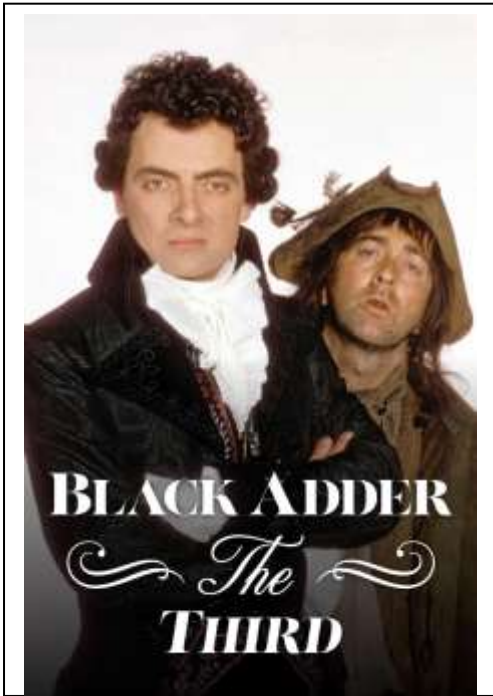
A quote from this series ranked number three in a list of the top 25 television "putdowns" of the last 40 years by the Radio Times magazine: "The eyes are open, the mouth moves, but Mr. Brain has long since departed, hasn't he, Percy?"

Blackadder II	
<p>Title screen of <i>Blackadder II</i></p>	
Written by	Richard Curtis Ben Elton
Directed by	Mandie Fletcher
Starring	Rowan Atkinson Tim McInnerny Tony Robinson Miranda Richardson Stephen Fry Patsy Byrne
Theme music composer	Howard Goodall
Country of origin	United Kingdom
Original language	English
No. of episodes	6
Production	
Producer	John Lloyd
Camera setup	Multiple
Running time	30 minutes
Release	
Original network	BBC 1
Picture format	PAL
Audio format	Mono
Original release	9 January – 20 February 1986
Related	
<i>The Black Adder</i> <i>Blackadder the Third</i>	

Additional Information – see below.....



3. Series 3: Blackadder the Third



Main article: [Blackadder the Third](#)

Blackadder the Third is set in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, a period known as the Regency. In the series, Edmund Blackadder Esquire is the butler to the Prince Regent, the Prince of Wales (the prince is played by Hugh Laurie as a complete fop and idiot). Despite Edmund's respected intelligence and abilities, he has no personal fortune to speak of, apart from his frequently fluctuating wage packet (as well, it seems, from stealing and selling off the Prince's socks) from the Prince: "If I'm running short of cash, all I have to do is go upstairs and ask Prince Fathead for a rise." The episode titles were puns on Jane Austen novels.

series starred Hugh Laurie as the Prince Regent and Helen Atkinson-Wood as Mrs. Miggins. The series features Dr. Samuel Johnson (Robbie Coltrane); William Pitt the Younger (Simon Osborne); the French Revolution (with Chris Barrie, Tim McInnerny as the Scarlet Pimpernel, and Nigel Planer); hammy theatrical actors (Kenneth Connor and Hugh Paddick); a squirrel-hating cross-dressing highwayman (Miranda Richardson); and a duel with the Duke of Wellington (Stephen Fry).

As well as Rowan Atkinson and Tony Robinson in their usual roles, this

Blackadder the Third	
	
Title screen of Blackadder the Third	
Written by	Richard Curtis Ben Elton
Directed by	Mandie Fletcher
Starring	Rowan Atkinson Tony Robinson Hugh Laurie Helen Atkinson-Wood
Theme music composer	Howard Goodall
Country of origin	United Kingdom
No. of episodes	6 (list of episodes)
Production	
Producer	John Lloyd
Running time	30 minutes
Release	
Original network	BBC 1
Picture format	4:3
Audio format	Monaural sound
Original release	17 September – 22 October 1987
Related	
Blackadder II	
Blackadder: The Cavalier Years	

4. Series 4: Blackadder Goes Forth



Main article: [Blackadder Goes Forth](#)

This series is set in 1917, on the Western Front in the trenches of the First World War. Another "big push" is planned, and Captain Blackadder's one goal is to avoid being killed, but his schemes always land him back in the trenches. Blackadder is joined by his batman Private S. Baldrick (Tony Robinson) and idealistic Edwardian twit Lieutenant George (Hugh Laurie). General Melchett (Stephen Fry) rallies his troops from a French château thirty-five miles (56 km) from the front, where he is aided and abetted by his assistant, Captain Kevin Darling (Tim McInnerny), pencil-pusher supreme and Blackadder's nemesis, whose name is played on for maximum comedic value. Guest appearances in this series include Stephen Frost as the leader of a firing squad detail, Miranda Richardson as Nurse Mary Fletcher-Brown, two further appearances of Gabrielle Glaister as "Bob" (in this series, a young woman who pretended to be a boy in order to join the army), Rik Mayall appearing as Royal Flying Corps Squadron Commander The Lord Flasheart, Adrian Edmondson as Baron Manfred von Richthofen (aka "The Red Baron"), and Geoffrey Palmer as Field Marshal Douglas Haig.

The series' tone is somewhat darker than the other Blackadders; it details the deprivations of trench warfare as well as the incompetence and life-wasting strategies of the top brass. For example, Baldrick is reduced to

cooking rats and making coffee from mud, while General Melchett hatches a plan for the troops to walk very slowly toward the German lines, because "it'll be the last thing Fritz will expect."


The final episode, "Goodbye", is known for being extraordinarily poignant for a comedy – especially the final scene, which sees the main characters (Blackadder, Baldrick, George, and Darling) finally going "over the top" and charging off into the fog and smoke of no man's land presumably to die. In a list of the 100 Greatest British Television Programmes, drawn up by the British Film Institute in 2000 and voted for by industry professionals, *Blackadder Goes Forth* was placed 16th.

One of the best comedy series ever to emerge from England, *Black Adder* traces the deeply cynical and self-serving lineage of various Edmund Blackadders from the muck of the Middle Ages to the frontline of World War I. In his pre-Bean triumph, comic actor Rowan Atkinson played all five versions of Edmund, beginning with the villainous and cowardly Duke of Edinburgh, whose scheming mind and awful haircut seem to stand him in good stead to become the next Archbishop of Canterbury--a deadly occupation if ever there was one. Among tales of royal dethroning's, Black Death, witch smellers (who root out spell makers with their noses), and ghosts, Edmund is a perennial survivor who never quite gets ahead in multiple episodes. Jump to the Elizabethan era and Atkinson picks up the saga as Lord Edmund, who is perpetually courting favour from mad Queen Bess (Miranda Richardson) and is always walking a tightrope from which he can either gain the world or lose his head. Subjected to bizarre services for her majesty (at one point, Edmund is asked to do for potatoes what Sir Walter Raleigh did for tobacco), Edmund--as with his ancestor--can never quite fulfil his larger ambitions. The next incarnation we encounter is in late-18th-century Regency England. This time, Blackadder is a mere butler to the idiotic Prince Regent (Hugh Laurie in a brilliantly buffoonish performance) and is caught in various misadventures with Samuel Johnson, Shakespearean actors, the Scarlet Pimpernel, and William Pitt the younger. With a brief stop in Victorian London for a Christmas special, the series concludes with several episodes set during the Great War. The new Edmund is a career Army officer, but a scoundrel all the same. Shirking his duties whenever possible and taking advantage of any opportunity for undeserved reward, this final, deeply sour, and very funny Blackadder negotiates survival among a cadre of fools and dimwits. No small mention can be made of Atkinson's supporting cast, easily among the finest comic performers of their generation: besides Laurie and Richardson, Stephen Fry, Tony Robinson, and Tim McInnerny.

The Ultimate Edition includes...

The *Blackadder*: Behold the bad hair in this first collection of silliness! Here the slimy Edmund (Rowan Atkinson), Duke of Edinburgh (alias The Black Adder), emerges from the bowels of somewhere stinky to annoy historians. The collection includes "The Foretelling," "Born to be King," "The Archbishop," "The Queen of Spain's Beard," "Witchsmeller Pursuivant," and "The Black Seal."

Blackadder II: The degradation of the grand and proud tradition that is the British monarchy continues as the loathsome Blackadder (Rowan Atkinson) snivels his way through the 16th century into the court of Queen Elizabeth I. This collection includes the six episodes comprising both "Parte the Firste," and "Parte the Seconde." Episodes are "Bells," "Head," "Potato," "Money," "Beer," and "Chains."

Blackadder	
	
Left to right: Tim McInnerny, Rowan Atkinson, Stephen Fry, Tony Robinson and Hugh Laurie in <i>Blackadder Goes Forth</i>	
Genre	Period sitcom
Created by	Richard Curtis Rowan Atkinson
Written by	Richard Curtis Rowan Atkinson (series 1) Ben Elton (series 2–4)
Directed by	Geoff Posner (pilot) Martin Shardlow (series 1) Mandie Fletcher (series 2 and 3) Richard Boden (series 4)
Starring	Rowan Atkinson Tony Robinson Tim McInnerny Miranda Richardson Stephen Fry Hugh Laurie
Theme music composer	Howard Goodall
Country of origin	United Kingdom
Original language	English
No. of series	4
No. of episodes	24 (plus 4 specials) (list of episodes)
Production	
Producer	John Lloyd
Camera setup	Multi-camera
Running time	30 minutes approx
Production company	BBC
Release	
Original network	BBC1
Picture format	PAL (576i)
Audio format	Monaural sound
Original release	15 June 1983 – 2 November 1989

Blackadder III: This third series presents more dim-witted antics from the annals of the Blackadder family. Previously aristocratic, Edmund Blackadder (Rowan Atkinson) now finds himself in the midst of the Industrial Revolution as a butler and gentlemen's gentleman to the pea-brained Prince Regent (Hugh Laurie). The collection includes six episodes: "Dish and Dishonesty," "Ink and Incapability," "Nob and Nobility," "Sense and Senility," "Amy and Amiability," and "Duel and Duality."

Blackadder Goes Forth: Edmund Blackadder finds himself in the trenches on the Western Front in 1917. Episodes include "Captain Cook" (where Blackadder tries to escape active duty), "Corporal Punishment" (which finds ol' Edmund facing an execution), "Major Star" (featuring a concert of sorts), "Private Plane" (in which Blackadder finds himself caught in the crossfire), "General Hospital" (where Blackadder searches for German spies among the wounded), and "Goodbyeee" (when the end of the war is at hand).

Cast

Contributor's: Tim McInnery, Ben Elton, Tony Robinson, Hugh Laurie, Rowan Atkinson, Stephen Fry, Mandie Fletcher, John Lloyd, Richard Curtis
Tim McInnery, Ben Elton, Tony Robinson, Hugh Laurie, Rowan Atkinson, Episodes feature a wide range of British stars, including Miranda Richardson, Rik Mayall, Jim Broadbent, Brian Blessed, Peter Cook...and many others.

Main cast

Rowan Atkinson as Edmund Blackadder, the series' protagonist.

Tony Robinson as S. Baldrick, his servant.

Stephen Fry as Melchett in two series, first as Lord Melchett, the sycophantic adviser to Queen Elizabeth I in series two and secondly as General Melchett, a blustering buffoon and presumed descendant in series four. Fry also appeared as Arthur Wellesley, The Duke of Wellington in series three and as various characters in Blackadder Back & Forth.

Tim McInnery as Lord Percy Percy, Blackadder's dim-witted sidekick in series one and two before a change of character to antagonistic rival Captain Kevin Darling in series four. He also appeared as The Scarlet Pimpernel (alias Lord Topper and Le Comte de Frou Frou) for one episode in the third series, and reprised his role as Darling in Blackadder: Back & Forth.

Hugh Laurie played George in series three and four, first as The Prince Regent, and later Lieutenant George in series four. Laurie also appeared twice in series two; firstly, as Simon "Farters Parters" Partridge and then as Prince Ludwig the Indestructible in the final instalment of Blackadder II. He reprised his role as George in Blackadder: Back & Forth.

Miranda Richardson was only a regular cast member for series two, in which she played Queen Elizabeth I, reprising the role in Blackadder's Christmas Carol and Back & Forth. However, she also played significant one-off roles as Amy Hardwood (a.k.a. The Shadow) in "Amy and Amiability" in the third series and Mary Fletcher-Brown, a dutiful nurse in "General Hospital" from the fourth. She reappeared as Queenie and additional characters in Christmas Carol and Back and Forth.

Non-recurring cast

Brian Blessed, Elspet Gray and Robert East appeared in all six episodes of the first series as the Black Adder's father, mother and brother respectively. Gray had also appeared in the non-broadcast pilot.

Patsy Byrne played Nursie in all six episodes of Blackadder II, but never featured in either of the subsequent series, either as a regular character or one-off. She briefly reprised the character in Blackadder: Back & Forth and Blackadder's Christmas Carol.

Helen Atkinson-Wood played the role of Mrs. Miggins in all six episodes of Blackadder the Third, but did not appear again in the series, although the character was mentioned several times in Blackadder II and in the final episode of Blackadder Goes Forth.

Guest cast

Ben Elton's arrival after the first series heralded the more frequent recruitment of comic actors from the alternative comedy era for guest appearances, including Robbie Coltrane, Rik Mayall (who had appeared in the final episode of the first series as "Mad Gerald"), Adrian Edmondson, Nigel Planer, Mark Arden, Stephen Frost, Chris Barrie and Jeremy Hardy. Elton himself played an anarchist in Blackadder the Third.

Gabrielle Glaister played Bob, an attractive girl who poses as a man, in both series 2 and 4. Rik Mayall plays Lord Flashheart, a vulgar friend in his first appearance and then a successful rival of Blackadder in later episodes of series 2 and 4. He also played a decidedly Flashheart-like Robin Hood in Back & Forth. Lee Cornes also appeared in an episode of all three Curtis-Elton series. He appeared as a guard in the episode "Chains" of Blackadder II; as the poet Shelley in the episode "Ink and Incapability" of Blackadder the Third; and as firing squad soldier Private Fraser in the episode "Corporal Punishment" of Blackadder Goes Forth.

More established actors, some at the veteran stage of their careers, were also recruited for roles. These included Peter Cook, John Grillo, Simon Jones, Tom Baker, Jim Broadbent, Hugh Paddick, Frank Finlay, Kenneth Connor, Bill Wallis, Ronald Lacey, Roger Blake, Denis Lill, Warren Clarke and Geoffrey Palmer, who played Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig in "Goodbyeee", the final episode of *Blackadder Goes Forth*. Miriam Margolyes played three different guest roles: The Spanish Infanta in *The Queen of Spain's Beard*, Lady Whiteadder in *Beer*, and Queen Victoria in *Blackadder's Christmas Carol*.

Theme tune

Howard Goodall's theme tune has the same melody throughout all the series, but is played in roughly the style of the period in which it is set. It is performed mostly with trumpets and timpani in *The Black Adder*, the fanfares used suggesting typical medieval court fanfares; with a combination of recorder, string quartet and electric guitar in *Blackadder II* (the end theme, with different lyrics each time reflecting on the episode's events, was sung by a countertenor); on oboe, cello and harpsichord (in the style of a minuet) for *Blackadder the Third*; by The Band of the 3rd Battalion, Royal Anglian Regiment in *Blackadder Goes Forth*; sung by carol singers in *Blackadder's Christmas Carol*; and by an orchestra in *Blackadder: The Cavalier Years* and *Blackadder: Back & Forth*.

Parents Guide

Certification

Australia:PG Germany:12 Germany:6 (iTunes rating) Iceland:12 Ireland:15 Japan:G (self-applied) Netherlands:6 (self-applied) Poland:12 (self-applied) Singapore:PG United Kingdom:15 United States:TV-PG

Sex & Nudity –Mild **Violence & Gore** – Mild, **Profanity** – Moderate **Alcohol, Drugs & Smoking** – Mild **Frightening & Intense Scenes** – Mild



Chronological Order:

Title	Type	Production / air date	Set in century
<i>The Black Adder (pilot)</i>	Pilot	1982 (unaired)	16th
<i>The Black Adder</i>	Series	1983	15th
<i>Blackadder II</i>	Series	1986	16th
<i>Blackadder the Third</i>	Series	1987	18th–19th
<i>Blackadder: The Cavalier Years</i>	Comic Relief Special	1988	17th
<i>Children in Need</i> ^[12]	Special	1988	Unclear (anachronistic)
<i>Clown Court</i> ^[13]	Special	1988	Unclear (anachronistic)
<i>Blackadder's Christmas Carol</i>	Christmas Special	1988	19th
<i>Woman's Hour Invasion</i> ^[14]	Radio	1988	20th, Various
<i>Blackadder Goes Forth</i>	Series	1989	20th
<i>Blackadder and the King's Birthday</i> ^[15]	Sketch	1998	17th
<i>Blackadder: Back & Forth</i>	Millennium Special	1999	20th, Various
<i>Blackadder: The Army Years</i> ^[16]	Theatre	2000	21st
<i>The Royal Gardener/The Jubilee Girl (for the Party at the Palace)</i>	Sketch	2002	21st
<i>Blackadder Exclusive: The Whole Rotten Saga</i>	Documentary	2008	n/a
<i>Blackadder Rides Again</i>	Documentary	2008	n/a
<i>CEO of Melchett, Melchett and Darling Inquiry</i> ^[17]	Theatre	2012	21st
<i>The Big Night In</i>	Sketch	2020	21st

Additional Information – see below.....



Various actors have appeared in more than one of the Blackadder series and/or specials. These are:

	<i>The Black Adder</i>	<i>Blackadder II</i>	<i>Blackadder the Third</i>	<i>Blackadder Goes Forth</i>	<i>Blackadder: The Cavalier Years</i>	<i>Blackadder's Christmas Carol</i>	<i>Blackadder: Back & Forth</i>
Rowan Atkinson	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Tony Robinson	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Tim McInnerny	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Hugh Laurie		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Stephen Fry		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Miranda Richardson		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Rik Mayall	✓	✓		✓			✓
Miriam Margolyes	✓	✓				✓	
Gabrielle Glaister		✓		✓			
Bill Wallis	✓	✓		✓			
Robbie Coltrane			✓			✓	
Jim Broadbent	✓					✓	
Stephen Frost	✓			✓			
Mark Arden	✓	✓					
Lee Cornes		✓	✓	✓			
Patsy Byrne		✓				✓	✓
Warren Clarke			✓		✓		
Philip Pope		✓				✓	
Barbara Miller	✓	✓					
David Nunn	✓					✓	
Denis Lill			✓			✓	

