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VIENNA: RETRIBUTION SALVATORI GOES TO JAIL

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EDITORIAL

YE ALWAYS been a huge fan of Gallifrey, with Romana, Leela and Narvin. From the word go, I followed their exploits, encountering arms dealer Arkadian, the political rise of Inquisitor Darkel, fighting off the Dogma virus, surviving in parallel worlds, and rebuilding the home world of the Time Lords.

So I'm rather excited to find out just where this month's release of **Gallifrey: The Time War**, is going to take our heroes next.

Moving events on to the Time War is exciting enough, but to add Sir Derek Jacobi's War Master into the mix... Oh, I can't wait to hear how he and Leela get on when they go out into the universe on a mission for Romana.

We've also got the return of Vienna Salvatori this month, the impossibly glamorous bounty hunter. I recently enjoyed a run of all of her adventures to date on my drive to work, and I



fell in love with Chase Masterson and Samantha Béart all over again.

And then we've got the second volume of **The Churchill Years**. I'm really looking forward to hearing it, as Ian McNeice was positively bubbling with excitement when he chatted to me about it for this month's feature.

Bizarrely, we spoke just hours after I'd watched Victory of the Daleks with my daughter – and she was really excited to hear I'd be talking to the 'real' Churchill! **VORTEX**

SNEAKPREVIEW

AVING JOINED the Time War at the end of last year, those hungry to find out what happened earlier in the Eighth Doctor's life will be delighted this April with the release of **Ravenous**, the sequel to **Doom Coalition**.

With the universe saved from the plans of Padrac, the Doctor and Liv Chenka are in for some tasty adventures on the trail of their missing friend Helen Sinclair, who was left trapped in time and space with the insane Time Lord known as the Eleven. Producer David Richardson teases: "Once again we have an over-arching storyline that will encompass four box sets, but it's somewhat looser in structure than **Doom Coalition**. There will be standalone stories that have nothing to do with the overall arc – but along the way we'll be dropping hints and building to something bigger further down the line."

The Doctor will meet William Churchill (who appears in this month's **The Churchill Years Volume Two** in encounters with the Ninth, Tenth and Eleventh Doctors), as well as his old foe the Kandy Man.



Executive producer Nicholas Briggs adds: "This is another whole new phase in the Eighth Doctor's epic journey. It builds on the great success of the **Doom Coalition** series and pitches the Doctor into some really startling stuff, with a couple of familiar trusty companions by his side." **VORTEX**

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Kenny Smith gets ready for the outbreak of the temporal conflict...

VER THE last couple of years we've dipped our toes (or, to be fully accurate, ears), into some skirmishes in the Time War.

So far, we've had four outings for the Eighth Doctor, 12 stories with the War Doctor and four adventures with the War Master. And that's just the start.

Key to the whole of the Time War is Gallifrey, and whilst we've followed renegade Time Lords before, this time we're going to the heart of the conflict to see what happened from the point of view of one set of the protagonists.

Long-term Big Finish **Gallifrey** regulars Lalla Ward, Louise Jameson, Seán Carlsen and Miles Richardson return with more recent recruit Sophie Aldred, in the depths of the Time War for this new chapter of the series.

Romana, Leela, Narvin, Braxiatel and Ace will feature in four new chapters from Gallifrey's history, in *Celestial Intervention* by David Llewellyn, *Soldier Obscura* by Tim Foley, *The Devil You Know* by Scott Handcock and *Desperate Measures* by Matt Fitton.

And joining the Big Finish ranks is another television Time Lord with the War Master being played by Sir Derek Jacobi.

Producer and director Scott Handcock says: "After the previous release, *Enemy Lines*, I honestly thought that was it for me and **Gallifrey**. We'd sort of completed that journey for those characters and had always been flirting around the edges of the Time War without ever addressing it, so I struggled to see what we could do to feel fresh without tackling the Time War head-on. "Thankfully, David Richardson already had plans for the next stage of the **Gallifrey** saga to be exactly

that, so I leapt at the chance!"

Working with script editor Matt Fitton, Scott plotted out the arc for the series.

Scott reveals: "The Master was always in my mind for this, just because I felt it would shake up the **Gallifrey** dynamic a bit.

"Initially, Matt and I spoke about doing a *Suicide Squad*-style series with the Master, the Meddling Monk, maybe even the Rani, but it just became quite a struggle to tell a story that satisfied, and we realised **Gallifrey** fans ultimately love the characters of Romana, Leela, Narvin and the gang.

"So we focussed on their role and their story, but still with the aim of bringing the Master in as a guest character. "We started planning around the time I pitched the War Master set, so the intention was always to record that and Gallifrey in a single block if Derek Jacobi was keen on reprising the role - which he was!

"In fact, the Gallifrey episode was our very first day recording with him, and he slipped back into that menacing charm effortlessly.



"Obviously the politics of Gallifrey are still present, but we also follow a couple of our heroes off-world and examine their exploits as part of the greater Time Lord campaign. All our heroes get their moment in the spotlight, which is no mean feat given we have so many leads!"



ELESTIAL INTERVENTION by David Llewellyn opens the series. David explains: 'It wasn't so much a brief as an

Above (I - r): Pippa Bennett-Warner, Guy Adams, Seán Carlsen, Lalla Ward, Paul Marc Davis, Ebony Wong and Louise Jameson

It's lovely to hear him spar with Romana, especially as Lalla was Ophelia to his Hamlet back in the 1970s, but it's his relationship with Louise as Leela that makes the episode.

"I wanted to write a script that really celebrated both those characters, and Derek and Louise ran with it. They're simply brilliant together."

Looking ahead to the series, Scott says: "Unlike the last couple of releases - Intervention

A MIX OF SKULDUGGERY, ESPIONAGE, BACKROOM POLITICS AND DERRING-DO - I HOPE! 99 DAVID LLEWELLYN

Earth and Enemy Lines - we're back to the classic episodic format of the Gallifrey series, so we've dropped the halfhour episodes telling a single storyline and opted instead for hour-long stories that standalone within a greater arc. end-point that I was given, where I'd pass the baton on to the next writer. Scott already had a rough outline for the series in mind, so it was a case of filling in the rest.

"We knew that some of the build-up to the war would already have taken place, so my story had

TIME WAR

to include that final, sickening lurch into the war itself. Sorry if that's all a bit vague, but I'm aware that saying much more might give away a few spoilers!"

Having written for previous series of **Gallifrey**, David continues: "Leela, Romana and Narvin are always a pleasure to write for, because there's already that established chemistry between them.

"The Time War ups the stakes somewhat, but one of the things we wanted to get across is that with the War Council grasping for power, their triumvirate are actually on the edge of things – they're not in charge. So the question is, how do they react to that?

"The only bit that was particularly daunting came when I realised that my story would feature Gallifrey's declaration of war. That felt like a big responsibility after 10 plus years of us hearing about the Time War."

David sums up the story as: "A mix of skulduggery, espionage, backroom politics and derring-do – I hope!"

OLDIER OBSCURA continues the story, written by Gallifrey newcomer Tim Foley. Of his brief, Tim explains: "I had to put Braxiatel and Ace on a side mission that would have larger ramifications. I was to explore the warped relationship between them. On both sides, there are equal lashings of respect and wariness for the other. That was lots of fun to uncover."

How did Tim find writing for the **Gallifrey** regular characters with the Time War background?

"The Time War adds a whole new level of screw-tightening. Paranoia gets ramped up. We know that both Ace and Brax are ever-adaptable, rising to face challenges in different ways, but even they are going to struggle with what lies ahead. Of course they are. It's the flipping Time War! "Writing for the series was just a complete joy. I was addicted to **Gallifrey** as a kid, I loved **The West Wing** in Space vibe. Now we've put **The West Wing** to war – still machinations aplenty, but this time not everybody will get out unscathed..."

Summing up the story, Tim adds: "Brax and Ace visit a weird part of space/time known as the Obscura. They team up with Brax's old mentor Danna on a rundown space station and lie in wait for





an inevitable skirmish. But can they trust each other? And is the biggest threat out there in the Obscura, or in here with them?"

COTT HAS written the third story in the set, *The Devil You Know*. He explains: *"The Devil You Know*

straightforward as they seem.

"I don't know what it is, but I love writing for villains and antiheroes. There's something about unpleasant or flawed characters that makes them instantly appealing, trying to fathom how they function. Obviously the Master and Leela have past much my aim to write a strong character piece for both of them."

The series concludes in *Desperate Measures* by Matt Fitton. He reveals: "I've followed **Gallifrey** since the very beginning. I love all of the characters and was desperate to bring Narvin into the Eighth Doctor's story in *Dark Eyes*.



GALLIFREY: TIME WAR

OUT THIS MONTH CD: £23.00, Download: £20.00 EXTRAS Interviews

Directed by: SCOTT HANDCOCK Starring: LALLA WARD, LOUISE JAMESON, SOPHIE ALDRED, SEÁN CARLSEN, MILES RICHARDSON, DEREK JACOBI, NICHOLAS BRIGGS

CELESTIAL INTERVENTION by DAVID LLEWELLYN SOLDIER OBSCURA by TIM FOLEY THE DEVIL YOU KNOW by SCOTT HANDCOCK DESPERATE MEASURES by MATT FITTON

basically all kicks off when Romana realises the Doctor's never going to help them, so the next best thing they have in terms of a renegade and their experiences is the Master.

"He's her wildcard – she knows just how dangerous he is, but also that even he doesn't want the universe to end whilst he's in it – so they grudgingly strike a deal: one that involves Leela keeping him under constant supervision as they seek out a long-lost freedom fighter and interrogate him for information. But, being the Time War, things are never quite as form, having met during the Fourth Doctor Adventures when he was portrayed by Geoffrey Beevers, so it's fun to examine her perception of him in this new, more gentrified incarnation."

Scott adds: "I've always said the Master's got that Hannibal Lecter quality, and that's absolutely the case here – he's the smartest person in the room and unafraid to let people know what they're letting themselves in for.

"Plus, of course, knowing I was going to be writing for Derek Jacobi was a huge thrill – one I know Louise shared – and it was very



Above (I - r): Miles Richardson, Nicholas Briggs, Zulema Dene and Sophie Aldred





"I really like how the character has developed over time, alongside Romana and Leela. This gives us a chance to pick up from the last series where Romana had been placed in charge of the CIA and Livia is President.

"We're now some time after that with a new Livia in a later term of office, but effectively that's the status quo in terms of everyone's positions. But a conflict has been escalating, which tips over into the events of the Time War.

"In my head, it's taking place just before the Eighth Doctor Time War.

"At one point, there's an official declaration with the President starting the war, and then the political machinations of the **Gallifrey** series, which I love, come about.

"Livia asks herself, Do I actually want to be a war-time President? and at the same time, Romana, the CIA and the War Council are all running missions to try and gain the advantage, using whatever means they have at their disposal to fight the Daleks. One of those means is the War Master.

"The first story by David Llewelyn sets everything up, giving the political situation on Gallifrey and the escalation of the war. We follow a couple of missions with Leela and the Master, and Braxiatel and Ace going out at the behest of Romana to try and gain an advantage over the Daleks.

"Then the final story comes back to Gallifrey and the consquences of those missions, the fall out from Livia's declaration and what the next step for the War Council and the CIA will be.

"To place the stories with Ace and Brax in the Time War concept is fun and exciting, to see what happens to all of the Doctor's friends on Gallifrey at the beginning of the war, and where they end up.

"There are little hints and links to other things we've mentioned in the Time War, between the War Doctor, the War Master and the Eighth Doctor Time War series. It's great to be able to give it some shape."

> **S THE** series edges closer to release, Scott teases: "The edits are sounding

brilliant. Russell McGee's sound design is simply superb. He's not only got a great understanding of audio drama but knows the **Doctor Who** universe inside-out, so there are plenty of lovely touches that really help build the world as we progress through the set.

"We also have the fantastic Ioan Morris back on music duties. I love working with Ioan – he's just so good and instinctive and bright, and most recently did a sterling job on the War Master set. Between them, it's sounding fantastic."

And looking ahead, will there be more series to follow in the future?

Scott smiles: "Absolutely. I think quite early on, Big Finish told us they'd be wanting more, so Matt and I have been tentatively talking about where these adventures might take us. Dark times lie in store!" **VORTEX**

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WITH TIPNS PACK THE CLOCK

KENNY SMITH TURNS BACK THE CLOCK TO THE 1940S - AND A BIT EARLIER...

HEN WINSTON Churchill encountered the Eleventh Doctor in TV episode Victory of the Daleks, we learned that this wasn't the first time the pair had met from hints of several other encounters between them.

Winston Churchill returns to Big Finish in **The Churchill** Years Volume Two, four new tales alongside the Ninth, Tenth and Eleventh Doctors, written by Paul Morris, Iain McLaughlin, Alan Barnes, Robert Khan and Tom Salinsky.

Ian McNeice, who plays Churchill, was delighted to get back into studio and record more adventures as Britain's war time leader. Ian admits: "I go to conventions and a lot of people have come up and said how much they enjoyed the first box set and ask if there will be another one, so I was thrilled when Big Finish decided to make a second.

"It's amazing how one appearance as Churchill has resulted in all these other storylines, and I'm delighted it has taken off in so many other areas. They are really terrifically done. Before I went back to record this series, I listened to a CD in the car just to get the flavour of the voice, and I had forgotten how beautifully constructed these productions are, with the music and the sound effects." Script editor Matt Fitton says: "It's one of those series where you can branch out a bit and have new voices, or even old voices back again – we've brought back Iain McLaughlin to write one.

"You can tell stories in a particular style, as a memoir, for example, as Churchill recalls the stories of the Ninth, Tenth and Eleventh Doctors."

Young Winston by Paul Morris open the series. It's London, 1899. After spending time in war zones abroad, Churchill considers a Parliamentary career, while across the city, Madame Vastra has a mysterious caller – and the pair learn they have a mutual acquaintance wearing a bow tie. Matt continues: "For the first one this time around, we've gone for a tale of young Churchill at the turn of the century,

Ian McNeice was really good fun, telling lots of stories in the Green Room, and I had lots of scenes with Iain Batchelor playing the young Churchill. He's been a friend of mine since we did a play together

HAD FORGOTTEN HOW AN MCNEICE

which places him in the same timeframe as Madame Vastra.

"It's nice when you bring together recognisable parts of the bigger Doctor Who universe, and with the story being in the Victorian era, it

in Oxfordshire." Ian concedes: "I was a bit worried about playing the younger Winston (as well as narrating the Doctor). At one point I thought I was really going to have to push my voice up, but



AVING STEPPED back a few years, we return to Churchill in the time period we're familiar with. Matt says: "The other three stories are all set during World War II.

"Human Conflict shows how far Churchill was prepared to go to win the war and sets him against the Doctor, fresh from his own Time War, with the Doctor willing to draw the line somewhere."



made logical sense for Vastra to be in there - and she was brilliant."

Neve McIntosh makes her first Big Finish appearance as Madame Vastra, and reveals: "It was great fun doing Vastra for Big Finish.

"Part of me was wondering if I would be able to do it in the same way, because getting the make-up and costume on is a big part of getting into the character.

"I was worried I wouldn't move my mouth in the right way, but I think I got it right in the end.

fortunately they brought in a very good young actor to play him!"

Director Ken Bentley adds: "We'd wanted to work with Neve for ages, Dan Starkey had always told us how lovely she was to work with. We started by finding other roles for her, but we always hoped we'd one day get permission to tell stories featuring Vastra.

"So many wonderful characters have been created for Doctor Who, and one of the things Big Finish can do is give some of those



The story has been written by Big Finish veteran, Iain McLaughlin, who created the Fifth Doctor's Egyptian companion Erimem.

Iain says: "I'd been chatting with Matt about something else which had fallen through, and then got an email out of the blue asking if I was up for a slot writing for Volume Two of the Churchill plays. Matt's brief was pretty simple. 'Yours! 1939–1941' He enclosed the scripts for Volume One and a precis for the other plays in the second series,

VOLUME TWO

but beyond that... it was up to me, and I had the option of the Ninth or Tenth Doctors. We swapped a few emails and Matt asked if we could take Churchill out of London. That was absolutely fine with me.

"It's a full on war story for Churchill. He's in and about the action, Alistair Maclean style... but there's also the chance to ask some

CHURCH

out in favour of the UK's only ever temperence MP, Edwin Scrymgeour. By the end of his time here, Churchill was loathed, and he in turn loathed Dundee. He promised to see grass grow in the streets of Dundee before he'd come back, and turned down the freedom of the city in 1943.

"I thought bringing him back here would be fun, and it gave me that Alexandra Palace is picking up transmissions from an alternative reality.

"It's an interesting one as Alan includes the fact that Churchill wrote an essay on the concept of alternative history. It's nice to have Churchill being ahead of the game when it comes to a sci-fi concept and not relying on the Doctor

VOLUME TWO

OUT THIS MONTH CD: £23.00, Download: £20.00 EXTRAS Bonus disc

Directed by: KEN BENTLEY Starring: IAN McNEICE, NEVE McINTOSH

YOUNG WINSTON BY PAUL MORRIS HUMAN CONFLICT BY IAIN McLAUGHLIN I WAS CHURCHILL'S DOUBLE BY ALAN BARNES CHURCHILL VICTORIOUS BY ROBERT KHAN & TOM SALINSKY

questions about war and how we view the enemy during a war. It asks questions about the morality of weapons and how using them affects us... I really want the story to show how raw the Doctor is about that kind of weapon. The dilemma facing Churchill is something the my favourite line of the play. It also gave him knowledge he could use in a chase... And when he needed to commandeer an office in the centre of town, though I don't actually name the building, if you know Dundee then you can work out which building it is. It's a

BY THE END OF HIS TIME HERE CHURCHILL WAS LOATHED AND HE IN TURN LOATHED DUNDEE.

Doctor understands personally."

Iain was able to tap into personal experience for the setting of the tale. He grins: "At one point Churchill sits at my old desk. Or at least where my old desk used to be. The story brings Churchill back to my home town, Dundee, where Churchill was MP for 14 years until he got thrown building I spent 26 years working in, so I sat him at my old desk!"

OU CAN expect something different in the next adventure, Matt explains: "There's alternative reality stuff in Alan Barnes's *I Was Churchill's Double*. Churchill finds to explain everything to him. Although, the reality turns out to be even more complicated than that..."

Alan continues: "The title goes back years and years, really, when I came up with a proposal for a Main Range story featuring the Rutans, in which they duplicated the wartime Prime Minister – an *Eagle Has Landed* meets **Dad's Army** sort of affair. But I was asked to abandon it, because – not that I had any idea at the time – Churchill was about to appear in the next series of the TV show, in *Victory of the Daleks*.

"So that idea ended up in my bottom drawer until Matt Fitton asked if I was interested in reviving it. But when I came to it, the title *I Was Churchill's Double* kept on pulling me in the direction of some kind of parallel universe story. Which I would have dismissed, because parallel WWII stories,



VOLUME TWO

with a gloomy Churchill trying to cheer himself up on VE day by impersonating a man of the people (poorly). But as it develops, we stir in some themes of just what the Blitz meant to ordinary Londoners. and of course Churchill's own Project Unthinkable."

Robert picks up: "In terms of background, we tend to do a lot of research for any writing project because as the cliché tells us, research is the enemy of cliché. Given though the vast amount of Churchill material that exists getting to grips with all that would have meant sailing past the deadline, so I instead I read Roy Jenkins' brilliant one-volume biography.

"We also though looked at Lord Alanbrooke's war diaries. where it is clear he often loathed his political boss, which we riff on very briefly in the story. The highlight for me was the cast who made a terrific ensemble as well as being able to name a character after my great uncle."

i.e. in which the Nazis won, are pretty naff, let's be honest. Except I suddenly thought - what about a parallel world in which Imperial Germany won WWII ...? And that was the lightbulb moment, I guess!"

FILM AND a bit of history helped in the formation of the box set's concluding story, written by Robert Khan and Tom Salinsky. Matt says: "The final one, Churchill Victorious, is set right after the end of the war. My brief to Robert and Tom was inspired a little by the film, A Royal Night Out, which sees the royal princesses going out, incognito, among the crowds on VE Day and mixing with everyone. Robert and Tom came back with something which is very funny and also very dramatic.

"It shows Churchill in a comical light but also there are some serious

RESEARCH IS THE ENEMY OF CLICHE. TOM SALINSKI

points there, looking at the effects of the war on ordinary people.

"It's not just painting everything as being rosy, as it looks at the effect on people's lives. There's real heart to it."

Tom explains: "One of the lovely things about Doctor Who is the freedom it gives you with regard to tone. But I think it's always good to leaven fundamentally serious stories with dashes of humour. and equally it's good to underpin essentially frivolous stories with some more serious ballast.

"Our starting point for the story was a riff on A Royal Night Out,

Ken Bentley was assigned to these stories as director, and he admits it was a good few days in studio.

He says: "We really hit the ground running with the second series. One of the many things I love about working with Ian is that he'll always listen to one of the plays on his way in, to get himself into the zone and to re-familiarise himself with Churchill's rhythms. He has an enthusiasm for the work that's infectious, and not just working for Big Finish. He loves his job, and it's a treat to hear him talk about the work he's currently doing." VORTEX





Kenny Smith catches up with all things Vienna Salvatori, and finds out that things have taken a turn for the worse...

HE'S BEAUTIFUL but deadly, and now Vienna Salvatori is back for her fourth box set. The impossibly glamorous Chase Masterson returns to play the bounty hunter in Vienna: Retribution. Having turned her back on her old life as an assassin and begun a different career, Vienna is now running a detective agency with Jexie Reagan (Samantha Béart). However, the sins of the past always find a way to come back to haunt you – as Ms Salvatori is about to find out.

When a woman is killed in cold blood, Vienna is charged with the murder and sent to a hellhole of a prison with no hope of parole or release. But not all is what it seems on board the Splinter. With no means to escape, and no idea who she can trust, can Vienna survive life on the inside?

Speaking to Vortex from her home in America, bubbly Chase laughs: "What's not to love about the adventures of an impossiblyglamourous-intergalacticmercenary-assassin-witha-heart-of-gold (mostly)?

"I mean, this show is more fun than anyone should have with their clothes on! Plus the fact that I get to work with the incredibly talented Big Finish team. Which, of course, affords me the opportunity to play Just a Minute at conventions (undefeated)! And then there are the lunches. Don't get me started...

"This release is a fun new angle on Vienna – she's deep in prison, and it doesn't look likely that she'll ever see the light of day. No spoilers, but she's gotta use all her wits to get out of this one - and it's a challenge for the audience to



Below: Chase Masterson

think ahead about whether that can happen. The fun thing about Vienna is that she's both smart and often seems a bit mental. And what's more British than that?!"

All three episodes in this series have been written by Big Finish stalwart Guy Adams, which was a conscious decision by producer Cavan Scott.

He explains: "I wanted this new set to be different. one story across three discs rather than three separate adventures. It has been a few years since the last release of Vienna, so I thought we could mix it up a bit.

"That said. I started making plans while recording Guy's story in Series Three, and talked it over with him in the green room over lunch. He came up with a load of great ideas off the bat. so I knew that he'd be ace."

HE PRISON theme is the overall arc for this box set, which is perhaps more pronounced than in previous years.

66A STORY THAT LURCHED THROUGH YOUR HEAD LIKE A GIGGLING DRUNK.77 GUY ADAMS



Cav admits: "Vienna has changed a lot since we first met her. She's gone from hard-nosed killer to a woman with a conscience. Vienna is now a

detective rather than an assassin and is very comfortable in her new life – so naturally I wanted to rip all that up!

"Guy has written a tense, inventive script for our special three-part event, and director Scott Handcock has assembled an appropriately stellar cast. Vienna: Retribution sees Chase at her best - and Vienna at her worst. Our assassin-turned-detective has never fallen so far..."

How did Guy find coming back to Vienna? He replies: "A pleasure actually, I'd had great fun writing Big Society and also taking part in the recording. Actually, it was during the studio days for that series that the initial plans for this special set were hatched.

"Producer Cay Scott knew he wanted to do an 'event' series, one big story told over three discs,

Vienna convicted of murder and sent to prison. Because it was a single story he decided one writer should handle the whole thing. it makes life much easier and I was overjoyed to be that writer!

"Obviously, you need to be looking at a story with enough scope to fill three hours rather than one. That's a fun challenge though and from the off, the big appeal of this was to build something that had a different feel to my previous story.

"Big Society was, in essence, a mad romp. Anyone who has ever pointed their ears at me won't be surprised to hear that. I know! A world taken over by living buildings and street furniture, a world where a sci-fi version of the Albert Hall can hoist up its brick skirts and run... well, yes, for all its occasional darker

RETRIBUTION

moments, it was a story that lurched through your head like a giggling drunk. **Retribution** has its mad moments but it's a much darker story, a story that comes as close to breaking Vienna as any story could.

"She's spent so long trying to become a better person, to make up for the violence – the killing – in one was slightly different. Due to work commitments Chase couldn't get over to the UK, so Scott recorded her lines with her in LA, and then we got the rest of the cast together in London. But I think the chemistry is still there between Vienna and Jexie – Chase and Samantha know city's Comic Con, where she met fans of not only her old TV show **Star Trek: Deep Space 9**, but of Vienna Salvatori. She laughs: "Tloved taking

Vienna to Vienna! It's always very cool to see Big Finish's work being loved in other countries. I mean, English is spoken



VIENNA RETRIBUTION

OUT THIS MONTH CD: £20.00, Download: £15.00 EXTRAS Interviews

A BRAND NEW THREE PART ADVENTURE FOR GLAMOROUS BOUNTY HUNTER VIENNA SALVATORI

Directed by: SCOTT HANDCOCK Written by: GUY ADAMS

Starring: CHASE MASTERSON, SAMANTHA BÉART

her past. Now the law is stepping in, apparently she's killed again and her life will be forever changed."

HASE ADMITS that she thoroughly enjoyed working on this set. She laughs: "Loved it! Cavan Scott is a fantastic producer and has brought so much talent to Vienna, including the extremely accomplished Samantha Béart, and what a treat it is working with Scott Handcock.

"It's rare to find a director who is so keyed into every single nuance of a script that spans a full spectrum of hilarious and serious – and who calls me out if for any reason I'm not delivering the very best it can be. Thank you, Scott – sorted! And Guy Adams's scripts for **Retribution** are a real treat – he's really got a handle on the signature combo of raucous fun and meaty sci-fi that is **Vienna**."

Cav adds: "Vienna recordings are always fun, although this

that relationship back to front." Chase agrees: "If I hadn't worked with Sam live, it would have been a bit scary to do only my lines, all in a row. But I knew she'd deliver with her wonderfully dry sense of Jexie, so it was easy." everywhere, but it's super fun to see so many fans make a specific effort to listen when it's not their first language.

"I want to say a big thanks to everybody out there who looks forward to new **Vienna**

CALCUY ADAMS'S SCRIPTS FOR RETRIBUTION ARE A REAL TREAT.77 CHASE MASTERSON

Guy feels it's the leading ladies who make Vienna and Jexie so appealing. He says: "As always it's the actors, working with Chase and Sam is always a pleasure. They're a great team and giving them words to turn from lead to gold will always be amazing."

Of course, the world of Vienna took an unusual turn in November last year, when Vienna went to Vienna. Chase was a guest of the Austrian episodes. And major thanks to the brilliant David Richardson, whose idea it was to spin **Vienna** off – he saw the potential in this show and championed it from day one. It means a lot that **Vienna** – with great messages about humanity, including female empowerment – is such a hit.

"Love you, **Vienna** fans! I look forward to hearing your thoughts. And full speed ahead to the next set of adventures!" **VORTEX**

LISTENAGAIN

THE MAIN MONTHLY RANGE: 167 - RELEASED NOVEMBER 2012

DOCTOR WHO: THE SHADOW HEART



HE'S BEAUTIFUL. She's sassy. She's witty. But let's stop talking about Chase Masterson and look at the character she plays, Vienna Salvatori! Her fourth series is out for release this month, and the character has come a long way since the glamorous bounty hunter first appeared with the Seventh Doctor in Main Range story The Shadow Heart in 2012.

Writer Ionathan Morris was handed a detailed brief for the story to tie in with the previous two stories featuring the Fifth and Sixth Doctors.

Ionny says: "I went off and made a list of various ideas and characters that were as distinct and memorable as possible. I was very much thinking in terms of the tone of 2000AD and the 1980 Flash

Gordon film, and Star Wars knockoffs like Star Crash. I had the idea of a Steptoe and Son duo riding around in a space snail (that's why the snail was called Hercules!). I also had the idea of a planet smashed in two so that it was just a hemisphere hanging in space, with a castle on the edge. The notion of a futuristic spaceship run like the HMS Victory was an attempt to add another colourful twist.

"Vienna was one more 2000AD/ Flash Gordon type concept. It's

"I had a lot of fun writing her - she's a character that came to life on the page and slightly took over – and then when Chase Masterson was cast she took the character up another level."

Producer David Richardson continues: "Ionathan Morris did something very special in The Shadow Heart - he created Vienna Salvatori as a fully fleshed out character, one that had so much backstory before she arrived in that adventure, and so much potential after it finished.

"I'd suggested Chase for the role because I knew she was keen to work for Big Finish, and I also knew she'd do it brilliantly. And

L **IT STRUCK ME THAT THERE AREN'T** A LOT OF GLAMOROUS FEMALE BOUNTY HUNTERS IN SCIENCE FICTION. 77 JONATHAN MORRIS

weird, when I came up with the idea of the character I thought it was a bit corny, but then it struck me that, actually, there aren't a lot of glamorous female bounty hunters in science fiction. Like the smashed planet, she was a visual concept - I could picture her on a poster for a sci-fi movie, dressed in some sort of black bodysuit, holding a laser gun. I have since looked to see if there has been such a sci-fi movie, to see where I got the idea from, but I haven't managed to find one! So the truth is, I don't know where she came from.

she just flew with the character, and it very quickly became apparent that we should do so much more with it. I asked Jonny to develop Vienna: The Memory Box as a pilot for a potential series, and it's success merited a run of box sets. Chase's dedication to Vienna has been extraordinary she's not just thrown herself into the performance, but also the promotion of the series. I'm full of admiration for her." **VORTEX**

The Shadow Heart is available now on CD and download from www.bigfinish.com

Kenny Smith previews the last of the Big Finish HG Wells's adaptations...

INCE JANUARY 2017, Big Finish has regularly been releasing acclaimed adaptations of HG Wells's classic novels.

The sixth and final audio play to get the treatment is *The Martian Invasion of Earth*, an adaptation of *The War of the Worlds*, which unsurprisingly, sees our world battling for survival against an unrelenting alien force.

Originally written in 1897, *The War of the Worlds* is one of the first alien invasion stories in the history of literature and has since become the defining classic of the genre.

RLD OF

Previous adaptations include the broadcast by Orson Welles in 1938 (which features as the backdrop to Mark Gatiss's Big Finish Eighth Doctor story *Invaders from Mars*), George Pal's 1953 film production, the 1978 musical album adaptation of the story by Jeff Wayne, and more recently the Steven Spielberg movie starring Tom Cruise in 2005.

Dramatised by Nicholas Briggs who also directed the play, Nick admits that he is a huge fan of the original book. He concedes: "Well, love

doesn't quite cover it! It feels

THE MARTIAN

LTHOUGH THE story is famous through previous radio and film versions, Nick confirms this wasn't particularly an issue for him. He admits: "I didn't worry about that, actually. Perhaps arrogantly, I thought all the other versions had made several really obvious errors. I've always wanted to 'put that right' as it were. I wanted to do an adaptation set in the original historical context and really get to the core of the story."

There's a tremendous cast in the play with film and TV star Richard Armitage taking the part of Herbert, the lead character and narrator of the epic story. He is joined by Big Finish regular, Lucy Briggs-Owen, playing his wife Amy.

Richard, who starred in the recent trilogy of films **The Hobbit**: *The Battle of the Five Armies* directed by Peter Jackson, has also featured in TV hits including **Spooks** and **Hannibal**, but this isn't his first brush with Big Finish. Richard previously narrated two Robin Hood tales, *The Witchfinders* and *The Siege*.

Producer David Richardson adds: "Nick is such a huge fan of the original novel, and his love and passion for the material shines through on every page of the script.

"It's a glorious adaptation, and we're blessed to have such a brilliant, huge star as our lead. I've admired Richard for many years, and to have him back at Big Finish in this production is very special for us indeed."

Nick continues: "David handled the casting. I wrote who I ideally wanted on the front of the first draft, and David went to work. And he got every single person I'd asked for – that very rarely happens.

"There were many highlights. I suppose the first was my decision to keep the narrator's wife with him – he rather callously drops her off in Leatherhead in the

Above (I - r): Lucy Briggs-Owen and Richard Armitage

like it's a part of me. Part of so many of my basic assumptions about storytelling and science fiction ideas. I love science draft of my last go is included as a free PDF download with the production, so you can see how I made some fairly radical

" ¶ put too many of HG Wells's actual words in..." NICHOLAS BRIGGS

fiction and this is the ultimate science fiction story for me. It feels like it's in my DNA."

Although Nick has written numerous Big Finish plays for many ranges over the years, he reveals that working on this script was a tough one.

He says it was: "Far more difficult than I ever envisaged. I had three or four goes at it, using completely different approaches. The second-to-final last-minute changes – mainly to keep the word count down.

"Because I had fallen in love with the book so heavily all over again, I put too many of HG Wells's actual words in, making it about a third too long. The finished script is still a bit longer than it should be, but I just couldn't cut it any more without seriously robbing it of what I felt was the essential plot."



Above : Nicholas Briggs

sanity – he kind of loses his mind in the novel, which is something that wouldn't have happened if he'd had the woman he loved a great power in his performance and is quite the most polite and gentle actor I've ever worked with. We had a good time and I

"As a big Doctor Who fan, I rather like *The Martian Invasion of Earth*. "

NICHOLAS BRIGGS

with him. And it makes the story slightly shorter by giving events more of an impulse.

"Another highlight was getting the leading actor I wanted. And then finding that Iain Meadows and Jamie Robertson were available to do the sound design and music, was flattered by everyone being so excited about the script."

F COURSE, one noticeable thing about this release is the change of title. Nick explains: "There's a very simple reason. The novel



No one would have believed in the last years of the nineteenth century that this world was being watched keenly and closely by intelligences greater than man's...'

THE MARTIAN INVASION OF EARTH

Starring:

RICHARD ARMITAGE LUCY BRIGGS-OWEN HYWEL MORGAN EWAN BAILEY RICHARD DERRINGTON HELEN GOLDWYN CHRISTOPHER WEEKS BENEDICT BRIGGS

Written by HG WELLS Dramatised and Directed by: NICHOLAS BRIGGS

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book, and later tells us that Leatherhead was flattened by a Martian machine! Quite how his wife survived, I don't know.

"But keeping Herbert's wife with him achieved three main things. It gave us a strong female voice in a male-dominated world from the past. It saved the narrator's respectively. So many highs. The script was very long, so I worried that we'd run out of time. But everyone was just brilliant and they all concentrated so hard that we got it all in the can without going over schedule. Richard was a really warm, modest and personable leading man. He has is out of copyright, but Jeff Wayne owns a trademark for the title and is quite rightly very protective of that trademark. So we avoided bothering him by applying a new title.

"And in a way, as a big **Doctor Who** fan, I rather like *The Martian Invasion of Earth*. It has echoes of The Dalek Invasion of Earth, which pleases me greatly. And in a small way it's perhaps a more accurate title. There isn't much of a war – it's more of a walk-over! But I didn't think we should call it The Martian Walk-Over. How about Martians Won – Humans Nil? I'll get me coat..."

With the release of *The Martian Invasion of Earth*, the HG Wells series of adaptations is now complete, a collection that David is especially proud of.

The late Sir John Hurt starred in *The Invisible Man* (for which he was posthumously nominated for a BBC Radio Award for best actor, and received a commendation), *The First Men in the Moon* stars Nigel Planer, *The Shape of Things to Come* stars Nicola Walker and Sam Troughton, *The Island of Dr* everyone would be doing HG Wells's adaptations; that we were in danger of being just one of the many. I'm very pleased to say I was wrong and I strongly feel that the six releases we've made stand out in any perceived crowd.

"And I was so proud that Sir John Hurt was posthumously nominated for a Best Actor award for *The Invisible Man*. Even if I work for Big Finish for another 30 years, the HG Wells range will be one of my most cherished projects."

EN BENTLEY directed several of the plays, and he too has his highlights. Looking back to the first release, *The Invisible Man*, Ken says: "I love Jonathan Barnes's writing. He has a handle on the period like no other writer directing it, and says: "It was a treat to be asked to adapt one of the novels. *Moreau* is a story that has fascinated me for many years. It's a rip-roaring adventure, but its observations about human (and animal) nature are still painfully relevant today."

Another highlight was *The Time Machine*, adapted by Marc Platt. Ken says: "Being so busy I didn't stop to think about the responsibility of directing *The Time Machine*: it's such a seminal piece of science fiction. For much of the story the time traveller travels alone, so adapting it for audio wasn't without its challenges. Marc's script is deceptively clever and the cast did a magnificent job, particularly Anjella Mackintosh. Uweena is not an easy role to







DR MOREAU





THE INVISIBLE MAN THE FIRST MEN IN THE MOON THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME THE ISLAND OF DR MOREAU THE TIME MACHINE

Moreau stars Ronald Pickup, and *The Time Machine* stars Ben Miles.

David explains: "It's been such a lovely series to work on. I think every one of the scripts has been a class adaptation, and that has allowed us to attract classy casts. "My worry when we started

working on these was that

at Big Finish, and it's always a pleasure to direct his scripts. But the experience was eclipsed this time round by the privilege of working with Sir John Hurt. You learn so much from actors with his experience of the industry." Ken also adapted *The Island*

of Doctor Moreau, as well as

play, but Anjella makes her appear effortlessly truthful." Of the whole series, Ken adds: "It's always exciting to work on a new range of audio plays, but this time doubly so to bring to life the work of such a famous and influential author, and with such strong casts." VORTEX

VORTEXMAIL

Email: feedback@bigfinish.com and put 'Vortex Mail' as the subject...

OLD GOLD

Just wondered if Big Finish has ever thought of having a review section in *Vortex* of some of their older productions from a fan's perspective? I would love to take some of the comments from our Big Finish Listeners page or even some of our own personal reviews and give it a go.

JASON

Nick: Jason, we do of course publish review quotes (and links to the full reviews) on the product pages of our website. But I think we should leave the reviews to different sites and publications – I hope you'll forgive us for leaving the comments to others...

EIGHTH WONDER

I wanted to give a thank you to all at Big Finish for allowing the immense talent that is Paul McGann to shine for so many years as the Doctor in countless amazing dramas. As a huge fan of Paul's, I've been mercilessly enthralled by his journey in the audio universe. Paul is such a brilliant actor and I'm elated you guys have given him a chance to prove his mettle as a stunning incarnation of the Doctor. Just thanks so much guys. Can I just end with a question: will Paul ever have a Yeti encounter? We need the Yeti back in Who as well as Counter-Measures! MATT RABJOHNS

Nick: Matt, I'm beginning to suspect you are a pseudonym for 'Paul McGann', ho, ho. We're committed to continuing our great voyage of adventure with Paul for as long as he'd like to do it. And there's no sign of his enthusiasm flagging, I'm very happy to report. I popped into the studio the other day during the recordings of **Ravenous**, and he was on fine form. The Yeti idea is, of course, a good one. The **Counter-Measures** slot was the earliest one we could use for the Yeti since our new-found agreement with the lovely people at the Haisman Literary Estate. We are planning for the Yeti to feature in other adventures before too long.

STAY ON TARGET

To say I'm looking forward to your adaptation of the John Peel/Dave Rogers **Avengers** novel *Too Many Targets* is an understatement, especially as I wrote in suggesting the very idea so long ago I can't remember the issue! Great choices for the previously unused characters, especially the new Mother – who else could have filled Patrick Newell's shoes?

• SIMON DARLEY Nick: Glad you're enjoying The Avengers. We have a few plans up our sleeves which we hope will come to fruition soon.

MASTER PLANS

It is often said that people are quick to criticise and slow to compliment. So I wanted to take a moment to do the latter. I pre-ordered the **Eighth Doctor Time War** – I've listened to it three times already. I love the bait and switch twist of Sheena but will we be seeing more of her? Secondly, the **War Master** – another outstanding release. No disrespect to the phenomenal Sir Derek Jacobi (loved his performance on TV and this set) but there is just something to the sinisterly silky performance of Geoffrey Beevers – could he have his own Master-centric box set?

CHARLIE ANDREWS

Nick: Many thanks, Charlie. I don't believe there are currently any plans for Sheena to return – but you never know! With regard to the lovely Geoffrey, he's got his very own Short Trip (written by Geoffrey himself) coming out later this year. We're not planning a box set for him, but it is a great idea.

COMIC CAPERS

In a few stories from Titan Comics, there are references to some companions which originated in Big Finish stories (such as Liv and Lucie in a Tenth Doctor story), and mentions of the Committee in a recent **Torchwood** comic. Would it be possible to get audio stories with Titan's companions like Josie, Gabby, Cindy and Alice among others? Being able to see some of your companions fully appearing in a comic would be amazing as well.

• GUILHERME GUSMÃO

Nick: I have to, rather shamefully, confess that I wasn't aware that Titan were doing this, but we certainly have no objection! We have no plans to feature Titan companions, simply because our schedules are jam-packed with our own companions. But I'd never rule that out. I've actually got a meeting scheduled with Titan soon, so it's something I promise I'll discuss with them. VORTEX

COMINGSO

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MARCH 2018

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- DW THE MONTHLY ADVENTURES: THE HELLIAX RIFT (237, FIFTH DOCTOR)
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- DW THE EIGHTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: RAVENOUS 1 (BOX SET)
- DW SHORT TRIPS: THE TURN OF THE SCREW DLO (8.4, EIGHTH DOCTOR, CHARLIE SATO)
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- TORCHWOOD: BELIEVE (BOX SET)
- TORCHWOOD: THE LAST BEACON (20)
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MAY 2018

- DW THE MONTHLY ADVENTURES: THE LURE OF THE NOMAD (238, SIXTH DOCTOR)
- DW FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: SERIES 7B

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- DW FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: THE SHADOW OF LONDON DLO (7.5. FOURTH DOCTOR AND LEELA)
- DW FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: THE BAD PENNY DLO
- DW FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: KILL THE DOCTOR! DLO
- DW FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: THE AGE OF SUTEKH DLO (7.8 FOURTH DOCTOR AND LEELA)
- FLIGHT INTO HULL! DLO
- JAGO & LITEFOOT: JAGO & LITEFOOT FOREVER (14, BOX SET)
- UNIT THE NEW SERIES: CYBER REALITY (6)
- STAR COPS: MOTHER EARTH PART 1 (BOX SET)
- WE ALWAYS GET OUT ALIVE (21)
- BIG FINISH ORIGINALS: CICERO DLO

JUNE 2018

- DW THE MONTHLY ADVENTURES: IRON BRIGHT (239, SIXTH DOCTOR)
- DW THE COMPANION CHRONICLES: THE SECOND DOCTOR VOLUME TWO (BOX SET)
- DW JENNY THE DOCTOR'S DAUGHTER (BOX SET)
- DW SHORT TRIPS: ERASURE DIO (8.6, FOURTH DOCTOR AND ADRIC)
- TORCHWOOD: GOODBYE PICCADILLY (22)
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- QUENTIN THE LOVERS' REFRAIN

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- THE AVENGERS: TOO MANY TARGETS
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- DW THE MONTHLY ADVENTURES: THE DISPOSSESSED (242, SEVENTH DOCTOR ACE AND MELL
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