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ISSUE 66 • AUGUST 2014

# DIMENSIONS

# 2014



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PETER DAVISON



SYLVESTER MCCOY



KATY MANNING



LOUISE JAMESON



SOPHIE ALDRED



KAI OWEN



PETER PURVES

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# Sneak Previews & Whispers



## Doctor Who: Damaged Goods

**R**USSELL T Davies's acclaimed New Adventure tells the story of the Tyler family on a London council estate, and an alien incursion that will change their lives forever... However, it's not Rose and Jackie Tyler – this was written some years before Russell brought **Doctor Who** back to TV – instead we focus on Winnie, Bev and Gabriel Tyler, and the dark secret from the past that haunts them.

Sylvester McCoy plays the Seventh Doctor, who is accompanied by his New Adventures companions Chris Cwej and Roz Forrester – here played by Travis Oliver (from **Doctor Who: Gridlock**) and Yasmin Bannerman (from **Doctor Who: The End of the World**).

"I'm so proud of this production," says David Richardson. "It's dark and searingly dramatic, with amazing performances from all the cast. And Jonny Morris's adaptation is superb – Russell was absolutely thrilled by it.

"There's no doubt in my mind that this will be one of the Doctor Who highlights of 2015."

*Damaged Goods* is out August 2015

## Editorial

**S**OMETIMES, the little things that you do go a lot further than you would ever expect. At Big Finish, Paul Spragg was testament to that.

Since Paul's tragic passing earlier this year, Big Finish has been inundated with messages from people whose lives Paul touched, to many different extents, from friends who knew him well, to those he helped with day-to-day customer service enquiries. All of these words of kindness go a long way when people are grieving, and Paul's mum Barbara Harvey recently got in touch to acknowledge the large number of messages of condolence that they received from the wider Big Finish family.

Barbara wrote: "May I say, on behalf of Paul's family, how comforting and elating all the lovely comments about my son have been during our great distress. We had no idea he had touched so many people's lives in such a positive way, and we are so proud of his achievements. While those closest to him will always bear a 'Paul-shaped hole' (thanks Nick), I was very pleased so many people have said they will always carry a bit of him with them. I am glad his kindness and genuine love of helping was so infectious!"

I was proud when I was asked to become a regular part of the Big Finish family when Nick and David asked me to succeed Paul on *Vortex*, and Barbara's message really does bring it home – all of us reading this issue, whether we buy Big Finish productions, or work for them, really are part of one big family. Just look at the forums – we share our views with one another, we joke, we wind each other up, we argue – but central to all of this, we're all united in our love of what Big Finish do.

And Paul was a huge part of that. I'm sure I'm not the only one who remembers Paul mentioning the game of Yellow Car in *Vortex* last summer (where every time you spot a yellow car, you shout, obviously, "Yellow car!"). I was on holiday in Spain at the start of July, and behind our hotel, every day, was parked a yellow car, and every time I saw this I would shout "Yellow car!" and thought of Paul.

Here's to you, once again, Mr Spragg – together, we go fo'ward!

## KENNY

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# MATT'S THE WAY TO DO IT!

For years, Matthew Waterhouse declined the chance to recreate the part of Adric, but this month he finally dusts down his badge of mathematical excellence for the release of **The Fifth Doctor Box Set**.

**F**OR many years, the numbers didn't add up for mathematical genius Adric – but now Matthew Waterhouse is finally making his Big Finish **Doctor Who** début this month. After politely declining several times to return to the part he played alongside

Tom Baker and Peter Davison, Matthew finally said yes to becoming involved in the audio adventures last year. The release of **The Fifth Doctor Box Set** – containing *Psychodrome* by Jonathan Morris and *Iterations of I* by John Dorney – is one of Big Finish's most anticipated this year.

Matthew was asked to work with Big Finish by original producer, Gary Russell, and declined other offers over the years. He said this was: "Because my character is so young, I got to a point where I thought I was being asked to play a boy – I didn't really want to. I was asked to do it right at the beginning by Gary Russell, and he says he said to me in a lift in America, 'Would you like to play Adric again?', and apparently I turned to him and said 'no, actually'. He's dined out on that story for fifteen years!

"It wasn't that I didn't like him or want to do it. I've always liked **Doctor Who**, but I just didn't want to play a boy when I was nearly forty, but I've changed my mind

because I've decided one can treat him as a form of extreme character acting, now.

"In the old days, Victorian actors played all sorts of ages – they would be much older than they were, and much younger, all that old hammy stuff, but nowadays in radio and television, all those kind of things, you are very much cast because you absolutely fit the character.

"I suddenly felt it's quite interesting, now. Instead of being irritated by being asked to play a boy, I should in fact find it interesting, and a request that very few actors actually get, to play something so extremely different. That's what drew it back to me.

"Also, I'd worked for Big Finish a couple of years doing **Dark Shadows** [*The Creeping Fog* and *The Crimson Pearl*], which I absolutely loved. I loved doing it, I thought the scripts were great; the other actor, David Selby, was great; everything about it was good. It was a very good

'I suddenly felt it's quite interesting, now. Instead of being irritated by being asked to play a boy.'

experience and that also helps. You look at this company you've worked for, for the first time, and you think they're really cool to work for, and that's a big help as well.

"The other little kicker was, for a long time, BBC Audio had been doing readings of the novelisations, the old Target books, and in that context you're reading all the characters but one of the characters I was reading was Adric, and I found – and I hadn't quite expected that I'd find – that I was getting something of him. It can never be quite the same – you can't get away with the fact it's thirty years later – but I did feel when I was reading *The Visitation* and *Full Circle* I was getting something of the gaucheness and youth and so forth of that character, albeit in a more stylised way.

"I felt I was getting something, from doing them, I was thinking, 'Maybe it is time to go into a studio with Peter

and Janet and Sarah, if Big Finish will have me.' So I sent off and let them know that I was feeling game for it and they got in touch and said, 'Yeah, okay,' so here we are."

Having not played Adric alongside his former TARDIS travelling companions for over thirty years, Matthew soon found he was getting back into the spirit of things



Above: Matthew Waterhouse and Peter Davison  
Inset: Matthew and Peter with Janet Fielding and Sarah Sutton



when he recorded at The Moat Studios.

He explained: "It's unbelievably good fun. I know **Doctor Who** and I understand the rhythms of **Doctor Who** scenes – I think we all do and we've all been around it for a long time, so it would be pretentious to say I found it a challenge, in an arty kind of way.

"It's very, very exciting, it's very, very enjoyable. It's chaos of course, as anyone who has been in the studio with Peter and Janet will know!

"But it's great fun. It's fun, and it's interesting because we always seem to be baffing about and making jokes, but the fact of the matter is we're getting an awful lot of

# Matthew Waterhouse

work done, because these four episode stories are done in two days. That's a great deal of material.

"If this had been on television it would have been a month's work in 1981, with rehearsal and studio days. And here we are doing the whole thing in two days. There's something very exciting about that, and I actually love that, going in. They hire very good guest actors as well, and you just stand there and do it, and at the end of the two days, as far as the

quite haunting. There's the illusion of it being a ghost story, but it's very science fiction, but has a ghostly quality to it, a haunting quality."

Matthew feels that the TARDIS crew of which he was a part, created during the time of producer John Nathan-Turner, had unique voices, which couldn't be transposed to other eras of the show.

He explained: "It's interesting, because John Nathan-Turner's companions, you do have to write for them. You can't



actor is concerned, there's the complete four episodes, you've got a complete piece, although they're still to take it away and add the music and the sound design, and so forth.

"It's very pleasurable." Matthew was also impressed by the quality of the scripts from John Dorney and Jonny Morris.

He said: "They are both very good." They write very well for the characters. One is quite a character piece, as **Doctor Who** goes, without giving away too much about it. We find out a lot about the way the four TARDIS crew members perceive each other, which I think is very interesting.

"The other one takes place in Ireland, and it was a great deal of mathematics in it. It's a cerebral story, in many ways, but

just give them generic **Doctor Who** girl dialogue, which perhaps with the Seventies characters, they did sometimes have this generic companion dialogue, but however how good the actors were, the scripts did have that quality.

"But I think that Nathan-Turner's companions are distinctive enough that you do have to think about them as individuals. They are not interchangeable – you can't just interchange the dialogue because of their actions, they behave quite differently to each other.

"Tegan, Nyssa and Adric are all three very distinct characters, and of course the life in them is in the way they relate to each other. The characters aren't just individuals who will sit there with their arms folded – they come alive in the way they relate



## THE FIFTH DOCTOR BOX SET

### Psychodrome

by Jonathan Morris

The TARDIS lands in a strange and unsettling environment, the urge to explore is irresistible... and trouble is only a few steps away.

With the TARDIS stolen, and the very environment itself out to get them, the travellers face a extremely personal threat. They'll have to work as a team if they want to get out alive... but can you really trust someone you barely know?

### Iterations of I

by John Dorney

The house on Fleming's Island had been left to rot. Ever since a strange and unexplained death soon after it was built, and plagued with troubling rumours about what lurked there, it remained empty and ignored for decades until the cult moved in. But now it is empty again. The cult found something in its corridors... and then vanished.

Trapped on the island one dark night, the Doctor, Tegan, Nyssa and Adric look into the building's mysteries, its stories of madness and death. Their only chance is to understand what terrible thing has been disturbed here... before it consumes them utterly.



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to each other. Both of these writers have been very careful to bring these relationships to life.

"Adric is alive because of the way he talks to Nyssa and Tegan, and the Doctor, and so it is with the others as well.

"That's very interesting. This is definitely very much in the style of the Fifth Doctor period but they do character work in the way they only occasionally did in the TV time, so it's still in the spirit of the Fifth Doctor period, there's no question about that, but there's more

'This is definitely very much in the style of the Fifth Doctor period but they do character work in the way they only occasionally did [on] TV.'

character work in it than I remember being in most of the actual episodes."

Of the regulars appearing in the box set, Matthew is actually the longest-serving member of TARDIS crew, having appeared several months before Sarah Sutton, Janet Fielding and Peter Davison.

Matthew laughed: "I'm the senior member – did you see the respect they treated me with?"

"Adric quite likes the childish fantasy that he's in charge, or remotely in charge, and never gets his own way, but it's a boyish belief, that notion, 'It's really my TARDIS now.' He goes on about the Fourth Doctor, saying it's not the same without him, and 'You used to be clever, and now look at you now with your celery and your cricket.' 'You're not serious,' and Adric thinks he's a bit more intellectually weighty than the Doctor now because he's this jolly fellow with celery on his lapel. That's all good fun and it's very nicely done." **VORTEX**

# FIVE STAR

The writers and producer of **The Fifth Doctor Box Set** tell Kenny Smith how they were invigorated by the challenge of creating fresh adventures for a new to Big Finish TARDIS team

**F**OR 15 years, Big Finish has been producing original adventures for the Fifth Doctor, accompanied by Turlough, Nyssa, Peri and Tegan, as well as Erimem and Amy. But now, they've managed to finally complete the available television companion set for full-cast plays with the arrival of Matthew Waterhouse as Adric. Producer David Richardson said: "I'd certainly tried to get Matthew in before – notably on a **Companion Chronicle**, but nothing ever came of it.

"I suspect a few things changed his mind – having done Target readings for AudioGO, and also the big fanfare of **Doctor Who's** fiftieth, which all the classic companions became a part of in some way.

"It was lovely to have him reprise the role, and amusing to hear another voice in the never-ending banter that flies around the Fifth Doctor team!"

Having secured Matthew's involvement, the next task was to find writers to craft that adventures that brought the boy from space back to life, alongside the Doctor, Tegan and Nyssa. When it came to selecting writers, David explained: "I don't think I had any choice in the matter – they both begged me! They're both of an age for which this TARDIS team is 'their' team, so it was important for them that they wrote for the first Adric productions at Big Finish. I was hardly going to say no, as I knew they would write terrific scripts."

*Psychodrome*, by Jonathan Morris, is set shortly after the events

of *Logopolis* and *Castrovalva*, as the new Doctor and his travelling companions get used to one another.

Jonny's brief was: "Something dark and psychological. And very small, with only two additional characters. Which is why the story has, er, twelve additional characters."

Season 19 is quite serious in tone – did he try to capture that? The writer said: "*Psychodrome* is set very early



**'The idea I came up with was one that, astonishingly, hadn't been done before in Doctor Who, which excited me.'**

Jonathan Morris

in Season 19, immediately after *Castrovalva*, and my intention was to try to make it a seamless addition to the run of quite abstract, high-concept science-fiction stories from *Full Circle* to *Castrovalva*. So I had to come up with a high-concept science fiction idea.

"The idea I came up with was one that, astonishingly, hadn't been done before in **Doctor Who**, which excited me. But, yes, the story is intended to fit neatly into that era of crashed spaceships, medieval societies (that turn out to be anything but) and bearded villains. And to capture that feeling of that era, that rather bright, slick, videotape-y quality."

John Dorney has written *Iterations of I*, which sees the TARDIS land on the deserted Fleming's Island, and trapped in a house one dark night, the Doctor, Tegan, Nyssa and Adric look into the building's mysteries. John was given no brief for the play: "Just the companion line-up. So, as I tend to do in those situations, I basically give myself a brief of my own. I wanted to do a story

that would work particularly well with that group of companions, so needed a bit of science in there.

"I wanted to do something that the team didn't really do on TV, so went with full on scary, an old-style ghost story, as it's only really *Kinda* that enters that territory at all. I initially was thinking about a haunted space-ship, to link into the science, but that clashed with some other

Davison stuff, so I went for Earthbound and then it was just a question of where.

"Jonny had recommended the *Nine Billion Names of God*, an Arthur C Clarke short story, as something that might be a useful touchstone for the story, and that was set in a monastery in the Himalayas... similar to where one of my great film obsessions, *Black Narcissus*, was set. So it was there for a while, to

get the requisite isolation but then (the split second after I'd bought a book about the mountains) I changed my mind and went for Scotland. Then the moment I'd bought the *Hamish Macbeth* DVD set, I changed my mind and went for Ireland instead! All about the houses rather."

How did the writers feel applying twenty-first century storytelling, to a team that hasn't been head together since the 1980s? Jonny said: "Well, with all these stories you are conscious that it is being written for an audience of fans in 2014, not an audience of people waiting for *Blankety Blank* in 1981.

"That's an audience that is extremely well-informed as to what has been done before, what the clichés and tropes are, which is some (very welcome) additional pressure when trying to come up with an original story and tell it in an unpredictable way.

"The other big difference, I think, is that back in 1981 there wasn't a great deal of screen time to develop the regular characters' relationships; the focus was very much on action, adventure and plot exposition.

"Which means that by the end of *Castrovalva* the Doctor and his companions barely know each other, they have barely had time to introduce themselves and assimilate all the things that have happened (the change of Doctor, for instance, or the fact that Adric, Tegan and Nyssa have all recently lost loved ones).

"So in *Psychodrome* there is an opportunity to give the characters a breathing space, to come to terms and get to know each other. It's what you would do in the show

# The Fifth Doctor Box Set

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**'It's lovely. I have an imaginary Doctor Who adventure from 1981 playing in my mind. Those four characters, are so familiar to me, they almost have their own existence.'**

Jonathan Morris

nowadays, viewers expect a greater focus on character development, which wasn't the case back then."

John added: "I think, given the science-y crew, I think I wanted it to have a certain intellectualism, if that isn't remarkably pretentious, and that lends it a certain seriousness. But I think I'd struggle to lose the humour, it's just the way I write, and particularly so with the Fifth Doctor and Tegan in the same play. They're both pretty funny separately, but together they're a riot, a sci fi Odd Couple.

"I think it's possible to touch lightly on the political situation in Ireland at the time, which the TV series would never have done at the time, but beyond that there's nothing conscious. Writing in the twenty-first century, I'm obviously going to be influenced by the time I'm writing in, but nothing I could pin down."

The writers were also pleased to be able to write for a TARDIS team new to Big Finish. John said: "I keep saying this, but it's true, I think I'm the only regular BF

writer who started with season nineteen. So this is my home crowd. I love them all. To get to write the first one we recorded with this group was a huge privilege and an honour. And Adric very definitely. I'd covered the other three, so it was exciting to explore what Adric could do. I've always thought him underrated!"

Jonny added: "It's lovely. I have an imaginary Doctor Who adventure from 1981 playing in my mind, all I have to do is write it all down. Those four characters, their voices, are so familiar to me, they almost have their own existence.

"The challenge is to put them into new situations, situations that throw new light on them or test them in new ways, whilst remaining true to what we know about their backgrounds and attitudes. And, as a kid, I loved Adric; it's not altogether surprising he wasn't popular with socially awkward teenage boys, because the last thing socially awkward teenage boys want to see on television is another socially awkward teenage boy. But I was still at an age where I thought things like maths and computers were pretty cool so, as far as I was concerned, Adric was the embodiment of cool."

With the plays having been recorded in July, August and November last year, post-production has now been completed on the **Fifth Doctor Box Set**. David added: "I'm deeply proud of it. Deeply. I think it's one of the best things I've worked on. *Psychodrome* has a lovely enigmatic quality and *Iterations of I* is really scary. I'd go so far as to say *Iterations* is one of the best things we have ever made at Big Finish." **VORTEX**

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Philip Olivier tells Kenny Smith why he's delighted to be back for the latest Seventh Doctor trilogy, and why Thomas Hector Schofield has got...

# THE HEX FACTOR

**L**ET'S BE honest – we all thought that Hex was a gonner after the events of *Gods and Monsters*.

In order to defeat Fenric, Hex apparently sacrificed his life to stop the Doctor's old foe from the dawn of time. Therefore, it came as something of a surprise when he returned in last December's *Afterlife*.

However, it wasn't the Hex we knew and loved, as he had been reincarnated in the body of gangster Hector Schofield, but without the memories from his former life.

Since making his Big Finish debut alongside Sylvester McCoy and Sophie Aldred in *The Harvest* in June 2004, Philip Olivier still gets a buzz from playing Hex, more than a decade later. He said: "Hex is just one of the best characters I've ever done in my life, and I've loved every minute of it.

"I want to credit everyone at Big Finish, Gary Russell who originally cast me, Jason Haigh-Ellery, Nick Briggs, David Richardson and everyone else, for making me so welcome, along with Sylvester and Sophie, as well as all

the fans who have really taken Hex to their hearts. It's incredible that Hex has become so established and so much has been centred around him.

"I would never have believed it, if you'd told me back in 2004 when I recorded my first one, that I'd still be involved ten years later, never in a million years. It's my longest-running job, and I love it.

"I was delighted last month when the fans at Whovianet held a poll for their favourite original Big Finish companion, and I won. I was thrilled, honestly, I can't tell you how much I loved that. I was really overwhelmed.

"I get lovely emails and fan people from people who love the character, from all over the world – Australia, Canada, the States, New Zealand – it's such a joyous job to do. I've really enjoyed going to the conventions, in LA and Chicago, all these beautiful places, and just seeing how dedicated the fans are. The love that they have is great. One of the best things is that you get to socialise

As the Doctor, Ace and Hector get ready for a trio of new tales, the writers previews each of the forthcoming stories.

### Revenge of the Swarm

Jonathan Morris brings the Nucleus of the Swarm back to life, and said it was: "An absolute delight. A lifetime's ambition fulfilled. The pinnacle of my career. The Nucleus of the Swarm is a great villain; it has self-awareness, vast intelligence, and a hugely inflated ego, yet, because of its microscopic size, it also has an inferiority complex. It knows that it looks a bit ridiculous – 'a pathetic crustacean' – and its greatest wish is stop people taking the mickey."

### Mask of Tragedy

James Goss takes the TARDIS crew back to Athens in 421BC, and chose that period: "Genuinely, because I fancied re-reading a pile of Aristophanes. I've always loved him, and Jonny was nice enough to go 'okay, not the period I had in mind, but go for it.' Quite a lot of the period detail is correct – he really did have a mysterious sponsor who was a doctor. He really was put on trial for bringing Athens into disrepute with aliens. And, during a time of terrible war and plague, he did write the most enduring comedies in any language – he may rarely have won first prize in Athens, but he still sells out the West End and Broadway."

### Signs and Wonders

Matt Fitton brings about the end of the world from Liverpool, which isn't the most obvious place for the apocalypse to begin: "As the climax of the whole Hector/Hex arc it was always going to be set in Liverpool! In fact, I should credit Ian Potter with some of the ideas in it too. Ian put me onto the influence of Mathew Street, Liverpool's history of change, ideas, and inspiration, and some of the local legends. I wanted to explore a potential cataclysm well away from the usual Home Counties."

Having written for Hex, how did Matt coming back to Hector again? "Hex has a strong sense of morality, a solid perspective on who he is and what he wants to do. Hector has none of that. He's cast adrift in a life that he doesn't know or want – all the certainties of who he thought he was in his 'Hector Thomas' fake persona have been stripped away and he's increasingly unsure of anything. **VORTEX**

with them afterwards. We don't just turn up and then leave, because we're staying in the same hotel as them, so you get to meet the fans on a social basis and get to know them, and have a great time. There's been lots of crazy things – like being drunk, inside a Dalek!

"I'm just so proud to have been welcomed into the **Doctor Who** family."

He added: "I really think a big part of **Doctor Who** coming



Philip Olivier and Sophie Aldred

back and being a success on TV is because of Big Finish – they've shown what can be done with **Doctor Who** when it's in the hands of people that love and care about it.

"Big Finish have done such a great job, and it's really nice to have been a part of that."

The 34-year-old actor had enjoyed what most fans had expected would be his final appearance, written by Matt Fitton. Phil admitted: "I was so proud of *Gods and Monsters*. Matt is such a humble man and only recently got into writing professionally. Now, he's in a position where he's got the financial stability to let him write a lot more."

"I was listening to his other work in Big Finish's *Survivors*, and it's fantastic. It's such a great series, and so well done."

Phil admitted that he had almost ruined the surprise of his unexpected return as Hex last December!

He laughed: "I remember putting out on Twitter, or another social media, that I was coming back as Hex, and was asked to take it down really quickly, as Big Finish didn't want the audience to know."

"I went out to an event in Chicago after *Gods and Monsters* had come out, and was doing a signing, and people were asking me if Hex was coming back. I had to play it down, saying I was gone, and it was nice that so many fans came up to me and said they wanted him to come back."

# Philip Olivier

"I wanted to say, but I couldn't!"

When it came to recording *Afterlife*, Phil admitted that getting into the head of Hector, rather than Hex, was slightly tougher than he'd initially planned. He explained: "It was a bit crazy – I'd read it in a totally different light before I came to the studio. You get the script sent to you, you read it, and don't get a rehearsal beforehand. I came down on the morning, went to the studio, then had a chat before we started, then went into the recording booths for a read through. I was doing it in an old English posh accent for Hector, and they were all like, 'No, no, no! He's still got the essence of Hex, but he's a bad version of him. 'You've got to portray him as a bit evil!'"



John Leeson and Sylvester McCoy

**'I was doing it in an old English posh accent for Hector, and they were all like, 'No, no, no!'**

"I asked if I could have five minutes, as I'd got Hector into my head in the wrong light, and after that it was fine.

"It was a brilliant script and once I got my craft together and had a coffee, it was really good."

The Doctor, Ace and Hector return this month as a new trilogy is released, starting with Jonathan Morris' *Revenge of the Swarm*. A sequel to Bob Baker and Dave Martin's *The Invisible Enemy*, the original Tom Baker adventure features a monster that isn't highly regarded amongst fans, despite a great vocal performance from John Leeson.

Phil laughed: "They showed us what the Swarm looked like – a great big giant shrimp! It was really funny. John Leeson is such a brilliant actor to work with, and I was really lucky as he was in the booth next to me. That's one of the

things that's so great about this job – I get to work with actors I wouldn't normally do. You feed off them and learn from them.

"It's one of the great things about Big Finish, and audio, as you've got no constraints with any storylines, because there's no huge budget to spent on CGI, as the power of the imagination is one of the best things there is. It's brilliant to work on that environment and just let your imagination run riot."

The second story in the trilogy takes the TARDIS back to ancient Greece, in *Mask of Tragedy* by James Goss.

And again, Phil was impressed by the guest cast: "We've got Samuel West, another great actor. Every time I come in, it's like, 'Wow! We've got this guy, that guy and this lady.' I keep on pinching myself every time I come in and work with this great, esteemed actors.

"*Mask of Tragedy* is brilliant, and I love doing period pieces like this, and it was really funny listening to Sophie doing some great noises! I can't wait to hear it when all the effects have been added.

"I did a lot of scenes in this one with Sylvester, running and hiding, while Sophie is away fighting the monsters. It was great to do that, because I love working with Sylvester.

"There's a good emotional range in this one for Hector, as he's had enough of not knowing who he is. It's written brilliantly by James Goss."

Matt Fitton returns to conclude the season, with *Signs and Wonders* with Amy Pemberton back as Sally Morgan. And Phil said: "I love this one, obviously, being set in Liverpool, and there were so many Scouse accents. They were asking me if they had got this or that right, and I'd tell them, 'Yeah, that's sound!' I never would have thought we would be having storylines set in Liverpool.

"I was really pleased to work with Warren Brown – he was great in this one. I'd worked with him years ago on *Hollyoaks*. And I loved working with Amy – she's so great. We have some flirting scenes, which I enjoyed! I kind of miss my flirting scenes with Sophie, though, as I used to love those, but I like the way the relationships has gone back to being like a brother and sister-type of way again."

The trilogy is highly-anticipated amongst the Big Finish faithful, and they're not alone!

Phil revealed: "I'm waiting by the postbox, hoping the CDs will come through the door any day now. Because we don't hear the effects in the studio, and it's all added afterwards, you think you know how it's going to sound, and it's totally different. They do an amazing job." **VORTEX**





# VORTEX MAIL

We love to hear from you, so if you have something to say, write to us at enquiries@bigfinish.com. Remember to put 'Vortex Mail' as the subject.

I was wondering if Big Finish is still planning on doing the Arthur Conan Doyle adaptations of Sherlock Holmes and if you are have picked the stories yet? Just wondering since you have announced the next box set on a recent podcast but nothing about those adaptations since you read my question about it around Christmas time. Thanks for your time.

**James Sparrow**

**Nick:** Yes, we are still planning to do them, but the schedule is a bit packed at the moment. **The Judgement of Sherlock Holmes** box set will, however, be out in December. When we get confirmation on when the Conan Doyle short stories will be out, we'll let you know. Apologies for the delay on this.

I know we have **The Early Adventures** to look forward to, but is there any chance of an older Ian Chesterton stepping back into the TARDIS for some adventures with one of the more recent Doctors? Might make a nice trilogy with Doctors Five, Six or Seven?

**Lawrence Conquest**

**Nick:** Interesting thought, Lawrence. Nothing exactly like that coming up, but there is a trilogy in the works now for the main range of **Doctor Who** that... well, I think might please you and go some way to giving you what you're after. Sorry to be so cryptic. Keep your eyes peeled for more news.

Thank you for fifteen years of audio dramas, though I haven't been around for that long I have listened to many releases from the **Doctor Who** and **Bernice Summerfield** lines. Being young, money comes in small drabs and finds itself going to **Doctor Who Magazine** every month so I was very excited by the

free downloads put up online over the last few days. Rest assured these were downloaded with haste!

I do a lot of independent **Doctor Who** audio and video projects and have ambitions to one day do a Big Finish audio drama as an actor. So thanks once more for hours of time sat in a chair listening to great drama.

To the next fifteen years,  
**Lewis Gibbs** (aged 14)

**Nick:** Good to hear from you, Lewis. Glad our fifteenth anniversary celebrations have helped you to get some more downloads from us.

How can Jago & Litefoot investigate so many paranormal cases and not run into Madame Vastra, Jenny Flint, and Strax at least once?

**Jonathan Bridge**

**Nick:** It's a very interesting question. Maybe one day we'll find out the answer! Perhaps they're working their cases in different years.

I am writing because I am wondering if there are any plans to write any War Doctor stories in the future. I didn't know whom to contact with this enquiry, I am a fan of your audio dramas, and I am excited to know if there are any planned. I apologies if I have wasted any time.

**Conor Manning**

**Nick:** There are no plans currently. We'd have to have a different licence agreement with the BBC for this to be possible. Sounds like a good idea, though.

Will Big Finish get to make audio dramas about the new series of **Doctor Who** now that AudioGo is gone? Thanks  
**David**

**Nick:** Obviously, that's something we'd love

to do. We've never made any secret of the fact that we'd like to do audio drama with other, newer Doctors as well as Doctors one to eight, but that's entirely reliant on a new licence with the BBC, which is currently something we don't have.

The BF Range interface doesn't currently list the author of the story.

I do like seeing the CD image, names of the principal actors, start of a summary, etc., but sometimes I choose a story based on an author whose work I love, and, as it is now, you have to click on each individual story to find that.

Yes, the author's name appears in tiny print (often too small to read) on the CD image, but it would be really nice to see the author's name listed up front, or to be able to filter by author.

**Brian Speer**

**Nick:** I'm not sure what you mean by the BF Range interface. All you have to do is click on the title and you'll see more details, including the author and director.

Just a quick query/suggestion – have you ever thought about doing a subscription where customers could pay in advance for 6 or 12 main range releases and then be able to select which 6/12 releases they want until they have been used up?

The main reason I haven't taken out a main range subscription is that I don't want all the releases but would quite happily take out a subscription if I could opt out of certain releases.

**Philip Lenton**

**Nick:** We are always reviewing our options on subscriptions and this is certainly something we'll be looking into. Currently, the site doesn't have the functionality to offer such a subscription.



# TAKEN FOR GRANTED

After a hugely popular run of full-cast adventures, the ninth volume of **Blake's 7 Liberator Chronicles** is released this month – and it's all change in front of and behind the microphones.

**B**IG Finish's **Liberator Chronicles** move in a new and unexpected direction this month, as a new cast member and producer join the series. David Richardson has taken the difficult decision to step down after producing all previous eight volumes of the **Liberator Chronicles**, as well as the first series of full-cast stories, to be succeeded by Cavan Scott. David said: "There were a number of reasons. I'd already produced a huge numbers of **Blake's 7** stories in the range and I felt I'd done all of the things that I'd wanted to do.

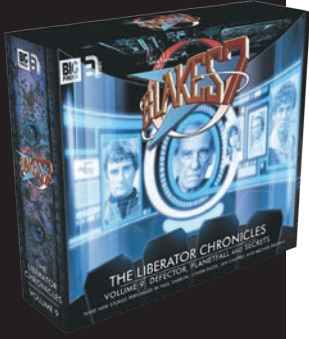
"We were just getting the licence for **Survivors**, and I had lots of ideas for that which I was keen to pursue. I couldn't do both. Also Cav, has a million ideas and I had a handful – it was his time, and from what I've heard of his episodes so far they are magnificent."

Volume nine features a trilogy of stories, *Defector*, *Planetfall* and *Secrets*, all of which are written by Cav and Mark Wright. There's an addition to the regular cast, with Tom Chadbon bringing Del Grant – from the TV episode

*Countdown* – back to life, this time as a crew member of the *Liberator*. Cavan is no stranger to Big Finish, having co-written the **Doctor Who** trilogy of *Project: Twilight*, *Project: Lazarus* and *Project: Destiny*, amongst others, as well as for **Counter-Measures**, **2000AD**, **The Tomorrow People** and **Highlander**, as well as co-producing *Iris Wildthyme*. Cav said: "This was an odd one, because *Planetfall* and *Secrets* were commissioned before I became producer. I was only asked after we'd submitted the scripts. I had no idea my first job was to produce scripts by Mark and me.

"Del coming on board the *Liberator* as a member of the crew was David's idea. We were recording *The Armageddon Storm* and were so impressed with Tom's performance that David asked us to rewrite the ending so that Grant throws his lot in with Avon."

Tom first returned as Del Grant in the third volume of **The Liberator Chronicles**, released in early 2013, and he admitted that playing the character again was not



Producer and co-writer Cavan Scott looks over the box set to give *Vortex* readers an exclusive preview of what they can expect from *Liberator Chronicles Vol 9*.

### Defector:

It's the two Dels! Not only were we pleased as punch to write for Grant again, we got Tarrant too! At first, this was commissioned as a stand-alone story, although ultimately it would kick off the trilogy, which have a definite espionage feel.

### Planetfall:

David came back to us and asked for a two parter to complete the set. We continued the 007-vibe by having Avon and Cally undercover at a space casino – and then blew it up. Oh and introduced a character that will have a long-term impact on the Big Finish *Blake's 7* line – played by the great David Warner.

### Secrets:

Here we see Del Grant in his element, taking the crew to an illegal arms bazaar. This is his world and his people. And a chance for us to delve into Bond territory once again. If the assassination attempt in *Defector* was inspired by *The Living Daylights*, the casino in *Planetfall* from, well, just about every Bond film, the arms bazaar comes from the opening of *Tomorrow Never Dies* – at least in initial inspiration. It soon moves in its own direction.

something he had thought about. He explained: "It's something I'd never expected – if I thought anything was going to happen with one of the science fiction characters I'd played, it would have been Duggan from [*Doctor Who* TV story] *City of Death*.

"When I do signings, Duggan seems to be the most popular, but with Del Grant, it's starting to pick up a bit.

"It's lovely to be back as Del, but it's a slow-moving world. It must have

*'Planetfall and Secrets were commissioned before I became producer... my first job was to produce scripts by Mark and me.'*

CAVAN SCOTT

been about eighteen months ago that Paul Darrow and I did a little meeting at a hotel with signings and talking to the hard-core fans. They were saying they wanted more of Grant."

Tom felt that acting with the *Blake's 7* cast was great fun, especially as they were working hard with such good material. He said: "With Big Finish, there's a good, jokey atmosphere, but we get the work done too – it's very professional, but it's not too earnest.

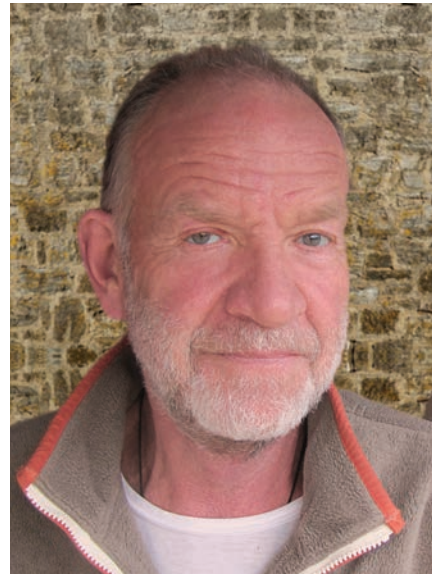
"Steven Pacey is such a fantastic voice talent. I think I'm quite good at doing characters, but nowhere near as good as Steven, doing crazy, off-the-wall voices.

"I've known Paul for 40-odd years, on and off, and love working with him – he's just so lovely. Jan I've seen over the years – she was at RADA just before I was, and Michael I've worked with too.

"They were great fun to do, the *Liberator Chronicles*, working with Ken, the director. It was a real kick to come back in and find

I've got to get myself back into it as Grant. These latest scripts are lovely – they are good, sci-fi scripts, as no one is pretending it's Shakespeare, because these are just great stories. The one I've just done with Michael Keating, *Secrets*, it was great – I had such a ball with that.

"They have given Del Grant characteristics I'd really like to see developed. When I next see Cav, Mark or David, I will have to talk to them about it as there's a lot of history with Del's sister



Tom Chadbon

and Avon, and it's got great potential to be expanded upon.

"You can still have all the sci-fi, and fighting against the Federation, but you can have an ongoing thread behind it, giving them all a bit of a shake up.

"Avon is sacrosanct – he's the leader, the top dog, all laid back, but maybe he's playing a double game. I wish I knew what they had in store for Grant! It's what good acting is all about – having something that challenges you.

"Working with Big Finish is always good, when they get in good actors, and working

# Blake's 7

with actors like Michael Keating, Steven Pacey and Paul Darrow.

"On the Big Finish website, you can read about how wonderful it is, and it's true. They really connect with the audience and try to give them what they want.

"It's tremendous to find all these tremendous actors under the umbrella of Big Finish, along with people like Paul McGann, and it's just lovely to work with them."

As a recognisable face to fans of **Blake's 7** and **Doctor Who**, Tom has been in the public eye as an actor of TV for decades. He said: "When I was doing a lot of other telly, I wasn't always available to go along and sign autographs at

things that we'd discussing for a while. Things that may have a lasting effect on certain members of the *Liberator* crew."

As well as Del Grant, the new box set features Paul Darrow as Avon, Jan Chappell as Cally, Michael Keating as Vila and Steven Pacey as Tarrant, while David Warner features in two of the plays as the mysterious Solvin Tavac. Mark added: "This set of episodes also fulfils a long held ambition to write something for David Warner.

"I produced a series he guest starred in [*Graceless*], but here I get to write the words for him. I've admired David's work for so many years, and to listen to David, Tom Chadbon and Michael Keating working together in studio



David Warner and Michael Keating

'Michael Keating wanted to show a different side to Vila, a private side away from the quips and Soma and Adrenalin... Hopefully that's what we've given him.' CAVAN SCOTT

events, and as a character actor, people don't always recognise you from being in **Doctor Who** or **Blake's 7**, but now, it's nice to go along and do these signings and meet the fans.

"It's funny, though, the places where you get recognised – the other day I was in a recording studio in Soho, and the sound engineer was about 22 and a real whiz. He came up to me and said, 'Wow! Tom Chadbon! I loved you in **Peep Shop!**' But I think people still recognise me most as Duggan."

Co-writer Mark Wright is pleased with the way the stories have turned out. He said: "What a privilege to have another three episodes of the **Liberator Chronicles** to develop a story across. There's a more thematic link in this box set than the closely linked episodes of *The Armageddon Storm*. It's such a thrill to be able to tell new stories for these characters, and this volume gave Cav and I more room to develop specific



is perhaps one of my favourite Big Finish experiences."

Cav added: "Looking forward, I'm looking for stories that give the actors chance to explore new aspects of their characters. That's definitely what happened with the last two stories in this box set. Michael Keating wanted to show a different side to Vila, a private side away from the

quips and Soma and Adrenalin. Hopefully that's what we've given him.

"We definitely see a side to Vila in *Secrets* that we've never seen before, an extension in a way to what we do to him in *Caged*."

Tom will be back as Del Grant before the year is out, as the second series of full-cast **Blake's 7** plays is released this autumn, and is set during the third season. Tom smiled: "I'll be back doing more Del, and I can't wait. They are telling me there's some great stuff coming up." **VORTEX**

# THE ZYGNON WHO FELL TO EARTH

We're letting Zygons be Zygons with this month's Fourth Doctor release. Kenny Smith looks back at the shape-shifters' first Big Finish appearance...



**A**PPEARANCES by old monsters are always popular with **Doctor Who** fans, and it was the turn of the Zygons to terrorise the Eighth Doctor and Lucie in *The Zygon Who Fell To Earth*.

Having partly delved into Lucie's backstory during the previous season in *Horror of Glam Rock*, Paul Magrs returned to write a story that revealed more about Lucie's Auntie Pat's past.

Script editor Alan Barnes said: "The reason we did another Auntie Pat story was because there was an unanswered question there from *Horror of Glam Rock* – if Auntie Pat had met Lucie in 1974, how come she had never said anything to her about it? Something odd had happened and I just felt it was something we needed to pick up on.

"Paul came up with the fantastic idea of a Zygon who has retired, but his mates come back for him – but he didn't want to go back. And it had that wonderful working title, *Trevor of the Zygons!*"

The writer said: "The periodising of the story was very important. Following on from *Glam Rock*'s investigation of

Seventies pop culture – this was all about getting to the heart of the Eighties."

Having directed Paul's season one play, Barnaby Edwards returned to the helm once again for *The Zygon Who Fell To Earth*, and assembled another impressive cast, most notably former **Blake's 7** star Steven Pacey, and **Goodie** Tim Brooke-Taylor.

Like *Horror of Glam Rock*, *The Zygon Who Fell To Earth* featured a song, sung by Steven Pacey.

With Barnaby writing the lyrics for *Falling Star*, Tim Sutton worked with him on the music.

Tim explained: "I wrote the songs in the wrong order: that's to say the Eighties remix (which was the more important of the two narratively) was my original version, and I reverse-engineered the Sixties 'original' afterwards. I have to say I'm very pleased with the Eighties version, which is supposed to be the naff one, and much less convinced by the Sixties, which sounds more like prog rock with a bit of *Strawberry Fields* thrown in.

"The Eighties version however made me smile a lot on re-listening – I really went to town with those early Eighties synths. I guess that's my 'period', though I kicked against it at the time (the time being 1984)."

Listeners to the play were being carried along with a fun vibe and humorous Zygons, but then Pat meets a horrible end, although Zygon Hagoth takes on Pat's form – events which are resolved in the fourth Eighth Doctor season.

Script editor Alan Barnes said: "I didn't have anything particular in mind at that point, but I knew it was something we could pick up on another day. It was the right way to end the story, with the Doctor having to deal with Hagoth – and keeping that terrible secret from Lucie." **VORTEX**

**DOCTOR WHO: THE ZYGNON WHO FELL TO EARTH IS OUT NOW ON CD AND DOWNLOAD!**

Coming up...

# RELEASE SCHEDULE

New and forthcoming audio releases

## AUGUST 2014

- Doctor Who: *Revenge of the Swarm* (189, Seventh Doctor, Ace and Hex)
- Doctor Who – The Fourth Doctor Adventures: *Zygon Hunt* (3.8, Fourth Doctor and Leela)
- **The Fifth Doctor Box Set** (Fifth Doctor, Adric, Nyssa and Tegan)
- Blake's 7: *The Liberator Chronicles – Box Set 9*

## SEPTEMBER 2014

- Doctor Who: *Mask of Tragedy* (190, Seventh Doctor, Ace and Hex)
- Doctor Who: *Signs and Wonders* (191, Seventh Doctor, Ace and Hex)
- Doctor Who – The Early Adventures: *Domain of the Voord* (1.1, First Doctor)
- Doctor Who – Philip Hinchcliffe Presents: *Volume 1 Box Set* (Fourth Doctor)
- Pathfinder Legends: *Rise of the Runelords – Fortress of the Stone Giants* (1.4, Full Cast)
- Big Finish Classics: *Frankenstein*
- Tom Baker at 80
- Night of the Triffids (Full Cast)
- The Omega Factor: *Audiobook of Novel* (read by Louise Jameson)

## OCTOBER 2014

- Doctor Who: *The Widow's Assassin* (192, Sixth Doctor and Peri)
- Doctor Who – The Early Adventures: *The Doctor's Tale* (1.2, First Doctor)
- The Worlds of Doctor Who *Box Set*
- Jago & Litefoot: *Series Eight Box Set*

## NOVEMBER 2014

- Doctor Who: *Masters of Earth* (193, Sixth Doctor and Peri)
- Doctor Who – The Early Adventures: *The Bounty of Ceres* (1.3, First Doctor)
- Doctor Who: *Dark Eyes 3* (Eighth Doctor)
- Blake's 7: *The Liberator Chronicles – Box Set 10*

## Pathfinder Legends:

- *Rise of the Runelords – Sins of the Saviors* (1.5, Full Cast)
- Blake's 7: *The Classic Audio Adventures 1: Scimitar* (Full Cast)
- Dorian Gray – *Series Three box set*

## DECEMBER 2014

- Doctor Who: TBA (194, Sixth Doctor and Peri)
- Doctor Who – The Early Adventures: *An Ordinary Life* (1.4, First Doctor)
- Doctor Who: *Trial of the Valeyard*
- Doctor Who: *The Highest Science*
- Blake's 7: *The Classic Audio Adventures 2: TBA* (Full Cast)

## JANUARY 2015

- Doctor Who: *Mistfall* (195, TBA)
- Doctor Who – The Fourth Doctor Adventures: *The Exxilons* (4.1, Fourth Doctor and Leela)
- Doctor Who – The Fourth Doctor by Gareth Roberts *Box Set: The English Way of Death/The Romance of Crime* (Fourth Doctor and Romana)
- Doctor Who – The Fourth Doctor by Gareth Roberts: *The English Way of Death* (Fourth Doctor and Romana)
- Doctor Who – The Fourth Doctor by Gareth Roberts: *The Romance of Crime* (Fourth Doctor and Romana)
- Doctor Who – Short Trips: *The Flywheel Revolution* (05, Download only)

## The Avengers – The Lost Episodes: Volume 3 (Box Set)

- Pathfinder Legends: *Rise of the Runelords – Spires of Xin-Shalast* (1.6, Full Cast)
- Blake's 7: *The Classic Audio Adventures 3: TBA* (Full Cast)

## FEBRUARY 2015

- Doctor Who: *Equilibrium* (196, TBA)
- Doctor Who – The Fourth Doctor Adventures: *The Darkness of Glass* (4.2, Fourth Doctor and Leela)

## Doctor Who: *Dark Eyes 4*

- (Eighth Doctor)
- Doctor Who – Short Trips: *Little Doctors* (06, Download only)
- Blake's 7: *The Liberator Chronicles – Box Set 11*
- Blake's 7: *The Classic Audio Adventures 4: TBA* (Full Cast)

## MARCH 2015

- Doctor Who: *The Entropy Plague* (197, TBA)
- Doctor Who – The Fourth Doctor Adventures: *Requiem for the Rocket Men* (4.3, Fourth Doctor and Leela)
- Doctor Who – Short Trips: *Time Tunnel* (07, Download only)
- Blake's 7: *The Classic Audio Adventures 5: TBA* (Full Cast)
- Blake's 7: *Lucifer Revelation: Audiobook of Novel* (Read by Paul Darrow)
- Gallifrey: *Intervention Earth*

## APRIL 2015

- Doctor Who: *The Defectors* (198, TBA)
- Doctor Who – The Fourth Doctor Adventures: *Death-Match* (4.4, Fourth Doctor and Leela)
- Doctor Who – Short Trips: *The Ghost Trap* (08, Download only)
- Jago and Litefoot: *Series Nine Box Set*
- Blake's 7: *The Classic Audio Adventures 5: TBA* (Full Cast)
- Terrahawks *Volume 1* (Full Cast)

## MAY 2015

- Doctor Who: TBA (199, TBA)
- Doctor Who – The Fourth Doctor Adventures: *Suburban Hell* (4.5, Fourth Doctor and Leela)
- Doctor Who – Short Trips: *The Toy* (09, Download only)
- Blake's 7: *The Classic Audio Adventures 6: TBA* (Full Cast)
- Blake's 7: *Novel 7* (TBA)
- The Omega Factor: *Series 1 Box Set* (Full Cast)



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