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WELL, THIS is all rather exciting, isn't it? What a month we have in store!

We've the long-awaited return of **Blake's 7, Classic Doctors, New Monsters Volume Two**, the latest HG Wells adaptation, and more of my old favourite, **Terrahawks**.

I think regular Vortex readers are fully aware of my passion for the 1980s Gerry Anderson/Christopher Burr puppet show.

When I was previewing the second series last year, Jeremy Hitchen (the voice of Tiger Ninestein, amongst others)

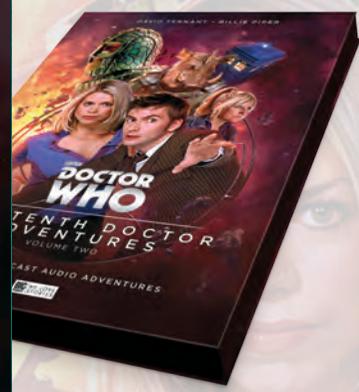
knowing my love of the show, wound me up something rotten about the final episode, telling me that there would be fatalities! And when I heard the finished production, two main characters died – apparently...

But, thankfully, the series has returned with eight new episodes, only producer Jamie Anderson – who also knows how much I love **Terrahawks** – has told me that the final episode will have me in tears. I dread to think what they've done this time!

KENNY

SNEAKPREVIEW

The Tenth Doctor Adventures: Volume Two



actually the town where I live! Every time he was filming here, he'd let me know, but it never coincided with my being at home. Until finally, during the filming of the third **Broadchurch**, our stars finally aligned and I walked literally five minutes down the road to the hotel David was staying in! During our chat over coffee, I made it very clear to him that he should always assume we're keen to do more with him. He said, 'Yeah, I get that' with a big smile. So I told him we'd got wind of the fact that Billie had apparently said at a convention that she'd love to do some Big Finish stories with David. She has since told me that 'about ten thousand people' were asking her that question. So, eventually, we managed to get it to work.

"The studio sessions were really joyous. I had an inkling that Billie would be surprised how straightforward audio recording is for an actor, as compared to how difficult

and time-consuming filming can be. As she walked into her booth, I told her it would be easy. And after we'd done a couple of takes for the first scene and I told her and David that I was happy with what I'd got and would move on to the next scene, Billie said, with her voice full of incredulity, 'Is that it?'. When I told her that was indeed 'it' for that scene, she said, 'Wow, this is much simpler than filming.' And she never really lost that relaxed feeling about the whole thing. She is lovely and so easy-going to direct. David was on top form too. I was particularly impressed by how protective he was of the integrity of the Doctor's character. He made a couple of superb suggestions for making the scripts better and making the Doctor less brash. I loved that. He is almost supernaturally good as an actor. You feel like he's some sort of acting super being!" **VORTEX**



The *Liberator* makes a welcome return to Big Finish, as Kenny Smith learns more about...

THE WAY BACK

IT'S BEEN over a year since the last *Blake's 7* release from Big Finish, with Volume 12 of the *Liberator Chronicles* coming out in April 2016. The *Liberator* returns for a third run of full-cast adventures this month, under producer John Ainsworth.

He reveals: "There are no immediate plans for any further *Liberator Chronicles* stories, but it's certainly possible that there will be more in the future."

John continues: "Over the next year we will be releasing a box set

of four new full-cast adventures every quarter. The first of these, *The Spoils of War*, and subsequent box sets will be consecutive and all set in the same timeframe – between the episodes *Death-Watch* and *Terminal*. Three box sets will form a 'season'. Like the original TV series, the episodes will each stand-alone, but a story arc will link through some of them.

"The first adventure in *The Spoils of War* is *Liberation* by Steve Lyons, set immediately after the TV episode *Powerplay* which focuses on Dayna after having

just joined the *Liberator* crew. *Outpost* by Christopher Cooper, is also set just after *Powerplay* and has Vila and Tarrant getting to know each other on a mission to an ex-Federation base. *Close Enough* by Sophia McDougall is very much a Cally and Avon episode and makes great use of Cally's telepathic abilities. And Finally, *Solus* by George Mann, has the crew encountering Servalan in an attempt to take over the *Liberator*.

"There was quite a bit of political upheaval in the Federation between the third and fourth TV series,

and much of the storyline was left fairly vague. How did Servalan lose the presidency? Who replaced her? We'll be exploring some of that in the later box sets, as well as providing plenty of exciting new material. And there will be at least two stories coming up that are sequels to TV episodes."

WITH THE adventures set during series C, the regular cast of Paul Darrow, Jan Chappell, Michael Keating and Steven Pacey are joined by Yasmin Bannerman, taking on the role of Dayna, a part previously played by Josette Simon.

John explains: "Of course we invited Josette to return to *Blake's 7* but although pleased to be asked,

she declined the invitation. So we were delighted to welcome Yasmin as the new Dayna, and Alistair Lock once again provided the voices of Zen and Orac. Jacqueline Pearce also made an appearance as Servalan.

Yasmin adds: "My brothers and I were huge *Blake's 7* fans as kids and we watched every single episode from the first till the last. Dayna was my heroine. I loved her. In an era when very few people of colour were to be seen on TV and fewer in any positive light, Dayna was a young black woman who was smart, accomplished, courageous, driven and kick-ass! She made me so proud.

Needless to say I was absolutely gobsmacked to be offered the role. My brothers are thrilled!"

IN *LIBERATION*, the series opener by Steve Lyons, Dayna gets used to life on the *Liberator* with her new associates. Steve tells *Vortex*: "John was keen to showcase our brand new Dayna. He suggested that on TV, she perhaps adapted to life aboard the *Liberator* a bit too quickly. So, he asked for a story set after *Powerplay*, which would show Dayna struggling to work with a team for the first time.

"I had to be careful not to make her seem stupid – or even all that reckless, really. She's just used to being independent. She throws herself into a course of action because she believes it's right, without waiting for permission or actually thinking about how others might be affected."

“ I HAD TO BE CAREFUL NOT TO MAKE HER SEEM STUPID... ”

STEVE LYONS

Steve says that there weren't many changes to his storyline along the way: "Not really. John pointed out that Avon wasn't doing much in my first-draft outline – but as the themes of the story crystallised, the perfect subplot presented itself for him. Let's just say that Dayna isn't the only one adjusting to new circumstances..."

He adds: "Given how grim *Blake's 7* can sometimes be, I always enjoy writing lines that make me smile. Usually, that means a comic turn of phrase from Vila or a withering putdown from Avon. This time, I had fun writing Vila and Dayna together. Chronologically speaking, this would be the first time they've actually spoken,



Left to right: Sophia Hannides, Michael Keating, Steven Pacey and Tracy Wiles

THE SPOILS OF WAR



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Written By: **Steve Lyons, Christopher Cooper, Sophia McDougall, George Mann**
Directed By: **John Ainsworth**

Paul Darrow (Kerr Avon)
Michael Keating (Vila Restal)
Jan Chappell (Cally)
Steven Pacey (Del Tarrant)
Jacqueline Pearce (Servalan)
Yasmin Bannerman (Dayna Mellanby)
Alistair Lock (Zen/Orac)
Sara Powell (Rokon)
Stephen Boxer (Tarkol)
Daniel Collard (Aquila/Guards)
Sophia Hannides (Shuuna)
Tracy Wiles (Valance/Roska)
Keith Drinkel (Kaverin)
Charlotte Watson (Imra)

ship and surrounded by the kind of people they've spent a majority of their life with. Are they back where they really belong?"

Chris particularly enjoyed writing for this *Liberator* line-up, saying: "Vila was always my favourite **Blake's 7** character, or at least the one I could identify with the most, so to be given the chance to write for him was fantastic. I wanted to give him more to do than just provide the comic relief. He's funny, and totally Vila, but my aim was to add some depth to his personal history, and place him in the centre of the action for a change. And I wanted to justify why he turns to drink – I mean, wouldn't you if you had to live in close quarters with Avon and Tarrant?!"

"As for Tarrant, I'll admit that I never forgave him for replacing Blake as chief curly-haired dude on the ship, and I didn't like the way he was always bullying Vila. I don't think we were ever supposed to particularly like or trust him, actually, which made the series C crew feel edgier than the original seven."

Chris adds that his personal highlight was: "Getting the go-ahead to write the script – it was such a buzz! I loved **Blake's 7**, absolutely loved it. It came along when I was nine years old, right after *Star Wars* primed me for stories of space rebels and despots, and I was with them all the way to *Gauda Prime*. So to be given the chance to tell a story in that universe was a gift."

CALLY TAKES centre stage in *Close Enough* by audio newcomer Sophia McDougall, who found that writing for one particular character had added challenges. She explains: "I was a little afraid where Avon was concerned – because the voice is so distinctive that any missteps were

now-established team their first proper mission together.

Chris says: "The brief was for an adventure featuring Vila and Tarrant, set sometime during series C, but aside from those requirements I had free rein to come up with my story. I decided to go early in series C, and *Outpost* is set somewhere between *Powerplay* and *Volcano*.

"Tarrant and Vila don't know each other that well, they certainly don't trust each other, and we're still in the wake of the crew losing Blake and Jenna. I thought it would be interesting to have both of them question why they're on the *Liberator* at all, during a mission where they are cut off from the

“AS FOR TARRANT, I NEVER FORGAVE HIM FOR REPLACING BLAKE AS CHIEF CURLY-HAIRED DUDE!” CHRISTOPHER COOPER



so we're hearing their first impressions of each other..."

WITH DAYNA and Tarrant now established as part of the *Liberator* crew, *Outpost* by Christopher Cooper gives the



going to be really glaring. I felt I had to get it right, but also do more than that – it's got to feel like the show and yet take us somewhere where the show, for whatever reason, didn't go to, or else what's the point. The two things that really helped me were making sure I was happy with his very first line (and this probably sounds a bit nuts) and choosing which modernist writer to use as a touchstone for his inner monologue. I decided Avon's inner monologue sounds as though it was written by Samuel Beckett!

"With Cally the challenge was different. Her characterisation was rather fluid in the original show. She's such a steely, ruthless character in her first episode – on a suicide mission, telling Blake she hopes he dies 'alone and silent' – and yet as time goes on

“AVON'S INNER MONOLOGUE SOUNDS AS THOUGH IT WAS WRITTEN BY SAMUEL BECKETT!” SOPHIA McDOUGALL

that drive seems to vanish and she ends up a bit in the background, playing the voice of conscience for everyone else. And yet she's such a fascinating character – more or less the last of her kind by series C and defined by loneliness even before then, with such a tortured relationship with her own culture.

"I wanted to get back to some of the guerrilla warrior grit of her debut episode – but at the same time I knew I couldn't just write her as she is in *Time Squad*. You can't ignore the softer persona she takes on for most of the show. So I decided the middle of the Venn diagram of Warrior Cally and Conscience Cally was ideal, and I sort of took that as my compass when writing her."

SERVALAN MAKES a welcome return in the final story in this set, *Solus*, by George Mann. George reveals the story was first conceived a couple of

years ago: "Well, this one had a long gestation! I was originally approached by Cavan Scott (then-producer of the **Blake's 7** range) to pitch a Servalan-centric story. It was also going to feature Blake in a prominent role, along with the rest of the series A crew. Sadly, Gareth passed away before the script was written, and the outline subsequently went on the shelf for a while. Later, we decided to return to the basic premise, but to reframe the story as a series C episode."

How exciting is it writing for these characters? George grins: "Oh, it's an utter joy. These are formative characters from my youth, and it feels like a real honour to play a small part in continuing their story. Writing lines for characters such as

Avon, Cally, Vila... if you'd told the younger me that I'd be involved in future new **Blake's 7** stories in the future, I'd have never believed you!"

The regular **Blake's 7** cast are iconic, but it's easy to imagine that being given Servalan was something a little bit special.

"You're absolutely right!", George agrees. "Writing for Servalan was a real thrill – all those witty, acerbic lines, the dry humour. A real 'bucket-list' moment. I think she and Avon play off one another brilliantly, so it was a lot of fun to try and capture some of that banter in their dialogue, too."

Producer John adds: "It's amazing to be producing new episodes of **Blake's 7**! The series was a big part of my teenage years, so it's a slightly weird experience to be working with the cast playing the characters that I first watched nearly 40 years ago." **VORTEX**

KENNY SMITH FINDS OUT ABOUT THE LATEST BIG FINISH CLASSICS RELEASE...

Animal Magnetism

SINCE JANUARY this year, Big Finish has been celebrating the landmark works of HG Wells through a series of adaptations of his classic novels. To date, we've had *The Invisible Man*, *The First Men in the Moon* and *The Shape of Things to Come*, and now they are joined by *The Island of Dr Moreau*.

The original story, which was published in 1896, tells the tale of Edward Prendick who is shipwrecked in the South Pacific. He is saved

by a passing vessel, where he is revived by Montgomery – a disgraced medic bound for distant shores, in charge of an unusual cargo. Their destination is a mysterious jungle isle where the night is split by terrible cries, and where inhuman creatures walk upright on two legs.

On the island, Prendick meets Dr Moreau, the man who lays down the law, and the new arrival realises that his nightmare is only just beginning...

The novel has been dramatized by Ken Bentley, who has also directed

the play, bringing together a strong cast headed by Ronald Pickup – the titular character, with John Heffernan as Edward Prendick and Enzo Cilenti as Montgomery.

Producer David Richardson says: "*The Island of Dr Moreau* is one of HG Wells's most fascinating works, and it has a reputation for having spawned some quite disappointing adaptations in its time!

"I'm going to stand up and say I think our adaptation is absolutely stunning – Ken's script is really smart

and rich, Steve Foxon has done such detailed and beautiful sound design, and John Heffernan, Ronald Pickup and the whole cast are just glorious. I listened to the final edit in one sitting and the two hours just flew by."

PRIOR TO working on the story, Ken wasn't familiar with the source material, although he knew of it on the big screen.

He reveals: "I hadn't read *The Island of Dr Moreau* before working on the adaptation. I was familiar with the story from its chequered cinematic history, but I was more into science fiction as a young reader than I was horror.

"I was surprised how contemporary the novel was in its structure. It went round in circles a little, as Victorian novels have a tendency to do, but basically the framework was sound. I'd say I've simplified the novel."

One of the adaptations was the film version of the mid-1990s, starring Val Kilmer, Marlon Brando, Sam Perlman and David Thewlis.

within the limits of only having two hours to tell the story.

"It's a tricky novel to adapt in as much as Prendick (the protagonist) ends up on the island alone for the larger part of his stay there, which is a challenge on audio!"

As well as Ronald Pickup, John Heffernan and Enzo Cilenti, other members of the cast are David

He says: "We'd worked with John on *Doom Coalition* (as well as working with him a number of times before) and David suggested he might make a good Prendick.

"Enzo I've seen on film and television a number of times and have always wanted to work with him."

Ken had plenty of creative control

BIG FINISH CLASSICS THE ISLAND OF DR MOREAU



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Written by HG Wells
Dramatised by Ken Bentley
Directed by Ken Bentley

CAST

Ronald Pickup (Doctor Moreau)
John Heffernan (Edward Prendick)
Enzo Cilenti (Montgomery)
David Shaw-Parker (Captain/Constans)
John Banks (Mate-LV/M'Ling/Satyr-Man)
Tim Bantinck (Helmar/John Davies/Ape-Man)
Daniel Goode (Seaman/Mate-I, Dog-Man)

“IT'S SURPRISINGLY PRESCIENT AND A DAMNING INDICTMENT OF OUR SPECIES.”

KEN BENTLEY

Ken feels it was a good example of how not to retell the story: "I know the 1996 film reasonably well. I had the dubious honour of having a public screening all to myself. I think I might be one of the only people in the UK to have seen it in the cinema.

"It isn't a good film, and it's an even worse adaptation. When you compare the two you realise that Wells knew exactly what he was doing and trying to say, so I stuck as close as possible to the novel,



Left to right: John Heffernan and Ronald Pickup

Shaw-Parker, John Banks, Tim Bantinck and Daniel Goode.

Ken was able to bring in actors he had worked with before, as well as others he had admired.

over the story by directing his own script. He was able to include many of HG Wells's philosophical themes from the novel, including pain and cruelty, moral responsibility, human identity and human interference with nature.

But he reveals: "Adapting and directing is different to writing and directing. My primary goal as adaptor and director was make sure we were being true to the author's original intention. The novel is a horror story, but like much of his work it's surprisingly prescient and a damning indictment of our species.

"That appealed to me and I wanted to make sure this adaptation carried Wells's message through to the listener. It isn't an easy message to have to hear, but now more than ever I think it's an important one." **VORTEX**

Kenny Smith finds eras collide again as the Doctor encounters...

Foes from the FUTURE

TIME AND space collide once again as the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Eighth Doctors encounter creatures from the 21st century in the second **Classic Doctors, New Monsters** box set.

After encountering the Weeping Angels, Judoon, Sycorax and Sontarans in the first release, there are meetings with the

Vashta Nerada, Carrionites and Racnoss this month.

Producer David Richardson says: "The first box set was a big success, and we got emails from lots of listeners asking us to do more. Actually, there aren't a huge number of options for mixing classic Doctors with new series monsters.

"We couldn't, for example, do

the Sixth Doctor and the Ood, because it wouldn't make any sense continuity wise. But I was keen to do the Carrionites and Racnoss, and loved the idea of bringing back the Vashta Nerada to encounter two different Doctors. But I suspect this may be the last box set of its kind... at least for now."

Tom Baker makes his debut in the **Classic Doctors, New Monsters**

range with *Night of the Vashta Nerada* by John Dorney. The story ties in with the Eighth Doctor story in this set, *Day of the Vashta Nerada*.

Funworld was set to be the happiest planet in the galaxy, but just a few days before opening, all communication ceased. Owner Georgia Donnelly is desperate to open the resort, but there's

and I was keen to put the story in that Hinchcliffe-era. There's something so dark about the Vashta Nerada that they suit this Doctor down to the ground, in that Gothic horror period."

He continues: "There was no sort of official plan of how to link my story and Matt's together, other than just seeing what we had

unlike Daleks or Cybermen, they are just doing what they need to do to survive. It's an interesting context to play with, working out their interactions. You don't want to go through the route of them communicating in the way we've seen before – you need a new angle."

WHEN DAVID Tennant encountered the Racnoss in *The Runaway Bride*, he indicated there had been a huge conflict between the giant red spiders and the Time Lords.

In *Empire of the Racnoss* by Scott Hancock, a distress call rips the TARDIS from the vortex, dragging it back through time. Scott was excited at being asked to write for the set, saying: "I was thrilled



Left to right: Tom Baker and Matt Devitt



“ I WAS KEEN TO PUT THE STORY IN THAT HINCHCLIFFE-ERA. ”

JOHN DORNEY

something lurking in the shadows.

Putting Tom Baker's incarnation against the Vashta Nerada is an irresistible combination, especially with Tom's famous voice.

John was delighted to write for Steven Moffat's Vashta Nerada. He explains: "Tom's voice has quite a sonorous quality to it

come up with. Matt had written his first, and I wondered 'what can I do that's new?' as he seemed to have done everything! The stories are tangentially linked."

"I think there's a sense that they are predators. There's an odd thing with the notion of predators in **Doctor Who**, as,

to be asked. Way back when Big Finish started thinking about a New Series monsters set, with a mixture of full-cast and narration, I suggested to David Richardson that maybe they could throw them together with past Doctors. So I was chuffed to hear they went down that route with the first set, and pleasantly surprised to be asked to write for the second – especially when I was handed both Peter Davison and the Racnoss. It's a brilliant pairing: one of the most reasonable and calmest Doctors

facing off a savage, brutal, and also slightly theatrical, race of arachnids.

“Weirdly, *The Runaway Bride* has always stuck quite clearly in my mind. When I started to work on *Doctor Who Confidential* for BBC Wales, they were making that year’s Christmas special, so it left a very firm impression on me for all kinds of different reasons. It’s such a brilliant story, and Russell T Davies does that thing he always does, of managing to sell an entire race’s backstory in a single episode, not through over-elaborate exposition, but with throwaway lines just sketching in odd details along the way. There were so many lovely references to pick up on, coming back to expand on the Racnoss and their empire was a treat!”



Left to right: Andrew French, Peter Davison, Adjoa Andoh, Nigel Planer and Lisa Kay

TERRIFYING FORCES are on the loose in *The Carrionite Curse* by Simon Guerrier, as Katy Bell returns to her Midlands home to find a witch trial in the 1980s and a bonfire ready to be lit...

Simon was delighted to be involved in the series, revealing: “I was offered this out of the blue: Matt Fitton just emailed me and asked for a Sixth Doctor story with the Carrionites. He had a few suggestions for how the story might work, but just enough to get me thinking and inspired. I’ve written a couple of



“ I THINK YOU CAN TELL I WAS INDULGING MY OWN TEDIOUS FASCINATION WITH ODD WORDS! ”

SIMON GUERRIER

Sixth Doctor short stories but not for Colin Baker, and the Carrionites are a brilliant creation – so it was just a lovely thing to be asked for.

“I watched the episode again and made some notes, and also had a think about the sort of thing I thought would work for this

particular Doctor. Gareth Roberts’s lovely script is a bit of a daunting prospect to follow – it zings with wit and intelligence. But the scene where the Tenth Doctor talks about Shakespeare always using the best and most brilliant words was where it suddenly clicked – the Sixth Doctor

has a very impressive vocabulary so was perfectly matched with the Carrionites. I suggested an idea which Matt and David Richardson weren’t keen on, and David suggested the setting we ultimately went for. After a bit of back and forth, we had an outline we were all happy with.”

The Sixth Doctor – and indeed Colin Baker’s – love of words are a great combination when it comes to facing the Carrionites.

Simon laughs: “I think you can tell I was indulging my own tedious fascination with odd words! I’ve



DOCTOR WHO: CLASSIC DOCTORS, NEW MONSTERS

NIGHT OF THE VASHTA NERADA
EMPIRE OF THE RACNOSS
THE CARRIONITE CURSE
DAY OF THE VASHTA NERADA

Written By: John Dorney, Scott Handcock, Simon Guerrier, Matt Fitton
Directed By: Barnaby Edwards

Tom Baker (The Doctor)
Peter Davison (The Doctor)
Colin Baker (The Doctor)
Paul McGann (The Doctor)
Adjoa Andoh (Racnoss Empress)
Nigel Planer (Old Racnoss Emperor/Herrax)
Andrew French (Racnoss Consort)
Lisa Kay (Alayna)
Pam Ferris (Amanda Steele)
Lorelei King (Georgina Donnelly)
Emma Lowndes (Phelan)
Matt Devitt (Benetto)
Maya Sondhi (Katy Bell)
Andrée Bernard (Mary Sissinghurst)
Adèle Anderson (Eileen Nelthorpe)
Michael Fenton-Stevens (Rev Douglas Bell)
Jacqueline Pearce (Ollistra)
Jan Ravens (Dr Eva Morrison)
Himesh Patel (Biotech Dendry)
Tim Wallers (Commander Roxita/Security Chief Raldon)

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kept notes on peculiar words and phrases I’ve come across in my freelancing, in the hope of using the weirdest ones somewhere – and this was the perfect fit. From my years of copywriting, I’m also a great believer in what George Orwell says in politics and the English language – and echoed in most newspaper style guides

stories. In John Dorney’s story, *Night of the Vashta Nerada*, and mine, *Day of the Vashta Nerada*, we approach them in different ways.

“You don’t want to just go over old ground and repeat what’s been done before. The story with the Vashta Nerada is often just run – run away



Left to right: Andree Bernard, Colin Baker, Michael Fenton-Stevens, Maya Sondhi and Adele Anderson

and things – that actually it’s the short, vivid words that hold the most power. Exploring that sort of thing was really fun to do.”

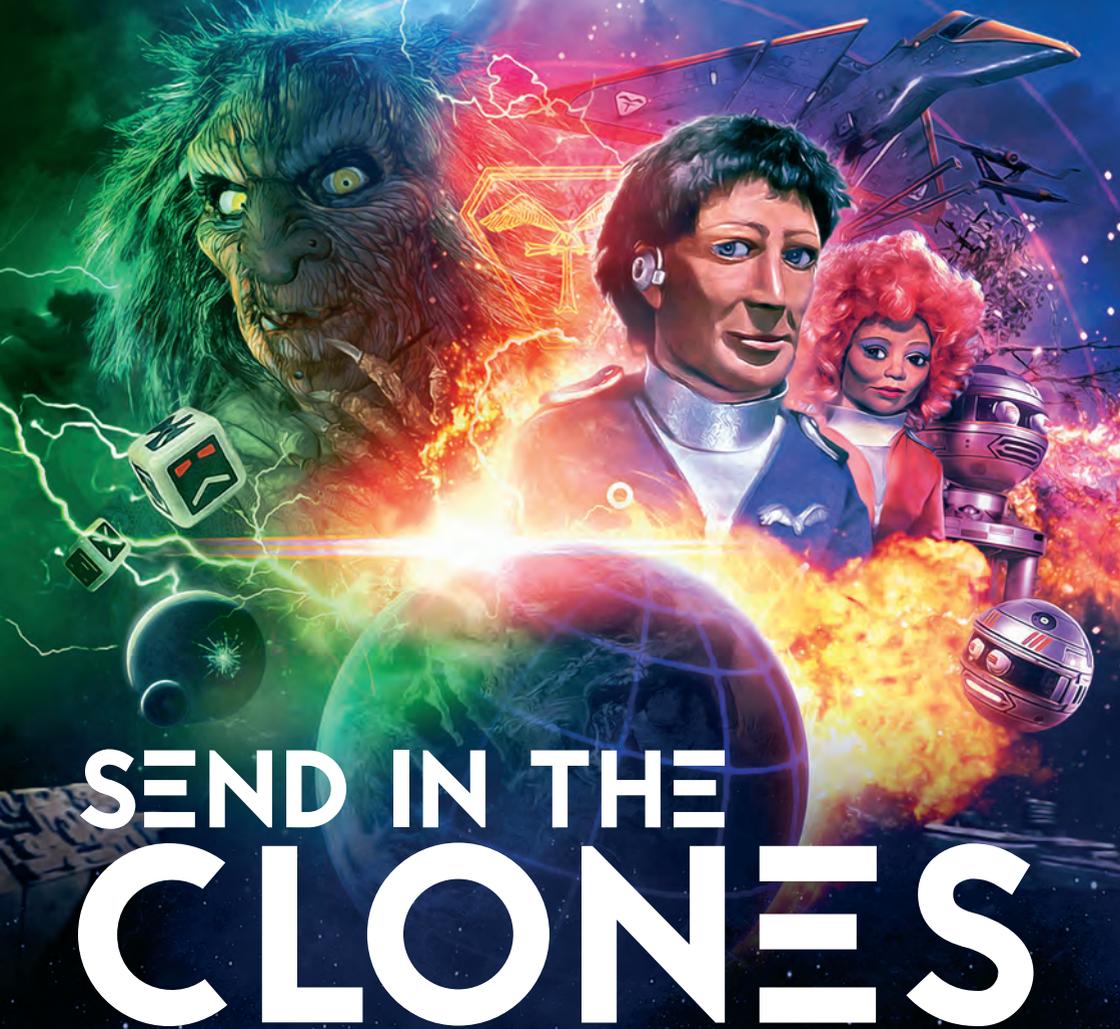
DAY OF the *Vashta Nerada*, by Matt Fitton, is set during the Time War, as Cardinal Ollistra seeks to create ever more dangerous weapons to deploy against the enemy. The Doctor discovers that the Time Lords have sponsored a project to weaponise a colony of Vashta Nerada.

Matt says: “It’s one of the scariest monsters of the new series, and it’s a challenge to get that across on audio. What we decided to do was top and tail the set with Vashta Nerada

from them! We had to find variations on doing that.

“They are animals that act on instinct and aren’t really malevolent unless they get attacked themselves. I always liken them to a shark, they are an unstoppable force of nature. They just eat things. If Dorney’s episode is like *Jaws*, then mine is like *Deep Blue Sea!*

“The thing I wanted to do was have the Time Lords exploiting the Vashta Nerada. The Doctor’s the one who knows how dangerous they are and what they can do – he’s the most informed person in the room. He’s like Jeff Goldblum in *Jurassic Park* – he knows it’s all going to go horribly wrong!” **VORTEX**



SEND IN THE CLONES

THE MENACE to mankind from Mars returns this month for a third series of **Terrahawks**. The cult 80s puppet show from Gerry Anderson, continues with its original cast reprising their roles, as the team defend the Earth from the menace of Zelda and her army of monsters.

This new series features eight tales, opening with *No Second Chances* by Jamie Anderson, the **Terrahawks** producer and director. The previous season

ended on a shocking cliffhanger, with Zelda and Tiger Ninestein both seemingly perishing to stop a common enemy.

Jamie tells *Vortex*: "It felt sensible to end the series with that, looking like it could be forever, but it was always the plan that, if executive producers Nick and Jason gave us the go ahead we could pick things up again.

"I wrote an underlying get-out clause in the original treatment (which was part of the series arc) so it was always there and it was never going to be an 'it was all

a dream' or 'let's get out of this through time travel' cheat. It's neither of the get-out clauses, when everyone dies. I think it's much smarter than that and I hope I have come up with a plan that is worthy of Zelda herself!

"There's a line in the first episode when she reappears, where she states she 'took some advice from a very good Doctor!' – I won't give any more away than that!"

With Ninestein gone, the defenders of Earth look for a new leader from Ninestein's



Left to right: Denise Bryer, Robbie Stevens, Beth Chalmers and Jeremy Hitchen



Ninestein, Threestein, Twostein or Sixstein?

clone brothers. In *The Wrong Clone Number* by Terry Adlam, the Terrahawks turn to pun-meister Twostein. In *Set Sail for Mis-Adventure* by David Hirsch, Sixstein is drafted in to service for an escort mission, while in *You Foe*, also by David Hirsch, it becomes a race against time as Zelda and her family try to take advantage of the final clone, Threestein's, good nature.

Jamie says: "I think in the same way that the sonic screwdriver in **Doctor Who** was often seen as the easy get-out clause, there's an element of a clone replacing one of the others, which means the Terrahawks have always got a back-up should things go wrong. We started exploring that in



Zelda

series one by killing off several clones and finding one who was slightly rebellious. I thought it would be really interesting to address that mechanism from the original series, which was in some ways a flaw. Ninestein was, essentially, a superhero character with invulnerability.

"So, the first thing I've done is to destroy the Terrahawks' ability to bring Ninestein back, which has also given us the opportunity to rebuild that main character. He was always a bit too grumpy, a bit too miserable, and just wasn't likeable enough.

"So with Tiger, we end up with a brand new leader of the Terrahawks and we get to see him going through the challenging

things you have to do as the leader of an organisation like Terrahawks.

"It's a little bit more mature, and further develops the series and its characters – making them more well-rounded. It was a shame that the main character, the leader of the good guys, doesn't make you want him to win, if you know what I mean.

"It's one thing to make Zelda and co entertaining, and to almost want to see some level of success for them because you want to see how they would

“ I HAVE COME UP WITH A PLAN THAT IS WORTHY OF ZELDA HERSELF! ”

JAMIE ANDERSON

behave in that situation. When you have a grumpy and unlikeable leader, it doesn't inspire you to get behind the Terrahawks as our heroes. There are definitely more grown-up themes in this series. We deal quite seriously with love and loss towards the end of it. There were tears in the booths a number of times."

IN *LIVING Legend* by Chris Dale, it's time for Threestein's first major mission, while in *The Prisoner of Zelda*, also by Chris, Threestein and journalist Lois Price are kidnapped and taken to an unknown coastal location where a bizarre village – The Community – becomes their prison.

TERRAHAWKS: VOLUME THREE



Written By: Jamie Anderson,
Terry Adlam, David Hirsch,
Chris Dale, Mark Woollard
Directed By: Jamie Anderson

CAST

Jeremy Hitchen (Ninestein/Hiro)
Robbie Stevens (101/Hudson)
Denise Bryer (Zelda/Mary Falconer)
Beth Chalmers (Kate Kestrel)
David Graham (Professor Otto Maddox/Elias Crick)

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Jamie says: “David Graham is a legend in Anderson circles. I was so pleased he agreed to come and do it, and what I’ve really enjoyed is working with actors that worked with dad before, for Big Finish and other projects.

“David and Denise worked with dad in the 50s, I’ve had Nicholas Parsons, Matt Zimmerman and Shane Rimmer in for other projects – it’s really nice to have that continuity and they get a sense for that too. Denise Bryer and David just had so much life and energy, bouncing off each other. You probably wouldn’t expect that from people of their ages – and that’s meant with no disrespect to them at all, quite the opposite in fact – but they are just as lively as any



Chris says: “Jamie had a very clear idea of the arc he wanted for series three, some of which I suspect had been in his mind since before we recorded the end of series two! Over lunch with Terry Adlam the three of us starting throwing around ideas and several possible storylines emerged... but from there we were basically free to develop them however we wanted. My idea for what became *Living Legend* seemed like a good fit for Jamie’s arc,



as it allowed us to play with the new Tiger’s positive nature while still showing he has the makings of a good commander for the Terrahawks.”

THIS SERIES of *Terrahawks* marks a return of an Anderson legend to the fold, with David Graham – the voice of Parker – appearing in two episodes. David voices the guest characters, Professor Otto Mattix and Elias Crick.



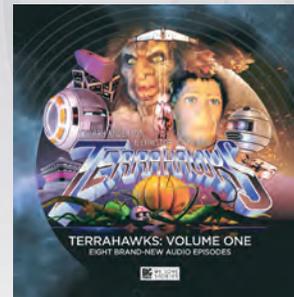
other member of the cast. David fitted into the silly, jokey style of our recordings straight away.”

Star Crossed by Mark Woollard gives Threestein a final chance to prove himself as a capable leader, before the season closes with *Enemies, Negotiation and Deceit*, by Jamie Anderson – and it promises to be a sad one – as Jamie himself tweeted: ‘*In floods of tears on the train having just heard @bigfinish #Terrahawks series 3 episode 8 for the first time. You won’t want to miss this.*’



Gerry Anderson, Christopher Burr and Moya Griffiths (the human version of Kate Kestrel) pose for the press launch of *Terrahawks*.

“ I’M CONSTANTLY IN AWE OF ALL FOUR OF THE VOICE ACTORS! ” CHRIS DALE



THE REGULAR cast all return, with Jeremy Hitchen (Tiger, Hiro), Robbie Stevens (101, Hudson), Denise Bryer (Zelda, Mary Falconer) and Beth Chalmers.

As ever, the regulars are pushed hard to find as many voices as they can, especially Jeremy Hitchen, playing several variations on the Ninestein



clones. Jamie explains:

“Twostein makes a comeback, from series one, and there’s Threestein as well. We’ve given Jeremy a lot to do. He’s playing four separate clones – each with their own distinct personality and characteristics. On the last day he had some really challenging lines. He was sat in the booth, drying his eyes for a

couple of minutes afterwards – it was tough going. It was even more of a challenge for Jeremy than normal, as he’s often doing several different voices in the one scene.

“It’s always great to see the team, they get on so well. Three of them have the history from the TV show, but Beth has slotted in beautifully. It’s like an annual family reunion and we went out for a Terrahawks crew meal on the penultimate night. It’s just a really lovely family to work with – everyone says that, but we have a great deal of fun, every single time. Robbie is very analytical and focussed, Jeremy is great fun – always joking and chuckling, Granny Denise keeps us in line and Beth is the little sister to the boys – rolling her eyes at their shenanigans.”

Chris adds: “In the studio the whole thing goes up another level when you’re hearing it all brought to life. Even after three seasons I’m constantly in awe of all four of the voice actors who always do such a terrific job with all their various characters, and to have Supermarionation voice legend David Graham join them on two episodes, this season was just incredible.”

Jamie admits that he’s still having a ball with *Terrahawks*.

He laughs: “Of course! How could you not? It’s hard-wired into me, and it’s a great joy and privilege to do it, and I’m very lucky that, by pure luck, I’m the one getting to do them. Everyone who works for Big Finish, whether it’s *Terrahawks*, *Doctor Who*, *The Avengers*, *Blake’s 7* or *Dark Shadows*, they really love it. That’s something that always shines through.” **VORTEX**



Kenny Smith finds out about this month's new audiobooks

THRILLING TIMES

BIG FINISH'S ever-growing collection of audiobooks has two new additions this month. Written by Jack Gerson, the creator of *The Omega Factor*, *The Assassination Run* and *The Treachery Game* are based on his BBC dramas, and follow hot on the heels of two of the writer's other novels, *The Fetch* and *The Evil Thereof*, which Big Finish recorded earlier this year.

Both are performed by Dan Starkey, better known as Strax the Sontaran in *Doctor Who*.

Producer David Richardson says: "I actually came to these novels through the TV series of the 1980s – which I'd watched at the time because they co-starred Mary Tamm. It was glossy and thrilling, and actually quite unusual for TV drama at the time in that it was shot overseas. From there I read the books, which I greatly enjoyed.

"Wind forward three decades, and we are working with Jack Gerson's daughter Natasha, and I suggested it would be great to record audiobooks of these novels from my youth. And here we are!

Natasha tells *Vortex*: "I'm really pleased. We were doing the second

series of *The Omega Factor* and (producer) David Richardson asked me if he could have a wee word. It felt like being called in to see the headmaster at school!

"He said he had really enjoyed the other two, *The Fetch* and *The Evil Thereof*, and wanted to do some more. They were both written after the BBC series. Dad had adapted Desmond Bagley's *Running Blind* for TV, and that was so successful that Desmond wanted to do the next one himself. So we have *The Assassination Run* and *The Treachery Game*. There's another one, *The Back of the Tiger*, which was always my favourite. I hope Big Finish are interested in that too!"

Director John Ainsworth says: "For those who remember the original TV serials, these new readings of *The Assassination Run* and *The Treachery Game* will be a slice of nostalgia.

"But Jack Gerson's novelisations of these action-packed, adventures will be enjoyed by anyone who appreciates a good, fast-moving thriller."

Dan Starkey enjoyed recording the plays, which were tough going in the soundbooth. He explains:

"Gerson's novelisations present a seedy, late seventies take on the world of espionage. The stories are a bit like James Bond meets *The Professionals* with a touch of *The Third Man* and even *The Thirty-Nine Steps*. I came out of the recording booth reeking of cheap whisky and second-hand cigarette smoke. So a typical day recording at Big Finish, really!"

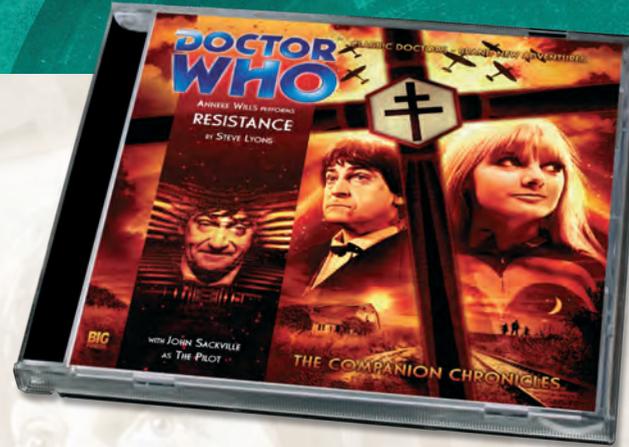
Natasha adds: "I just wish dad was here, but he's probably on some cloud, looking down and smiling at it all.

"It's funny how things come back around, when you don't expect it to. It's nice that people have come back to these works, all these years later, and I know that he'd be thrilled to know that his work is reaching audiences in the 21st century. I just hope it goes on, as I'm looking forward to hearing them. I hope everyone enjoys them as much as I do." **VORTEX**

The two audiobooks can be bought in a specially-priced Jack Gerson bundle for £16, or individually for £9.99.

LISTEN AGAIN

Doctor Who: Resistance



POLLY WRIGHT was back with the First Doctor and Ben Jackson last month as the second First Doctor *Companion Chronicles* box set was released. Polly has been a staple of the series for many years, played with relish, as ever, by Anneke Wills.

Steve Lyons' third season *Companion Chronicle*, *Resistance*, features Polly, and had its genesis in producer David Richardson bringing together *Doctor Who* and another British television show, as he reveals: "I'm a big fan of the classic TV series *Secret Army* and it occurred to me that *Doctor Who* had never done a story based on the resistance lines during World War II.

"And I had this image in my mind of Polly in an overcoat and beret, hiding from Nazis in the streets of Paris or Belgium... I gave this brief to Steve Lyons who came up with this lovely historical adventure which explores some of Polly's family history."

Steve recalls: "I did some research, yeah, though of course

as historical settings go the French Resistance is a fairly familiar one. I was worried it might be too familiar, in fact, from series such as *Secret Army* and 'Allo 'Allo.

"I felt I had to do all the things that people expected from the setting, and also fit in something new – something those series couldn't have done. I had the same problem with *Colditz*, actually. That's why I ended up working a time travel angle into both plots."

The story features Polly's uncle – was that a conscious nod towards the 21st century *Doctor Who* TV series, which has brought in the importance of family?

"No, I wasn't thinking of that at all. I was looking for that time travel angle, I realised that Polly would have been an infant during World War II, and I thought I could do something with that. I created a maternal uncle for Polly – who didn't share her surname, so we wouldn't know they were related to begin with.

"Then, I was flicking through Gary Russell's novel *Invasion of the Cat People*, and I saw he'd already established that Polly had lost an Uncle Randolph Wright during World War II. I couldn't resist the coincidence, so I asked Gary if I could use that character."

Steve reveals that before the story went into studio, Anneke put forward some thoughts of her own: "She had some definite ideas about how she wanted Polly to be.

"We had to thrash all the details out, but I think we ended up with a version we could both be happy with. Polly ended up a bit stronger than I originally wrote her – more like go-getting Polly from *The Highlanders* than, say, fainting Polly from *The Moonbase*."

David Darlington did the story's sound design with Jamie Robertson providing the music. Jamie says: "The *Resistance* music was scored across two weeks in February 2009 and I wanted to make sure that the instrumentation was only of that era. I think *Resistance* was the first time you hear my Gestapo theme I made, which then crops up in the Eighth Doctor story *The Scapegoat*."

And Steve is happy with the way it worked out, concluding: "I'm very happy with the play as it is – and I'm really proud of having written Anneke's first story as Polly in over four decades. When I first saw her in *The War Machines* in 1984, and fell in love with her and Ben, I could never have dreamed that that might happen." **VORTEX**

VORTEXMAIL COMING SOON

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

Forthcoming audio releases

YAY FOR YASMIN

Absolutely thrilled to see the announcement regarding the return of **Blake's 7: The Classic Audio Adventures** in July following a two year hiatus. I must admit I didn't think this was going to happen any time soon. Fantastic choice to cast Yasmin Bannerman in the role of Dayna, she's a great actor and it's marvellous that she is continuing her association with Big Finish which I believe dates back to 2005's *The Bride of Peladon*.

I found her portrayal of Roz Forrester in recent novel adaptations particularly enjoyable and was wondering if there are going to be any new stories featuring Roz, perhaps joining Benny in the Unbound Universe?

Lee Turner

Nick: No news on Roz yet, but I think that's a fantastic idea. And I too am so pleased about Yasmin working with us in any context. Casting her as Dayna had my full support, particularly because Josette Simon's being in Blake's 7 had meant so much to Yasmin herself when she was a young girl watching TV in the 1970s.

EXTRAS TIME

Pleased to hear about **The Tenth Doctor Adventures Volume Two**, which I have duly pre-ordered, but I'm a bit puzzled at the decision for the limited edition to feature a 'bonus documentary examining the worlds of **Doctor Who** at Big Finish'. We already

had this on volume one – is it the same documentary? Is there any chance we could get something a bit more exciting instead – perhaps a disc of isolated music suites, or a **Short Trips** reading? **Lawrence**

Nick: Sorry to hear you're puzzled by this. It will be a different kind of documentary with new material in it. There'll also be a behind-the-scenes look at the making of the Tenth Doctor and Rose stories, with interviews with David and Billie. I think it'll be a great little package.



VISION OF THE FUTURE

Big Finish's adaptation of *The Shape of Things to Come* was promptly become one of my favourite titles. If Big Finish made nothing else, this alone would justify the company's existence. Thank you.

Michael House

Nick: Michael, that is a lovely bit of praise. Guy did the most amazing work on the script and Lisa directed beautifully, with great sound design from Iain

Meadows and superb music from Howard Carter. We're so lucky to work with such great people. And I haven't even mentioned Nicola and Sam's beautiful acting, have I? Tremendous stuff!

MORE MASTERFUL MACQUEEN

Is it me or has there been an absence of Alex MacQueen and his 'masterful' interpretation of everyone's second favourite Time Lord? Is there any plan for his return? Particularly enjoying the verbal sparring between MacQueen and McGann. And have you ever considered producing a box set specifically dedicated to the machinations of the Master? **Rod Willie**

Nick: We have considered that. There will be more Master action very soon.

OMEGA SUPREME

I sincerely hope you have another series of **The Omega Factor** in the works, series two is head and shoulders above series one – and series one was excellent! I can only assume that series three could be monumental with the return of Drexel and the body snatching going on.

Mark Bruzee

*Nick: Who knows what's next for The Omega Factor... Well, we do, but we're not revealing it yet. But the series will return, which is great news for me particularly, as I do the music and love every minute of that job! **VORTEX***



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| THE TREACHERY GAME (Audiobook) |
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| DOCTOR WHO – THE THIRD DOCTOR ADVENTURES: VOLUME 3 (Third Doctor and Jo Grant) |
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