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COMING SOON DOCTOR WHO: THE LEGACY OF TIME

JULY 2019 marks the 20th anniversary of Big Finish Productions producing original **Doctor Who** audio adventures, and the greatest celebration of all time has been planned. *The Legacy of Time* is a very special production being released to mark the occasion, and it will be the biggest **Doctor Who** audio crossover event *EVER*, as the classic and new series come together.

We'll see Professor River Song meet the first lady of Big Finish – the original time-travelling archaeologist, Professor Bernice Summerfield. Kate Stewart finds herself back in the 1970s meeting the Third Doctor and Jo. The Seventh Doctor and Ace are reunited with the Counter-Measures team, while the Sixth Doctor and Charlotte Pollard meet Detective Inspector Patricia Menzies once again. We'll also travel to the homeworld of the Time Lords for adventures on Gallifrey – and there are plenty more surprises in store.

Chairman and executive producer of Big Finish, Jason Haigh-Ellery, says: "In July 1999 we released *The Sirens of Time*. In July 2019 we're releasing *The Legacy of Time*. These two decades have been incredibly fulfilling for us at Big Finish – a chance to work with so many great and talented actors, writers, production crews, and all of our friends at the BBC. This is a celebration of it all, with lots of surprise returns and references. Think of it as one massive **Doctor Who** party – and everyone is invited!"

Nicholas Briggs, executive producer and writer of *The Sirens of Time*, adds: "*The Legacy of Time* will probably go down in Big Finish history as our biggest, most exciting release, ever! Celebrating 20 years of **Doctor Who** at Big Finish, it expertly pulls together all the strands from our many and varied **Doctor Who** ranges." **VORTEX**

THIS MONTH'S *Vortex* front and back covers are rather different, as I'm sure you'll have noticed.

To mark the 20th anniversary of Big Finish, we announced an online competition encouraging budding artists to put brush to paper (or whichever method they wished!), to create something special for *Vortex*. And here are the winning results!

Our overall winner was Sophie Cowdrey, whose illustration of Professor River Song adorns the front cover. Isn't it gorgeous? Her attention to detail in capturing Alex Kingston's likeness, plus the superb background, stood out from the crowd.

And isn't our back cover, by Simon Brett, rather glorious too? I've maybe said once or twice how much I've loved Sheridan Smith since her career began on TV (she was outstanding as a young thing in **Holby City**), and I've followed her with interest ever since. So, it's great to see her and the Eighth Doctor reunited (and look at the Doctor's badge – he's ready for a party!).

Thanks to all who entered – it sounds like a cliché to say it was a tough task to pick a winner, but it genuinely was. There were so many good entries, covering all angles of the Big Finish universe, so narrowing it down was an incredibly tough decision, and the team who picked the winner were all unanimous in admiration of Sophie's work. **KENNY**



AND **AND** **AND** **ALIENS**
AND **SIX**
AND **CHIPS**
AND **GRAVY**

**KENNY SMITH
PREVIEWS
THE NEW
SERIES OF THE
TORCHWOOD
SPECIAL
RELEASES, OUT
NEXT MONTH...**

CARDIFF'S FINEST ARE BACK TO DEFEND THE WORLD IN STYLE THIS OCTOBER, AS TORCHWOOD RETURNS FOR ITS SIXTH SERIES OF SPECIAL RELEASES.



Above (l-r): Jonny Green and John Barrowman

“THE MOST FUN CAME FROM HOW THE TEAM INTERACTED.”

JAMES GOSS

SERIES FIVE, *Aliens Among Us*, revealed the Welsh capital had been invaded by the alien Sorvix, escaping their home world and putting themselves into positions of power including the Mayor, Ro-Jedda, whilst also having to deal with terrorists – and the surprising resurrection of Yvonne Hartman.

God Among Us commences a few days after the *Aliens Among*

Us finale, with John Barrowman returning as Captain Jack Harkness, joined by Tracy-Ann Oberman as Yvonne Hartman, Paul Clayton as Mr Colchester, Alexandria Riley as Ng, Samantha Béart as Orr, Jonny Green as Tyler Steele and Tom Price as Sergeant Andy Davison.

When producer James Goss was planning series six with director and script editor, Scott Handcock, did they always know where things were going to go?

James reveals: “Scott and I started working towards the end of series six from the middle of series five. Scott asked me, ‘What were the Sorvix running away from?’ and we agreed that they’d run away from their religion. And... now it’s found them.”

As with series five, Russell T Davies, who conceived the original **Torchwood** concept,

has had his own input into where things are going.

James says: “He had some brilliant, kind, frank notes. He’s very good at, in the nicest way in the world, telling you what not to do and why you should not do it!”

“He asked for some characters to be included, suggested how others should develop, was adamant about who we’d had enough of. He was also firm that this time he’d like to see some more self-contained stories. So, yes, a god has come to Cardiff, but that’s just to allow a springboard for some stories, rather than it getting complicated.

“One thing we all agreed on from the last series was that the most fun came from how the team interacted, so it’s much more about each episode finding them in a new and horrible situation.”



Above (l-r): Jonny Green, Paul Clayton and Samantha Béart

Inset (l-r): John Barrowman and Paul Clayton



THE FIRST episode is *Future Pain* written by James himself. How did he find setting up the series with this opener? James explained: "It's odd – it has to remind everyone where we were, and set up a whole new series of challenges. I cheated and asked Scott for a shopping list of unfinished business, and then worked through it.

"It's set on a really bad day for Torchwood, and it's about how everyone handles it. It also features the complete destruction of a car park..."

EVENTS CONTINUE in *The Man Who Destroyed Torchwood* by Guy

Adams. James reveals: "Guy Adams has written something about a YouTube bedroom warrior taking on Torchwood. It's sort of imagining if someone a bit like video blogger @PrisonPlanet devoted himself to taking down Torchwood. How does he see them? How do they see him?"

Guy confirms: "James and I were both wondering about

those people behind their webcams, the ones that work from basements of their parents' houses, pushing their conspiracy theories and views onto the world through their social media channels.

"In that world, it's possible to be absolutely huge – I've known and worked with a few vloggers who are exceptionally

important within that world and are highly regarded – but outside of that little bubble, they're nothing. But it's very strange as they claim to know 'the truth'; they make these huge claims about everything, but these are made from very small places.

"So what would someone like that make of Torchwood? This is where we find out.

JOHN BARROWMAN • TRACY-ANN OBERMAN • PAUL CLAYTON
ALEXANDRIA RILEY • SAMANTHA BEART • JONNY GREEN • TOM PRICE

TORCHWOOD

GOD AMONG US 1

**WHEN A GOD COMES TO CARDIFF,
THE WORLD GOES TO HELL...**

Torchwood are picking up the pieces and carrying on. Because they're Torchwood and that's what they do. They've a city to protect from a whole new series of alien threats. Including a plague of sleep, a world gone blind, and rumours of an alien god walking among us. Croeso Caerdydd!

FUTURE PAIN BY JAMES GOSS

THE MAN WHO DESTROYED TORCHWOOD BY GUY ADAMS

SEE NO EVIL BY JOHN DORNEY

NIGHT WATCH BY TIM FOLEY

▶ **RELEASED** October 2018

Download/CD

▶ **CD £28.00** Download **£25.00**

▶ **Extras** Interviews

▶ **Director** Scott Handcock

▶ **Cast** John Barrowman, Tracy-Ann Oberman,
Paul Clayton, Alexandria Riley, Samantha Beart,
Jonny Green, Tom Price

"People like that believe they are so big, and think their voice carries so much weight, when it shouldn't."

See *No Evil* by John Dorney is the third tale in the set, and James reveals: "John Dorney's written a horror episode in which the city goes blind. Only two people can still see – one is Jack and one is Yvonne. Each goes to work saving people in very different ways. It's great seeing the contrast between the two of them."

**“ I FOUND
WHEN IT CAME
TO WRITING FOR
CAPTAIN JACK, I
WAS WRITING
FOR JOHN
BARROWMAN,
RATHER THAN
THE CHARACTER
OF JACK. JOHN DORNEY**

Having been prolific in writing for many other ranges for Big Finish, this was John's first foray into **Torchwood**.

He says: "It was fun doing Torchwood, though at the start it was a bit of a struggle getting my head into the specific zone. I found when it came to writing for Captain Jack, I was writing for John Barrowman, rather than the character of Jack.

"My script is largely avoiding the overall theme of the series. Total darkness falls across Cardiff, as if all the lights have gone off. It's as if the sun has gone out, or everyone has gone blind – and people are struggling to find a way to move through the city.

"Everyone is in the same difficult position, and Torchwood want to find out what's happening.

"People in the dark is a good story for audio, but it's not quite the thing I'd normally do. I tend

to prefer ideas where people think, 'You can't possibly do that on audio.' To me, that's a 'challenge accepted'!

"I didn't want to have it as an opportunity to have people describing things to each other. Torchwood have one pair of night vision goggles between them when they're involved in a car chase, so you've got them passing the goggles between them, when one's driving and the other is trying to shoot!"

up. When it's not being poetic and heart-warming, it's also creepy, unsettling and filthy."

Tim continues: "Basically, it was Orr's time to shine, as the rest of the team battle their own demons. I've written for Orr before, but it's never taken centre-stage in any of my scripts, so I was really excited by this. I love Sam's performance and Orr as a character has such a different take on the universe.

we're united in our storytelling. And within these larger plot threads, we're free to weave our own adventures. I love being part of a series-length crescendo, because it means we get to really amp up the stakes and probe what makes these people tick.

"Scott and James have assembled a real complex bunch, and I'm encouraged to butt their heads together where necessary – the characters', not Scott and

“I TEND TO PREFER IDEAS WHERE PEOPLE THINK, ‘YOU CAN’T POSSIBLY DO THAT ON AUDIO.’ JOHN DORNEY



The set concludes with *Night Watch* by Tim Foley, placing Orr front and centre.

James says: "Tim Foley's script follows on from John's – a pall of sleep settles over the city as a strange entity comes to feed off Cardiff's dreams for a night. It's beautiful and lyrical, and is about that terrible moment where we're surrounded by old and much-missed friends and know that we're about to wake

I can think of no better individual to save Cardiff from the depths of night."

Tim also enjoyed working as part of a writing team. He confirmed: "I really enjoy it. The Torchwood stories I've worked on so far have been part of large arcs, so we know where the characters begin in each episode, and where they have to end up. On the surface, that might sound limiting, but it means

James's! For instance, this episode puts Yvonne, Jack and Ng in a corner, and within that, you've got a whole host of backstories and agendas informing the action. Strong characters drive delicious drama. I'm basically not needed, just put the characters in a room together and bake until bursting point! This episode is very different to what I've done

before. It's weird, cerebral, and this night is going to change some members of Torchwood forever."

UNLIKE SERIES five when availability meant John Barrowman had to perform his scenes in America, this time he was able to join the team in studio in Britain. James says: "We were lucky that John was here for some of the recordings, so we

“IT'S WEIRD, CEREBRAL, AND THIS NIGHT IS GOING TO CHANGE SOME MEMBERS OF TORCHWOOD FOREVER.

TIM FOLEY

were able to get him having a blast alongside Sam, Jonny and, of course he got to meet Mr Colchester (Paul Clayton), which made us all happy.

"John's energy is always infectious, and it was a lovely few days. It's also been great having Yvonne and Andy developing their storyline from the end of the last season."

Having the leading man in studio was great for the director too. Scott admits: "I'm so glad we could make that work. More usually I have to record John on my own, directing whilst also reading in all the other parts.

"There are whole episodes of **Torchwood** where no actors have actually met, but none of us remember that any more! It's hard work mentally keeping track of how different actors play scenes to make sure they match, so having them all together made my life easier. And also, it somehow made it all feel that little bit more real.

"Having John in studio, bouncing off the others, as well as in the green room, really felt like they were part of the **Torchwood** family. And it goes without saying, they all got on like a house on fire!"

Paul Clayton is back as Mr Colchester (or, if you're Yvonne Hartman, St John). Before joining the team as a regular, he was aware of where Torchwood had sprung from. He tells Vortex: "I remember the first episode

of **Doctor Who** which featured Torchwood, with Pauline Collins as Queen Victoria and David Tennant as the Doctor.

"I'm absolutely fascinated by **Torchwood** now, and the response I've had from the fans has been wonderful. I really like it when fans love something and are completely into it.

"When I've told people I'm doing **Torchwood**, they've asked about the filming, but I explain it's now the audio adventures. As



Above (l-r): Jonny Green, Samantha Béart and John Barrowman



Above (l-r): Tom Price and Tracy-Ann Oberman

somebody who loves words and the power of them, as well as the imagination, it's great to know that so many people are listening and drawing the pictures for themselves in their own minds.

"These days, everything seems to be done with computers, but with the CGI they have I occasionally feel short-changed – it's nice to leave some

things to the imagination."

Paul has a connection with **Doctor Who** which goes back over a decade – apart from appearing onscreen in *Planet of the Ood*. He recalls: "I did an animated **Doctor Who**, *The Infinite Quest*, years ago, I also did a Big Finish with Colin Baker (*The Wormery*), and I did a **Dorian Gray** for Big Finish – they wanted me

“ I JUST ENJOY THE WHOLE EXPERIENCE – THROWING THINGS OFF ROOFTOPS AND DEALING WITH ALIENS. PAUL CLAYTON

to play someone who owned a department store in Edinburgh.

"I got an email one Sunday afternoon (which shows that Scott works far too hard if he's sending emails then!), and he said he was reading a script for a new series of **Torchwood**, *Aliens Among Us*. He couldn't get my voice out his head for this character, Mr Colchester, and asked if it was the sort of thing I would like to do. Of course I did!

"I read the first episode and thought it would be rather good fun. I haven't regretted it once."

Mr Colchester has very quickly built up his own following, with his sardonic disdain of **Torchwood**, and especially Captain Jack.

"I think the best description I read of Mr Colchester was, 'the Terminator in a cardigan.' There's a sensibility about him, but I like to call it a healthy disrespect," laughs Paul. "He will deal with what comes before him, and what he's faced with.

"What's been wonderful is there's now bits of me coming across in the writing. I wouldn't have the temerity to suggest changing things, like you hear some actors doing on other jobs I've done, when they come out with lines like, 'That's not the kind of thing I would say'; I believe you should say what the writer has given you.

"But that said, little things do creep in, and I know there's bits of me from conversations I've had with Scott and James;

knowing things about me and my phraseology.

"The reaction to him has been fantastic – thanks to the many people who have taken to Twitter to say nice things, or written about him on their blogs. They love the character and have taken to him very quickly, and the fans have been very kind about how I bring him to life.

"I just enjoy the whole experience – throwing things off rooftops and dealing with aliens who have their life support systems in their suitcases, and

volume was even released, so this was the first time we got to record actually knowing what the fans had made of it all.

"And that was great, because the reaction to those first three sets was so positive, meaning we knew what people liked and what they didn't, and that we were on the right track. It gave us all an added confidence, I think. A feeling of a job well done. But also the pressure of wanting to keep up that quality going forward.

"The atmosphere's always

work seriously, if not ourselves, and it just results in a really lovely, relaxed atmosphere."

Scott has been carefully choosing his words, and grins: "I really don't know how much I can give away. The joy of these stories is nothing is guaranteed.

"We said last time that not everyone made it out of the previous series alive, and that still stands, but we're obviously keen not to give anything away about who or how, or what else might happen along the way. All I'll say is, reading the

“ THANKS TO THE MANY PEOPLE WHO HAVE TAKEN TO TWITTER TO SAY NICE THINGS

PAUL CLAYTON



then talking about the normal things in life. That's what's so beautiful about **Torchwood**."

For Scott, it was a joy to be back working with the **Torchwood** team. But he says: "It was strange coming back. We'd recorded so much with the new team, it felt like coming home. But those first 12 stories were all recorded before the first

great, especially with returning cast members – not only the new team, but also recurring characters like Ro-Jedda and Colin, and now we're introducing a god into the mix!

"It's a really tight cast, which makes it even more welcoming for newcomers who join us for just a single episode or two. We take the

scripts, frozen lasagne brought a lump to my throat..."

And looking ahead, James says: "*God Among Us Part 2* sees a new member join the team at Russell's royal command! It also sees a lot of rain. There are some stories that will, hopefully, feel very current. There's a submarine, a big explosion, and someone borrows Tyler's body." **VORTEX**



KENNY SMITH IS READY FOR RAVENOUS 2...

HUNGRY FOR MORE

OUR JUMPS around the Eighth Doctor's timeline continue this month with the release of *Ravenous 2*. After confronting the dangers of the Eleven and a revived Kandy Man in *Ravenous 1*, the Doctor and Liv Chenka were reunited with their lost friend, Helen Sinclair. And now they're back together, surely nothing can possibly go wrong?

Ken Bentley, director and script editor of this second series explains: "We're trying to have a lot more fun and explore story worlds we feel

we haven't been to before.

"That was always one of the primary goals for *Ravenous*, to have as much variety in the storytelling as we could, but always with a theme in mind: the things we all fear."

Matt Fitton, writer of series two opener *Escape From Kaldor*, adds: "We all got involved with the planning of this series, myself, David Richardson and John Dorney with Ken script editing to make sure the episodes all work after we've done our outlines, and ensuring it all fits

together as an ongoing story."

Producer David Richardson explains how the story came about: "Liv Chenka has always been close to my heart. I'd actually cast Nicola Walker in the role back when she first appeared in *Robophobia*, and I'd asked Nicholas Briggs if we could make her an ongoing companion, which he did in *Dark Eyes 2*.

"So I was delighted to take over producing the Eighth Doctor range with *Dark Eyes 3*, and it's been great to be able to plan out the development of

her character with the writers over such a long span of time.

"I always knew that we should take Liv home at some point – and here it is. In *Escape From Kaldor*, the first adventure in this set, Liv is back on her home world. We meet her sister, there are Robots of Death, and – for Liv – this is a seismic episode. The really fun thing is that we're not quite letting on yet *why* this is a seismic episode... but trust me, you're going to love what lies ahead!"

Matt continues: "David said he wanted to take Liv back to Kaldor and for her to encounter the robots again. This is the first time the Doctor has visited there since the original story – assuming *The Robots of Death* took place on Kaldor.

"From that premise, we decided we would introduce Liv's sister, so we told Nicola about it and asked who she would like to play her sister. She came up with a list and Claire Rushbrook – who you might remember as Ida Scott in *The Impossible Planet* – was on it. And they're great together.

"The robots are supposed to put us at ease, to be comforting and help you, but because of that, it also makes them quite disturbing, I feel. John Dorney is doing the voices of some of the robots, and he's very good at it. He knows how to do it.

"We've also got something different in there this time, as I thought it would be interesting to have a robot with a female voice."

Unlike the previous Eighth Doctor box sets, *Dark Eyes* and *Doom Coalition*, there is more of a loose connection to the adventures in *Ravenous*.

Matt explains: "We want to tell some standalone stories in this series, and as I wrote the first one, we touch on the arc, but not much more than that. As the series goes on, it will become clear what the *Ravenous* actually are. You'll certainly know by the final story in this set just where things are going!

"I get to start things off in a slightly calmer way. After the



Above (l-r): Hattie Morahan, Nicola Walker and Mark Bonnar

“ I ALWAYS KNEW THAT WE SHOULD TAKE LIV HOME AT SOME POINT – AND HERE IT IS. IN *ESCAPE FROM KALDOR*.

DAVID RICHARDSON

events of the first box set, we now have Helen back on board the TARDIS. The Doctor wants to give Helen and Liv a break, so he thinks a nice way to do it would be to visit Liv's home.

"The Eighth Doctor can be so eager to please his friends, but sometimes, he just doesn't get it."

RAVENOUS 2 is being released in October but the second adventure has a slightly more seasonal feel, with more than a hint of Christmas to it as the Doctor and his friends encounter the Krampus, the

mythical anti-Santa Claus figure from Central European folklore who, during the festive period, punishes children who have misbehaved.

The second and third adventures, *Better Watch Out* and *Fairytale of Salzburg*, have both been written by John Dorney.

He tells Vortex: "I think the Krampus is something that seemed really obvious to do. About a year ago, it featured in a **Short Trip**, but I'm doing something that covers a very different territory.

"The Krampus has been surprisingly underused, given the amount of **Doctor Who** Christmas specials there are. It might be because it's just too scary and little bit too terrifying for Christmas. The fact it's not been in **Doctor Who** as yet was one of the main reasons I wanted to do it.

"I was on holiday in Salzburg in Austria last year and saw the Krampus Run. I knew I was booked in to write for *Ravenous 2*, and as I was walking about during this festival, in a beautiful, incredible

city, there were these demonic monsters running through it.

"If you are a **Doctor Who** script writer and don't think that was worth doing a story about, then you're missing a trick! They volunteered themselves as **Doctor Who** monsters!

"I emailed David Richardson immediately to ask when *Ravenous 2* was going to come

Christmas, and I let my mind tick over until I came up with the plot.

"Another inspiration came when I was in an Oxfam in Stevenage and they were asked by a customer if they had a certain film in stock. When I heard mention of that film – which I won't name – it brought everything together in the way I wanted it to."



Above (l-r): Ewan Goddard, Kate Rawson, Jamie Newall, Nicola Walker, Hattie Morahan and Carla Mendonça

out, and when he told me it was October, that felt it was close enough to Christmas for me!"

The appearance of the Krampus – a horned beast – could have made them easy monsters to work into the **Doctor Who** universe, by relying on existing beings. But John admits: "I wanted to avoid anything too obvious with them. Just from the look of them, it would have been easy to make them the daemons, but that just felt like a lazy, cheap way to do it, so I had to find an alternative.

"I spent a lot of time in January and February this year, driving around and playing an album of Christmas songs on a loop, to get myself into the right headspace.

"It's great music to listen to, as you can become so wrapped up in

Writing the middle parts of a box set of adventures was something new for John, who has previously written the first and last parts, but never the second and third together. He says: "I remember having a chat in the initial stages where I was talking about how I hadn't had a chance to do a story with two hour-long episodes, rather than two single hours, or a standard four-partner of 30 minute episodes.

"The two hour-long episodes do lean towards a different structure which might not seem obvious, but as a writer there's a huge difference as you're not building towards the cliffhanger in the four episode structure.

"It has something of a puzzlebox structure, as it's non-chronological



DOCTOR WHO RAVENOUS 2

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▶ Director Ken Bentley

▶ Cast Paul McGann, Nicola Walker, Hattie Morahan

ESCAPE FROM KALDOR
BY MATT FITTON

BETTER WATCH OUT
BY JOHN DORNEY

FAIRYTALE OF SALZBURG
BY JOHN DORNEY

SEIZURE
BY GUY ADAMS

“ I SPENT A LOT OF TIME IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY THIS YEAR, DRIVING AROUND AND PLAYING AN ALBUM OF CHRISTMAS SONGS ON A LOOP.

JOHN DORNEY

for a good chunk of it. But suddenly, it all makes sense in the last couple of scenes, though it does require a good degree of patience from the listener."

IN THE box set's concluding tale, we finally get to meet the titular creatures of the series as *Seizure*, by Guy Adams, introduces the Ravenous. David explains: "In *Seizure*, the Ravenous arc goes into high gear. We finally discover what they are, what they are after and why the Doctor is so very afraid of them. Guy Adams has written a proper scary episode of **Doctor Who**. It drips with atmosphere and threat, and George Asprey is astonishing as the Ravenous. Make sure to listen to this one from behind the sofa!"

Director Ken adds: "This is the first time we meet the Ravenous, and working with an actor to figure out how to play a new creature, monster, or villain is always exciting. George Asprey is a wonderful actor with buckets of energy, so I knew he'd do something amazing. It was thrilling to sit back and watch

“GUY ADAMS HAS WRITTEN A PROPER SCARY EPISODE OF DOCTOR WHO. IT DRIPS WITH ATMOSPHERE AND THREAT.” DAVID RICHARDSON

him bring the Ravenous to life.

"I'm always fascinated to find out what listeners think of a new monster. David Richardson came up with the idea of the Ravenous, and they have a very specific role to play. The response to the Ravenous should be visceral, for everybody, the characters in the story and for the listener. Fear is an aspect of **Doctor Who** that we all fondly remember as children, but it's hard to recreate that primal feeling in adults, so I'm keen to find out if the Ravenous are as

“ I WAS CHANNELLING SHIRLEY JACKSON, WHO WROTE THE HAUNTING OF HILL HOUSE. ” GUY ADAMS



unsettling as we hope they are."

Guy adds: "I had heard a little bit about what was going on and it all sounded wonderful. The *Ravenous* series has a very slight foot in terror, particularly the second box set, and there's quite a horrific overtone to it – and that's my world, my background.

"I had the opportunity to take the Eighth Doctor, who I adore, into this territory, with an unusual haunted house story.

"I was channelling Shirley Jackson, who wrote *The Haunting of Hill House*. It's a real joy to think of something like that, and take **Doctor Who** into that territory. I also get to introduce the Ravenous, which was a joy. Those were fun conversations, getting to set something up. The whole story is an operation in unsettling!"

WHEN IT comes to bringing in the guest casts, Ken reveals: "We often ask our

leads if there's anybody they'd like to work with, and when we asked Nicola who she might like to play Liv's sister, Nicola suggested Claire Rushbrook and we leapt at the chance to cast her.

"If memory serves Siân Phillips was David Richardson's suggestion. Big Finish have worked with Siân before, and when you discover who she's playing I'm sure you'll agree she's perfect for the role.

"But I'm particularly proud of casting Raad Rawi as the bishop. It's such a lovely and appropriate bit of casting and Raad plays the part beautifully."

David concludes: "We're already underway on *Ravenous 3*. I've seen a synopsis of the first episode, and really exciting ideas are flying around for the second – it should be a real fan pleaser and a perfect fit for Big Finish's anniversary year. There are big things ahead!" **VORTEX**

PREPARE FOR SOME COLD COMFORT AS BLIND TERROR, THE LATEST BIG FINISH ORIGINALS PRODUCTION, IS READIED FOR RELEASE...



MYLES BETTER

T O DATE, the **Big Finish Originals** series has brought us a diverse range of productions, from following the lives of women in World War II in **ATA Girl**, historical life in Rome with **Cicero**, to science fiction with **Jeremiah Bourne in Time**. The breadth of scope continues this month with **Blind Terror: The Gods of Frost**, which, if a label has to be put on it, would be horror.

But really, it's not. It's far more than that.

The premise sounds like a recognisable setting, as, following the death of her husband, Kathryn Ellis becomes the new housekeeper at Hodder Hall, keen to embark on a bright new future. Only, her past won't let her go just yet, and the ghosts that stalk the village threaten to cut her future short.

Torchwood's Eve Myles stars in this series written by Guy

Adams, comprising six half-hour episodes, produced and directed by Scott Handcock.

Vortex asked Big Finish senior producer David Richardson what led the series to be commissioned, and he replied: "In six words, 'You had me at Eve Myles!' Quite simply, I believe that Eve is one of the finest actors in this country. She radiates passion, warmth, belief and every emotion on the scale with everything that she appears

in. Plus it's written by Guy Adams, one of our finest writers at Big Finish. For me, this is one of the highlights of our 2018 schedule."

Guy reveals: "It's entirely thanks to Eve Myles that **Blind Terror** came about. The idea was actually floating about for a while before it was one of what became known as the **Big Finish Originals**.

"It was purely because I had become the go-to person to write horror stories for **Torchwood**. Eve had said she enjoyed what I was doing and liked my scripts and we've become friends. She effectively said to Scott, 'Get Guy

I love Guy's work. We all get on very well, and we were chatting, and I said to Scott, you direct, Guy, you write, I'll perform, and we'll do a horror. Let's make it unique, let's make it for Big Finish, and let's make it our own. I'm so pleased we've got to do it. Kathryn Ellis is a great character."

HAVING WRITTEN many stories for Big Finish over the past few years, Guy – also an accomplished book author – was delighted to create something new on audio. He explained: "I'm so pleased. I've

"In some ways, I looked to **American Horror Story**, which takes these tropes and stirs them together, to find a new voice. I like doing that with traditional supernatural structures and creating something that would be unusual and eerie. Audio is the perfect medium for horror. That way, you have a voice whispering in your ear..."

Talking of her character, Eve explains: "I worked quite hard just to find her manner. On screen, you have a costume and make-up and the aesthetics to help you with your character,



Above (l-r): Guy Adams, Eve Myles and Scott Handcock

to write an original horror series, and if you do, I'll star in it'

"Scott then went to Big Finish and explained the situation, and when the answer came back, it was, 'Alright then – do it!' So it's really down to Eve herself."

Eve confirms: "I was coming in and out doing **Torchwood**, and Guy kept writing horror episodes for me. I love them and

had the opportunity to write three hours of horror, starring the wonderful Eve Myles.

"The thing that interested me was that I wanted to take a very traditional piece of supernatural fiction, the governess taking a position at a haunted house, and then do something different and unusual with it, so it's not what you expect it's going to be.

and on audio you really have to sell it through your voice – how you pace it and how you pitch it.

"Kathryn is an intriguing character as she's incredibly gentle, but she's broken, and yet she's still very assertive though lost and grief-stricken. It's lovely to be working on something completely different from Gwen Cooper being so strong, physical

and in the midst of the action, to find the lovely Kathryn in a rather strange world that she's very happy to be in.

"Awful events happen to her, and yet this woman does her best to survive it, so we tell a great story. Guy has written a fantastic piece and there was no way I wasn't going to do it.

"Kathryn Ellis is a gift. She's incredibly vulnerable. The way it's been designed and written by Guy is completely plausible and you buy into it straight away. It's a world of spirits, and all these characters are haunted, even before the ghosts turn up – but the ghosts seem in a much better place than the living.

"It's a really complex story, and that's what I like, it's not black and white. It isn't a horror. It isn't a thriller. It isn't sci-fi. It's its own genre – it's **Blind Terror**. It's layered, it's complex and it's intelligent."

GUY WAS delighted to work with Scott, as well as script editor James Goss. He says: "It's a good production team, we've done a lot of stuff now. I know James and Scott very well, either working with them individually or together on various series, like **Torchwood**, **Bernice Summerfield** and **Vienna**. We're old lags!"

Scott says: "James and I have worked on so much together at Big Finish now, and I've had the pleasure of directing many a Guy Adams script along the way, and that's always something I look forward to. It goes without saying that I love working with Eve, but doing something wholly new was a blast. It's a team that trusts each other, and she's completely committed to every role she undertakes.

"We had long, hour-long phone calls before recording discussing character and atmosphere, even the cover artwork! She's just someone who cares so much about her work, and I couldn't respect her more." Scott

continues: "There's always an extra excitement in trying out something new, because there are absolutely no expectations from the audience which means you can really make an impact. Whether that's with something like **The Confessions of Dorian Gray**, or even introducing a new team to the **Torchwood** franchise, the original formats allow us to play within new territories. The process is the same, but creatively it allows you huge freedom.

"I was involved from the outset as it came up during recording sessions with Eve on the **Torchwood** range, and she was very keen to work with us all

and I curled up and read them. It was a joy because there were no external branding concerns for Guy to answer to. No-one could say, 'This character wouldn't do this,' or anything like that. You could just sit and nod along, and throw in suggestions, and wholeheartedly approve of it all."

HELPING BRING the production to life is sound designer and musician Rob Harvey. With the setting of a creaky house, does that give him an advantage – a shorthand for the sound design – as we all know what to expect? Rob says: "Generally yes. A creaky haunted



Above (l-r): Guy Adams and Eve Myles

on something original. Eve, Guy and I are massive horror fans, as is James who script edited, so that was an instant must for us all."

James agrees: "It was great fun as there's a shorthand when working between Scott and Guy. Guy knows the things that Scott will enjoy and the things that he won't enjoy, and caters to one while maliciously sprinkling a few of the other! Script editing them was so easy. They turned up while I was in a hotel with bunk beds in Cardiff,

house is a creaky haunted house, though Hodder Hall is something else outside of the usual tropes. Kathryn Ellis, who is taking over as housekeeper, will be able to find more than just creaky old beams and dead rats for company. The house is lived in, has character and needs to feel homely at times.

"Atmosphere is possibly the most important part of this genre after the dialogue. A creaky atmosphere is created by clever use of reverb. If you've ever been

AWFUL EVENTS
HAPPEN TO HER,
AND YET THIS
WOMAN DOES
HER BEST TO
SURVIVE IT. EVE MYLES



BLIND TERROR
BIG FINISH ORIGINALS

- ▶ RELEASED October 2018
- ▶ Download £17.00
- ▶ Extras Interviews
- ▶ Written by Guy Adams
- ▶ Director Scott Handcock
- ▶ Cast Eve Myles, Joseph Tweedale, Bethan Rose Young, Kerry Joy Stewart, Bradley Freegard, Kezrena James, Gareth Jewell, John Cording, Laura Dalglish, Richard Elfyn, Guy Adams

EPISODE 1: SOUL CAKE

EPISODE 2: THEY'RE COMING

EPISODE 3: HODDER'S FOLLY

EPISODE 4: THE LORD OF MISRULE

EPISODE 5: HIDE AND SEEK

EPISODE 6: SOLSTICE

... somewhere creepy like an old army bunker, or a deserted old house, you'll have noticed the lack of sound. With nothing happening around you your brain starts to make stuff up. I'll take a sound source like a wooden creak or a roof tile rattling and run it through a special reverb. This reverb (or echo) warps and changes the sound to a point where you can't really tell what it is anymore.

... "Think of someone standing at one end of a cave shouting at you. Do you think you would understand what that person was saying? It's the same principle. That creak, by the time it's echoed through the house might sound

... put the sound of anything from a restaurant to an ocean, your brain will make you feel a certain way about it. This in turn adds to the immersion factor and sets the listener up for a scare!"

AS WE'RE now a month or so from release, Eve teases: "We have an attentive audience here at Big Finish and Guy has written this so beautifully. When they hear this, the image of what we're doing – the image of the scene – will pop into their ears, and they can decide if those ghosts are real. You can decide what you want to do. You are part of the story as well, as



Above (l-r): Eve Myles, Kezrena James, Kerry Joy Stewart, Joseph Tweedale, Bethan Rose Young and Gareth Jewell

... like a footstep or your door opening... this is an auditory hallucination. Much the same way you sometimes see something out of the corner of your eye. Your brain will tell you it's definitely evil and you need to leave.

... "Weather is also important. A recording of a windy cold horrible day will do a lot for the feeling of your play. We have this wonderful opportunity with audio to walk a thin line between imagination and reality. If you

... much as we are telling it. It's how you hear it."

... Guy concludes: "We have six half-hours, and it's a lovely thing to have for a winter's evening. The timing of the release of these episodes is quite unintentional, being October, the month of Halloween, but should you choose to do so, you could listen to one every week in the run-up to the shortest day. Should you be mad enough to do so, it would pretty much work!" **VORTEX**

VORTEX MAIL

HAVE YOUR SAY!

EMAIL: feedback@bigfinish.com

REMEMBER TO PUT 'VORTEX MAIL' AS THE SUBJECT

MILES BETTER, TO BE FRANK

I have loved **Callan** ever since I first saw it in the early 70s here in Australia. In addition to the TV show itself, I am extremely familiar with the novels and the short stories, so I was very keen to see what Big Finish would do with this TV classic. I've just finished listening to volume one and have to say I am very impressed with every aspect of it. They are very true to the short stories and really capture the spirit of the TV show. It only took a few minutes to get used to the voices of Ben Miles and Frank Skinner as Callan and Lonely, and after that the roles became theirs. I would also add that I was impressed with Nick Briggs's interpretation of Hunter. Perhaps adaptations of the three excellent original 1970s novels of James Mitchell might be considered for future releases.

DAVID B

Nick: Many thanks, David – and particular thanks for your praise for my Hunter. All of us who worked on Callan absolutely love it, and we're looking forward to doing more.

A PALPABLE HIT

Just a quick note to say congratulations on your new series of **Callan**, it really has the character of the originals and is fresh. It joins **Cyberman**, **The Prisoner** and **Blake's 7** downloads and is a great addition. I must say the Cybermen episodes were a



revelation – congratulations on such a dark and thought-provoking series.

DAVE INGERSON

*Nick: Thanks, Dave. Every now and then, I find I've forgotten about the two series of **Cyberman** that we did. It's rather nice to be reminded. And very glad you rank **Callan**, **The Prisoner** and **Blake's 7** among your favourites too.*

AUDIO EXCELLENCE

I just wanted to congratulate everyone involved with this months release, *Hour of the Cybermen*. It was a near perfect release, an "Excellent" release, if you'll pardon the (over use) of the expression. Loved the writing, the incidental music was spot on, and I swear I'd the 80s knocking on my door looking for their synths back. It was wonderful hearing the double act of Banks and Hardy back, even if only in sound. The only other thing I can say is – more 80s Cybermen please!

ANDREW WARD

Nick: Andrew, we should definitely do more of those. I was so pleased to get David Banks back. Originally, I was going to be his sidekick, but I wasn't available. Then director Jamie Anderson said, 'Why don't we get Mark Hardy?' Inspired! And then, Steve Foxon went the whole hog with his Cyber music. Just such a lovely piece of work with everyone in the creative team working to the 'nth degree'. It's what Big Finish is all about and makes me feel very proud.

A WINTERS TALE?

Has Big Finish ever contacted Alexandra Moltke about reprising her role as Victoria Winters on a future **Dark Shadows** release? I would like to see the mystery of Victoria's parentage finally laid to rest. *Return to Collinwood* provided an answer, but it was not the answer. It was certainly not the one hinted at (rather broadly) through the entire first year of the show on television. The identity of her father was all but delivered to viewers wrapped in a neat package with a bow. The identity of her mother is a little more problematic, but there is a supernatural element involved as she was said to have died before Victoria was born.

JEFF PLACKEMEIER

*Dark Shadows producer, Joseph Lidster: We have actually revealed the story behind Victoria's parentage in the collection **Haunting Memories** – well, our interpretation of it, anyway. Sadly, Alexandra has so far not been keen to reprise her role but we will keep trying – and we certainly have plans in the pipeline to explore the character of Victoria Winters in a forthcoming release. **VORTEX***

LISTEN AGAIN

BERNICE SUMMERFIELD EPOCH

RELEASED SEPTEMBER 2011



It's been 20 years since Big Finish first brought out the adventures of Professor Bernice Surprise Summerfield on audio.

Benny's been with us under several creative teams over the years, starting with Gary Russell in 1998. Along with Scott Handcock, Gary and the beloved archaeologist were reunited in 2011 succeeding John Ainsworth as producer. John had concluded the 11th series of Bernice Summerfield – then released as single CDs – on a cliffhanger.

For their first Bernice box set, *epoch*, Scott recalls: “Gary had a clear idea in his head when he took over from John Ainsworth of what he wanted to do with Benny. Ultimately, that was to have her on Legion, which would function as a sort of new version of the Braxiatel Collection, but with a new team.

“The problem was that John ended the last release on the

Atlantis cliffhanger. I think that's when Gary must have decided to treat Atlantis as if it was historical, but with darker forces manipulating events from further afield...”

epoch opened with *The Kraken's Lament*, by Big Finish veteran writer, Mark Wright, and saw Benny land herself in a world where the classical characters of fiction were real.

Mark recalls: “I think I pushed it as far as I could with things like the Minotaur gag and the Pegasus. Pegasi? Benny trying to climb on the back of a Pegasus is my favourite scene in the script. I had the original *Clash of the Titans* in my mind during the writing, and wanted Benny to be cast in that central heroic role. Acanthus was a good character for pushing the classics element as he could narrate various story elements, which I felt gave it an authentic feel.”

Next was *The Temple of Questions* by Jacqueline Rayner, who adapted Benny's very first adventure for audio. She says: “Working in the world of *Doctor Who*, I've been lucky enough to write for lots of characters that I didn't originate, and you can only do your best to capture their unique character. Of all of them, Benny is the one whose voice I find easiest to slip back into. I know Mark and I found it hard initially to get a hang on the Atlantis setting, so we both went off and watched *The Time Monster* for inspiration.”

The set's penultimate release was *Private Enemy No 1*, and writer Tony Lee says: “I was told that mine was where Benny and Ruth learned the truth, that Atlantis was effectively a ‘desktop wallpaper’ for the epoch. People from earlier stories would turn up, changed by the epoch. I'd see the world destroyed, and end with literally nothing. Benny and Ruth are running through

“BENNY TRYING TO CLIMB ON THE BACK OF A PEGASUS IS MY FAVOURITE SCENE IN THE SCRIPT.” MARK WRIGHT

Atlantis as it disintegrates behind them, becoming a new planet, a new society. It was a fair sized endeavour.”

Judgement Day concluded the set, featuring multiple Bennys and her friend Ruth. Scott says: “It was actually reasonably easy to write because each world had its own distinct storyline, and we kept intercutting. I suspect it was actually a lot more difficult for the actors and Gary, as director, because they were the ones who had to keep tabs on all the different versions of the characters when they were in studio.” **VORTEX**

EPOCH IS AVAILABLE NOW
ON CD AND DOWNLOAD
FROM WWW.BIGFINISH.COM

OTHER COVERS

AS PART of Big Finish's 20th anniversary celebrations we invited our listeners to join us in commemorating the occasion by creating an original piece of artwork to be used for the front cover of *Vortex*.

Many wonderful entries were received for the online competition – here are some of our favourite runners-up.



ADAM ROWLAND



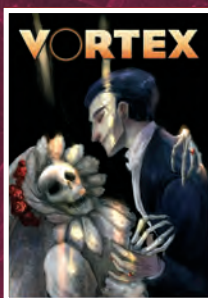
BRENDON WRIGHT



CONNOR ADKINS



MARK HADLETT



HARRIE AN (LUFIE)



MIKE McGEE



OLIVER BROOKS



RAINE SZRAMSKI



ALAN PEACOCK



KAT LUNROE

COMING SOON

THE BIG FINISH RELEASE SCHEDULE

SEPTEMBER 2018

- **DW • THE MONTHLY ADVENTURES: THE DISPOSSESSED**
(242, SEVENTH DOCTOR, ACE AND MEL)
- **DW • THE EARLY ADVENTURES: THE DALEK OCCUPATION OF WINTER**
(5.1, FIRST DOCTOR, VICKI AND STEVEN)
- **DW • THE DIARY OF RIVER SONG: SERIES 4** (BOX SET)
- **DW • SHORT TRIPS: A SMALL SEMBLANCE OF HOME** **DLO**
(8.9, FIRST DOCTOR, IAN, BARBARA AND SUSAN)
- **BERNICE SUMMERFIELD: THE STORY SO FAR VOLUME 1** (BOX SET)
- **BERNICE SUMMERFIELD: THE STORY SO FAR VOLUME 2** (BOX SET)
- **BIG FINISH ORIGINALS: SHILLING & SIXPENCE INVESTIGATE** **DLO**

OCTOBER 2018

- **DW • THE MONTHLY ADVENTURES: THE QUANTUM POSSIBILITY ENGINE**
(243, SEVENTH DOCTOR, ACE AND MEL)
- **DW • THE EARLY ADVENTURES: AN IDEAL WORLD**
(5.2, FIRST DOCTOR, VICKI AND STEVEN)
- **DW • THE EIGHTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: RAVENOUS 2** (BOX SET)
- **DW • SHORT TRIPS: I AM THE MASTER** **DLO**
(8.10, THE MASTER)
- **TORCHWOOD: GOD AMONG US PART 1** (BOX SET)
- **BIG FINISH ORIGINALS: BLIND TERROR: THE GODS OF FROST** **DLO**

NOVEMBER 2018

- **DW • THE MONTHLY ADVENTURES: WARLOCK'S CROSS** (244, SEVENTH DOCTOR AND KLEIN)
- **DW • THE EARLY ADVENTURES: ENTANGLEMENT**
(5.3, FIRST DOCTOR, VICKI AND STEVEN)
- **DW • SHORT TRIPS: THE MISTPUDDLE MURDERS** **DLO**
(8.11, FIFTH DOCTOR, NYSSA AND TEGAN)
- **DW • THE SEVENTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES**
(BOX SET, SEVENTH DOCTOR, ROZ AND CHRIS)
- **UNIT – THE NEW SERIES: REVISITATIONS** (SERIES 7)
- **SURVIVORS: SERIES 8** (BOX SET)

DECEMBER 2018

- **DW • THE MONTHLY ADVENTURES: MUSE OF FIRE** (245, SEVENTH DOCTOR, HEX, ACE AND IRIS)
- **DW • THE MONTHLY ADVENTURES: TBA** (246)

- **DW • THE EARLY ADVENTURES: THE CRASH OF THE UK-201**
(5.4, FIRST DOCTOR, VICKI AND STEVEN)
- **DW • SHORT TRIPS: THE DEVIL'S FOOTPRINTS** **DLO**
(8.12, SEVENTH DOCTOR AND MEL)
- **DW • THE WAR MASTER: THE MASTER OF CALLOUS** (BOX SET)
- **BERNICE SUMMERFIELD: IN TIME**
(NOVEL, EBOOK AND AUDIOBOOK)
- **STAR TREK PROMETHEUS 3: IN THE HEART OF CHAOS**
(AUDIOBOOK)
- **STAR COPS: MOTHER EARTH PART 2** (BOX SET)

JANUARY 2019

- **DW • THE MONTHLY ADVENTURES: TBA** (247)
- **DW • THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: SERIES 8A** (8.A, FOURTH DOCTOR, ANN KELSO AND K9)
- **DW • THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: THE SINISTRAN KILL** **DLO**
(8.1, FOURTH DOCTOR AND ANN KELSO)
- **DW • THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: THE ENCHANTRESS OF NUMBERS** **DLO**
(8.2, FOURTH DOCTOR AND ANN KELSO)
- **DW • THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: PLANET OF THE DRASHIGS** **DLO**
(8.3, FOURTH DOCTOR, ANN KELSO AND K9)
- **DW • THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: THE FALSE GUARDIAN** **DLO**
(8.4, FOURTH DOCTOR, ANN KELSO AND K9)
- **THE DIARY OF RIVER SONG: SERIES 5** (BOX SET)
- **CALLAN: VOLUME TWO**

FEBRUARY 2019

- **DW • THE MONTHLY ADVENTURES: TBA** (248)
- **DW • THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: SERIES 8B** (8.B, FOURTH DOCTOR, ANN KELSO AND K9)
- **DW • THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: TIME'S ASSASSIN** **DLO** (8.5, FOURTH DOCTOR, ANN KELSO AND K9)
- **DW • THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: FEVER ISLAND** **DLO** (8.6, FOURTH DOCTOR, ANN KELSO AND K9)
- **DW • THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: THE PERFECT PRISONERS PARTS 1-2** **DLO**
(8.7, FOURTH DOCTOR, ANN KELSO AND K9)
- **DW • THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: THE PERFECT PRISONERS PARTS 3-4** **DLO**
(8.8, FOURTH DOCTOR, ANN KELSO AND K9)
- **TORCHWOOD: GOD AMONG US PART 2** (BOX SET)

DLO = DOWNLOAD ONLY
DW = DOCTOR WHO

VORTEX



DOCTOR WHO
RAVENOUS 2

TORCHWOOD
GOD AMONG US

BIG FINISH
ORIGINALS
BLIND TERROR

