

**FREE!** ISSUE #20 OCTOBER 2010 **BIG**  
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# VINTAGE MAGAZINE



## NIKY WARDLEY

THE EIGHTH DOCTOR'S NEW COMPANION TALKS

### FRIENDS OF BENNY

Miles Richardson and  
Louise Faulkner

### DEATH IN THE FAMILY

Steven Hall on writing for  
the Seventh Doctor

ALSO...  
**WHO IS  
MERVYN STONE?**  
Nev Fountain explains  
**BACK TO E-SPACE**  
with Andrew Smith

# DIMENSIONS

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## EDITORIAL

Hello from the rehearsal rooms of **Doctor Who Live** at Elstree Studios. I'm not allowed to tell you anything at all about it, otherwise a beam will zap down from the BBC Worldwide mothership and destroy my brain. But suffice it to say that it's all lots of fun. And perhaps it would be okay to reveal that seeing a load of young girls bobbing around in Dalek bottoms (!) is quite a thrill for a man of my advancing years.

Now, back to the world of Big Finish. I hope you haven't been too wrong-footed by the change in our podcast regime. Because I'm away, we're giving you a couple of celebrity podcasts, plus a new podcast with David Richardson talking to a truly stellar line-up, which

includes Terry Molloy and even the great Gary Russell himself.

And talk of that great man brings me to the upcoming return of **Gallifrey**. Yes, due to unrelenting popular demand, I went to my illustrious predecessor and begged him on bended knee to bring back that popular series. I'm so delighted that Gary took up the challenge and know that the many fans of **Gallifrey** will not be disappointed by the amazing fourth series he is currently creating... with a fantastic cast!

Right, back to the rehearsals. The Cybermen are marching... where's my microphone?

Nicholas Briggs

## SNEAK PREVIEWS AND WHISPERS

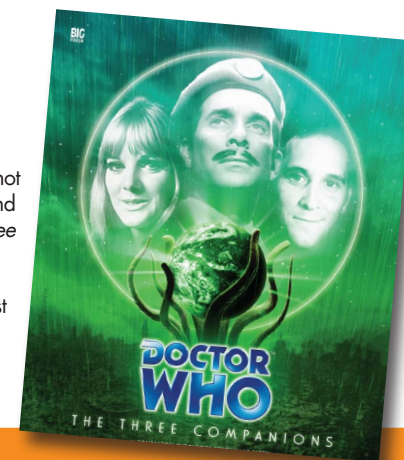
### Love Songs for the Shy and Cynical – The Audiobook

Six of the best from Robert Shearman's critically acclaimed, triple award-winning short story collection, performed to perfection by India Fisher, Toby Hadoke and Jane Goddard, and directed by Rob himself. The half-dozen twisted tales making the journey to audio are: *George Clooney's Moustache*, *Pang*, *Luxembourg*, *Love Among the Lobelias*, *Sweet Nothings* and *One Last Love Song*. A three-disc collection that should not be missed...  
Out March 2011



### The Companion Chronicles – The Specials

We've ummed and aahed for some time about whether or not to release it but it was you – yes you! – who tipped the balance and convinced us the demand was there. It's a chance to hear *The Three Companions* for the first time as a full, amalgamated edit, with the original intended edition of *The Mists of Time*, and *Freakshow*. Also included are some previously unheard interviews with the cast and crew, including a brilliant chat between writer Marc Platt and Nicholas Courtney on *The Three Companions*.  
Out June 2011



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# FOUNTAIN OF WISDOM



Nev Fountain introduces us to the unlikely hero of three new murder mystery novels when he chats to Paul Spragg

Hello Nev. So tell us: who is Mervyn Stone?

Mervyn Stone is a writer. Well, just about. The only words he's paid to write these days are the words 'Best Wishes Mervyn Stone' in autograph books.

His chief claim to fame was **Vixens from the Void**, a TV programme where women in lycra flew phallic-shaped spaceships and fired phallic-shaped ray guns at each other. It came out in 1985, a barren time for British TV sci-fi, with no **Doctor Who** or **Blake's 7**. **Vixens** literally emerged from that sci-fi 'Void'. I suppose if I'm honest it's a bit of retroactive wish-fulfilment, going back to the 1980s and making the programme-makers take the genre seriously.

Mervyn's life revolves around the fading echoes of that show: signings, DVD commentaries, documentaries, conventions, cruises, more signings... So he also keeps on meeting old colleagues that in normal circumstances he would have long since lost touch with twenty years ago.

Which crime-solving masters would you compare him to?

He comes from a long and honourable line of hapless (mostly amateur) detectives, who are good at solving murders but a bit rubbish at everything else. Life (girls, money, work, etc) tends to baffle them. There's Columbo, Monk, Shoestring, Jonathan Creek, Dangerous Davies... I suppose his nearest literary cousin is Simon Brett's thespian sleuth, Charles Paris – an actor who's great at investigating murders but not that good at being an actor.

How would you pitch the **Mervyn Stone** books to a prospective reader?

I think all three books have top-drawer murder plots, good character-driven humour and some sly nods to sci-fi media. I will pledge this to your readers, and this is me being utterly honest, BF fans. I've nothing to hide. I'm even naked while I speak to you. I have worked extremely hard to make these accessible and fun for sci-fi fans, murder-mystery fans and comedy fans alike. If you're a fan of any of these genres I GUARANTEE you will love them. And you're allowed to blow a raspberry in my face if I'm wrong.

What was your inspiration for **Mervyn Stone**? Some elements seem awfully familiar from certain classic sci-fi series we know and love...

The story of Mervyn and his relationship with **Vixens** inevitably draws from **Doctor Who**, because they had such an interesting and tumultuous time of it behind the scenes. But that's inevitable if you make up a sci-fi show that happens to have been made in the eighties; of course there'll be the same problems – budgets, unions, angry fans, public criticism, government outrage, all that stuff.

There's some jokes that lean towards parody in there, but I do emphasise that this is not a parody of **Who**; **Doctor Who** exists in this world, and **Vixens** was very much a reaction to it; its ethos – sexy girls being bitchy and amoral and fighting for power in a galactic empire – is very much in the soap opera idiom. I made it that way so I can have a sprawling show with a huge cast, where I can add previously unknown characters into the books once I've bumped off all the others!

As **Doctor Who** and all the other shows exist in the **Vixens** universe, I'd love Colin Baker, Paul Darrow and others to turn up as characters in future books – as guests at signings or at conventions... perhaps even as suspects in the murders!

So yes, there is **Doctor Who** and **B7** in there, but there are other shows too, particularly in *Cursed Among Sequels*, when the show gets 'rebooted' like **Battlestar Galactica**, **V** and **The Prisoner**. It's being remade by an American company, so it has a bit of a transatlantic feel in places, even though it's being made in Cornwall...

You've taken a very multimedia approach to **Mervyn Stone**. What other things can readers find to immerse themselves more fully in Mervyn's world?

Well, there's the Facebook site, which might have more photos on it soon, and Twitter perhaps, and the podcasts of course, some readings on YouTube... I hope there'll be a downloadable version of the **Vixens from the Void** theme to have as a mobile ringtone...

It would be a dream come true for me if fans immersed themselves, Harry Potter-like, in the fictional world of **Vixens**. It would make my day if fans recreate bits of **Vixens** on YouTube, dress up as **Vixens**, make their own convention t-shirts and merchandise, fanzines, websites, programme guides...

I suppose the ultimate would be to hold a whole convention dedicated to a sci-fi show which doesn't exist! We could have panels with Mervyn Stone, Vanity Mycroft and Roger Barker on it... played by actors from **Doctor Who** and **Blake's 7**! That would be ace!

You've written an upcoming **Companion Chronicle**; what can you tell us about it?

It's called *Peri and the Pisco Paradox*, and I'm very proud of it. It was a wonderful bit of serendipity when David [Richardson] said he wanted a Peri adventure that started with the Fifth Doctor and ended with the Sixth Doctor. It dovetailed nicely with an idea I've wanted to do for some time. I think it's worked very well – it's certainly the best audio I've written for Big Finish, and it's brilliantly performed – of course!

It's dicey writing for an established character exclusively associated with an actor, and it's dicey to the nth degree with a side order of

'uh-oh' when you're very close to the actor in question! *Pisco* is very much my style, but I've also worked very closely with Nicola on it, and fed into it her wishes and hopes for the character; stuff she's always hoped Peri would do. Hopefully it'll make you laugh and cry in equal measure.

It's a huge thrill that Colin [Baker] is guest starring in it. Without *The Doctor* it wouldn't have worked, which is an odd thing to say about a **Doctor Who Companion Chronicle**, but you'll have to wait and see what I mean by that!

You've written for **Dead Ringers**, you work on *Private Eye*, you write **Doctor Who** audios; what else would you like to turn your hand to, and what do you have coming up?

It probably feels like I went into hibernation, because I've been working on stuff that's taken a while – almost years – to see the light of day. Now they're all coming out at once! There's that *Time* and the *Rani* DVD thing, more sketches for **The Impressions Show**, more episodes of the children's series **Scoop**, both for BBC1...

I'd love to turn my hand to writing a stage play. I've not written one for years. Nicola had an idea for a great thriller, and I've wanted to work on it with her for years. I haven't cracked it yet. Perhaps we'll sit down and finally work it out.

But I'm so into **Mervyn Stone Mysteries** at the moment; I so hope the books do well because a great idea for book four is already bouncing around my head. I've even got a title: *Ten Little Figures*...!

The **Mervyn Stone** mysteries are out this month in hardback and leatherbound editions.



Niky Wardley discusses sofa-based childhood concealment, and becoming the latest person to set foot in the Eighth Doctor's TARDIS, with Paul Spragg

## DREW ON HER OWN EXPERIENCE

Hello Niky. How did you feel about becoming a **Doctor Who** companion?

Oh my God, I was over the moon! I was really, really excited actually, because it's such a huge thing to be any little part of. Catherine Tate is one of my really good friends, and [I loved] seeing her go through, right from the beginning when she first started on the whole behemoth that is **Doctor Who**. It was lovely to dip my toe in it.

It's quite an amazing thing to be part of; the conventions and the spread that it has is quite astonishing. Obviously we all grew up with **Doctor Who**, but then you sort of dip in and out of it. It's one of those comforting things in life; you know it's there. I watched it when I was a kid. Tom Baker was my main one and I did used to get – I know this is something everyone says but it is a genuine, genuine feeling – I did used to get really scared and I used to hide behind my nan's sofa.

**But people just say that, don't they? No one literally hid behind a sofa.**

I swear to you now, as I am sitting in this room, I hid behind her sofa! I don't know what it was; I don't remember it being any character in particular, but there was something that just felt much safer behind there.

**Were you aware of the Big Finish audios before getting the part?**

I'd no idea. Well, actually, I say that, I had an idea last year because I was auditioned originally for some other voices, which didn't work out, so I knew there was some kind of existence. But seeing the covers today is kind of great because I had no idea it was to that extent! My gosh! They're everywhere, these things!

**Have you seen much of the new series? Did Catherine tell you to watch on pain of death?**

No! I did actually watch quite a lot of Catherine. I'm very excited to see Matt Smith because I've seen him on stage a lot and think he's an amazing actor. But I've not seen the whole thing. I've seen bits of David and Billie, more of that than David and Freema.

It's such a classy thing to be in. There's always that joke about having **The Bill** on your CV; it's that kind of thing, every actor, you have to do it. But **Doctor Who** is the one now; how lovely to have that as a credit on your CV.



The women of Nevermore: Emilia Fox, Niky Wardley and Fenella Woolgar

**Tell us a little about**

Tamsin when we first meet her in *Situation Vacant*. She just really wants a new job, thinks that the way to get the new job, to put herself above the other candidates, is to adopt a kind of business woman persona, a bit of a ball-buster, a go-getter, which isn't really herself.

I mean, she doesn't suffer fools, definitely, but I think she's driven by the right morality. She isn't necessarily the Doctor's choice but almost kind of falls into the position when she's not really fighting against most of the other candidates because they're obviously so inappropriate for many different reasons.

I'm only discovering the character in [the booths] really; you don't know quite who she is, and it's only when you start reading it with the other actors that you go, 'Oh, okay! That's who she is!' But I'm loving it so far...

**Were you concerned about the fan reaction considering you're taking over from the much-loved Sheridan Smith?**

Well, no, not really. I suppose because I wasn't even hugely aware of the audio books before I was asked to do this and it was only then I realised how long Sheridan had been doing it and it had gone really, really well. But I don't think as an actor you can ever really afford to think like that. You just have to go in and do what you do, and not worry too much. Hopefully they won't hate me completely!

**Have you got the bug for more audio now?**

I love doing audios, actually. I used to voice a cartoon for quite a while [**The Pinky and Perky Show**] and it's lovely doing that kind of thing where

# FEATURE

you don't have to worry about what you look like or what faces you're pulling or anything. There's something really focused about it in a really nice way, which I like. Really enjoyed it.

And you were also recently in **Shameless**, where things got a little racy... Yeeees. When I first got the script, that wasn't in there. I turned up the day before I was supposed to start shooting, and went and had a make-up check, and David [Threlfall], who plays Frank Gallagher, he's the director, he came in and was like, 'I think, uh, I think that scene we need to see a bit more'. And I thought, 'Oh God...' I was like, 'What do you mean?'



Niky with co-stars Nicky Henson, Tracy-Ann Oberman and David Warner

Sometimes, unfortunately, these are things you have to do. Do you know what? It's really funny. Because stuff like that, as an actor, doesn't bother me at all. If it's part of a story, it's part of a story. But it's very interesting with the Internet how it just makes it something else. Which is actually a real shame because sometimes it's part of a story which is a necessary part of the story, and now the Internet can obviously take snapshots and make it look like something absolutely different. And it was really quite horrible actually; it's absolutely made me think twice about doing anything like that again. Which is a shame because it happens, it's real life. You don't do everything covered up!

What other projects do you have on the horizon?

I'm doing the next series of **Benidorm**, the whole series, and I've just been cast as a lead in this new series for BBC1. I've also written a six-part comedy-drama which Tiger Aspect wants to option so we're kind of in development on that at the moment as well. So quite busy...

**The Eighth Doctor Adventures** starring Paul McGann and Niky Wardley continue this month with *Deimos*

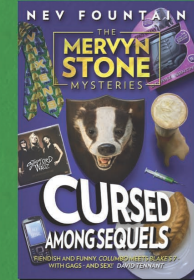
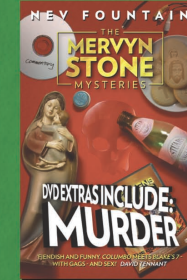
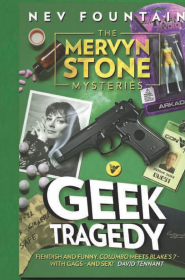


'FIENDISH AND FUNNY. COLUMBO MEETS BLAKE'S 7 - WITH GAGS - AND SEX!'  
DAVID TENNANT

# THE MERVYN STONE MYSTERIES



Mervyn is the ex-script editor of a cheesy old sci-fi show in the eighties. He's stopped looking for plotoles. Now he just looks for murderers.

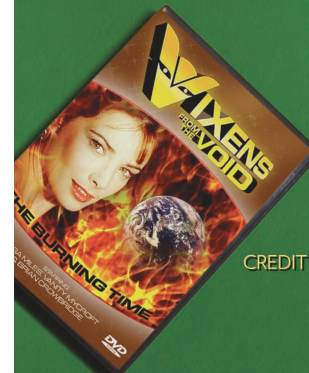


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# Hall or Nothing

Steven Hall teases us about his troublingly titled new story *A Death in the Family*

Hello Steven. *A Death in the Family* is quite a bold title for a story; does it live up to its name? Well, *A Death in the Family* is a title that comes with a certain amount of baggage, as comic book fans will probably have realized...

Hex has been put through the wringer in *Project: Destiny*; do he and the rest of the TARDIS team get an easier ride in your story?

I'd say that with *Project: Destiny*, you've seen the first half of a very, very bad day for Hex, Ace and the Doctor – things are about to get much worse for them before it's all over. The Doctor not being able to save Cassie Schofield's life and keeping what happened from Hex – I've always loved how these two big moments have rumbled through the plays for years, they changed everything between Hex and the Doctor, and between the Doctor and Evelyn too. There's a lot of painful, unfinished business between these characters and in *A Death* we're confronting that head-on. There are hard truths and pretty devastating choices coming for everyone. Of course, the world-ending threats don't just stop because the TARDIS team's fallen apart. With everything coming down around his ears, the Doctor still has to try to save the world: Nobody No One's back, regenerated, and very upset.

Why did you decide to bring back The Word Lord, and how has he changed from his first appearance?

I needed a villain who already had a bit of weight, who could present a serious threat and also really get under the skin of the Doctor and his friends – go toe to toe with them dramatically. The Word Lord knows exactly how to push people's buttons (Word Lords being the masters of words, after all) so he's doubly dangerous this time around.

Nobody's regenerated since we last saw him, and that's mainly because I was excited by the idea of seeing different incarnations of this character, just like we do with the Doctor. This new Word Lord is perhaps a little less balanced and a little more vindictive than his previous self. The second Nobody (Paul Reynolds) was very cool and in control, whereas the third Nobody (Ian Reddington) is a little wilder around the edges. He gets angry, which can be very bad news. And he's also adopted a very familiar scarf...

Was it difficult building an entire four-part story around him?

It was tricky because he's not a character that you can drop into any story, he's just too powerful. And I've always been very keen for him not to be one of those moustache-twirling villains who will stand around explaining the entire plan then wait to be defeated! In fact, one of the things I really like about him is that he turns the entire explaining-the-plan cliché on its head, because if Nobody keeps you talking, it's because your talking is exactly what's giving him the advantage. So, yes, it has to be just the right story to have him in a full-length play, but I think he's a good fit here.

As you mentioned, you've also brought back Evelyn. What's her role in the story?

Evelyn's back to do what she does best – bring some straight talking and good old common sense to proceedings. And who knows, she might even give this new Doctor a good talking to while she's at it.

Was there anything you wanted to do in the story that we wouldn't allow?

You know, I don't think there was. Quite early on, I mailed Alan and Nick with a list of things I'd like to do with this story. There were maybe four Really Big Things – serious character-changing stuff – but I didn't really think Big Finish would be,

or even could be, so very brave as to give me the green light on them. So I was shocked and delighted when Alan came back to me saying, 'Okay, do it' to the whole lot! I'm honestly blown away by the amount of freedom I've had and the huge amount of trust you guys have shown in letting me come in and tell the story I wanted to tell. Not that I cooked this up entirely in isolation – Alan and I bounced ideas and drafts back and forth for months and there's some great stuff in the play that's all Alan's, and a nice moment in episode one that came entirely from Ken Bentley. Then there was Mark [Wright] and Cav [Scott], who kindly agreed to read the scripts, because it was important for me to work faithfully with what they'd already created – so I had their notes too,

which were incredibly useful.

All in all, I think it's fair to say that there's a whole lot of love and unpaid overtime gone into making this one! I really hope people enjoy it.

What other projects do you have on the horizon?

Lots! I'm currently working away at my second novel, which is a real monster, then there's the film adaptation of my first book, **The Raw Shark Texts**, which is in development. I'm talking to Vertigo about writing a comic, and there are some notes for a screenplay – so much to do! But there'll always be time for **Doctor Who**.

*Doctor Who - A Death in the Family is out this month*



Steven with Seventh Doctor Sylvester McCoy

# Back in the Fold

Writing for **Doctor Who** for the first time since *Full Circle*, Andrew Smith tells us what's in store for the Doctor, Romana and Adric

This month sees the release of *The Invasion of E-Space*. If it's not too obvious, what's it about? It's set between the TV stories *State of Decay* and *Warriors' Gate*, with the Fourth Doctor's TARDIS crew looking for a way back to our universe. After a long search they come across a CVE, that rarest of space/time events, and a gateway between the universes. But this CVE has been manufactured by an invading force, the Farrian, who come through with designs on the nearby planet Ballustra. On that planet we've got Marni Tellis, a law enforcement officer who discovers that a series of murders she's been investigating are somehow linked to the CVE's devastating arrival adjacent to her planet. She and Romana find themselves in the thick of it when the invaders arrive (and oh my word, how they arrive), then take their own routes towards the resolution of what seems at first a pretty hopeless and terrifying situation...

How did you come to be writing for Big Finish? I was a guest at the Army of Guests **Doctor Who** convention in Glasgow in May 2009. David Richardson was there and after lunch we had a chat. He asked if I'd be interested in writing for Big Finish, which I was, although at first we talked about the possibility of adapting a particular story that I'd been commissioned to write for the TV series in the Eighties but which didn't go past scene breakdown stage. I gave him my contact details, and I think it was maybe a month or two later he called me up and asked if I'd be interested in writing a **Companion Chronicle**. I was delighted to say yes, although a little daunted – this was my first commissioned work in more than twenty years. It happened at a good time, really. I think most people know I'm a police officer, and my job over most of my career has involved unpredictable hours and long periods away from home, which isn't conducive to meeting writing deadlines. Recently my duties have become a little more predictable and so I felt I was able to commit to delivering a script within a promised timescale. I was always fastidious about deadlines.

How easy did you find it adapting **Doctor Who** to the audio medium?

During my professional writing career I actually did quite a bit of work in radio. Mostly comedy, but the piece of work I'm proudest of – and I mean across everything I did, including *Full Circle* – was a radio play called **Goal**, about a marathon runner. It was very well received, and in fact it was that script – not *Full Circle* – that prompted script editor Eric Saward to commission me for a story submission to the TV series in 1984, the one I mentioned previously that went to a scene breakdown. I always enjoyed writing for audio and it was a pleasure to renew my acquaintance with the format!

Was it always going to be an E-Space story? What other ideas were thrown around?

It was always going to be E-Space, but not always this story. David's requirement when he asked me to come on board was 'Romana 2, in E-Space.' He asked me to come up with a few one- or two-line story ideas. I came up with, I think, five ideas, each of about a third to half a page as I recall. They all had rough working titles. One was *The CVE Makers*, which became *The Invasion of E-Space* (via *Raid into E-Space*).

I'm going to be honest here. *The CVE Makers* wasn't my favourite of the pitches, in fact it was probably my least favourite as an outline. That's not to say I didn't like it – I wouldn't have submitted it if I didn't think it was worth doing – but it wouldn't have been my personal first choice. However, once I had expanded it to a full storyline and I discovered Marni and Ballustra and the Farrian, and established how the Doctor, Romana and Adric would interact, I was so pleased we'd gone with this one. I reckon he's got a nose for these things, this David Richardson bloke.

You were at the recording; what did you make of Lalla Ward and Suanne Braun's performances?

Lalla and Suanne did a great job. I think I'm right in saying that it was Suanne's first audio; hopefully it's the first of many. She has a great voice. And as soon as she started on her first lines, I thought, 'Oh yes, that's Marni Tellis'. Exactly right.

Lalla brings such authority to Romana – this is a Romana you really wouldn't want to mess with. I remember my 17/18-year-old self being a little intimidated by her; that's not in any way a criticism, rather that Lalla has real presence and confidence, and I was a shy thing in those days (that's changed).

I was so glad to be able to make it to the recording, not just to hear the performances but also because I've always liked to witness the technical side of putting these pieces of drama together, whether audio or TV. I also wanted to be on hand for

any queries, including assisting with pronunciation (It's Ball-oo-s-tra, people). Mainly I just sat back and said yes to anything [director] Lisa Bowerman suggested because she was always spot on!

You were very young when you wrote *Full Circle*. What impact has **Doctor Who** had on your life?

Blimey, how long have you got? **Doctor Who** specifically, and professional writing more generally, was a great experience. I was very young (so young in fact that at 17 years old the contract I signed for *Full Circle* wasn't worth the paper it was written on), and it taught me some lessons at an important time in my life, entering adulthood. I learned that if you want something it's no good waiting for it, you've got to do what you can to make it happen; the **Doctor Who** commission was the result of something like four years plugging away, not only with **Doctor Who** but submitting ideas to other series without such longevity, together with the incredible trust of Chris Bidmead and John Nathan-Turner.

My elder daughter, Amy, watched *Full Circle* for the first time straight after I returned from recording my interview for the DVD documentary, and that was a real pleasure, seeing her reaction (she ran off at the part one cliffhanger – that's my girl!). She became a committed Romana 2 fan, so that was another bonus with getting to write the **Companion Chronicle** for Lalla.

You have another **Doctor Who** story coming up. Is it another E-Space tale? What can you tell us about it?

All I can say at the moment is that it's a full-cast audio, and it's not set in E-Space, you may not be surprised to learn! I've just submitted the first draft, and I'm waiting to hear back from David and from script editor John Dorney with their notes.

*The Invasion of E-Space is out this month*



Suanne Braun, Andrew Smith and Lalla Ward

# FRIEND & FOE

Louise Faulkner and Miles Richardson, aka **Bernice Summerfield** characters Bev and Braxiatel, spill the beans to David Richardson about the brand new series

**You've been reunited after a bit of a break for these stories.**

Louise Faulkner: It's fabulous coming back. It's been about three years since I've seen Lisa [Bowerman, Bernice] and probably about the same since I saw Miles, because I had to record my last one separately to everyone so it's lovely to be all together.

Miles Richardson: It's nice to see the invisible woman again! She was sadly missed. We had John Ainsworth reading in her lines very ineffectively; he hasn't got the same emotional timbre Louise has. [laughs] I was beginning to think that they'd never have us back! It has been a big gap, but Bernice has been away doing other things and we've all been getting on with our lives on the Collection. What we've been doing I'm not quite sure!

LF: We need to read some books to catch up, find out what we've been doing.

**How does this compare to the rest of your acting work?**

LF: Miles and I probably have quite different acting careers outside of it but it is the only audio work that I do now. So I thoroughly enjoy it because it is totally different and very far removed from doing theatre.

MR: I do a lot of ADR and of course that's completely different to this because you have to record to lips, especially when they're foreigners; that's very difficult. Here we have a lot more freedom and I'm glad to say the writers have started writing for us specifically as actors. Certainly I've been told they're writing now for Miles Richardson as Irving Braxiatel, so there's a lot of me that goes into it. When I first started I used to say to John, 'Can I camp this up a

bit?' and he would say, 'Yes, of course you can, within reason'

**Have you done any conventions?**

LF: I haven't, no.

MR: I've never been asked!

LF: We've both never been asked. Preferably New York. Or a nice cruise. I would really like to do one. Lisa's done many, many, many.

MR: She's never off the circuit, is she?

LF: She does a good line in cruise ships, does Lisa.

**But you're keen to start going to some?**

LF: I'd like to. Especially now we're back in full swing, as it were.

MR: I think at conventions is probably the only place where you get the chance to hear what the public like or dislike about what you're doing, or what Big Finish is doing.

LF: They're so much more attached to it, in a funny way, than we are, because obviously we just turn up intermittently and do a recording and we get our script and we read it and we know what this story's about. It's quite frightening because they're so much more knowledgeable about it than we are!

**What appeals to you most about your character?**

LF: I like my sarcastic bent. I quite enjoy that. And she's so much different from me. She's quite ballsy, and I'm quite up for that as well. I'm not so ballsy in real life. I like my relationship with Lisa, that's something that's developed through the writing really. I was initially just slotted into a **Doctor Who**, actually, and then the character got written, as Miles was saying, for us as actors and that's nice because they've built in the relationships and all those human elements that we have. I've really enjoyed working those, playing with those, establishing them.

MR: What I like about Irving, I suppose, is every time I get a new script I learn something absolutely new about him! I remember the first time I got one – I can't remember what number it was – and I thought, 'Oh, good lord! I'm a

Time Lord!' and I'd had no idea. And I'd been a Time Lord all this time and no one had ever bothered to tell me! That was a revelation. So every time something new occurs, I go, 'Oh, that's interesting...' But also, the thing about Irving is that a lot of people think, and I do, that he is actually a good man. His intentions are for the greater good and he knows that he has to trample on people and kick people in the teeth sometimes to do the right thing.

**He's charismatic, isn't he?**

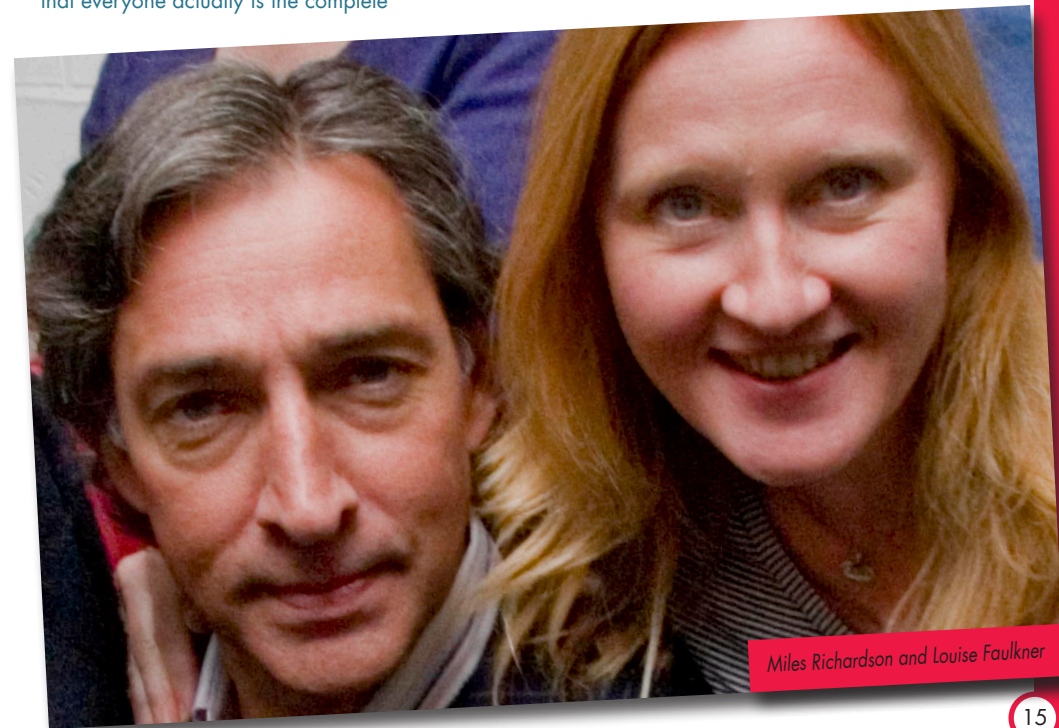
That's written into the part. He is a Time Lord, he owns the biggest art collection in the universe, you couldn't play it any other way. I did suggest to Lisa the last time we recorded any of these that there might be some kind of wormhole in space that she falls through and she finds out that everyone actually is the complete

reverse of what they are in her own world, so she finds out that Irving is a bit of an ineffectual stutterer and Adrian is actually a poodle. That would be an interesting idea for perhaps a future episode of **Bernice Summerfield**.

LF: What would I be? I suppose I'd be a complete wet lettuce as well, wouldn't I? And madly in love with Bernice. Actually, we've touched on our female relationship in *Summer of Love*...

**You've also been in other series beyond Benny...**

LF: They're a while ago now. That was my first introduction to Big Finish. I'd been working with Nicholas Briggs, actually, in a stage production, and he told me that he was involved in the audio world and that I should drop in my CV, all that kind of thing, and I did, and ultimately he gave me a call and told me to turn up at this recording studio in the middle of a car park – somewhere in Fulham, I think it was at the time – and met Sylvester and Sophie and that was my first experience of **Doctor Who** on the other side, not from behind my sofa when I was little. And I absolutely loved it. It was the first audio job I'd ever done; I shouldn't be saying that or admitting to it; people will listen now and go, 'Yeah, that's so obvious, she's



Miles Richardson and Louise Faulkner



really bad'. But I loved it; I just loved that whole world and entering into a totally different world to anything I'd done before, just in terms of science fiction and as an actor.

MR: The first one I did was playing Charles Darwin, with Colin Baker being the Doctor. It was the sea monster one they did, and he arrived in the Galapagos islands and I was Charles Darwin. So that was my first introduction. And then they asked me to do the first ever Braxiatel appearance. And then of course it sort of went back in time because, of course, **Gallifrey** is previous to our **Bernice Summerfield** stories; that's when I found out I was a Time Lord! It was interesting to go back into that world, especially meeting all those great actresses who had a great time, not in the recording studio but outside the recording studio, having a huge laugh with lots of anecdotes going on. That was tremendous fun.

**What hints can you give us about the new series of Benny?**

MR: Something very surprising happens to me at the end of this two-parter! Something I wasn't expecting at all! That's all I can really say on the matter.

LF: Yeah, it's always tricky to do that, isn't it, without a complete spoiler. I think it'll be an interesting turn for the listeners. It's an interesting ride, this one. For me, character-wise, it's sort of more of the same, there's no big surprises for me. But the story...

**Miles, you've also recently lent your voice to Alex Mallinson's Benny animation, Dead and Buried. What did you make of it?**

MR: I was very, very impressed by it because Alex hadn't really done much of this sort of work before. And to be so artistic – apart from the fact that I look very handsome in it, at least two stone lighter and at least 15 years younger – it's the precision of his work. You see, as an actor, as a technician, I can't sit down and watch a film without looking at the technical aspects of it and I have two moments in that animation which I adore, and they've got nothing to do with acting whatsoever; it's one when she's running away from the robot and her torch swings back and catches the robot's face, and I just think that was a brilliant touch and it shows movement, it creates tension. And the other bit, which has only recently started being used in animation, is when she shines the torch in the room; you get this reflective glare, which you would get if you were filming it on film and the torch caught the camera. Of course, in animation that doesn't happen but you create that glare to make it look more like a film, like a real event, and I just think those two tiny touches were so clever. More of that, please. I think I look gorgeous!

**Bernice Summerfield - Escaping the Future is out this month. The animation - Dead and Buried is available to view for free at [www.bernicessummerfield.co.uk](http://www.bernicessummerfield.co.uk)**



Braxiatel and Bev as depicted in the Benny animation

I simply had to write a quick email telling you how brilliant I think the Sylvester McCoy/Seventh Doctor audios are, particularly those where he travels alone. I am somewhat behind but now have them all bar *Return of the Daleks*. Without a doubt I cannot heap enough praise upon *The Death Collectors*, a brilliant concept wonderfully executed and, as always, a brilliant reading of the Doctor from Sylvester. I am also starting to listen to the Klein/Seventh Doctor audios and the first one is also very good. Keep up the good work and I hope we will be getting more of the melancholy, lonely Seventh Doctor alone.

Stephen Woollen

I picked up the **Stargate** CDs you had at the convention in Chicago and just finished the first one with Daniel. I just wanted to let you know how much I enjoyed it and am looking forward to listening to the others I bought.

Thanks for the great work.

Kim Haas

First, I want to thank you for producing such a wonderful range of audio! I'm slowly making my way through the back catalogue and have just subscribed to the monthly range. I recently took advantage of your Big Finish for a Fiver sale and downloaded *The Gathering*. After listening to it, I was really curious about the Peri/Erimeem story set at the same time, *The Veiled Leopard*. I know it was originally released as a *DWM* special offer, but obtaining that specific back issue has so far eluded me. I was wondering if there are any plans to offer the audio in any way, such as through a subscriber bonus, special offer-for-pay or through the Big Finish podcast like *Last of the Titans*. I imagine anyone taking advantage of the *Gathering* special offer would also be interested in *The Veiled Leopard*. Thank you for your response.

Brian McNamara

Nick: Hi Brian, *The Veiled Leopard* is certainly on our list to be offered either as a

subscriber special or a free podcast, as are all the *DWM* special releases.

I watched **Bernice Summerfield: Dead and Buried** when it came out – it was brilliant! And, thanks to it, I have decided to start buying the **Bernice Summerfield** audios (starting with series four, *Beyond the Sea*).

Phil Whitehouse

David: Welcome aboard Phil! We're certainly thrilled with Alex's amazing hard work on *Dead and Buried*. It was shown on the big screen at the Regenerations convention in Swansea recently and the applause was deafening!

In the latest issue of *Vortex*, there is a reference on the letters page to tentative plans to release **Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles: The Specials Box Set** which would consist of *The Three Companions*, *Freakshow* and *The Mists of Time*. Whilst I have already acquired each of those in their respectively arcane manner (spread across 12 monthly releases/special codes from my *DWM* subscription), I would certainly welcome their release on CD.

Michael Evans

David: Thanks Michael. See Sneak Peeks – this is happening!

What about making a **Randall and Hopkirk** audio range starring Alexander Armstrong and Ben Miller with Sheridan Smith as Jeannie Hurst – or a **Day of the Triffids** audio range?

Douglas Williams

David: That'd be great wouldn't it? Sadly it's not on our list of things at the moment, but I like the idea!

I recently heard an interview with Gary Russell. He said Big Finish went to ask Tom Baker if he would record stories for your **Doctor Who** audios. Tom refused, stating the scripts he saw were crap. In the Peter Davison story *The Kingmaker* you guys found a great Tom Baker impersonator. Can you talk

about this person and some behind the scenes tales about this story in a future podcast, if you haven't done so already? Also, I've never heard the **Doctor Who** theme incorporated into any music score from either Big Finish or on the TV series whereas American TV and movies do this on a regular basis. Oh, keep up the good work and get those Tom Baker audios out as soon as possible!

Steve Small

Nick: We never actually heard from Tom Baker about those other scripts all those years ago. Then, when asked at a convention about Big Finish, he started talking about scripts he's offered generally – not just those BF scripts – and made a joke about bad scripts slipping off his lap into the bin or something like that. I don't think he was specifically referring to those scripts. I think it was Jon Culshaw who did the Tom Baker impersonation. I know Jon is keen to do another BF release, but not as Tom's Doctor!

Just a word of praise and a request.

I have just finished **Doctor Who: Cobwebs and Echoes of Grey** and thoroughly enjoyed both; excellent, intriguing stories which recaptured the feel of the show perfectly: thank you!

But... is there any chance of another Geoffrey Bayldon story? *Auld Mortality* and *Storm of Angels* are surely two of the best stories BF has ever made and whilst I am really looking forward to *Quinnis* and *Farewell Great Macedon*, I can't help but feel that they would be even better if Bayldon was in them playing his **Unbound Doctor**. Perhaps you could do an unbound version of *Masters of Luxor*?

Fingers crossed.

Martin Edmonds

Nick: We established Geoffrey as our **Unbound First Doctor**, and sadly there are no plans to do any more **Doctor Who Unbound**. I don't think it would be appropriate to use an **Unbound Doctor** as a 'real' Doctor... but I'm open to persuasion.

## FORTHCOMING RELEASES

### OCTOBER

**Doctor Who** – *A Death in the Family* (140, Seventh Doctor/Ace)  
**Doctor Who: The New Eighth Doctor Adventures** – *Deimos* (4.05, Eighth Doctor and Tamsin)  
**Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles** – *The Invasion of E-Space* (5.04, Fourth Doctor)  
**Bernice Summerfield** – *Escaping the Future* (11.2)  
**Dark Shadows: Kingdom of the Dead 4** (2.4 Full cast audio)  
**Mervyn Stone 1: Geek Tragedy** by Nev Fountain (Hardback & Leatherbound editions)  
**Mervyn Stone 2: DVD Extras Include: Murder** by Nev Fountain (Hardback & Leatherbound editions)  
**Mervyn Stone 3: Cursed Among Sequels** by Nev Fountain (Hardback & Leatherbound editions)

### NOVEMBER

**Doctor Who** – *Lurkers at Sunlight's Edge* (141, Seventh Doctor/Ace)  
**Doctor Who: The New Eighth Doctor Adventures** – *The Resurrection of Mars* (4.06, Eighth Doctor and Tamsin)  
**Doctor Who: The Lost Stories** – *The First Doctor Box Set* (2.1 – *Farewell, Great Macedon & The Fragile Yellow Arc of Fragrance*)  
**Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles** – *A Town Called Fortune* (5.05, Sixth Doctor)  
**Bernice Summerfield** – *Year Zero* (11.3)  
**Graceless** – Box Set (Abby & Zara, 3 episodes)  
**Doctor Who: Short Trips** – *Volume 1* (2 CDs, various readers)  
**Caustic Comedies – The Stageplays** by Robert Shearman (Hardback & Leatherbound editions)

### DECEMBER

**Doctor Who** – *The Demons of Red Lodge and Other Stories* (142, Fifth Doctor/Nyssa)  
**Doctor Who** – *The Four Doctors* (Fifth, Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Doctors; Main Range subscribers only)  
**Doctor Who: The New Eighth Doctor Adventures** – *Relative Dimensions* (4.07, Eighth Doctor, Susan and Alex)  
**Doctor Who: The Lost Stories** – *The Second Doctor Box Set* (2.2 – *Prison in Space & The Daleks: The Destroyers*)  
**Bernice Summerfield** – *Dead Man's Switch* (11.4)  
**Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles** – *Quinnis* (5.06, First Doctor)

### JANUARY 2011

**Doctor Who** – *The Crimes of Thomas Brewster* (143, Sixth Doctor/Evelyn)  
**Doctor Who: The New Eighth Doctor Adventures** – *Prisoner of the Sun* (4.08, Eighth Doctor and Tamsin)  
**Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles** – *Peri and the Piscan Paradox* (5.07, Fifth Doctor, 2 discs)  
**Jago and Litefoot** – *Series 2 Box Set* (Four full cast adventures)  
**Highlander** – *Series 2 Box Set* (Four enhanced readings)

### FEBRUARY 2011

**Doctor Who** – *The Feast of Axos* (144, Sixth Doctor/Evelyn)  
**Doctor Who: The New Eighth Doctor Adventures** – *TBA* (4.09, Eighth Doctor and Tamsin)  
**Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles** – *The Perpetual Bond* (5.08, First Doctor)  
**Doctor Who: Short Trips** – *Volume 2* (2 CDs, various readers)  
**The Big Finish Companion** – *Volume 1* by Richard Dinnick (hardback)

### MARCH 2011

**Doctor Who** – *Industrial Evolution* (145, Sixth Doctor/Evelyn)  
**Doctor Who: The New Eighth Doctor Adventures** – *To the Death* (4.10, Eighth Doctor and Tamsin)  
**Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles** – *TBA* (5.08, Second Doctor)  
**Gallifrey** – Season Four (Box Set)  
**Love Songs for the Shy and Cynical** – Audiobook (read by India Fisher, Toby Hadoke and Jane Goddard)

### APRIL 2011

**Doctor Who** – *TBA* (146, Fifth Doctor/Tegan/Turlough/Nyssa)  
**Doctor Who: The Lost Stories** – *Thin Ice* (2.3, Seventh Doctor and Ace)  
**Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles** – *The Sentinels of the New Dawn* (5.10, Third Doctor)  
**Mervyn Stone 1: Geek Tragedy** by Nev Fountain (Paperback)  
**Mervyn Stone 2: DVD Extras Include: Murder** by Nev Fountain (Paperback)  
**Mervyn Stone 3: Cursed Among Sequels** by Nev Fountain (Paperback)  
**Caustic Comedies – The Stageplays** by Robert Shearman (Paperback)

### MAY 2011

**Doctor Who** – *TBA* (147, Fifth Doctor/Tegan/Turlough/Nyssa)  
**Doctor Who: The Lost Stories** – *Crime of the Century* (2.4, Seventh Doctor and Raine)  
**Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles** – *Ferril's Folly* (5.11, Fourth Doctor)  
**Doctor Who: Short Trips** – *Volume 3* (2 CDs, various readers)

### JUNE 2011

**Doctor Who** – *TBA* (148, Fifth Doctor/Tegan/Turlough/Nyssa)  
**Doctor Who: The Lost Stories** – *Animal* (2.5, Seventh Doctor and Raine)  
**Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles** – *The Cold Equations* (5.12, First Doctor)  
**Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles** – *The Specials Box Set* (*The Three Companions, The Mists of Time, Freakshow*)

### JULY 2011

**Doctor Who** – *TBA* (149, Fifth Doctor/Tegan/Turlough/Nyssa)  
**Doctor Who: The Lost Stories** – *Earth Aid* (2.6, Seventh Doctor and Raine)  
**Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles** – *TBA* (6.01, TBA)



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*Alistair McGowan*

