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# VORTEX

THE BIG FINISH MAGAZINE



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**NICK BRIGGS  
& PETER ANGHELIDES  
DISCUSS THIS DECEMBER'S  
SPECIAL MULTI-DOCTOR STORY!**

**PLUS! SIMON GUERRIER ON PRISON IN SPACE  
MARC PLATT ON A FAMILY CHRISTMAS FOR THE DOCTOR  
COMPETITION WINNER RICK BRIGGS ON WRITING DEMONS  
BEHIND-THE-SCENES WITH THE IRREPRESSIBLE JAGO & LITEFOOT!**

# ACT III 22 - 23 - 24 APRIL 2011



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LALLA  
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PADBURY



LYNDA  
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## EDITORIAL

I can hardly believe it! Have we really gone and brought **The Eighth Doctor Adventures**, in their standalone slot, to an end? As I listen to the frankly brilliant work of sound designer Andy Hardwick on the last two stories, *Lucie Miller* and *To the Death*, I'm getting all misty-eyed about it. I know, I know, I'm being self-indulgent. I wrote the bloomin' things after all... But sometimes I feel there's almost nothing to beat that feeling of hearing your script really come to life in the hands of a great composer and sound designer. And the fact that Andy is doing it is no coincidence. Andy and his then work partner Gareth Jenkins (no, not that Gareth Jenkins!) started the whole Doctor and Lucie thing off. They were heady times...

Getting the scripts together and getting Paul McGann and Sheridan Smith in the same place at the same time meant that we crunched our schedules painfully, striving manfully towards the Radio 7 broadcast dates. One of the methods we used to gain ourselves some extra time involved a rather unconventional use of Andy and Gareth. There they were, staring at the delivery dates, sweating and phoning me, demanding, 'How the hell are we going to do this in time?!?' So I told them to get on with the sound design *before*

the studio recording. They said something like, 'Huh?!?' So I explained: 'Record the dialogue yourselves, then edit the sound effects to that. When you get the real actors' recordings, it shouldn't take too much shuffling about to make things fit, surely?' And so, yes, it is true that somewhere in my pile of old CDs there is a copy of episode one of *Horror of Glam Rock* with Gareth Jenkins and Andy Hardwick playing the Doctor and Lucie Miller. I will dig it out one day and scare everyone with it.

But seriously, I was very keen to get Andy back to finish what he had started with *Blood of the Daleks*. Oh, there were other sound designers absolutely gagging for the job, but I thought, 'No, Andy must, must, must do this one'. And I'm so very glad he did. But what am I saying? I'm getting ahead of myself. This month sees the release of the truly wonderful *Relative Dimensions*, a Christmas Eighth Doctor special with a difference. Perhaps not as delightfully depressing as the touching *Death in Blackpool*, but certainly more scary! It's beginning to feel a lot like Christmas. Ho ho ho...

Nicholas Briggs

## SNEAK PREVIEWS AND WHISPERS



### Drama Showcase

Four original plays that break new ground at Big Finish, which are written by and star some very familiar names. Katy Manning dazzles with her monologue **Not a Well Woman**, Louise Jameson explores human aesthetics in **Pulling Faces**, Nigel Fairs visits the darker side of the human psyche in **In Conversation With an Acid Bath Murderer**, while Geoffrey Beevers looks at the big picture in **Unintelligent Design**. Subscriptions are very reasonably priced at £28 for the season, with all pre-ordered CDs signed by the relevant stars.

"It all began on Katy Manning's sofa," says David Richardson. "She invited me and Nick around for tea and basically performed the play to us while we chomped biscuits. And it was so great we said yes straight away. After that, serendipity played a part – Louise brought two plays to us, and Geoffrey Beevers asked us to read **Unintelligent Design**. The result is a series of smart and eclectic plays that shouldn't be missed." *Out March - June 2011*

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# JAGO & LITEFOOT

Producer David Richardson previews the second season of **Jago & Litefoot**, in which the Investigators of Infernal Events, played by Christopher Benjamin and Trevor Baxter, take on four new cases...

How did you feel about the reaction to season one?

It was everything I'd hoped. I'd been working with script editor Justin Richards, director Lisa Bowerman and designer/actor Alex Mallinson on this project for months, and we'd fallen completely in love with the



Vernon Dobtcheff and Jennie Stoller play memorable villains

characters, the world they inhabit, and the stories we could tell with them. It's always quite a nervous time when you're waiting for something you've made to be shared with the listeners, but I couldn't have hoped for a better response.

How does the series develop with season two?

That's a good question, because it's the thought that was at the top of my mind. On the one hand, Jago and Litefoot are the most brilliantly defined and loveable characters. On the other, I felt very strongly that if the series was going to have legs we couldn't just slip into a formula where the audience would know what to expect every time. There was the danger that it could become tired. So we shake things up right from the start of

season two – in fact, right from the climax of season one – as Litefoot abandons Jago and teams up with a new investigative partner in the form of Gabriel Sanders. If this series is a Victorian 'bromance', that first episode is the big divorce!

And you have David Collings as Sanders.

Yes! We got our first choice. Of course I'd known David's work, including his many **Doctor Who** TV roles, and I'd also been at the studio when he was recording one of the **Sapphire**

**and Steels**. He has the most brilliant voice for audio – he really brings such tone and quality to each performance – and he's every bit the equal of Christopher and Trevor.

Can you talk a bit about the guest stars?

We have the legendary Vernon Dobtcheff as our main guest character in *The Necropolis Express*. Vernon has hundreds of film and TV credits to his name – he's done everything from **Doctor Who** (*The War Games*) to **Blake's 7** and James Bond. And he's the loveliest man, who commuted from France just to play this role! He had known Trevor for many years, so as you can imagine, the repartee was breathtaking.

We've got Jennie Stoller as our surreal villain in *Theatre of Dreams*, while Simon Williams plays the titular Lord Ruthven in



Trevor Baxter, David Collings and Christopher Benjamin prepare to face all new foes in *Jago & Litefoot*, Season Two

*The Ruthven Inheritance*. I'm a big fan of **Upstairs Downstairs**, so I'm gradually working my way through casting everyone from that show at Big Finish!

How would you describe the tone of season two?

I'd say it's darker than season one, but it still retains a great deal of comedy with many laugh-out-loud moments. We stray more into Gothic horror territory with these four tales, although within that there are elements of fantasy (particularly in Jonny Morris's brilliant *Theatre of Dreams*).

Seasons three and four have already been announced. How far have they been developed?

Season three has been recorded, and is just about to enter post-production. I think it's fantastic – it takes the series into a brand new realm (one that will become clearer during the course of season two), and it is very different in tone to season two. Season four is being

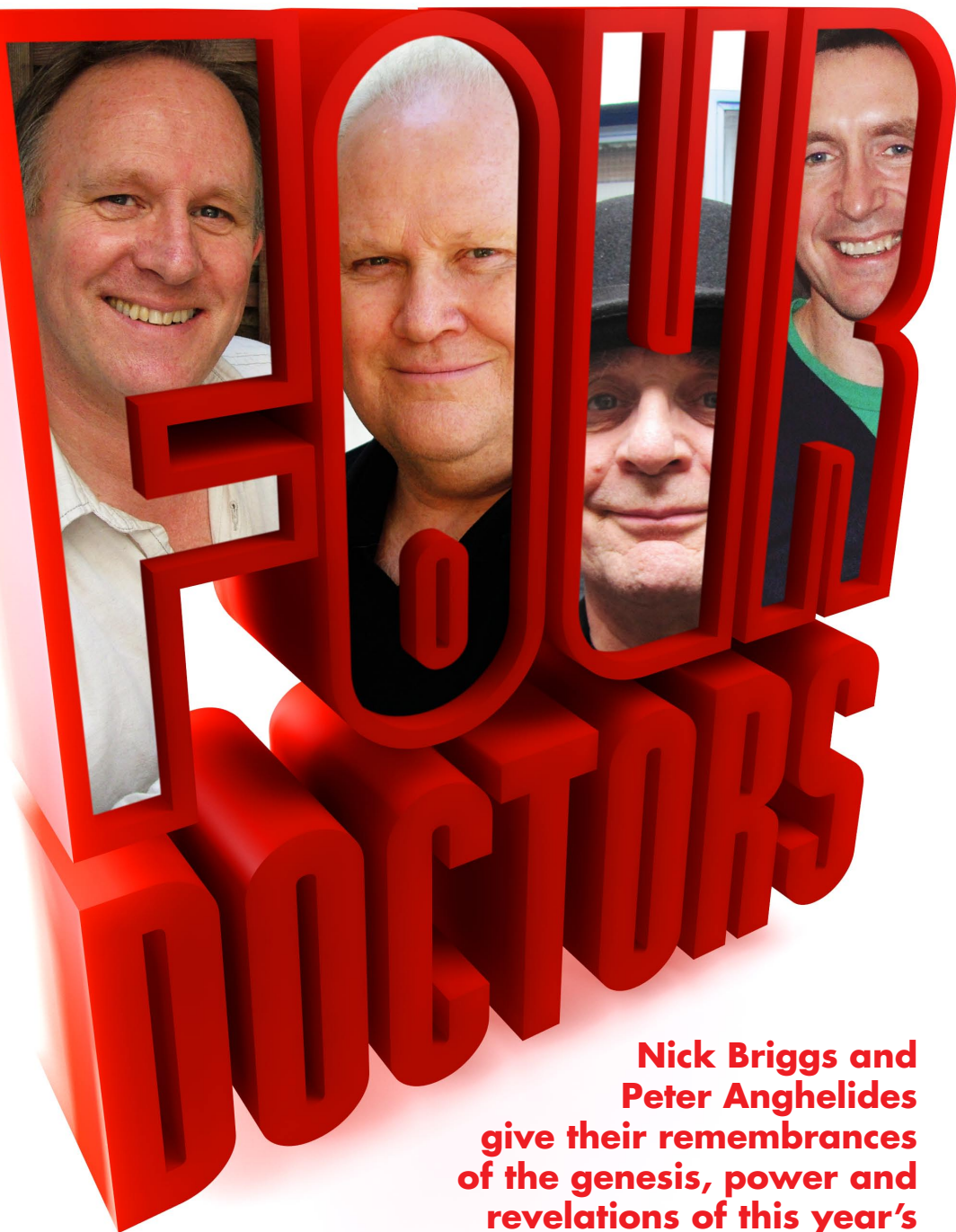
written at the minute – by the time this issue of *Vortex* is out I should have first drafts of all four scripts – and we hope to record them early in 2011, if the actors are available.

Again, we're trying to do something different every time, just to shake up the tone and move things forward.

Any thoughts beyond that?

I have some ideas for season five in my head, but it really depends on sales. Jason and Nick have been so supportive of this series, and took a leap of faith in commissioning four seasons when we barely had sales figures for the first box set in! If **Jago & Litefoot** continues to be popular, then of course I'll be twisting their arms and begging for more. I hope so. Naturally I think my idea for season five is so good it'd be a shame if it didn't get made!

**Jago & Litefoot – Season Two** is released in January. It is available to pre-order at a discount price until 31 December 2010.



**Nick Briggs and Peter Anghelides give their remembrances of the genesis, power and revelations of this year's subscriber-only release *The Four Doctors***

## NICHOLAS BRIGGS DIRECTOR

Welcome back from your **Doctor Who Live** tour, Nick. How did you find it? Lots of fun, quite exhausting, great people in the cast and far too much good catering! It was a real thrill to see all those thousands of kids screaming with delight as the monsters entered the auditorium.

**So: why *The Four Doctors*?**

Why ever not? We're always looking to do something very special and attention-grabbing as our subscriber special, and it was actually David Richardson who suggested that we do a story that used all 'our' Doctors.

**It's been discussed a lot on the forums; why the decision to make this forever a subscriber-only release and not sell it a year later, as has been the norm?**

We're constantly looking for ways to reward subscriber loyalty to Big Finish. I know people are sick of hearing it, but piracy is a huge problem. The government has made various rumbling noises about clamping down, but ultimately the Internet is this big, exciting, free space that, rightly or wrongly, everyone feels is theirs. This gives the false impression to people that they are free to steal copyrighted material without any consequences, and the sad thing is that they are largely right. So, given that there aren't really any restrictive measures that we can reasonably take to stop people stealing our work, the most sensible course of action is for us to make it more attractive and desirable for people to be loyal to us. And to do that, we need to make gestures of goodwill... or in other words, give stuff away for free. And we wanted to give this story a real extra-special feel, so we decided never to charge for it. The deal is, if you love Big Finish and want to subscribe, you can get *The Four Doctors*. Even if your subscription doesn't include the December 2010 release, you can always nominate *The Four Doctors* as the single-CD release you'd like to claim for free with a 12-month main range sub. All those subscribers are entitled to choose a single CD release from us for free.

**What can you say about *The Four Doctors* to entice people into taking out a subscription and getting it?** It's got four Doctors and the Daleks in it. That does it for me!

**You directed this story; what were the logistics of putting it all together?** Getting the availability of all the Doctors right was a bit tricky, but it all came together well in the end.

**Some people might think that because it's a free release it's a bit cheap and cheerful. Can you set their minds at rest?**

It had the same budget as any **Doctor Who** production we would mount; probably slightly more, because of the involvement of so many Doctors. And we had a lovely supporting cast with David Bamber and Nigel Lambert. We also had Ellie Burrows, who got in touch with us some time ago with her voice clips. She's an example of how persisting with Big Finish, if you're good enough, can eventually end in a job. She was great, and we'll certainly have her back again. And then, of course, we had the multi-talented Alex Mallinson, playing a rather pivotal role.

**We're also nearly at the end of the Eighth Doctor's current series of adventures. Can you tell us anything about what to expect from it?**

Well, when we planned it, we decided we didn't want to pull any punches. Sometimes you think, 'Well, the Daleks are really nasty, but we never really show them doing anything really bad'. So, this time I made the Daleks really horrible and cruel and ruthless. Toby, our studio manager, said he'd never heard them sound so vicious. So you can expect to be shocked and upset. But that's only because the stakes are so high in the drama. Our intention was to create a real, rip-roaring ending to the adventures that started with *Blood of the Daleks*.

**Finally there's the question on everyone's lips: where are things at on the Tom Baker front now?**

I had to stop doing final rewrites on the first script in order to answer these questions! So I'm glad the interview is over so that I can get back to it. Does that answer your question? Once we have a finished script, we'll set about organizing the recording.



# PETER ANGHELIDES WRITER

Hello Peter Anghelides! What was your brief for writing *The Four Doctors*? Big Finish originally suggested a **Doctor Who** version of **A Christmas Carol**. The CD was

coming out as a festive special for subscribers, so that initially seemed like a good idea. Fortunately, I persuaded them I had a different idea. Not least because it turns out that Steven Moffat is doing that for the Matt Smith 2010 Christmas episode, and if it's me versus Moffat then there's no contest – in any respect whatsoever!

I liked the idea of a proper time travel story for the Daleks. Not the sort of runaround we got with *The Chase*, or the clever but ultimately straightforward structure in *Day of the Daleks*.

**What are the key selling points of the story (aside from the obvious)?**

The presence of more than one Doctor invites you to do something a bit different from their previous meetings in *The Three/Five/Two Doctors*. Each Doctor has plenty of action, and it's the combination of all their decisions that drives the story and its resolution.

The TV series has shown that there's scope for developing the Daleks too, so I hope I've introduced a few new aspects to them. Lastly, it's four episodes. They're slightly shorter than conventional episodes, but really not that much. Or at least, they weren't when I listened to the initial cut. [It's now a one-part story.]

**How hard did you find it writing for all four Doctors?**

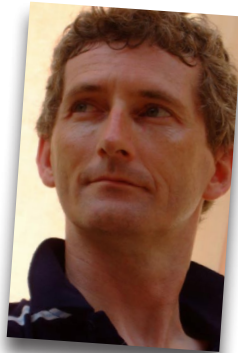
I'd written the Eighth Doctor before in three novels and an audio story, so I thought I'd find he'd be easier than he was. Thing is, the novelists were able to augment the TV Movie character through the BBC books. But we didn't benefit from the active participation of a lead actor growing into the role.

The authentic voice of the Eighth Doctor is now unambiguously the Big Finish version. And never more so than in the scripts written for him by Alan Barnes. Having Alan as my script editor was an absolute boon. His contribution has been essential. Alan's made me look really good!

**Is there one Doctor you have a special affection for?**

Tom Baker was the Doctor of my youth. But in *The Four Doctors*, I most enjoyed writing for Colin Baker.

He's a lovely chap – I've met him a couple of times in the Green Room at conventions. He's finally been done justice by the Big Finish audios, and I was very pleased to be the latest contributor to that.



**Four Doctors, Daleks; have you peaked now? What ambitions remain for you?**

Thanks for that thought! Maybe I haven't peaked just yet. Or, more probably, I'm like Sisyphus and each novel or audio is another boulder. I push the boulder up the hill, knowing it will roll back down and I'll start all over again on something else.

I've done novels and short stories and audio plays and talking books for various Doctors and **Sarah Jane** and **Torchwood**. I haven't given the Eleventh Doctor boulder a push yet. That would be fun.

**You've also written a lot of Doctor Who books; how different is it writing those to writing an audio?**

With novels, you work with the commissioning editor, and you may even do some broader planning with fellow authors. Nevertheless, it remains a solitary activity to produce what is, essentially, the final thing yourself. What you write defines the characters, the setting, the visuals, the sounds, the characterisation...

You know with an audio that the script is essential, but it's only the start. As you write, you're thinking about what will work in the story, how the effects might play, what the actors and director and sound engineer and composer can bring to it. The final thing is far more collaborative, the product of a wider variety of contributions and talents and variables.

**Which of your Big Finish stories has been your favourite?**

*The Tip of the Mind* in **Short Trips: Companions**. It was a Zoe Heriot short story in the form of an Alan Bennett monologue. Mind you, that was published in 2003. Perhaps I peaked even sooner than you suggested...

**What other projects do you have coming up?**

My **Companion Chronicles** story *Ferril's Folly* comes out in spring 2011, starring Mary Tamm as Romana. How is it possible that she and the Doctor discover a hitherto unseen segment of the Key to Time? Buy the CD in May to find out!

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**Rick Briggs talks us through the process of getting his winning one-part story made for *The Demons of Red Lodge and Other Stories***

Hi Rick! You're officially Big Finish's newest writer, as winner of the opportunity to write a brand new single-episode story. Tell us a little bit about yourself.

Hi – and what an opportunity it's been! I'm from the Midlands, that's where I still live today. Rolling back the years, Jon Pertwee was the Doctor who hooked me – although these days most of my favourite stories are from the last three decades. So now you know.

I've been writing scripts for a while now. Proper serious stuff – I studied (for anyone who's interested, I can't recommend DeMontfort uni highly enough!), I wrote, I got an agent, I hammered on the doors of the BBC and anyone else who'd talk to me. Like you do. Last year, I took the plunge and gave up the day job. When I heard that my pitch had been selected by Big Finish, it really felt like timing is everything!

**How many ideas did you have before settling on your pitch?**

Three. There were more – *many* more – vague notions flapping about before the deadline: I've been imagining **Who** stories since I was eight! But there were just three that I developed into full pitches.

My first effort wound up looking a little too much like *The Seeds of Doom* for comfort, so it had to go – although some of its setting has lived on. My third was a story that I hope

# The New Lodger

to tell another day – it's about time travel, parallel worlds and physics from ancient history through to Einstein. I'd like to think it would have appealed to both Chris Bidmead and Douglas Adams – but it's probably going to need more than 25 minutes!

So it was *The Entropy Composition* – my second pitch – that had the Goldilocks factor. It seemed just right, so I emailed it and crossed my fingers...

**As a first-timer, how did you find the process of getting a story made?**

Such a great experience. Alan [Barnes]'s notes as the script evolved were eye-opening – he helped me find the characters' voices a lot more confidently, and he quickly convinced me that, no matter how much I love scenes of running in corridors, it's possible to have too much of a good thing! I've still got so much to learn.

Sitting in on the recording session was the highlight of the process – I not only got to meet Peter [Davison], Sarah [Sutton] and all the fabulous cast and Big Finish crew, I also had a chance to experience one of Toby [Robinson, studio engineer]'s justly-celebrated lunches. Incredible!

**Introduce your story.**

In *The Entropy Composition*, the Doctor and Nyssa visit Concordum, a planet as big as a planet, and travel to Earth in 1968. There, they face a timeless force whose song could end both worlds.

**What inspired it?**

My original idea was a straightforward panic-in-corridors-on-another-world thriller. In this case, the threat was going to be a sonic doomsday device.

But in the end, it didn't feel at all right for Peter's Doctor; too terse and frantic! So I relocated the story to a setting I'd conceived for an earlier pitch, populated it with a reclusive guitarist who evoked every prog-rock album in my teenage record collection, and added an alien who wanted nothing more than a place she could live.

**How did you cope with cramming everything into one single episode?**

Strangely, it was not as impossible as I expected. Characters need to be a bit broader, as there's less time to peel away their layers, and the episode really does need to hit the ground running. But to be honest, I'm not a fan of languorous scene-setting anyway. As long as you keep the format in mind and make sure there are no wasted lines, then a single episode can be just long enough.

**Given the chance, what Doctor and companion team would you most like to write for?**

If I could go back in time, then I'd love to write for Liz Shaw – such a fabulous character. But – and this will inevitably sound *much* too convenient – my favourite TARDIS crew is Peter and Sarah, especially in their Big Finish adventures. Their characters so clearly respect each other, but there's always that edge of impatience on both sides. I guess it's because Nyssa's too smart for the Doctor to pull the wool over her eyes or fob her off successfully. I adore Evelyn for much the same reason – I'd jump at the chance to write for her and Six.

I don't believe my script sample would have caught Alan's eye if the opportunity had been about another team – I had so much fun writing for this pair and I think that showed from the start!

The story I'm developing now involves another companion with a razor-sharp mind, so that's proving to be a real pleasure.

But one thing I'm beginning to realise is that, even though Doctor-and-companion two-handers are a joy to write, there's a lot to be said for a crowded TARDIS. A bigger cast must be a godsend when it comes to structuring a full-length adventure!

**Overall, how would you rate the Big Finish experience?**

It's been a privilege. Truly amazing!

**Doctor Who - The Demons of Red Lodge and Other Stories is out this month**



Rick in the studio with Sarah Sutton as Nyssa



# Platt Weaves

**This month sees three releases, from *First to Eighth Doctor*, written by but one man: the incredible Marc Platt!**

Hello Marc! Is there anything you haven't written for us this month? Where do you find the time?

Don't tell anyone, but I've a secret stash of extra hours and minutes under the sofa. Oh dear, this does look a bit self-indulgent, doesn't it? Of course, *An Earthly Child* is a sort of leftover from last year, and it sets up things for this year's *Relative Dimensions*. *Quinnis* is not unrelated either. The stories all slot together.

Let's take these in chronological order. *Quinnis* is set before the very first **Doctor Who** story; how did that change the type of story you wrote?

It's Susan's story, set before Barbara and Ian gatecrash the TARDIS, so we get to focus on the Doctor and his grand-daughter and their travelling relationship. When Susan mentions the planet Quinnis in *The Edge of Destruction*, she says they visited there four or five journeys ago, which suggests that was directly before they came to London in 1963. I wanted to find out why on earth the Doctor placed Susan at a rather down-at-heel school at the dingy start of the Sixties. There must have been some crisis that led to it. As Susan says, on Quinnis the TARDIS was nearly lost, so that must be a clue. They are two very strong characters, but also very close. And they are also exiles; the Doctor has concerns about how Susan is isolated from family and people of her own age.

In the early days, the stories were more about exploring and encounters with other worlds, rather than defeating alien threats. So Quinnis is an exotic alien planet where the Doctor's high-handed attitudes, well-meaning but opinionated, land him in trouble and leave the very innocent Susan to fend for herself.

Out to buy this month is *An Earthly Child*, last year's subscriber freebie. What are your memories of that? It's one of those 'special moment' stories: the first meeting between the Doctor and Susan since he left her behind on Earth after the Dalek invasion. Both Paul McGann and Carole Ann Ford make it very touching.

It's twenty years since the invasion, and you get the impression that the Doctor had expected that things would be pretty much the same for Susan, but of course they're not, and he gets quite a few shocks in the process. Not least the fact that he's now a great-grandfather. Earth, after the trauma of the Dalek Invasion, is still in shock and hardly recovering at all. Susan, however much she wanted to belong here, is still very much an outsider.

Which leads us to *Relative Dimensions*, which pulls in elements from both of the other releases. Whose idea was that, and did it make it harder or easier?

Well, it started as not so much a sequel to *An Earthly Child* as the next step in the ongoing story. Alan Barnes asked for a four-hander set in the TARDIS over Christmas featuring only the Doctor and his family (or rather one of his many families, acquired or blood-tied.) The Doctor doesn't really have a clue about how to do a domestic Christmas, but he does owe Lucie Miller a proper one as well, after the disaster that was *Death in Blackpool*. That's the trouble with family get-togethers. Long-hidden secrets, even the Doctor's, get uncovered (or unleashed) and all sorts of mayhem ensues over the sprouts and pudding.

Pretty well at the same time as I was writing this, David Richardson asked me to write *Quinnis*. He suggested including the origin of one particular and vital element of the Christmas story in the **Companion Chronicle**. It's a bit like joining up the dots. Not too neat and tidy, because I hate that, but tightening up the plot and planting seeds which finally burst out eight Doctors later.

Having written for the Doctor, his grand-daughter and great-grandson, not to mention all you did in **The New Adventures' Lungbarrow**, what would you like to add to the Doctor's family history, given carte blanche to do so?

I think I had my whirl on that one. Everyone has their own parallel versions. But I bet the Doctor still has cousins in the unlikely places across this or other cosmoses.

You've spanned both ends of the Big Finish Doctor spectrum this month, writing for the First and Eighth. Do you have a favourite Doctor to write for?

Patrick Troughton, who I haven't yet (apart from one very short story) and Geoffrey Bayldon! Oh, and the others too. Probably whichever one I'm writing at the time.

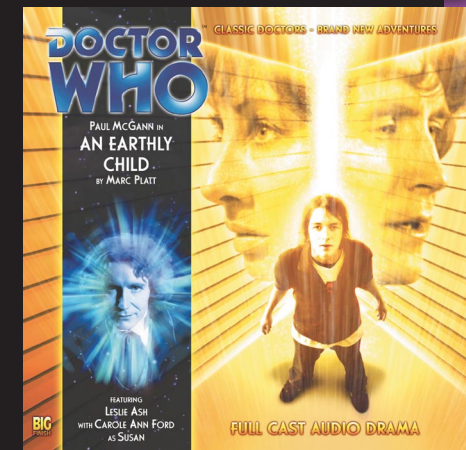
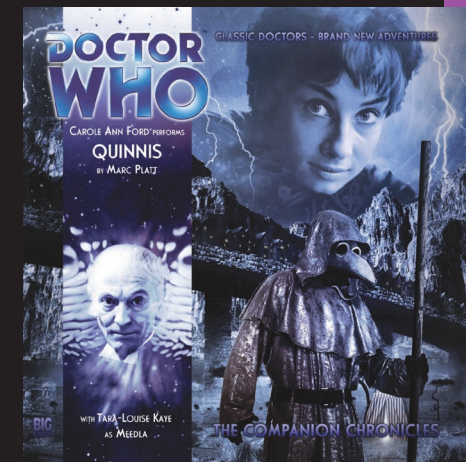
Can you give us any hints of your next BF project? Or have we worn you out?

*Thin Ice* in the new year – Soviet Ice Warriors – huge fun to get that story finally out in the open. And a couple of other stories, including something very special indeed, which David R has already called a bit of a coup – and it most certainly is!

**Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles** - *Quinnis* is out this month.

**Doctor Who** - *An Earthly Child* is available to buy for the first time this month

**Doctor Who: The Eighth Doctor Adventures** - *Relative Dimensions* is out this month.





**Simon Guerrier takes us inside the Second Doctor Box Set to talk about *Prison in Space*, and his other recent writing work**

Welcome back to *Vortex*, Mr Guerrier. This month sees the release of the **Second Doctor Box Set**. How did you tackle adapting *Prison in Space*? David Richardson provided me with the original script – a delicate, yellowed document, the type so faded it defeated my scanner and I had to copy it out by hand. Once I had that as a Word document, I worked through it scene by scene, ‘translating’ the stage directions – which are quite functional in a TV script – into more vivid descriptions. It’s quite a creative role – deciding what everyone looks like, trying to make the settings and action scenes rich and involving.

I’ve tried to keep as much of the original dialogue as possible, relying on Frazer’s incredible impersonation of the Second Doctor to carry a lot of the story. He was amazing in the recording – and quite spooked poor Wendy Padbury.



# Simon Says

What’s the basic premise of it?

The TARDIS arrives on Earth in the future where women have taken over and men are effectively slaves. The Doctor and Jamie quickly offend the world leader, Chairman Babs, and are sent off to a prison in space. Zoe, who resists the regime to begin with, is brainwashed and becomes a guard in Chairman Babs’ army. When the Doctor and Jamie stage a prison break, Zoe is one of the guards trying to stop them.

Just how sexist was it, and how much did you adjust?

It’s very much of its time, but is clearly not meant to be taken very seriously. The tone is a lot like the **Two Ronnies’** serial *The Worm That Turned* – which is also about a world ruled by women. Most of my job was to realise the action for the listener, rather than altering the plot. Jamie still dresses up as a woman and Zoe still gets a good spanking. No, really – that’s what happens.

Was there anything you had to leave out, and if so, why?

In the original script, the Doctor comments on how this world has come about, and seems to say that it was a mistake ever giving women the vote. He might be joking (though James Bond thinks much the same thing in the novel of *Goldfinger*). But what the Doctor says carries a great deal of authority – we tend to assume that if he says something it’s true. And that sat uncomfortably with what’s otherwise a light-hearted story. So I swapped some of the dialogue around: Jamie – who is from a more primitive time – now says it was a mistake letting women vote, and the Doctor just rolls his eyes.

I worried quite a lot about making any changes, but when we were in studio Frazer and Wendy were both keen to point out that scripts changed in rehearsal and that lines often got swapped about. So I like to think that my changes make our version more authentic. Honest!



You've recently finished the Sara Kingdom trilogy; how do you think it came out? I'm delighted with it. I was really spoiled by the cast and crew, who worked extremely hard to make my dodgy old nonsense something special. The response to the stories has been a bit daunting – I found *Guardian of the Solar System* very hard to write because I was so scared of messing it up. But people have said very nice things about it.

Did it achieve everything you wanted it to? Yes. It was very, very tempting to do more – and producer David Richardson and I have discussed what might happen next. People have asked which Doctor it is that turns up at the end. My current favourite wheeze, having watched *Death of the Doctor*, is that it's a dying Tenth Doctor, doing his round of the companions. They might just have time for a quick adventure or three before he has to regenerate... but David told me that was silly.



Above: Sara Kingdom as she appears in the **Second Doctor Box Set** on the cover of *The Destroyers*. Right: Her saga in the **Companion Chronicles** as written by Simon Guerrier



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Which companion are you taking on and giving a new lease of life to next?

I've written two adventures for space pilot Steven Taylor, set soon after Sara's death at the end of *The Daleks' Masterplan*. Those stories feature new companion Oliver Harper, played by Tom Allen who is quite uncannily brilliant. I'm hoping to write more for him.

We've also just recorded a story for Zoe, which follows on from the events of John Dorney's brilliant *Echoes of Grey*. I'm not sure I'm even meant to say that much about it yet.

**Graceless** is also out now. Here's your chance to give it one more gratuitous plug.

**Graceless** features pretty girls getting in antics in space. And sometimes their clothes fall off, but for vitally important plot reasons.

What else is on the Guerrier slate, above and beyond Big Finish? I'm currently working at *Doctor Who Adventures*, which is a magnificent joy. There's a team of very nice, very talented people who pretend to laugh at my jokes. And also it is a Good Thing to know lots of obscure facts about **Doctor Who**. Bliss!

At the same time, I've been working on some documentaries for the **Doctor Who** DVDs which should start appearing in the new year. And we're about to shoot a short film I have written and which I'm not meant to talk about yet. So ssh! It's a secret.

**Doctor Who: The Lost Stories** - The Second Doctor Box Set is out this month. **Graceless** is out now. Look for the free 15-minute sample at [bigfinish.com](http://bigfinish.com)

Left: **Graceless** stars Ciara Janson and Laura Dodginton in sunnier times

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# 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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Just wanna say that I have been a Big Finish fan for years and years but your latest Seventh Doctor offering has raised the bar soooooo much. Good Lord, it's brilliant!!! *A Death in the Family* is, in my mind, the best yet and I can't wait for the concluding story. The trailer sounds really scary. More like this please, and I hope Big Finish goes on and on raising the bar. I can't wait.

Keith Goldsbrough

Nick: Thanks, Keith. That is our aim. And may I take this opportunity to thank script editor Alan Barnes for all his Big Finish work, and specifically in this case, his work on these Seventh Doctor adventures. It was very much at Alan's prompting that we took the Seventh Doctor in this direction, and it was Alan who brought Steven Hall's considerable talents to my attention. I'm so pleased it's all worked out so brilliantly.

Hope this does not sound too gushing, but thank you! For 10 years I have been buying CDs from you and the hours of enjoyment I have gained are priceless. I am writing not to solely praise your good selves on the podcast, though praise is due, but the background staff, namely the sales team.

Recently, when placing my order for the regular 12 **Doctor Who** subscription I started the order a CD too early, and then I accidentally ordered season two of **The Lost Stories** twice. Both mistakes were sorted quickly and smoothly and I was even sent out my free CD for the 12 CD order.

So thank you to the sales team, for being as wonderful as the more public faces of Big Finish. My only problem now is working out what to spend the refund on? **Cyberman 2**, **Jago & Litefoot**, **Short Trips**, Paul McGann season, **Benny**...

Michael Waggott

Nick: I would like to join Michael in praising our sales team. It is true to say that up until fairly recently we were having some difficulties providing as good a service as our customers undoubtedly deserved. It's probably best that I don't go into the reasons for all the previous problems, but suffice to say that it is not always as easy as it might seem on the surface of things to sort out problems with regard to staff suitability and work practices. However, I'm very happy to say that our new additions to the sales team, Adam and Alison, have really worked wonders and virtually eliminated all our problems overnight. To put it simply, I think they are brilliant!

Imagine my unbridled delight this morning sat on the train with the other commuters listening to the September 7th podcast to hear my name as a competition winner! And that after entering for only the first time! Needless to say, spurred on by this I shall be entering the competition every month and will also buy a lottery ticket tonight – if I win I will invest in more Big Finish titles.

Tony Jones

Nick: Um... no guarantees, I'm afraid! But I think the odds of winning our competitions are vastly more favourable than those of winning most lotteries.

All **Doctor Who** main range 12 CD/download subscribers are entitled to pick one single CD story as their free gift. Yes, how do subscribers pick one single CD story as a free gift. Why is this so secret?

Wayne Hyde

Nick: It's not that much of a secret. When you go to the website and select a 12-CD **Doctor Who** main range subscription, the text tells you that you are entitled to pick any Big Finish single CD release worth £10.99 or less. But I agree with you that this benefit hasn't

been particularly widely trumpeted and perhaps the presentation of the whole subscription process on our website could be better. It's something I'm looking into. Perhaps I should change our slogan to 'subscribers definitely get a free single CD worth £10.99 or less at bigfinish.com'. Er... maybe not. We will mention it in podcasts though!

Would you please tell me the format of the download files that are available for purchase. I am interested in the **Doctor Who** stories in particular. Would you also tell me what the payment options are (credit cards, PayPal, etc)?

John Taylor

Nick: You can pay by credit card and PayPal. The download files are mp3s at 256 kbps.

One quick question: I have subscribed to many of the series over the years and am currently subscribed to the monthly Paul McGann series which I am enjoying a lot. Does this qualify me to receive *The Four Doctors*?

Geoff Bailie

Nick: I'm afraid it doesn't. *The Four Doctors* is only part of the monthly, double-CD main range subscription. But there will be a special, free download of something rather special coming up for Eighth Doctor subscribers.

Just got **Graceless** on download. I spent all afternoon listening to it. Enjoyed it very much; the music's great, great atmosphere and great performances from everybody involved. Are we going to get a series like **The Outer Limits**? That would be great on audio.

Simon Taylor

Nick: It's an interesting idea and one that we're discussing at the moment. The response to **Graceless** so far seems very good, so that would indicate that there is a market for that kind of thing.

## Caustic Comedies



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# FORTHCOMING RELEASES

## 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** – *An Earthly Child* (Eighth Doctor, Susan & Alex; available to buy for the first time)
- Doctor Who: The New Eighth Doctor Adventures** – *Relative Dimensions* (4.07, Eighth Doctor, Susan & 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 & Tamsin)
- Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles** – *Peri and the Piscon 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** – *Lucie Miller* (4.09, Eighth Doctor, Lucie & 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 Dimnick (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, Lucie & Tamsin)
- Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles** – *The Forbidden Time* (5.08, Second Doctor)
- Gallifrey** – Season 4 (Box Set)
- Love Songs for the Shy and Cynical** – Audiobook (read by India Fisher, Toby Hadoke and Jane Goddard)
- Drama Showcase 1** – *Not a Well Woman* (Katy Manning)

## APRIL 2011

- Doctor Who** – *TBA* (146, Fifth Doctor/Tegan/Turlough/Nyssa)
- Doctor Who: The Lost Stories** – *Thin Ice* (2.3, Seventh Doctor & Ace)
- Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles** – *The Sentinels of the New Dawn* (5.10, Third Doctor)
- Drama Showcase 2** – *Pulling Faces* (Louise Jameson)
- 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 & Raine)
- Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles** – *Ferril's Folly* (5.11, Fourth Doctor)
- Doctor Who: Short Trips** – *Volume 3* (2 CDs, various readers)
- Drama Showcase 3** – *In Conversation with an Acid Bath Murderer* (Nigel Fairs)

## JUNE 2011

- Doctor Who** – *TBA* (148, Fifth Doctor/Tegan/Turlough/Nyssa)
- Doctor Who: The Lost Stories** – *Animal* (2.5, Seventh Doctor & 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*)
- Drama Showcase 4** – *Unintelligent Design* (Geoffrey Beevers)

## JULY 2011

- Doctor Who** – *TBA* (149, Seventh Doctor)
- Doctor Who: The Lost Stories** – *Earth Aid* (2.6, Seventh Doctor & Raine)
- Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles** – *TBA* (6.01, TBA)

## AUGUST 2011

- Doctor Who** – *TBA* (150, Doctor TBA)
- Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles** – *TBA* (6.02, TBA)
- Doctor Who: Short Trips** – *Volume 4* (2 CDs, various readers)

## SEPTEMBER 2011

- Doctor Who** – *TBA* (151, Doctor TBA)
- Doctor Who** – *TBA* (152, Doctor TBA)
- Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles** – *TBA* (6.03, TBA)



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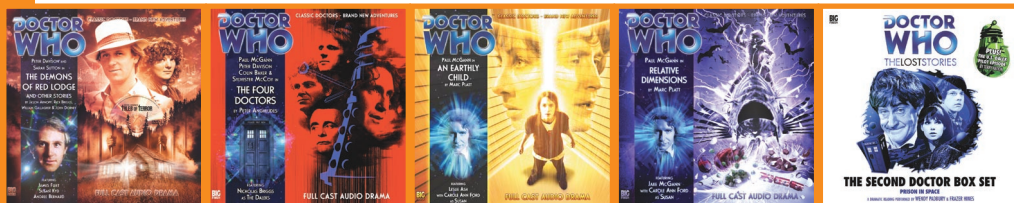
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