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THOMAS BREWSTER

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# GALLIFREY

**GARY RUSSELL, SCOTT HANDCOCK & SEÁN CARLSEN**  
ON THE LONG-AWAITED FOURTH SERIES

**PLUS! KATY MANNING • ROBERT SHEARMAN**



# ACT III 22 - 23 - 24 APRIL 2011



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## EDITORIAL

As you read this, it will have been a little while since the sad passing of Nicholas Courtney. There have already been so many brilliant tributes and beautifully nostalgic obituaries for him. He was a man who was greatly loved by all who knew and worked with him, including me. And if I may be so bold, I'd like to share with you a few thoughts of how I met and knew the lovely Nick.

We first met when I interviewed him for a **Myth Makers** video. We were both a bit shy and nervous, and frankly didn't really get on. I remember that in one break between shots, we sat in a car together to shelter from the weather. I was tongue-tied at meeting one of my heroes, and Nick just put up a broadsheet newspaper between us! The Brigadier disappeared behind newsprint and didn't say a word to me. I was mortified. Then, several weeks later, the video was edited and released and I was being the comper at a **Doctor Who** convention. I bumped into Nick backstage, and he greeted me like a dear old friend, congratulating me on how brilliant the video was. And from that day forward, Nick and I were always utterly delighted to see each other.

Among my fondest memories of him (suitable for publication!) are the many hours we spent together



concocting his first big, poll-winning interview for *DWM*; the many breakfasts we shared at **Doctor Who** conventions; our revamped **Myth Makers** in which we joyously lampooned the awkwardness of our first interview, with Nick pretending to be grumpy; his entertainingly rascal-ish and shrewd advice on my personal relationships (X-rated, of course!); his support for my acting career (proposing me on my Equity membership form, when it was still almost impossible to gain entry to that one-time closed shop)... but most of all I remember the glorious nonsense we used to talk and all the laughter we shared. Quite simply, he brought a hell of a lot of fun and happiness into my life, and every time I think of him and miss him so much, when the tears flow, I always smile through them. It was a privilege to have known him and I will always remember him, his hearty laugh, the big hugs and pats on the back... and the way I would invariably say to him, as I'm sure so many others did, 'Splendid fellow, all of you!'

We all loved the Brig. He was great.

**Nicholas Briggs, February 2011**

## SNEAK PREVIEWS AND WHISPERS

### Dark Shadows

The new series of **Dark Shadows** dramatic readings is well into production now, with studio sessions having taken place in Los Angeles, New York, Ladbrooke Grove, Camden and Nashville! Joining existing cast members Roger Davis, Lara Parker, Jerry Lacy, David Selby and Kathryn Leigh Scott are Lizzie Hopley as the gypsy Ivanka Romano and Roy Thinnas as Patrick Llewellyn. Roy, who starred in the 1991 revival of **Dark Shadows** and the 1960s cult series **The Invaders**, joins Nancy Barrett in *The Poisoned Soul*.

The series kicks off in May with *The Blind Painter*. Written by Jonathan Morris, it's a story of how a struggling artist is manipulated into making a Faustian

pact. Roger Davis stars as Charles Delaware Tate and he's joined by Nicola Bryant as the beautiful Eloise. Also out in May is *The Death Mask*, which is the story of what happens when a witch and a lawyer have to join forces to save themselves from a supernatural mask that wants them dead. It's going to be a long night of mysterious deaths and broken crockery.

Later stories feature a supernatural whispering fog attacking a London museum and a beautiful lady stalking an American civil war battleground. But the big question everyone will be asking is: what is the secret of the mysterious crimson pearl?

**Dark Shadows: The Blind Painter** and *The Death Mask* are out May 2011

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# audios for the shy and cynical

Rob Shearman discusses the latest way in which you can enjoy his award-winning short stories: on audio!

**Love Songs for the Shy and Cynical** comes out on CD this month; which stories feature, and what are they about?

There's a whole selection of different styles here! You've got the fairy tale of *Sweet Nothings*, in which a talking pig composes the very first love song in the Garden of Eden. And the grotesque horror of *George Clooney's Moustache*, a story shortlisted for a British Fantasy Award last year, in which a kidnapper gets rather more than he bargained for. There's the absurdist comedy *Luxembourg*, about small European countries that vanish overnight, to something more romantic (and grisly) in *Pang*, where a man gets given back his still-beating heart in a Tupperware box when his wife dumps him. And there are a couple of performance favourites: *Love Among the Lobelias*, which was originally broadcast on BBC Radio 4 a few years ago, and is here released in a new version, and *One Last Love Song*, that I have ended up doing readings of all over the world to promote the



book. (On the CD it's performed by India Fisher, who is much prettier than me.)

**How involved were you in the conversion from book to audiobook? Did you choose which stories to do?**

I was thrilled, actually, to be invited to direct the project myself. The idea being that these are all quite personal stories, and that maybe I'd be the best qualified to get the actors to dig deep under my skin and get the right sort of balance between laughs, scares and pathos. (There are a lot of laughs, scares and pathos in my life on an everyday basis, but it's true – getting the balance right is the hardest thing to do.) I looked back over the book rather like poring through a box of chocolates, trying to pick out ones I'm told are favourites, and getting a mix of soft centres and things which are a bit more nutty.

**Would you like to do the other tales in the book on audio if these are a success?**

Oh, absolutely! I had so much fun working on this. And there's another collection due out in June, **Everyone's Just So So Special** – so we've got a lot of strange stories to work from!

**What can audio add to the stories that the written medium can't?**

Well, I should confess, really – I never remotely expected to be a prose writer in the first place. For so many years I made a living working in the theatre, then moving on to radio and TV – and I didn't imagine I'd ever be one of those Proper Author people who wrote in paragraphs and punctuation. So the way I write short stories still is to think of them as performance pieces: I read them out, I recite them in front of people to get the pacing right and the gags funny and the squeamish bits suitably squeamy. And so I think to give them to actors in many ways restores them to their intended form. My stories

are very conversational, they're meant to feel as if someone is talking directly at you. Now they can be.

**Who picked the voice artists, and what did each of them bring to the table?**

I consulted with the bods at Big Finish, of course – but the idea really was to find actors who already understood the conversational rhythm of the way I write. And so I picked those people who hear me talk quite a lot, or have done so much of my work already that they can turn on that peculiar 'Rob Shearman' style of talking without much effort. India Fisher is wonderful – I've always known that she can do my sort of comedy ever since she did my **Doctor Who** play *The Chimes of Midnight* over a decade ago now. Toby Hadoke, apart from being an extraordinary comedian, is also a very touching actor: if you haven't yet seen his autobiographical stage play, **Moths Ate My Doctor Who Scarf**, which is funny and heartbreaking at the same time, then do yourselves a favour and do so. Toby and I have written a series of books together recently called **Running Through Corridors**, in which we email each other every day as we watch every **Doctor Who** episode in order – so it's arguable whether there's anyone in the world more drenched in my bad jokes than Toby is right now. If there is another person, it'd be the actress Jane Goddard, who is – after all – my wife. Janie and I met doing theatre way back in 1995, and she just gets in a heartbeat the way my sense of humour and my strange imagination play out. She's a fantastic actress, I'm always in awe when I see her perform. I hadn't worked with her in years, so it was wonderful to do so again here.

**What can people expect from your next book, *Everyone's Just So So Special*?**

It's a bigger book than the last one – twenty-one stories this time, each to reflect the twenty-one centuries of history since we stopped mucking about with all those BC years and decided to opt for the AD thing instead. It's all about history, and the way in which we perceive it, and what it's supposed to mean to us. I think it's funnier and more horrific and more touching than **Love Songs** – and individual stories that have already been let out of their cages are doing very well, anthologised in Best New Horror collections and things. A little boy who betrays his father to the whims of Santa Claus. An assassin so insipid that he erases people by his very presence. A kitty cat that only hunts in the back garden for endangered species. Camel marriages, killer angels, and children's conjuring tricks that cause worldwide plagues. Oh yes.



Shearman with his wife and colleague, Jane Goddard



*Love Songs for the Shy and Cynical* is released on CD this month, and the book is available now

*Everyone's Just So So Special* is released in hardback and leatherback in July 2011, and in paperback next year





# Time Thief

## John Pickard tackles the life and crimes of Thomas Brewster with Paul Spragg

Hello John. Good to have you back as Thomas Brewster. So, **2 Point 4 Children**...  
 Yep! Good times! We did eight years, so it was amazing. I was only, like, 11, so I never used to think the show would run for eight years and be a big part of my life. But such a great cast; they were like a second family to me growing up, you know. I always thought I had two Dads, two Mums, you know? I used to leave school for three months at a time, have a private tutor, go all around the country filming. Yeah, great times. Fond memories. I still manage to catch it every now and again when it's on UK Gold.



John Pickard gets rather a stern telling-off at the recording of *The Feast of Axos*

Is it weird watching yourself as a squeaky voiced youth?  
 Yeah! It's weirder actually when you catch your voice-breaking stuff, when you were going through puberty live on TV. But yeah, great times.

And now we have **My Family**, which isn't quite the same.  
 It's not as clever, I don't think. [Writer] Andrew Marshall was very good at putting this sinister side to it. You'd always end up in real scrapes all the time, this family. The vampires living next door, it was that little kind of weird edge. Great times.

Of course, you're not really here to talk about your classic sitcom past. How does it feel to return to audio **Doctor Who**?  
 I thought I was finished but I'm back for more, so I'm loving it, it's great fun! It started off with *The Haunting of Thomas Brewster*, which was the introduction of Brewster, a kind of Artful Dodger type. And then I did *Time Reef*; I came in at the end, stole the TARDIS. A short story by Jonathan Morris and then a **Companion Chronicle**, so I've done quite a few now. And then these three.

Let's go through in order, then. Firstly, *The Crimes of Thomas Brewster*.  
 In that one, Thomas has already found a portal and he's trying to save a planet himself. That's the great thing about Thomas, that he's actually out there trying to do stuff himself, getting into all kinds of scrapes. Because he found a portal before; he's gone back to use it again. He had a girlfriend who passed away and he thought about doing some time travelling to get that back, but he's found himself on another planet and



Above and right: The titles of Thomas Brewster

he's feeding it with humans and getting machine guns and all kinds of stuff, so it's quite mad. He's always in too deep, that's the thing. He's plunged and it's too late by then; he has to get bailed out by the Doctor.

Then there's *The Feast of Axos*.  
 Again, he's in too deep and I think he feels he's betrayed by the Doctor as well in that one, he hears something from Evelyn about 'just let him die' and he goes on the turn. But I think deep down he knows the Doctor's got a plan and it's gonna get him out of it. Then *Industrial Evolution*, which is a great story, machines taking over humans, which I'm sure everyone's worried about. It's all too late; the country's run by everything now, it really does make you worry! It's amazing how with banks sometimes, you go in and they say, 'We can't do anything because the computer's down' or 'The system's down'. There's a car they've been testing, isn't there, where you can get in and it'll drive you. They haven't done it on motorways, they've done it on circuits and stuff, so one day we will be overrun by computers and machinery. So this one's very much about that; it's one guy who has a great idea but they overrun and try to destroy everyone.

It also starts off in the middle, doesn't it?  
 Yeah, the Doctor's always got an eye out for [Brewster], where he is and everything else, and Thomas has his assignment, it's already planned, and [the Doctor] puts him in there first and then comes in afterwards. But yeah, really honoured to be back and having a good time. It's my fifth day now, and as you know, the food is known for being tremendous, so yeah, the food's





unbelievable. Forget work, it's about the food! Apparently they used to give people a fiver; this is phenomenal.

How did you end up coming back?

I went to Gallifrey in America in February and there was talk of it then. *The Haunting of Thomas Brewster* went down quite well and then they liked the character and thought he could stand up on his own a little bit and cause enough problems; he needs to get bailed out a lot, so it's great to come back and do some more. There's life in Thomas Brewster, I think.

It's a bit stranger than your life on **Hollyoaks**, though that can be quite odd at times... I would never want to live in that village! Even if you paid me, I'd be like, 'No, it's a bit too weird round here'. It's great to read anything that pushes the boundaries, isn't it, because anything's possible with **Doctor Who**, that's what I love. And I've become more of a fan since doing the conventions and getting chatting to people, so I'm very much into David Tennant, into Matt Smith now so I love it. I watch it on iPlayer; I don't miss an episode now. My brother goes through box sets galore and I don't ever seem to have the time, but I do try and keep up with things.

You're back with a different Doctor this time. It was great with Peter [Davison] and Sarah Sutton. Colin [Baker] does loads of these, so he's just straight in from day one really; you've just gotta get on to it. He's lovely, he's a great guy. He said he's doing a tour of **Inspector Morse**; I said I'll go down and see him somewhere, Richmond or Stevenage probably. It's been great fun!

And then there's Maggie Stables playing Evelyn. It's just lovely; you come in and you hear all the old stories, all the old anecdotes, and it's nice because you forget that in this business. I love all the old stories. It's weird, because every time I've tried to get out of the business, I've got a job, it's been that simple. A couple of times I've thought, 'I'm going to do something else', but I don't really know what else I'd do so I'm just going to hang in there, keep blagging it and do my best. That's all you can do, isn't it?

Do you think Thomas Brewster is redeemable? I don't think [the Doctor will] ever trust him, but I think his heart's in the right place. I think genuinely he goes about it in the right way, it just is what it is really. But he's definitely up for an



*Brewster disguised as the Doctor, from Time Reef*

adventure. I think he's the sort of person who'll just bounce around; he has had some adventures and I think there's a few more for him, hopefully. He's a quick learner, a jack of all trades. I feel like he's got older a little bit. He says at one point, 'I don't really know how old I am, but I'm older than I look' so he's lost his way a little bit, all these different dimensions and places; he's been back and forward a few times so I think he's probably a bit like me; a bit of a Peter Pan, man playing boy, boy playing man.

In your own life, you've done well to go from hit show to hit show, though. I've had quiet times in this business as well. I think that's what keeps you grounded in a way. You kind of think, 'I'm not going to buy into anything like this because it doesn't mean anything'. Really it's just a job at a time. A fantastic experience, but the more you buy into the whole fame thing, you've got a big fall, you know? But I feel very honoured. I've done some amazing things in my life, but I love the work and I go to class and I still try to keep myself in there. That's all you can do really, isn't it, just to prove yourself. Because we've only got ourselves to build on. I'm doing a bit of writing myself, so I'm hoping to make a few more things as I get a bit older. I suppose the good thing about our career is that as long as they can wheel you in, take the gas off, take the walking stick away, you can keep working!

*Industrial Evolution is out this month*

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# INTO THE 'FREY

Producer Gary Russell, script editor Scott Handcock and star Seán Carlsen provide a tour of Gallifrey as the spin-off enters series four...

It's been a while since the last **Gallifrey**; what were your first thoughts on where you wanted to take the series next, and how much did those thoughts change?

Scott Handcock: Gary always knew how series four would play out and how the climax of series three would be resolved. As an outsider coming in for the very first time, it made absolutely perfect sense, and provides a logical springboard for our heroes' new journey. Better still, it removes all sense of stability and makes the world they live in a very dangerous place indeed.

Gary Russell: It was a concept I'd had while doing series three. Although it got shifted and tweaked and played around with a lot, because of things that happened on telly **Doctor Who**, the basic conceit of what I wanted to do remained. And then, while plotting it out, I remembered something else that had been set up while I was working for Big Finish and thought, 'Oh that makes it even easier...' and bingo, we had a season four!

How would you pitch the series to a newcomer? Will they be able to leap on board with series four?

SH: Series four's a brilliant starting point for new listeners, I think. The situations the characters find themselves in are unlike anything they've

experienced before, and the central premise is all set up within the very first episode of the box set.

GR: My ambition all along was to make this a good jumping-on point for new people. It's been nearly five years since the last run, so you couldn't assume that a) the old listeners would come back and b) new listeners would risk a fourth series if they'd not heard the first three, so it had to stand astride both those poles. Regular listeners will get everything and see this as a direct continuation, new listeners will be told everything they need to know in scene one and go forward from there. Gary Hopkins did a clever scene one trick that solved all those problems, bless him.

You've got a host of familiar names in this series; what can we expect from the **Who** alumni?

SH: Expect something different – seriously! The joy of the new series of **Gallifrey** is that an entire world has been turned upside-down. There are new regimes and slaves and power vacuums, and the characters we include are fighting for their place in Gallifreyan society – and sometimes even Gallifrey itself. So expect to see different sides of our regulars and our guest stars!

GR: I love playing with audience perceptions and I love messing with my cast's heads too! All five regulars got a chance to play some



Left to right: Lalla Ward, Seán Carlsen, Steven Wickham, John Leeson, Louise Jameson, Scott Handcock and Matthew Bates

interesting scenes and some different takes on their characters as we put them through the mill. And our bevy of guest stars similarly thought they were doing one thing but soon realised it was something else entirely! Mwahahahahaha! [Bet they never want to work for me again...]

How has releasing the series as a box set affected the way it was written?

SH: The great thing we've found about releasing stories as part of a box set is we can have a far larger ongoing storyline playing out in the background without the worry of alienating our audience. There's always the danger with individual releases that you need to spend time in each instalment reminding casual listeners of what came before, but not now. And blimey, we've even managed to find lots of little moments and pay-offs across the series that will hopefully make people grin and laugh and gasp in all the right places. There's quite a nice sensation of security in releasing all four as one.

What were the difficulties in getting so many people together, especially ones who'd had roles in previous **Gallifrey** releases?

GR: Not sure it was a difficulty per se – everyone was up for this from the word go, which is always a delight. I haven't seen Lalla [Ward] since we did the last lot of **Gallifrey** five years back, but we just picked up where we left off (although this

time we talked about the joys of iPads rather than MacBooks) – everyone else I'd seen or spoken to on and off, so it was easy to sort it. Well, I say I sorted it, I actually didn't. David Richardson actually did the hard work, I just clicked my fingers and said, 'Do this, Richardson' and 'Oi Richardson, sort that' and he did! Mad fool! Then there were our marvellous guests. Briggsie suggested it might be time to have a Doctor in **Gallifrey** and I immediately thought I knew what I could do with Colin Baker alongside Leela and Romana. Mary Tamm has always been delightful in previous **Gallifrey** runs but she'd not played Romana before for us, so that was a nice opportunity. Scott and I wrote the third story specifically with Katy [Manning] and Geoffrey [Beavers]'s voices in our heads, so it was fab when they said yes. And Carole Ann Ford was someone I'd never worked with before but had met at conventions and suchlike and thought we had exactly the right part for her that she might like. Have we seen the last of all or any of them in any potential future series? Probably not – I know where at least one of our guests features in series five's storylines. If we get that far...

Is there anything you'd like to have done differently?

SH: Having heard the finished product, I don't think there's anything I wish we'd done differently. We started out with storylines and ideas that





grew and evolved throughout recording and post-production – it's been a very organic process – but one which I think has paid off. It's such a different series to those that have come before, so it still feels fresh and exciting, and a welcome shake-up for our characters and for **Gallifrey**. I'm not sure we could do this every time, and I doubt we'd want to, but I definitely think we've achieved what we all set out to.

Does this bring the **Gallifrey** saga to an end or is there a possibility of more in the future?

SH: There's definitely the possibility for more. In fact, I suspect that Gary and I had the storyline for series five mapped out before we'd even finished recording, and in spite of the fate that befalls certain of our leads in the climax of series four, enough survive for us to continue their adventure... possibly...

GR: Series five is absolutely planned and mapped out. Six... there are ideas floating. Beyond that, probably not. Every good series has to be finite. If we did six **Gallifreys**, I think I'd leave it there. Because I'd be happy that we did six great series.



Mary Tamm returns to **Gallifrey**

*Gallifrey: Series IV box set is out in this month*

## SEÁN CARLSEN HAS NARVIN TO WORRY ABOUT!

Hi Seán, and welcome back to both **Gallifrey**, and playing Narvin. How is he this series?

He has that edge, you know? Narvin has undergone a change, not so much in personality, more in terms of what we learn about him. Early on I thought, 'I'm playing the bad guy here'. As things unfold, I realise there's far more to Narvin. He's not the bad guy. He's completely devoted to Gallifrey and his President. He may not always agree with her, but he's trying to do the right thing by her.

Did you think series four would ever happen?

Gary [Russell] had every intention of doing either a fourth series or a one-off special which would resolve things but there was this opportunity at BBC Wales and suddenly Gary was gone. It looked like that really was the end of **Gallifrey**. Anyway, I was at Regenerations, just over a year ago, and Gary said, 'Keep this quiet but I've got a bit of work for you next year, we're gonna do a fourth season of **Gallifrey**'. Well, I can't tell you how happy that made me.

I love the character, I love the storylines; we're getting great scripts from fantastic

writers – David Wise, Stewart Sheargold, Alan Barnes, we've had some fantastic writers on it. And the other thing about it is that those actors in it, those regulars like Lalla Ward and Louise Jameson, John Leeson, Mary Tamm, all these guys, they're people that I grew up watching and enjoying [in], for me, the classic era of **Doctor Who**, which was the Tom Baker era. To find myself working with these guys and getting to know them, that's one of the joys of the job.

Right from the start of **Gallifrey**, I've always wanted the Doctor to turn up. And sure enough we've got Colin [Baker] in the next series, which is just brilliant because I've heard a lot of people say what an outstanding audio Doctor he is, what a lovely actor he is – and he truly is. He's fantastic to work with and such a lovely guy and a really good actor. That was great for me personally, to work with another Doctor.

Finally, how would you encourage someone to try **Gallifrey**?

If you love classic Seventies **Doctor Who**, great sci-fi and **The West Wing**, you'd love **Gallifrey**.

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**BBC**



I watched the animated **Bernice Summerfield** adventure on YouTube and I loved it! I would love to see the **Dalek Empire** series animated as it would be epic! Also, speaking of **Dalek Empire**, is there any chance of getting another sequel to **Dalek Empire 3** as it's left a bit open-ended at the end of series three, and from what I know of series four it was a prequel to series one I think, as I haven't listened to **Dalek Empire 4** yet.

Chris Clark

Nick: I recommend you listen to **Dalek Empire 4!** No plans to write a direct sequel to **Dalek Empire 3**. It kind of came to an end that didn't require anything to follow it, I thought.

Dear nice people at Big Finish, I very much enjoy your **Doctor Who** audio dramas. They are really enjoyable and totally recreate the feeling of watching a classic **Doctor Who** serial.

However, there is one thing missing. What is going on with all these regional accents and very working-class sounding actors? **Doctor Who** does not sound like that at all. We all know that apart from the odd Mummerst peasant and a few cockney **UNIT** soldiers, everybody in classic **Doctor Who** is supposed to sound posh.

It would really improve my enjoyment as an enthusiastic listener to hear a bit less of these strange Northern accents and a bit more proper BBC English. If we **Doctor Who** fans can accept that Ace comes from a London council estate while sounding incredibly posh, I am sure we can accept a few more aliens and far future human colonists sounding a bit more Home Counties.

An 'open letter' from Celestial Fundy, from his blog, as sent to us by Matthew Austin Clarke

Nick: Thanks, Matthew, but I think your opinion is actually a bit offensive for some people. What have you got against people with 'strange Northern' accents? What's your accent? How would you feel if people felt your accent spoilt their enjoyment? And Ace doesn't sound

incredibly posh! She's got a London accent. Don't really know what you're talking about there; you're just being inaccurate. And the history of **Doctor Who** is full of regional accents... Sorry, really can't agree with anything you're saying about that, or your recollections of the voices in **Doctor Who**. I think you should be a bit more open-minded about the way different people speak, and maybe you should try to listen afresh to the wide variety of accents in **Doctor Who**.

Just wondering: will we ever see The Rani in a Big Finish production?

Michael Hocking

Nick: We have no plans for that, currently.

I just wondered whether it is possible to do a subscription of non-consecutive past release titles? I have some gaps in my collection that I would like to fill.

Andrew Milnes

Nick: We don't have plans for non-consecutive subscriptions. It kind of goes against the idea of a subscription, doesn't it? The point of a subscription is for a listener to commit to a long, concurrent run of releases. That said, there are many special offers, so you may find your missing CDs available at discount prices. It's also always worth catching us at conventions, where we sell stock at various discounts.

Love **Axos**. Wasn't sure about it to start with; scarier than the original, even though you had the original chap in to play **Axos**. Excellent stuff! Love you guys.

Simon Taylor

Nick: Thanks, Simon.

I just wanted to let you know that I've been a Big Finish follower since day one and have been purchasing the CDs from Alien Entertainment here in the States for a dog's age. But I have decided to purchase directly from Big Finish from now on and cut out the middleman. I want to make sure you're getting every cent you deserve. I love the instant

download with purchase of the CDs. I do plan on subscribing to the main range and **Companion Chronicles** as soon as I can because, all together now, subscribers get more at bigfinish.com. One suggestion I have for the download versions: put all the extras at the end. I enjoy the music track extra and understand why it's placed at the end of episode two on the CD, but when listening to the download version it disrupts the flow of the story.

Keep up the fantastic work and thanks again for everything! You're awesome!

Michael Weidrich

Nick: Thanks, Michael. We appreciate it. As for the positioning of extras and music... you are in complete control of that and can move the files into whichever order you prefer.

Any chance, following the excellent stageplays, that you could produce **Recall UNIT** or **The Great T-Bag Mystery**?

Owen Peake

Nick: No plans for these.

I made a suggestion a while ago about getting the casts from the Irwin Allen series together for some audio adventures. Any chance of that happening? Also, it's great to see Matthew Waterhouse join Big Finish. Any chance of him revisiting the role of **Adric**?

Mike Maiwurm

Nick: I don't think there'd be much of an audience for Irwin Allen stuff... although I'd love to do it. As for Matthew Waterhouse, we've asked him directly to return as **Adric** and he has made it clear that this is something he does not want to do. End of story, I'm afraid.

Just a quick question: you are doing more stories with Evelyn, which is great, I love that character, but I was just wondering: are there any more plans to do more stories with **Erimem**? She is another character I really enjoy.

Gez Cleary

Nick: No plans for **Erimem** at the moment, but I would never rule it out.

Drama  
SHOWCASE

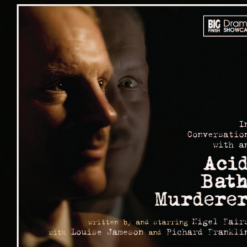
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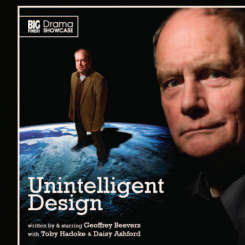
**NOT A WELL WOMAN**  
Written by 8 starring Katy Manning  
Out: March 2011



**PULLING FACES**  
Starring Louise Jameson  
with Colin Baker  
Out: April 2011



**IN CONVERSATION WITH AN ACID BATH MURDERER**  
Written by 8 starring Nigel Fairs  
with Louise Jameson and Richard Franklin  
Out: May 2011



**UNINTELLIGENT DESIGN**  
Written by 8 starring Geoffrey Beevers  
with Toby Hadoke  
Out: June 2011



# What Katy Did Next

Katy Manning takes Paul Spragg for a wander round her mind, the one responsible for the first **Drama Showcase** release, *Not a Well Woman*

Hello Katy. Can you introduce *Not a Well Woman*? It's about a young lady, Pansy Maude, it starts out at the beginning when she's about four, five years old and goes in and out of her life in no particular order at all, it goes back and forth in time and place and country; we go to Africa, we go to America, we go to London. And she's extremely visually challenged, which is interesting for me because I am too. If you're visually challenged and you're born that way, you come into the world seeing the world a particular way; you mistake things for other things, you learn to recognise blurs and blobs and so on and so forth. I just sort of questioned how it affected your take on life. And that's basically what it's about. It's quite dark in areas and it's got quite a dark, black comedy ending as far as I'm concerned; I hope everybody else gets my sense of humour!

#### What inspired you to write it?

As I've often said to people, I see things differently. You see a telegraph pole, I see a palm tree that needs watering. The other day, a friend of mine was driving – I'm not able to drive – so I went 'Stop the car, stop the car!' and she did, backed the car up, and I said, 'Look at those beautiful white

flowers!' and there was a small pause and she said, 'No, those are plastic bags to protect the fruit'. And so it's a very interesting little world that you live in when you see things differently, and that's always been in my mind: how does seeing things differently affect the way you think?



The other day I was walking along with somebody and I said, 'Oh look!' There was a man sitting in this tunnel and he had a dog and I always feel so desperately sorry for people who are forced to sit in streets and sleep out rough and I always give them something. My friend said, 'Oh no, don't' and I can't bear not to give to people in the street and I said, 'Besides, he's got a dog' and I'm absolutely dog mad and he said, 'No, no, no,' and I said, 'I'm going to,' and he said, 'No, don't, because that's not a dog, that's a backpack'. So it does affect how you view life. Through Pansy Maude I was able to look at this, and I used my life, I used other people's lives, I made lots of stuff up, and I put it together the way that it came from me, if you know what I mean.

#### For those used to you in **Doctor Who**, how different is it?

It couldn't be more different. It's so different that I think there are going to be some people



Katy Manning's mind is unleashed in *Not A Well Woman*. Photography by Alex Mallinson.

who go, 'What?' But I do that. I don't think a challenge in life is a challenge unless it's completely out of your comfort zone. Playing Iris Wildthyme was closer, I suppose, to playing Jo Grant, but equally I've had my own chat show, I do cartoon voices, I've played Bette Davis and several other characters on stage and in this, there's gotta be at least 15 different characters in it. So I have always risen to do something that is outside of what I'm used to doing. I do like a challenge. And I read this in a day, in real time – in other words, we didn't put any of the voices on afterwards except for a rap song, which I had to write – that's another thing that's completely out of my comfort zone. I did that while making a lampshade, shortening my daughter's curtains, and doing a doodle for charity!

#### Do the various voices come easily to you?

When I played Bette Davies I also played seven other characters, which included her husband, a four-year-old child, an Irish grandmother, an African-American evangelist, and in this one I'm playing African men, I'm playing Australian men, I'm playing American men and children. I even do a newborn baby crying. I love doing lots of voices; I always have. Once again, that's something to do with the fact, I think, that I came into the world and I saw everything through wonderful soft, blurred edges. Because my hearing was so strong, as a tiny little girl I was able to do some really bizarre voices – my poor

parents, I think they thought I was completely bonkers! I could do Popeye at five. It's a frightening thing to see or hear.

#### Can you still do it now?

Oh yeah! I requested to do Popeye! And I used to do Eartha Kitt. Anything I could hear – I made chicken noises somewhere in my throat, I'd sit around trying to make noises. My poor children growing up, every time I walked into a room and there was a cartoon on, mummy was having a go... So it's a thing that's always been there. I have voices in my head!

#### And you'll be returning again as Jo...

That's right! I had a lovely time marrying Jo Grant and Iris Wildthyme together, which we did on *Find and Replace*. Thanks to David Richardson, because I wasn't sure if I wanted to do one and I thought, 'I don't like being Jo without Jon', but then slowly I began to find her and enjoy her again and then I got the opportunity to recreate the character through the wonderful Russell T Davies in **The Sarah Jane Adventures**, which was a lovely storyline given to me. So Jo Grant still lives, but Katy Manning howls on with all sorts of voices and characters.

#### Drama Showcase: *Not a Well Woman* is released this month

Please note that this release is not suitable for those under the age of 15.



# If You Can Keep Your Head...

## Producer Paul Spragg reveals the process of bringing a second series of Highlander, featuring the Four Horsemen, to audio

Hello Paul. You're new to this producing gig; where did you come from? Having previously worked with David Richardson at magazine publisher Visual Imagination, he got in touch a little over two years ago and asked if I'd like to come and work with him at Big Finish. I thought it'd be a great opportunity to try something new after 11 years on magazines, so I became the producers' assistant, a job that takes in all manner of tasks, from dealing with customer enquiries and laying out CD booklets to contacting shops and magazines to inform them of our upcoming releases. Occasionally I organise scripts and contracts when David's in studio. And more... When Sharon Gosling discovered she was too loaded with work to take on producing a second series of **Highlander** audios, I was asked if I'd like to cut my producing teeth on them. I said yes, though I was terrified, as I'd be learning as I went.

**What was your brief?** After using Adrian Paul for the first series, Jason Haigh-Ellery was keen to branch out and use the fan-favourite Four Horsemen characters

from **Highlander: The Series**. Firstly there was plenty of potential in them, and secondly they were, in the main, UK actors, and thus easier for us to record. Of course, nothing's ever simple when producing audio drama and the first thing I learned was that Peter Wingfield had set up fairly permanent shop in Los Angeles, and that Marcus Testory was impossible to contact as he didn't really act any more (he's a music producer) and thus didn't have an agent. And lived in Germany – although that wasn't really unexpected, what with him being German and all. Coming to my rescue was Carmel from the **Highlander** fan club, who had an e-mail address I could reach Marcus on. A few e-mails later, all four Horsemen had expressed a keen desire to be involved. Stage one complete.

**Where did the writers come from?** I'd been told by former **Highlander** script overseer Mark Wright that James Moran adored **Highlander** and would love to write it. James Moran, writer of **Doctor Who's** *The Fires of Pompeii* and part of **Torchwood: Children**

*of Earth?* Wanting to work with little old us? I couldn't turn that down, so I got his e-mail and dropped him a line. Scott Andrews, writer of the excellent **Stargate Atlantis** release *Impressions*, not to mention several superb books including **The Afterblight Chronicles**, also said he'd love a go at **Highlander**. My original plan was to make the stories linked in some way, and thus to get one writer doing the first and last stories, and two others to do the middle parts, but Scott had a brilliant idea for an overall arc and it seemed mean to just give him one story to write for it, so I decided to split the series 50/50 between the pair. James, concerned because he'd never written for audio before, eventually decided he'd prefer to only write one story, so Scott took up the slack and penned a third. James needn't have worried, as it turned out; his script was superb. As, indeed, were Scott's.

**What is this arc of which you speak?** Scott came up with the idea of one person who wanted to torment each of the Horsemen for radically different reasons, and thus was created Dilijan. With the Horsemen surviving for centuries, we had plenty of scope to explore various eras and find new and interesting forms of torment. I felt that the key tent-poles of **Highlander**, especially in the series, were the flashbacks, the romance and the action, including plenty of beheadings. So there's certainly a good amount of each of those over the course of the series. Hopefully we've added a few new things to the mythos as well along the way.

**How did you prepare for the series?** I've been a fan of **Highlander** for a long while (I've watched **The Source**



Tracy-Ann Oberman joins the cast of **Highlander: Series Two**

and everything!) and the Horsemen are great characters. Before writing began, script editor Jim Swallow, Scott and James came round to my flat and, after admiring and playing with my **Doctor Who** and superhero action figures and Transformers for a bit, we watched *Comes a Horseman* and *Revelation 6:8* again (helpfully lent to us on DVD by cover artist and long-time **Highlander** fan Grant Kempster) so we knew what we had to fit the stories around and got a feel for the personalities of the Horsemen.

**Did it take the actors long to get back into the roles?**

Not really, no. All of the Horsemen took great joy in recreating their roles and gave it their malevolent best. Valentine Pelka was in first and set the standard with an amazingly good performance as Kronos. Richard Ridings was rather taken aback that (for reasons I won't give away here) his character was rather more talkative than he had been in the past, but did some expert work delivering some tricky speeches. Currently to be heard as Daddy Pig in children's cartoon series **Peppa Pig**, Richard was particularly keen to hear about Scott's idea for a disturbingly bloodthirsty **Highlander/Peppa Pig** crossover. Marcus was a little nervous, having not acted in a while, but Richard agreed to come back to the studio and lend some moral support, which helped a lot and resulted in another great performance. And we mustn't overlook the ever-excellent Toby Longworth, who came in to play opposite all three actors as Dilijan and helped keep the mood light and fun while delivering another magnificent, multi-layered character. Sadly I



never got to spend some studio time with Peter Wingfield, as he was recorded in Los Angeles.

Who else can we hear in the series?

When we were discussing casting, James Moran casually dropped in the fact that Tracy-Ann Oberman, veteran of both Big Finish drama and TV **Doctor Who**, loved some of his previous work, in which she'd also appeared, and might be happy to play a role or two in the series. A chat with an agent later, and Tracy-Ann was on board, delivering two distinct and perfect characters. She even got to meet James, which she never had before! I just needed a few more roles filled, so I went for the best of the best and brought in voice artiste extraordinaire John Banks, who not only did some reading-in for missing Horsemen where necessary but also created a range of distinctive characters to plug the remaining gaps and followed it up with a variety of agonising deaths that left myself and director Ken Bentley rather concerned for the poor man's health.

What's the future for **Highlander**?

Unknown at present. Everyone involved enjoyed themselves and seemed keen to do more, and Scott has a great **Highlander** idea he's desperate to



*Highlander: Brothers, featuring Kronos (Valentine Pelka)*

do. Sales will obviously factor into the decision in a big way, but with a reboot of the franchise coming up in the shape of a remake of the original **Highlander**, who knows where things will go from there? Perhaps a new series. We'll just have to wait and hope that the Immortals will, as has been the case up to now, always be around...

*Highlander: Series Two box set is out this month*



*Toby Longworth and Richard Ridings*

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## FORTHCOMING RELEASES

### 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)  
**Highlander** *Series 2 Box Set* (Four enhanced readings)

### APRIL 2011

**Doctor Who** *Heroes of Santar*  
 (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** *Kiss of Death* (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  
 Fairis)  
**Dark Shadows** 15 - *The Blind Painter* (Roger Davis, Nicola Bryant)  
**Dark Shadows** 16 - *The Death Mask* (Jerry Lacy, Lara Parker)

### JUNE 2011

**Doctor Who** *Rat Trap* (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)  
**Jago and Litefoot** *Series 3 Box Set* (Four full cast adventures)  
**Drama Showcase 4** *Unintelligent Design* (Geoffrey Beavers)  
**Dark Shadows** 17 - *The Creeping Fog* (TBA)  
**Dark Shadows** 18 - *The Lost Girl* (TBA)

### 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**  
*Tales from the Vault* (6.01, First, Second, Third and Fourth Doctors)  
**Dark Shadows** 19 - *The Poisoned Soul* (Nancy Barrett)  
**Dark Shadows** 20 - *The Carrion Queen* (TBA)  
**Everyone's Just So So Special** by Robert Shearman (Special  
 Leatherbound, Leatherbound and Hardback)

### AUGUST 2011

**Doctor Who** *TBA* (150, Doctor TBA)  
**Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles** *The Rocket Men* (6.02, TBA)  
**Doctor Who: Short Trips** *Volume 4* (2 CDs, various readers)  
**Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles** *The Specials Box Set*  
*(The Three Companions, The Mists of Time, Freakshow)*  
**Dark Shadows** 21 - *The Crimson Pearl*

### SEPTEMBER 2011

**Doctor Who** *TBA* (151, Doctor TBA)  
**Doctor Who** *TBA* (152, Doctor TBA)  
**Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles**  
*The Memory Cheats* (6.03, Second Doctor)

### OCTOBER 2011

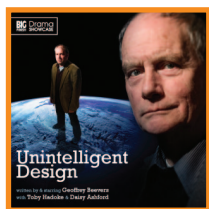
**Doctor Who** *TBA* (153, Doctor TBA)  
**Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles**  
*The Many Deaths of Jo Grant* (6.04, Third Doctor)  
**Doctor Who: The Lost Stories** *TBA* (3.1, Fifth Doctor, Tegan and Nyssa)  
**Sherlock Holmes: The Final Problem/The Empty House** (2.1)

### NOVEMBER 2011

**Doctor Who** *TBA* (154, Doctor TBA)  
**Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles** *The Child* (6.05, Fourth  
 Doctor)  
**The Big Finish Companion** *Volume 1* by Richard Dinnick (hardback)  
**Doctor Who: The Lost Stories** *TBA* (3.2, Fifth Doctor, Tegan and Nyssa)  
**Sherlock Holmes: The Reification of Hans Gerber** (2.2)

### DECEMBER 2011

**Doctor Who** *TBA* (154, Doctor TBA)  
**Doctor Who** *Subscriber Special* (Doctor TBA)  
**Doctor Who: The Companion Chronicles** *TBA* (6.06, Doctor TBA)  
**Doctor Who: The Lost Stories** *The Children of Seth* (3.3, Fifth  
 Doctor, Tegan and Nyssa)  
**Sherlock Holmes: The Hound of the Baskervilles** (2.3)  
**Graceless** *Series 2 Box Set*



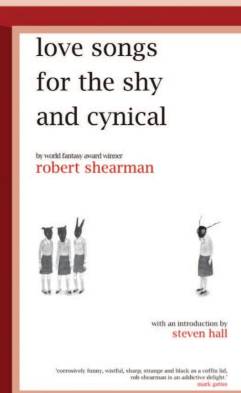
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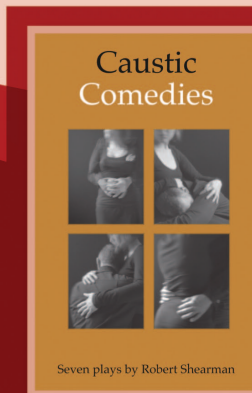
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