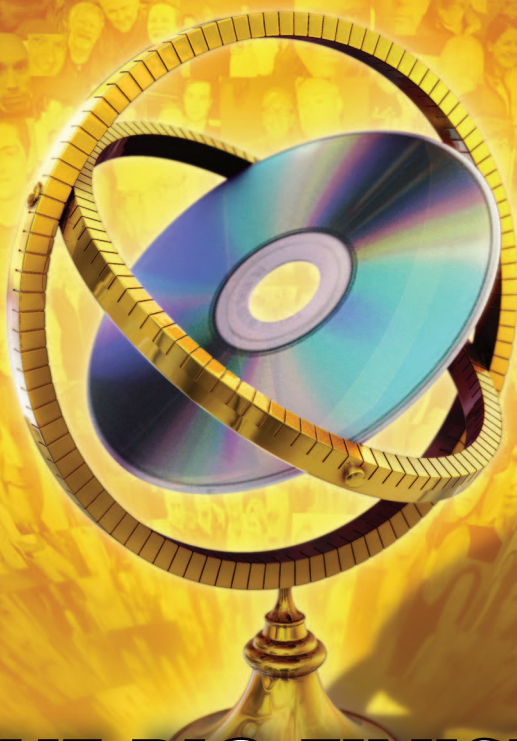


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Richard Dinnick discusses Volume 1

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EDITORIAL

Well, here we are in November, and it's getting really close to that special time of year. No! Not Christmas – although I guess that's pretty special for lots of people – but it's the time of the Big Finish subscriber-only special. Yes, December is the month of the year in which, if your main **Doctor Who** range subscription includes that month, you will get a free, subscriber-only, extremely special **Doctor Who** release.

Past subscriber-only specials since I've been exec producer have been *Return of the Daleks*, *Return to the Web Planet* and *Return of the Krotons* (are you noticing a theme here?). Last year, it was *The Four Doctors*. But this year, we've literally gone 'one' better. It's *The Five Companions*! Ian Chesterton, Steven Taylor, Sara Kingdom, Polly Wright (let's start that name debate again!) and Nyssa of Traken join forces with the Fifth Doctor to fight the Daleks, the Sontarans and some dinosaurs! Subscribe

now to make sure you get your copy. There's literally no other way of getting it.

And in case any of you have forgotten why we produce subscriber-only specials... it's because we love our subscribers. They are the people who really make Big Finish work as a company. We are, naturally, extremely grateful to anyone who buys Big Finish in any other way, but it's the subscribers who really help us to pay for the production of stories upfront. Without you, you lovely subscribers, Big Finish would be no more! So a big thank you to you all. And remember, apart from all the free scripts and extended CD extras, you'll also be getting quite a few free subscriber-only downloadable **Doctor Who** talking books as well! And this coming year, I've got something rather special up my sleeve for you. But, as they say, more on that story later...

Nick Briggs

SNEAK PREVIEWS AND WHISPERS

Counter-Measures - Series 1

Some **Doctor Who** stories create a world so interesting, and characters so vibrant, that it's easy to imagine how their lives might continue after the Doctor has departed. That's why *The Talons of Weng-Chiang* resulted in the hugely successful audio spin-off **Jago & Litefoot**. And it's why the 1988 story *Remembrance of the Daleks* has now led to **Counter-Measures**, a spin-off focusing on Group Captain Gilmore (Simon Williams), Dr Rachel Jensen (Pamela Salem) and Allison Williams (Karen Gledhill). They are now joined by the estimable Toby Kinsella (Hugh Ross) in a new department charged with combating dangerous new technologies and the unexplained...

The new series promises to be steeped in the period of early Sixties Britain – it should even sound black and white – a country not long out of the war which is changing rapidly. The four stories on offer here will comprise a terrifying ghost story, the discovery of a new

artificial intelligence, a mystery in a new town and an attempt to change the future direction of the country.

Counter-Measures promises to be nostalgic, fresh and exciting, and is available to pre-order at bigfinish.com (Out July 2012)



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COMPANION CHRONICLED

Writer Richard Dinnick reveals what you'll be able to find in the first volume of **The Big Finish Companion**

First things first: what is **The Big Finish Companion**?

The Big Finish Companion is essentially an episode guide to every audio drama Big Finish has ever produced. It is a vast tome dedicating a page to each story, an introduction to each range and profiles of those characters that Big Finish has created, such as Charley.

I've interviewed writers, directors and actors, as well as the producers and executive producers at Big Finish itself. There is a full plot synopsis – including spoilers – for every story, along with its accompanying production details and cast.

I've delved deep to eke out nuggets of trivia and a senior member of the production team (be it director, script editor or producer) has summed up every audio in a pithy and forthright but brief paragraph. Each play is accompanied by its cover and there are well over 100 behind-the-scenes photographs included in the book – many of which have never been seen before.

We've also got a delightful foreword by Colin Baker and an equally charming afterword by David Warner. I am very privileged to be the filling in such an august sandwich!

What Big Finish series does it cover, and to what point?

In volume one, we cover the **Doctor Who** monthly range up to release #75. Then we look at the first three seasons of the **Companion**

Chronicles, the first season of **Lost Stories**, the **Stage Plays**, the first five Special releases (*Maltese Penguin* to *Cryptobiosis*), the first two seasons of **The Eighth Doctor Adventures** and **Excelis**.

In terms of **Doctor Who**-related ranges that don't include the Doctor, we have **Dalek Empire**, **Sarah Jane Smith** and **I, Davros** in their entirety, as well as the first four seasons of **Bernice Summerfield** and the first season of **Jago & Litefoot**.

Outside the worlds of **Doctor Who**, I've looked at the full run of **Sapphire & Steel** plays and **Robin Hood** alongside the first seasons of **Highlander** and **Sherlock Holmes**.

How did you approach such an epic undertaking?

The short answer is: in complete ignorance of the scale of the project and the sheer amount of work necessary to complete it! The job is part archivist and part detective with a dash of pest, nagging away at Big Finish stalwarts and busy actors alike to get quotes and quips.

But also re-listening to the plays – that's over 300 hours – to ensure that the synopses are accurate. So you can appreciate that alone took a while, but then, listening to the output of Big Finish is no real hardship!

It is something of a major undertaking and we did actually complete a draft of the book



Richard Dinnick

and then decided that it needed even more detail. We didn't want to short-change the readers, so you can think of it like having a double scoop of ice cream and a flake instead of a single dollop!

Is it all new material or are there parts of previous books like *The Inside Story* ones in there?

The entire book is all new. I didn't want to step on the toes of the two **Inside Story** books because they were my inspiration for pestering Jason Haigh-Ellery, Nick Briggs and David Richardson to do this in the first place. Indeed, the idea started life as **Inside Story 2**.

So I have left those books un plundered and instead returned to the horses' mouths for quotes and comments. I wanted those who already own those books to be able to pick up the **Big Finish Companion** and find something new, be it an interview or a piece of trivia or a behind-the-scenes photo. And,

of course, neither of those magnificent books included actual synopses of the plots.

How much leeway did you have to give a 'warts and all' look at the stories?

There was no Ministry of Truth intervention from the Big Finish triumvirs of Jason, Nick and David, if that's what you mean. As a journalist I would never leave out any salient facts in a story, but I've never been a tabloid journalist so if you're after salacious sensationalism, this won't be the book for you. Do I talk about fallings out or tricky projects? Yes. Do I editorialise and stir up sentiment? No. As detective Joe Friday used to say in **Dragnet**: 'Just the facts, ma'am, just the facts'!

What was the research aspect like? What discoveries surprised you?

Naturally I had the **Inside Story** books as well as the script books Big Finish used to produce,

but this was a far more 'live' research experience: coming in to the Big Finish office to quiz Nick or David over a cup of tea and just laughing and laughing; having lunch with Gary Russell in Cardiff Bay and dredging his amazingly fertile memory for facts and trivia; spending the day with Paul Spragg trawling the filing cabinets and old computer drives of Big Finish for the fascinating photos; and speaking with dozens and dozens of writers to get their input.

I am a big sucker for the 'What if' aspect of any artistic project, so I was thrilled to unearth as many working titles as I did. People recalled those and other little things, such as casting possibilities or that some stories started off including X, Y or Z monster. All brilliant, salient, fascinating – and in the book!

What other projects do you have coming up, in and out of BF?

As I worked through the book, two things occurred to me. One was that I doubted I would ever have enough time to write **Volume 2**, so

I suggested that the natural successor would be Kenny Smith, who produces a wonderful fanzine called *The Finished Product* and knows Big Finish inside out.

The second was how many of the ranges I have been privileged enough to work on. Those that have already seen the light of day are: **Sapphire & Steel**, **Bernice Summerfield**, the main range of **Doctor Who** and audio **Short Trips**. And coming up, I've got a few more disparate entries! First of all we have the second series of **Sherlock Holmes**, which I am majorly proud of as I was assistant producer under Nick and adapted two of the four stories. Then we have my first **Companion Chronicle**, *The Wanderer*, due out in May, and next year we'll have my **Stargate** play. There are one or two other things in the pipeline which I can't reveal here but you'll be able to read about them in **The Big Finish Companion Volume 7!**

The Big Finish Companion - Volume 1 is out this month

Kenny Smith lets us know how he's getting on writing Volume 2 of the Companion

Early last year, I resurrected my unofficial Big Finish fanzine *The Finished Product*. I'd written the first two issues way back in 2000 and 2001, but for various reasons (parental bereavement, illness, new girlfriend, engagement, marriage and daughter), issue three never quite made it into print. I'm a newspaper reporter in my day job, so I've a passion for writing, and then in April last year, I finally got the difficult third issue done. I then followed it up with four more editions over the course of 2010.

The team at Big Finish was very co-operative, taking time to answer my sometimes difficult questions when they already had more than enough to do with actually producing the plays.

Then out of the blue came an email on January 28 this year from David Richardson. He wrote: 'I just wanted to put something to you... we wondered if you might be interested in writing **The Big Finish Companion Volume 2**, as you know BF so well.'

Does a vortisaur like shrieking? It was a very big yes from me. Of course, it wasn't going to be easy; I was given a list of over 200 plays to listen to, many of which I was unfamiliar with, including **Iris Wildthyme**,

Stargate, **The Tomorrow People** and **Highlander**. Each play had to be listened to, then summed up in a synopsis of 300 words or so, along with trivia, recording dates and lots of other details. But I've really enjoyed the writing process for the introductions to each section, interviewing writers, producers, actors, sound designers, cover artists and many, many others.

A personal highlight has been discovering the **Tomorrow People** range, and the tragedy of it ending on a cliffhanger when the licence wasn't renewed by Fremantle. However, the book will include full details of the lost season six, detailing how Nigel Fairs' masterplan would have been resolved, as well as Mark Wright and Cavan Scott's plans for series seven and eight.

Look out for more on the monthly range, the subscriber specials, **Companion Chronicles**, the **Lost Stories**, **The Eighth Doctor Adventures**, **Gallifrey**, **Cyberman**, **Bernice Summerfield**, **Jago & Litefoot**, **Graceless**, **Highlander**, **Iris Wildthyme**, **DWM** exclusives, **UNIT** and **Stargate**.

And some bloke called David Tennant talks about his role as Brimmicombe-Wood. Whatever happened to him?

THE BIG FINISH COMPANION VOLUME I



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MANN UP!

George Mann takes us through the process of creating this month's original Sherlock Holmes story, *The Reification of Hans Gerber*

Hello George! What made you decide to follow in the footsteps of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and write a Holmes story?

I've been a **Holmes** fan for many years, ever since I first read the original stories. I remember sitting on my bed at the age of thirteen, voraciously working my way through the complete canon. I had them all in TV tie-in editions, with Jeremy Brett and Edward Hardwicke on the covers. In fact, even before that I had a Puffin book, a selection of favourite **Holmes** stories.

I think even then, at that age, I was formulating and writing new adventures for Holmes and Watson. As far back as I can remember I've been entranced by the character of Holmes, as well as that fog-shrouded Victorian era he inhabits.

You can absolutely see the fingerprints of **Holmes** on my **Newbury & Hobbes** novels too, which are steampunk mysteries that are very much influenced by the tone and style of the **Holmes** stories. So, really, I think I was always going to write a traditional **Holmes** story, given the opportunity.

How do you approach writing such iconic characters? Did you have any concerns about doing so?

Yes! It's a bit like writing for **Doctor Who** actually, or any other major character franchise. I was very aware that I wanted to get it right, in terms of tone and character. Nick [Briggs, executive producer] had asked me very specifically for a 'traditional' tale (ie: a straightforward Holmes story with no fantastical or supernatural elements), and I was keen to do it justice.

I decided early on that I didn't want to emulate Conan Doyle's style – I think that might have been

the road to disaster – but I wanted to be true to the *spirit* of the original stories. Also, with a character that was so important to me, I wanted to feel that I'd done a good job too.

So yes, there was a little bit of trepidation, but once I found my groove I really enjoyed it. After that it was just about hitting the right beats in the story and making sure I had all the typical trappings of a traditional **Holmes** story in place.

How much of a **Holmes** aficionado are you?

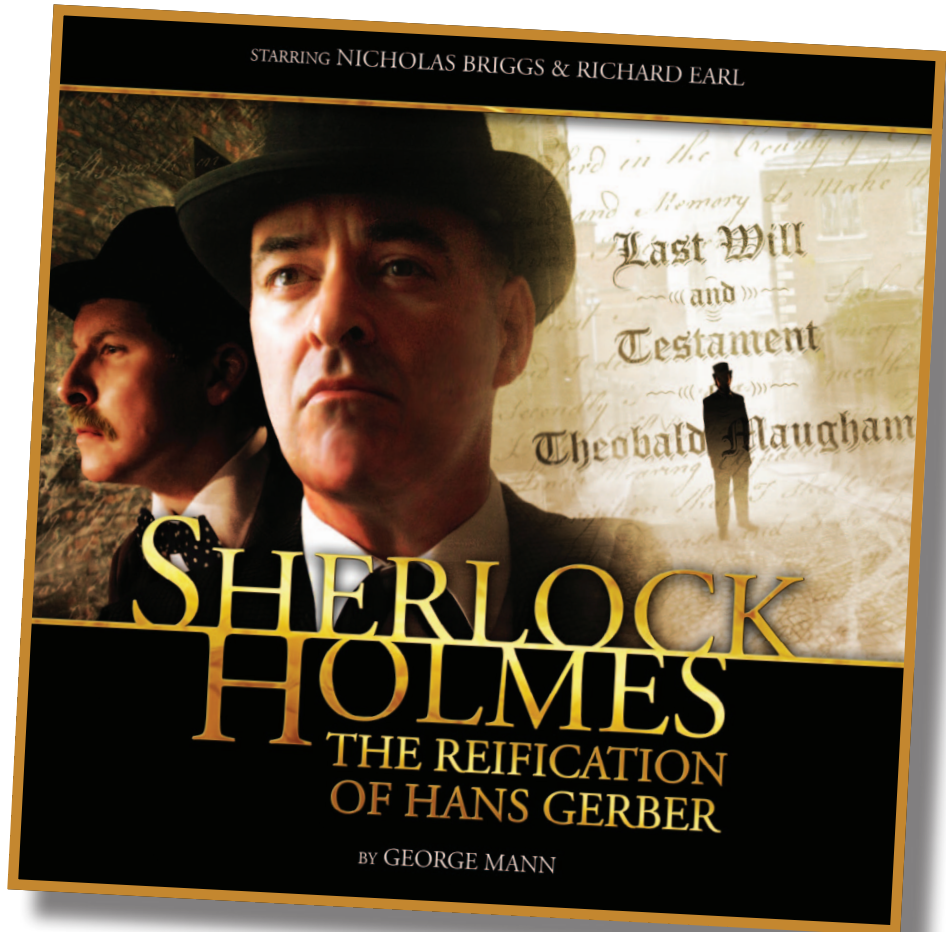
I'm certainly not an expert, but I'm most definitely a fan. As I mentioned earlier, I devoured the complete Conan Doyle canon in my early teens, and ever since I've kept on coming back to those stories, as well as reading a fair few of the pastiches and further adventures each year. I have quite a large collection of 'further adventures' these days, as well as a few different editions of the Doyle stories, including lots of bound issues of *The Strand*. I love all those wonderful Sidney Paget illustrations.

As far as TV and film versions go, I've always loved the Jeremy Brett interpretation of the character. For me he's the definitive Holmes on screen. I love Basil Rathbone too, but the stories let him down somewhat, and as fond as I am of Nigel Bruce, I find his bumbling Watson a bit infuriating. I do have a guilty pleasure, though: the Ronald Howard TV series. It's absolutely hilarious, although I'm not sure it's supposed to be!

How did you get involved in Big Finish's **Sherlock Holmes** range?

When I saw the announcement a couple of years ago that Big Finish was going to produce a range of **Holmes** audios, I emailed Nick immediately to say that I'd be keen to write for the range. At

STARRING NICHOLAS BRIGGS & RICHARD EARL



the time, however, he was hard at work on the first series and wasn't looking for anything new.

However, when Nick was planning the second series he dropped me a line to ask if I was still interested in writing a brand new story. Of course, I leapt at the chance!

What was the genesis of *The Reification of Hans Gerber*?

I've always been obsessed with the notion of identity and what makes people who they are. When it came to writing my first **Holmes** story, I decided that was very much a theme I wanted to mine. It's a theme that fits really well with Holmes, that famed master of disguise. I suppose that's where the genesis of the story

came from, really. I daren't say more in case I give anything away!

The title was, bizarrely, something I've had sitting around on my hard drive for years. That happens quite often, to be honest – I have these lists of orphaned titles without a story. When I sat down to start work on the outline for the **Holmes** story, it just leapt out at me. Everything just followed on from there really, with the title absolutely informing the plot.

Did you write with Nick's Holmes and Richard Earl's Watson in your head?

I'd listened to and enjoyed *Holmes and the Ripper*, so I certainly had a notion of how Nick and Richard would approach the script, and I

think they did a great job bringing it to life. The guest cast, too, was absolutely stunning.

Why does Holmes retain his appeal after so many decades?

I think it's because he's become an archetype now. He's passed into the public consciousness, and every generation seems to be aware of him. He's constantly reinvented through film, TV and audio, and there are thousands of new **Holmes** stories published every year, all around the world. And, at the end of the day, the stories are just so good. Classic literature at its very best, and the cornerstone of the crime genre.

What other projects are you currently working on? Would you do more Holmes?

I'm currently working on the next of my **Newbury & Hobbes** Investigations, entitled *The Executioner's Heart*. It's the fourth book in the series and the first of a new trilogy. After that I have a few scripts to get my teeth into, which should keep me busy until the end of the year!

As far as whether I'd give **Holmes** another go... I've actually just agreed to write two **Holmes** novels for Titan Books! These will be brand new adventures, with a few subtle ties to my **Newbury & Hobbes** books too. The first will be a pretty traditional adventure, while the

second will be set in the early days of WWI and will also feature Professor Angelchrist, of whom readers of my Eleventh Doctor novel, *Paradox Lost*, will already be aware.

I'm also going to be editing two anthologies of new **Holmes** stories for the same range. So lots more to come! Of course, I'm hoping lots of people subscribe to this new Big Finish series, too, so that we're able to do another series! I'd love to write more **Holmes** for audio.

Sherlock Holmes: The Reification of Hans Gerber is out this month



Terry Molloy brings Sir Theobald to life



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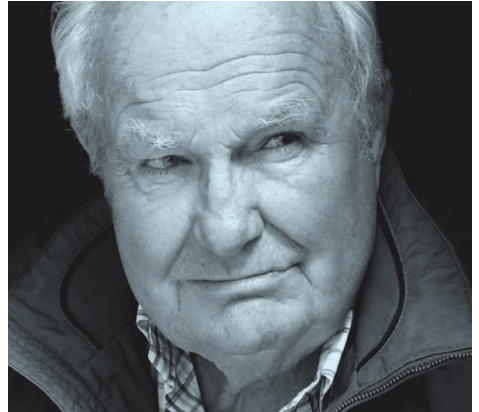
Shane Rimmer, the voice of Scott Tracy – alongside many other roles – looks back on his incredible career in his new autobiography

Hello Shane! What were your main aims when you decided to write your autobiography, **From Thunderbirds to Pterodactyls**?

I had trifled with the idea of setting down some of the work I had enjoyed in films and TV for some considerable time. Mainly because from the Sixties through the Eighties there had been so many exciting and cutting edge dramas on TV in which I was fortunate to have been cast. **Danger Man, Doctor Who, Tales of the Unexpected, The Chicago Conspiracy Trial, Oppenheimer, Billion Dollar Bubble, Professional Foul, Alternative 3** – good scripts too – and then the whole story of Gerry Anderson's great sci-fi productions with which I was intimately involved, not only with **Thunderbirds** but **Space: 1999, UFO, Joe 90, The Protectors**, etc; and script writing for them as well.

In the film world too, there were three pictures from the Bond years, **Star Wars, Superman II and III, Rollerball, Gandhi, White Knights, Reds, Out of Africa, The People that Time Forgot, Warlords of Atlantis, The Holcroft Covenant** and many more. During those years in particular there was a demand for North American-voiced actors, so having the right sound and the right look, it was not only a good time for my career, but more important than that, I had a desire to capture that whole rich seam of entertainment on paper before it was forgotten.

So when I had the heart scare in 2005 and was advised to take it easy by the surgeon, it was an offer I couldn't refuse. I would start each section by writing in longhand, a habit I always used with script writing, and then on to the computer to tidy it up. With [my wife] Sheila's help in researching the annals of the past, it all started to come together and the memory served me well. After a few months it began to look and sound like a book and that persuaded me to keep going to the last page. It took me three years.



Shane Rimmer

You've had a phenomenally busy career; what have been your highlights?

Stanley Kubrick, who was 'King of the Hill' among film directors, took me on as co-pilot on a zany romp through the Cold War spoof **Dr Strangelove** with Peter Sellers and George C Scott. I think it gave film audiences more than a pause for thought. It was a blissful thirteen weeks watching the Kubrick knowhow at work. Also among the crew was James Earl Jones – heard of him?

I think landing the role of Scott Tracy in **Thunderbirds**, as well as beginning a lengthy and very enjoyable association with Gerry and Sylvia Anderson, both as voice actor and script writer, helped open up other doors into films, theatre and radio – you need boosts like that to help you on your way. Three Bond films followed, the first two with Sean Connery, the third with Roger Moore. Incredibly interesting watching those two playing sides of the 007 coin – vastly different, but both making it happen.

SHANE RIMMER

My Autobiography

FROM THUNDERBIRDS TO PTERODACTYLS



A continuing highlight of this magic lantern business was seeing the places you otherwise would never have seen and the company you met when you got there.

You featured in **Doctor Who's** *The Gunfighters*; what do you remember of it?

I was really astounded that a great Hollywood Western epic – **Gunfight at the OK Corral** – could ever have been presented as a TV studio production and been so successful and genuinely entertaining. The Clanton Gang, Doc Holliday, Seth Harper and the Saloon crowd were all that the old legends said it were. Bravo!

What does the audio format add to the book?

There are two factors which will certainly make a distinction, the first being that the reader is also the author of the book, which makes for an added interest. Also, my voice is well known as being Scott Tracy from **Thunderbirds**, and even now people seem to recognise me through that voice from all those years ago.

The second point is that it allows for those who aren't able to read it, for whatever reason, to enjoy the story in a car or anywhere else and also get the feel of the actor's story through his own sound.

What did you enjoy most when you were in studio doing the reading?

As you entered the Moat Studios, there was an atmosphere there that allowed you to just completely relax – for me, nothing could be more important – except Toby's bistro brunch at break time, the gentle and most

relevant direction of Lisa Bowerman and David Richardson's friendly support. It couldn't have been a more delightful time.

As a renowned voice artist, what tips would you give others hoping to get involved in audio/voiceover work?

Keep using the voice – exercising it – in the bathroom, the garden, the kitchen, wherever, and really listen to it. We impose such limitations and preferences on ourselves that don't need to be there. *All the world's a stage.*

Where can people catch up with you?

I have been busy this year with conventions and giving talks in libraries around the country, with lots of local radio stations as well. I was in Derby for The Whoovers, the local **Doctor Who** Society, with David Graham, both of us giving a Q & A session and lots of photo signing. I gave a talk to the Greenacre Project in North Finchley on October 29th, who have a Film Club and a Writer's Club. The final date I have in the book so far this year is Sunday November 27th for The Bondstar Christmas Party, at Pinewood Film Studios. On February 11th 2012, I will be at Big Finish Day 2, where the CD will be available. At all public events I have the book, CD and photos, which can be signed and bought.

The news section on my website, www.shanerimmer.com, keeps up to date with all my events and you can also buy the book there using Paypal. You can also buy from the publisher's website at Signum Books.

From Thunderbirds to Pterodactyls is out this month

RICK ROLE

Rick Briggs talks through how he put together his very first four-part story – this month's *The Witch from the Well*

Hello Rick. Welcome back to the main range! Did you expect your single writing opportunity-winning episode to lead to this?

Blimey, it's good to be back again! Last year, it would have been ridiculous to imagine I'd be here writing for Paul McGann and Julie Cox. I hope I've done them justice with this story.

What options does a four-parter give you that a one-parter doesn't?

Those writers' opportunities are strange beasts. Pitching last year for a single 24-minute episode, I knew that everything I loved about the story had to be right there in the synopsis, in big flashing neon lights.

But a full-length adventure is different. With a four-parter your pitch needs to set up the themes and issues that the script will explore. It's more exciting, because the story grows and changes as you write. You have the time (and space!) to dig deeper. Barry Letts and Terrance Dicks brought contemporary politics and morality to Saturday teatimes. All the best **Who** adventures do a bit of that, I think.

When you're trying to make your one-episode pitch stand out among all those other writers' opportunity entries, themes and issues get jettisoned very early. You hit the ground running, there's no opportunity to break off and discuss ethical questions. So I really enjoyed the chance to address the prejudices of the story's villains this time around. (That said, I also enjoyed having the villains hunt people down and burn them. I think that's essential to any philosophical debate in the **Doctor Who** universe...)

The other joy of a full-length story is cliffhangers. They're a brilliant idea! If you can just get them right, then each one sets up a whole

new situation – so every episode has its own unique set of threats and goals. How can anyone not love cliffhangers?

What was your brief for this story?

I knew from the start this was going to be the second story in the trilogy, so the introductions are all dealt with. Mary's faced her doubts, she's learned she can handle the dangers of travelling with the Doctor. She's ready to take on some challenges of her own.

I'd already pitched *The Witch from the Well* to Alan Barnes, and I think he saw echoes of **Frankenstein** in its mix of science fiction and the gothic. We wanted to reflect Mary's future writings in her experiences, so my first draft put more emphasis on that. Mary vividly described the witch, for example, in ways that prefigured Victor Frankenstein's impressions of his monster.

But in the final script, Mary's real life – recorded in Aleister's library – turned out to be a more rewarding avenue than her published works. So now it's left to the Doctor to drop a few references for his own amusement. He really can be quite smug and annoying at times, can't he? Probably a good thing he'll be long gone before she finally understands some of his jokes at her expense...!

What's it been like tackling the Eighth Doctor and Mary Shelley?

Mary's reality makes her sound like the archetypal Doctor's companion. Brave, tenacious, curious, strong-willed, iconoclastic, loyal and very, very smart. Alan Barnes deserves some kind of award (or at the very least a pint) for recognising that potential and making it happen.

But revisiting Mary was a pretty scary prospect. That Jonathan Morris story on *The*

Company of Friends is a perfect little gem. It leaves you gagging to hear everything about Eight and Mary and their travels. As soon as it's over, you're already imagining where they went next, what they saw together.

Sometimes, though, it's better when those things stay in your imagination. Personally, I'm much happier not knowing the details of the Time War. Or the Terrible Zodin. I really thought Mary Shelley could be like that as well. Yes, I'm an idiot. So it's a good thing the nice people at Big Finish are making those decisions rather than me...

As soon as I started exploring Mary's life, she became a joy to spend time with. Suddenly, writing her adventures with the Doctor wasn't scary or intimidating anymore. It was the most natural thing in the world. Wherever she finds herself, Mary never stops thinking. Never stops trying to understand. Stories move much faster when you've got a character who doesn't need to wait for explanations.

Julie Cox breathes so much humanity into Mary. She's fantastic – I so hope she's going to be back in the studio with Paul very soon after this trilogy. I heard Marc Platt's *The Silver Turk* earlier this week. It's brilliant. It made me remember how nervous I'd been twelve months ago about following on from *Mary's Story*. Next time, just slap me and tell me not to be so blimmin' stupid. It's *always* good to hear more.

How did it go in the studio?

I sat in on the second day of recording. Honestly, the best day I've spent in a studio. I've admired Barnaby Edwards' productions in the past – who hasn't? – but now I think he's inspired. So many good ideas. He makes it seem easy. That's what genius looks like, I reckon.



The cast of *The Witch from the Well*: Lisa Kay, Andrew Havill, Julie Cox, Simon Rouse, Serena Evans, Kevin Trainor and Alix Wilton Regan

Which ideas are you most proud of in this story?

I like all the characters in here, but especially the villains. They're not berserk or crazy, they're actually quite eloquent – the performances at the end of part three sound chillingly reasonable. (Although obviously we got things a bit wrong if anyone starts thinking they're *too* reasonable...!)

Getting to name-check 'sequential regression' was a treat for me. I've always adored [Christopher H] Bidmead-style pseudoscience. I'm proud of Mary's attempt to explain dimensional transcendentalism as well. Of course, she knows what she's saying make no sense. But it's *just* convincing enough to stop her worrying about it – as long as she avoids thinking about it too deeply.

Actually, I love the way Julie and Andrew [Havill] play off each other all through the story. I wish I'd written more scenes for Mary and Aleister together, they should have their own show. She's a radical nineteenth century novelist and polemicist, he's her sidekick, they explore time and space together. It could work...

Doctor Who: *The Witch from the Well* is out this month



Apologies if this isn't the correct e-mail address for my question, but here goes anyway. I was wondering whether Big Finish had ever thought of finding old scripts from earlier releases and making them downloadable in a PDF format? Of course, that might not be financially viable, I won't pretend to understand how a company would go about doing this, but I think it could be very interesting to read, as well as giving people an insight into the creative process, something which may prove valuable in the future. You never know, you could potentially inspire the next generation of Big Finish writers. And while that would certainly be interesting, my main personal reason for asking this question is because of a hearing impairment I have. I've been a big fan of the audios in recent years, but occasionally I haven't been able to catch bits of dialogue, which isn't the company's fault, I have to say. Of course, my personal reason won't apply to very many people, but for different reasons I'm sure many people would be interested in having a couple of old scripts to read over.

Rob Christie

Nick: Rob, that is a very good idea. We'll look into that.

Just wanted to email and say how utterly brilliant I think the **Mervyn Stone** books have been. Just finished the third book – *Cursed Among Sequels* – and have to say that this is one of the very best sequences of books I've read in a long, long time. What I was particularly impressed with was that the second and third books weren't just 'more of the same' in reworking the first volume. Each one had its own identity, its own setting, its own characters and its own point as it tackled different issues. As murder mysteries, they really are very, very well plotted indeed with lots of elements to keep you guessing. As comedy, the characters and situations are really laugh-out-loud funny – very skilfully assembled. For those two reasons alone I'd rate them extremely highly, but when you add to them the very, very smart ingredient of incisive satire about the fan sub-culture, it turns what is already

very good into something outstandingly entertaining.

Hopefully these will do very well for you and there'll be more on the way. Very deeply impressed. Terrific fun.

Andrew Pixley

Nick: Thanks, Andrew. Nev is an extremely gifted writer, so we very much hope that one day these will sell enough to warrant some more. Nev is doing some fantastic work to publicise the book after our initial marketing push, but please feel free to spread the good word!

Just a question: has anyone thought of using a new actor as the Master? From the series, there were only three actors who played the part before his 'new body' on Traken, so just a thought that he could be a good surprise if a new actor was chosen to play one of the 'missing' incarnations.

Secondly, I know it's a little late, but on track fifteen of *Forty Five's* disc two, Hex shouts, 'Looks like a bomb's hit it', but on the track listing it reads, 'Looks like a bums' city'. Made me laugh...

Well done on all the brilliant work you churn out on a constantly incredibly high standard. For all the joy the return of the series to television has given me, the energy and freshness David Tennant, Matt Smith and, it has to be said, Karen Gillan have brought, BF has given me more pleasure over the past ten years or so and my monthly delivery always brings a smile to my face. Thanks.

Gary

Nick: Thanks, Gary. No reason why we shouldn't cast someone new as the Master at some point. We'll look into that. It would certainly be a good surprise, wouldn't it?

Having just watched *Kinda* again, and seeing how amazing Peter Davison's Doctor and Nerys Hughes' Todd were together, I wondered if Big Finish ever had any plans to reunite them?

Keep up the great work!

Graham Watson

Nick: No plans, but I'd never rule it out. I've worked with Nerys before for Big Finish and have been at the AudioGo studios at the same time as her on a

couple of occasions. She is brilliant and a lovely person to spend time with.

I just downloaded *The Silver Turk*. I haven't listened to it yet but I have listened to the new version of the **Doctor Who** theme song and have to tell you that I absolutely love it. Best version I've heard yet. Is it unique to the Eighth Doctor or is it being used for all of the Doctors' new audio adventures? (I haven't listened to any of the other Doctors' new audios yet). Or does each Doctor have their own version of the theme song?

Cathy Segee

Nick: Each Doctor has his 'correct' version of the theme; in other words, the version that was used on television at the time. Because there was only one visual outing for the Eighth Doctor, we felt we had more licence to try new things out. We started with a theme by esteemed film composer and self-confessed **Doctor Who** enthusiast David Arnold (who once got me to do a special Dalek message for his kids!). Then after we'd started the new Eighth Doctor and Lucie adventures, I tried a new mix of the original theme, which naturally (because I'd done it), I liked very much – but it met with a mixed reception, sadly for me. I thought it was only natural to do something new for these Mary Shelley adventures. But next time we encounter the Eighth Doctor, there'll be something new again!

Just a quick email to say well done on **Counter-Measures**; what an inspired idea. Having just read on your website that you are doing this, it seems such a brilliant opportunity... Well done on spotting it. I will be stoked to add **Counter-Measures** to my collection, and here's hoping it sells well as I would love to hear multiple series! Thank you again and keep up the great work!

Paul

Nick: Thanks, Paul. Fingers crossed that you all love it. I think it was a great idea from David Richardson, who's frankly bursting with good ideas, and we're so grateful to Ben Aaronovitch for giving us his permission to do it. And I'm really looking forward to doing the music!

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FORTHCOMING RELEASES

NOVEMBER 2011

Doctor Who: *The Witch from the Well* (154, Eighth Doctor and Mary Shelley)

Doctor Who - The Companion Chronicles: *The First Wave* (6.05, First Doctor)

Doctor Who - The Lost Stories: *Hexagora* (3.2, Fifth Doctor, Tegan and Nyssa)

The Big Finish Companion: Volume 1 by Richard Dinnick (hardback)

Sherlock Holmes: *The Reification of Hans Gerber* (2.2)

Shame Rimmer: From Thunderbirds to Pterodactyls – My Autobiography (CD)

DECEMBER 2011

Doctor Who: *Army of Death* (155, Eighth Doctor and Mary Shelley)

Doctor Who: *The Five Companions* - Subscriber Special (Fifth Doctor, Nyssa, Ian, Steven, Sara and Polly)

Doctor Who - The Companion Chronicles: *Beyond the Ultimate Adventure* (6.06, Sixth Doctor)

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*

JANUARY 2012

Doctor Who: *The Curse of Davros* (156, Sixth Doctor and Flip)

Doctor Who - The Fourth Doctor Adventures: *Destination: Nerva* (1.1, Fourth Doctor and Leela)

Doctor Who - The Lost Stories: *The Fourth Doctor Box Set (The Fox From the Future/The Valley of Death)* (Fourth Doctor and Leela)

Doctor Who - The Companion Chronicles: *The Anachronauts* (6.07, First Doctor)

Sherlock Holmes: *The Tangled Skein* (2.4)

FEBRUARY 2012

Doctor Who: *The Fourth Wall* (157, Sixth Doctor and Flip)

Doctor Who - The Fourth Doctor Adventures: *The Renaissance Man* (1.2, Fourth Doctor and Leela)

Doctor Who - The Companion Chronicles: *The Selachian Gambit* (6.08, Second Doctor)

Bernice Summerfield Box Set 2: Road Trip

Bernice Summerfield: Book (title tba)

Blake's 7: *The Liberator Chronicles – Box Set 1* (Blake/Avon/Vila)

MARCH 2012

Doctor Who: *Wirrn Isle* (158, Sixth Doctor and Flip)

Doctor Who - The Fourth Doctor Adventures: *The Wrath of the Iceni* (1.3, Fourth Doctor and Leela)

Doctor Who - The Companion Chronicles: *Binary* (6.09, Third Doctor)

Jago and Litefoot: *Series 4 Box Set* (Four full cast adventures)

Everyone's Just So Special by Robert Shearman (paperback)

APRIL 2012

Doctor Who: *TBA* (159, Fifth Doctor, Tegan and Nyssa)

Doctor Who - The Fourth Doctor Adventures: *Energy of the Daleks* (1.4, Fourth Doctor and Leela)

Doctor Who - The Companion Chronicles: *The Wanderer* (6.10, First Doctor)

Iris Wildthyme Series 3 Box Set (Three full cast adventures)

MAY 2012

Doctor Who: *TBA* (160, Fifth Doctor, Tegan and Nyssa)

Doctor Who - The Fourth Doctor Adventures: *Trail of the White Worm* (1.5, Fourth Doctor and Leela)

Doctor Who - The Companion Chronicles: *TBA* (6.11, Second Doctor)

Doctor Who - The Lost Stories: *The Guardians of Prophecy* (3.4, Sixth Doctor and Peri)

Blake's 7: Book 1 by TBA

JUNE 2012

Doctor Who: *TBA* (161, Fifth Doctor, Tegan and Nyssa)

Doctor Who - The Fourth Doctor Adventures: *TBA* (1.6, Fourth Doctor and Leela)

Doctor Who - The Companion Chronicles: *TBA* (6.12, Second Doctor)

Doctor Who - The Lost Stories: *Power Play* (3.5, Sixth Doctor and Peri)

JULY 2012

Doctor Who: *TBA* (162, Seventh Doctor, Ace and Hex)

Doctor Who - The Companion Chronicles: *TBA* (7.01, First Doctor)

Doctor Who - The Lost Stories: *The First Sorntarans* (3.6, Sixth Doctor and Peri)

Counter-Measures: *Series 1 Box Set* (Four full cast adventures)

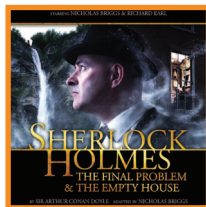
AUGUST 2012

Doctor Who: *TBA* (163, Seventh Doctor, Ace and Hex)

Doctor Who - The Companion Chronicles: *TBA* (7.02, Second Doctor)

Doctor Who - The Lost Stories: *The Masters of Luxar* (3.7, First Doctor, Ian, Susan and Barbara)

Blake's 7: *The Liberator Chronicles – Box Set 2*



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BACK IN TIME

DAVID RICHARDSON UNCOVERS THE SECRET ORIGINS OF THE LATEST SERIES OF **DOCTOR WHO LOST STORIES**

3.1 THE ELITE

Storyline by Barbara Clegg
Adaptation by John Dorney
Out: Now

Where Did It Come From?

Barbara Clegg (who wrote the fondly remembered *Enlightenment* for the Fifth Doctor) subsequently submitted several storylines to the production office but all were rejected. *Point of Entry* was made for series one of **The Lost Stories**; *The Elite* was a must-have for series three.

Who's In it and Where Have I Seen Them Before?

You'll remember Ryan Sampson, who plays Thane, from telly **Doctor Who** – he was Luke in *The Sontaran Stratagem* and *The Poison Sky*. Joe Coen, who plays Aubron, is in next year's **Companion Chronicle** *Binary* with Caroline John. He actually recorded *Binary* first, and was so good we got him back almost immediately.

Any Behind-the-Scenes Gossip?

Recording ground to a halt on the second day

when a power outage left the studio dead.

Everyone sat calmly and hoped for the best... and thankfully power returned and we got back on course.

Which Bit Should I Listen Out For?

Well... This one is out, but we're still avoiding spoilers. If you've heard it, you'll know the scene: the one when the story shifts up by one giant gear...

3.2 HEXAGORA

Storyline by Peter Ling and Hazel Adair
Adaptation by Paul Finch
Out: November 2011

Where Did It Come From?

Another storyline submitted to the production office in the 1980s, but never developed to script. Was this the one originally dubbed *The Doctor's Wife*? We may never know for sure, but it seems likely...

Who's In it and Where Have I Seen Them Before?

They're not in it, but of course Ling and Adair are names in their own right: the former wrote for **Doctor Who** with *The Mind Robber*, and with Adair wrote many episodes of **Crossroads**. Our guest star for *Hexagora* is the legendary Jacqueline Pearce – Servalan herself! – and in recording order this was the Big Finish debut for Dan Starkey, who plays the Sontarans in the TV series. He has since recorded with us many times.

Any Behind-the-Scenes Gossip?

Jacky flew in from South Africa, where she is involved with a monkey sanctuary, and charmed us with tales of eating out in restaurants with a chimpanzee on her lap.

Which Bit Should I Listen Out For?

Tegan taking a budget flight – but not the kind she's used to...



3.3 THE CHILDREN OF SETH

Storyline and script by Christopher Bailey

Adaptation by Marc Platt

Out: December 2011

Where Did It Come From?

Christopher Bailey's Byzantine sci-fi drama, which hit a brick wall during development in the 1980s and has finally been finished after twenty-five years. A storyline and partial script have been kept since the 1980s, and featured in the DVD documentary for *Kinda* and *Snakedance*. Robert Shearman pointed this out to Big Finish, and negotiations with Bailey were underway...

Who's In it and Where Have I Seen Them Before?

A brilliant script needs a brilliant cast, and this one has the best. Honor Blackman (**The Avengers, Goldfinger**) is Anahita, David Warner (**Titanic, Wallander**) is Siris, Vernon Dobtcheff (**The Borgias, The Spy Who Loved Me**) plays Shamur, Adrian Lukis (**Peak Practice, Judge John Deed**) is Byzan.

Any Behind-the-Scenes Gossip?

Adrian Lukis stepped into the role of Byzan at the eleventh hour when the original actor fell ill. The fact that Lukis is so outstanding in the role is a testament to his skills.

Which Bit Should I Listen Out For?

Oh... I think the scene where the Doctor gets lost. And not in the way you might expect...

3.4 THE GUARDIANS OF PROPHECY

Storyline by Johnny Byrne

Adaptation by Jonathan Morris

Out: May 2012

Where Did It Come From?

Johnny Byrne's aborted sequel to *The Keeper of Traken* was documented in great detail in *Doctor Who Magazine* some years ago. Jonny Morris has adapted it very faithfully.

Who's In it and Where Have I Seen Them Before?

Another killer cast – we tried to hire the kind of actors they might have used in the 1980s. So Simon Williams (**Upstairs, Downstairs**) plays Guardian, Nigel Lambert (*The Leisure Hive*) plays Auga and the villain of the piece is portrayed by Stephen Thorne – who gave us Omega, Azal and Eldrad! And Graham Cole, who played the

Melkur in *Traken*, plays Ebbko and voices the Melkurs in this story.

Any Behind-the-Scenes Gossip?

An outtake-filled production. Williams and Lambert are fantastic fun (the former is also a close friend of Colin Baker), so the recording was a riot.

Which Bit Should I Listen Out For?

The Melkurs en masse! If *The Keeper of Traken* was **Alien**, this is **Aliens**!

3.5 POWER PLAY

Script and adaptation by Gary Hopkins

Out: June 2012

Where Did It Come From?

Gary Hopkins originally wrote Victoria Waterfield's reunion with the Sixth Doctor back in 1984, but it was shelved because of the eighteen-month hiatus. Marc Platt suggested to me that this would make a great **Lost Story**.

Who's In it and Where Have I Seen Them Before?

Miles Jupp, who plays Dominic, stars in hit comedy **Rev**, is a regular on panel shows and tours as a stand-up comedian. Victoria Alcock, who is Marion, played Angela in *Planet of the Dead*, while David Warwick was Kimus in *The Pirate Planet* and the Police Commissioner in *Army of Ghosts*. And then there's a certain Deborah Watling, of course...

Any Behind-the-Scenes Gossip?

The story was also known as *Meltdown*.



However, at the time of production, there were major fears that a Japanese nuclear power station was going into meltdown. The alternate title was chosen to avoid any feelings of bad taste.

Which Bit Should I Listen Out For?

When Victoria realizes who that man in the funny outfit really is...

3.6 THE FIRST SONTARANS

Script and adaptation by Andrew Smith
Out: July 2012

Where Did It Come From?

Andrew Smith started writing this story for the 1985 season, but it was pulled and replaced by *The Two Doctors*.

Who's In it and Where Have I Seen Them Before?

Anthony Howell starred in seven series of **Foyle's War**, and has also guest-starred in a couple of our Fourth Doctor tales. Lizzie Roper is a regular in **The Scarifiers**, while for the first time Dan Starkey is playing the Sontarans for Big Finish.

Any Behind-the-Scenes Gossip?

As a fond farewell to Sixth Doctor **Lost Stories**, Nicola Bryant threw a party on the last day of recording at her home for the cast and production team. I, rather forlornly, couldn't attend as I had to head off to Tunbridge Wells to record the first of the Fourth Doctor stories the following morning...

Which Bit Should I Listen Out For?

Twists. Turns. Revelations... This one is huge.

3.7 THE MASTERS OF LUXOR

Script by Anthony Coburn
Adaptation by Nigel Robinson
Out: August 2012

Where Did It Come From?

Anthony Coburn, who wrote the very first **Doctor Who** story *An Unearthly Child*, also scripted *The Masters of Luxor*, but it was dropped in favour of *The Daleks*. The script was published some years ago by Titan Books, but this marks the first ever production of it.

Who's In it and Where Have I Seen Them Before?

It's a small cast, as *Luxor* is given the same treatment, by almost exactly the same team, as



the acclaimed *Farewell Great Macedon*. Joseph Kloska (**Peter Vs Life**) plays multiple roles – but given the nature of the story, this makes sense...

Any Behind-the-Scenes Gossip?

The recording of *Luxor* was three days of bliss. The whole team had received wonderful feedback for *The First Doctor Box Set*, and everyone was confident that this was another winner. We were back in 1964, making black and white **Doctor Who** again...

Which Bit Should I Listen Out For?

The end will break your heart.

3.8 THE ROSEMARINERS

Script and adaptation by Donald Tosh
Out: September 2012

Where Did It Come From?

Tosh's unmade story from the late Sixties finally sees the light of day as an enhanced narration by Frazer Hines and Wendy Padbury. Beware the roses!

Who's In it and Where Have I Seen Them Before?

David Warner is back at Big Finish, playing Biggs. He's joined by Clive Wood (*The Pandorica Opens*) as Rugosa. A classy couple.

Any Behind-the-Scenes Gossip?

Donald Tosh visited the recording and charmed everyone with his stories of the early days of television – including the real story of the beginnings of **Coronation Street**, on which he had worked...

Which Bit Should I Listen Out For?

With Frazer channeling the Second Doctor, it's like the team is back together again...

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