

BIG FINISH FREE! ISSUE 35 • JANUARY 2012
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SATURDAY
TEATIME 1977

Vortex

THE BIG FINISH MAGAZINE



THE BAKERS RETURN!

TOM BAKER on his Big Finish debut as the **FOURTH DOCTOR**
COLIN BAKER on his love of trilogies and a new companion

PLUS!

TERRY MOLLOY on returning to the role of **DAVROS**

BIG FINISH DAY 2

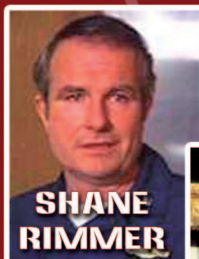
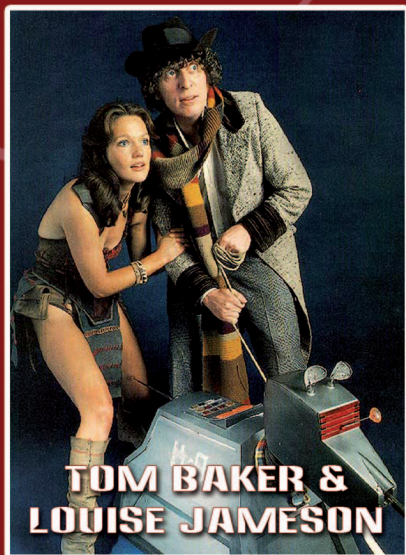
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Well, here we are at the start of an incredibly exciting new year for Big Finish Productions. There's so much for you to enjoy this year. I'm not just talking about the return of **Stargate** (with some brand new audio dramas, starring Michael Shanks and Claudia Black) although there's a lot to be said about that – see right. I'm not just talking about the new Tom Baker stories (six new stories and a **Lost Stories** box set). I'm not just talking about the return of the Sixth Doctor in a brand new mini-series with a brand new companion and Davros, Wirm and... ooh, all sorts of great stuff! I'm not even just talking about the Fifth Doctor, Tegan, Nyssa and Turlough returning, or the mystery of the 'black TARDIS' slowly unveiling itself with our new Seventh Doctor adventures (going into the studio this month!).

And... I'm also not just talking about a unique trilogy of adventures happening later this year, featuring... well, something unique. Oh, and I'm not just talking about that ultra-special **Sherlock Holmes** Titanic story, *The Adventure of the Perfidious Mariner* (released this April). Oh no. I'm not just talking about any of these things in isolation. I'm talking about all of them at once! What a cacophony! And on top of all that, as well as all the subscriber freebies we've given you in 2011, we have yet more planned for 2012! And I won't even mention the **Doctor Who** – *U.N.I.T: Dominion* and Eighth Doctor box sets, or those Sixth Doctor specials (all with unbelievably ultra-low prices). No! I won't just mention these. I will recommend them highly to you. So, if you've just picked this issue up at a convention, received it for free in the post with a CD you've ordered or downloaded it for free as a PDF off bigfinish.com, I'm warning you: this may be Big Finish's most exciting year yet.

I'm exhausted just thinking about it. No time to lie down, though. I've got work to do!

Nick Briggs

It's here! Yes, after far too long an absence, **Stargate** is returning to audio. The third series stars Michael Shanks and Claudia Black in a series of six stories which find them taking on some of SG-1's most dangerous foes, old and new. The stories are designed as two trilogies, taking place during the tenth season of **Stargate SG-1**, and will be released in two box sets. The first, released in May, begins with a horrific incident at the SGC and leads Daniel Jackson (Shanks) and Vala Mal Doran (Black) into an encounter with the last remaining System Lord, Ba'al, played once again by the joyously evil Cliff Simon. There are twists and turns aplenty as our dedicated duo realise they may not be able to trust anyone – even themselves. The trilogy also sees the return of the brilliant John Schwab as Hunter, a character who appeared alongside Michael Shanks in Big Finish's very first **Stargate** audio, *Gift of the Gods*.

The second trilogy, released in August, takes us deeper into the world of the alien Asgard. The discovery of a strange object by former 'associates' of Vala leads her and Daniel on a journey to stop a far-reaching plan that could mean the end of life as they know it. And yes, Michael Shanks is back playing Asgard favourite Thor!

The third series of **Stargate** is a full-cast drama for the first time, and is packed with the action, adventure and humour fans have come to know and love. If you love **Stargate** and have been missing it since **Stargate Universe** ended, you'll love this. If you've never tried the series out, this is a perfect time to get on board as we provide the biggest and most explosive run of stories to date!

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COLIN FLIPS OUT!

New companion, new trilogy, old malevolent foes.
COLIN BAKER chats about his latest action-packed contributions
to the Doctor Who main range with Paul Spragg

6.05pm Doctor Who

The Curse of Davros

A four-part story by JONATHAN MORRIS

Part One: While Flip and the fugitive Doctor struggle to beat back the Daleks' incursion into 21st century London, Davros's real plan is taking shape nearly 200 years in the past, on the other side of the English Channel. At the battle of Waterloo...

First of all, welcome back, Colin!

■ Yes, back for another trilogy! I like a little trilogy. If there are no trilogies in my life I get very depressed.

And this time you're picking up a new friend.

■ My new companion, the lovely Flip, portrayed by Lisa Greenwood, who was in a story I did last year with Thomas Brewster. Her character, who's this mouthy little Londoner who's afraid of 'nuffink' caught on, so Big Finish said, 'How do you feel about having her as a companion for a bit?' I said she'd be very good, and she is and it's fun!

You have a very wide variety of companions.

■ I wear them out! The poor companions.

Nicola's [Bryant, Peri] still hanging on in there. I completely wore Mel [Bonnie Langford] out, and Maggie Stables [Evelyn], I haven't done one with her for about a year and I hope that we'll have the chance to do some more. That's a great character and I enjoy doing stories with her because she's an intellectual equal in many ways and she doesn't go rushing into danger in quite the same way as other companions do. She is fabulous. And then there's India Fisher as Charley, who was intriguing because she was very self-possessed but had an air of mystery about her which intrigued the Doctor, and Frazer's [Hines] popped in and out giving us his Jamie, which was great fun, and now we've got Flip, who is this kind of random, spunky little creature.

What's the Doctor/Flip dynamic like?

■ Well, it's not unlike, in some ways, the relationship that Tom's Doctor had with Leela. This random force of nature who either doesn't have the sense or the self-preservation gene that the rest of us have and goes rushing up to villainous people telling them not to do things. She's got away with it so far. It's paternal rather than brother/sister or uncle/aunt and he really

does feel very bad when things happen to her that shouldn't happen to her. He feels a bit guilty about not looking after her. But at the end of it she still wants to go with the Doctor.

He does seem to tell her not to run off more than other companions.

■ She is younger and less sophisticated than any other companion. They're all far removed from travelling through time and space, but not the intellectual ability to imagine what that might be like. Certainly from the Doctor's point of view, Flip's just a little streetwise kid. And possibly younger at the time of meeting than any of the others companions I've ever had. I'm trying to work out if that's true. I would suggest she probably is.

She may just pip Peri to the post.

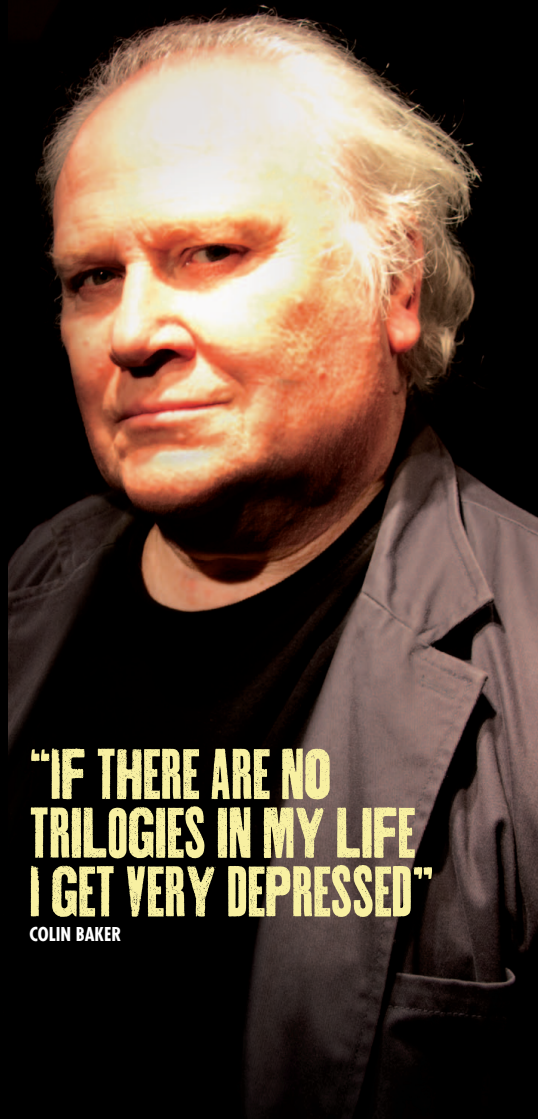
■ There's an awful lot of conversation in this about, 'Oh, is he your Dad?' so I'm very flattered because they could have said grandfather to be honest, but I imagine we have an image of the Doctor when I played him in the eighties in our minds rather than what I look like now...

What do you make of Lisa herself?

■ Fabulous. Fabulous. Just as she is in the character, she's a force of nature. She's like a little Cockney sparrow twittering about. She's brilliant. And she's such a lovely girl as well. She's just been doing a TV series with Dominic West playing a leading part [*The Hour*], and it's coming back for another series. So she's someone to watch.

And you got to help introduce her at the first Big Finish Day.

■ I think she found that a tad alarming, the degree of attention she got! I remember when I was introduced as the actor who was about to play the Doctor in 1983, I hadn't seen a script let



"IF THERE ARE NO TRILOGIES IN MY LIFE I GET VERY DEPRESSED"

COLIN BAKER

alone said a word, and there I was over in America being introduced as the new Doctor and receiving a huge amount of attention. I don't think she was quite prepared for what a **Doctor Who** convention is about!

Did you enjoy yourself at Big Finish Day?

■ It was great fun. All I could see was people staggering about with vast piles of Big Finish audios, which was very heartening because I've got a bee in my bonnet about people who copy and download without paying, because they love the work. The work is paid for by people who buy them, and if enough people stop doing that and copy them from other people because they think, 'I can't miss it but I can't afford it', then you'll kill it. It'll die because they can't afford to do it for nothing; the cost of making original drama is phenomenal. I just think it's so sad. I do understand if you haven't got any money, but if things are worth having, they're worth waiting for and paying for.

You've often said that your favourite villain is Davros as there's plenty of chance to spar. You must have been delighted when you got the script through for *The Curse of Davros*.

■ It's such a clever idea. I love working with Terry Molloy. I've worked with him a few times. The Davros stories have always been high on my list of favourite Big Finishes so to have him and chuck in Napoleon and Wellington for good measure, what more could you ask for really?

The other nice thing about the story was working with Granville Saxton again, whom I did a commercial for Spain with about eight years ago. I was God and he was the Grim Reaper. It was an insurance advert, it was very strange and we had to do it all in Spanish. But mine was my thoughts, so it was done with me standing there being benign while somebody else said the lines

on the overtrack. My mouth didn't move and he had to learn all the lines in Spanish; it was very funny. We hadn't worked together since. So not only is he a wonderful actor, he looks like Wellington as well, which is fantastic! And we had Jonathan Owen as Napoleon, who wasn't French or small. But we didn't do French accents for this one because of the usual TARDIS effect,

which is very good. But great idea. Great script to do. Jonny Morris, he's very prolific, isn't he?

Next up is *The Fourth Wall*.

■ I love *The Fourth Wall*. It's a clever story. John Dorney wrote this one; it's a great success. It's a not unfamiliar scenario that reality and fiction combine to ill effect. A brilliantly clever script, really enjoyed doing it, and the characters of the Chimblys, the inept alien invaders, were just very, very funny. They have the ambitions of a Dalek or a Cyberman, but the competence of the least competent person you can think of. They always cock it up, and the conversations between them are quite funny.

We had Julian Wadham, who hadn't done anything like this before, and was astonished



by the set-up here. The recording booths; he'd never encountered it. By the time he'd finished, he was sold on the notion of recording that way and really enjoyed it. He plays Augustus Scullop, a tycoon whose folly [comes from his]

“ALL I COULD SEE WAS PEOPLE STAGGERING ABOUT WITH VAST PILES OF BIG FINISH AUDIOS”

COLIN BAKER

desire to make a billion pounds. Not unlike a publishing media tycoon we have in the world at the moment who I won't name, because his arm is long and his lawyers are very practiced!

Apart from that we had Tilly Gaunt, who is Bill Gaunt's daughter, so I've met two generations of that family. Bill was in *Revelation of the Daleks* with me, playing a wonderful character in that [Orcini]. And Yasmin Bannerman. She's very good. Now we're doing *Wirrn Isle*.

Which returns the Doctor to the world of Fourth Doctor classic *The Ark in Space*.

■ Not a story I was familiar with before, though I was aware of the Wirrn. I got to be with Tim Bentinck, who plays the father of the family. It's unusual to have a family in a show, actually. You have a father, son, mother and daughter in a 'trapped in the middle of the wilderness' scenario and the Doctor and Flip come into that.

I did telly with Tim a couple of years ago, and found him a delightfully entertaining fellow. Most people will know him from **The Archers**,

where he's David Archer, who's the oldest surviving member of the Archer family now.

It's a complicated script, as provided by William Gallagher, working out who's transmatting where and how, following the logic of the transmit sequence and who can do what and why they can't do that; it is quite dense. But Nick has directed very well so the throughline is quite clear. And again, we've got some fab people in it. Helen Goldwyn, who I've worked with several times before. And I can't fail to mention my best mate Glynn Sweet, who is playing Dessay. It's not a major part in this, but he's here, so the atmosphere has improved considerably! **VORTEX**

Doctor Who: *The Curse of Davros* is out this month.

CLICK HERE FOR DETAILS



Just to say that *The Boy That Time Forgot* was brilliant. More Davison stories like that. Oh, and what is the name of the next story after *The Emerald Tiger*?

Matt Bevan

Nick: As you will see, the title is *The Jupiter Conjunction*. Really glad you enjoyed *The Boy That Time Forgot*. To be honest, it's not one of my favourites. But lovely to see that people do enjoy it.

A painful message to send after years of buying things from you that I adore, not just the wonderful audio drama, but the splendid original fiction. I'm afraid I have to write to express my disappointment with **The Big Finish Companion**. I realise that I have taken to expressing my frustration on your forum rather than make contact directly, which isn't particularly helpful. I will contain my comments there and let you know directly that I am surprised that a volume so riddled with little frustrating errors has seen release.

It is disappointing in a volume that sets itself up to be the start of a definitive guide that there should be so many mistakes. The difficulty being the suggestion that as a fan of Big Finish I cannot miss this **Companion**, where in truth, it is because I'm a fan of Big Finish that I find all the silly errors. The book is beautiful, but the level of editorial fact checking leaves a lot to be desired. As a factual volume, you have released something of a chocolate teapot, as any time I turn to it for information, I feel I would have to check elsewhere. A surprisingly sloppy release.

Could I kindly ask that you employ a more careful editorial eye for volume two?

With the best of intentions,

Jolyn Tuck

Nick: Thanks for writing in to let us know your frustrations. I would take issue with your assertion that it's 'riddled' with errors, but you are right in that there are far more than I would wish to see. As you may have seen in the forums, the author, Richard Dinnick, has responded and is taking steps to put things right. The second volume will undergo far more rigorous checks and may even include a chapter of amendments to *Volume 1*. Here is a relevant section of Richard's response which I think might help...

'To those who have found fault with the book, I would say you are – of course – entitled to

your opinion, and if the design/layout doesn't please you or the ranges covered aren't what you expected, that is a matter of taste. It certainly does not mean that the manuscript delivered needed to be "padded out".

However, I can see quite clearly that mistakes have been made. I am not sure how they slipped through our very stringent sign-off process. So far I have seen five definite errors mentioned. There must be thousands of facts in the book and while I do not think that can explain away the aforementioned mistakes, I would say that it makes the use of words such as "riddled" and "boundless" both unfair and inaccurate and, as they are clearly not meant as hyperbole, have no place in opinion.'

Are we going to hear from Bonnie Langford soon? I miss her very much and think she's a lot better on audio. Just heard *Fires of Vulcan*; she's fantastic. Received my **Big Finish Companion Volume 1**; can't put it down. Can't wait for the next one!

Simon Taylor

Nick: Yes, Bonnie Langford will be back as Mel. She's confirmed that with me, personally... well, on the phone. I think that counts.

1. Briggs is seriously wrong: there is a serious fanbase of **Robin of Sherwood**.

Check with the video sales of **Robin of Sherwood** via Network: not many video releases get reboxed re-releases: **Robin of Sherwood** did. Get those seven actors together again and you will be in for a big surprise.

2. Can I have a Fifth Doctor only subscription please?

3. You have managed to get the reluctant Janet Fielding and curiously timid Tom Baker back on-side. Have you given up on Peter Howell? He's still alive & working! The Fifth Doctor audios desperately need him...

Mike Labruyere

Nick: Well, Labruyere, I don't think I'm wrong. Even if there's a serious fan base for the brilliant **Robin of Sherwood**, audio drama is a whole different ball game, and in our experience the market for it is always very small. A box set being repackaged is not necessarily a sign of popularity. It is sometimes an attempt to shift old stock that's not selling. But please do provide me with masses

of proof to the contrary. It would be lovely to do a series based on this if it was financially viable. We don't do Doctor-specific subscriptions in the main monthly range, I'm afraid. We have a great team of composers and Peter Howell is unlikely to want to work for our modest rates of pay.

Just wanted to say how much I enjoyed *Holmes and the Ripper*. This was my first foray into the **Sherlock Holmes** range and it blew me away! Great performances all round – but particularly from Nick Briggs. I was really shocked by how good he was (that sounds worse than it should!). I'll certainly be picking up the rest now.

Also, great to see Nick and Jason at Chicago TARDIS again; both always happy to stop and talk to anyone with a question or an idea.

Thanks for the great work!

John Austin

Nick: Not sure how flattering it is that you were shocked that I was good! But I'm really pleased that you liked it.

Happy dance, happy dance, happy dance... (have to stop now at my age).

Beyond the Ultimate Adventure: Claire and Noel are both wonderful and brilliant, superb actors and singers in their own right from the London West End. I bow to them in thanks of doing this. Brilliant. Lovely straightforward storytelling, with lovely quips, continuity and Colin Baker, who is simply the most warm and wonderful man on the planet and one of the best ever Doctor Whos.

Quite frankly, I don't know why Terrance Dicks isn't taken hostage and made to write at least one item for **Doctor Who**. Novels, audiobooks, comics, anything, as the man is the genius of **Doctor Who** writing. Imagine getting Terrance in to write one of the missing Target books, beefed up to a bigger page count like the current new novels of the PDAs and NA books. Imagine Terrance Dicks's name on a new set of novels from the TV series.

10 out of 10 for me. The day there is no new Terrance Dicks for me will be a very sad day, but look at all the gorgeous stuff he has given us to treasure. Anyone who isn't beaming with a huge smile after listening to this needs to listen again with their happy hat on and realise the Power of the Genius.

Bryan Simcott

Nick: We love Terrance. He's great.

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MOLLOY MANIA!

Returning to his iconic role as the Daleks' creator in **THE CURSE OF DAVROS**, **TERRY MOLLOY** explains why he still loves the part almost thirty years on...

Hello Terry. What's it like being back in the sagging skin of Davros?

■ What's it like? I think the way *my* sagging skin is spreading as the years roll on, there'll soon be no need for a Davros mask should I ever be tempted to don one again! I was truly delighted to hear from David [Richardson] that Davros had been returned to the Big Finish fold. This is the tenth time I will have played Davros for Big Finish – including the four-part mini-series **I, Davros** – so along with the classic TV series and a stage appearance in **The Trial of Davros** it will make fourteen times in all. I think you can say that I relish playing the part, and a new Davros story from Big Finish is always something I look forward to.

What can you tell us about the story?

■ With any new script I always read it from cover to cover to get an overall feel of the story, then I go back and re-read it with more focused attention on how the character I have been asked to play interacts within the story. When I

received the script it had been titled *Waterloo of the Daleks*, so I thought, 'Hmm, could be the Daleks' attempt to take over the Southern Region of British Rail... or it could be set during the 1974 Eurovision Song Contest... or even possibly in Belgium around the year 1815'.

Okay, I have always been a bear of fairly small brain and sometimes not always the sharpest knife in the box at latching on to things, but I read the first two episodes of the story thinking, 'What *are* they playing at?' Then I got to the end of episode two and went, 'OMG!!! Woof!!' It all fell into place and rocked on from there! I'm not gonna spoil your joyride... just sit back and enjoy!

You helped to 'break in' new companion Flip. What did you make of her?

■ I love scaring the Doctor's companions as Davros... but Flip is made of sterner stuff! The character is wonderfully feisty and we have come a long way from the days where the Doctor's companions just stood around and screamed!

It was lovely to work with Lisa. She is great fun to be with and a very talented actress who – as Flip – complements Colin so well. I became a firm fan while working on *The Curse of Davros* and am now even more so after watching her as Sissy Cooper in **The Hour**. I look forward to the next series of that with great anticipation.

You've worked with a variety of Dalek voice artistes over the years; how does our very own Nick Briggs compare?

■ I have indeed worked with a number of Dalek voices, from the inimitable Roy Skelton to Lis Sladen's husband Brian Miller and so to the omnipresent Nick Briggs. Nick has really turned the Dalek voice into an art form, and through his superb versatility created a whole range of voices pitched to fit every dramatic situation. Nick is not only a wonderful actor (please don't let him read any of this or we will never be able to fit his head into one of the voice booths again!!) but also an excellent director, a very funny man and a lovely human being to boot!

apart from *Terror Firma*, it has always been the Sixth Doctor; we have yet to hear a Big Finish story where Davros comes up against the Fourth, Fifth or Seventh Doctor – note to production team and writers!).

Working with Colin is such fun and so easy, and as we know each other well I think it helps inform the way we play the scenes with each other; certainly it has helped in the way we have to play the characters in *The Curse of Davros*.

For me, it is the mental chess game the Doctor and Davros play with each other that has the greatest attraction. They each recognise their opponent's intellectual strength and respect that in the gameplay they then indulge in as they try to outwit each other.

You've featured in Doctor Who: Rat Trap and Sherlock Holmes: The Reification of Hans Gerber this year. What are your highlights of them?

■ I was so pleased to be asked to take part in both *Rat Trap* and *Sherlock Holmes* and the chance of exploring new characters.

"I THINK THE WAY MY SAGGING SKIN IS SPREADING AS THE YEARS ROLL ON, THERE'LL SOON BE NO NEED FOR A DAVROS MASK SHOULD I EVER BE TEMPTED TO DON ONE AGAIN!"

I so enjoy working with him either alongside me rasping Dalek commands, or from the other side of the control room glass rasping directorial commands... I must say I tend to ignore both!

Colin Baker has repeatedly said his matches with Davros are his favourites stories; what is your favourite aspect of that rivalry?

■ Colin and I have worked together many times over the years on TV, audio and on stage. I am delighted to know him as a good friend and I too always relish the encounters whenever it is the Sixth Doctor up against Davros (in fact,

Rat Trap gave me the opportunity to play a Scottish scientist – Dr Wallace – who is responsible for a new breed of super-intelligent rats bent on the destruction of humankind. But Dr Wallace comes good at the end, sacrificing himself to destroy his creations. The story brought me together again with Janet Fielding for the first time since we did *Resurrection of the Daleks* back in '83, as well as Sarah Sutton and, of course, Peter Davison, though due to the scheduling of Peter's scenes I wasn't in studio on the same day as him. Here's hoping our paths cross again before too long.



Davros and the Doctor:
Terry Molloy and Colin Baker

In **Sherlock Holmes** I played two characters: Sir Theobald, who gets killed off in the opening sequence after a lovely doddering monologue to his cat, and then later I turn up as Inspector Bainbridge, who is introduced as Holmes' foil from Scotland Yard. It was nice to play two completely different parts, and who knows? Maybe Inspector Bainbridge may return one day in another story...

Nick Briggs and Richard Earl are a perfect duo as Holmes and Watson and it is no surprise to me the series has been so successful.

UK listeners will also know you well from playing Mike Tucker in *The Archers*; what is it about audio drama that keeps you coming back for more?

■ I don't think it is a secret that radio drama and audio work has been the mainstay of my career over the past forty years – I joined **The Archers** in 1972 – and it is a medium I enjoy working in more than any other. Even with

“I ALWAYS THOUGHT THAT THERE SHOULD HAVE BEEN A DAVROS CHRISTMAS SPECIAL FEATURING DAVROS IN A ROCKING CHARIOT... AND A LITTLE BABY DALEK EXTERMINATING THE PRESENTS”

over six hundred plays behind me, I never cease to get a thrill when reading a new script.

As an actor I find it the most liberating way of working. You are not restricted by what you look like or how old you are. You have a palette of words from which you can create and paint characters that will inhabit the landscape you build within the listener's mind. And it is all done with your voice. For me, that is the real buzz! The pictures truly are better on radio!

We've taken to referring to this story on podcasts as *The Cruise of Davros* thanks to an e-mail typo. Do you think he'd fit in on board ship?

■ I think, given the age profile of passengers on some cruises, Davros would be right at home! I always thought that there should have been a Davros Christmas Special (a bit like the old **Val Doonican Shows**) featuring Davros in a rocking chariot with his Daleks gathered around the Christmas tree and a little baby Dalek exterminating the presents, while a massive log fire in the hearth has the Doctor suspended over it as Davros sings 'Doctor... roasting on an open fire...'

Ah... excellent!! **VORTEX**

Doctor Who: *The Curse of Davros* is out this month.

[CLICK HERE FOR DETAILS](#)

**BIG
FINISH**

28 JANUARY 2012

DAVROS DAY SALE



**DOCTOR WHO:
DAVROS**



**DOCTOR WHO:
THE JUGGERNAUTS**



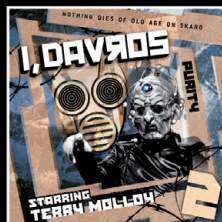
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BREAKING THE FOURTH'S WALL

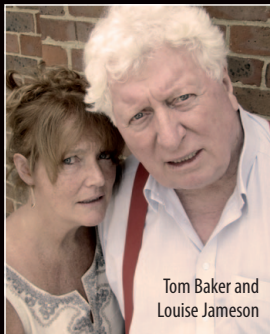
In the first part of a two-part interview, **TOM BAKER** looks back to the Seventies and forward to the future of the Fourth Doctor, with Paul Spragg

It's odd how you don't believe something is happening until you see it with your own eyes. I'm in studio for *Destination: Nerva* and, while this is the first of the brand new range of Tom Baker-starring releases from Big Finish, it's not the first to be recorded. Knowing Tom was in studio, being told by Nick Briggs and David Richardson that it was all going well; it's just not the same as being there and seeing it. A few recordings into his stride, Tom is ebullient, dedicated and extremely tongue-in-cheek. I'll let you decide what may or may not be true from the following...

Still the Doctor

"It's a good question, what's it like being back as the Doctor," muses Tom. "Because the brutally honest answer – and I don't often give honest answers because I'm a proper actor – is, of course, I've never stopped being the Doctor. Even though I left thirty-odd years ago, I've never stopped being the Doctor simply because, for one reason or another, mostly the enthusiasm of the fans, that's the way they saw me. The only great success

I ever really had was the Doctor and it's lasted so long that whatever I've done since, it's been the Doctor. Because that's really all I know what to do!



Tom Baker and Louise Jameson

And also, it's what the fans want me to do! So when I've done *An Inspector Calls* or *Macbeth* or *Romeo and Juliet*, it's very hard on the people who don't know me as Doctor Who. But most of the audience are **Doctor Who** fans, so I do it like the Doctor! Except, of course, I don't have a sonic screwdriver in *Macbeth*, although I did suggest it.

"I played *Macbeth* and afterwards some biting critic said, 'I had no idea *Macbeth* was such a nice chap!' And they would have said that about my Jack the Ripper: 'Oh, he was a darling! What are they making all this fuss about?' But that's because, like waiters, most actors want to please. They really want to give the audience what they want. There's no point trying to give them something else.

"It's never gone away from me, you see, because of the repeats, the merchandising, and also, above all, the power of nostalgia. You people are trading brilliantly on the power of nostalgia. We're all

"I PLAYED MACBETH AND SOME BITING CRITIC SAID, 'I HAD NO IDEA MACBETH WAS SUCH A NICE CHAP!'"

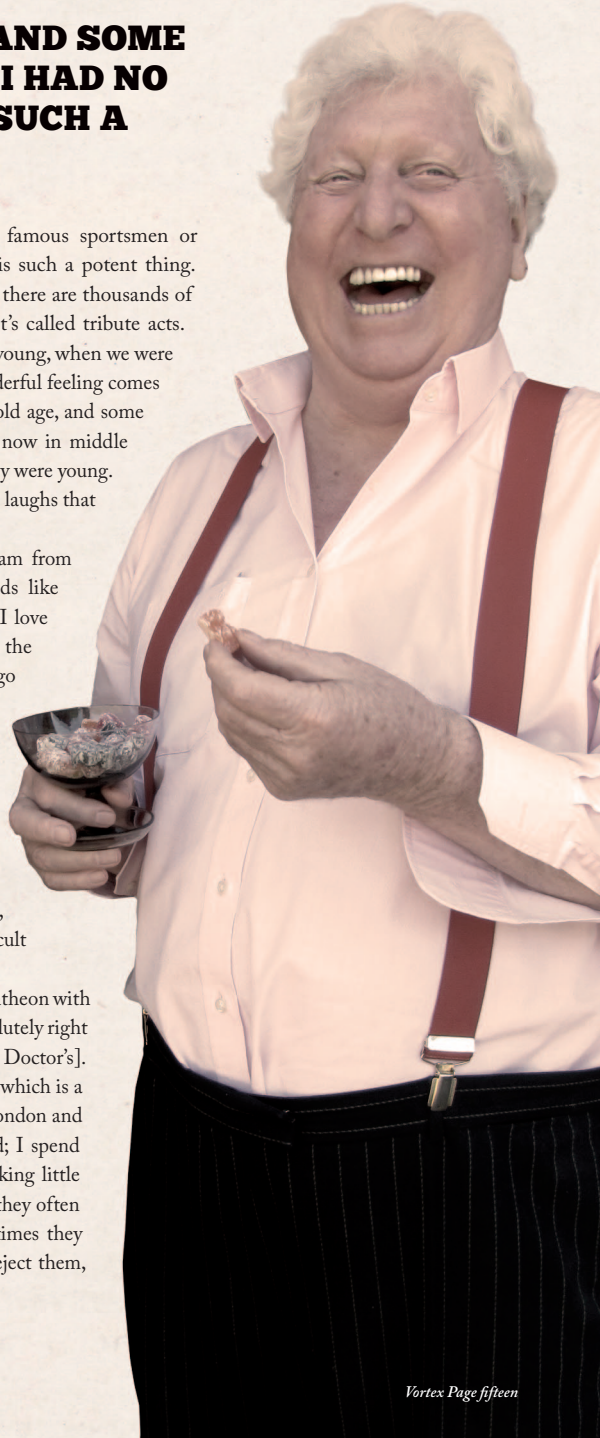
nostalgic for something: songs, memories of famous sportsmen or beautiful actresses or whatever it is; nostalgia is such a potent thing. You look at the back of any of the trade papers, there are thousands of young men and women trading on nostalgia; it's called tribute acts. It's about catapulting us back to when we were young, when we were happy, when we were full of hope. And that wonderful feeling comes back to us when we're grown up or, in my case, old age, and some of the fans, of course, who caught me late, are now in middle age themselves, but they're reminded of when they were young. Most people who look at me now feel young." He laughs that magnificently warm, joyous laugh he has.

Suddenly there's the sound of a hideous scream from another room as an actor provides what sounds like their character's last moments. Tom grins. "Oh, I love all this. Absolutely adore it. Audio is always the most exhilarating thing. You've got to actually go for it, and most of the actors cotton on instantly. Sometimes they don't get the pitch right for a scene or two and then they hear the others..."

Keen to go for it

If there's one thing you can say about Tom, it's that he's always keen to go for it in a performance. "Sometimes they say, 'Tom, could you just hold back a bit' and that's very difficult for me really," he grins.

Tom seems to be settling into the Big Finish pantheon with ease. "The thing about Big Finish and me, it's absolutely right up my street, this heroic, driven quality [of the Doctor's]. And it's being recorded not far from where I live, which is a great help because I live quite a long way from London and it consoles me because I really love lying in bed; I spend a lot of time in bed, marking up my scripts, making little suggestions. Because they're so accommodating, they often allow me to make little suggestions. And sometimes they accept them. Of course, most of the time they reject them,





The inimitable Tom Baker

but at my age I'm used to rejection," he grins again and laughs.

This first story finds the Fourth Doctor returning to Nerva. Can Tom remember watching *The Ark*

"THEY'VE BEEN PURSUING ME, INVITING ME, FOR A LONG TIME, AND I'M THE VERY LAST ONE TO JOIN, AREN'T I?"

in *Space* or any of his other stories? "No, no, no. I never watched *Doctor Who* when I was in it. It's a very common thing for actors not to watch what they do. When I began, I used to watch it and I used to get terribly rattled because one of the things about being an actor, which is sometimes frustrating, is that the editing is a matter of opinion with the producer and the director and technical people. The shots they select in order to drive the narrative, it's always a matter of debate.

"And I liked to think, 'I remember we did another take there when I looked over my shoulder and winked at Leela; why didn't they use

that?' That's because I was interested technically in the thing. And so [I'd ask] the director, 'What made you choose that shot?' and he'd say, 'I'm the director, I can do whatever I like'. And so after the first couple of disputes, I thought, 'Listen, the best thing I can do is just not look at it, and if the audience likes it and write lots of letters and come and see me at a personal appearance, I'm getting it right.' I think that's very common with actors, disputing, because the selection of the shots changes the tempo of a scene; technically, after the actors have all finished with it, the editors, directors and producers can change the tempo of something. They can either quicken it up by clipping the scene or slow it down.

"I was asked to be in a film just a few weeks ago called *Cockneys vs Zombies*, which must be a horror film; it sounds a scream! Anyway, I went along and they offered me the part; a very violent part of a guy who rescues all these old ladies from an old people's home. And so I looked at a script carefully and the very nice director said, 'Have you got any ideas how to do this?' and of course, did I have ideas how to do it! So I reeled

off all the ideas, which included me actually being seen putting a burkha on and then five old ladies clambering underneath my burkha while I crept out to see the zombies. And a zombie was veering towards me to kill me and the zombie is suddenly tapped by another zombie who obviously was politically correct and so they let me through.

"I thought this was really quite funny and would have got a roar of laughter from the sort of people I know, but I saw the producer catch the director's eye and he went like that." Tom rolls his eyes. "And so they called me a cab. But I didn't mind. I think I was deliberately making these



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The DoctorTOM BAKER
 Leela.....LOUISE JAMESON

6.05pm Doctor Who

Destination: Nerva

A four-part story by **NICHOLAS BRIGGS**

Part One: The Doctor and Leela respond to an alien distress call beamed direct from Victorian England. It is the beginning of a journey that will take them to the newly built Space Dock Nerva... where a long overdue homecoming is expected.

Dr Alison Foster.....**RAQUEL CASSIDY**
 McMullan/Pilot**SAM GRAHAM**
 Laura Craske**TILLY GAUNT**
 Giles Moreau/Jenkins.....**TIM BENTINCK**
 Jim Hooley/Drelleran 1/Security Guard **KIM WALL**
 Lord Jack/Drudgers/Drelleran 2**TIM TRELOAR**

6.30pm Doctor Who

The Foe from the Future

A six-part story by **ROBERT BANKS STEWART** adapted by **JOHN DORNEY**

Part One: The TARDIS follows a twist in the vortex to the village of Staffham in 1977 and discovers something is very wrong with time. But spectral highwaymen and cavaliers are the least of the Doctor's worries.

Jalnik**PAUL FREEMAN**
 Charlotte**LOUISE BREALEY**
 Constable Burrows**MARK GOLDTHORP**
 Father Harpin..... **PHILIP POPE**
 Butler..... **JOHN GREEN**
 Highwayman**DAN STARKEY**

suggestions so that they'd call me a cab really! I don't need to do the sort of things I get. Because as you get old – I'm 78 now – now they only offer me very old men, obviously, and quite honestly, old men don't have very good parts. Also, they can't run any more, and they've got to come downstairs backwards."

Revolution

Tom returns back to the question of watching **Doctor Who**. "So no, I didn't watch it. However, I am terribly aware of it because of my fan mail. The other day I was asked to go to Argentina and then they sent a cable to my agent saying, 'Not this week because we're having a revolution. But could we put it off for a fortnight? Because we think the revolution will be over. We've got a dedicated two- or three hundred people here and we'd send Tom flying to Argentina first class'. But I don't want to go to Argentina. I've got nothing against Argentina; I'm not a vegetarian and I've had the occasional Argentinean steak, but I don't want to go to Argentina. I get asked all over the world; isn't that wonderful? All over the world. I could spend the entire spring until September in America and Australia, easily, going back because of the nostalgia.

"Because I live in Sussex in a lovely old farmhouse, I don't want to be travelling really; I've done all that. I've done the glamour of first class travel and now I don't like being groped at airports by boot-faced security guards. I'm very happily married at home, and my wife is very affectionate. But a great number of very lonely people with bad breath are travelling by air now in the hope of being handled and feeling human contact as they're being searched. They often, actually, try to creep back into the queue..." I burst out laughing and he grins.

If anything, Tom is back in the limelight now more than ever. Quite apart from his Big Finish work, the likeness of the Fourth Doctor is appearing on a variety of merchandise from mugs to moneyboxes. "The wonderful thing about nostalgia," explains



"YOU DON'T SAY, 'OH LOOK, YOU'VE GOT FAT AND UGLY' OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT. THAT'S NOT THE WAY FAN LOVE WORKS"

Tom, "nostalgia is blind. A woman did say to me the other day, which was deliciously humiliating, 'Excuse me, my little boy is a great fan of all your stuff; he's got all the CDs and everything. I wonder, could you give me a photograph? I mean, not the way you look now, the way you looked then.'" Tom laughs uproariously. "I said, 'Okay, I'll get you one' and I sent her one.

"The wonderful thing about older fans... fan love is very superior to human love really, because when you're a fan of something, you go in for that wonderful ecstasy. We're all a fan of someone, so if you're a cricket fan and you meet Ian Botham or some old cricketer from the past, you don't think to yourself, 'Oh dear, he's grown old or gone bald', the sight of him does the trick for you and you then see him as he was in all his glory. You don't say, 'Oh look, you've got fat and ugly' or anything like that. That's not the way fan love works."

Apologetic

And there's certainly a lot of love for Tom amongst the fans still, which is why it seems only fitting that he's finally doing some Big Finish audios. He's somewhat apologetic on that front. "They've been pursuing me, inviting me, for a long time," he says sadly, "and I'm the very last one to join, aren't I?"

He certainly is. He was the gap in the Big Finish collection. "I was the gap. That's good," he smiles. "I was a gap. And so many people, Louise [Jameson] particularly, who used to live near me, and Elisabeth [Sladen], who I adored, they were always saying to me, 'Tom, we must do some Big Finish; they're so nice and they pay very reasonably, and it's such fun! And I was thinking, 'Oh, b****r Big Finish, I don't care about them!'"

And then, I don't know how it happened. I think it was because of Louise, because I lived briefly in Tunbridge Wells and I've become very fond of Louise; I still admire her hard work and ingenuity to make a living. She said, 'Tom, we've got to do some' and so I said okay and sent a message and they got straight back to me and I was on. And now I must have done eight or ten or more, I don't know. And there'll be more still. We've got a very, very exciting project that we're beginning to talk about now and explore, a really large project, which will be a lot of recording. And I'm back again in October to record something with Trevor Baxter and Christopher Benjamin, who I haven't seen since the huge success of *The Talons of Weng-Chiang* and apparently they've got a whole thing going from Big Finish. I look forward greatly to that because I so admire them and it's such happy memories."

More from Tom next issue.

Doctor Who: The Lost Stories - The Fourth Doctor Box Set is out this month.

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Doctor Who: Destination: Nerva is out this month.

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UNDER THE SKEIN

David Stuart Davies talks to Paul Spragg about the adaptation of his book *The Tangled Skein* and what makes Sherlock Holmes work in any era

Hello David. For the first series, we recorded the one-man shows you wrote, *The Last Act* and *The Death and Life*, for audio. This series, your book has been adapted for the range.

Was it a big change?

■ There's a definite difference between my first experience of Big Finish Productions and this. First of all, the two plays were plays, already scripted and written, so it was just a matter of them being tapered slightly for an audio audience instead of a visual audience. But this is a different kettle of fish altogether, *The Tangled Skein*, because it's a novel that's been adapted by Richard [Dinnick]. He's done a brilliant job, because in many ways he's kept so very close, not only to the structure of the story but also to the descriptions and the dialogue and so forth. It really resonates as my piece of work which has been gently transformed.

Had you looked back over the book recently?

■ I intended to revisit the book before I came to the recording but I was caught up with so many

other things, I didn't get a chance. So I'm actually coming to it comparatively fresh. I think it was probably a wise thing to do, in a way. Colin Dexter, who wrote the *Morse* books, said once you've given over your book to a production company to turn it into something else, you've got to accept that, and whatever changes they make, they're doing it for a good reason and you have to bite the bullet and accept it. But I have no reason to feel upset at all at the moment – unless they kill Holmes off or something!

This is a brand new Holmes story; do you need to be pretty confident to follow in the footsteps of Conan Doyle?

■ Yes, you do. I think that to write a *Sherlock Holmes* story today, you've got to have a feeling for writing but also find something new. If you're going to present Holmes exactly as Conan Doyle did, what's the point? He'd already done it. I'm not talking change the character out of all recognition, or do something ridiculous like

Watson's a woman and so forth. For example, *The Tangled Skein*, here I am having Holmes having to accept that there are such things as vampires in the world, which he does reject in one of the Conan Doyle stories.

How hard is it to mesh Holmes and Dracula?

■ It seems to be quite easy; a lot of writers have done it with people like the Phantom of the Opera and Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde; any sort of

script we've got here today, he carries the story because so much of it depends on his setting the scene and describing what's happening.

Holmes is, of course, big news these days since *Sherlock* won a BAFTA.

■ I met Mark Gatiss at a function four years ago now, when he said he and Steven Moffat had been travelling to Cardiff on the train to do the *Doctor Whos* and had been talking

“I have no reason to feel upset at all at the moment – unless they kill Holmes off or something!”

character that was roaming around in Victorian times seems to be dragged into the Baker Street world. I think the previous two plays were about the psychological elements in Holmes' character. This is a Victorian romp. It's really Sherlock Holmes meets Hammer films; it's the sort of thing that as a younger person I would have queued to watch at the cinema. If you like vampires and you like Sherlock Holmes, this is a wonderful coming together of the two!



about the possibility of doing a **Sherlock Holmes** series but bringing it into the 21st

century. I thought, 'Well, I'd love to see a TV series of **Sherlock Holmes**, but how will it possibly work?' I had my vision of Holmes on Dartmoor and it's night time, the mist is rolling in, and on the Tor is the phantom hound coming towards him, its jaws dripping fire and so forth, and all Holmes has to do is put his hand in his pocket, get out his

mobile and say, 'Watson, send back-up!' I just thought it wouldn't work in a modern context.

I was proved, pleasingly, wrong because I think what they've done works very effectively. They've been able to create a TV series that appeals to the general audience who don't necessarily know too much about Sherlock Holmes except that he's a detective in Baker Street, and yet they've got enough Sherlockian material within the scripts, in-jokes and references to things in the stories, to please the fans as well. **VORTEX**

You're very much a Holmes aficionado.

How's Nick Briggs doing in the role?

■ He's doing brilliantly! Actually, it is a very, very difficult part to play, I think. So many actors have failed in doing it, no names mentioned – Edward Woodward. I think he's got that tone and that sense of authority, and also at times the humour.

And what about Richard Earl as Watson?

■ I think he's brilliant. He treads a very, very nice path between the doddery and old and the silly buffer one and he's got a very good voice. In the

Sherlock Holmes: The Tangled Skein is out this month.

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FORTHCOMING RELEASES

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 Foe 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: *The Weather on*

Versimmon by Matthew Griffiths (Book)

Blake's 7: *The Liberator Chronicles – Box Set 1*

Dark Shadows 22: *The Voodoo Amulet*

MARCH 2012

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

Doctor Who - The Fourth Doctor Adventures:

The Wrath of the Icenii (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 So Special

by Robert Shearman (paperback)

Dark Shadows 23: *The House by the Sea*

APRIL 2012

Doctor Who: *The Emerald Tiger*

(159, Fifth Doctor, Tegan, Turlough 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)

Sherlock Holmes: *The Adventure of the*

Perfidious Mariner

Iris Wildthyme *Series 3 Box Set*

(Three full cast adventures)

Dark Shadows 24: *Dress Me in Dark Dreams*

MAY 2012

Doctor Who: *The Jupiter Conjunction*

(160, Fifth Doctor, Tegan, Turlough and Nyssa)

Doctor Who - The Fourth Doctor Adventures:

Trail of the White Worm (1.5, Fourth Doctor and Leela)

Doctor Who - The Companion Chronicles:

The Jigsaw War (6.11, Second Doctor)

Doctor Who - The Lost Stories:

The Guardians of Prophecy (3.4, Sixth Doctor and Peri)

Blake's 7: *The Forgotten* by Mark Wright and

Cavan Scott (Book)

Dark Shadows 25: *TBA*

JUNE 2012

Doctor Who: *TBA*

(161, Fifth Doctor, Tegan, Turlough and Nyssa)

Doctor Who - The Fourth Doctor Adventures:

The Oseidon Adventure (1.6, Fourth Doctor and Leela)

Doctor Who - The Companion Chronicles:

TBA (6.12, Third Doctor)

Doctor Who - The Lost Stories: *Power Play*

(3.5, Sixth Doctor and Peri)

Dark Shadows 26: *TBA*

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*

Sontarans (3.6, Sixth Doctor and Peri)

Counter-Measures: *Series 1 Box Set*

(Four full cast adventures)

Dark Shadows 27: *TBA*

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 Luxor

(3.7, First Doctor, Ian, Susan and Barbara)

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

Dark Shadows 28: *TBA*

SEPTEMBER 2012

Doctor Who: *TBA*

(164, Seventh Doctor, Ace and Hex)

Doctor Who: *TBA* (165, *TBA*)

Doctor Who - The Companion Chronicles:

TBA (7.03, Doctor *TBA*)

Doctor Who - The Lost Stories:

The Rosemariners (3.8, Second Doctor, Jamie and Zoe)

Bernice Summerfield *Box Set 3: Legion*

Bernice Summerfield: *Legion tie-in book*

(title *TBA*)

Dark Shadows 29: *TBA*

OCTOBER 2012

Doctor Who: *TBA* (166, *TBA*)

Doctor Who – *U.N.I.T.: Dominion*

(Seventh Doctor, Raine and Klein)

Doctor Who Special: *Love and War* (Seventh

Doctor, Ace and Benny)

Doctor Who - The Companion Chronicles:

TBA (7.04, Doctor *TBA*)

Dark Shadows 30: *TBA*



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