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# VORTEX



## UNIT: DOMINION

RAINE, KLEIN AND THE OTHER DOCTOR TAKE ON A MULTI-DIMENSIONAL INVASION

**PLUS!**

**LOVE AND WAR**

ADAPTING THE CLASSIC NOVEL!

**DORIAN GRAY**

CONFESSIONS OF ACTOR ALEXANDER VLAHOS

VORTEX ISSUE 44 ■ October 2012

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# SNEAK PREVIEWS AND WHISPERS

## IRIS WILDTHYME SERIES 4

Whatever happened to Iris Wildthyme? That's a question that will be answered in a fourth series of adventures aboard the celestial omnibus – if only we could find the lady herself!

Something nasty befell the trans-temporal adventuress and her best chum Panda at the end of series three: a terror from the future that not even Iris could escape. "And if you want to find out what that was, chucks, you'll just have to go and buy series three, won't you?" Yes... ahem... thanks Iris...

But does that means it's the end of the line for Ms Wildthyme? Not yet. When you're a fabulous righter of wrongs and wronger of rights, there are always adventures to be had.

There are glamorous parties in high society London of the 1960s. Or is it the 1690s? It's hard to tell when you're being pursued by clockwork time wraiths. Or maybe you'd prefer a relaxing massage in the exotic Bamboo Utopia?

How about an exclusive VIP ticket to the Pondsides Darts Championships, where the fate of an alien empire is decided at the oche? We'll even throw in a basket meal, but don't try to nick Panda's chips or he'll give you a punch up the hooter.

And before last orders is called, the very existence of the universe will be called into question. By a lift.

"With our finale already in the bag, Katy Manning and David Benson will be back in studio very soon to record the remaining adventures of **Iris Wildthyme: Series Four**," says co-producer Mark Wright, "and we can't wait."

"Series four sees life on the big red bus change forever," teases co-producer Cavan Scott. "There will be danger, there will be drinks, but there will also be death. It's only a matter of time."

**Iris Wildthyme: Series Four** will be released in August 2013 and available to pre-order soon.



# EDITORIAL

As always, it seems churlish to complain that I'm ridiculously busy, especially when I'm busy with things that I love doing. So I'm not complaining. In fact, as I keep saying to people, I'm mindful of the possibility that one day, as we used to say, the phone will stop ringing. So I must make hay while the sun shines.

Currently, I'm on tour, playing Sherlock Holmes in **Sherlock Holmes: A Study in Fear!** What do you mean, you haven't seen the trailer yet? Check out the Big Finish YouTube channel! The main reason I felt I could take the job was that I knew the dates of this theatre tour would be sporadic, leaving me time to keep hold of the reins of Big Finish. Well, I say 'keep hold'... David Richardson certainly has them firmly in hand, along with Paul Spragg who's riding shotgun, blasting any pesky varmints out of the way whenever necessary.

And as for Big Finish, well, I've just appeared in the Christmas special for **The Confessions of Dorian Gray** – as Sherlock Holmes (hmm, a pattern is emerging) – and Ken Bentley and I are starting to plan when to record Jonathan Barnes' excellent scripts for the upcoming box set **The Ordeals of Sherlock Holmes**. And on top of that, I'm already writing storylines and scripts... for things that David Richardson will only delete from this editorial if I mention them. So I won't. But some of it is connected with the past of **Doctor Who**, some of it with the future, and quite a lot of it to do with the fiftieth anniversary.

I dare say no more. I'll just get back to the hay making!

NICK BRIGGS

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Publisher: Big Finish Productions Ltd.





# FORGING A UNIT

STARS TRACEY CHILDS, BETH CHALMERS AND ALEX MACQUEEN DISCUSS THEIR ROLES IN HUGELY ANTICIPATED BOX SET UNIT: DOMINION WITH PAUL SPRAGG

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Hello all! Tracey, last time I spoke to you, you said you'd like your character, Klein, to have a spin-off series. Well, here you are...

**Tracey Childs:** I'm not daft, am I? I did know exactly what I was saying when I said I think Klein should get a spin-off! And frankly, I think it could run and run for years.

What can you reveal about your characters in *Dominion*?

**TC:** Elizabeth Klein is still Elizabeth Klein. Her memory has been wiped clean, but her characteristics, her personality, are the same. She just doesn't remember very much of her past. So the joy is, I get to play the whole efficient, wonderful Miss Klein again – with slightly bizarre tendencies occasionally – but in a whole new situation. And now she's a goodie, I suppose. Well, who knows? You can decide for yourself, really. But she's certainly in a totally different position, so it's great fun to see the character from a totally different perspective.

**Beth Chalmers:** I think [the Doctor's companion, Raine]'s getting the hang of what the Doctor's world is. To begin with, she's saying, 'Do you normally expect this? Did you and Ace [Sophie Aldred] have a lot of this?' so she's still finding out how the world works but I think by the end of this, she's going, 'Oh, I see. We almost die regularly'. Before, she thinks she's going to die and will probably take a day or two to get over it. Now she's going, 'Oh, I see. Yeah. We're going to die but now we're not dead. Brilliant!' So it's much more fun to play her like that.

**Alex Macqueen:** The Other Doctor's got a lot of colour; he's a split personality, which is great. As an actor it's a real pleasure to play because one minute he's being incredibly pleasant and nice and polite and the next minute he's being really quite foul and horrible, so it's a good part to play. In some ways I waited 'til I got here this morning so I could see how Sylvester [McCoy, the Seventh Doctor] plays it, because I've not watched the *Doctor Whos* as a child. I picked up on some of

his mannerisms and delivery style, playing it in a sort of jolly fashion. So it's slightly eccentric and slightly peculiar. That's my current approach!

Making sure you've got room on the day to hear how another actor's performing and delivering is quite important. If you come to it with a very clear mind as to how to deliver it and how you're going to do it, for some people that does work well, but for me I prefer to actually be able to respond in some way to what I'm hearing and seeing played.

It's probably one of the biggest scripts I've ever read; it's a good 300-and-something pages! But it's great, it's incredibly well written and it's very easy to remember lines if it's well written. And also, there's no big long sentences in them; they're all very manageable. Because it's co-written by an actor, they're very easy lines to deliver and play, so that's a big bonus.

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**"IT'S PROBABLY ONE OF THE BIGGEST SCRIPTS I'VE EVER READ; IT'S A GOOD 300-AND-SOMETHING PAGES!"** ALEX MACQUEEN

**What's your relationship with the Seventh Doctor?**

**TC:** Suspicious. Klein doesn't know who this man is, the umbrella man. She's haunted by someone; she sees him. She sees him watching her and she thinks he's judging her. And he never speaks to her, and every couple of months he just turns up and looks and it's freaking her out completely. So yes, she has a very suspicious relationship with him.

**BC:** I can be more sarcastic towards the Doctor because I'm sure of my position, I suppose. And I can ask outright questions because I don't mind appearing that I don't know. When Ace was around I'd go, 'I know! I know that's what happens!' whereas when Ace isn't there I can say to the Doctor, 'What does that mean? What's this? I don't know about this. What are we doing?' So that's quite cool.

**Klein and Raine have a few run-ins...**

**TC:** Well, excuse me, I didn't ask for her to turn up. I'm definitely suspicious of her!

**She's stealing your spin-off.**

**TC:** Absolutely! What's she doing getting in on the act? Yes, she's fab. And it's very nice to see Elizabeth Klein being rather frosty with another woman. Whoever the other woman is, she's going to be frosty with her!

**BC:** Normally, most of the characters I play, I come out on top. If I take on another woman I'm always the winner, but with her I've got lower status in our battles. Even though I'm the Doctor's companion.

**TC:** I'm sorry, I'm a time travelling astrophysicist! She can't touch Klein's intellect. She may be a little more street-savvy, and have things to offer on a different level, but intellect-wise, don't be silly. This is Klein we're talking about!

**How is the UNIT Klein different to how she's been before?**

**TC:** I guess she's a little more human now. In *Colditz* she was a Nazi. A time travelling physicist with her own TARDIS Nazi, but she was a Nazi. And the joy of the trilogy [main range releases *A Thousand Tiny Wings/Survival of the Fittest/The Architects of History*] was you got to see Klein's story and how she got in that situation in the first place, and realize that the situation she found herself in was not of her own making





and the Doctor did have a very big responsibility in screwing up her life and her timeline. I do think everything she's been through has made her a little more human, even though she doesn't quite remember why or what happened. So yes, she is possibly a little more emotional and human and... compassionate might be a little strong, but she has more sides to her this time. She's not quite as black and white as she used to be.

Is it possible, and should you try, to be a sympathetic Nazi?

**TC:** I went to Salzburg and was in a hotel and the maître d' remembered Hitler and turned round and said, 'He was always good to the dogs'. Yeah, great! Not so kind to Jews...

Everyone's nice to their mother or their dog or their something; everyone has their own sympathetic side, however it comes out. But Elizabeth was not just one-dimensional, there were people she cared about and there was a whole belief system that she had been indoctrinated into believing. The psychological

monsters don't think of themselves as monsters and they will always have the justification for why they do what they do and nine times out of ten they don't think it's their fault. So actually you can't play someone as an out and out monster; as far as you're concerned, you have a justification.

Have you enjoyed working with the rest of the cast members?

**TC:** I haven't worked with any of them before, apart from Alex Mallinson [Maynard and Arunzell], which is very rare, so to have lots of new people to play with who you've never met or performed with before is lovely. They're all very good. It does keep you on your mettle a bit!

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**"I THINK [ALEX MACQUEEN] SHOULD BE THE NEXT TV DOCTOR WHO, I REALLY DO!"**

BETH CHALMERS

**BC:** I was at the National Youth Theatre with Alex [Macqueen]. I've known him for years and years, so when I saw him on the call sheet I did think, 'Yay!' I was very, very pleased to see him because we haven't worked together for a long time. And I think he's absolutely brilliant.

**AM:** I think I first met Beth in 1992 and then I did a Masters at the same place she went to university, so we met there, and over the years we've come into contact with each other on various projects so it was very, very nice to see her name on the cast list and know there's someone you've worked with before, that's very comforting. It's altogether a brilliant environment here. Not just because the lunches are so exquisite, but also because it's a nice bunch of people. Sylvester and Tracey, it's great to be working alongside them. I've now worked with Colin Baker, Tom Baker and Sylvester McCoy, so this is great. I'm building up a portfolio of the Doctors!

**BC:** I think he should be the next TV Doctor Who, I really do! Just hearing him in there, you're going, 'Wow!' He plays slightly barking and very powerful.

**AM:** Oh, crikey Moses! I'd never ever rule anything

# UNIT DOMINION



The universe stands on the brink of a dimensional crisis – and the Doctor and Raine are pulled into the very epicentre of it.

Meanwhile, on Earth, UNIT scientific advisor Dr Elizabeth Klein and an incarnation of the Doctor she's never encountered before are tested to the limit by a series of bizarre, alien invasions.

At the heart of it all is a terrible secret, almost as old as the Time Lords themselves. Reality is beginning to unravel and two Doctors, Klein, Raine and all of UNIT must use all their strength and guile to prevent the whole of creation being torn apart.

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Written By: **Nicholas Briggs** and **Jason Arnopp**

Directed By: **Nicholas Briggs**

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"BECOMING DOCTOR WHO; YOU'D BE FILLING SOME PRETTY IMPRESSIVE SHOES." ALEX MACQUEEN

out. The idea of becoming Doctor Who; you'd be filling some pretty impressive shoes. It comes with the danger of being compared, but that would be a fantastic opportunity. We'll see what the future holds!

You're best known for your comedy roles in **The Inbetweeners** and **The Thick of It**. You must have been delighted to play a truly villainous role in the **Doctor Who Lost Story Paradise 5**.

**AM:** Most of the work I've done so far has been comedy; there's been **The Inbetweeners** and **The Thick of It**. Comedy is my background, but evil and comedy are often very much hand in hand; villainy can be a very amusing activity



as well as a dark activity. The comedy background is useful, but I have done more dramatic parts as well. I did a film called **The Hide**, in which I play a birdwatcher who's not all he seems, and there was comedy in there but it was a much straighter, more dramatic role than I'd played before. But I'm offered comedy more than anything else.

**"I WAS IN BERNICE SUMMERFIELD; I WAS A GIANT ELECTRIC MIXER, BASICALLY. BUT IN DOCTOR WHO I THINK I'D LIKE TO BE SOME BIZARRE ALIENS."**

BETH CHALMERS



You've not made many sojourns into sci-fi or fantasy yet. No, and I'd like to. I must say, it's thoroughly enjoyable.

You did appear in the disappointingly short-lived **Krod Mandon and the Flaming Sword of Fire**, which I rather enjoyed.

That was great fun to film, it was an incredibly good, fun time out in Hungary, but the show, I don't think, met with the same response, which is a pity. I played an obsequious manservant to Matt Lucas's chancellor,

so that was very good fun, to get to know him and work with him, because he's obviously a fantastic actor. I was very lucky to be part of that team.

It might have benefited from having a second series – I'd obviously say that, but it might have found its feet a bit more if it had had a second series, and then gone on forever! I think it was quite an expensive production. It may come back; there may be legs in it, but I'm not aware of any immediate plans.

You've all played several roles for Big Finish; is there anything you'd like to play more of, or play for the first time?

**TC:** Absolutely. I have played a megalomaniacal computer – now I come to think of it, megalomania seems to crop up in most of my characters! I did a **Bernice Summerfield**, so that was fun. So yes, I could come back as all kinds of things.

**BC:** I was an Ice Warrior. Ow. That hurt. But I haven't been enough aliens. I was in **Bernice Summerfield**; I was a giant electric mixer, basically. But in **Doctor Who** I think I'd like to be some bizarre aliens. Or Miss Moneypenny when they do **James Bond**! I think the **James Bond** series should be next...

**AM:** I thoroughly enjoy that the world of **Doctor Who** is very imaginative and inventive in a way that your straightforward dramas aren't. They're great fun, but they're not as colourful and inventive, frankly.

So Tracey, now you've got your spin-off, are you keen for it to continue?

**TC:** Much as we like getting into studio and having fun for a few days, actually we're doing it for the audience. So if the audience turns round and says, 'Oh, that's a great story,' it has a huge life in it. **UNIT** can go anywhere and do anything and, interestingly, it can also deal with almost any Doctor. Although obviously I'd like to keep Sylvester coming back and back and back because I love working with him. Sorry, but what's he been doing the other side of the world making movies when he could have been here doing audios for Big Finish with me? I mean, for goodness' sake. Keeping me hanging about waiting for him to do this... Being in a booth adjacent to Mr McCoy is a very lovely thing to be. But yeah, a couple of box sets a year would be very nice, thank you!



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DOCTOR  
WHO

# UNIT DOMINION

STARRING

SYLVESTER McCOY, TRACEY CHILDS, BETH CHALMERS AND ALEX MACQUEEN



A TERRIBLE SECRET, AS OLD AS THE TIME LORDS  
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# PULSE POUNDING

**COLIN BAKER GIVES HIS THOUGHTS ON THE ACHERON PULSE, JAGO & LITEFOOT AND REALITY TV TO PAUL SPRAGG**

Hello Colin. You've recently recorded a story I can't yet pronounce.

► It's *The 'Ack-er-on' Pulse*, I'm delighted to say. It's history being the lies we tell ourselves. Yes, good story. I enjoyed doing it.

It's unusual for your Doctor to be companionless.

► The joy of having a companion is that it's someone to tell what you're thinking to or someone to challenge you, or someone to tease information out of you. So the challenge is more to the scriptwriters to get the same level of information out there without having someone for the Doctor to confide in. And also a way of getting two separate storylines going, with

one overarching story. If there's a companion who wanders off or is kidnapped or is sent by the Doctor to do something, you then get other things going on contemporaneously as it were, which of course, when it's just the Doctor on his own... you can still do it, of course, because you can get the characters you haven't seen before going off. But that creates its own problems, because we don't know enough about those characters, whereas if you've got a companion, you've got sixty per cent of the information the listener needs already supplied – who the companion is, what they're like, what they do. If you're simply using characters who are new to this particular story, you have to know more about them before you get involved.

And prior to that you were voyaging with *Jago & Litefoot*.

► Jago and Litefoot, what a joy! I worked with both of them [Trevor Baxter and Christopher Benjamin] in 1969 on my first telly, so I've known them for years and that's a delight. And I know it's a completely different part of the range, but I had great fun doing **Dark Shadows** [*The House by the Sea*]. I loved doing **Dark Shadows** because that was ninety-five per cent me! What has been very gratifying has been the reaction of those who listen to it, who really got into it, so the next thing I want to do is I want to play a part in **Sherlock Holmes**, please.

## "I DID COME DINE WITH ME JUST BEFORE CHRISTMAS. THAT WAS QUITE AN EXPERIENCE..."



You'll have to make nice with Nick Briggs if you want to be in that.

► Oh, if I have to do that, it's not worth it...

What's been going on outside your life on audio?

► It's been a little quiet of late, to be honest. Ever since I finished panto at the beginning of 2011, I've been 'considering projects' is what the polite term is, ie doing very little! A few conventions, a couple of Big Finishes and that's been about it. But I am touring a new play which I'm quite excited about, written by Chris Palin, who's a journalist – well, principally a novelist. He's written a play called *The Final Test*, which

is about a man who's not unlike myself, in that he fails to notice what's going on around him – the fact that his wife has sold their house and two other people have moved in while he was sitting in the garden listening to cricket. And then it's the efforts of the incoming owners of the house to get rid of him from their garden. So it's kind of in the same territory as Alan Ayckbourn; it's an amusing piece but it's also rooted in reality.

You've been getting a lot of congratulations on the Big Finish message boards for your culinary win...

► Oh yes, I did **Come Dine With Me** just before Christmas. That was quite an experience, because it's a half-hour programme; they arrived to start filming at nine o'clock in the morning at my house and finished at five o'clock the following morning, which is four hours short of a whole day! So imagine five days of that, going from one house to another, and by the end of it I was a wreck! I think winning was a tribute to the fact I was so shell-shocked things didn't trouble me at all! And never having cooked anything beyond beans on toast or a hearty breakfast before, I amazed myself by being able to follow a recipe successfully and not irritating the four other people so much that they didn't give me any points!

Would you like to do more reality TV?

► There are certain ones I would try to resist doing, like **Dancing on Ice**, because it hurts when you fall over, I doubt they'd ask me and I doubt I'd be any good at it! Fifteen years ago I might have enjoyed **Strictly Come Dancing** but now the bones are too achy. I wouldn't mind going to the jungle [for *I'm a Celebrity*]; I'd give that a go, see what it's like. It's a good way of losing weight, for God's sake! The best diet in the universe: survive the whole duration of being in the jungle and refuse to eat everything!

**Doctor Who: *The Acheron Pulse* is out this month**  
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**Doctor Who: *Voyage to Venus* is out in November**  
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# ALL'S FAIR...

## PRODUCER SCOTT HANDCOCK PROVIDES A DIARY COVERING THE MAKING OF **DOCTOR WHO: LOVE AND WAR**

**I**T WAS THE SUMMER OF 2011 WHEN FELLOW producer Gary Russell and I were mulling over ideas for how to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of Bernice Summerfield. It's quite a milestone for a spin-off character, and the fact she's remained consistently popular was worthy of celebrating so, whilst we knew we had two box sets, two books, and were already pulling together our plans for the charity mania that is *Many Happy Returns*, we still felt we needed to honour her roots somehow.

'How about a **Companion Chronicle**?' I foolishly suggested, most probably over e-mail. 'We could reunite Lisa [Bowerman, Benny] with Sylvester [McCoy, the Doctor] and Sophie [Aldred, Ace] and set something during the *New Adventures* that taps into her history. Hey, we could even call it *War and Love!*'

I chuckled. (No one else did.)

Lovely line producer David Richardson then came back and, instead of nodding politely and backing

away as he normally does, suggested something even better. Something we'd considered, then disregarded as out-of-the-question: a full-cast adaption of Bernice's very first adventure, *Love and War*.

Now, I'll be honest: I loved this idea. The chance to work with Sophie and Sylvester was irresistible, and – even though I was too young when the novel came out – I obviously knew of its standing in fandom, and that the pressure was absolutely on to get it right. This is a unique release, a one-off – novels don't always suit other mediums (though this one did). Either way, we had to make it count.

**T**HANKFULLY, BERNICE'S CREATOR, PAUL CORNELL, was on board from the off... possibly before we even mentioned the idea. He likes to say 'yes', does Paul. His one proviso, which we'd already pre-empted because she's marvellous, was that Jacqueline Rayner would be the writer we asked to



adapt it. (Now, as anyone who's aware of why we're producing a charity adventure will know, Jac's schedule is not always necessarily an easy one to navigate, but when she commits, by God does she commit. And she

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**“GARY RUSSELL AND I WERE MULLING OVER IDEAS FOR HOW TO CELEBRATE THE TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF BERNICE SUMMERFIELD. IT'S QUITE A MILESTONE FOR A SPIN-OFF CHARACTER.”**



really rose to the challenge of bringing such an iconic book to life!)

By now, it was September. Ish. We knew we had to record in January to accommodate everyone's schedules, so we just had to sit and wait, twiddling thumbs and tapping at tables. It's a strange experience waiting for a script where you already know what's going to happen. The anticipation's still there, but for completely different reasons. You want to know if it still stands up, if it keeps your attention, if it feels fresh and new and exciting!

Which, as we discovered upon delivery in December, it does. Very much so. There's a real sense of jeopardy and pace. It's a whirlwind of characters and situations and events: new friends, ancient enemies and all manner of people in between. Then, because I am a fool who doesn't quite know when I have enough on, I

## ORIGINAL WRITER PAUL CORNELL REVEALS HIS THOUGHTS ON THE NEW LEASE OF LIFE FOR LOVE AND WAR

*Love and War's* a very special release, celebrating twenty years of Bernice Summerfield. Why do you think the character's endured the way she has?

▶ She was originally created to be the domestic foil to a very cosmic Doctor, and I think there are all sorts of things that need deflating like that. In truth, I'm continually surprised and pleased by her success.

Why do you think she was chosen as the Doctor's new companion all those years ago?

▶ Maybe because the audience was getting older too, and the idea of a companion with an older point of view appealed.

How did you react when the idea of adapting the novel was first put to you by Big Finish? Were you protective at all?

▶ I wanted to make sure it was done well, but when I heard they wanted Jac Rayner to do it, it was clear that it would be. And I got to just take a quick look and cross a few Ts. I'm after that 'mucked about with' credit that Terry Pratchett gets on his TV adaptations.

Obviously when you wrote the novel, you already had Sylvester and Sophie's voices in your head. What was it like hearing them bring those words to life – and Lisa, who didn't become Bernice for another six years after it was printed?

▶ It's quite startling how Lisa's inhabited the character to such a degree now that her saying this dialogue seems natural rather than strange. And Sylvester and Sophie really sound right for it too. It all seemed to fit together quite remarkably well. The story's been streamlined a bit, but that was necessary, and the cutting is done so well that I don't think, unless you read the novel the week before, you'll notice what's been got rid of.

What do you think the appeal is of this audio for those who read the original novel?

▶ It's that it's done with actors, on audio, and thus with an infinite budget. And you get the *Doctor Who Magazine* prelude thrown in. It's a love song to the *New Adventures*, really, and I think, for the uninitiated, a good introduction to Bernice.

dug out the old Prelude from the pages of *Doctor Who Magazine* and another e-mail exchange ensued:

'Hey! Wouldn't it be fun if we adapted the Prelude too and released that beforehand, just like they did back in '92?'

'Do it!' came the reply. So we did. And it adds a whole new dimension to the story: a sense of dread and impending melancholy, all brought to life so beautifully by Sophie. (Seriously, download it, listen to it! Whet those appetites!)

And so, we had scripts. All we needed was a cast, so Gary called upon all manner of actors, old and new, to come and play. James Redmond is a loveable, gentle Jan. Bernard Holley is a villain who genuinely could seduce you into suicide. Maggie Ollerenshaw's exactly as you imagine Ace's mother... in fact, everyone's at the top of their game, whether they knew the novel or not. The characters really do leap off the page, and everyone knew exactly what they were doing. (Special mention



goes to Sophie Aldred for channelling Nineties Ace, and really driving the narrative all the way through. That woman astounds me more than ever!)

**I**T'S PROBABLY A CLICHÉ – BIG FINISH RECORDINGS are generally full of laughter and merriment, usually after lunch – but *Love and War* felt genuinely special. Reuniting the three leads was particularly joyous, especially out in the green room... So much happened on those days: we persuaded

**“IT’S PROBABLY A CLICHÉ – BIG FINISH RECORDINGS ARE GENERALLY FULL OF LAUGHTER AND MERRIMENT.”**

Sophie to sign up to Twitter, we ate lots and lots of trifle, and Sylv randomly stepped into the courtyard at one point, where a gust of wind caused a designer skirt to land atop his head. Mad, fun times!

Then it was in the can, recorded. Months of work, two days in studio, and it felt like it was over – but then it all begins again. We handed it over to our post-production supremo, Steve Foxon, who has pulled the whole thing together and made it sound amazing, truly amazing. And Andy Lambert did the cover – that new striking image, which now seems somehow more iconic than the novel that spawned it.

DOCTOR WHO - LOVE AND WAR



A new adaptation of the Virgin *New Adventures* novel which introduced Bernice Summerfield; also contains the prelude from *Doctor Who Magazine* and a behind-the-scenes documentary about the making of the story.

**WRITTEN BY: PAUL CORNELL, ADAPTED BY JACQUELINE RAYNER  
DIRECTED BY: GARY RUSSELL**

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# Bernice Summerfield

STARRING LISA BOWERMAN



# LEGION

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# GRAY MATTERS

**ALEXANDER VLAHOS INTRODUCES THE CONFESSIONS OF DORIAN GRAY, AND THE TITULAR CHARACTER HE PLAYS**

Hi Alex. Welcome to the Big Finish fold! How did you come to be involved in *The Confessions of Dorian Gray*?

► Through working with Big Finish on several projects and producer Scott Handcock really. I did a Big Finish episode of *Bernice Summerfield* playing Dorian Gray which was set in the far future – a version of Dorian Gray that’s quite different from the version in this new series, mind you. As we were recording that episode, Scott mentioned that it would be a great idea for a series. At the time, I just laughed and thought, ‘I’ll believe that when I see it!’ Cut to a year and a half later, and there I was getting these scripts sent to me. It was pretty mental – in a good way.

What did you make of the premise when you first heard about it?

► I thought it was equally bonkers and brave. I was terrified too, at the thought of having to be the main

person of the series. That it was relying on me to carry it in some way. Usually I’m used to rocking up at the studio to be greeted by well-known actors, whose projects I’m guesting on – not the other way around. It was brilliant though, I’m in huge debt to Scott and Big Finish for the opportunity to tackle a challenging role. It’s rare that an actor gets given this chance so early into a career.

What can you tell us about the stories that make up the series?

► Each of them has been penned by writers who have risen to the challenge of writing for such a complicated anti-hero character as Dorian. I’ve been blessed by the scripts – such fun to read first time around, then heaps more fun to actually record. We have the last meeting of Oscar Wilde and Dorian, a story set right in the heart



of Blitz-torn London which contains horrifying ghosts, a leap across the pond to a Singapore dragon duel, a heartbreaking love story between two unlikely candidates smack in the middle of the Eighties, and to cap it all off, modern day London and Dorian has found himself as an unlikely king – king of the economy! – and is faced with a weird monster from a very unusual source...

**Sounds like there's a lot going on! So what was it that appealed to you about the series, and what do listeners have to look forward to?**

► It has everything. It's breaking new ground with what Big Finish has done before, I think: a horror series that has at its heart a character who, for most people, is the epitome of an anti-hero. Dorian is complicated, not your

first, but when we got started, the layout and the feel of the new studio, I felt, fitted perfectly to what we were trying to achieve. It felt like Dorian. It added a sense of atmosphere that I hope will be apparent to the listeners.

**And Dorian's not the only thing you've been occupied with lately. What else have you been up to?**

► Currently, I'm coming to the end of an eight-month shoot for the BBC, playing Mordred in the fifth season of **Merlin** – which has been the most amazing experience. I'll be sad to finish in October, but looking forward to what else is on the horizon... and of course this series, which I'm incredibly proud of. Awaiting the reaction to this is going to be a little nerve-racking but it's something I'm eagerly waiting for!



**“PEOPLE EXPECTING THE DORIAN FROM THE BOOK WILL BE PLEASANTLY SURPRISED AS TO WHERE THIS SERIES IS TAKING HIM.”**

usual protagonist. People expecting the Dorian from the book will be pleasantly surprised as to where this series is taking him. I've made some bold choices on him, I hope people will just run with it.

**The Confessions of Dorian Gray** also marks the first Big Finish audio to be recorded in Cardiff. How did that compare to your previous experiences?

► Recording in Cardiff was a delight, if a little unconventional... I did miss the studios in London at

## THE CONFESSIONS OF DORIAN GRAY

Paris, 1900. One of Dorian Gray's oldest friends is on his deathbed, locked away in a room at the notorious Hotel D'Alsace, where he is fighting a duel to the death. And when Dorian comes to visit him one last time, both men realise they may never be allowed to check out...

**The Confessions of Dorian Gray: *This World Our Hell*** is out this month for download from [www.bigfinish.com](http://www.bigfinish.com)

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## EFFICIENT AND PLEASANT

I feel compelled to write to you about your fantastic Sales team. I have phoned them twice this week with questions about my orders and spoke to James, who dealt with my enquiries. He was so helpful and obliging. It is a pleasure to have someone on the end of the phone who deals with issues in an efficient and pleasant manner. Big Finish is amazing in many ways and this just adds to the fantastic nature of your company. The best customer service I've encountered. Keep up the good work.

PS: *Black and White* was the best yet! Roll on *Gods and Monsters*!!

### Keith Goldsbrough

Nick: Keith, we will pass this along to Alison and her brilliant team. We're not a vast company with hundreds of staff. We have a small, dedicated team who work incredibly hard and often under a lot of pressure. Our special offers, recently, have put them under a lot of stress, but they've never fallen behind the 28 days delivery deadline, and are always mostly way, way ahead of it. They are great and we love them!

## REGENERATION

In Pip and Jane Baker's TV story *Time and the Rani*, the regeneration of the Sixth Doctor into the Seventh was a rather cursory affair – necessarily so, given Colin Baker's understandable unavailability to return to the show for just one scene. The absence of a 'proper' regeneration for the Sixth Doctor is, in one sense, a 'lost story'. Has Big Finish ever considered ways of returning to this particular regeneration, to do something more interesting with it? I'm sure that creative ways of developing a scene could be found while sustaining continuity with the little which is actually seen on screen. Ideally, the project would involve Colin, Sylvester McCoy, Bonnie Langford and, perhaps, authorisation/input by Pip and Jane Baker themselves. It's the sort of opportunity which only Big Finish could do something about and which might be fitting as part of the Doctor's fiftieth anniversary. Feasible at all?

### Clive Springham

Nick: The trouble is, Clive, that this regeneration was depicted in the series. We saw it happen, however 'cursory' you might feel it was. So there's nothing much we can do about it.

## MILLION POUND LOST STORY

Well blow me if you ain't done it again. I don't know why I get surprised when everything you do is done with a labour of love and comes out sounding like a multi-million pound movie.

I didn't know how you would approach *Masters of Luxor* as the script has been available for nearly fifteen years and it was (like *Farewell, Great Macedon*) possibly not a

finished script and of course tweaked by William Hartnell and the cast and crew and David Whitaker editing the scripts, so I am sure some of the overt stuff would be toned down, as you have yourselves done.

Congratulations to Nigel Robinson on a superb job and to William and Carole for giving us so much history and bringing Ian and Susan to life fifty years after they first did. And Joseph Kloska for being really amazing with all the voices. What a dark and powerful drama this is.

I love stories; I am so glad Big Finish loves them too.

### Bryan Simecott

Nick: We do indeed. It is our reason for being.

## EMOTIONAL AUDIO

I listen to the BF stories on my commute to work. Casual listening, you know. But *To the Death* had me rivetted the whole time. Can't imagine what the other drivers thought of the looks on my face as they passed! And when the Daleks began exterminating major characters! Oh my...! Hasn't been anything like that in *Doctor Who* for a long time. Wonderful stuff! Can't wait for the *Dark Eyes* box set!

### James Stewart

Nick: Thanks, James. I had a similar experience when I listened to *A Death in the Family*. I was particularly embarrassed when waiting at some traffic lights, with other drivers glancing across to see me bawling my eyes out. Glad you enjoyed *To the Death*. *Dark Eyes* is, I believe, a worthy sequel. But you can be the judge of that.

## McCOY AND McGANN

Just a note to say thank you for the wonderful work on the audio discussion with Mr McCoy and Mr McGann on the *Doctor Who* TV Movie DVD. I listened to the director audio first and then decided to listen to the second audio. What a great surprise to be able to listen to all three of you. Thank you for everything that you have done over the years to keep the program alive. I enjoy the work that you and all of Big Finish are doing in the genre.

### Greg Job

Nick: Goodness me, we did that ages ago! Yes, lots of fun. Paul and Sylv were on very good form and it was an honour to be there.

## EXTRA JOY

Just finished the latest *Companion Chronicles* and once again was struck by what a joy the audio extras are. I've noticed this on the DVD releases as well, that having the cast discuss the work after the fact, allowing you to be in the room as they remember their time on the show and their connection with the series, allows that extra bit of intimacy. I often find myself, while listening to an adventure, wondering what the actor will have to say

about a particular storyline, and I'm always charmed by their memories of their Doctor. Thanks again, Big Finish.

### Craig Fernandez

Nick: The 'extras' were something that I was keen on having on all our releases when I became executive producer. Can you believe there was a time when people were suspicious and doubting of them? I know! Almost inconceivable.

Thanks to David Richardson for his excellent interviewing, and to Jamie Griffiths and Martin Montague who do such great work editing the extras together.

## MERLIN?

I would like to start off saying that I am a huge fan of Big Finish Productions and that I love your *Dark Shadows* and *Sherlock Holmes* storylines.

I was wondering if you guys have ever considered creating an audio drama tie-in to *Mertlin*, the BBC TV series. The show is great but one thing it was short on was stories involving Lancelot, played by Santiago Cabrera. After appearing in only six spaced out episodes, Lancelot died. I think it would be great to hear about his solo adventures and his adventures with Arthur. I would love to know why he was the bravest and most noble of them all. Just an idea.

### George Rodriguez

Nick: It's not something we've ever considered, to be honest. Although I did just work with Alexander Vlahos in *The Confessions of Dorian Gray* – and he's in *Mertlin*!

## GRAY CD?

Just wondering if there will be a CD release of *The Confessions of Dorian Gray*?

### Joseph Baneth Allen

Nick: We have no plans to do that. This is part of an experiment with a new model for releasing. It will allow us to take more risks with new and experimental subject matter as the lack of CD pressing and printing costs reduces the budget significantly.

## TIMEY - WIMEY

Okay, so I am many months out of date but I just finished listening to *Cobwebs* today. Until today I thought Steven Moffat was the master of timey-wimey episodes. This is the best audio since *The Witch from the Well*. The story was so well plotted, so interconnected and was as for the reunion of Tegan, Nyssa and Turlough, it was perfect. I felt like it was 1983 all over again. I was in my grandparents den and having a blast. I cannot say enough good things: the story, the acting and the writing were so on point! Stories like this keep me a loyal customer.

### Paul Wersten

Nick: Glad to hear it, Paul. You're being a bit timey-wimey yourself there, as *The Witch from the Well* came after *Cobwebs*, didn't it? Or has my brain melted?



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# LISTEN AGAIN: OMEGA

**KENNY SMITH REVISITS THE FIFTH DOCTOR'S ENCOUNTER WITH AN OLD TIME LORD FOE IN OMEGA!**

**B**ringing back old enemies is always a popular move with Big Finish fans. Big Finish released *Omega* as monthly play number 47 in August 2003, as part of the fortieth anniversary celebrations, reuniting Peter Davison with his *Arc of Infinity* co-star Ian Collier, who sadly died in 2008.

It was Nev Fountain's first play for Big Finish, and he said: "*The Three Doctors* has such imagination, humour and flair to it – it is such an underrated script, and Bob Baker and Dave Martin are underrated writers – and *Omega* is such a good creation. In *Arc of Infinity* Johnny Byrne injects pathos and sympathy in *Omega* and makes him a far more interesting character.

"I love *Arc* for the same reason I was excited about writing for the Fifth Doctor versus *Omega*. They are so well matched, because *Omega* isn't a particularly good villain, and the Fifth Doctor isn't a particularly good hero. They never quite match up their words to their deeds, which appeals to me.

"It struck me from watching *Three Doctors* and *Arc of Infinity* how *Omega* scales down his ambitions and his plans each time we meet him – from destroying the universe to just existing in the universe. I scale them down still further – he's preoccupied by how the universe will remember him. A lot of it's about history, and like *Jubilee*, it's the perception of history, and how easy it is for history to distort how you remember characters and people."

Joining the cast for his Big Finish debut was actor Conrad Westmaas, who made such a good impression on producer

Gary Russell that it led to his casting as the Eighth Doctor's companion C'rizz.

He said: "There's a real sense of fun underneath it all and Nev's knockabout *Hitch Hiker's*-style treatment somehow feels right for a villain who seems to struggle to find his place in Time Lord history.

"Taken in the right spirit, there are some chuckles to be had in hearing his story told via amateur reenactments, half-baked myths and talking action figurines and there's some poignant and grisly stuff in there too and plenty of nuggets of Gallifreyan history in the mix with references and flashbacks to Rassilon, the Hand of *Omega* and TARDIS graveyards.

"I'll always have a soft spot for this story as it was my first introduction to the bonkers world of Big Finish and brings back happy memories – the brilliant Hugo Myatt, the very glamorous Caroline Munroe, and being able to feel the late Ian Collier's deep, booming voice rumbling in the floor whenever he spoke. **Carry On** actress Faith Kent completely steals the show with her beautiful delivery of her few lines – pure class."

Nev added: "Ian Collier's performance was utterly amazing. What a voice! I still get goosebumps just listening to the trailer, when this unmistakable rumble comes through the speakers talking about Peylix. There are two reasons why this story belongs to the world of audio, and the other reason was his fantastic voice. I am so glad he managed to return to the part one more time."





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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: **The Last Post**  
(7.04, Third Doctor)  
Dark Shadows 30: **Dreaming of the Water**  
**The Confessions of Dorian Gray** (download only, weekly from 27th)

## NOVEMBER 2012

Doctor Who: **The Shadow Heart** (167, Seventh Doctor)  
Doctor Who: The Eighth Doctor Box Set – **Dark Eyes**  
Doctor Who: The Sixth Doctor Specials 1: **The Voyages of Jago & Litefoot**  
– **Voyage to Venus**  
Doctor Who - The Companion Chronicles: **Return of the Rocket Men**  
(7.05, First Doctor)  
Blake's 7: **Archangel** by Scott Harrison  
Dark Shadows 31: **The Haunted Refrain**  
Bernice Summerfield: **Many Happy Returns** (download only)  
Stargate SG-1: **Series 3 Box Set 2** (Three full cast adventures)

## DECEMBER 2012

Doctor Who: **1001 Nights** (168, Fifth Doctor and Nyssa)  
Doctor Who - The Companion Chronicles: **The Child** (7.06, Fourth Doctor)  
Doctor Who: The Sixth Doctor Specials 2: **The Voyages of Jago & Litefoot**  
– **Voyage to the New World**  
Dark Shadows 32: **A Christmas Collins**

## JANUARY 2013

Doctor Who: **The Wrong Doctors** (169, Sixth Doctor and Mel)  
Doctor Who - The Fourth Doctor Adventures: **The Auntie Matter**  
(2.1, Fourth Doctor and Romana)  
Doctor Who - The Companion Chronicles: **The Flames of Cadiz**  
(7.07, First Doctor, double disc)

## FEBRUARY 2013

Doctor Who: **Spaceport Fear** (170, Sixth Doctor and Mel)  
Doctor Who - The Fourth Doctor Adventures: **The Sands of Life**  
(2.2, Fourth Doctor and Romana)  
Doctor Who - The Companion Chronicles: **TBA** (7.08, Second Doctor)  
**Gallifrey V** (Three full cast adventures)  
Blake's 7: **The Liberator Chronicles – Box Set 3**

Blake's 7: **Warship** (Full cast drama)  
Blake's 7: **Warship** (Novelisation)

## MARCH 2013

Doctor Who: **The Seeds of War** (171, Sixth Doctor and Mel)  
Doctor Who - The Fourth Doctor Adventures: **War Against the Laan**  
(2.3, Fourth Doctor and Romana)  
Doctor Who - The Companion Chronicles: **TBA** (7.09, Third Doctor)  
Jago & Litefoot: **Series Five Box Set**  
Big Finish Classics: **Treasure Island**

## APRIL 2013

Doctor Who: **TBA** (172, TBA)  
Doctor Who - The Fourth Doctor Adventures: **The Justice of Jalvar**  
(2.4, Fourth Doctor, Romana, Jago and Litefoot)  
Doctor Who - The Companion Chronicles: **The Alchemists**  
(7.10, First Doctor)  
Bernice Summerfield: **New Frontiers Box Set**  
Bernice Summerfield: **New Frontiers tie-in book** (title tba)

## MAY 2013

Doctor Who: **TBA** (173, TBA)  
Doctor Who - The Fourth Doctor Adventures: **Phantoms of the Deep**  
(2.5, Fourth Doctor and Romana)  
Doctor Who - The Companion Chronicles: **TBA** (7.11, Doctor TBA)  
Blake's 7: **The Liberator Chronicles – Box Set 4**  
Blake's 7: **Lucifer** by Paul Darrow  
Blake's 7: **Lucifer audiobook** (Read by Paul Darrow)

## JUNE 2013

Doctor Who: **TBA** (174, TBA)  
Doctor Who - The Fourth Doctor Adventures: **The Dalek Contract**  
(2.6, Fourth Doctor and Romana)  
Doctor Who - The Companion Chronicles: **TBA** (7.12, Doctor TBA)

## JULY 2013

Doctor Who: **TBA** (175, TBA)  
Doctor Who - The Fourth Doctor Adventures: **The Final Phase**  
(2.7, Fourth Doctor and Romana)  
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