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BONNIE LANGFORD ON REUNITING WITH COLIN
TOM'S SECOND SERIES PREVIEWED

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THEY'RE LOOKING FORWARD TO IN 2013!

ISSUE 47 • JANUARY 2013

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JAGO AND LITEFOOT SERIES FIVE

A change of scenery for series five, as Victorian adventurers Henry Gordon Jago and Professor George Litefoot are fish out of water in a different era. The backdrop may be different but there are still mysteries to explore – again aided by the reliable Ellie (now a thriving businesswoman) and a certain Sacker (but not quite as you may remember him...) Jago and Litefoot will be back home in the late 19th century for series six, but how they get there must remain a mystery for now. In the meantime, settle back and enjoy four quality tales that involve a restaurant where the food eats people, a dangerous book, and a deadly threat from the past.
(Out March 2013)

CREDITS:

Managing Editor: Jason Haigh-Ellery
Editors: Nicholas Briggs, David Richardson
Assistant Editor: Paul Spragg
Design: Mark Plastow
Web Services: Hughes Media
BFP Administration: Alison Taylor, Charlotte Baker,
Frances Welsh
Publisher: Big Finish Productions Ltd.

EDITORIAL

As the year begins, I'd just like to welcome aboard all those of you who have dipped your toes into the Big Finish audio pool (or other such terrible metaphors) after coming on board in the wave of enthusiasm for *Dark Eyes*, featuring the return of Paul McGann as the Eighth Doctor (in a leather jacket!!!) and the arrival of his brand new assistant Molly O'Sullivan (played by the rather brilliant Ruth Bradley). Some of you have also come on board via our 12 Days of Christmas special offer on the website, when we went completely bonkers and offered up some really great stuff for just £2.99 per download for 48 hours only. So... if you're on board, please do feel free to stay with us for the rest of our voyage.

This year, we hope to build on the successes of last year. There will, of course, be a follow-up to *Dark Eyes*... in fact, there will be more than one follow-up. And carrying on from the great success of our first series of Tom Baker Fourth Doctor stories, we commence our second series this month, with the late, lovely and very much lamented Mary Tamm as Romana. As well as having been involved with scripts and directing for this series, I've also been doing some of the music and have been having a fantastic time. In fact, I think it's fair to say, I love everything about my job... except the deadlines. Ah well, there's always something to moan about, even when you're doing your most favourite thing in the whole wide universe.

Also coming up this year (release dates yet to be confirmed) will be a brand new series of *Sherlock Holmes*, in which I play the title role alongside the brilliant Richard Earl as Dr John Watson. We start recording in a couple of months' time, with some fabulous scripts by Jonathan Barnes and the ever-brilliant direction of Ken Bentley (once thought to be a mere legend, but now far too omnipresent for his existence to be doubted). Add to that a brilliant, blisteringly faithful adaptation of *Frankenstein* the works, and you can see that this year really has a huge amount to offer – much more than I've had space to mention here! Keep an eye on our website news page, Twitter, Facebook and the pages of this 'ere free magazine *Vooorteeex* for all the necessary updates.

Right... I'm off back to work!

NICK BRIGGS



OH BRING BACK MY BONNIE TO ME

AFTER TOO LONG AN ABSENCE FROM THE BIG FINISH AUDIO RANGE, BONNIE LANGFORD TELLS PAUL SPRAGG HOW SHE FEELS ABOUT RETURNING TO THE CHARACTER OF MEL

Hello Bonnie, and welcome back. You've been keeping us all fascinated with tales of your career in the green room today.

■ My anecdotes!

And it's an astonishing career. How old were you when you started off in **Doctor Who**?

■ Oh God, I don't know. Was I mid-twenties or something?

It would have been 1986.

■ Oh, don't do that, you're making me do maths now! Yes, I would be 22.

What's amazing is that you were already a household name by then.

■ I know, I know! And I didn't know that most people who did **Doctor Who** were not at that point. As far as I was concerned, it was another thing to do.

What brought you to it in the first place?

■ [Producer] John Nathan-Turner. I met him at a dinner and casually said, 'Oh, that sounds fun, I'd love to do that,' and little did I know I was signing myself up for an assistant job! I thought he would say, 'Come and be a little guest in one episode' or something.

You were in the unusual position of being a companion who bridged Doctors, working with both Colin Baker and Sylvester McCoy.

■ Well, I knew them both previously, so it was interesting. Dear old Sylvester, I kind of feel like I... not helped him through, but I felt like I was there to support him when he first joined, because it was quite a step for him. I always felt that we were sort of the rep company and the guest stars would come in; we were like the hosts of a party, on the first day particularly, guiding people through. Tour guides, helping people through the world of **Doctor Who** and how it all madly starts!

"IT'S THE BEST STORY EVER TOLD REALLY, ISN'T IT? IT HAS NO BEGINNING, MIDDLE AND END, IT HAS NO LIMITS."

BONNIE ON DOCTOR WHO

Did you expect your **Doctor Who** experience to last this long?

■ Yes, I always knew. It's the best story ever told really, isn't it? It has no beginning, middle and end, it has no limits. So in that respect, as long as you've got your formula, which was that partnership and then good versus evil and the fact that good will always win through, however you dress that up is always going to be a recipe for success, really.

What they've proved now with the new series is that if you move with the times, and you put the budget behind it and the creative team behind it, then that's gonna make it very saleable. Whereas at the time I was in it, it was sort of floundering.

What I didn't know when I first joined the show was how massive it was globally. I had no idea. And that was quite daunting at the time as well. I was bemused by it all, quite frankly! And I think that's what I tried to support Sylvester with, the fact this is like no other job, you will be asked questions that you never knew you had to think about and will constantly get that for ever more!



THE WRONG DOCTORS AVAILABLE THIS MONTH



With Evelyn gone, the Doctor sets course for his destiny... in the form of his first meeting with Miss Melanie Bush, a computer programmer from the village of Pease Pottage, currently busy rehearsing with the local Amateur Dramatic Society – and blissfully unaware that her future is on its way, in his TARDIS.

Make that two TARDISes. Because at that very moment, a slightly younger Doctor is flying into Pease Pottage, too – returning his future companion Melanie Bush to her rightful place and time, after they were flung together during the course of his Time Lord trial.

Time travel is a complicated business – the iguanadon terrorising Pease Pottage being a case in point. But how much more complicated could things possibly become, if the wrong Doctor were to bump into the wrong Mel?

Written By.....Matt Fitton
 Directed By.....Nicholas Briggs
 The Doctor.....Colin Baker
 Mel.....Bonnie Langford
 Stapleton Petherbridge.....Tony Gardner
 Jedediah Thurwell.....James Joyce
 Mrs Wilberforce.....Patricia Leventon
 Vaneesh.....Beth Chalmers
 Ksilak.....John Banks

Yours has been one of the most requested characters for the audios.

■ How strange! How very flattering! How sweet!

You seem surprised.

■ Of course I am! It's always surprising! It's nice. Why is that?

“ONE OF THE REASONS I DIDN'T STAY WITH THE TV SHOW ANY LONGER WAS I FELT THERE WAS REALLY NO PURPOSE FOR ME WHATSOEVER.”

I think it's partly to do with the 'Big Finish effect'. Colin's said the audios have allowed his Doctor to become more than he was on screen, and I think the same's true for Mel. She certainly spends less time screaming on audio!

■ It took me a long time to get back into it because I did **Doctor Who** and then that was done. Like most jobs you do. That's done, now we go on to the next one. And you might get asked bits and pieces about them. With **Doctor Who**, it was always sort of there but I didn't really talk about it because I didn't feel that anyone really wanted to know.

Also, as you say, when I first started doing Big Finish, I didn't want to just be screaming every thirty seconds and I think one of the reasons I didn't stay with the TV show any longer was I felt there was really no purpose for me whatsoever and that I needed to get my teeth into something else professionally. I had no back-story, I had nothing to pick from. It was strange; whenever you play any kind of part, you know that there's something, whatever your character. Mine was just carrot juice and living in a TARDIS; it's all a little bizarre! There was nothing outside of that that one could pull upon that could perhaps beef it up a bit. So I found that quite limiting and just decided I didn't want to do it any more. I was worried that the audios would be the same thing. I'd be a spare girlie part going, 'But Doctor...' And so it's nice to do these because it gives me the opportunity to perhaps not be as stupid as I looked! There's more to do and say and just to feel that it's a positive input. It's much nicer to be able to feel you can be more of a partner than a stupid sidekick.

You also got the strangest introduction of any companion on TV, just heading off with the Sixth Doctor at the end of *The Trial of a Time Lord* despite never having actually met him. All we really know is you're a computer programmer from Pease Pottage.

■ The weird thing was, I never went near a computer! A person who is a computer programmer at that time would never have been away from some device. I think I pressed a couple of buttons on the TARDIS once but that was it. So to be honest, that in itself was pretty unrealistic, although



Nick Briggs and Bonnie Langford

when I first joined the show, I know I had lots of computer programmers contact me saying, 'You should talk to me, because I'll tell you about it all,' and they were right because it was complete gobbledeygook to me, I had no concept whatsoever! However, I could have pretended. It didn't even get mentioned that I would use any kind of electronic device to zap any monster that was trailing me. All I would do was run like Fay Wray into King Kong's arms. That was it for me. The times have moved so fast, much faster than at that point **Doctor Who** was able to keep up with.

What do you remember about leaving the show?

■ I just went off to a supermarket in the sky with Tony Selby! I remember one thing I did say was, 'Please don't

give me some kind of brain transplant' but it was a bit **Brief Encounter!** It's weird, isn't it? Someone told me the other day that I was supposed to have stayed. The mere fact that John never asked me was by the by. But I never outstay my welcome if I can help it, and I had been contracted for two series, so I didn't expect it to be any more than that. But apparently I was misinterpreting whatever vibes were being given out!

You started out as a child actor, so you must be very...

■ Tired.

Well, that as well, yes! But I was actually going to ask how tricky it is to keep so much work coming in as the years go on.

■ Well, I like the job. It's playtime, isn't it? You do have to concentrate, but ultimately, it's about enjoying it as much as possible. Even when you don't feel like enjoying it, you find the way of enjoying it because that's what makes you do a better job. And it's what I do. I can't think of doing anything else, I wouldn't be employable to do anything else, and I'm just really fortunate that I've been able to keep going, really, and keep moving on and hopefully doing better and approaching things differently and better, and just growing. I am really lucky in this job that I have access to express myself in some respects. Even if it's through



the voice of whatever part I'm playing, to be able to have that creative outlet is quite levelling. The industry's weird. Always has been. I do like it. And it still plays tricks on you and it's a business and you have to get used to that. But ultimately you have a really fun time.

Did you always have a soft spot for **Doctor Who** or did you see it as just a job amongst a lot of other jobs?

■ I think it was a job amongst a lot of other jobs, except for the fact that it's still there. It's still very alive. And it's amazing the interest other people have in it. And the fact that still, after all these years, it has such a soft spot for so many people in different countries, different levels, different generations – and it's a TV show. And yet it's more than that to so many people. So one has to feel quite humbled by the fact you're part of that history, bizarre though that may be.

First, when I joined, it was a job. Absolutely. But it is more than that. It's sort of a passport in some respects. It's fascinating how it has a key to unlock many doors at times. Even if just to have a fun conversation with somebody. I spend a lot of time in the States and they know it there, they like it there. They find it eccentric and fun, and to think that in that huge country and in the grand scheme of how much television has been made, it still has a place.

Have you watched the new series?

■ I haven't watched it for a long time, actually. My daughter used to watch it a lot and then she kind of got freaked by it. She's in that phase of believing it all, because we did go through a phase of it being a bit freaky and then we used to watch the 'making of' straight after so she could work out that it wasn't real. And then her imagination's taken over again. She won't even watch **Harry Potter**! She'll watch the most mature and adult thing – she's only eleven – but something like **Doctor Who** still gets to her. Isn't that funny?

Meanwhile, I see you're still keeping busy; I was channel hopping the other day and spotted you on **Who Wants to Be a Millionaire**.

■ I did alright on that! I won **Weakest Link** once as well. I've just done **Pointless**, which was so bizarre. I didn't know the rules! They take a long time to record and we had to keep asking in between the different sections, 'What are we supposed to be doing? What are the rules? So we can't

say that but we must say that...?' It's like, 'Oh God, who ever thought of this game???' But we won it! That's one with Todd Carty, who I'm in [**Monty Python**-inspired stage play] **Spamalot** with at the moment.

My Mum recently saw **Spamalot** in Bristol; she said to tell you you were brilliant.

■ It's so funny because we do this thing where they go, 'You have to take this show all the way to...' and we used to say wherever we were. And when we were in Bristol, the guy who plays the Knight of Ni said, 'And you have to take it all the way to... Bristol!' and normally the audience would go, 'Oh!' or laugh or something, but somebody went, 'That's where we are! Yes, that's the point! That's why we say that! They loved it in Bristol. They came dressed up as knights. It was very funny.'

I'm coming to see it in a week.

■ Are you a **Python** fan? Do you know all the sketches?

Pretty much.

■ You'll be saying them with us.

I'll give you a wave from halfway back in the auditorium.

■ I might not wave back. Just because it's not appropriate; Lady of the Lake and all that. But you'll know that I mean it in my heart. **VORTEX**



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A GREAT DEAL

I've just read the letters page of November's *Vortex* magazine and while I can understand Keith Andrews' point of view I have to say that I, for one, have really appreciated the recent pre-order Special Offers.

I bought the two Jago & Litefoot specials and the *Dark Eyes* box set, and paying a few months in advance was a pretty good trade-off for getting such a good deal. £5 a CD is a real bargain these days, particularly considering the amount of work that goes into your productions. With the offer extended I'm now going to be picking up **UNIT: Dominion and Love & War** too.

With crowd funding becoming increasingly popular, including such **Who**-related projects as *Behind the Sofa* and *Fan Fiction Illustrated*, I think that fandom will become much more used to this sort of thing.

I just wanted to say that I think these deals were great value, and while I understand it wouldn't be practical or profitable for Big Finish to do this with all your new releases, I certainly hope there will be similar deals in the future.

Mike Howlett

Nick: Thanks, Mike. There are plans for future releases to be offered in this way.

MORE EIGHTH?

I've just finished listening to **Doctor Who: Dark Eyes**, and I loved it! I listened to a section every day while on my walk, and the more exciting it got, the faster I went! With Paul McGann and Ruth Bradley at my side, I could be winning races! (Well, almost.) But then I went and looked at the forthcoming releases in the latest issue of *Vortex*, and I can't see any Eighth Doctor coming up for the next year! Please tell me he'll be back – and Molly O'Sullivan, too, even if I have to wait so long. I'd love to hear that they'll be having more adventures together after the brilliant *Dark Eyes*.

Thanks for all your hard work on this wonderful, exciting, absolutely brilliant production!

Melanie Goldmund

Nick: There will indeed be more from Paul McGann. The release slot is in November 2013, and as you'll read elsewhere in this issue, there will be a sequence of box sets entitled *Dark Eyes 2*, *Dark Eyes 3* and *Dark Eyes 4* running until November 2014. And yes, it will be possible to pre-order these at a discounted rate.

WRONG!

I loved **UNIT: Dominion** – apart from one really annoying much-used error. I do so hope it was not Nick Briggs who repeatedly wrote in the phrase 'Over and out' in the walkie-talkie dialogue. Anyone who had done the slightest bit of research would know that no professionally trained soldier or police officer would ever use the expression 'over and out' on the airwaves without expecting immediate derision from his or her fellows. 'Over' means 'waiting your response' whilst 'out' means 'end of conversation'. The phrases are thus mutually exclusive and would never be used together. 'Over and out' is an error often used in poorly researched television and radio drama and not what is expected from Big Finish. It probably arises from a misremembering of the American phrase 'Roger and out' but is blatantly incorrect. Please do not let it ever be repeated in Big Finish audios – the fans expect better of you! (It is like the oft-repeated 'none of us are' – the Sixth Doctor would tell you that 'none' so used is a contraction of 'not one', so the correct English is 'none of us is'!)

Sorry for being pedantic, but the errors grate every time I hear them and ruin the listening pleasure.

Please keep up the good work – and in future please also remove the errors.

Thank you for so many hours of listening pleasure.

GR Samuel

Nick: GR Samuel, I hold my hands up. I'm afraid I copied the error from many **Doctor Who** stories and the many films I've seen that used the phrase 'over and out'. I was one step better than my co-writer, Jason Arnopp, who hadn't written 'over' or 'out' during any RT conversations. But I guess that's not much consolation. I promise to do better next time, but I'm much in your debt for enlightening me. Difficult to research something when you – incorrectly – already think you know the answer. A terrible gap in my knowledge for me, a self-confessed war film addict. D'oh!

LOYALTY BONUS?

I just logged in to my account to discover the somewhat scary statistic that there are now 193 releases there. I have been a subscriber since 2009 and very much appreciate the

subscriber bonuses that you send our way from time to time, but was just wondering if you had considered any kind of loyalty bonus for customers who reach some kind of milestone. In my case, for example, that would be 200 purchases. These are not just my subscription purchases, but a whole range of other stuff that I have ordered as well.

Anyway, just wondering...

Chris Wake

Nick: Interesting idea, Chris. That's officially on the agenda for our next meeting.

DOWNLOAD-ONLY

A big thank you for your fantastic audios. They are always a highlight of my month and I find myself clicking on your website more and more as the anticipated release dates approach. Three quick points: I would like to urge you to release more download only work such as **Dorian Gray**. It was fantastic value for money and if it is viable for you to release this way, I think it is the future!

Would you consider developing a Big Finish app? I could imagine scrolling through thumbnails of the fab covers being quite irresistible to potential purchasers and very convenient.

Please could you have a final test of the order that stories upload to iTunes and then onto the phone itself. **Dorian Gray** was fine on iTunes but then uploaded out of order on the phone. It's only a small point but there have been some other examples.

Thank you all at Big Finish.

Craig Hanson

Nick: I am personally keen to do more download-only productions. The problem is that most of our listeners still prefer to buy CDs, so it does rather limit the market. It also limits our ability to promote and sell a production at a convention. But I agree that it is an excellent way to pursue new kinds of productions. We're not currently considering an app, but this is constantly under review. What we are working towards is making our site more useable for mobile devices. We now have an alternative player for devices that are not compatible with Flash player (such as iPhones, iPads, etc). Other development work for the site's adaptability is under discussion and we hope to make progress this year.

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COMING SOON...

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EXECUTIVE PRODUCER NICK BRIGGS, LINE PRODUCER DAVID RICHARDSON AND PERSON-WHO-JUST-WANTED-TO-GET-IN-ON-THE-ACTION PAUL SPRAGG REVEAL WHAT THEY'RE LOOKING FORWARD TO AMID NEXT YEAR'S BIG FINISH RELEASES...

NICK:

2013 means a lot of writing, directing and acting for me – which is a very exciting prospect. Top of the list is the third series of **Sherlock Holmes**. I'm very grateful that we've had nothing but great reviews for our first two series of adventures for the great detective. Early last year, acclaimed novelist Jonathan Barnes wrote the fascinating original **Holmes** drama **The Adventure of the Perfidious Mariner** to commemorate the tragic sinking of the *RMS Titanic*. It was a truly brilliant script and such a pleasure to act. Jonathan attended the recording and, picking up on my enthusiasm, was keen to

pitch an idea for a box set, **The Ordeals of Sherlock Holmes!** It's a brilliant piece of work, featuring four stories set at various different points in Holmes's life. These stories function perfectly in isolation of each other, but they also have a link which takes us to a rather startling conclusion by the end of the fourth story. Director Ken Bentley and I are planning for it to go into the studio in March!

Staying on the Jonathan Barnes theme, Scott Handcock, the producer and showrunner for our acclaimed **Confessions of Dorian Gray** series, pitched to us the idea of doing a 'definitive' dramatization of the novel **Frankenstein**. With some exciting ideas on the table for who was going to play the leading man (more on that story later, as they say!), we decided to go ahead and make a really special collectors' edition. Jonathan Barnes is handling the adaptation, and his story breakdown of the dramatization demonstrated that this will be the most faithful presentation of the novel in dramatic form. Really looking forward to this one.

On the **Doctor Who** front, there's so much to look forward to, of course. There are more Fourth Doctor scripts for me to write, something mind-bogglingly exciting for a new range we haven't yet announced and, of course, **Dark Eyes 2** – which Alan Barnes, Matt Fitton and I had a very fruitful meeting about. I start work on my script for that in the new year. We have hatched a plan for a three box set series, **Dark Eyes 2**, **Dark Eyes 3** and **Dark Eyes 4**, which will be available from late 2013 through to late 2014. And if you'll forgive me getting all commercial, there will be an advanced pre-order available for those three releases. ■



DAVID:

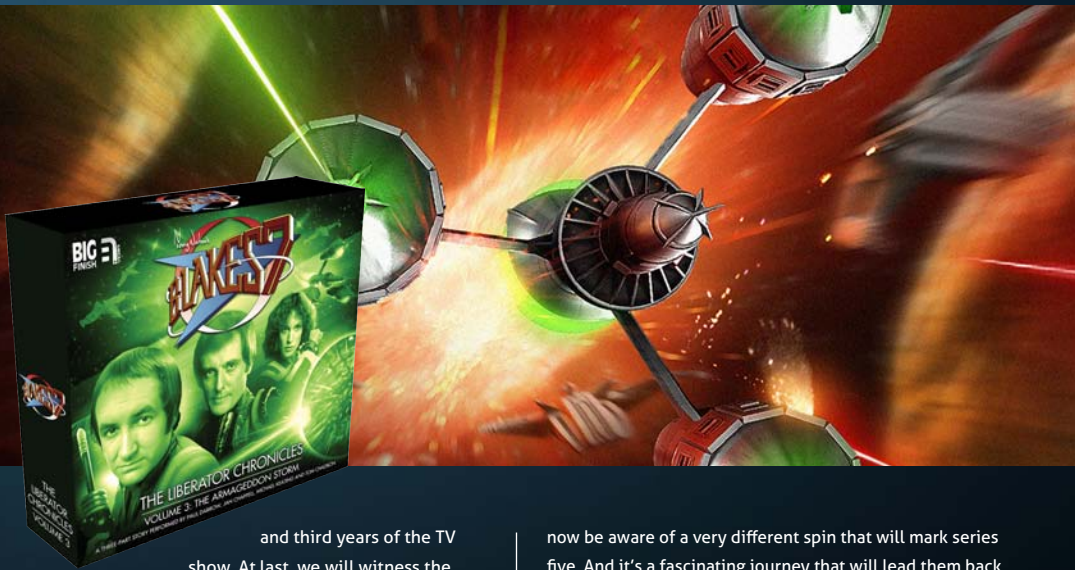
'Write a little bit about what you're looking forward to in 2013' said

the Spragg. It's very difficult – I'm looking forward to everything! And it's *Doctor Who*'s fiftieth anniversary year, so we are planning some major event releases that we are ridiculously excited about. But all will become clear on that front during January... and you'll see why 2013 is our biggest year ever!

Over in a different galaxy, we have our first full cast *Blake's 7* release with *Warship*, a gripping drama that fills in the gap in the show's mythology between the second

The fourth and final season of *Doctor Who: The Lost Stories* starts in September, with a clutch of tales for the first three Doctors. And I think they are fantastic – *The Dark Planet*, by Brian Hayles and Matt Fitton, is a wonderfully moody and dark piece; and *The Lords of the Red Planet* by Brian Hayles and John Dorney does something rather new and exciting with the Ice Warriors.

And last, but definitely not least, Jago and Litefoot return... not only in *The Fourth Doctor Adventures*, facing *The Justice of Jabbar*, but in two new box sets. Anyone who has listened to *Doctor Who: Voyage to the New World* will



and third years of the TV show. At last, we will witness the Galactic War and Blake and Jenna's departure from the Liberator! And it's wonderful to hear Gareth Thomas, Paul Darrow, Michael Keating, Sally Knyvette, Jan Chappell and Jacqueline Pearce back in their roles and firing on all cylinders.

We also have some exciting additions over on the *Liberator Chronicles* range, where Stephen Greif (Travis) and Steven Pacey (Tarrant) will be making their debuts in the range... And on the *Blake's 7* books range, Avon himself, aka Paul Darrow, has written *Lucifer* – a tale that takes up the story after the death of most of the crew at the end of series four!

now be aware of a very different spin that will mark series five. And it's a fascinating journey that will lead them back to the status quo (or what passes for the status quo in their world...) in series six. ■

"ON THE BLAKE'S 7 BOOKS RANGE, AVON HIMSELF, AKA PAUL DARROW, HAS WRITTEN LUCIFER – A TALE THAT TAKES UP THE STORY AFTER THE DEATH OF MOST OF THE CREW AT THE END OF SERIES FOUR!"

PAUL:

Well, that'll teach me to let Nick and David go first, won't it? What's left to talk about?

Luckily, the answer to that question is: loads! We've got such a wealth of great material coming out next year that it's tricky to know where to start!

Let's try 'at the beginning'. This month sees a release I'm particularly looking forward to: *The Wrong Doctors*. It's an utterly fantastic script from Matt Fitton, and I'm in total awe of Bonnie Langford, firstly from hearing parts of her performance in this story, secondly from meeting and talking to her – you can read the result of that earlier in this very publication – and thirdly from watching her show-stealing tour-de-force as the Lady of the Lake in the recent London run of *Spamalot*.

Morris, and Chase makes a great lead. And she's backed up by a brilliant cast, including splendid stand-up comedian and actor Tom Price as a character named after me. How could I not love this release?

As well as the aforementioned *Frankenstein*, we're also tackling another classic novel next year: *Treasure Island*. A project Tom Baker was keen to get off the ground and stars in,

"HAVING READ NONE OF THE SCRIPTS, I'M THRILLED ABOUT THE UPCOMING RETURN OF THE FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES."



Having read none of the scripts, I'm thrilled about the upcoming return of the **Fourth Doctor Adventures**. Because I only have a few little snippets of information on what's coming up in them, I get to enjoy them like all of you lovely listeners out there! Everyone involved takes so much time and care over them to make them as true to the era they come from as possible – and Tom Baker is clearly having a whale of a time.

I was in studio for the recording of our **Vienna** pilot, featuring the wonderfully warm and entertaining Chase Masterson, reprising the titular role she fully inhabited in main range **Doctor Who** story *The Shadow Heart*. *The Memory Box* is a brilliant script from the endlessly talented Jonathan

it's been expertly and lovingly adapted by Barnaby Edwards, who also directed the sterling cast he assembled, and I can't wait to hear how it all comes out.

And then there's **The Big Finish Companion – Volume 2**. Reading it, I've been astonished by the depth and insight author Kenny Smith has been able to wheedle out of his many interview subjects, and the resulting book is an engrossing read with a vast array of facts, figures and fun surrounding each title it covers. It's made me want to catch up on every release I've not had a chance to hear yet – I just hope, with everything else going on next year, that I'll have the time! **VORTEX**

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GOING FOURTH AGAIN

**PRODUCER DAVID RICHARDSON PREVIEWS THE SECOND SERIES OF
FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES, STARRING TOM BAKER AND MARY TAMM**

Is it really a year since Tom Baker made his debut as the Fourth Doctor at Big Finish? In some ways it seems like only yesterday... in others, it seems like a lifetime ago. And so much has happened in between – most of it good, a little of it sad.

Before we launch into a full preview of season two of **The Fourth Doctor Adventures**, it seems fitting to talk about Mary Tamm, who eagerly embraced the opportunity to return as Romana for this series. “Nothing will keep me

away,” she told me when I first approached her, and she was true to her word. Even cancer, and months spent enduring treatment, didn’t quell Mary’s passion for the project. We, as colleagues and as fans, are indebted to her for seeing the series through, under awful circumstances. She came to every studio recording full of enthusiasm, laughed endlessly, and – on the last day I saw her – told me that doing the recordings had helped her get through it. She was a fantastic lady, and this season is dedicated to her.

FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES

2.1 THE AUNTIE MATTER

Written by Jonathan Morris

Directed by Ken Bentley

Guest stars: Julia McKenzie, Robert Portal, Lucy Griffiths, Alan Cox



A glorious romp to open the season, in which Jonathan Morris channels PG Wodehouse in a tale of lovelorn young Reggie (Robert Portal) and his sinister Aunt, who might just be from another planet. Tom and Mary adored this script – Mary particularly, as it really brings Romana to the fore in a way, perhaps, that her TV episodes didn't.

2.2 THE SANDS OF LIFE

Written and directed by Nicholas Briggs

Guest stars: Hayley Atwell, David Warner, Toby Hadoke



Here's a bit of an exclusive... we have a bonus surprise for you! *The Sands of Life* will actually be three episodes long! Now, before you cry 'Why can't they all be three episodes long!' I should point out that it's a budgetary thing, and on this one occasion we were able to pull an extra episode out of the hat. So it's a special one-off...

And what a one-off it is. A power-crazed businessman, a race of space-borne aliens and a new Earth President come together to provide deadly new challenges for the Doctor, Romana and K9. Yes, K9 – here making his debut in the range, played by the wonderful John Leeson. It's good to have him back. The season 16 reunion is complete.

2.3 WAR AGAINST THE LAAN

Written and directed by Nicholas Briggs

Guest stars: Hayley Atwell, David Warner, Toby Hadoke, Hugh Fraser



We're still in the far future, and the Laan have become a threat to the world. *War Against the Laan* continues the story established in *The Sands of Life*... meaning that, together, they make up a five-episode blockbuster. It's our longest Fourth Doctor tale since *The Foe From the Future* in the *Lost Stories* range. If you like an epic, then this one is for you!

2.4 THE JUSTICE OF JALKAR

Written by John Dorney

Directed by Ken Bentley

Guest stars: Christopher Benjamin, Trevor Baxter, Adrian Lukis

In many ways, it was an obvious choice to reunite the Fourth Doctor with Victorian investigators Jago and Litefoot, over three decades after they appeared together in *The Talons of Weng-Chiang*. So, not wishing to be entirely obvious, we brought Romana into the mix – what will this very sophisticated Academy graduate make of Henry Gordon Jago, as they are paired up to face a deadly steam-powered robot that is murdering on the streets of London?

FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES

This one was so much fun to make. The actors were in their element – Tom clearly adored the chance to work with Christopher and Trevor again – and the day whizzed past far too quickly. I wanted to relish every moment.

2.5 PHANTOMS OF THE DEEP

Written by Jonathan Morris
Directed by Ken Bentley
Guest star: Alice Krige

I gave Jonny Morris a firm brief for this story: *The Auntie Matter* had been a fun romp, so I wanted him to deliver the polar opposite with his second script – to be dark and scary. And he hasn't disappointed with this claustrophobic tale in which the TARDIS lands on the ocean floor, and meets a scientific expedition that has uncovered a terrifying presence. This is one to listen to with all the lights off. I was especially pleased to book Alice Krige (*Star Trek: First Contact*, *Spooks*) for the lead guest role in this story. And even more pleased to discover she was one of the most warm and kind actors I've ever met. I do hope she'll return one day.

2.6 THE DALEK CONTRACT

Written and directed by Nicholas Briggs
Guest stars: David Warner, Toby Hadoke, Dominic Mafham



You might just recognize a couple of the guest names on this one... Mr Warner and Mr Hadoke are back, as a story arc that began in *The Sands of Life* kicks back into gear. This time, the Daleks are along for the ride – and they have some deadly surprises up their sleeves (if, of course, they had sleeves).

2.7 THE FINAL PHASE

Written and directed by Nicholas Briggs
Guest stars: David Warner, Toby Hadoke, Dominic Mafham



The big season finale, in which our recurring story arc comes to a spectacular close. The Dalek plan is revealed, and the stakes have never been higher... I remember that we recorded this one in February, when the country was knee-deep in snow – somewhat ironic, as the story is set on a planet that is covered in snow. So at least the studio photos look quite fitting!



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KENNY SMITH GETS HIS SEQUINED TROUSERS ON AND LOOKS BACK AT AN EARLY BF CLASSIC STARRING SYLVESTER McGOY AND BONNIE LANGFORD

BANG-BANG-A-BOOM!



After the euphoria from everybody surrounding *The One Doctor*, it wasn't long before producer Gary Russell was going ding-a-dong at the doors of Clayton Hickman and Gareth Roberts to write Big Finish another script. Those rock 'n' roll kids were doing wild dances after getting their second commission, as the producer believed they could recapture the magic.

Gary says, "Because of *The One Doctor* and its success, all I said to Clay and Gareth was, 'Give me something as weird, wacky and fun, again with Bonnie, but this time with Sylvester.' They came up with the idea of doing an intergalactic Eurovision song contest, and that was all I needed to hear – I didn't ask for a synopsis, I just said, 'Off you go!'"

Co-writer Gareth says, "We viewed the BF stuff seriously when writing but it wasn't our main job and we wanted to have fun doing it, so any pressure would have killed that off, so there can't have been much. What we did take from *The One Doctor* was how amazing Bonnie was, so we were determined to do her justice. Gary Russell asked us for a Sylvester story and we agreed so long as it was Mel, so we could use the fun season 24 Doctor, not the later version with all his plots and plans. And pots and pans.

"We just sat down and bashed it out together taking turns at the keyboard. Clay sorted all the admin side, if you like, talking to Gary Russell, etc, but that's how we always work when we write together. Same room, same desk, same ashtray. Like Pip and Jane, but not married.

"Eurovision was much more fun in the olden days when people hadn't quite worked out how funny it was. Neither of us are massive fans of it, but it was the perfect thing to substitute for a *Star Trek*-style conference at that rundown space station."

Director Nicholas Pegg explains, "I wheedled Jason Haigh-Ellery into letting me have a slightly bigger casting budget than usual so that we could get a few bigger names. The four 'guest star' turns were Graeme Garden, Sabina Franklyn, Nickolas Grace and Patricia Quinn, all of whom were just wonderful.

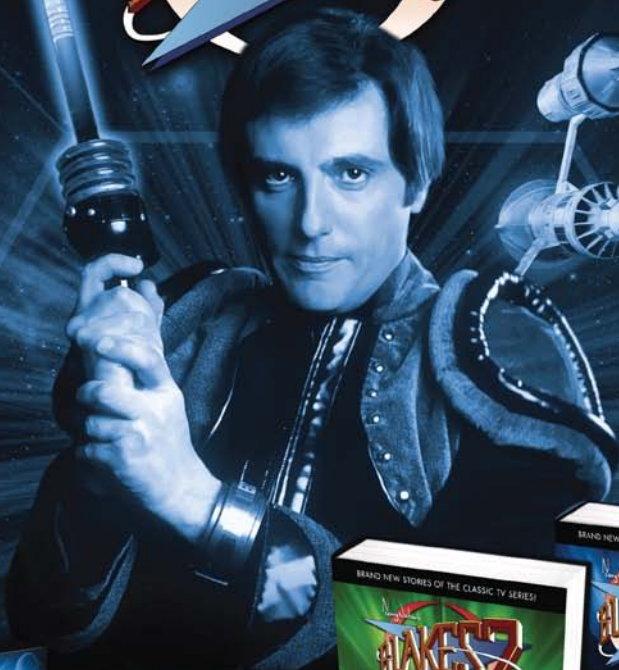
"Graeme Garden is an absolute hero of mine. And he got the professor completely. I remember him saying to me before we recorded the first scene, 'So, Barry Morse in *Space: 1999* except he's drunk, yes?' That was it. He'd nailed it in one!"

Musician Andy Hardwick adds: "I do remember Nick Pegg giving me pretty much free range to be as silly as I wanted with the song contest entries.

"Sylvester's super spoon performance was recorded at The Moat Studios freestyle without any backing track. It was pretty hard to do anything to what he'd done, which didn't matter really as that was kind of the point. Initially I did a [UK R&B star] Craig David-style track for it, but decided to go all out 'Euro-camp-trash' in the end. I thought this worked a lot better and was much easier to make the crowd sound like they were clapping along with it." **VORTEX**



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FORTHCOMING RELEASES

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)

Dark Shadows 31: **The Haunted Refrain**

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: **House of Cards**
(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)

Vienna: **The Memory Box** (Full cast drama)

The Big Finish Companion: **Volume 2** by Kenny Smith

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: **The Scorchies** (7.09, Third Doctor)

Jago & Litefoot: **Series Five Box Set**

Big Finish Classics: **Treasure Island**

APRIL 2013

Doctor Who: **TBA** (172, Fifth Doctor)

Doctor Who - The Fourth Doctor Adventures: **The Justice of Jalzar**
(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, Fifth Doctor)

Doctor Who - The Fourth Doctor Adventures: **Phantoms of the Deep**
(2.5, Fourth Doctor and Romana)



Doctor Who - The Companion Chronicles: **The Apocalypse Mirror**
(7.11, Second Doctor)

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, Fifth Doctor)

Doctor Who - The Fourth Doctor Adventures: **The Dalek Contract**
(2.6, Fourth Doctor and Romana)

Doctor Who - The Companion Chronicles: **Council of War** (7.12, Third Doctor)
Graceless 3 – Box Set

JULY 2013

Doctor Who: **TBA** (175, TBA)

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

Doctor Who - The Companion Chronicles: **TBA** (8.01, Doctor TBA)
Counter-Measures: **Series Two Box Set**

AUGUST 2013

Doctor Who: **TBA** (176, TBA)

Doctor Who - The Companion Chronicles: **TBA** (8.02, Doctor TBA)

Blake's 7: **The Liberator Chronicles – Box Set 5**

Iris Wildthyme: **Series Four Box Set**

SEPTEMBER 2013

Doctor Who: **TBA** (177, TBA)

Doctor Who: **TBA** (178, TBA)

Doctor Who - The Companion Chronicles: **TBA** (8.03, Doctor TBA)

Doctor Who - The Lost Stories: **The Dark Planet** (4.01, First Doctor)

Bernice Summerfield: **Missing Persons Box Set**

Bernice Summerfield: **Missing Persons tie-in book** (title TBA)

OCTOBER 2013

Doctor Who: **TBA** (179, TBA)

Doctor Who - The Companion Chronicles: **TBA** (8.04, Doctor TBA)

Doctor Who - The Lost Stories: **The Queen of Time** (4.02, First Doctor)

Gallifrey VI (Three full cast adventures)

Blake's 7: **The Liberator Chronicles – Box Set 6**

Blake's 7: **Novel** (TBA)

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