

WWW.BIGFINISH.COM • NEW AUDIO ADVENTURES

VORTEX

STEED & KEEL

THE AVENGERS
VOLUME FOUR!

BACK TO THE SIXTIES

COUNTER-MEASURES
THE TEAM TALKS!

TWINKLING EYE

DARK SHADOWS
SPOOKY GOINGS-ON
IN COLLINSPOORT!

DOCTOR WHO:

BONNIE'S BACK!

BONNIE LANGFORD ON PLAYING MEL FOR BIG FINISH AND
TAKING UP RESIDENCE IN A VERY FAMOUS SQUARE!

ISSUE 77 • JULY 2015

BIG WE LOVE
FINISH STORIES

SHOWS Q&A DVD
STAGE TALKS CD

Signings 

CELEBRITIES

FUN



01775 30 20 60 Professional
www. _____

MEET THE STARS

10TH   

PLANET
EVENTS

_____.co.uk

 Coffee Club
People

STARS  

HORROR

PHOTO

Books AUTOGRAPHS

Photo friends

Studio HISTORY  SOCIAL

Sci-Fi

BIG FINISH

WE LOVE STORIES

WELCOME TO BIG FINISH!

We love stories and we make great full-cast audio dramas and audiobooks you can buy on CD and/or download



Big Finish... We love stories.

Our audio productions are based on much-loved TV series like **Doctor Who**, **Torchwood**, **Dark Shadows**, **Blake's 7**, **The Avengers** and **Survivors** as well as classic characters such as **Sherlock Holmes**, **The Phantom of the Opera** and **Dorian Gray**, plus original creations such as **Graceless**, **Charlotte Pollard** and **The Adventures of Bernice Summerfield**.

We publish a growing number of books (non-fiction, novels and short stories) from new and established authors.

Subscribers get more at bigfinish.com!

If you subscribe, depending on the range you subscribe to, you get free audiobooks, PDFs of scripts, extra behind-the-scenes material, a bonus release, downloadable audio readings of new short stories and discounts.

www.bigfinish.com

You can access a video guide to the site at www.bigfinish.com/news/v/website-guide-1

WWW.BIGFINISH.COM @BIGFINISH THEBIGFINISH

a new play written & performed by
Louise Jameson & Nigel Fairs

Driving me Round the Bend



George and Georgina Best have been married forever and are driving to their daughter's on Christmas Eve. The atmosphere is tense; even the Sat Nav has her own agenda! Award-winning team Louise Jameson and Nigel Fairs reunite on the page and the stage for this hilarious new car-crash of a comedy.

Sackville Theatre, Sevenoaks 29th - 30th June, 7.30pm £14

<http://www.stagesevenoaks.co.uk/whats-on/live/driving-me-round-the-bend-1215/>

The Space, London 15th-19th July, 8pm £12.50/£10

<https://space.org.uk/2015/03/13/driving-me-round-the-bend/>

Sneak Previews & Whispers



The Third Doctor Adventures

THE THIRD Doctor Adventures (volume one) materialises at Big Finish this September, with two all-new adventures set during Jon Pertwee's time. *Prisoners of the Lake* by Justin Richards and *The Havoc of Empires* by Andy Lane will mark the return of the Third Doctor, who will be voiced by Tim Treloar. Producer David Richardson says: "The trailer says 'Recreating an era' and that's what we are aiming to do. Across the board, everyone has worked so hard to recapture the flavour of The Pertwee Years, even though we did not have Jon with us. Tim Treloar drove himself to distraction, I'm sure, by having Jon's voice on his phone and playing it over and over and over again between takes. It kept him in character throughout and paid off beautifully.

"When we came up with idea of making these, the person whose opinion mattered most to me was Katy Manning. She adored Jon and I know she would always honour his memory. She was the first person I went to when the idea of doing these came up and she was the person we turned to when we were recording, to make sure we were getting it right. And she adored Tim – she found his performance uncannily like Jon's.

"So there was a sense of family behind the scenes that we didn't quite expect to get – this felt like a close-knit team. And I really hope it's a team that goes on to make more stories. There's certainly no shortage of ideas for more!" **VORTEX**

The Third Doctor Adventures: Volume One is out on CD and download in September.

Editorial

I WAS, LIKE thousands of other *Avengers* fans, saddened by the death of the late, great Patrick Macnee last month. His passing comes just as Big Finish are about to release the fourth volume of lost stories and it seems appropriate to dedicate this issue to his memory.

The first time I remember seeing Patrick Macnee being interviewed was on *Clive James on Television*. He switched on the outdoor air conditioning at his California home and the swimming pool area was covered in a cool mist. That struck me as being very, very cool, and my admiration for the man began.

I was a bit of a latecomer to *The Avengers*. My friend Alistair McGown (the *Dark Shadows* cover artist for Big Finish) had been a fan for years and I knew he liked it, but I'd never seen an episode.

Back in the summer of 1992, in the good old days of the VHS, it seemed that very few people had *Avengers* episodes recorded off-air from the repeats of 1982. By chance, when channel hopping one afternoon on Sky, I found a German TV channel *Premiere* was showing *The Avengers* (or *Mit Schirme, Charme und Melone*).

I mentioned this to Alistair and soon, I was recording episodes on a daily basis for him. I didn't speak much German, but very quickly, the show's visual appeal and obvious humour had me hooked. By chance, I later met someone who had recorded *Castle De'ath* onto audio tape when it had been on Channel 4 and with the help of another friend, we were able to restore the episode (*Die Schottische Schloss*) to English. It took HOURS in those pre-digital days...

When *Bravo* began repeating the show's early years, including *The Frighteners* (the only Ian Hendry era episode then known to exist) I enjoyed these just as much as the Diana Rigg episodes I had been introduced to.

Julian Wadham has done a tremendous job of taking on the role of John Steed, but it's thanks to the strength of Patrick Macnee's performance that the series has endured.

Patrick Macnee, I salute you one last time.

KENNY



ISSUE 77 • JULY 2015

Managing Editor: Jason Haigh-Ellery

Editor: Kenny Smith

Executive Producer: Nicholas Briggs

Line Producer: David Richardson

Design: Mark Plastow

Marketing Consultant: Kris Griffin

Web Services: Hughes Media

BFP Administration:
Miles Haigh-Ellery, Cheryl Bly
& Alison Taylor

Publisher: Big Finish Productions Ltd.



Bonnie Langford escapes from Albert Square to tell Kenny Smith her latest...

MEL-ODRAMA

BONNIE LANGFORD is an actress who is in demand. Earlier this year, it was announced she'd be joining the cast of British soap *EastEnders*, as Carmel Kazemi. Getting hold of an in-demand actress is never an easy thing, so *Vortex* was delighted when, on a rare day off, Bonnie was able to take time out from her hectic schedule to find time to talk about all things Melanie Bush.

Mel's back in the *Doctor Who* main range this month, as a new trilogy of adventures begins with *We Are The Daleks*, which is then followed by *The Warehouse* in August and *Terror of the Sontarans* in September.

Although Bonnie's acting career stretches back many years and she's played a huge and varied number of parts, when she talks about Mel, it's clear there's a huge affection on her part for the computer programmer from Pease Pottage.

"It's nice playing her," says Bonnie, "although really, it feels like she's never gone away, because of Big Finish. When I first started playing her again, I could tell straight away there was a huge difference in the way they were writing for me. They've given her much more depth than she ever had on TV.

"It really is a delight to be playing her again and return to good old *Doctor Who* – and I know everyone says it – but it's a real joy to be doing it with Big Finish, who are so good to work for."

Bonnie is always delighted to meet up with her old *Doctor Who* co-stars in the form of Colin Baker and Sylvester McCoy. "I love seeing them again," she says. "I've known them both as actors and people for so long, as I'd worked with them both before I did *Doctor Who*. They're friends, who I've known for over 30 years now.



Doctor Who: We are the Daleks

The year is 1987, and Britain is divided. In Bradford, strikers are picketing and clashing with the police. In the City of London, stockbrokers are drinking champagne and politicians are courting the super-rich.

The mysterious media mogul Alek Zenos, head of the Zenos Corporation, is offering Britain an economic miracle. His partners wish to invest – and their terms are too good to refuse.

While the Doctor investigates Warfleet, a new computer game craze that is sweeping the nation, Mel goes undercover to find out the truth about Zenos's partners.

The Daleks have a new paradigm. They intend to conquer the universe using economic power. The power of the free market!

WRITTEN BY: Jonathan Morris

DIRECTED BY: Ken Bentley

STARRING: Sylvester McCoy, Bonnie Langford, Kirsty Besterman, Angus Wright, Mary Conlon, Robbie Stevens, Ashley Zhangazha, Lizzie Roper, Dominic Thornburn, Nicholas Briggs.

OUT: THIS MONTH!

"I think I was 16 or 17 when I first worked with Colin! What's great is having a reunion with them, as it's really like being part of one big family once you've done *Doctor Who*."

The *Doctor Who* family feeling extends to Big Finish and Bonnie enjoys turning up to the Moat Studios, ready to meet the guest cast for the audio adventures. "I can't wait," she giggles. "It's always so jolly in the studio and we have such a great variety of guest stars. I can't wait to

Daleks again. It's a nice feeling, hearing that voice coming out at you! When we were doing the original stories on television, there was a slightly unrealistic feel to them, but nowadays, because we're so far removed from then, it's much more naturalistic.

"Sometimes, it can be so hard to play it when you're so far removed from your own universe, but this one was so easy to fit into and with the Daleks trying to take over, it all seemed very appropriate and eerie."

"I could tell straight away there was a huge difference in the way they were writing for me. They've given [Mel] much more depth than she ever had on TV..."



Above: Bonnie Langford

find out who I'll be working with. It's fantastic as I just have to turn up and act from my script, without having to learn all the lines and movements and just enjoy the day."

Bonnie has her second Big Finish encounter with the Daleks in this month's release, *We are the Daleks* by Jonathan Morris, having previously encountered them with the Sixth Doctor in *The Juggernauts*.

The adventure is set in Britain in 1987, as businessmen look for opportunities to make lots of money – and the Daleks are there with their brawn and brains. Thankfully, Mel can program a computer and choose the perfect time... "Isn't it fantastic? I was rather thrilled to be working with the

The Warehouse, by Mike Tucker, is the second play in the trilogy, set on the titular orbiting warehouse, in a delivery facility with a dangerously eratic computer.

Bonnie says: "It's really nice to get some satire in there. I remember the guest cast had a busy time, as they were doubling up on a lot of parts and we had to work out who was talking where.

"It was quite complicated to do, but the other actors were terrific and just went with it. That's another of the great things about Big Finish – they know what works and are brilliant at doing it."

Terror of the Sontarans by John Dorney and Dan Starkey completes

Doctor Who: Bonnie Langford

Below: Bonnie Langford and Sylvester McCoy

Inset (left to right): Bonnie Langford, Robbie Stevens, Mary Conlon, Sylvester McCoy, Angus Wright and Nicholas Briggs



“I find it extraordinary that younger people who watch the classic series enjoy it.”

you are going to be. It's worked out that I've been given a bonus day off, which is nice! I've got a heck of a lot of things to do and I'm just champing at the bit to get in and do them.

“Working on *EastEnders* is like nothing I've ever done before. With *Doctor Who*, you would rehearse and then go on location, then come back, rehearse some more and do the studio work. It was all calm and collected.

“With *EastEnders*, it's totally different – you go in, you don't get a rehearsal, you read your scenes in no particular order and then you go and do it! In the last week or two, I've done six episodes with six different directors – it's always on the go. At first, it's very difficult going in as a new character, or even a guest, as you don't

quite know where to place yourself at first.

“But the company are great – they make you feel at home really quickly, but there are still people there I haven't met yet, because our storylines don't cross over and there's no interaction between them.”

Although busy, Bonnie admits she's enjoying working on the BBC's flagship soap. She adds: “It's really relentless – in a good way. I'm not complaining, far from it! It's a brilliant, but extraordinary machine and it's quite amazing how it all works. I'm completely in awe of the whole thing.”

Of course, working on the *EastEnders* set isn't an entirely new experience for Bonnie, who appeared in 1993's *Doctor Who* 30th anniversary special *Dimensions In Time*, which was partly recorded there.

Bonnie laughs: “Oh, no! I was there for a day, about 20 years ago and to be honest, it was a bit strange. What I do remember were the 3D cameras, which were a bit different, but it was a good day.” **VORTEX**

the mini-season of releases for the Doctor and Mel. “Oh, Dan Starkey!” says Bonnie, enthusiastically. “Dan is a complete phenomenon. I did a scene with him and six other Sontarans, only to realise they were all played by him. It was amazing. He's astonishing with his voice and a very good writer as well. He certainly knows how to write for the Sontarans.”

Bonnie has been surprised that with the return of *Doctor Who* in the 21st century, she has become recognised by younger fans of the revived show.

“These days, *Doctor Who* is so generational,” she explains. There are the fans who watched it from the original run and now, it's almost like a family heirloom – it's been passed down from generation to generation.

“I find it extraordinary that the younger people who watch the classic series enjoy it, but at the same time, it's lovely. They probably find it slightly safer and it's maybe not quite as taxing as some of the new episodes. It's not as extreme, it doesn't have all the jazzy effects, but perhaps it's the simplicity of the old series that appeals to them.”

Bonnie will soon be earning herself a new legion of fans, thanks to her appearances in *EastEnders*. “I don't always get my schedule until late on and you never know where



BIG WE LOVE
FINISH STORIES

AUDIO ADVENTURES IN TIME AND SPACE



BBC
**DOCTOR
WHO**

**DAMAGED GOODS AND
THE WELL-MANNERED WAR**

FIVE-DISC LIMITED SPECIAL EDITION

BASED ON NOVELS BY
RUSSELL T DAVIES AND GARETH ROBERTS

**SPECIAL EDITION INCLUDES BONUS DOCUMENTARY AND
AN INTERVIEW WITH RUSSELL T DAVIES!**

OUT NOW ON CD AND DOWNLOAD

ALSO AVAILABLE IN STANDARD EDITIONS

WWW.BIGFINISH.COM

[@BIGFINISH](https://twitter.com/BIGFINISH)

[f THEBIGFINISH](https://www.facebook.com/thebigfinish)

BBC

BBC, DOCTOR WHO (word marks, logos and devices), TARDIS and K-9 (word marks and devices) are trade marks of the British Broadcasting Corporation and are used under licence.
BBC logo © BBC 1996. Doctor Who logo © BBC 2009.



FOR YOUR EYES ONLY

Kenny Smith ventures back to Collinsport and finds there are more secrets lurking in the shadows...

MARIE WALLACE never had much luck with her characters in *Dark Shadows* on television – she’s died three times to date! Thanks to Big Finish, the actress has returned as a new character, Jessica Griffin, who has been running The Blue Whale pub since the new audio series began. Life is never smooth in Collinsport, as Jessica found out earlier this year in *Bloodlust*.

Now, fully recovered from her hospital stay and back behind the bar, Jessica Griffin welcomes Nate, a stranger in town, in *In the Twinkling of an Eye*, by Penelope Faith.

Producers Joseph Lidster and David Darlington said: “A problem we have with some of our actors is that, because of the strange and twisted world that is *Dark Shadows*, many of their characters only appear for a few months before being killed off.

“The characters Marie Wallace played all suffered such a fate; serial killer Eve was murdered by her Frankenstein boyfriend, Crazy Jenny was stabbed to death and lovely antiques shop owner Megan Todd became a pawn for the Leviathans before being turned into a vampire and staked.

“Luckily for us, a previous producer on the *Dark Shadows* audio range introduced a new character for Marie to play – landlady of The Blue Whale bar and restaurant, Jessica Griffin.

“Jessica’s not had much luck so far – in *Bloodlust*, she was viciously attacked and spent half the series in a coma! But Marie is a fantastic actress and hugely supportive of our work and we thought it was about time she took centre stage... and that’s what inspired *In the Twinkling of an Eye*. We also knew that we wanted to hear more of the brilliant Alexandra Donnachie as Collinsport teen Jackie Tate and

Dark Shadows

Collinsport, an isolated fishing village on the Maine coast. At its centre lies the ominous Collinwood mansion. Those who dare to live at Collinsport find themselves the victims of ghosts, witchcraft and the supernatural.



In the Twinkling of an Eye

"I keep getting drawn back to Collinsport..."

Fully recovered from her hospital stay and back behind the bar of The Blue Whale, Jessica Griffin welcomes Nate, a stranger in town claiming to be 'just passing through'. But how come he knows so much about her and why is he so keen to lure her back to the house she hasn't set foot in since the death of her husband? And he really is so very familiar...

WRITTEN BY: Penelope Faith

DIRECTED BY: David Darlington and Jim Pierson

STARRING: Marie Wallace, Alexandra Donnachie, Ryan Wichert, Walles Hamonde, Aaron Lamont

OUT: THIS MONTH!

"Because of the strange and twisted world that is **Dark Shadows, many of the characters only appear for a few months before being killed off!"**

"we wanted a story to feature Ryan Wichert – an acclaimed theatre actor we've used before in smaller roles but who we knew was going places.

"So that was the brief we gave writer Penelope Faith – 'Write a story for these three fantastic actors that really pushes them...' And that's what she's done."

Writer Penny was delighted to join the **Dark Shadows** family, especially as she knew Ryan and his work. She says: "I know Joe Lidster through attending writing groups and he put a call out for new writers to pitch a storyline involving the three characters, Jessica Griffin, Jackie Tate and a male character who could be whoever we wanted. I'd only been aware of **Dark Shadows** as something that Joe was involved in and that a lot of actors I knew had taken part in playing a variety of small roles.

"The **Dark Shadows** team were keen to use Ryan Wichert in a featured role and fortunately I know Ryan well as he's performed my writing before, so that was really helpful in thinking up the character as I could hear his voice.

"When Joe contacted me to say they liked my pitch the best, I honestly felt like I'd won a prize.

"I was aware that **Dark Shadows** always used high quality writers so it felt like I'd been invited into the club!

"Big Finish are a very professional and efficient company to work for. I was given deadlines for first, second and final drafts, Joe was always available and quick to respond to queries (of which there were many!).

"The producers take great care of **Dark Shadows** and I was guided



Above: Ryan Wichert

through the complications of backstories and helped with pieces of information that needed to be in the script. Other than that it was up to me and my imagination to tell the continuing story of Jessica Griffin, using her recent history, being attacked in *Bloodlust* and being in a coma."

The writer also enjoyed the challenge to write for the feisty Jackie, played by Alexandra Donnachie. "I loved the character of Jackie," says Penny, "her apparent confidence and sassiness, almost like a young Jessica, so it was fun creating a friendship between them and it's always good as a woman writer to have the opportunity to write female friendship.

"Jessica is a great character and I've hinted at a backstory for her that is open for delving into further, which of course I would love to do. Now that I've accepted the challenge of writing audio drama and succeeded, with the team's help, I would love to write more for Big Finish."

She adds: "If you haven't tried a **Dark Shadows** play before this would be a great place to start. It takes you into the town of Collinsport, introduces a couple of vital characters and you don't need any knowledge of any previous **Dark Shadows** storylines to enjoy it, which I really hope you do!" **VORTEX**



THE FINAL COUNTDOWN?

When last we heard them, the **Counter-Measures** team were not in a good place – Kenny Smith asks just how do they get out of that...

“W ENDED series three on a huge cliffhanger,” says script writer Matt Fitton, “and as to what happens in the first three episodes, well... there’s even more climactic and globe-spanning events. It’s actually quite hard to say anything at all about these stories, without giving anything away!”

At the end of the third series of **Counter-Measures**, Professor Rachel Jensen and Dr Allison Williams were separated from Group Captain Gilmore and their boss Sir Toby Kinsella, while sinister moves were being made back in the corridors of power in London. This month marks the release of the latest **Counter-Measures** box set, with four new stories, *New Horizons* by Mark Wright and Cavan Scott, *The Keep* by Ken Bentley, *Rise and Shine* by John Dorney and *Clean Sweep* by Matt Fitton.

When they were crafting the climax to the previous series, did producer David Richardson have everything mapped out? “Well, of course we’ve known for a long time where it goes,” he admits. “We’ve been playing a long game on **Counter-Measures** for some time. We nearly gave out a vital piece of information at the end of series three, but John

fought (correctly) to hold it back for series four. This series is one long story and it’s this series in which you find out what it’s all about. Everything slots into place. Every player shows their hand. And then it all steps into high gear... So, in essence, these four stories are more inter-linked than we’ve ever done before on a series. I think it’s very exciting.”

As well as writing the third story, John Dorney was script editor on the series. “While we were working on *Unto the Breach*, he says, talking of the climax to the third series, “I thought we shouldn’t try to rush it. It would kind of neuter the end of the play if we tried to resolve the story so quickly. It would have meant there was a proper pay-off but with it all being sorted out in two or three minutes. That would have been an unsatisfactory ending.

“So, we left it on a cliffhanger. I did have a few ideas to how we’d get out of it – it would be a bit daft not to have that worked out.

“Something I had at the back of my mind were a couple of season cliffhangers that had been in **Red Dwarf** and **Casualty** where I didn’t like the resolutions. In **Red Dwarf**, there was *Tikka To Ride*, when the previous series had



Above (left to right): Simon Williams, Pamela Salem, Hugh Ross and Karen Gledhill

Counter-Measures: Series Four

Four brand new adventures with the Intrusion Counter-Measures Group, as long-held secrets are torn open... and the deadly truth dawns at last:

NEW HORIZONS
by Mark Wright and Cavan Scott

THE KEEP
by Ken Bentley

RISE AND SHINE
by John Dorney

CLEAN SWEEP
by Matt Fitton

DIRECTED BY: Ken Bentley

STARRING: Simon Williams, Pamela Salem, Karen Gledhill, Hugh Ross, Phillip Pope, Richard Hope, Oscar Pearce, Nigel Carrington, Francesca Hunt, Dominic Rowan, Adrian Lukis, Denise Black, Philip Bretherton, Alex Ferns, Mary Conlon.

OUT: THIS MONTH!

“THE FIRST EPISODE BY MARK AND CAV SORT OF PAYS HOMAGE TO AN EPISODE OF CASUALTY!”

ended with them killed and then resurrects them in seconds during a pre-title sequence, and a season of **Casualty** which ended with Charlie Fairhead lying on an operating table – then the new series starts and it's six months later. Charlie just casually mentions, 'Oh, I was shot, but I'm okay now.' I didn't want to do that. The resolution has to be a big thing or it's unsatisfying.

"The first episode by Mark and Cavan sort of pays homage to that episode of **Casualty**. They had originally done a storyline for the third season that we held over because they were hugely busy on **Pathfinder Legends**.

"It's what I wanted for the opener – I had to slightly shift their storyline to fit in with the other stories that I wanted to do.

"The opener is everything I wanted to do and what I wanted it to be, as I know it's the one everyone has

been waiting a year for, to find out what happens next. It's not going to be what anyone expects the next episode to be. There are obvious ways to resolve it but it's going to throw people, in a nice way."

Matt points out: "We've always known where it was going to go. After we recorded the last series, myself, John and David got together and talked about the next series.

"At one point, I think John wanted me to write my own way out of that cliffhanger, but in the end, that fell to Cavan and Mark, with John's overall guidance as script editor!"

SERIES DIRECTOR Ken Bentley, also a writer this series, has been pleased to chart the development of **Counter-Measures**. He says: "Initially **Counter-Measures** felt like an episodic series where each story



Above (left to right): Oscar Pearce, Pamela Salem, Karen Gledhill and Phillip Pope

“WE TEASE KAREN GLEDHILL A LOT. SHE SUFFERS MERCILESSLY IN OUR COMPANY! DESPITE THAT, SHE BRINGS US ALL JAMS AND PICKLES ON THE LAST DAY OF RECORDING.”

could stand-alone. But over time threads of the story have started to come together and it's about now that you get a real sense of just how much of a serial drama **Counter-Measures** is. In each box set we've been planting seeds. Now we can see them grow. Hopefully loyal fans of the series will find this rewarding."

John adds: "They are all stand-alone stories, but I read them all in one day during the script editing process and it was pretty epic."

His good working relationship with the actors has informed Ken when he's written for their characters.

"Having directed quite a few episodes of **Counter-Measures**," he concedes, "I'm familiar with the characters and also with what the actors bring to the roles. The cast are smart and experienced, they know what they're doing and their contributions during recording are always spot on.

"I found when I came to write for **Counter-Measures** that the characters' voices were very clear to me (after all, I'd listened to hours and hours of them in post-production!) but I was also familiar with the cast and the threads of story they'd responded to and enjoyed playing, so I had an idea of what they might like their characters to get up to. More than any other writing I've done I'd say **Counter-Measures** is the closest I've come to feeling the characters write themselves."

David confirms: "It's tremendous fun making **Counter-Measures**. We've all become a bit of a big family, even if we only see each other once a year for a block of episodes. Simon Williams is one of the funniest people I've ever met. I spend every moment in his company laughing – he's an utter joy to be with. Hugh Ross has become a great friend – we socialise away from the studio and he's much nicer than Sir Toby!

"We tease Karen Gledhill a lot. She suffers mercilessly in our company! And yet despite that she brings us all jams and pickles on the last day of recording. And Pamela is

“THE ACTORS ARE GOOD FUN TO WORK WITH... IT’S REALLY NICE BEING SO AWFUL TO THEIR CHARACTERS, THOUGH!”

just delightful – such a warm and kind soul. Even now, I’m reminded how much I miss them when they’re not around!”

Matt Fitton, who has written for **Counter-Measures** since series one, is a big fan of the team. He says: “It’s always good to get back to these characters – I’ve written one for each series and it’s nice to revisit them every year and finding new aspects we can play with, especially in this one, to show the team off.

“Each of our characters has got such strong, distinctive individual voices. They are all so different but they fit together so well. Each of them fulfills a different function and that helps, when doing the plotting, as you know what you can throw at them to take them out of their comfort zone.”



Above: Pamela Salem and Hugh Ross

THE TALENTED cast is one of the key strengths of the series, with the four regulars each bringing something different to the table.

Ken says: “Probably the thing that makes **Counter-Measures** different to other Big Finish productions and one of the things that makes it so much fun to work on, is that we have a great ensemble cast.

“One of the things I like most about my job is its collaborative nature. I enjoy working with people to tell stories. These four characters provide us with so much storytelling potential, but the cast themselves are also a real joy to work with.

“I get a great sense of satisfaction and achievement from the fact that they’ve embraced these roles so enthusiastically and have such a strong sense of ownership of them.”

And John believes: “They are such a great team to write for – the actors are good fun to work with and good to have around. It’s really nice being so awful to their characters, though! One of my favourite moments pre-recording was telling Karen Gledhill a fairly major thing that happens at the end of episode four –



absolutely not lying to her and at the same time, knowing she wouldn’t believe me. She was sort of also believing me, because I was saying it to her, so often!”

Looking ahead to the last story in the box set, Matt laughs and teases: “The final episode, *Clean Sweep*, tidies up the loose ends, leaving no trace, as you do when you have a top secret high-risk governmental organisation!”

David concludes: “We conceived **Counter-**

Measures to be something different – an action adventure series with a black and white, 1960s tone. Since then its really embraced its own life and identity and I think the scripts – especially those by Matt Fitton, John Dorney and Ken Bentley – have been excellent. The series has been a great group effort and I’m hugely proud of it.” **VORTEX**



BOWLERED OVER

There are no superpowers in sight this month as Kenny Smith discovers more about how **The Avengers** assemble their stories...

THE HIGHLY-regarded adaptations of lost episodes from **The Avengers** continue this month, with the release of the fourth box set. The adaptations of *Kill the King*, *A Change of Bait* and *Dead of Winter* marks the end of the first season **The Avengers** scripts which are known to exist.

The inclusion of *Hunt the Man Down* is a departure from the previous releases from Big Finish and the remaining adventures (aside from the dramatisations of the two existing episodes) will be recreations drawn from a variety of sources.

Producer David Richardson says: "With volume four, we exhaust the supply of existing scripts for lost episodes and so the first three stories in the set mark the end of the 'straight reconstructions'. With the final episode, *Hunt the Man Down*, our job gets much harder – recreating the stories from synopses, telesnaps, anecdotal evidence and anything else we can pull together with the help of advice from **The Avengers** experts Alan Hayes and Richard McGinley. It's a

great weight of responsibility – and a lot of fun – getting it right and I'm pleased to say for our cast the move between different types of scripts has been seamless."

HAVING NOW played John Steed in 16 episodes for Big Finish, Julian Wadham has firmly established himself in the part made famous on television by Patrick Macnee.

Julian says: "I took a decision very early on, that other than the first couple of episodes where I had a very powerful mental image of the original productions, I thought, 'I'm going to be playing this part and nobody else – I must forget the past and make it my own'.

"With the initial episodes, I was very aware of Patrick Macnee, with his charming smile, his humour and the elegant image of the bowler and the brology. Something of that is useful in the very early episodes, but once we got going, I've increasingly tried to make it my own."

The period feel of the episodes is something that Julian, along with his co-stars Anthony Howell as Dr David Keel and Lucy Briggs-Owen as Carol Wilson, have found highly amusing on occasions. He explains: "I think one of the things we have all enjoyed, and I certainly have, is the laughs we have making these recordings.

"The scripts are excellent and very well written, but you couldn't write these scripts today, as they are not particularly politically correct these days. Sometimes, it reduces us to tears of laughter!

"It's an absolute given that in these days Steed is always incredibly randy and can hardly talk to a woman without trying to chat her up. There are only two ways to react to that – you can either disagree strongly and walk away from

"STEED IS ALWAYS INCREDIBLY RANDY AND CAN HARDLY TALK TO A WOMAN WITHOUT TRYING TO CHAT HER UP!"

it, or go with the flow and enjoy it. But really, there are times when it's just so hilarious."

Having worked with Anthony and Lucy on numerous occasions now, there is a real family feel in the Moat Studios, with a regular crew which includes director Ken Bentley, script adapter John Dorney, sound engineer Toby Hrycek-Robinson and producer David.

"It does feel like a family, very much so," says Julian, "and not just the three regulars, but the whole company. The studios are set up in a particular way which I had never come across before in other recording studios.

"They have these individual glass booths so we can all see each other while we are recording and the integrity of these



Above (left to right): Anthony Howell, Lucy Briggs-Owen and Julian Wadham

booths means if anyone present makes a fluff, it doesn't ruin the take for the sound engineer.

"They always get in very friendly casts and crews and they know how it works – they've got it down to an art. Toby, the sound engineer, he's fantastic. He's not only good at his job, but he's such a well-known chef. He produces these incredible lunches which are so eagerly anticipated.

"I think the two things are interconnected, in a way.

"If you or I were to make a bowl of soup, it might have one flavour, or very possibly two, but a bowl of soup made by Toby is extraordinary. Somehow, he's able to get five or six different flavours in there and you can taste them all coming through.

The Avengers: The Lost Episodes – Volume Four • OUT THIS MONTH!



KILL THE KING

By James Mitchell,
adapted by John Dorney

A CHANGE OF BAIT

By Lewis Davidson,
adapted by John Dorney

HUNT THE MAN DOWN

By Richard Harris,
adapted by Justin Richards

DEAD OF WINTER

By Eric Paice,
adapted by John Dorney

DIRECTED BY: Ken Bentley

STARRING: Anthony Howell, Julian Wadham, Lucy Briggs-Owen, Oliver Cotton, Philip Bretherton, Andrew Dickens, Daniel O'Meara, Dan Starkey, Karina Fernandez, Michael Chance, Harry Myers, Robbie Stevens, Daniel Hoffmann-Gill, Adrian Lukis, Richard Cordery, Matthew Cottle, Tim Treloar, Elizabeth Morton, Mark Bonnar, Lobo Chan, Ozzie Yue, Lourdes Faberes.

The Avengers



Above (left to right): Robbie Stevens, Elizabeth Morton, Lucy Briggs-Owen, Tim Treloar, Mark Bonnar, Anthony Howell and Julian Wadham



“YOU REALLY CAN’T REPLACE THAT AUTHENTIC FEEL... IT’S ALMOST LIKE GOING TO A GOOD THEATRICAL COSTUMIERS AND PUTTING ON AN AUTHENTIC SIXTIES SUIT”

“The amount of care that he puts in and the attention to detail, it’s exactly the same as the way Big Finish work on every production – and I like to think we all relish doing it.”

JULIAN HAS had a tremendous time working on *The Avengers*, but reveals: “I don’t think there’s any particular favourites for me. I really enjoy doing them and they all come as a bit of a surprise.

“The scenes are recorded like a film and out of sequence, so it seemed to me that, other than the first two episodes, there was little point in reading the scripts in advance, as they weren’t going to be recorded in any particular order.

“When you go in, there are four different scripts to record and we’ll be recording them in a completely different order. You can be recording a scene for episode four and then after that, doing a couple from episode two and then one from episode one. It can be slightly chaotic!

“I’ve always quite enjoyed sight reading – it keeps it fresher, too, so that’s why I don’t read them in advance.

“We’ll go into the booths and rehearse a scene, so by the time we come to record it – and we’ll do each scene a couple of times – I’ve a good idea of how it works and if we’re ever in any doubt, then we speak to the director.”



Having recorded the plays, Julian always anticipates hearing how the finished versions sound.

“I do listen to them – I really enjoy them when I’m going for

journeys in the car, so when I’m driving along, I’ll just pop one on. Toby has done a fantastic job with the sound design – it really does sound very Sixties and he absolutely recreates that time.

“They’ve also done an incredibly good job on the scripts and so far the ones we’ve done have been the original TV ones. You really can’t replace that authentic feel and it’s almost like going along to a good theatrical costumiers and putting on an authentic Sixties suit. It’s got a good cut and completely different feel, when compared to a suit today.”

Earlier this year, Big Finish announced they had secured a licence with STUDIOCANAL and DC Thomson to produce full-cast audio productions of *The Avengers* comic strips published in *Diana* in 1966 and 1967, over two box sets in April and November 2016.

Julian adds: “I’m absolutely delighted to hear about it – it’s excellent news. I’m really looking forward to doing those. Do you know who they’ve cast as Mrs Peel?”

Vortex, sadly, doesn’t. “Oh, well – I look forward to finding out who she is!

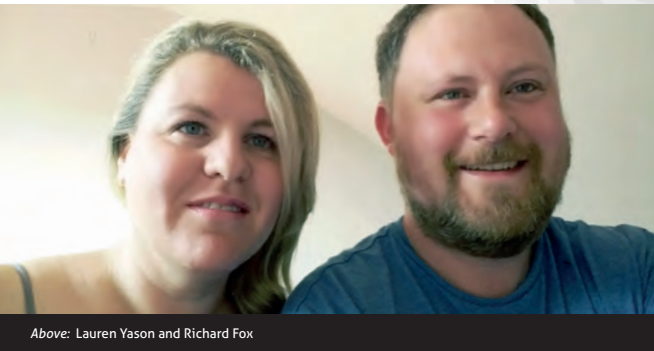
“From what I’ve heard, STUDIOCANAL, who own the rights to *The Avengers*, have been very pleased with the results of what we’ve done, so who knows, perhaps we could get their permission to do more with Steed and Keel when we’ve finished these episodes?

“We have such fun doing it and in my experience, when people are very happy at what they are doing and do it in a joyful way, it’s usually successful.” **VORTEX**



MEET THE MAKERS

Kenny Smith talks to Richard Fox and Lauren Yason about their work on **The Avengers: The Lost Stories – Volume Four**...



Above: Lauren Yason and Richard Fox

“RECREATING THE SOUNDS OF THE SIXTIES CAN BE AS CHALLENGING AS CREATING AN ALIEN WORLD FROM SCRATCH.”

THE SWINGING Sixties are back this month, with the return of John Steed, Dr David Keel and Carol Wilson in the latest box set of **The Avengers** releases from Big Finish. There's a new team in town on this release, with Richard Fox and Lauren Yason taking over from Toby Hrycek-Robinson in handling the music and sound design.

How do the sound designers go about tackling **The Avengers** and sourcing 1960s sounds? Rich says: "Fortunately, (for us), we took over the sound design from Toby and he kindly provided an excellent library of SFX [sound effects]. That dramatically cut down the time spent sourcing era-specific sounds! For each individual drama, however, there are always additional SFX to find/create but that can be the fun part. Actually I've just cleared out my dad's attic and I reckon most of the clutter from that dates back 50 years; must remember to keep some of it for the Foley... [sound effects]"

Recreating the sounds of the Sixties can be as challenging as creating an alien world from scratch. Rich explains: "You need to be more specific with your SFX, certainly compared to a new alien planet where you effectively have carte blanche on sound design, but then there's also a big satisfaction in getting the right sound for the right scene.

"It's a very different process. Toby's music for **The Avengers** goes a long way in creating the right period feel too of course. It's great work."

The previous **Avengers** sets have had a smoky jazz club sound to them, through Toby's work, and the new team intend to

keep it going. "That largely relies again on Toby's music, more than anything that creates the smoky, jazzy feel. Mind you, sorting out characters actually smoking is a little tricky. It's such a subtle thing and yet the script calls for it to be heard. Towing the line between hearing the cigarette and not making it sound like someone is breathing a little too heavily!"

Working on the four plays – *Kill the King*, *A Change of Bait*, *Hunt the Man Down* and *Dead of Winter* – was a lot of work for the pair. What was the main challenge?

"Just the sheer quantity of drama being prepared," admits Richard. "Four episodes at round 45 minutes each means you are working on three hours of sound design at a time! That's roughly twice as long as a monthly **Doctor Who** release and for the **Who** a lot of the SFX/foley remains consistent whereas **The Avengers** settings are changing every three-quarters of an hour!"

He adds: "It's very nice to be involved in recreating lost classics from television. I'm not really an **Avengers** fan but I know if I was recreating lost **Who** episodes how much responsibility I'd feel to get it right so hopefully these **Avengers** episodes are hitting the right note! It's a little bit of TV history and for that I'm quite chuffed we're involved." **VORTEX**

Listen again...

DOCTOR WHO 1963: THE ASSASSINATION GAMES

Set your ears to listen in monochrome, as we go back to 1963 and join the Counter-Measures team as they play The Assassination Games!

THERE WAS something deliciously tasty in the fact that Group Captain Ian Gilmore, Professor Rachel Jensen and Dr Allison Williams played their part in celebrating 25 years of *Doctor Who* on TV and then featured as part of Big Finish's golden anniversary celebrations.

John Dorney brought together the Doctor and Ace with their old friends from *Remembrance of the Daleks*, in the third part of the 1963 trilogy, also featuring the Fifth and Sixth Doctors, in the year in which *Doctor Who* was first shown. Producer David Richardson recalls: "*The Assassination Games* was such an exciting prospect – reuniting the Doctor and Ace with Rachael, Gilmore and Allison, as a 50th anniversary (and a 25th anniversary of their first appearance) special. I loved John Dorney's script for this, so smart and clever and it remains one of my favourites of the main range. And though it was made later, it's the perfect lead in to *Counter-Measures*... miss it at your peril!"

Writing the four-part adventure, which also featured *Counter-Measures* boss Sir Tobias Kinsella, was a tough task for John. He recalls: "At that point, I hadn't written a Sylvester and Sophie story, so it was nice to be able to count them off.

"David had first mentioned it to me at a meeting when we were planning *Counter-Measures* series two, I think it was, but it took me quite a while to come up with a story that would tie everything together. It was a good project to work on – but I took a while to get something that was suitably 60s that hadn't already been in *Counter-Measures*.

"I also needed to come up with something that was going to be big enough for the Doctor and Ace to be involved. You need a story with six lead characters – The Doctor, Ace, Gilmore, Rachel, Allison and Sir Toby – and need to have a plot that's full enough for them all – it's quite a big ask."

With an affair with a young woman, lies in the House of Commons and the Cold War menace of Russia, the play very much captures the period.



John adds: "I was reading a book by Dominic Sandbrook on the 1960s and all the little bits and bobs came through from that. Very early on, when I was doing the writing, I was in a play called *Coalition* and I was backstage doing some reading on it. And there, in the audience one night, was Sophie Aldred! It was quite nice that I was writing for her, while she was out there watching me."

The director of the play was Ken Bentley. He admits: "The two-day recording turned into a fun reunion with a bit of work thrown in for good measure! I sometimes worry I have too much fun at work! But I like it when actors are enjoying themselves – I think actors do their best work when they're having fun – and the cast made recording *Assassination Games* a real pleasure. It was a privilege to play a small part in bringing them all back together."

Released in November 2013, 1963: *The Assassination Games* surprised a few people on their first listen. John concludes: "I think people often think of this story as being more *Counter-Measures* than *Doctor Who*, because of the first episode.

"People make that decision early on, because the Doctor and Ace don't feature in it very much, as we set the scene. By the time you get to episode four, *Counter-Measures* are more in the background. It's totally flipped around and it's Doctor-led *Doctor Who*." **VORTEX**

1963: The Assassination Games is available now on CD and download from bigfinish.com.

VORTEX MAIL

THE FOURTH DIMENSION

I am currently listening to the Fourth Doctor **Lost Stories** box set while I am writing this. I am new to Big Finish and I am so glad I am part of all the excitement! Thank you for making dramas that make me happy! Thank you for making everyone happy!
JOSH HARRISON

NICK: *That's the best kind of email to receive. But what took you so long? I hope you'll be with us for many years now.*

MASTER PLANS?

I have really enjoyed the recent audio adventures featuring Geoffrey Beevers as the Master. I suppose he's become the definitive classic series Master on audio now, hasn't he?

I was watching *The Deadly Assassin* recently and it struck me that there is one, very obvious **Doctor Who** adventure that has never been told – notably, what on earth happened to the Master between *Frontier in Space* and *The Deadly Assassin*? Somewhere between these stories the Master used up all his regenerations, became an emaciated husk and met up with Goth on Tersaurus, where they made their sinister pact.

It would be interesting to find out just what happened to turn the Master into his hideously mutated, cadaver-like form... I don't buy that it was just using up his regenerations, but perhaps something worse...

SI HUNT

NICK: *You're right. We should look into this! There's a great story in there, Si.*

ALL AT SEA

Jago & Litefoot series nine. Simply stunning. Huge pats on the back for reaching nine series and every

one of them a corker. Now that ending... I don't suppose a short story collection/novella range could be on the cards? I loved the whole idea of the ship and the passengers.

A brilliant cast as ever and Trevor and Christopher are magical. I could listen to them banter all day, both on and off the storylines. Here's to series ten.
BRYAN SIMCOTT

NICK: *I'm afraid we don't have a licence for in print **Doctor Who**-related short stories and novellas.*

CARRY ON

I really enjoyed listening to **Terrahawks** and was wondering whether you had any more plans to continuing other TV programmes? I watched **The Tripods** as a child and would like to have seen it carried on to its conclusion, would you be interested in making this into an audio adventure in the future?

Continue the good work, looking forward to some exciting adventures from Big Finish.
SIMON BLOOMER

NICK: *The rights for **The Tripods** are not available. We did look into it a while back. I believe they're owned by a film company. And don't forget, we've got **The Prisoner** coming up!*

MUSIC MAESTRO

Dark Eyes 4 is one of the best **Doctor Who** series that has ever been made, I particularly enjoyed the music, but was slightly upset that unlike **Dark Eyes 2**, it wasn't included on its own. Will the soundtrack to it ever be available?
'LIV CHENKA'

NICK: *Well, Liv, since you were in the adventure, you shouldn't have been*

able to hear the music at all. Ho, ho... But I will look into this.



FIRST YEARS?

The recent announcement that **Doctor Who: The Early Adventures** is going to continue for at least another three years, along with the casting of Elliot Chapman as Ben Jackson, has got me wondering if we have any stories featuring the First Doctor with Ben and Polly to look forward to?
ROWAN MESSINGHAM

NICK: *There are no plans at the moment, but it's something that we'll look into.*

Send us an email and tell us the things that you like most...

Email feedback@bigfinish.com and remember to put 'Vortex Mail' as the subject..

Coming up...

RELEASE SCHEDULE

Forthcoming audio releases.

JULY 2015

- Doctor Who: *We Are The Daleks* (201, Seventh Doctor and Mel)
- Doctor Who – The Fourth Doctor Adventures: *The Fate of Krelas* (4.7, Fourth Doctor and Leela)
- Doctor Who – Short Trips: *Dark Convoy* (5.07, Download only)
- Counter-Measures – Series 4 *Box Set* (Full Cast)
- The Avengers – The Lost Episodes: *Volume 4* (Box Set)
- Dark Shadows: *In the Twinkling of An Eye* (47)

AUGUST 2015

- Doctor Who: *The Warehouse* (202, Seventh Doctor and Mel)
- Doctor Who – The Fourth Doctor Adventures: *Return to Telos* (4.8, Fourth Doctor and Leela)
- Doctor Who – Short Trips: *Foreshadowing* (5.08, Download only)
- Iris Wildthyme: *Wildthyme Reloaded* (Box Set)
- The Omega Factor: *Series 1 Box Set* (Full Cast)
- Dark Shadows: *Deliver Us From Evil* (48)

SEPTEMBER 2015

- Doctor Who: *Terror of the Sontarans* (203, Seventh Doctor and Mel)
- Doctor Who: *Crisis-Cross* (204, Sixth Doctor and Constance)
- Doctor Who: *The Sixth Doctor – The Last Adventure* (Special Edition)
- Doctor Who – The Early Adventures: *The Yes Men* (2.1, Second Doctor)
- Doctor Who – Short Trips: *Etheria* (5.09, Download only)
- Doctor Who – The Third Doctor Adventures: *Box Set*
- Torchwood: *The Conspiracy* (1.1.1, Captain Jack Harkness)
- Dark Shadows: *Tainted Love* (49)
- Big Finish Classics: *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*

OCTOBER 2015

- Doctor Who: *Planet of the Rani* (205, Sixth Doctor and Constance)
- Doctor Who – The Early Adventures: *TBA* (2.2, Second Doctor)
- Doctor Who – Short Trips: *The Way of the Empty Hand* (5.10, Download only)
- Doctor Who: *Doom Coalition 1* (Eighth Doctor)
- Jago & Litefoot: *Series 10 Box Set*
- Survivors – Series 3 *Box Set* (Full Cast)
- Dark Shadows: *And Red All Over* (50)

NOVEMBER 2015

- Doctor Who: *Shield of the Jötunn* (206, Sixth Doctor and Constance)
- Doctor Who – The Early Adventures: *TBA* (2.3, Second Doctor)
- Doctor Who – Short Trips: *The Other Woman* (5.11, Download only)
- UNIT: The New Series: *UNIT: Extinction* (1.1, Kate Stewart)
- Blake's 7: *Book 8: Mediasphere* (Kate Orman and Jonathan Blum)
- Blake's 7: *The Liberator*
- *Chronicles – Box Set 12*
- Dorian Gray: *Series Four*

DECEMBER 2015

- Doctor Who: *You Are The Doctor (And Other Stories)* (207, Seventh Doctor and Ace)
- Doctor Who – The Novel Adaptations: *Theatre of War* (07 Seventh Doctor, Ace and Bernice)
- Doctor Who – The Novel Adaptations: *All-Consuming Fire* (08 Seventh Doctor, Ace and Bernice)
- Doctor Who – Short Trips: *Black Dog* (5.12, Download only)
- Doctor Who – The Early Adventures: *TBA* (2.4, TBA)
- The Confessions of Dorian Gray: *The Spirits of Christmas*

JANUARY 2016

- Doctor Who: *The Waters of Amsterdam* (208, Fifth Doctor, Tegan and Nyssa)
- Doctor Who – The Fourth Doctor Adventures: *Wave of Destruction* (5.1, Fourth Doctor and Romana II)
- Doctor Who: *The Diary of River Song* (Box Set)
- Torchwood: *TBA* (1.2)
- The Prisoner: *Volume 1 Box Set*
- The Avengers – The Lost Episodes: *Volume 5* (Box Set)
- Charlotte Pollard: *Series Two Box Set*

FEBRUARY 2016

- Doctor Who: *Aquitane* (209, Fifth Doctor, Tegan and Nyssa)
- Doctor Who – Fourth Doctor Adventures: *The Labyrinth of Buda Castle* (5.2, Fourth Doctor and Romana II)
- Gallifrey: *Enemy Lines* (8, Romana II, Leela and Ace)
- Torchwood: *TBA* (1.3)
- Vienna *Series 3* (Full Cast)

MARCH 2016

- Doctor Who: *The Peterloo Massacre* (210, Fifth Doctor, Tegan and Nyssa)
- Torchwood: *TBA* (1.4)
- Doctor Who – The Fourth Doctor Adventures: *The Paradox Planet* (5.3, Fourth Doctor and Romana II)
- Doctor Who: *Doom Coalition 2* (Eighth Doctor)

APRIL 2016

- Doctor Who: *TBA* (211, TBA)
- Doctor Who – Fourth Doctor Adventures: *The Legacy of Death* (5.4, Fourth Doctor and Romana II)
- Torchwood: *TBA* (1.4)
- Terrahawks: *Volume 02*
- Doctor Who – The Novel Adaptations: *Nightshade* (Seventh Doctor and Ace)
- The Avengers – Steed and Mrs Peel: *The Comic Strip Adaptations* (Volume 1)



FULL-CAST AUDIOBOOKS BASED ON THE CLASSIC TV SERIES



SURVIVORS

HOW FAR WOULD YOU GO TO SURVIVE?

SERIES TWO BOX SET OUT NOW!



WWW.BIGFINISH.COM

[@BIGFINISH](https://twitter.com/BIGFINISH)

[f THEBIGFINISH](https://facebook.com/THEBIGFINISH)

BRAND NEW FULL-CAST AUDIO ADVENTURES



JOHN BARROWMAN IN

TORCHWOOD

OUTSIDE THE GOVERNMENT • BEYOND THE POLICE

COMING SEPTEMBER 2015



WWW.BIGFINISH.COM

 @BIGFINISH

 THEBIGFINISH



BBC and TORCHWOOD (word marks, logos and devices) are trade marks of the British Broadcasting Corporation and are used under licence. BBC logo © BBC 1996. TORCHWOOD logo © 2006.