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BIG WE LOVE
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EDITORIAL

FOR YEARS, *Doctor Who* fans have come up with their own ideas for stories – heck, it's what Big Finish was founded on. One of the most common thoughts we often have is mixing and matching Doctors and monsters. Okay, we've not had the Second Doctor facing the Tetraps in the *Companion Chronicles*, but you get the idea.

And now, this month, we've got it happening, as old and new *Doctor Who* collide. **Classic Doctors, New Monsters** is something I've been itching to hear for over a year now.

In June last year, whilst on a work placement at the *Daily Mirror* in London (yes, I was effectively on work experience, despite having been working for 20 years!), I was able to pop into the Big Finish office for the first time. Whilst there, after recording a couple of podcasts with Nick Briggs and Joe Smith, I asked if there was anything exciting coming up.

The pair of them grinned and Joe opened a file on his computer – and up popped two covers, the first for **Doom Coalition 2**, and then **Classic Doctors, New Monsters**. Let's just say I was a little surprised!

It's a set that promises so much – how will the Weeping Angels work on audio? Colin Baker's moral Doctor encountering a Judoon... Sylvester McCoy's pronunciation of the Scyorax... An Eighth Doctor story set during the Time War... Just four thoughts that have crossed my head, ahead of this new batch of stories.

I'm excited to hear them – and just wait until you hear who's in season two...

KENNY

ISSUE 89 • JULY 2016

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SNEAK PREVIEW THE CHIMES OF MIDNIGHT



VINYL is a bit like *Doctor Who*. It's made a comeback recently, having been considered obsolete for many years, and is now something that's in demand. The pair will combine for the special edition release of two classics from the Big Finish early years, in *The Chimes of Midnight* (out October) and *Spare Parts* (out April 2017).

Executive producer Nicholas Briggs says: "We just thought it would be a great idea to celebrate these two great stories."

But it's not just a straight re-release, as there's a host of extras being added to each package, which are being produced by Martin Montague. Back in the early Noughties, Big Finish plays didn't include the CD extras we're accustomed to today. Martin reveals: "We've gone purely for a production angle on this, so there's none of the cast interviewed. This is down to logistics, the availability of talent, etc.

"It's been great fun – rather like revisiting old friends. *Chimes of Midnight* is a particular favourite of mine anyway and one which I listen to when decorating the tree, most Christmases. You kind of forget it wasn't actually a Christmas release – it came out in February!

"And Rob Shearman is someone I've known for a long time – we first met when I was a BBC reporter in Yorkshire and he was working with Alan Ayckbourn in Scarborough in the early 1990s. I met him again through *Doctor Who* connections about 10 years later and it took us both a while to work out where we'd met before!"

Amongst the interviewees are Gary Russell (producer on *The Chimes of Midnight* and *Spare Parts*, the latter of which he also directed), Nick Briggs (current executive producer at Big Finish and voice of the Cybermen on *Spare Parts*), Jason Haigh-Ellery (producer of both stories), Robert Shearman (writer of *The Chimes of Midnight*), Barnaby Edwards (director of *The Chimes of Midnight*), Andy Hardwick (sound designer on *The Chimes of Midnight*) Russell Stone (music on both stories), with another to be confirmed. **VORTEX**



MODERN CLASSICS

It's time for the old and the new collide in four exciting new **Doctor Who** adventures...

WHEN WE got the licence to do post-2005 **Doctor Who**," says producer David Richardson, "we had a long think about inventive stuff we could do with new series characters. A mash up of new series monsters with the classic Doctors just seemed irresistible to me."

And this month, the result is revealed – **Classic Doctors, New Monsters**, volume one. We've got Peter Davison's Doctor encountering the Weeping Angels, Colin Baker faces off against the Judoon,

Sylvester McCoy meets the Sycorax, and Paul McGann takes on the Sontarans.

David continues: "Of course, when you look closely, there are quite a few new series monsters you can't do with the original Doctors for continuity reasons. But fortunately we were clear for Weeping Angels, the Judoon, the Sycorax and the new Sontarans. And we've got some much-loved creatures for volume two as well.

"I was very keen to have the Weeping Angels. They are now one of

the definitive **Doctor Who** monsters. The Judoon and Sycorax are both brilliantly rich creatures – Russell T Davies invested so much detail into them that there's plenty to play with. And I like the idea of having an established old series monster that had been revamped – hence the Sontarans, here played of course by Dan Starkey and Christopher Ryan."

The four plays have been directed by Barnaby Edwards – who is a new series monster himself, as a Dalek operator – and David is delighted by how the box set has come together.



Left to right: Rebecca Callard, Giles Watling, Sylvester McCoy, Jonathan Firth and Nisha Nayar



Above: Christopher Ryan and Sean Connolly

He adds: "It was a special atmosphere, and that was complemented by some glorious casting by director Barnaby Edwards. So it felt special in every way."

T HE BOX set kicks off with *Fallen Angels* by Phil Mulryne, with Peter Davison. Phil says: "It was a bit of a head-scratcher at first, but it was

incredibly exciting when they said, 'Do you want to do one with the Weeping Angels?'

"Of all the modern series monsters that have been created, it feels to me that the Weeping Angels are the one that have gone up there with the classic monsters, like the Daleks and the Cybermen. To play around with them and to put them in a story was a privilege and exciting. When you go

back and watch them in *Blink*, they're just so brilliant as a visual monster, so it was a challenge to do on audio.

"People have seen them in episodes other than *Blink*, though, and we know there's a lot more to them now, so that gave me more to work with.

"When Big Finish does a monster like, say, the Daleks, they have a very distinctive voice, and people also have the image of a Dalek very clearly in their minds. You don't need to put in bits of dialogue about the way they look.

"People know what the Angels are like, and because of that, there's ways to make them work on audio, without you having to put in dialogue that's too clunky with exposition.

"There's lots of ways to make all kinds of threats work on audio."

Guest star Dan Starkey adds: "I really enjoyed my old mate Phil Mulryne's Weeping Angel script. For such a 'visual' monster from the new series, I think that they were really intelligently deployed in the audio script, and I'm really looking forward to hearing how their menace is conveyed with full sound design!"

T HE SIXTH Doctor encounters the space rhinos for hire in *Judoon in Chains*, by Simon Barnard and Paul Morris.

The pair were delighted to be given Russell T Davies' creations to work with. They tell *Vortex*: "It's always a thrill to be handed a well-loved – or indeed hated – character from **Doctor Who** to play with, and the Judoon are no exception. Hand in hand with that is the fact that we were being allowed to take the shiny new Judoon figure and play with it in the classic **Who** sandpit! I think it's fair to say we were excited at the possibilities.

"To capture the Judoon voice, and their general attitude, we went back to the start – *Smith and Jones*. However, our hero Judoon, Kybo, is a rather unusual example of his species. Without wishing to give too



Left to right: Matthew Kelly, Sacha Dhawan, Joe Jameson, Dan Starkey, Diane Morgan and Peter Davison

much away, our research for the character who comes to be known as 'The Rhinoceros Man' consisted of watching a similarly-titled classic film from 1980. Oh, and asking Nick Briggs just how talkative it was physically possible for a Judoon to be. Luckily he was happy to let us push that aspect quite a way..."

Nick interjects: "It's much worse on the throat than Daleks, actually. Yes, it's a really silly voice to have chosen. I once completely lost my voice doing it for *Judgement of the Judoon*, a Judoon audiobook I did for AudioGo. On the second day, I had virtually no voice at all, so it had to be remounted a couple of weeks later. I was very embarrassed, but I'd been recording having just recovered from a cold and throat infection I'd caught of Daphne Ashbrook. I never let her forget it!

"It's always great fun doing the Judoons. Not least because other members of the cast always find them amusing. Colin Baker said, 'Wait a minute, are you just doing that yourself without any electronic trickery?' I was proud to reply, 'Yes.' Nice to get a feeling of pride like that, especially since Colin

is always joshing and taking the mickey out of me!"

Simon and Paul add: "Mixing old and new *Doctor Who* has its challenges. The aspect that took us longest was getting the pace of a new series episode, which took a couple of drafts to get a handle on – not helped by the tricky structure we'd adopted for the story. But watching the story get tighter and more focussed with every draft is a reward in itself."

THE TENTH Doctor's first enemies come to Big Finish for *Harvest of the Sycorax*, by James Goss. James' brief for the story was an ever-changing process between his first commission and the finished play. He grins: "Ooh! It was fun watching the brief evolve – it was originally practically a Doctor-free adventure (like those early *Doctor Who Weekly* strips) featuring plucky humans versus a terrifying outer-space menace, then it became 'you can have a bit of the Seventh Doctor in it,' until finally it was, 'Unleash Sylvester McCoy on the Sycorax'. Which was enormously exciting – what other Doctor could



DOCTOR WHO CLASSIC DOCTORS NEW MONSTERS

OUT JUNE!
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Written By: Phil Mulryne,
Simon Barnard and Paul Morris,
James Goss, Andrew Smith
Directed By: Barnaby Edwards

CAST

Peter Davison (The Doctor)
Sacha Dhawan (Joel Finch),
Diane Morgan (Gabby Finch),
Matthew Kelly (Michelangelo),
Joe Jameson (Piero), **Dan Starkey** (Priest), **Colin Baker** (The Doctor), **Nicholas Briggs** (Captain Kybo), **Kiruna Stamell** (Eliza Jenkins), **Trevor Cooper** (Jonathan Jaggars Esq), **Tony Millan** (Justice Burrows/Jonty), **Sabina Franklyn** (Herculanian), **Nicholas Pegg** (Business Owner), **Sylvester McCoy** (The Doctor), **Nisha Nayar** (Zanzibar), **Jonathan Firth** (Cadwallader), **Rebecca Callard** (Shadrak), **Giles Watling** (The Sycorax Chief), **Paul McGann** (The Doctor), **Josette Simon** (Sarana Teel), **Dan Starkey** (Jask), **Christopher Ryan** (General Stenk/Flitch), **Sean Connolly** (Tag Menkin/Ensign Stipe)

better pronounce their name?"

Unlike the Judoon and the Weeping Angels, the Sycorax have only had one TV adventure in which they play a prominent role, as well as making some comic strip appearances. Did James go back and rewatch *The Christmas Invasion*, and re-read the Sycorax's printed adventures?

"Both. The problem with rewatching *The Christmas Invasion* is getting distracted by Jackie Tyler. It's such a great story and they're such a formidably horrid monster, but they get upstaged by, 'I'm gonna get killed by a Christmas Tree.' Every time. They were the first grim original villains of the new series. The Slitheen were sinister and charming – the

Andrew says: "Originally, they were going to be partly narrated, but fairly soon afterwards, it was decided to make it full cast and fully dramatised. I think I had delivered the final version of the storyline, and was just about to start on the first draft of the script, when I was told we could go ahead and put the Time War in it.

"What we now have is a battle across time that intrudes in the real

Doctor and they come across the Sontaran."

Andrew picked up on a major difference between classic series Sontarans and their 21st century selves. He explained: "The thing that has struck me about the new series Sontarans is their leaders. They're very Colonel Blimp-like, very much a caricature – an alien based on an old British officer stereotype. With that in my head, I used it as my template.

"I went back and watched *The Sontaran Strategem* and *The Poison Sky*, just to get their voices in my head – and we've got in the rallying cry of 'Sontar - ha!'

"We've got Dan Starkey and Christopher Ryan back together again, with Dan playing the Sontaran who has been disgraced. Dan is magnificent as always, and Chris, who is playing the general, is just fantastic. He had a big smile on his face the whole time – he's one of the loveliest people you'll ever meet."

Dan adds: "Andrew Smith's script is a great addition to the Sontaran canon. As well as a pacy plot that cracks along, it's full of really nice details which deepen what we know about Sontaran culture and legal processes. It's lovely to see a bit of world-building going into it, and of course Andrew has form here, having written *The First Sontarans* a few years ago. Trust me, I was taking notes.

"The 'power play' elements between the two chief Sontarans was great fun to explore as well."

WITH SERIES one all set for release, what can David tease about the next?

He grins: "I've got two complete scripts for series two, and I'm awaiting the other two. Here's a thing – two of the scripts feature the same monster, with a story that connects with two different eras of *Doctor Who*. It's going to be grand."

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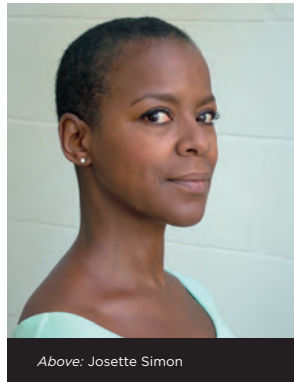
"MIXING OLD AND NEW DOCTOR WHO HAS ITS CHALLENGES..."

Sycorax were just totally alien and almost unredeemably alien. There was the language barrier, their lack of empathy, their utterly bullying nature."

Was there a bit of a thrill, in bringing old and new **Doctor Who** elements together? "There was a real joy in immersing the Seventh Doctor in that lovely new series world of humans with real relationships and plausibly ludicrous names. It's a civilisation with tablets and apps and people called Zanzibar Hashtag. He has no truck with it all, and promptly gets on with wiping out the bits of it he doesn't approve of.

"It was terribly tempting to have the Seventh Doctor speak Sycoraxic, but I ducked it in the end. Sylvester's such a lovely man that it seemed mean to inflict it on him!"

THE SONTARAN *Ordeal* by Andrew Smith rounds off the first box set, and brings former **Blake's 7** star Josette Simon into the Big Finish fold for the first time, with Dan Starkey playing Sontaran Jask, while his old TV boss Christopher Ryan plays General Stenk.



Above: Josette Simon

time of this planet where it has a devastating effect.

"The population of the planet aren't aware of what's happening but the Doctor is, and we deal with the ramifications of that battle. We also have a Sontaran who has been dishonoured – he wants justice and his honour back.

"It's got a 'feel' to it, a gritty, grainy feel, with this world that they are in. We've also got Josette Simon as Sarana Teel, who is a Paladin – a people's champion - who meets the



MEL AND BACK!

The Doctor and Ace are reunited with their old friend Mel in the new **Doctor Who** monthly range trilogy...

AS **DOCTOR Who** companions go, Melanie Bush and Ace are like chalk and cheese. One is middle class, the other comes from a council estate. One speaks politely, the other uses slang. Mel and Ace are diametric opposites, but when they come together in *Dragonfire*, they work. It is a shame

that the pair didn't get the chance to spend more time together.

It's been 29 years (for us) since the Doctor, Ace and Mel parted company, but this month the trio reunite in the **Doctor Who** monthly range.

Script editor Alan Barnes says: "I've loved teaming the Seventh Doctor up with both Mel and Ace.

They were only ever together on TV in *Dragonfire*, but I thought they were a companion combination with a huge amount of untapped potential – earnest, perky Mel makes for a fantastic contrast with untamed, sarky Ace.

"With the conclusion of the Hex saga, it seemed an opportune



Left to right: Sophie Aldred, Sylvester McCoy and Bonnie Langford



Above: Ginny Holder

moment to look in on Mel, and find out what she's been up to since leaving the TARDIS. Quite a lot, as it turns out!"

Returning to play Mel once again is Bonnie Langford. Winner of the Best Newcomer at the British Soap Awards Bonnie says: "Mel's like a big sister to Ace, in some respects. You've got

"IT LOOKS LIKE MEL HAS MAYBE TURNED A BIT BAD..."

Bonnie Langford

Ace, who likes going around and throwing explosives, but now Mel is more of a go-getter than she was – and more argumentative!

"She's still completely loyal to the Doctor and Ace, but she's worried about Ace's welfare and there's quite a few lovely moments between her and the Doctor.

"We've got the team with the three of us, with a lot of diversity in their experiences and different strengths Mel gets more to do with computers and programming now, while you have Ace doing things like being a freedom fighter.

"There's an interesting side to it all, where, from the outside, it looks like Mel has maybe turned a bit bad and her morals and ethics are more like Sabalom Glitz's, so it looks like he's been a big influence on her by

not always doing the right thing.

"At heart, she's still a good egg, but she's definitely more worldly-wise."

SINCE BONNIE first returned to play Mel for Big Finish in 2000's *The Fires of Vulcan*, she's been delighted with the way the character is being given real depth. And in the new trilogy, she particularly enjoys the reunion with her old co-stars.

She reveals: "Working with Sylvester and Sophie is such good fun – it's always a really friendly, warm atmosphere. We're all doing the same job and it's great fun, keeping ourselves going – we've all been there, done it, and worn the t-shirt, which means we can just get on and enjoy ourselves. When you're working with nice people, and we've all come from the same place, it's just joyous.

"When we recorded these, Sylvester had just done *The Real Marigold Hotel*, and I loved watching it. The vision of him trying to get on a bunk bed head first was just fantastic and it made me laugh!

"I think, when I was in the show before, I was in a very different headspace and time changes that as well. Things change and you don't mind doing things that way that maybe in the past you weren't so sure of."

ALAN BARNES says: "This new trilogy kicks off with Matt Fitton's *A Life of Crime*, in which an on-the-run Mel pitches up on the paradise planet Ricosta – a sort of space Costa del Crime for lowlifes seeking to retire with the proceeds of their illegal activities. But when she runs into the Doctor and Ace, will they even recognise her as the Mel they once knew...?"

Matt continues: "It's nice to come back to the monthly range and I was very pleased when Alan asked me to write such a pivotal story in the



Left to right: Stephen Hagan, John Banks, Ginny Holder and Harry Myers

“WHO IS THAT LADY ON THE COVER, THE ONE WEARING THE DOCTOR’S HAT?”

Alan Barnes

next stage of the Seventh Doctor and Ace’s journey.

“Having been part of the whole Hex arc, it’s good to pick up on what was happening in *You Are The Doctor and Other Stories*, and who the TARDIS was really trying to find.

“We don’t specifically say how long Mel has been away with Glitz after the events of *Dragonfire*, but we pick up on how that experience might have changed her, having left the TARDIS as a very upright, slightly naive but morally correct girl from Pease Pottage. It’s a change to look at how her experiences with an intergalactic conman have changed her and



DOCTOR WHO A LIFE OF CRIME

OUT JUNE!
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Written By: **Matt Fitton**
Directed By: **Ken Bentley**

CAST

Sylvester McCoy (The Doctor), **Bonnie Langford** (Mel), **Sophie Aldred** (Ace), **Ginny Holder** (Gloria/Secretary), **Des McAleer** (Lefty Lonnigan), **Stephen Hagan** (Nathan Later), **Harry Myers** (Atomon/Sperovore Banker/Steward), **John Banks** (Mayor/Sperovore Auditor/Sperovore Financer)

given her a different perspective on life.

“The Doctor and Ace are not sure she’s the same Mel, and Mel isn’t sure if they are the same people she used to know.

“And, of course, there’s also the question of who that lady is on the cover, the one wearing the Doctor’s hat...”

IT’S A trip to Spain in the August release, with *Fiesta of the Damned*, but it’s no summer holiday for the TARDIS travellers when they arrive amid the horrors of the Spanish Civil War.

What kind of brief was writer Guy Adams given? “Just to pitch something for the Doctor, Ace and Mel. I ran through a few ideas and we settled on this.

“The characters have always been dear to me, I was 11 and taking both myself and *Doctor Who* terribly seriously when Sylvester sat up on that BBC studio floor and started sticking his nose into strange matter. So I was a junior apprentice back then, soaking their voices up like a sponge.

“I’ve been lucky enough to write for Sylvester and Sophie a few times now but this was my first time with Bonnie so, really, I just wanted to please her. That’s the main thing any scriptwriter wants to do, please his actors and the listeners to come.”

ROUNDING OFF the trio of tales is *Maker of Demons*, the first four-part story for Matthew J Elliot.

The TARDIS lands on the planet Prosper, which the Doctor and Mel visited previously.

Matthew says: “I was told simply to come up with a four-parter for the Doctor, Ace and Mel, set some time after *Dead to the World*, my contribution to *You Are The Doctor and Other Stories*. That said, the plot went through quite a few changes



Left to right: Sylvester McCoy, Sophie Aldred and Bonnie Langford



Above: Harry Myers

"THE ONLY DIFFERENCE IS INSTEAD OF HEADING DOWN TO THE VIC, YOU JUST GO TO ANOTHER PLANET!"

Bonnie Langford



before it eventually became *Maker of Demons*."

Without wanting to give too much away, Matthew – writer of *Lost in Time and Space: An Unofficial Guide to the Uncharted Journeys of Doctor Who* – explains: "One of my personal hobbies is conspiracy theorists. Not theories, theorists. I'm kind of fascinated



by the sort of people who concoct insanely elaborate explanations of shadowy organisations being responsible for the constantly chaotic nature of existence.

"Watching the YouTube videos of the likes of Alex Jones and Dr' William Mount is, for me, a little like slowing down for a traffic accident. So, naturally, this story features its

very own conspiracy theorist, who has his own notions about what's really happening on the planet Prosper, and who's responsible for it. The realisation of that character turned out to be more fun than I could ever have imagined."

BONNIE, WHO fitted in the recording sessions around her role in *EastEnders* as Carmel Kazemi, adds: "What I particularly love is the fact that it's audio drama – the listener can use their own imagination, which makes the storylines much more powerful – when we did it on TV, there was a reduced budget but here, the only limit is how far you can push your mind.

"I just love coming into the studio – they're such lovely people, it's great to work there and they always get in such good guest artists as well – it keeps your brain working!

"It's quite different to Albert Square, but in other ways, it's still about people. The only difference is instead of heading down to the Vic, you just go to another planet!"

VORTEX



Kenny Smith tunes in to more...

SOUNDS OF THE SIXTIES

ALL GOOD things must come to an end, and sadly, that's the case with **The Avengers** – the **Lost Episodes**.

This box set of three plays is the penultimate release in this series, and it's something that the production team are very aware of, as their studio days with Anthony Howell as Dr David Keel, Julian Wadham as John Steed, and Lucy Briggs-Owen as Carol Wilson, are numbered.

Producer David Richardson says: "Actually, I'm starting to sense a bit of sadness as we make these final episodes of **The Avengers**. The whole project has been such a happy experience, and Julian, Anthony and Lucy have become part

of the Big Finish gang. Every time we come back to make an episode, it's like a bunch of pals getting back together and catching up.

"And now we only have a handful left to make – none of us can believe it's all gone so quickly, and that soon it'll all be over. But all three are wonderful actors who I will cast again in other things."

It's a return to a more earnest era of **The Avengers** for Julian, fresh from the success of **The Avengers** – **The Comic Strip Adaptations**, alongside Olivia Poulet as Emma Peel.

Speaking of the comic tales, Julian feels: "There's a big change in the emphasis from the original series – these are far lighter. Yes, that's the big difference from the **Lost**

Episodes – these are far funnier.

"The other thing I've noticed is there's been a change in Steed, as he's now quite far from the outrageously sexist character we meet in the earlier stories."

KICKING OFF the set is an adaptation of *The Frighteners*, originally written by Berkeley Mather. The story – one of only two first season **Avengers** stories to exist in its entirety – has been adapted by Rae Leaver.

She says: "It's a corker of a story with some genuinely nasty bits, which was good to get my teeth into. I really like the story of this one, the blackmail angle, and the



Left to right: Julian Wadham and Anthony Howell

“I THINK THE CAST HAD A LOT OF FUN, ESPECIALLY WITH THE ‘LONDON GANGSTER’ DIALOGUE.”

Rae Leaver

levels of bluffing going on by all the involved parties. There’s a lot to play with. It was certainly a lot more straightforward than *The Girl on the Trapeze* too, as far as turning it into a story that works well on audio. And I got to play with Steed finally, after being very jealous of all the fun other people were having with him!”

What did Rae learn from adapting *Girl on the Trapeze*, that she brought to *The Frighteners*?

“I learned the first thing to do is to identify what the trouble points are in the adaptation, what won’t work on audio, what’s too visual, and spend your time mulling over them... but don’t put off the nitty-gritty of adapting whilst you ponder! Most of the time, you’ll be out at the supermarket and suddenly how to fix the problem will hit you, it won’t come to you just because you’re sat very still contemplating it.”



Above: Anthony Howell

She also had the chance to attend the play being brought to life.

Rae adds: “I was lucky enough to be able to attend the recording for this one, and it was an absolute delight. I think the cast had a lot of fun, especially with the ‘London Gangster’ dialogue and vocabulary. It’s all very of its era, a wonderful example of the tone of dialogue

of the time. I hope everybody else enjoys it as much as we did!”

T ECOND IN this set is *Death on the Slipway*, by Ian Potter from a storyline by James Mitchell.

Ian reveals: “*Death on the Slipway* is quite an interesting story in that we have only a tiny synopsis but lots of other clues.

“We have all the John Cura tele-snaps which I found were a useful spine in developing a full story – working out what the locations were, who was where when (occasionally tricky) and giving me specific emotional beats to hit. I actually wrote the script with the tele-snaps embedded in so I knew exactly where I was up to with them in every scene.

“I was quite keen to make the story reflect the kind of work the author James Mitchell was doing around that time.

“So in preparation I watched his other *Avengers* episodes (or listened in the case of *Kill the King*), a surviving *Armchair Theatre* by him, binged on his series *Callan* and *When the Boat Comes In*, and read

one of his novels *A Way Back* which seems to share a tiny bit of DNA with *Death on the Slipway*.

"This gave me, I hope, a bit of a feel for his sensibilities, a few names for characters like the non-speaking agent we meet in the first scenes and an absolute certainty he'd have put the shipyard in his story in the North East of England."

Ian found there was a particular issue which he had to deal with, as there were no clues in the existing story notes or in the tele-snaps. He reveals: "The biggest problems

are never even mentioned in the synopsis? The *TV Times* cast listing gives us some clues, and suggests they may well have appeared earlier and dodged Mr Cura's camera, but it was up to me to give them roles."

CONCLUDING THE latest batch of sounds from the Sixties is *Tunnel of Fear*, adapted from Terrence Feeley's storyline by John Dorney, who is also the Big Finish series script editor. John says: "It was a rather

fits together. That gives you a bit of a stronger starting point.

"The process was largely a case of looking at the picture and figuring out what was happening in them, compared with the synopsis and using that, I was able to pull together the nucleus of the storyline. You just want it to feel plausible.

"You still don't have everything, though, but there's enough there to edge you towards knowing where it's all going, especially with the photos.

"It's an interesting process because of the detective work that's

"BY WORKING WITH THE TELE-SNAPS AND THE DETAILED SYNOPSIS, YOU CAN WORK OUT FAIRLY WELL HOW THE PLOT ALL FITS TOGETHER."

John Dorney

needed and I'd liken it to a puzzle. You just need to put all the parts together. Writing anything is like the world's hardest puzzle – especially when you're pulling everything together to make it work."

Like his producer, John is not looking forward to the end of this *Avengers* series. He adds: "I'm sad because we'll not be back with the three members of the regular cast again. I actually had a moment of panic because in set seven, we've a solo Keel story and a solo Steed story and I wasn't sure if Carol appeared in the other. I checked – and fortunately she does. It would have been awful if we'd done the last story with the three of them and not realised it. It's been a real privilege to be involved with **The Avengers.**" **VORTEX**

THE AVENGERS: THE LOST EPISODES

VOLUME SIX



Tunnel of Fear by John Dorney, from a storyline by Terrence Feeley

Directed By: Ken Bentley

CAST

Anthony Howell (Dr Keel), **Julian Wadham** (John Steed), **Lucy Briggs-Owen** (Carol Wilson), **Hugh Ross** (Sir Thomas Weller), **Eve Webster** (Marilyn Weller), **Michael Lumsden** (The Deason), **Laurence Spellman** (Moxon), **Chris Pavlo** (Nature Boy), **Ferdie Roberts** (Kolchek), **Jon Culshaw** (Sir William Bonner), **Niky Wardley** (Liz Wells), **Barnaby Edwards** (Sam Pearson), **Dan Starkey** (One-Ten), **Pete Collis** (Harry Black), **Charlotte Strevens** (Mrs Black), **Amy Embank** (Claire), **Tony Turner** (Wickram), **Charles Davies** (Maxie Lardner)

OUT JULY!
CD/DOWNLOAD

The Frighteners by Berkeley Mather, adapted by Rae Leaver

Death on the Slipway by Ian Potter, from a storyline by James Mitchell

I faced were questions that might have been solved with a line of dialogue that no visuals would help with. What motivates the secondary villain? Why doesn't the main villain just run off when his initial plan goes wrong? And, most taxingly for me – who on Earth are the characters who turn up towards the end of the tele-snaps who

different experience from my previous stories where I wasn't working from a script. I had the tele-snaps to work with, while there was a rather more detailed storyline available. For *Diamond Cut Diamond*, I had virtually nothing.

"By working with the tele-snaps and the detailed synopsis, you can work out fairly well how the plot all

LISTEN AGAIN

SHADOWS OF THE PAST



“If I was going to get in her head to tell the story, I’d need back-up. So I asked a proper scientist and he did the hard bits.”

Simon Guerrier

THERE’S NO denying that Caroline John’s portrayal of Liz Shaw was one of the most beloved in the **Companion Chronicles** range. Caroline was a latecomer to the worlds of **Doctor Who** beyond the confines of the television screen, waiting until 1992 to make her convention debut, as she believed that Liz was neither loved nor important. How wrong she was.

When Big Finish launched the **Companion Chronicles** range in 2007, Liz was the companion who was chosen for the initial Third Doctor release, *The Blue Tooth*. Until her sad passing in 2012, Caroline regularly returned to the Big Finish

studios to record more adventures as Liz.

Liz features in this month’s **Short Trip**, *The Blame Game*, read by Rufus Hound, and Caroline John was a real favourite with the production team.

Producer David Richardson says: “My over-riding memory of *Shadow of the Past* is that it was the first time I got to work with Caroline John, who just stepped back into the role of Liz Shaw so effortlessly.

“Liz is one of my favourite companions – my earliest **Doctor Who** memory is *Spearhead from Space* – and Caroline was one of my favourite people to work with at Big Finish. I was always on the lookout

for new scripts we could record with her. Everyone had so much respect and affection for her.”

Shadow of the Past was written by Simon Guerrier, who was delighted to write for Liz.

He recalls: “Yes, great fun. Though I realised with horror as I watched *Spearhead from Space* that she’s got degrees in physics and medicine, and is a proper, professional scientist. If I was going to get in her head to tell the story, I’d need back-up. So I asked a proper scientist and he did the hard bits.”

The alien menace in the tale comes in the form of the Mim, making their first appearance in the **Doctor Who** universe, after Simon created them for the **Bernice Summerfield** range. Mostly made up of nervous tissue, the Mim are purple sponges with tentacles, and possessed the ability to take on the form of Time Lords and humans like.

Simon explains: “I invented the Mim to be a cheap audio baddie, and then never quite used them in a CD. They were a natural fit for the story.”

Capturing Liz’s unique character was something of a challenge for Simon. He adds: “The main thing was that David didn’t think I’d quite captured Liz, so I did a rewrite with *Inferno* on in the background. I think I’d made Liz a little too serious, like she was peering over her spectacles at us the whole time.”

Although the Mim were defeated, they did return to the range, where they faced the First Doctor, in *The Library of Alexandria*. **VORTEX**



COUNTER STRIKE

KENNY SMITH DISCOVERS THAT SIR TOBY KINSELLA'S TEAM ARE ALIVE AND KICKING IN THE SEVENTIES...

THEY'RE BACK – and it's about time! At the end of the last season of *Counter-Measures*, our regular characters, Dr Rachel Jensen, Group Captain Ian Gilmore and Dr Alison Williams, appeared to be dead.

And now, here they are, apparently alive and well in a new series, *The New Counter-Measures*, in a special two-story

release, *Who Killed Toby Kinsella?* *Counter-Measures* had been a huge hit with Big Finish fans, so what led to the decision to revamp the established format?

Producer David Richardson says: "Actually it wasn't planned as a revamp... the shift came organically out of the storyline we had planned. We'd known the end of series four for a long time,

and we knew where it would go in series five. So it was all about story – which is, of course, how it should be.

"We've moved on to the next decade. Rachel, Allison and Gilmore are dead, and Toby Kinsella is killed. That's the beginning of *The New Counter-Measures*, which stars all of the old team. Confused?"

The first story in this set, *Who Killed Toby Kinsella?* was written by John Dorney, while story two, *The Dead Don't Rise*, has been written by Ken Bentley. John says: "We always knew what the plan was after the end of the last series and that it was going to end on a cliffhanger.

"We got as far as the season planning document, but with all of



Above: Simon Williams

series four the way we did, and we knew they were all still alive. But we hadn't made any decisions about what **The New Counter-Measures** might be."

Actor Hugh Ross is back as Sir Toby, and adds: "At the end of the last series, we were told what was going to happen next – we would all hopefully rise from the dead."



Above: Pamela Salem

imagined **Counter-Measures** as if it was being shot in black and white so created the world around that – and everyone got what we meant. This time, it's now more like an ITC action drama.

"This special is a bit of a mix, between the style of the **Counter-Measures** we've had so far in the 60s and what's to come in **The New Counter-Measures**."

Ken continues: "I don't think it was a challenge to reboot the series so much as an enjoyable exercise in developing the existing story world and deciding how it should and could change. There were certain things we wanted to leave behind. Aspects of the world of **Counter-Measures** that were in some ways restrictive. The period itself was one thing.

"We wanted to jump ahead into the 1970s when genre television became technicolor with a much more international and exotic flavour. We were also keen to cut their ties to the British Government and to the military. They could investigate so much more without the baggage of an army to lug about! And I was keen to have them out on a limb, on their own, and for once see them on the receiving end of military intervention!

"**Counter-Measures** was well-known for being set in the 1960s, and David was keen to make it clear that **New Counter-Measures** was set in the 1970s, so the historical context became a key factor. Conveniently the world was in social and political turmoil at the time, so I used that as the backbone of the idea.

"I knew I wanted the story to be about Sir Toby. He's such a shady figure, I wanted to hint at his past and explain how he became the man we know and distrust! So really it was a case of connecting factual political events with our fictional characters and story world. It took a little digging to establish those

"THIS TIME, IT'S NOW MORE LIKE AN ITC ACTION DRAMA."

JOHN DORNEY

the new series **Doctor Who** releases coming along, the schedules got a bit frenetic. The plan was to bring out this special release ahead of the next **Counter-Measures** series, with Ken coming up with the storyline for the special and I got one of the discs to write."

Ken also directed this set, and says: "We finished series four of **Counter-Measures** long before we started planning what to do next. We decided we wanted to reboot the series, that's why we ended

THERE'S A change in tone on the way with **The New Counter-Measures**, with this release acting as a bridge before the first box set of this new series is released in December.

John explains: "If you look at **The New Avengers**, it's kind of the opposite of what we've done with **Counter-Measures**. **The New Avengers** is a bit more gritty than the 60s series, and I think we've perhaps gone a bit in the reverse. From the word go, we always

parameters, but once they became clear the rest of the pieces fell into place quite quickly.”

Talking of the decade, Hugh recalls: “The Seventies were an interesting time. I’ve been rewatching a programme on television recently looking back at what was on TV at the time, and it’s absolutely incredible some of the things that were shown.

“The attitudes were really quite shocking when compared to today, with things like sexism and racism – I was watching it with an open mouth!”

HUGH IS delighted to be back as Sir Toby, and is delighted with the latest adventures for the team.

He says: “These two new scripts are really, really good – and we had such a good time doing them.

“From my point of view, I can tell the writers have really taken to Toby – it’s great for me!”

Sir Toby is a fascinating character, as it’s never easy to predict exactly how he will react when placed in a difficult situation.

Hugh laughs: “I think there’s lots of people like that in real life, aren’t there? Over the years we’ve seen politicians that are exactly like that. I’ve even been told Boris Johnson is like that – apparently he’s really nice if you get to know him! He just doesn’t do it for me, though.

“Just look at the newspapers just now, with all of the things that have come out about the private lives of people in the public eye – it just shows you never can tell what’s really going on with people.

“Nobody is completely black and white – there are a lot of shades of grey there and the greyness is a lot of fun for me to play.

“A few years ago, I did the play *Death and the Maiden*, where I was playing the torturer.

“Some nights when I went on stage, I was convinced I was



Above: Hugh Ross



Above: Karen Gledhill

“I CAN TELL THE WRITERS HAVE REALLY TAKEN TO TOBY — IT’S GREAT FOR ME!”

HUGH ROSS

THE NEW COUNTER-MEASURES

WHO KILLED TOBY KINSELLA?



Directed By: Ken Bentley

CAST

Simon Williams (Group Captain Gilmore), **Pamela Salem** (Rachel Jenson), **Karen Gledhill** (Allison Williams), **Hugh Ross** (Sir Toby Kinsella), **Raad Rawi** (Prince Hassan Al-Nadyr), **Justin Avoth** (Mikhail), **Belinda Stewart-Wilson** (Overton), Ian Lindsay (Routledge), **Jot Davies** (Avery), **Alan Cox** (Fanshawe)

OUT JUNE!
CD/DOWNLOAD

Who Killed Toby Kinsella?
by John Dorney

The Dead Don't Rise
by Ken Bentley





Left to right: Belinda Stewart-Wilson, Alan Cox, Jot Davies, Justin Avoth, Simon Williams, Pamela Salem, Hugh Ross, Karen Gledhill and Raad Rawi

“WE WANTED [COUNTER-MEASURES] TO FEEL VERY MUCH LIKE A PRODUCT OF THE ERA IN WHICH IT IS SET.”

DAVID RICHARDSON

responsible but on others I was certain that it hadn't been me. That's a lovely thing to bring to the part.

“We've had Sir Toby flirting as well, which is another side of him we don't often get to explore, so there's still plenty of areas to look at. We think we know what he's like, but there's still a lot to examine.”

COUNTER-MEASURES has a very strong fan following, which isn't bad for a show based around three characters who featured in *Remembrance of the Daleks*.

David says: “I think we have some really strong characters that were created by Ben Aaronovitch, and are played by some great actors. I think

we made a good call when planning the series, in that we wanted it to have its own distinct flavour, and to feel very much like a product of the era in which it is set. **The New Counter-Measures** will also reflect that – though now our audio series has gone from being in black and white to being in full colour!”

Ken agrees: “All the leads are such endearing characters. They contrast and compliment each other well, and they're delightfully British which I think is very appealing. But an important factor is that their job is to keep the rest of us safe. That's a really compelling characteristic and is the reason so many hero and superhero stories are popular.”

VORTEX

VORTEXMAIL

EMAIL: FEEDBACK@BIGFINISH.COM AND REMEMBER TO PUT 'VORTEX MAIL' AS THE SUBJECT...

WRITTEN WORD

I am a fan from South Korea who wants to buy the **Tenth Doctor Adventures** audiobook. I have a question. If I buy this audiobook, can I have or download the script? Because English is not my mother tongue, I need the script to understand the audiobook fully.

YUJIN

Nick: Yes indeed, these scripts are available as supplementary material when you access your downloads via the Big Finish site.



PERFECT TENTH

I am a new Big Finish fan. I just received my first story, the Tenth Doctor Limited Edition 1240 of 5000 box set. I am in love with it! I didn't know what to expect when I ordered it and I am definitely impressed with it. Thank you Big Finish, I look forward to more Tenth Doctor and Donna adventures, as well

as other stories when the budget allows. Keep up the good work.

SANDRA SMITH

Nick: Thanks, Sandra. Have a good look around the site. There are loads of offers and even some releases available for free. Dip in and see what you fancy.

MISSING LINKS?

Does *Outbreak* require a listener to have listened to past **Torchwood** audios or is this stand alone?

CHRIS METZGER

Director Scott Handcock: It's a brand-new, self-contained story set between series two and Children of Earth.

COMPACT DISCWORLD

Thank you for attending Timegate 2016 in Atlanta! It was a pleasure meeting you gentlemen.

During the Q&A, a guest asked if you'd consider productions other than **Doctor Who**. I would like to suggest the *Discworld* series by Sir Terry Pratchett. I very much enjoy reading them and would be delighted to listen to them as a radio show.

L. MICHELLE POOLE

Nick: A great idea. I think those works already have their audio rights allocated to different companies. There were some BBC Radio adaptations. They may have been commercially released,

so it's worth doing an internet search for them. Oh, and I loved it at Timegate 2016. A lovely convention.

JOURNEY'S END?

When you posted "the 2017 Christmas title – and the last in the current run of **Doctor Who Short Trips**" in the announcement, does this mean that **Short Trips** is ending with that title in December 2017, because it reads that way?

RONALD J MAUTI

*Nick: Actually... sssh... we haven't announced it yet, but another year's worth of **Short Trips** has just been commissioned. Cue applause.*

MISSING CHAPTERS

In the cover notes for *The Child* (**Companion Chronicle** 7.06) Nigel Fairs says this is (intended to be) the first play in a third trilogy of Leela stories. Will this trilogy ever be resolved by a special release **Companion Chronicle**?

DAVE

*Producer David Richardson: I'm afraid there are currently no plans, as this was shelved when the range ended. Of course, **Companion Chronicles** has since been revived as an annual box set, but these will be concentrating on the First and Second Doctors for now. **VORTEX***

COMING SOON

FORTHCOMING AUDIO RELEASES



JULY 2016

- **DOCTOR WHO: A LIFE OF CRIME** (214, Seventh Doctor, Mel and Ace)
- **DOCTOR WHO – FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: THE PURSUIT OF HISTORY** (5,7, Fourth Doctor, Romana II and K9)
- **DOCTOR WHO: SHORT TRIPS: THE BLAME GAME** (6,07, Third Doctor, Liz, download only)
- **DOCTOR WHO: CLASSIC DOCTORS NEW MONSTERS** (Volume 1)
- **THE NEW COUNTER-MEASURES: WHO KILLED TOBY KINSELLA?**
- **TORCHWOOD: BROKEN** (2,5)
- **THE AVENGERS – THE LOST EPISODES: VOLUME 6** (Box Set)

AUGUST 2016

- **DOCTOR WHO: FIESTA OF THE DAMNED** (215, Seventh Doctor, Mel and Ace)
- **DOCTOR WHO – FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: CASUALTIES OF TIME** (5,8, Fourth Doctor, Romana II and K9)
- **DOCTOR WHO: SHORT TRIPS: DAMASCUS** (6,08 Third Doctor, Jeremy, download only)
- **THE NEW ADVENTURES OF BERNICE SUMMERFIELD – VOLUME 03: THE UNBOUND UNIVERSE** (Box Set)
- **SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE SACRIFICE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES** (Box Set)
- **TORCHWOOD: MADE YOU LOOK** (2,6, Gwen)
- **YOU'RE HIM, AREN'T YOU?** (Audiobook, Paul Darrow)

SEPTEMBER 2016

- **DOCTOR WHO: MAKER OF DEMONS** (216, Seventh Doctor, Mel and Ace)
- **DOCTOR WHO: THE WAR DOCTOR: AGENTS OF CHAOS** (Box Set, The War Doctor)
- **DOCTOR WHO: SHORT TRIPS: A FULL LIFE** (6,09 Fourth Doctor, Romana II and Adric, download only)
- **DOCTOR WHO: THE EARLY ADVENTURES: THE AGE OF ENDURANCE** (3,1 First Doctor, Susan, Ian and Barbara)
- **DOCTOR WHO: PHILIP HINCHCLIFFE PRESENTS The Genesis Chamber** (2,1 Fourth Doctor, Leela)

OCTOBER 2016

- **DOCTOR WHO: THE MEMORY BANK AND OTHER STORIES** (217, Fifth Doctor, Turlough)
- **DOCTOR WHO: DOOM COALITION 3** (Eighth Doctor, Liv and Helen)

DOCTOR WHO: THE EARLY ADVENTURES:

- **THE FIFTH TRAVELLER** (3,2, First Doctor, Ian, Barbara, Vicki and Jospa)
- **DOCTOR WHO: SHORT TRIPS: RULEBOOK** (6,10, Fifth Doctor, Peri, download only)
- **DOCTOR WHO: THE CHIMES OF MIDNIGHT LIMITED VINYL EDITION**
- **CHARLOTTE POLLARD: SERIES 02** (Box Set)
- **JAGO AND LITEFOOT: SERIES 12** (Box Set)
- **THE CONFESSIONS OF DORIAN GRAY: SERIES 5**
- **DOCTOR WHO: THE THIRD DOCTOR ADVENTURES:** (Volume 2)

NOVEMBER 2016

- **DOCTOR WHO: ORDER** (218, Sixth Doctor and Constance)
- **DOCTOR WHO: SHORT TRIPS: TBA** (6,11, TBA, Download only)
- **DOCTOR WHO: THE EARLY ADVENTURES: THE RAVELL CONSPIRACY** (3,3 First Doctor, Vicki, Steven)
- **DOCTOR WHO: THE THIRD DOCTOR ADVENTURES: VOLUME 2** (Third Doctor and Jo)
- **SURVIVORS – SERIES 5: BOX SET** (Full Cast)
- **THE AVENGERS – STEED AND MRS PELL: THE GRAPHIC NOVEL**
- **THE AVENGERS – STEED AND MRS PELL: THE COMIC STRIP ADAPTATIONS** (Volume 2)
- **UNIT: THE NEW SERIES: SILENCED** (3, Kate Stewart)
- **TORCHWOOD: OUTBREAK** (Box Set, Jack, Ianto, Gwen, Rhys, Andy)

DECEMBER 2016

- **DOCTOR WHO: ABSOLUTE POWER** (219, Sixth Doctor and Constance)
- **DOCTOR WHO: QUICKSILVER** (220, Sixth Doctor and Constance)
- **THE NEW COUNTER-MEASURES: SERIES 1**
- **DOCTOR WHO: SHORT TRIPS: THE HESITATION DEVIATION** (6,12, Seventh Doctor, Bernice Summerfield, Download only)
- **DOCTOR WHO – THE NOVEL ADAPTATIONS: ORIGINAL SIN** (Seventh Doctor, Roz, Chris)
- **DOCTOR WHO – THE NOVEL ADAPTATIONS: COLD FUSION** (TBA)
- **DOCTOR WHO: THE EARLY ADVENTURES: THE SONTARANS** (3,4, First Doctor, Steven, Sara)
- **DARK SHADOWS: HAUNTING MEMORIES**

JANUARY 2017

- **DOCTOR WHO: THE STAR MEN** (221, Fifth Doctor, Adric, Tegan and Nyssa)
- **DOCTOR WHO – FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: THE BEAST OF KRAVENOS** (6,1 Fourth Doctor, Romana II, K9, Jago & Litefoot)
- **DOCTOR WHO: SHORT TRIPS: TBA** (7,01, Download only)
- **DOCTOR WHO – THE DIARY OF RIVER SONG: SERIES 02** (Box Set, River Song, Sixth Doctor, Seventh Doctor)
- **GRACELESS: SERIES 4** (Box Set)
- **THE PRISONER VOLUME 02** (Box Set)
- **THE AVENGERS – THE LOST EPISODES: VOLUME 07** (Box Set)

FEBRUARY 2017

- **DOCTOR WHO: THE CONTINGENCY CLUB** (222, Fifth Doctor, Adric, Tegan and Nyssa)
- **DOCTOR WHO – FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: THE ETERNAL BATTLE** (6,2 Fourth Doctor, Romana II and K9)
- **DOCTOR WHO – NEW SERIES: THE WAR DOCTOR VOLUME 4** (4, War Doctor, Leela)
- **DOCTOR WHO: SHORT TRIPS: TBA** (7,02, TBA, Download only)

MARCH 2017

- **DOCTOR WHO: ZALTYZ** (223, Fifth Doctor, Adric, Tegan and Nyssa)
- **DOCTOR WHO – FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: THE SILENT SCREAM** (6,3 Fourth Doctor, Romana II and K9)
- **DOCTOR WHO: SHORT TRIPS: TBA** (7,03, TBA, Download only)
- **DOCTOR WHO: DOOM COALITION 4**

APRIL 2017

- **DOCTOR WHO – SPECIAL RELEASES SPARE PARTS (LIMITED VINYL EDITION)** (Fifth Doctor and Nyssa)
- **DOCTOR WHO – SHORT TRIPS: TBA** (7,04, TBA)
- **DOCTOR WHO – MAIN RANGE: TBA** (224, TBA)
- **DOCTOR WHO – FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES DETHRAS** (6,4, Fourth Doctor and Romana II)

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