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DOCTOR WHO

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EDITORIAL

ISSUE 99 • MAY 2017



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UNIT WAS always something that excited me when I was a wee boy. Brigadier Lethbridge-Stewart, Captain Mike Yates and Sergeant John Benton existed in my mind's eye through *Target* novelisations, long before I first saw them on TV. I first caught sight of the Brigadier and Benton in *The Three Doctors*, during the 1981 **Five Faces of Doctor Who** repeats, and encountered Yates when *Day of the Daleks* came out on cut-price VHS in 1988. Add in the ever-adorable Katy Manning, and you've got a great team, of interesting, human characters with lives, loves and flaws.

Big Finish's 21st century **UNIT** series has been great, especially the introduction of the likes of Josh and Sam, plus Colonel Shindi, alongside the TV stars in Kate and Osgood. For me, when we saw the **UNIT** team in action against the **Zygons** in the 2015 series of **Doctor Who**, Captain Carter and Lieutenant Bishop was always just out of shot – they're that much a part of the team, in my mind.

So to bring this group of strong and interesting characters together is something I can't wait to hear – everyone I've spoken to for this issue says it's a great mix, especially when Jo and Osgood meet!

I love the Silurians and Sea Devils too, so I reckon this set is one I'll be listening to over and over again.

Classic Doctors, New Monsters was a big hit – I'm looking forward to this one just as much! **KENNY**

SNEAKPREVIEW

Producer/director Scott Handcock previews Big Finish's first Shakespearian production, with **Hamlet** set for release in August...



*"A little more than kin,
and less than kind."*

HAMLET CAME about because of Alexander Vlahos. Although we decided to wrap up **The Confessions of Dorian Gray** last year, we weren't ready to part company, and wanted a brand-new challenge. Suffice it to say, **Hamlet** pushed both of us further professionally than we've ever been pushed before.

It's Big Finish's first foray into Shakespeare, and is probably one of the most important texts in literature. In that sense, it's hugely daunting, but also thrilling to give it the Big Finish treatment. Justin Richards has provided an edit from the various folios to make it wonderfully audio-friendly, and the dynamics within the cast are electrifying. They're all at ease with the Bard and at the top of their game, and I can't wait for listeners to hear what promises to be a very special production. ■



REUNITED

Kenny Smith finds out what happens when past and present collide...

EVER SINCE the first announcement that Kate Stewart and Osgood would be coming to Big Finish for their own **UNIT** series, fans have been asking for their counterparts from the classic era to be recalled.

This month, their wish is granted as Jo Jones, Mike Yates and John Benton encounter the 21st century team, along with Josh Carter and Sam Bishop.

But that's not the only old and new mash-up, as new series Silurians and classic Sea Devils take on the Unified Intelligence Taskforce.

Producer David Richardson says: "When we started working on these new **UNIT** tales, the idea of bringing in much-loved **UNIT** members from the past seemed irresistible. But I chose to resist it, because our primary duty with this series was to define it and keep to the world of Kate and Osgood that we'd seen on TV.

"However, now it's established and successful, I think now is the time to bring the teams together. For our **UNIT** to meet classic **UNIT**. With Silurians and Sea Devils, in a battle for the planet!"

Script editor and writer of the first and fourth stories in the set Matt Fitton continues: "It was news to me when David said we were going to do old and new **UNIT** together, but it was a brilliant surprise to play with, bringing the old guard from the 20th century together with the 21st century **UNIT**. It's a nice twist.

"It feels like it's the right time to do it, as we're at our fourth set now and we've established our new characters. We've got **UNIT** united against a classic enemy, which just makes sense.



Ingrid Oliver
and Katy Manning

Finish production as Benton, which delighted David.

He explains: “John Levene is back as Benton... I think John was quite public about the fact that he’d not really enjoyed recording his **Companion Chronicle**, which saddened me because – as I said to him – he was utterly brilliant in it and it was a real thrill for us to work with him. A few years on, and he was eager to return and clearly had the time of his life. This was the first time that this team had acted together since *The Green Death* in 1973. How special is that?”

It was a special day for James Joyce, the plastic fantastic Captain Josh Carter. He adds: “I was so disappointed I only got one day recording with the old team, because this series really revolves around the older crew.

“I felt it was really lovely – there was a real sense of



John Levene
and Richard Franklin

“We have a crossover of different generations of **UNIT** and of the Earth Reptiles too, with new series Silurians and the classic Sea Devils – and they’ve brought some friends from the pre-historic era with them.”

Katy Manning was delighted to return to meet the new **UNIT** team. She says: “It was so lovely to be asked to go, particularly as myself,

“ IT’S WONDERFUL TO BE A PART OF SOMETHING THAT MADE ME SO HAPPY IN MY FORMATIVE YEARS. ”

JAMES JOYCE

Richard Franklin and John Levene are the last men standing from that era, in terms of the actors. I’m still great friends with them both, and even though I’ve lived in other continents since we last worked together, we still have that special bond. We were a strong team.

“It was lovely to have John with us this time. It felt like something was missing before, so I’m delighted to have him back.

“I love the new **UNIT** team, so bringing us pensioners together with them was a lovely idea.”

John Levene makes his second appearance in a Big

the baton being passed on to another group of people, to carry on the **UNIT** tradition. It’s a real honour to feel like a part of that family.

“Even though these were people we hadn’t met before, it did feel like we had that connection, because of **UNIT**.

“It was a special thing for me, having watched **Doctor Who** when I was growing up. I know lots of people say that, but it’s wonderful to be a part of something that made me so happy in my formative years, which caught my imagination.”

UNIT: ASSEMBLED

■ THIS MONTH! ■ CD/DOWNLOAD

CALL TO ARMS BY MATT FITTON

TIDAL WAVE BY GUY ADAMS

RETRIEVAL BY GUY ADAMS

UNITED BY MATT FITTON

CAST

Jemma Redgrave (Kate Stewart),

Ingrid Oliver (Osgood),

James Joyce (Josh Carter),

Warren Brown (Lt. Sam Bishop),

Richard Franklin (Mike Yates),

John Levene (John Benton),

Katy Manning (Jo Jones),

Richard Hope (Jastrok),

Neve McIntosh (Kalana),

Nicholas Briggs (Sea Devils),

Nicholas Asbury (Burmester),

Annette Holland (Anne),

Alex Tregear (Laura Sale)

Written By: **Matt Fitton**
and **Guy Adams**

Directed By: **Ken Bentley**



THE FOURTH UNIT series begins with *Call to Arms* by Matt Fitton, followed by *Tidal Wave* and *Retrieval* by Guy Adams, before *United* by Matt Fitton concludes the set.

David says: “I was really pleased by how the teams merged so well together, and I especially liked the pairing of Osgood and Jo Grant. Osgood is in awe of Jo – the legendary companion to the Third Doctor! – and their dynamic is lovely. The second episode is really mainly about them and the Sea Devils – and it’s a real treat!”

A grinning Katy continues: “To team Jo up with Osgood was such a clever idea. Not only is Ingrid such a wonderful young lady and a great actor, but the two characters were fantastic together – you’ve got lovely old Jo, and then there’s Osgood, the ultimate fan girl!”

“I can’t say too much, but it was super to be able to complete something which her Doctor had started years before but had never been able to finalise. It was very emotional.

“What was also interesting to see was Jo’s attitude to soldiers.

“NATURALLY, AS SOON AS HE SAID JO JONES I WAS GIDDY. I LOVE KATY MANNING!”

GUY ADAMS



She might have been employed by UNIT, but her biggest influence in life was the Doctor, so it’s good to see her take on aspects of a soldier’s lifestyle. Her training came from the Doctor, not UNIT.”

Matt adds: “Working with Guy is great – the first thing I did with him was *Pretty Lies* for the

War Doctor series. It’s a good relationship – he’s someone who can turn in a good first draft and responds brilliantly to notes.

“We knew the overall shape of the story, from A-B-C-D, and Guy has the middle two parts. We knew where each episode would sit across the arc. The opening story features the awakening of the Silurians, in the second there is a seemingly unrelated incident, then by the third, the stakes are raised, as the real scale of the threat becomes apparent.

“The third story is quite a claustrophobic one for Kate and Osgood, being hunted through caves by a Silurian warrior. And when they end up stranded in the final story, the UNIT veterans are called in to assist.”

Guy continues: “The shape of the overall arc was pretty much in place – though Matt is very clever



Above (clockwise from left): Toby Hrycek-Robinson, Richard Franklin, John Levene, Katy Manning, Ingrid Oliver, Neve McIntosh, Richard Hope, Nicholas Briggs, David Richardson, Alex Tregear, James Joyce, Ken Bentley and Matt Fitton

and lovely and encourages you to chip in new thoughts. You know the characters you have to play with and the rough things you need them to achieve in order to keep the ship on course. Naturally, as soon as he said Jo Jones I was giddy. I love Katy and her appearance in *The Death of the Doctor* is just wonderful. Sometimes, when I need cheering up, I sit and hug that blu-ray just to soak it up via emotional osmosis.”

Unlike recent **UNIT** and **Doom Coalition** box sets, the second and third parts of this series are not linked.

Guy explains: “They’re two distinct stories actually. They both contribute important elements moving forward but they have – I hope! – different shapes, and tones of their own. One is about Jo Jones channeling the spirit of the love of her life in order to save the world, the other is a more intense, claustrophobic affair. They’re both



heavy on action but the emotional undercurrents are very different.”

ONE OF the series guest stars is Neve McIntosh, who has carved out a niche by playing Silurians in the 21st century. She says: “It’s great. I love working at Big Finish – it’s like a little family when you have so

much fun. When I first got the job on **Doctor Who**, I was given a Jon Pertwee DVD. My make up is a bit better than theirs was, almost like a big papier mache head! It was such a great story as well, with the idea of the disease to wipe out the humans and take over the Earth. It’s very Terry Nation and **Survivors**, isn’t it?



John Levene, Katy Manning and Richard Franklin

“ I DON'T NEED TO SIT IN MAKE UP FOR FOUR HOURS, OR GET STRAPPED INTO A CORSET. ”

NEVE McINTOSH

She adds: “What’s lovely about being in the booth is your imagination working, I don’t need to sit in make up for three or four hours, or get strapped into a corset. It’s brilliant fun – you put everything into you voice. You’re not thinking about too many other things.”

James hopes that the Big Finish **UNIT** series will attract newcomers to the classic era.

He explains: “It would be fantastic if there are people who have come to **UNIT** through the current TV series and then hear this series, then want to go back and find out more about the original **UNIT** team. It’s like a jigsaw puzzle so hopefully they will want to find out about the missing pieces and put it all together, so they can learn about the original **UNIT** team in the classic episodes, for the first time.

“Everything is connected to a bigger story, and in **Doctor Who**, nothing is ever in isolation. That’s part of the charm.”

Katy adds: “I think people really loved the old **UNIT**, and I know people love Kate Stewart and the new **UNIT**, so I’m sure the fans will enjoy them coming together.

“It was a real joy to do it, as it always is at Big Finish. I hope everyone enjoys it, because it would be great to come back and do some more.” **VORTEX**

“When I did my original story with Matt Smith, that was around the time of the Large Hadron Collider, and I wondered if we would be doing anything to do with that... but it was just mining!

“I must have now done something like five Silurians – but it’s fun. When I did the first one on TV, I thought, ‘That’s me got one off my bucket list, doing one of my favourite sci-fi shows ever,’ and then when I got the phone call asking me if I’d fancy coming back... ‘Okay – let’s do that!’

“My brother is my go-to guy. I think at one point he had every book and every episode of **Doctor Who** that existed, so I could always phone him up for advice. We were sci-fi geeks growing up with **Doctor Who** and **Star Wars** – we just wanted to go into space!”

Working on this particular series was a joy for Neve, who had previously met Katy Manning.



She reveals: “I knew Katy was going to be there. She’s friends with a friend of mine in Edinburgh. They were down in London to see a show, and I’d just heard that day I was going to be doing my first **Doctor Who**. And there was Katy Manning! I had to tell her that night, but she was sworn to secrecy. She’s just gorgeous!”

Neve also enjoyed the fact that she was playing a Silurian without having to undergo the full make-up transformation which she requires for the TV show.



WATER RESULT

JANE SLAVIN is something of a Big Finish regular. She's acted in a host of **Doctor Who** plays (many with Tom Baker, as well as *The Paradise of Death* back in 1993), but not many people will know she's also a published author.

Originally released in 1998, *Writing on the Water* features Ellen Millar, an actress whose star is in the ascendant, who then meets Aedan, who is 12 years her senior. Their attraction is instant; their affair intense and all-consuming. But after five days, Aedan returns to Belfast and realises that some emotional entanglements are impossible to untie, as Ellen's addiction to one man takes her close to madness.

David Richardson recalls: "One day I heard Jane talking about her novel in the green room. I thought, 'That sounds interesting' so I bought it on Kindle, and took it away on holiday with me and read it greedily. It's funny and powerful and gripping, and I've told her many times how much I love it. And then one day I asked Jane if it had ever been recorded as an audiobook and she said 'No'. So here we are!"

Jane explains: "I wrote *Writing on the Water* some time ago. We were at a recording and David said to me, 'I'm reading your book.' It was exciting and alarming at the same time. What would he think? He later texted me and said he had been blown away by it. He loved it.

"A few months later we were having an interview after doing a **Doctor Who**, and he asked me if I wanted to record it as an audiobook. I'm really delighted to have been asked to do it."

In studio, Jane found herself in a strange position. She says: "It was actually quite scary because you've got double the pressure – you're taking your own words and then you're recording them.

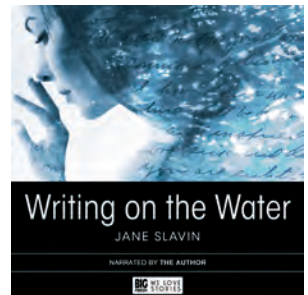
"It's quite rude in places, I mean, it's funny too but there's a lot of sex in it – I wrote it never imagining that one day I'd be sitting in a studio performing it, talking VERY candidly about sex, and then minutes later I'd be having lunch with the other two people who were there, listening in!

"I think it helps to write as if there is no one there, to imagine there's no audience; no one is judging you. That gives you a freedom you otherwise wouldn't have. There's nothing

quite as creatively paralysing as the idea of your grandma reading it!

"I wrote it almost as though everyone in my life was dead – it's about grief and loss, so that's quite appropriate." She adds: "It's ultimately a book about hope, and hope triumphing over experience or the lack of it, and occasionally hope where there perhaps shouldn't be any, like a stage of grief, when you imagine one day you'll see them walk into the room again and the hope keeps you going for another day." **VORTEX**

Please note: *Writing on the Water* contains adult material and is unsuitable for younger listeners.





NINE LIVES

It's the start of an exciting new Doctor Who range, set in the era of Christopher Eccleston's fantastic Time Lord...

“WHEN WE first got the new series licence,” says Big Finish executive producer Nicholas Briggs, “we talked about how we could further explore the adventures of the Ninth, Tenth and Eleventh Doctors, when the actors who played them might not necessarily be available.

“Since I’d had experience doing a Ninth Doctor voice for **Destiny of**

the Doctor and some of the AudioGo titles, everyone seemed to agree I’d be the best choice of narrator.”

Nick pauses, before bursting into laughter: “Naturally, I was in favour!”

Destiny of the Doctor had been a success in 2013, taking a narrator and a second actor, to tell a tale from the eras of each of the first 11 Doctors.

Now, the format has been tweaked for this new **Chronicles** series.

Nick continues: “Yes, it’s fairly similar to that really. There’ll be lots of sound design and music, bringing it all to life.”

Producer for the new series is Scott Handcock, who’s delighted to be involved.

He explains: “I began my career working on the new series, back in

2006, so coming back to tackle these stories is a personal thrill. Russell T Davies and Julie Gardner worked so hard on establishing a fresh take on the series, faithful to everything

Ninth Doctor's television adventures in terms of action and emotion."

Nick concedes: "It was hard work, quite a challenge and a responsibility, but great fun!

THE SET opens with *The Bleeding Heart* by Cavan Scott, who has had a fair bit of experience of writing for the Ninth Doctor. Cav says: "Writing for audio, especially for Big Finish, is always like coming home, and with Nine I had the benefit of knowing how good Nick's take on this particular incarnation actually is. He read *Night of the Whisper*, which I wrote with Mark Wright for the 50th anniversary year, and everyone was rightly blown away with his Ninth Doctor. I was excited to provide something for Nick that had a bit more grit maybe than *Whisper*, which was set during Nine's time with Rose and Jack – the same era I've been writing for the Titan Comic run. This story is set before the Doctor even meets Rose, so its a slightly different, more haunted Ninth Doctor, before his edges were smoothed down and he learnt to enjoy his travels again."

Cav reveals his brief was: "Just that it had to be set before *Rose*, and feature a second voice. The rest was up to me, which was a lovely position to find myself in. I started



Camille Coduri
and Nicholas Briggs

that came before it, but forging the Doctor's world in a brave new direction, it's great to get the chance to explore the Ninth Doctor in greater depth, and everything that followed!" He continues: "Each story is narrated by Nicholas Briggs, with a second actor providing a guest voice for each adventure. In the first, we have Claire Wyatt as journalist Adriana Jarsdel, followed by Laura Riseborough as Emily Brontë in our celebrity historical, followed by the return of Bruno Langley as Adam Mitchell, and Camille Coduri rounding off the set as Jackie Tyler. Helen Goldwyn's direction, coupled with Joe Meiners' impressive sound design, really make these adventures feel bigger than two actors in a studio, and evoke the scale of the

“ I'M SURE I'M QUITE A HANDFUL TO WORK WITH IN THIS CONTEXT. IT CAN'T BE EASY, DIRECTING 'THE BOSS' ” NICHOLAS BRIGGS

Helen's brilliant at directing these. She's very good at leaving me to my own devices, letting me go bonkers, then she reins me in a bit, or puts me in my place with a well-aimed note. I'm sure I'm quite a handful to work with in this context. It can't be easy, directing 'the boss'. But the truth is that I'm quite scared of getting it wrong, so I have to go a bit bonkers to sort of release all my tension. I think it's worked out well, though."

by asking what the Doctor would be looking for at this point in his lives, and the answer was: healing. The rest of the story flowed from there, complete with aliens and setting, a world that brings natural harmony and understanding."

The adventures continue in *The Window on the Moor* by Una McCormack. She says: "Script editor Matt Fitton approached me to write the kind of story that would

fit the Ninth Doctor era, and we settled on a 'celebrity historical', like *The Unquiet Dead*. We were both keen for the celebrity to be female. I suggested a few people, but they weren't quite right, or else the Doctor had already met them. Eventually we decided on Emily Brontë. I think we were both surprised to discover that she hadn't really featured before, and that the space was there to use her.

"I wanted to avoid the obvious (using *Wuthering Heights* as inspiration), so I went back to Emily's juvenilia, the stories and poems that she wrote with her sister Anne, set in the world of Gondal. These are very melodramatic – all about dukes and duchesses, and civil wars, and people getting locked in dungeons, and lovers separated by death. Perfect for **Doctor Who!** Emily went on 'playing Gondal' well past childhood, so I went with the idea that these 'games' were based in reality."

PRODUCER SCOTT

Handcock has written the third tale, *The Other Side*.

He reveals: "I wasn't down to produce these stories originally. Instead, I was only down to write one of the stories, and I cheekily asked whether I might be able to write a new adventure featuring Adam Mitchell. I'd worked with Bruno on *The Confessions of Dorian Gray* and knew how good he was, and Russell agreed there was space for a new adventure between *Dalek* and *The Long Game* (with obvious caveats), so it seemed like a no-brainer.

"Watching *The Long Game* again, there are plenty of small suggestions that they're all a bit more familiar with each other than they might otherwise have been simply from *Dalek*, so it's nice to flesh out that dynamic. Obviously they can't arrive anywhere as



DOCTOR WHO: THE NINTH DOCTOR CHRONICLES

■ THIS MONTH! ■ CD/DOWNLOAD

THE BLEEDING HEART by Cavan Scott

THE WINDOW ON THE MOOR by Una McCormack

THE OTHER SIDE by Scott Handcock

RETAIL THERAPY by James Goss

Directed By: **Helen Goldwyn**

CAST

Nicholas Briggs (Narrator), **Camille Coduri** (Jackie Tyler),

Bruno Langley (Adam Mitchell), **Claire Wyatt** (Adriana Jarsdel),

Laura Riseborough (Emily Brontë)



“ WE DECIDED ON EMILY BRONTË. I THINK WE WERE BOTH SURPRISED TO DISCOVER THAT SHE HADN'T REALLY FEATURED BEFORE... ”

UNA MCCORMACK

overwhelming as Satellite 5, so instead they find themselves drawn to Birmingham, 2012, where an alien presence is beginning to manifest in a derelict cinema..."

The final story in this set is *Retail Therapy* by James Goss.

He was told from the word go his tale was to: "Celebrate the majesty that is Jackie Tyler. Well, who wouldn't?"

What was the biggest challenge along the way for James? "Finding a story that



Bruno Langley
and Nicholas Briggs



Helen Goldwyn, Laura Riseborough,
Una McCormack and Nicholas Briggs

fits into that magical season. I'd already done a Jackie Tyler story for **The Lives Of Captain Jack** boxset (featuring Captain Jack and Jackie Tyler fighting alien menaces) and knew what a delight writing for Camille was.

"This is a story about those very 2000s concerns – pyramid-selling and catalogue parties. It's

also fun creating a story where (unwittingly) Jackie is the villain. I guess the biggest challenge was making sure that the Doctor and Rose still got some words in."

C HARGED WITH bringing the stories to life in studio as director was Helen Goldwyn. She reveals: "Working with Camille

was a joy. She's got a very specific and idiosyncratic rhythm to the way she performs – and you really do believe Jackie Tyler is back in the room! Nobody can do it like her. Her delivery of lines is great, and she's completely charming and quirky.

"We also had Bruno Langley with us and it took a while to sort out his availability because of **Coronation Street**. I don't actually watch **Coronation Street**, so I wasn't quite aware of just how famous he is!

"He's a great actor – very natural and easy going," Helen adds: "What I find really incredible is there's just two people in studio, but between them and the time you add in the post-production effects, it can sound as expansive as a full cast production. It's enhanced by the narration, which gives you the visual pointers.

"We've created something that's very authentic to the era." She adds: "It's felt like an internal, personal project for a little while now, but we do have to get it out there!

"You always hope people will love it and we've certainly put our hearts into it. Fingers crossed!"

VORTEX

If your mansion house is haunted just call... the Doctor and Romana!



PLACED IN FEAR

THE FOURTH Doctor faced many threats on television, in the form of monsters based on classic horror films, dangers drawn from ancient myths and menaces with a hard science basis. Something he has never faced before comes with this month's release of *The Haunting of Malkin Place*, in which he and Romana meet the spiritualist Talbot, who has been called to investigate ghostly apparitions in a 1920's mansion.

Written by Phil Mulryne, Tom Baker and Lalla Ward are joined by **The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy** legend Simon Jones, along with Denise Black.

Producer David Richardson recalls: "*The Haunting of Malkin Place* was Phil Mulryne's first script for Big Finish. He'd worked for us as an actor

many times and, as I recall, we'd just been chatting about the fact that he was a writer too, and I offered him the opportunity to do a Fourth Doctor story.

"I have a theory that great actors make great writers – look at John Dorney, Louise Jameson, Christopher Hatherall... Actors spend their lives inside scripts, so they know how dialogue, pacing and narrative work. They spend their lives learning how to do this. And Phil is the same – as soon as that first draft of *The Haunting of Malkin Place* came in I knew we had found someone special. Of course, though this was his first script for us it's actually been released long after others he has written – notably the BBC Audio Drama Award nominated **The Omega Factor: The Old Gods!**"

Phil continues: "Yes, this was the first Big Finish script I wrote. It was around the same time I got involved with writing on **The Omega Factor** series – which was exciting enough, but then also to be offered the chance to write my first **Doctor Who**, with Tom Baker no less! I got the phone call from David Richardson when I was in a hotel in Belfast. While trying to play it cool I was bouncing up and down with excitement, pacing the room.

"The haunted house in this story is located on Romney Marsh down in Kent, which in itself is a wonderfully atmospheric, strange landscape that really inspired me. And ultimately the story, set in the aftermath of the First World War, draws on that real history – and I wanted to be very respectful to the awful real



DOCTOR WHO: THE HAUNTING OF MALKIN PLACE

■ THIS MONTH!
■ CD/DOWNLOAD

Written by: Phil Mulryne
Directed by: Nicholas Briggs

CAST

Tom Baker (The Doctor),
Lalla Ward (Romana),
Simon Jones (Talbot),
Denise Black (Mrs Mountford),
Gunnar Cauthery (Maurice),
Fiona Sheehan (Beatrice),
Rikki Lawton (Tom),
Phil Mulryne (Jack)

life experiences of those men who fought. The story has to be fun and gripping too, of course... But I felt a real responsibility not to be cheap and sensational about that element."

THE TALE has been directed by Nicholas Briggs.

He says: "I absolutely loved it. It seems so long ago now. I just listened to all the interviews, and people were talking about the centenary of the First World War. I remember one thing in particular. There's a part for a child in it, and I remember thinking, 'I'll get my son Ben to do that... but he's not old enough yet. I'll wait until this is about to go into post-production.'

"So, three years later, there he is, standing in my office, doing all sorts of spooky noises!"

The sound design and music are being handled by Jamie Robertson.

How does he, as a sound designer, go about creating a creepy atmosphere? He reveals: "It's all in the drone... I find hiding dark drones then when something is to be jumpy we bring in the sound of the particular event louder. Eerie winds and creaking houses are very common. Our bodies can pick up infrasound but we cannot hear it

thing you would have is the footsteps to say he's moved, and maybe a door.

"So we have to create a different sound for each room and on a spaceship it's easier because it's done by different engine noises, maybe louder or quieter. But for a haunted house, every room would sound the same except the size.

"We make different reverbs for the room size and then I normally add a clock. Each room I put a different clock in. For the hallway, I will always normally put a grandfather clock there. In the kitchen, you can hear



Simon Jones
and Tom Baker

very well. This can make us feel on edge and is something that you will get in the modern day horror films. Lots of dark ambience with a very low drone to add a rumble."

Is it easier doing something in a recognisable setting, such as an old house, rather than a visceral alien attack in a spaceship corridor?

Jamie laughs: "I'm sure some of the other guys and girls will agree that it's easier to create a spaceship than a haunted house.

"It's easy on film and TV to do sound design for anything because you have the visuals to back up but if I just put the Doctor in a room with a candle and then make him move to another room with a candle, the only

the grandfather clock off camera.

"In the bedroom we put a little ticking clock. It's all clocks!"

Jamie, who can be followed on Twitter (@jamiecomposer) concludes: "Hopefully it will work but we will only see when the listeners hear it. I tell you, though - this has to be the scariest and best Fourth Doctor I've done yet. Before, the scary one I found hard was *The Crooked Man*, and this is even more scary! Proper Saturday tea time, all over again!"

Phil adds: "I can't wait to hear the final version, which has to put the real 'haunting' into *The Haunting of Malkin Place*. Please listen at night with the lights off!" **VORTEX**



SHAPING UP

KENNY SMITH GOES BACK TO THE FUTURE FOR THE LATEST HG WELLS ADAPTATION...

THE *SHAPE of Things to Come* was first published in 1933, speculating on future events from that year until the year 2106. HG Wells claimed that the book was his version of notes written by Dr Philip Raven, who had dream visions of a history book published in the future, then wrote down what he could remember of it. As a result, the

book doesn't have a flowing narrative in the same way that his other novels do.

For the Big Finish audio adaptation, Guy Adams has had his work cut out – now British diplomat Dr Raven is about to see how history might have played out differently, with a better future for those who dare to grasp it, thanks to an emissary from that future.

Producer David Richardson says: "At one stage, we weren't even sure if we were going to make **The Shape of Things to Come** in our HG Wells season, as the original work doesn't really lend itself to a dramatic full cast production.

"But... Guy Adams is a genius, and he wove Wells's original piece into a framework of his own devising. It's a dark, prophetic and



Sam Troughton
and Nicola Walker

“MY STARTING POINT WAS CRYING IN A CORNER. THEN HIDING FROM DAVID RICHARDSON.”

GUY ADAMS

thoughtful piece, and we recorded it two days after the US Presidential election. To be in a changing world making a story about a dangerous changing world felt really weird... I won't comment on politics, but Wells certainly does.”

Sam Troughton takes on the part of Raven, with Nicola Walker playing a new character, Jane, who has been created for the production.

Nicola explains: “Jane is from the future and is crossing timelines to find Philip Raven. I've not read the

original novel, but she comes with all this knowledge and she has to find this man as they have worked out, logistically, he's going to be in the right place at the right time to keep her timeline on course.

“She's an archivist – she's not used to running around and seeing these things made flesh and blood; she's used to reading about it.”

David continues: “I was so pleased to be able to secure Sam Troughton and Nicola Walker as the two leads. Sam is pure class, he's worked for

Big Finish a few times and it was great to get him back. I've worked with Nicola for the past few years on our **Doctor Whos**, and I've always wanted to cast her in something else – but she's always been busy filming.

“We got lucky though, as she'd just finished the most recent **Last Tango in Halifax**, and we were able to grab her for two days on her return to London. She's astonishing actor and human being – she just brings this amazing energy to the studio.”

Script writer Guy was also impressed with the cast, saying: “All of these Wells adaptations positively glow with talent. Lisa Bowerman had her work cut out with this one – you should see the list of characters, it's terrifying – but she's amazing and I can't wait to hear how my script sounds now it's been filtered through geniuses.”

HAVING BEEN given the tough task of scripting an audio version of **The Shape of Things to Come**, Guy admits that the original work's structure didn't automatically lend itself to an audio play. He grins: “My starting point was crying in a corner. Then hiding from David Richardson. Then poking at the book with a very long stick, trying to keep it away from me. Then going to the grave of HG Wells and screaming ‘Why?!’ at the top of my voice. On the second day I just cracked on with it.

“Yes, it was a tricky one. No, the structure of the book – the very big, very long book – doesn't lend itself to dramatisation. In fact it quite actively avoids it. There is one moment that could be accused of containing human drama and the book actually apologises for it. Wells himself decided not to attempt it when he wrote the screenplay for Alexander Korda. But, you know, sometimes it's those challenges that make for the best work. As aware as I am of the inherent risk of saying this:

I think it's good. And I'm one of those writers who don't say that easily. I'm an apologist. I sit in the green room of the recording studio begging forgiveness from actors. This one though... well, let's see, but I actually think it works!"

Guy admits that he needed some creativity to make it pull together. He reveals: "Really, it was a case of

"In the book Dr Philip Raven dreams the pages of a history text book from the future. There's very little personal inflection on the history he copies down on waking. In fact, he's dead at the point the book starts, these notes found and now presented to the world. So the big thing I had to do was find a way of involving

“THE BOOK STARTS IN WHAT WAS THE PRESENT DAY AT TIME OF PUBLICATION. FROM OUR PERSPECTIVE THAT MEANS A BIG CHUNK OF MATERIAL IS NOW HISTORY.”

GUY ADAMS

the framing. The book, naturally, starts in what was the present day at time of publication and then works forward. From our perspective here in 2017 that means a big chunk of material is now history.

"For all of 10 minutes I considered ejecting the events prior to 2017. Then I decided to make them an alternative timeline because we really needed all that lovely stuff of the outbreak of the Second World War and the chaos that followed it. But would an alternative timeline have the same weight? Would doing that make it all seem unimportant?"

"Wells's book was intended as a warning. It wasn't an idle chunk of speculation offered for casual amusement, it was a roar from a podium. It was signal flare, shot up through the brittle air of the 1930s, a thing of fear.

"I needed to capture that somehow. I didn't want to just keep Wells's plot, I wanted to try and keep his intentions – which sounds presumptuous, but I'm sure you know what I mean. I wanted this version to still bring a few chills, ask a few pointed questions. The climax, in particular, is redolent with that.



Sam Troughton

Raven in the action. To give it a personal, emotional edge.

"So, yes, while the events presented in this history are very close to the book – I made very few changes – the way they're presented is wholly original."

Guy admits his research for the adaptation was straight forward: "Outside of reading the book and making note after note after note, very little. I wanted it all to come from the Wells as much as possible. There was more than enough there to work with."



HG WELLS
THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

■ THIS MONTH!
■ CD/DOWNLOAD

Written By: HG Wells
Dramatised by: Guy Adams
Directed by: Lisa Bowerman

CAST

Nicola Walker (Jane),
Sam Troughton (Raven),
Ewan Bailey (Arden Essende),
Simon Greenall (Hooper Hamilton),
Eve Webster (Maira Caruso/Anna),
Duncan Wisbey (Titus Cobbett),
Stuart Milligan (Benito Caruso)

However, did Guy ever think it was going to be 'Mission: Impossible'? "Yes. But then you sit down with your IMF briefcase and flip out the tools you need to do the job.

"There's 'Barney', he understands the nuts and bolts of plotting. There's 'Rollin Hand', he brings humour and a dash of action and surprise. Then 'Cinnamon', for the glamour (didn't use her much with this one but she sparkles her way through most of my scripts)." **VORTEX**

LISTEN AGAIN

Doctor Who: Council of War



This month, Kenny Smith recalls UNIT...

THERE'S NO denying how important the 70s era of UNIT was to **Doctor Who**. At the time, it provided a popular backdrop to the adventures of the Third Doctor. The family atmosphere with a cast of regulars made an impression on future showrunner Russell T Davies, who used that idea as a very basic template for the revived 21st century series.

Sadly, many of the Pertwee era's beloved regulars have passed away, with the loss of Nicholas Courtney, Caroline John and Elisabeth Sladen in recent years, but the era lives on thanks to Big Finish ranges, including the **Companion Chronicles**. The seventh season was rounded off by *Council of War*, written by Simon Barnard and Paul Morris.

Producer David Richardson says: "We'd hoped to tempt John Levene to work at Big Finish, and the result was this rather charming **Companion**

Chronicle, scripted by Scarifiers boys Simon Barnard and Paul Morris.

"I thought John did an absolutely terrific job – as I kept telling him on the day, he managed to step instantly back into the skin of that character and he made the words fly off the page. Director Lisa Bowerman brought in Sinead Keenan (best known from **Being Human**) to play Marjory, and it proved the first of many Big Finish engagements for her – she is, quite frankly, superb."

Did the writing team go back to watch a few old episodes with Benton to get a feel for his character?

Simon reveals: "No. But the UNIT years are the era of **Who** that I'm most fond of anyway, so I just wrote it as I remembered. Besides, Paul wrote the majority of Benton's stuff, while I wrote Margery.

"Benton's a dependable soldier, old-fashioned manners, a bit square. The only thing we know about him is that he goes ballroom dancing with his

sister, so he's not very rock n' roll. That was the thing that interested me most about him, in a way. If you set him against what was happening at the time – the counterculture movement, women's lib, the campaign for nuclear disarmament – then he represents everything the young people involved in those movements would've hated.

"So I thought, what if Benton was forced into a close relationship with someone with completely opposing views to him? On just about everything? And that person became Margery Phipps, a feminist and local councillor for the Rainbow Party.

"Benton also reminded me a little of Bond in **Goldfinger**, when he says that drinking Dom Perignon '53 above 38 degrees is 'as bad as listening to The Beatles without earmuffs'. He even looks a bit like Bond – a sort of knitwear catalogue version. So I had the image in my head of Benton in his dinner jacket, undercover, Walther PPK in hand. Which is where the play begins."

Simon said the writing process was fairly straightforward, without many changes.

"I enjoyed bringing Margery to life. It's nice to write something where the character has some progression throughout the story, and in this we see her start out with one set of assumptions about Benton, and then see those assumptions challenged. Benton may be a bit old-fashioned, and may not totally understand Margery, but beneath the stiffness he's a decent chap. And Margery also can't help but notice how well he fills out that dinner jacket." **VORTEX**

VORTEXMAIL

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

NEW ADVENTURES

I was very saddened to hear that the novel adaptations range has been discontinued, as I thought it was just brilliant. But it occurs to me that you have two brilliant actors and companions in Yasmin Bannerman and Travis Oliver playing Roz Forrester and Chris Cwej respectively. What are the chances we may hear Big Finish original stories, perhaps main range stories/trilogies, with this TARDIS team?

Alex H.

Nick: I think that's a great idea, Alex. Let's see what we can do about that.

CD RELEASE?

I was very pleased to read the announcement of **The Jago & Litefoot Revival**. However, as a CD-only customer, I would love to know if there is any possibility of a CD release for this story. As a two-parter, presumably it has the length to justify a CD release, and the presence of Jago, Litefoot and the Tenth Doctor (not to mention spoiler!) would I imagine mean the demand for this one is greater than most. Whether as a bonus in a future **Jago & Litefoot** boxed set, or a stand alone release, it would be great to file this on my shelf alongside thirteen boxed sets of Big Finish's best series.

David Cromarty.

Nick: David, I'm sorry to say there are no plans to release it on CD. It took quite some time for the balance to tip with download versus CD sales for Big Finish. For quite a

while we bucked the general trend of the audio industry, but we are finally catching up, and the balance is shifting really quite rapidly. We have no plans to make current ranges download-only, but equally, we're not going to start releasing CDs of ranges which fare well as download-only. Apologies for not giving you the answer you wanted.

HOT STUFF

I know it's yet another "have you considered..." question, but this one has bounced in my head for too long now: would Big Finish ever be open to continuing Joss Wedon's **Firefly**? It already has a guaranteed international audience and a cast who have repeatedly stated that they would be more than open to coming back in some form. As always, the business of securing rights is rarely easy, but with Big Finish's reputation for producing high quality adaptations of cult science fiction, I would say that puts you in good stead.

James Wright.

Nick: There's a huge rights and approvals issue right there. And just because something has a massive audience, that doesn't necessarily translate into a niche audience that will listen to audio drama. But we'd love to be proved wrong on that. Firefly was brilliant.

GANGING UP

Just wanted to write and tell you how excited I am about the fabulous Madame Vastra appearing in the next **Churchill**

box set! I enjoyed the first box set quite a bit and I loved Strax's appearance in the **Jago & Litefoot** special release. Now, I know that you don't have permission to use the Paternoster Gang as a group, but we have to get the lovely Catrin Stewart as Jenny into the Big Finish family somehow. I'm thinking a **Short Trips** where she narrates an encounter with an earlier Doctor? It would be somewhat unique, at least.

Brian Flynn.

Nick: That would be great, but we are restricted in the use of the Paternoster Gang. We had to get special permission for Madam Vastra to feature. Great idea for the short trips. Catrin is brilliant and has worked for Big Finish, in Torchwood.

OLD AND THE NEW

I loved your **Classic Doctors, New Monsters** set, but are we ever going to have the first two Doctors meeting any new series monsters in their **Early Adventures** range? Please tell me this has been considered. I'd love to hear the Second Doctor with the Weeping Angels or the First Doctor with the Reapers! That'd be epic....Then the new **Who** could reach right back to the old at the beginning. A superb mix!

Matt Rabjohns.

Nick: Nice idea, Matt. I've heard rumblings about this amongst our 'creatives', but no plans just yet.

VORTEX

COMING SOON

Forthcoming audio releases



MAY 2017

DOCTOR WHO – MAIN RANGE: **VORTEX ICE / CORTEX FIRE** (2/5, Sixth Doctor and Flip)

DOCTOR WHO – FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: **THE HAUNTING OF MALKIN PLACE** (6.5, Fourth Doctor and Romana II)

DOCTOR WHO – SHORT TRIPS: **FALLING** (7.05, The First Doctor, Polly, Ben, Download only)

DOCTOR WHO: **THE NINTH DOCTOR CHRONICLES**

UNIT – THE NEW SERIES: **ASSEMBLED** (Box Set 4, Kate Stewart and Osgood)

TORCHWOOD: **CORPSE DAY** (15)

PATHFINDER LEGENDS – CURSE OF THE CRIMSON THRONE: **SKELETONS OF SCARWALL** (3.5)

HG WELLS: **THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME** (3)

DARK SHADOWS: **DREAMS OF LONG AGO**

AUDIOBOOK: WRITING ON THE WATER

JUNE 2017

DOCTOR WHO – MAIN RANGE: **SHADOW PLANET / WORLD APART** (2/6, Seventh Doctor and Ace)

DOCTOR WHO – FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: **SUBTERRANEA** (6.6, Fourth Doctor and Romana II)

DOCTOR WHO – SHORT TRIPS: **HOW TO WIN PLANETS AND INFLUENCE PEOPLE** (7.06, Fourth Doctor, Sarah, Harry and The Monk)

DOCTOR WHO – THE COMPANION CHRONICLES: **THE FIRST DOCTOR VOLUME 2** (11.0, First Doctor, Vicki, Steven, Ben and Polly)

SURVIVORS: **SERIES 6** (Box Set)

THE LIVES OF CAPTAIN JACK

TORCHWOOD: **CASCADE, CDRIFTOR** (16)

PATHFINDER LEGENDS – CURSE OF THE CRIMSON THRONE: **CROWN OF FANGS** (3.6)

JULY 2017

DOCTOR WHO – MAIN RANGE: **THE HIGH PRICE OF PARKING** (2/7, Seventh Doctor)

DOCTOR WHO – FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: **THE MOVELLAN GRAVE** (6.7, Fourth Doctor and Romana II)

DOCTOR WHO – SHORT TRIPS: **FLASHPOINT** (7.07, Eighth Doctor and Lucie)

DOCTOR WHO – CLASSIC DOCTORS NEW MONSTERS: **VOLUME TWO** (Box Set)

TORCHWOOD: **THE OFFICE OF NEVER WAS** (17)

TERRAHAWKS: **VOLUME 3**

HG WELLS: **THE ISLAND OF DR MOREAU** (4)

DARK SHADOWS: LOVE LIVES ON

AUGUST 2017

DOCTOR WHO – MAIN RANGE: **THE BLOOD FURNACE** (2/8, Seventh Doctor, Ace and Mel)

DOCTOR WHO – FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: **THE SKIN OF THE SLEEK** (6.8, Fourth Doctor and Romana II)

DOCTOR WHO – SHORT TRIPS: **THE BRITISH INVASION** (7.08, Second Doctor, Jamie and Zoe)

DOCTOR WHO – THE THIRD DOCTOR ADVENTURES: **VOLUME 3** (TBA)

TORCHWOOD: **THE DYING ROOM** (18)

THE PRISONER: **VOLUME TWO** (Box Set)

BIG FINISH CLASSICS: **HAMLET**

SEPTEMBER 2017

DOCTOR WHO – MAIN RANGE: **THE SILURIAN CANDIDATE** (2/9, Seventh Doctor)

DOCTOR WHO – MAIN RANGE: **TIME IN OFFICE** (2/0, Fifth Doctor and Tegan)

DOCTOR WHO – FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: **THE THIEF WHO STOLE TIME** (6.9, Fourth Doctor and Romana II)

DOCTOR WHO – SHORT TRIPS: **A HEART ON BOTH SIDES** (7.09, Eighth Doctor and Nyssa)

DOCTOR WHO – THE EARLY ADVENTURES: **THE NIGHT WITCHES** (4.1, Second Doctor, Jamie, Ben and Polly)

DOCTOR WHO – THE NEW ADVENTURES OF BERNICE SUMMERFIELD: **RULER OF THE UNIVERSE** (Box Set)

CAPTAIN SCARLET AND THE MYSTERONS: **50TH ANNIVERSARY BOXED SET**

CAPTAIN SCARLET AND THE MYSTERONS: **SPECTRUM FILE 1**

CAPTAIN SCARLET AND THE MYSTERONS: **SPECTRUM FILE 2**

CAPTAIN SCARLET AND THE MYSTERONS: **SPECTRUM FILE 3**

HG WELLS: **THE TIME MACHINE** (5)

OCTOBER 2017

DOCTOR WHO – MAIN RANGE: **THE BEHEMOTH** (2/1, Sixth Doctor, Flip and Constance)

DOCTOR WHO – SHORT TRIPS: **ALL HANDS ON DECK** (7.10, Eighth Doctor and Susan)

DOCTOR WHO – THE EARLY ADVENTURES: **THE OUTLIERS** (4.2, Second Doctor, Jamie, Ben and Polly)

DOCTOR WHO – THE EIGHTH DOCTOR: **THE TIME WAR** (Box Set)

NOVEMBER 2017

DOCTOR WHO – MAIN RANGE: **THE MIDDLE** (2/32, Sixth Doctor, Flip and Constance)

DOCTOR WHO – SHORT TRIPS: **THE INGENUOUS GENTLEMAN ADRIK OF ALZARBUS** (7.11, Fifth Doctor and Adric)

DOCTOR WHO – THE EARLY ADVENTURES: **THE MORTON LEGACY** (4.3, Second Doctor, Jamie, Ben and Polly)

UNIT – THE NEW SERIES: **ENCOUNTERS** (5)

SURVIVORS: **SERIES 7** (Box Set)

HG WELLS: **THE MARTIAN INVASION OF EARTH** (6)

DECEMBER 2017

DOCTOR WHO – MAIN RANGE: **STATIC** (2/34, Sixth Doctor, Flip and Constance)

DOCTOR WHO – SHORT TRIPS: **OTTANENBAUM** (7.12, First Doctor and Steven)

DOCTOR WHO – THE EARLY ADVENTURES: **THE WRECK OF THE WORLD** (4.4, Second Doctor, Jamie and Zoe)

THE NEW COUNTER-MEASURES: **SERIES 2** (Box Set)

DARK SHADOWS: **SHADOWS OF THE NIGHT**

BIG FINISH CLASSICS: **JEKYLL AND HYDE**

JANUARY 2018

DOCTOR WHO – MAIN RANGE: TBA (2/34, TBA)

DOCTOR WHO – FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: **SERIES 7A** (7A, Fourth Doctor, Leela and K9, Box Set)

DOCTOR WHO – FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: **THE SONS OF KALDOR** (7.1, Fourth Doctor, Leela and K9, Download Only)

DOCTOR WHO – FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: **THE CROWMARSHE EXPERIMENT** (7.2, Fourth Doctor, Leela and K9, Download Only)

DOCTOR WHO – FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: **THE MIND-RUNNERS** (7.3, Fourth Doctor, Leela and K9, Download Only)

DOCTOR WHO – FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: **THE DEMON RISES** (7.4, Fourth Doctor, Leela and K9, Download Only)

DOCTOR WHO – SHORT TRIPS: **THE AUTHENTIC EXPERIENCE** (8.1, Sixth Doctor and Peri)

FEBRUARY 2018

DOCTOR WHO – MAIN RANGE: TBA (2/35, TBA)

DOCTOR WHO – SHORT TRIPS: **MEL-EVOLUNT** (8.2, Sixth Doctor and Mel)

DOCTOR WHO: **THE CHURCHILL YEARS VOLUME TWO** (Box Set)

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