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AND THIS TIME SHE'S GOT COMPANY!**

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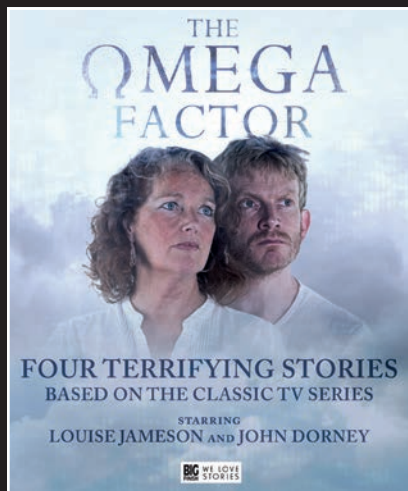
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Sneak Previews & Whispers



The Omega Factor

Get ready for the launch of a new Big Finish series this May, with the first **Omega Factor** box set. Script editor Matt Fitton reveals what's in store...

THE OMEGA Factor: the end of scientific knowledge, and beyond. Anyone who remembers the 1979 BBC TV series will recall an atmospheric and spooky set of tales – so spooky in fact that one episode was denounced as 'thoroughly evil' by moral campaigner Mary Whitehouse. In our new audio series, we revisit Dr Anne Reynolds (Louise Jameson) and Department 7 – the clandestine government unit set up to study the strange and uncanny – and discover what she's been doing in the intervening decades. When the troubled Adam (John Dorney) arrives in Edinburgh looking for Anne, it begins a chain of investigations that will force them to confront the strange, the paranormal, and the downright terrifying. Join Anne and Adam for four supernatural tales set in present-day Scotland, but with a history that reaches back through all the things that have ever terrified humanity in the dark... **VORTEX**

Editorial

IT'S REALLY hard not to like Vienna Salvatori. I loved her when I first heard her in Jonathan Morris' **Doctor Who** monthly range play *The Shadow Heart*, as Chase Masterson made her so utterly charming. We shouldn't really like people who are motivated solely by money, but it's down to the writing, subtle direction, and tremendous performance, that we do care for our anti-heroine.

And it really wasn't that much of a surprise to learn she was being given her own pilot episode, ahead of a possible series. If you've not heard *The Memory Box*, it's well worth ordering, because it's a story that keeps on giving and giving. If you liked **Doctor Who's** 2014 TV festive offering *Last Christmas*, you'll love *The Memory Box*. Guaranteed.

And then came the first series – and wow. More clever plots, witty dialogue, and even more Chase. What's not to like?

So, here's three useless facts relating to **Vienna**.

1. I have never been to Austria.
2. Midge Ure was lead singer of Ultravox, who had a huge hit in 1981 with *Vienna*, and he and I come from Cambuslang, a town near Glasgow – as does Big Finish **Dark Shadows** cover artist Alistair McGown.
3. I had the pleasure of meeting the fabulous and gorgeous Chase Masterson when she visited Glasgow in September last year, and her enthusiasm and passion for **Vienna** is absolutely genuine. She also loves hugs. Not only did I get a huge cuddle, but so did my wife and daughter, who had no idea who this beautiful, glamorous American was!

Sometimes, life's hard when you're editor of *Vortex*...

KENNY

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FOUR TIMES FOUR

The fourth season of audio adventures for the Fourth Doctor and Leela arrives in 2015, and producer David Richardson previews the latest series.

FOUR SEASONS in and at last K9 (voiced by the wonderful John Leeson) joins the Fourth Doctor and Leela in some new audio adventures. As a result, our stories nudge up to being set post-*The Invisible Enemy*, and we touch upon the kind of space opera stories that were found in the era of producer Graham Williams.

But not always – some Hinchcliffian horror remains!

After exploring more of Leela's background in season three, there are some new challenges for everyone's favourite savage in series four. Not least she has to answer the question...

'When do you know?'

4.1 The Exxilons

Guest stars: Hugh Ross, Jacqueline King and Daisy Dunlop

"I went to the planet Exxilon once. To this city of theirs. A city that had destroyed their civilisation by controlling the minds of its inhabitants. And it gained its power from a gigantic beacon." – The Doctor



WRITER NICHOLAS BRIGGS SAYS: Such an intriguing race, only ever featuring previously in *Death to the Daleks*... And that story was so full of hints of their previous activities. David Richardson came to me, knowing I am officially the 'World's Greatest *Death to the Daleks* Fan' (it

says that on a BBC DVD caption, so it must be true!) and that I'd jump at the chance to develop a story featuring them.

What I wanted to do was something that had the flavour of what I call the Sunday Afternoon Matinee movies, like *King Solomon's Mines* and all those great adventure movies.

Explorers travelling into the domain of ancient civilisations and incredible danger. It's also a story that tackles the issue of what actually constitutes intelligence. **VORTEX**

4.2 The Darkness of Glass

Guest stars: Mark Lewis Jones, Julian Wadham, Sinead Keenan and Rory Keenan

"Manning Caversham was, without doubt, the greatest Lanternist of the golden age. The images he conjured up were... Otherworldly to say the least. And that is what drove him, ultimately, to give his final performance here in the great hall of the castle he built on this tiny isolated island." – Joseph Holman



WRITER JUSTIN RICHARDS SAYS: The starting point for *The Darkness of Glass* was a line by T.S.Eliot – ‘... as if a magic lantern threw the nerves in patterns on a screen.’ In fact, I think the original title for the story was *A Pattern of Nerves*. It just struck me that it would be

completely bonkers – and great fun – to attempt an audio play based on something so visual. Obviously there needs to be more to it than just a magic lantern showing something a bit spooky, so the story built up from there. And of course anything is possible on audio when you have Tom Baker’s voice to describe it! **VORTEX**

4.3 Requiem for the Rocket Men

Guest stars: Geoffrey Beevers, Mark Frost and Olivia Pouket

"Too many people have died at the hands of the Rocket Men, Mister Marshall, I'm going to stop them if it's the last thing I do, you can trust me on that." – The Doctor



WRITER JOHN DORNEY SAYS: Every Rocket Man tale has three set ingredients – it starts with the companion saying ‘when do you know’, a regular has a fight whilst wearing a rocket suit, and there’s some kind of magic trick. But that’s not a plot in itself, so

you need a stronger idea. My first drive was finding a new angle for a Master story. The concept I landed on was switching the roles our favourite Time Lords play in the story – usually the Doctor arrives somewhere and discovers the Master already there and up to something. So what happens if we swap that around? If this time the Master is trying to foil the Doctor’s plan...? **VORTEX**

Below: Julian Wadham, Mark Lewis Jones and Tom Baker.



"Anything is possible on audio when you have Tom Baker’s voice to describe it!"

4.4 Death Match

Guest stars: Geoffrey Beevers, Susan Brown and Andy Secombe

"I have been watching. Waiting. The wisest warrior is one who knows when to fight and when to wait." – Leela



WRITER MATT FITTON SAYS: *Death Match* includes certain linking elements with John Dorney’s preceding tale, so we worked together to establish exactly how those elements would play out. Considering the Master, and how an evil genius at the top of his game

might pass the time, I took inspiration from films such as *Battle Royale* and *The Most Dangerous Game*. Leela always shines in a life-or-death environment, and I really wanted to push the emotional stakes for her. But, of course, she’s not the only hunter in this TARDIS crew. K9’s role is key to the story and he gets a good slice of the action too. **VORTEX**

Doctor Who: The Fourth Doctor – Series Four

4.5 Suburban Hell

Guest stars: Katy Wix, Raymond Coulthard and Annette Badland

"The house was happy to be left alone, all that time. But then you arrived, and when it didn't seem to repulse you from the moment you crossed the threshold; when it didn't reject you, like it rejected everyone else who'd ever viewed it... well, I thought, "Good; at last, it's found someone it likes to live in it." – Thelma

WRITER ALAN BARNES SAYS: *Suburban Hell* started, I suppose, with a self-imposed restriction – to set a **Doctor Who** story entirely within the bounds of an ordinary suburban house, and the street immediately outside. Not long before, I'd exited the gents at a swanky awards do (no, really) and walked (well, swayed) into the brilliant Mike Leigh. I can't remember exactly what I said to him – I only hope the phrase "besht mate" didn't figure – but I'm sure I'd have said something about how his 1977 TV play *Abigail's Party* was the besht... er, best thing ever, because it is. Hmm, I thought. 1977 TV play... set entirely within the bounds of an ordinary suburban house... And suddenly it seemed inevitable that the doorbell of that ordinary suburban house was going to ring, and the hostess of the dinner party at that ordinary suburban house was going to open the door to the Doctor and Leela. **VORTEX**

4.6 The Cloisters of Terror

Guest stars: Rowena Cooper, Richenda Carey and Claudia Grant

"Doctor John Smith. I met a Doctor Smith once... He saved my life, when I was being attacked by a sort of clockwork armadillo. And you most definitely are not him. He had white hair, and wore a ridiculous frilled shirt." – Emily Shaw

WRITER JONATHAN MORRIS SAYS: *The Cloisters of Terror* came about largely because I was watching lots of 1970s supernatural anthology shows, like **Hammer House of Horror** and **Thriller** and had the idea of attempting to tell a ghost story on audio (not as easy as it sounds, as ghosts tend to be mainly visual phenomena). To try to write a character-based atmosphere piece, as spooky as possible. As the setting was a women's college in Oxford (occupying the premises of a former tenth-century convent, of course), David Richardson suggested including the character of Dame Emily Shaw, previously heard in *The Last Post*, to give the Doctor somebody equally eccentric and quick-witted to bounce off. **VORTEX**



Above: Bernard Holley, Frazer Hines and Michael Cochrane.

4.7 The Fate of Krellos

Guest stars: Michael Cochrane and Veronica Roberts

"It is... the end of all that we love and have loved. Our lives, our world... torn out, ripped apart, utterly destroyed. No power can stand against our fate. The fate of Krellos... is sealed forever..." – Geralk

WRITER NICHOLAS BRIGGS SAYS: This originally started life as a story entitled *Blind Summit*, because I wanted to explore the idea of climbing a huge mountain, but there being a fear of what was at the top. So, the TARDIS arrives at the bottom of the mountain, but the story then developed into something much more. I wanted to make it mostly about the Doctor, Leela and K9, not least because I've enjoyed directing this team and had realised you can do so much with them. So it's also quite a character-based piece for the central characters, with not many other characters involved. But there's a real sense of something wicked this way coming! **VORTEX**

4.8 Return to Telos

Guest stars: Frazer Hines and Bernard Holley

"Once construction of our new Cyber Army is complete, the Doctor's ingenuity, adjusted to serve our purpose, will make that army invincible.!" – Cyber-Planner

WRITER NICHOLAS BRIGGS SAYS: It won't take long for you to guess which monster features in this story, if you know your **Doctor Who** alien planets. This is a tale where one classic era of **Doctor Who** meets another. This was one of those occasions where the brief for the story, again from the inestimable David Richardson, took on a life of its own, almost, when I worked through the 'historical' implications. **VORTEX**



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OH VIENNA!

Ms Salvatori is back and Kenny Smith discovers that she's not alone for her second series

FOR A character that was originally created for a one-off appearance in a *Doctor Who* monthly range title, Vienna Salvatori has taken on a life of her own. The galaxy's most glamorous assassin was first introduced in Jonathan Morris's *The Shadow Heart*, with former *Star Trek: Deep Space 9* actress Chase Masterson starring opposite Sylvester McCoy's Doctor, and she threw herself into the role as the sassy and no-nonsense hit woman. Vienna then spun-off into her own series, with first a pilot episode, *The Memory Box*, then her own series of three episodes, under the guidance of producer Mark Wright, working with Jonathan as script editor.

Vienna returns this month, with three brand new stories, this time produced by Cavan Scott. He says: "In series two, Vienna finds herself back on Earth and involved with Crime Corps, the company behind law enforcement in America of the future. The setting may be new, but the stories continue the tone of the first series. **Vienna** exists in a world where nothing is what it seems, not even your memories. There's another first in series two. Vienna gains a new partner, troubled cop Lieutenant Jexie Reagan, played by Samantha Béart."

Chase is delighted to return as Vienna, saying: "Vienna is... Ballsy. Ruthless. Amiable. Tricky. Wait, that was not meant to be an acronym for brat. Let me try again. She's a... Bloody Intelligent Tom-boy. Cheeky. Hilarious. Oops."



"Actually, the main thing about Vienna is she's truly likeable. Because of her background (listen to series one) she has a huge heart, with an unrelenting commitment to justice, and the integrity necessary to carry it out, at any cost."

So while she has a dangerous persona, she's really a hero. Vienna is a part of each of us that we'd like to dare to be – all wrapped up in a completely irreverent package. Fearless. Unpredictable. Naughty."

How much fun is there to be had with a character like her? "Well, that's the thing," laughs Chase, "I'm pretty cheeky in real life. I mean, I don't run around the galaxy finding ingenious ways to assassinate bad guys – at least not yet – but there's not a lot I wouldn't do for something I believe in. So while Vienna is definitely a dream role, in some ways she fits like your favourite glove."

"Script editor Jonathan Morris is one of the best writers around – in either the US or the UK – and his signature blend of powerful story themes, rich characters, and intriguing dialogue is laced with sass and wit. Jonny's work is masterful, and unique, and we're really lucky to have him."

"Producer/writer Cavan Scott has a vision that's also taking the show in a fantastic direction, and I think we'll continue to see surprises as the show develops, as we do in series two. The direction, by John Ainsworth is spot-on; John has a fine-tuned ear, always steering the actors to make our best

Star Chase Masterson previews the second series of Vienna

Tabula Rasa

James Goss gives Vienna a whole new life; in fact, he creates a world where no one is who they seem – because they've paid a price to stay in a Personality Hotel, where they can be anyone they want. It sets up the relationship between Vienna and Jexie, and gives Vienna some moments of true vulnerability, when she needs all the help she can get. It says important things about social climbing – wealth with an absence of values – a topic I'm pretty vocal about, myself. And all the while, it's funny. Keeps you laughing. You know how few writers are able to do all that? Goss does.

Underworld

Cavan Scott gives us a wild ride in *Underworld*, an action-packed episode in which the stakes are extremely high – but also one which is packed with strong relationship moments. It's stories like these where you really get attached to the characters. So, I'm warning you, resistance is futile. We learn more about Jexie – also a very strong woman with built-in vulnerabilities. There are powerful themes of friendship and betrayal. And we get to meet some brilliant new characters (Screeder is my personal fave). Twisty-turny action, plus great characters, equals must-hear fun. It's a combo plate not many writers can serve up, and Cavan does it and more.

The Vienna Experience

As Jonathan Morris did so deftly with *Deathworld* in series one, he wraps up series two with a twisty-turny, non-stop adventure, *The Vienna Experience*. A master at weaving solid, real-life issues in with imaginative, futuristic circumstances, Jonny poses questions about the sanctity of privacy, the power of wealth – and the fun of two smart, kick-ass women showing who's boss. At the risk of saying too much here, I'll tell you that the episode turns pretty much everything on its head – you're probably gonna wanna hear the whole trilogy again once you finish.

VORTEX



choices. And once again, the writers have created a trilogy that's great dramatically – you really get involved with these characters, partly because there's never a dull moment. They keep you on your toes. And of course, series two brings back the character of Vienna's computer, who I'm particularly fond of – even if Vienna is not!"

Vienna can look forward to the company of Lieutenant Jexie Reagan, with Samantha Béart bringing her to life. Sam is no stranger to science fiction, appearing in Dirk Maggs' Radio 4 production of **The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy: Quintessential Phase**, as well as her role of Random in **The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy** live tour.

"Vienna is... Ballsy. Ruthless. Amiable. Tricky. Wait, that was not meant to be an acronym..." CHASE MASTERSON

"I'd done a **Doctor Who** with Colin Baker, 1963: *The Space Race*, by Jonathan Morris," explains Sam, "and for some reason, he thought of me for **Vienna**, as a jaded New York cop from the future, which was a bit different to cosmonaut Marinka Talanov! So I appreciate him suggesting me. When we first meet Jexie, we find out that she was a very good detective until something went wrong and she got demoted. We find out how and why she got there, but, being **Vienna**, there's more to it than you'd expect.

"With Vienna, Jexie only knows what she's been told, which is NOT that she's an assassin. There's some really great odd-couple scenes with the pair of them trying to suss each other out – lots of fun to do."

Sam has particularly enjoyed working with her co-star. She admits: "Chase is fantastic, she's very generous and makes it easy to work with her, and she's now got another person to talk to instead of her computer! She's got a partner in Jexie. Vienna is such a great character too – I know she started off in a **Doctor Who** adventure, and is very popular with her fans. I'm coming back for future episodes – we've established the dynamic now, but talking about any further is pure spoilers, so if you want to hear more, buy this series! It's going to be interesting how their relationship changes when Jexie discovers Vienna isn't actually a cop, but an assassin."

Chase adds: "Samantha is a fantastic actress, an excellent addition to the cast. And adding the role of Jexie brings a great dynamic in that Vienna is a life-long-loner, and now she's got someone she's responsible for, and who is watching out for her. But while Vienna is a loner, she's also a bit lonely – though she'd be hard-pressed to admit it. So it's kinda nice to have Jexie around. As long as she remembers who's in charge."

With series three already confirmed for Vienna and Jexie, where would Chase like to see the series go next? Raising an eyebrow, Chase gives that cheeky grin again: "BBC?" **VORTEX**



Steven Pacey talks to Vortex about all things Tarrant!

DEL BOY

Interview: Cavan Scott Words: Kenny Smith

FOR BLAKE'S 7 fans of a certain age, the show began with Series C. Lots of fans have no recollections of watching the show on its original run with Gareth Thomas as the titular character, and, indeed, the only curly haired character they remember onboard the *Liberator* was Del Tarrant. The part was brought to life by Steven Pacey, who is now recreating the part with relish.

As the second series of full-cast *Blake's 7* audios continues this month, Steven admits that he's amazed by

the loyalty of the show's followers. For those who don't know, Steven explains that Tarrant: "was a space captain and he was a wanted man – along with the others – and they joined forces because it made sense to do so."

"He's a D'Artagnan kind of character – he's the youngest man in the room, and all that testosterone had to go somewhere, so it came out against Avon! When I auditioned for him, I was told Tarrant was 35, and there I was at the age of 23 – I had a good, long hard look in the mirror!

"I didn't think I had a hope in hell of getting it, but the producer, David (Maloney), told me to give it more gravitas, and to drop my voice deeper and deeper – so now I'm using my own voice in the audios without having to drop it! Sadly, the physical appearance doesn't match up any more!

"The only time I'd ever seen it before I went into it was when I was waiting on a girlfriend at the time. She was in a stage show, *A Chorus Line*, when I was doing *The Cedar Tree*. I would meet up with an actor friend, and he would

“All that testosterone had to go somewhere, so it came out against Avon!”

insist on watching the show. I asked him what it was, and I told him, 'It looks rubbish!' I was trying to prise him away from the screen to get a drink!"

Steven has enjoyed doing the audio series for Big Finish, as he feels he has slotted right back into the part he played on television between January 1980 and December 1981. He explains: "They're very faithful to the originals, these scripts. It was like I'd never left – it was extraordinary, and it seemed pretty much like the same kind of thing we used to do. We're stuck in aspic! It's good to do, though, as I've very fond memories – I never quite understood it, with the science fiction aspects of it all, but they were very important years that I had there.

"The only time I ever saw the others was at the occasional convention, as we've not worked together in anything else.

Below: Buffy Davis, Steven Pacey, Tom Chadbon and Paul Darrow.



It's really lovely to be reunited, as we get to see each other again and have a bit of a giggle.

"These audios very much feel like it always did. We can't see each other when we're in our own booths, but I can see the others with the images of 30 years ago in my mind – I sort of see myself running around the *Liberator*."

One change that the audio series has seen is the arrival of Tom Chadbon as Del Grant, who appeared in the TV series, but has become a regular as the *Liberator* crew search for the missing Dayna. With a new man on the ship, Steven



Blake's 7: Ghost Ship

STARRING: Paul Darrow (Kerr Avon), Michael Keating (Vila Restal), Jan Chappell (Cally), Steven Pacey (Del Tarrant), Tom Chadbon (Del Grant), Alistair Lock (Zen/Orac), Nick Asbury (Revenant One), Susan Franklyn (Revenant Two)

WRITTEN BY: Iain McLaughlin
DIRECTED BY: Lisa Bowerman

RELEASED: THIS MONTH!

Vila is scared. Of course he is. Vila is always scared.

He should feel safe. He is on board the *Liberator*, the most powerful ship ever constructed. He is home – but he is certainly not alone. Ghostly figures stalk the corridors of the *Liberator*. Spectres who know Vila's name. Revenants. Demons.

And Vila has nowhere to run.

Blake's 7: Steven Pacey



feels: "It does alter the dynamics. There's always a different dynamic when you introduce someone new, but I was happy as I had someone to send up, slightly!"

"I suppose I was sort of subservient to Avon when I was the new boy, although I would kick against him, and with Tom's character coming in, I felt slightly superior to him in a lot of ways.

"When I walked out of the TV studio, I thought that was the last I'd ever see of Tarrant – but it still carries on. That's been a huge surprise over the years, because at theatres there's still such a strong fan base that come to see you. They are unbelievably loyal, the people that follow it. It's unlike anything else in my career. It's weird, because you can do other performances – and I hope I've done better performance over the years – but it doesn't capture

the imagination of the fans in the way that science fiction does, and it lives on through the fan base. Tarrant just won't go away."

One release in particular that fans of Tarrant can look forward to is March's play, *Devil's Advocate*, which centres on the character. Little is known about his background, as, when he boarded the *Liberator*, the gallant Federation officer with friends in high places thought he'd left his past behind him. In Steve Lyons' play, Tarrant's past catches up with him.

“There’s always a different dynamic when you introduce someone new, but I was happy as I had someone to send up.”

The *Liberator* encounters the former President of the Federation [Hugh Fraser], having been deposed by Servalan, on the run with his aide Pelora. Speaking of Hugh, Steven says: "He's a fine actor, and it was great to have him onboard. He's got such a dry sense of humour, and he's very effective as a villain – but he's a really nice guy. I thought he was superb – in *Poirot* [playing Captain Hastings]."

Tarrant also gets the chance to enjoy a bit of romance with Pelora. Steven laughs: "It's very nice – it's amazing how many times I was ignored with the romance in the actual series. It was very frustrating, up there in space!"

Devil's Advocate also looks at some of Tarrant's backstory as a pilot. "I wish I'd known that stuff earlier on," Steven says, ruefully. "I wish there had been more material that was character based, that one could put a performance to. It was very hard then, because the lines were often interchangeable, as any one of us could have said them and they weren't very grounded as strong characters. That was one of my complaints.

"I suppose the one thing, as an actor, I look for is the human interest, rather than explosions and all the science fiction parts of the story. The human element is more interesting to me, anything that has relationships in it."

Steven is appearing at the Swan Theatre in Stratford on Avon with the Royal Shakespeare Company from March until September. **VORTEX**



Liberator Chronicles: Volume 11

STARRING: Paul Darrow, Jan Chappell, Michael Keating, Alistair Lock, John Leeson, Anthony Howell, Anthony Byrne, Louise Jameson, Samantha Béart

WRITTEN BY: Nigel Fairs, Iain McLaughlin, Andrew Smith

DIRECTED BY: Lisa Bowerman, Louise Jameson

RELEASED: MARCH

Brother

Auron scientist Gustav Nyrron is back aboard the *Liberator*, on his way home. But Avon does not trust him, and soon a drugged Nyrron wakes to find himself in Avon's clutches on a devastated world. In this desert, their pasts are waiting for them... and a devastating truth that will shake their very beliefs to the core.

Poison

Federation Freighter *Antares* is a ship with many secrets. Why is it making regular runs to a heavily guarded frontier world? Why is the hold out of bounds? And who is watching the crew's every move? Events take a dangerous turn when two new recruits come on board. Will Jance and Voss survive their very first mission together?

Escape

When the *Liberator* receives a distress signal from a planet it once helped save, Cally and Vila journey to a civilisation on the brink of collapse. There, they encounter Pasco, a scientist Cally first met years ago. The Federation is closing on Destiny – but should Vila and Cally stand in the way this time? **VORTEX**

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After six series, we all thought that the story of **Gallifrey** had been told, but Kenny Smith discovers that's not the case at all...

DOWN TO EARTH

WITH **BIG** Finish, we know to expect the unexpected - and we should never try to predict what's coming next. We, the devoted listeners, thought that **Gallifrey** was done and dusted at the conclusion of the sixth series, but at Big Finish Day in January this year, the fans in attendance were delighted to learn that Romana, President of the High Council of Time Lords and played by the incomparable Lalla Ward, and Leela, brought to life by the brilliant Louise Jameson, would return once more for a new series of adventures in February 2016.

There's also another take on the series, being released this month, with **Gallifrey: Intervention Earth**. We return to the planet of the Time Lords, at a time when Romana has regenerated into her next incarnation, played by Juliet Landau, who featured in the sixth series.

Scott Handcock, who co-produced series four, five and six with Gary Russell, returns to fly solo as producer on *Intervention Earth*, which he has co-written with David Llewelyn. "I think it's fair to say that I never expected the call to do more **Gallifrey**," he admits. "Gary Russell and I had wrapped up all the loose

ends for the original run, so I knew anything we did would have to be significantly different from what had come before. Thankfully, David Richardson's brief made it obvious that this would be a very different take on the **Gallifrey** format.

Following her appearance in *Luna Romana* and previous **Gallifrey** dramas, listeners were keen to hear more from the future incarnation of Romana, as played by Juliet Landau, and executive producer Jason Haigh-Ellery was keen to explore this in a one-off drama. David suggested introducing Ace as another familiar element, alongside Narvin to make more of the Celestial Intervention Agency, and from there the pieces began to come together..."

Juliet loves being back as Romana in *Intervention Earth*. She smiles: "I loved it! It is brilliant! I had an inkling that there might be more stories to tell. Jason Haigh-Ellery, Scott Handcock and I were excited about the potential. In **Gallifrey VI**, Romana was a projection from the future, and in *Luna Romana*, the character was reflecting on a past time. In *Intervention Earth* we see her in power and in charge. She is in 'take action' mode. We see her as both a stateswoman and as an adventurer. She is more alone

“REINVENTING A RANGE AS POPULAR AS GALLIFREY WAS ALWAYS GOING TO BE DIFFICULT...”



Above: Juliet Landau. Inset: Gyles Brandreth and Sophie Aldred.



Above: Seán Carlsen and Stephen Thorne.



than in prior stories and has to figure out whom to trust. Loyalties are challenged.”

Having resolved the existing storylines in **Gallifrey VI**, Scott and co-writer David had to start with a blank slate for the new play, which is presented in four episodes. Scott admits: “I’ll be honest and say it wasn’t the easiest project I’ve worked on with Big Finish – reinventing a range as popular as **Gallifrey** was always going to be difficult – so in a way, being presented with a new set of characters before I even started made life a lot easier.

“And I also spoke a lot with Gary Russell about the release. He’d always been so protective of the series, I wanted to make sure he was happy a) that it was continuing and b) with the direction we were taking it in. Thankfully, he was very happy. In fact, if he hadn’t been otherwise occupied on the other side of the world, I think he’d have been across this one himself! And because we wanted to find a way of linking **Gallifrey** with **Earth**, Omega seemed an ideal threat for our heroes...”

“Once everyone was on board and the elements were in place, it was then just a case of finding the right kind of story. Again, if we were telling a story with Juliet’s Romana, it couldn’t be the sort of tale we’d have told with Lalla. Juliet’s Romana is more of an observer than Lalla, so **Intervention Earth** allows Romana to take more of a backseat

as events unravel around her. In that sense, the four-episode format came quite naturally, as it allowed us to focus one episode on each of our main characters: Ace, Romana and Narvin, before all three unite properly to

tackle Omega in the fourth and final episode. And I think that serial feel really helps to drive the drama. We cover a lot of ground in a relatively short space of time; we flit between locations and time periods; but it never feels rushed because we’re cutting between our characters.”

With a different take on Romana, as an observer, does Juliet relate to the character she’s playing? She laughs: “I am like that! But I think I gather facts so that I can be instinctive, if that makes sense. I consider, prepare and do a lot of research, but then I go forth freely and boldly. I welcome the surprises.”

Something that would have been a surprise would have been a **Gallifrey** story without Narvin, but thankfully, Sean Carlsen is back in the part. With a huge smile on his face, Sean beams: “It’s great to be back. There’s been two occasions in my career when I thought that my time as Narvin was done – the first was after season three and Gary Russell said he had the intention of doing more, but he went off and did other

Gallifrey: Intervention Earth

“IT’S GREAT THAT WE’VE GOT A FUTURE ROMANA – I JUST HOPE THERE’S NO PLANS FOR A FUTURE NARVIN!”

SEÁN CARLSEN



things, and we had a hiatus of five years. When season four finally came about, I was really pleased to be involved again. Then at the end of series six, I thought that was it, we’re done. I was grateful for my time on Big Finish and for the work they’d given me but I thought, well that’s the end of that.

“Then in 2014, I was invited back and worked on the **Philip Hinchcliffe Presents** box set, and since then, I’ve done **Dark Eyes 3** and **Intervention Earth**, which I was massively proud to be involved with. I’m grateful to David Richardson and Scott Handcock for the opportunity to do these.” Sean, like everyone else, had assumed that **Gallifrey** was finished. But he says: “To do another episode of **Gallifrey**, it’s a very bold move. It’s a bit of a reboot, and it almost feels like a spin-off, like **Star Trek: Deep Space** to **Star Trek: The Next Generation**, as it’s going off in another direction with the future Romana.

“I’ve loved working with Lalla and Louise Jameson and I really can’t wait to do more together in the future as they’re the most fantastic actors to work with in the studio. With Juliet, it’s very different, and the first time she appeared in the previous **Gallifrey**, I was a bit gobsmacked to be working with her. I was excited to be working with Juliet as I was obviously aware of her work on **Buffy**.

“It’s great that we’ve got a future Romana – I just hope there’s no plans for a future Narvin! I’ve survived being tortured, blown up and shot by stasers so far...”

Sean was impressed with other members of the cast too. He adds: “What a cast we’ve got – Stephen Thorne, what a voice! That’s the first time he has played Omega since *The Three Doctors* back in 1973, and I just assumed that he had done it at some point, but that wasn’t the case. When he did his first scene, the voice was there, instantly. I felt quite proud to have been there. It was wonderful to work with Sophie as well, as I hadn’t done any with her until then. It was just fantastic to have Narvin and Ace go off on an adventure in my own TARDIS! It was almost a bit like being the Doctor – the fan boy in me was rather excited at that!”

Where earlier **Gallifrey** series were rooted in politics, plotting and power, there’s a real change in emphasis with *Intervention Earth*. Scott says: “This time, **Gallifrey** breaks away from the political intrigue of its original seasons and enters into full-on conspiracy thriller mode. It’s not the **Gallifrey** people knew but, like **Doctor Who**, the format’s sometimes more flexible than you realise, and *Intervention Earth* particularly allows characters like Ace, and especially Narvin, to shine in a whole new light.

“This was one of those productions that just seemed to happen, very quickly! I’m indebted to David Llewellyn for coming aboard when he did – not only for scripting episodes two and three, but also helping shape the overall storyline for the adventure. And it is an adventure. It’s unashamedly an adventure.

And Juliet is delighted to have been involved with the play “Scott Handcock and David Llewellyn wrote a brilliant script and Scott did a spectacular job directing it. It’s a wonderful, thrill ride of a story. I couldn’t put it down when I read it. And I think we could all feel how special it was when we were working in the booth. Scott describes it as, ‘Time Lords meets **24**.’ We laughed a lot at work, which is the best!” **VORTEX**



Gallifrey: Intervention Earth

Times change...

Romana is approaching her final term of office, and hopes to leave her world in a state of peace and harmony. Narvin is concerned about the implementation of a controversial Precog programme, one that seeks to predict the Time Lords’ future. Ace is an operative for the Celestial Intervention Agency, having learned the art of interference from one of the best...

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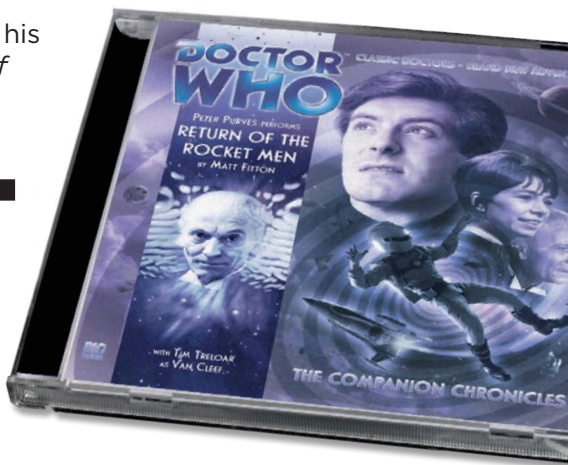
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Listen again...

THE RETURN OF THE ROCKET MEN



Ahead of March's *Requiem for the Rocket Men*, Kenny Smith straps on his jet pack and looks back at *Return of the Rocket Men*!



BIG FINISH has created many memorable characters over the years, and one of the most outstanding creations has been the Rocket Men. Originally created by John Dorney for *The Companion Chronicles*, and appearing in 2011, producer David Richardson was determined to do a second story featuring the villainous creations. *Return of the Rocket Men* was commissioned as a result, and written by Matt Fitton.

This month, John gets the chance to return to his own creation, in *Requiem for the Rocket Men* in the **Fourth Doctor Adventures**. David explains: "I'd loved John Dorney's first Rocket Men story so much that I'd asked him for a sequel, but he was too busy to write it. Typical Dorney – creates great ideas but then is too busy to write more with them! So Matt Fitton did us a lovely sequel, which honours the original with an unusual framework and some fun twists. By now, I'd realised we were really creating an expanding universe with these **Companion Chronicles**."

With the Rocket Men having been very popular in their debut, Matt admitted he was under pressure as a result, and says he was: "Daunted at first, then I realised this would bring an enormous amount of goodwill. So I decided to embrace the sequel status! Although it can be heard with no knowledge whatsoever of the first, I was aware it had a lot to live up to.

"Fairly early on I decided I wanted to pick up on the thematic impetus of *The Rocket Men*. 'When do you know?' is such a genius opening – I decided to steal it! In a way, John's is a straightforward story told in an inter-

layered fashion, while mine is a complex set of events told in a more linear style."

Matt particularly enjoyed writing for Peter Purves, saying: "The wonderful thing about Peter is he can do the drama and narration equally well, so I could write a good variety of scenes, from the dialogue with Van Cleef to the narration of the space-flight, describing the workings of the rocket packs. And of course, I knew he'd recapture Hartnell brilliantly – and he was pretty great at impersonating Dodo too."

The play proved to be a hit with its star. Peter adds: "It's a very clever story – a great piece of writing by Matt Fitton and I was very happy with that one. It's terrific, with so many twists and turns – if you listen to it carefully, you might guess what's going to happen, but you can never tell where it's going.

"I've been very lucky with the scripts I've been given by Big Finish – I haven't had any where I've thought, 'I can't do this or say that.' They're always well-written and easy to play – I just love the fact it's great fun to do." **VORTEX**

VORTEX MAIL

Send us an email, or letter in the post – tell us the things that you like most... Email feedback@bigfinish.com and remember to put ‘Vortex Mail’ as the subject.

JUST WILLIAM

I have just finished *Domain of the Voord* and wanted to let you know how much I enjoyed this tale; it was a perfect recreation of the Hartnell years and the most enjoyable adventure I have heard this year, (sorry, but the recent Tom Baker ones have been too gory and grim for me!). The script, production and performances were all equally outstanding – more please! One request – would it be possible for William Russell to take over the role of the First Doctor properly in future i.e. could he play the Doctor in stories where Ian is not present too? Peter Purves does a marvellous impersonation of Hartnell, but I feel that William Russell portrays the First Doctor as a complete character and should be freed from Narrator/Ian duties in some titles!

MARTIN EDMONDS

Nick: We're happy to continue the Early Adventures in the current format, while noting your request, Martin. Sorry you found the Fourth Doctor adventure too grim and gory. We thought they were in keeping with that era of the programme.

FAN FUNDAMENTALS!

I have a quick trio of unashamed fan questions about your **Doctor Who** audios.

1. In regards to the Sixth Doctor's relation to Gallifrey's history, such as **The Worlds of Doctor Who** or his appearance in the **Jago & Litefoot** audios with Leela, is that incarnation now aligned with the Eighth Doctor's post-*Zagreus* Gallifrey or are his meetings with Leela and Romana simply independent meetings?

2. Can we hope to see the Master as played by Geoffrey Beevers alongside the Seventh Doctor ever again?

3. Simplest question of all: can we hope to hear the Sea Devils battle any Doctor? To my knowledge they have only appeared in one 2003 **Benny** audio, *The Poison Seas*, so a return for this race is, in my honest opinion, long overdue.

And I really hope the Fourth Doctor audios herald a return for Sutekh! I really want to hear Tom Baker have a good showdown with Gabriel Woolf once again.

CHRIS MCKEON

Nick: Unashamed fan questions they are indeed. 1. I've no idea and I don't think it matters (cue thunder lightning and a wailing and gnashing of teeth!) 2. No plans, but it's a great idea. 3. No plans, but another great idea. Also, the Sutekh thing, no plans for him to return with the Fourth Doctor... but another great idea!

MORE, MORE, MORE!

Over the last year I've got into the audio dramas that you do and they are superb to listen to. I have three questions I would like to ask.

1. Are the **Eighth Doctor Adventures** going to continue after the end of the **Dark Eyes** series?

2. Is there any chance that Amy/Abby are going to cross paths with the Doctor again in the future?

3. Will there be any more **Gallifrey** adventures after the *Intervention Earth* audio, maybe exploring Gallifrey in the wake of the Time War?

DAVEDOC85

Nick: Another list of questions? It's a month of lists... 1. Yes. Of course! We have no plans to stop working with Paul McGann. 2. No plans, but I wouldn't rule it out. 3. There will be more Gallifrey, but nothing about the Time War.

TOLKEIN, THE BIBLE AND ALL-CONSUMING FIRE

I wondered if you had ever considered tackling some of the less well known Middle Earth stories. I was thinking particularly of *Silmarillion/Unfinished Tales* and *Children of Hurin*. The reason I was thinking of this was I have copies of *Silmarillion* tales read by Martin Shaw, but I found them a little complex and names seemed to blend into one another and at times it read more like a text book (or Bible reading). A dramatisation could bring these stories to life and make them accessible to people like me who have tried *Silmarillion* and couldn't get through it.

Also, talking of Bible readings, have you ever considered providing an audio version of the Bible? I say this as I have tried to listen to a number of audio Bible readings and have generally found them dry and dull, often with American readers who can't pronounce names or who pause at the wrong moment. There is a market for this outside of the normal Big Finish audience.

Also can we have an adaptation of *All-Consuming Fire*? I'd love to see Sherlock and the Doctor teaming up!

WAYNE BURCHELL

Nick: There would be a massive copyright issue with the Tolkien material you mention, so we have no plans. I imagine the film rights are already tied up along with audio deals. The Bible would certainly be a project of biblical proportions. We'd also have to check with God for the copyright situation... Only kidding, I hear God's pretty lax with copyright rules. No plans to do this, but you never know. All-Consuming Fire is a jolly good idea! Hmmm...

Coming up...

RELEASE SCHEDULE

New and forthcoming audio releases

FEBRUARY 2015

- Doctor Who: *Equilibrium* (196, Fifth Doctor, Tegan, Nyssa and Turlough)
- Doctor Who – The Fourth Doctor Adventures: *The Darkness of Glass* (4.2, Fourth Doctor and Leela)
- Doctor Who – Short Trips: *Little Doctors* (5.02, Download only)
- Blake's 7: The Classic Audio Adventures 4: *Ghost Ship* (Full Cast)
- Dark Shadows: *Bloodlust – Episodes 8-13* (Full Cast)
- Vienna – Series 2 (Full Cast)
- Gallifrey: *Intervention Earth* (Full Cast)

MARCH 2015

- Doctor Who: *The Entropy Plague* (197, Fifth Doctor, Tegan, Nyssa and Turlough)
- Doctor Who – The Fourth Doctor Adventures: *Requiem for the Rocket Men* (4.3, Fourth Doctor, Leela and K9)
- Doctor Who – Short Trips: *Time Tunnel* (5.03, Download only)
- Doctor Who: *Dark Eyes 4* (Eighth Doctor)
- Blake's 7: *The Liberator Chronicles – Box Set 11*
- Blake's 7: The Classic Audio Adventures 5: *Devil's Advocate* (Full Cast)
- Blake's 7: Lucifer Revelation: *Audiobook of Novel* (Read by Paul Darrow)
- Jago and Litefoot: *Series Nine Box Set*

APRIL 2015

- Doctor Who: *The Defectors* (198, Seventh Doctor and Jo Grant)
- Doctor Who – The Fourth Doctor Adventures: *Death Match* (4.4, Fourth Doctor, Leela and K9)
- Doctor Who – Short Trips: *The Ghost Trap* (5.04, Download only)
- Blake's 7: The Classic Audio Adventures 6: *Truth and Lies* (Full Cast)
- Terrahawks *Volume 1* (Full Cast)

MAY 2015

- Doctor Who: *Last of the Cybermen* (199, Sixth Doctor and Jamie and Zoe)
- Doctor Who – Short Trips: *The King of the Dead* (5.05, Download only)

- Doctor Who – The Fourth Doctor Adventures: *Suburban Hell* (4.5, Fourth Doctor and Leela)
- Doctor Who – Novel Adaptations *Damaged Goods / Well Mannered War* (Special edition)
- Doctor Who – Novel Adaptations *The Well Mannered War* (Fourth Doctor)
- Doctor Who – Novel Adaptations *Damaged Goods* (Seventh Doctor)
- The Worlds of Big Finish: *Box Set*
- Blake's 7: *Book 7: Lucifer: Genesis* (Paul Darrow)
- Dark Shadows: *Panic*

JUNE 2015

- Doctor Who *The Secret History* (200, Fifth Doctor, Vicki and Steven)
- Doctor Who – The Fourth Doctor Adventures: *The Cloisters of Terror* (4.6, Fourth Doctor and Leela)
- Doctor Who: The First Doctor Companion Chronicles – *Box Set 1*
- Doctor Who: Short Trips *The Sisters of Serenity* (5.06, Download only)
- Doctor Who: The New Adventures of Bernice Summerfield: *The Triumph of Sutekh*
- Survivors – Series 2 *Box Set* (Full Cast)
- Dark Shadows: *The Curse of Shurafa*

JULY 2015

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

AUGUST 2015

- Doctor Who: *The Warehouse* (202, Seventh Doctor and Mel)
- Doctor Who – The Fourth Doctor Adventures: *Return to Telos* (4.8, Fourth Doctor and Leela)

DOCTOR WHO – Short Trips:

- Foreshadowing* (5.08, Download only)
- Charlotte Pollard: *Series Two Box Set*
- The Omega Factor: *Series 1 Box Set* (Full Cast)
- Dark Shadows: *Deliver Us From Evil*

SEPTEMBER 2015

- Doctor Who: TBA (203, Seventh Doctor and Mel)
- Doctor Who: TBA (204, Sixth Doctor and Constance)
- Doctor Who – The Early Adventures: *The Yes Men* (2.1, Second Doctor)
- Doctor Who – Short Trips: *Etheria* (5.09, Download only)
- Dark Shadows: *Tainted Love*
- Big Finish Classics: *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*

OCTOBER 2015

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

NOVEMBER 2015

- Doctor Who: *Planet of the Rani* (206, Sixth Doctor and Constance)
- Doctor Who: *Doom Coalition* (Eighth Doctor)
- Doctor Who – The Early Adventures: TBA (2.3, Second Doctor)
- Doctor Who – Short Trips: *The Other Woman* (5.11, Download only)
- Blake's 7: *Book 8: Mediasphere* (Kate Orman and Jonathan Blum)
- Blake's 7: *The Liberator Chronicles – Box Set 12*
- Survivors – Series 3 *Box Set* (Full Cast)
- Dorian Gray: *Series Four*



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