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EDITORIAL

DOOM COALITION is a very clever thing. Each story needs to be able to stand on its own, as a piece of entertaining drama. But the four stories in each box set need to unify to tell a bigger story, which feels complete in its own right. But then, the four box sets need to work together, to relate a full adventure in 16 parts. On my way to and from work lately, I've been relistening to the first two box sets. And the questions are there...

Just who helped to set the Eleven free? Who knew the identities of the Time Lords who went into the Lord President's office, and how? And the portrait of the Red Lady... where did that come from? And Caleera... who put her in contact with the Eleven?

These are some of the questions that sprang up when I was listening, and I'm sure there's plenty of other things that I've missed.

This month, of course, on top of **War Doctor 3**, there's another release of major note too: **The Torchwood Archive!** As I write this, it's not actually been announced, so it's quite exciting to be talking about something that's been kept top secret.

It's a fantastic script, celebrating the worlds of **Torchwood**, past, present and future. There's so much in it, that makes it a real treat for fans of the series. It's a great celebration, marking all that's good about the show.

If you've not heard any **Torchwood** releases to date, I'd thoroughly recommend that you do give them a go. Every play has been done with such love and care, by people who know and understand what makes it work, and the cast are so obviously passionate about **Torchwood**, even 10 years after the show first aired.

KENNY

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SNEAK PREVIEW COLD FUSION



It was a secret kept hidden for months, and it's nearly with us – the full cast adaptation of *Cold Fusion*.

THE CLASSIC **Doctor Who Missing Adventure** has been adapted by its original writer, Lance Parkin, bringing together the Fifth and Seventh Doctors, as well as their companions Nyssa, Tegan, Adric and Chris and Roz. Lance tells *Vortex*: "As tends to be the way with me and Big Finish, I got an email out the blue. I knew they were adapting some of the Virgin books. I wrote three, back in the day. They'd already done *Just War* years ago as one of the first Benny audios, and *The Dying Days* has a big role for Brigadier Lethbridge-Stewart.

"So if they were going to do one of mine, *Cold Fusion* was the obvious one. And it's got the selling point that it's got two Doctors in it. My first reaction was that with two Doctors and five companions between them, that didn't leave any room for anyone else in the cast, so I replied with 'I'd love to do this, so how should I pare it down?' ...and the reply came back 'write the script, keep it as close to the book as you can, we'll figure it out'. And I did rationalise and elide some of the characters – there aren't 10 different Adjudicator lieutenants or whatever, there are two main ones, now – but it's basically the whole book.

"I literally took the original text file and erased everything that wasn't dialogue, then shaped it from that." He adds: "I tried to make sure all the regulars get a lot to do, there's some fun stuff in there for all of them, a chance to be brave and funny.

"I've not heard the end result, but the rest of the cast looks great, doesn't it? Keen to see what they've been able to make of it." **VORTEX**



It's many happy returns to Captain Jack Harkness, Gwen Cooper, Ianto Jones, Toshiko Sato and many others this month as...

TORCHWOOD

IT'S HARD to believe it, but this month marks a decade since the phenomenon that is Russell T Davies' **Torchwood** first took to our screens.

On October 22, 2006, we watched as PC Gwen Cooper discovered there was something odd going on in – and below – the streets of Cardiff. She met Captain Jack Harkness, Owen Harper, Toshiko Sato, Ianto Jones and Suzie Costello, and her life was never the same again. And, it's fair to say, it's been similar for fans of **Torchwood**.

But how do you celebrate something that has become far more than just a TV series? With a large and devoted following all over the world, it had to be something special. And, while *The Three Captain Jacks* is something that the series' leading character might enjoy, Big Finish and producer James Goss have decided to do something else to

mark a decade of the show. James laughs: "It's totally borrowed from an idea that Joe Lidster and I had when we were working on **Dark Shadows** – while we had the cast in for one thing, get them to record short scenes for something else which would stitch together into a narrative.

"It seemed a great way to celebrate both **Torchwood's** birthday and **Torchwood** itself – it's an amazing format spanning thousands of years, and this allows us to tell the stories of everyone – from Queen Victoria to Jeremiah Bash Henderson, who might be **Torchwood's** last employee."

The Torchwood Archive is a different kind of tale, as it's not a straightforward story, as, in James's own words: "It's an unusual release – part anthology, part giddy epic, and mostly just an excuse to hopefully make the fans ridiculously happy. It's all

“ PART ANTHOLOGY, PART GIDDY EPIC, AND MOSTLY JUST AN EXCUSE TO MAKE THE FANS RIDICULOUSLY HAPPY. ”

a bit unusual. Some of them are like little scenes, some of them are short stories. They all answer a question, or tease something else. There's a linking narrative, of



TURNS TEN



Indria Varma

course, it's all going somewhere, but hopefully you'll just enjoy the individual segments – Jack sorting out a nasty problem in Cardiff Docks; a terrible confession from the ladies' loo at Aberdeen airport; and Toshiko Sato explaining how she saved the world while unloading a dishwasher."



Naoko Mori

THE TORCHWOOD Archive features one of the largest casts assembled for a Big Finish release, but it was recorded over a number of studio sessions and months, slotted in during the recording of other plays.

How did the cast find it? James reveals: "They were very nice about

it – considering how random it all was. 'There's just a couple of scenes, if you could just...'

"Eve and Kai recorded on separate days, so Eve took a delight in saying 'I'll pronounce that word like this as it'll really annoy him'. John Barrowman threw himself at the madness of it all – you get to hear his Scottish accent.

"Rowena Cooper as Queen Victoria was as brilliant as ever. She looked at the script very carefully and then, with the slightest hint of reproof, announced, 'I don't understand a word of it. Shall I just say it?', and then did so brilliantly.

"Naoko Mori's scene is a firm favourite – it's just the sound of an actress at the end of a long day letting rip. Drunk Tosh. That's what we've given the world, and you'll want more of it."

Director Scott Handcock adds: "The Archive was one of those scripts you read and your mind



Scott Hancock and Gareth David-Lloyd

starts to race. It's a lovely story in its own right, but one that wraps up the ongoing Committee arc, whilst also ensuring everyone we can possibly lay our hands on has something to do.

"In terms of recording, it was absolutely a jigsaw. Madder still, a jigsaw where you weren't guaranteed you'd have all the right pieces! But we got there in the end, chipping away throughout the year, ever since January, editing it all together as we go. It's been mad! I think we'd forgotten most of it by the time we heard the edits!"

It's a hugely impressive cast, including John Barrowman (Captain Jack Harkness), Eve Myles (Gwen Cooper), Gareth David-Lloyd (Ianto Jones), Naoko Mori (Toshiko Sato), Indira Varma (Suzie Costello), Kai Owen (Rhys Williams) and Tom Price (Andy Davidson).

And then there's Tracy-Ann Oberman (Yvonne Hartman), Richie Campbell (Jeremiah Bash Henderson), Rowena Cooper (Queen Victoria), Julian Lewis Jones (Alex Hopkins), Samuel Barnett (Norton Folgate), David Warner (The Committee), Emma Reeves (Miss Trent), Krystian Godlewski (Maxim Ivanov), Guy Adams (Archie), Geoffrey Breton (Bartender), Lisa Bowerman (Miss Mitford), Laura Doddington (Delilah), Aaron Neil

(Mandrake), Kerry Gooderson (Little Girl), Ryan Sampson (Ivan Putin), Damian Lynch (Kieran Frost), Paul Clayton (Mr Colchester).

Yes, that's a substantial cast list.

“ IN TERMS OF RECORDING, IT WAS ABSOLUTELY A JIGSAW. ”

THE MAN charged with bringing the various studio sessions into the one play is Steve Foxon, who is tackling the sound design.

It's easy to imagine this would be a big challenge, given there's not just one story setting, but several, all within the one release.

Steve grins: "I wouldn't say it was much different from any other play, only that you have to design more background atmospheres than you would normally. However, this actually makes it more interesting to work on, coming up with a variety of settings and makes it easier to keep things more interesting for the listener – not too often are you recording yourself



TORCHWOOD ARCHIVE

OUT OCTOBER!
CD/DOWNLOAD

Written by: James Goss
Directed By: Scott Hancock

"Welcome, visitor. The Torchwood Archive provides a complete history of our Institute from its distant beginnings to the present day. When we founded our great enterprise in the year of our Lord 1879, we decreed that there should be a record of this achievement, stored at the very furthest limits of the British Empire. By visiting you are spreading that legacy, perhaps out through the skies. For now, I shall bid you a good day and welcome you to the Torchwood Archive. Do, please look around."

The Torchwood Archive is a forgotten asteroid in the centre of a great war. Jeremiah is its first visitor in many centuries. He's come to learn something very important. And the ghosts of Torchwood are waiting for him.

making toast and coffee one minute, then designing a futuristic Torchwood Hub the next.

"Although it can be a little difficult to make a living room sound different enough to say an office, but with most scenes broken up by scenes in the Archive it didn't cause any headaches in this play! It's always nice to be able to be



Left to right: Samuel Barnett and Tom Price

involved in something special like this, but does put pressure on you to make it sound extra special! I have loved working on the second series of **Torchwood** and this is a great way to round that out. I am a fan as well which makes it even more special and it has been great hearing/editing all the characters."

Were there any particularly challenging bits? "To be honest, and sorry for the boring answer," said Steve, "but it has been quite a straightforward one to work on! Bizarrely I did have an issue with the miniature bottles – I must have spent a morning going to different shops trying to find some!

"They either didn't have any, or they were plastic which was no good to get the glass chinks. I did find some Jack Daniels in the end, which is good as it's the only spirit I like, so they won't go to waste. All worth it to make it authentic sounding in the end. The only other challenge was knowing about the play for so long and not being able to say anything!"

He adds: "I want to add how much I have enjoyed doing the sound design on the **Torchwood** audios over the last few months. I really

like designing for a real world setting and making environments and actions sound as real as possible and **Torchwood** has that, but throws in some curve balls occasionally to liven things up (think Goo monster). The quality never fails to amaze me, from the excellent stories, brilliant acting and of course Scott's wonderful direction – he really does know how to get the best out of everyone, and **The Torchwood Archive** brings all of that together brilliantly. "

THE PRODUCTION team are pleased to be carrying on making and expanding on the worlds of **Torchwood**, and there's plenty more still to come.

How proud is James, to be doing something that marks 10 years of **Torchwood**? "Enormously," he admits. "It's amazing now that the edits are coming in and it all hangs together. Scott Handcock has done a wonderful job as director of making sure that it all works, but it really does. It's so strange to think that it's 10 years ago.

"This is weird – this is the **Torchwood** version of *The Three*

“ WE SHOULD HAVE DONE THAT. ARC OF INFINITY WITH KEBAB GREASE. ”

Doctors. Which, when you think of it like that is just so strange. Imagine that – I mean, John Barrowman did record his lines in a converted garage, there is a quarry, and a very loud explosion. That's about the limit of the parallels, though. Sadly.

"That's where we missed a trick. Maybe **Omega** should show up at every **Doctor Who** spin-off's tenth anniversary? Damn. Yes. **Omega** striding around the streets of Cardiff in yet another amazing cloak and being chased by a hen night and getting stuck in a queue outside a chip shop while it all kicks off at Walkabout and oh damn. We should have done that. *Arc of Infinity* with kebab grease."

Scott adds: "There are so many lovely moments and sequences throughout **The Torchwood Archive**, it's hard to narrow it down, or spoil them too much by revealing what they involve. Things like getting Julian Lewis Jones back as Alex Hopkins, for example. It's such a small, incidental detail, but lovely for the fans. We genuinely have tried to get as many people involved as we can!

"In terms of recording, we had one day with Richie Campbell, Rowena Cooper, Aaron Neil and Laura Doddington which was simply a hoot. Even though they're new characters, they absolutely embraced the essence of **Torchwood** and were as outrageous as any of the TV cast!" **VORTEX**



DOOM

FOR MANOUVRE

Kenny Smith looks at the twists and turns in the latest Eighth Doctor box set...

BIG FINISH'S latest series of Eighth Doctor adventures enters its second half as **Doom Coalition** reaches its third set.

We don't know much about what the titular organisation is (if it is an organisation or group. *Vortex* has, honestly, no idea!). So far, the Doctor (Paul McGann), Liv Chenka (Nicola Walker) and Helen Sinclair (Hattie Morahan) have encountered the Eleven and the Sonomancer, while Helen has also met a certain Professor River Song. And according

to the director and script editor of the set, we've only just begun.

Ken Bentley says: "We've purposefully avoided getting to the point. We wanted to keep the listener in the dark, just like the Doctor. But the third box set finally answers the big question. I hope it's a big revelation and a genuine surprise. Our intention was for the third box set to be cataclysmic, both metaphorically and literally."

Producer David Richardson continues: "Doing a 16-part story with these four box sets has afforded

us some luxuries. It's allowed us to have lots of pieces in play, and a lot of those pieces won't be clear until you've heard all the episodes. And it's allowed us to have some really lovely interludes during the ongoing arc – episodes that stand beautifully on their own two feet.

"John Dorney's *Absent Friends* is one of those. At the moment (and I've heard the FX edits) it's one of my favourite **Doctor Who** episodes ever. Not just because it's a lovely idea beautifully done, but it's so powerful and moving. Nicola and

Hattie have some incredible scenes – I don't mind admitting it made me cry. A lot."

Ken continues: "From the very beginning David and I knew what **Doom Coalition** was about. But with each box set I tried to give the writers only the information they needed to write each

has two writers, in Matt Fitton and John Dorney.

THE new series begins when the TARDIS brings the Doctor and friends to Earth in the late 20th century in *Absent Friends*, by John Dorney, as the mobile phone revolution gets underway.

these. *Absent Friends* follows the pattern we've had in quite a few of the last McGann box sets, like **Dark Eyes 3 and 4**, with *The Death of Hope* and *A Life in the Day* and **Doom Coalition 2**, with *Beachhead*, where the first story is, to a degree, a prologue to the other stories in the set."

They remain on Earth for the second story of the set, *The Eighth Piece* by Matt Fitton, but this time the TARDIS crew are split up with Liv in 15th century Prague, the Doctor in England, 1538, and Helen in Rome, 2016.

The third story, *The Doomsday Chronometer*, explores what happens when River Song takes Helen on an archaeological expedition like no other, while the Doctor finds himself enlisted by an alien Queen to save her people, and Liv stares death in the face as she meets the enemy who's been dogging the TARDIS travellers' footsteps throughout Earth's history.

Matt says: "Ken and David presented me with a two-parter in the middle of the set, which I had to make inter-locking and as pivotal as I could within the **Doom Coalition** world. Ken was keen on presenting secret societies and I wanted to use River's archaeological background as well, to bring in things like the legends of the Knights Templar, so all of these started whirling around in my mind.

"When you've got the likes of Paul McGann, Nicola Walker and Hattie Morahan, you want them to have something interesting to work with and give them lots to do in studio.

"When we're in studio, I'm always keen to hear what Paul McGann is interested in – previously, he'd mentioned how much he was enjoying **Wolf Hall**. Everyone was raving about it – so in this set, I thought it would be interesting to have the Doctor meet Thomas Cromwell.



Above (clockwise from top left): John Dorney, Richard Hope, Ian Puleston-Davies, Anna Acton, Nicola Walker and Hattie Morahan

“ I DON'T MIND ADMITTING IT MADE ME CRY. A LOT. ”

episode. I wanted them to be free to invent and to introduce new and unexpected elements to the story. That's been one of the most challenging but rewarding things about script editing **Doom Coalition** – helping it to grow organically. That means the final box set has some surprises up its sleeve that even I hadn't imagined when David and I first planned the whole series."

Unlike the previous two **Doom Coalition** sets, number three only

He says: "I'm kind of aware there's a ready-made responsibility with the first and fourth stories in a box set. It's a bit of a switch from **UNIT: Silenced**, where Matt had the first and last, and I had the middle ones.

"We had a long time to prepare as we first got the brief in January or February last year, but haven't had to write it until the beginning of this year. Nicola Walker was in New York for a chunk of last year, so it meant we had time to work on



Above (left to right): Glen McCready, Nicholas Woodeson and Janie Dee
Below (left to right): Tim McMullen and John Shrapnel

"Having the two-parter, it meant I could give them all their own adventures, with the TARDIS team split across time, if not space, with Helen in modern day Rome, which is a trip out of time for her.

"We've got a team that works well – complimentary companions who are different and show different aspects of each other. Liv and the Doctor are almost equals as she's very clever and can keep up with him, while Helen has an emotional connection with him and that brings out his human side.

"Then you throw River into the mix – she's just my favourite person to write. I love her to bits!

"In turn, she brings out different aspects of the regulars – she can take Helen under her wing, and Helen's rather impressed by River – she's everything she aspires to be, with a historian and an archaeologist together.



"Liv has met River in passing, but is maybe a bit more suspicious. And with the Doctor, he and River had a near miss last time – but that can't keep going on forever...

"As we go along, we'll discover more about the Doom Coalition, who's a part of it and what they really want..."



DOCTOR WHO DOOM COALITION 3

OUT SEPTEMBER!
CD/DOWNLOAD

ABSENT FRIENDS
THE EIGHTH PIECE
THE DOOMSDAY CHRONOMETER
THE CRUCIBLE OF SOULS

Written by: John Dorney
and Matt Fitton
Directed By: Ken Bentley

CAST

Paul McGann (The Doctor), Nicola Walker (Liv Chenka), Hattie Morahan (Helen Sinclair), Alex Kingston (River Song), Jeremy Clyde (George), Ian Puleston-Davies (Angus Selwyn), Richard Hope (Phillip Cook/Kal), Anna Acton (Kate Drury), John Shrapnel (Thomas Cromwell), Kasia Koleczek (Apolena), Glen McCready (Solvers/Abbot), Emma D'Inverno (Rosalia), Tim McMullen (Octavian), Janie Dee (Risolva), Robert Bathurst (Padrac), John Heffernan (The Imposter) and Nicholas Woodeson (The Clocksmith)

David adds: "Yes, River Song is back, and not for just one episode this time. River is now part of the **Doom Coalition** ensemble, and I love working with this team of actors. They're not just performers who are respected and admired by their peers, they're also really lovely human beings too. Whenever we get together to

record, it's an absolute treat – a group of friends coming together to have fun and do great work. I will never take for granted the fact that I get to work with them."

DOOM COALITION 3 concludes with *The Crucible of Souls*, by John, and with the TARDIS crew separated and in terrible trouble, will today be the day the bad guys win?

John says: "The less people know, the more they will enjoy it.

"We have, to a degree, learned who the Coalition are. The audience have, hopefully, got the sense that across the first two sets, there's something building behind the scenes – the Eleven and Calira have been talking to other people.



“ RIVER'S JUST MY FAVOURITE PERSON TO WRITE. I LOVE HER TO BITS! ”

"So, hopefully, people will get a clearer sense of the overall picture as to how it all comes together.

"I suppose **Doom Coalition** is like a big old-school four-parter. This is episode three, where the villain's plans are coming together and getting into motion – but there's still all sorts of twists and turns to come!

"We've always considered it to be a season arc and you have to be aware of that when you're writing it. Each story has its own shape, style, beginning, middle and end. Simultaneously, you're writing short and long form, to balance out the individual story, the arc of the box set and the overall bigger story."

Ken adds: "I'm very proud of **Doom Coalition**. It's taken some complex plotting but we've so far achieved what we set out to

achieve, and I'm really happy that listeners seem to be enjoying the journey we're taking them on.

"I know listeners have been keen to find out what **Doom Coalition** is all about and I'm pleased to be able to reveal that all questions are finally answered! Well, almost all."

LOOKING THROUGH the cast list for **Doom Coalition 3**, there are some fantastic actors who have been in studio.

Ken says: "Casting is fundamentally important. It's the foundation of any production. I put a lot of effort into casting and I take a lot of pride in casting roles appropriately. We've purposefully tried to bring together a really strong company of actors and hopefully once listeners discover what **Doom Coalition** is all about

our casting choices will make a lot of sense. I can't explain why for fear of spoilers, but I'll be interested to hear what listeners think once all the pieces fall into place."

John adds: "If you show the cast list to anyone who knows their theatre, it's absolutely astonishing. What West End production wouldn't want to have Paul McGann, Nicola Walker and Hattie Morahan – and that's just the regular cast?!

"We have some major players from the National Theatre, like Janie Dee – who has created several roles for Alan Ayckbourn – John Shrapnel and Nicholas Woodeson. With our regulars, they can only help attract these incredibly classy theatrical names. They had a good time and were determined to come back and do another project for us as soon as possible.

"When I told some of my actor friends of the cast we had for *Crucible of Souls*, they were amazed. It's such a good cast."

LOOKING ahead, John teases: "When I was building up to writing my stories for **Doom Coalition 4**, I went back and re-read the scripts for *The Eighth Piece*, *The Doomsday Chronometer* and *Crucible of Souls* in the one day, to get a sense of what's happening, and it was a rollercoaster! This is big screen **Doctor Who**, in audio! It's an epic movie.

"Once you hit *Crucible of Souls*, it's full speed until the end."

Matt concludes: "The first two box sets were perhaps slightly more stand alone than the second two will be – there's a puzzle going on in the background which the Doctor, Liv and Helen aren't aware of as yet, and now we're starting to see the bigger picture.

"By the end of set three, you'll be desperate to hear set four!"

VORTEX



A GRAY DAY

Kenny Smith discovers that it's the end of Dorian...

THE END is nigh, even for an immortal like Dorian Gray. So this is it. It's the last series, the denouement, for **The Confessions of Dorian Gray**. The fifth and final series is released this month, and we bid farewell to Dorian in *One Must Not Look at Mirrors* by Guy Adams, *Angel of War* by Roy Gill, *The Valley of Nightmares* by David Llewelyn, and *Ever After*, by the series' creator, producer and director, Scott Handcock.

The series ends on a high, with Alexander Vlahos – seen recently in

Versailles on BBC2 – back as Oscar Wilde's creation one final time.

Scott says: "I've always had a plan at the back of my mind when it came to **Dorian**, and Alex and I have always discussed that plan as it's developed. But we've always left things open. We could have easily been cancelled after series one or two. Thankfully, we weren't. Series three gave things a new momentum and we've been slowly edging towards the end.

"As for why Alex and I chose to draw it to a close? It just felt right. It was the first day of recording on

series four (March 2015) and we were both skirting round each other a bit at lunchtime, neither one quite wanting to admit we should think about ending it. But we've always been on the same page, and want to end on a high while the audience still want us around, and whilst we still had the energy to make it as good as it has been."

Alex is delighted with the way the series has built up its own cult following. He agrees: "I am immeasurably proud, yes, of course. Getting to play Dorian Gray has

been one of the most joyous acting experiences I've had... But I question the word 'cult'. When a show builds up a 'cult' following, that means it's transcended the mainstream. I always believed there was an audience for these type of audios and to get to series five is an amazing achievement and proof that we were right all the way back in 2012 when series one aired."

“ IT IS —
ABSOLUTELY —
THE END ”

LOOKING AHEAD to the new series, Scott and Alex are keeping their cards close to their chests, but Scott says: "What can I tease? Well, it's a series of hour-long episodes that revisit some of the more pivotal characters from Dorian's life, before lurching right into the present for the final story. The characters are the focus, and their relationships with Dorian are the strength of the series, I feel. The threats are a lot more intimate than simple monsters or demons, and these stories are possibly a great deal more disturbing than any we've tackled. We have Dorian and Oscar Wilde at the time of Jack the Ripper; Dorian and Captain Anderson in the trenches of World War One; Dorian and Dorothy Parker in 1940s Hollywood; then the end..."

Looking back on series five, Alex had several highlights. He reveals: "So many, but I guess if I had to pick one, it was a moment looking around the green room on a lunch break on one of our recording sessions – and seeing all of these incredibly talented cast members, coming back to this little series for one last hurrah! It felt like Dorian had built up this little family and there they

all were! Tracey Childs, Bernard Holley, Hugh Skinner, Geoff Breton, Sarah Douglas, Steff Rhodri and Dan Brocklebank – just amazing, amazing people. Puts a smile on my face just thinking about it."

Looking back over all five series, plus the Christmas specials, Scott says: "It's been a joy from start to finish. Genuinely. I've had this series in my head since 2010 – long before Big Finish came aboard – and it's been an honour and a thrill to be trusted by Big Finish, but also to see the audience fall in love with it. I've had the most amazing messages from people.

"I've been sent fan art, short stories, even a Dorian and Toby t-shirt! It's been the most incredible journey. But obviously, the highlight's always been getting to work with Alex and the rest of the team. Who doesn't like working with their mates? And I've made so very many on **Dorian**."

Alex was delighted with getting to work so closely with the producer.

His highlight was: "Getting to work with one of my best mates, Scott Hancock and getting to see his brilliant and bonkers creation grow and develop into what it's become. I'm so proud of him. I want to thank him for letting me be a part of it all, the fact that I was always 'his' Dorian still to this day baffles me."

SO THIS is it. There's no turning back, and it's the end of **Dorian Gray**?

Alex smiles: "It is the end. For me and Scott at least. Always best to end on a high, and I think series five does that. It's bold, brash, epic, thoughtful, sad and scary. We've taken him cross the globe, from the 19th century all the way to 2016... He's had the best and craziest life. But like they always say, all good things must come to an end."

Scott adds: "It is – absolutely – the end. Sorry. People have been trying to get me to change my mind – even

people at Big Finish – but Alex and I have a pact. We've reached our end, and anything more would feel like a cheat, and cheapen our ending. And personally, I hate it when series or programmes announce an end, but then keep coming back. So no, that's your lot. It's sad, yes, but in a way, that's very **Dorian**. Just avoid spoilers!" **VORTEX**

*Please note: **The Confessions of Dorian Gray** contains material that is not suitable for younger listeners.*



THE CONFESSIONS OF DORIAN GRAY SERIES 5

OUT OCTOBER!
CD/DOWNLOAD

Written by: Guy Adams, Roy Gill,
David Llewellyn, Scott Hancock
Directed by: Scott Hancock

CAST

Alexander Vlahos (Dorian Gray),
Guy Adams (German Officer),
Samuel Barnett (Stuart Knight),
David Blackwell (Simon Darlow),
Daniel Brocklebank (James
Anderson), Tracey Childs (The
Governess), Steven Cree (Fraser
Collins), Ben Crystal (Richard Dadd),
Sarah Douglas (Dorothy Parker),
Stephanie Ellyne (Mary Harris), Ben
Flohr (Tommy Coogan), Bernard
Holley (The Portrait), Lizzie Hopley
(Emma Elizabeth Smith), Jo Joyner
(Constance Wilde), Mac McDonald
(Walter van Kirk), Lewis Reeves
(Walter Sickert), Steffan Rhodri
(Oscar Wilde), John Schwab (Jim
Harris) with Hugh Skinner

PICTURE PERFECT

Two Big Finish classics are set to be released on vinyl over the next few months, and Kenny Smith meets the man behind the stunning covers...

WHEN YOU think of classic Big Finish releases from the early years, *The Chimes of Midnight* and *Spare Parts* immediately leap out.

As well as being outstanding scripts with tremendous performances from the cast, great direction and sound design and music, the covers by Clayton Hickman are fairly iconic too.

With a new cover design to be had for the vinyl releases, the seemingly-impossible task of emulating the originals fell to Tom Webster. Looking back at the originals, Tom says: "Ah, yes, those covers are so iconic, I remember looking at them for hours and hours when I was younger. They've definitely stuck in my head and were definitely an early inspiration to start making *Doctor Who* art and

“ YOU GOTTA LEARN TO KNOW WHEN SOMETHING'S FINISHED AND LET GO! ”

harbour hopes of working for Big Finish one day! In short, yes it was very daunting!"

Rather than attempt to do something similar, Tom decided to rip it up and start again. He reveals: "I decided to approach it in my usual way and not try to do a homage to them or copy them in any way.

"I was really inspired by the *DWM* comic strip previews at the time, particularly the *Spare Parts* one with the horse. With





The Chimes of Midnight, I knew I wanted to do something very simple and stark with an emphasis on atmosphere. *Spare Parts* was different, I just wanted to chuck everything at that!

"As mentioned before, I wanted to approach these covers in the same way that I'd usually approach a new story. The starting point was the story, going back and listening to them, and then re-listening while I was making them. It was so enjoyable as they're wonderful stories!"

Whilst working on creating the images, there wasn't too much evolution along the way. And since the designs were revealed on the Big Finish website, there has been unanimous praise for them from fans. Tom says: "The covers

didn't change too much during the process. The main challenge with *Spare Parts* was fitting everything in!

"I'm reasonably happy with both of them and I'm so glad that people like them. As ever, you do notice things that you'd like to change, but that's part of it.

"You gotta learn to know when something's finished and let go. It's definitely one of the biggest challenges.

"I'm so so happy that people like them and they've gone down very well, so the hard work's paid off.

"I've posted textless versions on my Facebook page and on Twitter, and have got more love on there. Wooh!" **VORTEX**

Spare Parts (Limited Vinyl Edition) is released in April 2017 and is limited to 500 copies.

DOCTOR WHO THE CHIMES OF MIDNIGHT

OUT NOW!
FOUR DISC VINYL SPECIAL EDITION

STRICTLY LIMITED TO 500 COPIES -
THIS RELEASE IS EXCLUSIVE TO THE
BIG FINISH WEBSITE!

Written by: Rob Shearman
Directed By: Barnaby Edwards

CAST
Paul McGann (The Doctor),
India Fisher (Charley Pollard),
Louise Rolfe (Edith); **Lennox**
Greaves (Mr Shaughnessy), **Sue**
Wallace (Mrs Baddeley), **Robert**
Curbishley (Frederick), **Juliet**
Warner (Mary)

Also contains a brand new
documentary which talks to some of
the people involved in the making of
this release.



THE VAMPIRE DIARIES

KENNY SMITH DISCOVERS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN FRIEND BECOMES FOE IN THE LATEST SERIES OF JAGO & LITEFOOT...

HENRY GORDON Jago and Professor George Litefoot may be a pair of bachelors, but it hasn't stopped them from establishing their own extended family unit. They've got their trusted friend in the police, Inspector Quick, and the Red Tavern's adorable barmaid, Ellie Higson.

But there's a problem in the family in series of 12 of **Jago & Litefoot**. Before being defeated by the Doctor at the end of the last box set, the Master lifted Litefoot's block on Ellie's vampiric condition,

introduced way back in the earliest series – and now the consequences are about to be revealed.

Producer David Richardson says: "When we came to plan series 12 of **Jago & Litefoot**, I wanted to bring the series back to basics a bit. We'd just done a big series that had included a lot of **Doctor Who** continuity and featured the Master and also an appearance by the Sixth Doctor, and this time I wanted just to look at what makes **Jago & Litefoot** great, and exploit that fully in these four episodes.

"I suggested we look back to our very first episode, and explore the repercussions of a tragedy in that story's climax. And I wanted to return to the fact that Ellie was still a vampire, yet one that had been weaned off the sauce – as it were!

"I also dictated that we'd have just two sets of writers covering all four episodes – so Justin would write the first and last, and Paul Morris and Simon Barnard would do the middle pair (although ultimately Paul did episode three on his own). The original idea was this would be,

more than ever before, a four-hour story. We pulled back from that a little, but it's still a very strong over-arching theme. Ellie has gone over and turned against her friends, and they have no idea what has happened..."

Picture This by series script editor Justin Richards opens the new set, when an art gallery is robbed, and

of him – if he'd left something unpleasant behind. And Ellie's vampirism fitted the bill perfectly."

The Flickermen by Paul Morris and Simon Barnard sees Jago being rather scathing of the new art of cinematography, and we learn what happens when he accompanies Litefoot to see a demonstration at a fairground.

the freedom to take the story and the new supporting characters wherever we wanted, as long as we left them in the correct positions for Justin's finale to pick up.

"The brief was fairly open – it was even up to us whether we filled that gap with one story or two. In the end we thought that a two-parter stuck in the middle might



Above (left to right): Ronan Vibert and Ronald Pickup

“ I WANTED TO RETURN TO THE FACT THAT ELLIE WAS STILL A VAMPIRE... ”

the curator drained of blood, as if killed by a vampire.

Justin says: "The notion that Ellie is still, deep down, a vampire was something we thought we might explore at some point. This seemed like a good set to do it in. We felt that when the Master escaped at the end of the previous box-set, it would be interesting – and typical

Then in *School of Blood* by Paul on his own, as vampiric murders are plaguing London, Jago and Litefoot investigate a girls' school.

How did Paul find coming into this series, knowing he had two stories to write? He grins: "It was very flattering to be entrusted with the middle two stories of this set, and quite a challenge too. We had



JAGO & LITEFOOT SERIES TWELVE

OUT OCTOBER!
CD/DOWNLOAD

PICTURE THIS
THE FLICKERMEN
SCHOOL OF BLOOD
WARM BLOOD

Written by: Justin Richards, Paul Morris and Simon Barnard
Directed By: Lisa Bowerman

CAST

Christopher Benjamin (Henry Gordon Jago), Trevor Baxter (Professor George Litefoot), Lisa Bowerman (Ellie Higson), Conrad Asquith (Inspector Quick), Ronald Pickup (The Old One), Forbes Masson (Kindred), Ronan Vibert (Mr Ravener), Robbie Stevens (Melchester), David John (Sir James Royston/Pete Stepney), Nigel Whitmey (Robert W Paul/Hardwick), David John (Sir James Royston), Jacqueline King (Old Ma Hambley/Miss Broodie), Charlie Hayes (Nellie/Lucilla Fredericks), Niky Wardley (Hannah Bennet)

unbalance the set, but it's certainly an intriguing idea... Another time, perhaps!

"We came up with a number of ideas and in the end settled on one story that stood largely apart from the vampire theme and another that was far more heavily tied into the series arc. The titles

very capable of working in the elements of the overall arc that need to be included."

DIRECTING THE plays in this set, as well as playing Ellie, is Lisa Bowerman. Had she ever wondered if Ellie's vampiric nature would resurface?

pure evil.

"I'm rather fond of all the stories in this set. There's a lovely sweep to them. The one where they both find themselves in a girls' school is very amusing – they're completely out of their comfort zone. Also – the threat of the new for Jago, in the form of the newly



“ IT'S BEST NOT TO TRY AND MAKE IT TOO MOUSTACHE TWIDDLING! ”

Above right (left to right): Christopher Benjamin and Trevor Baxter

Above left (left to right): Charlie Hayes, Trevor Baxter, Niky Wardley, Jacqueline King, Christopher Benjamin and Ronan Vibert

– *The Flickermen* and *School of Blood* – should give a clue as to which is which..."

Rounding off this season is *Warm Blood*, also by Justin, where Ellie tells Jago and Litefoot that she has been in contact with a group of vampires. Justin adds: "The overall plot is very tightly linked in this set, so just having the two sets of authors made co-ordinating that much easier. Plus Paul and Simon are great to work with anyway – full of ideas and imagination, but also

Lisa laughs: "I rather thought it might, as we've always resolved story strands one way or another. Just wasn't sure how it would manifest itself though. Rather like this one... I get to do battle. But with whom?!"

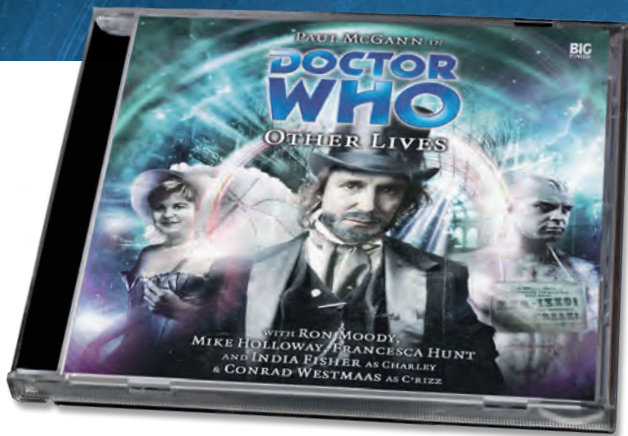
Actors often say it's more fun to play it 'bad', and Lisa's in agreement. "Bad's always more interesting to play. It's best not to try and make it too moustache twiddling, and certainly in Ellie's case – it's more anger driven, than

invented 'cinematograph' – Lots of challenges, lots of humour, lots of jeopardy, but also lots of humanity as well. That's the attraction of **Jago & Litefoot**."

Justin concludes: "I'm really looking forward to it. I think we've managed, pretty much, to make each **Jago & Litefoot** set better than the one before. How long that can go on for, I don't know – it's a challenge. But this is certainly one of our best and yes, I'm very proud of it." **VORTEX**

LISTEN AGAIN

OTHER LIVES



and I talked about it a couple of times, I went away and wrote it, and that was that."

The play featured the late Ron Moody as a guest star, playing the Duke of Wellington. Gary Hopkins explains: "It was my intention from the outset to involve the Duke of Wellington as a surrogate Doctor, while the Doctor himself was off having a romantic liaison of sorts with a Victorian housewife. The Duke of Wellington ended up being the only real-life historical figure in the whole story, played brilliantly by Ron Moody, who'd done his research and did it exactly as I'd imagined he would."

Also joining the cast was Francesca Hunt, sister of Charley Pollard actress India Fisher, in the first of several Big Finish appearances.

India says: "Big Finish knew my sister Francesca had a science fiction connection, having been in *The Adventures of Jules Verne*, and she had her own following through that.

"Gary said he would like to get her in, and I'd spoken to her and knew she was interested in doing one, so we fixed it up.

"Everyone says it must have been wonderful working with my sister, but I always replied, 'It would have been!'

"I was pretty disappointed that we were in on completely different days and I didn't actually get to work with her, as we didn't have any scenes together! In hindsight it may have been a good thing, as we would possibly have been laughing too much!" **VORTEX**

P AUL MCGANN has recently come back as the Eighth Doctor, as he, Liv Chenka and Helen Sinclair return for the third *Doom Coalition* box set. Although there's danger lurking at every corner in this new set, there were problems of a different sort back in December 2005, when the Doctor, Charley Pollard and C'rizz found themselves in Victorian London in *Other Lives*, an adventure written by Gary Hopkins.

Then producer Gary Russell says: "I think Gary put forward the idea of the Crystal Palace, and I wanted to do something about freakshows, although it may all have been a coincidence. I liked the idea of C'rizz being trapped in a freakshow."

Gary Hopkins continues: "Gary and I got talking about setting a story during the Victorian period – a purely historical story, but not necessarily tied to any specific event or person. All we were after, at that stage, was something

“ I LIKED THE IDEA OF C'RIZZ BEING TRAPPED IN A FREAKSHOW. ”

non-science fiction. Excluding the presence of the TARDIS, of course. Oh, and we wanted it to be a comedy of manners.

"Everything else was to have its feet on the ground. Almost my first thought was to have a story based in and around the Great Exhibition of 1851, as I'd been researching it for a completely different project and felt the sense of spectacle could be captured quite nicely in sound only. Gary was familiar with the Exhibition and more than happy for me to weave a tale around it.

"There was no brief as such, beyond the request for something historical, and certainly no written brief. Gary

VORTEX MAIL

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

COMIC CAPERS

Having read the latest issue of *Vortex*, I do agree with Gareth Humphrys that adapting comic strips into the audio medium is a great idea. I can just hear Abslom Daak uttering those immortal words across my audio speakers. But I was wondering not just to focus on the Eighth Doctor. The Fourth to the Seventh incarnations had great stories. *The Neutron Nights*, *The Tides of Time*, *The Stockbridge Horror*, *Nemesis of the Daleks* and *Voyager* were just some of the greatest comic strips ever. I thought the **Missing Adventures** that were adapted was sheer brilliance as were the **New Adventures** and there are so many wonderful tales to choose from. Now with the incredible voice talents of Frazer Hines as the Second Doctor and Tim Treloar as the Third there's just so much to choose from.

Peter Thorpe

Nick: Food for thought there, Peter. We do have some plans up our sleeve along some of the lines you mention. Well, sort of...

DIVING IN

It was only last year that I took the plunge into the audio world of **Doctor Who** and I am so madly in love with it. You are all amazing and I have yet to find a story I didn't love! Everything from **Dark Eyes to River Song!** I just finished all of **Torchwood** and the ending to *Made You Look* had me in shock! My question is can we expect another full series of **Torchwood** audios? Keep up the amazing work! **Harry Harper**

Nick: Hi Harry, it's lovely to hear from

*recent 'converts', if you'll pardon the term. There will be another series of **Torchwood** from March 2017!*

THE SCENIC ROUTE

Now that Big Finish has reunited Mel with the Seventh Doctor and Ace in style, I was wondering if you have plans to do actual stories with the Sixth Doctor, Leela, and President Romana II taking the scenic route back to Gallifrey, as per the epilogue of the excellent anniversary story, **The Worlds of Doctor Who**. I would gladly buy such stories, and I have a hard time imagining that I would be the only one. Keep up the good work in any event.

Michael House

Nick: No plans for that yet, Michael. But it's rather a nice idea.

LONG-TERM LISTENER

I felt compelled to write as a long-term podcast listener who remembers the line-up being Nick, Paul and David! (When will we get more from the lovely Sue Cowley?) I firstly wanted to add my condolences for the late but never-forgotten Paul Spragg, and wanted you to know that the phrase "Foe-ward" has passed into everyday parlance especially when I set off on a long car journey. I have recently started relistening to the early releases in the **Doctor Who** main range to celebrate my having purchased all of them and taking out a subscription to make sure I keep up to date. I have really enjoyed relistening to *Whispers of Terror*, *The Spectre of Lanyon Moor* and *The Fearmonger*. I felt that the political imagery and social

commentary in *The Fearmonger* was just as relevant now as when it was made and whilst now seeming like a period piece set in the early 2000s has undertones and reflections of what is happening in the political world right now.

Clive Lewis

Nick: Good point about The Fearmonger. An excellent story. Far too close to reality for comfort, perhaps? Thanks for your thoughts on the old podcasts, and particularly Paul. He's never far from my thoughts. As for Sue, she's a bit shy about being in podcasts. When she first joined, I sort of forced her into it... But she and Ian Atkins would rather not. To be frank, they're a bit too busy. But any time I can persuade Sue (and Ian) to return, they'll be back. For now, I'm having great fun with new co-host Benji Clifford.

UTTERLY ANGELIC

Fallen Angels is one of the best Big Finish audios I've ever heard. Fantastically fun throughout, scary, intelligent and humorous. It is certainly the best Davison audio adventure I've ever heard (well maybe right after his last box set, you know, the one with Matthew as well). Thanks! Love this story! And *Judoon in Chains*, this was a pleasant surprise. I loved it. It is the best Sixth Doctor audio ever. Funny, humorous, surprising in a sort of **Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy** way. Colin is in great form and the rest of the cast is fine, too. The ideas are funny and somewhat tense. A terrific way to use the Judoon.

Charles Mento

Nick: Ko, Fo, Mo, Bo, Ho-ho...

COMINGSOON

FORTHCOMING AUDIO RELEASES



OCTOBER 2016

- DOCTOR WHO: THE MEMORY BANK AND OTHER STORIES (217, Fifth Doctor, Turlough)
- DOCTOR WHO: THE EARLY ADVENTURES: THE FIFTH TRAVELLER (3.2, First Doctor, Ian, Barbara, Vicki and Jospa)
- DOCTOR WHO: SHORT TRIPS: RULEBOOK (6.10, Fifth Doctor, Peri, download only)
- DOCTOR WHO – THE WAR DOCTOR: AGENTS OF CHAOS (Box Set)
- TORCHWOOD ARCHIVE
- JAGO AND LITEFOOT: SERIES 12 (Box Set)
- THE CONFESSIONS OF DORIAN GRAY: SERIES 5

NOVEMBER 2016

- DOCTOR WHO: ORDER OF THE DALEKS (218, Sixth Doctor and Constance)
- DOCTOR WHO: SHORT TRIPS: THE MAN WHO WASN'T THERE (6.11, Eighth Doctor and Charley Pollard, Download only)
- DOCTOR WHO: THE EARLY ADVENTURES: THE RAVELLI CONSPIRACY (3.3 First Doctor, Vicki, Steven)
- DOCTOR WHO: THE THIRD DOCTOR ADVENTURES: VOLUME 2 (Third Doctor and Jo)
- SURVIVORS – SERIES 5: BOX SET (Full Cast)
- THE AVENGERS – STEED AND MRS PEEL: THE GRAPHIC NOVEL
- THE AVENGERS – STEED AND MRS PEEL: THE COMIC STRIP ADAPTATIONS (Volume 2)
- UNIT: THE NEW SERIES: SILENCED (3, Kate Stewart)
- TORCHWOOD: OUTBREAK (Box Set, Jack, Ianto, Gwen, Rhys, Andy)

DECEMBER 2016

- DOCTOR WHO: ABSOLUTE POWER (219, Sixth Doctor and Constance)
- DOCTOR WHO: QUICKSILVER (220, Sixth Doctor, Constance and Flip)
- THE NEW COUNTER-MEASURES: SERIES 1
- DOCTOR WHO: SHORT TRIPS: THE HESITATION DEVIATION (6.12, Seventh Doctor, Bernice Summerfield, Download only)
- DOCTOR WHO – THE NOVEL ADAPTATIONS: ORIGINAL SIN (Seventh Doctor, Roz, Chris)
- DOCTOR WHO – THE NOVEL ADAPTATIONS: COLD FUSION (Fifth Doctor, Adric, Tegan, Nyssa, Seven Doctor, Roz and Chris)
- DOCTOR WHO: THE EARLY ADVENTURES: THE SONTARANS (3.4, First Doctor, Steven, Sara)
- DARK SHADOWS: HAUNTING MEMORIES

- DAN DARE: THE AUDIO ADVENTURES: VOLUME ONE (Box Set)

JANUARY 2017

- DOCTOR WHO: THE STAR MEN (221, Fifth Doctor, Adric, Tegan and Nyssa)
- DOCTOR WHO – FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: THE BEAST OF KRAVENOS (6.1 Fourth Doctor, Romana II, K9, Jago & Litefoot)
- DOCTOR WHO: SHORT TRIPS: THE WORLD BEYOND THE TREES (7.01, Eighth Doctor and Liv Chenka, Download only)
- DOCTOR WHO – THE DIARY OF RIVER SONG: SERIES 02 (Box Set, River Song, Sixth Doctor, Seventh Doctor)
- GRACELESS: SERIES 4 (Box Set)
- THE PRISONER VOLUME 02 (Box Set)
- THE AVENGERS – THE LOST EPISODES: VOLUME 07 (Box Set)

FEBRUARY 2017

- DOCTOR WHO: THE CONTINGENCY CLUB (222, Fifth Doctor, Adric, Tegan and Nyssa)
- DOCTOR WHO – FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: THE ETERNAL BATTLE (6.2 Fourth Doctor, Romana II and K9)
- DOCTOR WHO – NEW SERIES: THE WAR DOCTOR VOLUME 4 (4, War Doctor, Leela)
- DOCTOR WHO: SHORT TRIPS: GARDENERS' WORLDS (7.02, The Third Doctor and Jo Grant, Download only)
- DAN DARE: THE AUDIO ADVENTURES: VOLUME TWO (Box Set)

MARCH 2017

- DOCTOR WHO: ZALTYZ (223, Fifth Doctor, Adric, Tegan and Nyssa)
- DOCTOR WHO – FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES: THE SILENT SCREAM (6.3 Fourth Doctor, Romana II and K9)
- DOCTOR WHO: SHORT TRIPS: HOW TO WIN PLANETS AND INFLUENCE PEOPLE (7.03, The Fourth Doctor, Sarah, Harry and the Monk, Download only)
- DOCTOR WHO: DOOM COALITION 4
- CHARLOTTE POLLARD: SERIES 02 (Box Set)
- TORCHWOOD: VISITING HOURS (3.01)
- THE OMEGA FACTOR: SERIES 2

APRIL 2017

- DOCTOR WHO – SPECIAL RELEASES SPARE PARTS (LIMITED VINYL EDITION) (Fifth Doctor and Nyssa)

- DOCTOR WHO – PHILIP HINCHCLIFFE PRESENTS: THE HELM OF AWE
- DOCTOR WHO – SHORT TRIPS: FLASHPOINT (7.04, The Eighth Doctor, Lucie Miller, Download only)
- DOCTOR WHO – MAIN RANGE: TBA (224, TBA)
- DOCTOR WHO – FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES DETHRAS (6.4, Fourth Doctor and Romana II)
- TORCHWOOD: THE DOLLHOUSE (3.02)

MAY 2017

- DOCTOR WHO – SHORT TRIPS: FALLING (7.05, The First Doctor, Polly, Ben, Download only)
- DOCTOR WHO – MAIN RANGE: TBA (225, TBA)
- DOCTOR WHO – FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES THE HAUNTING OF MALKIN PLACE (6.5, Fourth Doctor and Romana II)
- UNIT – THE NEW SERIES TBA (Box Set 4, Kate Stewart and Osgood)
- TORCHWOOD: TBA (3.03)

JUNE 2017

- DOCTOR WHO – SHORT TRIPS: TBA (7.06, TBA)
- DOCTOR WHO – THE COMPANION CHRONICLES THE FIRST DOCTOR VOLUME 02 (11.0, TBA)
- DOCTOR WHO – MAIN RANGE: TBA (226, TBA)
- DOCTOR WHO – FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES SUBTERRANEAN (6.6, Fourth Doctor and Romana II)
- SURVIVORS – SERIES 6: BOX SET
- THE LIVES OF CAPTAIN JACK
- TORCHWOOD: TBA (3.04)

JULY 2017

- DOCTOR WHO – CLASSIC DOCTORS NEW MONSTERS: VOLUME TWO (Box Set)
- TORCHWOOD: TBA (17, TBA)
- DOCTOR WHO – SHORT TRIPS: TBA (7.07, TBA)
- DOCTOR WHO – MAIN RANGE: TBA (227, TBA)
- DOCTOR WHO – FOURTH DOCTOR ADVENTURES THE MOVELLAN GRAVE (6.7, Fourth Doctor and Romana II)
- TORCHWOOD: TBA (3.05)

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