



# CELESTIAL TOYROOM





# EDITORIAL

## By Alan Stevens

"We are the pure and chosen few,  
And all the rest are damned.  
There's room enough in Hell for you,  
We don't want Heaven crammed."

Nevertheless, there is a great deal crammed into this latest heavenly edition of Celestial Toyroom!

Ian Millsted kicks things off with his investigation into the work Barry Letts and Terrance Dicks undertook for the BBC's Classic Serials, while Fiona Moore and I grapple with classical mythology as we enter the lost city of Atlantis.

Dale Smith and Ann Worrall take pot shots at a persistent myth about a classic monster, before Jez Strickley goes all 'meta' with the

### Celestial Toyroom issue 520/1

Published by the

#### Doctor Who Appreciation Society

Honorary President: Colin Baker

This issue edited by Alan Stevens

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suggestion that *Doctor Who* might be a fiction after all!

We are brought back to Earth by accomplished Dalek builder John Darley who examines, in some detail, what makes for a classic silhouette, before Steve Everitt shows off his True Paradigm. Tom Connor then takes us on a tour of his refurbishment workshop, in addition to contributing the Black Dalek Supreme and glowing Time Destructor for cover artist Andy Lambert's wonderful reimagining of *The Daleks' Master Plan* for a twenty-first century audience!

Continuing with this theme of 'fan endeavour', Dylan Rees uses his expertise to tabulate the top ten past releases from BBV, I provide a no holds-barred account of the making of Magic Bullet's *Kaldor City*, and Mary Milton gives us the inside scoop on the *Leisure Hive* and *Honeycomb* shindigs in Swindon.

Finally, I have, as usual, to convey my gratitude to JL Fletcher for his amazing postcard of *The Time Monster*, and also extend my appreciation to Marie Carter, Alan and Alys Hayes, Jean Riddler, and Jonathan Strawbridge for their convention photos and Laurence Hallam, Warren Lewis, Mark Oliver and Ian Pritchard for their assistance in obtaining high-resolution images of various cover designs.

On a personal note, I was saddened to learn, recently, that my friend, the talented Andy Hopkinson, who provided artwork for both *Kaldor City* and *The True History of Faction Paradox* CD series, plus a number of photographs for this CT, has passed away. Rest well, Andy. ▲



## CLASSIC SERIALS WITH BARRY AND TERRANCE

### By Ian Millsted

Terrance Dicks once commented that nobody ever asked him about his and Barry Letts' work on the BBC One Classic Serial. If true, then that is our shame and our loss: there is a lot in them to interest those who also enjoyed the pair's work on *Doctor Who*. The adaptations were often ambitious, sometimes definitive, and their credits included the names of many *Doctor Who* alumni.



The Classic Serials we are talking about here were all distinct adaptations of well-known literary masterpieces, aimed at a family audience, and usually broadcast in roughly thirty-minute episodes on Sunday evenings (or late afternoons). They should not be confused with the longer-format adaptations the BBC also ran for a more adult viewership elsewhere in the schedules (although, apart from a few notable exceptions, most of those contained nothing much to trouble a family audience). Whilst the Sunday teatime serial had been a staple of BBC television since the 1950s, the period I am examining involves the years from 1976 to 1988 when Barry Letts and Terrance Dicks, either individually or together, took control.

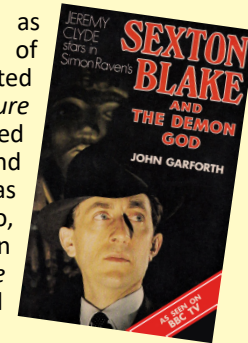
Barry Letts succeeded John McRae, who had been the producer for the Classic Serial since 1970. Letts had directed *The Prince and the Pauper* for McRae at the beginning of 1976. Upon replacing him, he would follow his predecessor's desire to expand the remit. Aside from adapting obvious children's

classics such as *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1971) and *Ballet Shoes* (1975), McRae had also authorised serials with North American settings like *Anne of Green Gables* (1972) and some which were more complex or adult such as *The Moonstone* (1972).

However Letts began cautiously, his productions of *Lorna Doone* (1976), *Little Lord Fauntleroy* (1976) and *Nicholas Nickleby* (1977) playing to the BBC's strengths of period costuming and sets, and using casts and crews who knew how to make those dramas work. An added bonus (whether it was Letts' decision or someone else's) was the presence of Carl Davis, who composed occasional scores from *Lorna Doone* onwards. Davis' music really enhances those productions on which he was employed.

Soon, Letts, as well as broadening the range of possible adaptations, started to vary their format. *Treasure Island* (1977) was comprised of fifty-minute episodes, and this expanded setup was occasionally repeated. Also, in 1978, with his production of *Sexton Blake and the Demon God*, Letts showed that he wasn't afraid to commission surprising material. Not only was *Sexton Blake* outside the usual canon of children's and family classics, but there had been a series about the character on the rival ITV network only a few years previously (1967 to 1971). Further experimentation followed with a live-action adaptation of *Pinocchio* (1978). Not all these endeavors worked, and for me, the actors in animal masks mark this one down, although the main puppet character is very well done.

With any long running strand like this, there will be comparative successes and failures.



*The Swish of the Curtain* (1980) was a fun serialisation of a now, largely forgotten book, while 1981's *Sense and Sensibility* was too insipid, and compares unfavourably with more recent versions.

In 1981 Letts was joined by Terrance Dicks in his familiar role of script editor, taking over from Alistair Bell who had been doing the job since 1969. The reunion marked the start of a particularly strong period for the Classic Serial. As well as solid Dickens' tales with *Great Expectations* (1981) and the less frequently serialised *Dombey and Son* (1983), there was Tom Baker as Sherlock Holmes in *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (1982) and director Douglas Camfield's achievement of his long term goal of bringing *Beau Geste* (1983) to the small screen.



Baker as Holmes was less successful than might have been expected. A contemporary review noted that Baker sounded right but looked wrong, while Terence Rigby's Watson looked right but sounded wrong. Perhaps so, but after a slightly stagey first episode, it settles down into a fairly atmospheric adaptation, and also features Caroline John's return to TV after a career break.

The Camfield directed realisation of *Beau Geste* is the most complete interpretation I've seen out of the many that have been made over the years. The 1939 film is excellent, but takes liberties with the story, as does the 1966 version starring Telly Savalas (in great form as a sadistic sergeant). Camfield retains the mystery plotline while achieving wonders in conjuring the desert fort setting out of a sand pit in Dorset.

Alexander Baron and James Andrew Hall were the two most frequently commissioned writers through the Letts/Dicks era, and Baron was responsible for a fine version of *Jane Eyre* (1983) which managed to attract Timothy Dalton to play Rochester, as well as featuring Mary Tamm in a couple of episodes.

For those of you who like playing spot the *Doctor Who* actor: in addition to Caroline



John and Mary Tamm, there are appearances by Anthony Ainley (*Nicholas Nickleby*); Elisabeth Sladen (*Gulliver in Lilliput* and *Alice in Wonderland*); Mark Strickson (*David Copperfield*); Michael Craze (*The Diary of Anne Frank*) — not forgetting Patrick Troughton, who is in both *Lorna Doone* and *Treasure Island*. I should further mention, for completists, that *Doctor Who* and the *Daleks'* Jennie Linden features in *Little Lord Fauntleroy*. There are also faces familiar from other genre TV and films popping up when least expected: Glynis Barber appears in *The History of Mr Polly* (1980) while Paul Darrow is in *Dombey and Son*. Fans of Hammer films should look out for Michael Ripper and Madeline Smith in *The Pickwick Papers* (1985). And I've not even mentioned the likes of Michael Wisher, Julian Glover or Michael Sheard. Note also that *The Legend of King Arthur* (1979) which was not produced by Letts, but went out in the Sunday classic's slot, featured Maureen O'Brien as Morgan le Fay.



A rare venture into classic works of science fiction did arouse some concern. The 1984 version of *The Invisible Man* was deemed too scary for the teatime slot, and went out instead at 8:30 pm on a weekday. Viewed now, this impression is created more by the unsympathetic nature of the main character, who displays little

humour to balanced the portrayal. The special effects are very good.

Letts retired from producing the serials in 1985 and Dicks took over. Under his leadership, the technical side of the productions became ever more polished. Dicks cast the net wide again with a couple of Josephine Tey stories. There were also impressive serialisations of *David Copperfield* (1986) and *Vanity Fair* (1987).

Yet, just as the writing was on the wall for *Doctor Who* in 1989, so the Classic Serial also faced the axe. *The Franchise Affair* in 1988 was the last production from Terrance Dicks. There were other hands that dabbled with late afternoon Sunday serials, including those of Paul Stone, who produced various Narnia stories between 1988 and 1990, and a pre-*Downton Abbey*, Julian Fellowes, the adapter of the 1995 *Little Lord Fauntleroy* and 1996 *The Prince and the Pauper*. But the times when classic serials ran in sequence for up to six months were gone.

Lazy journalists, and even some industry professionals, have tended to portray the Classic Serial as old fashioned, safe, and cosy. How interesting then, that, when the BBC were looking for a way to make classic literary adaptations more relevant for a modern audience, they made the 2005 version of *Bleak House* in half hour episodes for a pre-watershed audience. Barry, Terrance and others were doing that twenty plus years earlier. They also took more risks than they are given credit for and achieved more hits than misses.



Quite a few of the above-mentioned serials are available on DVD, although far from all. *The Hound of the Baskerville* can only be obtained as a German import. It will be instructive to monitor which, if any, of these find their way onto Britbox (which I don't have yet, anyway). As ever, the BBC seems unwilling to release much of its back

catalogue. Just the same, I'd recommend *Beau Geste* as a starting point.

Finally, because *Doctor Who* fans love a checklist, here are the complete Classic Serials of Messrs Letts and Dicks.

#### Barry Letts as producer

*Lorna Doone* (1976)  
*Katy* (1976) — adapting both *What Katy Did* and *What Katy Did Next*  
*Little Lord Fauntleroy* (1976)  
*Nicholas Nickleby* (1977)  
*Treasure Island* (1977)  
*The Children of the New Forest* (1977)  
*Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm* (1978)  
*Sexton Blake and the Demon God* (1978)  
*Pinocchio* (1978)  
*The Mill on the Floss* (1978/79)  
*The Old Curiosity Shop* (1979/80)  
*The History of Mr Polly* (1980)  
*The Swish of the Curtain* (1980)  
*A Tale of Two Cities* (1980)  
*The Talisman* (1980/81)  
*Sense and Sensibility* (1981)

#### Barry Letts as producer with Terrance Dicks as script editor

*Great Expectations* (1981)  
*Gulliver in Lilliput* (1982) — actually produced by Ron Craddock, presumably to allow Letts to write and direct.  
*Stalky and Co* (1982)  
*The Hound of the Baskervilles* (1982)  
*Beau Geste* (1982)  
*Dombey and Son* (1983)  
*Jane Eyre* (1983)  
*Goodby Mr Chips* (1984)  
*The Invisible Man* (1984)  
*The Prisoner of Zenda* (1984)  
*The Pickwick Papers* (1985)

#### Terrance Dicks as producer

*Oliver Twist* (1985)  
*Alice in Wonderland* (1986) — Letts wrote and directed  
*Brat Farrar* (1986)  
*David Copperfield* (1986) — Letts directed  
*The Diary of Anne Frank* (1987)  
*Vanity Fair* (1987)  
*The Franchise Affair* (1988) ▲



# COOL THINGS: THE TIME MONSTER

By Fiona Moore and Alan Stevens

30 Stupid Things about The Time Monster  
(and 20 Cool Ones)

(But we're not telling you which is which)  
(We're expecting you to work that out for yourselves)

1. The adventure is sold as part of a box set along with *The Horns of Nimon* and *Underworld*. There's a tenuous link here through mythology, but, in truth, they don't exactly amount to a distinguished company.

2. Somewhat surprisingly, Barry Letts was heavily involved with conceiving and writing this serial. As the producer and a frequent director on the programme, you'd think he'd have some idea of what one can convincingly achieve on the average six-part *Doctor Who* story budget. Apparently not.

3. In *The Mind of Evil*, the Master's worst nightmare is the Doctor towering over him and laughing, and in *The Time Monster*, the Doctor's worst nightmare is the Master towering over him and laughing.

4. The dream is actually an unusual way to begin the tale. However, it doesn't really have much to do with anything else, and appears to come in as a holdover from *The Mind of Evil*.



5. There is also an implication that the dream comes from the Master, and yet surely it's a bad idea to provide your enemy with clues as to what you're getting up to?

6. Although it does make one speculate whether the inspiration for the opening of *The Deadly Assassin*, in which the Master

sends the Doctor a precognitive vision of the President's assassination, actually originated here.

7. And considering how the recursive 'Tardis within a Tardis' idea from Episode Four is reused in *Logopolis*, localised time disturbances turn up again during both *Invasion of the Dinosaurs* and *City of Death*, and interstitial time resurfaces in *Battlefield*, this serial has been more influential than its reputation suggests.

8. The Doctor takes a teacup from Jo, holds it for a moment, then hands it back to her, saying, "Thank you. I enjoyed that." Did he drink the tea through osmosis?



9. The Master's actually less of a dick to Doctor Ingram than is Stuart.

10. Especially since Stuart is the lowest ranked member of the research team, apparently lacking even a PhD. Would he really be making cheeky quips to a male researcher and addressing them as "love"?



11. On the one hand, the Barry Letts' team do deserve some credit for trying to understand the feminist movement, despite it all being rather alien to them. On the other hand, they're as subtle as a brick about it.

12. This particular Thing is dedicated to everyone who complains that present-day

*Doctor Who* is too full of heavy-handed politically-correct messaging.

13. As for that, there's an unexpectedly subtle, feminist message in Episode Three, when the Doctor, with his usual casual high-handedness, orders Stuart, rather than either of the women in the room, to make the tea, and he obeys without question.



Benton just to "stand there and look pretty."

15. "Thera? Means nothing to me." Unfortunately neither Mike nor Jo suggests to the Doctor that he could theorise.

16. Despite all the references to Venusian martial arts, Venusian lullabies, Venusian miles, Venusian feet, and Venusian proverbs in the Pertwee Era, he never actually goes anywhere near Venus.

17. A laboratory for a machine that emits such dangerous radiation that the operator needs to dress in protective clothing — and yet it has unsealed outward-facing windows, and a wooden door that Stuart carelessly allows to swing back open when he rushes out to assist, and then cheer, with Ruth about their success.

18. Why did the window-cleaner fall off the ladder, anyway?

19. And apparently lie on the ground until UNIT turned up? Aside from the Master, did nobody in the college see him fall? Did nobody walk across campus and find the body? Is this the least populated college in Cambridge?

20. Jo doesn't go through Bessie's windshield because Bessie's brakes work through the absorption of inertia. No boring seatbelts for the Third Doctor, oh no.

21. You'd think that yelling, "Come, Kronos, come!" might be a bit of a giveaway to UNIT that Professor Thascales is, if not the Master, at least sufficiently unhinged to warrant more investigation.

22. And why does he arrange for all those people to turn up and watch him demonstrate the machine, scream, "Come, Kronos, come!", and then run away?



23. Ian Collier's old-person makeup is actually really quite good.

24. To judge by the poster in his flat, Stuart is an Elton John fan.

25. The infotext points out that Greek for 'master' is actually 'daskalos', meaning that both the Doctor and Jo assume that Thascales means 'master' because he is in fact the Master, and if you think about it too long your head hurts.

26. Considering that the British establishment of the 1970s were generally quite literate in Latin and Greek, the Delgado Master often sailed stupidly close to the wind in his choices of aliases.



27. Yet again, the Master's into his cigars. Well, he can always regenerate a new pair of lungs.

28. Krasis shouts "At last, Kronos, the time is come, and I await your call!" Followed by the lab telephone ringing.

29. Between the window-cleaner and Stuart, the Cambridgeshire ambulance service are having a hell of a day.

30. "Nobody, and nothing, can stop me now!" Is this a deliberate reference to *The Underwater Menace*, the other Atlantis-set *Doctor Who* adventure?



31. It doesn't say much for the Doctor, that the man who is his nemesis — the Moriarty to his Holmes — is such an airhead.



32. It's a good thing they're able to fix Stuart's condition, as there's no way he's going to be able to qualify for an old-age pension; he'll only have made a couple of National Insurance payments at most.

33. "Doctor, I must insist. What are you up to?" "Delaying tactics, Brigadier. We're only halfway through Episode Three."

34. Speaking of delaying tactics, most of Episode Four involves the Master watching the Doctor Master-baiting. No, really.



35. Krasis appears in dramatic circumstances, but after that, dwindles into a replacement for Dr Percival, just so the Master has someone he can talk at.

36. You could argue that the reason the Master is throwing the knight and the roundheads at the convoy is to keep it at the exact same spot where a doodlebug crashed during 1944 — but even by the Master's standards, that's a lot of effort for very little payoff.

37. How is the Master able to see any of that on his little viewscreen? Does he have a camera crew stationed in the woods outside Cambridge?

38. Kudos to director Paul Barnard for coming up with the idea of dressing the Chronovore in white, and so cause the camera to flare, as this takes some of the curse off the fact that it's, fairly obviously, not a weird, time-eating



creature that emerges from a crystal, but a supporting artist on a Kirby wire.

39. The infotext on the DVD points out that some of the Doctor's subconscious voices are female. Although the infotext goes on to link this with Jungian ideas of the animus and anima, with hindsight, this might actually be another future development that *The Time Monster* anticipated.



40. Though the Doctor begins his crypto-Buddhist story with "When I was a little boy..." So the earliest incarnation he remembers at that point, identified as male.

41. King Dalios, in Episode Five, is out-acted by a Burmese cat. Mind you, the same can be said of the entire Atlantean cast.

42. We'd like to point out that, if the designers were going for authentically Cretan costumes, then both Ingrid Pitt and Katy Manning should be getting their tits out. No reason, we'd just like to...

43. When the Master's Tardis materialises, why do the Atlanteans track its sound across the set from stage right to stage left? It's not flying in, it's just appearing on the spot.

44. It's perhaps inevitable that, in a tale about magic crystals, one of the characters is a Hippies. Oh, please yourselves...

45. The actual Minotaur legend involves a Minoan queen who, after having an affair, gives birth to a bull-headed monster. Considering what Galleia is apparently up to with the Master at the same time as Dalios is providing us with the Minotaur's in-story origin, it's a missed trick that they didn't keep to the original version.



46. The actual Minotaur legend was also probably inspired by bull-leaping, a ritualised Cretan sport arguably similar to present-day bullfighting; a practice which inspired script writer Robert Sloman to include the Minotaur sequence in *The Time Monster*. There's a pleasing circularity to that.

47. "The set falls down" is a candidate for the best stage direction in the series' history.

48. Why does the Master have a pair of police handcuffs in his Tardis? Don't answer that.



49. It's not just the middle episodes that are over-padded; the finale is so dragged out that one suspects the characters aren't so much on the "threshold of being", as the threshold of boredom.

50. This obsession the Master has with taking over the universe... What would he do with it? ▲

## THE LESSER EVIL OF THE DALEKS

By Dale Smith and Ann Worrall

When you're a *Doctor Who* fan, there are things that you just 'know'. There are little factoids that separate us from the Not We: like the fact that the expression "Not We" comes from the story *Kinda*, or that it is illegal — actually illegal — to use the name "Yartek" without his full honorific "Leader of the Alien Voord". Or that the Daleks are actually Nazis.

Yes, definitely that last one.

Thinking you know something however, is not the same as being factually correct. And when it comes to the Daleks, there is considerable room for debate.



The show itself has never been particularly shy about the parallels. In their first story, the Dalek credo is explained as "a dislike of the unlike", and their response to anything that falls into this category is "Exterminate!" — something which would have seemed very uncomfortable to an audience only twenty years away from the first discovery of the Majdanek death camp. All evidence which,

on first reading, unequivocally links them to the Nazi policy of the "Final Solution". Even Terry Nation claimed that he'd borrowed the word 'exterminate' from the Nazis, didn't he?

Ah, but if we look closer, we discover that during that first television appearance, the Daleks only refer to the act of extermination. This is also the case with Terry Nation's original draft scripts for *The Dalek Invasion on Earth*, where the word is used once. Further, their signature cry of "Exterminate", doesn't appear at all in *The Curse of the Daleks* stage play; Nation's submitted scripts for *The Daleks' Master Plan*; his unproduced spin-off pilot, *The Destroyers*; the 1960s Dalek annuals: and only on a single occasion during the TV Century 21 comic strip. The word is more frequently used in Nation's first draft scripts of *The Chase*, but in the teleplay a number of those exhortations were contributed by the story editor and the director. Consequently, "Exterminate" was a catchphrase that developed over time, and this would suggest that the link between 'Exterminate' and 'Ausrotten' (the equivalent German word) was not directly in Nation's mind during the 1960s.



It's worth noting that a Dalek does say "The Final Solution" during episode six of *The Dalek Invasion of Earth*, but again, this was added during the recording and doesn't appear in Nation's original draft, or the camera script.

Conversely, *The Dalek Book*, *The Dalek World*, and *The Dalek Outer Space Book* all contain references to World War Two, whether it's in relation to the political manoeuvrings during the 1930s, or the economic and military concerns that arose for the Germans during the conflict and its immediate aftermath. Indeed, when you watch any random scene from *The Dalek Invasion of Earth* or *Genesis of the Daleks*, it's hard not to conclude that the Daleks and the Nazis have a great deal in common. Which is why it comes as something of a surprise to discover that Terry Nation had to be convinced about the link, implying in a 1988 interview that the connection wasn't made until he began work on their aforementioned origin story in late 1973. "If you look at *Genesis of the Daleks*, the uniforms, the Elite — all those things seem to have echoes of what the Nazi regime was like. I was tremendously influenced by that. I would have said that was in the script, but I won't swear to it."

conflate the terms 'fascist' and 'Nazi': Nation probably saw — and wrote — the Daleks as fascist. But even that doesn't really explain it. Fascism is a political belief that the only true progress comes with a leader who has complete and unquestioned control. However it wasn't until 1967's *The Evil of the Daleks*, that they were observed, onscreen, to have an actual 'Führer' — in an adventure written by David Whitaker. And as much as the Golden Emperor of the Daleks features in the Nation/Whitaker scripted annuals and TV Century 21 comic strip, Nation was averse to the idea, having the Daleks in his television stories led by a "Supreme Council" (something that was originally mentioned in his draft for *The Dalek Invasion of Earth*, albeit missing from the camera script). Even Davros, eventually introduced as the leader of the Daleks, has been shown to lack complete and unquestioned control of his creations. While the Daleks are totalistic, instead of a

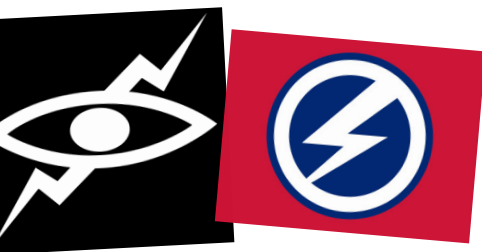


single leader, they see their whole species as being the undisputed power in the universe. To the Daleks, the only really important life is Dalek life. Everything else is to be judged on a sliding scale of how useful it is to the Daleks at any given moment.

Nevertheless, compare that to the stories the Nazis told about themselves, and it is impossible not to hear the echo:

"A better way to encapsulate the National Socialist ethos was through the slogan over the entrance at Buchenwald: 'To each his due' (Jedem das Seine). As a concept of justice, this meant that Germans and their closest racial cousins deserved moral respect... and that 'lesser' peoples could not claim any such protection."

Brian A Smith, *The Nazis Aren't Who We Think They Are*.



He was right to be cautious. A perusal of the camera script reveals that there are no details given about uniforms, armbands, or saluting, which strongly suggests that these additions came from the director David Maloney and costume designer Barbara Kidd. Furthermore, the uniforms and insignia of the Kaled Elite are modelled on the British Union of Fascists, not the Nazis.

It's possible also to categorise his blindness as a symptom of our modern tendency to

Yet, even here, we must be cautious about accepting this at face value. We know for example, that the Waffen-SS was a multi-ethnic paramilitary organisation, clearly demonstrating that, when the need arose, the Nazis were more than capable of relaxing their ideological rules concerning racial purity. In a similar way, this holds for *Revelation of the Daleks*, where we find the denizens of Skaro willing to accept Davros' human Daleks into their ranks. Indeed, during *Resurrection of the Daleks*, they are even prepared to allow Davros to change their genetic structure in order to beat a virus that is killing them. Consequently, it is probable that the 'racial' conflict in *Remembrance of the Daleks* was simply a struggle for power between Davros and the Dalek Supreme, and only identified by Ace as a "war to the death" over "chromosomes", because of her own, racist mindset.



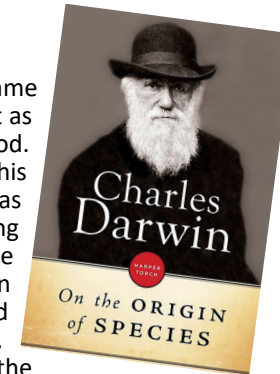
In addition, Nazi and Daleks may have similar thoughts concerning 'racial hygiene', but there is still a major difference: the former believed their bloodline derived from a fictitious 'pure' Teutonic race, whereas the Daleks never considered their progenitors to be anything other than "inferior creatures".

You might claim that we can find a clearer parallel in the ways both the Daleks and the Nazi embraced the ideology of eugenics. In *Bad Wolf/The Partying of the Ways*, the Daleks used scientific genetic engineering to sift out the one human cell in a billion that was worthy of being transformed into Dalek, whilst the Nazis employed murder and sterilisation to remove those they deemed unworthy from the gene pool.

There is, however, an important detail to remember about eugenics — it wasn't a Nazi invention.

Eugenics, like *Doctor Who*, was born in Britain. Darwin rushed *On the Origin of Species* into publication, and the law of nature

it enshrined quickly became inarguable. But it wasn't as equally well understood. Almost immediately, his assertion that life was forever blindly evolving into new forms, some more successful than others, became diluted by human prejudice, the result being the construction of a perceived hierarchy in nature — the survival of the fittest. This postulated that the varieties of life that died out were of lesser worth than those that survived, and that nature was selecting with an endpoint in mind: the human race.



Homo Sapiens, therefore, represented the pinnacle of life, because humans had power and dominance over the animals: and, as a corollary, it must also, then, be true that rich, white men had been selected as the pinnacle of humanity because they had power and dominance over the poor and 'not white'. This was Social Darwinism; a theory which dressed itself in the clothes of scientific rigour and authority, although it was not science at all. It completely ignored the overwhelming message of the scientific data Darwin had collected; that life persisted and succeeded only through genetic diversity. Instead it theorised that to be white, rich and British was the peak of evolutionary advances, and invented the data to support it.

Social Darwinism infested Victorian Britain, but only because it developed as a way of confirming the prejudice already in existence: that the Victorian gentleman "deserved moral respect... and that 'lesser' peoples could not claim any such protection". It was applied to the perceived natural hierarchies of class and race, but in practice race and class were deeply intertwined. Author and historian, Sir David Cannadine, quotes an argument between the future King Edward VII and the future Kaiser about whether King Kalākaua of Hawaii outranked the Crown Prince, as evidence that class was more important to the Empire than race. While Edward's insistence that "the brute is a





king” could be seen as proof that class could win out over race, it actually shows that a sovereign was regarded as merely a barbarian if his skin was the wrong colour: that it was

always assumed that members of other races were of a lower class, and even their Monarch needed white men to endorse their unexpectedly higher status. The veneer of scientific validity that Social Darwinism gave to British racism meant that it was quickly adopted as ‘fact’. It was the pretext for the slave trade that made Britain rich, and the bedrock of the great mission to ‘civilise’ the world that was the British Empire.

This deplorable theory was taken one step further by Charles Darwin’s half-cousin, the Birmingham-born Francis Galton. If rich white men dominated society because of some innate genetic advantage, then surely it would be in everybody’s interest to cultivate that asset? His thinking led him to invent the ‘science’ of eugenics, suggesting that ‘good’ people should be encouraged to breed, and the ‘bad’ discouraged. The inherent prejudices involved in deciding what constituted a ‘good’ or a ‘bad’ person meant this was an idea that appealed to the worst impulses in humanity. For example, eugenics legitimised a dislike of poor people because it claimed they lacked resources through some inner defect, and that anything you did to help them was pointless if it didn’t also take them out of the gene pool.

In a world riddled with anti-semitism, eugenics claimed to be both the explanation and the solution. It spread across the world, talked about seriously and without revulsion

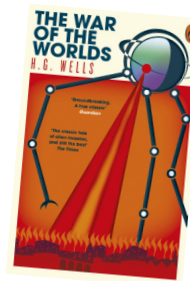
at the highest levels of scientific communities and government. Churchill wrote in 1910 of his belief that those incapable of looking after themselves through mental illness should be sterilised for the good of the race, and in a 1911

speech to the House of Commons, he urged the introduction of forced labour camps and transportation for “mental defectives”, “tramps and wastrels”, and the “feeble-minded”. It wasn’t Nazi science that inspired Adolf Hitler to develop his plan for Europe’s Jewish population; it was a book called *The Passing of the Great Race*, by American eugenic Madison Grant.

So why do Nazis pop up so frequently in British popular culture that we are quick to see them in creations such as the Daleks?

We are familiar with the idea that fighting Nazis enables the British to relive the nation’s greatest triumph — that possibly unequalled moment where we were on the right side in war, and our tenacious spirit saw us fight back from Defeat at Dunkirk to Victory in Europe. But there is another reason for the popularity of Nazi villains that doesn’t get discussed as often. To an unbiased eye, there wasn’t that much difference between the British Empire and the Third Reich. They both believed the same things about natural genetic superiority, and they both let that belief decide their actions when dealing with the ‘inferior races’. The Nazis are a dark mirror in which the British can see themselves reflected all too clearly. The discrediting of eugenics didn’t come about because intellectuals suddenly realised how unscientific it was: it happened because survivors of the Nazi death camps arrived in Britain and we observed face-to-face exactly what it looked like to be on the wrong side of the genetic line in the sand the eugenicists had drawn. The British public saw how far down the road to Nazism their nation had gone and recoiled.

Spotting the Nazi in popular culture is something we are trained to do because it offers a more bearable way of looking at ourselves. This is why the Doctor is so keen to debate whether he would be “no better than the Daleks” if he destroyed them completely, and why Davros is so keen to point to the Doctor and name him “the Destroyer of Worlds”. Science fiction has done this since its very earliest days: taking our own behaviour



and making an alien race from it, to force us to consider how justifiable our actions have been when we are the victims of something similar. It is one of the central themes of *The War of the Worlds* — to give the most famous example — and has persisted through the years.

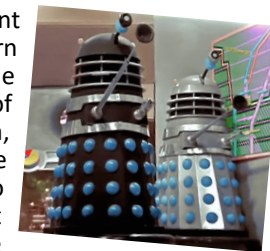
Yet there is a similar, but still distinct issue, that science fiction has reflected since its earliest days. It is a product of Empire, thriving as a genre in France, Germany and Britain just at the moment when those countries were at the height of their conquests, and, as such, colonialism is integral to its landscape; the kink in sci-fi DNA that might have given it the edge over less successful competitors. Science fiction reproduces the colonial experience time and time again, frequently looking through the eyes of the white coloniser at planets filled by others who are Not We and questioning what our reaction should be. Aliens in science fiction are the ultimate Other, and they frequently appear as proxy for the racial Others that white society sees populating our own world.

And they are not always used as an opportunity to question how we see ourselves.

Stories of aliens who invade our planet, time travel that shows history as a fixed path that leads from barbarism to science, and space operas where the inquisitive young hero learns the ancient wisdom of the natives, all share the same feature: the colonist meeting the alien and embracing, controlling or destroying it. Colonialism thrived because it distanced itself from the suffering of the colonised by claiming that because they were unlike us, they were less than human. Science fiction takes the process one step further, literally dehumanising its Others by turning them into different species. Even when science fiction critiqued colonialism, making, for instance, the aliens the colonists and humanity the natives, it still rooted itself

in discourses that did not challenge the basic system of colonialism.

*Doctor Who* is no different in this regard. It was born in the dying days of the Empire, on the cusp of the post-colonial era, and has embraced the invasion story trope so wholeheartedly that it has become a cliché second only to wobbly sets.



Which bring us to the problem of the Doctor himself: an alien Other and, therefore, a potential threat to ourselves (an idea flirted with throughout the series). By what means could his Otherness achieve heroic status? Well, the conundrum is solved in three ways: first by giving him a human companion, later by making him half-human, and most tellingly, by having him put to one side his knowledge that the human colonising impulse is destructive and siding with us. As the Doctor once confessed, “It may be irrational of me, but human beings are quite my favourite species.”

It is this partiality that leads him, in *The Ark in Space*, to celebrate the spread of humanity across the universe. During *The Invisible Enemy*, he admits he knows they are a “disease” and, “When they get together in great numbers, other lifeforms sometimes suffer.” He also agrees with the contention put forward by the Nucleus of the Swarm (an actual disease) that, “It is the right of every creature across the universe to survive, multiply and perpetuate its species. How else does the predator exist? We are all predators, Doctor. We kill, we devour, to live.” Despite this, he still pursues the Nucleus to Titan and destroys both it and its progeny with an all consuming fire, forcing us to the conclusion that, aside from any higher concern, the main reason is because “some of [his] best friends are human.”

Repeatedly, we see the Doctor facing his own prejudice against the Daleks, as his conception of them as ‘just evil and no





more' is challenged. But ultimately, the programme always pulls back from saying that

his view of them is wrong. The 'good' Daleks are killed off, have a nervous breakdown, or else agree with the Doctor that the Dalek species is uniformly evil and needs to be destroyed. Despite being unsettled, the status quo quickly rights itself. We applaud the Doctor's defeat of the Daleks because of what they represent. It's understandable. Any other approach would involve finding answers to questions that we're still reluctant to even voice in the real world: how do you move on from the history of oppression; how do you wipe away the legacy of centuries of hatred and violence; how do you forge peace from war? There are no easy answers, and it might be asking too much of a decades old TV show to provide some.

But perhaps a first step would be to admit that the Daleks aren't Nazis after all, because the Nazis aren't Nazis either. We can never properly and uniquely define the Nazis because, essentially, their methods were no different to those of the countries they were fighting: self-serving colonialists, who

de-humanised their opponents and then ruthlessly starved and murdered them for personal gain. The major divergence, and the one most shocking to the Western world, was that the Nazis' genocidal, colonialist endeavours were being conducted against white people on mainland Europe.

So maybe the reason why Nation took so long to acknowledge a similarity between the Daleks and the Nazi, was that he believed both to be cut from the cloth of human nature and history.

Or perhaps, at some level, he recognised a very real difference between the Daleks and humans, because, unlike us, they don't go around slaughtering each other. Civil wars only occur between Daleks after a "human factor" is introduced;

Davros being a prime instigator. Which leads us to the uncomfortable realisation that if we compare this against the history of the human race, then the Dalek species is, inarguably, the lesser of two evils. ▲



## RECURRING NIGHTMARES: THOUGHTS ON WORLD-BUILDING

By Jez Strickley

(From an idea by Alan Stevens)

It's a well-known convention in serial dramas, that the script writers channel the same tropes time and again, recycling them across their narratives. They can range from character flaws, settings, to wholesale plotlines. Take the BBC hospital drama *Holby City*, for instance. Here, the recurring figure of the morally ambiguous medic, who puts their career ahead of their patients' safety, is a popular motif. In detective dramas, the nighttime woodland setting, complete

with obligatory fox calls, prepares us for an impending murder. The routine Yuletide tragedies in soap operas like *Eastenders* and *Emmerdale* provide another example.

Reusing these concepts serves a number of purposes, aside from the obvious one of giving the author's imagination a rest. It may cast light on a specific theme, allowing a thread to be woven into otherwise unconnected stories. It can present audiences with something familiar, enabling them to intuit plot points, thus rendering

exposition unnecessary. Similarly, it assists incoming writers and cast and crew members to have a more immediate understanding of the programme they are making.

Yet what if these repetitions, rather than being extrinsic to the story, as part of its scaffolding, were, in fact, the products of some sort of in-universe explanation: namely, projections or delusions of the characters themselves?

What if the reality they experience is created from memory, or subconscious apprehension? This is a notion Alan Stevens draws on in his examination of Terry Nation's 1965 draft script for *The Chase* (see *The Celestial Toyroom Annual 2019*)

and the subtitle to his essay, *Perception is Everything*, nods to the eighteenth century philosopher George Berkeley, and his theory that an object cannot exist without first being perceived. Stevens argues that Terry Nation's original version of *The Chase* takes the aforementioned formulaic aspect of serial drama and repurposes it as the adventure's plotline. Had this element not been subsequently removed by the story editor, the sort of surreal elements seen in *The Celestial Toymaker* would have come to light almost a year earlier, and more than three years before the psyche-stretching *The Mind Robber*.

The challenging content of Nation's original script rests with the conceit that the past and the future, as viewed from the present, belong to our collective unconscious. In visiting the Earth's past, we encounter a fixed reality as it is understood from the standpoint of the present (fixed by the then production team's policy that documented former times cannot be altered). In contrast, the future is open to interpretation. This means that the Tardis crew has greater interpretative power in relation to the type of future they encounter than they have with the nature of the past.



As a consequence, it is possible that, when the Tardis crew visits other planets, these worlds are wholly invented constructs, whereas the past exists as it is popularly conceived, even to the point of counting fictional characters as real. When it comes to actual people, the distinction is blurred anyway, as we have no direct experience of the likes of Marco Polo or Charles Dickens, whilst literary characters such as Baron Frankenstein or Robin Hood have embedded themselves so firmly in the minds of the public that they might as well have lived. Indeed, a sizeable chunk of the world's population recognises no distinction at all. It is a hypothesis which pre-empts those adventures where the programme's reality is called into question, and even critiqued (e.g. the Celestial Toyroom, the Land of Fiction, the world of Omega, the SS Bernice in Vorg's miniscope, the Time Lords' Matrix, the city of Castrovalva, the Psychic Circus), but at the time, it seems to have proved a step too far for producer Verity Lambert and story editor Dennis Spooner, whose conservative approach to season two relied primarily on consolidation and promotion of comforting familiarity, rather than the radical or avant-garde.

Nevertheless, once observed, Nation's argument is difficult to repudiate, especially as it cuts to the very heart of formula television.

Consider as an example Clara Oswald's entrapment in a Dalek during *The Witch's Familiar*. Might this be sourced from the awful fate of her alternate self Oswin, as depicted in *Asylum of the Daleks*? Could *The Moonbase* be a case of Ben and Polly reliving the terrifying experience of *The Tenth Planet*? Maybe *Timelash* springs from Peri's deeply frightening encounters on Androzani Minor, involving monsters in cave systems, political intrigue, and a tortured villain who becomes



obsessed with her? Indeed, the overtly Freudian overtures in Peri being menaced by the phallic Morlox, can only have their origins in the unconscious mind.

The Doctor doesn't escape this theory, either. Take *Arc of Infinity*, for example. Here the Doctor is threatened with execution by an advanced civilisation, the Time Lords, whose leaders believe he is putting their world at risk. To resolve this situation, the Doctor must thwart a renegade Time Lord, Omega, who briefly takes control of a uniquely powerful technology, the Matrix, in an attempt to escape his anti-matter existence. All of these plot points are anticipated in *The Keeper of Traken* during which another advanced civilisation, the Traken Union, threatens the Doctor's life because its leaders see him as an existential threat. To put matters right, the Doctor must foil a renegade Time Lord, the Master, who briefly hijacks a uniquely powerful technology, the Source, in his endeavour to escape death and regain a fully mobile existence. These similarities surely point to the Doctor reliving his experiences on Traken through his confrontation with Omega. Given the way in which circumstances on Traken catalyse his near-fatal struggle with the Master in *Logopolis*, there is a lot here that a psychoanalyst would enjoy getting their teeth into.

The central plot point of *Doctor Who and The Silurians* — an underground group attempting to recreate the past — is repeated for *Invasion of the Dinosaurs*. With regard to the latter, we also see Sarah's experiences with the Operation Golden Age faction echoed during her stay aboard Nerva Beacon, where she is rendered unconscious only to reawaken in new clothing amongst a group of humans seeking to restart civilisation on a cleansed Earth.

Intriguingly, *Invasion of the Dinosaurs* would suggest that Sarah was not returned to her own time, but rather a near future construct. This would certainly provide the answer to the conundrum of UNIT dating, if adventures like *Mawdryn Undead* have simply been imagined.

In fact it may be argued that Sarah herself is a fiction, brought into corporal existence by the Doctor's need for a new female companion.



These examples and speculations apart, it is perfectly conceivable that Nation returned to the axiom he used in *The Chase* when writing for *Doctor Who* again during the 1970s. Might not *Planet of the Daleks*, for instance, be a nightmarish fabrication of the Doctor's unconscious mind, stemming from his very first visit to Skaro?

In *The Daleks*, the Tardis crew arrives on a desolate planet amidst a radioactive petrified forest. Their initial encounter with the Daleks sees them confined in the Daleks' city deep beneath Skaro's surface, with Ian temporarily paralysed by Dalek gunfire. Life-threatening radiation poisoning leads Susan to make a desperate journey for help and a chance meeting with a Thal. Still a prisoner of the Daleks, the Doctor engineers a crafty escape plan which centres on disabling and impersonating a Dalek (physically grappling with it in the process) and using a yawning elevator shaft to reach the surface. Later, when the Doctor encounters the Thals, he hears of their peace-seeking and ultimately doomed Thal leader, Temmosus, and meets with the more pragmatic Alydon, who is romantically attached to Dyoni. Joining forces with the Thals, the Tardis crew engage in a dangerous undertaking to penetrate the city. Finally, the Daleks are rendered immobile when their static electrical power is cut.

In *Planet of the Daleks*, the Tardis crew arrives on a seemingly deserted jungle world. An incapacitated Doctor results in Jo making a dangerous journey into the tropical forest for help and a chance meeting with a group of Thals. Later, the Doctor encounters the same Thals and discovers the pragmatic Taron, who is romantically attached to Rebec, and the bullish, war-obsessed, and ultimately doomed, Vaber. His re-encounter with the

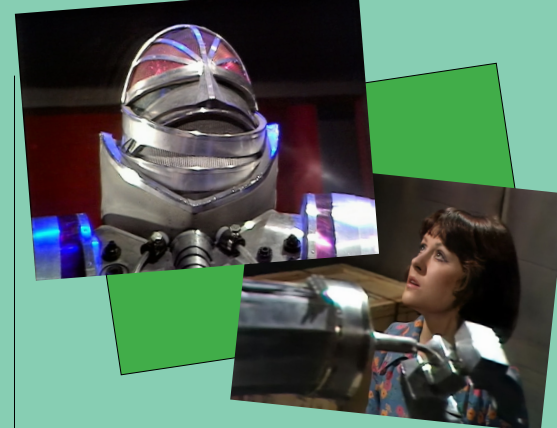
Daleks sees him temporarily paralysed by their gunfire and taken prisoner. Held within the Daleks' city, the Doctor manufactures a crafty escape plan which entails disabling a Dalek, physically grappling with it in the process, and using a vertiginous ventilator shaft to reach the surface. Joining forces with the Thals, the Tardis crew engages in a dangerous undertaking to penetrate the Daleks' city and destroy them, and in doing so the Thal Rebec impersonates a Dalek. Finally, the Dalek army is frozen into mobility by a volcanic eruption of molten ice.



Deadly plants and invisible aliens also appear in both *Planet of the Daleks* and *The Daleks' Master Plan*, although the tropes from the original Dalek serial would have been more familiar to contemporary audiences as the 1965 Amicus film remake, *Dr. Who and the Daleks*, had received its television debut the previous year.

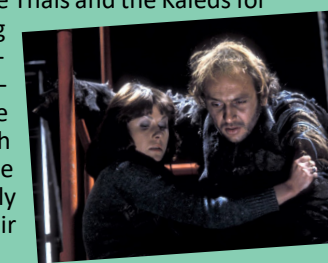
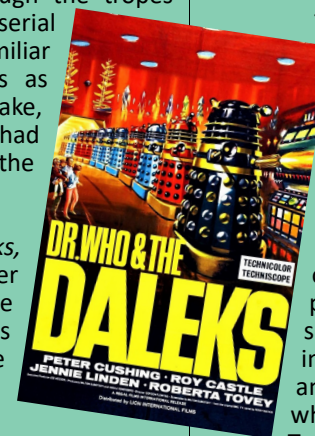
As for *Genesis of the Daleks*, this contains even stronger and more vivid evidence that Nation was recycling his earlier concept, in that the story can be read as a later manifestation of Sarah's experiences in *Robot*.

During this previous adventure, Sarah finds herself in a familiar setting but with an unfamiliar Doctor. As a result, she investigates recent strange goings on solo. She encounters the severe Hilda Winters of the Think Tank organisation and Winters' factotum Jellicoe. She also uncovers the towering K1 robot and its troubled creator, Professor Kettlewell. As events proceed, Sarah befriends the robot, and Winters is revealed to be a fascistic psychopath. Winters and Jellicoe takes shelter within a



bunker complex, protected by landmines, intent on triggering a nuclear holocaust if their demands to "reform the world on rational and scientific lines" are not met. The robot, conflicted by its programming, kills Kettlewell and then takes Sarah hostage. K1 is eventually destroyed when the Doctor throws the robot's "growth mechanism into reverse."

These experiences, reconstructed as an elaborate product of Sarah's mind, become *Genesis of the Daleks*. Here, a familiar Doctor is juxtaposed with an unfamiliar setting, where Sarah is quickly separated from her friends and must make do on her own. Amidst the wreckage of a fog-bound and war-torn planet, complete with landmines, she befriends Sevrin, a huge and imposing Muto from the wastelands, and encounters Davros, the scientist who has invented the Mark Three Travel Machine, or "Dalek". Later, she will also meet Davros' factotum, the fascist Security Commander Nyder. As events unfold, Davros and Nyder, sheltering within a bunker complex, embark upon a dual massacre of both the Thals and the Kaleds for the sake of bringing about a world — even a universe — dominated by the Daleks. Although Davros' unstable creations ultimately turn upon their





architect, the Doctor fails to eliminate the Daleks at source, and thereby throw the Daleks' history into reverse.

For Winters read Nyder, for Kettlewell read Davros. The Scientific Reform Society becomes the Kaleds' Elite scientific corps, the Brigadier and UNIT are represented by the Thal Bettan and her motley group of survivors, and the K1 robot is reconstituted as the Daleks (there are shades of the machine in Sevrin, too). Sarah nearly sees the end of the world at the hands of Hilda Winters, whereas on Skaro she does witness a post-apocalyptic planet in which the genocide of the Kaleds gives way to the genesis of the Daleks.

All of the above, of course, raises the question as to where exactly in time and space 'reality' is located?

According to Nation's draft script for The Chase, it can be found in 1966 on the observation deck of the Empire State Building "one hundred and two storeys above ground level", as this is the only point in the adventure where there is no intrinsic overlap between fact and fiction. The sudden appearance of the Tardis crew and the Daleks

is rationalised away within a framework of 'understanding' that preserves present day normality in the face of a disputed past and an unknown future.

Outside of that, the universe of *Doctor Who* is fictive; an imagined creation of human minds.

Which is, of course, true. ▲



## THE FALL AND RISE OF THE DALEK PARADIGM

By John Darley

Want to discover how a piece of *Doctor Who* concept art was re-imagined and greatly improved by a group of fans? Of course you do...

As it is, that segment of the story is still some way off, and to understand why it was attempted, and to fully appreciate the work that was done, we have to go back in time... and also return to Art and Design school.

It is not particularly controversial or inaccurate to say that the New Dalek Paradigm, while it has its fans (as does sadomasochism) is not widely regarded as a high-point in the history

of the *Doctor Who* series. This is borne out by the way it was quietly put to bed, despite the initial intention that the Paradigms would be a direct and permanent replacement for the classically-styled, bronze New Series Daleks. The one time where the production team appear to have taken heed of fan opinion!

Nonetheless, this design debacle raises certain questions:

Why didn't the re-design work?

Why is the original Dalek design so difficult to improve upon?

What is it that makes a design noteworthy?

It's complicated, but there are a few pointers.

Successful design is often both 'of its era' and something that transcends changes in fashion to remain forever relevant.

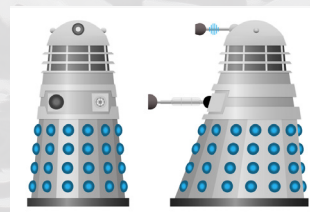


Without doubt, the original Dalek (attributed to Raymond P Cusick, yet also receiving input from his assistant Jeremy Davies, Bill Roberts of Shawcraft Models, and writer Terry Nation) falls firmly into this category. Unquestionably a product of the 1960s, it is now familiar to so many that it has attained the accolade of a 'design classic'.

A key feature of this and many other memorable productions, from the Mini to the iPhone, is a well-considered combination of form, function, and simplicity.

The archetypal Dalek is staggeringly effective in this regard, despite the fact Cusick was given a restrictively small budget with which to work. It left no scope for unnecessary adornments and affectations. The prop had to fulfil its brief in the most efficient (cheapest) way possible, and this was achieved, because of the meagre resources, not in spite of them.

In later years, this blueprint was adapted and augmented to an extent. However, the movie Daleks, 1970s Daleks, 1980s Daleks (including the Imperials), and even the bronze Daleks in the twenty-first century series, all remain faithful to that basic Dalek form and that same, characteristic profile.



The New Dalek Paradigm was the first radical departure from that established construct, and failed because it didn't follow the unwritten rules of Dalek proportion. It wasn't elegant. It wasn't beautiful.

So what are those unwritten rules?

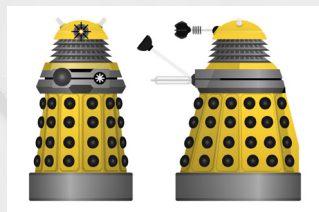
I've been drawing and making Daleks all my life. As a child, I used anything that looked even vaguely Dalek-shaped to incorporate into a model. Then as I grew up, I studied the details of the sections and their relationships with each other, and began to really understand the Dalek silhouette; one so unique it makes it easy to pick out a 'real' Dalek from, say, a group of toys that have been produced in haste, or by someone who hasn't looked closely at what the props are actually like.

All these considerations and observations came into play when I decided to build a full-size replica of my own. Back then, there were no off-the-shelf plans available, and the dimensions were either supplied from fellow builders' experiences, or worked out from accurate models and photographs. My keen eye instantly spotted even the smallest incongruities on other people's Daleks. Subconsciously, I created a list of all the major traps and pitfalls that people could fall into when they built a Dalek without careful examination. I had developed a sense of — let's call it 'Dalekness'.

Photographs of very early Dalek replicas, produced before plans were available, often depict weird creations. For the most part, they can still be identified as a Dalek (as can a salt shaker and three match sticks for that matter) but they lack the essence, the X factor, of convincing Dalekness.

There are several elements which are potentially difficult to get right, and if you don't, they are sure to betray your design as a pale facsimile of the original. The Dalek is treacherous in that respect... it will try to sway you into fabricating something that you think is there, rather than what is actually present. Herein lies the problem with the





New Dalek Paradigm. It embraces features that have always been considered schoolboy errors to Dalek lovers.

For starters, it has a hemispherical dome. Naive Dalek models often have one because it's easier to make.



Then it has gun and arm boxes which aren't recessed centrally into the shoulders. Rush-released 1960s toys, and many a kid's replica, often skipped the recessing because it is hard to achieve. The Edwin Hall Dalek ride (not know for its accuracy) also has this anomaly.

It's shape reveals some very erratic profile angles, including a hunched back. This is something that happened historically from a lack of observation or effort.



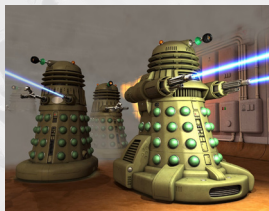
Further, the New Dalek Paradigm has a movie-style fender though the curved shaping is absent — a common failing, because people didn't scrutinise movie Dalek props accurately and so omitted it from their builds.

I could go on.

The Paradigm demonstrates little in the way of evolution, just random unjustified changes and elementary mistakes, culminating in the Dalek equivalent of a car crash. This is a great pity because it really didn't have to be that way.

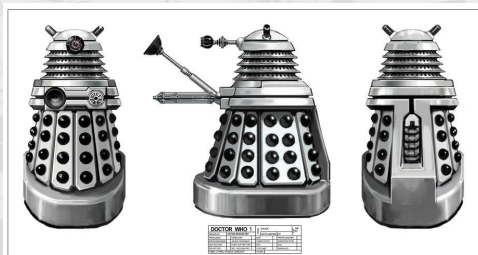
As I've noted, back in 2010 it was assumed from what happened in *Victory of the Daleks*, that the Paradigms were to be a permanent replacement for all that had come before. You can imagine how this was of some concern to myself and several other Dalek builders! So we got together to discuss the situation, and decided that we would make our own version.

Recent work by Dalek enthusiasts using Computer Generated Imagery (try Googling Mechmaster Daleks) has demonstrated what is possible when Dalek geometry is understood, evolved, and applied in a disciplined and creative manner. Their end products — a collection of unique, varied, well-designed Daleks; beautiful creations which followed the rules of proportion while adding a touch of individuality — were an achievement we were keen to emulate.



So once we were over our initial shock, we forced ourselves to examine the original concept art for the Paradigm created by Peter McKinstry, which had been released on the BBC website. The thing is... it really wasn't that bad. His approach encapsulated all the elements with which we are familiar, yet lacked the severe, hunch-backed look. His notion carried a potential which had been squandered when the idea was made a reality.

This concept art was our starting point. We were going to apply our collective years of Dalek building experience to produce a design that could still be identified as that



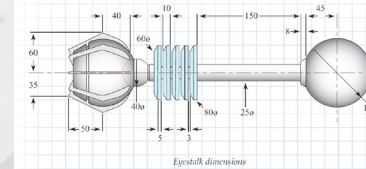
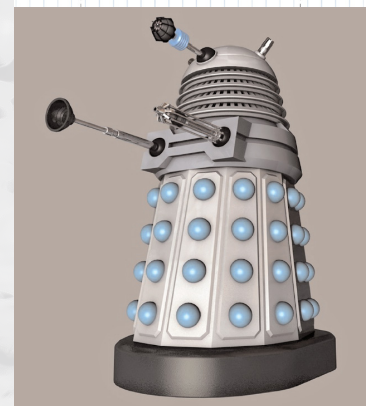
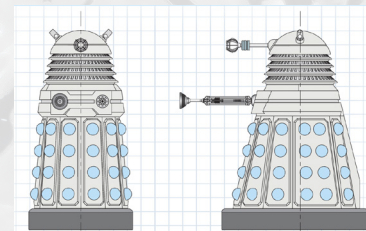
original work, but which was also compliant with the fundamental, unwritten rules of Dalekness: an identifiable silhouette, that was also elegant. When we contacted Peter McKinstry, he very generously gave us his blessing.

We named the project The True Dalek Paradigm. Amongst the team working on it was (the aforementioned) Mechmaster. His Dalek CG designs are highly regarded and his *Second Empire* online graphic novel showed us exactly how a Dalek re-design could be accomplished successfully. Having him build the CG prototypes for our True Paradigm Dalek was a no-brainer. We were in good hands.

A lengthy process of adjusting proportions and tweaking features to make them adhere more closely to the classic Dalek profile, followed.

The height of the Dalek was scaled back, allowing it to fit more comfortably alongside its forbearers. The skirt was modified, and the hemispheres reduced from a diameter of five inches to the more familiar four inches. Other elements followed suit, either re-sized, or tailored to fit within the parameters of the established Dalek profile. Dome to neck ring, to shoulder, to skirt proportions were assessed and fine-tuned until the silhouette attained the greatest amount of Dalekness we could manage.

Overall, the project took many weeks to complete, with design elements suggested, tried, and often rejected, before we eventually arrived at something we were all happy with. The CG model was then split into parts and used to generate a set of full-sized dimensions. Section layouts were created



in orthographic form, imported into the relevant software, and dimensions added to create the illustrations for the final plans.

The New Paradigm Dalek had finally evolved into The True Paradigm Dalek.

It was at this point, I was tasked with assembling all the elements into a booklet, complete with an introduction/explanation, cover art and various possible colour schemes.

We toned down the brashness of the original Paradigm props. Alongside paler, more subtle versions of the yellow and blue arrays, some combinations that harked back to earlier Dalek incarnations were then added. We now have

a silver version with pale blue hemispheres, a grey and black version, (à la *Genesis of the Daleks*) and even a bronze and gold variant. Naturally, Dalek colour schemes are entirely up to its builder/owner, but we did try to illustrate how handsome this design could look when treated with some thought.

The True Dalek Paradigm booklet was released as a free download via the *Project Dalek Forum*, where it can still be accessed to this day. At the same time, we made available the first draft of our New Dalek Paradigm construction plans. This simultaneous release was entirely intentional, done in the hope of drawing at least some New Dalek Paradigm fans towards the light.

Now, over ten years after the New Dalek Paradigm first appeared, there are a number of fan-built versions out there, constructed from those draft plans.



However, to my delight, you will discover several True Paradigm props as well; all made by fans who saw the potential of our design and embraced it.

In fact, if you're ever browsing Daleks online and happen to come across a photo of something that looks like a New Paradigm Dalek prop but is somehow



better, with a lot more 'Dalekness' about it, then the odds are that you're looking at a freshly built True Dalek Paradigm.

Take a moment to admire it and consider what can be achieved with understanding, careful observation and a little bit of effort. ▲

## My PARADIGM DALEK

By Steve Everitt

At the beginning of 2015, after enduring a life-changing event, I made a conscious decision to unshackle myself from the drudgery of employed life and pursue a lifelong dream. Consequently, I sold my house, set up an independent business, and became master of my own destiny.

In February, I opened a horror, science fiction, comic book, and memorabilia store in Coventry. Creatively named Sgt. Bilko's Vintage Emporium, as a tribute to the great Phil Silvers, it quickly flourished, and by August we were already moving into bigger premises. On 1 November, 2015 we extended the allocated floor space to launch the world's first ever Phil Silvers' Archival Museum, which has Mark Hamill's seal of approval! Yes, Luke Skywalker is an incurable Bilko fan!

For the much heralded store launch, to be covered by both national and local media, I decided the centre piece for the Emporium had to be a full size Dalek! As a longtime *Doctor Who* fan (Jon Pertwee and Tom Baker

accompanied me through my rites of passage and remain my Doctors to this day) one of Skaro's hostile, alien machine-organisms was really the only viable choice. Whatever changes to its original iconic design have been introduced throughout the show's history, the Dalek remains, to me and to many, the Doctor's most archetypal enemy.

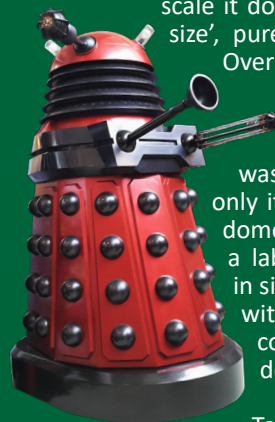
Financial budget set, my quest began! Lots of painstaking research, questions, and friendly advice from the *Who* fandom ensued, and eventually, when perusing a list of unsold items on eBay, I stumbled on what appeared to be a tidy example. A quick message to creator and owner Andy Laycock, and an equally quick reply, informed me he'd listed it numerous times only to be inundated with a flurry of what he designated Dalek "tyre kickers" and "time wasters". He was about to try and sell it for the final time, so after studying the images and listening to his fascinating back story, I decided to commit with a brave offer, which to my astonishment and delight was accepted and the deal sealed!

Andy had started the Dalek build from scratch early in 2014, choosing to focus specifically on the Paradigm version. Originally introduced as a new race by showrunner Steven Moffat and his team in 2010 during



Matt Smith's tenure as the Doctor, they had a chequered history. Although intended to replace the Time War models in *Victory of the Daleks*, audience and fan reception was, at best, lukewarm, and despite their appearances in *The Pandorica Opens/The Big Bang* and *Asylum of the Daleks*, they quickly disappeared from the series.

Nevertheless, while Andy had liked the design, he told me he was not so keen on the Paradigms' startlingly enlarged dimensions. So, plans in hand, he made the decision to scale it down to that of the 'normal size', purebred, mechanical killers!



Over the course of twelve months, his skills slowly bought his Dalek to life. Almost every part was personally crafted; the only item outsourced being the dome. The build was, in short, a labour of love. Constructed in six parts, running on castors with a beautifully carved (and comfy) seat, the attention to detail is truly impressive.

Tom Connor, the owner of Tom's Refurbishments (a hobbyist who restores full-size Dalek props) wholeheartedly endorses this, noting in a review he wrote of our establishment: "some of you will dislike the fact that the beastie is based on the New Paradigm Daleks, and some of you will notice that it doesn't fully resemble one either. In fact, its odd dimensions effectively rectify some aspects with which a majority of people disagreed, such as the 'hunch' at the back, the overall height of the prop, and its bulky proportions. This is because it has been made to a custom set of plans, available for free via the *Project Dalek Forum*. A gorgeous

machine, and a loving tribute to the marmite of the Dalek world, it is proof that they may have been liked a bit more had they'd been scaled down and finished with darker paint schemes."

Now, I'm not sure if all owners name their Daleks, but I decided my new acquisition needed an identity in time for our launch date. With little deliberation, I named him 'Terry', in tribute to Terry Nation, and he's been called Terry or Tel ever since! Name decided, my next dilemma was how to round him up, as he was then residing (and presumably wreaking havoc) in a small, sleepy village over two hundred miles away. After toying with the idea of hiring a van, but worried there might be too much excess room that could possibly cause damage in transit, I decided to use both the wife's Nissan Qashqai and my Smart car! A date was set and we set off up the M6, battling against some vicious crosswinds. I guess in hindsight we should have checked the weather forecast!



Eventually, with a sigh of relief, we arrived and were greeted by Andy with cups of tea. He pointed us to the living room door, and I cautiously creaked it open to see Terry standing there in all his motionless glory! The smallness of the room amplified Terry's bulk and menace, and I have to admit, coming face to face with a Dalek for the first time gave me quite a jolt, and a few goosebumps! Until you get to see one in the flesh you don't quite realise how foreboding and unnerving they are.

Our next step was to dismantle Terry, and try to shoehorn him into our waiting vehicles. From memory, this took the best part of an hour, as we'd seriously underestimated his size. Even when dismantled into sections,





it was a challenge. The fender, skirt (which splits into two parts) and shoulder-section (carefully wrapped in foam and blanket) were crammed snugly into the wife's car. Luckily, my Smart car is a lot like a Tardis — more room on the inside! We eventually managed to wedge the arm and gun tightly in the back, and Terry's head was placed on the passenger seat. As you can probably imagine, he got quite a few double takes from bemused drivers and members of the public. The weather was even more vicious, so we endured a white knuckle drive back to Coventry, relieved to arrive home safe, but very tired. More importantly, Terry was unscathed and, apparently, unperturbed by the whole experience.

Our Dalek took up residence in the kitchen until we could arrange transportation to the store. I had also commissioned a local artist to paint a time and space backdrop for the

main shop window to make Terry feel truly at home. The launch was a success and Andy's creation a tremendous hit with our visitors. He's still the main attraction, but he has now been joined by life-size replicas of Darth Maul, Boba Fett, BB-8, R2-D2, Scott Tracy from Gerry Anderson's *Thunderbirds*, and a snarling Sir Christopher Lee as the definitive Count Dracula, complete with blood shot eyes!

To this very day, Terry still commands attention, loved by children and feared by adults. In 2016 we fitted him with a Bluetooth speaker and amplifier, so he can now bark commands at unsuspecting visitors. The children are, mostly, genuinely enthralled, but he has upset a few and at least two adults have fled the store in fear! He's also attended two local school *Doctor Who* themed events, as well as Coventry's first Comic Con. We had more outings planned, but then the coronavirus pandemic hit. Our

current ambition is to bring Terry along to the Sons of Skaro The Gathering II when it's back on the events' calendar, in a second attempt to get together enough Daleks to break the *Guinness Book of Records* record!

We are so humbled this one-off build has been given a prestigious seal of approval from Robert Cowley's Sons of Skaro, Neil Cole's Adventure in Science Fiction: Museum of Sci-fi and the aforementioned Tom at Tom's Refurbishments!



Terry has now emerged from hibernation, following the COVID-19 lockdown, and can be viewed at the Emporium. Photo opportunities and selfies are encouraged with donations to Macmillan Cancer Support. ▲

Information regarding Sgt. Bilko's Vintage Emporium can be found at:  
[www.sgtbilkosvintageemporium.com](http://www.sgtbilkosvintageemporium.com)

## REFURBISHMENT OF THE DALEKS

By Tom Connor

I was just three years old when *Destiny of the Daleks* captured my heart. My dad had bought it on VHS a few weeks after its release in 1994 (I still have the tape) and sat me down to watch it with him. I was used to magic roundabouts with blue cats, talking tugboats, and anthropomorphic railway engines — this was something else entirely. I could not believe what I was seeing: creatures housed within armoured tanks, with haunting electronic voices, as well as the ability to illuminate you with an eye-watering, blue glow.

It was scary, and I loved it!



My fascination both with Daleks and their adversary, the Doctor, persisted throughout my years in secondary school to the extent that, in 2007, I decided to make my own *Doctor Who* episode for a video production course on which I had enrolled. My teacher, Peter Hannis, understood my passion. He suggested I contact our local branch of Waterstones about borrowing the full-size model they had as a promotion display for Product Enterprise's run of twelve-inch, remote-control, movie Daleks. Waterstones agreed to loan it to the school, then, surprisingly, gifted it to us a few months later when a regional manager raised health and safety concerns. Maybe he feared it would start exterminating his customers.

The following year I was leaving the sixth form when my Headmaster told me that, if I wanted it, the Dalek could be mine. I was delighted, although I have to admit it wasn't the greatest of models. The casing was very static — just four castor wheels fitted to the

underside — with only the eyestalk that moved. I had neither the tools, nor the know-how to begin restoring such a machine. As it was, I did my best, improvising with a voice changer from a Dalek Sec toy helmet and a little doorbell switch to operate its dome lights by means of a six volt battery. Unfortunately, the dome, along with the gun and arm, remained immobile. Later, I changed its colour scheme from its original black with silver to a *Destiny of the Daleks*-style light grey with black detail. And I had to be content with that.

My Dalek epiphany didn't arrive until 2010, when I took it to the UK Games Expo (by train, I might add) and met Richard Ashton and Raymond Hyde, two people who have since become valued friends. This was the first time I got to talk to prop owners in depth, and saw they shared my passions for these monsters, yet had the knowledge and skills to work on them. I discovered that people gave their Daleks names, and it was here that my own was christened, receiving the moniker 'Dave'.

While I was making my way home that Sunday evening, Raymond called me. He said that, despite the potential I showed as a Dalek operator, I was obviously lacking the skills to make Dave into what it could be. So, why didn't he refurbish it on my behalf?

Ten months later, Dalek Dave (now dubbed Dalek Dave Mark Three due to its third repaint) returned home, having regenerated into one of his second movie brethren — all shining silver and blue.

Dave Mark Three and I lived together in reasonable harmony (at least it didn't try to





kill me!) until March 2014 when a terrible accident occurred — one which I feared would put pay to my days as a Dalek owner. I was taking it out for a photoshoot, when the dome and neck section slid off its shoulders and smashed onto the ground. My heart sank. How was I going to repair the damage, even assuming I clear a space to work in my little one-bedroom flat? Where would I be able to source replacement parts? I honestly believed this was the end. I couldn't just call Raymond and ask him to do all of this work again, and I couldn't afford to pay him to do it either. Thankfully, it was Richard who now came to my rescue, showing me how to repair the neck, how best to work with fillers and epoxy resins, and how to sand and spray-paint. Mark Three was soon as good as new.



Around this time I was working as an apprentice for Harry Jervis, rewinding alternators and armatures and learning about lathe and milling work. Harry was to become my mentor, even though he didn't really understand my obsession with Skaro's monsters. Still, he could see I had a talent for engineering and suggested I applied it to improving Dave. He sat with me for hours, working on different methods to reverse engineer and simplify things to make Dave more accurate and efficient. One day he asked me, "What will you do when it's all finished?" — I didn't have an answer for him!

We pursued this question over the next two years, bouncing around the idea of restoring props for people as a side business, which we later developed into a very extravagant scheme to set up an entire company. It would not only upgrade props but supply replacement and kit pieces, becoming, in the process, the go-to place for people wishing to buy and sell memorabilia from all different forms of science fiction. I suppose, in a way, this was where the concept of 'Tom's Refurbishments' started to take shape, although the name we settled on for our business was the very different 'Sci-Fi Asylum'.

To our dismay, shortly after we had secured a site and registered as a limited company, a factory fire broke out overnight at Harry's other premises. Immediately, I told him that our new venture was all his, so he could rebuild his business.

As much as Harry and I were no longer partners, we still remained firm friends, frequently meeting up to share stories over a few pints at our local. While I didn't regret my decision to split with him, I found I was struggling to occupy my spare time. Then, one day, I was contacted by a local Dalek owner who needed assistance with renovating a prop he had bought online. Little did I know that this was to be the start of something much bigger.

By 2017 I had completed my first two refurbishment contracts. 'Dalek Dan', was an early 1960s 'Shawcraft' design, constructed mainly from wood, whilst the other, 'Dalek Elder' (built on late 1980s dimensions) resembled the Renegade Black Dalek from *Remembrance of the Daleks* and was made primarily from fibreglass. These couldn't have been more different from each other. It was a perfect opportunity for me to jump in at the deep end to learn as much as I was able. Both were fully sanded down, repainted, wired with different brands of voice modulators, and had different models of electric power chair units welded up to be fitted into the fenders. Dalek Dan was installed with a Rascal Turnabout powerchair, with a Dartech Voice Modulator as supplied by the client,



and Dalek Elder, a MartMod Mark Three Voice Modulator, and a Shoprider Nippy powerchair. (I recommended that particular model because of its small size and ease of use within a classic Dalek casing.)

During the time I worked on these Daleks, I was commissioned to fit lights and battery power into a replica, full-size Police Box for the Buckland family. They suggested that I set up a Facebook page with a catchy name, to post all the photos of my work. I discussed this with my wife Lauren and with Harry. They both liked the name Tom's Refurbishments, so the page was created. With Lauren and Harry's help I expanded onto other social media platforms, involving myself in discussions of engineering techniques to further develop my craft.

Sadly, Harry passed away in October 2018 at the age of 82. He had, however, instilled into me the idea that I should always follow my gut in regard to opportunities. Therefore, when I was invited by Dean Stoner, of the Sons of Skaro Dalek group, to showcase my work by joining him on his display stand at the Birmingham NEC in June 2019, I thought, "Why not. Let's do this!" I had already completed a few more Dalek refurbishment jobs and made replacement parts for other builds, nonetheless, it was after attending this event (and selling Dave Mark Three to Dean) that I was really able to accelerate my business. Soon I was stocking better quality items and offering a lot more in-house work.



Recently, I've been sent a K-9 prop and a number of sonic screwdrivers to revamp, as well as whole sections of Daleks which are shipped across the country for me to work on. As an owner myself for many years, I understand that these models become valued pieces of art, almost like family members, and I handle and treat them as I would my own collection.

When tasked with a specific request from a client, I'll happily refer the work if I think someone is better equipped to tackle it.

Nonetheless, I've never been one to turn down an engineering challenge, and it's the more obscure builds that have given me the most enjoyment. I've remodelled a Dalek to feature a unique hinged dome to resemble the prop used in *The Space Museum*. This was an unusual commission in that it had to be fully operational, retaining its dome rotation, yet with a hinge in order for the operator to stand up and poke their head out from the top of the neck section, just as William Hartnell did in that story.

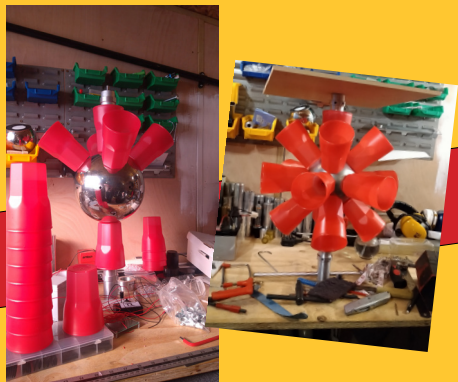


Then, Neil Cole contacted me for his Museum of Sci-fi. My brief was to make a Dalek dome and neck to withstand being outside in all weathers. This involved constructing the entire neck assembly from mild steel sheet and dowels welded up for the main cage, as well as using fibreglass neck rings, along with a dome section sourced from fellow builder Steve Allen. The arm, weapon and eyestalk were comprised mainly of aluminium tubes that I machined by hand on my lathe, counter-balanced with custom-made billets to help



them stay in place when outside. The eyestalk and gun were lit by fully insulated twelve volt light-emitting diodes, with the wires positioned in order to stop any rainwater that got to them from trickling down and earthing out the circuits. To finish it off, the parts were sprayed with weather-proof exterior paint.

Still, of all the props I have worked on, the most intriguing was for Rich Tipple: a scratch build of the Daleks' "Time Destructor" from the mostly lost story *The Daleks' Master Plan*. Prior to commencement, Rich sent me countless photos and computer-generated images of what it was believed to look like. Then, after I had bought the initial parts, a new photo emerged online from the guys at the *Dalek 63•88* research project, showing the original backstage. Weeks of debating how many beakers were on the darn thing, at last had a definitive answer. As I awaited the new parts, it was back to the drawing board, reworking the circuit diagram that would make the Time Destructor pulse with light. This was the first time I'd ever had to construct a circuit board, so I put in several hours over a weekend, reading up on components and running simulations on my phone app to make sure it would work.



My increased workload resulted in our dining room becoming stuffed with Dalek parts, much to Lauren's frustration; causing me to buy a new six by eight foot workshop and assemble it alongside my eight by ten foot original. Now my three-year-old daughter can run around in safety, wearing her princess

dress, holding toy Daleks and shouting "Exterminate" as she chases the dog.

I couldn't call myself a good dad if she was tripping over Dalek weapon sticks, or a good businessman if the dog chewed up the rubber on a Dalek fender.

For the last few years, my services have been employed to find new homes for Daleks, and recently I took up a request from Laser Tools (a brand owned by Tool Connection) who wished to put one on display at their Warwickshire showroom as a talking point.

The new series-style Dalek in question (called 'D4') was the property of Richard Ashton, who'd made a fine job of building it himself. Richard had, in the past, attended quite a number of *Doctor Who*-related events with his creation, but for some years now it had sat in his house gathering dust.

As part of the agreed sale, D4 was given a full restoration, which included a new paint job. On this occasion, it was decided to reproduce the colour scheme employed by Laser Tools (mostly blue with grey and black) and the best match for that was the Dalek Supreme as it appeared in *The Chase*, *Mission to the Unknown* and *The Daleks' Master Plan*.



Nevertheless, I did alter the scheme slightly by using a darker grey on the shoulder section to make the silver slats (panels) stand out more.

I was also requested to provide a home for 'Dalek Chronica', a unique, one-of-a-kind, originally commissioned for a fan-production titled *The New Empire*, built by

the incredibly talented Gary Glover at Mooncrest Models. The shell was initially based on the Imperial/Renegade design as seen in the late 1980s, then had elements incorporated into it from work by the highly regarded 3D Dalek artist known as Mechmaster.



As a sole trader, I am open to pretty much any enquiries people have regarding props. All I want is to make a living using my knowledge and skills to help others achieve their ambitions to own a replica they can be proud of.

I haven't got here on my own, however. So I'd like to shout out to everyone (those I've mentioned by name and those I haven't)

who never stopped believing in me, and have stepped forward to lend a hand when I've had deadlines to keep and life has got in the way.

To each and every one of you, I say, "Thank you!"

Who would have thought that owning one of the most dangerous creatures in the universe would result in so much fellowship and fun? ▲

**If you have a prop that needs restoring, then please send all enquiries to: [tomsrefurbishments@gmail.com](mailto:tomsrefurbishments@gmail.com)**



## BBV TOP TEN COUNTDOWN

### By Dylan Rees

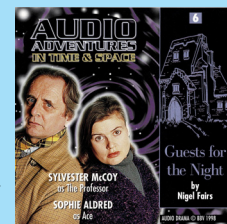
During the mid 1990s, you couldn't open a *Doctor Who* fanzine, magazine, or attend a convention, without coming across a mention of BBV. The brain child of Bill Baggs, a fan from Southampton, BBV spearheaded a movement of official *Doctor Who* spin-offs and unofficial rip-offs. It nurtured new writers such as Mark Gatiss, Nick Briggs and Rob Shearman, as well as working with stars of the classic series, including Jon Pertwee, Peter Davison, Colin Baker and Sylvester McCoy.

Before the advent of Big Finish, and the return of the show itself, these productions were the only way to experience more *Doctor Who* with the original cast. From audio adventures with the Sontarans to Caroline John reprising her role as Liz Shaw in the *P.R.O.B.E.* video series or Colin Baker playing the Doctor-like character in *The Stranger*, they provided a much-needed *Who*-fix for the fans in those 'Wilderness Years'.

Now BBV has returned with new material and a reissuing of its entire back catalogue, within which are some remarkable releases for another generation to enjoy. The following is my selection of the best the archive has to offer.

#### 10. *Guests for the Night*

This audio production, written by Nigel Fairs — who would later go on to be heavily involved with Big Finish — forms part of *The Time Travellers* series: a range that follows the adventures of The Professor and Ace, played by none other than Sylvester McCoy and Sophie Aldred (see what they did there?).



Released in 1998, it sees a missing persons search de-railed by time disturbances in a house of vampires. The play feels like a strange hybrid of classic *Doctor Who*, *The Avengers* 1998 movie (not in a bad way) and



*Dark City*, with a gruesome conceit and, at the heart of it, a solid adventure, delivered with macabre humour. Steeped in a 'Cool Britannia' neo-nostalgia, it could almost be part of a forgotten late-night BBC 2 *Doctor Who* series, playing out to an audience of a few thousand at the rag end of the decade.

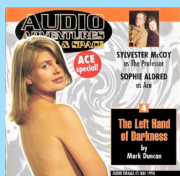


### 9. *The Doctors: 30 Years of Time Travel and Beyond*

One of only a small number of documentaries produced by BBV, this is based loosely on the book of the same name by Adrian Rigelsford. While

the publication is remembered in fan lore for its dubious, 'new' interview material from William Hartnell and Roger Delgado, and for missing out season 18 entirely, the documentary (which in truth has little in common with the book) contains some very outspoken interviews with former cast and crew.

The BBC's own *30 Years in the Tardis* felt like a celebration of all things *Doctor Who*. This is more like a postmortem of the show's decline during the 1980s. It's rough around the edges, lacking the slick quality of the *Myth Makers* range, but here, for the first time, many of those involved felt far enough removed from the programme to speak candidly about their time on it.



### 8. *The Left Hand of Darkness*

Written by Mark Duncan, this is an unconventional love story that focuses on Ace, successfully mixing Stockholm syndrome, autophobia and

the complicated emotions of two lifeforms trapped together, who develop a genuine, if unexpected, affection for each other. It provides a real insight into Ace's psyche and feelings about her separation from the Doc... Sorry! The Professor. The neat, if not exactly original, trope of having Ace blinded, makes this audio work extremely well. With a lesser writer it could have become clichéd, but Duncan rises to the challenge and

Aldred gives one of her more accomplished performances, working well with Miles Richardson to create a killer combo.

### 7. *The Quality of Mercy*

This full cast audio by David A McIntee provides another outing for Guy de Carnac, a disgraced former Templar Knight, who took centre stage in McIntee's Virgin *New Adventures Doctor Who* novel, *Sanctuary*. In this simple, but effective story, a man falls from the sky to land in medieval Europe, attracting the unwelcome attention of a local dignitary. During the ensuing manhunt, de Carnac strives to return the newcomer to his ship. The script overflows with lavish dialogue set against Gregorian chants, and superior sound design. Intended to be the first in a series for Guy de Carnac (played exquisitely by Joe Young) it was, instead, prior to the company's 2021 revival, the last of the BBV audio releases from outside their Faction Paradox range. But it sent them out on a high.



### 6. *The Devil of Winterborne*

If becoming spin-off media's Del Boy was top of Bill Baggs' agenda, then he certainly achieved his aim when he attempted to sell the *P.R.O.B.E.* series as the British *X-Files* in the genre press. The second video in Mark Gatiss' quadrilogy may have some supernatural elements, but it owes more to *Cracker* and *Silent Witness*. A tightly-plotted crime drama, it features Caroline John as Liz Shaw, who easily holds her ground in the leading role. Shaw is accompanied by Patricia Haggard, (a layered character given a nuanced portrayal by Louise Jameson) while Terry Molloy's dulcet brummie, Detective Inspector Burke, proves a great straight man for the duo. In fact the entire cast is superb, including newcomers Daniel Matthews and Reece Shearsmith (whatever happened to him?). But it's Peter Davison who steals the show. One minute he is the stiff upper lip,



British headmaster, the next a deviant manipulator, and finally, the pathetic victim.

After it's initial video release, *The Devil of Winterborne* had an outing on the Sci-Fi Channel and is the nearest BBV ever got to broadcast grade television.



### 5. *Only Human*

After the BBC rapped Bill Baggs' knuckles for overstepping the mark with The Professor and Ace, BBV were forced to change their lead characters to "The Dominie and Alice".

You can guess who played which role! The audio play is written and directed by Mark J Thompson, who would go on to have some involvement both with Magic Bullet's *Kaldor City* series and Big Finish's *The Companion Chronicles* range.

The play is a sombre affair, that packs huge science fiction ideas into its short runtime (one hour and five minutes). We get creatures made of blood, cities made of flesh, a psychotic droid, and moral quandaries involving the sensitivity of the laws of time. An intense character piece, it is very much Alice's story, as she is forced into a harrowing showdown with her sexually abusive stepfather. It's not something *Doctor Who* really touches on, especially in such detail, and goes a long way to explain Ace's (we all know it's her) hatred for her mother, who recognised the abuse but said nothing.



### 4. *The Stranger — In Memory Alone*

The first two *Stranger* films were *Doctor Who* in all but name, with Colin Baker as the titular character, accompanied by a "Miss Brown", played by Nicola Bryant with an English accent to distinguish her from *Doctor Who* counterpart "Peri Brown".

This stylish third outing, written by Nicholas Briggs, carved a new identity for the series. During an episode that shares more than a little DNA with *Sapphire and Steel*, the Stranger and Miss Brown find themselves in a dilapidated train station at the edge of the universe, having lost their memories. Here they encounter Minor, a bespectacled, bowler hatted commuter (played by Briggs himself) whose only interest appears to be that the trains run on time. They can't leave the station and there is something beneath them that is stirring — something that has travelled a long way to get there. Unfortunately, stilted camera work rather spoils this ambitious production. But despite that, it provides a glorious forty minute adventure, with excellent performances, and, in terms of story-telling, it's one of the best in the range.

### 3. *Punchline*

The final outing for *The Time Travellers* was a solo play for The Dominie. Written by Rob Shearman under the pen name Jeremy Leadbetter ("Jerry Leadbetter" was a character from the BBC TV series *The Good Life*) *Punchline* is set within the world of a 1970s radio sitcom (complete with canned laughter). Day after day, The Dominie is forced to live the mundane existence of Dominic Perkins, a gin and tonic swigging, middle management, family man and bungalow dweller, with the perpetual threat of a home visit from "Sir", his malignant boss, constantly hanging over him. McCoy excels with the jaunty but intentionally dated humour of the sitcom, delivering a dour and reflective performance as the true nature of events unfold, and the way The Dominie manipulates the narrative that's keeping him prisoner, is a perceptive deconstruction of the Doctor/The Dominie himself.

*Punchline* plays to the strengths of the audio medium like no other title in this range. It is rich in themes and ideas: from love and relationships, to the banality of a traditional lifestyle, and the way society treats anyone



who goes against it. The play looks at narrative purpose and characters in the most meta of ways, and extrapolates from this the very nature of *Doctor Who* as a show.



## 2. Old Soldiers

BBV produced a number of audio plays featuring familiar alien races from *Doctor Who*, including The Wirrn, Zygons, Krynoids and Rutans, but the most consistent output in their

monster range came from the Sontarans. Of the three main Sontaran stories, which are all well worth a listen, *Old Soldiers*, written by Colin Hill and Simon Gerard, offers the most in-depth look at the Sontarans' motives and characteristics of any format.

John Wadmore (surely the definitive Sontaran) takes on the role of Commander Brak, who has been a captive of the British government for eighty years, whilst Sally Fulkner — who played Isobel Watkins during *The Invasion* — appears as UNIT interrogator, Captain Alice Wells.

The relationship between the two is both subtle and intricate. The Sontaran is trapped by an uncompromising code of honour, so his inadvertent survival and subsequent imprisonment, places him in an existential crisis. This is further exacerbated though a culture clash of ideals with the Captain, around the concept of war. As far as Commander Brak is concerned, the human lust for conflict is something to be admired, but their reluctance to embrace it as their true calling, is hypocritical.

Nevertheless, he sees Earth, if equipped with advanced technology, as a worthy and respected adversary for his own race. Yet to

facilitate this requires a further breaking of the Sontaran code, which states it is “treason to divulge information to any species under any circumstances.”

Ultimately, he seeks death in battle through orchestrating an interstellar war, although the fact he recognises that the Sontarans would not otherwise grant him such an honour, suggests that Commander Brak would be fighting in defence of the Earth.

## 1. I Scream

The top entry in my list is a horror tour de force from writer Lance Parkin. It is sinister and eerie, with a sound design that amplifies the general creepiness present in the script.



The drama lies somewhere between the films *Brazil*, *The Truman Show* and *Doctor Who* story *The Impossible Astronaut*, with the sinister “I” manipulating humanity from the sidelines pre-dating the series 32 opener by some 15 years. The I themselves (who previously appeared in the BBC *Eighth Doctor Adventures* novel, *Seeing I*, by John Blum and Kate Orman) are voiced by Peter Yapp and his unsettling performance, set against the utopian world of Galspar, makes the play's gradual slide into outright terror, all the more effective.

The role of the “Narrator” is performed by Lisa Bowerman, who gives a suitably vulnerable performance here.

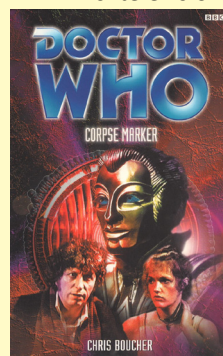
*I scream* is a triumph of cast, script and sound design, making it, in my opinion, the most accomplished production BBV has to offer. ▲

# THE MAKING OF KALDOR CITY

## By Alan Stevens

On Saturday, 4 December 1999, I wandered into WH Smith in Gloucester and spied a copy of *Doctor Who: Corpse Marker* by Chris Boucher — the latest release from the *Past Doctor Adventures* series.

The book is a sequel to the author's *Doctor Who* television serial *The Robots of Death*, but with a twist. A cross-over novel, it features Carnell from the Boucher scripted *Blake's 7* episode *Weapon*, a psychostrategist who has made a career out of predicting behaviour patterns.



I immediately purchased a copy, and a few days later phoned Boucher, with whom I had become acquainted a decade earlier, to float the idea of an audio *Doctor Who/Blake's 7* spin-off from *Corpse Marker* entitled *Kaldor City*.

Boucher expressed an interest. I was to come back with some ideas, possibly even a script, and, if it all met with his approval, we could proceed from there.

At that time I was also in regular communication with a chap called Jim Smith (AKA James Cooray Smith), and would often use him as a sounding board for ideas.

I had recently watched *Last Man Standing*, a Bruce Willis remake of the Akira Kurosawa film *Yojimbo*, and considered that this might provide a good starting place. Our opening story could, in similar style, feature a mysterious stranger, Kaston Iago, arriving in Kaldor City and sparking a war between rival factions for his own financial betterment.

The obvious choice to play this role would be Paul Darrow, an actor I had worked with on the well-received *Blake's 7* audio play *The*



*Logic of Empire*. I knew Darrow was a big Clint Eastwood fan, and as *A Fistful of Dollars* had also taken its plot from *Yojimbo*, I could see the idea resonating with him.

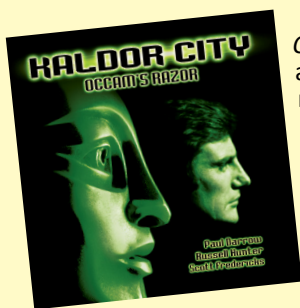
As for our sound designer, Alistair Lock had fulfilled the role on three of my previous audio productions, so he was pretty much a shoo-in. But how was I going to provide the finances for what was going to be a costly project?

Whilst pondering this, I received a call from Smith. He'd met Paul Ebbs, who, at the time, was working for BBV (known for their audio and video dramas starring *Doctor Who* monsters, characters, and cast members) and discussed the idea with him. Ebbs had seemed interested; in fact he was very encouraging. BBV would provide the money, the advertising, and the distribution mechanism. I think Ebbs had even suggested that they'd make the series for us, but I was less keen on that idea. *Kaldor City* was too big an adventure to be recorded in a bedroom!

As Smith and I batted ideas back and forth, a very ambitious script began to emerge. I recall describing a plot point to Smith and him replying, “Occam's Razor”, which struck us both as a good name for the story (our original working title had been *The Giant Chaffinch*).

**Downtime — The Lost Years of Doctor Who by Dylan Rees can be ordered from:**  
<http://obversebooks.co.uk/product/downtime/>





*Occam's Razor* featured a large cast, plus the return of Uvanov from *The Robots of Death* (who was a major force in Boucher's novel) and, of course, the aforementioned Carnell. We planned to approach Russell Hunter and Scott

Fredericks, respectively, to recreate these roles.

I was able to contact Darrow through make-up artist Sheelagh Wells, the ex-wife of *Blake's 7* star Gareth Thomas, and I had a direct line to Hunter thanks to actor David Bickerstaff, another acquaintance of some years' standing. As for Fredericks, BBC Residuals put me in touch and, after getting Boucher's approval, I sent him a script.

Other main cast members were drawn, in part, from my previous productions, and soon we had Peter Tuddenham, Tracy Russell, Brian Croucher, Trevor Cooper, Peter Miles and Patricia Merrick on board. Alistair Lock, David Bickerstaff, Robert Lock (AKA Robert Barringer-Lock), and Bruce McGilligan were drafted in, amongst others, to provide additional voices.

Then disaster struck. Smith told me that BBV had withdrawn from the project!

"Why?" I asked.

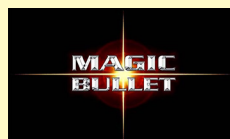
Apparently, it was considered too ambitious for them. Ebbs had also advised Smith that it was foolish for him to have relied so heavily on a "what if" conversation that had taken place during some heavy drinking.

I rang Boucher and was further told that Bill Baggs, the owner of BBV, had approached him independently, to request the rights to do his own (and no doubt substantially cheaper) spin-off series from *The Robots of Death*.

This struck both Boucher and I as a dirty trick; so much so, that it prompted my immediate

decision to scrape together the money and produce the *Kaldor City* series myself.

Which is how Magic Bullet Productions came into being.



To save on costs, it was decided that we'd record two stories back to back, with Boucher scripting the second one. Later, I went on to draft a recording schedule so that I would only need to employ each actor for one session at a time: they would then perform all their scenes, sometimes with my reading in the part of another cast member if they weren't contracted to appear that day.

I checked with the recording studio I had used for *The Logic of Empire*, but was informed by the manager that it had been condemned as a health hazard, and instead I was put onto another place called Skylight Studios, again situated in London.

By now I had received Boucher's finished script and it was an absolute scorcher, although there were two minor issues. The first was the title: *Schrödinger's Litter Tray*.

"What does it mean?" I asked.

"The story involves a lot of scratching around, covering up shit!"

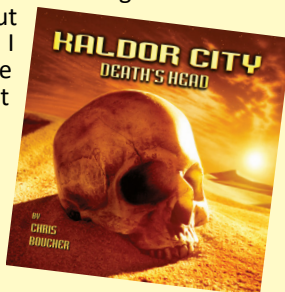
"I was hoping for something shorter. Two words. How about *Memento Mori*?" I ventured. "As the main plot element is a skull?"

"Too languid!" replied Boucher. "We could call it *Head Games*?"

"That's the name of a *Doctor Who* New Adventures novel. Um... *Death's Head*?"

"Yes, that'll work."

The next quibble concerned the naming of a new female character. Boucher had called



the Company Security Operative "Blike" so he could have Croucher (whom I'd cast as Deputy Operations Supervisor Cotton) say, "Don't be under any great illusion, Blike", which was a callback to the *Blake's 7* episode *Pressure Point*, where Travis (also played by Croucher) had said "It's the great illusion, Blake."

Recently I found a quote from Boucher on the *Internet Movie Database* in which he says, "It has rather cruelly been suggested that I will cheerfully sacrifice plot and character in pursuit of a gag. It's a lie of course. I would only do that for a good gag."

As this wasn't a particularly good gag, I'm pleased to report that neither plot nor character had been sacrificed on this occasion. But I still thought calling what was intended to be a series regular "Blike", a bit naff.

Coming up with names which are striking and yet believable is always difficult. "Kaston Iago" was an amalgam of the main villain from *Othello* and David Scott Kaston, the editor of Smith's particular copy of the play. So trying to find a better moniker than "Blike" took some effort.



The first appellation that came to mind was "Blaze", but, on reflection, I felt this was too close to 'Modesty Blaise'. I agonised further for about a day, and then I remembered how *Space: 1999*'s second season producer Fred Freiberger had contrived the episode title *The Rules of Luton*. It

probably wasn't the best example to follow, but, nevertheless, I decided that I would name the character after the next road sign I encountered.

That night I called Boucher. "How about Hayes?" I said.

"It's the great illusion, Hayes... I think it needs that 'BAAA' sound. How about Blayes?"

"Okay, we'll go with Blayes," I said. To hell with Modesty.

Later she became "Elska Blayes"; inspired by the Nazisploitation film *Ilsa, She Wolf of the SS*; although I should add that "Elska" is Norwegian for 'love'.

Recording took place over two days in August and one in September 2000. At the time I was having a couple of health problems: extremely loud tinnitus that disrupted my sleep; and a deterioration in my eyesight which made reading difficult.



Remarkably, as I stepped up to direct the very first scene between Hunter and Fredericks, I looked down at the script and found that the cloudiness had gone and I could now see perfectly; also the ringing in my ears had stopped. I can only conclude that these ailments had been caused through stress.

Later that day, I was telling Patricia Merrick of my remarkable recovery when she observed something strange about my eyes...

"One pupil is bigger than the other! I've never noticed that before!"

*Kaldor City* had left its mark on me.

Generally the recording went smoothly, although there were three instances where issues did arise.



The first concerned an exchange of dialogue:

ATTENDANT: There is a person asking to see you.

LANDERCHILD: A person?

“What’s so amazing about a ‘person’ asking to see me?” queried Peter Miles. “He might as well be saying there is a cat asking to see me!”



This placed me in a quandary, as the line was from *Death’s Head* and Boucher did not care for actors changing his script. I had to come up with a good explanation, and fast.

“Firstmaster Landerchild is a member of the Founding Families. The ‘Oasis’ he’s attending is like an exclusive gentleman’s club. So, to be told there is a ‘person’ asking to speak, would suggest to him this was an outsider, someone who had no right to be there, let alone call for Landerchild’s attention.”

Miles seemed reassured, and with some relief, we moved on, but a day later, Croucher was raising an objection:

COTTON: It isn’t wealth that makes the difference you know, it’s what you do to earn your money that matters. You can be damn sure Kaston Iago doesn’t earn the sort of money he earns doing anything... (HE GROPEs FOR THE WORD)

BLAYES: Respectable?

“This doesn’t make any sense!”

“Cotton is saying that being rich isn’t a problem, it’s how you get rich that’s the problem.”

“That’s what it says, Alan, but what does it mean? Can we scrap this line?”

“No, because it will screw the scene up!”

“Not if we carefully edit the dialogue ...” said Croucher, crossing over to Tracy Russell, “... You say this line, and then I’ll cut down to here...”

“Brian, we’re not chopping any lines!” I insisted.

“Do you understand it, Tracy?”

“I think so. Your character believes that earning wealth through amorality is wrong!”

“Yes, but Kaston Iago is a contract thug, my character is a contract thug, how is that different?”

“It isn’t different...” I replied. “That’s what Blayes is implying.”

“But my character should know that already!”

Very aware of the studio clock ticking, I had to make a decision. On the one hand, the more the exchange was dissected, the less sense it appeared to make, but on the other, my fear of Boucher was greater than my fear of Croucher.

“Look!” said I, “Just say the fucking line, Brian!”

“Alright! I’ll say the fucking line!”

And he did — beautifully.

The final matter involved the casting of Firstmaster Devlin. Here, the fault was entirely down to my own inexperience, in that the part required the voice of a more mature woman, and yet was too small a role to be of much interest to an actress of long standing.

I asked Miles if he could approach Cynthia Grenville, who, aside from playing Maren, the High Priestess to the Sisterhood of Karn in the *Doctor Who* story *The Brain of Morbius*, also lived just across the street from him.

“Er... No. I don’t think so!” came the reply. “Cynthia and I are not on friendly terms at the moment.”

“What’s happened?” I enquired.

“The last time she came over to my flat she was stung by a single bee, and she has taken it personally.”

Miles suggested someone else, but when recording her lines, it was plain she was much too young for the part and it would need recasting.

Eventually, Croucher recommended Annabel Leventon. They had attended the same drama school together and were firm friends. That night, I spoke to Leventon on the phone: her voice was perfect. We arranged a studio time, and she asked me to provide a paragraph or two about the character’s background.

Leventon turned up, said the profile I’d written was just what she’d required, and half an hour later all her scenes were completed without a hitch. I started to wish that Firstmaster Devlin had survived the story, but, unfortunately, her death was necessary to the plot.



With the recording over, it was now Alistair Lock’s job to get on with the sound design, whilst Boucher, Smith and I put some thought into how the series could continue.

It had always been my intention to revisit Boucher’s *Doctor Who* story *Image of the Fendahl*, and clues to the Fendahl’s presence were fed into both *Occam’s Razor* and *Death’s Head*, but quite how the creature would become directly involved with the narrative had to be determined.

Then there was the question of Blayes. Boucher’s story ended with the suggestion that she would be manoeuvred out of her position as a security operative and forced to join a terrorist organisation.

How was that going to be achieved?

Boucher’s answer was simple. “You don’t explain it. If you explain everything then you bore your audience. So you just leave hints and let them work it out for themselves!”

This was good advice, although it still meant I had to devise a background for her, otherwise I wouldn’t know what hints to leave.

Eventually, after more discussions with Boucher, a timeline for Blayes materialised, and with further input from Smith, the third script in the series, initially called *The Rhubarb Conspiracy*, slowly came together.

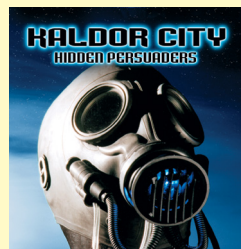
Smith explained that the rhubarb plant is very effective at releasing oxygen, and that if the air on the planet Kaldor was quite thin, then growing vast, sweeping acres of the plant would be a necessity. Equally, if Blayes was now a terrorist, this would make

a legitimate target, and it would also tie-in with Iago’s claim in *Occam’s Razor* that he was “a rhubarb farmer!”

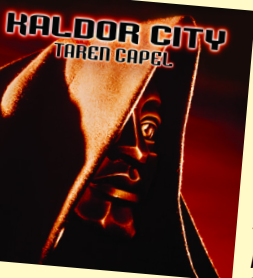
I was a little dubious, but through further conversations with both Smith and Oxford University postgraduate student Fiona Moore, the idea finally evolved into what would be an attack on

a giant “Oxygenator” plant (as in building, not stick of rhubarb) and, consequently, the story became *Hidden Persuaders*, a title borrowed from a book by Vance Packard on how governments and advertisers use psychology to manipulate the population.

Based on what we had achieved so far, it was evident that three stories could be recorded back to back by simply







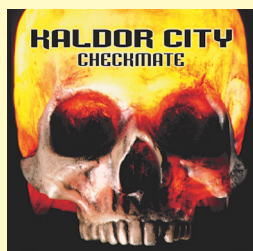
extending the studio time from three to four days: two further scripts were duly required.

Drawing on the Fritz Lang film *The Testament of Dr. Mabuse*, we decided the fourth was to centre on the

legacy of the insane, though now deceased, robotics genius Taren Capel, whereas story five (provisionally known as *Counterplot*), would see the physical manifestation of the Fendahl.

In my original storyline, Taren Capel, in addition to suffering from robophobia, had also been influenced in his thinking by "The Fendahl Triptych", a work completed by the visionary artist Wallbank some two hundred years previously, which foretold the apocalypse in three distinct images: a pentagram, a snake and a skull.

I had determined that the Fendahl could only be perceived by the insane or the dying, and that Capel's ultimate goal was to defeat the monster through reprogramming the robots to kill all the humans on Kaldor; preserving his own life by disguising himself as a soulless, and therefore, inedible, mechanical man.



*Counterplot* (later retitled *Checkmate*) would then involve an alliance between Firstmaster Uvanov and the Fendahl to defeat Capel's plan.

Boucher hated this, and vetoed both ideas in no uncertain terms.

As far as he was concerned, Taren Capel's actions on Storm Mine Four had no connection whatsoever with any beliefs about the Fendahl. Equally, it would be impossible for Uvanov to communicate in a practical way with the Fendahl, as it was a totally alien, godlike entity of enormous power. You could not possibly negotiate with it, and as the Fendahl had been silent during

the original television serial, Boucher was doubtful that it should speak at all. How do you write dialogue for God?

"But it has to speak, Chris, it's an audio play!" I bristled. "And thematically, if the Fendahl was a subliminal part of Kaldor society, then there would be echoes of it everywhere. Taren Capel could not be oblivious to that!"

Boucher conceded my first argument and ameliorated the second; there could be a connection between Capel and the Fendahl, but it had to be less direct. Maybe Capel's plan to change the robots and cause a planet-wide revolt would subconsciously parallel the Fendahl's own manipulation of the human race. However, my suggestion of any kind of agreement between Uvanov and the entity was a non-starter: the Fendahl had to remain an enigma.

This was a major game-changer, and to be perfectly fair, a welcome one.

Boucher's observations were a clear and unequivocal insight into the Fendahl; in fact, they harkened back to the opening script *Occam's Razor*, with the multiple possibilities raised as to how that particular mystery could be solved. We would deal with the Fendahl by raising questions, but without providing any definitive answers.

It was during this period that I was contacted by Jason Haigh-Ellery. He knew that *Kaldor City* was in production and Nicholas Briggs had played a small role in *Death's Head*, his character's lines having been recorded during a Big Finish studio session.

Haigh-Ellery seemed keen for the series to be released under the Big Finish label and a few weeks later Fiona Moore and I met with him over lunch. He'd read the first two scripts and thought they were "brilliant", but even so, he was concerned. As it was still early days for Big Finish, he felt that if the company was to become involved, as a courtesy, they would also need to seek permission from the BBC. Big Finish had to appear "whiter than white" and due to *Kaldor City's* hard-

hitting, *Pulp Fiction*-style nihilistic content, there was a fear that the BBC might veto such a venture. At which point, Magic Bullet Productions would go ahead and make it anyway, reflecting badly on Big Finish, and putting their licence to produce *Doctor Who* audios in jeopardy.

Haigh-Ellery's logic was irrefutable.

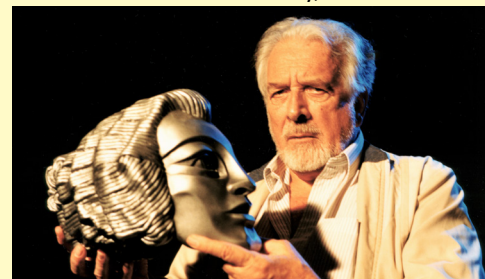
A week or two later I received an email from Bill Baggs.

An article had recently featured in *Doctor Who Magazine* promoting the forthcoming *Kaldor City* series, and he was now offering me the chance to make it available through BBV. In return he would cover advertising, distribution and even provide financial support for future productions.

In response I told him, very politely, that I was no longer interested in BBV's involvement. Baggs thanked me for getting back to him, adding that he was surprised I'd replied at all, considering past circumstances. He left me with some good advice; "When dealing with shops, never do sale and return!"

Following the successful release of the first two *Kaldor City* plays, the next three stories, *Hidden Persuaders*, *Taren Capel*, and *Checkmate* were recorded during August 2002 at The Moat Studios, London; Skylight Studios having been sold to the pop group *Aqua*.

Our regular cast returned, this time joined by David Collings and David Bailie, recreating their respective roles of Poul and Taren Capel from *The Robots of Death*; with new cast members Nicholas Courtney, Jasmine Breaks,



Peter Halliday, Alison Taffs, Nickey Barnard, Mark Thompson, Courtney King, Rachel Fishwick, Miles Gould... In fact it's enough to say that the list of additional actors was, as before, substantial.

Again, the recording went pretty smoothly (although Tracy Russell telling me that she now self-identified as Elska Blayes was a tad disturbing). The only major production hiccup I remember was during the scene where Cotton is supposed to walk in on a naked Justina.

It's possible that the matter concerned the staging, or discussions about the way the scene should be played, but the only thing I distinctly recollect is Croucher pointing across the studio at Patricia Merrick and announcing forthrightly, "I can see her tits and her fanny!"

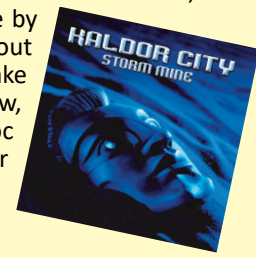
The next three CDs were launched in November 2002, and March and September 2003. Once again, they were met with favourable reviews and sales remained high. People would ask me, "Why are there such long gaps between episodes?" and my reply was an elementary, "What's the hurry?"

On 26 February 2004, Russell Hunter passed away.

Many people thought this would be the end of *Kaldor City*, and, indeed, *Checkmate* had followed the tradition of the *Blake's 7* season finalé, in that it could act as both a cliffhanger and a concluding episode for the entire series.

Even so, I felt there was one more card to play.

A key element to *The Robots of Death* was D84, an automaton with human virtues, brought to memorable life by Gregory de Polnay. Without doubt, this actor had to make a showing, with Paul Darrow, Tracy Russell, Philip Madoc and John Leeson along for the ride.



The scripting of *Storm Mine* was given to Daniel O'Mahony, an imaginative writer who likes to test the boundaries of any given medium, but who was himself, tested to the very limit by a process that required him to create a mystery with plenty of clues and a multitude of possible answers.

The story was recorded in October 2004 at the Moat Studios. Further recordings took place later that same year and during February 2005, for the first two episodes of *The True History of Faction Paradox*, a series by Lawrence Miles which I'd inherited from BBV following the collapse of its audio range.

Aside from the big six, Fiona Moore and I scripted two further, short *Kaldor City* plays — *The Prisoner* (2004) and *Metafiction* (2012). Both are two-handers, the first with Paul Darrow and Peter Miles, the second with Paul Darrow and Patricia Merrick. There was also a stage adaptation of *The Robots of*

*Death* (with the Doctor and Leela replaced by Iago and Blayes) and *Storm Mine*, again in 2012; but these were simply written as grace notes to the main series.

As I look back, it's become clear to me that *Kaldor City*'s existence is entirely down to Chris Boucher's incredible generosity — and my total ignorance regarding the scale of the task ahead of me.

That's the strength of ignorance.

No confidence can match it and yet, although it often courts disaster, just sometimes it can make the impossible, possible... ▲

***Kaldor City* is available from Magic Bullet Productions: <http://www.kaldorcity.com>**



## WHEN DOCTOR WHO CAME TO SWINDON TOWN

By Mary Milton

Unlikely though this might sound, for a brief period during the late 1980s, Swindon was, for me, the centre of the *Doctor Who* fan universe. The town was already home to a DWAS Local Group: we'd produced a couple of issues of a fanzine called *Paradise Lost* as well as making links with other groups in Bath and Bristol. For some of us, *Doctor Who* became more than a television programme: it was the foundation on which our artistic, literary, academic or career endeavours were built. We grew into adulthood together, sometimes harmoniously, often not, always with fandom as a backdrop. Those times, as I recall them now, seem like yesterday but also far, far away.

1984 was the year conventions came to Swindon. I've been reminded of that time by reading Miles Booy's book *Love and Monsters*. Miles was one of those young members who made up the Swindon group, as was Paul Cornell. We may not all have thought

the show was at its peak (when would we ever?) but in terms of its public profile and the attention this created, it was huge. While the DWAS had been running events for some time, it was the BBC's twentieth anniversary celebration at Longleat (something Anthony Ainley later referred to as the "Doctor Queue Exhibition") that demonstrated how much general interest there was in the programme. Only members could go to DWAS conventions and not everyone wanted to attend badly enough to pay for membership.



In my mind (there is scope for me misremembering this) it was after the Longleat celebration that events other than the ones run by the DWAS started to spring up — certainly those longer than a single day, outside London. And if they didn't start this movement, conventions in Swindon were very much part of the trend.

In 1983 *Doctor Who* dominated my life. I'd gone to a couple of DWAS events and Longleat where I met Tony Cherrington, the man who ran Link-Up (an unofficial *Blake's 7* and *Doctor Who* fan club). He was to introduce me to more general conventions for programmes like *Battlestar Galactica*, *Blake's 7*, *UFO* and *Star Trek*. These were nothing like the *Doctor Who* gatherings I'd attended. They seemed informal by comparison. Guests mingled with attendees; people dressed up in costume; video rooms showed back to back episodes; there was evening entertainment with music and dancing. Most of all, they were somewhere we could go to do things our parents probably wouldn't have approved of, and certainly didn't understand. We met like-minded people, forgetting our 'normal' lives in the process. There was even a thing we called 'post con depression', a term defining the lows that followed a great weekend away with friends.

It was Tony's idea to bring this type of event to *Doctor Who*. We didn't canvas anyone, we didn't ask, we just did it. It could have been a monumental disaster. Fortunately, interest in the programme was at a high, and along with us novices, our committee also had some experienced convention organisers.

At 16, I found myself putting on the hideous interview suit my Mum had made me buy, to convince the manager of the Wiltshire Hotel, Swindon, that he should rent his premises to a bunch of young people, who were going to use it for a thing he had never heard of and probably thought quite silly. It was a business persons' hotel, "pretty empty at the weekends," he said, so he'd give us a try. Obviously concerned, he rang me most weeks to check all was going to plan.

By the end of that first booking he had well and truly 'got it'. The receipts were off the roof, the staff admitted to having a great time, and the manager finally conceded that, in future, he would give us the whole hotel and not sell any of his rooms to 'normal people'.

Eventually, we were to hold five conventions at the hotel. *Leisure Hive* ran 1984 — 1987. We had a year break, and then put on *Honeycomb*, our final event, in 1989. I couldn't recall why we changed the name until Alan Hayes reminded me that it had been a request from Colin Baker. Who were we to refuse? By this time the committee had become myself, Daniel Cohen, Eileen Wingrove, Lee Bougourd and Alan Hayes; others — Jo Banks, Andrew Smith and Tony Cherrington — having left along the way.

Convention weekends found neighbouring B&Bs, along with the hotel, full to bursting. Attendees embraced our new concept, making it, and the venue their own. Every space was used, including areas not part of the official programme. The lift landings became stages for games of trivial pursuit; a





randy Dalek roamed the corridors screaming "IMPREGNATE"; and attendees had to be warned, via tannoy announcements, that the carrying of ray guns or other weapons outside the hotel was inadvisable, given the proximity of the local police station. The bar made a fortune. One Sunday morning, when the main hall was opened for the day, someone rolled out from behind the curtains. Attendees arranged sleeping bags to doss in the video rooms that ran all night. "You don't have a room to sell them," I pointed out, when the manager complained. Unemployed 19 year old Steve Broster (who kindly sent me his diary entries for *Leisure Hive*) kept within budget by cycling each day to a Youth Hostel, a mere 16 miles away. Resourceful!

That first convention felt like a rite of passage. One of the reception staff was a girl who, only a couple of years before, had spent a whole lesson at school kicking the back of my chair. Now we were 'grown-ups', she working in a hotel, me in charge of an event. It was weird.

From 1985 on I was responsible for inviting and liaising with guests. It was a wonderful job with one, unpredictable drawback — America. *Doctor Who* was big in the US. Conventions popped up all over the States, seemingly with little notice. They were well funded by virtue of being large scale, and they had the ear of the production office. Timetable clashes were inevitable. I remember being very annoyed on behalf of British fans: although, thinking about it, what guest would choose a weekend with us in Swindon (however lovely we were) over

an all-expenses paid trip to Los Angeles or Chicago? Even with its better connections to the production office, the DWAS was suffering too, with one event cancelled altogether over a clash of dates. In a pre-internet age it was impossible to advertise accurately — possibly a blessing in disguise, as our convention booklet rarely reflected the final guest list. I'm pretty sure there were weeks where we thought we had Jon Pertwee, Peter Davison or Patrick Troughton in our line-up, only for them to withdraw as the date approached. Advertising that fact would have been a voyage of stress and disappointment for us and our attendees.

*Leisure Hive* continued to be relaxed. We never had interviewers for our guest panels, relying instead on audience participation. I've wondered since if this was a mistake — it led to a few hairy moments when the questioning became slightly inappropriate. Yet fan reviewers at the time seemed to approve and our guests also appeared to enjoy it. Sometimes panels looked random, the result of my scattergun approach to making sure we had enough speakers, but they were seldom dull. A free weekend in Swindon wasn't exactly a big draw, so our guests generally came because they wanted to engage with fans and several, Mat Irvine, Colin Baker, David Banks, Peter Miles, Michael Wisher, John Leeson, Ian Marter, and Nicholas Courtney, became well-loved regulars. I will never forget their kindness and patience. There was Colin Baker, abandoning his dessert in the hotel restaurant because he didn't want to keep people waiting for his panel, doing it solo, and effortlessly putting

attendees at their ease while provoking lots of questions. He was such a good sport: interrupted by surprise stunts from fans (a Patrick Troughton impersonator, and a pink Cyberman with 'love handles') he threw himself into playing along, which was extremely entertaining. Sylvester McCoy was game too, juggling on request and posing for many informal pictures.

We encouraged guests to mingle and I was really pleased when I read in some of the old fanzine reviews that this was a feature people recalled: Alan Hayes reminisced in CT only last September about "the halcyon days" of conventions, when chats with the likes of Nicholas Courtney, Ian Marter and Peter Miles could be enjoyed for the "cost of a pint or two." There were never more than about three hundred attendees at *Leisure Hive* so rubbing shoulders with the stars was commonplace.

For their time, our events raised decent money for charities. We twice donated to the Study of Infant Deaths in memory of Colin's son Jack, and after the shock of Ian Marter's death in 1986, we supported the British Diabetic Association for our next event. Ian had attended *Leisure Hive* two and three, creating a splendid double act with Nicholas Courtney. They both contributed to our Saturday evening cabaret — not the norm in the UK, although a common occurrence at American conventions. Our guests literally sang for their supper. David Banks wrote a poem *The Leader was a Cyberman*, while Michael Wisher's act is best remembered as 'something drunken in a kilt'. He wasn't actually drunk. Many in his audience were.

If our guests were the rock on which we built our events, it was the attendees who really made it. They were a diverse bunch. I'd been to several *Who* cons where I was one of maybe two women there. This certainly wasn't the case at *Leisure Hive*. Boys met girls, boys met boys, girls met girls and many of us met trans people for the first

time. Between our second and third event, committee members Lee and Eileen married. *Leisure Hive* changed lives. I've had numerous messages from people who made lifelong friends there, some more traditionally at the bar, others when participating in 'strange' convention rituals such as throwing Gordon the Gopher toys out of the window, or re-enacting Queen's *I Want to Break Free* video (the bit with Freddy Mercury bodysurfing over a group of rolling torsos) at the Saturday evening disco. Parents brought their kids too and they were made a fuss of, particularly by some of the guests. Dealer John Fitton recalls his three-year-old daughter being carried around by Colin Baker. Colin brought his own children to *Honeycomb*, where they were baby sat by fans during panels. Looking back, our racial diversity was poor. I wonder if that's changed now the show itself has made an effort to do so? I sincerely hope this is the case.

What few outside fandom in those days could ever understand, was the positive influence that it had: the skills we learned that led to careers or lifelong interests, the people we met there who broadened and changed our horizons. My first experience of being close to someone with a disability was meeting Nabil Shaban, together with his friends and family, and they taught me so much in a very short time. Colin Baker helped his biggest fan, Heather "Pest" Allen, get a much needed job, having previously agreed to be 'flanned' by her at one of our events. As I've noted, lasting friendships were forged and it's remarkable that, even now, although I am no longer actively involved with fandom, and have not been for many years, I find a large contingent of those I engage with on Facebook are connections I made at *Leisure Hive*. I can't imagine what life would have been like without them.

My thanks to everyone who contributed memories and photographs for this article. You really are too numerous to mention, and there really were enough for a book. ▲

