

THE DOCTOR'S WOMEN

DOCTOR WHO
WATCH EXCLUSIVE

DEFINING SCENE



"A lot of people would choose the Bad Wolf Bay scene," says Davies, but for me it's the scene in *The Satan Pit* where Rose thinks that the Doctor is dead, ten miles below the planet's surface, with no means of reaching him, and the whole planet is about to fall into a black hole, the murderous Ood are on the rampage... but still she won't leave. The spaceship is about to depart, but she won't abandon the Doctor. She's both selfish and selfless in the same moment. It's the most beautiful, heart-wrenching performance from Billie."

"It's still the same Rose Tyler. I didn't bring her back in order to reinvent her" **Russell T Davies**

Hurrah, Rose is back! As the companions draw together in the build-up to the series finale, we ask what makes them so important to the Doctor



"The companion acts as our eyes and ears, our gateway into the Doctor's extraordinary world," says Russell T Davies (left), *Doctor Who*'s lead writer and executive producer. "The companion is there so that the kids watching at home can think, 'That could be me!'" So when Davies was a child, did he dream of turning a street corner and seeing the Tardis, and running inside? "Yes, always! I hope the companions still make children think that's possible, to travel in time and space."

Although the role of the fellow traveller is not uniquely female ("I think the Doctor can bedazzle anyone," says Davies, "whether it's a man, woman, Slitheen or robot dog!"), the single woman companion tends to be the show's staple. Rose Tyler (far right) returns this week to join forces with Donna Noble (page 17), before hooking up with Martha Jones (page 15) in the two-part season finale, which begins next week.

"As the Doctor has said himself," Davies continues, "what's the point of seeing the whole of the cosmos and all of history if there's no-one to share it with, no-one to join in with the wonder and awe, no-one's hand to hold when it gets terrifying? Underneath all the Doctor's wit and vigour, there's quite a lonely man, the last of his kind,

wandering inside the only Tardis in existence. He needs companionship."

In return, the Doctor offers his companions the trip of a lifetime. "He changes their lives, mostly for the better," says Davies. "We've seen Donna undergo the biggest change of all. She's discovered the compassion inside her, the intelligence and bravery a temp wouldn't normally have the chance to show. At the beginning, she was fantastically self-absorbed – superficial, brash and perceiving herself only in terms of her marital status. This week's episode shows what would have happened if the Doctor hadn't liberated her from that."

What do the Doctor's companions really mean to him? He'll show them the wonders of the universe, save them from the monsters, and fight for them tooth and claw... yet he repeatedly places them in the most terrible danger. "In fairness, the Doctor never hides the danger," adds Davies. "That's pretty clear from the first time you meet him. But the Doctor, let's not forget, can be a powerful, dark presence at times. If that's not tempered by humanity, I think he can be capable of terrible deeds. As Donna once told him, 'I think you need someone to stop you.'"

Benjamin Cook

Rose Tyler (Billie Piper)

"The Doctor and Rose just complete each other," says Davies. "She had a humdrum life, with horizons no further than the chip shop, and he showed her the universe. She'd been so fiercely loyal to her mum, Jackie, and her boyfriend, Mickey, that she'd rarely looked beyond the confines of her council estate. Life with the Doctor allowed her to unlock all the passion and adventure inside her, though my favourite thing about Rose is that she was never a saint. She always kept a fantastic, ruthless, selfish streak at heart, which helped her to survive and never give up."

"At the same time, the Doctor was damaged and scarred after the Time War and Rose taught him compassion again. She took the Doctor from being an introverted loner, who'd run away from any contact with her family, to the man who sat down and had Christmas dinner with Jackie and Mickey. In a way, she healed him, and made the Tenth Doctor out of the Ninth, which forged an incredible bond between them."

But is it love? "It's certainly some sort of love," replies Davies, "but sometimes I think this gets massively overstated. If you look at all the lovey-dovey dialogue between them, over two years and 27 episodes, it amounted to three slight hints and no proper kisses." Hang on, their lips locked twice! "But one was a vortex transfer," insists Davies, "and the other a body swap! Not what I'd call kisses."

At the end of series two, when the Doctor left her in a parallel universe, Rose told him that she loved him. Before he'd finished his reply, he was cut off. Will we ever find out what the Doctor was going to say? "Maybe in this year's series finale," grins Davies. "That conversation on Bad Wolf Bay has yet to be resolved, but it's by no means forgotten."

The Doctor must have missed Rose enormously

Just wait till you see his face when he claps eyes on her again! She was always very special to him, but I don't think he realises how much until he returns of her return." This time around, she is "tougher, more independent and bright, at times, seem a little harder," but underneath that, says Davies, "it's still the same Rose Tyler. I didn't bring her back in order to reinvent her!" **BC**

Life on Rose

The Doctor has turned her life on its head for the better. She found this person who has made her celebrate life and humanity and said, 'Look, you should have this zest for life because here are the reasons why it's great.' Sometimes you need someone to shake you and stop you from your tracks, to make you look at what's going on around you and make you want to be a better person."



Martha Jones (Freema Agyeman)

"Martha came along at just the right moment for the Doctor," says Russell T Davies, "when his heart was broken after losing Rose. They forged a brilliant friendship, underscored by absolute trust – the tragedy being that she fell quietly in love with him, and he barely noticed." He laughs, before adding, "Who hasn't been there?"

The irony, then, is that Martha meant everything to the Doctor, except what she wanted. "Yes, but that's hardly his fault. If anything, that brought out his alien side, his sheer inability to cope with ordinary human relationships. No matter how wonderful and dazzling he might seem, he's still an alien, from a different time and place, and he still has so much more to learn about people.

"By this series, it's a measure of how much Martha's relationship with the Doctor has matured that they don't need to miss each other; she's got him on tap, at the end of a phone! Her mobile is still on board the Tardis. When she needs him, she rings. He's never allowed anyone else to do that." Martha has already called him home to fight the Sontarans, and Davies hints that the phone will be "very important" to the series finale. **BC**

Freema on Martha

"She's had a right old journey!" says Freema Agyeman of her character. She's not wrong. Seconded to Unit (the military/scientific elite), battling for Torchwood and back at the Doctor's side recently when the Sontarans threatened Earth – it's all in a season's work for the doctor with a small 'd' but a big heart.

"Inevitably she's harder, just because of all she went through," Agyeman explains. "It affected her so much that she decided not to travel with the Doctor any more, because she needed to concentrate on her own life.

When you see her again, she looks more capable of doing alien investigations solo. She's continued to develop her knowledge, based on Earth and working with Unit, she's in a relationship and her family are close by. So she's a lot more grounded."

Martha's return comes next week, when the two-part finale line-up suggests a Doctor surrounded by adoring females: Martha, Donna, Rose, Sarah Jane...

"And Captain Jack!" laughs Agyeman. "Actually, it doesn't quite work like that. There's a lot going on and there's a wonderful moment that just emphasises how much he needs them all in different ways, and how they are very much part of a team within his life. It was really great to be a part of that." **Nick Griffiths**

DEFINING SCENE

It's the climax of *Last of the Time Lords*, says Russell T Davies, "when Martha faces the Master [John Simm], at the height of his powers, and she's about to be executed, in front of her family... when she laughs. She simply laughs at him. That's because he's fooled him, but the laugh is far more than that: a laugh makes a megalomaniac utterly powerless. In one moment, she faces down the power of an evil Time Lord and makes him impotent. Freema handles the danger of that scene perfectly."



"She looks more capable of doing alien investigations solo" **Freema Agyeman**

Donna Noble (Catherine Tate)

"The Doctor and Donna are the best of friends in the whole of time and space," says Davies. "A good mate, to laugh with, to run with, and to battle the enemies alongside. There's none of that fancying nonsense with Donna! She brings out the Doctor's sense of fun, but she's brilliant at bringing him down to earth. She's a breath of fresh air, after the intensity of Rose and the complications of Martha. I think Donna is the first one to truly understand him. He can be completely honest with her, admitting when he's scared, or lost, or powerless."

It's taken the Doctor a long time to find this best friend – but can he keep her? "Huge events are in store for Donna," promises Davies. "The returning companions have incredible status – as the finale swings into action, we've got Rose, with her ability to stride parallel worlds, alongside Captain Jack and his Torchwood team, plus Martha with the military might of Unit behind her, and Sarah Jane with her alien-busting career – and yet it's still Donna at the heart of events. The ordinary human! It's what *Doctor Who* is all about." **BC**

Catherine on Donna

Doctor Who's end-of-season episodes find Donna fighting for survival. And this week's episode *Turn Left*, says Catherine Tate, "will show Donna very much stepping up to the plate. Really rising to the occasion. What that occasion is, I can't say."

Donna's changed. The harridan in a meringue from 2006's Christmas special, *The Runaway Bride*, has, like the companions before her, found a sense of purpose. When the chips are down, she's no longer content to add them to the wedding menu.

"Donna's learnt to trust herself," says Tate. "She learnt that she isn't silly. I think she had her eyes opened."

"In *The Runaway Bride* there was this brilliant speech Russell wrote in which her fiancé [played by Don Gilet], summed her up: that the height of excitement for her was a new-flavoured Pringle. 'Text me, *Big Brother*, text me!' She was into her pop culture and that was kind of it. And as the stories unfolded, all of that was stripped away and she became hungry for more adventure. She realised what a fantastic opportunity this was for her."

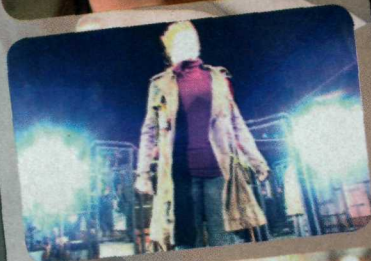
"The Doctor is not unaccustomed to people seeing him through a rose-coloured tint. Donna doesn't do that with him, so she brings him down to earth."

They're very blunt with each other, so she allows him to be more of himself.

"She says to Martha at one point, 'I'm never going to stop wanting to do this' – because all the companions get to a point where they know it's time to go. But she says, 'I'm going to travel with that man [the Doctor] for the rest of my life.' She doesn't tire of it, she will never tire of it." **NG**

LINKS

Our *Doctor Who* expert posts a blog after the show every week at www.radiotimes.com/doctor-who-weekly



DEFINING SCENE

"For me," says Davies, "it's in this week's episode, *Turn Left*, when Donna returns to the circle of mirrors. It's the most blazing performance from Catherine, so full of fear and hope and bravery. It's just about my favourite performance in anything I've ever done. Even then, it's small fry compared to what she does in the final episode... but let's not get ahead of ourselves!"

"As the stories unfolded, she became hungry for more adventure" **Catherine Tate**