

# Jon Pertwee

## The Gallant Doctor

Ten years after he last played  
the role, Britain's third Time  
Lord returns to help celebrate  
the 20th anniversary of



By PATRICK DANIEL O'NEILL

**T**he great shock of silver hair glints in the stage lights as he makes his entrance, dressed just as you expect him to be: black velvet smoking jacket, frilly shirt, with a red-lined Inverness cloak thrown over it all. He grins and announces, "I am the Doctor!"

For five years, from 1970 to 1974, Jon Pertwee, circus star, vaudevillian, cabaret entertainer, actor, played the title role in television's longest running science-fiction series: *Doctor Who*. His tenure was perhaps the show's most unusual era, beginning with the tale of how he nabbed the part.

As Pertwee tells it, "One day, between engagements, I called my agent and let him know that I would be interested in playing the Doctor, *if*—and when—the role ever became open. Now, mind, this is when Patrick Troughton was well-settled in the part, and he hadn't said anything about wanting to quit. At any rate, my agent was rather dumbstruck and asked if I were sure. I said, 'Of course, I am. Be a good fellow, and look into it, will you?'"

"So, my agent rang up the program's producer, and said, 'I represent Jon Pertwee, and I'm calling to let you know that Jon would be interested in doing *Doctor Who* whenever the time comes for a replacement.' There was dead silence at the other end of the phone. And my agent said, 'Yes, I know, that was my reaction, too.'"

"But the producer said, 'No, no, that's not it. Listen, I have my 'short list' in front of me right now. Would you like to know who's second on that list?' And damned if it wasn't *me*."

So, when Troughton opted to depart the series, Pertwee was chosen as his replacement. Now came a new decision: exactly what kind of "man" was this third Doctor to be? The answer: just like Jon Pertwee!

*PATRICK DANIEL O'NEILL is a former Associate Editor of STARLOG and a Dr. Who aficionado. He chatted with Tom Baker in STARLOG #77.*

"They asked me, 'How do you feel like playing this?'" Pertwee explains, "and I said, 'How do you want me to play it?'"

"Well, as Jon Pertwee."

"And I said, 'Who the hell's *he*?'"

"Well, *you*."

"And who am I? You see, until that time, I had never played me. I was like Peter





Sellers, hiding under a 'green umbrella' all my life. So, playing *me* was going to be difficult. But after a while, I found I rather enjoyed being *me*."

### Who's Companions

Jon Pertwee has quite a varied background. Born into a theatrical family, his father, Roland, was a well-known playwright and screenwriter, both in Great Britain and Hollywood, turning out scripts for actors such as Leslie Howard and Ronald Colman. The elder Pertwee was also a noted short story writer, whose tales appeared in the original *Saturday Evening Post* and *Collier's*. Jon Pertwee's brother, Michael, is also a celebrated playwright (*The Mouse that Roared*), and his cousin, Bill, is a popular actor and comedian in Britain.

Pertwee was thrown out of the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts (for lack of seriousness, he says), and then went into touring companies, "putting up the stage, doing a show and then moving on the next day." Those days were followed by several years of repertory work, a stint in the Navy during World War II, and then a segue into radio and television. His credentials also include some time in the circus (an experience which would serve Pertwee in good stead during his *Doctor Who* gig), vaudeville and cabaret. For the past five years, Pertwee has been the star of *Worzel Gummidge*, a television fantasy about a scarecrow who comes to life, based on the story by Barbara Euthan Todd.

That incredibly varied career allowed him to avoid the bane of every actor's existence: typecasting after a long run in a prominent role. "The people who get typecast are those the public *don't* know," Pertwee explains. "I've been in the business for so long I didn't have to worry about it. For example, we had a program in England called *Z Cars*, all about police in Liverpool. It was tremendously popular, on twice a week, and the people in it were big stars, getting enormous reactions everywhere they went. And after a bit, they said, 'This is ridiculous, I can't go on doing *Z Cars*. I'll go independent, because I'm really big now.' They would leave the show and then just disappear off the face of the Earth. Nobody would touch them, because producers didn't know them before. The only place anyone knew them from was *Z Cars*. So, if these actors appeared anywhere else, people would say, 'Oh, that's the fellow from *Z Cars*!'"

Upon leaving *Doctor Who*, Pertwee signed on a quiz show, *Whodunnit*, as emcee. "After *Who*," he recalls, "I really couldn't go into another series playing myself in an acting role. On *Whodunnit*, I didn't have to be an actor, just a front man. Then came *Worzel Gummidge*, with the carrot nose and the makeup to look like a scarecrow, so there's no actual recognition factor."

During his tenure as the Doctor, Pertwee teamed up with three companions: Caroline John as Liz Shaw, Katy Manning as Jo Grant, and Elisabeth Sladen as Sarah Jane Smith (STARLOG #77). He has fond



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# The "Doctor Who" Episode Guide: The Adventures of The Third Doctor

In an effort to keep STARLOG readers informed about their favorite Time Lord as he begins his 21st year, here's a guide to the adventures of the Third Doctor, Jon Pertwee, currently being syndicated in the United States by Lionheart Television International.

The 14 adventures, totalling 73 half-hour episodes, begin after a major turning point in the Doctor's life. After many years of freedom from the strictures of life on Gallifrey, his home world, the Doctor's superiors, the High Council of the Time Lords, finally catch up with him. For his "crimes" (stealing a TARDIS and interference with alien cultures), they are prepared to execute him. But his moving defense, calling for the Time Lords to assist those races threatened by disaster and despotism, as the Doctor has done, prompts a more lenient sentence. He is exiled to Earth in the 20th century, after first undergoing a forced regeneration (transforming him from Patrick Troughton to Jon Pertwee). His knowledge of time-space travel is removed from his mind, and his TARDIS is rendered inoperable, except by remote control from Gallifrey. In this way, the Doctor is forced to act as the High Council's agent.

Returning to Earth, he signs on as scientific advisor with UNIT (United Nations Intelligence Taskforce), a semi-military organization devoted to protecting Earth from alien invasion. (By the way, the UNIT adventures do *not* take place during the era in which they were first broadcast. In several stories, it is said to be the early 1980s.)

## INFERNO (7 parts)

Airdates: May 9—June 20, 1970

Writer: David Houghton

Director: Douglas Camfield

Guest Cast: Olaf Pooley, Christopher Benjamin, Ian Fairburn, Walter Randall, Sheila Dunn, Derek Newark.

A top secret deep-drilling project, which threatens to destroy the Earth by explosion, is also turning humans into beings called Primords. Accidentally transported to a parallel Earth, the Doctor witnesses its destruction, but escapes to prevent our own Earth's doom, by battling the power-crazed head of the project, Professor Stahlman (Pooley).

## THE CLAWS OF AXOS (4 parts)

Airdates: March 13—April 3, 1971

Writers: Bob Baker, Dave Martin

Director: Michael Ferguson

Guest Cast: Peter Bathurst, Paul Grist, Fernanda Marlowe, Derek Ware, Donald Hewlett, David Savile, Bernard Holley.

An alien spaceship lands on Earth with a crew of seemingly friendly, golden humanoids. But the Doctor discovers they are actually organically grown parts of the vessel itself, a living creature called Axos which has allied itself with the Master, a renegade megalomaniacal Time Lord and the Doctor's old enemy. Axos' nutrient fuel is exhausted and it plans to stay until its supplies are replenished—by absorbing all living energy on Earth.

## COLONY IN SPACE (6 parts)

Airdates: April 10—May 15, 1971

Writer: Malcolm Hulke

Director: Michael Briant

Guest Cast: David Webb, Sheila Grant, John Line, John Ringham, Mitzi Webster, Nicholas Pennell, Helen Worth, Roy Skelton, Bernard Kay, Morris Perry, Tony Caunter, John Herrington, Stanley McGeach, Pat Gorman, Roy Heyman, Norman Atkyns.

Some 500 years in the future, colonists and mineralogists feud over land rights on a primitive planet. Meanwhile, the Master schemes to gain control of the Doomsday Machine hidden in the ruins of an ancient civilization. The Doctor is dispatched by the Time Lord Council to prevent the Master from blackmailing the galaxy.

## THE DAY OF THE DALEKS (4 parts)

Airdates: January 1—22, 1972

Writer: Louis Marks

Director: Paul Bernard

Guest Cast: Wilfrid Carter, Rick Lester, John Scott Martin, Anna Barry, Jimmy Winston, Scott Fredericks, Valentine Palmer.

In the 22nd Century, Earth has been conquered by the Daleks, soulless machine-like beings. Rebel humans make a time-trip to the 20th Century to assassinate Sir Reginald Styles (Carter), a move they believe will change history and prevent the Dalek conquest. The Doctor must battle his oldest foes and convince the rebels that they will only cause the catastrophe they seek to prevent by murdering Styles.

## THE SEA DEVILS (6 parts)

Airdates: February 26—April 1, 1972

Writer: Malcolm Hulke

Director: Michael Briant

Guest Cast: Clive Morton, Royston Tickner, Edwin Richfield, Alec Wallis, Terry Walsh, Brian Justice, Jane Murphy, Hugh Fletcher, Declan Mulholland, Eric Mason, Donald Sumpter, Martin Boddey.

After an abortive attempt to conquer the Earth, the Master has been exiled to a remote island.

Unknown to the Doctor, or Earth authorities, the Master and his warden, Colonel Trenchard (Morton), are aiding a colony of Sea Devils, a lizard-like race which once ruled the Earth and now seek to regain control—unless the Doctor can stop them.

## THE MUTANTS (6 parts)

Airdates: April 8—May 13, 1972

Writers: Bob Baker, Dave Martin

Director: Christopher Barry

Guest Cast: Paul Whitsun-Jones, Geoffrey Palmer, Garrick Magon, John Hollis, Christopher Coll, Rick James, James Mellor, George Pravda, John Scott Martin.

Once again, the Time Lord Council sends the Doctor and Jo into the future—to Skybase One, a giant space station orbiting the planet Solon. A mysterious plague is mutating the Solonians into monsters. The Doctor discovers that Skybase's commander, the Marshal (Whitsun-Jones), is attempting to make Solon habitable for humans by oxygenating the atmosphere—and thus also making the planet deadly to the natives. The Time Lord and Earth scientist Sondergaard (Hollis) seek a cause and cure for the mutations.

## THE TIME MONSTER (6 parts)

Airdates: May 20—June 24, 1972

Writer: Robert Sloman

Director: Paul Bernard

Guest Cast: Wanda Moore, Ian Collier, John Wyse, Neville Barber, Barry Ashton, Donald Eccles, Aidan Murphy, Marc Boyle, George Comack, Ingrid Pitt, Susan Penhaligon, Michael Walker, Derek Murcott, Dave Prowse, Ingrid Bower.

Disguised as Professor Thascales, the Master is working on a new form of time travel, in order to visit Atlantis *before* its destruction and steal the Crystal of Kronos. Possession of the Crystal would allow the renegade Time Lord to control Kronos (Boyle), an entity which lives and feeds on time itself. The Doctor and Jo are unable to prevent the Master from gaining the Crystal and using it to destroy Atlantis.

## THE THREE DOCTORS (4 parts)

Airdates: Dec. 30, 1972—Jan. 20, 1973

Writers: Bob Baker, Dave Martin

Director: Lennie Mayne

Guest Cast: William Hartnell, Patrick Troughton, Stephen Thorne, Graham Leaman, Clyde Pollitt, Roy Purcell, Laurie Webb, Patricia Pryor, Rex Robinson, Denys Palmer.

Threatened by an energy drain through a black hole, the Time Lords seek the Doctor's help. When the problem appears so enormous that he cannot handle it alone, they permit the Doctor's previous selves (Hartnell, Troughton) to cross

memories—and definite opinions—about each actress. "I would never be so bold as to criticize any of them, because actors don't criticize each other," Pertwee begins. "It would be disastrous if we did. Nobody would work with anybody else.

"Technically, they were all utterly, utterly different. Caroline John is, I'm sure, a first class National Theater actress, though I didn't think she was right in *Doctor Who*. She wasn't quite the right physical stature.

The sort of companion the Doctor needs should fit the 'Mary Pickford' syndrome—the 'Help, help, I'm strapped to the railway line' thing. And, therefore, I needed little, very feminine people—as Lis and Katy are—because they're easier to pick up and rescue. I was a protective Doctor. The cloak was symbolic of the mother hen, taking the chicks under the wing for protection. I used the cloak that way with Katy and Lis."

Comparing the two, Pertwee adds, "Lis is

by far the better actress. She's a knockout. If she's able to give the impression she did, playing such an awful character—someone who rushes around, hiding, crying 'Help, help,' and always getting into trouble—and come out as perhaps the most popular companion, that's a *real* accomplishment. It's a very difficult role to play and come out of it well.

"But Katy had a sort of magic, and there would be days when she would be positively brilliant! She had this incredible face, with



into his timeline and aid him. The three discover the danger is being caused by yet another Time Lord, Omega (Thorne), who has been trapped in an anti-matter universe for thousands of years. (At the conclusion, the Time Lords lift the exile sentence on the Doctor, freeing him to once more roam time and space).

#### **CARNIVAL OF MONSTERS** (4 parts)

Airdates: January 27—February 17, 1973

Writer: Robert Holmes

Director: Barry Letts

Guest Cast: Stuart Fell, Michael Wisher, Terence Lodge, Cheryl Hall, Leslie Dwyer, Ter-niel Evans, Andrew Staines, Ian Marter, Jenny McCracken, Peter Halliday.

Promising Jo a trip to Metebelis 3, the famous blue planet, the Doctor instead seems to land the TARDIS on a cargo ship in the Indian Ocean. But that is not their true location. The Doctor soon discovers they are trapped in a cosmic peepshow, containing creatures and environments from around the galaxy—including, unfortunately, the savage Drashigs. The Doctor and Jo must escape the Carnival *without* releasing the Drashigs.

#### **THE GREEN DEATH** (6 parts)

Airdates: May 19—June 23, 1973

Writer: Robert Sloman

Director: Michael Briant

Guest Cast: Stewart Bevan, Jerome Willis, John Scott Martin, Ben Howard, Tony Adams, Mostyn Evans, Tal-fryn Thomas, Roy Evans, John Dearth, John Rolfe, Richard Beale, Mitzi McKenzie, Roy Skelton.

Two sides are drawn up when Global Chemicals decides to build a refinery in the Welsh village of Llanfairfach. The villagers are delighted, but Professor Clifford Jones (Bevan) and fellow commune members are appalled. A strange death brings UNIT into the picture and the Doctor discovers a swarm of giant green maggots and green slime in the plant's waste—both fatal to the touch. The plant director (Willis) refuses to discuss the matter, because he is controlled by Global's master computer, BOSS (Dearth). At the story's conclusion, Jo Grant marries Professor Jones and leaves UNIT. The Doctor gives her a blue crystal from Metebelis 3.

#### **THE TIME WARRIOR** (4 parts)

Airdates: Dec. 15, 1973—Jan. 5, 1974

Writer: Robert Holmes

Director: Alan Bromly

Guest Cast: Kevin Lindsay, David Daker, John J. Carney, Sheila Fay, Donald Pelmear, June Brown, Alan Rowe, Gordon Pitt, Jeremy Bulloch.

Linx (Lindsay), a Sontaran warrior, crashlands in the England of the Middle Ages. To repair his ship and return to the Sontarans' endless war with the Rutans, Linx makes a deal with the robber chief Irongron (Daker), providing him with firearms, centuries before their invention. Meanwhile, the Sontaran is kidnapping scientists from

these wonderful eyes and this mouth like safe door. If you dissected Katy Manning then she hadn't anything, but put he together and she's one of the most wonderful sexual bundles which has ever existed. An she wore 'gear' like the minis.

"All three were great in their own way an... all different, thank heavens! It made it so much more exciting to work with different people who had different attitudes."

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the 20th Century to help in repairing his ship. The Doctor investigates for UNIT and time travels to the Middle Ages with a stowaway, journalist Sarah Jane Smith.

#### **DEATH TO THE DALEKS** (4 parts)

Airdates: February 23—March 16, 1974

Writer: Terry Nation

Director: Michael Briant

Guest Cast: Arnold Yarrow, Roy Heymann, Duncan Lamont, John Abineri, Julian Fox, Joy Harrison, Neil Seiler, Mostyn Evans, Steven Ismay.

When a deadly plague spreads throughout the galaxy, a strange collection of creatures gathers on Exxilon, source of the only known cure. The Exxilons have rejected all technology, since being expelled by their automated city. The Doctor and Sarah arrive, the TARDIS drained of power by the City, and are caught up in a struggle for the antidote among Exxilons, humans and Daleks.

#### **THE MONSTER OF PELADON** (6 parts)

Airdates: March 23—April 27, 1974

Writer: Brian Hayles

Director: Lennie Mayne

Guest Cast: Ralph Watson, Donald Gee, Gerald Taylor, Nina Thomas, Frank Gatliff, Michael Crane, Stuart Fell, Ysanne Churchman, Terry Walsh, Rex Robinson, Graeme Eton, Nick Hobbs, Roy Evans, Sonny Caldinez, Alan Bennion.

The Doctor returns to the site of a previous adventure, the planet Peladon, 50 years after his first visit. He finds that his old friend King Pelador is dead but that Pelador's daughter, Thalira (Thomas), is Queen. The Peladon monster, the Aggedor (Hobbs), is once more on the rampage, spurred on by renegade Ice Warriors, who wish to seize Peladon's mineral wealth.

#### **PLANET OF SPIDERS** (6 parts)

Airdates: May 4—June 8, 1974

Writer: Robert Sloman

Director: Barry Letts

Guest Cast: Richard Franklin, John Dearth, Terence Lodge, Cyril Sharp, Kevin Lindsay, John Kane, Ralph Arliss, Geoffrey Morris, Joanna Monro, Gareth Hunt, Jenny Laird, Maureen Morris, George Cormack.

Jo Grant's wedding gift, the blue crystal of Metebelis 3, is vitally important to the planet's spiders. Sending an emissary to recover it, they are discovered by ex-UNIT Captain Mike Yates (Franklin), who alerts UNIT and the Doctor. The Time Lord and Sarah are transported to

**Pertwee poses with predecessors Patrick Troughton (left) and the late William Hartnell during taping of the 1973 episode "The Three Doctors."**



Metebelis 3, where they must confront the Queen Spider and her gigantic mutated mistress, the Great One (Maureen Morris). Mortally wounded, the Doctor returns to Earth, to undergo his third regeneration.

**Producers:** Derrick Sherwin ("Inferno" only), Barry Letts

#### **CAST:**

**The Doctor:** Jon Pertwee

**Liz Shaw** ("Inferno"): Caroline John

**Jo Grant** ("The Claws of Axos" through "The Green Death"): Katy Manning

**Sarah Jane Smith** ("The Time Warrior" through

"Planet of the Spiders"): Elisabeth Sladen

**Brigadier Alastair Lethbridge-Stewart:**

Nicholas Courtney

**Captain Mike Yates:** Richard Franklin

**Sergeant Benton:** John Levene

**The Master:** Roger Delgado



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# Pertwee

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## Who's Stunts

Pertwee's memories of the SF series include more than the people, they also include the stunts. More than any other Doctor, Pertwee's character was a man of action, reflecting the actor's own fascination with danger and fast moving vehicles. In fact, one of the most memorable vehicles of the Pertwee era, nicknamed the "Whomobile," actually belongs to Pertwee! A saucer-shaped auto, with hidden wheels, the actor had it specially constructed, not only to drive on *Doctor Who*, but for his own personal use as well.

"I've always been an adventurous bugger," Pertwee laughs, "much to my producers' horror, because I used to insist on doing all my own stunts, except falls. I wouldn't do falls, because if I broke a leg, then I would put everyone out of business."

"But in a question of, say, roaring a motorbike across a field with Jo Grant on the back, well—Katy would go anywhere with me, because she was so blind she couldn't see anything anyway. She would just put her arms around me and hang on!

"Sometimes it could get quite riotous, because Barry Letts, the producer, wouldn't ever let me have time to learn. He would just say, 'Oh, Jon can drive or fly anything.' Once, I drove a hovercraft in 'Planet of the Spiders' for a very hysterical sequence. I had exactly one hour's practice with it and I wiped out three camera crews trying to get through this gap, where I had to leap the thing over a tramp eating lunch."

**"I was a protective Doctor. The cloak was symbolic of the mother hen."**

Sometimes, Pertwee performing his own stunts led to unforeseen circumstances. For example, there was the time when he ran down a stuntman. "Because I'm not a professional stuntman and used to stopping a car dead on the button," the actor begins, "it frequently *wouldn't* stop dead on the button and I would go powering on and hit oil drums or something. Once, in a story called 'Inferno,' there was a great chase sequence, in which I was driving the roadster, 'Bessie', being chased by the Army. The script called for one fellow, a dear friend of mine named Allen Chance, to leap out in front of me. And I asked, 'What do you want me to do?'

"And he said, 'You barrel along and I'll jump out of the way at the last minute.'

"Are you sure?" I said. "You don't want me to brake?"

"No, don't do that," he answered, "because I won't be able to time it."

"So, I went shooting down at him about 60

miles an hour, keeping it steady. He was supposed to jump out of the way—and he didn't! CRACK! I hit him! You can imagine how I felt: he was a dear friend and I hit him with a bumper at 60 miles an hour on his shinbone. It threw him in a ditch, and I came out of the car and was nearly sick. He kept saying to everyone else, 'Take Jon away, take him away. He'll get upset.'

"Anyway, they took Allen off to a hospital and cut his boot off. The collision had opened him up, practically from ankle to knee and he had 27 stitches put in his leg. But he put his leg in a plastic bag, put another boot on, and came back to the set again, because he thought I would be worried! After lunch, he hobbled around, saying, 'Oh, I can stand.' Well, he fell over after 10 minutes, and they took him home. But he didn't want to upset me. He tried to work with 27 stitches!"

Pertwee returned to the series to do his turn as the Doctor in the BBC's 20th anniversary special, which was also broadcast in the United States. How did it feel to return to a role after nearly 10 years? "It's a question that's inevitably asked, isn't it? And it's an unanswerable question, really, because an actor's only doing a job," Pertwee replies. "Say, for example, you're a reporter on the *Boston Globe*, and you leave to become a reporter in San Francisco, and a little while later, you go home to Boston. Someone asks you, 'What's it like going back to being a reporter on the *Boston Globe*?' You would say, 'Just like any other job, just like any other day.' Being an actor is being an actor. I know how to play the Doctor, so if you asked me 20 years from now, I would be a bit slower, but I could still play it."

"Being in the anniversary special was an enormous joy. I was working with Pat [Troughton] and Peter [Davison] and masses of old friends, which was a wonderful experience. It became very difficult for the director, however, simply because we laughed so much. We behaved disgracefully throughout the entire production."

On an American tour, in part to promote the release of 14 of his *Who* adventures to U.S. television by Lionheart Television International (STARLOG #76), Pertwee is struck by the intense enthusiasm of American fans. "I think it's because they're SF buffs, much more than we British are," he ventures as an explanation. "You Americans have always been science-fiction fans, buying SF magazines and books long before we were. The United States would be a wonderful place to film a *Doctor Who* story. The Lionheart representative said that they might be interested in putting up the money for location filming of a *Who* story here with the studio work done, as usual, back in London."

The blue eyes twinkle at the thought. Perhaps in the back of his mind, Jon Pertwee is considering being a part of that production, should it ever happen. After all, for a whole generation of British fans, and for a coming generation of Americans, his "science-fiction James Bond" interpretation *is* the Doctor! ★