



Doctor Who, alias Richard E. Grant, in animated form

Doctor Who takes over in cyberspace

DOCTOR WHO fans will take over the internet this lunch-time when Richard E. Grant materialises as the ninth time-lord in an animated adventure (Adam Sherwin writes).

The character is being preserved in cyberspace until a full television regeneration next year with Grant one of the names tipped for the title role. The first episode of *The Scream of the Shalka* can be downloaded at 12.30am from the BBCi website and five further episodes will be released on following Thursdays.

The British animation company Cosgrove Hall has created the series, which also features the voices of Sir Derek Jacobi, Diana Quick and Sophie Okonedo as the Doctor's assistant. Grant described his Doctor as "something of a Sherlock Holmes in space".

The cyberspace series was created as a way of keeping *Doctor Who* fans across the world happy while plans are hatched for a BBC One return. Bill Nighy and Eddie Izzard are also being considered for the title role.

BBC Worldwide, the corporation's commercial wing, is pressing on with plans for a feature film, possibly starring Paul McGann. The 40th anniversary of *Doctor Who* will be marked at the House of Commons with a reception attended by Daleks and Cybermen.

Written by the science fiction novelist Paul Cornwell, the animated series sees the Doctor battle the Shalka, a snake-like alien species with a deadly scream. It can be viewed at www.bbc.co.uk/doctorwho