

Diggin' For GOLD

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NO KNOWN CURE

BBC Radiophonic Workshop/Brenda And Johnny Doctor Who/This Can't Be Love

(Decca F 11837, first pressing with unboxed Decca logo, 7", 1964) £30

Eric Winstone And His Orchestra Dr Who/Pony Express

(Pye 7N 15603, 7", 1964) £18

BBC Radiophonic Workshop/Brenda And Johnny Doctor Who/This Can't Be Love

(Decca F 11837, reissue with boxed Decca logo, 7", 1972) £10

BBC Radiophonic Workshop Dr Who/Reg

(BBC RESL 11, p/s, blue/white label 7", 1973) £10/£6

Mankind Dr Who/Time Traveller

(Motor MTR 001/12, blue 12", 1973) £10 each

(Pinnacle PIN 71-12, green 12", 1973) £10 each

Don Harper's Homo Electronicus World Of Sport/Dr Who

(Columbia DB 9023, 7" 1973) £6

Peter Howell And The BBC Radiophonic Workshop Doctor Who/The Astronauts

(BBC RESL 80, Tom Baker p/s, 7", 1980) £8

Peter Howell And The BBC Radiophonic Workshop Doctor Who/The Astronauts

(BBC RESL 80, Peter Davison p/s, 7", 1982) £8

Peter Howell And The BBC Radiophonic Workshop Doctor Who/The Astronauts

(BBC RESL 80, Colin Baker p/s, 7", 1984) £5

Dominic Glynn Doctor Who/Doctor Who (Cosmic Remix)

(BBC RESL 193, 12", 1986) £3

The Timelords Doctorin' The Tardis (Radio)/Doctorin' The Tardis (Minimal)

(KLF 003 P, car-shaped picture disc 7", 1988) £15

Doctorin' The Tardis (Radio)/Doctorin' The Tardis (Minimal)/Doctorin' The Tardis (Club Mix)/Doctorin' The Tardis (Video)

(KLF CD 003, CD Video, 1988) £15

Celebrating its 50th anniversary last November, *Doctor Who* continues to dominate the UK's TV landscape and is building on its gently escalating worldwide appeal. Almost an overnight success, thanks to the notorious Daleks appearing in the show's second story, it was inevitable that the BBC's emerging appetite for brand extensions in the 60s would lead to an early single release for the famous theme created by Delia Derbyshire and Ron Grainer.

The first issue, on Decca, arrived in record stores early in 1964, and was rather extraordinarily backed by *This Can't Be Love*, a reworking of the Rodgers & Hart track from the 1938 musical *The Boys From Syracuse*, by (it's believed) session singers Brenda And Johnny. Little is known of the pair and it's likely that the track was simply lurking in the Decca archives with no obvious outlet; the duo remain among the most mysterious of the Doctor's many companions...

Decca also released the single in Australia sometime during that decade, and it appears to have remained on the label's catalogue for years in the UK, with multiple pressings, including a 1972 reissue that featured Decca's new logo. There's also some rather nice sheet music, released in 1964 to accompany the theme, sporting photos of the first Doctor and the early TARDIS crew.

The first *Doctor Who* picture sleeve didn't actually arrive until 1973, this time on the BBC's own imprint. But despite Jon Pertwee being the first actor to gain widespread recognition in the role, it was the TARDIS that graced the sleeve. The flipside to this release was a jaunty Paddy Kingsland composition called *Reg*, from the BBC's legendary Radiophonic Workshop. It wasn't until 1980, and Peter Howell's radical reinterpretation of the theme music, that a Doctor was actually given pride of place – and it was Tom Baker, in his final season, who was afforded that honour.

None of these regular theme releases (and there were at least six before Howell's arrangement) troubled the UK charts, but disco act Mankind had famously peaked at No 28 in early 1979 with their reworking of the tune, which came on blue or green coloured vinyl, on the Motor and Pinnacle imprints respectively. The Eric Winstone Orchestra had also released its version of the theme on Pye in 1964, which now commands a surprising amount for a decent copy. Don Harper's *Homo Electronicus* included its take on the theme as the flip to a 1973 recording of Harper's own theme for *World Of Sport* – only the 7"

found itself banned because of the group's name. (Harper had history with *Dr Who*, having previously penned the incidental music for the 1968 Cybermen epic, *The Invasion*.)

Peter Davison's incarnation of the Doctor graced the sleeve for a 1982 reissue of the Peter Howell/Radiophonic Workshop theme, backed again by Howell's composition *The Astronauts*, while 1984 saw Colin Baker front another reissue for his relatively short-lived time in the role. And as the decade of multiple releases gathered pace, so *Doctor Who* themes emerged in ever-increasing variants. The days of the 7" were numbered, however, and Colin Baker remains the last Doctor to appear on a regular picture sleeve; the 12" release of Dominic Glynn's treatment, in late 1986, was housed in an impressive hologram TARDIS console sleeve.

By the end of the decade, the TV theme tune 7", once a record store regular, had had its day. The *Doctor Who* theme's true chart swansong was, however, certainly a grand one, with future KLF hitmakers The Timelords topping the charts for one week in June 1988 with *Doctorin' The Tardis*, a heady mash-up of Gary Glitter and Grainer's theme, laced with a dose of *The Sweet* and DJ Steve Walsh, who was to die the very next month. This release came in the standard 7" and 12" formats of the time, along with a car-shaped picture disc, but rather rarer is the CD-V single edition, which can fetch up to £30.

All told, the *Doctor Who* theme wasn't quite the successful chart invader one might have expected: it was simply too steady a seller over the decades to ever truly have a chance of chart entry. Other hit theme tunes over the same time period tended to accompany a short-run series – such as Nana Mouskouri's 1986 *No 2 Only Love*, from *Mistral's Daughter*, or 1981's *Chi Mai*, featured in *The Life & Times Of David Lloyd George* and scored by Ennio Morricone – when public interest was concentrated into a brief period of time.

Doctor Who started to lose its widespread appeal by the end of the decade, and the show was put out to pasture in 1989. Fan support and its prevalence in British culture meant it never truly went away, however, and the show's 21st-century regeneration was a television triumph, meaning that collectables from the original series soon started to soar in value once more. The theme tune is truly just the beginning for Who hunters – there are dozens of novelty releases and broader soundtracks to explore. But, as the good Doctor himself might say, that's something for another space and time... **Mark Elliott**

