

TRY ME!

BETTE DAVIS: Betrayed by her daughter



Yours

ISSUE 41 // August 2021

RETRO

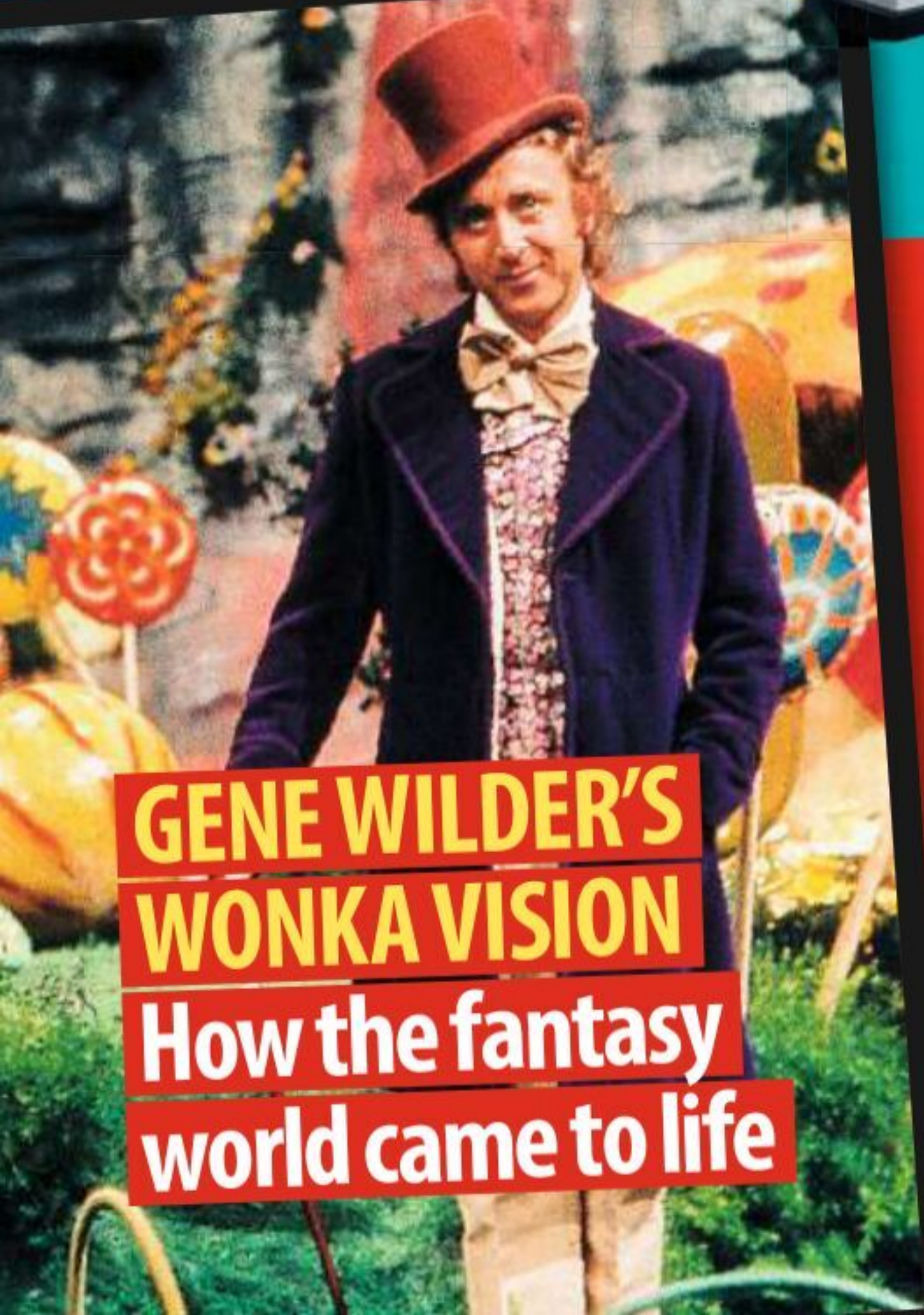
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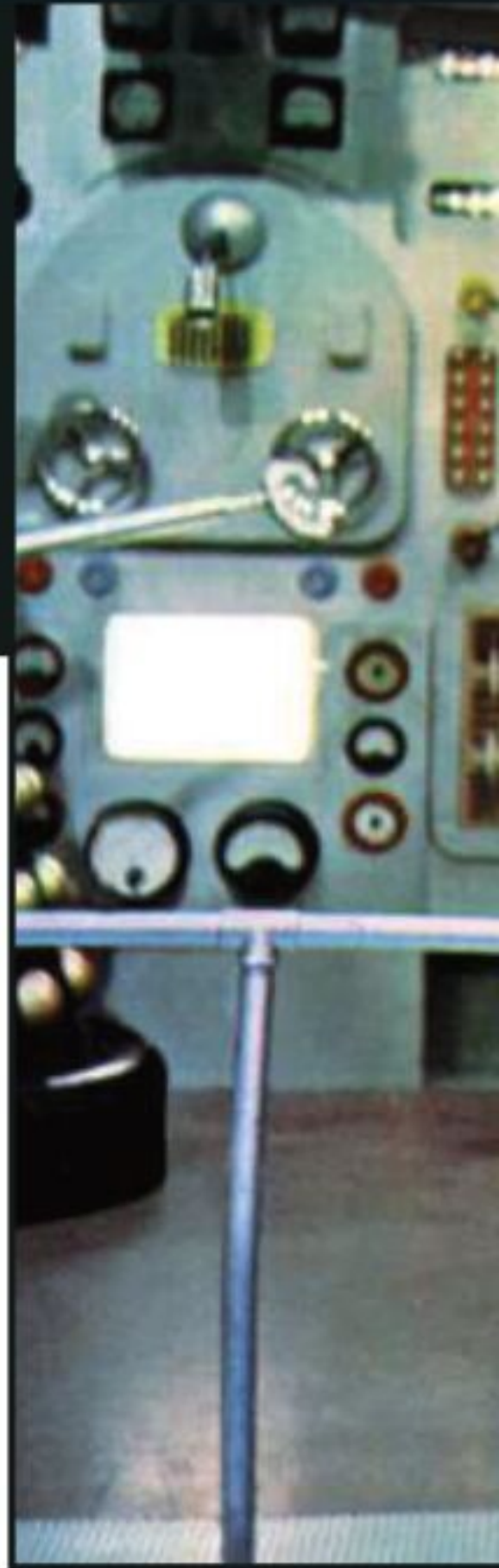


Peter Cushing found fame as a vampire slayer and as Sherlock, but it was another heroic icon that would earn him a new audience, reveals Doctor Who superfan David Reid

Daleks invade cinema



Four generations of Dalek re-enact their Sixties invasion (above). Right: Cushing, Tovey and Andrew Keir as freedom fighter Wyler, in the 1966 film.



In 1963 the Daleks propelled the BBC's new sci-fi show Doctor Who from obscurity into the limelight. The sinister alien pepper pot-shaped cyborgs captured imaginations and Dalekmania gripped Britain. A second Dalek serial followed, along with a vast array of merchandise. Writer Terry Nation and the BBC licensed the concept for the cinema and, in August 1965, theatres were packed with fans excited to see Doctor Who battle his arch enemies in glorious colour.

William Hartnell was still portraying The Doctor on television, which would remain strictly in black and white in the UK for another two years, and the cantankerous time traveller's origins were still mysterious. Amicus Productions, which bought the rights for up to three pictures, wanted to sell the movies around the world, aiming especially at the children's market. Scriptwriter-



Dr. Who and the Daleks (1965)

Travelling in the TARDIS time machine, Dr. Who, his granddaughters and Ian Chesterton accidentally arrive in a barren world, where they team up with the peaceful Thals to defeat the evil Daleks.

Daleks' Invasion Earth 2150 A.D (1966)

Dr. Who and his companions arrive in 22nd Century London to find the Daleks have invaded Earth and are converting people into robomen while also running a mysterious mining operation.



William Hartnell as the original television Time Lord with Carole Ann Ford as his granddaughter and companion, Susan.

producer Milton Subotsky decided to re-imagine the material to ensure a U-certificate and to avoid confusing international audiences who had never heard of Doctor Who.

While the plot would remain close to the original 1963 serial, in this version, the main character would

be an elderly human scientist actually called Dr. Who, and his granddaughter, Susan would be 10 years old to appeal to younger viewers. Barbara and Ian – both school teachers in the regular programme – would become the Doctor's older granddaughter and her boyfriend. It was also decided a more well-known star was required.

Peter Cushing was at the height of his fame in the mid-Sixties. The south London-born actor's distinguished career had already spanned repertory theatre, supporting roles in Hollywood

and acclaim as a leading man in many early BBC productions, when he was approached by Hammer pictures to star in *The Curse of Frankenstein* (1957). Cushing's dark, unhinged take on the title role was the first of many that would make him an icon of Horror.

Ironically, unlike his great friend and regular co-star Christopher Lee, Cushing never played monsters. In a 1964 interview he said: "People look at me as if I were some sort of monster, but I can't think why. In my macabre pictures, I have either been a monster-maker or a monster-destroyer, but never a monster. Actually, I'm a gentle fellow. Never harmed a fly. I love animals, and when I'm in the country I'm a keen bird-watcher."

Certainly, his appearances as the likes of vampire slayer Van Helsing, Sherlock Holmes and his acclaimed portrayal of Winston Smith in the BBC's live production of Orwell's *1984* (1954) made him a perfect choice for Doctor Who. He had also recently starred in two Amicus films – *Dr Terror's House of Horrors* and *The Skull* (both 1965). The former, the first of five 'anthology' Horror movies made by the company, also starred all-round entertainer, Roy Castle. Subotsky, noting the good chemistry between Cushing and Castle, cast Castle as Who's companion Ian. But while the TV Ian Chesterton was a serious, heroic figure, Castle's version was played for laughs as a clumsy buffoon.

Peter Cushing meanwhile, would, like William Hartnell, play the Doctor as older but while the TV Doctor was abrasive, impatient and sometimes sly, Cushing's is more gentle, kinder eccentric, with an offbeat sense of humour. Jennie Linden who played Barbara was also no stranger to Horror movies, having co-starred in Hammer's *Nightmare* the year before.

New, bigger Daleks were built for the film, finished in various bright colours and with larger dome-lights than the TV originals. This caused problems at the editing stage as ➤

director Gordon Flemyng had failed to realise they were supposed to flash in time with the Daleks' speech. The director's pragmatic approach with 11-year-old Roberta Tovey, who played Susan, was more successful: he offered her a shilling for every time she could do a scene in one take. This earned her the nickname One Take Tovey – and 21 shillings.

Upon its release *Dr. Who and the Daleks* was a big hit in Britain. With higher production values than the TV series, the film has the feel of a living comic strip with over-the-top bright and intense colours.

EXTERMINATION

A second film went into production almost straight away. *Daleks' Invasion Earth 2150 A.D.* – based on Terry Nation's second BBC serial – saw the return of Peter Cushing and Roberta Tovey. However, Roy Castle and Jennie Linden were unavailable, so Milton Subotsky wrote two new characters – Dr. Who's niece Louise was played by Jill Curzon while Bernard Cribbins co-starred as Tom Campbell, a policeman who accidentally stumbles into the TARDIS after mistaking it for a real police box.

While still there to provide a comedy element, Cribbins' slapstick is toned down from Castle's rather frequent over-the-top pratfalls. In fact, the second film is a much darker, more violent, grittier affair. Many children had complained that

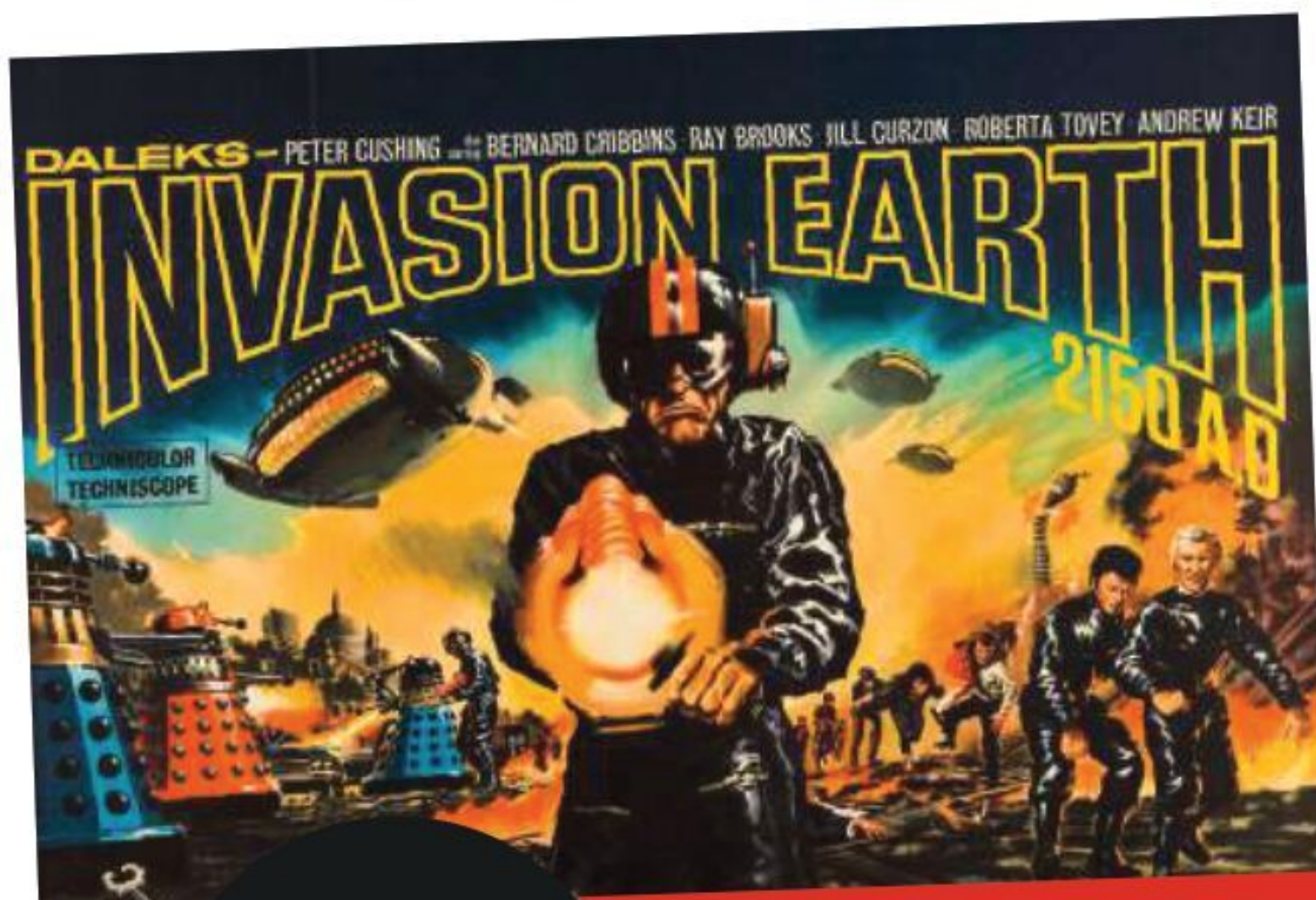


Roberta Tovey, who played Susan, went on to appear in TV series in the Seventies and Eighties including *The Two Ronnies*.

the Daleks didn't do enough of their signature 'exterminating' in the first film and the sequel certainly makes up for that.

Released in 1966, *Daleks' Invasion Earth 2150 A.D.* didn't do as well as its predecessor so the projected third movie was abandoned. The second film is generally felt to be the better of the two – with an exciting, sustained pace, impressive visuals and excellent supporting cast.

Sadly, despite Subotsky and Amicus' best efforts neither of the movies were successful overseas, which ironically meant that the re-imagining of the source material had been unnecessary (and led to their later exclusion from official Doctor Who canon). Regardless, Peter Cushing recalled his time as Dr. Who fondly: "Those films are among my favourites because they brought me popularity with younger children. They'd say their parents didn't want to meet me in a dark alley but Dr. Who changed that. After all, he is one of the most heroic and successful parts an actor can play. That's one of the main reasons the series had such a long run on TV. I am very grateful for having been part of such a success story."



DALEKMANIA MERCHANDISE

From the mid-Sixties, hundreds of Doctor Who and Dalek toys, games and books began to appear. They vastly varied in quality but are all now highly collectable...

// *The Mechanical Dalek (by Codeg) – A clockwork, wind-up toy available with either black or blue domes.*

ORIGINAL PRICE 15/11d

NOW WORTH £300-£650



// *Cutta-mastic Doctor Who and the Daleks (by Bell toys) – sheets of polystyrene with templates and a heated tool to cut the plastic into Dalek shapes.*

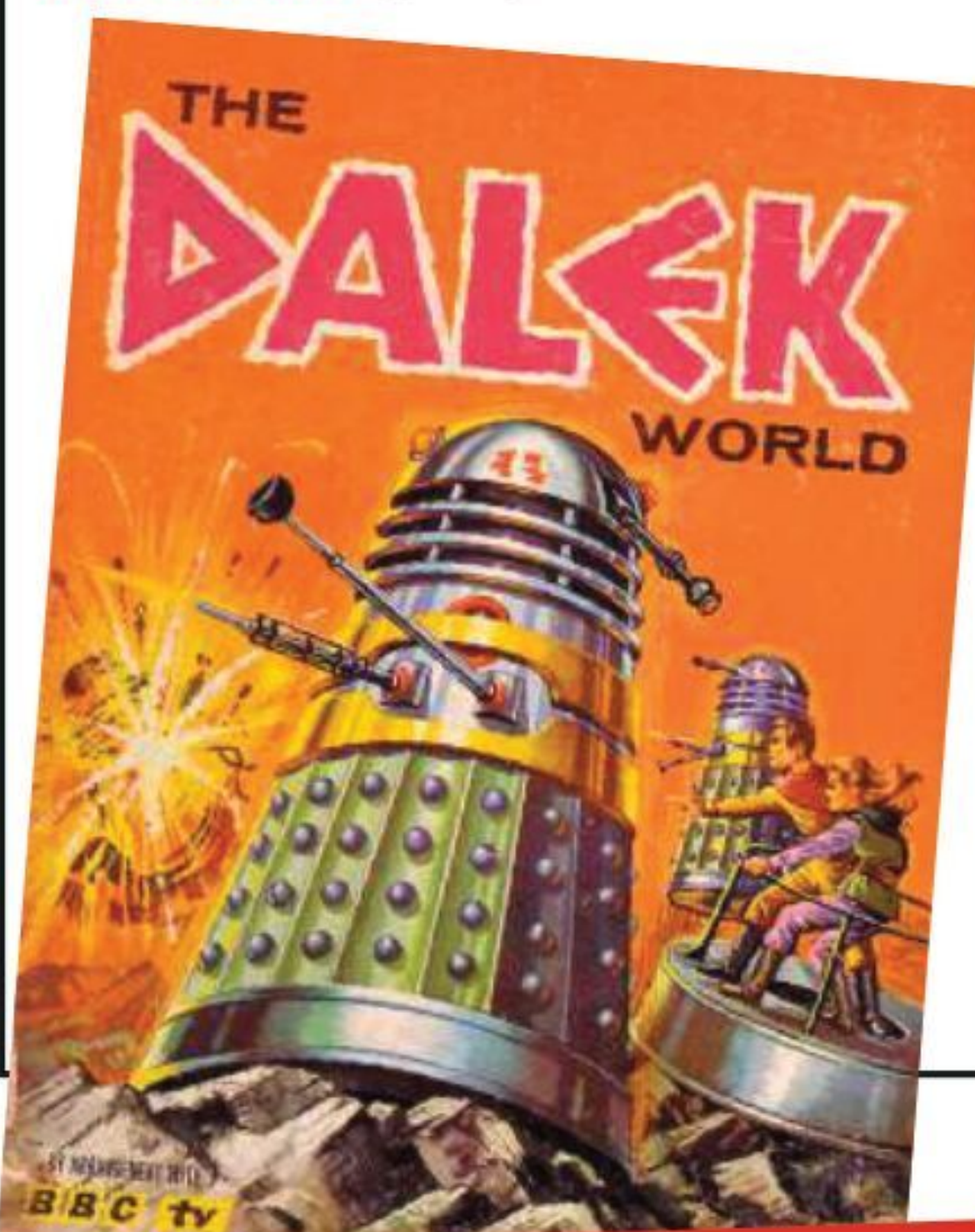
ORIGINAL PRICE £1/9/11d

NOW WORTH £75-£295

// *The Dalek World Book (Souvenir Press 1965) – the second Dalek annual co-written by Terry Nation and David Whitaker, featuring Dalek information, stories, comic strips and images from the Dr. Who and the Daleks film.*

ORIGINAL PRICE 10/6d

NOW WORTH £65-£167



DID YOU KNOW?

Terry Nation created the Daleks as totally inhuman – he didn't want them to appear as 'men dressed up'. He was inspired after seeing Georgian state dancers in long skirts who appeared to glide around the stage.



Bernard Cribbins is the only actor to have played two different Doctor Who companions: Tom Campbell and years later Wilfred Mott in the revived 2000s series.