

Cover story



What adventures await the new Doctor and her pals?

GRAHAM

The Chase host Bradley Walsh plays Graham. 'He is Ryan's step-grandad. The show's all about friendship, family and loyalty, which you see from the first episode,' he says. 'Jodie is brilliant. She's an exceptional actress and has so much energy. It was difficult keeping up with her.'

YASMIN

Mandip Gill plays the Doctor's second companion, Yasmin. 'She is a police officer who responds to Ryan's 999 call when he finds a strange alien pod, and that's how they meet the Doctor,' she says. 'The diversity in the new series is brilliant. I hope we can inspire a new generation.'

Jodie's SPACE ODYSSEY

Jodie Whittaker makes TV history as she becomes *Doctor Who's* first female Time Lord

NEW SCI-FI

Doctor Who

Sunday, BBC1 HD, 6.45pm

Jodie Whittaker's casting as the first female Doctor in *Doctor Who's* 55-year history has made plenty of headlines over the past year, but now the most-anticipated TV moment of 2018 has finally arrived.

With a fresh cast and now in a Sunday-evening slot, Whittaker is leading the well-loved sci-fi series into a new era.

After being hurled from the TARDIS following her regeneration at the end of last year's

Christmas special, the new Time Lord soon finds herself in danger in this week's opening episode – but luckily help is at hand in the form of her new friends, Graham, Yasmin and Ryan (see above).

TV&Satellite Week travelled to the show's set in Cardiff, where the 36-year-old actress told us more...

How did you find out you were cast as the Doctor?

I thought I was going for my final audition, but showrunner Chris Chibnall, who I knew from *Broadchurch*, said, 'We invited you here because you're the new Doctor!' I cried. I never thought I'd get it and it's such a big responsibility.



New series boss
Chris Chibnall



RYAN

Tosin Cole plays the Doctor's other companion, Ryan. 'Ryan has dyspraxia, which affects his co-ordination, but he's determined to make something of his life,' says Cole. 'I'd only seen a couple of episodes of *Doctor Who* before. It's been an amazing experience.'

7 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE NEW SERIES

1 The 13th Doctor has a brand-new TARDIS and a new sonic screwdriver, which she acquires in this week's first episode.

2 Jodie Whittaker helped design the Doctor's outfit with the show's costume department. 'The idea came from a photo I found on the web, though I can't remember what I searched to find it or what era it was from,' she says.

3 Alan Cumming (below) will play James I in an episode set in 17th-century England, which also involves witchcraft. *Broadchurch* and *Coronation Street* actress Julie Hesmondhalgh is rumoured to be a guest star later in the series. *Not Going Out*'s Lee Mack will also appear.



4 The second episode, *The Ghost Monument*, was filmed in South Africa. Guest stars include Shaun Dooley, Susan Lynch and Art Malik.



5 An upcoming episode will feature US civil rights heroine Rosa Parks (left), who was the leader of the famous Montgomery bus boycott in the 1950s.

6 There are still no details available, but the good news is, as ever, there will be a *Doctor Who* festive special this Christmas.

7 Sadly, for fans of the Daleks, Cybermen (below) and the notorious Weeping Angels, none of these baddies will be returning. 'We've got a new Doctor, all-new characters, all-new monsters, all-new stories,' says head writer Chris Chibnall.



Did you find it difficult to keep the secret? I had to make up excuses when I went to auditions and I couldn't even tell my family. After the big reveal last Summer, my phone just exploded, mainly with people saying, 'You lied to me!'

What can you tell us about your take on the Doctor? She's high energy. Chris knows how energetic I am, so that was written into it. The Doctor's speed of thought helps drive the scene and every episode requires a different side to her.

Were you nervous on the first day of shooting? We all were, but after you finish the first take, you think, 'Okay, this is it and I can do it.' There's a big stunt in the first

episode and I did that myself, which was great for my confidence.

Do you think it's the right time for a female Doctor? I think it's time to show children – girls and boys – that role models and heroes on screen don't all look the same. It's okay for boys to look up to a woman. But the Doctor is an alien with two hearts, not a man or a woman, so we can do what we like!

How does the Doctor react to her new body? Regeneration always comes as a bit of a shock to the Doctor, but she's open-hearted and hopeful with a child-like wonder about the way the world is, so she takes it in her stride. Unfortunately, she starts off with the old Doctor's

clothes so she doesn't feel like herself until she gets a new outfit – which I absolutely love.

Did you ask any of the previous Doctors for advice? The day before I was revealed, I called David Tennant, who I knew from *Broadchurch*. I was desperate to talk to someone about it and I could speak to him. He said, 'I knew it was going to be you!' He told me it's like nothing you'll ever do again and it goes so fast, so enjoy it.

BOX SETS

All 10 series of *Doctor Who* since 2005 are available to watch now on BBC iPlayer.



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