

More Time Lord for your money?  
We delve into the wealth of extras contained  
on the **Doctor Who** Series One box set

# Bigger Inside Than Out



Doctor Who is reviewed  
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## Ultimate DVD visits a Commentary recording for the new box set – and settles down with the director and stars

A new team at the TARDIS controls



IT'S a pleasant August Saturday and the day of the recording of the final Commentary track for the long-awaited **Doctor Who** box set, containing all 13 episodes of the wildly popular new series and a host of extras. This track is for episode seven *The Long Game*, in which the Doctor (Christopher Eccleston) and his companions Rose (Billie Piper) and Adam (Bruno Langley) arrive on Satellite 5 and discover a news-gathering collective. Reporting to The Editor (*Shaun of the Dead*'s Simon Pegg), on close examination the Doctor realizes something is seriously amiss...

The Commentary features director Brian Grant, and actors Langley and Christine Adams (information downloader Cathica), the last of whom is very excited about the prospect when she's told exactly what she's doing.

"I have a tendency to finish watching a good film and go straight on to the Director's Commentary, which actually I'm starting to realize is not always the best idea. I'm a film buff and an actor and I always like to know how directors approach something and how actors approach something."

Langley is also enthusiastic, if a little disconcerted, by the BBC's rock solid security procedures just to get into the building. His concerns are alleviated when we make it to a



### Trashing Big Ben

IN THE OPENING scenes of *Aliens of London*, a Slitheen spaceship plummets into central London, carving a hole out of the clock face of Big Ben. The effect was achieved by Mike Tucker and his team at the BBC's Model Unit.

"There are a number of reasons you can go down the miniature route," says Tucker. "It was the randomness of it – when that wing actually hits you've got things that are breaking, dust falling. You could do that in the computer, but sometimes you do want the anarchic destruction of a real life violent act taking place."

"We went to great lengths to make sure our Big Ben was as accurate as possible. There was a lot of reference, a lot of photography, a lot of visits to it to make sure the colour was right. It had to hold up to the close-up."





Captive once more in *The Long Game*

marked out 'safe area' of Television Centre, which is apparently impregnable. Relaxed, he and Adams discuss the amount of fan mail they've received since being on the show. Langley admits that he's no longer getting any mail about playing Todd on *Coronation Street* (in which he appeared for three years) but receives at least four letters a day about *Doctor Who* (in which he appeared for two episodes). Adams says she only gets a couple per week, but is worried about having the time to keep replying to them all.

During the Commentary, Grant admits to borrowing much of the style of the show from *Blade Runner*. Langley claims his character is "a bit of a wimp" and Adams thanks the quality of the lighting for her on-screen attractiveness. With the track recorded, they settle down for a supplementary chat with *Ultimate DVD*.

"It was fun!" says Adams gleefully. "It's actually nice to watch it back with the director because obviously an actor never gets to see that. Watching it with Brian, because he's seen the whole thing from beginning to end, it's quite interesting to hear his comments on certain things which as an actor you're not always aware of when you're doing it."

"I think the hard thing," Grant considers, "because there's so many DVDs out there, is somehow not to be derivative. You want to get the balance right between giving information which people who will watch this are interested

in, but not repeating yourself and not saying things that they already know. People are very educated out there now because of this technology, and people who are film buffs know what a green screen is, know what you're doing, and yet some people don't. So I think getting that balance is the trickiest bit, without sounding condescending. I always think it's important you keep a balance between the technical side of things and the character side of things and what the story's about, or my, as a director, interpretation of the story. Because somebody else directing this would have done something different."

As for his approach to this particular story, Grant insists, "Shooting's easy. Storytelling, it's always about how good or bad the script is, and then you're dealing with logistics. How much money you've got, how much time you've got. Never enough time."

"Never enough money," adds Adams.

"I always think the challenge is, you've got a resource, how do you use it wisely? I think I mentioned in the DVD Commentary that the house [Adam's house at the story's conclusion] is just two [wooden] flats because we didn't need to build any more than that.

"When you're a visiting director, it's all about making the episode work on its own and making it work in the series, that's always the hard bit. Even though they're individual stories there's got to be some sort of consistency within them. That's always the tricky bit, especially if you



Masked horror

## I Want My Mummy

IN *THE EMPTY CHILD* and *The Doctor Dances*, wartime London is plagued by an alien nano-virus that is rewriting the DNA of humans. Literally their faces contort and twist into a rubbery gas mask. The horrific effect was achieved in CG by Chris Petts from *The Mill*.

"I'm from a biology background so I tend to think of things in a literal way," he says. "So if somebody's going to turn into a gas mask I want to know which bits are going to turn into what. So the obvious thing is to make the eyeballs turn into the lenses, and the eyelids turn into the lens holders, and then the lips would form into the main snout, and the tongue would push out and form the grille."

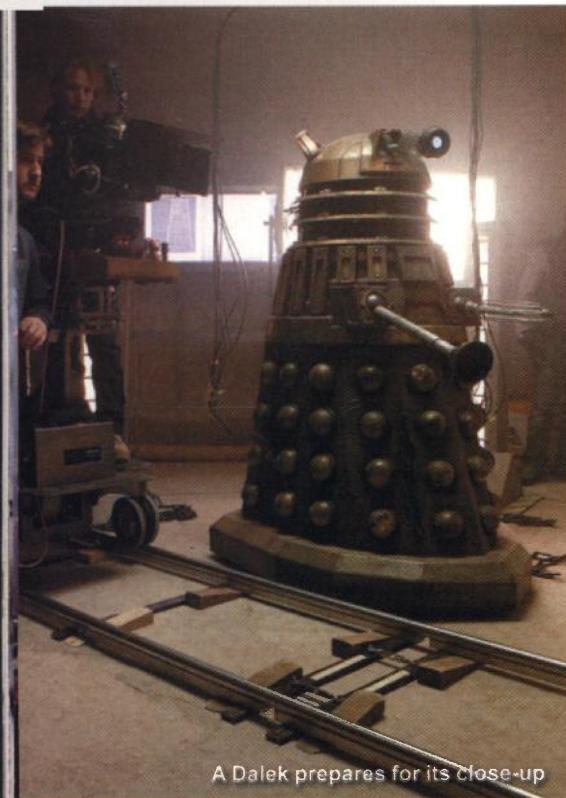


On set with Christine Adams and Christopher Eccleston



Adams, Grant and Langley





A Dalek prepares for its close-up

haven't created it, that's where the work really comes from. Shooting's easy. I'm a cameraman. I can shoot with my eyes closed."

"What stuff were you the cameraman on?" chips in an interested Langley.

"Lots of stuff in the '70s. Lots of high concept stuff as well. Anything from documentaries to dramas, and lots of music videos in the Eighties."

"Really? Oh, wicked!" responds the actor. If anyone's keeping track, Grant's CV includes videos for The Bee Gees, Whitney Houston, Duran Duran, David Bowie, Spandau Ballet and Peter Gabriel, to name only a few.

As for the people he's been working with recently, Grant describes his *Long Game* cast as, "Fantastic!"

"That was a really good cast actually," agrees Adams. "I'm not speaking about myself, but great actors doing what they do really well."

"You never really wanna be the one that lets the side down. You've gotta push it," adds Langley. "It does make you raise your game," continues Adams. "I mean, firstly Christopher Eccleston, and then Simon Pegg, Tamsin Greig [the Nurse]."

"It's quite hard to know how to come in and where to pitch it because you don't know how everyone is playing their regular characters. I didn't know how Chris had been playing it, I didn't know how Billie had been playing it, so you're trying to pitch it at exactly the right level so it doesn't come across as camp or something. do you know what I mean? I think some of the original *Doctor Who* was quite camp, and this isn't."

"I think I put a bit of that campness back," admits Langley sheepishly, making everyone burst out laughing.

With the campness gone, the scariness has been back in force in the new series. All of them

**"One episode was really horrific... the World War II story with the gas masks"**

saw at least some of the other episodes of the season, and Adams says, "I would have been behind the sofa. Obviously not so much this episode, but there was one episode in particular that I thought was really horrific, which was the World War II episode with the masks, you know? Everyone becoming the gas mask, did you see that? I thought that was genuinely horrific actually. But I couldn't really cower because I was watching it with a 10-year-old boy and he was completely fine about it and I just thought, 'I can't cower in the corner because it doesn't look cool'. But yeah, I was genuinely scared."

Not too scared to lead the charge and rescue the Doctor in the denouement of *The Long Game*, though. "That gets you a lot of props in the playgrounds of England right now," she smiles. "If you're saving Doctor Who/saving the entire universe, it's not a bad thing to have on the CV."

Would any of them like further episodes on that important piece of paper? "I can't at the moment because of other commitments, but yeah," confirms Grant.

"Like a shot," agrees Langley. "If I was available. Well, come on, it's one of the top shows! Definitely. It's not *Hollyoaks*."

They all burst out laughing again.

"And you can print that," grins Adams.

Paul Spragg



Auton destruction

## The Auton Invasion

THE SEASON OPENS with a full scale invasion of Earth, as window dummies, animated by the Nestene Consciousness, massacre shoppers in London. Camille Coduri, who plays Rose's mum Jackie, was the damsel in distress.

"No acting was required," she insists. "It was terrifying. You just drop your bag and run! It took all night, every night for a week, so it was quite tiring. Also it was scary and dangerous with buses and taxis and people running in all directions, it had to be very carefully choreographed. I think the people playing dummies had the hardest job because it was very hot under those masks, they had to have tubes put in their mouths between takes in order to breathe. I couldn't do that, they were incredibly brave."



Rose (Billie Piper) investigates...