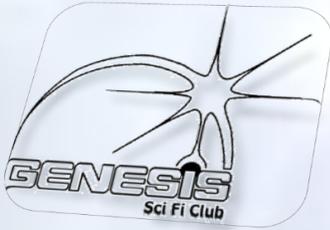


THE
GENESIS

MATRIX

(ReBooted)



The Magazine Of
Genesis Sci-Fi
August 2013



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August 2013

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GOLD CHANNEL

Good afternoon folk, welcome back to Genesis.

With the final bank holiday of the year apart from Christmas bearing down on us (it's tomorrow), it occurs that a scarily large proportion of 2013 has now flown past and is heading for Essex. This being the case it is now time to do some trumpeting for the cause of ArmadaCon, as is obligatory from time to time in this oily rag of a newsletter.

This year is ArmadaCon's 25th anniversary, so it's a big year for this small, friendly, fan-run event. ArmadaCon is a relaxed and above all fun weekend, with only a hint of actual organisation rearing it's head from time to time and I urge you to give it a go. It runs in Plymouth on 15th, 16th and 17th November; more details at their website, www.armadacon.org.

On the subject of conventions, and looking a bit further ahead, next August sees the return to Britain of WorldCon, which is being held at the ExCel in London on 14th to 18th August 2014. This is a world-wide event which doesn't often take place on these shores, and as it's in relatively easy distance for a day trip or possibly an extended stay, depending on your preference, so now would be a good time to at least start thinking about if you want to go, and on what day(s). More details about the event at www.loncon3.org.

Next, thank you to Steve for last month's timetable, with it's 1970s theme, and quiz; this month the timetable is brought to you by Mark Sinclair and the quiz by your esteemed Chairperkin.

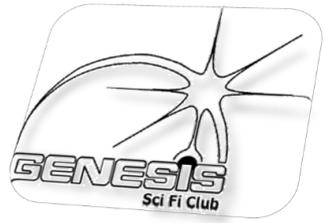
A reminder that our discussion board on the website is open for business; please direct any questions you may have towards Matt, our web-master.

Finally I would like to extend my congratulations to a Mr P Capaldi on his recently gained new employment, which was revealed to the nation amongst much (ahem) *Who-hah* and cheering a few weeks ago, and wish the gentleman he is replacing in the role, a Mr M Smith, all the next for his future career.

That's all for now; enjoy the meeting.

PRus

(As relayed by The Ghost Writer In The Sky)



Club Events For Your Diary



ArmadaCon 25—15th, 16th and 17th November 2013 at Future Inn, Plymouth.

This is **ArmadaCon's** 25th Anniversary year; guests already announced include Doctor Who make-up supervisor / guru Neil Gorton, and the weekend will also feature the filming of the ArmadaCon 25th anniversary short film.

Find out more at www.armadacon.org.

Cinema Trips

Films being released over the next few months which we may be going to see...

- > *The Hunger Games: Catching Fire* (November)
- > *The Hobbit: Part 2—The Desolation Of Smaug* (13th December)

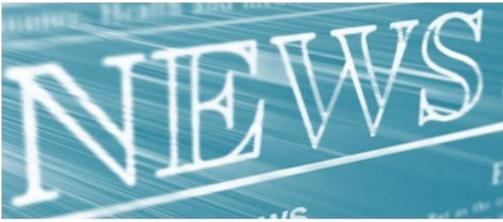
MEETING DATES FOR 2013.....

	Pub	Book Club	Main meeting	Program/ Quiz
September	12th September	14th September	22nd September	Paul Belsey
October	10th October	12th October	20th October	Matthew Greet
October / November	31st October	9th November	10th November	The Committee
December	5th December	7th December	15th December	Robert Green

Pub meetings are at the Queen's College Arms on the A340 between Basingstoke and Tadley until further notice.

The Genesis Book Club is at South Ham Library, Basingstoke, on the dates listed above, from 10.00 am to mid-day.

The club's on-line discussion board is open for business; you'll find it at our website, www.genesis-sf.org



PETER CAPALDI UNVEILED AS NEW DOCTOR IN LIVE SHOW

As you may have noticed, not least from this here magazine, is that we now know the identity of the actor who will become the Twelfth Doctor when Matt Smith leaves *Doctor Who* at the end of this year.

In a live show broadcast on BBC1 on Sunday 4th August, Scottish actor Peter Capaldi was unveiled as the new incumbent chosen to take the show into it's sixth decade, starting with the eighth series since the show returned, in 2014.

Capaldi, at 55, is a noticeably older actor than any of his immediate predecessors, and is a full 25 years older than Matt Smith, but said when interviewed on the live show by host Zoe Ball that he'd been a fan for many years. In fact his Hartnell-esque 'lapel gripping' pose when he walked onto the stage immediately endeared him to a large number of fans.

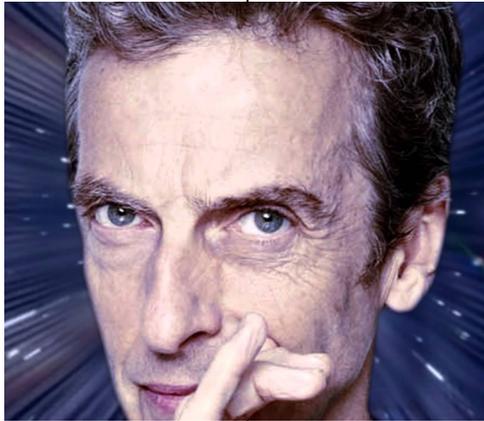
Capaldi said when interviewed in the program: "Being asked to play The Doctor is an amazing privilege. Like the Doctor himself I find myself in a state of utter terror and delight. I can't wait to get started."

Steven Moffat, lead writer and executive producer said : "It's an incendiary combination: one of the most talented actors of his generation is about to play the best part on television. Peter Capaldi is in the TARDIS!"

In a later interview Moffat commented on

some of the reasons for casting an older actor.

Speaking about how many names were on the shortlist this time around: "The list went, 'Peter Capaldi' -- it was a very short list! Honestly, there was only one audition this time... and it wasn't an audition so much as... he came round my house and we put him on video to see what he looked like as the Doctor and, gosh, he was terribly good!"



Asked if it was a conscious decision to cast a much older actor this time, he replied: "Not particularly. I mean, the apparent age of the Doctor makes no narrative sense at all – he's been anything

from his 20s to his 70s. Obviously he doesn't care, he just sort of picks a face off the rack and goes with it!

"I think it's good that we've got a different age, just because I cannot imagine what somebody in their 20s would do with the Doctor after Matt showed us all how to be a 20s Doctor. I don't know what you would do after that, because he was so perfect. You'd have to be an alternative or a deliberate contradiction -- it wouldn't work, I don't think. So it makes life easier, I suppose, that Peter is different. But that wasn't the reason, the reason was... the Doctor was in the room and that's it. You don't argue with that!"

Asked whether it was true that Peter was considered to play the Eleventh Doctor: "He did flick through my mind when we were

replacing David [Tennant] and it didn't feel right at all -- if you think about that, that wouldn't have been right, not then. But there's something about Matt's Doctor that paves the way for Peter's Doctor somehow. The important thing to remember about the Doctor is that it is one character, going through his life, played by a succession of different actors. and you have to get to that place each time. I can somehow absolutely believe that the strange old/young Matt Smith will turn into the strange young/old Peter Capaldi."

Responding to what sort of Doctor will Peter be: "Magnificent! The truth is, we don't know. I've seen him do 'Doctor-ish' stuff and it's worked. I've seen him deal with the technobabble, I've seen him deal with the nonsense... I wrote scenes [for the audition] that were deliberately impossible -- deliberately impossible dialogue, just to see, 'Can you do the impossible, even without gunk being poured on you?' and now we're going to pour gunk on you, and throw a lizard at you, and ask you to say all this stuff and explain the plot... So we don't know [what he'll be like] yet, we're going to work on that. Matt developed hugely as he approached the part over the first few episodes and we'll do the same with Peter."

Doctor Who companion, Jenna Coleman said "I'm so excited Peter Capaldi is the man taking on the challenge of becoming the Twelfth Doctor. With Steven's writing and his talent I know we'll be making an amazing show with an incredible incarnation of number 12. I can't wait to start this new adventure!"

Peter Capaldi is an award winning actor, film maker and lifelong *Doctor Who* fan. He has enjoyed an illustrious career to date in both film and television.

Before securing the coveted role of the Twelfth Doctor, Peter first appeared in

Doctor Who in 2008, playing Caecilius in the episode "The Fires of Pompeii".

Peter grew up in Glasgow and attended the Glasgow School of Art, while studying there he secured his first breakthrough role in *Local Hero* (1983). He has also had roles in *Dangerous Liaisons*, *The Crow Road*, *The Devil's Whore* and *Torchwood: Children of Earth*.

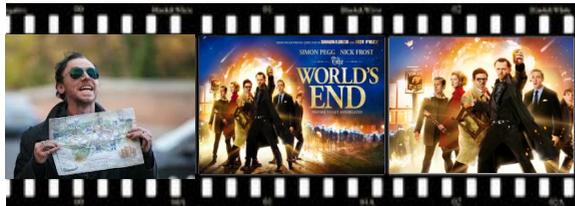
It is his role as Government spin doctor Malcolm Tucker in the BBC comedy series, *The Thick of It*, that has earned Peter both international and award success. In 2010 he won the BAFTA Television Award for Best Male Performance in a Comedy Role and the BPG Best Actor Award. In both 2010 and 2012, Peter won the British Comedy Award for Best TV Comedy Actor. A film spin-off from *The Thick of It*, entitled *In the Loop*, was released in 2009.



As well as appearing in front of the camera, Capaldi is an award winning film maker. In 1995, he won the Oscar for Best Short Film (Live Action) for Franz Kafka's *It's a Wonderful Life*. He also wrote *Soft Top*, *Hard Shoulder*, which won the audience award at the London Film Festival, and wrote and directed *Strictly Sinatra*. His stage credits include Professor Marcus in *The Ladykillers* at the Liverpool Playhouse, which saw the play transfer to the Gielgud Theatre in London.

2013 has been a busy year for Peter who has been seen on screen in the film *World War Z* and in BBC Two drama series *The Hour*, for which he was BAFTA nominated. Not only will Peter film his first scenes for *Doctor Who* this Autumn, but he will appear in the forthcoming film *The Fifth Estate* and the Disney film *Maleficent*.

Capaldi is currently filming new BBC One drama series *The Musketeers*, in which he plays Cardinal Richelieu which will launch in early 2014. **Jeremy Ogden**
Source: bbc.co.uk / doctorwhotv.co.uk



GENESIS AT THE MOVIES: THE WORLD'S END

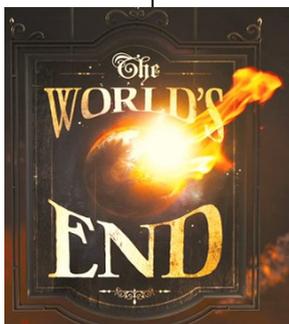
It's The End OF The World As We Know It (But I Feel Fine)

So, with his stock at an all-time high following his return to the role of Montgomery Scott in *Star Trek Into Darkness*, Simon Pegg is back with his actor mate Nick Frost, and his director pal Edgar Wright, for the third and final part of what has collectively become known as *The Cornetto Trilogy*, the previous two instalments of which were the brilliant *Shaun of the Dead*, and the utterly awesome *Hot Fuzz*.

So, could this movie, described by Wright as 'social science fiction' live up to it's predecessors? Well, the answer is, yes. It takes a while and you have to have a bit of patience with this film because quite a long way in it's very easy to wonder what happened to the science fiction and the razor sharp comedy which was the signature of the previous two films, but generally it does live up to it's billing. And then there's the ending, but I'll come to that later.

So, what's it all about then? Well basically, Gary King (Pegg), a hedonistic, swearsy alcoholic, tracks down a group of his estranged buddies from his teenage years and resolves to re-create an infamous pub crawl, the Golden Mile, in their home

town of Newton Haven, which the group had attempted in their teenage years, but had failed to reach the twelfth and final pub, The World's End.



Gary convinces Peter (Eddie Marsan), Oliver "O-Man" (Martin Freeman), Steven (Paddy Considine) and Andrew (Nick Frost) to join him in Newton Haven. While his friends have adult lives and responsibilities, Gary has changed little since 1990, remaining

untrusting and impulsive. In the first pub, the First Post, the group is not met with the hero's welcome Gary expects. Then, a couple of pubs later, Gary gets into a brawl, conveniently hidden from the eyes of the locals as it happens in the gents, and the terrible secret of Newton Haven is exposed.



Frost and Pegg were both slightly startled when they saw the list of stuff Martin Freeman has been in recently.

Now, as this film is still in the cinemas and it's possible people haven't seen it yet, I'm not going to spoil it by going into a much deeper examination and description of the plot, but suffice to say, at this point, the story and the

pace pick up a lot, and the curiously, previously absent science fiction elements come piling in at a rapid rate.

The general tone of the film is darker and some of the humour a bit more

poignant than some of the stuff that happened in the previous films, given the circumstances of the characters involved, but the way in which Gary solves the, shall we say, central problem of the film, and the reaction to this method of persuasion is very funny, very novel, and in keeping within the film's setting, cast and crew, ie, very, very British!

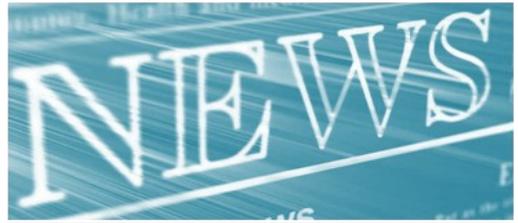
Now, the ending. Again I won't spoil it by telling you exactly what happens, but it is, shall we say different. I can see what they were trying to do and say, and it is an admirably different conclusion to the one which you might perhaps expect, but it was somewhat jarring. It's not bad, just....different, in a "oh, that's a bit messed up!" kind of way. I'm going to try not to describe it as disappointing, and I'm trying to keep a positive view on it, but it was, as I said, certainly not what I was expecting.

So, I think a worthy conclusion to the trilogy, detracted from a touch by its slow burning nature in the first part, and the ending, so despite its high merits, I still have to say I liked the other two slightly better. Therefore I'd give it a three and a half or four out of five.

I hope that, even though we have reached the end of the *Cornetto Trilogy*, and it's heady mix of romantic comedy with zombies, creepy village guardians working for 'the greater good' and the recreating of drunken pub crawls, with body-snatchers (that's the only clue I'm giving to the plot) the acclaimed trilogy of Pegg, Frost and Wright will return to entertain us again.

(But Simon Pegg is allowed to go and star in *Star Trek 3* first, obviously).

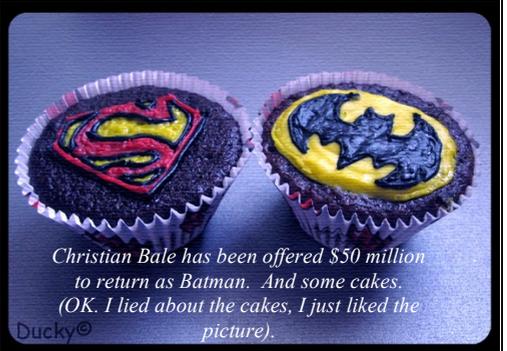
Jeremy Ogden



Christian Bale has allegedly been offered a deal to reprise his Batman role.

Warner Bros is said to have approached the British actor with a \$50 million contract, in the hopes of securing him for the *Superman vs Batman* project. Bale himself has publicly ruled out returning as Bruce Wayne in any more movies, explaining that three Dark Knight films were enough.

However, author Vince Russel has claimed in his new eBook *Beyond Batman: The Unauthorized True Story of Christian Bale and His Dark Knight Dilemma* that Bale is not out of the running just yet.



Christian Bale has been offered \$50 million to return as Batman. And some cakes. (OK, I lied about the cakes, I just liked the picture).

Russel writes that Bale is under "extraordinary pressure" to reprise his superhero role in the upcoming sequel to *Man of Steel*.

Orlando Bloom has emerged as a potential "hot favourite" to take over the Batman role from Bale. Ryan Gosling and Josh Brolin are also among a list of actors who are reportedly being sought to star opposite Henry Cavil.

Batman vs Superman is scheduled for release in 2015, with a possible shoot to begin in early 2014.

Source: www.digitalspy.co.uk

The Master, depending on what continuity you believe is either still in his post-mutated / Tremas (Ainley) form, or in his post Tremas, semi-mutated form as heard in a couple of Big Finish audio stories, when he was portrayed again by Geoffrey Beavers. If you believe the early version of the TV movie he is in a different form 'portrayed' (as his face is obscured) by Gordon Tipple. Either way, he is fighting for survival, at the end of his regenerations, trying to stay alive by any means necessary, just as he pretty much has done ever since *The Deadly Assassin*.

The Doctor, who says even in death he couldn't trust the Master, was in his Seventh incarnation, and had been for a very long time, because even he, a TimeLord, was looking visibly older than in his previous televised adventure, and in between times, if you believe other continuities in other media, he had been, to say the least, quite busy. The Seventh Doctor was manipulative and devious character when the situation called for it, and I hardly think that he would have taken a summons to the home planet of his mortal enemies to collect the remains of another of his mortal enemies *entirely* at face value. However, in the Eighth Doctor's post-post regenerative amnesia moment of revelation when he was frantically (and from Grace's point of view) incomprehensibly explaining to Grace what the hell was going on and why he was desperately trying to avoid looking

at her with his eyes open, he talks about collecting the Master's remains from Skaro "where his final incarnation had been exterminated by the Daleks, or so we thought..." That's *we*. Not just him, someone else. He had help. The obvious and most sensible conclusion is that the someone else was the Time Lords, who, as they tended to do from time to time, sent the Doctor on a mission to Skaro, perhaps equipped with some sort of gadget to allow him to not be detected, because they either knew that the Daleks would not let the Doctor swan around their home planet collecting the remains of an exterminated prisoner, whether the exterminated prisoner had demanded it or not. Perhaps the Doctor, knowing that the Master would have planned some method of escape and prolonging his life, approached the Time Lords because he knew he would not be able to retrieve the Master without their help.

And with this in mind, and bearing in mind subsequent events (ie, the time Lords resurrecting the Master because they thought he would make a 'perfect warrior for the Time war', perhaps the Time Lords also had a greater purpose in mind because they could foresee a time when a full scale conflict with the Daleks became inevitable - once again, retro-fitted continuity is great, isn't it?. As it was they were later able to resurrect him anyway, whether they had to do it after he'd been exterminated by the Daleks or pulled into the heart of the TARDIS made no difference in the long

"It was on the Planet Skaro that my old enemy The Master was finally put on trial.

They say he listened calmly as his list of evil crimes was read, and sentence passed.

And then he made his last, and I thought, somewhat curious request.

He demanded that I, The Doctor, a rival Time Lord, should take his remains back to our home planet of Gallifrey.

It was a request they should never have granted....."

*The Doctor,
Doctor Who (1996)*

run. But amidst his devious, manipulative nature, would the Doctor approve of this if he knew? Would he willingly go along with a plan to retrieve the Master if he knew the Time Lord's real intentions? I doubt it.

But at the same time, the time Lords (and the Doctor) must also have had suspicions about what The Master was up to when he demanded to be returned to his

home planet by the Doctor – he said in the voiceover at the start “he made his last, and I thought somewhat curious request”. Either he had a surprise in mind for The Doctor which he would spring while en route, which is more or less what happened, or he would be able to make some sort of move on the time Lords themselves when he was back on Gallifrey.

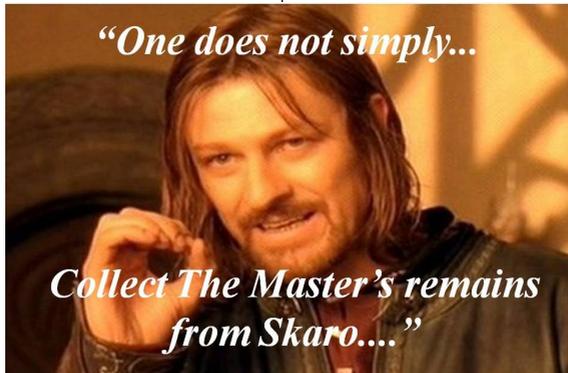
There is also one other thorny little issue here – the

Daleks putting someone on trial. Even a show-trial will for the sake of appearance include some measure of implication that there is at least some element of doubt about the guilt of accused or at least the illusion that he or she is getting a chance to defend themselves or be defended. But the Daleks, putting someone on trial? Usually a Dalek's idea of justice is to scream “EXTERMINATE!” and shoot them in less time than it takes to say “I plead not guilty m'lud”. Suspicions must, you'd think, be aroused by this concept.

One additional complication to all of this

which has just sprung to mind, is that if you believe the continuity of the Big Finish audio dramas, the President of the time Lords at this point was none other

than the Doctor's old friend Romana. Would she come up with or go along with such a plan to retrieve the Master or send the Doctor into danger to do so? If it wasn't her, perhaps the brains behind the Time Lord's plans was the shadowy,



mysterious Celestial intervention Agency -the CIA?

But with all these suspicions and counter-suspicions about the motives of each 'faction', with the possibility that the



Master and the Daleks were somehow in league, that the Time Lords were desperate to retrieve their evil prodigal son and put him to use for some higher purpose, that the Doctor knew that the Master

would have some sort of escape plan and that the best place for whatever was left of him was back on Gallifrey, all we can be sure of is that the truth was a complex and clouded and that it will probably remain shrouded in mystery in an intriguing and largely hidden , period of the Doctor's life which we can only really speculate about.

Jeremy Ogden



The Oracle

THE ORACLE

An Occasional Journey Into The Sublime, The Ridiculous and Stuff I've Learned

The Sublime:

Rare and splendid things are themselves, rare and splendid things. New Doctor Days definitely count as very rare and very splendid. (That's three 'splendids' in two sentences, I don't think that would make me sound egotistical but I can't be certain). And when the outcome of New Doctor Day is what, at this stage seems like an almost universally acclaimed (also rare and splendid) piece of casting, that's a happy outcome all round. Thank you, Grand Moff, for what I think will prove to be a brilliant decision, so brilliant that I've completely forgiven you for not giving the job to Rory Kinnear or Marcus Brigstocke, and good luck to Peter Capaldi for his tenure in the TARDIS, starting in 2014.

The Ridiculous:

There was of course, a lot of utter garbage spouted in the last few weeks regarding the identity of the new Doctor, whoever he (or she) turned out to be. The snippet here is one of the most outrageously silly of these rumours (well spotted Susan), but if he had got the job, Time wouldn't simply have been Wibbly wobbly. The Doctor would have been able to 'Bend It Like Beckham'. In addition, the Grand Moff would also have been looking, in all likelihood for alternative gainful employment. And I suspect, a padded cell.

A couple of other things have occurred to me recently. Firstly Craig Charles said in an interview something along the lines of being cast as the Doctor would be interesting but there would be a conflict with the production of *Red*

FANTASY TV

Tim Dowling imagines...

Memo — Strictly Confidential

To: All producers, Doctor Who

Re: New Doctor — do not forward!

Lots of lateral thinking on the new Doctor — Rupert Crint, Helen Mirren et al — but we have a real opportunity to surprise, so I'm presenting you with our top secret, out-of-the-box shortlist. Please do not discuss it with anyone else.

DAVID BECKHAM

Our initial fear was that we couldn't afford him, but now he's retired we're no longer competing against the big clubs — just *Strictly* and *EastEnders*. Our bigger fear is that he can't act, but the guys in FX claim they can just CGI in his emotions in postproduction. If this is true, it opens up the field considerably.

DAME MAGGIE SMITH

I can confidently predict that no one will have predicted this. It answers all those critics who think we have an ageist and/or sexist agenda, and we get a Doctor with an imperious air and a nice line in withering put-downs. One issue: the first episode of the new series has her climbing a 60ft rope ladder into a flaming zeppelin. Rewrite, or CGI? If we go this way, we'll need to make a decision soon.

PRINCE HARRY

We got the idea after watching the Queen jump out of the helicopter during the Olympics. Apparently he's keen, although officially his people won't comment. If we can claim the role is an extension of his official duties, we won't even have to pay him.

MICHAEL JACKSON

Aside from the obvious stumbling blocks — and our CGI experts relish the challenge — the real problem is that no one seems to know who owns the rights to him. Until we get legal clearance, this one's on hold.

PUDSEY

It's a neat reversal of the K-9 partnership: the Doctor is a dog, and he has a humanoid robot for an assistant. Obviously the robot does all the talking, and Pudsey just barks yes or no, jumps through hoops and pretends to drive the Tardis with two fake paws. His agent says he won't do it without Ashleigh, but this is negotiable.



Dwarf XI next year. Of course, the *Doctor Who* casting locusts latched on to the comments about *Doctor Who* like a flock of tiberian bats, just because the item contained the words 'Doctor' and 'next', but the comment about *Red Dwarf XI*, the first seemingly firm comment about another series of *Red Dwarf* got utterly lost in the ether.

Also I noticed utterly absurdly literally some people take any little scrap of news or *Doctor Who* related rumour, when they really should know better. Recently, the same esteemed publication who gave us the rumour about David Beckham and others reported a whisper from that pesky 'insider' that there would indeed be a 'classic era' Doctor featured in the Anniversary Special in November. The item was footnoted with an off-the-cuff, completely meaningless remark about a 'classic era' *Doctor Who* lead actor returning to 'wield the sonic screwdriver once again'.

A science fiction related website reported this on a news page and proceeded to completely over analysed the *Radio Times* article. The returning actor, they reasoned, must be either Tom Baker, Peter Davison or Paul McGann, because (please read the next sentence this voice with an anorak-train-spotter type voice in your head) the sonic screwdriver was destroyed in a *Doctor Who* episode in 1982, therefore they could be the only three actors who it could *possibly* be. Excuse me? Do you really think that a website like the *Radio Times* website, aimed at the general TV viewership, would *really* make that distinction? Noooo. I think not. In addition, they themselves got the facts wrong because Sylvester McCoy, as the Seventh Doctor, actually got to use the sonic in the opening scene of the TV Movie, and the device was only returned to the Eighth Doctor right at the end of the story. Doh!



Something I've Learned:

In fact, this month, two things.

First, as of a short while ago (at the time of writing) there are 96 days to go to ArmadaCon. This is something which obviously proves that there is some sort of weird time distortion thing going on at the moment because I can't believe it is now less than 100 days until we'll be off to Plymouth again.

Second, and even more bizarrely, the concept of a singing leprechaun called Sheldon is quite startling and vaguely disturbing.

(Bazinga).

Jeremy Ogden



FRESH PERSPECTIVES

Star Wars Episode VI: Return of the Jedi

Or This Ain't No Teddy Bears' Picnic.

I have never understood Ewok hate – until now. That is fully ten minutes of my life I will never get back, watching Warwick Davies and his dwarf friends preparing to roast Harrison Ford and Mark Hamill while Carrie Fisher prances about like an overgrown Goldilocks. That is ten full minutes which could have made the first half hour's terribly improbable escape from Jabba the Hutt a bit more epic and not a huge anticlimax.

I'm sorry if that comes across as if I didn't enjoy the film. It is a fitting conclusion to the saga – for now – and the battle at the end on Endor is one of the highlights of choreography. Palpatine and Vader's temptation and demise at the hands of the wilful Master Skywalker is also a good piece of writing, showing off the nuances of the science fantasy genre. Because of the time at which the enhanced versions were made, we can see a proper Force ghost for Anakin. And to cap it all off, I think I prefer the less cuddly Yoda of the original films to the rather bland one in the prequel trilogy. I hadn't been prepared for him to actually *die* – like with the previous two films in this series, I have seen them before but didn't remember the crucial details.

The action begins on Tatooine with a very enjoyable rock gig *chez* a certain Mr J Hutt. Leia is captured early on, and

is forced into revealing clothes, doubtless all in the best of taste (and for good reason) but certainly a bit ill-fitting for her character. I recently had a short argument on a forum with someone who said Amidala displayed battered-wife syndrome (what, because she stuck by Anakin when he went rogue because she didn't know he'd been turned by Palpatine?) in the third prequel, so obviously there are some serious analysis waiting to be done on the portrayal of women in Star Wars. Even though Slave Leia is supposed to be uncomfortable with her role in Hutt's entourage (given we see his last exotic dancer fed to the Rancor for entertainment), it's still a way of sneaking a bit of misogyny past the radar. When she uses her chains to throttle Hutt, however, she returns to being the badass trooper she has been throughout the series, and we can overlook the bit of eye-candy she provides in the meantime. She continues to play a significant role, and one can't help feel that the



romance between her and Han is something added in just because every film like this *has* to have a bit of romance. At no time do you feel it detracts from her role as a kick-ass tomboy, however, to the extent that her willowy dress in the Ewok village looks decidedly out of character.

The main action is Luke's quest to save the Rebel Alliance but keep his soul

intact. You start to wonder whether Palpatine can foretell his own demise, particularly when the clock starts running down on the film, and you know he only has 20 minutes to break out the blue lightning. Luke's faith in Vader is heartening, and as we all know, rewarded after a fashion. It's certainly a cautionary tale that violence and aggression isn't always the way to solve your problems, even when you're in a fantasy movie and have a kickass sword which can sever limbs at a stroke. Palpatine is guaranteed to give anyone sleepless nights; personally, I think Vader should have defenestrated him years ago, but as Jeremy points out, you just don't do that to Palps. He's psychic enough that I guess Vader would have found himself on a shortcut to the Death Star laundry chute before it could happen.

Shame he didn't take the Ewoks into account, eh. I can't help thinking he should have nuked them from orbit. Then again, that would have left Han and Leia with bugger all chance of succeeding in dropping the protective shields, so Lucas did do well to create a coherent story for them, although it did remind me a *lot* of *Avatar*. *Dances with Ewoks*, anyone?

This gets three and a half plutos. The flaws in the film – the silly Ewok bits which I don't think were entirely necessary to the plot and the corresponding lack of significance to the Jabba the Hutt sequences did actually spoil the film. (And I'm a fan of the 80s Ewok cartoon series – along with *Dogtanian, Dungeons & Dragons* and *Mysterious Cities of Gold*, it was a highlight of my childhood TV viewing – so would always give them the benefit of the doubt.) I feel bad for saying I'm not sure how you would expand the JtH sequence, but it didn't feel like a part of the series which was strictly necessary, and ended up as padding to extend the film to two hours. But it's a great end to the series, and now I'm eagerly awaiting the next instalments.

Louise Stanley

MICHAEL FOALE RETIRES FROM NASA

Michael Foale, the most experienced British-born astronaut in the history of human spaceflight, with a total of 375 days in orbit, has retired from NASA, to work on developing an electric aircraft.

Holding dual US-UK citizenship, Dr Foale flew on numerous shuttle and Soyuz missions. He serviced the Hubble telescope, and had tours on both the Mir platform and the International Space Station, and commanded the ISS in 2003

Michael Foale was born in Lincolnshire and went to school in Canterbury, receiving his astrophysics PhD from Cambridge. He left the UK shortly afterwards to pursue his dream of going into orbit by joining NASA, which required he become a US citizen.

The NASA administrator, and former fellow astronaut, Charlie Bolden, paid tribute to Dr Foale.

"We salute Mike and his contributions to NASA as an accomplished member of the astronaut corps," General Bolden said in a statement. "Mike has worked tirelessly to support NASA's quest to explore the unknown. I know Mike will go on to do more great things as he continues to support the aerospace industry in his new endeavour."

One of the most dramatic events in Dr Foale's career occurred on Mir in 1997 when the Russian space station was rammed by a visiting cargo ship. He later recalled to the BBC: "It weighed about seven tonnes so the impact was very noticeable. We heard a big thud and I remember having a severe adrenaline rush and thinking about how much longer do we have.

"I felt the fall of the air pressure in my ears and realised it was fairly severe but not so severe that we wouldn't have time to evacuate. It all started to fit together and a plan even started to form in all our minds that we would be ok - or we could be ok."

Dr Foale made a total of six trips into space and at one point held the record for the most cumulative time in orbit for a US astronaut.

Source: www.bbc.co.uk

CHRIS LENKO WAS, INDEED, A SORCERER.

RASA



HE CAST A SPELL ON YOU!

WELL... IF HE IS, THEN HE MADE ME FEEL BETTER, NOT WORSE.

JUST LIKE RASA CLAIMED...

I'LL SPEAK TO RASA - SHE MIGHT KNOW MORE.