

InterMission

The Daleks' Master Plan

My close association with *Doctor Who* very nearly never started. On that historic evening, I was up in my bedroom when my father called up to say that *Doctor Who* was starting on the television. My immediate reaction was "not another hospital programme; why is he calling me?" Around that time *Emergency Ward 10* was all the rage, the nearest thing to a 'soap' that there was then.

I went downstairs only to be told it had been delayed because of some totally unimportant event that was of no interest to me. So back up I went to carry on building my Airfix Lancaster Bomber. Subsequent calls brought me back down again where I discovered the programme was already five to ten minutes in – just before William Hartnell made his first appearance. I remember thinking; "Oh no, not him. How can he possibly be the star? It's not going to work (for me)." My opinion at the time was clouded by Bill's performance in the *Army Game* where he had played the 'bad guy'. How wrong one can be?

Within minutes I was hooked and silence reigned in our household for the remaining fifteen minutes or so.

So imagine my surprise and delight when next week they repeated *An Unearthly Child* before *The Cave of Skulls*.

From then on I had the privilege of us older few who were able to watch each episode/story unfold week-by-week keeping us on tenterhooks until the following Saturday afternoon. I was fortunate enough to be just at the right age and have access to a television without interference. (You know what I mean, parents, siblings, something called ITV, etc). Add to this the happy serendipity of low definition television and an enthusiastic mind wanting more of the same, being very forgiving of production values if, to be honest, I was even aware of them.

Soon all my money was channelled into purchasing a reel-to-reel tape recorder and tapes. Although, available in the shops during the 50s they were not really that common a household item and therefore quite pricey.

I would record each episode and play it nearly everyday until the next one was broadcast. I can still remember my delight in having my first TARDIS take off/materialisation sound effect. Boy, did I play that to death! This then prompted me to purchase another machine for the purposes of crude editing and archiving – remember, we did not have the luxuries of sound tracks, effects and music from the talents of Mark Ayres, et al. Things like theme music, TARDIS engines, doors, scanner, background ambience and... Daleks! There was some severe oxide burning back then in the mid sixties which brings me on to *The Daleks' Master Plan*.

One of the most precious characteristics of viewing *Doctor Who* at the time was that we never knew what was going to happen. There was very little pre-publicity then. Story lengths were often undeterminable as were the outcomes. This is a development thread lost in later years, which I feel is a shame.

Anyway, the *Daleks' Master Plan* had an unprecedented introduction and start, even though the *Radio Times* told us the metal monsters were soon to return.

First we had *Mission to the Unknown*, which had the unheard of acclamation of not having any of the programme stars in the actual programme! I don't think that had ever happened in any television programme, before or since.

With the intermission of *The Myth Makers* and (in my opinion) the sad loss of Maureen O'Brien's Vicki, we were then into what was to become a Dalek epic. Again, unknown to us or at least me at the time, there were so many landmarks and high points in the *Master Plan* it is difficult to comment on them all or even pick out just one. However, here goes:

So, let us see - some examples: First off in *The Nightmare Begins*. There were so many brilliant scenes yet the one that remains vividly in my mind is Chen's enigmatic speech on the huge screen with Lizan and Roald mouthing Chen's words in the foreground. Excellent.

"Katarina is going to be good, questioning everything. I hope she continues for some while," thought I. Huh! Almost immediately, relatively speaking, we had her surprising demise. How sad. What a waste! I remember being amazed as she had only just joined the Ship's crew. The very poignant moment stays with me as the Doctor remembers her as "One of the daughters of the gods."

Now then, what is all this about dates? "2157", says the Doctor referring to *The Dalek Invasion of Earth*. At first I found this an anomaly and then realised that Craddock had said that the 'invasion' had "started ten years ago". That means then, that the calendar that the Doctor and Ian found was an old one. The actual date must have been 2167! I loved those continuity things back in the sixties. I still do. To me it made the whole programme 'more real'. Things like the goblet on the TARDIS console travelling from Rome to Vortis, Lovely stuff.

5.50

DR. WHO

An adventure in space and time
starring
WILLIAM HARTNELL as Dr. Who
and
PETER PURVES
with
KEVIN STONEY, PETER BUTTERWORTH



Golden Death

by DENNIS SPOONER
from an idea by TERRY NATION
with
Jean Marsh

The monk tries a double-cross and Sara has a fight.

Dr. Who.....WILLIAM HARTNELL
Steven.....PETER PURVES
Sara.....JEAN MARSH
Mavic Chen.....KEVIN STONEY
The Meddling Monk

Khepren.....PETER BUTTERWORTH
Tuthmos.....JEFFREY ISAAC
Hyksos.....DEREK WARE
Daleks.....WALTER RANDALL
.....ROBERT JEWELL
JOHN SCOTT MARTIN, KEVIN MANSER
GERALD TAYLOR
Dalek Voices.....PETER HAWKINS
DAVID GRAHAM

Fight arranger, David Anderson
Title music by RON GRAINER
and the BBC Radiophonic Workshop
Incidental music composed and
conducted by TRISTRAM CARY
Designer, Barry Newbery
Producer, JOHN WILES
Directed by DOUGLAS CAMFIELD



Space Agent

Sara (Jean Marsh) is involved in a fight in this afternoon's episode of Dr. Who at 5.50

The next object lesson for me was a comment from the Doctor. When being pursued he decides to go to the Dalek city. "It is the last place they will think of looking for us." That one line affected me and developed my character for the rest of my life. Because of that one line I have always tried to do the opposite of what people expect of me. (A bit like Tom Baker really, but that's another story!) Couple this with Troughton's bamboozling of the enemy and one can get away with murder. Anyone who knows me will concur – "Oh that's just Richard being Richard." Brilliant (even the tax man gave up!).

Anyway, back to *Day of Armageddon*. To think I nearly missed this episode due to my best friend having just bought a new car and insisting that we go for a spin! He could not understand my insistence on returning home to record a "children's programme". I remember badgering him to watch the programme properly before judging it. He had seen it on and off over the past years and would so annoyingly insist in calling the metal monsters of Skaro, 'DIALECTS'!

However, I digress, so back to the *Daleks' Master Plan*. I thought at the time that the sets were fantastic wondering how they produced them week in and week out. Remember, we had only 405-line television then and (relatively speaking) things looked superb!

Another memorable moment, one among many, is in *Counter-Plot*. "Baxter's or Daxter's" betrayal caught me out. I did not realise about the taranium until the Doctor told us. Very skilfully handled. I really felt part of the show in those days. In latter day *Doctor Who*, not only could you predict the plot, one could almost predict the actual dialogue!

Of course, who can forget that infamous line of the Dalek; "The creatures **appear** to be **invisible**!" Plus the Doctor's musings of, "The mice couldn't have done that."

In *Coronas of the Sun*, I found the Doctor's voice from the TARDIS too similar to a Dalek voice when speaking to Steven. Even then I had started to become critical. It's amazing thinking back about it now.

Moving on to *The Feast of Steven*, naive as it may seem, I did not realise that it was a pantomime pastiche on the part of the production office. My most memorable recollection is Sara (Jean Marsh) being told to take her clothes off!

The next episode annoyed me. First the chase sequence trying to avoid the Monk and the Daleks did not pay any credence to the facts given in *The Chase* where we were informed that the TARDIS computers need twelve minutes to re-align. Secondly, the cricket commentators would not have been so blasé about a Police Box appearing and disappearing on the Lords cricket pitch. What rubbish, I thought!

Then on to Egypt. "Voice Audio is functioning"; "The enemy ship" – lines that are burnt into my memory. Chen's doubting of the capability of the 'Voice Audio' technology causes a slight delay and much irritation to the Dalek. A sublime moment. The same can be said when the roles reverse and Chen swipes the Dalek's eyepiece away with a brusque gesture.

In the 60s the Daleks had character, body language. It made them real. Daleks of the 70's onwards pale by comparison. They had no charisma or identity. They lost that 'realism' by being virtually static. Compare the saucer control room scene in *Flashpoint* (marvellous) to any of the 70/80s serials to see what I mean.

Next up we have our 'friendly' Monk. Straight out of the *Carry On Cowboy* film, Peter Butterworth falls foul of the Daleks and is forced to make up his merit as he goes along. "Hostages", the double bluff toward Steven and Sara. Then, there was the mummification and his realisation of his changed TARDIS scenes. All classic Who humour without going over the top. The only down point I can think of in the Egyptian scenes is when the Dalek is immobilised by putting a few rocks around its base. That simply didn't work in my opinion.

Finally, *Destruction of Time* was superb except for one thing. The sound of Chen's gun! Pathetic. Otherwise it was a great episode, especially the whispering Daleks, finishing with a characteristic Camfield ending of the TARDIS dematerialising under the credits. Not pleased myself, because of poor sound effects, but that's a minor point.

5.50

DR. WHO

starring

WILLIAM HARTNELL as Dr. Who

and PETER PURVES

with KEVIN STONEY

☆

Destruction of Time

by DENNIS SPOONER

from an idea by TERRY NATION

with Jean Marsh

Dust blows across the planet Kembel.

Steven.....PETER PURVES

Sara.....JEAN MARSH

Mavic Chen.....KEVIN STONEY

Daleks...ROBERT JEWELL, KEVIN MANSER

GERALD TAYLOR, JOHN SCOTT MARTIN

Dalek voices.....PETER HAWKINS

DAVID GRAHAM

Title music by RON GRAINER

and the BBC Radiophonic Workshop

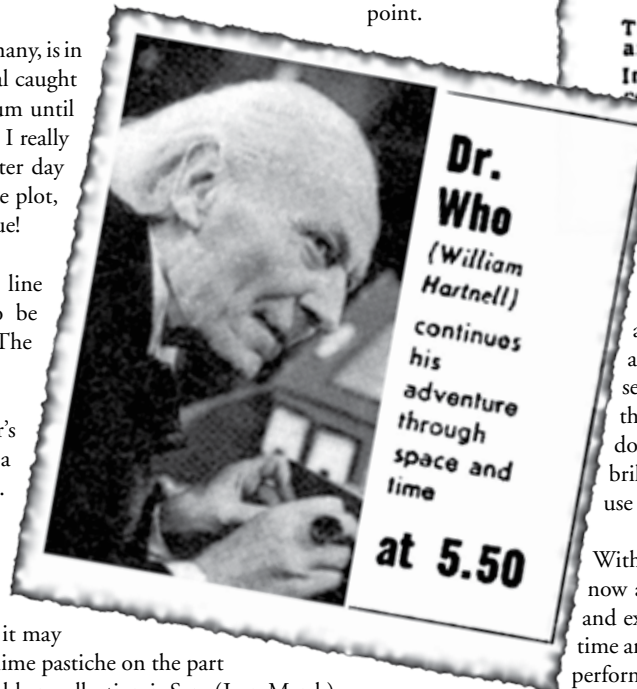
Incidental music composed and

conducted by TRISTRAM CARY

Designer, Barry Newbery

Producer, JOHN WILES

Directed by DOUGLAS CAMFIELD



So in summary I felt the first half of *The Daleks' Master Plan* worked the best. Deep, moody and atmospheric. Plus, I guess, episodes eleven and twelve were also of the current vogue. The second half, in a way, is more light-hearted yet still thoroughly enjoyable. I have to say that I loved the double cross over the Monk's TARDIS and what a brilliant character the Monk was. Why didn't they use him more?

With the recent return of *Day of Armageddon* we can now all get a better flavour of this deeply atmospheric and excellently directed story. Very ambitious given the time and money constraints only overcome by the superb performance from the actors and tender loving care and skills of the production team, engineers and technicians.

It is a cross between *Dalek Invasion of Earth* and *The Web Planet* done to fullest limits of talent and resources of the time.

Day of Armageddon in particular was way ahead in science fiction themes. For one it portrayed the idea of various alien races within the realms of a single story combining to overcome adversity or as in this case, partake in an alien conquest or invasion. Indeed, *Star Trek* was still six months away, which seemed to derive some of its visual ideas and development from the pool of *Doctor Who's* resources. Of course the most direct comparison is with *Star Wars*. As we know, George Lucas used to watch *Doctor Who* and some of his inspiration does seem to derive from our own homegrown product.

Certainly, the early years of *Doctor Who* remain etched in my memory forever. They were really radio plays that we could see. One can listen to 60s *Who* and understand 98% of what is happening without the aid of visuals – as can be seen from the success of the BBC's missing episode CDs. Try listening to some of the later stories and imagining not having actually seen them. Also, I felt that all the fluffs, coughs and wheezes added realism to 60s *Who* which unfortunately was lost during the clinically speech perfect Pertwee era onwards. Let's face it; none of us speak word perfectly, does we?

I hope Russell T Davies is aware of some of the above and puts it into his mix of the new *Doctor Who*. Certainly, *The Daleks' Master Plan* is a lot to live up to and money alone is not any kind of substitution. It's good stories, actors and production values, which are of prime importance. Visuals and effects are icing on the cake. I await it all with baited breath.

Richard J. Landen