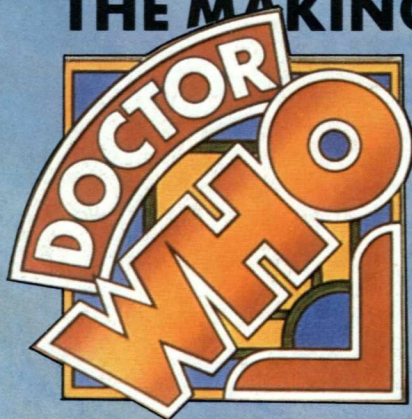


THE MAKING OF A TELEVISION DRAMA SERIES



# THE SUN MAKERS



MONITOR

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ISSUE 27

# Context

Cover by Martin Proctor

THE SUN MAKERS was a very different Doctor Who from those which surrounded it. It is generally remembered more for its politico-economic allegory than for being a good, straightforward story.

But as Andrew Pixley points out (in *The Fun Makers*, page 4), despite its background setting in the plutocracy of Pluto, this is a traditional Who with little new to add in terms of plot.

The setting, though, makes all the difference. David Owen examines the design aspects of the programme (*Set Piece*, page 7), while *Production* offers its usual insights into the making of the show.

In *Unit Manager* (page 12), John Nathan-Turner, better known as Who's Producer through the eighties, tells IN-VISION about his work as Production Unit Manager for the late Graham Williams.

Graham's own comments to IN-VISION about Robert Holmes' sophisticated script are printed opposite. □

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GOUDREY.....Michael Keating  
MANDREL.....William Simons  
VEET.....Adrienne Burgess  
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BISHAM.....David Rowlands (2-4)  
COMMANDER

Colin McCormack (3-4)  
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## REFERENCES

## LITERATURE

DICKS, Terrance *Doctor Who and the Sun Makers* (Target, 1982)  
TULLOCH, John & ALVARADO, Manuel. *Doctor Who: The Unfolding Text* (MacMillan, 1983)

## ARTICLES

*Doctor Who Magazine* 69 (Episode guide), 85 (Louise Jameson interview), 100 (Robert Holmes interview), 105 (satire/humour examined), 110 (morality of story), 114 (Canadian retitling of UNDERWORLD), 122 (Pennant Roberts interview), 123 (Archives/fact file)  
*DWAS Yearbook* May 1978 (Review by John McElroy)  
*DWB - A Voyage Through 25 Years of Doctor Who*, December 1988 (Season 15 review by Justin Richards)  
*Doctor Who Files - Season 15 The Frame* 14 May 1990 (Christine Rawlins interview)  
*Gallifrey* 10 Spring 1980 (Pennant Roberts interview)  
*Radio Times* w/e 2, 9, 16, 23 December, 1977  
*Spectrox* 3 1985 (John Leeson interview)  
*Wills World* 142 23 June 1977 (Report of location filming)

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## TRANSMISSION

PART 1: 26 November 1977, 18.07.00 (24' 59")

PART 2: 3 December 1977, 18.05.25 (24' 57")

PART 3: 10 December 1977, 18.05.26 (24' 57")

PART 3: 17 December 1977, 18.08.25 (24' 57")

## FILMING

June 1977: Cambden Deep tunnels, Hartcliffe Wills Tobacco, Bristol.

## RECORDING

4th, 5th July 1977 (studio TC3)

18th July 1977 (studio TC6)

# Graham Williams

It would be true to say that the archness with which Robert Holmes managed to send up the whole tax system was not entirely the way it had been explained in the story brief.

Robert was a wicked old bastard. He sold us a story very much along an anti-colonial, anti-empire, nationalistic line. These people were freedom fighters battling for independence - which was a good story to tell in 1976. Then he added the jokey parts about the Inland

Revenue. Unfortunately, he was playing to a very sympathetic audience with Pennant Roberts.

I think, with the benefit of fifteen years hindsight, that maybe it went a bit too far. But if it did, it was only by a gnat's whisker that it was actually offensive. I think a hell of a lot our audience, something like about sixty percent, probably did not get the joke anyway. A P-45 corridor or a taxman who is a humbug was a very vague allegory. The Appreciation

Society, of course, picked it up at once, but I would never ever treat them as a typical audience.

Again with hindsight I think at the time I would have taken more off the edge of the humour because we had not really prepared the ground for that type of story. In that respect it did stick out like a sore thumb as there was nothing like it in any of the other stories. That is not the fault of THE SUN MAKERS. That was the fault of our own perceptions on the rest of the

series.

That element of sophisticated humour was certainly going to continue in the series for the time I was doing it after THE SUN MAKERS, and that was not accidental. I wanted the humour to be there, available for those who wanted to grab it, and add a little bonus without detracting at all from those who did not want to catch hold. If they did not get the joke, then it should not impair their enjoyment of the show. □

## FILMS

*Metropolis* (Fritz Lang, 1926)  
*October 1917* (Eisenstein, 1927)

## TELEVISION

*The Adventures of Don Quixk* (LWT, 1970)  
*The Adventures of Robin Hood* (ITC/Sapphire, 1955-60)  
*All Creatures Great and Small* (BBC)  
*Angels* (BBC)  
*The Avengers* (ABC, 1961-9)  
*Basil Brush* (BBC)  
*Blake's Seven* (BBC, 1978-81)  
*Doctor Who* (BBC, 1963- )  
*Doomwatch* (BBC, 1970-72)  
*Flesh and Blood* (BBC, 1979)  
*The Goodies* (BBC)  
*The Man From Atlantis*  
*Marty* (BBC)  
*Monty Python's Flying Circus* (BBC, 1969-71)  
*Parkinson* (BBC)  
*The Prisoner* (ITC/Everyman, 1967-8)  
*Survivors* (BBC, 1975-7)  
*Sutherland's Law* (BBC Scotland)  
*Z Cars* (BBC)

## DOCTOR WHO

*Carnival of Monsters* (PPP)  
*City of Death* (5H)  
*The Deadly Assassin* (4P)  
*Face of Evil* (4Q)  
*Ghost Light* (7Q)  
*Horror of Fang Rock* (4V)  
*Image of the Fendahl* (4X)  
*The Invisible Enemy* (4T)  
*The Macra Terror* (JJ)  
*The Sunmakers* (4W)  
*Underworld* (4Y)



# The Fun Makers

ANDREW PIXLEY asks if THE SUN MAKERS taxed the imagination

**T**HE SUN MAKERS was a breath of fresh air. With its wacky dialogue and dose of Holmesian characters the story was a complete change from the dark intensities of Fetch Priory and Fang Rock, and even the fantastic voyage to the Bi-Al Foundation. Now it stands up as a clear indication of what was to come.

Everyone knows the story is the one that attacks the tax system so wittily, but attention to the actual story shows that this is not its foremost trait. The financial and economic aspects of the serial are restricted mainly to the dialogue. What we have here is simply another example of tyranny - this time *fiscal* as opposed to *physical*. And whereas Don Quick, on coming across a planet with a less than ideal culture, started to screw things up, the Doctor can do no harm as he again helps the underdogs to help themselves.

The story is not unfamiliar, but a brief recap

could prove useful here nonetheless. The TARDIS overshoots again and ends up atop a huge tower block on Pluto where the Doctor and Leela save the life of a pathetic fellow who is about to kill himself. Rapidly they learn about the man's financial problems, and how the Company which runs the megropolis (city) taxes the life out of its citizens. Rather than be caught illegally on the roof (and risk a large fine), Cordo takes the Doctor and Leela down into the bowels of the city where the thieving low-life hangs out. Captured by these 'Others', the Doctor is told that he and his chums can all go if he gets some Talmars from a cash-point machine using a stolen ConsumCard. The authorities, already on to the Time Lord, have him gassed, trussed up, and sent to the Correction Centre. But at the last moment Gatherer Hade relents, hoping to catch the Doctor's allies, and sends the Doctor on his way with the money

he was asking for.

Meanwhile Leela has gone off to look for the Doctor, only to get captured herself. Rather than have her corrected, the head of the Pluto branch of the Company - the Collector - decides to have her steamed, earning some revenue from selling tickets to the execution. But the Doctor has realised that he is being monitored, and that the nice perfume in the air is really an anxiety-inducing agent to help keep the frenzied masses quelled. Armed with this knowledge, he persuades the Others to help him rescue Leela, stop the dispersal of the PCM gas and stage a strike. These first three objectives accomplished, he then feeds a two per cent index-linked growth tax into the Company computer. This panics the Collector so much he turns back into the slimy green blob he really is and disappears back into the base of his wheelchair. The Company officials are overthrown (some literally) and K-9 gives a new meaning to computer chess.

With nothing much new in this story, it was thus merely a case of sitting back to spot the allegories and the hidden words, and enjoying the light relief - humour of the sort sported before by Robert Holmes, misquotes are used to great effect, as in CARNIVAL OF MONSTERS for example. And as the Doctor admits, he has a gift for the apt phrase.

Many of the usual science fiction clichés of a bleak future are in the air. Megropolis One is a city of featureless metal corridors and telescreens, with a few artwork blow-ups of printed circuit boards to break the monotony. The inhabitants' drab garb is nothing extraordinary either. Whether all this is a conscious nod to Lang's *Metropolis*, a cost-cutting exercise, or a taster for *Blake's Seven* is not clear. The storyline also admits that the bad guys cannot wield full power by financial means alone, so we have platoons of guards with suspiciously lightweight blaster guns in evidence ready to cart people off to the Correction Centre (located under the Collector's Palace so he can hear the screams) should they get out of hand. The atmosphere is repressive from the word go, unlike the mock gaiety of either THE MACRA TERROR or the Village of *The Prisoner*, where the ruling power maintains a facade of satisfaction and harmony.

The supporting decor really sports the word 'cheap'. The Collector's wheelchair is all too obviously the standard item with a box around it, and more everyday hospital equipment arrives to take the gassed Doctor to the Correction Centre when his ConsumCard backfires. The chief form of correction seems

## Veet says goodbye to Leela and K-9



to involve having a motorcycle helmet with lightbulbs attached to the cranium. The Gatherer's mode of transport, despite its bizarre noises, is conspicuous by its absence. But the dismal sets in the studio and the grotesque iron underpasses on film add to the depressing scenario as effectively as if PCM were actually being pumped out of the screen itself. The attention to detail strengthens the setting and in true Holmes style we get additional and irrelevant information which adds to the atmosphere. We hear of, but do not see the Ajacks - miners of Megropolis Three where the PCM is ineffective in the subterranean tunnels and who cause problems for Gatherer Pyle. Hade boasts of his role in the Kandor Conspiracy and how the defrauding executive survived an amazing (wow-gasp) three years in the Correction Centre.

Holmes' attack on bureaucracy and taxation works extremely well on the dialogue level. The emotionless nurse who tells Cordo that his father has died and then slams the screen shut as he offers her the Golden Death payment must remind many who have struggled with the officialdom of Inland Revenue and got the "I'm sorry, you'll want our other department" brush-off. The D-Grade's discovery that the death tax has risen is also reminiscent of all those times when the everyday man finds that the rules set by officialdom have changed, and that ignorance of the law is no excuse.

And if those aren't enough, references such as to the P-45 return route and Morton's Fork are also hidden there for good measure. Those at the top getting the taxes live in luxury, able to walk in the light of whichever sun takes their fancy and play games with their talismans on the surface of ma-ho-gainey desks. Falling back to the clichés again, the average man is now a work unit whose prime concern is paying his taxes.

The reliance of dialogue also means that the production office was able to get away with a virtually bloodless story. Guns, when fired, do not produce the searing wounds of yesterday and although Mandrel continually waves a whip at those who displease him, he is never allowed to crack it in anger. These restrictions also extend to the story's climax where the Collector is defeated simply because the Doctor does something clever to the computer forecasts. In the best manner of "What I still don't understand, Inspector, is..." in the last act of a detective show. The brief explanation of just what did happen is flung in off-hand in the tag scene.



*Syngé, Cordo, Mandrel and Bisham at PCM Control*

Of the characters, some are realistic, and others are predictable comic figures. The Collector is the obvious bad guy - a crippled and twisted fellow clad in pin-stripe with pocket handkerchief who could almost have trundled out of *The Avengers* like some sort of comic Davros. Nose to the printout, he can deliver such wonderful lines as: "I'll issue an invoice for her erasure" when ordering an execution. To the Usurians, financial jargon is everything. His prime worry about the Doctor is not that he is an all-round good guy, but that he has a history of economic subversion.

The Collector's stooge is the grovelling human-thesaurus Gatherer Hade. Hade is a cypher for the rare opulence of Company society around whom the Doctor can run verbal rings and who, as the viewer knows, will get his come-uppance from both his boss and the repressed masses. He is, as the Doctor says, a "humbug" right down to his costume. As such he is a superb mouthpiece for Holmes to deliver some of his most outrageous and humorous dialogue to date.

Cordo works better, gradually and realistically changing across the episodes from the depressed D-Grade faced with a debt he can never pay right through to one of the staunchest and bravest men in the rebellion from which he knows he has nothing to lose.

Perhaps the most interesting character, though, is Mandrel. Once a B-Grade technician he is now leader of the Merrie Men of the Undercity. The whip-carrying turncoat can be a ruffian, as seen by his threats, tortures and cries of: "Stuff the Company!" (deleted from the Australian transmission). But he has a very strong strategic and technical mind, and indeed a very eloquent vocabulary when he tells Cordo not to "mouth those mindless pieties down here..." Veet, Goudry and the other Others will do what Mandrel says and

he manipulates their talents accordingly. He will not act himself unless the outcome seems both likely and beneficial, and he senses that the Doctor's presence means that an insurrection could work - a feeling he rapidly instills in even the most apathetic of his followers. By the end he is fully in the working man's spirit of toppling the taxers and referring to Syngé and Hackett as "brothers".

The rest of the cast are just bodies. Marn is an almost featureless straight-person to her boss, despite her Arabian Nights pantaloons jumpsuit. Syngé and the silent Hackett are there to operate the PCM controls when Mandrel has better things to do. Bisham is extremely wet and Goudry's "By the Company, if Mandrel orders her killed I won't be the first man on his feet" places him more in the vicinity of Sherwood Forest (circa Richard Greene) than Pluto. But with the evil sheriff knowing that if he announces he is going to steam Maid Marion alive he'll probably get Robin Hood when he comes to rescue her, here's yet another source of inspiration for what is basically emerging as a traditional adventure yarn rather than political comment. More generally in terms of the programme's development, we are now clearly into the territory of *The Tom Baker Show*, from the early scenes in the TARDIS to the matching tag scene at the end. With his jerky movements and smart-alec answers this is now a Doctor who can handle a life and death confrontation with a smile and a joke and whose comic timing for reaction shots now matches his technical skill and humanitarian instincts. Fully in his element now and obviously sharing a rapport with Pennant Roberts' direction, it is clear why Tom Baker's character and charisma have won him such a following over the years even in stories as generally unremarkable as this one.

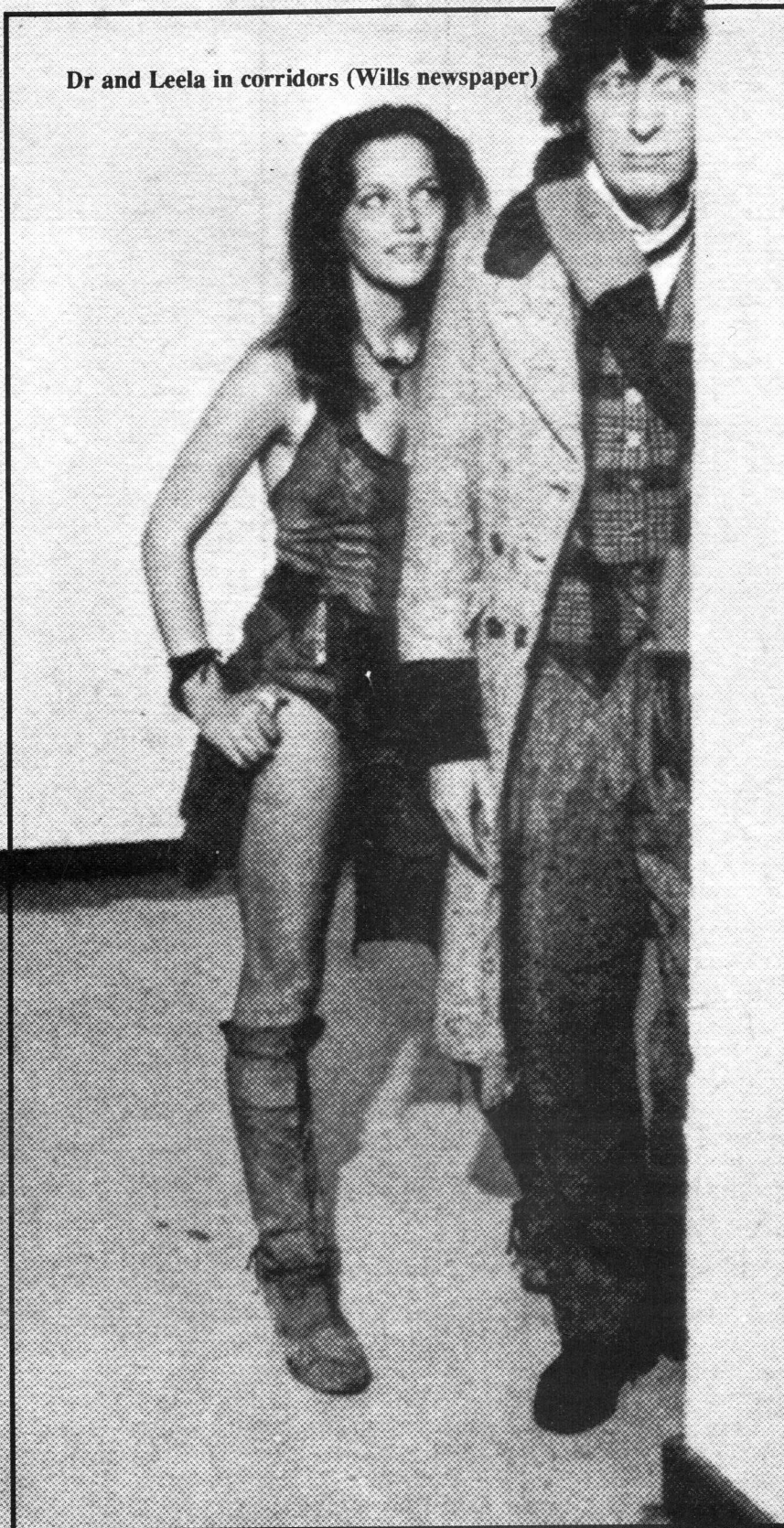
Louise Jameson excels as Leela, who man-

# Fun Makers

ages to behave in a realistic fashion throughout the most bizarre of scenes and even in the background of her increasingly erratic mentor. Some of her lines of innocence, such as comparing taxes to a sacrifice to appease the gods, are excellent - even if most are actually feeds for the Time Lord to deliver another punchline. Probably most touching in the story is her developing relationship with Cordo, and one wonders what high-drama could have developed if Cordo had perished in the revolution and she had sworn vengeance. In a story where none of the good guys die at all, some of the most dramatic and tense moments are produced by Leela's threats. We do not actually see Mandrel do very much, but Leela's track record has been established for us all. Her words are enough. After four episodes in the kennel for repairs, the super-hyped K-9's return was eagerly awaited to see how the mechanical mutt would fit into a standard story. The result is disappointing as K-9 merely functions as a large and rather noisy stun gun whose chief trick is getting guards curious enough to kneel down so he can blast them. His key role in the story is to blast open the pressure hatch from the inside, and it is debatable if this skill would have been required at all if he hadn't been in the story in the first place. For the first of many adventures, K-9 is left in the TARDIS to come trundling to his master's aid after the Doctor has fallen into the hands of the locals. K-9 also exhibits an embarrassing cutesy howl when being told off, which thankfully seems to vanish after part three. Probably his most squirmable scene though is the seemingly ad-libbed hunt-the-K-9 routine in part four.

THE SUN MAKERS was a bold step in a new direction for **Doctor Who** despite its flaws and its shortcomings. It aimed more for wry smiles on the faces of watching parents than gleeful chuckles from the younger audience. The peculiar background sound effects, comical Dudley Simpson music and almost Marvel Comic-style narrative combine to give us not so much the "vicious attack on the tax system" but something of enjoyable fun... and a taste of what was in store.

Dr and Leela in corridors (Wills newspaper)



DAVID OWEN decides the story is a

# Set Piece

**S**EVERAL critics of *Doctor Who* have observed that the series' realism, or at least grittiness, declined during the late Seventies. While this can be attributed in part to intervention by powers above the Production Office calling for the show's shock content to be toned down, a considerable shift in the programme's production style over and above this can be observed.

Compare *THE SUN MAKERS* with Robert Holmes' four-parter of the previous season - *THE DEADLY ASSASSIN*. Both stories parody aspects of contemporary human society. Yet by comparison the latter seems to hammer its point home with all the subtlety of a bolt from K-9's nose. The content has little to do with this - it is the production style alone which makes this adventure more fitting for the label 'family viewing' than its dozen or so predecessors. Which perhaps just goes to prove the old maxim that it's not *what* you say, it's the way that you say it.

Family viewing, in television terms, conjures images of soap operas, variety shows and afternoon films on bank holidays. However, a much older form of generation-gap-spanning entertainment has become an institution as much as a tradition - the pantomime. Had such a piece been produced depicting downcast peasants storming the gates of the Winter Palace in 1917 to overthrow the Czar and his retinue, the result might have been more Pennant Roberts than Eisenstein. The strongly theatrical theme of *THE SUN MAKERS* is reflected in the design and the use of the sets. The offices of Gatherer Hade and the Collector contrast sharply with the bare Megropolis corridors in which much of the action of parts two and three takes place. The former can be likened to the showpiece sets of a stage production, the latter function more like the closed curtains in a pantomime - hiding the set changes going on behind, whilst dialogue or chase sequences keep the audience entertained. In television terms, it is at times almost as if while the rest of the production world has woken up to the fact that bridging scenes are no longer necessary (given that programmes are not recorded as if live) and has taken them out, Roberts and Holmes have carefully gone through the script and put some back in.

The design of most of the sets serves, as on a stage, to emphasize the performers rather than impress in their own right. All displays, controls and doors are present not for effect, but because the characters need to use them. The Gatherer's Office is undoubtedly the show-piece set. It has several levels, an imposing lobby, a huge Company seal, attendant extras and (of course) the

Gatherer's executive toy-strewn wooden desk ("of a type called ma-ho-gainy"). The location work depicting the exclusive, sun-washed roof of Megropolis One is remarkable mainly for the length of some of the shots, whilst the film sequences in the tunnels do not jar with the studio (and film) corridors only because it is stressed that they are in the dark Undercity. The filmed corridors are at least longer than their studio counterparts, giving a pleasing sense of scale which does *something* to dispel the feeling that it only takes thirty seconds to reach any part of the Megropolis.

Costumes in the story speak volumes about those wearing them even before a single word of dialogue is uttered. The broad stripes and tasteless colouring of the Gatherer's robes and headgear prepare the viewer for his blustering over-confidence and complete lack of common sense; the aesthetic mirrors the strategic. Like his PA Marn's stylish silk pyjamas and the Collector's (appropriate) pinstripe his costume proudly sports the Company logo. The work units' smocks and slacks echo the sterile blandness of the corridors they traverse (or in the case of Cordo's father, clean). The distance of the Others from their previous existences is emphasized by the way their costumes have deteriorated, contributing to an overall effect that can almost be felt. In the scene where the guard discovers the workers are refusing to work, Goudry stands out for his tattered, grubby clothing and unkempt appearance as much as his overt dissidence. Slight variations in work unit apparel signify the wearer's vocation, but we never see any of the Ajack miners of Megropolis Three - we can only deduce that they are descendants of the floppy hat and scarf brigade of *Who* fandom, since the Doctor is mistaken so readily for one. In keeping with the theatrical nature of the production, there are few important visual effects or props. Gadgets too are kept to a minimum. The model shots of the Megropolis are rarely used (which is probably as well, since they are a little at odds with the location filming).

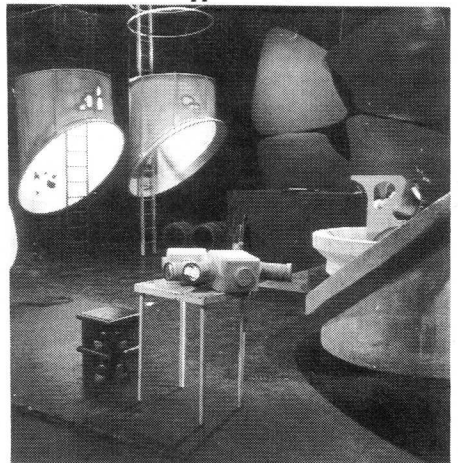
There are visual gags - the entrance to the Gatherer's office is rather like the jaws of a lion or the body of a whale, and the opening shot of Cordo is designed to suggest an expectant father (which given he is waiting for news of his own father's death is ironically apt). But the most obvious visual parody is the ConsumCard. This is, simply, an enormous BarclayCard Visa. Thankfully, high street banks have yet to introduce the idea of gassing customers who go into the red or forget their PIN number.

Of the other main props, the Megro-guards' buggy

is kinder on the ear than either K-9 or the Collector's wheelchair - above which dialogue is occasionally audible. K-9's motive drawbacks have become quite noticeable. He is always at the back of the group at the end of one corridor scene, and at the front of it at the start of the next.

Another prop worthy of note is the revolving world television station logo - a parody of the BBC globe, with six sun-symbols orbiting it.

So the stage is set, the costumes are ready and the prop table is filled. As the orchestra strikes up (a familiar soundtrack which includes Dudley Simpson's *Doctor theme* on a couple of occasions) with a performance that can easily be heard at the back of the upper circle, Gatherer Hade's



**The Others' Undercity hide-out**

larger than life occupancy of Number 11, Downing Street succeeds largely by virtue of never once faltering. How are the mighty fallen.

Marn, by contrast, is played dead straight. So much so that when she throws in her lot with the revolution it is believable simply because that is what any sane person would do.

Like Hade, the Collector's one-dimensionality is rendered a success by the consistency and adeptness with which he is portrayed - the living embodiment of cold-blooded monetarism. His debate with the Doctor in part four really tests the credibility of the character - but brutality wins out over absurdity.

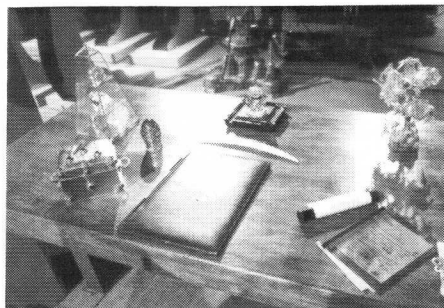
Cordo is portrayed as such an emotional wreck at the story's outset that his subsequent involvement is less believable than that of the jingoistic Bisham who, one feels, would align himself with almost any cause.

The portrayal of the revolutionaries is in fact very stagey indeed. But this is almost totally eclipsed by the pure entertainment put up by the team. Good performances all round ensure that the squabbling death-threats and violence early on are consistent with the by now familiar cries of "The Doctor's right - let's help him!" later.

Like a good pantomime, *THE SUN MAKERS* uses its resources - budget, performers, script - to the full without overstressing them. Those capable of suspending their disbelief can shout "Behind you!" while those incapable can enjoy the topical in-jokes and brave performances. And I'll wager a Talmar to a toffee that everyone involved enjoyed it too. □



**Gatherer Hade's split-level office**



**Hade's toy-strewn wooden desk**

# Production

**A** PRINCIPLE that Graham Williams worked on to *Doctor Who* was pairing experience with inexperience. If an experienced director was available for a show, then Williams felt happier entrusting the script writing to a newcomer - although a newcomer could be a seasoned writer who was merely new to *Doctor Who*. Similarly, if writers were old hands, then Williams was prepared to give new directors, or directors new to drama, a chance on the programme. It was a principle established in the wake of the trials and tribulations that had dogged the making of *THE INVISIBLE ENEMY*. Derrick Goodwin was primarily a documentary and features director whose fly-on-the-wall approach had drawn him into drama via the all-location *Z Cars*. He had barely survived tackling one of the most technically-complex stories in the show's history. Robert Holmes had been his staunchest support, often rewriting and rejigging whole passages of script whenever time or production overheads threatened the completion deadlines. Thereafter the pattern was set for the rest of season fifteen. *IMAGE OF THE FENDAHL* paired former *Sutherland's Law* director George Spenton-Foster with (relative) newcomer Chris Boucher to produce what Williams considered to be the finest story of that year. Similarly, *UNDERWORLD* would later match long-term *Who* writers Bob Baker and Dave Martin with new director Norman Stewart, while for the season finale it was planned to team senior director Gerald Blake with a writer new to the programme - David Weir.

## Writer & director

*THE SUN MAKERS* was a compromise. Pennant Roberts had only directed one *Who* previously (*FACE OF EVIL*), but was known to directors as a very competent technical director. He directed several episodes of *Survivors*, and within the year was to direct four of the thirteen episodes of the first season of *Blakes' Seven*.

Paired with Pennant Roberts was Robert Holmes. But while the script would be pure Holmes, one aim of this production was to enable Anthony Read to cut his teeth on *Doctor Who*, handling rewrites and agreeing any on-the-day script changes.

The other reason for having Robert Holmes write the script was to establish how K-9 would fit in as a regular member of the *TARDIS* crew. Having been lifted from the pages of *THE INVISIBLE ENEMY*, Williams felt it necessary to have a story which to act as a visual showcase - identifying K-9's personality, his capabilities and his limitations. Both Chris Boucher and George Spenton-Foster had intimated that they "...didn't much care for the beast to be in their story." So *THE SUN MAKERS* was the only opportunity before Holmes left the series.

## Scripting

Written in a very short space of time, the script for *THE SUN MAKERS*

surprised everyone with its style and content, not least Graham Williams. Robert Holmes revised his original story after a visit from his VAT inspector. As a professional writer, Holmes was registered for Value Added Tax. This meant he could reclaim the 15% tax he paid on anything pertinent to his work. It also meant he was liable to have his records inspected at any time. The VAT men are notoriously thorough. Frustrated by this experience, Holmes adapted his script (without having to restructure the plot) for *THE SUN MAKERS*.

Interviewed at a convention in 1983, Graham Williams recalled: "What none of us expected, and certainly didn't know beforehand, was that Bob had planned to vent his feelings towards the Inland Revenue in a script for *Doctor Who*."

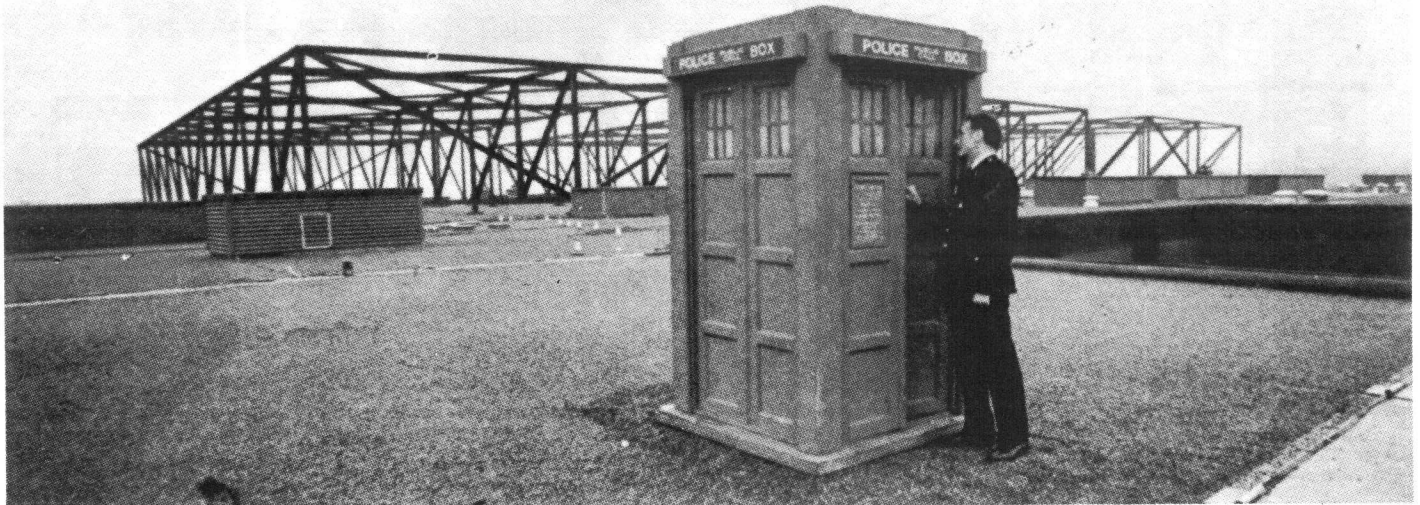
All four episodes are rich in what Terrance Dicks calls "vintage Holmes". Robert Holmes: "Well, I think I'm not a serious writer. I like to get some fun out of what I'm writing. If I'm sitting at my typewriter and something makes me laugh then I think, 'Well, I'll try that,' and I use it. Usually, I think, they accept it. I wrote a thing called *THE SUN MAKERS* which was a skit on the Inland Revenue system, with a Gatherer and a Collector, and in that I had some reference to income tax forms, like a Corridor P-45, liquidation, and things like that. And then there was the planet that the Collector originally came from, once it was revealed that he wasn't human, and he himself went into liquidisation and plopped down

into this commode thing. I said he came from the planet Userers (as in people who use you). But Graham Williams was adamant that we couldn't have a planet called 'Userers', which both myself and the director, Pennant Roberts, didn't agree with." So the planet's name was changed slightly to Usurius.

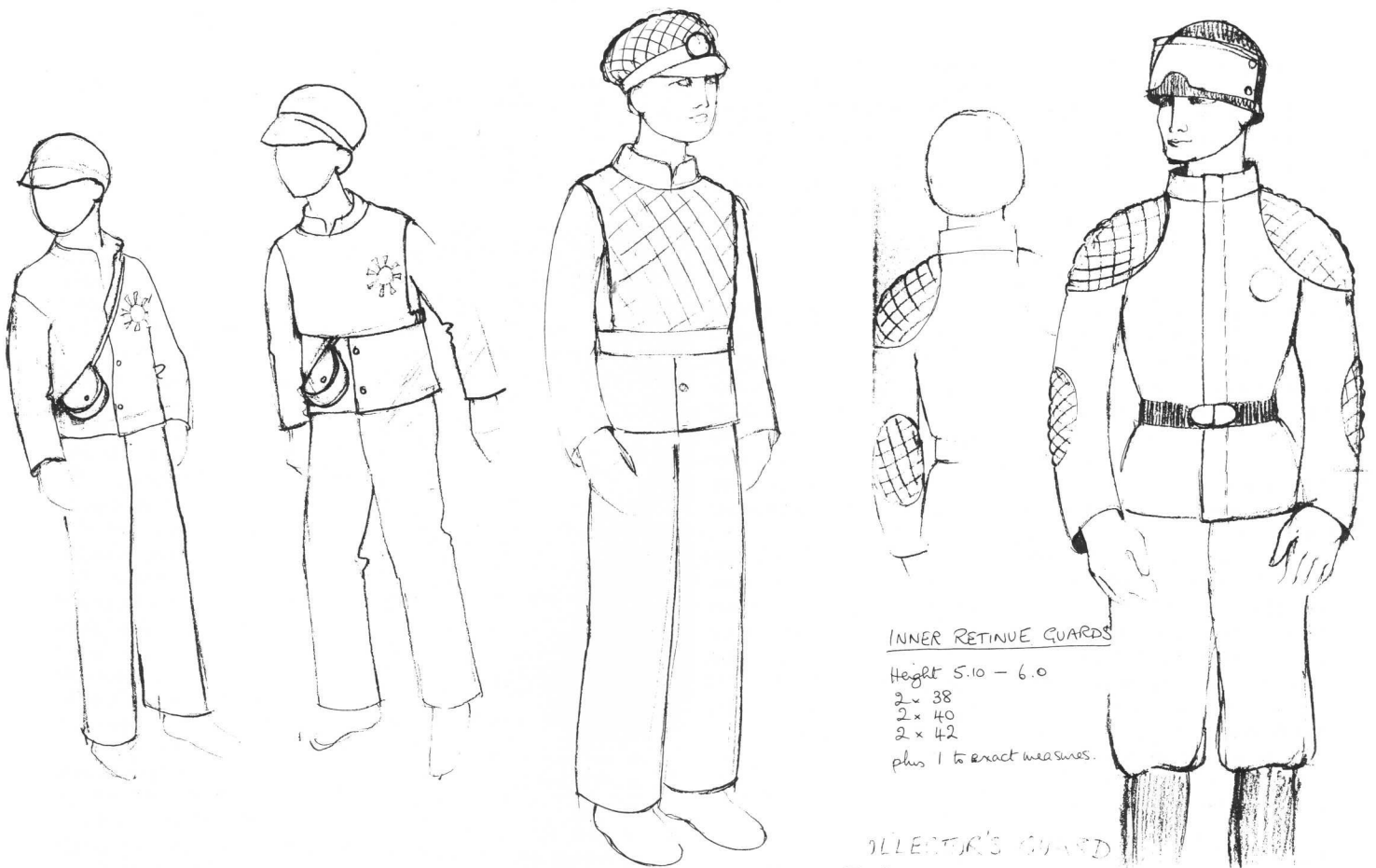
Some of the satire was subtle, like the Gatherer offering the Doctor a Rubus Idaeus or a military manoeuvre called Morton's Fork, some of it less so - like the mention of Gatherer Pyle. A more topical allusion was that the two PCM factory workers were Syngé and Hackett - after the drag act of Hinge and Brackett. Some of the jokes were certainly lost on the large majority of the possible audience - a 'beamer' (the Gatherer's form of transport) is slang in yuppie and stockbroker parlance for a company BMW. One other joke toned down at the insistence of Graham Williams was the ConsumCard. The original prop was an almost exact duplicate of a BarclayCard, albeit giant-sized. From the Gallery, during recording, Williams insisted this be made less obvious. Rather late in the day, the only option was to cover some of the offending areas of the card with black insulation tape so as to mask out the coloured bars of the Visa credit card symbol.

But despite what Holmes remembers, while Subway CT-1 and references to the Collector's crack troops as the Inner Retinue are his, the reference to the P-45 Return Route was actually added by Pennant Roberts during production.

*Wills security man Tony Butler finds there's been an illegal landing on the factory*







Christine Rawlins' costume sketches for citizen, guard, and Inner Retinue

## Imagery

Interviewed for the fanzine *Gallifrey*, in spring 1980, Pennant Roberts outlined his style of directing to editor Geraint Jones: "It is up to the director to coordinate and stimulate the imaginations of the set designer, visual effects designer, costume designer, lighting designer, and so on. I try to indicate some sort of overall style early on, but you can't say: 'This is precisely how I see it,' and squash every other suggestion otherwise why work with professional designers? It puts their work into a strait-jacket."

"The imagery has a better chance of developing a unity if concepts are deliberately sketchy at the first coordinating meeting. Experience tells that halfway through the design process, everything will come together. After that, the director double-checks that each designer keeps abreast of the others' sketches."

Roberts' belief that everything comes together half-way through, even if terms of reference are not clearly defined at the outset, nearly caused major problems for the SUN MAKERS' team.

Tony Snoaden, the set designer, realised that the story was deliberately allegorical. He proposed that the sets and costumes should be likewise. Seeking visual inspiration, Snoaden found it in the field of propagandist art - where art is used to focus context toward getting over a specific message or attitude. The specific ref-

erences Snoaden picked out were the fine art works of Mexican muralists Jose Clemente Orozco, Diego Rivera and David Alfaro Siqueiros, whose public works praised the reforms of the Mexican revolution and extolled the culture and integrity of the Aztec Indians at the expense of their Spanish conquerors.

Equating the phrase 'Sun Makers' to Sun Gods, Snoaden proposed to his fellow designers using these propaganda murals as the visual theme for the story, giving all the sets, costumes, and even make-up an Aztec look - from the bronzed workers who had never known dark, to the soldiers in the high hats and tabards, and right up to the Company executives in their halls and robes dripping with gold. Midway through pre-production, with some work already commissioned, Pennant Roberts chose to veto the idea, worried that the basic notion of telling a science fiction *Doctor Who* story in a hi-tech city would clash with or be compromised by visuals suggesting an ancient culture.

Opting instead for simplicity, Pennant Roberts explained to *Gallifrey*: "Tony Snoaden brought a collection of photographs to my office of abstract sculptures and paintings. We poured over these and settled on a style for the story - I think it was at the second attempt. Bob Holmes' script was fantastical and obviously allegorical; we wanted something to match. So we settled on a clumsy, wooden texturing to go with the

clumsy, wooden thinking of the taxmen and the work units they dominated. After all, even Mandrel and his crew accepted their place in the theme of things before the Doctor woke them up.

"You take your visual clues from the author's text, and hope and pray you get it right first time. There aren't any second chances once the sets are built and the costumes made. There were some complaints that the whole feel of the story was too surreal. In this case I feel we struck a pretty fair balance."

Although most of the Aztec symbolism was lost, a few elements did survive. Most notable among these were the crested hats, the badges worn by the Company executives and, most obviously, the giant symbol of the

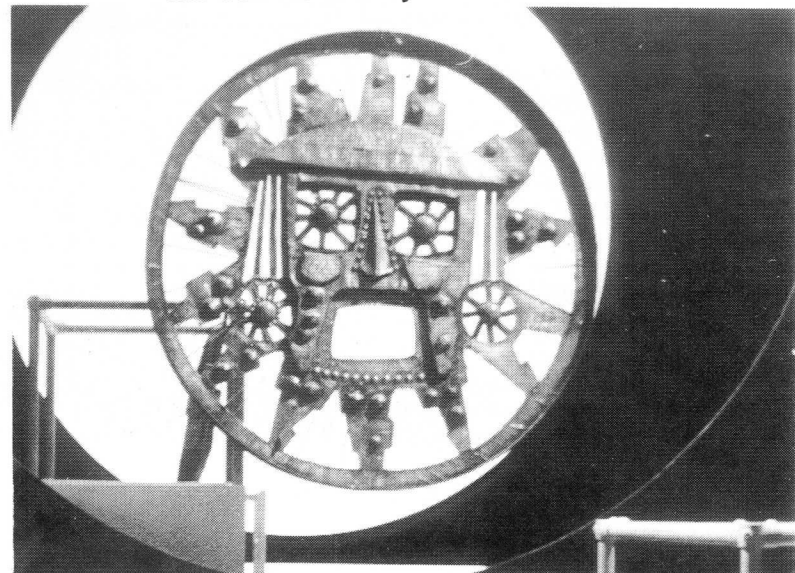
Sun Makers seen hanging at the back of the Gatherer's office.

## Characters

As on his previous *Doctor Who*, Pennant Roberts went through the script of THE SUN MAKERS picking out all the clues he could find to draw up a set of character profiles for all the guest roles he needed to cast.

"If you want one performance to contrast with another, you have to cast selectively. I usually prepare a casting breakdown for those theatrical agents who want to suggest their clients to me, with elaborate background details for the various charac-

The Sun Makers' symbol in Hade's office



ters which I may not find. Sometimes I may even consider altering the sex of the characters... Then I'll study my list of actors I've worked with or interviewed in the past, interview for as much time as I can afford, consider the agents' suggestions, and any other familiar faces. Maybe I'll end up with a short list of six or more for each part. Then it all happens in a rush, because one factor predominates. It's not always possible to predetermine what that factor will be. Once I'd settled on Henry Woolf as the Tax Collector, the remainder of the casting on *THE SUN MAKERS* happened quickly, with the contrasts and similarities I was searching for maintained along the line.

"I prefer to try to stimulate the audience's involvement with the subsidiary characters as early on and as firmly as possible. If they don't stand out from each other, strongly defined, the burden on the Doctor's shoulders to carry the story along becomes too heavy"

The clue picked up on for the Collector was Holmes' reference to him as "a myopic, faceless little man," which served both as an allegorical as well as a physical reference to his status. Henry Woolf is an actor who was then primarily known for radio work (although he also presented the schools programme *Words and Pictures*). He was also a proficient actor in both comedy and drama - a characteristic that would serve him in good stead in evolving his interpretation of the Collector, for which he adopted an exaggerated, nasally voice.

For *THE SUN MAKERS* Roberts did indeed change the sex of two of the characters. Neither Veet nor Mam were specified as male in the script, although they were presumed to be by Holmes. In essence the Gatherer and Mam were planned as a double-act, the former being the funny man and his assistant the po-faced stooge. But as rehearsals began it became increasingly apparent that greater comic performances could be yielded between the Gatherer and the Collector. Usually, for a comic pair, the stooge (the Collector) is given the leading lines to which the comic one (the Gatherer) responds. One trait that was deliberately amplified was the Gatherer's fawning modes of address. Robert Holmes had scripted a lot of Gatherer Hade's obsequious lines, but more were added during rehearsals as cast and Roberts ploughed through a thesaurus in search of ever more ingratiating superfluities.

## Location work

Filming requirements were easily identified from the script, but proved less easy to realise than was at first thought. Because of their length, the

Megropolis city corridors were prime candidates for film. Pennant Roberts already had a venue in mind from directing the *Survivors* story *THE LIGHTS OF LONDON*. The story had called for rounded tunnels like those found in the London Underground (so as to avoid having to pay London Transport's high fees for filming in the real thing).

The location Roberts found and used was Cambden Deep - a series of maintenance tunnels, starting at Camden Town, that connects a variety of ducts, conduits and passages from North to West London. They were originally built in Victorian times when most of London's rivers into the Thames were diverted and channelled underground.

The only problem with Cambden Deep was access for the guard's three-man buggy which was a key element in the battle scene scripted over episodes two and three. In short, there was no easy way to get the buggy down into the tunnels without lengthy disassembly and reconstruction.

## Budget balancing

The solution came as a bonus to the solution to the problem with the roof scenes. Originally the crew had aimed to film these scenes on any available large tower block roof in London. Even BBC Television Centre had in the past had dummies thrown from the roof, as the script called for Hade to be in part four of the story. But *THE SUNMAKERS* had a requirement which *Monty Python, Marty, The Goodies* and other comedy shows had not had - there were to be no other buildings visible on the skyline.

Since nowhere available in London was suitable, Graham Williams proposed shooting the roof-top sequences in the studio, using ChromaKey and caption slides for the backgrounds. Pennant Roberts:

"I wasn't too happy. The roof scenes were my only chance to show the scale of the Company's operations. A roof set would have taken up almost the whole studio space, and the scenes themselves were too long for me to be able to vary my shooting without complicating my overlay set-ups disproportionately. Plus the problem of the Gatherer's death plunge in the final episode..."

"Then my Production Assistant brought a copy of *The Architectural Review* into the office, with illustrations of the new Imperial Tobacco Factory in Bristol. Not a very high roof, but the size of two football pitches. Enormous. The bonus was an underground tunnel which connected the two halves of the factory to each other, three hundred feet long, and with no access problems for the buggy.

# Production



It was no easy matter persuading Graham Williams and his Production Unit Manager John Nathan-Turner to sanction (and fund) an extra four-day filming down in Bristol - particularly as they were already committed to using Cambden Deep. What was eventually agreed was that Roberts could have his extra filming, but the cost would be one full studio day. The non-filmed interiors for all four episodes would have to be shot at Television Centre in just three days, instead of the usual four.

## Bristol filming

The cast and crew arrived at the Hartcliffe Wills Cigarette Factory on June 13th, 1977 to an enthusiastic welcome from the management and staff. Being mid-summer, Pennant Roberts had hoped for sunny weather - an important ingredient in a story about artificial suns. But, for the entire

four days, the rain hardly ceased and the skies never cleared. The lighting team did what they could to overcome this handicap, but the size and scale of the roof prevented the illusion in any long shots.

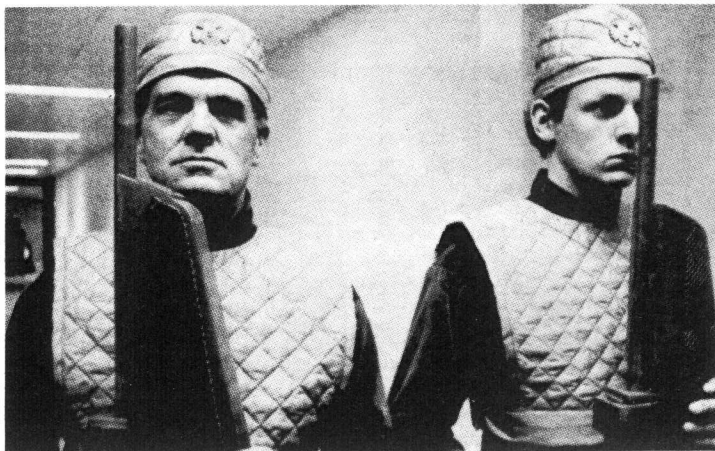
Where possible, in hope of better weather towards the weekend, Pennant Roberts concentrated on indoor filming early in the week. Shooting in the long tunnel corridor, between the factory and the head office block, went without a hitch, as did additional scenes in basement corridors near the plant's power house. The BBC film crew's visit to the factory coincided with the annual Wills Family Sports Day. So, when not required for filming, Tom Baker took time off during the afternoon to attend the festivities and sign autographs.

One member of the Wills' staff (Ron Rogers, of Production Training) unexpectedly found himself being drafted in as an extra guard when the scheduled cast member fell ill, and the team needed somebody of a suitable build to step into his clothes. (The scene was, however, cut from the finished programme.)

## Visual effects

This story was the first time K-9 was used on location. With nearly two months since the end of recording on *THE INVISIBLE ENEMY*, visual effects had used the time to upgrade K-9's mechanics. The main change made by visual effects designer Peter Day for *THE SUN MAKERS* was to make K-9 front-wheel drive rather than rear-wheel. This solved the problem of the wheels seizing and skidding every time the dog bumped into a cable or a





Ron Rogers (on the left) is called in to play a guard

door sill. Peter Day's assistant on this production was Peter Logan. Although it would be another year before he was promoted to a full designer, he was given a full credit on *THE SUN MAKERS* since so much of the effects work fell to him when Peter Day was called away to start trailing as assistant head of the visual effects department (under Michaeljohn Harris) as the management structure was reshuffled to accommodate Bernard Wilkie's retirement. Interviewed for the fanzine *Oracle* in 1979, Logan said his main work on *THE SUN MAKERS* was designing and building the effects elements in the sets, such as the steaming chamber mechanics and the computers in the Collector's office.

## In the studio

The first recording block was in studio TC6, on Monday 4th and Tuesday 5th July 1977. The session concentrated on scenes in the Gatherer's office, the TARDIS, some corridor work, and all the scenes in the undercity. The undercity was the largest and the most complicated set. Some of its scenery walls were constructed against scaffolding towers. Several of the actors had to climb the towers so they could be seen on the upper gallery, above the manhole tubes, looking down into Mandrel's hide-out.

In order to make his camera angles as varied as possible, Pennant Roberts arranged with Tony Snoaden for some of these sets to be built on swingers (see *IN-VISION* issue 24) to increase their apparent size.

The second recording block (which ended up involving some overtime payments) was the single day Monday 18th July. The principal sets featured in this block were the steaming chamber, the preparation room, and the Collector's office. Henry Woolf appeared in full costume, seated on his self-propelled hospital wheelchair and wearing a bald wig. It was Woolf who suggested that the Collector should at one point stroke the Doctor's mane of hair in envy (at rehears-

als it had not occurred to him, since he was not made-up to seem bald).

## Electronic effects

Three complicated electronic effects had to be completed this day, organised by A. J. Mitchell. The first was the electrocution of the attendant in the preparation room. Here Robert Holmes' script gave Mitchell a hint on the effect he was after - describing the surrounding field of energy as "hairy *Ready-Brek*". A different pattern was used for the later, similar shot of Leela zapped by the force field protecting the Company safe.



The most difficult optical to line up and execute was the shot of the Collector flushing himself down his own seating bowl. This was accomplished by overlaying a separate picture of Henry Woolf crouching on a large ChromaKey cloth while the camera shooting him panned back.



## Sound

With shooting and editing complete, just the sound effects and music needed adding. Dick Mills was unavailable for this story, so all the special sounds were the responsibil-

ity of Paddy Kingsland.

However, Kingsland did not provide the percussive clanging noises during the steaming scenes. These were incidental music performed by Tristan Fry (of John Williams' band Sky) hitting a section of railway track with a hammer. As for *THE DEADLY ASSASSIN*, the organ music was performed by Leslie Pearson on a church organ.

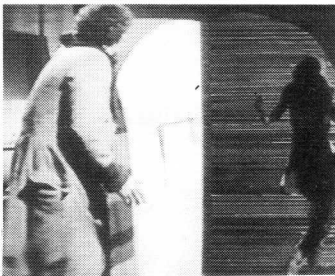
## Transmission

*THE SUN MAKERS* was transmitted over four consecutive Saturdays starting November 26th, 1977. After part four, *Doctor Who* took a fortnight's break for Christmas.

## Leela

It was during the making of this serial that Louise Jameson let it be known that she wanted to leave the series as soon as possible. She originally asked that the character of Leela be killed off in this story - suggesting she be fatally injured by the force field protecting the Company safe.

Graham Williams asked her to stay till the end of the season, and finish her year's contract. The press state-



ment announcing her departure was held over to the new year.

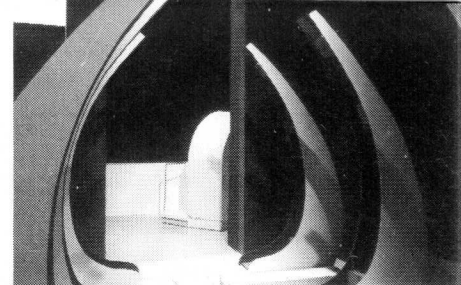
## Trivia

The start of part three is re-edited from the end of part two so that there is less of the Guards' buggy approaching and time for Leela to tell K-9 to hide.

The Doctor says that the time rotor stopping means that they might have "gone right through the time spiral". The Doctor mentions in part three that the Droge of Gabrielides once offered a whole star system for his head. It is not clear whether the reward is still available.

K-9 states that the outermost planet of the solar system is Cassius. Pluto (relegated to penultimate position) is now around 20 degrees centigrade and "very humid". Pluto now has six suns (which the Doctor guesses to be in-station fusion satellites) - one for each megropolis.

The building the TARDIS lands on is



Block 40 in Megropolis One (the oldest megropolis), and is (according to Cordo) a thousand metres high.

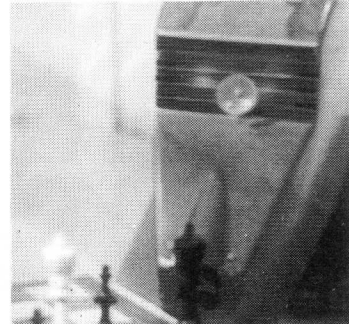
The part of Goudry was Michael Keating's last television role before he starred as a regular in *Blake's Seven*. Pennant Roberts originally suggested Keating for the part of Avon, but Paul Darrow had already been chosen for the part and he was cast as Vila instead. (This made for some interesting camera angles in later seasons as Vila is bullied by Avon, since Keating is taller and of a bigger build than Darrow.)

Roberts had been impressed with Keating's talents as an actor since he first hired him for the *Doomwatch* episode *ENQUIRY*. Pennant Roberts was director of the first *Blake's Seven* episode to be made, *SPACE FALL* (second to be transmitted, after *THE WAY BACK*). The episode was made very soon after completion of *THE SUN MAKERS*, and ironically it used several costumes from this - and other - *Doctor Who* stories.

A carry-over from *IMAGE OF THE FENDAHL* is that while the Doctor offers jelly babies, he actually dispenses dolly mixtures. Towards the end of the run of *THE SUN MAKERS*, the BBC viewers' opinion programme *Points of View* ran an expose on this. It featured a clip from *FENDAHL* where the doctor offers the skull, Eustace, a jelly baby (dolly mixture) and an explanation from the Production Office (Graham Williams). The explanation is, quite simply, that the Doctor says he is offering one thing while actually meaning something else so as to confuse people. The archetypal example put forward was the Doctor's offer to the Gatherer of a humbug - actually a jelly baby (ie, dolly mixture).

This story was reported at the time of transmission to be Louise Jameson's favourite.

The chess game played by the Doctor and K-9 at the beginning (and, almost, at the end) of *THE SUN MAKERS* was in fact the end game from the Spassky/Fisher confrontation. The original game was played on July 16th 1972. □



# UNIT Manager

John Nathan-Turner is best known to fans as *Doctor Who's* longest-serving producer. But before that he worked on *Who* in various capacities. *IN-VISION* asked John about his time as Production Unit Manager for Graham Williams.

**I** DON'T think the role of Production Unit Manager - or Production Associate as it's now called - has changed massively. The way shows are costed has obviously changed, that seems to be updated virtually every year. But while the role hasn't changed, I don't think there are two Associates who do the job exactly the same. It's a job that you can make as much or as little of as you care to. Perhaps *Associate Producer* is a fairer title than Production Associate. What the Associate is required to do is to book the resources that are required to execute the programme, based on the budget, and organise all the post-production - the editing, the dubbing, and so on. The Producer says "I want to make it in this way", and the Associate is the one who books and organises everything. He or she also does the charts and schedules for the post-production.

Graham Williams felt that the contribution was such that the post should be called Associate Producer, and he put forward a proposal to appoint me that for his final year. They wouldn't let him do it. I believe they said that I could be a Producer and share the credit with him, but that wasn't what he had in mind. In many ways it was that which really made the head of department look at me in a different way. When Graham decided to move on, because he'd been chipping away, saying "I think John ought to be called Associate Producer", that's why my name came up. I don't think I'm being over generous when I say that I think it was all down to Graham that I got the job of Producer. I had always wanted to produce. The head of department before the one who made me producer was a fabulous man called Bill Slater. I used to go and hammer on his door regularly and say "I

want to be a Producer". In the end he said, "Go and be a Production Unit Manager for a bit, then be a Script Editor for a bit, and then you'll be well qualified to be a Producer." So I said, "Okay, when do I start the Unit Manager bit?" And he said, "Monday". In those days things at the BBC were a little less regimented than they are now. So the following Monday I became a Unit Manager - without an interview, or anything - on *Doctor Who* and, a little later, *All Creatures Great and Small*.

Bill Slater then left to go back to directing, and Graeme MacDonald took over. At that time there was a possibility that I was going to move on to be Script Editor on a re-vamped version of *Angels* (I called it *Angels with new Virgins*). I did some preliminary work on the characters with Julia Smith, who was going to produce it. That all fell through, so I went in to bleat to Graeme. And he said, "Well personally I don't think that Producers have to have been Story Editors at all. I think your next move will be from Unit Manager to Producer." That, combined with Graham's pleas, was why I was promoted to the job.

I think I was a constant thorn in Graham and, particularly, Douglas Adams' side. I was always saying: "We can't do this one, it's too expensive - it's got night filming and everything!" They liked it better when I said: "Oh I like this one - it's very economical with a small cast and only a couple of sets." But I was not massively involved with the scripting side other than as a financial advisor.

You start to make rough jottings about cost when you see episode one, but you can't do anything serious. If you ask the writer how many characters there are going to be in the next three episodes, he probably won't know. He'll say, "Oh, I haven't worked out who dunnit yet. And I don't know how many more of them are going to turn into monsters!" You rough it out on episode one, then start to fine tune on the following ones. So I hadn't done much work on Terrance Dicks' *THE WITCH LORDS* before it was pulled, because we never got all four scripts finished.

You can only have a gut feeling at the script

*The Collector (minus bald 'wig') is in his counting house*





stage because, quite rightly, the Director is going to come in and might insist, for example, on more model work or vastly cut it down. And it's the same with every other contributing factor. So it's not until the Director has joined and you hear the sorts of ideas he has that you are furnished with enough information to quote to your servicing departments. You need to wait until the Director has had the script adjusted or you find out the way he intends to do it. What may read as something fairly innocuous, like "A spaceship passes the moon", he may want to make a big deal of. Whereas in the initial estimate it was just one shot, and we have a stock moon so it will be fairly cheap, you then find he wants it subjective with the whole of the rest of the galaxy in the background. Whether you try to restrain the writer from the start very much depends on who the writer is. If we feel that somebody is going to be strapped by what we might say, then we tell them to write the first draft with no eye on the money - in effect, to write *Ben Hur*. Then we can examine the script elements and have another session with the writer and tell them to take out some characters or sets or night shooting. Some writers like to have the brief in stone before they start. As a Producer I prefer the former approach. Most writers aren't stupid enough to put eighty-four sets in anyway. I prefer, as does Andrew Cartmel my latest Story Editor, and so did most of the writers, to say "Go for it". Then we'll have a meeting and prune it back. In those days the way Doctor Who was costed was very similar to the current way. The

four-part stories all have the same budget, and the six-parter has a higher one. It was up to the Unit Manager then to play with the money. So if you had a very economical script, then you could say to the Producer about another one, "This is an outrageous script, but I'll see what I can do." K-9 was a big cost and I remember Graham saying to me: "What do you think of him?" And I said, "I think he's terrific, but he cost so much that I hope you're going to keep him." Other people, who weren't influenced by the finances, had also said what a good character he was. As Unit Manager I was constantly robbing Peter to pay Paul and shunting money about. What I'd often do on *All Creatures Great and Small* was to ask the Story Editor if episode two, scene forty-six couldn't be set inside a barn in the studio rather than a farmyard outside on film. So we ended up having a couple of stock barns to give us that flexibility. For *Doctor Who*, the decision whether location shooting would be London-based or away was usually made before the Director joined. There was one story - *IMAGE OF THE FEN-DAHL* - where the Production Assistant lived in Salisbury. And whatever show she did somehow the filming always ended up in Salisbury. Even if it was set in Glasgow! I remember saying to Graham, "We don't have the money to go away, we must make sure the house is in London." Within ten days they had the perfect house - Stargroves, just outside Salisbury. In the end Graham let them do it there. We did night filming for

that too. I'm not keen on night filming as a rule, though day-for-night filming usually doesn't work - especially if you can see the sky. For night filming, all the workers are regular-hour workers. So if you're doing night filming, you've already paid for them from nine-thirty to five-thirty, and they start work at six. So it's monstrously expensive. For *Outside Broadcast* you book the unit for a twelve hour stretch - and it can be any twelve hours in a given twenty-four. But there is always the expense of additional electricians and additional lighting to achieve it. I thought *FEN-DAHL* was shot very close-up considering the vast expanse we had to light. The only bit of night filming I allowed last year was the establishing shot of the haunted house in *GHOST LIGHT*. For that I stripped the unit right down to about eight people. We even got the scene crew to rig the gates during the day, and then go away and pick them up again the next morning. I had always ear-marked *THE SUN MAKERS* as a London-based story. So when they wanted to go to Bristol that threw out my accounting. We kept it to only three days in the studio, but still the maths doesn't work out - one day's studio doesn't equate to a four days of film. For one thing, out of a studio day you expect to get sixteen or seventeen minutes of material. From a day's film, you're very lucky if you get three and a half. The only additional cost would have been the overnight stays in Bristol. And there you're only talking about cast and production crew - we don't pay film teams over night, their

# UNIT Manager

expenses are born by their own department as are Costume, Make-up and Visual Effects. So it wasn't a fortune.

There are unexpected expenses, obviously, but there are also unexpected bonuses - like a Costume Designer ringing you and saying "I'm going to hand you back two grand." In that case, having told a director he can't have another thirty extras, for example, you might be able to go in and say with great largesse, "I've managed to find the money for fifteen." It's a constant balancing of the scales.

There's obviously a great resistance to you overspending. But there's an almost equal stigma if you underspend - there are no bouquets handed out because that money could have been spent on another show.

That said, you've got to keep some money in your knicker elastic. You never have all the scripts until it's too late. In an ideal world, before anyone starts spending any money, your desk would be covered with the scripts for the whole season. Then you could do the job absolutely properly. The trouble with not having them all up front is that you're committing expenditure on your early stories, not knowing precisely what's coming in later in the season. So you have to keep something tucked away for emergencies.

Graham was always very cooperative. If planning said "Please will you take this show to a region," or "Please will you do this one all on location and give us back the studio dates", he would always say: "Yes, if you give us the money to do it then okay."

So for HORROR OF FANG ROCK, because they asked us to move out to the provinces, they gave us all the additional expenditure that doing it in Birmingham entailed. That included artists' overtime, transport, and so on. I already knew Birmingham Pebble Mill and I like the atmosphere up there. They were extremely cooperative. They don't have an hour and a half before you record, like they do here in London, they only have an hour. There are lots of benefits.

There was also a political reason. They wanted to equip Pebble Mill with ChromaKey and Inlay facilities which it didn't have. They saw it becoming a network production centre ad infinitum - as it has become. Us going up there forced the Birmingham management to put in a bid to update their gallery and equipment.

As it was, the show was a bit fraught because the clipping on the ChromaKey didn't work terribly well. I remember A.J. Mitchell had terrible problems with bleed on the picture and there were tremendous hold-ups in the studio.

Peter Grimwade was Production Assistant and Paddy Russell directed it. And they had all been off to a real lighthouse on a recce.

Either Paddy or the Designer had decided they ought to have it exactly the same in the studio, and that's how the set was made. The problem was that with two people in one of the corridors, they were so narrow there was no way of getting a shot back on one of them. It turned out to be a fairly impractical set. Nowadays an Associate does just one show. When I was a Unit Manager I was doing forty programmes a year - twenty-six *Doctor Whos* and thirteen *All Creatures* plus a Christmas special. I did *Who*, which was London based with occasional shooting away, *All Creatures*, which was Yorkshire filming and the studios in Pebble Mill. Then in my last year as Unit Manager Bill Sellars got a family saga called *Flesh and Blood*. That was filming in Lancashire with studios in Manchester. I felt I was forever on the M1 going back and forth between Yorkshire, Lancashire, Manchester, Pebble Mill and London.

I'm glad I had another show with *Who* - they couldn't have been more different. But on any show the Unit Manager has to be as friendly as possible, while running it like Stalag 39.

It was when were in Paris, doing *CITY OF DEATH* that Graham said he'd asked for me to be called Associate Producer. And he said then that it was going to be his last season. He said: "If we can get you the title of Associate Producer, you'll be in good shape to

take over." I was asked to take over in October 1979, and Graham left the show in about the February of 1980. Having been a Unit Manager equipped me extremely well for Producer. It's background experience which you can't buy. It's worth so much to have worked on any show for three years and then to take it over at the helm.

When I took over as Producer I had already costed what became my first season. They asked me if I would accept a trainee Production Associate, Angie Smith, since I'd already done the initial costing. She turned into a splendid Associate. As Producer I always told the directors I had a Star Fund. I had visions of getting some RSC luminary or something, and a Director would sometimes come in and say: "They're available! But they're going to be terribly expensive." And I'd say, "Don't worry about it, we'll use the *Star Fund*."

The first time I did this - on the season I'd costed - Angie came in and said: "I want a word with you... *What Star Fund?* There *isn't* one!" And I said, "There's got to be." She said: "There isn't any fat anywhere in the budget. Where can I find it?" So I said, "Always keep something up the knicker elastic for the stars."

I surprised all my Associates over the years with the *Star Fund*. But they've always found the money somewhere. □



# Audience

ITV (LONDON region)

SATURDAY 26th NOVEMBER 1977

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BBC 2

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A new adventure for Dr Who when he lands on a distant planet; 6.5 p.p.

Radio Times

**A**LL four episodes of THE SUN MAKERS made it into the national top fifty television programmes. This was a feat which none of the preceding stores of the season had accomplished. Ratings were also up on average, scoring respectively 8.5, 9.5, 8.9 and 9.4 million viewers.

This is not really surprising since television ratings traditionally rise through the autumn into the winter. Television viewing picks up as the evenings become dark and colder. Nevertheless, with three of the episodes in the upper forties/mid thirties positions, it seems the bulk of the Saturday evening audience was watching Doctor Who in preference to ITV's screenings of The Man From Atlantis. By this time ITV was running the series proper, as opposed to the longer and bigger-budget tv movies. Critical comment for this latest US import had not been very favourable. And despite each episode going out twenty minutes ahead of Doctor Who, the ITV audience share did not reflect this advantage.

The crucial watershed on November 26th (Doctor Who's fourteenth anniversary weekend) was 6:30 pm, when all channels ended one show and began another. BBC 1 had the clear advantage, wielding its almost invincible schedule from Basil Brush at 5:30 through to Parkinson at midnight. It was around this time that Shaun Usher wrote a memorable feature for the Daily Mail commenting favourably on this strong line-up which really did offer something for everyone - from drama to comedy, juvenile feature to chat show, action/adventure to sport. There was an honourable mention for Doctor Who, which Usher described as a show

able to "...perk up and surprise you." Publicity for THE SUN MAKERS was good too. For the first week, the Radio Times printed a quarter-page photograph of Tom Baker in Cambden Deep tunnels. Most of the national dailies, including The

Times, ran the still of Baker talking to Mandrel's men in the PCM plant. Much of the BBC publicity material is interesting for both its inaccurate photo captions, and for reference to the Sun Company.

## DOCTOR WHO

### The SUNMAKERS (Series 4W)

When the TARDIS lands on Pluto millions of years in the future, the Doctor is surprised to find a colony of humans living there under the light of several small artificial suns. Why are they there? And what is the mysterious 'Company' that controls them? Leela and the Doctor set off to investigate and find themselves caught in a desperate battle of wits with the all-powerful Company and the money-grabbing Collector who runs it.

They meet Cordo, a low-grade worker who is on the point of committing suicide because he is unable to pay the heavy and unjust taxes demanded by the Company. He leads them to the underground area of the city where a group of rebels are in hiding.

The rebels confront the Doctor, Leela and Cordo, and to convince Mandrel their leader that he is prepared to help them, the Doctor attempts to

defraud a bank. However he is captured by Gatherer Hade and taken off to the infamous correction centre. Leela and K9 attempt to rescue him, but Leela herself is captured, while the Gatherer releases the Doctor in the hope that he will lead him to the rebels.

However the Doctor outwits the Gatherer, and persuades the rebels to go with him on a dangerous mission to capture the PCM production centre



(Left to right) TOM BAKER as The Doctor and RICHARD LEECH as Gatherer Hade

