

SPECIAL KEY

Doctor Who gave Christopher Barry his first opportunity to work with an actress who became a good friend.

In January 1964, a young RADA graduate called Kay Patrick wrote to Christopher Barry asking if he might "spare a couple of seconds to see me". It proved to be a well-aimed missive: over the next four years, the director would cast Kay in no fewer than five TV productions, including two Doctor Who stories.

Kay appears to have been the only actress considered for the role of Poppaea, jealous wife of Emperor Nero, in 1965's *The Romans*. "It was fun to do," she says "I remember there was a lot of chasing down corridors – which is very Doctor Who – but we only had one corridor, so we had to run down it, turn around and run back.

"Christopher was a brilliant technical director, more than an actor's director," she reflects. "That's why he cast people like Derek Francis [as Nero], so he didn't need to worry about it. He knew it was in safe hands."

Recording of the story's third episode, *Conspiracy*, took place on William Hartnell's 57th birthday. "Verity Lambert was taking all the stars out to lunch at Bertorelli's in Shepherd's Bush, and even though I was just a junior player, Bill insisted that I be invited along," recalls Kay. "I know he could be irascible, and a few people found him difficult, but I found Bill to be very kind."

The following year, Barry hired Kay to play the alien ingenue, Flower, in *The Savages*, choosing her over such actresses as Anna Carteret and Niké Arrighi. "The costumes on that one were wonderful. I had a wig and these long hoop earrings. But because they were in black and white, nobody ever saw the beauty of them, which was a shame."

Over the years, Kay kept up a long correspondence with her early sponsor. "Christopher and I became friends," she says. "I was very lucky that he gave me those breaks. But I got frustrated with the actor's life. It's like boxing shadows, you can't really build on it."

Instead, she went on to establish herself as an in-demand director and producer, including helming close to 250 episodes of *Coronation Street*. "I killed off so many people!" she says, laughing. "The most moving one was when Hayley Cropper took her own life. Julie Hesmondhalgh and David Neilson [who played Roy] are superb actors, and I was able to direct it almost like theatre."

Last year, Kay settled down to enjoy Julie's guest turn in the Doctor Who story *Kerblam!* "I think Jodie Whittaker is astonishing," she says. "Male, female, it doesn't matter – she is her own personality. An amazing actress."



Far left: Pages from Christopher Barry's first casting notebook. Barry shortlisted Stephen Thorne for the role of Avon, and would later cast him in *The Daemons* (1971).

Above: Barry kept this photograph of Kay Patrick in the pages of his first casting notebook.

Left inset: Poppaea (Kay Patrick) appraises her new slave, Barbara (Jacqueline Hill), in *The Romans*.

Below: Kay shows off her extraordinary earrings in a publicity shot from *The Savages*.



Doctor Who (Again!)

Captain Edal: Peter Thomas ✓
James King
Gary Pope 2
Nicholas Hensby 2

Exoras: Mark King 2
Brian Jackson
Stephen Thorne
Robert Siddons
Jeffrey Frederick 2

Jans: Donald Douglas 2
Max Adams
Fred Jaeger 1 ✓

Senks: Simon Barrett
Gary Hogg 2
Frank Wilson Taylor
David Clout
Nicholas Hensby
Norman Henry ✓

Avon: Stephen Barrett
Andrew Lodge 2
Robert Siddons ✓
Jeffrey Frederick 2
Stephen Thorne

Flora: Kay Patrick ✓
Zainey Tarnock
Bonnie Huron
Anna Carteret
Lisa Thomas 2

Chad: Peter Thomas 2
Patrick O'Connell 2
Robert James
Ronald Fraser
Loren Silen ✓

Thurna: Clare Jensen ✓

Tom: Raymond Fink
Patrick Gallagher 2
John Rolfe
William Silen 1
Frank Wilcock Taylor

Wylda: David Siddons
David Thomas
Dennis Keilly
Edward Collick 2
William Thorne



to two days' work at Ealing Film Studios, where sequences set in three separate locations were shot. Even though all four episodes are now lost, it seems that the studio sets – designed by Stuart Walker, on his sole Doctor Who assignment – were also above-par for the day, including an absolute prince among Doctor Who corridors (a very crowded field, as we know).

All of this adds up to an impressive sense of world-building, with the action playing out across the deserts, jungles, caves and futuristic city of an unnamed, far-flung world. Much of this terrain Barry had covered before, most obviously in the first Dalek serial, but bringing it all together here adds a sense of scale to what is otherwise a fairly trifling, low-stakes tale.

Indeed, writer Ian Stuart Black was explicit about wanting to avoid "mindless action scenes" in his little morality play – an unusually explicit meditation on slavery, colonialism and apartheid, as embodied by the imperious Elders, who think nothing of draining the life force from the local "barbarians" to sustain their own, supposedly civilised society.

This may explain Barry's subsequent recollection that making the story "wasn't a troubled process, but it wasn't very challenging either." And yet imaginative →