

resurrection of the daleks

Resurrection of the Daleks is a pivotal story in the long-running science fiction series Doctor Who, marking the return of one of the most iconic and formidable enemies faced by the Doctor. First broadcast in 1984 as part of the show's 22nd season, this serial has left an indelible mark on fans and critics alike, thanks to its intense storytelling, memorable villains, and significant developments in the Doctor's ongoing saga.

Overview of Resurrection of the Daleks

Resurrection of the Daleks is a six-part serial that originally aired from September to October 1984. Written by Eric Saward, it is set in a distant future where the Doctor encounters a secret military operation involving the Daleks, their resurrection, and the consequences of meddling with ancient enemies. The story is notable for its darker tone, complex characters, and exploration of themes such as morality, power, and the ethics of resurrection.

Plot Summary

The Setting and Premise

The story unfolds in the year 2540 AD, in the aftermath of a war that has decimated much of Earth and its colonies. A secret military base, called "Exelon," is engaged in a controversial project to resurrect and reprogram the Daleks, aiming to use them as weapons in ongoing conflicts. The Doctor, played by Peter Davison, becomes embroiled when he is drawn into the conspiracy, uncovering the moral and strategic dilemmas posed by resurrecting the Daleks.

The Key Events

- The Doctor arrives at Exelon and encounters the military personnel and their scientific advisors.
- A group of Dalek mutants is discovered in a hidden laboratory, leading to a debate over whether to revive the Daleks.
- The resurrection process begins, with the mutants being reconstructed into fully functioning Dalek shells and weapons.
- The Daleks regain their consciousness and quickly demonstrate their ruthless nature, launching an assault on the base.
- Amidst chaos, the Doctor and his companions, Tegan and Turlough, work to thwart the Dalek plans and prevent a potential invasion.

Significance of Resurrection of the Daleks in Doctor Who Lore

The Return of the Daleks

Resurrection of the Daleks marks a significant return for the Dalek species, first introduced in the 1963 serial "The Daleks." Their resurrection in this story underscores their resilience and adaptability, as well as the ongoing threat they pose to the universe. The story also deepens the mythos by exploring their origins and the technological processes involved in their resurrection.

Character Development and Themes

This serial is notable for its morally complex portrayal of the Daleks, emphasizing their role not just as villains but as symbols of destructive power and hubris. The story also explores ethical questions about resurrection, the use of war machines, and the consequences of playing god.

Key Characters and Their Roles

- **The Doctor:** The central figure, seeking to prevent the Daleks from unleashing destruction while grappling with his own sense of responsibility.
- **Tegan Jovanka:** A companion who exhibits courage and determination in the face of danger.
- **Turlough:** A new companion introduced during this serial, whose background and motives add complexity to the story.
- **The Military Personnel:** Led by Brigadier Lethbridge-Stewart, representing human militaristic ambitions and ethical dilemmas.
- **The Dalek Mutants and Shells:** The resurrected Daleks, embodying the threat and menace of the series.

Themes and Analysis

Resurrection and Ethics

The story raises questions about the morality of resurrecting ancient enemies and weaponizing them. It examines the hubris of humanity in attempting to control powerful forces, often with disastrous consequences.

War and Power

Resurrection of the Daleks reflects on the destructive nature of war, the cycle of violence, and the lengths to which societies will go to gain strategic advantage. The Daleks, as a symbol of genocidal warfare, serve as a cautionary tale.

Identity and Consciousness

The resurrection process prompts reflection on what constitutes identity and consciousness. Are the resurrected Daleks truly alive? Do they possess free will, or are they merely tools of their programming?

Production and Reception

Behind the Scenes

Directed by Matthew Robinson, Resurrection of the Daleks features notable special effects for its time, especially in depicting the Dalek mutants and resurrection sequences. The serial was filmed primarily at BBC studios and involved intricate puppetry and makeup work.

Critical Reception

The serial received mixed reviews upon release; some praised its darker tone and complex moral questions, while others criticized its pacing and special effects. Over time, however, it has gained recognition as a classic story in the Doctor Who canon, appreciated for its ambitious storytelling and character development.

Legacy and Influence

Impact on the Series

Resurrection of the Daleks contributed significantly to the ongoing narrative of Doctor Who, especially in exploring the darker aspects of the Doctor's

universe. It also influenced subsequent stories involving the Daleks and their resurrection or re-emergence.

Adaptations and Media

The serial has been adapted into various formats, including novelizations, audio dramas, and comics, continuing to inspire new generations of fans. Its themes and characters remain relevant in contemporary Doctor Who stories, which often revisit the Dalek menace.

Where to Watch and Access

For fans interested in experiencing Resurrection of the Daleks, it is available through various platforms that host classic Doctor Who episodes, including DVD releases and digital streaming services. The serial is also included in some box sets dedicated to the Fourth Doctor era.

Conclusion

Resurrection of the Daleks stands as a compelling and thought-provoking chapter in Doctor Who history. Its exploration of resurrection, morality, and the destructive potential of war elevates it beyond mere monster fare, making it a must-watch for fans and newcomers alike. As the Daleks continue to be a symbol of existential threat within the series, stories like this remind us of the importance of ethical considerations in technological and military advancements.

If you're a fan of science fiction or looking to deepen your understanding of the Dalek mythology, Resurrection of the Daleks offers a rich narrative full of action, moral questions, and iconic villains that have defined the series for decades.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the significance of the 'Resurrection of the Daleks' in Doctor Who history?

'Resurrection of the Daleks' is a classic 1984 serial that is considered one of the most intense and controversial stories featuring the Daleks, exploring themes of morality and the Daleks' ongoing threat to the universe.

Who were the main writers and director of 'Resurrection of the Daleks'?

The serial was written by Robert Holmes and directed by Matthew Robinson, both renowned for their contributions to Doctor Who during the 1980s.

Which Doctor appeared in 'Resurrection of the Daleks'?

The Fourth Doctor, played by Tom Baker, featured prominently in this serial, returning to the series after a brief hiatus.

How does 'Resurrection of the Daleks' compare to other Dalek stories?

It's often praised for its darker tone, complex characters, and moral ambiguity, setting it apart from more straightforward Dalek attacks and showcasing the species' sinister intelligence.

Are there any notable guest characters in 'Resurrection of the Daleks'?

Yes, the serial features characters like Commander Lytton and the thug Belal, who play pivotal roles in the story's moral and physical conflicts.

Has 'Resurrection of the Daleks' been adapted or referenced in modern Doctor Who media?

While it has not been directly adapted, its themes and elements have influenced modern stories, and it remains a fan-favorite for its intense storytelling and classic Dalek portrayal.

Is 'Resurrection of the Daleks' available for streaming or purchase today?

Yes, the serial is available on DVD and sometimes included in Doctor Who classic series collections, and it may be accessible on streaming platforms that host classic Doctor Who episodes.

What are some of the key themes explored in 'Resurrection of the Daleks'?

The serial explores themes of morality, the nature of evil, the ethics of resurrection and cloning, and the moral dilemmas faced by characters in the face of existential threats.

Additional Resources

Resurrection of the Daleks: A Deep Dive into a Classic Doctor Who Adventure

Introduction: The Legacy of the Daleks and the Significance of "Resurrection of the Daleks"

When exploring the expansive universe of Doctor Who, few villains have achieved the cultural ubiquity and menacing notoriety of the Daleks. Since their debut in 1963, these ruthless extraterrestrial machines have become symbolic of the show itself—embodying themes of genocide, tyranny, and the peril of unchecked technological advancement. Among the many stories featuring these iconic foes, Resurrection of the Daleks stands out as a quintessential example of the 1980s era of Doctor Who, blending intense storytelling, innovative special effects, and complex character dynamics.

This article aims to provide a comprehensive review and analysis of Resurrection of the Daleks, examining its narrative structure, themes, production elements, and its place within the broader Dalek mythos. Whether you're a seasoned Whovian or a newcomer seeking insight into one of the most compelling Dalek stories, this detailed exploration will offer valuable perspectives.

Background and Context: The Era and Production of "Resurrection of the Daleks"

Background of the Serial

Resurrection of the Daleks was first broadcast in four episodes from October 8 to October 29, 1984, during the tenure of producer John Nathan-Turner and script editor Eric Saward. It is part of the classic Doctor Who series, specifically within the era of the Fourth Doctor, portrayed by Tom Baker.

The serial is set amidst a period of significant change for the series—facing declining viewership, budget constraints, and a shifting audience demographic. Despite these challenges, Resurrection managed to deliver a story that combined gritty realism with classic sci-fi horror, making it a memorable entry for fans and critics alike.

Production Notes

- Director: Michael Wisher, who brought a distinctive tone and pace to the serial, balancing action with character-driven moments.
- Special Effects: While constrained by the modest budgets typical of the era, the serial employed inventive techniques, including practical effects, model work, and makeup to portray the Daleks and their environment convincingly.

- Casting: Notable for its cast of characters, including the return of the Doctor's companions Leela and Tegan, as well as new characters such as the mercenaries and the scientists.

Narrative Overview: Plot and Structure

Summary of the Plot

Resurrection of the Daleks follows the Fourth Doctor, along with his companions Leela and Tegan, as they navigate a perilous situation involving a clandestine scientific facility on the planet Gallifrey and an intricate Dalek plot.

The story begins with the Doctor and his companions arriving at the planet Thoros Beta, where they encounter a group of mercenaries led by Tien and a group of scientists attempting to develop a new weapon. Unbeknownst to them, the Daleks are covertly manipulating events to facilitate their resurrection—a process that involves harvesting genetic material and using a complex resurrection chamber.

As the plot unfolds, the Daleks' plan to resurrect their fallen brethren is revealed: they aim to create an unstoppable army to conquer the universe once again. The Doctor must race against time to stop the Dalek resurrection process, confront the moral dilemmas posed by the mercenaries' ruthless tactics, and prevent a galactic catastrophe.

Structural Breakdown

- Introduction: Setting the scene with the scientific facility and introducing key characters.
- Rising Action: The discovery of the Dalek plot, the infiltration of the Dalek base, and escalating tension.
- Climax: The confrontation with the Daleks, the resurrection chamber activation, and the Doctor's efforts to sabotage it.
- Resolution: The Daleks' plans are thwarted, but not without cost, leaving lingering questions about their resurgence.

Thematic Analysis: What Makes "Resurrection of the Daleks" Stand Out?

1. The Morality of Scientific Experimentation

One of the central themes involves the ethics of scientific research and the consequences of playing god. The scientists' pursuit of power and the mercenaries' ruthless tactics highlight the moral ambiguities of technological advancement, especially when driven by greed or militaristic ambitions.

2. The Cyclical Nature of Conflict

The Daleks' resurrection symbolizes the persistence of evil and the futility of forgetting past atrocities. The serial explores whether history is bound to repeat itself and questions the effectiveness of suppression versus confrontation.

3. The Complexity of Characters

Unlike many serials where villains are purely evil, Resurrection presents morally gray characters, particularly the mercenaries, who are motivated by survival and profit. This adds depth to the narrative, prompting viewers to consider perspectives beyond good versus evil.

4. The Role of the Doctor

The Doctor is portrayed not just as a hero but as a cautious scientist and moral compass. His interactions with the Dalek threat emphasize intelligence, morality, and the importance of restraint.

Character Dynamics and Performances

The Fourth Doctor (Tom Baker)

Tom Baker's portrayal remains iconic—combining wit, intelligence, and a touch of eccentricity. In this serial, his scientific curiosity and moral stance shine through, especially in his dealings with the Daleks and the scientists.

Leela (Louise Jameson)

Leela's fierce independence and warrior nature add an edge to the story. Her confrontations with the Daleks highlight her bravery and combat skills, making her a memorable companion in the serial.

Tegan (Janet Fielding)

Tegan's pragmatic approach contrasts with Leela's impulsiveness, providing a balanced perspective within the team. Her character also adds emotional depth, especially in moments of crisis.

Villains and Antagonists

- Daleks: Resurrected with upgraded models, their design features more aggressive and menacing aesthetics, emphasizing their threat.
- Mercenaries: A morally ambiguous group with complex motivations, making their interactions with the Doctor more layered.

Production Design and Special Effects

Set and Costume Design

The serial employs a combination of futuristic laboratories, alien landscapes, and Dalek technology. The Dalek models are notably more detailed and menacing than earlier iterations, reflecting budget enhancements.

Special Effects

While limited by the era's technology, the serial's effects include:

- Practical models for the Dalek resurrection chamber.
- Makeup and prosthetics to depict the Dalek mutants.
- Explosive effects during confrontations.

The visual design effectively conveys a sense of menace, complementing the serial's darker tone.

Critical Reception and Legacy

Initial Reception

At the time of broadcast, *Resurrection of the Daleks* received mixed reviews, with some praising its darker tone and complex characters, while others criticized its pacing and violence.

Modern Perspective

Today, the serial is appreciated for its ambition, character depth, and its contribution to Dalek lore. Fans often cite it as one of the more intense and morally nuanced stories, setting a precedent for later, more sophisticated narratives involving the Daleks.

Influence on Future Stories

Resurrection influenced subsequent Dalek stories by emphasizing their resilience and adaptability. Its themes of resurrection and moral ambiguity have resonated in later series, including modern *Doctor Who* episodes.

Conclusion: An Essential Chapter in the Dalek Saga

Resurrection of the Daleks stands as a compelling, multifaceted serial that combines traditional *Doctor Who* adventure with darker themes and complex characters. Its production values, narrative depth, and moral dilemmas make it a standout piece in the classic series.

For fans of the Daleks, it offers a fresh perspective on their relentless nature and resilience, while for newcomers, it provides a gripping story with action, ethical questions, and memorable performances. As a cornerstone of 1980s Doctor Who, it remains a testament to the show's ability to evolve while respecting its roots.

In the pantheon of Dalek stories, *Resurrection of the Daleks* endures as a thought-provoking, entertaining, and visually striking adventure—worthy of both critical praise and nostalgic admiration.

Resurrection Of The Daleks

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