

THE JUDOON SMITH AND JONES



“A part from the Sycorax, the Judoon is the monster that I’m most attached to. It’s definitely the most successful collaboration between Millennium Effects and myself. Originally, they were to do the head and I’d do the rest, which was the usual way we did it, but we felt that the scale of the head and helmet meant that it would be easier for them to cast an entire torso, as they had a full-size dummy to scale it on. I had the leather gladiator kilts made, and purchased boots and leather trousers, and these were all sent to Millennium to tie in with the top half of the costume. I think it’s a very powerful image. I certainly wasn’t short of men wanting to try on those leather skirts in the Tone Meeting!”



Louise gets to take on the Time Lords, at long last!

how I’d imagined it, but I remember panicking, on the first take, that the skirt would end up in a mangled mess tied to an oily wheel. Luckily, it didn’t.”

For the 2007 series, Freema Agyeman arrived as Martha Jones. Louise didn’t have much warning. “They kept it so secret that I didn’t know, and then suddenly I had, like, a couple of weeks to sort out her costume! Russell explained that Martha would be wearing the same outfit for the first six episodes, and that’s a huge responsibility, because it’s got to be something that the viewers won’t get sick of. At that stage, the first six episodes hadn’t all been written, so Freema and I were really struggling to work out who Martha was.

“I bought a prototype of the leather jacket, the burgundy one, without Freema. The final jacket was made for her. It’s easier sometimes for me to go shopping without the actor there. Actors aren’t always thinking about the character; they’re thinking about themselves, what they might look good in, or what they might be able to buy off me afterwards. There were lots of things that I put Freema in that she said she’d never have tried on herself in a million years – like her look at the end of Series Three. She said that was the first time in her life that she’d ever tried on combat trousers.

“It was different again when Catherine Tate [Donna] came in. Russell had written stuff where... for example, in *The Fires of Pompeii*, he wanted her in a toga, but Catherine didn’t want to wear one. You can’t blame her, really. I said to Russell, ‘Women didn’t even wear togas,’ so we made her the plum dress, which I think worked really well. I think the most nervous I’ve ever been was on that Pompeii episode. I said to somebody at the time, ‘If this had been a film, and I’d been offered it, I’d have turned it down.’ I went into a major panic, partly because we were filming in Rome, and I was so reliant on an Italian team that I hadn’t ever met, but also because it’s not my period, in terms of costumes.

“I suppose I was nervous with someone like Timothy Dalton [Rassilon in *The End of Time*], too, before he came over, if only because I wasn’t sure how I was going to smuggle him into the costume house for a fitting without anyone seeing us. Secrecy has always played a big part of my time on *Doctor Who*. I’ve smuggled more actors in and out of buildings

than I care to remember, and made up some terrible stories – a mixture of slapstick comedy and stress. I had a load of stuff lined up for Timothy at his fitting, but you still think, gosh, if this goes horribly wrong, where do I go from here, because he starts filming in a couple of days?

“You try to make each costume the best it can be, no matter who’s wearing it, and no matter how iconic you think it’s going to be. If I’d worried too much about the standing of the person that I was dressing, I wouldn’t have got anything done. The pressure would have been a bit counterproductive.”

Louise says that she learnt something new on every episode, even after four years on the job. Last November’s *The Waters of Mars* was,



Donna takes on a Roman look (but not a toga!) in Pompeii.



Designing costumes that had to be soaking wet, proved a challenge...

says Louise, a particular learning curve. “I’d never done costumes where you had to have somebody soaking wet for hours on end. What we discovered was, you can soak someone in water, as though they’ve walked through a shower, but they’ll still look dry on camera. We ended up using a gelling agent that Millennium Effects [special make-up and prosthetics] gave us, which they put on their monster masks to make the skins look shiny. We were, literally, wallpaper-pasting our costumes with this stuff.”

A costume designer is also responsible for dressing the background artists, a particularly time-absorbing task on period setpieces like *The Girl in the Fireplace*, *The Shakespeare Code* and *The Fires of Pompeii*. “Everything has to be done to measure,” explains Louise. “You can’t just have people coming in on the day, because everybody either lies about their measurements or gets them wrong. Even with contemporary stuff, we’d ring every single supporting artist and say, ‘It’s a wedding scene. It’s Christmas time. Have you got something you could wear? Oh, and please don’t wear green.’ There was so much green screen on *Doctor Who*, I’d just say, ‘No green, full stop.’”

Was anything else outlawed?

“No spots, no stripes, no checks,” says Louise, counting them off. These designs tend to strobe on camera. “But then, of course, everybody would turn up in black, and Donna’s wedding would risk looking like a funeral! Particularly for wedding scenes, I’d buy a load of hats and spare outfits, and you can bet your bottom dollar that we’d end up using everything we bought. Oh, and ties! Ties were the bane of my life. I’m fussy with ties. I had a real problem with them. People came in with these

