



## **TRANSCRIPT: THE NINE WORLDS PODCAST, 2017 EPISODE 01**

### HOSTED BY

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### ADDITIONAL VOICES

JANE ENSELL as the GEEKPLANETONLINE ANNOUNCER

### **Performance Notes**

Misha's voice is soft and traditionally female. She has a fairly neutral southern English accent.

Matt's voice is deeper and traditionally male. He has a tempered southern English "estuary" accent.

The announcer has a slightly harder, traditionally female voice. She speaks with received pronunciation.

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PODCAST BEGINS

[Serene Music Starts]

### **ANNOUNCER**

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[Serene Music Ends]

[Theme Music Starts]

The theme music is fast-paced and upbeat.

[Theme Music Ends]

**MATT**

Hello, gentle listener, and welcome to The Nine Worlds Podcast, here on GeekPlanetOnline. I'm Matt, and I'm joined by Misha - Hello! - who's very timid!

**MISHA**

I'm just... just hiding. Metaphorically hiding.

**MATT**

Metaphorically hiding behind the microphone. And we're here to entertain you! So, since this is the first Nine Worlds podcast, we thought that we'd chat about auspicious beginnings: those TV shows, movie series, book series, even - anything like that - that grabbed you from the getgo, grabbed you from issue one or episode one. So I shall hand over to my co-host, who will furnish us with the first!

[Sound effect: rewinding vinyl record]

*Note: this sound effect is used as a section break. It will henceforth be referred to as [Section Break] in this transcript.*

**MATT**

What's first on your list of auspicious beginnings?

**MISHA**

I feel like it's an obvious one, and I also feel like I'm about to really age myself here by saying the, er, the new Who series, and the very first episode of that, so... Christopher Eccleston, running down a corridor, being very Northern.

**MATT**

Now that's interesting, because for many people that would be a very controversial choice... because the furore when that came out...

**MISHA**

Yeah... a lot of that bypassed me, because I... I am in fact a tiny child in the grand scheme of the internet and, uh, so I would have been... I want to say about eleven... when it was released. With no... no real knowledge of Doctor Who before that, so... 'Oh, this is a new programme! We'll sit and watch this!'

**MATT**

You've just made me feel soooooo old.

**MISHA**

It happens.

**MATT**

Sooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooo!!!!!! When I was eleven I was catching up on Sylvester McCoy's last season on VHS! That's... ugh... the Seventh Doctor was the last one I saw on telly. Dear God! (PAUSE) Well, it was a bit of a controversial choice, because the fans of my generation... the fans, sort of, my age... a lot of us had been waiting a VERY long time for Doctor Who to come back, and we'd always sort of kept that flame burning... and then something came along that was SO different to the last televised series that there... I mean, the internet... well, as you know, as you know, the internet collectively flips its wig over pretty much anything these days. Or at least, the vocal minority do.

Um... yeah... there was a lot of hatred piled on... I mean, I rather enjoyed it. I was one of those, one of the many people who couldn't resist downloading the leaked copy of the first episode. So I'd seen it a couple of days early, 'cos, you know, come on. It would be like, er, it would be like the new Song of Fire and Ice series book dropping, like, somebody getting hold of that a couple of days early, like, really? Would you really wait to read it? No, of course you wouldn't. You'd get straight in there. And that's what it was, you know, we'd been waiting so long. I mean, 1996 was the last time that Doctor Who was on TV, and that was a really terrible TV movie. We'd been waiting such a long time. So, yes, of course I dived in, and I... I kind of enjoyed it.

I mean, there were things about it I didn't like. The sort-of more slapstick humour I thought was very out of place. But, it's one of those funny things with me and Doctor Who, in that... the more time passes between an episode airing and me watching it for the first time, like the more times I revisit, the kinder I feel about them. And of course, in retrospect, I absolutely adore the Russel T. Davies era, I think it's... especially his last season, I think is some of the best television that was around at that time. But, er... (PAUSE) So how did you... 'cos if you were eleven, I mean, it must have blown your mind.

**MISHA**

Yeah. I have a vague memory of, like, sitting down to watch it, and like, "Oh, that's that thing, I don't really remember it, but it's a sci-fi thing, and I am a tiny nerdy child, I like sci-fi things." (PAUSE) But having not really got into any of the internet... stuff... like we, we were really late to broadband, um... (LAUGHS) we didn't get broadband until about 2006, 2007, so um... yeah, a lot of the initial internet just... passed me by. And so, yeah, I just kind of was like "here's this new thing, I'll sit down and watch it." And it must have been good, because I had a friend round visiting, and it always used to be that the kids would have their dinner first, and then we'd go off and entertain ourselves, and then we'd come back and join, uh, join the grown-ups when it was time for pudding. And we all skipped pudding because we wanted to watch the end of this program.

**MATT**

How did that grow for you though? 'Cos... I mean, I've got various... I, I was about to say, I've got various little people in my family, but of course, most of them have grown up now, so... you know, especially since 2005, but you know, at the time, there were, there were, there were a handful of... uh... of children in my family, and you know, it was just like the overnight hit, like, kids just loved it... What was that like for you, I mean, playground on Monday, or what have you?

**MISHA**

It... was... It would have been more, I think, if I'd had more friends, but the really telling thing is, um... (LAUGHS) again, this is my sort-of Enid Blyton childhood - we all used to go and play just out on a bit of grass in the lane, which was opposite where I lived and outside everyone's houses, and on a Saturday, which was when Doctor Who was on, we were allowed to stay out later than normal, we were allowed to stay out until 8. Which was very exciting. And... normally, the rest of the year, staying out 'til 8, it was like, you know, bang on 8 o'clock, you finally go and knock on the door, like (RELUCTANTLY FOR EFFECT) "Oh, I suppose I've got to come in". (PAUSE, THEN NORMALLY) But Doctor Who was, I think, it was either seven or half-seven... I know it was, like, significantly before eight. But -

**MATT**

Yes.

**MISHA**

- whoever was the one wearing the watch would be kind-of tasked with keeping an eye on the time on a Saturday, and, so at ten-to, it was like, (EXCITEDLY) "Oh, we've got to go, got to go in and watch Doctor Who now! (NORMALLY) And we'd all just, you know, we could stay out late, but we didn't

want to. We all wanted to go in and watch Doctor Who instead, which is, I think what, you know, what they wanted it to be.

**MATT**

Ooh, yeah.

**MISHA**

With that (MATT REPEATS OOH YEAH, OBSCURING MISHA) 06:23 NOTE! everyone runs back home to sit down and watch it.

**MATT**

Well then, I have to ask then, what did you think of your first sight of a Dalek?

**MISHA**

Um... I think I was definitely meant to be more scared of it, but I was mainly just a bit like "Ooh, this weird, alien thing. Hmmm. (PAUSE) It's slightly threatening- oh, it's flying, that looks silly." (PAUSE) Because if you look at the shape of them, they're clearly not meant to fly.

**MATT**

One of my favourite scenes from An Adventure In... uh... Space And Time, which was the, the dramatisation of the, of the creation of Doctor Who, the early years of Doctor Who, that David Bradley starred in, I don't know if you caught that? The anniversary year? 2013? So one of my fa- (MATT TRIPS OVER HIS WORDS) favourite scenes in that was when... Verity Lambert's on the bus on the way into work the day after the first Daleks episode... airs, and all of the kids are running up and down the bus pretending to be Daleks, like... (PAUSE) which actually did happen, you know, it's based on a real anecdote, I mean, it actually did happen, like, kids just latched on to the Daleks straight away, they... just blew their minds. And... I suppose they were stuck between... keeping them recognisable for those existing fans, 'cos Daleks are now a classic design. But at the same time, getting them updated enough that they would... they would be... interesting, or scary, or funny, or whatever... to... a modern generation of children. Ah, and it's a great episode, I mean, the episode Dalek... have you listened to any of the Doctor Who audio adventures?

**MISHA**

I've got - listened to a couple, yeah, but not...

**MATT**

The Dalek is veeeery loosely, very loosely, adapted from a Sixth Doctor audio adventure called Jubilee. Which likewise kind-of deals with a lone Dalek, like the last surviving Dalek after a war. And, uh, the Dalek sort-of demanding orders or demanding something from The Doctor that he's not willing to give. I do prefer the audio adventure, 'cos obviously it's longer, and it's- it's more involved, but I think... I think the TV episode does a really good job. But yeah, it's- it's really... It's really weird to, er, to see like the... almost like the generational gulf, like...

I lo- I love Doctor Who as I say, and I, I, I love the Russell T. Davies era... ah... and even I wouldn't have picked Rose as... an auspicious beginning. But you as, who was a child at time, and was the intended target audience, that's where your- that's the first thought that you have, which I think is lovely, I think it's... beautifully illustrative of the sort-of two generations of fans.

#### **MISHA**

It's what you always have to remember when people go, "ooh, well this is a bit, you know, silly," and I think, well, I have to remember when I was 12, and... thought that Rose was really exciting and fun and... like, I enjoyed the silly bits like, you know, like Rose saving the day because she could do gymnastics, because that was the sort of thing that we were doing, you know, running around the playground and doing handstands.

#### **MATT**

It's sort-of been hinted at in what you've been saying, but has that turned into fandom for you now, are you still a Doctor Who fan?

#### **MISHA**

Oh, I still love it. I mean, it does, it does silly things, and not all of them are brilliant, but I've got... I'm very fond of it. It's that kind of defensive thing of, "No, only we're allowed to be rude about it, no-one else can."

#### **MATT**

(LAUGHS) Oh, trust me, trust me, you, you know, you know nothing compared to the wilderness years, where you really did just have to defy Doctor Who fandom. I mean, I don't... I don't say that in a 'gatekeeping' way - I get really cross, really cross with fandom gatekeeping, and people kind of going, (POMPOUSLY) "Ooh, you can't be a real fan, because you weren't born in 1963". Oh, well I'm sorry, I obviously had total control over my date of birth.

#### **MISHA**

I mean, I'm sure you did! I can't believe you had the... the lack of foresight.

## MATT AND MISHA LAUGH

### MATT

Yeah, to be born, you know, uh... exactly. So, it's, yeah. I can't stand that sort of thing, but I do enjoy kind of clueing people in, younger people in, on... on how it was for us, 'cos, trust me - Doctor Who in... from the New Who-era onwards has pretty much... been... cool. Like, "kid" cool, from day one. Whereas, when I was growing up... Oh my God, you never admitted you were a Doctor Who fan! Oh my God, no! (LAUGHS) You... 'cos you would be ostracized. I mean, crikey, I... I mean, I got picked on at school, but... Dear Lord! Dear Lord, it would have been so much worse if they had realised that I was a Doctor Who fan! (PAUSE)

So... (STUTTERS FOR A MOMENT) I love it though. I love it that kids are so into it, I mean, my... um, my youngest niece, she is the biggest Doctor Who fan. She's 12 now, actually, and she is the biggest Doctor Who fan, and she's still got a massive crush on David Tennant, although she'd die rather than admit it. But she does. And, she and I really bonded over, once I realised that she was into Who, like, she and I really bonded over it, and... I... I've sho... showed her some of the old stuff, and she's kind of like, "What, what, what, what's this? Whatwhatwhatwhat are you showing me, 'cos it's... it's kinda... kinda rubbish?" (LAUGHS) And I'm just like, "No, this is awesome! This is a cool, classic episode!" And she's like, "No, seriously, w-w-what is this?" (LAUGHS)

### MISHA

But, being, like, uncool to now being cool with kids, the closes equivalent now, is like, when I was a teenager, you did not in any, any circumstances, apart from maybe on LiveJournal, admit to writing fan fiction. And now that's cool. All the authors are like, "Oh, yeah, I wrote a fan fiction. Oh yeah that's how I got started. Oh yeah, it's all on Tumblr". It's like (MAKES A NERVOUS NOISE) And it's that same dividing content as well -

### MATT

Yeah.

### MISHA

- like, if I were to take today's sort of 12 year old and show them what we used to write, they'd just be like, "What is that?"

### MATT

Yeah! Well, I mean, fan fiction is, er, i-is a great example, because it's... I mean, fandom in general, like, the internet is a beautiful thing, and it brings people so close together, it... There's also downsides, you know, you've got awful things like, GamerGate, and, you know, the harassment of

women, and, uh... a certain yahoo with a name beginning with 'M' who I won't dignify by naming who, you know, who organised sort of harassment and hatred, but at the same time, that gets a lot of focus, that gets a lot of attention, because it's so horrendous. But it also enables so many beautiful things, like... It's so much easier... now, to find people. If you're into something, a quick google search will find you... a forum, or... a Facebook group, or something, a community somewhere, that you can just rock on up to and say, "Hey, I love this thing too". And you'll... you'll start making friends. It's, it's... I-it's absolutely wonderful. So, something like fan fiction, you know, people like go, "Oh, you're doing that thing - I want to try that thing!" And then, it sort of spreads, doesn't it, and everyone's doing it. It's become part of internet culture in exactly the same way as social media has, and... you know, I, I, I don't know any geeky kid that's not written fa... Well, to be fair, back in the day, when I was a kid, I didn't know any geeky kid that hadn't written, it's just that... that's not what it was called in those days, and it was strictly analogue! (LAUGHS)

### **MISHA**

Yeah, it's, um, it's funny, and I wonder how much of it is the kind of... the... the beginning of Who making it cool to be a fan of... like, sci-fi type things, you know, the reboot of Star Trek and the reboots and Star Wars, and everything, and suddenly it's less... "Oh, the thing with the spaceships," and it's the thing that everyone goes home to watch on the Saturday.

### **MATT**

That's... I mean, that's a really good question. Uh, I'm not entirely sure what my view of that is. (PAUSE) I think on balance, I probably agree with you. I think, I think, yes. I mean, Doctor Who has certainly... the kind of start of geek chic in this country. That's when, that was when things very obviously... in the mainstream media, went from poking fun at us to getting excited with us. When even papers like The Scum- Sorry, I mean, The Sun - were, were dedicating front pages to, to, you know, who the next Doctor was going to be, or big spreads inside.

### **MISHA**

Yeah.

### **MATT**

That... That was a big deal. And now, of course, just as it was... 50 years ago, when, when somebody's leaving Doctor Who, it's a news story. When there's going to be a new Doctor, it's a new story, and speculation fills the pages. It's... it's an iconic role, it's... I think people anticipate it more than they do the new Prime Minister.

[SECTION BREAK]



**MATT**

OK, so, erm... Moving on from that, so, my first, my first choice for this conversation is another TV show. I'm going with Star Trek: Deep Space Nine.

**MISHA**

Good choice.

**MATT**

Because I was thinking about this, 'cos I'm... I've been a Trekker almost since... I was old enough to walk. I, you know, my, my parents would sit us down at tea-time to watch repeats of the original series, you know it's... Star Trek's been a part of my geek DNA for as long as I can remember. But... every single pilot has been as dodgy as hell.

**MISHA**

(LAUGHS)

**MATT**

Like... I, I, I very famously, and often, opine that if Star Trek: The Next Generation premiered today, it wouldn't last a season.

**MISHA**

Yeah.

**MATT**

You know, if we'd had no Trek for all that time, and then Next Gen had turned up, you know, that first season, even by late 80s, early 90s standards, is as cringeworthy as hell. Encounter At Farpoint is so awful. But... at that time, I mean, that premiered in the States in 1987, we got it in 1989... and there was next-to no sci-fi on TV, so, if you were into sc-fi or fantasy, it was either that or nothing.

**MISHA**

Yeah.

**MATT**

So we watched, we tuned in, because that's what we had. Unless you wanted to watch repeats of The Original Series, or stuff like The Man From UNCLE, like these, these sixties shows, which was like the last decade where people really seemed to care about sci-fi and that sort of thing television? Sixties and seventies, like, yeah. Unless you wanted to watch old repeats, that, that was what you watched. There was that, and then of course, Twin Peaks came along -

**MISHA**

Yeah.

**MATT**

- in the early nineties, and then, The X-Files, around the same time, and all of a sudden, things took- it took about a decade, but we started getting just a little bit more on telly, a little bit more on telly. But, uh, Deep Space Nine was there from day one. I've spoken to a lot of people who aren't particularly fond of Emissary as a pilot, and I will argue that it's slightly overlong, like, if you go back and watch it now -

**MISHA**

Yeah.

**MATT**

- it's, it's clearly an hour's worth of plot stretched over an hour and a half. There's lots of protracted scenes inside the wormhole, things like that, that don't need to be there. You could cut that down into a slightly extended episode quite happily. But, the characters are there from the get-go, fully established, you know. The plotting and, and what turns out to be a big arc plot, not that anybody noticed at the time, that all hits the ground running. It's... It's great. I love Deep Space Nine. I've just recently completed a rewatch, it's one of those things that I can just go back to, time and again.

**MISHA**

Yeah.

**MATT**

And, just about the only thing that changes is, Dr Bashir starts off really annoying. (PAUSE). Really. Annoying. Like, flush-him-out-an-airlock annoying. But that actually matures, and that, apparently, was deliberate. I always thought as a fan, that as time went on, they, they realised how to use the character better, and maybe they realised that he was a bit despised. But no, that was kind of deliberate, they wanted him to start off really sort of rash and youthful and annoying and full of beans, and over time actually become a character that you rooted for, and uh, and they did that. It... is Deep Space Nine something that you've watched yourself?

**MISHA**

Uh, noooo, which is really terrible. I've seen most of the Star Trek reboot films, and I've kinda seen bits of stuff, but I've never properly sat down and, um, gone through the series, which is just mainly because it's quite hard to get hold of all of them and then find the time and then actually watch them, when there's all the things, and... Ah, the ongoing challenge.

**MATT**

It is. That's actually... another very good point, you know, that's something that we can tangent off into briefly, because I remember, who was it it... uh... (PAUSE) I think it was Phill Jupitus I saw on a panel program a couple of years ago, and he was talking about buying DVD box sets, and he said he'd reached the point in his life where, when he's in HMV and there's a sale on, and there's... a TV box set, you know, especially a long-running series, 8 seasons, 7 seasons. (PAUSE) He has to, when he picks it up, he has to ask himself, "How many times will I watch this before I die?"

**MISHA**

Yeah.

**MATT**

Because from his point of view, he's like, "Best will in the world, I've got another 30, 40 years - am I really gonna sit and watch this entire series more than once? If not, can I just catch this on Netflix, or something?" And that kind of... typifies The Struggle, if we wanna use the... if we wanna use the meme, you know, The Struggle Is Real. You're quite right, it's... these days, as the internet brings us closer together, it also makes us busier, I find.

**MISHA**

Yeah. It... oh, it so does.

**MATT**

And as a result, even though it's, like, consuming media is so much more convenient these days. If you wanna read a book... you can download it to your phone and start reading in, like 30 seconds. If you want to watch a TV show, it'll be on a streaming service somewhere, for the most part. Everything is so much more accessible... and yet, we seem to have less time to actually sit and enjoy it.

**MISHA**

Yeah.

## **MATT**

I mean, Star Trek-wise... I don't know, I'm gonna sound biased, but, I would say, you could quite happily dive into Deep Space Nine. (PAUSE) Deep Space Nine is quite unique in that... amongst the Trek series in that... because... the movies, the, the Next Gen movies were going on at the same time, and Voyager had launched at the same time, it's actually the one show that covers all eras of Trek, like, there are two different uniform changes throughout the series to reflect changes going on elsewhere in the Trek universe.

## **MISHA**

Yeah.

## **MATT**

It kind of touches on event going on. And it has got, unlike the other shows, it has got a fairly interesting arc plot, although the arc plot doesn't really kick in until, sort of, the end of season 3. (PAUSE) And the characters are all utterly fascinating, and most crucially for Trek, which historically had always been very... Flash Gordon, you know, it'd all be very 'gee-whiz', everyone gets on in the future, there is no conflict- Something that Gene Roddenberry famously used to say, like, "Humanity's resolved all the differences, people won't get- fall out, or have arguments". And the writers of The Next Gen and Deep... er, well, Next Gen primarily, while Roddenberry was still alive, were banging their heads on the desk, like... "No, that's where drama comes from. This is a sci-fi drama, drama comes from conflict. If everybody on the ship gets on and loves each other, that's not gonna happen. It's going to be really bland." So, when he passed away, that's why... if you actually sort of watch both shows, you can tell the moment- well, Deep Space Nine itself exists because it's the Trek show that they could finally get away with doing because Roddenberry (LAUGHS) died. But it's-it... you can tell the moment in Star Trek: The Next Generation when Roddenberry gets too ill to continue. Because suddenly people start having arguments and things get a little bit darker. And then you can tell, you can definitely, tell when he passes away, because all of a sudden, everyone becomes just that... that little bit much more realistic.

But yeah, DS9, I think you can just dive into it. There's... iiiiit's one of the few shows I've ever encountered where the quality is... from season to season, is more-or-less consistent throughout. Like, any of my favourite shows, I can point to a season where... things dip a bit, whether it's the, uh... the first season, it takes a while to find its feet, or whether it's later season where it's, like, "Hmm, they're running out of ideas now." (PAUSE) But DS9, there's not a single season that I can point to where I can go, like, that's the dodgy season. It just seems to get, if anything, it gets better as it goes along. And yeah, it's- it's the only Trek show to nail the characters and to nail the sort-of beginnings of... the beginnings of the end, so to speak, in the first episode.

[SECTION BREAK]

**MATT**

So, what would be your next choice?

**MISHA**

So, um, I was trying to decide. There's two. One... one's a podcast, one's a book.

**MATT**

OK, go ahead!

**MISHA**

I would say podcast-wise, uh, Welcome To Night Vale, which I... didn't find out about until... probably about a year into when it had been running.

**MATT**

Yeah.

**MISHA**

Which is when people were finally saying, like, "ooh, this thing, this thing's quite cool." (PAUSE) And, yeah, I started listening to it up at the Edinburgh Festival, which is a terrible time to get into something new, because you have no time.

**MATT**

(LAUGHS)

**MISHA**

And so, I was making time to listen to it, like, kind of, you know, going, "oh, I'll just listen to 10 minutes while I walk to this show", "I'll just put it on before I go and, go and flier for a bit." There's something about it that's just sort of... really... pleasingly creepy and weird? (LAUGHS)

**MATT**

Yeah

**MISHA**

Yeah, I don't know if you listen, or otherwise does this sound really strange?

**MATT**

Yeah, because, largely because so many of my friends were raving about it and it was when... they were doing a live show, and it was coming to Britain for the first time, so that is a couple of years ago now, so... so many people within my circles were absolutely raving about it. So... I- I- I sort of dived in, and wanted to- you know, you get that whole 'fear of missing out' thing, it's like, "everyone's going on about this, maybe I should give it a go", even if you're not particularly inclined to. So I did, and, uh, yeah, I get why people like it. (PAUSE) I kinda got a bit fatigued with it, after... 20 episodes or so, where it's like... yeeeeeeaaaah, again, I get why people like it, and I can see why it appeals to the, say, the Twin Peaks crowd, that sort of thing. (PAUSE) But I... yeah, it's like, actually, there's only so much of this I can listen to. So I- I just don't think it's to my tastes, ultimately, but... the quality's fantastic and I agree with you, I think it nails it from episode one.

**MISHA**

Yeah. I massively go through surges with it, like I... listen to it, kind of very much - voraciously, went to the same set of live shows and really enjoyed it. And then, I genuinely haven't listened to it since until this week, which is really funny, 'cos I was thinking, "Oh, what, what had a good start?" (RAMBLES/MUTTERS INCOHERENTLY) And I've been going through, catching up... 2... 2 or 3 years' worth of podcast! And I'm back to being like "ooh yeah, I remember why I liked this, this is great, I really enjoy it", and, it's that same kind of... listenability thing that although it is very... I don't want to say 'formulated', but it's got it's style. But in some ways, that's what's enjoyable about it, you know what you're gonna e... you know a bit what to expect? Does that make sense?

**MATT**

Yes, no, absolutely. And, of course, it's inspired a number of imitators, it's inspired people to kinda... pick up the torch and experi... and that's, that's the beautiful thing about podcasting, it's so democratic, and if you know what you're doing, or rather if you know that ahead of time, it's so easy to just pick up and... and get started. Like, it seems so impenetrable from the surface... much like Youtube in that respect, in fact. And yet actually, all you really need is a microphone... and a piece of recording software.

**MISHA**

Yeah. And I think the other thing I like, specifically to Night Vale, is that... (CLEARS THROAT) they massively proved that you could just... do things, and it wouldn't stop the audience listening. But also, they really nicely proved that they could make mistakes and step back, so they could go, "ooh, we've introduced this character who is non-white, and we feel it's very hypocritical of us to have a white actor so we can change the voice", and people just go, "Yeah, great idea. We- we approve. You know, now you're doing all these live shows, that's a good thing". And I like that it... it's very good at getting those kind of like bits of... representation in a way that don't feel, like... and here's the token character of colour, and here's the token character who is gay, and here's the token character who is

a woman. It's just sort of... it feels mo- more like real life I suppose? Despite being... nothing like... real life.

## **MATT**

No, I, I get exactly where you're going from on that. And it's quite interesting because, you know, I... I've kind of twice now made reference to Twin Peaks, which is not something that I'm actually a fan of. I didn't watch it, first time around. My... room-mate is a massive fan, and desperately excited for the new series starting in May, so... she's had us, she's had, Samantha and I... my partner Samantha and I, watching with her, 'cos we've nev... neither of us have watched it before. So, we're watching the original series with her, in anticipation of the new one. And I spend most of my time in abject confusion. But... the beautiful thing about Twin Peaks is, because it is so surreal and because it is so weird -

## **MISHA**

Yeah.

## **MATT**

- like, literally from the first moment that the first episode, it is bizarre. Because of this, when they later introduce... a... um... (PAUSE) And this is something Samantha and I were discussing... David Duchovny plays a character who mostly goes by Denise, but occasionally goes by Dennis. And what's brilliant about Denise is, her... her gender identity is never discussed. And more importantly, nobody remarks on it. The closest you get to a remark on it is... Denise, when she identified as Dennis full time, was a former partner of the main character, Agent Dale Cooper. So when she arrives... Cooper is expecting Dennis, and then in walks Denise. And he literally just takes a moment, like, "Dennis, is that you?", and she replies, "I go by Denise now", and he just goes "Of course you do", and shakes her hand and that's it, and it doesn't get commented on. So she's not labelled at all.

So, Samantha and I have been discussing this, like... because we both thought it was great in terms of representation, but... what community is being represented in Denise, because... I was saying, like, initially I was uncomfortable with it, 'cos I said, "I think they are... representing a, uh, cross-dressing person as... a transgender person, which is a mistake that gets made a lot in television." And I wasn't happy with that. And Samantha said, "No, I don't think she is a cross-dresser, I think she's polygendered." 'Cos there is a point, it's not like a... a massive plot point or anything, but there is a point where for an undercover operation, Denise transitions back into Dennis. And puts on a tux, and... short hair. And again, it's not, it's not done as a thing, you know, it's not- attention's not drawn to it. It's like, well, yes... uh, Dennis will attract less attention than Denise, so Dennis is the one going in. But Denise has no problem with doing that. It's not like dead-naming, it's not like... you know, it's not like regression for her. It's just like, "no, fine, like today... today I'm identifying as Dennis, and that... and that's fine." So, so, yeah, as far, you know, as best we can tell, what's been written here is a, you know, is a polygendered character. But the point is... it's not a thing, and it's not a plot point. It's mentioned once in an off-hand manner, and then Denise is just there.

And... getting back to the point you were making about Night Vale, I realise that the reason this works... because I'm like, I'm surprised there wasn't a big issue with this back in the day, given how conservative television was, and people in general were.

**MISHA**

Yeah.

**MATT**

Back in the early 90s. And then we realised it's because... everything about Twin Peaks is so strange, surreal and subversive, that when something like this, which in any other TV show would be seen as a big deal, gets introduced, nobody bats an eyelid. (PAUSE) Because we're alre... we're already talking about a show in which murderous demons inhabit owls.

**MISHA**

Yeah.

**MATT**

Because reasons, Misha, because reasons. Because reasons. You know, we're talking about a show where there's, there's, um... you know, there's... there's a person of short stature speaking backwards and dancing in a dream. And... and Dale Cooper uses it to solve a murder case, and it is actually... it does actually solve the murder case in the end, and that's fine.

**MISHA**

Yeah.

**MATT**

And it... I refuse to believe that David Lynch did not do it on purpose. Now, I'm not a massive fan, so I haven't read any of the literature or interviews, or anything like that. I may be that somebody's listening to this now and going, "Oh, actually Matt, David Lynch, you know, has already come about and said blah blah blah." Maybe that's the case, I don't know if it is or not. But I refuse to believe that it wasn't deliberate. And... that's what brings me to the other show I was gonna bring up... in this comparison, which is Babylon 5.

**MISHA**

Yeah.



## **MATT**

Because, uh, I have actually had the pleasure of having a nice long conversation with the series creator, uh, Joe Michael Straczynski, and... he was talking, I interviewed him for a podcast that I used to do... and... he was talking about, 'cos like, er, my co-host at the time and I, sort of, took the opportunity to praise him for the inclusion of a bisexual character, Susan Ivanova, and more importantly, a character that's bisexual, and again, it's not a plot point, it's not a thing. Over the course of the show, if you realise what you're looking at, you realise sh... you know, you... you're watching a character, a female character, fall in love with another female character. And it is heavily implied that they have a sexual relationship, but it's not explicitly stated or sensationalised. It's just there.

And Straczynski then went on, well he said "well, thank you for the compliment", but he went on to say that, like, if you actually go back and watch Babylon 5 and look in the background, you know, there are so many scenes that take, you know, it's a busy space station so, you know, there's so many scenes that take place, you know, there's cafes and there's restaurants, and things like that in the background, and if you look, he said, that when there are couples sitting at the table, there are interracial couples, there are interspecies couples, there are same gender couples, and there are binary gender couples, and heteronormative couples. And they're just there in the background, because he knew he couldn't put it in the foreground, because the censors, uh, people over at Warner television would flip their wigs. But he could put it in the background, and nobody would care. But, he's normalising non-cis, non-het... you know, non-binary relationships. (PAUSE) And it's wonderful.

He's just... it's just there. It's not even a thing. (PAUSE) And I think it... it's so easy these days, to underestimate how powerful or how important that was. Even if by modern standards it's barely anything. But at the time it was, it was a huge deal. So, that, to me, is very much what you're talking about there with Welcome To the Night Vale. It's like, you say, it's not a thing, it just, it happens, and... and people recognise it as real life. And it's great.

## **MISHA**

Yeah. It's nice, it's like, "oh yeah, that's, that's... not a big deal."

[SECTION BREAK]

## **MATT**

I'm aware that I've been rambling quite a bit, uh, but it's my turn, I'm nex... uh, I am next up. So... my, uh, my final auspicious beginning... is a games console. It is the Nintendo Entertainment System. First released in Japan in July 1983, and then it was eventually released in 1985 in the US, and 1986 over here in the UK. And, after the video games crash of the late 70s, early 80s, it was kind of the thing that saved the gaming industry. It was just... when people getting bored of computer games and, and things weren't selling, all of a sudden, here comes this, this little console, and people can

just plug it into their TVs and play, and play, you know, what was then arcade-quality games. And, it blew everyone away.

And it is to this day... I still have an Nintendo Entertainment System, the actual Nintendo Entertainment System, as opposed to the micro version that was released at Christmas, although I have one of those as well. Thank you, Samantha. (LAUGHS, PAUSE) You know, I, I'm, I'm a video games collector and so I have, I have pretty much any console you could care to name, to be fair. I have a Nintendo, and I still play on it, because it's a beautiful little console, and... yes, games were, people are fond saying games were harder back then, actually they kind of were... But, I've still got this romantic view of g... and so many classics kind of spawned on the NES, the stuff that we take for granted these days. You know, your Marios and your Zeldas and... and so on. Bomberman even, you know, that was, that was... there was a version of that for the Nintendo. (PAUSE) You know (PAUSE) And since the release of the, the Famicom, I would argue, with the exception of the Wii, and I'm in the minority there and I'll get to that, Nintendo have never failed to release a console that hasn't generated excitement.

**MISHA**

Yeah.

**MATT**

You know, I mean, I was personally, as a... as a lifelong Nintendo fan, I was personally disappointed by the Wii. Yes, my first little go with the motion controller was like, "oh wow, it's like I'm actually playing tennis", and then I remember that I'm a big, overweight person, I don't like playing tennis, and actually, I play video games to relax and not get sweaty and jump all over the living room. And then I realised that I could play the game just well by occasionally twitching the controller with my wrist. It doesn't need the big movements. And then, what's the point? (LAUGHS, PAUSE) But... I'm very much, you know, the Wii sold a lot. And... it was very popular with a certain audience, and that audience was people who don't normally play video games. Much like I was saying earlier, you know, you- we... uh, Doctor Who fans of my generation had to accept that, that Doctor Who has always been for kids, it's always been a show aimed at children. And... you can enjoy it as an adult if you like, that's fine, but it's not for you.

And the Wii was not for me, it was for everyone that wasn't being catered to by the like of the Playstation 3 and the Xbox 360. (PAUSE) But, uh, the Wii aside, I have never failed to experience unbridled joy with every new Nintendo console, right up until the Nintendo Switch, that would be, that would be my final auspicious beginning. Are you, are you a gamer yourself? Did you grow up with gaming?

**MISHA**

A little bit. Um, Nintendo actually, I had a Gameboy Colour, which I was very fond of -

**MATT**

Oh yeah.

**MISHA**

- as my first proper game, and we all, and it was the big boom of Pokémon.

**MATT**

Yesssss.

**MISHA**

And that excitement of being able to be like, "Look, Dad, I'm not, you know, just playing on a computer game, I'm going to take it outside and attach it to my friend's one via a cable." (PAUSE) It never worked quite as well as you wanted it to. (LAUGHS)

**MATT**

No, this is where, at least you weren't trying the little infrared thing in the top. Which-

**MISHA**

Oh, yeah.

**MATT**

- would be, the beam would be broken by a speck of dust.

**MISHA**

You just had to sort of breathe on it and it would stop.

**MATT**

Do you still play, by the way? Still play Pokémon?

**MISHA**

I do occasionally, I sta... I've got my old Gameboy upstairs, and I still think it's the best game. I've got, got a couple of Gameboys lurking around, um... and I used to have a PlayStation, which I mainly used for playing a game called G1 Jockey 4, which was great, you got to pretend to be a jockey. And

there's lots of all sorts of exciting things at the moment, but, again it's all sort of a time thing, You go, "Oh, I could buy a console but then I'd have to make time to do it, and I just..."

**MATT**

Yeah. Which I, which I think is fair enough. I mean, I get... I'm very frequently torn with how to spend my time.

[SECTION BREAK]

**MATT**

What would your final choice be?

**MISHA**

Final quick one is got to be the first Ben Aaronovitch book, Rivers of London.

**MATT**

[EXCITED] OOH! Good choice, good choice.

**MISHA**

Friend sold it to me with "it's like police procedural, but with magic," and I was like, "yeah, brilliant, give it here." [PAUSE] Um, and then I was on my way to work in Covent Garden, coincidentally, about... maybe a chapter from the end and I was like "right, I have to go to Waterstones and buy all the available... books that he's written so far. I can't wait... for... you know, Amazon, or even tomorrow to carry on with the rest of this story." Um... yeah. (LAUGHS)

**MATT**

Yeah, I mean, I'm... I'm a couple of books behind at this stage, but I adore them, like... The beautiful thing about having grown up in and around London is that you're reading these books and going, "I've been there!"

**MISHA**

The... I think it's the third or the fourth one, the... tower block is Elephant and Castle, which is near where I lived, and it was quite weird reading and going by on the bus like, "No, it's still there."  
(LAUGHS)

**MATT**

Yeah. Well, do you know what, the amount of times I've walked past The Spice of Life -

**MISHA**

Yes.

**MATT**

- and I've never gone in, you know, because it's a pub in central London and, and I tend to avoid those like the plague because I don't have a house to re-mortgage in order to afford the drinks there... but I had to, once I started reading the books of course, I had to go in and have a pint, just so I'd had a pint in The Spice of Life. Are you looking forwards to the TV series being planned?

**MISHA**

I am quite excited. I think... I think they'll hopefully they'll do it well? Like... I'm, I maybe, I don't know if 'nervous' is the word for casting, because I think Ben Aaronovitch will get it right, and he's very much always said that, you know, "Oh no, of course they're not going to recast Peter as a white man because that's not who Peter is -

**MATT**

Yes.

**MISHA**

- but, his defence of like Dr. Walid, is like, no, think Cat Stephens, Dr. Walid is a white ginger Scottish man, who is also Muslim. That's... different, different problem. Um, especially, like, Nightingale. Everyone's got a very... they've got their own idea of who that should be. I've always in my head had, er, David Thewlis, I think would make a good Nightingale.

**MATT**

Oh, okay. Do you know what, from minute one, he's been Bill Nighy in my head.

**MISHA**

Ohh, nice, I could see that.

**MATT**

His voice is Bill Nighy... you know, and I can't see anyone else in the part?

**MISHA**

A, a few people I know have mentioned Paul McGann, but I...

**MATT**

Ohhhh!

**MISHA**

I don't want to say 'solid', 'cos that sounds like I'm dissing Paul McGann's figure, but Paul McGann is sort of broad shouldered and athletic though, whereas always in my head had Nightingale down as that sort of Billy Nighy, like, you know, very much sort of slim and elegant and... kind of... angular.

**MATT**

Weeelllll, I think McGann could pull off, kind of, tall and spindly. I think... I think, I think, he- he's a great actor. I think he could pull that off... And he's around the right age range now.

**MISHA**

But, you know, he might be someone that none of us have predicted, that'd be the interesting thing to find out, I guess.

[SECTION BREAK]

**MATT**

That brings us to the end of the podcast, but of course this is the Nine Worlds Podcast, so we do actually have to talk a little bit about the convention. So this is the kind of part of the show where we're going to be talking about... sort of con news, and clue you in on maybe some advance info. But as it's our first podcast... and the con is still being planned, so we're... things are kinda still a bit under wraps, we're not allowed to talk about a lot at the moment... So, I thought, it would be best

just to kind of clue, perhaps, those of you who have not heard of Nine Worlds, or have never been to Nine Worlds, into what Nine Worlds is about.

So Nine Worlds is an annual convention, uh, or as we prefer to refer to it, a 'Geekfest', and it's in London every year. Our watchword is 'inclusivity'. And to quote the website, "Nine Worlds is founded on the belief that Geekdom should not be restricted by class, age, gender, sexuality, disability, ethnicity, or the ability to cite Wookieepedia in arguments."

Now, the question is, if you've never been to Nine Worlds, what, what can we say to you to entice you to buy tickets? What, what is, what is at Nine Worlds? What can you find at Nine Worlds? Well, this is my first year volunteering for Nine Worlds. I have been as a punter, but Misha is, uh, is far more experienced than I. So, Misha, what can people find at Nine Worlds?

**MISHA**

Obvi... obviously I feel duty bound to first and foremost say the Bifrost Cabaret and disco.

**MATT**

(LAUGHS)

**MISHA**

Bit of a personal interest as the Producer, Stage Manager, and all-round, uh, Person-wrangler... for that. Last year I went to a couple of interesting panels, including 'Dr Who, Wild Speculation', which was great, because we were all really... quite tired and a bit hungover, and just going "What do you think is going to happen?" "Who knows!" "Imagine if this happened, that'll be fun." I know from the organisers that a lot of you know, talks, there's proper events, there's yeah! Lots of panels, a lot of events, exciting things, lots of cosplaying... Last year there was someone dressed as No-Face, who... committed to that costume... at least as far as I saw, for the entirety of Saturday. No-Face lead the conga at about two in the morning, round, round the disco, still... fully dressed, in no way slightly creepy....

**MATT**

(LAUGHS)

**MISHA**

If you're... if you're not familiar, with No-Face, google 'Spirited Away, No-Face', and then imagine one of those, seven foot tall, wondering around a hotel [PAUSE] Uhm... Yeah! Like all sorts of things, exciting, inclusive stuff, you know, just... Yeah. All the things.

**MATT**

All the things. I mean there will be panels, there will be entertainment, there will be tutorials, we've had, we've had Water Dancing tutorials. There are all sorts of things, every year, most of which is covered in the ticket price. Occasionally there will be the like, special demonstrations... there might be a slight surcharge, there might be sort of mini-ticketed event, because places will be limited. I mean, there has been hair tutorials, like Viking hair tut... I think it was Viking hair tutorials, wasn't it?

#### **MISHA**

Yeah.

#### **MATT**

There have been lectures, there have been educational things, there have been... you know, there have been some hard-hitting sort of social issues panels. What, uh, I think I can tell you this year is that I'll be doing a lot of podcast-related content at the con. One of the things I'll be doing is Podcasting 101. I will be conducting a tutorial on how you can get started in podcasting for no money whatsoever, providing you've already got a computer or a laptop, and... access to the internet. Although if you didn't have access to the internet, why would you be wanting to do a podcast? That, that makes... no sense. And, Misha and I will be doing a live version of this very podcast, on the day, so hopefully by the time we get to event day, people will actually like hearing us, we'll have a following, and people will actually turn up, so... so we can only hope.

So, with that in mind, we should tell you... where it is, and, and how you can take part. So, Nine Worlds 2017 is being held at the Novotel London West, which is in Hammersmith, London. It runs between the 2nd and the 4th of August this year. Tickets are on sale now at £99 for a three day adult pass and, get this [PAUSE] kids go free! Children accompanying a ticket holder don't have to pay, and actually all children attending to have to be accompanied... you can't just lob your 10 year old in the direction of the convention and expect us to look after them! You know, we're all too busy looking after everyone else. (LAUGHS) Looking after ourselves and trying not to go mad... as we, uh, as we bring you a convention.

#### **MISHA**

It's a real challenge, especially when it's suddenly 6am and you're having a really deeply intense conversation about, um, the turning points in the world, and what if something had been different.

#### **MATT**

Well, yes, Nine Worlds is... it's my first year volunteering for Nine Worlds, but I have volunteered for cons before and I do know the literal blood, sweat and tears that goes into making sure everything runs as smoothly as possible. I'm not going to say 'runs smoothly', 'cos something always goes wrong. You know, this is the thing about conventions, you don't judge a convention by what goes wrong, you judge it by how they deal with it when it does. And, uh, I, I think Nine Worlds does very well in that regard, which is why I'm on board this year, rather than being a punter.



Anyhoo, so that is where Nine Worlds is going to be, um... We'll have more information about specific program items in the coming weeks on this very show. In the meantime, if you want to stay up-to-the-minute with news, head over to [nineworlds.co.uk](http://nineworlds.co.uk) for more information, and you can also find us on twitter under [@london\\_geekfest](https://twitter.com/london_geekfest), because apparently, some bugger had taken London Geekfest without the underscore. How very dare they!

**MISHA**

Do they not know the chaos they're causing?

**MATT**

Do they even care? It's all about them, it's all about them. Anyway, that's been it for the inaugural Nine Worlds podcast. This has been out auspicious beginning. I've been Matt Dillon, Misha has been Misha Ankwel , and (LAUGHS) we will catch you in a fortnight's time, for the next Nine Worlds podcast. Bye bye!

**MISHA**

Bye!

[Theme Music Starts]

**ANNOUNCER**

You have been listening to the Nine Worlds Podcast, the official podcast of the Nine Worlds London Geekfest Convention. For tickets, news, and other updated, please visit [nineworlds.co.uk](http://nineworlds.co.uk). The podcast theme music is by Jonathan Coulton, and is licensed under Creative Commons. Find this, and many other tracks, at [JonathanCoulton.com](http://JonathanCoulton.com). This has been a Wafflehaus production for [GeekPlanetOnline.com](http://GeekPlanetOnline.com) and Nine Worlds Limited.

[Theme Music Continues, Then Fades Out]

[SECTION BREAK, LEADING INTO OUTTAKE]

**MATT (IMPERSONATING SIR IAN MCKELLEN)**

Hello, I'm Sir Ian McKellen, and this is the Nine Worlds podcast. (Pause, then as himself) Maybe not.

**MISHA**

(LAUGHS) I like it!

**MATT**

(TO HIMSELF) OK, serious face, serious face, serious face. (Impersonating Gollum) This is the Nine Worlds Podcast...

**MISHA**

(LAUGHS)

**MATT**

Right, I promise I'll do it properly. I promise.

END OF PODCAST