

THE WAX MUSEUM

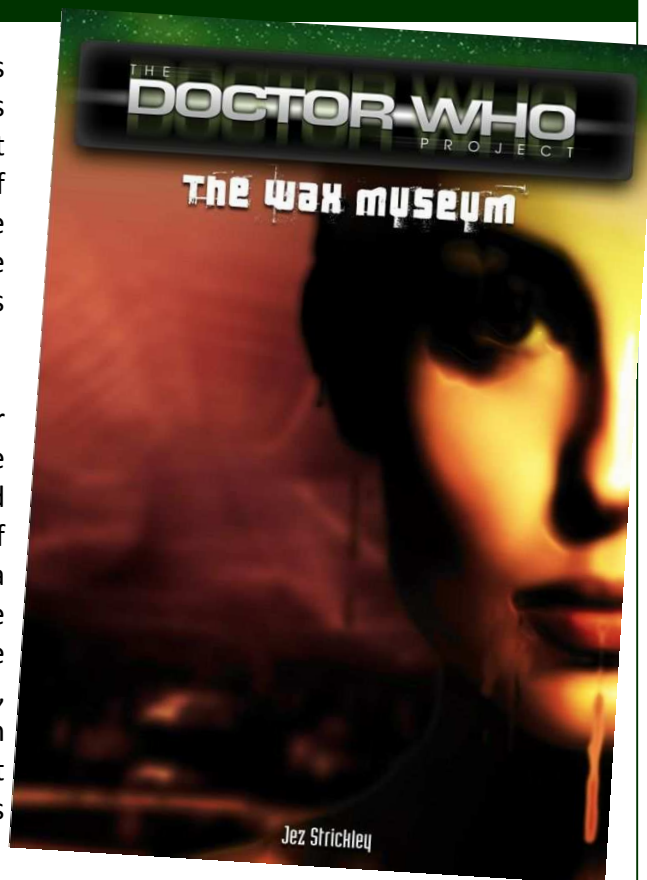
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Season 36 - Story 10W
Reviewed by David Preston

After the somewhat laboured and at times introspective excesses of *The Web of Time* this entirely contrasting story comes as a great relief. It deals with the dubious practices of an insanely arrogant artist (Mortich the Magnificent, no less), his entry into the Celestial Exhibition and two couples independently investigating his Wax Museum.

Within the confines of a short story the author takes the decision to create larger than life characters, making them both memorable and enjoyable. The contemptuous manner of both Mortich's assistants at the Museum is a joy, as are the haughty and overbearing tone of the Museum's two main visitors. For me the most forgettable character was Istria, taking the companion role for the story. In fairness this is due more to the dominant nature of the other characters. The plot is conventional and at times transparent but this ultimately pardonable.

The secret of the waxworks is immediately obvious from their first description, at least in general terms if not technicalities. Fortunately, this doesn't really detract from the reader's enjoyment as the story has such a rapid pace. The writing style is energetic, stating facts and drawing conclusions in quick succession enabling the characters to quickly catch-up with the reader.

Although dealing with a rather horrific concept there is much humour here. For example, the first TARDIS scene in the Celestial Exhibition is lovingly reminiscent of a



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similar scene in *City of Death*. And as previously mentioned, one can't help but smile whilst reading the condescending dialogue between many of the characters.

At times it reminded me a great deal of Gareth Roberts' books, which is no bad thing.

7/10