

Film gore gets to hardman Ray

Sharon Feinstein

HE IS the hard man of British cinema, known for roles in *Scum and Sexy Beast*, but Ray Winstone is now so burly that his body double has to wear a fat suit under his armour.

The news filtered out from the set of Winstone's latest venture, the biblical drama *Of Kings and Prophets*, which is being filmed in South Africa.

Winstone is said to be under strain, and his fellow British actor Olly Rix has been taken off set on a stretcher as they act out a barbaric story involving beheadings, amputations and concubines.

Winstone, 58, plays King Saul in the television drama based

Winstone: 'daily beheadings'



on the two Books of Samuel. Rix plays David, the future King of Israel. It is being made by the US broadcaster ABC and will also be shown in Britain.

A source said the cast was showing the strain of filming "daily beheadings and slaughtering" and added: "It's a really heavy movie but that's what happened in biblical times."

Winstone is working long hours strapped into leather body armour with a thick undershirt, long leather boots, cloak and sword in sweltering heat. He is said to be "longing to get back to England".

It takes 45 minutes for his body double to get into his fat suit.

Rix is said to be under medical care after twice falling off a horse.

ABC did not respond to requests for comment.

British rocket man to blast off with Bono and Freddie

James Gillespie and Mark Hookham

WHEN the British astronaut Tim Peake blasts off in the Soyuz rocket on Tuesday he will do so with the sounds of Queen, U2 and Coldplay echoing in his ears.

Peake has compiled a playlist of tracks to take with him on his six-month stay at the International Space Station (ISS) and has revealed his "rocket list" — three songs he will listen to while he does final checks before the launch.

Peake has opted for Don't Stop Me Now by Queen, U2's Beautiful Day and A Sky Full of Stars by Coldplay.

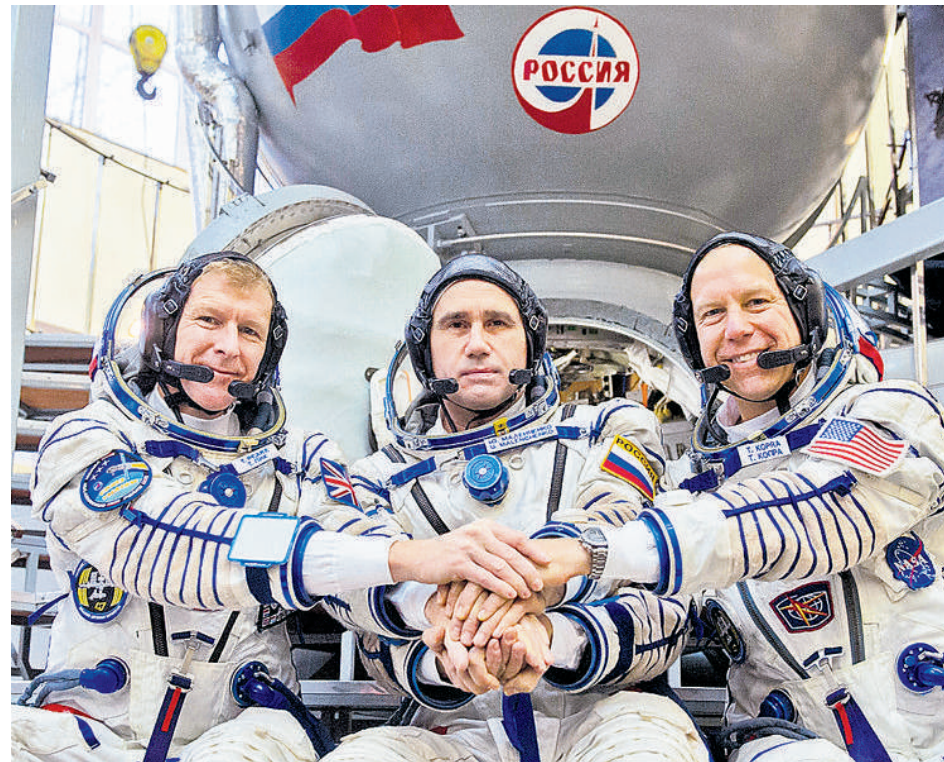
"I love Queen and I think that [song] has just got so much energy and obviously fun lyrics to go with it," he told The

Sunday Times. Peake, 43, will launch into space at 11.03am, British time, from Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan with the veteran Russian commander Yuri Malenchenko and Tim Kopra, an American. The flight to the ISS takes six hours.

Among the items Peake will take with him are two watches he plans to give his sons Oliver, 4, and Thomas, 6, when they turn 18. "I thought it would be wonderful to give them a gift on their 18th birthday of something that was flown in space," he said.

He is also taking a signed copy of the book *Road to the Stars* by Yuri Gagarin — the first man in space — which was given to him by Helen Sharman, the first Briton in space.

Peake said he was "quietly



Tim Peake, left, takes off with Yuri Malenchenko and Tim Kopra this week after six years' training

optimistic" that he would carry out a space walk. He has been taking advice from Kopra, who went to the ISS in 2009, on what to expect when he steps into the void.

"He said it's quite overwhelming for the brain to take everything in: you are floating in outer space, in a vacuum and looking down 400km on

planet Earth that is going round at 27,000kph."

For Peake the take-off is the culmination of six years of arduous training. The hardest challenge was learning Russian. "I love systems, I love diagrams but I'm not a natural linguist and learning Russian for me has been particularly hard," he says in a video diary

that will be shown on a Horizon special on BBC2 this evening.

Peake is aware of the line of history that he is following. "I took a walk around [the Baikonur centre] just to look at my surroundings and I suddenly realised that behind me is the tree that Yuri Gagarin planted in 1961 prior to the first flight taking a human being into