



Lambda Sci-Fi DC Area Gaylaxians

PO Box 656, Washington, DC 20044

(202) 232-3141 - Issue #251 - February 2011

E-MAIL: info@lambdascifi.org WEBSITE: www.lambdascifi.org



The LSF Book Discussion Group

If you're interested in lively discussions of F&SF books (with an emphasis on elements of interest to the LGBT community), we invite you to join the LSF Book Discussion Group. Each month, we conduct fascinating roundtable discussions of works by significant F&SF authors.

The LSF Book Discussion Group usually meets on the 4th Thursday of every month, starting at 7:00 PM, at Peter & Rob's home: 1425 "S" St., NW - for directions or more details, call 202-483-6369. The next meeting will be held on February 24th.

Here are the details for the next couple of book discussions:

Feb. 24th - *The Book of Lost Things*, by John Connolly; moderator: Teresa.

March 24th - *Galileo's Dream*, by Kim Stanley Robinson; moderator: Claire.

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February LSF Meeting

The next LSF meeting will be held on Sunday, **February 13th**. The meeting will be held at James Crutchfield's apartment (1414 17th St. NW, #413), near Dupont Circle. The business meeting will begin (as usual) at 1:30 PM; and the social meeting will begin at 2:00 PM. Please also bring some munchies or soft drinks, if you can. See you there!

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Gaylaxicon 2011 Coming Attractions!

from Alan Siler,
Programming Committee

Gaylaxicon this year is in Atlanta, GA (May 13 - 15) and is hosted by Outlantacon, Atlanta's own GLBT sci-fi/fantasy/horror/comics convention! Here's a little preview of what we have lined up for you this year at G'con!

Guests: Amber Benson - In addition to her film career and the novels/comics/films/web series she's written, Amber starred as Tara Maclay in 47 episodes of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. Melissa Carter - Atlanta's only out lesbian DJ, Melissa is a regular on Q100's hugely popular morning show, *The Bert Show*, and a big sci-fi fan! Steve Scott - Steve is an artist who has worked with both Marvel and DC, and he did production art for *Smallville*. Eugie Foster - Hugo Award-winning author. Catherine Lundoff - Two-time Goldie Award-winning author. Lee Martindale - Award-winning author and editor. Don Schermerhorn & Wayne Hergenroder - The tireless convention organizers are our fan guests of honor this year. Plus many others!

Programming Highlights: Match Game - Our own recreation of the classic 70s television game show. Project Cosplay - Join our own Heidi Plume and Tim's Gunn for a special version of the hit reality show. It's convention costuming gone wild! Buffy "Once More With Feeling" Sing-along - We can't have a *Buffy* cast member as a guest and NOT do this!

Chocolate Symposium - A Gaylaxicon staple that'll kick off our weekend. Gaylactic Jeopardy! - The game show returns with special prizes for the triumphant! Queer Ghost Stories - Sit around a "campfire" eating s'mores and share your favorite scary stories with friends! Adult Bedtime Stories - It's bedtime! Show up in pajamas and hear stories to rock you to sleep. (Actually, they may be too racy for that!) Plus film screenings, workshops, panels, performances, and much more! We're still in the planning stage, so there will be lots more announcements to come!

For full information about our Guests, our Programming, or to purchase your membership or book your hotel room, please visit us at:

<http://www.outlantacon.org/>

If you have any questions, post away! To stay on top of all our announcements, join our Facebook group (link on the website). Hope to see you all in Atlanta in May!

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Gaylaxicon 2012 Will Return to the Doubletree!

The North Country Gaylaxians and the Gaylactic Network are proud to announce that Gaylaxicon 2012 has a signed contract with the Doubletree Hotel Minneapolis-Park Place. Gaylaxicon 2012 will take place over the weekend of October 5-7, 2012.

Current registration rates are: \$80 until 09-01-2012; \$90 at the door. More information at: www.gaylaxicon2012.org

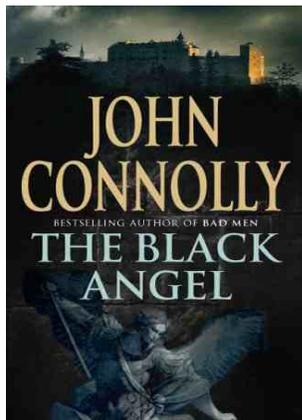
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WHAT'S INSIDE?

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John Connolly: Beyond *Lost Things*

a review by Carl



The Black Angel
by John Connolly
(Pocket Star Books, 2005)

In February, the LSF Book Discussion Group will be discussing a fascinating fantasy novel: *The Book of Lost Things* (2006), by John Connolly. I was interested to learn that this was Connolly's "first non-mystery novel" (although it certainly has "mystery" elements in it); so I decided to look up his other works. I discovered that he has also authored a popular series of crime-noir-horror-mystery novels featuring "anti-hero Charlie Parker." OK, off to Barnes & Noble, where I looked over what they had on the shelves and decided that *The Black Angel* looked kind'a interesting. (Besides, it was autographed.) Did I say "interesting"? As it turns out, that's an understatement. It's a *terrific* read!

The Black Angel is actually Connolly's *sixth* story featuring Charlie Parker. But that turned out not to be a problem—I got into the novel just fine; the story didn't suffer because I hadn't read the previous four novels and one novella. But now that I've read *The Black Angel*, I'm pretty sure I'm going to go back and read all the previous Charlie Parker stories—and well as the four novels that follow it. It was in his very first novel (*Every Dead Thing*, 1999) that Connolly introduced the character of Charlie Parker, a former NYC police officer hunting the killer of his wife and daughter. *Every Dead Thing* garnered a lot of critical acclaim: nominated for the Bram Stoker Award for Best First

Novel; winner of the 2000 Shamus Award for Best First Private Eye Novel (the first non-US author to win the award). Connolly's novels are generally considered to be in the "crime genre"—and that's where you'll probably find them in your local bookstore. Connolly has said that he was drawn to the tradition of American crime fiction because it seemed like the best medium for exploring issues of compassion, morality, reparation, and salvation; and he was influenced by such writers as Ross Macdonald, James Lee Burke, and Ed McBain.

According to Wikipedia, Connolly's novels "have become increasingly tinged with supernatural overtones." Well, from what I've read, Connolly's Charlie Parker novels could also be firmly placed in the "horror genre," as they often include the search for mysterious and grisly serial killers (*à la* Hannibal Lecter). By the time he got to *The Black Angel*, Connolly had clearly edged over into the "supernatural thriller genre," too.

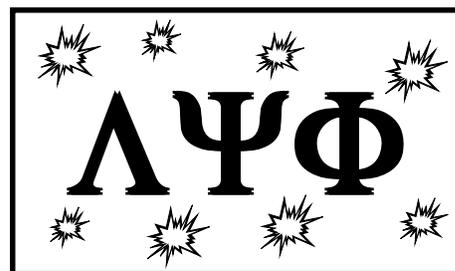
Many years ago, ex-cop Charlie Parker left New York City in an effort to escape the memories of the brutal murders of his wife and daughter—as well as his own feelings of guilt about not having been able to protect them. Now he lives in a small house in the countryside near Portland, Maine; he's settled in with his new "significant other" Rachel and their daughter Samantha. Marriage? Well, maybe... but there are a couple of problems. Since leaving NYC, Parker's new career as a private investigator has brought him into contact with some truly horrific killers and creepy low-lives; and he's haunted by fears of a repeat performance of his wife's and daughter's murders. And, in *The Black Angel*, he's apparently *really* haunted by the ghosts of said wife and daughter! His wife's ghost is stridently unhappy about being "replaced" in Parker's affections by "his new woman." (*We will not go away. We will not disappear. We refuse to leave you. You will remember us. You will not forget.*) As a reader, I suppose you can never be sure whether the ghosts aren't simply manifestations of Parker's feelings of guilt and remorse—but, considering the other supernatural elements in the story, I'm willing to bet that they're meant to be actual ghosts.

When Parker's longtime friends and allies, Louis and Angel, show up for his daughter's christening ceremony, Parker is drawn into what he thinks is a "simple" case involving a missing NYC prostitute, an old friend of Louis's. The case turns out to be anything *but* simple. They eventually discover that the girl is dead and has been hideously dismembered; and that this is only one of a whole series of gruesome, unexplained murders—all seeming to involve the same grotesque individual, a huge man known only as "Mr. Brightwell." All the victims also seem to be linked to a legendary silver icon known as "The Black Angel." The trail leads from the shadowy back streets and alleyways of New York City to the crypts beneath a medieval monastery in the Czech Republic—and a supernatural menace that is possibly as old as time.

What a great read! The novel hits all the right *noir* notes for me: the gritty streets; the street-wise, wise-cracking protagonist; the "loose" moral codes of his associates; the dirty secrets and schemes of the "bad guys"; the hard-fisted action. Added to this are some pretty graphic descriptions of violence and some fascinating mythologizing. There's even some positive GLBT content! You see, Louis and Angel aren't just Parker's long-time "business associates"—they're also a picturesque long-time couple. Louis is a large black man: a quiet but *very* dangerous "semi-retired" hired killer. Angel is a small white guy: an ex-burglar whose fashion choices often raise eyebrows (not "gay" so much as "unsettling"). They often provide short bits of comedy relief—bickering like an old married couple—but they're both *really* good at what they do; they can *always* be counted on in a tight spot; and Parker trusts them implicitly.

Like I said: good stuff. I look forward to reading more of Connolly's Charlie Parker stories.

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**Minutes of the
December 2010 LSF Meeting**
taken by Scott

A small group assembled at Rob and Peter’s house on this rainy Sunday afternoon.

Teresa suggested a potential LSF outing to see a stage adaptation of Madeleine L’Engle’s *A Wrinkle in Time* at the Roundhouse Theater in Bethesda. The play has been extended to January 2nd.

Rob reported that only one theater in the metro DC area – in Greenbelt – is showing a non-3D version of the *Tron* movie. He also mentioned that author Elizabeth Moon had been un-invited as a guest to the 2011 WisCon. He has not heard if she has been blacklisted from being invited to other cons.

Some LSFers indicated that they plan to attend Outlantacon/Gaylaxicon 2011 (May 13-15) in Atlanta as well as the 2011 WorldCon in Reno, Nevada.

Rob announced that he and Peter will be hosting a New Year’s Day LSF video party on Saturday, January 1st.

The upcoming LSF book discussion books were listed – *Steel Remains* by Richard K. Morgan (January), *The Book of Lost Things* by John Connolly (February), and *Galileo’s Dream* by Kim Stanley Robinson (March).

Teresa said she enjoyed both *Tangled* and *Black Swan* (even though the main female character in *Black Swan* is crazy).

Rob reported that AMC has indicated that another season of the popular *Walking Dead* series is in the works.

Arne said that he enjoys both *TruBlood* and *The Vampire Diaries*, even though *Vampire Diaries* seem to mimic *Twilight* quite closely.

Carl described the January LSF book exchange process.

Barrett said that Keith Hartmann’s (non-genre) *You Should Meet My Son* film will be shown during Reel Affirmations in March 2011.

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**Minutes of the
January 2011 LSF Meeting**
taken by Scott

Business Portion

2011 LSF elections: The slate of candidates is the same as the current list of officers – Teresa as Speaker, Rob as Treasurer, Peter as Membership Coordinator, Scott as Secretary.

A motion was made to allow the LSF Membership Directory to be distributed electronically. (This motion has previously been tabled, awaiting a needed quorum.) After discussion, the motion was passed without opposition.

Social Portion

Teresa provided updates on various upcoming genre TV shows and movies: *Young Justice* on the Cartoon Network; *Bob’s Burgers* – an animated series about a man, his family, and his haphazard burger joint; NBC’s *The Cape*. Adult Swim’s *Robot Chicken* is starting up again. The American version of *Being Human* is premiering on SyFy, (Will there be a GLBT character?) *Spartacus: Gods of the Arena* is back for its second season – including Lucy Lawless’ character, whom some thought had been killed off in the first season. The spy-oriented animated *Archer* show is returning. In February, *The Event* returns. Some time this year, George R. R. Martin’s *Game of Thrones* will arrive on cable.

A “lite” film version of *Green Hornet* opens this week. Comic-themed movies coming out this year: *Green Lantern*, *Thor*, *Captain America*, *X-Men: First Class*.

Another trailer has been produced for the film version of Pittacus Lore’s YA novel, *I Am Number Four*, about nine aliens hiding out on Earth from another alien race that is hell-bent to kill them. *Sucker Punch* is a fantasy action movie about the dream world of a girl in a mental institution, involving dragons and bombers.

The Tim Powers novel *On Stranger Tides* is having the character of Captain Jack Sparrow written into the plot of the latest Pirate Movie.

Has JJ Abrams renamed the

mysterious *Super8* movie as *Darlings*?

Okay, movie titles expected to open this year: *Rise of the Planet of the Apes*, *Transformers*, *Harry Potter*, *Cowboys & Aliens* (with Daniel Craig), Disney remake of *Fright Night* (in 3D, no less), *Real Steel* (about fighting robots in the future), another *Twilight* movie, *Sherlock Holmes 2*, and a live-action *Tin Tin* movie.

David said he enjoyed the third *Narnia* movie, *Voyage of the Dawn Treader*. He thought that the Christianity references were more blatant than in the first two movies.

Rob and Peter attended the Hyperbolic Reef Exhibit at the Smithsonian Natural History Museum. One of the contributors is genre author Vonda McIntyre.

Genre author Laurie Marks, who has porphyria, had a liver transplant.

Peter passed around the latest newsletter from the Pittsburgh sci-fi group, *Sigma*.

Rob mentioned the next three LSF book discussion books: *Steel Remains* by Richard K. Morgan (January), *The Book of Lost Things* by John Connolly (February), and *Galileo’s Dream* by Kim Stanley Robinson (March).

And, yes, the long-held tradition of the January LSF book exchange was held. Here’s who received what from whom: Teresa received Kim Stanley Robinson’s *Year of Rice and Salt* from Barrett. Julian received Chris Moriarty’s *Spin State* and *Stranger Horizon* from Rob. ____ received five David Brin books from Julian. Wes received *District 9* (DVD) from Jonathan. Jonathan received *It’s Superman* from _____. Rob received a *Black Hole* graphic novel from Wes. Peter received *The Complete Lovecraft* from James. Carl received a DVD of the 8th season of *Stargate: Atlantis* from Wes. (But will he watch seasons 1 thru 7 first?) James received two “Doctor Who Adventures” paperbacks from Teresa. ____ received Alan Moore’s *D.R. & Quinch* graphic novel from Peter. Barrett received *The Sword of Shannara* from David. David received Emma Bull’s *Territory* and Nancy Collins’s *Dead Man’s Hand* (both “Weird Western” F&SF) from Carl.

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****INFORMATION ABOUT LAMBDA SCI-FI: DC AREA GAYLAXIANS****

Lambda Sci-Fi: DC Area Gaylaxians (LSF) is an organization for gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgendered (GLBT) people, and their friends who are interested in science fiction, fantasy, horror and related genres in all forms (SF/F/H). LSF's primary goals are to have fun, to provide a community, and to:

- promote SF/F/H, with particular attention to materials of interest to GLBT people and their friends;
- provide forums for GLBT people and their friends to share their interest in SF/F/H;
- promote the presence of GLBT elements within SF/F/H and within fandom; and
- promote SF/F/H within the GLBT community.

Annual membership fees are \$10, for which you will receive an e-mailed this monthly newsletter and a membership directory. (Hard copies of the newsletter cost an additional \$15 per year.) Newsletter submissions are always welcome.

Meetings are usually held on the second Sunday of each month at a private residence. The next Lambda Sci-Fi meeting will be held on **Sunday, February 13th**, at James Crutchfield's apartment (1414 17th St. NW, #413), near Dupont Circle. The business meeting will begin (as usual) at 1:30 PM; and the social meeting will begin at 2:00 PM. Please bring some munchies or soft drinks, if you can. Hope to see you there!

Lambda Sci-Fi: DC Area Gaylaxians is an affiliate of **the Gaylactic Network**, an international organization for gay people and their friends who are interested in science-fiction and fantasy.



Con Calendar



by Carl

Feb. 18-20, 2011 **FARPOINT 2011**. Crowne Plaza Baltimore (Timonium, MD). Guests: John ("Dr. Phlox," *Enterprise*) Billingsley, Bonita ("Gen. Diane Beckman," *Chuck*) Friedricy, more TBA. Pre-registration for weekend: \$80 (daily rates available). Make checks payable to "Farpoint Enterprises" and send to: Farpoint Enterprises, Inc., 11708 Troy Ct., Waldorf, MD 20601
Website: www.farpointcon.com E-mail: trekcontact@comcast.net

April 8-10, 2011 **RAVENCON 2011**. Holiday Inn Kroger Center (Richmond, VA). Author GoH: John Ringo; Artist GoH: Kurt Miller. Membership: \$35 from 1/1/2011 to 4/1/2011; \$40 at the door (daily rates available). Download registration forms from their website; make checks payable to "Ravencon" and send to: Ravencon PO Box 36420, Richmond, VA 23235.
Website: www.ravencon.com

May 13-15, 2011 **GAYLAXICON 2011** (held in conjunction with OutlantaCon 2011). Holiday Inn Select Atlanta-Perimeter (Dunwoody, GA). Special Media Guests: Amber Benson & Melissa Carter; Artist GoH: Steve Scott. Membership: \$45 thru 1/31/2011 (purchased on-line thru their website).
Website: www.outlantacon.org Information: info@outlantacon.org

May 27-30, 2011 **BALTICON 45**. Marriott's Hunt Valley Inn (Baltimore, MD). GoH: Ben Bova; Artist GoH: Vincent DiFate. Membership: \$55 until 4/30/2011; \$60 after that and at the door. Make checks payable to "Balticon 45" and send to: Balticon 45 Registration, PO Box 686, Baltimore, MD 21203-0686. (Registration forms available on-line.)
Website: www.balticon.org Information: balticoninfo@balticon.org

May 27-29, 2011 **TIMEGATE** ("The Home of Doctor Who and Stargate Fandom in Atlanta!"). Holiday Inn Select (Atlanta, GA). Guests Sophie Aldred ("Ace," from the era of the 7th Doctor); Ben Aaronovitch (Dr. Who script writer); Melissa Scott (author); and more. Membership: \$35 to 5/1/2011; \$45 at the door. Make checks payable to "TimeGate" and send to: TimeGate, PO Box 500565, Atlanta, GA 31150. Or purchase membership on-line at: www.timegatecon.org/memb/htm
Website: www.timegatecon.org

Aug. 17-21, 2011 **RENOVATION** (69th World Science Fiction Convention). Reno-Sparks Convention Center (Reno, Nevada). Guests of Honor: Ellen Asher, Charles N. Brown, Tim Powers, Boris Vallejo. Membership: currently \$160 (will go up!).
Website: www.renovationsf.org Membership queries: memberships@renovationsf.org

