



Lambda Sci-fi

DC Area Gaylaxians

(202) 232-3141 - Issue # 312 – March 2016

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Happy Birthday, LSF!!

This month, Lambda Sci-fi: DC Area Gaylaxians turns 26! There were nine attendees at our first meeting: March 14, 1990, at the home of Loree and Marcelle Cook-Daniels.



What else happened on March 14th?

- **1794:** Eli Whitney patents the cotton gin.
- **1879:** Albert Einstein is born.
- **1885:** Gilbert & Sullivan's "Mikado" premieres in London.
- **1889:** Ferdinand von Zeppelin patents his "Navigatable Balloon".
- **1986:** European Space Agency's "Giotto" flies by Halley's Comet (605 km).

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LSF Gaming Party - March 5th -



info passed
along by
Peter

What: A tabletop gaming party. There's plenty of room for gaming, so please bring your favorite table games (cards, board, etc.).

When: Saturday, March 5th; 2:00 PM – ??

What to Bring: Bring your favorite table game (or two). Also, please bring munchies and/or soft drinks.

Dinner: For those who are interested, we'll order pizza. To get in on the pizza order, please bring \$8 in exact change. If you don't want pizza, you can order take out or go forage for food. There are a lot of food choices in the "U" Street Corridor.

Where: Home of Peter and Rob, 1425 "S" Street NW, Washington, DC 20009

Directions (with Metro and parking advice) at:

<http://lambdascifi.org/club/>

[PeterRob.html](#)

Questions: Send email to:

PeterPKnapp@gmail.com

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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 round-table 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 book discussion will be held on March 24, 2015.

Here are the details for the next book discussion:

March 24 – *Her Smoke Rose Up Forever*, by James Tiptree Jr., (moderator: Claire).

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<<<<< March 2016 LSF Meeting >>>>>

The next LSF meeting will be held on **Sunday, March 13th**. The meeting will be held at Peter and Rob's home, **1425 "S" Street NW, Washington, DC**. The meeting will begin at 1:30 and the "group watch" will begin at 3:00 PM. Please also bring some munchies or soft drinks, if you can. Hope to see you there!

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What's Inside?

Page 2: Minutes of the Feb. 2016 LSF Meeting; The Muses in F&SF – Part 2 (book reviews).

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Minutes of the February 2016 LSF Meeting

taken by Scott

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Rave reviews on the new film *Deadpool*. Lots of violence, nudity, bad language. Ryan Reynolds is just unbelievable; he even makes a derogatory reference to *Green Lantern*.

Movie trailers: Enjoyed the promos for *Batman vs. Superman*. Will the *Suicide Squad* movie be impressive? Will Will Smith be the lead character? The previews for *Zootopia* look cute. *10 Cloverfield Lane* – is it a sequel to *Cloverfield*? It might or might not be.

Rob reported that LSF has secured its table for the June 2016 Capital Pride festival.

TV News: Rob has finished watching the 5th season of *American Horror Story*. Characters from prior seasons appear in this current season. Hulu's *11.22.63* movie starts tomorrow, starring James Franco. LSFers previously read the Stephen King novel for the Book Discussion Group. Arne is unsure about the new TV series *Lucifer* – it's about Lucifer getting bored with Hades and deciding to open up a bar in Los Angeles... and to solve crimes. Rob enjoys *DC's Legends of Tomorrow*. He is also enjoying the "Earth 2" episodes of *Flash*. On the other hand, he's not happy about the new "show-runner"

for *Doctor Who*. Apparently, there's a new (as yet untitled) *Star Trek* TV series – it will premiere on CBS and then only show on CBS All Access after that. *Twin Peaks* is being remade, maybe in 2017. Arne likes the 2nd season of *The Returned* – the original French version of the US *Resurrection*. BBC's *Black Mirror* is a 21st Century version of *Twilight Zone*. Rob watched the 1st season of *Man in the High Castle*; the TV show plot does not mirror the book plot.

Rob and Carl love the *X-Files* revival series. Gillian Anderson has aged spectacularly. The chemistry between the Scully and Mulder is perfect. The 3rd episode was one of the best! The Lone Gunmen will return, even though the characters were killed off in the original series.

Movie News: Arne is looking forward to the *Dr. Strange* movie. Dan mentioned that *Preacher* is also coming out soon. The next *Star Trek* movie is coming out in July 2016.

LSF News: There will be a LSF board game party on Saturday, March 5th, at Peter & Rob's place. The Feb. 25th LSF Book Discussion Group will feature *The Goblin Emperor* by Katherine Addison (aka Sarah Monette). Carl reminded everyone that LSF will turn age 26 next month.

Per our new meeting format, we concluded with a "group viewing" by showing the first two episodes of the SyFy Channel series *The Magicians*. Well received; cheers all around.

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The Muses in F&SF (Part 2)

short reviews by Carl

O for a Muse of fire, that would ascend
The brightest heaven of invention...

— William Shakespeare
Henry the Fifth

The Muses: the nine immortal daughters of Zeus and the Titaness Mnemosyne (Memory); they are patronesses of the arts, sciences, and culture. They are guiding spirits who give inspiration to all artists, particularly poets, painters, dancers, musicians, philosophers, and astronomers. On the other hand, the Muses can also have their darker aspects, as shown in the novels I reviewed last month. Artistic genius has its price, they say – often a terrible price. And – just maybe – the Muses are not exactly the beneficent creatures we believe them to be. I invite you to share a couple more F&SF versions...

Mortal Love

by Elizabeth Hand
(Harper Perennial, 2004)

The commonly-accepted belief is that artists (poets, writers, painters, etc.) need the Muses to inspire them to create great art. But what if that's not quite right? What if it's the *Muses* that need their human lovers? What if the Muses *require* something that only human artists can provide for them: great art? But great art frequently comes at a great price! That's the central theme of Elizabeth Hand's novel *Mortal Love*: an exploration of artistic inspiration, obsession, and madness.

Hand's story moves back and forth through time, interweaving the experiences of three separate artists with strangely alluring auburn-haired women who are definitely more than they seem. In 1883, American painter Radborne Comstock is visiting London and meets Evienne Upstone, a beautiful model who has inspired members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and driven painter Jacobus Candell insane. A half century later, Radborne's grandson Valentine is sent to an asylum after viewing some intensely erotic paintings

(continued on page 3)



For details, see Con Calendar on page 4.

The Muses in F&SF

continued from page 2

that Radborne produced while under Evienne's influence. There, Valentine meets Dr. Thomas Learmont, who has been studying the relationship between madness and artistic creation. Finally, in contemporary London, there's critic Daniel Rowlands, who has been researching the legend of Tristan and Iseult for his book *Mortal Love*. During his researches, Rowlands meets and becomes obsessed with the strangely alluring Larkin Meade, who leaves him physically and emotionally deranged. How are all these stories linked? Is it possible that Evienne and Larkin are one and the same person?

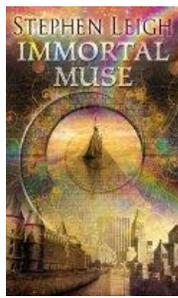
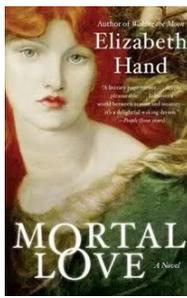
Hand masterfully weaves diverse elements into the novel: folklore, Arthurian legend, Pre-Raphaelite painting, and the works of various other artists down the years, from Algernon Swinburne to Curt Cobain. It's a darkly fascinating and well-paced story, with a unique supernatural basis.

Immortal Muse

by Stephen Leigh
(DAW Books, 2014)

I spotted this one on the F&SF shelves in a B&N. The title attracted my attention; but so did the author's name. I've read a couple of Stephen Leigh's SF novels – *Dark Water's Embrace* (1998) and *Alien Tongue* (1991) – and I quite enjoyed both of them. *Dark Water's Embrace* also won the Galactic Spectrum Award in 1999 for Best Novel. As it turns out, this novel presents some interesting contrasts to the previous "Muse" novels I've reviewed – and it's a good read, too!

Perenelle Poisson is living a fairly quiet and uneventful life in Paris during the mid-1300s. She's a loving and supportive young woman, the daughter of a minor alchemist; and she marries a talented local troubadour. Both her



father and her first husband often remark that she has helped to bring out the best in them. When her husband dies of the Plague, Perenelle soon remarries, this time to a manuscript-seller named Nicolas Flamel. That name probably rings a bell if you've read *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*. But this version of Flamel is not a kindly old wizard; he's a nasty piece of work: hungry for power and jealous of the spotlight. (Yes, Flamel *was* a real historical person and reputed to have been an alchemist. In the Afterword, the author admits that he probably owes Flamel an apology for making him so villainous. On the other hand, the real-life Flamel did make a fortune by profiteering from Jews as they were being expelled from France.)

Thus begins a deadly centuries-long game of cat-and-mouse for Perenelle and Nicolas, with both of them taking on many different identities over time. They also discover that the Elixir of Life has affected each of them differently, enhancing their natural, individual proclivities. Perenelle, a loving and supportive person, literally becomes a Muse-like entity: she finds and falls in love with creative people (artists, scientists, musicians, philosophers, etc.), enhances their creative skills, and reinforces her eternal life from their psychic/artistic emanations. Nicolas, on the other hand, has become even more grasping and power-hungry, inflicting and living off the physical pain and mental anguish he causes others. (He especially enjoys it when he can inflict pain on either Perenelle or her lovers.)

The novel shifts back and forth in time, alternating between Perenelle's current identity (Camille



Apollo and the Muses, by Sargent

Kenny, in modern New York City) and her previous "incarnations" down the centuries. As it turns out, Perenelle/Camille has loved some of the most famous artists and thinkers in history, including Bernini (the sculptor), Vivaldi (the composer), Lavoisier (the scientist/chemist), William Blake (the artist-poet), Lord Byron (the poet), and Klimt (the painter). And, since artistic talent knows no gender boundaries, she has also had female lovers over the course of time, a couple of whom are featured prominently in the storyline. Occasionally, Nicolas Flamel finds her again, and Bad Things Happen. (Flamel is – often graphically – portrayed as a *real* villain!) But it looks like their long conflict could come to its bloody conclusion in current-day New York City.

I really enjoyed *Immortal Muse*. Leigh uses the novel's exciting (and sometimes heart-breaking) storyline to vividly recreate the life and times of some of history's most creative people. Chalk up another triumph for Stephen Leigh!

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**And as Aurora lifts her rosy
veil
My muse approaches—haggard,
had, and pale.
Fetid, fingered, rancid, rank,
and frowzy,
No wonder all my poetry is
lousy!**

— from a poem by
Victor Buono

* * 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 copy of 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, **March 13th, at Peter and Rob's home, 1425 "S" Street NW, Washington, DC.** 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



May 27-30, 2016 **BALTICON 50**. The Renaissance Baltimore Harborplace Hotel (Baltimore, MD). GoH: George R.R. Martin; Artist GoH: John Picacio. Membership: \$64 from 3/1 to 4/15; \$70 thereafter. On-line registration available: registration@balticon.org. Website: www.balticon.org E-mail: balticoninfo@balticon.org

July 15-17, 2016 **SHORE LEAVE 38**. (Celebrating Star Trek's 50th Anniversary.) Hunt Valley Inn (Hunt Valley, MD). Membership: \$90 for the weekend (daily memberships available) – deadline for pre-registration 6/15/2016; prices higher at the door. Send a membership form, self-addressed stamped envelope, and check payable to "Shore Leave" to: Shore Leave 38, PO Box 6809, Towson, MD 21285-6809
Website: www.shore-leave.com E-mail: information@shore-leave.com

Aug. 17-21, 2016 **MIDAMERICON II, the 74th Worldcon**. Kansas City Convention Center & Bartle Hall (Kansas City, MO). GoHs: Kinuko Craft; Patrick & Teresa Nielsen Hayden; Tamora Pierce; Pat Cadigan. Membership: \$185 "until Spring 2016" (will go up after that). Registration is on-line (via PayPal).
Website: <http://midamericon2.org/>

October 7-9, 2016 **CAPCLAVE 2016**. Hilton Washington DC North/Gaithersburg (Gaithersburg, MD). Membership: \$50 thru 5/31/2016; \$55 from 6/1 thru 7/31; \$60 from 8/1 thru 9/30; \$65 at the door. Author GoHs: Sarah Beth Durst, Tim Powers. On-line registration. Website: www.Capclave.org

Oct. 7-9, 2016 **GAYLAXICON 2016**. Doubletree by Hilton Hotel Minneapolis-Park Place (Minneapolis, MN). Guests of Honor: Eleanor Arnason (author); David Maxine (Hungry Tiger Press); Eric Shanower (*Age of Bronze*). Registration: \$65 thru Sept. 12th; \$80 at the door. Registration is on-line.
Website: <http://www.gaylaxicon2016.org/>

Nov. 25-27, 2016 **CHESSIECON 2016**. Radisson North Baltimore [formerly North Baltimore Plaza Hotel] (Timonium, MD). Membership: \$50 until 3/15; then \$55 until 11/15; \$60 at the door. GoH: Sarah Pinsker; Artist GoH: Tabitha Ladin; Music GoH: S.J. Tucker; Special Guest: Elizabeth Schechter. On-line registration via PayPal; or make check payable to "Thanksgiving Science Fiction Society" and send (with membership form) to: TSFS, Inc., PO Box 83032, Gaithersburg, MD 20883-3032
Website: <http://chessiecon.org/> Information: info@chessiecon.org