



Lambda Sci-Fi

DC Area Gaylaxians

(202) 232-3141 - Issue # 320 – November 2016

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 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 December 1, 2016.

Here are the details for the next few book discussions:

Dec. 1 (combined Nov./Dec. session) – *Luna: New Moon*, by Ian McDonald (moderator: Carl).

Jan. 26, 2017 – *The Last Policeman*, by Ben Winters (moderator: Konrad).

Feb. 23 – *The Long Way to a Small, Angry Planet*, by Becky Chambers (moderator: Konrad).

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Doctor Strange Movie Outing - November 5th

announced by Peter Knapp



Time: 10:00 AM. (This is a 2D showing). Line up as 9:30 AM.

Where: AMC Uptown 1 - 3426 Connecticut Ave NW, Washington, DC 20008

Cost: \$5.81 (There has to be some benefit of getting up so early on a Saturday.)

Tickets at:

http://www.fandango.com/doctorstrange_186645/movietimes?date=11/5/2016

Lunch: After the movie, at a local eatery, if there's interest. Rob and I will *not* be doing lunch.

Questions: Contact Peter at Peter.P.Knapp@gmail.com or on Facebook.

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LSF Holiday Gaming Party

announced by Peter Knapp

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

When: Saturday, December 3rd; 1:00pm – ??

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 \$7 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 Midcity (14th and "U") Corridor. Also, delivery menus will be available at the party.

Where: Home of Peter and Rob, 1425 S St NW, Washington, DC 20009. Their home is in the Midcity (14th and "U") neighborhood, near Dupont Circle and Logan Circle.

Directions (with Metro and parking advice) at:

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

Questions: Contact Peter at:

PeterPKnapp@gmail.com

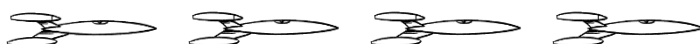
or Rob at:

RobGatesDC@gmail.com

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<<<<< November 2016 LSF Meeting >>>>>

The next LSF meeting will be held on **Sunday, November 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. Hope to see you there!



What's Inside?

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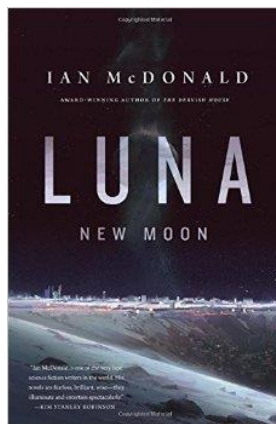
Spectrum Awards Announced by Rob Gates



Washington DC: The Gaylactic Spectrum Awards Foundation is pleased to announce the winners and recommended list for the 2016 Gaylactic Spectrum Awards for Best Novel. The Gaylactic Spectrum Awards were created in 1999 by The Gaylactic Network, the premiere organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) fans of science fiction, fantasy, and horror (SF/F/H), to honor works in SF/F/H that deal positively with LGBTQ characters, themes and issues. The independent Gaylactic Spectrum Awards Foundation was created in 2002 to manage and further the mission of the awards, which is to educate and raise awareness of LGBTQ content in SF/F/H. Nominations for the Gaylactic Spectrum Awards are open to everyone. Winners and a short list of recommended works in each category are selected by a jury. The 2016 Awards were presented in one category – Best Novel - for works originally appearing in calendar year 2015 or which were published earlier and granted an exception for consideration by the judging team.

The novel selected by the judges as the best science fiction, fantasy or horror novel with significant positive LGBTQ content from 2015 is *Luna: New Moon*, by Ian McDonald, published by Tor Books. This near future novel combines strong science fiction elements with social and political themes, particularly developing economies and post-colonialism, and includes a significant number of major LGBTQ characters.

Other novels recommended



on the judges' short list are *The Bastards' Paradise*, by Kathe Koja (Roads-well Editions); *Chaos Station*, by Kelly Jensen and Jenn Burke (Carina Press); *Cherry Bomb*, by Kathleen Tierney (ROC/Penguin); *Ebenezer*, by JoSelle Vanderhooft (Zumaya Boundless); *Karen Memory*, by Elizabeth Bear (Tor Books); *My Real Children*, by Jo Walton (Tor Books); *The Mystic Marriage*, by Heather Rose Jones (Bella Books); *Planetfall*, by Emma Newman (Roc); and *The Watchmaker of Filigree Street*, by Natasha Pulley (Bloomsbury). These recommended works show remarkable variety in content, tone, publishing house size, author experience, and genre.

The 2016 Gaylactic Spectrum Awards were presented at Gaylaxicon 2016 in Minneapolis on October 8, at a panel discussion surrounding the history of the awards and the changing dynamics of LGBTQ content in the genre. Winners and short list titles in the Best Short Fiction and Best Other Work categories will be given at a later date, sometime in the first half of 2017. Winners in each category receive physical awards and a cash prize.

For more information about the Gaylactic Spectrum Awards, including a complete listing of all nominated works from 2016, a handout listing winners and short list recommendations with brief descriptions, or to nominate works for the 2017 Gaylactic Spectrum Awards, you can visit the website at:

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

or send email to:

info@spectrumawards.org

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Lovecraftian Anthologies reviews by Carl

Well, the October issue of the newsletter was just too full to include these reviews. Ah well. But with the lengthening nighttime hours, it's *still* quite appropriate to review these Lovecraftian anthologies. So, cuddle up, turn off most of the lights, and dig into some creepy stories.

The Madness of Cthulhu
edited by S.T. Joshi
(Titan Books, 2014)

This anthology contains 14 new stories (and two reprinted classics) “inspired by H.P. Lovecraft’s legendary novella *At the Mountains of Madness*.” It also contains a fascinating Foreword by horror/thriller author Jonathan Maberry, recounting his initiation into the thrills and chills of Lovecraftian literature by L. Sprague de Camp. The nifty cover art by John Jude Palencar caught my eye, of course – but what actually cinched the purchase for me were the two reprinted stories it contains: “At the Mountains of Murkiness” by Arthur C. Clarke (*Satellite*, 1940) and “Diana of the Hundred Breasts” by Robert Silverberg (*Realms of Fantasy*, February 1996).

Here’s a little history about Lovecraft’s *At the Mountains of Madness*. Lovecraft wrote the novella in 1931 and submitted it to Farnsworth Wright, editor of *Weird Tales* – Wright rejected it (“too long” was one of the reasons). Several years later, Julius Schwartz convinced Lovecraft to let him market the manuscript; and it finally appeared as a three-part serial in *Astounding* (February, March, and April 1936). It is this novella, Lovecraft’s longest fiction, that serves as the inspiration for most of the stories in *The Madness of Cthulhu*.

In his Introduction to the anthology, S.T. Joshi says: “Science fiction writers have long held ambivalent views of Lovecraft.” The first entry in the anthology is Clarke’s “At the Mountains of Murkiness”, which
(continued on page 3)

Lovecraftian Anthologies

continued from page 2

tends to be rather more in the less-than-delighted-with-Lovecraft group. It's a parody – and often a pretty silly one at that. I certainly don't think it's one of Clarke's better works, but it's fun to read nevertheless. (FYI: Joshi mentions that in Clarke's 1989 autobiography, Sir Arthur says that he quite enjoyed both *At the Mountains of Madness* and "The Shadow out of Time" when he read them in 1936.)

I think Silverberg's "Diana of the Hundred Breasts", on the other hand, is a *very* good story, although it's not as closely linked to Lovecraft's novella as most of the other stories in this anthology are. As you might guess from the title, it links human history and mythology with an ancient alien presence. (That's the "link" to *At the Mountains of Madness*.)

I quite enjoyed a number of stories that "retold" *At the Mountains of Madness* from another viewpoint. For example, John Shirley's "The Witness in Darkness" is presented as an Old One's explanation to humanity of "what really happened", using a recording of William Dyer's voice. (And the title is, of course, a variation of Lovecraft's "The Whisperer in Darkness", which also features alien recording devices.) K.M. Tonso's "Last Rites" is sort of a next-generation follow-up: Dr. Paul Dyer (a professor at Miskatonic University) investigates the mysterious adventures (and subsequent disgrace) of his father, William Dyer (from the original expedition to Antarctica). And Donald Tyson's "The Dog Handler's Tale" tells the frightening story of the Dyer expedition through the eyes of a non-scientist.

A couple of my favorite stories are of the "not related to *At the Mountains of Madness*" variety. As always, I was delighted to read a new story by Caitlin R. Kiernan: "A Mountain Walked". Kiernan draws on her background as a paleontologist for this story about the glory days of fossil-hunting. It's set in



Wyoming Territory during the summer of 1879. A team of fossil hunters, including the famous Prof. Othniel Charles Marsh (yes, he's famous – I'll wait while you look him up), run afoul of powerful supernatural entities while digging for Jurassic and Cretaceous fossils. And I *really* got a kick out of Darrell Schweitzer's "The Warm". It's a re-telling of Lovecraft's famous "Pickman's Model" – as told by one of the ghouls! As soon as I finished it, I quickly re-read the original Lovecraft story for comparison. That pretty much reinforced my admiration for Schweitzer's story-telling ability. Finally, as I was reading Jonathan Thomas's "A Quirk of the Mistral", I couldn't help but think of it as sort of a mix of George R.R. Martin's novella "Sandkings" with one of Caitlin Kiernan's paleontology-based stories: mysterious, with creepy implications.

Final suggestion: If you haven't previously read Lovecraft's *At the Mountains of Madness*, give it a try before getting into *The Madness of Cthulhu*. I think it'll increase your appreciation of the stories in this anthology.

Jazz Age Cthulhu

by Orrin Grey, A.D. Cahill, and
Jennifer Brozek
(Innsmouth Free Press, 2014)

I found this slender volume while browsing around in Amazon.com. It's a small press anthology that takes the Mythos out of its usual context. Here's a short excerpt from the Introduction: "The novelette is a somewhat *rara avis* these days... We

are therefore glad to present to you, not one, but three brand new Lovecraftian novelettes, all set during the Roaring Twenties." And I found these three novelettes – by authors previously unknown to me – to be quite enjoyable.

In Jennifer Brozek's "Dreams of a Thousand Young", the wealthy daughter of an Assam tea plantation owner is invited to a special party at the exclusive Black Ram Club. The next morning she wakes up in bed next to a murdered Assamese nobleman – with no memory of what happened the night before. In the ensuing murder investigation, she and a colonial official uncover a dark conspiracy involving Shub-Niggurath cultists. Don't expect a happy ending to this story.

Orrin Grey's "The Lesser Keys" takes place in Kansas City. So, of course, music – specifically Kansas City Jazz – plays a major role in the story, as do Kansas City's well-known rampant criminal organizations and its secret societies (which are, of course, less well known). A young woman goes to Kansas City in search of her prodigal brother; a gangster is sent to Kansas City to steal away a hot new jazz ensemble for a Chicago mob boss; and the owner of Kansas City's newest and hottest jazz club has very big – and very dark – plans for the world. Collision ahead!

The third story – A.D. Cahill's "Pomptinia Sum" – is a tale of hidden identities and dangerous secrets; and it's the least overtly Lovecraftian of the three stories. A European con man is finding it difficult to ply his trade in Mussolini's new Italy, so he heads south to Pomptinia, a warm and sunny Mediterranean island. He quickly finds wealthy tourists he can swindle; but as the time for Carnival approaches, he also discovers that Pomptinia is a very strange island indeed!

[to be continued]

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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 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, **November 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



Nov. 18-20, 2016 **PHILCON 2016**. Crown Plaza Hotel (Cherry Hill, NJ). Principal Speaker: CJ Cherryh; Artist Goh: Dave Seeley; Special Guest: LE Modesitt. Membership: \$55 through 11/6/2016. Checks payable to "Philadelphia Science Fiction Society" and send to: Philcon Registration, PO Box 8303, Philadelphia PA 19101 Website: www.philcon.org

Nov. 25-27, 2016 **CHESSIECON 2016**. Radisson North Baltimore [formerly North Baltimore Plaza Hotel] (Timonium, MD). Membership: \$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

Feb. 17-19, 2017 **FARPOINT 2017**. Radisson Hotel North Baltimore (Timonium MD). Membership: \$80 pre-registration for the weekend (daily rates available). Guests: Enver Gjokaj ("Agent Daniel Sousa" from *Agent Carter*), more TBA. Checks payable to "Farpoint Enterprises" and send to: Farpoint Enterprises, 11708 Troy Ct., Waldorf, MD 20601. Register and pay on-line at: www.FarpointCon.com/register Website: www.FarpointCon.com

March 24-26, 2017 **(RE)GENERATION WHO3**. Renaissance Baltimore Harborplace (Baltimore MD). Membership: Pre-registration \$80; \$90 at the door; VIP packages available. Guests: Sylvester McCoy (7th Doctor), Michelle Gomez (Missy), Peter Purves (1st Doctor Companion Steven Taylor), Katy Manning (3rd Doctor Companion Jo Grant). Registration through the website: <https://regenerationwho.com/>

May 26-29, 2017 **BALTICON 51** (including The 1632 Minicon). Renaissance Baltimore Harborplace (Baltimore MD). Membership: *[more information as it becomes available]* GoH: Eric Flint; Artist GoH: Donato Giancola. Checks payable to ? and send to PO Box 686, Baltimore, MD 21203-0686 Website: www.balticon.org E-mail: balticoninfo@balticon.org

June 16-18, 2017 **AWESOME CON 2017**. Walter E. Worthington Convention Center (Washington, DC) "Awesome Con welcomes some of the biggest and nerdiest names across comics, movies, TV, and more." Membership: \$75 for the basic 3-day weekend pass (daily rates & "add-ons" available). Registration on-line. Website: <http://awesomecon.com>

Happy Thanksgiving!

