



Issue Tredici - Jan 2011

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Musings from Under the Mountain

Okay, it's late again, and this time it's my fault for spending most of Wednesday at Muriwai with my son, Paul, and a gaggle of 50 or so surprisingly well-behaved 12-year-olds. The fact that we ended up going on what was the first cool and cloudy day in a week was out of my control. The water was cold and frisky—I ended knocked clean off my feet by the waves more than twice... Made me remember younger days and club outings to various beaches—one trip to Army Bay particularly comes to mind. Of course, today is an absolutely gorgeous sunny day, and I rather wish I was at the beach today instead of yesterday. Ah well, at least we didn't get sunburnt—even the blonde girl with the freckles was safe!

Which brings me to the next topic—Space at the Beach. Now, admittedly that morning didn't look particularly promising from the meteorological point of view, but I have to say that when we got out to Omana the weather turned out quite lovely—pity about the turn-out of you lot! Or lack thereof. Still it was a very nice afternoon, and a pleasant time was had.

So, why is it Friday and I'm still not finished....? Well, I have to admit I've been distracted by the news that Amazon.co.uk is offering free shipping to NZ on orders over £25—believe you me it did not take long for the Smiths to make a list of more than £25 worth of desirable goodies. Your typical Doctor Who novel retails for \$NZ20 on Fishpond, and \$25 on the shelf. They're £5:50 on Amazon.co.uk—which is about \$NZ11. So, what is a sensible person to do in these cash conscious times?

The end consequence, of course, is that the retail book industry in New Zealand is getting clobbered—they tell me even the venerable Whitcoulls is now heading into receivership. It's not that people aren't buying books and DVDs... it's that they aren't buying them *here*. We routinely de-zone our DVD-players, and wait for the courier to come with another package.... It's the economics of scale. One big warehouse somewhere in Germany.... Airplanes and couriers.... It's actually more efficient to ship the specific goods I require directly to my door. No waste, you see. Scott tells me that the new free shipping policy may be connected to the opening of a massive new cargo terminal in India. Whatever.... It's a smaller world....

Jacqui Smith

From the Cramped Office

How's your year going? Mine isn't so bad so far – I've got involved in a "play by email" alternate history game on *Armchair General*, where I'm trying to get the Tsar's navy to help His Britannic Majesty and the French (and those Japanese fellows) prod German and American bottom during WWI. This qualifies as SF, or Fantasy, or something. The Yanks are also bemoaning the downward decline of the SyFy channel as it is now known. Apparently it has become the home for WWF as well as culling all the good shows.

This is miles away from the theme of the month: OGBs or Omnipotent Godlike Beings. And I'm not talking about librarians. Remember those annoying, know-it-all beasts that used to pop up with alarming regularity on *Star Trek*? Them. Anyway, Mrs Smith reckons she can whip a few of them into some sort of discussable pile, so that's this month. Then there is Alan Parker's *Context*, the 2011 Natcon being held up here in Auckland. Give Alan a hand to make sure it all goes smoothly and his breakdown arrives after the Con.

Now to get out of this muggy heat.

Steve Litten
President

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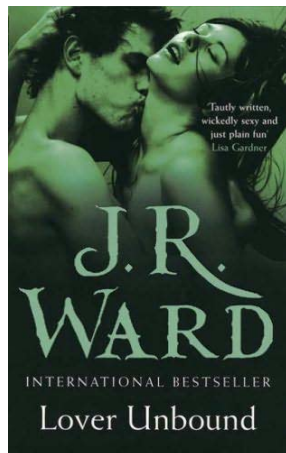
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Lover Unbound: Black Dagger Brotherhood Book 5

By JR Ward
Published by Piatkus
Supplied by Hachette
Reviewed by Jan Butterworth

Vishous, a smart IT geek and scary vampire warrior is a member of the Brotherhood. He has the gift of prophecy and a glowing hand that can torch dead lesser so they disappear from existence. The son of the Bloodletter, V grew up in harsh warrior training camps where he endured extreme cruelty. He now enjoys BDSM, where he is the one being punished. He also has feelings for Butch, his formerly human roommate who is now mated (Book 4). After a fight with Lessers, V ends up in a human hospital, where he falls instantly and unexpectedly in love with a human surgeon, Dr. Jane Whitcomb. Needing medical care but unwilling to be exposed as a vampire, he kidnaps Jane and brings her to the brotherhood compound to care for him. Jane is a brilliant surgeon, dedicated to helping people live. She grew up in a very repressed household where emotion was frowned on. She now loves expressing herself and being the best in her field. After meeting V, she's impressed by how hot he is, and he loves her brain. V is destined to become the Primale, a warrior with multiple vampire wives who's meant to ensure the survival of the species. After meeting Jane he doesn't want the role so Phury steps in, as he's in love with someone unattainable, his brother's mate Bella. The Scribe Virgin, who turns out to be V's mother, agrees. We get to see a lot of Phury, his potential primary mate, and a lot of background is set up for the next book. A lesser shoots Jane and she dies in V's arms. He tries to resurrect her but is stopped by the Scribe Virgin. She is horrified by V's grief and trades her only joy in life (her birds) so Jane can come back. Jane is now a ghost and V is the only one who can touch her – to everyone else she is translucent. V then gives his mother a bird to thank her for what she did. I never got why Jane was fine with being kidnapped by a group of vampires. If I was kidnapped by vampires, I would be freaking out, not joking and flirting with my captor, no matter how hot he was. And V has just kidnapped her, he is her patient, he is a vampire, she is supposed to be very professional, yet she gives him a HJ without even knowing his whole first name? The whole relationship between them was not believable at all, it was too rushed. Secondary characters do play a bigger role, there's a lot of detail about John Matthew and his friends, who finally go through transition and Zsadic continues to develop. The ending left me feeling unsatisfied but I couldn't wait for Phury's book. We meet his possible mate and what we find out about her and the culture she arrives from is not to be missed. Lover Unbound is a must for Brotherhood fans but not the book to start the series with. Definitely R 18.



Turn Coat

By Jim Butcher
Published by Orbit
Supplied by Hachette
Reviewed by Kevin G Maclean

This is a Harry Dresden book. If you don't know what that means, where have you been? It's number eleven in the series, but I'm about four behind, so it was a surprise to be able to drop right in to the latest without feeling like I'd missed something. I'd also forgotten that I wasn't going to be able to put the damn book down, unless you count collapsing around 6 a.m.

As usual, Harry has someone show up on his doorstep in need of help. The twist is, this time it's Morgan, the Warden who has spent most of the previous books looking for an excuse to execute him, and it's the White Council that are chasing him. And not just them – there's a very substantial bounty out for him from some other source. Harry instantly concludes that Morgan must have been framed, because a self-righteous prig like Morgan would never betray the White Council. And Harry being Harry, he just can't let an innocent man get executed, no matter how much he dislikes him. Even if he's likely to get executed for helping him...

Scene set? Throw in a plot to start a war between the Council and the Vampire White Court, a big bad who is both very tough and very nasty, and Harry's usual complicated inter-personal relationships. I strongly recommend this book. I also recommend that you don't plan on doing anything else between starting and finishing, because there's a good chance it won't happen.

The Passage

By Justin Cronin
Published by Ballantine
Borrowed from the Library
Reviewed by Jan Butterworth

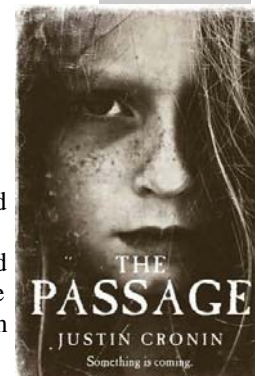
I didn't actually get beyond the first 20(?) chapters as I found it boring and long winded. I managed to make it to the bit where the FBI agents kidnap Amy, then couldn't go further as things seemed too unrealistic (yes, in a book about vampires and the apocalypse). I flicked to the middle which looked promising – there were horses –but couldn't face figuring out who people were. So I made Kevin read it. He didn't think much of it either.

The story is split into two distinct parts. The first tells of the coming of the apocalypse. In the jungles of Bolivia a virus is discovered which scientists are convinced will help prolong human life. They test it on violent death-row inmates who are then turned into vampires. Inevitably they escape and lay waste to America. A strain of the virus has also been tested on an abandoned little girl called Amy. When disaster strikes, she's rescued by an FBI agent who spirits her away to safety in an abandoned mountain camp.

The second part of the novel is Cronin's brave new world - an enclave of survivors in the southern Californian mountains who are protected from the marauding virals by a barrier of bright lights. This is a prize-winning novel evidently and you either like it or not. Read the book then write a review telling us what you thought. Someone in the club must like it.



BOOK REVIEWS



Sir Julius Vogel Nominations are Open

The Sir Julius Vogel Awards opened for nominations on 1st January and will close on 31st March, 2011.

The Awards are made annually by the Science Fiction & Fantasy Association of New Zealand (SFFANZ) and recognize achievement in Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror by New Zealanders. Initial nominations are open to everyone - and anyone - but the final vote for shortlisted works is restricted to members of SFFANZ and those attending the national convention, Context, which is to be this year over Queen's Birthday weekend, 3-6 June.



To make a nomination, here's what you do:

If you wish to make a nomination - and remember that anyone may nominate - here's what you do:

Go to the Sir Julius Vogel Award site and check out "the rules" http://sffanz.sf.org.nz/sjv/sjvAwardsRules_2011.shtml

But my take on "what to do" is basically this:

If you like a work of fiction or SFF tv series or film (that has been created by a NZ-er and released in 2010) then make a nomination—it costs you nothing and helps support and recognise SFF in NZ;

You can **nominate as many works as you like but only once in each category**—in other words, you can nominate all the NZ-created works that you loved this year; no need to pick and choose at this stage!

Remember to **include your name and contact details** when you make a nomination;

Also **include the contact details for the creator of the nominated work**, where you know them, as the nomination must be accepted by them;

Email your nominations to: sjv_awards@sffanz.sf.org.nz

A separate email for each nominated work is very much appreciated but not absolutely required.

And **do nominate** - the works that make the final ballot are based entirely on the number of nominations received, so if you loved a work this year and want to see it recognised, then **your nomination counts!**

Novels eligible for nomination this year can be found under the 'Interesting Lists' link on the SFFANZ homepage or <http://sffanz.sf.org.nz/lists/WritersByInverseDate.shtml>

Helen Lowe

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For the full blog post visit: <http://helenlowe.info/>

The Windup Girl

by Paolo Bacigalupi

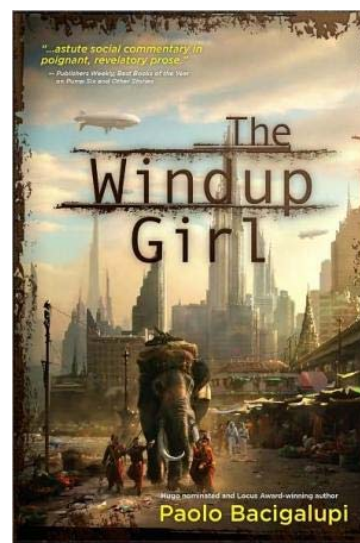
Published by Orbit

Reviewed by Steve Litten

This is a debut novel, set in a quasi-post apocalyptic Thailand. Thanks to the miracles of genetic modification, crops and humans are no longer safe from rogue viruses that have incorporated modified genetic material, resulting in all sorts of plagues and diseases. Genebanks house the raw materials of unmodified foods, and Thailand is one of the last holdouts of pure food; pure in that the Calorie Companies don't control Thailand's food production. Anderson Lake has been sent to Bangkok to aid AgriGen in wresting control of the Thais genebanks for use by the company. But it is not just his story. Hock Seng, his company's plant manager, is a refugee from the anti-Chinese pogrom that overtook Malaysia and he is playing his own game, as are several other minor characters. Woven into the story is Emiko, an abandoned Windup Girl, a Japanese "new person", a genetically modified construct designed to be the perfect compliant employee. Currently she is stuck in a seedy bar in Bangkok, working as a stripper and prostitute. Her situation is perilous - if the Thais find her, she will be thrown in the recycling vats. Anderson Lake takes her as his lover. To make life more interesting, there are two main factions within the Thai administration - the Army and the Environment Ministry, the latter responsible for keeping Thailand genetically safe.

The main protagonists, Lake, Hock, Emiko, and Kanya of the Environment Ministry weave in and out of the thread of the story, which culminates in a minor civil war precipitated by Emiko defending her honour. Alliances change and nothing is quite what it appears. Lake is bent on furthering AgriGen's position, Emiko on finding safety, Hock wants security and Kanya needs to answer to two masters. The civil war brings survival and provides a satisfying conclusion for most.

This is a brilliant novel, and I can understand why it won both the Hugo and Nebula Awards for 2010. The characters are believable, and Thailand makes for a good setting, being sufficiently alien for most Westerners without stretching the imagination beyond breaking point. Bacigalupi's style is sufficient for the story and he has obviously listened to the advice given to him. A definite page-turner, I devoured the 500+ pages in two days. I look forward to his next offering, only hoping it will be as good.



[Paolo Bacigalupi's next book was a young adult novel called "Ship Breaker" published in 2010.—Ed.]

Over the past year I've waded my way through a fair number of new authors chosen to be showcased in the **Bookworms** section of *Stella Nova*. Some of the books have been excellent; others have left me wondering why? *Reviews by Steve Litten*

Recursion, Tony Ballantyne, **Bantam Spectra**. In the 23rd century, there is human space and there is the universe beyond. In human space, the Environment Agency picks out Herb for violating the protocols of planetology and gives him the opportunity to make amends by combating a self-replicating machine menace that seems to dominate the rest of the galaxy. Its representative is a self-aware machine that guides Herb through the maze of the conflict with the machines, gradually sacrificing itself to help him. Eva is a self-destructive young woman trying to commit suicide, something impossible in a Big brother society. And then there is Constantine, an engineer trying to correct a fault in a city construction programme. Or is that trying to destroy the programme?

This is an enjoyable read, with only a few minor hiccups along the way, and had a pleasing conclusion. Tony Ballantyne has created some believable characters and joined their stories together well. A recommended read.

Monster Hunter International, Larry Correia, **Baen**. Owen Pitt is a large young man, recently graduated with an accounting degree suddenly thrust in to the world of the paranormal. Werewolves, zombies, vampires and creatures resembling the Elder Gods of H. P. Lovecraft are out there and Monster hunter International is all that stands between us and them. Pitt is their newest recruit. After killing his werewolf boss, he must adjust to the weirdness; win the love of Julie Harbinger, daughter of his new boss at MHI and save the day by defeating an ancient undead conquistador.

This one read too much like a *Call of Chthulhu* adventure. Correia obviously knows a lot about firearms and enjoys showing off that knowledge; but the rest of the story is just too pat. A bit like nachos with too much chilli and not enough topping, there was not enough substance to satisfy. Read it if you like weak character development and lots of guns.

Child of Fire, Harry Connolly, **Del Rey**. Ray Lilly is a small time criminal obliged to be the "wooden man", or decoy, for a magician in this urban fantasy. Set in Washington state, Ray and Annalise Powliss are on the path of the magician responsible for causing children to spontaneously combust and become small, silvery worms. Even more worrying, their parents forget about their existence. They are soon in the small seaside town of Hammer Bay, where the locals are decidedly odd, and not everything is as it should be. To make matters worse, Ray must take the lead when Annalise is sidelined with an injury that won't heal. For those who like Jim Butcher's urban fantasy, this is in a similar league and it is more enjoyable and believable than MHI. Ray has to battle the occasional inner demon and is not the most likable of heroes, but at least he is credible. The conclusion buys Ray a stay of execution for his past misdeeds and while not the most satisfying of reads, is acceptable. As I said, if you like *Harry Dresden*, you'll like *Child of Fire*.

Death's Head, David Gunn, **Del Rey**, 2008. Sven Tveskoeg is a man recruited by the imperial services to sort out a problem. The occupied worlds are divided between OctoV and the Uplifted and the U/Free. Varying amounts of cybernetic interfacing determine which camp is which. OctoV's realm has the least and the Uplifted the most. Sven is thrust into the Death's Head Battalion of Space Marines and obliged to conduct missions of increasing personal danger and complexity for his remote overlord, OctoV. The last involves preventing a planet from falling to the forces of the Uplifted, a plan which seems to be going horribly wrong. This is a book that is trying to be several different books – Edgar Rice Burroughs, Robert Heinlein and *Perry Rhodan* vie for supremacy. While not a bad yarn neither is it a good one. The various influences don't quite destroy it, but I feel hard pressed to recommend it as a read. Maybe if you like Burroughs and Heinlein and want to check out their unruly lovechild, then perhaps this is for you. Or not.

WRITER'S WORKSHOP

with
Catherine Asaro

Limited to 10 participants

- When: 3 days, Wednesday – Friday, 1 – 3 June, 9.00 am – 5.00 pm
- Where: Barrycourt Quality Motel, 10 – 20 Gladstone Road, Parnell 1052
- Cost: \$150.00 pp for the course (free parking onsite)
- Bring: Pen & paper or laptop
Lunch not included

About the tutor

Catherine Asaro is the author of more than 20 Science Fiction and Fantasy novels and many novella and short stories. When not writing and making appearances at conventions and signings, Catherine teaches math, physics, and chemistry. She is a member of SIGMA, a think tank of speculative writers that advises the US government as to future trends affecting national security. A former ballerina, Catherine Asaro has performed with ballets and in musicals on both coasts and in Ohio. She founded and served as artistic director and a principal dancer for two dance groups at Harvard.

For more information about Catherine go to:
<http://www.catherineasaro.net/>

Please contact enquiries@context.sf.org.nz for a registration form.



TAUPO JOUST 2011

Text
by Jacqui
Smith
Photos
by Keith
Smith

We'd been told that it was starting early this year, so we packed on the Thursday evening and headed off for Taupo on the Friday morning. It was lunchtime, so we checked in to our usual accommodations, had a bite, changed into our Roman costumes and headed for the Joust. Turned out to be workshop day so we watched people workshopping and practising, and wondered when our fellow Romans would turn up (late afternoon as it happens).

It rained that night, but it stopped by morning so we headed in. I spent most of that day at the Roman camp helping various children into Roman chain-mail, and purchasing a few souvenirs (and earning some from the nice fireman by answering fire safety questions). However the ground was now muddy enough that the jousting itself was called off as being too dangerous—and it only got worse. Late afternoon the rain started, getting heavier and heavier into the night. The site was evacuated.... You could say that rain stopped play... :-)



*Oi! What are you doing with that sharp and pointy object!
It's all part of the melée!*



Blacksmith at work!



*Give fire!
Archers make ready to put holes in targets....*



*"Aren't you a bit young to be a legionary?"
Paul and Anne guarding the Roman Camp.*



*This is what you might call a wash-out!
The site of the Joust on the Sunday....*

AUCKLAND ARTSFESTIVAL

A SYMPHONIC ODYSSEY

Saturday 12 March
8pm

Auckland Town Hall
Discount for
Stella Nova Members
Saturday 12 March, 8pm
Auckland Town Hall

The New Zealand Symphony Orchestra will lead concertgoers across new frontiers with its homage to Stanley Kubrick's sci-fi classic *2001: A Space Odyssey* in Auckland next month.

Co-presented by Auckland Arts Festival, **A Symphonic Odyssey** is a one-off performance of orchestral greats from the film, including epic works by György Ligeti and Richard Strauss.

NZSO Music Director Emeritus James Judd returns to New Zealand from the US to conduct the concert. He says the blockbuster music is a giant in scale and will thrill the audience.

The programme includes Luciano Berio's rarely-performed 1968 masterpiece *Sinfonia*, considered to be the most revolutionary avant-garde symphony of the twentieth century.

The NZSO would like to offer **Stella Nova members a discount** to this concert – **NZSO 15** - \$15 off the adult priced ticket in all reserves. Book at The Edge 0800 289 842 and ask for **NZSO 15**. (Service fee will apply).



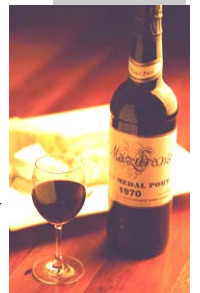
Uncorked by Broderick Wells

A while ago, a keen drinker presented me with a small barrel for the holding and dispensing of fortified wines. Lovely little thing it is too. I immediately did the smart thing and put some water in it. What, you say, Wells drinking water? From a barrel? Don't be silly. As may readily be guessed, aforesaid barrel had not had a good life of late and was a little parched. Water was necessary to swell the wood so as to prevent leaks. Then came the hunt for the proper filling. Keen drinker and I agreed that the most suitable contents would be port; but not just any port, no, rather it had to be a special one, from a special producer. A voice from the past suggested *Old B*st*rds Madeira Port*, and was promptly advised to stick a bit less nostalgia in the absinthe. In the end, the vote settled on *Mazurans* fine range of products, and there we left it. Now, those of you unfamiliar with the virtues of *Mazurans* fine range of wines will be in this condition for a very good reason: there are only two stores where one may purchase said spirituous liquors, one being on K Rd, and the other being at the estate, in Henderson. Thus poor Broderick had to locate either a tart with a heart or a mullet hairdo, black t-shirt and an FJ Holden to complete this transaction. Prudence, and a wider selection, won out, so armed with the cardio-enhanced beauty, Wells went West. And so, almost, did the plan, because Wells acquired a case of influenza before acquiring the case of port.

As far as flus go, this was a cheeky little number inviting the participant to sweat profusely, lose energy and appetite, enjoy a mild headache and a dry cough (but don't try and enjoy them at the same time, as you won't) and the occasional joint ache. On a scale of 1 (more chicken soup, please) to 5 (Fetch the priest), this was about 2.5. But Wells, being the hardy sort, decided the flu could survive West Auckland too, and took it to the vineyard in search of a cure.

Finally, the best *Mazurans* could provide was ready to pour into the barrel. I gave it a preliminary shake to satisfy myself that the water was doing its job only to be mortified again: the water had dried up! Curse this hot weather, I intoned and added a measure of fresh water to the barrel, which added it to the bench top and thence to the floor. I had a medicinal port to steady my nerves – that could so easily have been booze dribbling out. Still haven't done anything fantastical this past month, but those were my adventures.

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The Sky at Night – March 2011

Evenings are looking rather devoid of planets this month. Jupiter is low in the evening sky and Saturn doesn't rise until fairly late. Venus is still a dawn object and Mars and Mercury are still playing 'peek-a-boo' with the sun.

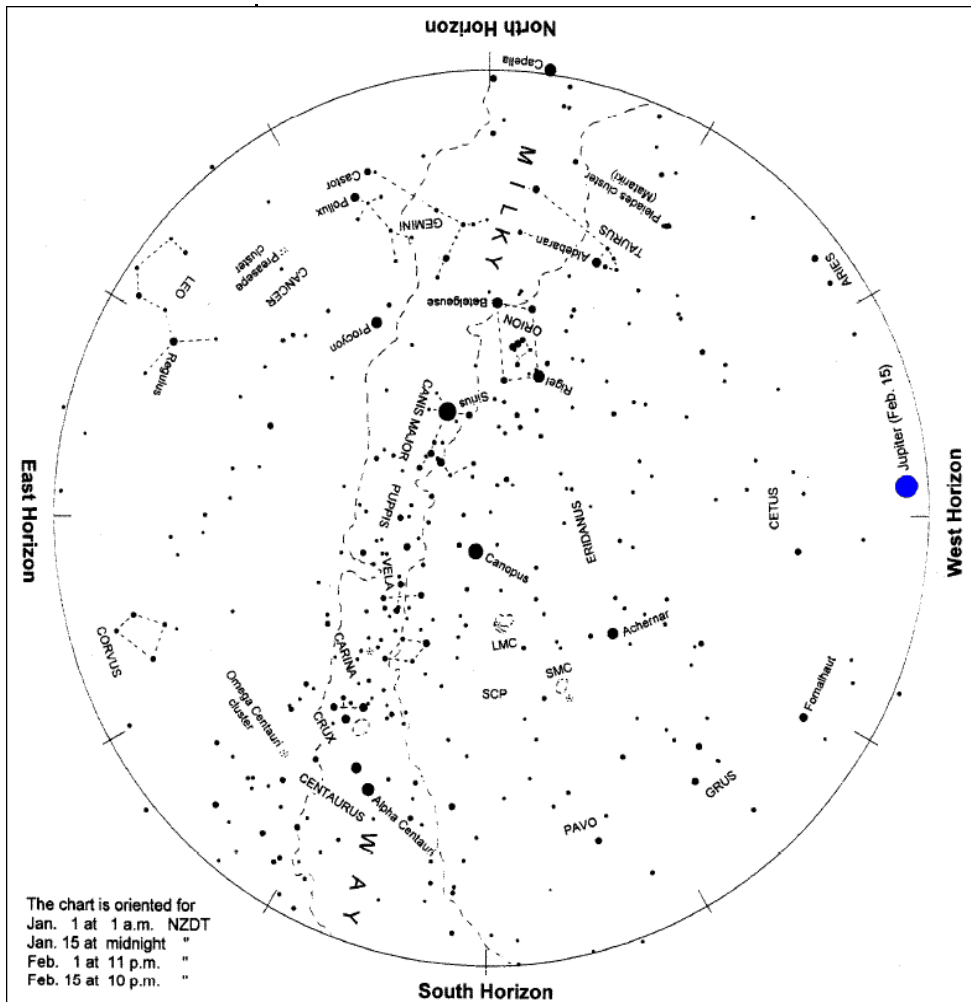
Orion is still prominent in the evening sky but it is now more east of north. Looking due north is Gemini, marked by the two bright stars, Castor and Pollux. Pollux (the one on the right) is a largish orange star only 34 light years away while Castor is actually a sextuplet star system located 50 light years away. Sextuplets are extremely rare and the system consists of two binary pairs orbiting each other with another binary pair (noted as YY Geminorum in atlases) associated with them.

Binary stars are actually rather common and several stars can be 'split' into their components in small telescopes. Alpha Centauri and Alpha Crucis are examples. Other binary pairs are so close that a spectroscope is required to separate them. Still other stars consist of a bright and a dim component. Both Procyon and Sirius are examples of this as they have dim, white dwarf, companions. Procyon can be found above Gemini being part of Canis Minor. To the right of Gemini is Cancer consisting mostly of faint stars. Cancer contains the Beehive cluster, also known as Praesepe (M44), which looks rather spectacular in binoculars.

Further along is the bright star Regulus in Leo. The Southern Cross is around the 9 o'clock position. If you want to try seeing Venus during the day (and it is possible, I've done it) . The trick is finding it and focusing on it in the featureless sky. On March the 1st the crescent Moon will be near Venus and can act as a guide.

On March 27th, Neptune and Venus are very close to each other. You'll need a good pair of binoculars or a small telescope to see Neptune.

- Events:
- 1st March – Moon close to Venus
 - 5th March – New Moon
 - 13th March– First Quarter Moon
 - 20th March– Full Moon
 - 27th March – Last Quarter Moon
 - 27th March – Moon close to Venus



More information can be found at:
<http://www.astronomy.co.nz/pub/home.asp>
<http://www.astronomy.org.nz/>
<http://www.skyandtelescope.com/index.html>



*Sirius A and B
(through the Hubble Space Telescope)*

by
Keith
Smith

Obits

January 16

Edward Chlapowski, (aged 88)

American Navy radioman. He was the man who told the world about the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour



Augusto Algueró, (aged 76)

Spanish composer and conductor—his name is familiar, but his father had the same name... so who knows? He composed musicals such as “Penélope”, “Noelia”, and “Tómbola” along with music for film and TV.

January 21

Tony Geiss, (aged 86)

American television writer and composer of music mainly for children’s shows including “Sesame Street”, Emmy award winner.

Jay Garner, (aged 82)

American actor, who, among other roles, played Admiral Asimov in “Buck Rogers in the 25th Century”.



January 24

Bernd Eichinger, (aged 61)

German film producer (and director) of numerous movies, many of them genre such as “The NeverEnding Story” and both the “Resident Evil” and the “Fantastic Four” movies.



January 27

Charlie Callas, (aged 83)

American comedian and actor, best known for as a stand-up comedian on television, and for the role of Malcolm Argos, the restaurant owner in “Switch”. He was the voice of Elliot in “Pete’s Dragon”



January 30

John Barry, (aged 77)

British film score composer, five-time Academy Award winner, composer of the scores for eleven James Bond movies (whether or not he wrote the famous “James Bond Theme” itself is a matter of debate) and a number of other very famous (and familiar) tunes such as the theme from “Born Free”.



February 4

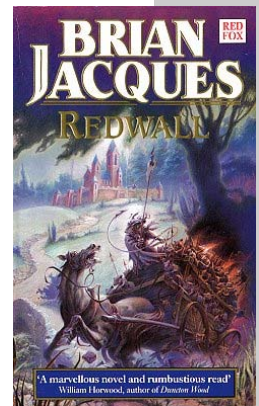
Tura Satana (aged 72)

Japanese-born American actress and former exotic dancer, best known for the role of “Varla” in Russ Meyer’s 1965 cult film, “Faster, Pussycat! Kill! Kill!”, but also appeared in the TV series “The Man From U.N.C.L.E.”, and a number of other movies, some of them very strange....

February 5

Brian Jacques, (aged 71)

British fantasy author of the “Redwall” animal series for children. He was working as a milkman, delivering milk to a school for blind children, when he got to know the children, and began telling them stories—which developed into the books (and explains his very descriptive style).



February 12

Frank Whitten, (aged 68)

New Zealand actor, played Ted “Grandpa” West in “Outrageous Fortune”, but better known to people like me as the old guy in the Speights ads who says, “Good on ya, mate!”



ConText 2011

New Zealand National SF Convention

ConText will be held over Queen's Birthday weekend in Auckland, Friday 3rd to Monday 6th June. The venue has been changed to the Quality Hotel Barrycourt, 10-20 Gladstone Road, Parnell.

Catherine Asaro, an American author of both science fiction and fantasy novels, will be the GoH. The fan GoH will be Lynelle Howell, editor of Phoenixine and an active Wellington fan. Also attending will be Helen Lowe, the Christchurch based author of the Heir series, of which the first 'The Wall of Night' was released earlier this month. The crew are also in negotiations with other potential guests.

This is a marvellous opportunity for anyone who enjoys science fiction to participate in 4 days of sharing their hobby with other fans. There will be discussion panels, organised gaming, costuming events, the Quiz, a video stream and a chance to buy science fiction related items. The winners of the 2011 Sir Julius Vogel Awards for Excellence in New Zealand Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror will be announced on the Sunday night at the Conjunction Banquet.

Full and day memberships will be available if you wish to attend for one or two days only. Organised events will be going into the early evening. The bar will be open all day until late.

The Barrycourt Hotel is holding a block of rooms for convention attendees. Book directly and quote the reference number 64913 to ensure you receive the rates.

Phone: +64 9 303 3789
Facsimile: +64 9 377 3309
<http://www.barrycourt.co.nz/reservations@barrycourt.co.nz>

Standard King Room

King bed, ensuite bathroom, coffee & tea facilities. LCD TV, DVD, writing desk. Some rooms with amazing city & harbour views. Rate includes car parking & daily newspaper (on request). \$109.00 per night including GST (maximum 2 pax)

Double Room

1 Queen & 1 Single bed, ensuite bathroom, coffee & tea facilities, private balcony, LCD TV, DVD, writing desk. Some rooms with amazing city & harbour views. Rate includes car parking & daily newspaper (on request). \$129.00 per night including GST (maximum 2 pax)

Stella Nova Wiki:

http://stella-nova.sf.org.nz/wiki/index.php/Main_Page

Nova Zine Back Issues:

<http://stella-nova.sf.org.nz/wiki/index.php/StellaNova:Novazine-new>

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This Month:

BOOK Monday 28 February, 7:30pm
at Teri's Place in New Winsor
(email for details).

SPACE Friday 4th March, 7:30pm
Maree's BIG 50
in Papakura
(email for details).

Next Meeting:

Wednesday 16 February, 2010 at 7:30pm
Auckland Horticultural Centre,
990 Great North Road, Western Springs



Upcoming Events:

June 3-6th 2011 **Context**
2011 New Zealand NatCon in Auckland
http://context.sf.org.nz/wiki/index.php/Main_Page