

ARTS & CULTURE

Gay flicks, freaks, and geeks at Dragon*Con

By Van Gower | Aug 31, 2012 | 10:50 AM

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Labor Day Weekend is upon us, but it might as well be renamed Gay Days Weekend in Atlanta for a diverse cornucopia of queerness, like gay-specific Dragon*Con events, that can keep you out and about through Monday.

Dragon*Con is one of the hottest tickets this weekend, opening Friday and running all the way through Labor Day. The annual blockbuster fantasy/sci-fi con to end all fantasy/sci-fi cons once again takes over downtown Atlanta with a mind-bending agenda that includes fan tracks, workshops, gaming, contests, vendors and exhibitors, celeb sightings—and yes, costumes. Of course, the gays are all up in the fray, too (top photo).

Another crowd-pleasing component is the Dragon*Con Independent Film Festival, which goes gloriously gay on Friday night. The festival hosts the world premiere of "Blood Fare" (photo, right) on Friday at 8:30 p.m. The indie horror flick is helmed by lesbian director J.A. Steel and stars Gil Gerard of the late 1970s TV series "Buck Rogers in the 25th Century" and out actress Michelle Wolff ("Dante's Cove"). "Blood Fare" is touted by its makers as a Civil War movie with a modern twist, blending history, ghosts and a modern-day lesbian main character (Brandi Lynn Anderson) and her girlfriend (Bridgette McManus).

The film's Dragon*Con premiere marks Steel's return to Atlanta following a screening of her previous sci-fi/horror film, "Denizen," at the LGBT-specific OutlantaCon in 2010. Steel, who has been in the film industry some 20 years, was influenced by B-grade horror, sci-fi and monster movies.

In addition to "Blood Fare," the film festival will also feature "Strange Frame: Love & Sax," an "animated, sci-fi, lesbian, musical of debt



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slaves, spaceships, and saxophones" that includes the voice talents of Tim Curry, Cree Summer, "Star Trek" alumni Michael Dorn and out actor George Takei.

One of the not-to-be-missed events of the weekend is the annual **Dragon*Con Parade**, which never fails to serve up a smorgasbord of **eye-popping hunks** in creative and often barely-there costumes. It steps off Saturday at 10 a.m. from Woodruff Park, heads north on Peachtree Street to Baker Street, and turns onto Courtland Street, where it will end at the Atlanta Marriott Marquis.

Of course, it's no secret that Dragon*Con has long been a manic melting pot where gay geeks and straight sci-fi buffs rub elbows, bonding over their mutual love of all things way-out. Not to be outdone by all the hetero happenings taking place on the holiday weekend, two local gay sci-fi/fantasy fan groups will be hosting events of their own in conjunction with the con.

Ample opportunities to get up close and personal with that costumed stud you've been un-costuming with your eyes include the queer-friendly **Alice's Mad Steamy Tea Pool Party**. Get wet all over in the Sheraton Atlanta on Sunday from 6 p.m. – 10 p.m. The event features two bars and food, with a sensory overload of DJs, fashion shows, steampunk couture, cosplay, anime, and Victorian, gothic, fantasy, fairy tale, and superhero themes.

Immediately after, the gays of Atlanta OutWorlders sci-fi fan group host the **LGBT Dragon*Con Meet & Greet** in the Sheraton's Fandangles bar at 9 p.m. There are also Outworlders' **LGBT meet-and-greet and gaming tables** at Dragon*Con all day Saturday and Sunday.

You can also check out a slate of gay-inclusive fan tracks and workshops like "Gay Themes in 'Doctor Who,'" a GLBT Writer's Session, "Sex in Videogames," and "LGBT on Pern." Visit **Dragon*Con online** for complete event listings. And remember, Dragon*Con is just one of the **best gay things to do in Atlanta this weekend**.

Photo by Brent Corcoran, **RNZ Photography**



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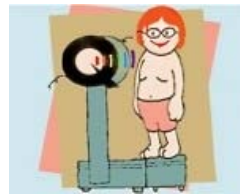
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