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Genre Fiction Sightlines

Ian McDonald
Chaga / Evolution's Shore

by John Lennard

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Ian McDonald: *Chaga / Evolution's Shore*

John Lennard

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A Note on the Author

John Lennard took his B.A. and D.Phil. at Oxford University, and his M.A. at Washington University in St Louis. He has taught in the Universities of London, Cambridge, and Notre Dame, and for the Open University, and is now Professor of British & American Literature at the University of the West Indies—Mona. His publications include *But I Digress: The Exploitation of Parentheses in English Printed Verse* (Clarendon Press, 1991), *The Poetry Handbook* (1996; 2/e, OUP, 2005), with Mary Luckhurst *The Drama Handbook* (OUP, 2002), and the Literature Insights *Hamlet* (2007). He is the general editor of the *Genre Fiction Sightlines* and *Monographs* series, and has written *Sightlines* on works by Reginald Hill, Walter Mosley, Tamara Pierce and Octavia E. Butler. His critical collection *Of Serial readers and other essays on genre fiction* (2007) is published simultaneously with this e-book.

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1. Notes

1.1 Ian McDonald

1.1.1 Life and Work

Ian McDonald was born to a Scottish father and Irish mother in Manchester in 1960, and moved to Northern Ireland in 1965. He remained there throughout his schooling, latterly in Belfast, and has remained a Belfast resident as an adult, so living through “the Troubles” of 1968–98 (Note 1.1.2). A fan of TV SF from the mid-1960s, hooked on shows like *Star Trek*, *Thunderbirds*, *Dr Who*, and *Space 1999*, he began writing SF stories when he was 9 and sold his first story (‘The Island of the Dead’) to a Belfast magazine when he was 22. Over the next 5 years, while doing a variety of part-time jobs, he became a regular contributor to some of the best known SF magazines (including *Asimov’s* and *Interzone*), and in 1987 took the plunge as a full-time writer.

Since 1988 he has published 10 novels, two novellas, a graphic novel, and two collections of stories, travelling for research to Kenya, India, and Brazil. Since 2000 he has also been associated with a Belfast media-production company as a Network Development Researcher. He is married, but does not discuss his family life in interview (biographical details are not readily available), and admits only to having two cats.

McDonald’s published long works are:

- Desolation Road* (1988) A collection of related stories about humanity on Mars; Locus Award 1989.
- Empire Dreams* (1988) Collected short stories.
- Out on Blue Six* (1989) A savagely comic satire of social systems in the manner of Kurt Vonnegut.
- King of Morning, Queen of Day* (1991) An epic fantasy, first of a thematic trilogy of novels that ultimately concern Northern Ireland; Philip K. Dick Memorial Award 1992.



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