

Home » Brent Hartinger »



## “The Lair” May Finally Be Worth Visiting

Posted by Brent Hartinger on September 4, 2009

Tweet

Share

Like



Let me say up front that I've always found the here! TV soap opera *Dante's Cove* to be pretty much unwatchable. If the point is to see undressed pretty people enacting out incomprehensible plots, why not just go direct to adult movies?

Let me also say upfront I'm also *very* tired of vampires, which I thought became overdone around the time of *Lost Boys* in 1987.

But I've always had a soft spot for at least the *idea* of *The Lair*, here! TV's show about a coven of gay vampires, their gay vampire sex club, and the mortal reporter who investigates all of this.

I think the central concept is flat-out brilliant. Anne Rice (and *many* others) have been writing about vampires as some kind of coded "metaphor" for gay people for decades. So why the hell not just come out and make the damn vampires gay? It's the story that's been begging to be told for as long as vampire homoeroticism has existed.



Like *Dante's Cove*, the first two seasons of *The Lair* suffered from sometimes shockingly low production values and wooden acting. It's more akin to micro-budgeted gay indie filmmaking than anything you see on TV, especially on a premium channel like here! TV.

But the show's 13-episode third season debuts Friday, September 4<sup>th</sup>, and at least the first four episodes (made available for preview by the network) are far and away the best yet.

The production values and acting, while improved, are still sometimes spotty. But frankly, I think the writing is often better than soaps with much bigger budgets – CBS's *As the World Turns*, for example.

For one thing, the show has lightened up on the earnestness, taking itself less seriously and adding some well-needed humor.

"A gay vampire sex club after sunrise is the loneliest place on earth," one character says at one point.

*Peter Stickles as the vampire "Damian"*



There are also some cheeky comparisons between vampire relationships and gay ones. What do you do, for example, when one partner isn't "satisfied" with only one person? Damian, a vampire, is in a relationship with Thom, a mortal, and the way they've worked it out is that Damian only feeds on Thom. But Damian isn't too happy with that and suggests an "open" feeding relationship.

"I'm supposed to be happy knowing you're feeding off a different guy every night?" Thom says, irony intended.

*Actor David Moretti plays "Thom"*



Meanwhile, some of the relationship problems are of the decidedly non-human variety: for example, how do you explain to other people that you're friends with a ghost when it's someone no one else can see? And if your partner is a vampire, how can you ever be sure that you truly love him, and you're not just charmed by his ability to make people do his bidding?

There is also one fantastic new addition to the cast: a male medusa who, when he's wearing dark glasses, appears completely human, but who transforms into a monster when he takes them off.

Last season's werewolf disappointed me, because if there's anything that's as tired in my mind as vampires, it's werewolves.

But a male medusa? Now *that's* something I haven't seen before! After all, why *wouldn't* there be a male version of the species? And when the man turns into the medusa, it's both cheeky and *gloriously* campy.

*Colton Ford plays "Sheriff Trout"*

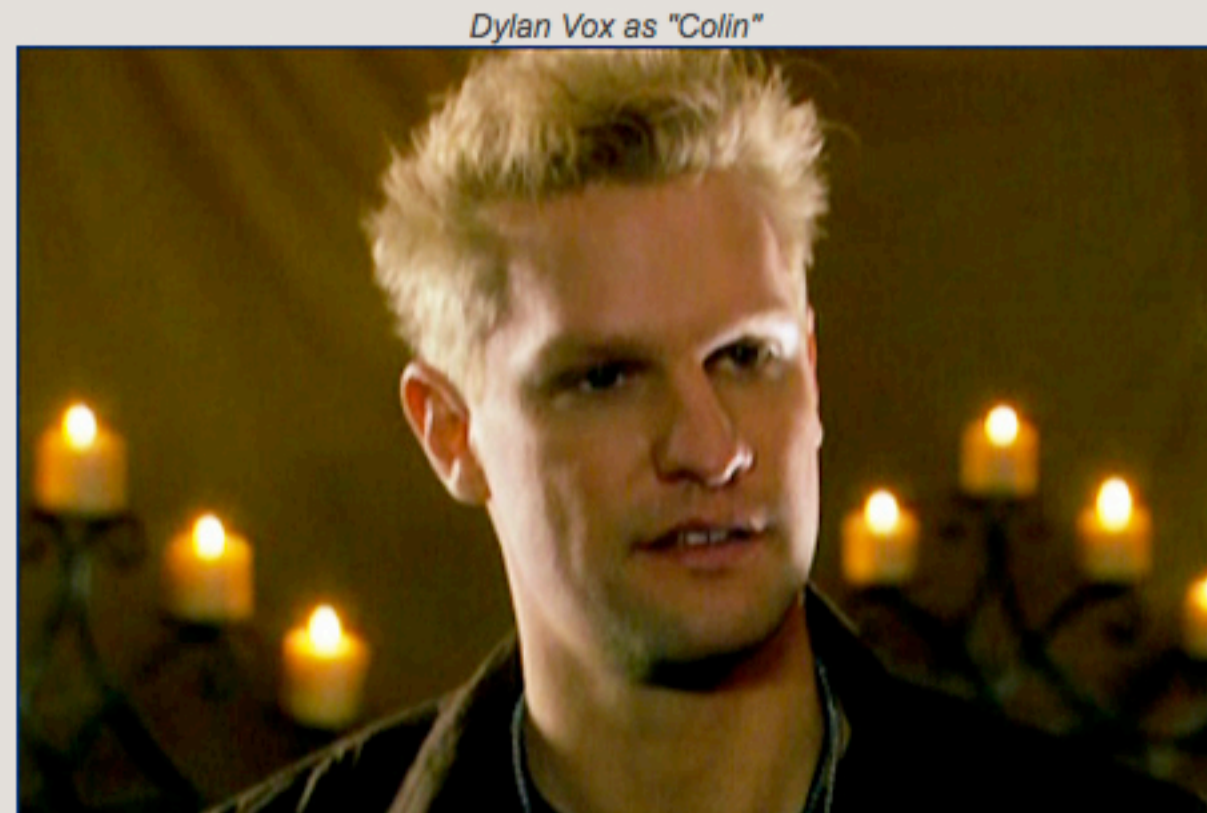


How does the local sheriff, played by adult film star Colton Ford, deduce that he's dealing with a creature from Greek legend? The creature's victims who have been turned to stone aren't just statues: they also have veins and internal organs that are also made of stone.

I'm sorry, but this is some pretty good stuff!

As usual, Dylan Vox chews – or should I say bites? – the scenery as the ultimate bad boy, Colin. And Peter Facinelli look-alike Peter Stickles does a pretty good smolder as Damian.

*Dylan Vox as "Colin"*



The rest of the cast is pretty to look at, and does its best to get undressed at regular intervals.

*The Lair* is not the "gay" version of *Buffy, the Vampire Slayer*, and it never will be. It doesn't have anything close to that show's wit or sophistication (not to mention its budget).

But if you turn down your brain a bit and take *The Lair* for the very low-budget gay soap opera that it is, you might be surprised to find how much you enjoy it.