



Five Oaks Press

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PRESS RELEASE

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For immediate release

Chico State Professor Nominated for a Pulitzer Prize

Rob Davidson, a professor in the Chico State English Department, has been nominated for a Pulitzer Prize for his most recent work, *Spectators*. This collection of flash fiction grapples with the Western identity vis-à-vis the idea of the spectacle, and was written in response to the visual art and photography of Tom Patton, Stephani Schaefer, and Sara Umemoto.

Davidson's short fictions range from the narrative to the lyric and are presented in artful language that is both well-crafted and playful. Several themes recur as Davidson ponders the ideas of the spectacle, the spectator, and tourism. Many of the fictions critique or question the idea of the spectacle, and so Davidson writes against the clichés and hollow sentiments of tourism, or the romanticization of nature.

Davidson inhabits the mind of his characters, ranging from sketches of anguished private lives, to daydreams and fantasies, to humor, and a touch of absurdism. Several pieces ponder narrative itself, as well as storytelling and metafiction, inviting the reader into a "third space" of suggestion, innuendo, and experiment.

Spectators has already received high praise from the literary community. Peggy Schumaker, author of *Just Breathe Normally*, calls it "brilliant . . . dark music" and a book of "tiny marvels . . . beautiful mystery." Novelist Fred Arroyo states that "its brevity, fragmentation, and rendering of globalization's affects" makes *Spectators* "a big, bold, expansive, and heartfelt work." Troy Jollimore, winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award for poetry and a Guggenheim fellow, says that the book "[goes] straight

for the metaphysical jugular, offering vividly sketched characters in whom you will surely recognize yourself . . . [and the] world you and I walk through on a daily basis, dumbfounded and amazed and taking in the sights.”

Davidson’s publisher, Five Oaks Press, nominated *Spectators* for a Pulitzer Prize in June. Award winners will be announced in late April 2018. Founded by journalist Joseph Pulitzer, the Pulitzer Prize is an award for literary excellence that has been awarded annually since 1917.

Davidson is the author of two previous collections of short stories, *The Farther Shore* and *Field Observations*. His other honors include a Fulbright U.S. Senior Scholars Award, the Camber Press Fiction Award, a 1997 AWP Intro Journals Project Award, and a Pushcart Prize nomination. For information on Davidson’s local readings, please visit <http://www.robdavidsonauthor.net>.