

**For Immediate Release  
April 2024**

**Contact:** [KanoPress@gmail.com](mailto:KanoPress@gmail.com)

**Kano Press releases *The Spectators*, the second novel in its mission to publish “books that include humor and a transcendent point of view, stories that evoke openings.”**

Novelist Betsy Robinson had worked for magazines, published novels with indie presses (winning prizes from Mid-List Press and Black Lawrence Press), and had professional experience in all aspects of publishing. She had a wonderful agent. But still her books *Cats on a Pole* and *The Spectators* made the rounds fruitlessly. “They weren’t rejected,” says Robinson. “Nobody would read them!”

Feeling as if both books—firmly rooted in our current cultural tumult—would miss their window, she decided to start her own press, despite the bleak realities of publishing and selling books without a platform of a million followers, without a celebrity name, and given that her stories will most likely appeal to a small, albeit ever-increasing, part of the reading public who are more interested in owning uncomfortable truths than in slick humor or denial.

After being blown away by *Sun House* by David James Duncan (*The Brothers K*, *The River Why*), she reached out for a blurb for Kano’s September 3rd release, *The Spectators*. Says Robinson, “Duncan not only understood what I’m writing but wrote a treatise, allowing me to extract from it an ecstatic cover blurb:”

**“A novel that in the last chapter reaches the only heaven to which I aspire: a life fully awake to this beautiful bleeding Earth”**

—David James Duncan

For more information on the author and both novels, see the following Advanced Reading Copy coversheet. And to request a PDF or EPUB galley, email [KanoPress@gmail.com](mailto:KanoPress@gmail.com).

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***The Spectators* ARC coversheet**

contact: [KanoPress@gmail.com](mailto:KanoPress@gmail.com)

Title: *The Spectators*  
Author name: Betsy Robinson  
Publisher: Kano Press  
Pub date: September 3, 2024  
Page count: 216  
5 illustrations  
Price: \$16.00  
ISBNs: 979-8-9896892-2-4 paperback  
          979-8-9896892-3-1 e-book  
Distribution: Ingram  
Publicity: KanoPress@gmail.com

**Description of the book:**

Front Cover Blurb:

“A novel that in the last chapter reaches the only heaven to which I aspire: a life fully awake to this beautiful bleeding Earth”

—David James Duncan, author of *Sun House* and *The Brothers K*

This is what you get when you mix apathy, shamanism, Buddhism, esoteric Yogic traditions, quantum physics, the power of DNA ancestry, and cluelessness with a small band of older women negotiating chaos in New York City in the era just preceding Trump.

Part love letter to NYC’s Upper West Side, part an ode to friendship between a writer and her creations (reluctant psychic protagonist Lily Hogue and her loner friends, with guest appearances of real and fictional historical events and people, from Bernie Madoff to Paul Simon to terrorists), *The Spectators’* cast of characters battles the problems of foreknowing disasters we cannot control and being part of an uncontrollable human herd.

Private link to book trailer: <https://youtu.be/LJnfvqa8YIA?si=0dKBp22xQF9byMn8>

**Author bio:**

Betsy Robinson writes funny fiction about flawed people. Her novel *The Last Will & Testament of Zelda McFigg* is winner of Black Lawrence Press’s 2013 Big Moose Prize and was published in September 2014. This was followed by the February 2015 publication of her edit of *The Trouble with the Truth* by Edna Robinson, Betsy’s late mother, by Simon & Schuster/Infinite Words. She published revised ebook and paperback editions of her Mid-List Press award-winning first novel, a tragicomedy about falling down the rabbit hole of the U.S. of A. in the 1970s, *Plan Z* by Leslie Kove, when it went out of print. Her articles have been published in *Publishers Weekly*, Lithub, *Journal of Compressed Creative Arts*, *Oh Reader*, *The Sunlight Press*, *Prairie Fire*, *Salvation South*, *Next Avenue*, *Lit Mag Roundup* and many other publications. Betsy is an editor (former managing editor of *Spirituality & Health*), fiction writer, journalist, and playwright. [www.BetsyRobinson-writer.com](http://www.BetsyRobinson-writer.com)

## About Kano Press

Kano Press takes its name from the oracle rune Kano, which stands for Opening, Fire, Torch. A rune is a letter in a runic alphabet used to write Germanic languages before the Latin alphabet was adopted. The symbol for kano is <, or reversed >. Runes inscribed on small stone pieces that are blindly drawn from a bag are used to aid our understanding of whatever issue we choose or to provide guidance. Drawing < signifies opening and renewed clarity, freedom to both receive gifts and to know the joy of nonattached giving. If one draws the reversed position, >, it signifies a darkening of the light and advises to give up the old, live on empty, develop inner stability, and wait for illumination.

Three guiding quotations:

“I mean, if you have any idea of any kind of complexity or immensity or destiny, of general order, you're put in a position of nothingness. And I think this is true. I don't think I'm anything; I never have thought that. Whatever it is that activates it is a certain kind of energy that goes on. But the effect is ridiculous; it's absurd.”

—Lincoln Kirstein in *The New Yorker*

“When I see heavy dramas with no comic relief, I don't think they're honest. I don't think people go through life miserable all the time; in fact, if you're very miserable, you giggle a lot at the oddest things.”

—Carl Reiner in *The Trib*

“In the same way that . . . the listener completes the song, I believe if you give them a certain sound and you place it just far enough so that they can just hear it, it creates a depth in your hearing and that depth, just like if you imagine the church bells in the distance, there's something about that that opens the listener . . . there's something about these distant sounds that open us up emotionally and if as a writer, a songwriter, I can produce sounds that allow the listener to open themselves emotionally, then whatever I have to say lyrically has a chance of being really meaningful.”

—Paul Simon, “Smartless” podcast

Kano Press aspires to publish books that include humor and a transcendent point of view, stories that evoke openings.

Website: <https://www.betsyrobinson-writer.com/KanoPress.com.htm>

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