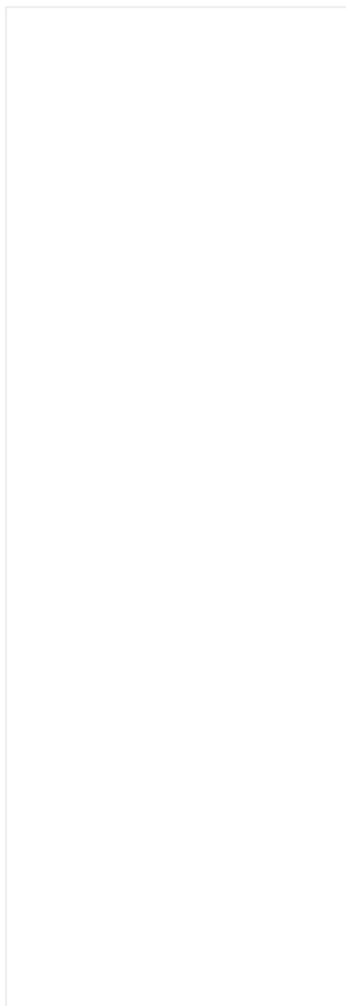


Alumnus Reading of Debut Novel at BookPeople

Posted on **September 15, 2009** by **Marla Akin**



— Author photo by E. McCourt

James Hannahan, a 2006 alumnus of The University of Texas at Austin's **Michener Center for Writers'** MFA program, will read at BookPeople from his debut novel "God Says No," which was published this summer by **McSweeney's Books**. The reading will begin at 7 p.m., September 16.

Hannahan completed his bachelor's degree at Yale University and was a culture reporter for the Village Voice and other New York publications before joining the MFA program. Since graduation,

he's been a staff writer for Salon.com and creative writing instructor at the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn.

Hannaham tackles difficult terrain for any novelist—particularly a first-time author—in telling the story of a closeted gay black man who struggles in a cycle of guilt, denial and self-loathing as he tries to live by the tenets of his Southern Christian upbringing, honor his marriage vows—to a woman he truly loves as his closest friend—and accept himself for who he is. “Hannaham forces us to consider how important intimacy is, and how difficult . . . Irrespective of sexual orientation, he demonstrates the destructive forces of silences and shame on our families and romantic partnerships,” says a review in TheDefenders.com. Numerous scandals involving very public figures reveal the kind of double lives led by men like Hannaham’s protagonist, but the subject is one that has “hardly been touched by literary fiction,” says author Jennifer Egan, who calls Hannaham “a groundbreaking new American voice.”

BookPeople is on the corner of West 6th Street and N. Lamar.

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