

These stories are part of a larger collection of tour guide stories that describe fantastical cities, museums, libraries, restaurants, hotels, and art galleries—each one a universe unto itself. It's also a kind of autobiography, as each of the destinations is a metaphor for the emotional/mental locations I've visited: museums of longing, hotels of joy, cities of heartbreak, and bakeries of hope. Other stories from this series are forthcoming in *Chattahoochee Review* and *Southern Indiana Review*.

My forthcoming book, *Children of the New World*, is a collection of stories written and published over the last seven years. The stories arose from a growing concern over the effects that the internet age is having on our social, emotional, and psychological interactions. Throughout the collection, the characters' social interactions, while blossoming online, become increasingly fraught as their geographical landscape deteriorates. The backdrop of many of these stories is a dystopia caused by real-world avarice. I'm thinking here of the foreclosures and criminal activities of the Banking Industry, Monsanto's ownership of seeds, the continual corporate/political attack on indigenous populations, ad infinitum. I felt a need to write stories which tell the stories of good people struggling against this brand of survival-of-the-fittest capitalism.

I've been continually inspired by the social commentary, satire and humor of writers like Tom Robbins, Kurt Vonnegut, and George Saunders. The themes of hope and optimism that run through *Children of the New World* come from my affinity for the value of compassion, human kindness, and love.