

What Is All This?: Uncollected Stories - Stephen Dixon

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An uncompromising collection of modern fiction. Stephen Dixon is one of the literary world's best-kept secrets. For the last thirty years he has been quietly producing work for both independent literary publishers (McSweeney's and Melville House Press) and corporate houses (Henry Holt), amassing 14 novels and well over 500 short stories. Dixon has shunned the pyrotechnics of mass market pop fiction, writing fiercely intellectual examinations of everyday life, challenging his readers with prose that rivals the complexities of William Gaddis and David Foster Wallace. Gradually building a loyal following, he stands now as a cult icon and a true iconoclast. Stephen Dixon is also the literary world's worst-kept secret. His witty, keenly observed narratives and sharply hewn prose have appeared in every major market magazine from Harper's to Playboy and have earned him two National Book Award nominations-for his novels *Frog* and *Interstate*-a Guggenheim Fellowship, and the Pushcart Prize. He has also garnered the praise of critics and colleagues alike; Jonathan Lethem (*Motherless Brooklyn*) even admits to "borrowing a jumpstart from a few lines of Dixon" in his own work. In all likelihood, many of the students who have passed through his creative writing classes at Johns Hopkins University have done the same.

Fantagraphics Books is proud to present his latest volume of short stories, *What Is All This?* The tales in the collection are vintage Dixon, eschewing the modernism and quasi-autobiography of his *I* trilogy and instead treating us to a pared-down, crystalline style reminiscent of Hemingway at the height of his powers. Centrally concerning himself with the American condition, he explores obsessions of body image, the increasingly polarized political landscape, sex-in all its incarnations-and the gloriously pointless minutiae of modern life, from bus rides to tying shoelaces. Dixon's stories are crafted with the eye of a great observer and the tongue of a profound humorist, finding a voice for the modern age in the same way that Kafka and Sartre captured the spirit of their respective epochs. using the canvas of his native New York (with one significant exception that affords Dixon the opportunity to create a furiously political fable) he astutely captures the edgy madness that infects the city through the neuroses of his narrators with a style that owes as much to Neo-Realist cinema as it does to modern literature. *What Is All This?* is an immense, vastly entertaining, and stunningly designed collection, that will delight lovers of modern

fiction and serve as both an ideal introduction to this unique voice and a tribute to a great American writer. Author: Dixon, Stephen Publisher: Fantagraphics Illustration: N Language: ENG Title: What Is All This?: Uncollected Stories Pages: 00000 (Encrypted EPUB) On Sale: 2010-10-18 SKU-13/ISBN: 9781606993507 Category: Fiction : Short Stories (single author)

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