

Unopened / Doug Hoekstra

“Hoekstra writes in a style that could safely be called eclectic, but that doesn't do his either his music or his literary genius true justice. He is like a quirky art collector, putting together odd bits and ends, and then making them into something with an effect so much more than the mere sum of their collective oddities.”

(Midwest Book Review)

Doug Hoekstra is a Chicago-bred, Nashville-based writer and musician, educated at DePaul (B.A.) and Belmont (M.Ed.) respectively. His first book, *Bothering the Coffee Drinkers*, appeared on the Canopic Publishing (TN) imprint in April 2006 and earned an Independent Publisher Award (IPPY) for Best Short Fiction (Bronze Medal). The *Bothering* experience garnered stellar print reviews and signature appearances at the Southern Festival of Books in Nashville and WXP World Café's Summer Reading Series hosted by David Dye. “Bothering” also worked as a compliment to Hoekstra's work as a singer-songwriter, as he included selections from the book in his live oeuvre, at performances in the U.S. and Europe.

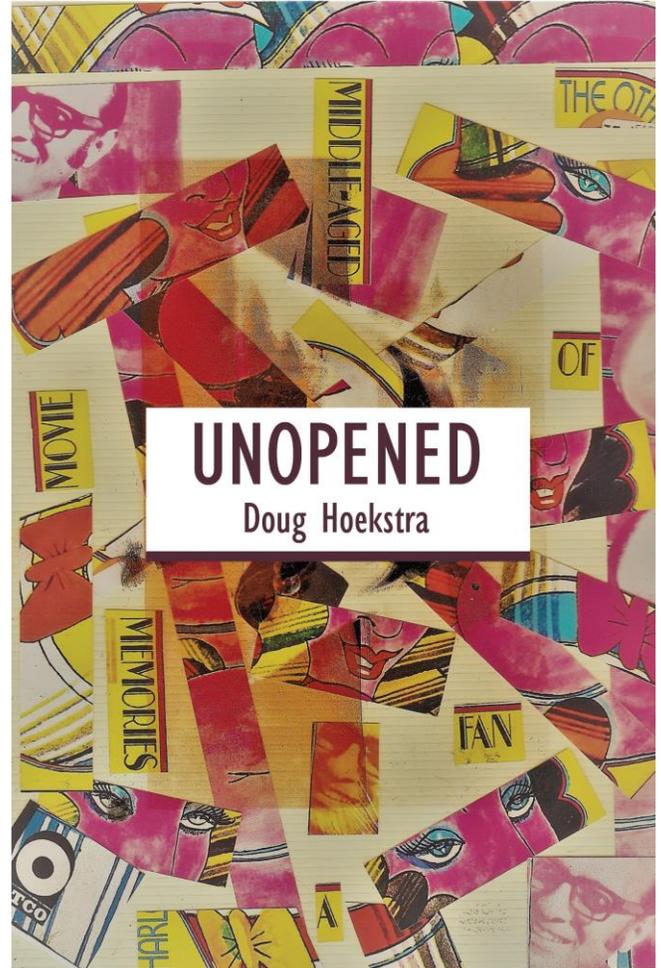
Unopened, an intriguing volume of previously published and unpublished poetry, is Hoekstra's latest and third book. Among its fifty-seven selections, the reader will find poems that rhyme, poems that don't, prose poems, sedokas, and yes, even an obligatory sonnet. Some are personal; some are societal. Some look inward, some look outward. Throughout the reader is invited to connect and reflect.

Unopened is divided into three selections to allow the works to cross-pollinate and the reader to choose his or her adventure -- “On the Page” (themes close to home), “Off the Canvas” (out in to the world), and “Between the Notes” (the space between, the indefinable). Hoekstra's introduction sets the tone for this journey, but the reader sets the course.

Unopened also features Hoekstra's original artwork on the front and back covers, taken from a series of collages created to reflect the content of the book. As he says in the afterword, the art and prose both reveal themselves “as a collection of fragments—memory, imagination, anticipation—broken, reassembled, and made whole.”

Taken as that entity, *Unopened* is a worthy addition to Hoekstra's body of work, living somewhere between the “five-minute worlds” of his songwriting canon and the short and long fiction of his prose writing.

*Also coming in 2019; new music and prose collection
 (“Ten-Seconds Inbetween”)*



Release date: February 5, 2019
Five-Minute Books

Distribution: Amazon.com, Goodreads,
Independent book stores

Suggested Retail: \$14.00, 84 pages
ISBN: 9781983664717

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Weighing in on Hoekstra's prose.....

"*Bothering The Coffee Drinkers* establishes Doug Hoekstra as an outstanding writer and essayist, someone just as skilled in penning stories and essays as songs." (*Nashville City Paper*)

"Music, it seems, carries with it a kind of hopes-and-dreams collective unconsciousness, and Hoekstra, with *Bothering the Coffee Drinkers*, taps gleefully into that astral plane." (*Harp Magazine*)

"Music runs like a liquid vein through these 80-proof experiences. Hoekstra pours it out with a Dylan-esque fervor, giving us a sputtering catalog of beauties and terrors..." (*Paste Magazine*).

"A grounded, informative, extraordinary piece of work." (*Pop Matters.Com*)

"The characters of *Bothering the Coffee Drinkers* are portrayed throughout with dignity, empathy and compassion....enthralling fiction and what should prove to be one of the best fictional debuts of this year." (*Pennyblack Music UK*)

"*Bothering the Coffee Drinkers* is a collection of essays and fiction that are engaging enough to keep the most nonmusical person interested, but every now and then his rock and roll heart takes over. When the backbeat stops, Hoekstra's words still find a way to jump off the page." (*Time Out Chicago*)

Doug Hoekstra has earned kudos for his songwriting (deservedly so) and on this his first book shows that he has a knack for the long form as well...Hoekstra has an ear for the way people talk- and why. Unique characters abound in these tales, but they exist as real people, not props. The conflict between the act of creation and the tiresome drudge of commerce fuels much of this book, and as a performer Hoekstra has seen both. His storytelling skills are only glimpsed here, and one wishes for a novel perhaps, but for now, *Bothering The Coffee Drinkers* will have to do. And by the way, anyone who has played their heart out while yapping goofs slurp lattes or Jack Daniels know what a perfect title this book has!" (*James Mann, The Big Takeover*)

"...profundity seeps into every significant detail and one comes away from Hoekstra ennobled by a sense of humanity...wisdom, calm and articulacy." (*Mike Butler, Metro Newspapers UK*)

Hoekstra Bibliography

Unopened

(5 Minute Books, January 2019)

The Tenth Inning

(5 Minute Books, February 2015)

Bothering the Coffee Drinkers

(Canopic Publishing, June 2006)



Previous literary publications:

20Twenty Journal, Ambush Review, Arctic Tusk, Baseball Bard, Better than Starbucks, The Big Muddy, The Big Windows Review, Bouillabaisse, Brilliant Flash Fiction, Broke Bohemian, The Canopic Jar, Deep South Magazine, Dirty Chai, Door is Ajar Magazine, Edify Fiction, Elysian Fields Quarterly, Epiphany, Feminine Collective, Flying Shoes (U.K), Feminine Collective, Fifty Word Stories, Friday Flash Fiction, Gambling the Aisle, Hobart Pulp, Ink 19, In Layman's Terms, Juke Jar, The Maverick Press, The Minneapolis Review of Baseball, On the Tracks, The Main Street Rag, The Palo Alto Review, Paste Magazine, Pure Music, Right Hand Pointing, Second Hand Stories (w/podcast), Si Senor, Southern Hum, Spitball, Stories About Ticket Stubs, Sugar Mule, Twenty20, Threshold (DePaul University), Trampset, Two Cities Review

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Weighing in on Hoekstra's music...

Doug Hoekstra's instantly recognizable musical persona and deep talent for songcraft garnered years of praise from critics, djs, and fans throughout the United States and Europe. His gentle baritone anchors his music, setting sympathetic narratives against a backdrop of memorable melodies, wry rhythms, and subtle but unexpected arrangement touches. "A lot of people write songs, Hoekstra writes five minute worlds" (*Wired Magazine*) or "Americana's answer to Oscar Wilde...mesmerizing both musically and lyrically" (*Americana-UK*). Take your pick.

Throughout the journey, Hoekstra has released, wrote, arranged, recorded, and released nine CDs of original material on labels on both sides of the pond, touring most of the continental U.S., as well as six European countries, performing at bookstores, coffeehouses, clubs, libraries, pubs, festivals, and castles, solo and with band in tow, headlining and/or in support of artists as diverse as Barenaked Ladies, John Cale, Arlo Guthrie, Jewel, India Arie (etc.), while also performing at every possible laminate fest (A2A Amsterdam CMJ, LMNOP, MRMF, NXNW, SWSW and more).

Other highlights have included **Nashville Music Award** and **Independent Music Award** nominations, many top 10 lists, and a bevy of cool live radio spots, including but not limited to: Acoustic Cafe, All Songs Considered, BBC England (many locales), BBC Scotland (Brian Morton Show, Clare English' Celtic Connections) E-Town, Kentucky Homefront, WFUV/Live at the Bottom Line, Woodsongs, World Cafe, WPLN Songwriter Sessions Live.



Discography

Blooming Roses

(Wing Ding, US / Folkwit UK February 2008)

Six Songs

(Wing Ding US, June 2005)

Su Casa Mi Casa (the Official Live Bootleg)

(Headroom UK & US, June, 2005)

Waiting

(Paste US, June 2003/Headroom UK, Feb. 2004)

The Past is Never Past

(Inbetweens Europe, October 2001)

Around the Margins

(Inbetweens Europe & US, March 2001)

Doug Hoekstra Combo Live at Sal's

(Hinah, France, 2001)

Make Me Believe

(One Man Clapping US 1999/Round Tower UK, 2000)

Rickety Stairs

Back Porch, 1996)

When the Tubes Begin to Glow

(Back Porch, 1995)

Hoekstra on Compilations

Sound Asleep/Hit the Hay

("Camden Town," Sweden 2005)

Americana-UK

("The Bottomless Pit," UK, 2005)

Comes With a Smile

("Because She Loves Him," UK, 2003)

Acuarela Songs

("Watercolor Rose," Spain, 2001)

Doug Hoekstra Combo Live at Sal's

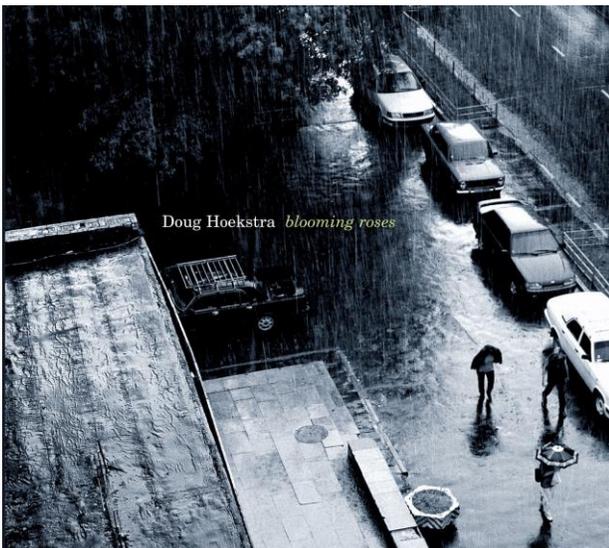
(Hinah, France, 2001)

Comes With a Smile

("If the World Was Blind," UK, 2001)

Songwriter: a contemporary collection

("Cottonwood Tree" / "Slipping Through the Cracks," XIII Bis Records, France, 1997)



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"Doug Hoekstra has quietly become an **icon** of Americana music and the Nashville scene, writing **beautifully spare songs that contain genius-level observations** about people...Blooming Roses consists of another eleven perfectly understated songs that incorporate elements of country, rock, and even jazz. (Jeff Vandermeer, *Amazon.com / Omnivoracious*)

"The lyrical, folk-y route usually limits a songwriter, but it's always given Doug Hoekstra an incredible amount of space to roam. The title track of his forthcoming album, *Blooming Roses*, begins with the line "I was walking through public housing, flyers in my hand." Hoekstra uses such seemingly trivial details to build engrossing stories that strike out from the folk idiom into a surreal, distinctly modern world. Like previous efforts, *Roses* is sonically diverse but clutter-free, with everything from acoustic performances to tastefully applied pianos, strings, clarinet, harmonies." (Scott Gordon, *Onion AV Club*)

With a novelist's eye for detail and narrative, and a songwriter's genius for melody and phrasing, Nashville outsider Doug Hoekstra just keeps rolling along. *Blooming Roses*, with its Velvet Underground-cum-steel guitar vibe, is his latest gem." (*Pop Culture Press*)

"Doug Hoekstra continues to deepen the emotional presence of his evocative songs. Much of their strength comes from the quiet bearing of his voice, contrasted against accompaniment that carries him aloft on the shoulders of a rollicking throng....he favors subtly soulful arrangements that give the finished songs a late-night Muscle Shoals funkiness, mixed with an inward-looking sense of space. The contrasts he utilizes create tensions that underscore the human-scaled core of the songs, enveloping the listener. (David Greenberger, *Harp Magazine*)

"...Hoekstra's whispered croon is close like a lover's confidence, its willowy presence carried on the softly undulating sound of nylon strings pinging lightly over a loping, minimal snare/cymbal snap....*Blooming Roses* coheres nicely, evoking a somber circumspective vibe that avoids melancholy or sentimentalism, from the quiet reflection of "Instincts" to the country-tinged "Disrepair" to the swelling six-minute closer, "Everywhere Is Somewhere." (The latter recalls the aching Americana of The Band, but was cut in Norway with members of Thomas Dybdahl's band.) (*Nashville Scene*)

"the godfather of narrative alternative folk" (*Roots Town Magazine Belgium*)

"One of the Southeast's finest songwriters for a decade (Chris Parker, *Independent Weekly NC*)

"In an ideal world Hoekstra would be listened to by folk enthusiasts, middle American mainstreamers, retro-heads, and indie-land purists...fifteen years ago, he'd have been heralded the next Dylan or Springsteen." (*All Music Guide*)



"Superb Nashville-based but Chicago-born singer-songwriter with a tasty line in slow-burning melody and subtly affecting songcraft...warm and worldly, dirty, real and poignant fare." (*Time Out London*)

"While much of Hoekstra's music is grounded in the folkish singer-songwriter tradition, his moody meditations are accentuated by a wide range of arrangement and production touches, from the avant-garde to accessible roots pop. Hoekstra's storytelling sensibilities straddle the space between Lou Reed and Leonard Cohen's dark narratives and Ray Davies' more melancholy pop." (*Billboard Feature*)

'A breathy folk flaneur, this Chicagoan-gone-Nashville writes dirty-realist story songs that usually begin and end in quiet acceptance. Hoekstra's expanding his musical palette into funkier and more worldly areas, but at heart, he's still a well-spoken back-porch strummer full of bittersweetly tuneful observations' – (*Village Voice, Voice Choices*)