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Falls voice actor narrates audiobook, 'Rounds'

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

Jeffrey Adams, artistic director for the Icebox Radio Theater, an award-winning studio based in Borderland, is the narrator for the audiobook "Rounds," written by Dan Nygard. This is Adams's first audiobook narration, according to a release.

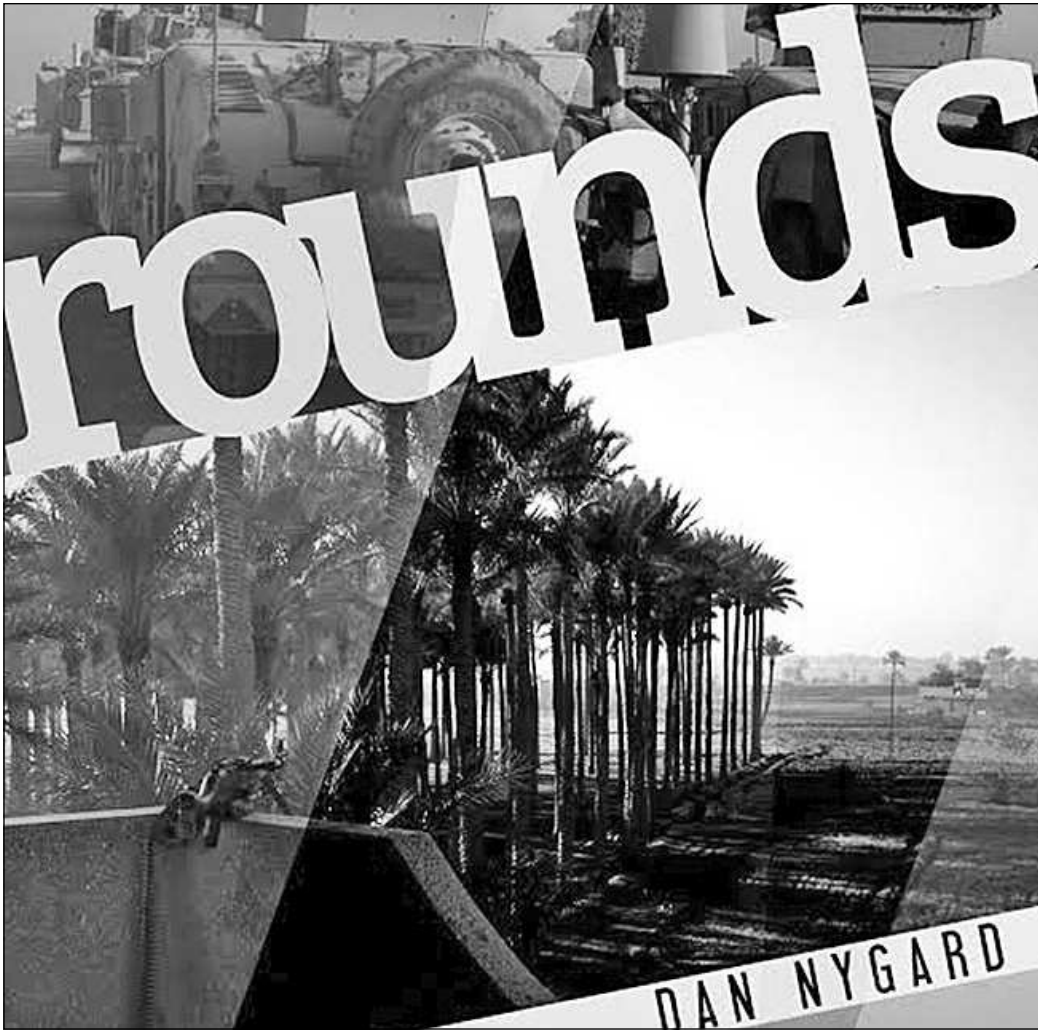
Through the perspective of soldiers in the Minnesota National Guard, both at home and in Iraq, Nygard's book takes readers on a psychological journey into the soldier's virtual foxhole, those walls of silence against a world filled with trite attempts to communicate. Within this trench, the soldier has said all that he can figure out, and it's where he burrows when he returns home to a land that has become foreign to him in ways he can't explain and be understood.

These stories are framed within the first-person narration of Ray Beaucook, a soldier who quit the National Guard and who now lives in a community where quitting is seen as failure, not only by loved ones who will never understand what he went through, but also by fellow soldiers who know exactly why he quit, and who are afraid to leave the life they've grown accustomed to.

The audiobook is the author's attempt to reach out, through fiction, to those who seek understanding and something less abstract than the pedestrian concept of war, especially now that the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan have faded into the background of the 24-hour news cycle. These stories expose a picture of a unit on deployment and the everyday anomalies they face, all-in-all an attempt to explain war in a way so that the listener can understand. Rounds is the front page story never told.

About Adams

Adams was born and grew up in the Pacific Northwest before moving



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Rounds is available as an audiobook through the following online retailers: Amazon.com; Audible.com and iTunes. It is also available as an eBook through Amazon.



Jeff Adams



Dan Nygard

to International Falls in 2004. Shortly after arriving, he founded the Icebox Radio Theater for the purpose of telling stories about this unique, famous little town through the medium of sound. He has written more than 40 half-hour episodes for the theater as well as numerous shorter skits and works, and has directed nearly as many episodes including live broadcasts, studio productions, and live theatrical performances of radio theater.

A four-time honoree by the Society for Interest in Science Fiction Audio, the release said Adams and the Icebox Radio Theater were most recently honored in 2009 with a Silver Ogle Award – best horror or fantasy audio production – for the tense psychological thriller "The Thing on the Ice."

When not working for the IBRT, Adams is a part-time disc jockey at Psalm 99.5

FM radio in International Falls. He also has an extensive list of writing and production credits in radio advertising. His work as a writer, voice talent and producer can be heard in spots for urban missions organizations in Minneapolis and several other cities in the Midwest. He also runs Sound Stages Radio, an on-line radio station featuring an all-modern audio theater format.

Adams and his wife, Diane, who is the director for the International Falls Public Library, have three children.

About Nygard

Nygard grew up in the small towns of Sabin and Georgetown in Minnesota, where he learned to play music. He has been a musician most of his life and has played in a number of bands, most recently The Cass County Ugliers.

Right out of high school, Nygard joined the United States Army, and spent four years in Germany as an electronics repairman. He then attended Minnesota State University Moorhead, where he graduated with honors with a degree in English. From April 2006 until July 2007, he was deployed to Iraq with the Minnesota National Guard.

During graduate school at MSUM, Nygard was selected to be the Dean's Graduate Student Lecturer in October 2010, when he spoke about his process for writing Rounds based on his experiences in Iraq. He received his master of fine arts in creative writing degree from MSUM in 2011.

Primarily a poet and nonfiction writer, Nygard's poems have appeared in Emprise Review, and his articles have appeared in High Plains Reader. He shares poetry in a writer's group with Moorhead poet Ken Bennett.

Currently, Nygard works as a team leader for a legal services company in Fargo, N.D., and as an Operations Sergeant for the Minnesota National Guard, where he helps to track and communicate the activities of an infantry battalion. He lives with his wife, Nicole, whom he married on the rooftop of the Hotel Donaldson in Fargo while on leave from Iraq. They live together in West Fargo, N.D., with their daughter, Genevieve.

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Another award for Rasmussen

BY EMILY GEDDE
Staff Writer

Matt Rasmussen can add another award to his collection.

The International Falls native won the Minnesota Book Award for his debut poetry book, "Black Aperture," at the Minnesota Book Awards Gala Saturday in St. Paul.

A Twin Cities news source said, Rasmussen, the son of Allen and Gail Rasmussen of the Falls, was one of four finalists for this year's award in poetry.

According to The Friends of the St. Paul Public Library website, a summary of why "Black Aperture" earned the award says, "In his moving debut collection...Rasmussen faces the tragedy of his brother's suicide, refusing to focus on the expected pathos, blurring the edge between grief and humor. Rasmussen is a founding coeditor of Birds LLC, a small independent poetry press, and teaches at Gustavus Adolphus College."

"Black Aperture" earned Rasmussen the 2012 Walt Whitman Award and he

was also a finalist for the National Book Award for Poetry in the fall of 2013.

The Walt Whitman Award is a first book prize awarded to a first collection by an American poet who has never before published a book of poetry.

The National Book Award is one of the nation's most prestigious literary prizes and has a stellar record of identifying and rewarding quality writing. The National Book Foundation's mission is to celebrate the best of American literature, to expand its audience, and to enhance the cultural value of good writing in America.



Matt Rasmussen

More information

For more information on Rasmussen and "Black Aperture," visit www.mattrasmussen.net.

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