

Reading Group Guide
FUN CITY HEIST
By Michael Kardos

AUTHOR BIO

Michael Kardos is the author of the novels *Fun City Heist*, *Bluff*, *Before He Finds Her*, and *The Three-Day Affair*. His story collection *One Last Good Time* won the Mississippi Institute of Arts & Letters Award for fiction, and his textbook *The Art and Craft of Fiction: A Writer's Guide* is taught at colleges and universities across the country. His short stories have appeared in *One Story*, *The Southern Review*, *Ellery Queen Mystery Magazine*, and many other magazines and anthologies, and have won two Pushcart Prizes.

Michael grew up on the Jersey Shore, received a degree in music from Princeton University, and played the drums professionally for a number of years before focusing on fiction writing. He received an M.F.A. from Ohio State and a Ph.D. from the University of Missouri, and for 15 years he co-directed the creative writing program at Mississippi State University, where he was awarded the John Grisham Master Teacher award, the university's highest teaching honor. He currently lives with his family in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- When the novel opens, would you say that Mo is primarily satisfied or dissatisfied with his life?
- Why is Mo so reluctant to play the July 4th gig? Why do you believe he finally agrees to play it?
- *Fun City Heist* is set entirely in New Jersey. What sense of the state—its landscape and people—does the novel convey? To what degree does the novel fit with, or veer from, your sense of New Jersey?
- How would you describe Mo's growing relationship with Janice? Is Mo a "good guardian"?
- What does the novel reveal about the highs and lows of playing in a band?
- How would you describe Mo's relationship to music when he was a boy? What about when the novel opens? What about at the end?
- *Fun City Heist* is written from Mo's first-person perspective. If you were able to include another character's point of view, whose would it be? Why?

- Do your feelings about Mo change from the beginning of the novel to the end? What about Johnny? Janice?
- If you've read any other books by Michael Kardos, do you notice any similar themes? Stylistic approaches?
- What did you find most surprising about the novel?
- If you were to create a playlist for this novel, what artists/songs would be on it?
- If you were casting a film adaptation of *Fun City Heist*, who would play these people in the movie?

Bonus Question:

- Spinning rides or dropping rides?

**FOR MORE ABOUT THE AUTHOR, INCLUDING LIVE EVENTS, VISIT
WWW.MICHAELKARDOS.COM**