

“Center of Gravity” Explored By Greg Cohen

by Joana Varawa - Lana`i Times

“Center Of Gravity” starts with a great first line - “As his beloved spun dizzily on the spangled, whirling wheel a red-maned blur of sequin stars...” which introduces Max, a knife thrower in a vaudeville act, and ultimately takes us through several generations of folks, all of whom are looking for their own center of gravity on the whirling wheel of life.

The setting is the music industry, which Greg knows intimately, having been a part of it for over twenty years; both in the retail and wholesale music business and as a regional touring musician. His years of observations, favorite stories, and a rich and checkered history, form the thread and backdrop for the story.

I liken “Center of Gravity” to comfort food. The book is just plain comfortable. There is nothing pretentious or fake about the story or the people in it. You could - and probably do - know them, and their lives are interesting without being dismaying. I think of the book as a good weekend vacation from my everyday angst; an angst often caused by the same thing that concerns its characters; how much to risk, how much to gain or lose by action, or inaction. Greg’s literary intent is to guide you, not shock you into submission. It could as easily be a quiet conversation about people you know over a good lunch; basic burgundy and spaghetti, with a fine cigar to finish it. I could read “Center of Gravity” before going to sleep and know my dreams would not be dismaying.

I liked the tidbits I picked up, unusual information about the music industry; and I liked his concern about the effect that powerful companies have over people’s lives, and the overwhelming influence of commerce and technology. In some sense the book is a social history of America. It’s an essentially kind book, written with quiet intelligence. I like his values, and I like his unpretentious prose. I think you will also.

“Center of Gravity” is published by Publish America, Baltimore, and you can log onto Greg’s website for a link

to where you can order the book online at <http://www.gregcohen.net/FictionWeb/GravitySheet.htm>. You can also buy the book here on Lana`i at the Lana`i Art Center, Gifts With Aloha and The Mike Carroll Gallery. Greg will be reading from his new work at the at the Carroll gallery on October 21. Come by and listen, take home an autographed copy. It’s a great read.

