

For Immediate Release

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***Publisher's Weekly* gives Vietnam satire novel NAM-A-RAMA a starred review...**

NAM-A-RAMA

by Phillip Jennings

“Published as the military and its actions abroad are under intense scrutiny, this highly entertaining, provocative lampooning of the Vietnam War is reminiscent of *Catch-22* and David Mamet's *Wag the Dog*. In this wonderfully irreverent novel, evocative of vintage Max Shulman, hearty belly laughs contrast with chilling insights into high level political machinations.”

—*Publisher's Weekly* **starred review

“Tall tales of the flying war in Vietnam mix successfully...with adventures both amusing and hair-raising in Southeast Asia. Oliver Stone confirmed that war is evil. Joseph Heller made the case that war is nuts.

First-novelist and Marine aviation veteran Jennings suggests that war, even the war in Vietnam, could...be fun. It was hell too, of course, and the battle scenes here are tough, fast, and frightening.”

—*Kirkus Reviews*

As the war in Iraq intensifies, resembling Vietnam more and more every day, the Vietnam War has taken on renewed relevance in our diplomacy, our politics, and our culture. Amidst the buzz, author Phillip Jennings turns the pundits on their heads with his hilarious new novel: **NAM-A-RAMA** (A Forge Hardcover; \$24.95; March 2005).

Phillip Jennings piloted over 300 helicopter missions in Vietnam and left the Marines at the rank of captain. He later flew for Air America and served in the CIA. Like Joseph Heller and Richard Hooker before him, Jennings did his duty, and did it with his eyes wide open. He takes readers away from the talking heads on their TVs and into the life of a real soldier: an unpredictable and surreal world of fear and friendship where nothing seems to make sense, like a twisted *Alice in Wonderland* with napalm and land mines.

Join Marine lieutenant Jack Armstrong and his unpredictable buddy Gearheardt as the Vietnam War is cooked up at a White House pizza party. When the conflict quickly escalates, President Larry Bob Jones sends the boys on a secret mission with anti-war movie star Barbonella to meet Uncle Ho. Their trip to Hanoi takes them into deadly combat in South Vietnam and wild misadventures that propel their story forward in a boisterous satiric rush. Not since *Catch-22* has there been such a laugh-out-loud anti-epic capturing so brilliantly and tragically the absurdities of modern war.

More Praise for *Nam-A-Rama*

"Set during a pivotal time in U.S. history and populated by a bizarre cast of characters, Phillip Jennings' zany novel is cynical, fast-paced, irreverent, thought-provoking and thoroughly entertaining."

—**Bob Kerrey, President, New School University**

"Jennings has dared to go where few writers have gone before and returned a hero. With a wit as savage and devastating as napalm, he's barbecued the sacred cows grazing on the White House lawn and exposed the hideous, hilarious truth buried beneath its richly fertilized surface. This painfully funny book proves once again that behind every tragedy there's a unruly comedy patiently waiting for just the right moment to sneak up, kick the tragedy in the ass, and run like hell."

—**Jim Taylor, co-writer of the Golden Globe-winning and Oscar-nominated screenplay *Sideways*, winner of the Golden Globe for the screenplay of *About Schmidt*, and Oscar nominee for *Election***

"Just when you thought it was safe to stop reading novels about the Vietnam War, along comes Phillip Jennings with *Nam-A-Rama*. It falls into no known categories of fiction (that I can think of) but is a wild, original and often hilarious ride from its opening sentence to the last..."

—**Christopher Buckley, best selling author of *Little Green Men* and *The White House Mess***

"In his new novel *Nam-a-Rama*, Phillip Jennings has done a big service to all of us Vietnam vets and anyone else who was touched by that conflict. He has written a book that hacks its way through the dark tangle of the Vietnam War with a blade that flashes with comedy. One of the most bizarrely profound aspects of the human condition is the way horror and hilarity can intimately embrace. And to capture that truth in fiction may be the toughest stunt of all. Phillip Jennings does that, and does it brilliantly."

—**Robert Olen Butler, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *A Good Scent from a Strange Mountain***

"I think this [*Nam-A-Rama*] is an outstanding novel which represents that complex war well, and strongly urge that it be widely printed and studied as a primer on how *not* to prosecute a war. What it is, is brilliant."

—**William J. McDaniel, Rear Admiral, United States Navy, retired**

"*Nam-A-Rama* is a wild piece of work, a sustained vaudeville softshoe on the most rollicking, ugly topic. Very, very funny. Ribald, is what people will say. Raunchy and smart. I raise my glass to Gearheardt."

—**Stewart O'Nan, award-winning author of *The Names of the Dead*, *Snow Angels*, and *The Night Country***

"Phil Jennings led what can safely be called an eventful life in Vietnam—Marine Corps pilot, Air America jockey, CIA operative—exactly the kind of experience, in other words, that most fiction writers dream about having at their beck and call. What Jennings does with this material takes the concept of surreality to a whole new level. *Nam-A-Rama* is a dazzlingly inventive novel of an epic American adventure abroad run totally amuck, a work that demands your full attention from start to finish."

—**Nicholas A. Basbanes, author of *A Gentle Madness: Bibliophiles, Bibliomanes, and the Eternal Passion for Books***

"Terry Southern is Alive! This damn Jennings has done what we all wanted to do—write a bitter, dark comedy about the most misunderstood action in U.S. history, the Vietnam War."

—**Jack Butler author of *Living in Little Rock with Miss Little Rock* and *Jujitsu for Christ***

WILL IRAQ BE ANOTHER VIETNAM (without the rice paddies)?

Now, almost 30 years after the famous helicopter evacuation of the US embassy in Saigon, America once again faces enormous risks and challenges: this time in Iraq. As in the Vietnam era, the military and the Administration don't agree, and the intelligence agencies seem to have gone blind even as the White House keeps claiming to see light at the end of the tunnel. Having failed to learn from history, are we doomed to repeat it? **NAM-A-RAMA** is a scarily relevant and powerful cautionary tale, a clarion call to common sense couched in comedy.

TALKING POINTS FOR PHILLIP JENNINGS

- How and why does America go to war?
- Were the actions of leaders, for and against the Vietnam War, more than just mistakes or misjudgments?
- Is the same thing true this time?
- How do we get out of this mess and avoid more like it?
- The Mark Twain tradition of using humor to speak hard truths to the American people.
- Why would a Marine officer, who loves his country and the Corps, and who proudly served in Vietnam (and later in Laos with Air America, Inc.), write *Nam-A-Rama*?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Phillip Jennings piloted over 300 helicopter missions in Vietnam. He left the Marines as a captain and subsequently flew for Air America. Jennings won the Pirate's Alley Faulkner Society short fiction award in 1998. He lives in Kirkland, Washington, and is the CEO of Mayfair Capital Partners. Jennings was recently proud and honored to swear his youngest son into the U.S. Marine Corps. He's also a very funny guy.

**Phillip Jennings is available for interviews. Please Contact:
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