

Melissa Pritchard

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Melissa Pritchard is the nationally renowned author of four short story collections: *The Odditorium*, *Spirit Seizures*, *The Instinct for Bliss*, and *Disappearing Ingenue*; and three novels, *Phoenix*, *Selene of the Spirits*, and *Late Bloomer*. She is also the author of *Devotedly*, *Virginia*, a biography of Arizona philanthropist Virginia Galvin Piper.

Spirit Seizures, a New York Times Notable Book, received both the Flannery O'Connor and Carl Sandburg Awards. *The Instinct for Bliss*, also a New York Times Notable Book, received the Janet Heidinger Kafka Prize, and *Disappearing Ingénue*, a Doubleday "Fiction for the Rest of Us," selection, was chosen to appear on National Public Radio's 2002 Summer Reading List. Her short stories are frequently anthologized and cited in *Prize Stories: The O. Henry Awards*, *The Pushcart Prize*, *Best of the West*, *Best American Short Stories*, the *Prentice Hall Anthology of Women's Literature* and numerous other anthologies and college textbooks.

Selene of the Spirits was a Barnes and Noble "Discover Great New Writers" selection, and *Late Bloomer*, a 2004 Chicago Tribune Best Books of the Year selection, described as "ravishing" in *Vanity Fair*, received a starred review in *Publisher's Weekly*.

Her fiction has appeared in over fifty renowned literary journals, including *The Paris Review*, *A Public Space*, *Agni*, *Ecotone*, *The Southern Review*, *Gulf Coast*, *Conjunctions*, *Gettysburg Review* and *Image: Art, Mystery and Faith*. Her book reviews, essays and journalism pieces have appeared in *O, the Oprah Winfrey magazine*, the *Nation*, the *New York Times Book Review* and *Chicago Tribune Books*. Her essay, "A Solemn Pleasure," published in *Conjunctions* by guest editor, David Shields, has been reprinted in *The Inevitable: Contemporary Writers Confront Death*, W.W. Norton, 2011. A recipient of numerous awards, including fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Howard Foundation at Brown University, the Illinois Arts Council, Writer's Voice YMCA, Scotland's Hawthornden International Fellowship, and the Bogliasco Foundation Fellowship, Liguria, Italy, Melissa teaches at Arizona State University and has served as judge for The Flannery O'Connor Award and the PEN/Faulkner Award. She is also the founder of The Ashton Goodman Grant, working with The Afghan Women's Writing Project www.awwproject.org to provide funding for the education and literacy of Afghan women and girls. A 2011 recipient of Arizona State University's prestigious Faculty Achievement Award in the category of Excellence in Scholarly and Creative Activities, Melissa has been teaching creative writing at ASU since 1992. In 2011, she was a keynote speaker at the annual conference on American literature at the Centro di Studi Americani, Rome, Italy, sponsored by the Italian Association for North American Studies. Several of her books have been translated into Italian and Spanish.