

THE CHIEU HOI SALOON

Michael Harris

It's 1992 and three people's lives are about to collide against the flaming backdrop of the Rodney King riots in Los Angeles. Vietnam vet Harry Hudson is a journalist fleeing his past: the war, a failed marriage, and a fear-ridden childhood. Rootless, he stutters, wrestles with depression, and is aware he's passed the point at which victim becomes victimizer. He explores the city's lowest dives, the only places where he feels at home. He meets Mama Thuy, a Vietnamese woman struggling to run a Navy bar in a tough Long Beach neighborhood, and Kelly Crenshaw, an African-American prostitute whose husband is in prison. They give Harry insight that maybe he can do something to change his fate in a gripping story that is both a character study and thriller.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Michael Harris grew up in a little railroad town in Northern California, in the loom of Mt. Shasta, whose mystic influence shadowed him from the University of Oregon to Harvard to the Iowa Writers' Workshop. An Army veteran of Vietnam, he has worked as a Forest Service aide, a janitor and an English conversation teacher in Tokyo. For 30 years, he was a reporter, editor and book reviewer for West Coast newspapers, including the *Los Angeles Times*. Like his alter ego, Harry Hudson, he stutters and is a gloomy cuss. He lives with his wife in Long Beach; they have a grown son. *The Chieu Hoi Saloon* is his first novel.

ACCOLADES

"Michael Harris is one of those rare beings: a natural writer, with insight, sensitivity and enviable talent."

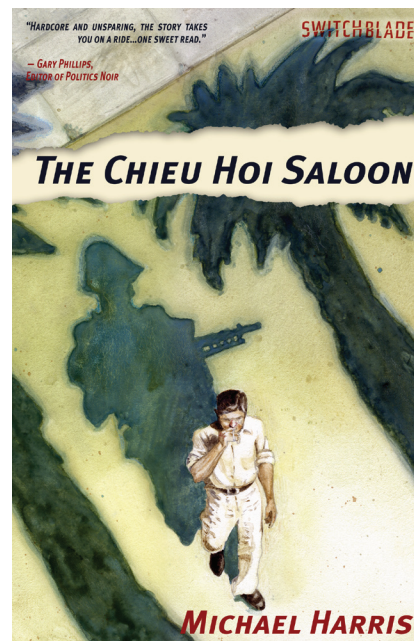
—Charlotte Vale Allen, author of *Daddy's Girl* and *Mood Indigo*

"Mike Harris' novel has all the brave force and arresting power of Celine and Dostoevsky in its descent into the depths of human anguish and that peculiar gallantry of the moral soul that is caught up in irrational self-punishment at its own failings. Yet Harris manages an amazing and transforming affirmation—the novel floats above all its pain on pure delight in the variety of the human condition. It is a story of those sainted souls who live in bars, retreating from defeat but rendered with such vividness and sensitivity that it is impossible not to care deeply about these figures from our own waking dreams. In an age less obsessed by sentimentality and mawkish 'uplift,' this book would be studied and celebrated and emulated."

—John Shannon, author of *The Taking of the Waters*

"*The Chieu Hoi Saloon* concerns one Harry Hudson, the literary bastard son of David Goodis and Dorothy Hughes. Hardcore and unsparing, the story takes you on a ride with Harry in his bucket of a car and pulls you into his subterranean existence in bright daylight and gloomy shadow. One sweet read."

—Gary Phillips, author of *The Jook*



SUBJECT CATEGORY
FICTION

PRICE
\$19.95

ISBN
978-1-60486-112-9

PAGE COUNT
320

SIZE
8 X 5

FORMAT
PAPERBACK

PUBLICATION DATE
10/10

DISTRIBUTED BY
Independent Publishers Group
(312) 337-0747
www.ipgbook.com

◆ **PM PRESS** ◆
P.O. Box 23912
Oakland, CA 94623
www.pmpress.org

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