



## Actual Air

*By David Berman*

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**Actual Air** By David Berman

David Berman reinvents the overlooked and seemingly ordinary details of everyday life--from the suitcase of a departing girlfriend to a baseboard electrical outlet. His poems chart a course through his own highly original American dreamscape in language that is fresh, accessible, and remarkably precise. This debut collection has received extraordinary acclaim from readers and reviewers alike and is quickly becoming a cult classic. As Pulitzer Prize-winning poet James Tate said, "These poems are beautiful, strange, intelligent, and funny. . . . It's a book for everyone."

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## **Actual Air** By David Berman Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #452139 in Books
- Published on: 1999-07
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x 5.50" w x .25" l, .30 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 93 pages

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### Editorial Review

#### From [The New Yorker](#)

"David Berman is a young Virginian poet with a sly, intense regard for the past. He comes on like a prankster, restocking the imperial orations of Wallace Stevens and the byzantine monologues of John Ashbery with the pop-cultural bric-a-brac of a new generation: 'I am not a cub scout seduced by Iron Maiden's mirror worlds.' But his words have an easy, eloquent gait; each line needs to be a line. The landscapes are crisply American, and history, especially Southern history, casts a shadow. A poem about the death of Lincoln ends, 'The assassin was in mid-air/when the stagehands wheeled out the clouds.'"

#### Review

"Actual Air is actual poetry. Berman is on a mission to make the world strange, to find in the doo-dads of daily life a profound weirdness . . . which makes for a rarity in contemporary poetry." -- *Spin*, June 1999

"Actual Air is one of the funniest, smartest, and sweetest books of the year, a collection of snapshots colored ecstatically outside the lines. This is the absurd American sublime, poetry that raises the stakes on the everyday and bluffs the blunders." -- *GQ*, July 1999

"Berman's debut announces the discovery of a great American poetic storytelling voice by a new generation." -- *Publisher's Weekly*, June 28, 1999

"In Berman's universe, time slips lazily on by, life thoroughly strange and perpetually interesting . . . Berman is very much alive to life's nuances, even in what many might think of as bland surroundings." -- *Time Out New York*, May 27, 1999

"When was the last time you picked up a volume of poetry and found yourself hanging on every word, reading it all the way through in a single sitting and then going back to the beginning? This first collection from Berman is that kind of book. Full of casually sharp observations about the most mundane subjects. Air is funny, weird, and profound, whether it's tackling the nature of hallways or the architecture of back pain." -- *Entertainment Weekly*, July 30, 1999

Berman's is a funny, smart, on-again, off-again poetry of great promise. -- *The New York Times Book Review*, David Kirby

#### From the Back Cover

"David Berman's poems are beautiful, strange, intelligent, and funny. They are narratives that freeze life in impossible contortions. They take the familiar and make it new, so new the reader is stunned and will not soon forget. I found much to savor on every page of Actual Air. It's a book for everyone." -James Tate

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#### Wallace Long:

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### **Lyla Jackson:**

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