Hum (Paperback)



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Reviews

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(Jody Veum)

HUM (PAPERBACK)



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ALICE JAMES BOOKS, United States, 2014. Paperback. Book Condition: New. New.. 226 x 150 mm. Language: English. Brand New Book. In May's debut collection, poems buzz and purr like a well-oiled chassis. Grit, trial, and song thrum through tight syntax and deft prosody. From the resilient pulse of an abandoned machine to the sinuous lament of origami animals, here is the ever-changing hum that vibrates through us all, connecting one mind to the next. Linguistically acrobatic [and] beautifully crafted. . . [Jamaal May s] poems, exquisitely balanced by a sharp intelligence mixed with earnestness, makes his debut a marvel. --Publishers Weekly The elegant and laconic intelligence in these poems, their skepticism and bent humor and deliberately anti-Romantic stance toward experience are completely refreshing. After so much contemporary writing that seems all flash, no mind and no heart, these poems show how close observation of the world and a gift for plainspoken, but eloquent speech, can give to poetry both dignity and largeness of purpose, and do it in an idiom that is pitch perfect to emotional nuance and fine intellectual distinctions. Hard-headed and tough-minded, Hum is the epitome of what Frost meant by a fresh look and a fresh listen. --Tom Sleigh Jamaal May s debut collection, Hum, is concerned with what s beneath the surfaces of things--the unseen that eats away at us or does the work of sustaining us. Reading these poems, I was reminded of Ellison's lower frequencies, a voice speaking for us all. May has a fine ear, acutely attuned to the sonic textures of everyday experience. And Hum-a meditation on the machinery of living, an extended ode to sound and silence--is a compelling debut. --Natasha Trethewey In his percussive debut collection Hum, Jamaal May offers a salve for our phobias and restores...

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