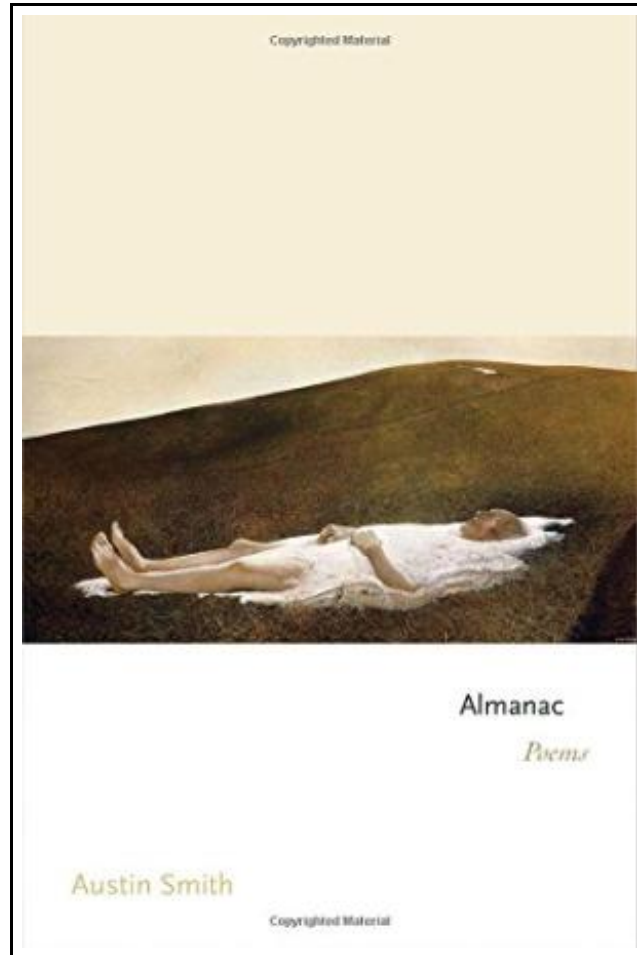


Almanac: Poems



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Reviews

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(Ms. Heidi Rath)

ALMANAC: POEMS



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Princeton University Press, United States, 2013. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 230 x 152 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. Almanac is a collection of lyrical and narrative poems that celebrate, and mourn the passing of, the world of the small family farm. But while the poems are all involved in some way with the rural Midwest, particularly with the people and land of the northwestern Illinois dairy farm where Austin Smith was born and raised, they are anything but merely regional. As the poems reflect on farm life, they open out to speak about childhood and death, the loss of tradition, the destruction of the natural world, and the severing of connections between people and the land. This collection also reflects on a long poetic apprenticeship. Smith's father is a poet himself, and Almanac is in part a meditation about the responsibility of the poet, especially the young poet, when it falls to him to speak for what is vanishing. To quote another Illinois poet, Thomas James, Smith has attempted in this book to write poems clear as the glass of wine / on [his] father's table every Christmas Eve. By turns exhilarating and disquieting, this is a remarkable debut from a distinctive new voice in American poetry. From Almanac: THE MUMMY IN THE FREEPORT ART MUSEUM Austin Smith Amongst the masterpieces of the small-town Picassos and Van Goghs and photographs of the rural poor and busts of dead Greeks or the molds of busts donated by the Art Institute of Chicago to this dying town's little museum, there was a mummy, a real mummy, laid out in a dim-lit room by himself. I used to go to the museum just to visit him, a pharaoh who, expecting an afterlife of beautiful virgins and infinite food...



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