



# Albrecht Dürer and me: Travels, 2004 to 2014

*David Zieroth*

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David Zieroth's *Albrecht Dürer and me*, an autobiographical travelogue spanning the author's journeys through central Europe, explores the transformative effect of dislocation. Inspired by and responding to art and music, history and war, architecture and place, this collection unearths knowledge that can only be realized by leaving home.

Throughout the book, the observant eye of a visitor witnesses the layering of history and the contemporary, and contemplates the juxtaposition of the practical aspects of travelling ("noise") with emotional and spiritual evolution ("Nude self-portrait"). Responding to greats such as W.H. Auden, James Joyce and Albrecht Dürer, the speaker expresses how viewing foreign artwork or hearing unfamiliar music can spark a new awareness, not only of international culture, but of the expression of life and the human condition.

The poems temper the high with the low, reflecting the many dualities of wanderlust. Stately homes are contrasted with war-scarred architecture, and sleepless nights, crowded trains and missed connections offset literature and symphony. "Berlin Album" reflects on the stains the past has left on modern-day Germany: "church bells at 6:00 p.m. / from spires on Borsigstrasse / pass an iron sound through rippled windows / so my body vibrates, and remembers / bullet holes in stone walls along the Spree." "on first hearing Mahler's Fifth" echoes that musical composition to mirror and evoke life's song and "weeds grew while I was away" describes the shock of returning home with the expectation of stasis only to find that things have changed.

Attentive, humble and expertly crafted, *Albrecht Dürer and me* is a travel diary rife with evocative image, sensory detail and eloquent reflection, narrated with an honest, mature voice.

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