



# Vanishing Point: A Novel

*By David Markson*

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## Vanishing Point: A Novel By David Markson

In the literary world, there is little that can match the excitement of opening a new book by David Markson. From Wittgenstein's *Mistress to Reader's Block* to Springer's *Progress to This Is Not a Novel*, he has delighted and amazed readers for decades. And now comes his latest masterwork, *Vanishing Point*, wherein an elderly writer (identified only as "Author") sets out to transform shoeboxes crammed with notecards into a novel—and in so doing will dazzle us with an astonishing parade of revelations about the trials and calamities and absurdities and often even tragedies of the creative life—and all the while trying his best (he says) to keep himself out of the tale. Naturally he will fail to do the latter, frequently managing to stand aside and yet remaining undeniably central throughout—until he is swept inevitably into the narrative's starting and shattering climax. A novel of death and laughter both—and of extraordinary intellectual richness.

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## Vanishing Point: A Novel By David Markson Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #692234 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Shoemaker Hoard
- Published on: 2004-01-01
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.25" h x 5.50" w x .75" l, .57 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 191 pages

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## Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

With his seventh novel, Markson, an avant-garde favorite for works like Wittgenstein's Mistress, which David Foster Wallace called "pretty much the high point of experimental fiction in this country," proves once again that his trademark fragmental style yields boundless meditations on the mythologized lives of great artists and thinkers, as well as the somewhat hapless project of constructing and controlling a novel. Author, who began the book with two shoeboxes full of notes, only rears his head occasionally, to mention that he's a procrastinator, that he's "damnable tired" and physically clumsy "as if his Adidas had whims of their own," and that despite his best efforts to arrange his notes, he has no idea where the book is headed. Yet for all his supposed relinquishing of control, he's omnipresent and clearly omnipotent, steering the narrative into increasingly murky waters. As the novel progresses, he includes more and more references to the deaths of artists ("Devon, Jean Rhys died in," "Heidegger was buried in the same small-town German cemetery he had passed every day... eight decades before") and the book's quotes, once neatly attributed to anyone from Plutarch to Dorothy Parker, disintegrate in the latter half, not always attributed, littering the once sturdy narrative like so much detritus at sea. We are left wondering, as Author does, "Where can the book possibly wind up without him?" Striking, devilishly playful ("If on a winter's night with no other source of warmth Author were to burn a Julian Schnabel, qualms? Qualmless") and with a deeply philosophical core, this novel proves once more that Markson deserves his accolades and then some.

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From [Booklist](#)

Following his last novel, the wryly titled *This Is Not a Novel* (2001), Markson offers another thought-provoking work that extends and challenges the traditional novel form by stringing together snippets of information ranging from quotes by artists and writers to trivia about historical figures to commentary on current news events. The premise is that "The Author," as the narrator refers to himself, is assembling a box of note cards full of information he has gathered over the years with the hope of forging a novel. Life then imitates art as Markson literally accomplishes what his narrator hopes to: he creates a novel out of fragments of ideas and information. *Vanishing Point* feels a little like a literary Trivial Pursuit, or the associative stream of consciousness produced by a surrealist party game, and it's just as entertaining. Markson deserves great credit for his literary experimentation, which will appeal to open-minded readers who welcome a fresh and witty approach to narration. *Janet St. John*

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Review

"No one but Beckett can be quite as sad and funny at the same time as Markson can."

## Users Review

From reader reviews:

**Charlotte Hawley:**

The event that you get from *Vanishing Point: A Novel* may be the more deep you excavating the information that hide inside words the more you get serious about reading it. It does not mean that this book is hard to comprehend but *Vanishing Point: A Novel* giving you enjoyment feeling of reading. The article author conveys their point in particular way that can be understood simply by anyone who read this because the

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