

Astronomy Picture of the Day

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Herbig-Haro 24

Image Credit: [NASA](#), [ESA](#), [Hubble Heritage \(STScI / AURA\)](#) / Hubble-Europe Collaboration

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Explanation: [This might look like](#) a double-bladed lightsaber, but these two cosmic jets actually beam outward from [a newborn star in a galaxy near you](#). Constructed from Hubble Space Telescope image data, the stunning scene spans about half a light-year across Herbig-Haro 24 (HH 24), some 1,300 light-years or 400 [parsecs](#) away in the [stellar nurseries](#) of the Orion B molecular cloud complex. Hidden from direct view, HH 24's central protostar is surrounded by cold dust and gas flattened into a rotating [accretion disk](#). As material from the disk falls toward the young stellar object it heats up. Opposing [jets are blasted out](#) along the system's rotation axis. Cutting through the region's interstellar matter, the narrow, energetic jets produce a series of glowing shock fronts [along their path](#).

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