



by **Tex Rubinowitz**
Rowohlt
January 1970 / 240pp
Fiction

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Irma

Irma

review

Tex Rubinowitz's extraordinary novel recounts how a Facebook friendship request triggers a journey of self-discovery through the narrator's own past. The request comes from Irma, the narrator's flatmate and sexual partner of three decades ago. Their relationship came to an end with an enigmatic note left on the kitchen table and they haven't seen one another since. The narrator's musings on his time with Irma spark wider reflections on other aspects of his life: his love of 1980s Berlin rock music, his provincial childhood, experiences of abuse, various significant holidays, as well as stints living in Vienna and Hamburg. His train of thought always returns to Irma, however.

Rubinowitz's fragmentary and informal style of writing makes for a novel and stimulating reading experience. This is heightened by the inclusion of assorted images, such as old LP covers, photos and flyers, in a technique reminiscent of W. G. Sebald. All the objects that appear in Rubinowitz's narrative were sketched by his friend, the artist Max Müller.

Irma offers a highly original take on the issues of youth, past relationships, and the passage of time and it is easy to see how an excerpt from the novel was awarded the prestigious Bachmann Prize in 2014.

press quotes

'A wild, beautiful and very rare love story.'

– The Bachmann Prize jury on Irma

'This text has something unkempt about it, but this is the source not only of its comedy but also its existentially laconic quality.' – *Die Zeit*

about the author

Tex Rubinowitz was born in Hanover in 1961 and is a freelance writer, painter, musician and illustrator. He has lived in Vienna since 1984. In 2014, he received the Ingeborg Bachmann Prize with excerpts taken from *Irma*.

Previous works include:

Lists Against Chaos (2013); *Heading Out* (2012)

rights information

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Rowohlt Verlag was founded by Ernst Rowohlt in 1908. This publishing house with its various divisions is part of the Holtzbrinck group. Rowohlt publishes literary fiction, non-fiction and children's books. Authors include Wolfgang Borchert, Joachim Fest, Elfriede Jelinek, Daniel Kehlmann, Imre Kertész, Ildikó von Kürthy, Klaus and Erika Mann, Peter Schneider, Martin Walser and many others. In 2008 Rowohlt celebrated its 100th anniversary.