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WHY WE LOVE *THE MUSEUM OF MODERN LOVE*

Dear Reader,

Within the first few chapters of *The Museum of Modern Love*, it is clear we are in the hands of a very skilled, very special author, who, until this book, had never been published in North America. I am thrilled Heather Rose has landed in our part of the world and I am excited to select *The Museum of Modern Love* as our next hoopla Book Club Hub Spotlight title.

From reading the description, you may gather that it is a book about art. The novel revolves around a famed work of contemporary performance art by Marina Abramović that occurred at NYC's Museum of Modern Art in 2010. And Rose indeed delivers us fully into the artistic process and into the experience of art in a way that is refreshingly accessible, giving us biographical insight into Marina the flesh-and-blood person along the way. In itself, this conceit of encountering a real work of art at such a deep level through narrative, which Rose achieves brilliantly here, struck me as worthy of discussion.

Yet the book is as much a drama exploring questions of grief, ambition, love, and loneliness through main character Arky Levin, an aging film composer who reaches a crisis point as he is forced to reckon with his own failings as a husband and father, and the limits of his success as an artist. Arky and an assemblage of supporting figures are revealed and explored as they are drawn into the orbit of *The Artist Is Present*, and the quality of Rose's writing for these characters has a refinement and precision that struck me instantly. There are some authors who are able to create characters who are so sharply observed, and have such fully realized emotional interiority, that I have sometimes thought reading those authors can be like experiencing a slice of life in a more crystallized, somehow more real way. The writing is that direct, that plugged in. This book, which was written over ten years, is one of those.

For me, Rose fuses the experience of art and the experience of life in a way that makes it quite unlike anything I've read before, and that defies easy categorization. This is a book that invites discussion of the Big Questions of life, art, and how to find meaning in them both.

We hope you enjoy it. Let us know what you think @hoopladigital!

Best wishes,
Tara Carberry

About the Author

Heather Rose was born in Australia in 1964. Her novels have been shortlisted or have won awards for literary fiction, crime fiction, and children's fantasy. In 2017, *The Museum of Modern Love*, her seventh novel, won the Christina Stead Prize and the Stella Prize. It is her first novel for adults to be published in the United States. She lives by the sea on the island of Tasmania.





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Selected Praise

Winner of the 2017 Stella Prize

A Goodreads "Hot Book" November Selection

A BookPage Top Pick for December

Winner of the 2017 Margaret Scott Prize - Tasmanian Premier's Literary Prizes

Winner of the 2017 Christina Stead Prize for Fiction - NSW Premier's Literary Awards

Shortlisted for the 2017 Australian Literature Society Gold Medal

Shortlisted for the 2017 University of Queensland Fiction Book Award

"Framing a love story around a long-durational performance work, where the passage of time is essential, is a profoundly original idea. I loved this book." —**Marina Abramović**

"Over the centuries, few things have been written about as much or as often as art and love. In her profound new novel, Australian author Heather Rose becomes the latest in a long line of writers, thinkers, philosophers, and artists to explore the uniquely human topics...*The Museum of Modern Love* is a tender meditation on art, love, grief, and life." —**Bustle**

"*The Museum of Modern Love* interrogates what it is that drives artists to create—and the power of their creations on those who allow themselves to truly look at them." —**Book Reporter**

"This captivating work explores the meaning of art in our lives and the ways in which it deepens our understanding of ourselves. As Hannah Rothschild did in *The Improbability of Love*, Australian author Rose also combines intriguing characters with a laser-sharp focus on art to produce a gem of a novel." —**Library Journal, starred review**

"Clever, genre-bending...A portrait of human desire and human failing, but perhaps most profoundly, human striving for something greater than self. Rose's melancholy book resonates with emotion, touching on life's great dilemmas—death, vocation, love, art." —**Publishers Weekly, starred review**

"A lush tone poem to the life of art and art in life...Incisive, beautiful, and precise." —**Foreword Reviews, starred review**

"...an engaging, multifaceted meditation on the meaning of life and art...a brilliant find for any reader who enjoys grappling with the larger questions of life and literature, and it is an excellent choice for book clubs seeking thought-provoking discussion." —**BookPage**

"Tremblingly earnest...a bold proposition—Rose does not shy away from grappling with questions about the meaning and purpose of art...The real power of the book, though, lies not in its philosophizing but in the unsteady tenderness between its characters." —**Kirkus Reviews**

"A glorious novel, meditative and special in a way that defies easy articulation." —**Hannah Kent, author of *Burial Rites***

"A deliciously inventive tale of the New York art scene, swirling with complex characters and connections, posing questions about how we should live, about art's ability to change our lives, and about the ways art changes the artists who create it." —**B. A. Shapiro, author of *The Collector's Apprentice***

"From its conception to its last page, this book challenges our perceptions of where life ends and art begins." —**The Australian**