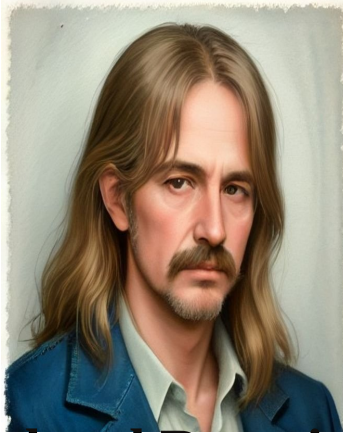




Richard Brautigan

January 30, 1935 - September 16, 1984

Bolinas, California

Richard Brautigan, American novelist and poet whose *Trout Fishing in America* made counterculture prose feel like a pocket surrealist postcard, died by suicide at his home in Bolinas, California; investigators later fixed the date as about September 16, 1984. He was forty-nine. Tacoma birth, Pacific Northwest drift, and San Francisco years had already made him a literary brand of the late 1960s - long blond hair, deadpan jokes, short books that sold like vinyl.

Born January 30, 1935, in Tacoma, Washington, Brautigan published poetry and fiction that treated American landscape as both joke and sacrament. *Trout Fishing in America* (1967), *In Watermelon Sugar*, and *A Confederate General from Big Sur* turned spare sentences into cult objects; Japan and Europe found him as readily as Berkeley bookstores. Later novels and the long fade of fashion left him less visible than the decade that minted him, but the early books never fully left classroom syllabi or used-bookstore stacks.

Friends and biographers have described isolation and heavy drinking in the Bolinas years. The body was found weeks after the estimated death date - a forensic calendar that still places September 16 on American literary necrologies. The work remains gentler than the ending: humor with a bruise under it.

He died in Bolinas on or about September 16, 1984. The short novels keep speaking in their odd, flat music.

Brautigan's gift was lightness that was never merely light - American vernacular bent into dream logic. Notice Nearby records the death date so September 16 remembers a Northwest writer who made trout, watermelon sugar, and sadness share the same page.

Services

Died in Bolinas, California, on or about September 16, 1984. Novelist and poet; author of Trout Fishing in America and other counterculture classics.

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