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Roberta Fallon, artist, writer, and Artblog cofounder, has died at 76

For nearly 22 years, she posted commentary, stories, interviews, reviews, videos, podcasts, and other content that chronicled the eclectic art world in Philadelphia.



Fellow artist Libby Rosof said Ms. Fallon “was innovative and changed the way art reached people.”
Courtesy of the family

by Gary Miles
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Roberta Fallon, 76, of [Bala Cynwyd](#), cofounder, editor, and longtime executive director of [theartblog.org](#), prolific freelance writer for The Inquirer, Daily News, and other publications, adjunct professor at St.



Ms. Fallon's husband, Steven Kimbrough, said the crash remains under investigation by the police.

Described by family and friends as empathetic, energetic, and creative, Ms. Fallon and fellow artist Libby Rosof cofounded the online [Artblog](#) in 2003. For nearly 22 years, until the blog [became inactive in June](#), Ms. Fallon posted commentary, stories, interviews, reviews, videos, podcasts, and other content that chronicled the eclectic art world in Philadelphia.

The site drew more than 4,500 subscribers and championed galleries and artists of all kinds, especially women, LGBTQ and student artists, and other underrepresented innovators. "I think we have touched base with every major arts organization in Philadelphia at one point or another, and many of the smaller ones," Ms. Fallon [told The Inquirer in May](#). "We became part of the arts economy."

Roberta Fallon: Tips for Going to Openings



[She earned grants](#) from the Knight Foundation and other groups to fund her work. She organized artist workshops and guided tours of local studios she called art safaris.

For years, she and Rosof raised art awareness in [Center City](#) by handing out miniatures of their artwork to startled passersby. She said in a 2005 Inquirer story: "We think art needs to be for everyone, not just in galleries."

"We just started it, and we wrote, and, by gum, people found it. That was the weirdest thing of all."

Ms. Fallon about the Artblog in 2013

She mentored other artists and became an expert on the business of art. "She was so generous and curious about people," Rosof said. "She was innovative and changed the way art reached people."

Artist Rebecca Rutstein said Ms. Fallon's "dedicated art journalism filled a vacuum in Philadelphia and beyond. Many of us became known entities because of her artist features, and we are forever grateful." In



Ms. Fallon never tired of enjoying art.
Cate Fallon

Colleague and friend Gilda Kramer said: “The Artblog for her was truly a labor of love.”

In November, [Ms. Fallon](#) and other art writers created a website called [The Philly Occasional](#). In [her Nov. 12 article](#), she details some of her favorite shows and galleries in Philadelphia and New York, and starts the final paragraph by saying: “P.S. I can’t let you go without telling you about what I just saw at the Barnes Foundation.”

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The Philadelphia Inquirer



Weekly, [Philadelphia Citizen](#), and [other publications](#). In 2012, she wrote more than a dozen art columns for the Daily News called “Art Attack.”

She met Rosof in the 1980s, and together they curated exhibits around the region and displayed their own sculptures, paintings, and installations. Art critic Edith Newhall reviewed their 2008 show “ID” at Projects Gallery for The Inquirer and called it “one of the liveliest, most entertaining shows I’ve seen at this venue.”



Ms. Fallon stands in front of a mural at 13th and Spruce Streets. She is depicted as the figure profiled in the lower left in the white blouse. Courtesy of the family

Most often, [Ms. Fallon](#) painted objects and sculpted in concrete, wood, metal, textiles, and other material. She was a founding member of the Philadelphia Sculptors and Bala Avenue of the Arts.

She studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and [Temple University](#)’s Tyler School of Art and Architecture, and later taught professional practice art classes at St. Joseph’s. Moore College of Art and Design, which will archive Artblog, awarded her an honorary doctorate.

“Creating community through art and making art accessible go hand in hand, and are cornerstones of my thinking.”

Ms. Fallon to the Da Vinci Art Alliance in 2020

“Roberta was an exceptional creative artist” and “a force,” artist Marjorie Grigonis [said on LinkedIn](#). Artist Matthew Rose said: “Robbie was a North Star for many people.”

Her husband said: “Her approach to life was giving. She succeeded by adding value to wherever she was.”



Ms. Fallon (second from right) enjoyed time with her family.
Courtesy of the family

[Roberta Ellen Fallon](#) was born Feb. 8, 1949, in Milwaukee. She went to the University of Wisconsin-Madison to study sociology after high school and dropped out to explore Europe and take art classes in Paris. She returned to college, changed her major to English, and earned a bachelor's degree in 1974.

She met Steven Kimbrough in Wisconsin, and they married in 1980, and had daughters Oona and Stella, and a son, Max. They lived in West Philadelphia for six years before settling in Bala Cynwyd in 1993.

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Ms. Fallon was a neighborhood political volunteer. She enjoyed movies and reading, and she and her husband traveled often to museums and art shows in New York and elsewhere.

They had a chance to relocate to Michigan a few years ago, her husband said. But she preferred Philadelphia for its art and culture. "She was like a local celebrity in the art scene," her daughter Stella said.



Ms. Fallon and her husband, Steven Kimbrough, visited New York in 1982.
Chuck Patch

Her husband said: “Everybody likes her. Everybody wants to be around her. She made a difference for a lot of people.”

Her daughter Stella said: “The world would be a better place if we all tried to be like my mom.”

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In addition to her husband and children, Ms. Fallon is survived by four grandchildren, a sister, a brother, and other relatives.

A memorial service is to be held later.

Donations in her name may be made to [Moore College of Art and Design](#), 1916 Race St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19103.



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