

## **ROBERT ROSENBLUM**

### In Memoriam

The Institute of Fine Arts mourns the loss of Robert Rosenblum, who died on Wednesday, December 6. His beloved wife Jane and his dear children Sophie and Theo were with him at home.

We lose in Robert Rosenblum a brilliant art historian, a generous teacher, a warm and witty colleague, and a dear, dear friend. His curiosity—about art and people alike—was boundless. We cherished his cosmopolitan presence, his effervescent conversation, his sartorial flair.

Robert had an uncommonly strong commitment to New York University and the Institute of Fine Arts. In 1956 he earned his PhD from the Institute with his dissertation “The International Style of 1800: a Study in Linear Abstraction.” Ten years later he was appointed Professor of Fine Arts in the Institute and the Department of Fine Arts, and in 1976 he became the Henry Ittleson, Jr. Professor of Modern European Art. Those titles do not begin to capture his manifold contributions to our programs and, as importantly, to the spirit of the place.

Robert was an astoundingly productive and insightful scholar, starting with his landmark book *Transformations in Late Eighteenth-Century Art* (1967). In subsequent years he tackled major artists from Ingres to Picasso to Warhol, but also recuperated the forgotten and the neglected, from Salon painters to Orientalists to Norman Rockwell. Robert had an uncanny ability to make telling comparisons between incommensurate paintings—juxtapositions that illuminated the special interests of each picture in the pairing.

Robert’s genius was recognized with numerous distinctions, including honorary degrees from Oxford University, the Pratt Institute, and Queens College, where he had earned his BA. In 2003, the French government named him a Chevalier de la Legion d’Honneur. Two years later, New York University recognized his remarkable record as a teacher with the Distinguished Teaching Award, the University’s highest such honor.

We shall miss him. Our hearts go out to Jane, Sophie, and Theo on the loss of this magnificent man.

Mariët Westermann  
Judy & Michael Steinhardt Director  
Institute of Fine Arts – NYU

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