Mary Abbe Biography

Mary Abbe has been writing about art, artists, museums, galleries and cultural af- fairs since 1977. During her 32 year tenure as art critic and art news reporter at the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* (1984 - 2016) she wrote feature and news stories, profiled Minnesota artists and museum staff, reviewed museum exhibitions and gallery shows, analyzed national cultural politics and finance, and penned stories inspired by art-themed travel in Europe, especially Italy and France.

An advocate of snappy ledes and jargon-free lingo, she remains confident that, no matter how esoteric art may sometimes appear, it will interest anyone if the writing about it is incisive, engaging, and informative. Topics she’s written about range from baroque sculpture to minimalism, manga, winter counts, tapestries, textiles, pottery, paintings of every era, Civil War and civil rights photos, Japanese screens, Chinese tomb sculpture, artful guns, practitioners of “erotic torture” as art, and more.

Prior to the *Star Tribune*, she was public information director at Walker Art Center (1980 - 1984), associate editor of *Twin Cities* magazine (1979), and a copywriter and assistant to the director of the University of Chicago Press (1976 - 1978). Dur- ing the 1970s and ‘80s she also wrote feature articles and art reviews for the *Chicago Reader*, *Mpls/St. Paul* magazine, *TWA Ambassador*, *Portfolio*, *Border Crossing*, and other publications. Until her retirement she was a Midwest corre- spondent for *ARTnews* magazine.

The Society of Professional Journalists, Minnesota Chapter presented her with awards for arts criticism and travel writing in 1989, 1998, 1999, 2000, and 2004. A 1968 graduate of St. Olaf College with a B.A. in English, cum laude, she earned an M.A. from the University of Wisconsin in 1969.