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UFO investigator Barbara Bartholic Dead At 71



Submitted by [Dirk Vander Ploeg](#) on Sat, 11/20/2010 - 12:09

By [TIM STANLEY](#)
World Staff Writer

Close encounters with Barbara Bartholic usually sparked the same reaction.

"She always left you laughing. She had this marvelous sense of humor," her sister, Catha Block, said.

"Barbara just had this way of making people feel important - like you were the only person in the world."

One out-of-this-world topic was no laughing matter, though, to the Tulsa artist and art gallery owner.

Bartholic had been fascinated for years by the possibility of extraterrestrial life, and in the 1970s, the subject consumed her.

Bartholic's subsequent field research into UFOs led to writing and speaking engagements. It wasn't long before she became a respected UFO authority worldwide.

One of the consultants on the movie "Close Encounters of the Third Kind," she later wrote about her experiences in the book "Barbara: The Story of a UFO Investigator."

Barbara Simon Bartholic died Nov. 10 after suffering a stroke. She was 71.

A service is set for 10 a.m. Saturday at Memorial Park Cemetery Chapel under the direction of AddVantage Funeral Service.

"Barbara really perceived a world that's larger than the one we live in," Block said, adding that she was never embarrassed by her sister's devotion to a subject that often draws stares.

"We were a free-thinking bunch and were open to the idea," she said.

"And it was so fascinating. It was like going out of your universe into another one. If I was able, I'd love to carry on her work."

Bartholic, who moved to Tulsa from St. Louis, Mo., as a child, started out in an entirely different line of work - just one of many over her life.

Her mother, Tulsan Alice Simon, was a fashion model when she was younger. So was her mother before her.

Bartholic carried on the family tradition, starting at age 17. Her modeling took her to Los Angeles and New York City, where she worked with well-known fashion designers.

After she married Tulsa artist Bob Bartholic, she decided to move on.

A painter herself who excelled in oils, she and Bob became leading figures in the Tulsa art scene and ran two downtown art galleries in the 1970s.

Barbara Bartholic also hosted her own television show, "Arts Arena," on a local cable channel. She interviewed Tulsa-area artists, but it wasn't a conventional talk show, her sister said.

"She was very inventive and avant-garde," Block said.

Bartholic's other interests began to take a back seat to her obsession with UFOs.



Inventive and avant-garde' Barbara Bartholic:

The Tulsa art gallery owner became a UFO investigator in the 1970s and was a consultant for the movie "Close Encounters of the Third Kind." She had been working recently on a documentary film about extraterrestrial life before her death Nov. 10 at age 71 Read more from this Tulsa World article at www.tulsaworld.com

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For several years, she worked closely with friend and fellow UFO investigator Jacques F. Vallee, a French astronomer who inspired the "Close Encounters" character of Claude Lacombe, played by French film director Francois Truffaut.

Bartholic interviewed alleged alien abductees and looked into reported sightings of UFOs around the country. After nearly 40 years, she was convinced, her sister says, that we are not alone.

Block added that Bartholic had been working recently on a documentary film on the subject.

She is survived by four children, Braden Bartholic, Mandy Wilson, Catha Clark and Becky Bartholic; her mother, Alice Simon; one sister, Catha Block; six grandchildren; and one great-granddaughter.

Original Print Headline: Artist perceived a world larger than herself

Story source: www.tulsaworld.com

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