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 by Alexandra Hruz



For nearly seven decades, Nancy Kravetz has pursued her passion for art. Nancy's painting career began when she was just 16 years old. She grew up in Newburyport, Massachusetts in the early 1950s. The small, picturesque New England town had a storied seafaring history and was surrounded by beautiful forests, rivers, freshwater ponds, and the Atlantic Ocean. The extraordinary natural beauty in her hometown and in other locations has helped inspire Nancy over the years, bolstering a long creative journey. During her youth, she explored oil painting and life drawing classes with a local artist and teacher, Sam Sargent, at the Sargent School of Painting. Nancy was also encouraged by her high school art teacher to attend the Junior-Senior Prize Program at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, Massachusetts. As she got older, Nancy continued working diligently as an artist, perfecting her technique and creating work when she felt inspired. She then took a break from painting to raise three sons. She shares that all three of her boys attended Central High School, followed by two attending Stanford and one going to Occidental. Nancy also proudly explains that each of her sons was selected as most likely to succeed by their respective senior classes.

After the demanding job of raising her young children, Nancy resumed her career, picking up her brushes again and focusing on her art once more. By this point, her life had progressed through college, marriage, raising children, and a permanent move to Arizona with her husband, Bob, and their family. Nancy explains that she resumed oil painting (working on still life compositions, portraits, and a few desert scenes) at this point while studying under Don Ruffin in his studio in South Phoenix. The inspiration provided by the southwestern landscape was impactful on Nancy's art. "The transition from Northeast to Southwest brought with it the excitement of an entirely new visual landscape," she explains. "The Arizona desert, with its variety of unusual cacti, soft desert colors, gorgeous sunsets, wide open spaces, unusual terrain with amazing rock formations, radiant light and sunshine, and

the awe-inspiring beauty of Sedona and the Grand Canyon, profoundly inspired my artwork."

In the late 1960s, Nancy studied acrylic painting, design and color theory, life drawing, and watercolor painting with contemporary artist Dorothy Fratt. These classes made a substantial impact on Nancy's life and creative output. "Dorothy's classes were life-changing and transformative," Nancy shares. "They were small, informal, and designed to maximize painting experiences for a full exploration of color." Through her friendship with Dorothy, Nancy was introduced to a variety of art collections, including the Phillips Collection in Washington, DC, the Barnes Collection in Philadelphia, and the Cone Collection in Baltimore, among others. Under Dorothy's guidance, Nancy flourished as an artist. Nancy says that it was during this time that she began developing her

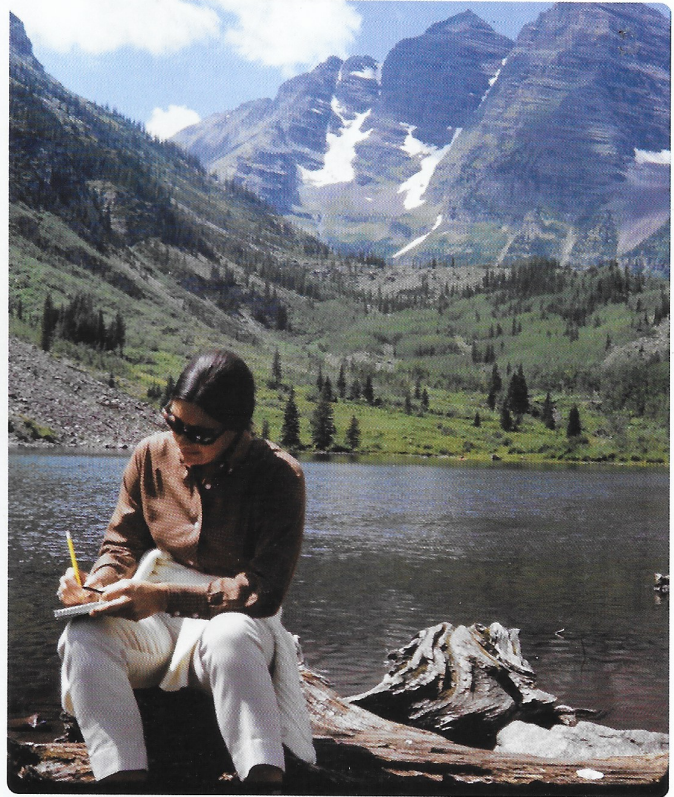


own voice and style of painting, eventually leading to her first solo exhibit in 1973. In 2007, Nancy opted again to take a pause on art, this time taking a break to write a comprehensive family history that she had been researching for years. The book, *Remember Me to the Little Ones: A Family History*, was published in 2010 and included a foreword by well-known genealogist Arthur Kurzwell. After the book was published, Nancy returned to painting full-time.

In the last decade, Nancy has reemerged as an artist—she’s refocused her energy and talent and has become reengaged in painting and exhibiting her work. In 2017, she had a solo exhibition at the Shemer Art Center, a unique and charming restored historic home that showcases and supports Arizona artists. She met David Haff, arts program specialist and curator of exhibitions at the Mayo Clinic Galleries in Scottsdale, in 2020. This fruitful connection has led to Nancy’s work gaining greater exposure. She’s had work shown several times at ‘Tis Art Center & Gallery in Prescott, and she had a retrospective exhibit at the Shemer Art Gallery in 2017. Nancy also had two solo exhibitions in 2021: Her group of collages, entitled “A Day at the Beach,” was showcased April through June. Her second show, “Color is the

Messenger,” consisted of acrylic paintings on canvas and was on display from September through December. It was then extended through March 2022. Coming up, she’ll exhibit collages at the Mayo Clinic from August through November. Another exhibition of her work will be featured at the Mountain Shadows Resort in Scottsdale in February 2023.

At age 84, Nancy has had a career that spans 67 years. For her, no day is complete without picking up her tools and pouring some of her soul onto canvas. As she continues doing what she loves most, she hopes to inspire other women and show that age should be no deterrent to following passions.



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