

NANCY KRAVETZ – A Lifetime Passion For Art

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Very rarely in life will you meet someone that is a true inspiration. When I first sat down with Nancy Kravetz, I knew little, apart from the brief research I had conducted before our interview. I knew Nancy was an artist who despite being 85 years old continued to work in her studio every day to sketch and create. However, I did not know the stories of love, passion, work, and family which has allowed Nancy to be so successful throughout her life, and has truly changed the way I view things in my life.



At 85 years old, Nancy Kravetz is an illustration of beauty, beaming with energy, retained from her youth. With a welcoming smile and an unparalleled warmth of hospitality, Nancy ushered me into her home which is almost reminiscent of an art gallery.

Her first oil painting depicting a fisherman's village of her hometown of Newburyport, Massachusetts hangs proudly along with her more recent work of modern and contemporary designs showing the immense versatility and uniqueness of her art.

Nancy has been painting since she was 16 years old, immersing herself into different art mediums such as oil painting, watercolors, acrylic, and creating collages from different fabrics, papers, and colors. Each piece Nancy creates is full of life, illustrating a distinct and beautiful story. Radiating with passion and inspiration Nancy regaled me with stories of her travels and adventures throughout her life. One such story being when Nancy was rafting down the Grand Canyon. Nancy said, "after that trip my work took a very simple path. There were beautiful blocks of colors and traveling from low canyon to high ground. Each layer of earth stacked up." What to most may just be a mesmerizing sight of the beauty and depth of colors, Nancy found an inspiration and passion in the simple color changes she experienced while going down the canyon. This inspiration would take physical form in many of Nancy's paintings as she utilized the colors she saw in her experiences in many of her pieces.

Nancy fondly shared paintings from her early years. “My passion for art took hold early in life as a teenager growing up in a small picturesque New England Town” Nancy said. Her connection to the beautiful landscapes, rivers, and foliage she saw every day of her youth helped to inspire a passion that would continue throughout her life. While painting was a hobby at this point, it was something that she knew would stay with her throughout her life.



College took Nancy through new and exciting adventures. As an Education major, Nancy knew that she would like to combine her passion for art with her education in some way. She attended Simmons College in Boston and then moved to Philadelphia where she went on to earn a Bachelor of Science degree from Temple University. While still in college, Nancy would meet the love of her life. This chance meeting would change the trajectory of Nancy’s life forever.

At a wedding in Boston, Nancy met Robert “Bob” Kravetz. Bob was sitting at the same table talking to Nancy’s roommate, but he wasn’t interested in her. Instead, Bob started to talk to Nancy, and they both knew that this was the start of something special. Over the next six months, Bob and Nancy would see each other only four times. However, the love they felt for one another was so deep, that after only four dates Bob proposed. Two months later, Bob and Nancy were married.

As Nancy shared the story of meeting Bob, you could see the love and affection they share for one another. Their love is special and hearing their story makes you want to smile. After 65 years of marriage, they joke together like teenagers, finish each other’s sentences and constantly smile and exchange loving glances.

Nancy and Bob moved to Arizona with their three young sons in the 1960’s. Family is so important to Nancy. Her pride and admiration for her three sons and her grandchildren was evident as she shared many loving stories with me. When her children were younger, Shabbat and family dinners were a big deal. “Every Friday night everyone would come home from the schools they were attending and they would invite their friends. It was always so special. We are a very close family” Nancy said. Even today, Nancy makes every effort to have her family come for special holiday dinners and services. “We have belonged to Beth El Congregation for 62 years and all of our children had their Bar Mitzvah there. Beth El has been an important part of our life.”

Moving to Arizona was a defining point for Nancy as she began to rediscover her passion for art. The landscapes, colors, and natural beauty of Arizona reignited the spark she needed to get back into painting. She started studying still life and compositions with Don Ruffins for a few years. However, Nancy's passion for abstract art really took center stage after meeting and studying with renowned

artist Dorothy Platt. Nancy said that, "abstract art is where I finally found my voice." Platt helped Nancy define herself as an artist and showed Nancy that her art had value. Platt gave Nancy the encouragement she needed to exhibit her work. Studying with Platt became a "life-changing and transformative experience," said Nancy.



"I'm inspired by so many different things. When a period of inspiration comes, it usually starts with one thing and it leads to another thing" Nancy shared. When I asked Nancy if she would be slowing down anytime soon, she said that she is too busy and won't be stopping anytime soon. Nancy said that she will continue working as long as she can.

Currently, Nancy is getting ready for an art exhibit of collages at the Mayo Clinic Gallery that will take place August 2022 – November 2022. She is also planning an exhibition of her work to take place at the Gallery at Mountain Shadows Resort in February 2023.

Although Nancy has already written one book, she is still contemplating creating a book about her artwork. Her husband Bob is supportive and continues to nudge her to get her to start working on a book. Nancy said, "I get distracted, and get pulled in other directions. If not now, at 85 years old, when am I going to do it? Maybe, I should have done it yesterday. I'm just so busy doing other things."

Nancy showed me that by doing what you enjoy and surrounding yourself with love and family you will be able to accomplish anything. Her positive and upbeat attitude shows that no matter how old you are, if you have dreams and passion, then you can accomplish your goals. Age is just a number, and if you live life to the fullest and enjoy what you are doing you will lead a much happier and more fulfilling life.