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Featured Photographer

Arnold John Kaplan, APSA-AFIP

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Caught in a Storm

Arnold Kaplan doesn't subscribe to the notion that the image you capture in the camera is the image you have to end up with. At age 92, with 80 years of photography under his belt, he has come to believe that his photos are just a starting point. From there, he brings his creativity and artistic sensibility (he's also an oil painter) to bear on the images he creates, some of which he calls "derivations".

And as such, he fully realizes that his work may offend some purists who believe that absolute realism should be every photographer's goal.

"The purist does not create anything new unless they actually create a drawing, a painting, a sculpture, etc., then take a photo of it -- thus, it is a photograph of their original creation," he says. "When the purist photographs outdoors, or takes a portrait, they are just making a copy of what Mother Nature has created.

"When we all were shooting film, we tried very hard to improve the color slide with all kinds of sandwiched filters or double images, darkening parts of the photo, etc. We did a lot of manipulation of both color slides and prints. In the darkroom, we would dodge and burn parts of the print to improve the impact of the image. Even Ansel Adams used various methods of exposure to get his great photos.

"The original image is just the beginning," he says. "I believe the photographer should be allowed to be as creative as any other artist, and use whatever means to create the image he wants."

Here's Arnold's story, in his own words:

By Arnold John Kaplan, APSA-AFIAP
Cape Cod

I fell in love with photography in 1928 when I was 12 years old and developed my first roll of film, in a tray, in a darkroom converted from a coal bin in the cellar of my house. That same year I built my first enlarger from tin cans. At 15 years old, I had a full darkroom and portrait studio set up in the cellar and was taking portraits of my friends and local neighborhood children.

In college, I was the photo editor of the college newspaper and yearbook, and was also involved in stock photography, selling my photos to magazines and book publishers. I earned my degree in business management in 1939 at Boston University. I was also an aerial photographer in the US Naval Reserve Air Force.

I was inspired, in my early years, by Ansel Adams, Minor White, and Paul Caponigro, all great masters of black and white printmaking. My favorite photographic medium was photo printmaking, in both black-and-white and color.

My first expensive camera was a used 5 by 7 inch, sheet film, Graflex in 1938, then came the 4 by 5 inch, sheet film, Speed Graphic, which I gave up for a 35mm Leica in 1940, which was traded in for a Nikon camera and lens system that I used until 1995. Then the digital age appeared and I switched to a digital Canon camera system, but I still miss the use of color slide film.

I am the author of the Vermont photo guide book, *How To Find and Photograph The Photo-Scenics In Vermont*. The handbook was written as a protest against those selfish photographers who kept the beautiful Vermont photo sites a secret for many years in order to win awards in their camera clubs. As I traveled up and down Vermont in the 1960s, photographing, I stumbled on each photo-scenic and jotted down the information on how to find them and finally put it all into book form for all photographers to use. More than 5,000 copies have been sold to photographers around the world in the past few years. Eastman Kodak used the handbook when they send a photo crew to photograph Vermont years ago.



Jenne Farm, Reading, Vermont



Jenne Farm in winter

Over the years I have been involved in several photo organizations, including the Boston Camera Club, South Shore Camera Club, and the Photographic Society Of America. I have given more than 300 color-slide

presentations to photographic and non-photographic clubs, groups, societies, and councils all over the USA. My subjects ranged from all-day photo seminars to entertaining flower and travel shows for women's groups and senior citizen clubs.

In 1974, I was honored by the Photographic Society of America with their prestigious "Associate Award" (APSA) for outstanding work in the field of photography. In 1977, the Internationale de L'Art of Europe awarded me the title of Photographic "Artiste" (AFIAP) for my international photo salon exhibiting. I have judged a half dozen International Photo Salons across the USA.

Over the years I have won Gold, Silver, and Bronze medals and best of show trophies, plus hundreds of placement ribbons in the International Photographic Salons, and earned the highest rating of 5 stars in color slide exhibitions. In the early '70s, I was listed among the 100 best black-and-white print exhibitors in the world.



Siesta



Vatican Lady

I was an amateur photographer for over 50 years and turned professional after I retired from the non-photographic business world in 1978, and moved from Quincy to Centerville on Cape Cod. In 1980, I opened the first school of photography on Cape Cod. I sold my photographs at art shows and also specialized in stock photography, working with five stock photo agencies around the world, including Getty Images, with more than 5,000 color slides in their photo files.

I have been published in every printed and visual medium available and today I am involved in digital computer photography working with software programs to create new images from old photographs. My images have been used for fine art photography, magazine covers, posters, record and tape covers, advertising and book publishing. I have sold my images for as high as \$5,000 for commercial use. My fine art photographic prints have been sold for as high as \$250 each and several patrons are now collecting them.



Cape Cod Sand Fence

This is an oldie, taken way back in the 80s before digital cameras were even dreamed of. I was walking along the beach area on the north side of Cape Cod, late in the afternoon, waiting for a sunset shot, when I saw the long shadows of the low sun through the sand fence. It was low tide, so the exposed sand area added design to the photo. My Nikkormat film camera was on a tripod since the light was fading fast, and I had to use a slow shutter speed. There was no editing done on this image. The original color slide was copied to digital.



Bass Hole Red Sky Derivation

This is a fun photo. All you do is manipulate your saturation and hue sliders on any editing program until you find a color scheme that pleases you. You can also add some of the many filter effects that are in your editing program for more creative images. The original photo was taken of the marshes at Bass Hole in Yarmouth on Cape Cod. I used my new Canon XTi camera with the Tokina 24 to 200mm zoom lens on automatic, handheld.

One example of Arnold's willingness to experiment and stretch the boundaries of traditional image-making is his practice of cloning together various elements from different photos. Some would consider it heresy, but to Arnold, it's all part of the joy of digital photography.

One example is his practice of cloning in clouds from one scene into the cloudless sky of another. He explains:

Adding clouds or sunsets to a bare blue or white sky without using layers: If a photo has a sky area you do not like, such as a bare blue or white sky, you can add clouds or sunsets to the sky area. This is done by cloning and placing the main photo and the cloud photo in the same window of your editing program. You have to make sure that the cloud photo will match the sky area of the main photo and the direction of the sunlight. You can also use part of the cloud photo to fill the sky area if it fits in better.



Chatham Beach Shack

This was a famous photo-scenic in Chatham, on Cape Cod, years ago. It was located off the Shore Road near the Chatham Lighthouse. However, the severe storms in the past years have washed away that part of the beach area along with the beach shack and fence. The sky was devoid of clouds, so I cloned them in.

Camera info: Nikkormat, 80 to 200mm Nikon zoom lens, Kodachrome 64 film. Copied original color slide to digital.



Clouds

Using a fairly large cloning circle, you start cloning the cloud photo at the point where you want it to start in the main photo, usually at the edge of the horizon line, and you clone in the complete cloud image in one sweep, so

that if it does not look right you can delete it completely with Alt-Z and start over again until it looks OK. Sometimes you will have to do this routine over and over again. It is easy to do once you master the technique, but it may take some time learning how to do it.

When you are satisfied, you now have to get rid of the telltale areas that shows that you cloned in the clouds, such as where the clouds meet the horizon line, or where the clouds or new sky meets a roof top or tree tops. Here you have to work closely with your cloning tool and clone in the sky color tight against the area it touched. You may have to zoom enlarge the main photo to make it easier to close the gap between the sky and other areas.

Sunsets are handled in the same way as clouds. It is best to have a dozen or so good cloud or sunset photos, so start taking some now.



Chatham Beach Shack with Clouds

The finished product has both the original scene and the clouds from another photograph.



Cape Cod Sand Dune

Most beach areas on the Cape have small sand dunes, and if you find the right angle, you can produce a pleasing photograph. The morning sunlight was nice and warm in color and brought out the golden color in the beach grass, but it had a beautiful blue sky without a cloud in it. Here again, I cloned in the clouds.

Camera info: Canon 300D with 24 to 200mm Tokina zoom lens, set on automatic, and handheld.

About Arnold



Arnold John Kaplan, 92, lives on Cape Cod, where he is enjoying his second business career as a fine art photographer, computer geek, and webmaster. He dabbles in oil painting and has won prizes in both photography and painting. He is a juried member of the Cape Cod Art Association and a member of the Photographic Society of Cape Cod, the Yarmouth Art Guild, the Cape Cod Museum of Art, the Cultural Center of Cape Cod, the Photographic Society of America, Photo-Net, and the CCAA-Camera Club. You can see more of his photos at his website: www.johnarnoldphotography.com

NOTE TO READERS

Hey, folks ... Arnold offers advice on how to use computer-based techniques to produce enhanced images, and we recognize that some independent photographers, at times, use Photoshop and other techniques for artistic purposes. But we want to make sure that you understand that The Boston Globe and most other newspapers don't do this; we prohibit the manipulation of photographs by our staff and anybody else who takes photos for us. Just an FYI.