

Maine Home

MAY 2015

+ DESIGN



COLOR ON THE COAST

WELCOME TO SUMMER IN THE KENNEBUNKS

Homes designed for gathering

David Sears



David Sears maintains studios on Matinicus Island and in Pennsylvania's Bucks County. He has shown his work at galleries, festivals, and his own open-studio events. Recent exhibitions include solo shows at Archipelago Fine Arts Gallery in Rockland and SFA Gallery in Frenchtown, New Jersey. His work has been featured in *Island Reader*, an anthology of words and images published by the Maine Seacoast Mission. He is represented by Archipelago Fine Arts Gallery.

Creating things has always been central to my life," says Sears. He has worked in several media, "but in my heart I was always a painter," he admits. When his children decided to pursue art education, Sears realized "that I really wanted to spend the remainder of my life painting. My course was set and I have not looked back." In tandem with creating art, Sears nurtures a passion for the environment. Devoted to the unique landscapes of his beloved Matinicus Island and Bucks County, Sears celebrates the beauty of the natural world through his work while raising awareness of critical environmental issues. "Art is valuable for its own sake, but it can also be valuable for many other reasons," he says. Sears partners with various organizations to mount exhibitions that educate viewers about important causes. *Edges*, his first formal exhibition of this kind, was shown in 2012 at Archipelago Fine Arts Gallery and featured paintings inspired by Penobscot Bay. Sears explains that, while he is not a political artist, he believes that "a successful work of art should be able to multitask—bringing pleasure and beauty while also creating an awareness and knowledge for change."

20 Black Rocks is part of an ongoing series of paintings inspired by Condon Cove, "a cobblestone beach that rattles

and clatters with each wave," says Sears. "Each stone exists in a state of flux, every tide alters the balance, shadows shift, and some rocks get carried away." The stones he paints are not meant to be fully representational. Color, texture, and pattern become the focus, lending the piece a nearly abstract quality. For *20 Black Rocks*, Sears deliberately departed from his usual process, wherein "images grow from experience, research, and a desire for anatomical accuracy," instead allowing "creativity to drive choices." Talismanic black stones interspersed throughout encourage the eye, and the mind, to wander along their labyrinthine curves. Sears draws connections between his rock paintings and the teachings of Thich Nhat Hanh, a Vietnamese Zen Buddhist monk, namely that people should remain focused on the present moment. "Each work is created one stone at a time, much as life is built one moment at a time, and both can be elusive if you are searching for a comforting, recognizable pattern," he says. "The hope is that we can learn to focus on the moment, discover beauty in a single stone or expression, and then multiply that joy a thousandfold to create a beautiful 'beach.'"



20 Black Rocks (Condon Cove Series), 2009, acrylic/watermedia on paperboard, 24" x 36"