During the 1980’s I taught art in the Portland area and often visited Acadia to take advantage of the public access to the coastline that forms the backbone of my work. Acadia National Park protects more than 47,000 acres, in stark contrast to the patchwork of private and municipal holdings along the coast in the rest of New England. After a few visits I proposed an Artist in Residence program to Acadia National Park management, and in October of 1994 I was the first resident painter. The following year my family relocated to Town Hill in Bar Harbor. As a landscape painter, the issue of public access to the coastline was central to my decision to leave South Portland to live near the Park.

My work is done largely from direct observation and I have spent countless hours studying, painting and drawing on Mount Desert Island. My favorite sites include Great Head, the Otter Point area and both Hunter’s and Little Hunter’s Beaches, however this summer found me working off the island. For the month of July, I was an artist in residence at the Maine Farmland Trust’s Joseph A. Fiore Art Center at Rolling Acres Farm in Jefferson. It was an opportunity to explore a very different Maine landscape, and one that has been likewise opened for artists and others to experience freely.

I paint outside, year-round. In winter I break out the finger-less gloves, warm boots and occasionally, a chemical heat pack tucked into the palm of my glove. The calm beauty of the island in the winter speaks to me as a painter, though the variable weather and winter’s short day length can make winter painting challenging. There’s much to be said for having Sand Beach all to yourself on a calm, cold February morning.