

# DUDLEY ZOPP: AN INTRODUCTION

Essay from the catalogue in conjunction with the exhibition "Discovering the Physical: Norman Tinker and Dudley Zopp"

Center for Maine Contemporary Art

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Dudley Zopp first visited Maine fifteen years ago at the invitation of "Red" and Peg Garner, her parents' friends from Lincolnville, and returned once, twice and then three times a year until purchasing her present home in Belfast in 1996. Her expedition "Down East" to Quoddy Head close by the Canadian border in 1992 was nothing short of an epiphany. Amidst bogs, flora, forests and rocks aplenty, the artist came face to face with the kind of landscape that she had been able to experience previously only in her mind's eye. There, Dudley found her physical and spiritual center. She and the landscape—stretching ultimately from mid-coast Maine to remote Newfoundland—became one. Previous involvement with drawing architectural structures and painting the gentle, horizontal landscape during her student years at the University of Louisville in Kentucky would give way to more urgent images of abstracted rock formations embracing shafts of bold light among others.

Dudley continues her dedicated, single-minded search to uncover universal principles lying beneath the surface of things through close observation of the natural world. Her revelations come to us through the language of paint and canvas. Starting with an understanding of patterns in nature (and rocks in particular), the artist physically moves her brush over the canvas building layer upon layer of paint until something deep (and often inexplicable) within her psychic memory reveals archetypal truths to share with her audience.

Maine has been an uncommonly good fit for Dudley and vice versa. She has earned the respect of her peers in a milieu that she describes as "extraordinarily welcoming and generous of spirit." She has made her studio an active center for sharing and support among artists of all levels of ability. In her brief years here she has exhibited in all corners of the state—from Farmington to Rockport and Machias, and from Bangor to Belfast and Portland (including the first Portland Museum of Art Biennial). The Center for Maine Contemporary Art welcomes her return in "Discovering the Physical."

Bruce Brown, Curator

Center for Maine Contemporary Art  
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