

ROSANNE SOMERSON

To me Haystack is like the sound of a syncopated rhythm that plays its beat through decades. This running rhythm presents itself in new ways each time I am lucky enough to be there. A syncopated rhythm is unexpected in how it deviates from the typical succession of regularly spaced strong and weak beats. That which is usually unstressed is accented. In this way a new kind of unexpected sound results. This parallels my many Haystack experiences over the years. Sleeping on the hard granite ledges and finding them unexpectedly soft and yielding as they carry the sounds and smells of the sea, sitting with the blank page of a sketchbook and having six good ideas show up that come from nowhere—Haystack is never predictable but always full of discovery and experience.

It's the one place that I always go to with no expectations, and come home rethinking everything. There is wisdom at Haystack that resonates off the crash of the shore, that settles in the mosses and lichen-covered stones, and that vibrates with the wooden decks. This wisdom draws fuels from the intensity of the landscape, so extraordinary that it both settles and invigorates every one of the senses. It draws from the decades of creative people that have made there, and invented there, and shared there and whose presence is still felt there.

For me personally Haystack has been a kind of gift of magic. That gift is one that has helped my work, but also my teaching, my sense of discovery about ways of working, my feelings about just being a participant in the world, and my ability to deal with some of the most joyous and most painful parts of things. It's the place where I can always work it out with myself, find the door, walk through without hesitation and come out safe, even though I might be suspended in mid-air. There is no other place like this for me. I am so grateful for the many momentous events, the deep learning, the people, the foggy framed views, the amazing shared meals, the made and natural workspaces, and the continued generosity. My repeated trips to Haystack are one ritual in my life that forms an unmatched rhythm.

