

PRESS RELEASE – For immediate release, October 5, 2021

Info: Nancy Hauswald
Left Bank Books
Belfast, ME
207.338.9009
info@leftbankbookshop.com

**AUTHORS BOB KEYES and PAUL DOIRON
IN CONVERSATION**

The public is warmly invited to a virtual conversation on Tuesday, October 19 at 6 pm, when Bob Keyes, nationally recognized arts journalist, and Paul Doiron, acclaimed author of the Mike Bowditch mystery series, get together to celebrate the recent release of Keyes’s book, *The Isolation Artist: Scandal, Deception, and the Last Days of Robert Indiana*. The free Zoom event is being co-hosted by Left Bank Books in Belfast and the Belfast Free Library. To register for the event, go to <https://belfastlibrary.org/virtual-programs/> and find the link.

Robert Indiana, who lived on Maine’s Vinalhaven Island for almost forty years until his death in 2018, was best known for creating the iconic “LOVE” sculptures, paintings, and prints that became hallmarks of the American art scene in the last half of the twentieth century. The artist, who craved both fame and solitude, was “a walking, talking bundle of contradictions,” according to Christopher Crosman, the former director of the Farnsworth Art Museum. That Indiana never copyrighted his “LOVE” image—“I’m not a businessman, I’m an artist” he famously said—was only one of many reasons why his multi-million dollar estate (by some estimates it was worth \$60 million) was embroiled in lawsuits, allegations of elder abuse, an FBI investigation, and fraud.

Keyes, who knew Indiana and had interviewed him, talked with dozens of people who knew the artist, reported on court hearings, and reviewed hundreds of pages of legal findings to tell the story of Indiana’s forty years in Maine. *Isolation Artist* is a fast-paced and riveting story that examines the life of an artist as well as the often-unscrupulous world of high-end art. It is an extraordinary window into the life and death of a singular American artist who lived and died in isolation, in horrendous living conditions. Keyes writes “In the final hours of his life, Robert Indiana was without the grace of a better angel, as the people closest to him covered their tracks and plotted their defenses.”

Paul Doiron, who will be conversation with Keyes, wrote that *Isolation Artist* “is a scandalously good tale of intrigue set on a remote Maine island and feature a rogue’s gallery of art hucksters, small-town grifters, and self-dealing drug addicts. But the chief rogue in [this] masterful investigation is Robert Indiana, a troubled genius who was often more trouble than he was worth.”

Doiron, of course, knows a thing or two about tales of intrigue. His Mike Bowditch mystery series (there are now 12 books to date) all take place in Maine, have been translated into 10 languages, and have received numerous prestigious regional and national awards, including the Maine Literary Award (three times). Doiron was the editor-in-chief of *Down East Magazine* from 2005 to 2013 before stepping down to write full time. He is a native of Maine, graduated with a degree in English from Yale University, and holds an MFA in creative writing from Emerson College. He is a former member of the Maine Arts Commission and a current member of the Maine Humanities Council. He is also a Registered Maine Guide specializing in fly-fishing.

Copies of *Isolation Artist* are available at Left Bank Books; call 207-338-9009 or email: info@leftbankbookshop.com to reserve one. The shop is happy to ship copies if you're unable to visit.



Bob Keyes



Paul Doiron