Isaacs and his late wife, Lisa DeFrancis, were living on Bragg Hill in Norwich, Vt., while DeFrancis was being treated for breast cancer at Dartmouth’s Norris Cotton Cancer Center. She died in 1999 at the age of 46, but Isaacs has special memories of both the Cancer Center (“a safe haven,” he calls it) and of this Vermont hillside (to which “we always seemed to be heading back,” he says). A noted artist, Isaacs has worked in numerous mediums—drawing, pastels, prints, stone, glass. But it’s paint that he finds most appealing. “I simply like the gooey, gloppy nature of the stuff,” he says. “Painting in oil is very forgiving. Adding, subtracting—it’s hard to get into too much trouble.” And, he continues, “I love how the slightest stroke or mark, just a bit out of one’s control, can change or suggest a new idea.” Whatever medium he works in, Isaacs finds that creating art has therapeutic value. “For me personally,” he says, “art has always been a place to go, to wash up, so to speak, and renew [my] strength.” And he thinks everyone benefits from the presence of art in health-care settings. “I believe that the upheavals of illness need . . . breaks and that art can provide them,” he says. “Sometimes escape is just the right medicine.” But it must be the right kind of art, he adds—not a “corporate design ‘look’” but a “central role of fun and healing.” Bragg Hill is one of three paintings that Isaacs has donated to the 2010 Prouty, the annual bike ride and walk that benefit Norris Cotton; prints of the works will go to Prouty participants who raise more than $10,000, and the originals to the top three fund-raisers. The Prouty brings in over $2 million a year; for more about the event, see www.TheProuty.org.