Last voyage of the Emeralda

Ritchie's Perfect Press

Last voyage of the Emeralda:
Story of the painting
by Bill Ritchie

Ritchie's Perfect Press
Division Emeralda works
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Preface

The story of this painting began in 2005. I had a studio on Taylor Ave., North in Seattle located between a custom furniture wood shop and a soft goods factory. The wood shop was run by a craftsman named Nick Dello's. Nick and I became friends and good neighbors. One day he came to me with a proposition.

He had a commission to do the entire interior of a penthouse on a high-rise in downtown Seattle. The owner of the penthouse commissioned Nick to design and build all the furnishings in the condominium. It was taking Nick about a year to finish the project.

When it was finished they plan to sell it. Nick asked me, would I be willing to make four or five artworks to go in the condominium penthouse? He would pay me $500 for materials and I could name my price for the artworks if the new owners wanted to buy them as a collection.

Painting, for me, is an indulgence I can't afford. It's a long story, but I limit myself to works of modest size and requiring only as much time as I have to allow for the pleasure of making art. So I was glad to say yes to Nick's proposal because it gave me a chance have material to work with (which is the first problem I faced whenever I thought of making a large painting).

The following is the story of one of these five paintings, titled "Last voyage of the Emeralda." It is the largest of the group of works I made for Nick. It measures 6 feet wide and 4 feet tall. I don't recall clearly how many months it took to finish. When the penthouse condominium was ready, Nick arrange to have the work moved and installed.

The painting hung in the master bedroom and it looked great. The other works were distributed around the other areas. The effect was successful and soon the penthouse was sold. However, the buyers didn't plan to live there; they planned to lease it. Therefore they did not want the artworks. Obviously the choice of artworks would be left to the people that leased the penthouse.

It was only a slight disappointment that the works weren't purchased, but the upside was that I got to keep them! We installed the artworks in our home and the large painting eventually went into our gallery around 2013. There it was admired by everyone who came in or who walked past our windows.

In 2018 – over 12 years since I made it, one of my oldest and dearest friends, Carl Chew bought it! It was comical the way it happened. He happened to be in the neighborhood because his mother was recording a video for Cuts, a Netcast. He had time to kill and came to see me. He declared, "I'm going to buy that painting!" He asked, "How much is it?"

My own reaction was a mixture of consternation and confusion. Probably I didn't want to sell it. But this was 2018, and I was going through a period of pain and doubt about disposing of my art. I have to clear out the gallery. I have to face the fact that everything will go into the dumpster unless I take action. This painting, for example, had to go. When he asked me how much it was I remembered that at one time I had a price of $54,000 on it.

How I came up with that number is a story in itself having partly to do with the apparent success of some of my former students. At their shows I saw price tags like that on their artworks. So, why not me? Could I not ask for as much or more for my art as my students?

But to answer my friend's question, "What's the price?" I walked over to where there was a little label pasted to the wall. Our daughter Nellie made that label and it said, $875. I laughed! Surely it was a mistake. I told Carl. He asked again, "So, then, how much is it?' Honestly I just picked a number out of the air, and I said, "$3,750."

He said, "Okay, I'll send you a check tomorrow." True to his word, the check arrived. I was still feeling strange. I don't like to make a big thing about money chasing art. Still, my feelings were conflicted. One, I hated to see the painting go. Two, Carl himself knew the painting was worth about $25,000, and he said so. Three - where would he hang it? The last time I saw his house, the walls were already full of art.

There is a tangent to the story worth mentioning because it touches on the future. The foregoing happened when I was in another one of my low points, financially speaking. Before this all happened, I put out word to a friend on Facebook that I needed some quick cash to pay for the last set of postcards for my friend Ed Raub – part of another project entirely and another long story.

Janet Fisher, sent me $80 for a print. At the same time, I have been thinking about a project called Artscrip, a kind of investment scheme where people take on artworks as shares in a Benefit Corporation – the artwork standing as scrip, like stock certificates. Taking Janet's $80 and dividing it by the number of square inches of the print, I established that my art sold for about $2.43 - so she had $80 dollars' worth of stock in my scheme. Applying the same formula to Carl's painting, meant that the painting was worth just under $9000.

I was then able to think of Carl's purchase not of my painting for itself, but as his having purchased the art as scrip at a depressed price. The market was down at that moment! The money he paid me could be applied to my vision for an international print center and incubators.

I tell the story as a preface to what follows – the story of this painting. If an artwork could be said to have a life of its own, then this preface serves as the beginning of the biography of this painting.

Bill Ritchie, April 2, 2018.

What's in the title?

People often ask artists what their images mean, or what is meant by the art's title. Some artists bristle at this tired old question. They feel and believe that the art speaks for itself. Abstract art, however, is difficult; yes, it is what it is, but if they work seems to express something yet it's not obvious what, then the viewer becomes curious. This is human nature. Or, not; this, too, is human nature.

The title, "Last voyage of the Emeralda," does mean something, despite that the painting, "is what it is," an abstract, colorful organization of geometric lines, loops and spirals rendered in rich acrylic paint, collage and script. If someone needs to understand a little about my way of working then I'm happy to tell the story of what the title "means."

To begin, understand first that painting to me is a process, not merely a means to an end. In other words, I don't start with a clear idea and then use paint to fill it in. I have a vague idea, and the idea I have at the beginning is subject to changes as the painting goes along. My painting is an art of process - like my printmaking processes. Some people call it "process part."

Compare this to musical composition. A composer might have a tiny bit of music in mind, a short, hummable melody, and that's all. There might be some words, suggested by the melody - or not. As I understand it, then the music grows into a longer piece, more words, and then it's arranged and rehearsed. Even through the rehearsals up to the recording or live performance, it's still subject to change. Indeed even in a live performance more changes may occur on purpose or by "happy" accident.

My painting, Last Voyage of the Emeralda is like that. I had months in which to create this painting, and much of the original idea remains, but many chance occurrences came along that made the painting image change. The snapshots on the following pages show the progression. Obviously, some stages got completely wiped out by subsequent layers of paint.

Now that I've given the basic idea of my process, I can tell the reader that the title came after several weeks. In fact, even as I explain, I'm wondering if it is the best title!

The word Emeralda is one I made up around 1992 in response to a challenge in the Seattle Times newspaper. It was in the business and finance section. The issue was about the economics of trade between British Columbia and our Northwest, the states of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana.

Economic development people were suggesting that in Seattle we needed to come to agreements that would serve both the Canadians and the United States Americans. They called for a name or a brand for this special region. What should it be, they asked their readers? The times invited people to send their suggested names.

My letter to the times suggested the name Emeralda because already Seattle was known as the Emerald City. The areas around Eugene, Oregon, was called the Emerald Valley. The word sounded to me like the name of a land or a region, like Shangrila. The Times' contest ended and the name I sent in was not adopted. The powers that be chose the word Cascadia.

Nevertheless, by now I was fond of my notion, thinking that our region was the Emeralda that I envisioned as a special place, characterized by a green philosophy in the sense of ecological concerns.

As time went on, the name Emeralda became magical to me until, sometime in the mid-1990's, it was the name I gave my fantasy land. It was my imaginary place and I envisioned it on the World Wide Web as a virtual world, a paradisaical haven for artists, teachers and other important humanists today and for all history.

Emeralda also became the name of a game I work on inventing and play-test. Therefore, whenever I have an opportunity, I take ideas and adapt them to my game. My game is like a puzzle you have to solve in order to invent.

As for the word voyage, I have long considered artists as being like voyageurs. More exactly, I think of them as navigators. When computers were reaching into all aspects of people's lives, I got interested in the history of computers and the word cybernetics, which refers to an early version of computer science.

The founders of cybernetics named it that kybor is the Greek word for steersman, or navigator and the issues of cybernetics were about ways the human brain resembled steering systems, or controls. Cybernetics came to mean the science of control in humans and machines.

Artists play a role in steering society, and since computers are important, I believe that artists should learn how to use cybernetics effectively in the creation and dissemination of their art, craft and design.

Connecting Emeralda to the ideas of cybernetics is, to me, like building a craft – a ship, in other words - and the name of my imaginary ship is the Emeralda. It sounds Spanish, and the reason for this is because it's Spanish for emerald, a member of the beryl family of gemstones. There are three other Emeralda's, by the way: A hotel in Jakarta, a luxury resort in Vietnam, and it's the name of a warrior girl in a video game.

The reader may ask, "Why is it the last voyage of the Emeralda?" As he painting was a process, things kept changing over the weeks and months that I worked on it. Things happened that I had no idea would happen when I started; and when things happen that interested me, I'd ask myself, "What can I do with this in the painting?"

There are connections among the things that I do which do not have any apparent relationships. The idea that this voyage was the last one for the ship Emeralda is a long story. Emeralda is also the name of a fantasy region I invented in order to develop a game.

This make-believe place got its name not only from the greenness of the Pacific Northwest, but also from the tale I wrote about the Emeralda – a ship sunk not far from Seattle in the mid-18th century by a powerful tsunami. I made up this story partly because I was creating this painting and, concurrently, other events happened and then fell into place as the painting progressed.

In one version, it was the last voyage for the Emeralda, a Spanish galleon (later I changed it to a frigate) owned and sailed by remnants of the Knights Templar. They had escaped Europe when their order was being destroyed and they sought

a place in the New World where they could rebuild their order. The search for a new, safe haven took them to Puget Sound, but that's as far as they got because one night, around the year 1742, a tsunami rushed in through the Straits of Juan De Fuca, forming a towering wave that smashed the ship. All were lost in the ship was totally destroyed the wreckage sank into a deep channel near between two islands known today as Cedar Island and Guemes Island.

Before that fatal day, something happened that contributed a lot to the painting; or, was it the other way around? Even as I write, I'm not sure now which came first, the story of the Russian cabin boy, or did the painting dictate the need of the story of the cabin boy? Process art is a funny thing, illogical and fraught with chance occurrences.

I love beautiful handwriting, the old-style calligraphy you seldom see practiced today. Also I'm fascinated by the story of Leonardo da Vinci and how he wrote some of his journals backward, mirror – image. If my memory serves me correctly, it was to make reading it difficult without a mirror so that there was less likelihood of others reading it. What he was writing could have been considered heretical so he wanted to reduce the chance of being charged with a crime, perhaps.

For similar secret intentions but more so because I wanted to tell his tale in the cabin boy's own words I wanted to include this beautiful script in my painting. I had a problem: my handwriting is not beautiful and, secondly, it would be even less effective if I tried to write backward! Another problem was: What would I write? I needed a story or a poem, but what would it be? Would the cabin boy's tale be enough? And suppose the viewers of the painting could actually read it- would they be disappointed? Maybe the story stunk.

Then, in early August of the year I started this painting – 2005 – I received a letter from a woman who was having a show. It was an invitation, one of the nicest I've ever seen and – guess what – she wrote it with beautiful calligraphy, the kind I wanted to use.

At once I wanted to hire her to write my text, and with this in mind I went to work on improving the story content. Already I had the idea of writing a story about a stranded sailor who was picked up by the crew of the Emeralda, but when I got the woman's invitation – and she's Russian – I changed the sailor to a Russian cabin boy.

I might insert here that I was, at the time, reading James Michener's novel, "Alaska," and the stories of the Russian exploration and settlement of the area were fascinating and eye-opening. Michener included a tsunami in his story, too, verifying the existence of tidal waves in the Pacific Rim in the 1700s.

In my imagination I figured that - around the same time the Emeralda was in the Puget Sound - a Russian ship had sailed from Kamchatca to the Americas and south almost as far as the Straits of Juan De Fuca. Through some accident, a cabin boy about 14 years old was lost overboard. He made it to an island where, by chance, the Captain of the Emeralda had sent a boat for fresh water and the crew came upon the boy on the beach and saved him.

I wanted to hire the Russian woman to write my story in her beautiful handwriting but I had no money to pay her, so I waited. But I waited too long, and when I finally wrote to her belatedly, thanking her for her invitation, she must have gone back to Russia because I never heard from her again.

So I began the writing project myself, despite my inferior handwriting. All this is to explain the title of the painting, Last Voyage of the Emeralda. There's more to tell but not for now.

A note on production quality

When the photos were taken, in 2005, my digital camera was a Sony which did not have the controls of a good camera. It produced TIF files at one pixel per inch. The images were 640 inches by 480 inches, and when I converted them it was still early in the day, and I mistakenly made them 72 dpi when it might have been possible to go with 300 dpi.

Notes from the Emeralda Library

The painting developed he year after the design of the Halfwood Press in 2004. I collected essays relevant to both the title, Last voyage of the Emeralda, and the evolution of the presses, storing them on my computer and editing them from time to time. On the occasion of this printing - for Carl Chew, the owner of the painting - I decided to fill in the white spaces with the most recent iteration of the collection, the "Emeralda Library." Why waste all that white space, after all, I may never have another chance to put it in a duplicable format as I have the opportunity now, thanks to Carl.

- Bill Ritchie, April 4, 2018

Nick Dellos' built a panel and I stretched 7 ounce cotton canvas over it. With a snap-chalk line I created a grid of 18 12 X 16" rectangles. Then I began to gesso the grid with a mixture of buff colored and white titanium acrylic gesso.

Book 1: Secret of Santander Beach:

History of the phantom ship, the Emeralda I

Santander, Spain - 1983

(See also Bill Ritchie's journals he made while traveling Spain with his family in 1983)

I walked the beach a little way, eating Spanish peanuts from a paper back. A shell caught my eye—long, like piece of a tree branch but definitely a sea shell. I picked it up. It looked like jack knife. I learned later it was their version of a razor clam.

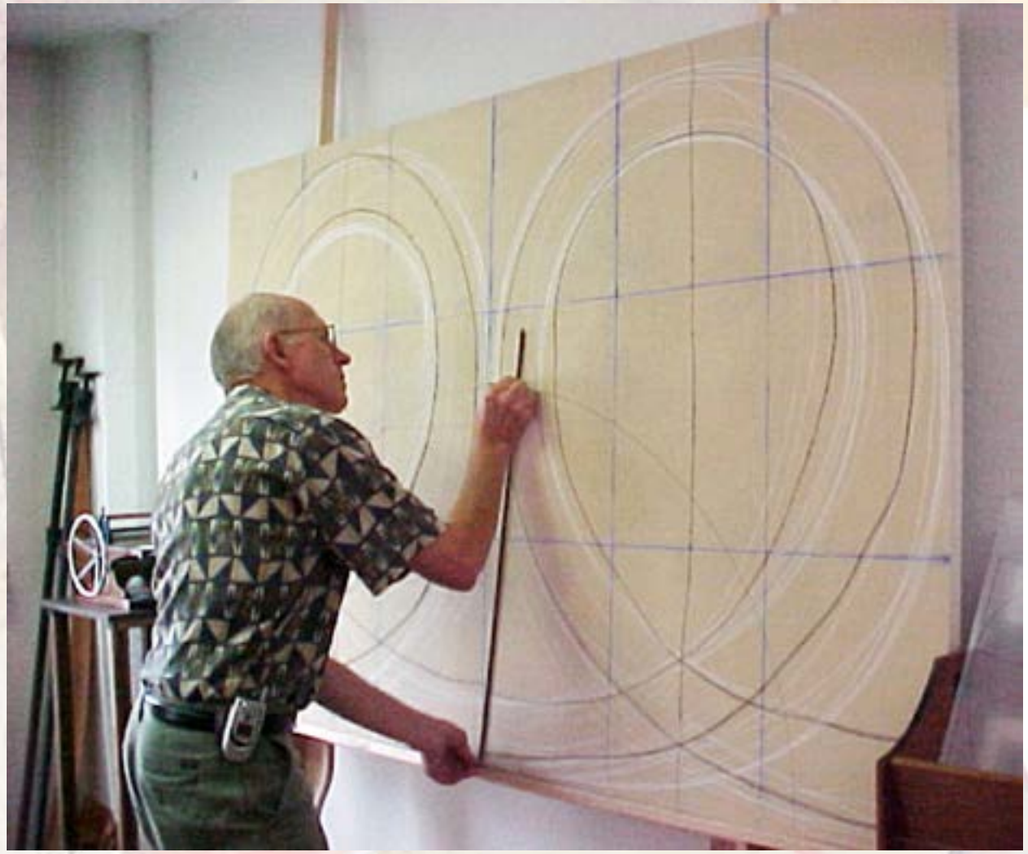
A dark object lay ahead, which I took to be a rock. There were no other rocks around, however. When I got closer I saw it was not a rock, but wood. I nudged it with the toe of my shoe, but it was solid, not a mere piece of driftwood as I thought at first.

I squatted down to look closer. It was burnished; it had been here a long time. I put my hand on it, appraising its silky, wet cold surface. The color was of a very dark red apple, like redwood, but darker—almost purple. If it were redwood, it would be soft so I pressed my thumbnail against it. It was as hard as rock. I stood up and gave it a kick, thinking I might loosen it.

"Don't do that!" someone said, in a tone like someone admonishing a child.

A shadow fell across the wood and I looked up. Against the sun I could only make out the silhouette of the person standing there. I stood up, embarrassed.

"I'm sorry," was all I could think to say. But to myself I wondered, why should I be sorry for kicking a piece of wood on a beach? It was a woman, and she looked to be very old. Her hair was white and her face was deeply lined and stern. She was dressed in black. Her face softened, and she smiled a



With white and black Conte crayon, I started the "loop-da-loo" spirals based on my year 2000 journal drawings I call the "helix of time." Using sticks of Brazilian hardwood that I found in Nick's shop, I made arcs with the sticks serving as compasses.

wide smile.

"You are interested?" she asked, pointing at the wood. I was relieved that she spoke English. Maybe she noticed our car's license plates, or maybe she could just tell by looking at me that I was an American. I glanced toward the car. I could see Lynda and the girls poking around the sand near where we parked.

"Yes, very interested," I lied.

"It is a ship. A great ship from the 16th Century," she said. "You are American?"

"Yes. I am an American. I am a professor at a University," I said. My name is Ritchie. Bill Ritchie.

She nodded. She studied me awhile, as though thinking whether to stay and talk or go on her way.

"A professor? Well, it happens that I, too, am a professor. Where is your school?"

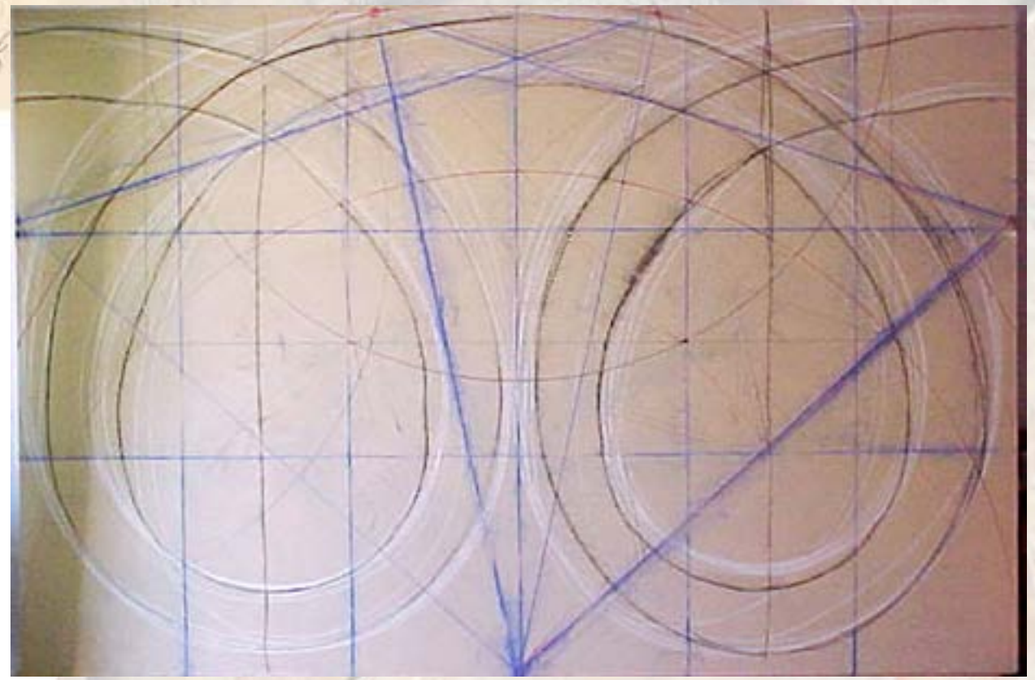
"In Seattle, in Washington State."

"I know Seattle," she said, and gave me another big smile. "You have a great University there, and I know it. I met another professor from there, years ago. What do you teach?"

"Art."

"Ah. Art. So what brings you to Santander? And why do you think this piece of wood is interesting?" She tilted her head as she asked me this. A breeze caught her hair and strands fell across her eyes. She brushed them aside. Her eyes were dark and penetrating I thought—like Picasso's eyes.

I said, "I don't know. We came to Santander for the beach. For the view. We are staying in Castro Urdiales. I am waiting for the International Art Fair in Bilbao. I heard that Santander is beautiful so I decided to come and see." She was nodding as I spoke. "You understand my English well?" I added, to be sure she was following me.



Upside–down, and with the first of the triangles, I think an abstraction should read well upside-down as well as right–side up. The rectangles are 16 x 12", planning for a book of that size - a book which never materialized.

"I taught English until I retired six years ago," she said. Then she turned and looked back to where our van was parked. Lynda and the girls were walking toward the surf. "Why does this wood interest you?"

I was watching Lynda, and at that moment she looked my way. Even though distant, I knew she was looking at me and I waved. She waved back, her hand high. Then she continued walking toward the water, the girls going ahead of her.

The fact this woman knew English—and as a professor, perhaps better than I spoke it; and a teacher, too. I relaxed. "Really, I don't know, but when I saw it I thought, 'There are no rocks but this one; then I found it was wood—and it seems like it is not like any wood that comes from trees around here.'" I squatted down again to look closer. "Also, it looks as though . . . it does not look like a tree nor ordinary driftwood."

"You are correct. The fact is, professor, it is part of a ship. You are standing where the Esmeralda—the first Esmeralda—was beached in 1588, during the war with England. You know the Grande y Felicísima Armada? Oh, but you would say, Spanish Armada."

"Vaguely," I confessed, and added, "Not very well."

"This is the grave of only one ship, the Emeralda, which was part of that fleet. She was not a war ship, but a supporting ship. In the battles out there," at this she raised an arm and pointed out at the sea, "She was so badly damaged that all the crew could do was get her to this beach. Over time, so many years, the remains sank deeper and deeper until this is all you can see." She sighed. "They are like her bones." She added, "That is why I asked you not to kick."

She was quiet for a moment. I tried to imagine the ship, but I could not. I was thinking as a boy I loved to draw ships—great ships in sails billowing and the bow crashing through the ocean waves. The woman suddenly raised a hand, as though she had just remembered something else.

"You would say 'Emeralda' for the Spanish, Esmeralda. The gem of the ocean. It is said she was a marvelous craft, very fast and very beautiful," the woman continued. "Like a jewel. A poet wrote about it, The Gem of the Esmeralda Coast. You know, of course, that this region is called the Esmeralda—Emerald—Coast. It is so green.

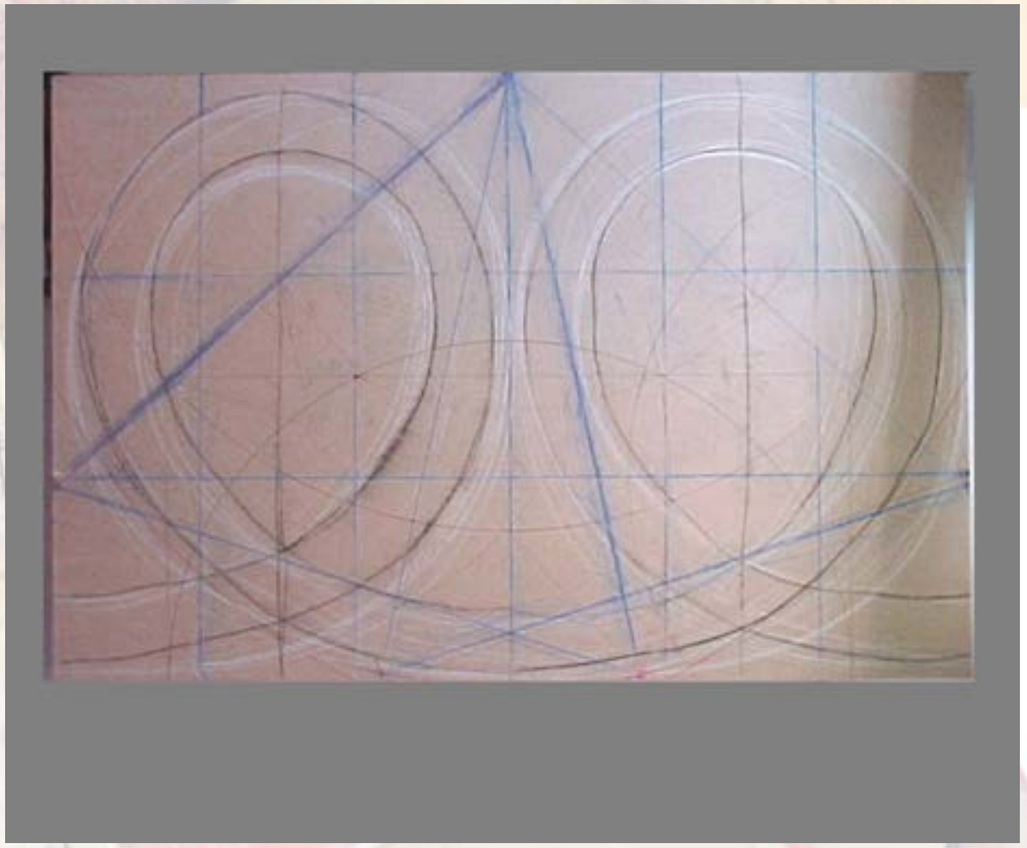
I nodded, yes I had heard that. "Do you live here?" I asked.

"No. I am on holiday. I have a farm in the Mondragon, not far from Arrasate. Do you know Mondragon?" she asked.

"Somewhere . . .." I started to say that I had heard of it.

She interrupted, "It is famous. Because it is where the Mondragon Cooperatives began. They are still very strong, the Mondragon. Worldwide." After a moment of silence, she asked, "Would you like to know more about the ship? The Esm—the Emeralda?"

I looked toward the van. Now Lynda and the girls had got into the van, and Lynda was waving with her arm out the



driver's side window, waving for me to come back.

"I would like to know more, yes, but now my wife is beckoning me to come back. I wish I could hear more. Is it possible I could find a book, perhaps?" At this question she chuckled.

"Yes, perhaps. In the tourist section of Santander, you might find a book. Just ask someone there. It is a great story." Friendly now, she extended her hand and I grasped it. It was cold. The wind had picked up and again her white hair tangled across her eyes. "It was very nice to meet you, Professor Ritchie."

"Likewise. I'm glad you came along," I said, but she already had turned away and was walking on. I called, "Wait, I didn't get your name," but she kept walking as though she couldn't hear me, the wind blowing away my words or, at her age, she was hard of hearing. I watched her back. For a second I was tempted to catch up with her, but now I heard our car horn beep. It was Lynda. I looked toward the car again and she was again waving to come back.

With s glance at the woman, who now was too far to regain, I turned and walked to the van. When I got there and opened the car door to get in, Lynda scooted over to the passenger side and I got in.

"What took you so long?" Lynda said, and from the back seat Billie Jane whined, "I want to go back." Nellie was silent.

"Okay," I agreed, and I added, "Well, that was interesting," I said to Lynda.

"What?"

"That woman I was talking to. She's a retired professor and she spoke English—she used to teach English. She told me that piece of wood buried there is part of a ship."

"What woman?"

"You know, that woman in the black coat and white hair. She talked to me a long time. It's an interesting story, about a ship."

"Are you kidding me?"

From the back, Billie Jane said, "Yeah Dad, there wasn't anyone there. This whole beach is deserted. And boring. It's creepy. Let's go!"

"Can we go now?" Nellie asked quietly.

I started the car as I asked, "What do you mean? It wasn't

Black gesso came next, and by following some new parks I found interesting, I added to "wings" to the border that accommodated their swing. The triangle was repainted over the black gesso, and the loop-da-loop loops were restored.

that far that you couldn't see her. We were standing by that thing—I'll show you," and I turned the car toward the wood. I wanted to show them and tell them the story.

"Are you sure it's okay to drive on the beach? We could get stuck," Lynda warned.

"It's just a little way," I said, scanning the beach for that dark lump of wood. I was retracing my footsteps, which were clearly imprinted on the sand. Then I came to the end of my trail. There was nothing except my tracks—going to this point and then returning to where the car was. I stopped the van and backed up a little. I was confused.

Lynda said, "If there was a woman talking to you, she must have been very light on her feet, because I can only see your tracks, Hon."

"Can we go now?" Nellie repeated.

"Dad, can we go in the city and look around?" Jane said. The girls' questions hung in the air as I stared at the sand and my footprints. Only mine.

Lynda said, "Yes, lets' do go to town. We have time." I had a funny feeling not to argue about the woman; I'd talk to Lynda about it, later, when we were alone. I turned the car around and headed to the access road.

The drive into the tourist section in town was easy. It was off season, so there were plenty of parking spaces. I was looking for a shop that looked like it might have books. I didn't want to forget what had happened back at the beach. I needed a book. I wanted to learn about that ship.

We parked and we began walking. There were shops selling everything—souvenirs, beach-wear, trinkets of all kinds and a few art galleries. Then I saw a sign, Librería de Playa de Santander. Lynda and the girls didn't want to stop there, so we agreed to meet back at the van in a half-hour.

Entering the bookstore I suddenly remembered—if the book I wanted was in Spanish, I wouldn't be able read it! A young woman came toward me. "May I help you?" she asked,

in English, with a smile.

"Oh good, you speak English," I said.

"Of course, and you are American, perhaps?"

"Yes. I am looking for a book—I hope I can find it in English—about a ship that I heard was—is near here, beached, under the sand . . ." She gazed at me for a moment, and then her face lighted up, a show of recognition.

"Oh, si, yes, yes," I think I know the one. But I don't think there is a book. It is only a legend. No one knows for a fact that a ship is really out there," and she paused. "It was the 16th Century, you know, according to the legend." She shrugged. "But, who knows?"

Disappointed, I left empty-handed. From a passing comment from a stranger on Santander Beach—a ghost perhaps, or I imagined it—I was interested in this legend.

Back in our van, headed back to Castro Urdiales and our hotel, I asked Lynda: "You really didn't see anyone with me?" Lynda just looked at me. She's not the kind of person who tolerates fantasy. My flights of imagination were sometimes too much. I knew not to pursue the matter of the woman in black.

Book 2: Halfwood Press Workshop - Seattle, 2010

One afternoon, it was late and I was about to close up my shop, when a woman tapped on the window, indicating she wanted to come in. I nodded, and she opened the door and entered.

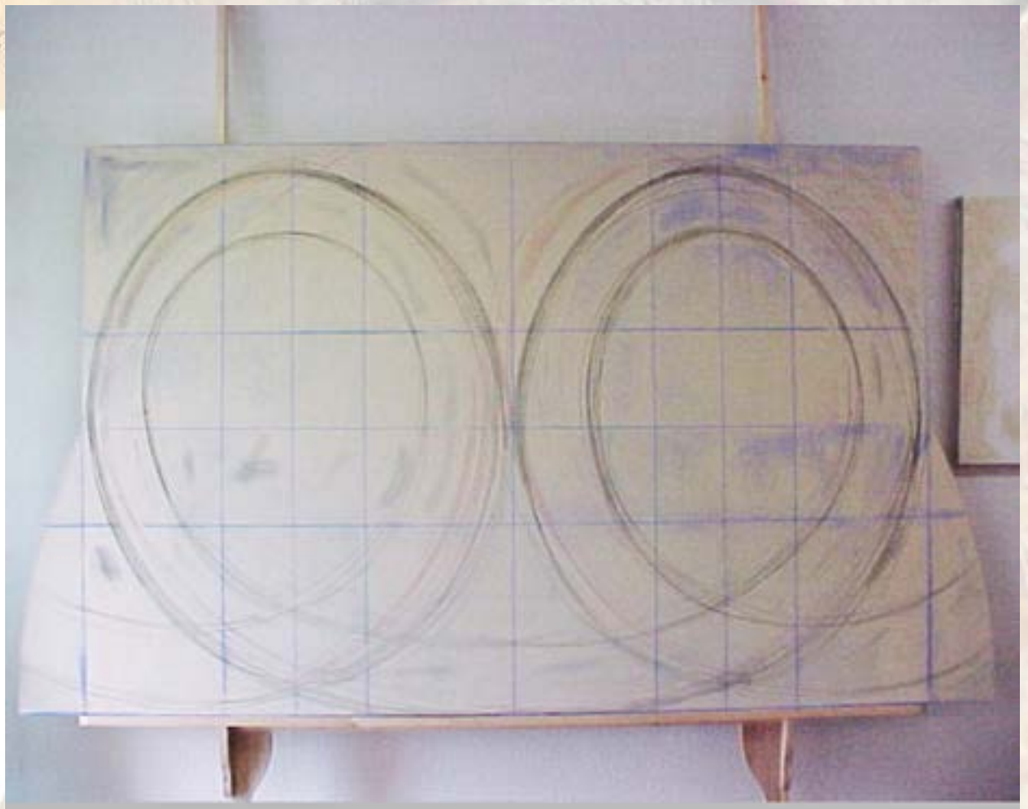
"Watch you don't trip on anything," I warned her; then, "Hi, my name is Bill."

"I'm Sandy," she said, and smiled. "I saw the presses in the window, and I just had to ask you about them. I'm a printmaker, so I know they are etching presses, but they're unlike any I've seen." She was looking around the shop as she spoke, meeting my eyes momentarily and then darting about again, taking everything in.

"Well, I make them . . ." I ventured.

"You *make* them?" she said, her head jerked back to me. "No kidding, so you make them. *Here*?"

"Yes. Welcome to Halfwood Press Workshop."



"Wow," she said. "Wow." She repeated. "Well, they're beautiful. So you make them?"

"Well, to be totally honest, I do the wood parts, and my co-worker, Tom, he does the steel parts. He's the steel guy and the engineer." Now she was exploring the shop, stopping, peering closer at things. Now she stood looking at two of the larger presses, the model that I call Galleon.

"That one I call the Galleon. The ones you saw in the window are Prams," I offered. "I've given them all names that have to do with wooden boats. There is a nautical theme in all the designs." I glanced at the clock. Lynda expected me back in ten minutes. This happened before; people on their way home from work see the presses in the window and they stop and sometimes they come in.

"Yes," she said. "I can see that. The wheel looks like a ship's wheel in a way. The woodwork is beautiful. And I like the brass touch," she said as she traced the brass medallion on the top of the press. Her hand stopped at the small, black indentation on the edge of the wood crosspiece.

"What's this?" she said. She was pointing at the flash drive, barely visible, hidden in the wooden hood.

"Flash drive," I said. "It's a memory chip with four gigabytes' capacity.

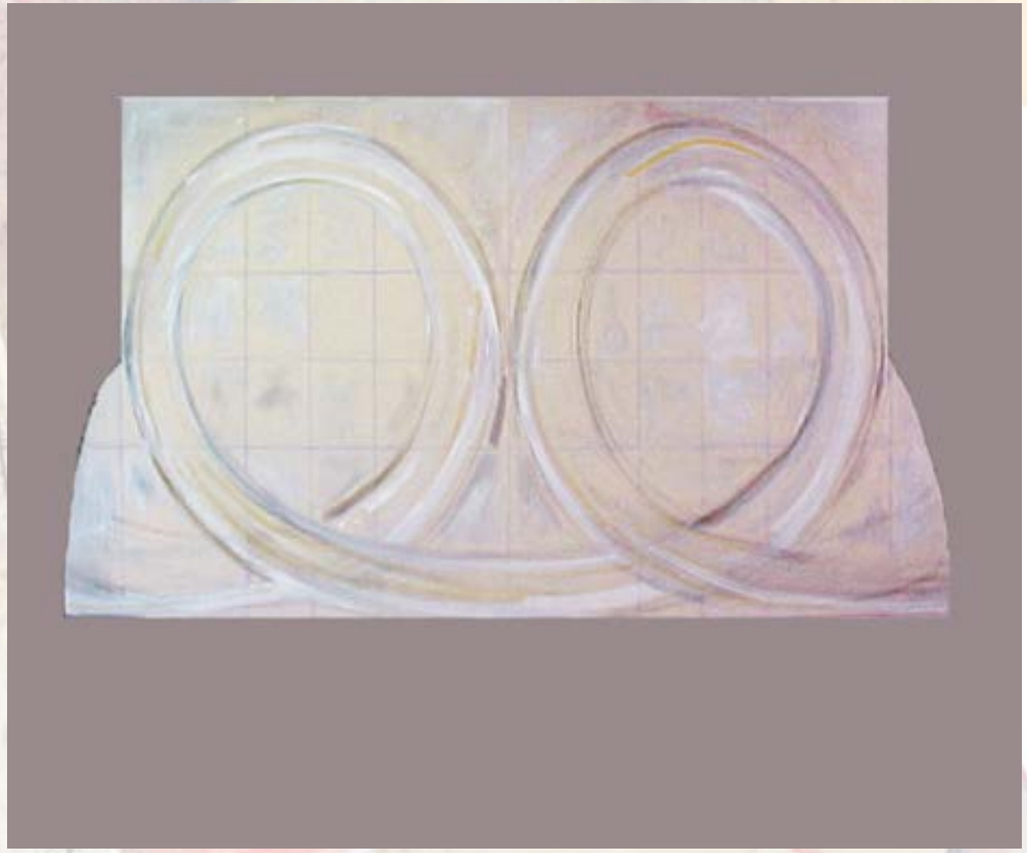
"Computer memory?" she said, her eyes wide. "You're kidding! Really?"

"Nope. Yes, the flash drive—thumb drive—connects with a cable to your computer, and you can download the information that's on it. I put my brains in it, you might say."

She was quiet. Then, "Well, I won't keep you, I have to get home. Do you have a card?"

"Oh, yes," and I went to the shelf and from the clutter fetched a business card. I added, "And here's a souvenir postcard, too." She took them and went away. I never saw her again. It happens this way, quite often. I went home to dinner with Lynda.

That woman didn't stay long enough to learn about the source of the design of the press. Other people had, in the past, and I enjoyed making up stories as to the source or inspiration for the design. The more times I told the story, the more details crept into it.



Book 3: It started with a medallion

It started with the medallion—that quarter-size brass emblem set into the wood that connects the two sides at the top of the Halfwood press. I etched a design in the brass, the side-view, profile of the press itself. That profile was to become my letterhead logo for the Halfwood Press venture.

It was the boredom of the handwork that brought on the stories. Handwork appeals to me when it's a kind of problem-solving, like putting pieces together in a puzzle. But, after I have done it a time or too, boredom sets in.

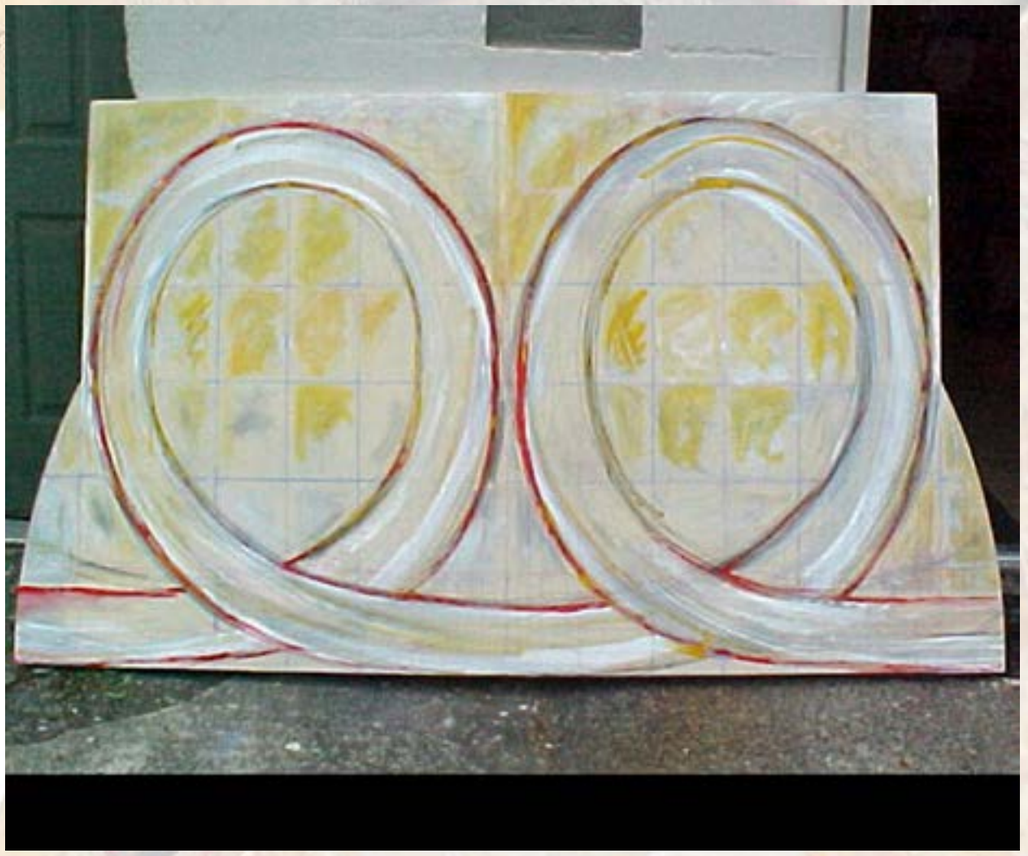
My mind needs something to entertain itself while my hands work on the wood parts of the press, or the connecting parts, setting the screws and such. Then there are setbacks that seemed to pop up without end. Now and then I would make a few discoveries of ways to do the work more efficiently. So, without any challenges, my mind would go off in a corner somewhere, curl up and go into states of fantasy and dreaming.

The best story that emerged and became the longest-lasting was about finding a report in a small town paper in Bellingham, north of Seattle, where my wife and I had gone for a New Years' eve overnight. At breakfast, in the local newspaper, I saw a picture of a badly corroded, barnacle-covered bronze artifact, a medallion, which had been given to the local maritime museum. It looked like an old coin. There was a design on it, and the article said no one could make sense of it.

The experts at the museum could not make out what the design meant. There were a few letters and words that seemed to be Latin or Spanish. What I saw in that photo, however, was what the maritime museum experts could not have thought of: an etching press.

You know what they say: To a carpenter, everything looks like a hammer. As a printmaker, to me the faint outlines on the medallion looked like an etching press. Not like the old wooden etching presses you see in history books. This one suggested a graceful design for a press, more like a musical instrument than a printing machine.

Naval construction on the Basque coast dates back to the moment when the Basques started working as fishermen and merchants. But it was the presence of Vikings and Norsemen in the Adour Estuary which motivated the early development



of Basque ships into a war fleet. The first "cogs" appeared in the 11th century, strengthening the principles of the art of navigation, which were followed by the building of all kinds of vessels.

During this first period, and until the 1550s, the builders were the ship owners themselves. It was only later that the Basque naval construction industry developed, reaching its height during the 1500s, due to converging factors such as the abundance of oak and beech forests, a maritime tradition, excellent craftsmanship, the existence of ports and the presence of an enterprising middle-class. There was also the discovery of the Americas, which moved trade towards the Atlantic.

Moreover, the Crown adopted a protectionist policy, as can be seen in the regulation made in 1500, where the Catholic Kings state: No goods or objects can be loaded on a foreign ship when one of our own ships is available."

Due to all of this, the Basques were the most highly sought ship owners and builders and, by the 1500s, their shipyards were supplying not only the Basque Provinces but the whole Spanish state. They made ships for the Spanish Crown, also for America, for international trade, for hunting and fishing in Newfoundland and for coasting along the Gulf of Biscay.

By the 1590s, however, there was a slight decrease in the quality of their ships, almost certainly due to the fact that the ships were made to order and that the people who built them were no longer the owners, meaning that they were perhaps less careful with the way they were made. As from this moment we can talk about a naval industry as such.

Amets Gotzon was born in 1525 during this time when shipbuilding was flourishing. His birthplace is uncertain, but probably in the Province of Gipuzkoa. His brother, Itzal, was born two years later. When grown, they would become lifelong partners in the shipbuilding business.

True to his name, which means "dreamer," it is said Amets later recounted a vision that came to him one morning when he was barely awake—a dream of a ship. This was in 1538. In his dream he was visited by four women in white, and they bore with them a small wooden model of a ship's hull of a very unusual design. Though most resembling a frigate, it had a special bow.

At its bow it resembled the ram of an ancient Greek trireme, and. Amets was only 15 at the time, and without even

getting dressed, he took a pen and began sketching a ship with this unusual, bulbous bow. Some say it was not in a dream that Amets saw this futuristic design, but in an account of Grecian history. That is neither here nor there, for he tested his design next.

There is a story how, when the brothers were about 15 and 13 years old, the older of the Gotzon brothers, Amets, carved two hulls in cedar wood. One was in the shape of the ship model that he said appeared to him in his dream. The other was a conventional, state-of-the art ship's hull, like ones with which the brothers had carved and played often. It was a different situation this time, as Amets had added the bulbous bow.

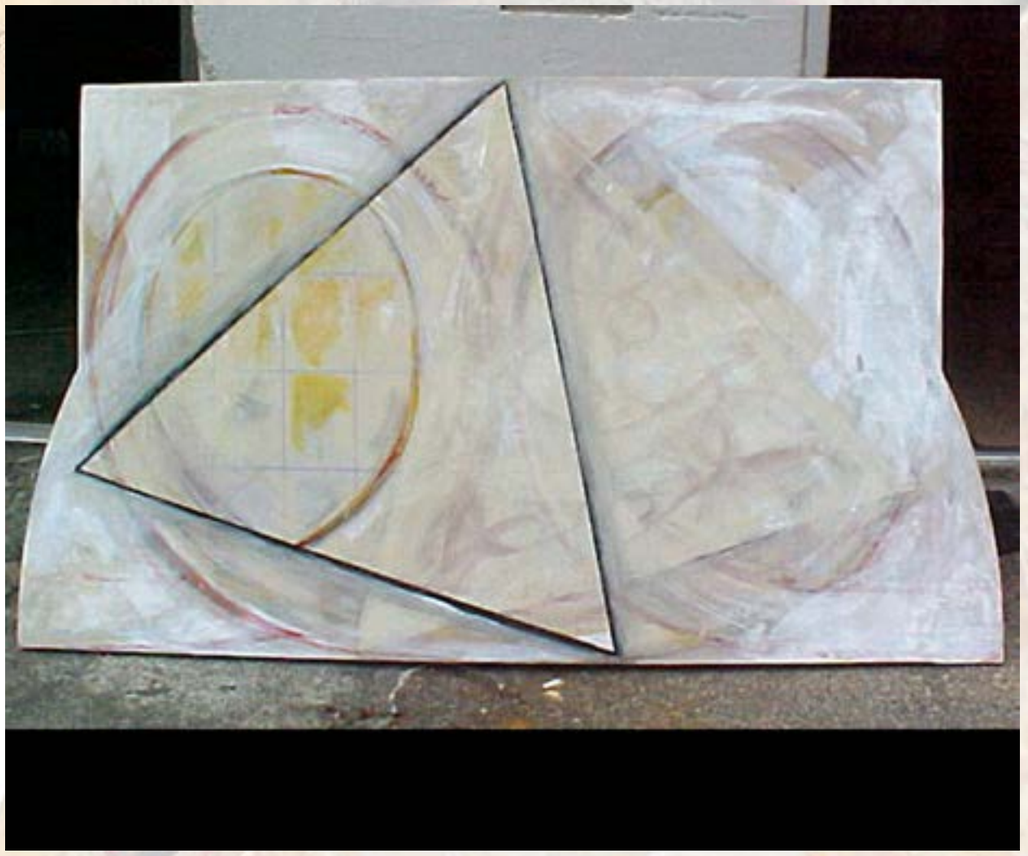
They took fishing poles and the two hulls down to the slow moving river's edge. Amets secured the bulbous-bowed one to his pole, and to Itzal's he tied the standard hull design. Their poles were the same. It was Amets' idea that the shape of the hull would prove something—he was not sure what, but the powerful feeling he had from the dream he had two years before moved him on.

They launched their boats and the models floated nicely, veering this way and that on the water. One boy stood a little way downstream from the other. What Amets noticed, and what he was looking for as he pointed out to Itzal, that his pole was less bent than the younger brother's pole. The younger Itzal's pole was curved almost in a C-shape, while Amets pole, attached to the hull with the bulbous bow, was not so much bent, proving something Amets could not explain, but it was enough to make his belief in the dream lifelong, that it was a message.

The bulbous bow was to be the design of the ship they would build many years later, the Esmeralda (and, by an accident, was later named the Emeralda). The bulbous bow was the secret why the ship could outrun pirates, for one thing, and could deliver cargoes between Europe and the New World colonies with record speed.

In a region where there was a flourishing shipbuilding industry, plus maritime trade, warfare, fishing and exploration, the boy's persistent interest in ship design is not surprising. It is often true that in areas of concentrated industries, youth are drawn—or coerced—toward these trades. In Amets' case, he went voluntarily and wholeheartedly into these lines of interest.

With extraordinary tenacity the older Amets Gotzon followed his dream, and that was to realize the ship he had



seen in his vision, his dream. His younger brother Itzal, as is appropriate to his name (which means shadow) shadowed Amets' every step. Amets was obsessed by this vision of an amazing ship, and Itzal was in awe of his brother's creativity.

It is fortunate for Amets that he had a loyal and admiring brother in Itzal. The younger Gotzon boy did not have the precociousness, daring and creative spirit of his brother. Amets was an outsider, thought of by many of the villagers as a misfit, and accused of extreme, irreligious ideas. Itzal, by comparison, was a quiet, patient boy. He would defend his older brother when anyone among the village youth teased or ridiculed Amets.

Though younger, Itzal grew up to be stronger in stature and build than his older brother! Amets was short, frail and tended toward bookish ways. He was always sketching, studying numbers, mechanical things and navigation principles. Today we would call him a nerd. In mathematics the brothers were equals, but Amets had unusual ways with numbers, with Itzal caring more for established, practical mathematics and accounting.

Amets was apprenticed to a marine architect at age seventeen. He must have presented himself to several shipbuilders in the area before he was accepted because of his size. Moreover, we suspect he got the job because he applied for work with his brother right at his side that, even at fifteen looked powerful compared to Amets. This was in 1540, and shipbuilders were glad for strong hands to help in the flourishing industry. Naval construction was a much diversified activity. It gave rise to professions such as the carpenters, gunboat makers, rope makers, blacksmiths, sail makers, etc., and being good at numbers was a plus.

Probably the Master saw a potential in taking both boys—one for his bright mind, the other for his strength. They were obviously a complementary pair, and both knew their math.

Amets, being slightly built, was a near failure at the hard work of the shipyard; however; Itzal made up for this. The two proved able and eventually Amets worked in the Pasaia offices of the marine architect, and Itzal worked in the shipyards. The older brother learned marine architecture quickly and was given assignments of greater and greater importance. Likewise, his younger brother excelled. Their roles were different in the

art of ship building, but they had an instinctive sense and unified, shared vision of the projects. As a pair they were complementary to each other. They thought and worked like one person.

Amets never shared his vision of the bulbous bow with the Master.

The brothers Gotzon eventually became the owners of their own shipbuilding yard. Amets distinguished himself as an innovator and forerunner in the field of naval construction. Often the ship owners were of important lineage and it was the local nobility, such as Alonso de Idiaquez, superintendent in the Northern Fleet during the 16th century, who would use the letter of marquee. But most of the shipyard owners, like the Gotzon brothers, belonged to the lower social strata, with medium-sized fortunes, building small or medium-sized ships but free to design and take extra pains to do it right.

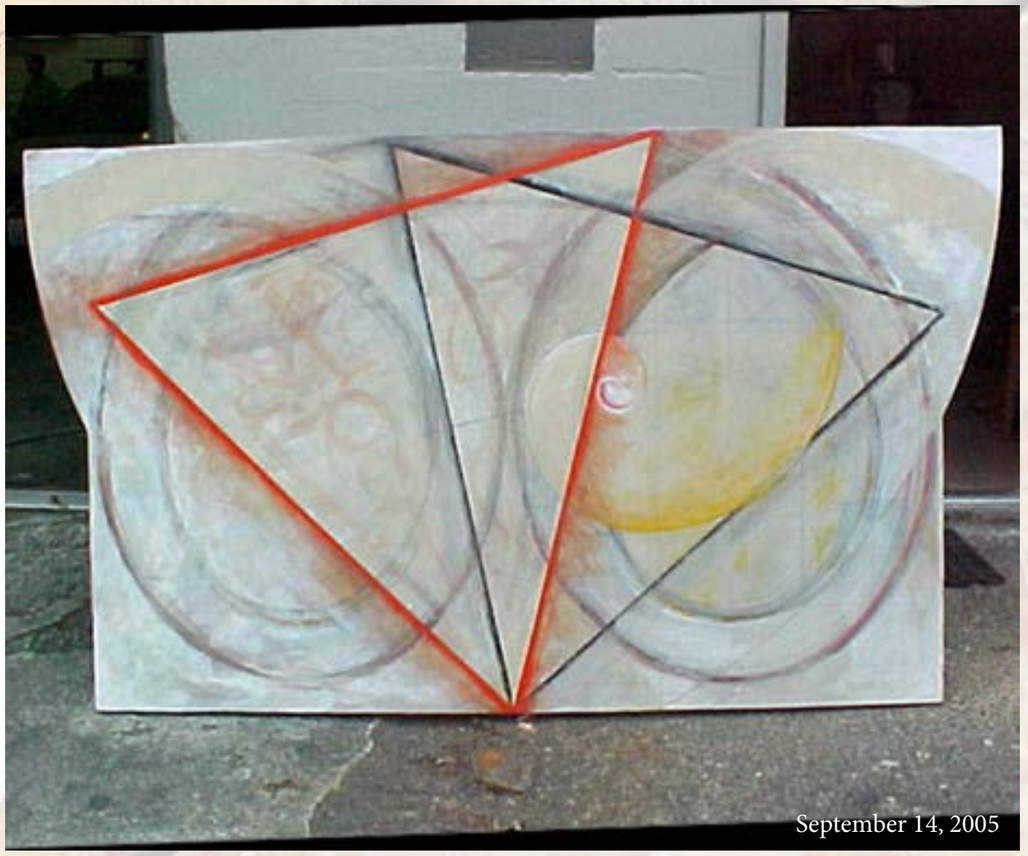
Their business flourished. Basque shipyards, and especially the Gotzon Shipyard, were leaders in the sector, with respect to quantity as well as to technical progress. Now, by the time he was only 25, Amets was considered a wealthy man; however, he was unsociable and almost all dealings of the company were carried out by the steadier Itzal. What he lacked in Amets' wile, Itzal made up for in business sense so the two lived in weal.

Amets married in 1550 at age twenty-five, but then experienced his first great tragedy when his wife and child died in childbirth. It was only 18 months after their marriage. Amets threw himself into his profession and never remarried. His life was one of constant work in the offices of their shipyard, seldom going to his home to eat or sleep.

His younger brother Itzal married in 1552, two years after Amets' wedding, to Amets' late wife's younger sister. She gave Itzal a daughter, Nahia, in 1560, when he was 33 years old. Itzal, continuing of course to work as number two man in the shipbuilding company, found it hard at times to spend time with his family. He began bringing Nahia to work, for, even little, the girl was precocious and active. She did not want to stay home or play with other little girls. She was too much of a handful for her mother.

Amets and Itzal had started their company making tenders and pinnaces for liaison between other ships or patrolling fleets. By 1568 they expanded and began making two-mast carracks and caravels—long, slim vessels with a single deck and prow

Last Voyage of the Emeralda



September 14, 2005

ram—but not of the extreme bulbous prow of Amets' childhood dream.

He seemed to be guided by his childhood vision of a wondrous, fast frigate. Then, in 1573, at last he secured an order that gave him the necessary financing for his dream ship. He called this frigate the, "Esmeralda, the jewel of the oceans."

The reason for the name "Emeralda" is not clear. Rumor has it that Nahia showed a fascination for things exotic, and therefore, rather than use the Spanish word, Esmeralda, she convinced her father and uncle to name it Emeralda for a more exotic sound—derived, perhaps, from some imaginary place in the New World.

Another theory is that with this strange spelling, it might help to confuse ocean-going predators, pirates and other threats. Today we might say it helped in their marketing, as it was unlikely they would ever be confused with another ship by the same name.

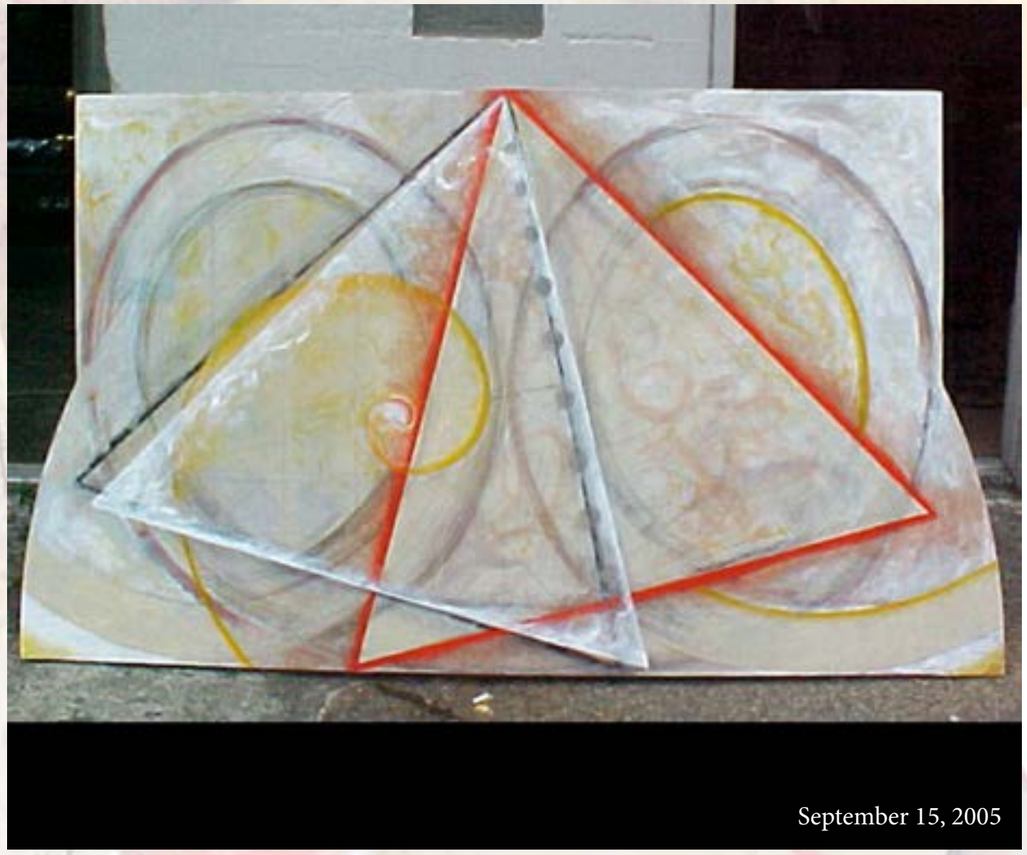
The Emeralda was launched in 1578. Built of Adriatic oak, the best there is. It had the unique bulbous bow design, a feature few people could be aware of since it was under water. The bulbous bow is known, however, because the model has survived, as well as several drawings and details. The survival of these artifacts is a story in itself, to be related later.

Nahia, eighteen by this time, had been helping her uncle and her father in the offices as a secretary and mathematician. She worshiped her strange uncle, Amets, and he loved his niece well, treating her almost as an equal. She displayed a trace of the same genius as Amets for design and she had her father's strategic acumen.

The ship, which was still owned by the brothers, as this was the usual practice, did a flourishing business for its owners. With their hand-picked captain and crew, she ventured west as far to the north as Newfoundland and as far to the south as Brazil, trading at ports in North America, too.

For almost a decade they enjoyed uncommon good fortune—even outmaneuvering and outrunning the worrisome pirates of the open seas. When its captain and crew returned to Cadiz in 1587, however, they were informed they could not leave until further notice. The ship was conscripted into service. King Philip II decreed that all worthy ships were to be outfitted for war.

Story of the painting



September 15, 2005

In May of 1588 the "Great and Most Fortunate Navy" set sail from Lisbon, Portugal, bound for the English Channel. The Esmeralda was part of this fleet, newly armed with additional brass cannons, carrying supplies to service the galleons and galleys. The deadly battles that took place in the English Channel in July of 1588 were a turning point with the battle of Gravelines, and it was probably during these days that the Esmeralda was so damaged by English cannon the crew had almost no control, and the vessel was carried Westward and closed in to the shore at Santander.

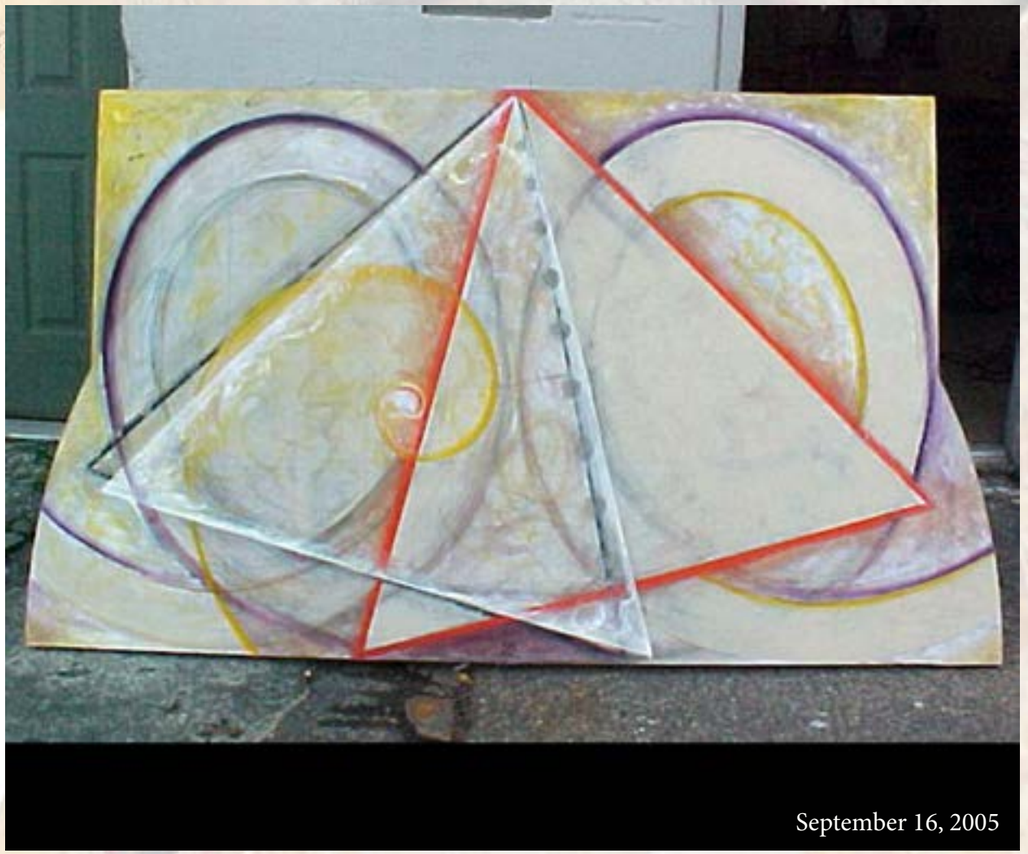
By either managing to steer the ship or by a storm, the ship was beached in August. Like a wounded sailor, she was not far from where she had been built. When news of the beaching reached the Gotzon brothers, they made haste to Santander. This was heartbreaking for them, as one might imagine. Nahia, now eight, accompanied them. Her attempts to console her father and uncle were to no avail.

Family descendants say the older brother's death, in 1595, was probably hastened by the sight of his dream ship a wreck on the beach. The remnant of the fine ship was soon stripped by scavengers.

It was not long until all that remained of the "Jewel of the oceans" were the oak ribs, like the rib cage of some giant sea creature. Annually the wave action and movement of the sands engulfed even these remains. Over centuries' time, the remains sunk deeper and deeper until all that was visible was a worn down, reddish wood stump that was once the head of the bow.

Itzal inherited the plans and models that were part of the manufacturing of the ship when his brother passed away. Itzal's first daughter, Nahia was given the collection, which she—and subsequent descendants—kept in a long wooden trunk under lock and key. It passed through over 20 generations, through the daughters in the line, all who were given the name Nahia.

A section later in this book gives the details of the lineage.



September 16, 2005

Book 4: Another version of the story – October 6, 2013

She was a frigate with a bulbous prow, the dream of a boy who said he was visited by four women in white. They showed him a model of a sailing ship with an unusual front end – the bow had a bulge below the waterline.

He said they told him if he must find a tree with an elbow-shape, and fell the tree, let it age and then shape it to be the prow of the keel– if he did all this as they directed him, they promised that he would have the fastest ship on the ocean. She would be the jewel of the seas and should be named from his homeland, the Emerald Coast. He would name his ship, Emeralda.

He built a model, using a small, elbow-shaped branch from a laurel tree. He built a hull from this branch. He built another hull, but it was a typical kind, shaped like the models he saw every day in his little town on the Bay of Biscay, on the north coast of Spain, home of the Basque.

With his little brother to help him, they took the two models to a slow moving river and fastened lines to long poles, like fishing poles. Standing a few meters apart on the riverbank, and having put their models in the water and let them out, the lines of their poles tied at the poles' ends. They watched, and the pole with the strange-shaped hull, with the bulbous bow was hardly bent at all, while the pole with the normal hull formed a graceful curve.

The older brother was quite bright for his years, and his younger brother, too. Their experiment bore out what the women in white told the older brother in his dream. He did not have the technical word for it, but the drag on the hull with the bulbous prow was less than on the design of a typical hull. It was likely, therefore, with proper handling the vessel with a bulbous prow would move faster than a vessel without.

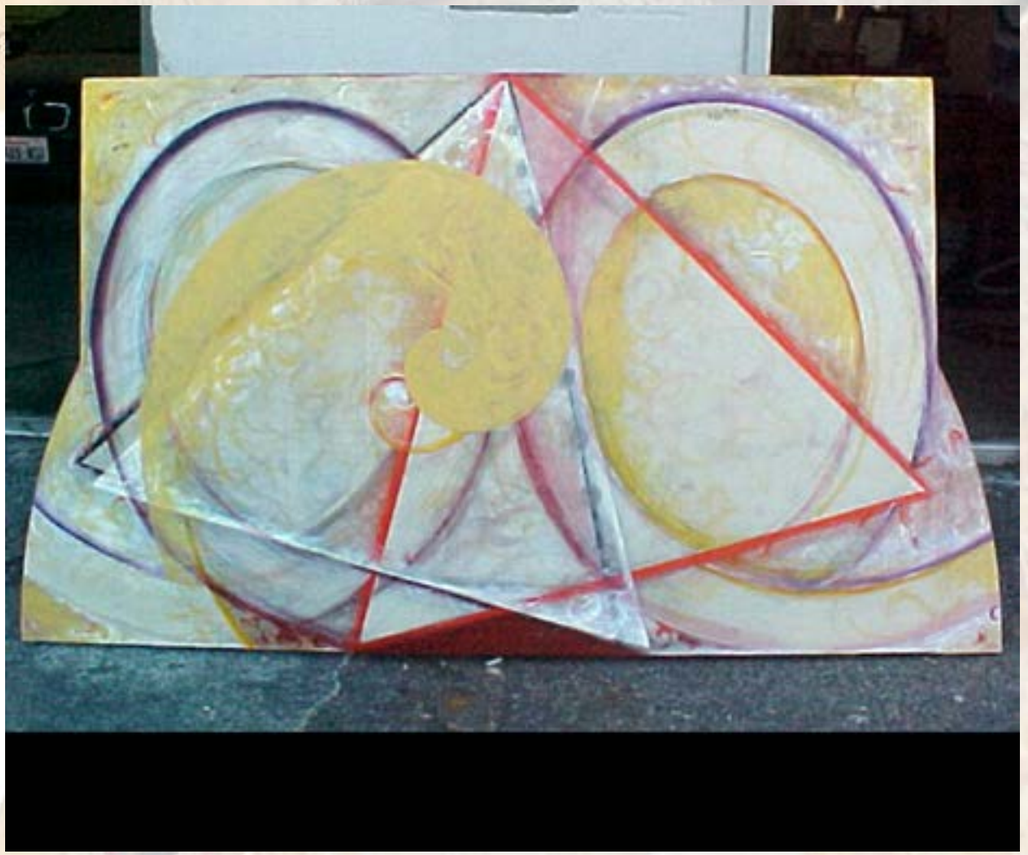
The story of the Emeralda began this way—in the dream of a 15-year old boy on the Spanish Emerald Coast in 1530. The ending of the Emeralda was sad, beached at Santander during the disastrous battle with England in 1585. She was conscripted into King Philip II's campaign as a supply ship for the Great Armada, but was so badly shot that the crew had no choice but to beach her. There she lay, broken and ruined until she sank in the sand.

It was by chance, generations later, in the 1700s, a newly-wed couple stayed at Santander and, walking the beach, they

came to the few remaining ribs and planking of the Emeralda. It happened the bride was a descendant of the architect who had designed the ship—that 15-year old who had grown, with his brother, to be a principle shipyard owner, renowned for his fleet, the speediest of any on the sea. He died not long after the wreck of the Emeralda, heartbroken that his fine ship, which had done ten years' service between the old and new worlds, should end as she did.

The young woman told her husband that her family passed the story—and a fine, large trunk that had belonged in the family for over 150 years. Inside the trunk were the drawings and a model of the Emeralda, a part of her dowry. Her husband had not known this, but he was overjoyed when he saw the contents of the trunk, for he was, himself, a student of marine architecture and his personal goal was to restore the reputation of the Basque for their ship design and nautical prowess.

He determined that he would rebuild the Emeralda along the same general lines of his predecessor's design, and add some improvements to the rigging and sail design. The hull he would leave as it was because he could not conceive any improvements that could be made. The second Emeralda was launched in 1730—the 200th anniversary of the dream.



Book 5: History account of Basque shipping in decline

International circumstances, such as the defeat of the Invincible Armada, for which the King had ordered several Basque ships, had negative effects on this activity, and the 1600s meant a period of crisis for Gipuzkoa and Biscay. However, exactly the opposite was happening in Labourd, and the King's Naval Dockyard was located in Bayonne, where ships were built for the French Royal Army.

We have a portrait of Antonio de Gaztañeta (1656-1728), from Mutriko, innovator and forerunner in the field of naval construction, changed the size and shape of the Spanish navy war ships of his time.

The evolution of navigation and naval architecture led to longer and more highly perfected ships being made in the 18th century, mostly by the inhabitant of Mutriku, Gaztañeta. Basque shipyards, and especially the Zorrotza Shipyard, recovered their leadership in the sector, and the 18th century meant a period of recovery with respect to quantity as well as to technical progress.

It was at this favorable moment that the Real Compañía Guipuzcoana de Caracas started collaborating by promoting naval construction, mainly in Pasaia. At the end of the century there was a period of stagnancy and recession.

In naval construction, and especially corsair ships, the ship owner played a extremely important part as he would equip, furnish and exploit the ship. Often the ship owners were of important lineage and it was the local nobility, such as Alonso de Idiaquez, superintendent in the Northern Fleet during the 16th century, who would use the letter of marquee. But most of them belonged to the lowest strata of nobility, with medium-sized fortunes, and they would build small or medium-sized ships.

They normally came from the Basque ports or nearby areas. Donostia-San Sebastian had professional foreign ship owners and, in Bilbao, the ship owners were traders, whether they were foreign or not. Common shipyards were simple and normally provisional installations, located on the coast or riverbanks. Royal shipyards, however, were more complex and much bigger.

The country's main shipyards were located around the

Adour and the Nervion, and we know that the following existed in Gipuzkoa:

In Zarauz, ships were manufactured in different places, amongst others in Gurarte and in the town's shipyards, next to Zarauz Palace, which were later sold in Seville for the Indies' trade. In Lezo, Pasaia and Renteria there were shipyards where galleons were built for His Majesty's Fleet.

The Royal Pasaia Shipyard was founded in 1597. This is where the "Capitana Real" was built, weighing one thousand five hundred tons. [This conflicts with the fictional architect, of whom it was written began his career in Pasaia around 1540—fifty years before the Pasaia shipyards were founded.]

There were master carpenters in Arcaiza, near Astigarraga, by the stream running past the house of Arámburu, in the so-called "old shipyard". Donostia-San Sebastian had two shipyards, one on the beach and another in Anoeta.

Apart from these were the long-standing shipyards of Mapil in Usurbil, of Santa María in Motrico, and those of Hondarribia. The ships which were built in the shipyards along our coasts and which were used at some time by Basque corsairs were mostly the following:

Cogs - Single-masted vessels, of Nordic origin, widely used in the 14th century, which already had a stern post rudder, and which were used for both fighting and trading.

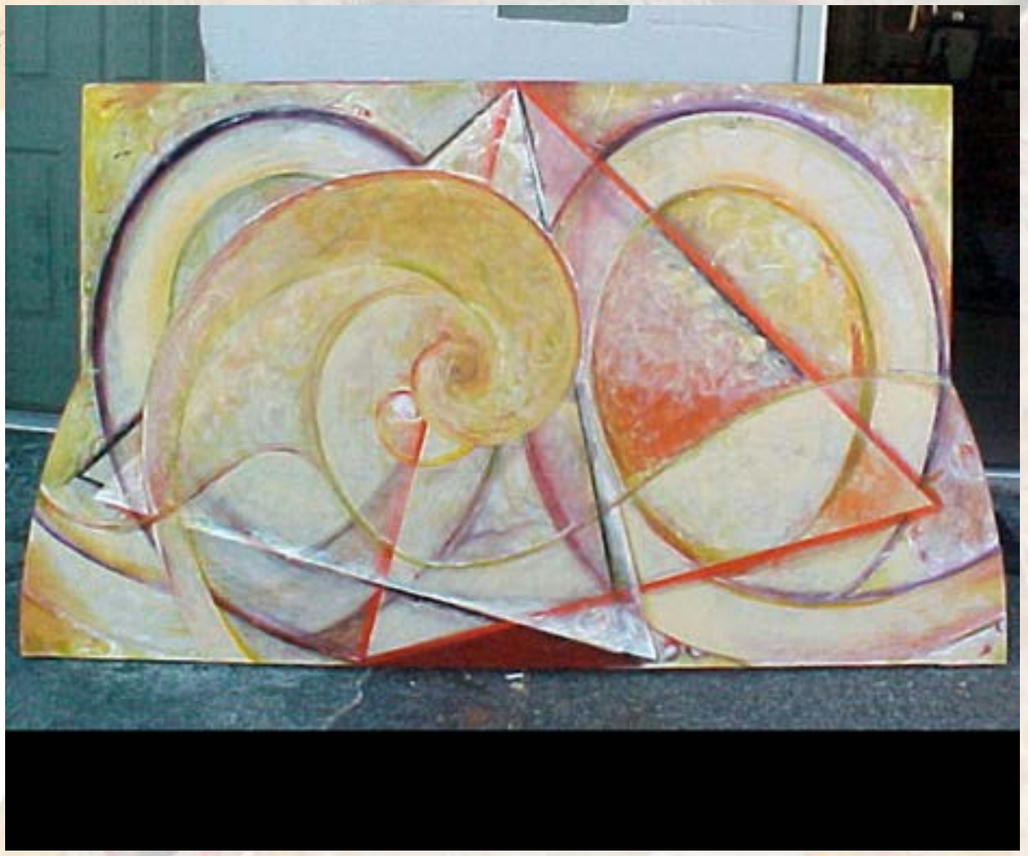
Hookers - Wide vessels of Dutch origin, with a great loading capacity, generally used for transporting and trading.

Carracks and Caravels - Long, slim vessels, with two or three masts and a maintop, lateen sails which later became square, a single deck and prow ram. Ideal for expeditions, they were mostly used during the 15th and 16th centuries.

Masted sailing vessels - An evolution of the carrack, with two or three masts, a high deck, great capacity and strength for confronting storms and enemies.

Galleons - Large tonnage sailing vessels from the 16tn and 17th centuries, sporting a maximum of four masts and a bowsprit with several bridges, extremely well suited to ocean navigation, to which lines and tackle were adapted that would later lead to their evolution. These galleons would race to the Indies and were equal to the galley with respect to gracefulness and agility, once they had adopted round sails.

Tenders, pinnaces, lateen-rigged vessels - Smaller



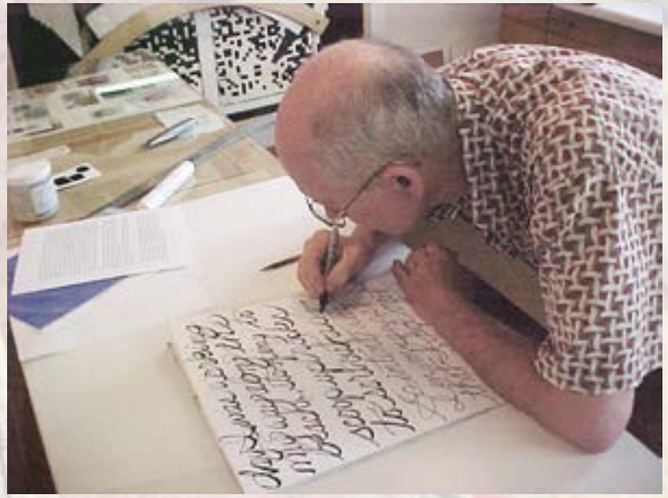
landing craft, for liaison between ships or patrolling the Fleet, the names of which spread and were given to other small tonnage vessels. Old ships on our coasts were called tenders, and they were used for coastal navigation or other tasks.

Frigates and clippers - These vessels became quite developed, and were of great size and displacement. Ships were not built specifically for privateering. Moreover, no great difference was made between war and trading ships until the 17th century. The law only stated that corsair ships, should be "ships of less than three hundred tons", and they almost always were, since it was more practical to navigate along the French coast in smaller vessels. Corsair ships could be bought, but they could never be sold to foreigners.

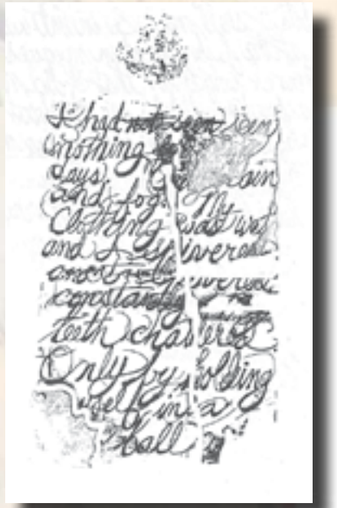
Basque corsairs, or pirates - Gipuzkoa has long lived in ignorance of the epopee which many of its ancestors lived along the coast and on the seas, an epopee widely written about by the few descendants of that legion of navigators, fishermen, ship owners and corsairs whose main roles in that period of powerful action came to an end so long ago.

It was enough to let the three last centuries of history pass in silence to almost totally erase Basque signs of identity from the details of sea life.

With respect to Basque corsairs, this silence is understandable, partly due to the obscurity surrounding many of them. The reason for this—according to Michel Iriart—lies in the custom which many ship owners had of burning all the documents related to those who often made them rich. On the other hand, many corsairs only stood out on one single voyage or crossing and this unique piece of information was not enough to find out more about their origins, life and previous and future campaigns.



Enhancing the characters and words of the story from the journal of the castaway Russian cabin boy, emulating the script. The words are in English, lacking a russian translation.



Sample of one of the sheets of script printed on a laser printer - the image being a digital photo of the handwritten one.

Book 6: The words in the painting

The script follows text I wrote at a point in my story of the Emeralda when I thought about the stranded, castaway Russian cabin boy. In my text he describes how he was almost dead from exposure and starvation. He wrote:

"I had seen nothing for many days except mist and rain and fog. My clothing was wet and I shivered constantly with the cold. Only by holding myself in a tight ball could I not freeze. Surely, I thought, the sun must come out eventually.

"Each day I went down to the water's edge when it was at its lowest level and I would find little clams in the loose rocks there, just inches below the surface. I'd smash the shells on a rock and pick away the bits of shell and eat the fleshy parts inside. How I longed for a fire!

"I will always remember the day I was working my way along the beach, stooping to scoop up rocks to sort out a clam. So intent was I in my quarry that I did not see the boat approaching me through the fog. The slapping of the men's oars blended with the sound of the waves and I paid no attention until one of them shouted a word that sounded like "Oh Lah".

"The shout made me jump and I heard them laugh. I didn't know whether to run or stay; I was too surprised and, at least for a moment, hopeful that they had sent out a search party. But this was not a boat from my mother ship. This was a foreign ship's boat, I knew at once, and the crew men were not Russians.

"I must have looked strange to them, for they just stared. They were as astonished as I was, I think, for while there were natives living in these islands, it was obvious that I was not one of them. And I was astonished to see any Europeans other than those from Mother Russia. I had heard there were English and Spanish—and even

The print is set in wet acrylic gel medium and, while the paper is still damp, rubbing it with the finger peels away the paper fibers and leaves the black toner of the laser print - in reverse. The process is repeated for all the sheets of printed paper. It is similar to decoupage.

October 3, 2005

Americans—who were searching for the Northwest Passage, but there had never been an encounter with them.

"Were these men dangerous? Again I thought perhaps I should run and I turned, but as I did the man in the prow of the boat called out to me, but I couldn't understand him. I backed up the beach a few steps, but it was obvious he was trying to show they were friendly. They gestured with open arms and showed they had no weapons trained on me.

"I began to relax, and then I took a few tentative steps toward them. The boat crunched up on the beach and two men jumped out and dragged it further up on shore. The one who appeared to be the leader stepped out of the boat, steadying himself against the gunwale. He was jabbering in his native language and smiling at me.

"Something he said made the other laugh. I smiled, despite I didn't know what was funny. I was cold and wet, and I must have looked like death, but their gestures made it plain they meant me no harm. The man then thumped his palm against his chest and said, "Espanol. Espanol." And grinned, then pointed at me, "Eh? Eh?"

"Spanish! They were Spaniards, I realized then. Then I recognized the helmets that two of the crew were wearing, I'd seen them in a print in the Captain's library. The Spanish conquerors wore a helmet that was easily recognized. Yet these men didn't look like the conquerors from Spain. They didn't have the air of marauders or pirates. I could not help but feel grateful that they'd found me, despite my hopes that I'd be found by my fellow countrymen and restored to my job aboard my own ship, the Great Lady."

The foregoing fragment represents an opening chapter on what grew into a longer story. In making the script to transfer into the painting, only a few paragraphs actually made it into the prints transferred by means of the method of rubbing off the damp paper on which the laser print was made. It's a technique which is similar to decoupage.

October 7, 2005

Book 7: Life aboard the Emeralda

The Master of Journals gave me strange little tasks, such as grinding a black powder, finer than gunpowder and not explosive, into a paste with a clear, amber colored oil. For hours I would grind until it was a shiny, stringy mass. He called it "ink" but it was not like the ink for writing. It was so thick and sticky one could never write with it.

For writing ink he used a black liquid that he told me came from the pouch of a sea creature called an octopus. He showed me how to cut a bird's feather into a point, to dip it in the liquid ink, and write on a smooth paper. When I began writing he raised his eyebrows and was silent. He'd never seen my language, obviously. Under his breath he said something that sounded like approval.

After than he was generous with his paper—for which I showed my gratitude by doing everything he asked me to do with utmost care. His metal plates were hard to cut, but I worked at them until my hands were blistered from gripping the cutting tool. With a sharp scraper I made the edge smooth just as he showed me. The plates were the color of gold. "Brass," he told me, was what they were made of. Another, the color of a sunset, were "Copper."

I will never forget my impression the first time he showed me his machine. It was made of dark steel and polished hardwood. There was much of the metal he called brass used on it, and a highly skilled artisan had made it. He pointed out the name on the top and then I understood that it was the name of his home city, or at least the port from which the ship, the Emeralda, had sailed from two years before. Cadiz, the nameplate said.

While I was given many other jobs aboard the Emeralda, such as helping in the galley and the carpenter's, I was not expected to work in the sailing. Perhaps it was my small size, or maybe they didn't trust me because I was a foreigner to them. When they learned that I had been to school, they showed more interest in trying to communicate with me, and little by little I learned their Spanish language.

The captain was indifferent to me for the first several weeks, but one day my Master took me by the elbow and led me astern to the captain's quarters. We went in and, while I stood before them like some strange specimen, they apparently decided what to do with me. While they talked I looked around the cabin. There were many books—many more than my captain had aboard the Great Lady. There were the usual charts rolled and stored overhead.

My eyes were attracted to a shiny, spherical object in a box that was sitting open on a low shelf. When the captain saw me

Last Voyage of the Emeralda

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eying it he got up and went over to it and closed it. Then my Master said something to him that made the captain pause, then he took the box in both hands and sat it on the table, and he gestured to me to come closer. I stood next to him and he reopened the box.

The sphere was probably brass, and highly polished. On the surface was a network of lines and numbers, words and a few diagrams or pictures. All was silent in the room except for the creaking of the ships timbers. The silence was broken when the Master said something to the captain, who then grunted his approval and responded.

From that time on I was given more freedom, and the master gave me more interesting tasks. It became apparent that this ship was not on a mission of conquest, but of exploration. Not for the acquisition of land, but the acquisition of knowledge. This I found hard to understand. What would be the purpose of gathering knowledge if not to use it for profit?

One day, with my rudimentary Spanish, I asked my Master about this paradox. He was quiet for some time, and then he told me a story. I think he had a difficult time of it, as he had to talk to me as though I were a child, our language being limited to a few hundred words.

He talked of a martyr named Jesus Christ, and a miracle that had happened 17 centuries before. Long after the martyr had been killed, the miracle was sustained by a nobility that was named the Knights Templar. Their protection of the symbols and artifacts of the martyr's power was challenged, however, and the knights were banned from Europe. My Master's ship and all his crew, the captain—everyone aboard—were members of this heroic order.

They fled Europe to save their lives and also the knowledge that had given power to the people who followed the martyr's word. Tyrants and impostors drove the Knights into hiding, but they were too smart to be entirely exterminated. Their ship, the Emeralda, stole away from the port of Cadiz under a different name—just missing by hours seizure by the king.

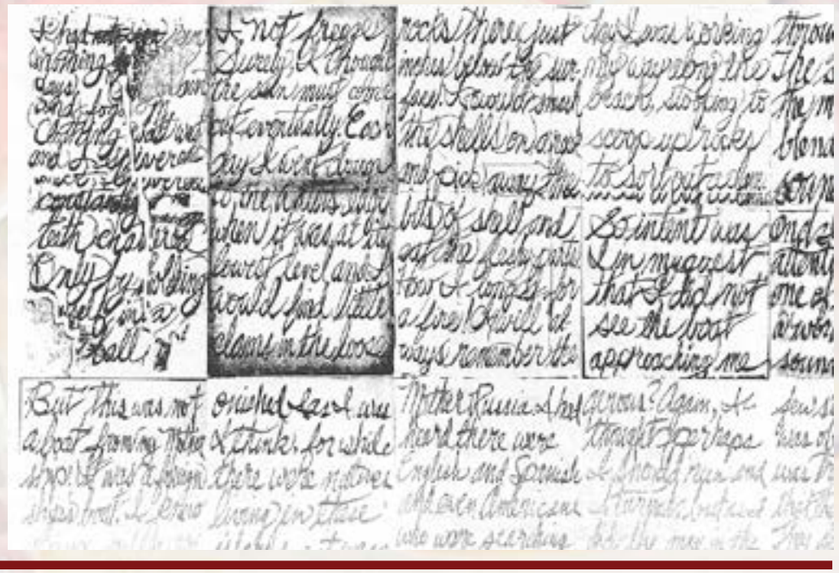
They thought of fleeing North to a country named Scotland, but when they got reports from passing ships that it was not safe for them there, they decided to sail to the New World. Their plan became to find a safe haven, a land where they could start a colony of Knights. Once established, they would return for their families, who were scattered all over Western Europe.

The crew was not typical of seamen of these times. While they could sail a Spanish frigate, they were also scholars, scientists, artists (as was my Master) and mathematicians. The reason was obvious—they embodied the state of learning that it had risen to in Modern Europe and the Middle East. They believe in using their knowledge to create, invent, discover and

Story of the painting

October 31, 2005 - Here I had just finished transferring and rubbing off the paper fibers of the second row of text and the coat of transparent gloss acrylic over it. I polished the acrylic when it was dry to the touch, sometimes wearing latex gloves and sometimes bare-handed.

Right: The sixteen pages, or panels consisting of much of the narrative. Each panel was photographed from the large format and downsized to 8 1/2 X 11 laser print, ready to be transferred to the painting.



imagine things and bring about a more perfect society by the blending of art and science.

By the time he finished his story, it was very late at night; yet I was not sleepy. Then he ordered me to bed. But I lay in my hammock with my eyes wide open, thinking about the martyr, Jesus Christ, and the Knights Templar. I was reminded of similar stories I'd learned in school, of heroic Tsars who were cut down in the prime of their life, and the bloody wars that came in their aftermath.

We'd had our own version of Knights, I believe, but they had no escape, there being few seaports, and ocean-going craft were few. The Knights Templar, on the other hand, owned many ships like the Emeralda—though not all of one design. And most certainly there were few crews in the world that matched that of the Emeralda.

Book 8: Coming together - the end

The story of the Emeralda's last voyage is worth telling because, like rocket science today, it involved scientific and engineering innovation. To tell it we have to flash back 175 years. Two brothers—the older one, fifteen, was a dreamer; the younger brother was practical-minded. They lived in the north of Spain. Shipbuilding was a major industry then. Many of the village' boys were attracted to the adventure of seamanship—also the shipyard workforce. They occupied themselves with an imaginary shipyard.

The older brother had a vision of a strange hull design for a frigate. He told his brother that four woman, all in white, had appeared to him in a dream, showing a model of a ship's hull with a protuberance, like a knob extending from the keel through its bow. The elder brother carved a hull as he remembered it, and then carved another standard hull model.

They took these to the banks of a slow-moving stream. Fastening them to two fishing poles, they set the hulls afloat. The pole with the conventional design bent in a tight curve, more than the one with the bulbous bow. There was less drag on the hull with the bulbous bow, which meant it would move faster under sail. Inspired, the brothers began a quest for a perfect ship.

By the time they were in their 'thirties they had their own yard. They were set to build the ship with the bulbous bow and when it was finished they named it Emeralda, the jewel of the sea. It was so fast that it became a favorite vessel for trade with the New World as it could outrun pirates and enemies of Spanish shipping.

Life was good for the brothers—one of them married and had a daughter who showed promise as an engineer. She adored her uncle, the designer of the frigate. Disaster struck them—as it did for all of Spain—when King Phillip conscripted all the ships to support his Great Armada to attack England. The Emeralda was not a fighting ship but an escort.

Nevertheless, in the battles the ship was so badly shot up that the crew had to beach the beautiful Emeralda. Its usable parts were scavenged. What remained of her sank slowly in the sands off Santander, on the Emerald coast of Spain. The architect died of a broken heart. His brother carried on for a time. His niece married and she had a daughter whose line—for generations—carried her great-uncles' chest of drawings and the model hull forward.

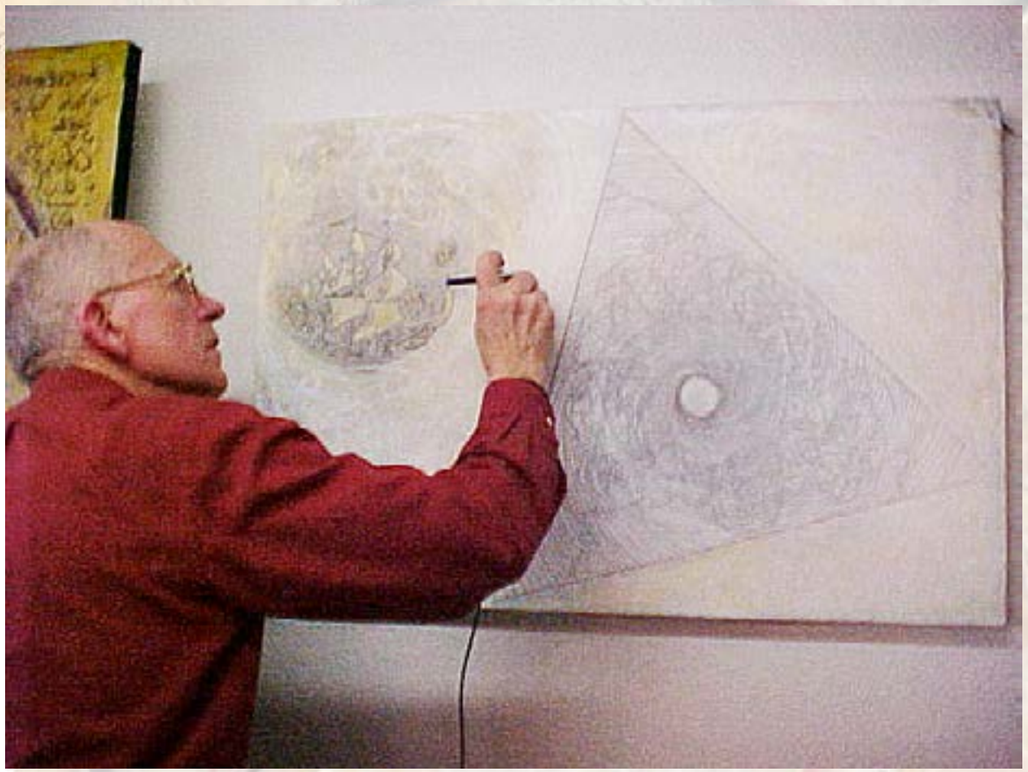
A hundred-fifty years later, from out of a dowry chest, the antique collection of specifications regarding the bulbous bow, the Emeralda II was built. It, like its namesake, was the fastest of the 18th Century, crossing the Atlantic and back in record time. Shipping companies favored her.

There were at this time plans being made for growing Chinese trade. Investors had no trouble commissioning the Emeralda II for their purpose. Because of their network and their money, they had their choice of the most diverse and trustworthy best officers and sailors. In addition there were scientists, an artist and musician.

The Captain chose his officers carefully. He sought out the best navigator, a man who was Danish by birth and had sailed on Spanish expeditions before. His story is an interesting one, and figures in the fate of the Emeralda II.

In his career he traveled inland to St. Petersburg, accompanying another Dane named Bering. This navigator was young, gifted intellectually, handsome and charming and a womanizer. In St. Petersburg, with Bering, he attracted the attention of the wife of a Russian officer who stationed far away at the moment.

An affair ensued between them, and, months after the navigator left Russia for Spain, she left St. Petersburg, pregnant. In Moscow she bore a son. The boy was named Vladimir Chichinoff and was left there to be raised by a middle-class family. The navigator never knew he had a son.



Learning how to use the airbrush using the practice panel - a silverpoint drawing of the map of the Emeralda Region.

Bering wrote to his friend the Navigator, inviting him back to Russia and go on an expedition to Kamchatka in the East to build ships, trade for otter fur and map the coast of the Americas. He mentioned the boy he fathered, also, but the letter didn't get to the navigator.

The Emeralda II manifest included samples of western-style printing presses, designed according to rumors of Chinese preferences for beauty and functionality. The Emeralda II sailed to Desterro, Santa Catarina Island, which is along the coast of Brazil, known today as Florianopolis.

The Emeralda II sailed south, rounded Cape Horn, and then north. In northern Ecuador the ship anchored for an extended period at the port of Esmeraldas. Its water and food supply replenished, the Emeralda II weighed anchor and sailed until the navigator calculated they were at the 47th latitude, the best latitude for starting the last leg of the voyage to China.

Seeking a sheltered place to take on food and water, the ship sailed into the Straits of Juan de Fuca, which, generations in the future, was named by the explorer George Vancouver. They found a deep water passage between two verdant islands and the ship was anchored in a sheltered cove.

What of the boy—Vladimir Chichinoff? His story must be told at this point because—unknown to either the boy or the navigator—they would meet in a most unconceivable way. At eleven, he was kidnapped—a scheme by the officer's for revenge on his unfaithful wife. The boy was pressed into service in an expedition to Kamchatka to the East—a jumping-off place for fur traders. He'd be taken fur-gathering toward the Aleutian Islands and the Americas.

The ship sailed southward over the coming months. Vladimir had made an enemy of the first mate. The captain intervened to save Vladimir, but fearing mutiny, he had him put ashore on one of the islands of the inner passages between the American mainland and what is today called Vancouver Island.

There he was castaway and bound to die. For days he suffered with no food to eat except for clams he managed to find in the beach gravel. One foggy day he was scrounging among the seaweed and gravel when he heard voices in the fog. A boatload of helmeted men appeared. Straight for him they rowed their boat and Vladimir sank to his knees in a faint, certain that this was the end of him.

The men, amazed to find him, carried Vladimir to their boat and returned to their ship, the Emeralda II. When the boy woke up, to the navigator's amazement, Vladimir's first words were Russian. The navigator's short, happy time in Russia came

Usng airbrush for the "ghost ship" painting.

back to him in a flash upon hearing the boy's mumbled words. Vladimir was terrified. He was incoherent at first. Slowly he unfolded his story for the navigator.

When the boy said his name was Vladimir Chichinoff, it was familiar to the navigator. It was a common Russian name. If there could be a link to his amorous past, any connection with his St. Petersburg affair with the officer's wife, it was unlikely. He dismissed the thought.

As he got to know him, he found the boy was quick to grasp things. He took a liking to the lad and taught him Spanish. Vladimir wanted to learn how to engrave and how to print on the press the Navigator kept in a watertight chest. The navigator agreed to teach him the art and craft of plate-making and printing.

They stayed anchored in the cove, sheltered from the prevailing winds by a steep stone cliff, waiting for the right to embark for China. From time to time a small party was sent ashore to hunt for meat and gather edible greens and berries. The boy like to go on these with the men.

Once, when it was time to return to the ship, the boy had followed a path to a spot high above the cove. From this vantage he could see the ship far below. He was shocked to see the boat had left the beach and was returning to the ship.

Why had they not waited? Vladimir would have to spend the night. Darkness came, and Vladimir tore off enough branches from the fir trees to make a kind of covering. He discovered a shallow cave in the sandy earth cliff a little way back from where he had watched the ship. As evening came, he could hear the men below, and lamps flickered. He longed to be in the navigator's cabin, and he wondered why he was not sent for.

Night fell, and he slept. Thundering and crashing woke Vladimir at midnight. The ground trembled and gravel rained down on him from the cave's ceiling. He was terrified. It was so dark he could not see his hand in front of his face. The booming was followed by a long hissing and roaring sound. He was frozen with terror.

The noise and rumbling subsided. Still he trembled, now wide awake. He didn't dare to leave his bower. He fell asleep, or fainted. He awoke in silence. In a soft gray light of early dawn, fog covered everything. He strained to hear the sounds of the change of watch on the Emeralda II. Nothing.

The fog thinned until he could make out the tops of the fir trees. Soon he should see the masts of the ship. But no. There

Snapping the light-colored acrylic along the edge of the triangle. The string is dripping full of paint, both ends secured the panel. Then a tool is used to lift the taught string off the surface and then released. The string full of paint snaps down and sends driplets along the path. The paper mask prevents paint from going where it's not wanted.

were no masts, and when most of the fog had dissipated, he could see only an empty, gray cove. There was no ship!

The cove looked as though everything had been rearranged. Trees around the lowest levels near the beach were bent, uprooted broken and splintered. Around the shore were unfamiliar shapes and piles slabs of wood. With a horrible realization and vacuous sense of horror Vladimir realized it was the wreckage of the Emeralda II.

No one could know there had been an earthquake on the ocean floor. Thousands of miles from the cove, beyond the outlet of the Straits where it met the Pacific Ocean, hours before Vladimir dozed, a tsunami reached all around the Pacific Rim—causing destruction in Japan, North America, and recorded even in New South Wales.

As the shock wave entered the Straits of Juan de Fuca, its force was channeled into the waterway and, entering the narrow channel between the two islands where anchored the Emeralda. The energy of the wave forced it to a height with force enough to rip the anchors from the seabed and the craft was thrown up against the stone cliff. That cliff was the death of the ship and everyone in it.

With a roar the wave withdrew from the land, dragging everything with it what it dislodged and broke. When the waters returned to their normal ebb and flow, the passing hours saw trees, parts of the wrecked ship and the bodies of men who served her. Vladimir wakened as the only survivor.

In the chill silence, Vladimir clambered, screamed and cried among the wreckage that had washed up on shore—horrified at the carnage of bodies and parts that he saw. At the foot of what had been a tree by the beach, snapped off a few feet from its base, was the body of the navigator, naked and horribly broken. Near him was one of the press chests, undamaged.

In the days that followed, Vladimir's life was of constant labor of burials and salvaging victuals. Much later, when he had ventured to a beach farther beyond their cove he saw, from the mainland across the water, a column of smoke rising.

Terror and hope mixed as he was sure that there were no other survivors of his people. It could only mean there were natives of this wild country, and they might be cannibals!

First version of the airbrushed "Ghost ship."

End note

There is more to the story, how there were Native Americans on the other shore, and how Vladimir was discovered by them and nearly killed. However, there was a woman who intervened, and, if this publication includes her story, the reader will learn more about the etching press chest and how it carried forward to the 20th Century as the Halfwood Press in the screenplay, *Swipe*, and the author's *A Printmaker's Tale.*

Following is another treatment of the story as a ballad titled, *Vladimir's Song.*

Vladimir's Song

My name is Vladimir Chichinoff
I'm dying at forty-three
In the lonely Aleutian Islands
But my song won't die with me.
I'm engraving my story in ivory
In scrimshaw, my lines fine as lace
On tusks from a giant walrus
I picture my journey to this place.
I was born in Moscow, Russia
At eleven they kidnapped me
And took me far East to Kamchatka
On the edge of the Okhotsk Sea.
At fourteen I was taken as cabin boy
Toward the Americas our ship was sailin'
For to trade in the furs of sea otters
Hunted by the Aleutians there dwellin'.

Last Voyage of the Emeralda

The hunters gathered ‘round our ship
Like children eager to trade
Those guileless Aleutians in their skinboats
Carelessly they came unafraid.
Choosing one who appeared to be leader
Our first mate displayed a reward
The brave one paddled close in to take it
But they grabbed him and took him aboard.
The first mate took him a prisoner
Tied him to the mast of the ship
I befriended and cared for the Aleutian
And schemed how to help him escape.
So I took rations of rum to the first mate
‘Fore long he was passed out asleep,
Then I freed the Aleut from his bindings
Then o’er the side in his skinboat he leaped.
Awake the first mate learned what I did
He gave chase to stab me with his knife
For freeing his captive Aleutian man

But the ship’s Captain he saved my life.
In revenge the first mate spread a rumor
I was bewitched and would bring us dread
Those superstitious sailors noosed me
To hang by the yards ‘til dead
In order to save his voyage
The Captain put me ashore
On an island in the cold wet wilderness
With nothing but the clothes that I wore.
For days I suffered in foul weather
Castaway with no food to eat
‘Cept for clams I managed to dig up
In the gravel and rocks on the beach.
Scrounging one day I heard voices
Then a boatload of helmeted men
Came out of the fog, came straight for me
Then I fainted, certain that it was my end.
I woke on their ship, it was Spanish
A three-mast’d frigate was she

Story of the painting

The ship’s name was the Emeralda
The beautiful “Jewel of the Sea.”
I was given to the old navigator
The kindest man I have known
Since my almost-forgotten childhood
Long ago, in the warmth of my home.
He taught me the words of their language
And the most wondrous magic to be seen
Of engraving a map on gleaming copper
Inked and pressed in a printing machine.
The machine he said was an etching press
Of polished wood and steel it was wrought
By Basque blacksmiths and dulcimer makers
In Mondragon, of which I knew naught.
Before long this kindly old master
Had taught me his craft and his arts
He said someday I would be a great

Navigator and maker of charts.
Our ship sheltered in a cove by an island
While a furious storm passed near
After which we saw flotsam and jetsam
Of the vessel on which I suffered to here.
To my great misfortune I spied floating
Of all the lost crew only one who survived
It was that cruel first mate, my nemesis
Yet they had to take him aboard alive.
Not a word passed between us when he saw me
But threatening his black looks were clear
And when fully recovered and working again
Made it known that my ending was near.
One day on an island we were hunting
Meat, berries and fresh water supply
My enemy, on some pretense or other
Contrived that I be left behind.

Last Voyage of the Emeralda

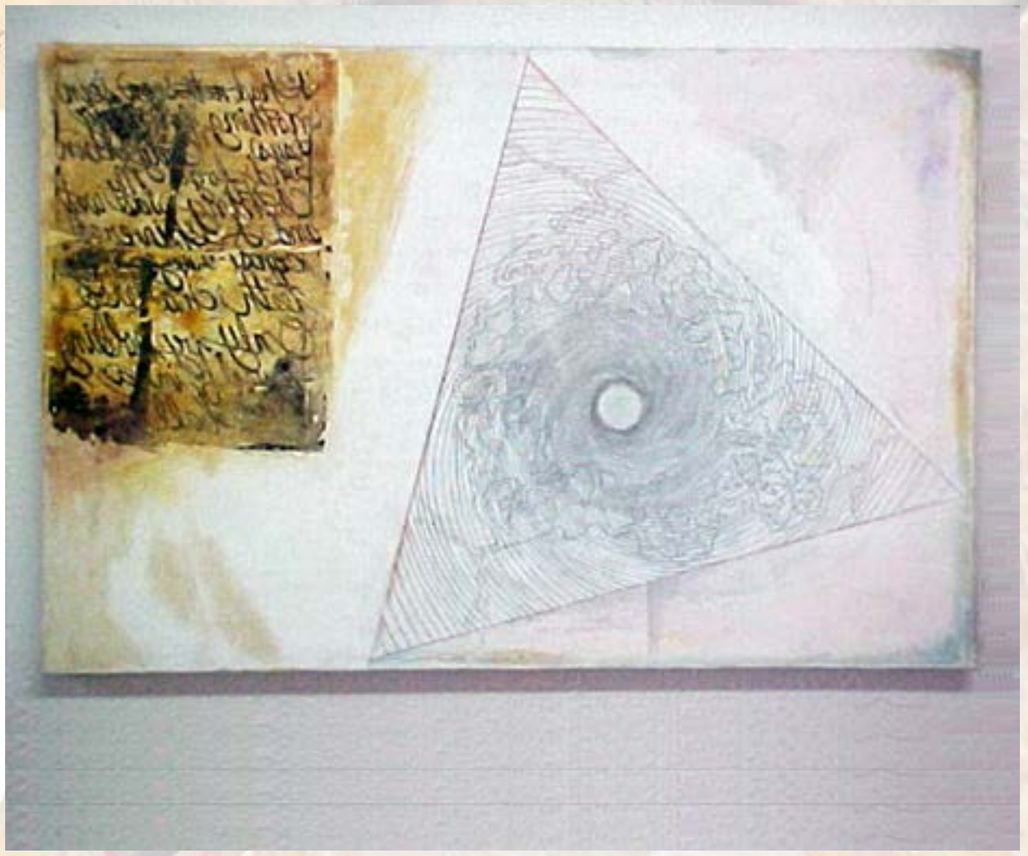
The painting installed in the master bedroom of the condominium penthouse.

Dusk came and I found me a shelter
In a hillside cave o'er the ship's winking lights
In darkness I waited for dawning
When a mighty rogue wave rose in the night.
It lifted the Emeralda from her anchor
And smashed her against the stone walls
Hillside high water and rockery
Brought death and destruction to all.
All that I saw in the wet gray morning
As fog o'er the anchorage grew thin
Empty gray water like a picture wiped out
As though the Emeralda had never been.
And so again I found myself stranded
This time not alone, I soon found
In a tangle, bleeding and with his leg broken
That bitter first mate lying on high ground.
Despite my loathing and fear of the man
As his vengeance toward me was clear
I brought him to my cave and fed him
With what food I could scrounge and prepare.
I found searching the wrack and ruin the next day
The old Navigator's etching press chest
Wholly intact and undamaged
With a supply of copper and the rest.
My joy was darkened and disparaged
By the disdain in the first mate's talk
With his good leg he booted my prize aside
Swearing I'd die on the day he could walk.
The next morning while searching for victuals
The island rumbled violently and shook
I thought there would be a second rogue wave
But it was only an earthquake had struck.
When the Earth's shaking had subsided
I hurried to the cave out of breath
There the dirt bank had slid down and buried
That man who was plotting my death.
I could not mourn how this foul man perished,
But the loss of the press made me cry

Story of the painting

The signature and stamp of the voyage.

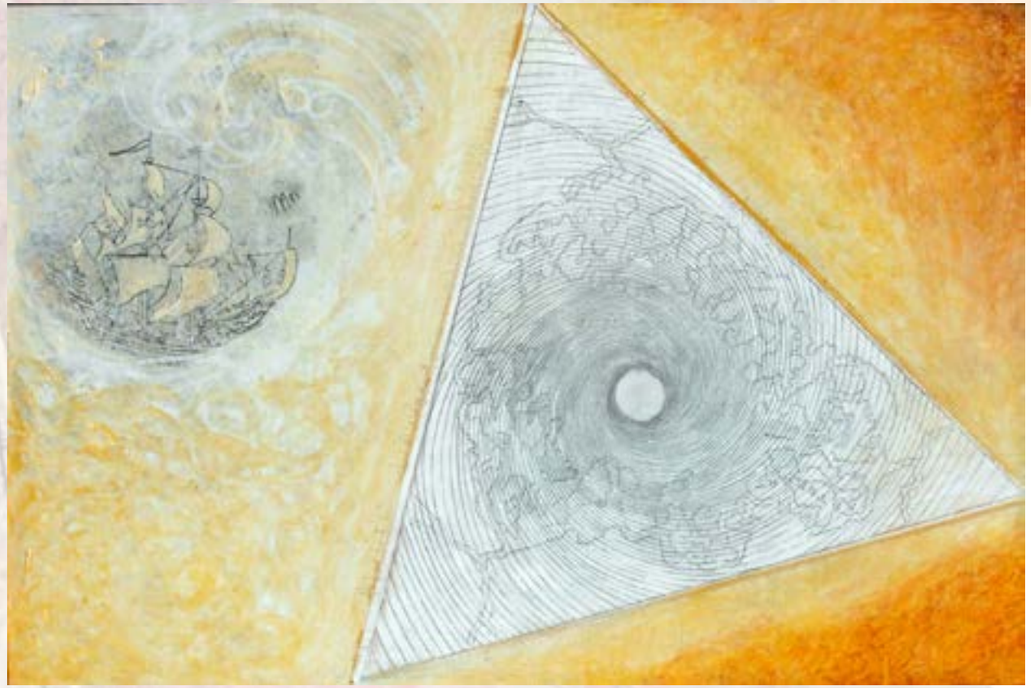
Last Voyage of the Emeralda



The practice panel with the first attempt and test of the laser transfer method for putting the script into wet transparent acrylic medium.

Earth now covered everything I had left
To remember the old navigator by.
Turning my crying eyes east to the mainland
Seeing rising white smoke that showed
That there were natives on that horizon
If coming would they be friendly or foe?
Sure as my prescience had told me
Canoes full of natives came
A long while I hid in the trees and waited
Then heard someone screaming in pain.
Toward the sound I hurried, 'twas a woman
One foot caught in a logjam she floundered
Her people too far to hear her last cry
Choking as logs pulled her under.
Over them I clambered to free her
Up now, her eyes widened with horror
Seeing I was not of her people
Yet I freed her and took her ashore.
Raging and threatening her people now came
And would have killed me for touching the girl
But as I had saved her they spared me
They departed, then I saw them no more.
From then on I began to find bundles
Of clothing, fish and dried meats
Then spying the one who was bringing it
I gave chase and they ran to the beach.
Sure enough it was the woman I saved
Who was bringing supplies to my store
I learned that her name was Shadow Two Whales
And from then on she came even more.

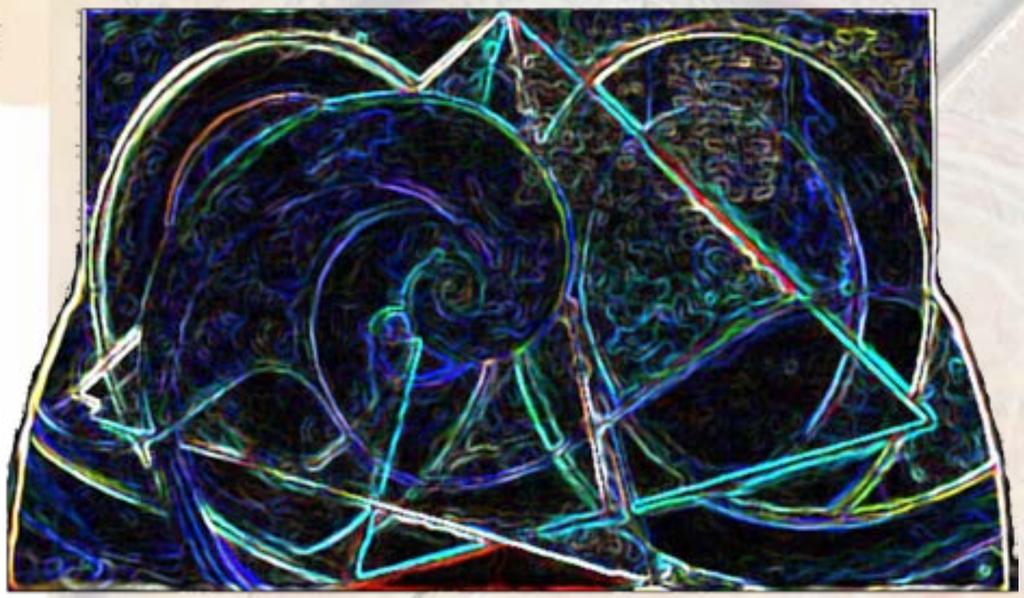
Story of the painting



The "pracctice painting" started as a drawing of the map of Emeralda Region, a gesso'd panel and silverpoint with pencil drawing under. When I decided to use an airbrush for the "ghost ship" effect, I needed a practicing panel, and this is it.

She was turned back by strong winds one day
And in her canoe to my island was returning
I saw on the mainland a great smoke rising
As dreaded enemies her village was burning.
A marauding tribe was destroying her people
She said no one would be left alive
That even our life here was in danger
We must make our escape to survive.
So off to the far north we paddled
Good fortune gave us fine weather
In months we arrived in the Aleutians
Her real home where lived her real father.
Not only was he chief of their people
And grateful for return of his daughter
He was also that prisoner I freed long ago
Wrongly wrenched with his kayak from the water.
In the course of events I was married,
Taught to hunt with the Aleutian clan
And on whale tooth and tusks of the walrus
Learned to make scrimshaw pictures by hand.
With wood, thong and ivory I crafted
From memory a make-believe press
The ivory was my tablet for scrimshaw
Showing how ended the Emeralda's quest.
Somewhere in those southerly islands,
Where the Emeralda met her ends
On the mud bottom of some island cove rests
A lost manifest from far Spanish lands.
It was a cargo of presses for China
Celestial ardor for beauteous machines
Would have been met by those half-wood presses
Now they would never be seen.
As I now finish engraving my story
On a look-alike half-wood press
Where my creation may go now I'll know not
As now I'm going to my rest.

- Bill Ritchie



The digital files of the photos subjected to Photoshop filters, such as this neon effect.

500-year history of the Emeraldas

1525: Amets Gotzon born, his name means "dream" in Basque. Amets will marry but his wife dies tragically and he never remarries. **1527:** Itzal Gotzon, Amets' brother, born. His name means "shadow" in Basque.

1538: Amets Gotzon has a vision at age 15, is visited by four women in white who show him a ship with an unusual design of the prow. **1557:** Itzal Gotzon marries at 30. He will father four children. Nahia, a girl, is his firstborn.

1560: Nahia I, daughter born to Itzal; he is 33 years old. Nahia's name means "desire" in Basque. Nahia adores her uncle Amets. Issabelle refers to our character in the screenplay, *Swipe*, much later in the story of the Emeralda as it connected with the Halfwood Press in *A Printmaker's Tale*.

1573: Financing secured, the building of Emeralda I commences when Amets is 48. Nahia is now 13, constantly helping her uncle Amets, serves as a secretary and also inspiration.

1578: Emeralda I takes her maiden voyage, demonstrates remarkable speed due to its hull and prow design. It is written of the frigate, "Built of Adriatic oak, the best there is. Designed by Amets Gotzon. He was far ahead of his time."

1578: Nahia I marries at 18. **1580:** Nahia II born to Nahia I at 20 years of age. **1587:** After nine years' service the Emeralda I is conscripted by King Philip II for military service as a tender. **1588:** As part of the Spanish Armada, the Emeralda I is attacked

Photoshop filters applied to the digital file.

near the Emerald Coast of Spain by British ships, near sinking she is beached at Santander. Nahia II is 8 years old.

1595: Ametz Gotzon, having seen his precious ship rotting away and scavenged at Santander, dies, a broken-hearted old man. He was 70; his brother, Itzal inherits from his brother the Emeralda I models and plans. These have been carefully preserved and stored in a long wooden trunk. He bequeaths these to his daughter Nahia I and Itzal dies not long after. Nahia I in turn gives the precious trunk and its contents to Nahia II. The trunk will be part of the girls' dowries for generations.

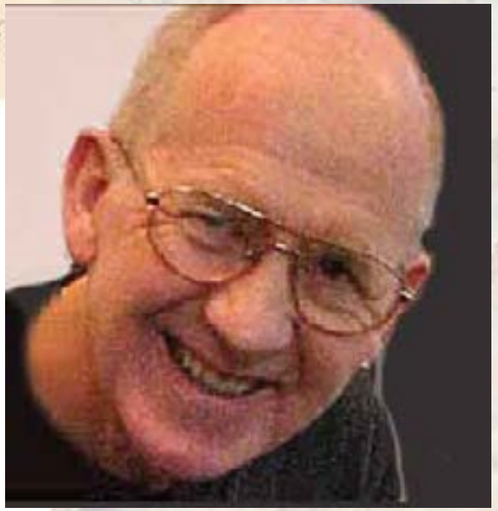
1600: Nahia III born. The trunk is left to her by Nahia II. It will continue to be passed down for centuries. **1620:** Nahia IV born. Trunk left to her by Nahia III. **1640:** Nahia V born. Trunk left to her by Nahia IV. **1660:** Nahia VI born. Trunk left to her by Nahia V.

1680: Nahia VII born. Trunk left to her by Nahia VI. Nahia VII marries Iker Kremen when she is 18. They spend their honeymoon in Santander, in view of the remains of the Emeralda I, now mostly buried in the sand. **1678:** Emeralda's timbers standing at Santander Beach visited by Iker Kremen, who then is told of the trunk which is part of Nahia VII's dowry. A marine architect, he will re-design and have Emeralda II built to modern standards. Iker means "visitation" in Basque and, Kremen means "courage, vigor." Iker has the advantage over the frigate's grand maiden ancestor with better ways to build and equip a ship for these times of exploration and discovery of trade.

1700: Nahia VIII born. **1707:** Construction begins on the Emeralda II. **1710:** Maiden voyage of the Emeralda II. Again, her speed is extraordinary, owing to her bulbous bow. **1720:** Nahia IX born. **1740:** Nahia X born perhaps a twin sister, too. This may be one of the captured daughters of the steel wright and luthier who made the Halfwood Press for the Emeralda II clandestine voyage to China. The Emeralda II had proven to be an amazing vessel, serving transatlantic shipping for over thirty years until it was commissioned for a voyage to China. The voyage was not admitted to official charter books because of the nature of the voyage's purpose. The ship was known to have stopped in Madeira, and there Nahia X was ransomed from slavery and she joined the voyage. She debarked in Desterro, now Florinópolis, as part payment to the governor for permission to leave the harbor. The frigate, however, never reached China, nor did it return to Europe. It was last known to have stopped in Ecuador and California around 1740.

1760: Nahia XI born in Brazil, the child of Nahia X, who was the mistress of the Governor of Florianópolis (the island's old name is Desterro). **1780:** Nahia XII born. **1800:** Nahia XIII born. **1820:** Nahia XIV born. **1840:** Nahia XV born. **1860:** Nahia XVI born **1880:** Nahia XVII born. **1900:** Nahia XVIII born. **1920:** Nahia XIX born. **1940:** Nahia XX born as Issabelle, who has a sister who will be Amor. These sisters are in the screenplay, *Swipe*, and Amor is the wife of Professor Dusty Cann, the protagonist in the screenplay.

1960: Nahia XXI born to run-away daughter of Issabelle. **1980:** Nahia XXII born, this may be "our" Issey. **2000:** Nahia XXIII born. **2020:** Nahia XXIV born. Note that the dates above are approximate, used mainly to determine how many generations lay between the Emeralda I and the Emeralda II.



Bill Ritchie, 2004.

About Bill Ritchie

Bill Ritchie reached a privileged age when he can write before breakfast, make prints in the morning and invent games in the afternoon that pay homage to the printmakers of all history--from prehistoric cave-dwellers to computer graphics animators.

Born in 1941 in Yakima, Washington, he's the son of a farmer and a Montana mountain gal and was schooled in the public schools of Yakima Valley. For anyone living on the Yakama Indian Reserva-tion, fine art was a distant thing, but after high school he left the farm and attended state colleges in Washington and California, then got a position as professor at the University Of Washington School Of Art.

He stayed for nineteen years and reinvented printmaking history by tracing the histrionic line from 30,000 BC to the 21st Century. Excited by the Seattle technology boom, he left academe to work out a balance between his old, traditional printmaking and new media-based arts of video, computers, social networks and video games.

He says his greatest hope is to write books, screenplays and ballads he will enjoy reading in his Golden Years, plus playing with games that teach, known as games with purpose.

Bill lives and works in Seattle with his wife, Lynda; their two daughters and their husbands and a granddaughter live nearby. Nellie, the younger, helps him with his projects. Lynda bought the family an art gallery—the Mini Art Gallery—for their family which also serves as Bill's project development office.

The end - for now

My book, *A Printmaker's Tale* is available at amazon.com and consists of the full story of the Emeralda. Much of it has been abridged for this magazine. The book includes the full screenplay, *Swipe* and also the 48-stanza Vladimir's Song from *Vladimir's Story Sketchbook* only available on lulu.com. This publication was produced with Ka-Blam, a comic book and magazine service.

Since 2016, Nellie Sunderland has been managing the Etsy online shop for the Ritchie family's Mini Art Gallery in Seattle.

Her work for the family goes back to the 1990's when she was still in high school - transcribing video tape sountracks for her parents' instructional video business.

In 2008 she was became the family's asset manager, developing databases, editing and cataloging Bill's journals and essays as well as running her household with her husband, Michael.

The Etsy service came along at a good time s now many of the smaller works in the Mini Art Gallery can now be seen and collected online in a convenient way.

Most are under one-hundred dollars and are framed ready for display. Nellie keeps about fifty in stock at all times.

The works, mostly prints, reflect the Emeralda theme.

Please visit the RitchieMiniArt shop on Esty. When in Seattle, visit the Ritchie family's Mini Art Gallery at 812 5th Ave. North, C-2, in the Uptown neighborhood, a few blocks northeast of the Seattle Center.

Ritchie's Perfect Press
Division of Emeralda Works
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