

Emily Sander, "My Path as an Artist, Part 2"

#12 "Italian Garden, Bellagio" This is a picture I subsequently painted of the garden of the villa where we stayed in Bellagio.



### *Painting on trips*

Painting on trips is rewarding. The inspiration and energy and time are right at hand. They provide a vivid memory of the trip. And they are a good way to interact with local people. For several years when we traveled, my husband would ask for a room with a view, and I would paint from our room. Finally in Sydney I mustered courage to go outside. First I went to their botanical gardens and found an enormous ficus tree. I always thought ficus trees were small and could be put in living rooms. This was like an enormous banyan tree with branches that traced down the trunk and ran along the ground. At one point I looked up, and there was a whole nursery class sitting on one of the roots. There came a moment when I was trying to paint the connection from the branch to the root, and I quickly turned my pad upside down before the paint dried to get a better angle for holding the brush. I was only vaguely aware of two women standing behind me who left at that point. I subsequently realized they probably thought I was cross at them for watching me paint, and I was sorry that I had interjected a sour note into their excursion. I realized if one paints in public, one has some responsibility for the experience of others. The next day when I was painting in the Japanese garden, one man asked me how many I had done that day. (I spend hours on a painting.) Another commented that when I became good, I would paint in oils. I launched into a long description about different media and why I liked watercolor. As he left he said that when I became good, I would paint oils.

#13 The Interior of a 12<sup>th</sup> Century Mill in Tuoro” This Mill in Umbria, Italy, was owned by an English artist who had gone as a young woman to study art in Italy, married an Italian, and lived there ever since. She had done a lovely job of fixing up this 12<sup>th</sup> century mill where we stayed.





#14 “Light on the Tower Stairs” This stone staircase in Vezeley, France, is, I think, my husband’s favorite painting of mine. It was unusual in that, generally, I feel dissatisfied when I do a painting because the painting doesn’t match my vision. That’s why a teacher or fellow artists are a help because they aren’t troubled by what you, the artist, had intended. However, I was quite pleased with this painting as I took it to class. Much to my surprise my invariably supportive teacher and classmates didn’t approve. They suggested that each step has its own perspective. I worked on that and returned to class. They still were critical and suggested I make the stairs look as though they were receding and then advancing. When I had accomplished that, then the painting was approved.



#15 "Amphitheater on Monhegan" The next two paintings are from Monhegan Island where I took my first week long painting workshop and then I returned a second summer.





#16 "South Window, Island Inn, Monhegan" Monhegan is an enchanting place.



*First grandchild*

#17 "Laura and Caleb on Cape Elizabeth"

Here our daughter-in-law, Laura, and grandson, Caleb, are in Maine, and this was Caleb's first time at the beach. As a one-year-old, he was quite sophisticated about sandboxes but this was far bigger than anything he had experienced. Every few step he would stoop to pick up another handful of sand to see if the sand was still continuing. The next day he saw the ocean, and his eyes became really big; one wonders what a child of that age makes of the ocean.





#18 "Tom and Caleb on Cape Elizabeth" Here are our son, Tom, and Caleb, also on Cape Elizabeth.





#19 "Childhood Apparel of Emily Bishop Harvey, born 1878"

This was my grandmother's outfit; it's a bit more elaborate than we dress little girls now.



#20 "Wedgwood Pitchers" These Wedgwood pitchers also belonged to my grandmother.





#21 "Where Many Rivers Meet"



This is the only painting that came from the time when I had cancer in 1998. The clerk of Friends Meeting at Cambridge also happened to have cancer at the same time. She was a very private person, but because she had to miss a meeting, she told people why. I followed her example of being very open about the diagnosis and, as a result, had some wonderful conversations with people I had only known casually before. I also learned more. When my sister-in-law had eye surgery, she told my brother she could manage things on her own. She subsequently called him from the hospital and told him never to believe her again if she said she didn't need him. From that story I decided there was no need to show how brave I was, and I invited people I loved to accompany me to chemotherapy. At one point when the nurse asked me if I always got dressed up to go to the hospital, I realized I was focused on a date, not chemotherapy.

I had a dear friend, Cathy, who searched with me for an image of chemotherapy that could help me welcome the chemicals into my body; I chose to imagine a waterfall. (Someone else who was musical thought in terms of a conductor bringing harmony to her body.) One day Cathy had come down from Maine to accompany me to chemotherapy and had brought a present of a tape of loon calls, lute music, and the sound of lapping waves. The gift was decorated with loon feathers. She also brought a book of poems entitled, "Where Many Rivers Meet". As things turned out, I wasn't able to have the chemotherapy that day because my blood count was low, so we went to the Gardner Museum for lunch. We found there was an hour and a half wait for lunch so we returned to the hospital cafeteria. We then

decided to put the day on the map by going to a Trustees of Reservations property called [Doane's Falls](#) in Royalston in north central Massachusetts. As we walked up a path there, we saw one waterfall, then another, then another.



Doane's Falls

Subsequently we were driving to another Trustees of Reservations scenic spot in Royalston when a policeman stopped us. I couldn't think what I had done wrong. He asked where we were going. When we told him, he said it was hunting season. He knew another place just as beautiful where there would be no hunters. He led us there and showed us a good parking place.

That lurching day seemed typical of life where you never know what is coming around the corner, nor whether it will be good or bad. That was also true of cancer. I never want to have it again, but I would not have not had it. It was a time of openings for me. I learned to feel people's love. I developed a belief in prayer, not because I prayed, but because I was so sustained by the prayers of others. I developed a new zest for life, and there was new energy in my painting. I became more open to hearing about the problems of others. I had always thought I could never cope with having no hair, but I did, so I wondered what else I could do that I thought I couldn't. I guess there was a sense that I know I am going to die, I am beginning to learn how to live.'



*Flowers*

#22 Narcissus Family The Ashstreet Painters paint a lot of flowers.



#23 Orchids and Bud I find myself in a group there of gardeners and sailors.





#24 Orchids in the Sun and Air Orchids are so beautiful and exotic.



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*Tuscany*

#25 Strove in Tuscany Our teacher, Marian, along with Beci Pettit Barron, a very accomplished artist and the ex-wife of our resident, Norman Pettit, lead painting groups to Italy. Castel Bigozzi, where the groups often stays, is located near Strove. This is the view of Strove from the window of the studio where we stayed.





#26 Vineyard, Hills, and Valleys in Tuscany This is a view from Castel Bigozzi looking in another direction.

