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UNUSUAL PURSUITS

On a voyage of artistic discovery

SOUNDING like it was lifted from a Rudyard Kipling novel, "expedition artist" may be one of the world's most intriguing job titles. And Tujunga painter Danielle Eubank will be doing just that aboard the *Phoenicia*, documenting Philip Beale's attempt to circumnavigate Africa in a replica of a 600 B.C. Phoenician cargo ship.

"I try to document everything as we go along, but I don't know ahead of time everything I'm going to paint. I might have some portraits, pictures of the boat, pictures of water. The main thing for me is to express the essence of what we're doing," Eubank says.

Inspired by a reference to such a journey in Herodotus, Beale hopes to disprove the belief that Portuguese explorer Bartholomeu Dias was the first to sail around Africa in 1488.

Fortunately, the modern world has its advantages. Beginning and ending in Awad, Syria, the trip will take about 10 months instead of three years, Beale won't stop to plant and harvest crops, and the rate of death from food-borne infections should be

lower. But the risk of pirates, especially off Somalia, remains high.

Having just returned from the boat's launch, where she spent the previous month helping build the ship with other crew members, Eubank, 39, will set to work on her first round of paintings. She'll rejoin the crew for the Kenya-to-Tanzania and Gibraltar-to-Tunisia legs, shooting pictures and sketching, either with charcoal and pencils or with the same oils she uses for her final paintings.

"It's quite suitable to the *Phoenicia* expedition because that's where linen was originally grown and that's what the original sails would have been made out of 2,500 years ago," says the painter who specializes in abstract waterscapes.

She has no specific requirements for subject matter, but Eubank is drawn to water, paying attention to subtle changes in color, movement and reflection. "I'm getting more and more interested in painting portraits of the boat via water. I can capture things about it that you couldn't capture if I just painted a picture of the boat straight on," she says.

— ELINA SHATKIN



JENNIE HILL
ALL HANDS ON DECK: Artist Danielle Eubank helps the crew tie the sail on the yard of the *Phoenicia*.