

Jeremy Howard **Nine waves of Russian *sudno* art: tacking the ebb and flow of modern maritime representation from the Gulf of Finland to the Pacific Ocean**

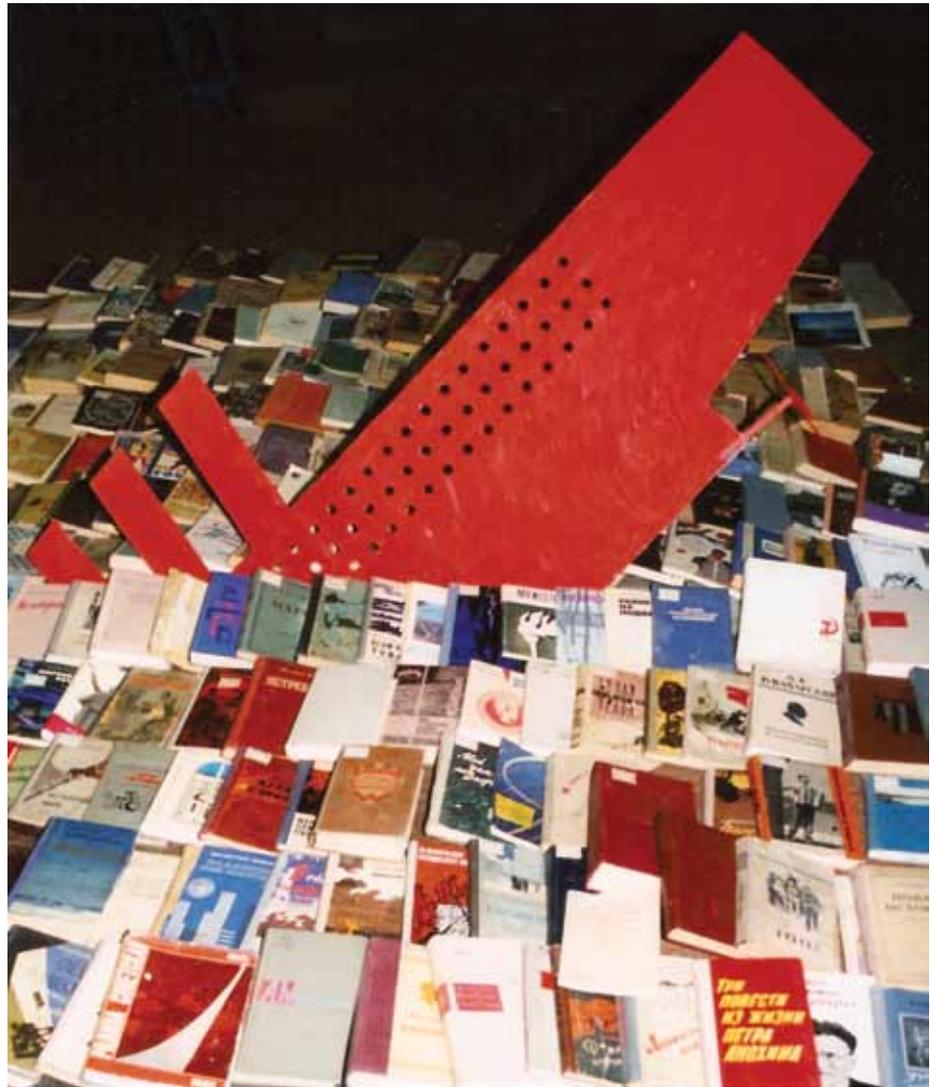
This article plots waves of maritime-associated artwork in Russia from the present to the mid-nineteenth century, without proposing that they comprise progress, development or full range. Rather, through analysis of distinguishing *sudno* qualities,¹ it is suggested that they collectively convey an expressive form of undulating surge–retreat force cycle that correlates with the action of the sea. The forces at play in this are aesthetic, existential, political as well as historical. Thus, the waves present artwork-vessels that embark on voyages of the imagination or recall ships of state. We commence with the ninth wave, and trickle down, away from notions of climax and conclusion, and in essence sequentially and gradually, towards the first. That first, while containing the potential of the ninth is also a crescendo and diminuendo following earlier patterns.

In this study of swell each wave is an overturn of its (more-or-less) chronological predecessor, the turn being marked by significant shifts in moment, medium and meanings. Hence we pilot a passage from the installations and happenings of the *Emplacements* event in and around a navy ship test tank (wave 9), through Tsereteli's vast metal Russian fleet monument (wave 8), Kononov's concrete and wooden celebration of the Cossack freebooter Stenka Razin (wave 7), Soviet walrus ivory carving (wave 6), Tatlin's maritime theatre sets (wave 5), Miturich's 'waver' construction designs (wave 4), a late-Tsarist memorial to tragic shipwreck (Izenberg's *Steregushchiy*) (wave 3), and the marine decoration of Kronstadt Naval Cathedral (wave 2), to Pimenov's ship figureheads (wave 1). In so doing we arrive at something of a beginning of modern Russian *sudno* art, the journey and its stages allowing each passenger to make up their own mind apropos the connotation of *sudno*.²

Wave 9: *Emplacements*

If *sudno* art reflects concern with passage, *Emplacements* is a moment of rite of passage to zero, to the stillness before a new swell. As the ninth wave, according to sailors' lore, it is the death wave. It represents overthrow, a halt from previous accumulations and a recess for the gathering of alternative energy. For about a week at the end of July 2000, culminating in an opening on Russian Navy Day, Saturday 29 July, a series of performances, interventions and installations was staged in and around the ship test tank on the artificial island of New Holland, St Petersburg. As the cornerstone of construction for Tsar Peter

1. Oleg Zhogin, *Red Crossing*, 2000, painted metal and paper books. *Emplacements*, New Holland, St Petersburg (photo: Jeremy Howard).



the Great's northern fleet, which was to turn Russia into a global maritime power, the choice of New Holland for *Emplacements* was highly symbolic. From the early eighteenth century the island had been the place where the timber for the new Russian navy's ships was prepared, sorted and stored; where the naval prison was sited; and where, towards the end of the nineteenth century, Dmitry Mendeleev had initiated a marine laboratory which included a 9-metre deep concrete water tank and canal for experiments on ship design and technology. It was here then, almost exactly one hundred years earlier, that Russian ironclad and armoured cruiser design had been accelerated, purportedly to protect Tsarist interests around the world. It was fittingly ironic that *Emplacements* was commenced by Roxane Permar, an American, a woman, 'launching' from the site a flotilla of tiny paper boats comprised of 'hardcopy' emails concerning the transnational planning of the ephemeral collaborative art project. Permar also recorded interviews with engineers who had worked in the test tank and had their 'reminiscences' broadcast as a work of sound art from the control booth of the tank during the vernissage.³

Visitors flocked to see, hear and participate in the art-happenings on this previously off-limits Romanov and Soviet military base. Given the location, many (though by no means all) of the individual projects were marine-themed and politicized. One of the first encounters for the public was with Oleg Zhogin's *Red Crossing* (fig. 1). On the floor of the tank's laboratory the stern of a red ship (a flat, painted, metal cutout) protruded diagonally from a loosely rectangular sea of books. Set overlapping one another in imitation of waves, the books appeared to be swallowing the sinking ship, its bow seemingly already vanished below their rippled surface. The books comprised mass-produced late Soviet political literature, prominent in the first line of which, at least while I attended, was Dmitry Gusarov's *Three Tales from the Life of Pyotr Anokhin* (1974), about the Karelian Bolshevik martyr, with its flaming yellow and red cover, and *Soviet Motherland [Rodina Sovetskaya] 1917–1987*, the fifth and final edition of the post-Stalin Soviet Communist Party's interpretation of Soviet history. The latter featured an arcing white dart dissecting a red ground, this representing the titanium *Monument to the Conquerors of Space* (Andrey Faydysh-Krandkievsky, Moscow, 1964). With its evocation of the diagonal thrust of a Soviet spaceship, the rather battered soft cover of the book made a stark juxtaposition with the similarly angled sinking red steamship behind it.

While *Red Crossing* marked the culmination of Zhogin's seven-year period of book assemblage art, other pieces at *Emplacements* also contemplated drowning and passage to new times, spaces and altered states of consciousness. Nearest to *Red Crossing* was a different red ship.⁴ Placed on a workbench, the shiny greenish surface of which appeared to represent a placid sea, this was a crude model cargo vessel with a stern and prow covered in waffle-fabric, midship adorned with lit candles and, in place of a funnel, a cylindrical bowl filled with water and several goldfish. Next to this postmodern take on the votive ship were what observers could have assumed were two corpses covered in white lace fabric on mortuary trolleys. In fact under the fabric were two model test boats from the tank, the length and breadth of which accorded with human dimensions. Atop a bench at the prow was placed a television monitor on which played a video featuring two heads of young women in embroidered lace scarves superimposed against murky, rippling waters (of the River Neva). This was Gail Pearce's installation *Sleeping Beauties*. Turned into 'brides', the intention was to have the women-boats appear asleep and then awaken, as if revitalized by the power of the river. According to Pearce, their awakening signified a critical but largely unnoticed effect of *Emplacements*: 'It seemed to me that the closed New Holland site was opening and awakening because of the national and international artists working there ... I filmed [the Neva] to represent the source of energy which would bring the site to life ... however, the audience saw the princesses as corpses.'⁵

Two of the remaining artworks at *Emplacements*, both of which utilized the ship test tank, are worth noting for the purposes of this article. First came Oleg Yanushevsky's *Letter on the Water*, which comprised the artist riding the

waves of the test tank on one of its experimental craft and simultaneously writing transient poems, using flour, butter and whipped cream, on the water's polymer-coated surface. Second was Ludmila Belova's *Presence* which, contrary to Yanushevsky, sought not to disturb the absolute stillness of the tank's water 'with its feeling of being a plastic film disguising its nine-metre depth' (fig. 2).⁶ Instead Belova utilized and challenged this visual illusion by placing three lifebuoys on the water's surface. On each of these she fixed eight life-size hands made out of white plaster from which fabric imitating sleeves trailed down into the oily and turbid 'green' water. Clinging to the ring of each lifebuoy, the four pairs of hands suggested shipwreck and drowning, with only a forlorn hint of attempted survival. As the visitors passed by, confined to and directed along the dark narrow walkways either side of the tank, they were confronted with a display that was simultaneously suspended hope, vain hopelessness and ghostly succumbing. Here then the passage of the ninth wave was epitomized. Inevitably it was both intrinsically linked and an obverse to that which had gone before.

Wave 8: Zurab Tsereteli's *In Commemoration of the 300th Anniversary of the Russian Fleet*

While the disparate body of ephemeral *sudno* works by multiple artists at *Emplacements* suggested crash, dispersal and spent force, they also had a latency which anticipated an alternative regeneration. For all its triumphalism, great height and exposed site, no such signs were visible in Tsereteli's monument to the founder of the Russian navy, Tsar Peter I. When it was erected on a specially created platform island at the confluence of the Moskva River and Vodootvodny Canal in Moscow in 1997, this gargantuan 98-metre tall artwork was the third highest sculpture in the world. At around 600 tonnes (not including the c.1400-tonne pedestal) it was also one of the heaviest (fig. 3). If the concept of *Emplacements* had been the creation of site-specific art and yet it had turned into a form of post-industrial eulogy, the Moscow statue was a work of industrial artifice celebrating naval ambitions realized in a pre-industrial age many hundreds of kilometres distant (and not least through the very creation and functioning of the New Holland ship timberyards). With a St Petersburg foundry being the manufacturer of the main parts, Tsereteli's sculpture was built from stainless steel, bronze and copper. It features an 18-metre figure of the Tsar in Roman legionary garb piloting his *sudno*, a disproportionately small, single-mast vessel, atop a bulbous tower of oversized volutes and billowing sails out of which project 14 rostra. Sporting 15 heavy bronze St Andrew's flags free to blow in the wind (as Russian navy ensigns), the whole stands atop a low pedestal from which spill fountains of water intended to suggest waves made by a ship passing through water.

Replete with 'antique' figureheads on the lowest rostra, imperial double-head eagle on its main prow, gilded scroll in the Tsar's upraised right hand, model neoclassical architecture on the *sudno*'s deck, and tiers

2. Ludmila Belova, *Presence*, 2000, lifebuoy, plaster and fabric. *Emplacements*, New Holland, St Petersburg (photo: Ludmila Belova).



of wavy-folded sails on the mast, Tsereteli's structure is a provocative, eye-catching and kitsch salutation to bygone ages and vision. Its brash eclecticism makes it the flagship of post-Soviet Moscow's 'Luzhkov style'.⁷ In 2010, immediately after Yuri Luzhkov had had his eighteen-year incumbency as mayor of the Russian capital brought unceremoniously to an end, given the questions of 'taste' and 'era' sparked by the monument, serious debates began about its removal. Agreement could not be reached on any alternative locations. This massive, static *sudno* is going nowhere fast.

The stationary sculptural commemoration of the late seventeenth-century inception of the Russian fleet by the young Russian Tsar then based in landlocked Moscow actually suggests multidirectional movement. It aspires vertically as it first seems to erupt from the water and then tapers to the crow's nest and flag at the summit of the mast. But, with its rostra pointing in different directions, it also heads north, south, east and west simultaneously. While this hints at the diverse origins of the fleet in the Azov and Baltic seas, it also conveys the grand geopolitical orbit of the Russian Federation and its predecessors, the Soviet Union and Romanov empire. Yet what is also articulated is a disproportionate, irrational assemblage that can only lead to extremely complex and irreconcilable navigational problems. As such, and with its proclamatory gesture of triumph over the waves and conquering of new worlds, it might be both compared and contrasted with monuments to great navigators (and colonizers) around the globe, not least those dedicated to Christopher Columbus (e.g. Barcelona, 1888, and San Juan, Puerto Rico, 1893), Leif Eriksson (e.g. Reykjavik, 1930) and Henry, Duke of Viseu (e.g. António Salazar's *Estado Novo* regime's *Monument to the Discoveries*, Lisbon, 1939–60).⁸ For all their own qualities of imperialism, these latter are certainly more evidently aimed in their respective seafaring directions.

3. Zurab Tsereteli, *In Commemoration of the 300th Anniversary of the Russian Fleet*, 1997, metal, concrete and water. Moscow
(photo: Jeremy Howard)



Still, being an emblematic sculptural statement of naval prowess and imperial history at the heart of a metropolitan capital, the monument to Peter the Tsar-commander can also be seen to follow in the almost two-century wake of Trafalgar Square's Nelson's Column (London, 1840–43) and the plastic decoration of the Admiralty (St Petersburg, 1812–13), both of which were recognitions of victory over Napoleon.⁹ As the zenith of Russian Empire Style design, the latter incorporated Ivan Terebenev's frieze depicting *The Establishment of the Fleet in Russia* over its main portal. In the centre of this multi-figured nautical relief, Peter, in Roman dress, holds out his right hand to accept the trident from a wave-riding Neptune.

Stephen M. Woodburn has noted that around the time of the creation of *Russian Fleet*, "Tsereteli seemed to embody a New Russian aesthetic, corresponding to the gaudy ostentation of the "New Russian" nouveaux riches".¹⁰ According to Sergiusz Michalski, Tsereteli was then a 'sculptural entrepreneur' who, in 'espousing a lurid, baroque figurative style', bucked the contemporary trend (particularly in certain parts of Europe) for non-figuration and temporary or immaterial counter-monuments.¹¹ Yet for all its seemingly anachronistic triumphalism, *Russian Fleet* is polysemous. It might even be considered a work of national atonement and/or conspicuous postmodern critique. Irrespective, it shrieks impurity and was created in a period of major reassessment and realignment of political direction by one of the largest states in the world. That it should commemorate western-oriented autocratic royalty at the hub of a newly created federal-presidential republic spanning much of eastern Europe and Asia signifies eschewal of the previous seven decades of Soviet monumental art. As is well known, those decades had seen the large-scale erasure of Romanov memorials and their replacement by huge statues of the Soviet Communist Party *vozhds* Vladimir Lenin and Joseph Stalin. The erection of the figural *Russian Fleet* monument signalled re-engagement with the monarchist past. Is it irrelevant that this is essentially a process of vacuous rehabilitation and that the colossal, caricatural sculpture harkens darkly to the expression of cult of personality that both the oppressive Soviet and Romanov regimes exploited in order to proselytize their grotesque systems of power and control? One could argue that its sense of pastiche, Disney-like playfulness and quality of tourist-draw make it equally manipulative, cynical and sinister. Let us posit instead that this eighth wave is not solely comprised of Tsereteli's crest but that it might also contain a latent and imagined *Russian Fleet* counter-monument that we ourselves are hereby creating and dedicating to Henry Farquharson and Stephen Gwyn, the brains responsible for the introduction and teaching of navigation in Russia at the turn of the eighteenth century.¹²

Wave 7: Sergey Kononov's *Stenka Razin and his Gang*

The tide that brought about Tsereteli's *Russian Fleet* is evidently swelling in the dilapidated concrete monument to Stenka (Stepan) Razin that has, since 1972, graced the embankment of the port of Rostov-on-Don, close to the site

of Peter's establishment of the first Russian naval shipyards at Azov.¹³ Here six larger-than-life blached figures are placed in groups of two around a flat elongated platform which is interrupted left of centre by the sweeping curves of the cantilevered prow of Razin's *sudno* and the waves through which it cuts (fig. 4). Facing the river, the giant figure of the Cossack ataman dominates the *sudno*'s deck and gestures with the tilt of his body and right hand towards the seated figure of the Persian princess before him. This, then, is the moment before Razin's furious and drunken sacrifice to the waters of the lover he had captured during his Cossacks' battle against a Persian fleet in the Caspian Sea in June 1669.¹⁴ As such it memorializes the little despot before the big despot, the freebooter's navy before the imperial navy. Missing its original bronze plaque, every spring the monument gets a new coat of whitewash.

The articulation of the *Razin* monument with its simplified cuboid and curved forms accords with the 1970s penchant for modified brutalism that Lobak was subsequently to most clearly express in his design, as a concrete open grand piano, for the Rostov Music Theatre. That this was also the Brezhnev era which ushered in a decade of Soviet gerontocracy was apparent in the commission of the monument as homage to the sculptor Konenkov, who died, aged 97, a few months before its completion. For the Rostov *Razin* pays tribute to what can be considered Konenkov's greatest work: his *Stepan Razin and his Gang*, created in 1918–19 as part of Lenin's supposedly socially transformative Plan for Monumental Propaganda. As the martyr-hero who had led the brutally suppressed 1670 Cossack and peasant uprising against harsh, Muscovy-led rule, Razin became a highly symbolic figurehead for the Bolshevik leaders in the wake of their seizure of power in 1917. Konenkov's original monument was erected on the site of Razin's execution (by quartering) on Moscow's Red Square, with Lenin giving a rallying speech at its unveiling on 1 May 1919. It epitomized and made manifest the significance of the Cossack for contemporary Russian



4. Sergey Konenkov (and Leonid Lobak), *Stenka Razin and his Gang*, 1972, painted concrete, Rostov-on-Don (photo: Boris Mavlyutov)



5. Sergey Konenkov, *Stenka Razin and his Gang*, 1919, wood and coloured cement. Red Square, Moscow. Contemporary photograph.

culture: leading Russian artists Vasily Surikov, Boris Kustodiev, Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin and Pavel Kuznetsov had recently produced major images of the wilful Razin on his *sudno*; the avant-garde poets Velimir Khlebnikov, Vasily Kamensky, Marina Tsvetaeva and Maximilian Voloshin wrote poems about his exploits and character;¹⁵ and the first Russian film (*Stenka Razin*, 1908) had been about his sacrifice of the Persian princess as portrayed in a well-known folk song.

Of peasant origins himself, Konenkov's proximity to the folk, sympathy with the oppressed, feeling for polytheism and intrinsic love of music had been consistently expressed in much of his work since his days in art school in Moscow and St Petersburg. His *Razin* falls towards the end of a period of carving powerful wooden figures and busts of country folk and spirits. These included two heads of stoic Russian bargehauleders, the first more staunch than the second and seemingly the result of Konenkov surrendering himself for months at a time from 1915 to 'Razin ... the lure of the unrestricted expanse of the Volga, the squeak of [oars in] rowlocks ... to the image of the fearsome ataman'.¹⁶ Using men from the Don Cossack Regiment in Moscow as his models, Konenkov created a set of six roughly carved and painted

wooden figures 2.5 metres tall (fig. 5). Their primitivism makes them appear totemic. They were to be grouped around the recumbent painted plaster figure of the princess and erected on Red Square's Place of Skulls for about three weeks before their removal to Moscow's newly created First Proletarian Museum.¹⁷ The group embodied the tragic folk song, entitled 'From beyond the Island into the Main Stream', about Razin's sacrifice of the Persian princess.¹⁸ According to Konenkov's contemporary and fellow sculptor Boris Ternovets,

the work was undoubtedly the most remarkable and strong of all those created in the revolutionary epoch ... its epic strength is gripping ... the faces of Razin and his gang breathe the breadths of Volga and a craving for freedom, brigandage and daring. Their conjoined poses, together with the barely marked folds of their clothes and their painted wood, speaks of the immense simplicity and polychromy with which the life of the folk is enriched.¹⁹

Their late Soviet Rostov incarnation whitewashes their primal urgency and reduces their effigy-like potency. At the same time this free interpretation is one of the more gracious monuments to its era and speaks volumes for the troubled waters traversed by the Soviet ship of state in the half century since its (and the original version's) inception.

Wave 6: *Submarine S-56* and Mikhail Rakov's *Aerial Reconnaissance*

Wave 6 deals with an artform and artist that have been largely submerged in the ocean of art history. In 1975 the S-56, an almost 80-metre long, 837-tonne, green and grey submarine was hoisted on to a reinforced concrete pedestal on the Shipping Embankment of the Golden Horn Bay in Vladivostok. On 9 May that year, in celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of end of the Second World War, it opened its doors as a museum. Seven years later, on Navy Day (25 July) 1982, it became part of the new Memorial Complex that marked the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Soviet Pacific Fleet. As such it was joined, among other works, by a multi-figural Second World War monument (by the sculptors Valery Nenazhivin and Nikolay Montach) with an eternal flame. In 1985 a 14-metre high obelisk in the shape of a sail blown in the wind and an accompanying anchor were added to the complex. They commemorate the 1860 founding of Vladivostok by Nikolay Komarov, a warrant officer in the Tsarist army. Right by the water's edge, this monument is said to mark the spot where Komarov, together with 30 troops, disembarked from the supply ship *Manchur* in order to establish the military outpost that was to become the biggest Russian port on the Pacific Ocean coast. A further addition to the complex occurred in 1995 when a 6-metre high Wall of Memory was erected behind and slightly above the submarine, running its length. With red wedge coping suggesting blood-soaked Soviet waves, it is adorned with multiple plaques bearing inscriptions to the some 7,000 Vladivostok citizens who died in the war.

Soviet sculpture is all too easily identified with gargantuan tendencies, not least with bronze, steel and concrete Stalinist monuments. But here, for this wave dealing with the mid-twentieth-century era, we can take another tack. The Central Navy Museum in St Petersburg has in its vast and rich collection a 39-cm long piece of *sudno* art. Carved from a walrus tusk or bone, it is a 1:200 scale model of Vladivostok's S-56 submarine. Made in 1956 by V. Sheremet, this ivory imitates the form of the S-56, with its cigar-shaped hull, conning tower, gun deck, hydroplanes and propeller.²⁰ Even the small portholes are appropriately etched along much of the length of the hull. Two questions arise. Why commemorate the S-56 and why in this way? The answer to the first is all to do with the defence of the Soviet Union and, most immediately, the immeasurably costly victory over the German-led Axis Powers in the Second World War. The S-56 was constructed in a Leningrad shipyard in 1936 and belonged to a series of 41 'Stalinets', diesel-electric submarines. Launched from Vladivostok in 1939, by late 1942 it had been requisitioned by the Soviet Northern Fleet. Patrolling the planet's most northerly waters over the next fifteen months, it survived numerous German bombings, and in reply torpedoed and sank four German ships. Awarded the Order of the Red Banner in 1943 and the Guards Title in 1945, it was decommissioned in Vladivostok in 1955.

The action seen by S-56 was in some respects anticipated in openwork



6. Mikhail Rakov, *Aerial Reconnaissance*, c. 1930s, walrus ivory. Whereabouts unknown.

ivory miniatures made by sculptor Mikhail Rakov in and around the 1930s. And through his work we can find answers to the second, ‘why in this way’, question. Examples included *Aerial Reconnaissance*, a pair of oval medallions (fig. 6). The first of these depicts a ski-plane, steamship and four basking seals. The second shows an airship, steamship and a family of three Arctic people, presumably indigenous Nenets. The latter wear thickly padded fur-trimmed and hooded coats, hold hands and wave flags. One of the elders carries a rifle slung over his shoulder. In essence, what Rakov is expressing is the exploration, settlement, opening up and defence of the Soviet Arctic. He might well also be celebrating the Arctic flights and development of the Soviet dirigible programme undertaken by the Italian explorer-engineer Umberto Nobile.

Around the time that Rakov made *Aerial Reconnaissance*, the leading Soviet art critic Anatoly Bakushinskiy published ‘Small form sculpture’, an essay in which he both recognized the prime significance of small-size art for the new Soviet citizen and lamented the lack of taste and skill present in the mass of work being created. Calling for a new style that synthesized archetypal primitivism with refined realism, artistry with function, he noted a (very) few signs of hope. Prominent in these ‘islets in the ocean of talentlessness and uselessness that clogs our eyes and markets’ was the work of Rakov:

an extremely talented virtuoso in most delicate ivory miniature art. With his reliefs he beautifully and thoughtfully revives and extends the traditions and styles of our northern, Kholmogory ivory carving. At the [‘15 Years of Sculpture’] exhibition this was shown in his work dedicated to Arctic themes ... these are not just individual pieces for they are also paradigms for ivory arts and for the artistic cooperatives of the north.²¹

Bakushinskiy felt that work such as Rakov’s miniatures could effect a sea-change in the quality of ‘small-form’ art and thereby act as a ‘powerful linchpin for the perestroika of consciousness through which our whole culture will be set to acquire new foundations’.²² This understanding of



walrus tusk and bone carving as a building tool of mass culture was part of the reframing of Soviet art policy away from its earlier, more experimental forms and practices which, for the main part, had left the masses cold. It anticipated a 1934 decree from the Central Executive Committee of the USSR to develop the dying art of ivory carving in Kholmogory, a traditional centre for the craft close to the Northern Dvina River and White Sea coast at Arkhangelsk in the Russian far north. Alison Hilton has indicated how Kholmogory carving had developed from a folk craft to a form of highly regarded, court-patronized, luxury art in the seventeenth century.²³ With, for example, combs, brooches, caskets, small boxes, plaques and icons being created in engraved, relief and openwork walrus ivory, motifs moved from local flora and fauna to abstract forms, allegorical figures, portraits and genre scenes.²⁴ This blurring of the line between the urban and cosmopolitan, and rural and peasant skills and interests, was taken up by Rakov in his work.

Having grown up in Arkhangelsk, Rakov had trained in sculpture, painting and jewellery-making in St Petersburg from 1912. While working for Fabergé in the years leading up to 1917, he established himself as a miniaturist sculptor specializing in the use of precious materials. Shortly afterwards, in the midst of the Russian civil war, he returned to Arkhangelsk where, being employed as an organizer of handicraft production for the new regional economic council (Sovnarkhoz), he studied and became a master in ivory carving and scrimshaw. He was subsequently to advance this skill and craft in his many years of employment at VKhUTEIN, the Higher Artistic-Technical Institute in Moscow. Besides *Aerial Reconnaissance*, other miniature openwork sculptures by Rakov included a scene of fishing with a spear from a boat, as well as a variety of scenes depicting northern human and animal life. Thus the local nature and economy were represented in works of extreme refinement, which, for all their propagandist side, were also a serious embodiment of the desire for self- and communal improvement.²⁵

Wave 5: Tatlin sets sail: *sudno* stage design – *We'll not give up* and the voyage through *Zangezi*

If 'intensive ideological and artistic restructuring'²⁶ is evident in Rakov's miniature sculpture, it is equally evident if radically different in Vladimir Tatlin's marine-related stage sets of the early Soviet and late Tsarist periods. Both represent alternatives to the easel and the monumental as well as a move towards craft and design, and both embrace the organic and elemental. Yet unlike Rakov, Tatlin's turn to the material is also towards the machine. With his background as a sailor it was natural for the artist of assemblage and progenitor of constructivism to turn towards maritime technology. That this should develop, simultaneously with Rakov's creation of *Aerial Reconnaissance*, into a study in the means and dangers of navigation in the Arctic Ocean (i.e. in *We'll not give up*), was no coincidence. And that the nautical concern should be expressed through stage design was in keeping with Tatlin's lifelong persuasion for theatre work, as well as the contemporary move of leading constructivists such as Stenberg brothers into the production of socialist-inspired and agit-inspiring maritime sets.²⁷

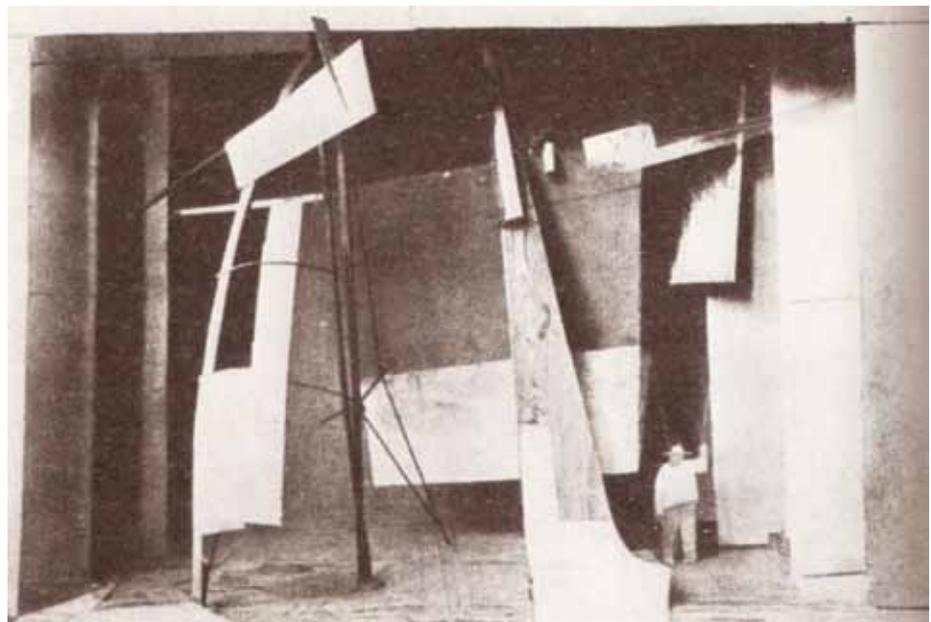
Essentially Tatlin's marine-themed theatre designs numbered seven: 7. *For those who are at Sea* (Boris Lavrenev, 1947); 6. *Captain Kostrov* (Aleksy Fayko, 1946); 5. *Fog over the Bay* (Isidor Shtok, 1945); 4. *Kronstadt (Spring of 21)* (Aleksandr Shteyn, 1940); 3. *We'll not give up* (Sergey Semenov, 1935); 2. *Zangezi* (Velimir Khlebnikov, 1923); 1. *Flying Dutchman* (Richard Wagner, 1915).²⁸ Comparing *We'll not give up* and *Zangezi*, we can see key development towards the figurative and communal and away from investigation of the elements of construction (figs. 7 and 8). *We'll not give up* premiered at the Moscow Chamber Theatre run by Alexander Tairov on 7 November 1935. Its production bore witness to Tairov's adaptation of his experimental approach to a form of what he considered 'structural realism' or 'concrete realism'. This accorded with the newly heightened dirigism over contemporary Soviet life as well as Communist Party Secretary Andrey Zhdanov's infamous 1934 demand for 'socialist realism' in the arts. The play related the story of the SS *Chelyuskin*, a specially reinforced cargo and passenger steamship which, in 1933, had sought to establish the viability of non-icebreakers navigating the Northern Sea Route from Murmansk to Vladivostok. Becoming icebound at the entrance to the Bering Strait, the ship had sunk on 13 February 1934. Of the 105 people on board, 104 survived on the ice floes and, in an unprecedented feat of aviation deliverance, over the next two months they were gradually airlifted to safety. With two airships on standby in Vladivostok, the two-month-long rescue operation was carried out by an international variety of aeroplanes and through the preparation of multiple ice airstrips.²⁹

Professor Otto Schmidt, a pioneering geophysicist from the Soviet Academy of Science, had led the expedition and it was he who advised on the staging of *We'll not give up*. Photographs of Tatlin's maquettes show a schematic map of the Arctic Ocean covering the proscenium. For the first act he created a set that opened up fragments of the *Chelyuskin*.³⁰ Two decks are visible, with a

cabin, wardroom, passenger lounge and outside deck complete with railings and lifebuoy. One of the next sets featured a central part of the sinking ship tilted at a slant and with a gangway leading down to the ice floe. A third set showed the camp on an ice floe that appears to disappear into the dark distance. There is thus a movement from intimate internal space to vast untamed expanse, an emphasis on the elemental power of plane and line as the partial faceted forms are dissected and defined horizontally, vertically and diagonally.

The formal qualities of Tatlin's *We'll not give up* reveal a legacy from Velimir Khlebnikov's climactic, fourth 'supersaga', *Zangezi* (1922), just as *Zangezi* itself reveals a legacy from the Futurist poet's first supersaga, *The Otter's Children* (1911–13). Both of Khlebnikov's works are an assortment of compilations, the montage of which included distinct genres, diverse contents, a variety of 'transrational' languages and an overarching sense of quest for universal spatio-temporal patterns and order. The significance of the latter was made evident by the division of the supersagas into sections entitled 'sails' (*Otter's Children*) and 'planes' (*Zangezi*). The Russian for 'sail' is *parus* which also means 'pendentive'. This double meaning is vital not least given the pendentive's symbolic and constructional role in the creation of a domed space that unifies realms of heaven and earth, the ineffable and the material. *Otter's Children* is a meditation on history, will and destiny that primarily takes the form of marine time travel. *Zangezi* follows suit, its 21 planes being assembled as a study in the waves and rhythms of history via numerical laws and word-root evolution. Its hero, Zangezi, is a mixture of the rivers Ganges and Zambezi, a god and Khlebnikov himself, a material-, sound- and wordsmith who soars above the world directing action. In Plane 10 he calls:

Em has burst into the domains of Be ... Daringly shake the elders by the beard! I am Mogoguru and I ring in Em! Mightmaker of Mightmakers!



8. Vladimir Tatlin, *Zangezi*, 1923, maquette, wood, wire, cardboard, etc. Whereabouts unknown (photo: *Russkoe Iskusstvo*, 1923, 2, n.p.).

To Em, that North Star of Humankind, that Pleiades staff for the ricks of our beliefs – that’s where our course lies. To her the barque of centuries sails. To her the omnibus of humanity sails, proudly puffing out the sails-pendentives of state.

Given that Khlebnikov had died in 1922, Tatlin’s staging of his dramatic poem in Petrograd on 9 May 1923 comprised a homage to his closest literary collaborator. His known set suggested those of *We’ll not give up* but was more abstract. It is a group of seemingly flat surface planes. They are built of various materials and, in places, joined by wires. With an oversize mast, sail and rudder dominating the front of his maquette, and himself perched atop the structure and proclaiming Khlebnikov’s neologisms, the effect is of Tatlin–Khlebnikov being both a lookout in a crow’s nest and a god-superman transcending the bounds of sea and earth. With its dramatic sense of multidirectional movement, intersection of multiple diagonal and curved lines, use of illumination and projection, and fragmented storm-tossed aerial-nautical *sudno* parts, there is much in *Zangezi* that derives from Tatlin’s Monument to the Third International project, as well as his rigging-strung counter-reliefs and designs for Wagner’s *Flying Dutchman*.³¹

Wave 4: Miturich’s *Volnoviki*

The fourth wave is just a ripple and a bit of breather. As with Tatlin’s *sudno* sets it is a form of organic constructivism. From the late 1910s the artist Petr Miturich, Khlebnikov’s brother-in-law, had begun to posit inventions concerned with kinetics. In an interest that continued until his death in the 1950s, this led him to the design of apparatuses that would move according to a principle of wave technology which he discerned in the natural world, not least through observation of the movement of creatures such as the caterpillar, worm, tadpole, snake and fish. He called his ‘mobile’ objects *volnoviki*, or wavers. These comprised undulating mechanisms designed to move through an efficient system of energy production and conservation that was essentially a set of small interconnected thrusts and pauses. This ‘wave-like vibration of the body or surface’ was to be at the basis of his 1920s and 1930s patented designs for various forms of apparently self-propelling *sudno*: e.g. a fish-like boat, airship, glider and transporter.³² Most were created while he was teaching at VKhUTEMAS, the Higher Artistic and Technical Workshops, Moscow’s prime art school in the early Soviet period. His ultimate idea was to introduce wave dynamics to human life, not least in terms of urban planning and transport. The movement was intended to be initiated by the bulging and contracting of curved rods that ran much of the length of the inside of the elastic body and were attached to its skeletal framework at regular small intervals. The bionic elasticity of Miturich’s constructions (which made it to model stage in a few cases), while rejected as impracticable at the time, anticipated later flexible transport and object designs.

Wave 3: Shipwreck: Izenberg's *Steregushchiy*

Before he embarked on his material-assemblage voyage, Tatlin painted a nautical icon which also seems to be a self-portrait. In it a sailor's highlighted head and shoulders is centrally placed and surrounded on both sides by two disproportionate, calligraphic, cowed sailor figures.³³ With its decisive, rhythmic curved contours and empty, elliptic, blue space, the work is a highly resolved study in pictorial construction. The main sailor wears a cap, across the band of which is emblazoned most of the word 'STEREGUSHCHIY' ['Vigilant'] (it lacks the initial 'S'). The *Steregushchiy* was a destroyer built in St Petersburg in 1900. It was launched from the Russian naval base of Port Arthur, eastern China, in 1902. Attacked by a squadron of Japanese warships near the base at the start of the Russo-Japanese War, it was sunk on 10 March 1904. Legend had it that it was scuttled by two sailors opening the seacock when the ship was in danger of being captured. Four of the crew of 52 survived.

On 10 May 1911 a 5.5-metre high bronze, granite and water monument to the *Steregushchiy* heroes was ceremoniously unveiled in St Petersburg's Alexander Park. The work of sculptor Konstantin Izenberg, in collaboration with architect Aleksandr von Hohen, the monument incorporated a fountain and, on either side, two lamps given the appearance of lighthouses (fig. 9). Izenberg's bronze centrepiece is a cruciform fragment of a ship's hull, its thick edges delineated by 'riveted steel' bands. The large niche at its heart has two sailors opening the kingston valve and a porthole, through which floods bronze 'water'. Jagged swathes of this water cover the lower parts of the sailors' bodies. The hull is raggedly incised with missile abrasions. Across the top of the very broad vertical of the cross is STEREGUSHCHIY. The initial 'S' is partially missing, 'damaged' by an abrasion (fig. 10).



9. Konstantin Izenberg, *Steregushchiy*, 1908–11, bronze, granite and water. St Petersburg (photo: Jeremy Howard)



10. Konstantin Izenberg, *Stere-gushchiy*, 1908–11, bronze, granite and water (detail). St Petersburg (photo: Jeremy Howard)

The ecclesiastical references in Tatlin's sailor make it a two-dimensional counterpart to Izenberg's monument. While the former rides the incoming tide of Russian neo-primitivism, the latter marks the crest of St Petersburg's Art Nouveau wave. Izenberg worked on this *Stere-gushchiy* commemoration from 1908 and exploited drawings of its loss that had been published in 1904.³⁴ In many respects, as much as it celebrates heroism, it also memorializes failure and the disasters of war. Its radical form combines realist detail, fragmentation and abstract flow. As an embodiment of shipwreck, its confronting of the danger-filled human relation to the sea is a metaphor for existence.³⁵ What we see here, then, is a sculptural encapsulation of the will of mankind at the whim of both inviolable nature and its own self-destructive drive. With its splaying, bronze cross-hull, figures and water combining with the rugged granite base and 'lighthouses', the monument artificializes materiality and mythologizes historical events. Thus, on land

prone to be soggy, it configures seafaring as a pathetic and archetypal human transgression of boundaries. Its shipwreck represents the tragedy of man's against-nature pull to ride waves he has no hope of controlling. And so with the flared Latin cross signifying death cult, its fusion with the sea reveals the folly of man's puny attempts to broach ungovernable realms. A German and Lutheran born and brought up in the family of a military physician, Izenberg died, having been ill for some time, three months after the *Stere-gushchiy*'s unveiling. It is the 52-year-old's swansong, his monument, his shipwreck.

Wave 2: Ahoy decoration of Kronstadt Naval Cathedral

Consecrated in 1913, the St Nicholas Naval Cathedral in Kronstadt was to be the magnificent swansong of neo-Byzantinist architecture in Russia. Work on the church in the garrison port's Anchor Square began in 1901. The design was by Vasily Kosyakov, in collaboration with his brothers Vladimir and Georgy, and derived from that of Constantinople's Hagia Sofia. An elaborate Greek cross surmounted the main dome and, at a height of 70 metres, was to act as a beacon for incoming ships. The cathedral is the tallest and largest building on Kotlin, a small island (16 sq km) that lies 10 kilometres offshore towards the eastern end of the Gulf of Finland.

Paid for largely by sailors and accommodating 5,000 persons, this grand church was intended as a monument to the heroes of the Russian fleet. The aim was for a most distinctive piece of high-quality syncretic art, and

as a result, the treatment, from concept to material to surface, turns the building into a panoply of modern Byzantinism. The basilica has a central nave and two side aisles covered by the dome. Around the 82-metre external circumference of the latter was a huge frieze, originally in terracotta, comprised of a repeated interlinked pattern of oars, anchor-crosses, lifebuoys and ropes. This nautical celebration was continued right down to ground level where the bronze doors were adorned with relief panels depicting anchors, fish among waves and saltires.

Wave 1: Ship figureheads of Nikolai Pimenov

If the second wave that is St Nicholas's Naval Cathedral and its sculptural ornamentation set out to create a big splash, so too did the first wave, if through entirely different means. It is rare that we know the names of the carvers of the figureheads that projected from the prows of ships built before 1900, and even rarer that those names belong to leading academic sculptors of an age. Yet such is the case with a set of mid-nineteenth-century Russian figureheads. This is because around this time a sculpture studio was set up in the St Petersburg Admiralty especially for the design of figureheads for the new screw-propelled frigates, corvettes and clippers of the imperial fleet. By 1865 the studio's work was overseen by the director of the Naval Museum, then located in the west wing of the Admiralty. Collection of wooden figureheads and their plaster models began. When, in 1909, a book was published celebrating the bicentennial anniversary of the museum, it was illustrated with nine photographs of figureheads. A description described their placement at the entrance to the museum:



11. Nikolay Pimenov, *Alexander Nevsky*, 1861, figurehead, metal and wood. Central Naval Museum, St Petersburg (photo: Jeremy Howard)

In the spacious vestibule the visitor sees objects arranged around the entrance staircase ... figureheads of sail- and screw-propeller steamships, each of which is a direct representation of the *sudno*'s name. Prominent among these artworks are the busts of 'Dmitry Donskoy', 'Oslyabya', 'Bogatyr', 'Vityaz', 'Bayan', 'Dzhigit' etc. The majority of them are the creations of famous Russian artists such as Mikeshin, Pimenov and others.³⁶

As the text suggested, the figureheads were of legendary and historical figures. The photographs showed them all as male, and as mainly arms-wielding warriors. The first three images were of frigate figureheads by Nikolay Pimenov, a neoclassicist professor of sculpture at the St Petersburg Academy: *Dmitry Donskoy* (launched 1861), *Oslyabya* (launched 1860) and *Alexander Nevsky* (launched 1861) (fig. 11). *Donskoy* and *Nevsky* show a distinct resemblance to the medieval princes in chain armour that were placed around the country's most expensive monument to date, the 129-figure *Millennium of Russia* (1862) in Novgorod. However, a far greater dynamism marks the ship figures, the assertive diagonal of the upper bodies not needing clumsy, earthbound legs and instead tapering into decorative carved scrolls covering the pointed tip of the ship's bow. In the wake of the Tsarist regime's appalling failure in the Crimean War, Pimenov's figureheads were princes named after the mighty rivers that marked their domains and victories. Made from lightweight metal (sheets and webbing) and wood, and covered in silver and gold paint, they were designed to cut a new dash through the breakers of the Baltic and Black seas, of Russian history... and into the future. By the 1870s they were out of date and museum pieces. The ninth wave's concrete test tank saw to that.

Coda

Ei, Ukhnem! Ei, Ukhnem! Eshche razik, eshche da raz!
Yo, heave ho! Yo, heave ho! Once more, still once more.

Song of the Volga Boatmen

I dedicate this article to the students of my 'Ship' course in St Andrews, and in commemoration of our epic seminar, surrounded by seabirds and shipwrecks in the lighthouse of the Isle of May, Firth of Forth.

1. *Sudno* is a Russian word of Slavic origin, meaning vessel or craft. It also means chamber-pot. Its etymology suggests both judgement and making.

2. For a complementary, chronologically forward-progressing, interpretation of the arks of modern Russian art history, see Jeremy Howard, *East European*

Art, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006, pp. 74–95.

3. Concerning Permar's practice of 'art of place' and for a record of *Emplacements*, see her website: <http://www.roxanepermar.com/> (accessed 13 March 2015). Based in the Shetland Islands, and principally concerned with how communities are shaped, Permar continues to

regularly explore maritime themes in her participatory art practice. Together with Françoise Dupré, she was responsible for the initial conception of *Emplacements*, with New Holland being one in a series of correlated events led by the two artists.

4. I believe this to be *Ship 13* by Vladimir Markovich, though

enquiries to date have proved inconclusive.

5. Gail Pearce, 'Emplacement curation', *History and Theory, Bezalet*, 4, 2007, https://bezalet.secured.co.il/zope/home/en/1173510036/pearce_en (accessed 12 March 2015). For photographs of the installation, see <http://www.gailpearce.com/>

Page-10-2001.html (accessed 12 March 2015).

6. See (in Russian) 'Prisutstvie (2000)' on the artist's website, at <http://www.ludmilabelova.com/ru/works/108/> (accessed 12 March 2015). Belova continued to work on the theme of the fragility of human life when faced with the power of the sea in subsequent works such as *Immersion [Pogruzhenie]* (2001, Art-Boat Festival, New York), an installation (again with hands and cloth) in the hold of a ship salvaged from the bottom of the River Hudson; *SOS* (2007, Navikula Artis Gallery, St Petersburg); and *Acqua Vita. A Short Journey* (2009, Anna Frants Gallery, St Petersburg).

7. Named after Yuri Luzhkov, mayor of Moscow 1992–2010, the Luzhkov Style tends to be regarded as officially sanctioned, vulgar, pretentious and ill-considered work. Decried for its pompous, playful and contrived use of historical styles with which it simultaneously tries to assert contemporaneity, it can also be deemed postmodernist. While the monument by Tsereteli is its prime example in sculpture, its counterpart in architecture is the Nautilus Shopping Centre (Aleksey Vorontsov, Moscow, 1998), which contains a similar mishmash of maritime allusions. Enjoying the patronage of Luzhkov, Tsereteli, a Georgian artist, was made president of the Russian Academy of Art in 1997.

8. The *Russian Fleet* monument bears numerous similarities to two monuments Tsereteli created for both sides of the Atlantic in order to celebrate the quincentenary of Columbus's discovery of America in 1991. *Birth of the New Man* was erected in Seville, Spain, while *Birth of the New World*, weighing 600 tonnes and comprised of 2,750 pieces, is due to be finally assembled near Arecibo, northern Puerto Rico in 2016. As with the Moscow sculpture, here Tsereteli's concept of history, moment and collective memory is highly contentious. For an illuminating analysis of his American Columbus, together with a brief account of *Russian Fleet* as well as a survey of his career and the 'Tseretelization' of Moscow and east-coast USA, see Stephen M. Woodburn, 'Strategic monuments: Zurab Tsereteli's gift sculptures to the United States in the eras of détente, perestroika, and anti-terrorism, 1979–2006', *Experiment: A Journal of Russian Culture*, 18, 2012, pp. 264–96.

9. Furthermore, *Russian Fleet* usurps and 'toys' with the landmark symbols of imperial St Petersburg, the twin rostral columns on the artificial spit where the River Neva divides in front of the *néo-Grec*

Bourse (1805–16), as well as with their predecessor, the Chesme Column celebrating naval victory over the Ottomans in the Great Pond of the Catherine Park at Tsarskoye Selo (1771–76). It also challenges the lighter, more graceful and allegorical *To the Glory of the Russian Fleet* erected on an embankment in St Petersburg a year earlier (sculptor Mikhail Anikushin, 1996).

10. Woodburn, as at note 9, p. 282.

11. Sergiusz Michalski, *Public Monuments. Art in Political Bondage 1870–1997*, London, Reaktion, 1998, p. 201.

12. Concerning Farquharson's and Gwyn's contribution to the art of navigation in Russia, see, for example, John H. Appleby, 'Mapping Russia: Farquharson, Delisle and the Royal Society', *Notes Rec. R. Soc.*, 55, 2, 2001, pp. 191–204, and John H. Appleby, 'Farquharson, Henry', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 2004, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/53921> (accessed 18 March 2015).

13. It is also possible to see a Soviet precedent for *Russian Fleet* in Andrey Vasnetsov's light-hearted metal and concrete *Steamship* (1978), created as part of the *History of Transport* sculptural ensemble that was a focal point for a central boulevard in Tol'yatti (Togliatti), a major postwar industrial city on the banks of the River Volga.

14. Known as the Battle of Suina Island, the conflict is regarded as Russia's most significant maritime victory of the pre-Petrine age. Razin, who had established himself as a local potentate, had under his command about 23 small but easily manoeuvrable flat-bottomed *strug* boats.

15. In 1913 Khlebnikov had also called for a 'wistful monument to the Persian princess thrown into the river, and Razin, on the roadstead where the Volga falls into the Caspian Sea. It would also touch Persian hearts.' See his 'Monuments' [Pamyatniki], in R. V. Duganov (ed.), *Velimir Khlebnikov. Sobranie sochineniy v shesti tomakh*, Moscow, IMLI RAN, 2005, vol. 6, book 1, p. 209.

16. Sergey Kononov, *Moy vek*, Moscow, Politizdat, 1972, pp. 225–26.

17. Various figures and heads from the group survive in the Russian Museum, St Petersburg. Conditions in war-torn Moscow dictated the choice of materials more than Kononov's preferences. The original intention was to have the group subsequently remade in more durable material and for more permanent external display.

18. For multiple translations of the version written in 1833 by the poet-folklorist Dmitry Sadovnikov, see <http://ingeb.org/songs/stenka.html> (accessed 19 March 2015).

19. Boris Ternovets, *Russkie skul'ptory*, Moscow, GIKhL, 1924, pp. 45–46.

20. For a reproduction, see Anatoly Razdolin and Mikhail Fateev, *Na rumbakh morskoy slavy*, Leningrad, Sudostroenie, 1988, p. 296.

21. A. Bystrov [A. Bakushinskiy], 'Malye formy skul'ptury', *Iskusstvo*, 5, 1933, pp. 59–75, as republished in A. V. Bakushinskiy, *Issledovaniya I stat'i*, Moscow, Sovetskiy khudozhnik, 1981, p. 336. The exhibition referred to is the sculptural section of the major retrospective of 'Artists of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic – the First 15 Years' which opened in Leningrad in November 1932 before moving to Moscow in mid-1933. Rakov's work found similar praise from Boris Ternovets when it was exhibited 'amongst the piles of [Soviet] rubbish' at the third Monza Biennale (1927); see letter dated 27 May 1927, in B. N. Ternovets, *Pis'ma. Dnevnik. Stat'i*, Moscow, Sovetskiy khudozhnik, 1977, p. 179.

22. Ternovets, as at note 21, p. 332.

23. See Alison Hilton, *Russian Folk Art*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1995, pp. 102–04. Hilton also elucidates how Kholmogory carving accompanied the miniature lacquer painting of Palekh as a form of small-form art successfully encouraged by the Soviet authorities in the interwar years (pp. 264–77).

24. A significant plaque made using various techniques and motifs is *Genealogy* (Yakov Shubny, 1774, State Historical Museum, Moscow). Besides 61 medallion portraits it includes two sailing ships and an array of military attributes, suggesting celebration of the Russian navy's victory over the Ottomans at Chesme in 1770.

25. A Rakov retrospective exhibition was held at the Vologda Museum-Reserve in late 2012. For reproductions of his work, and a post-Stalin Soviet interpretation, see Mikhail Il'in, *Mikhail Dmitrievich Rakov*, Moscow, Iskusstvo, 1956.

26. Hilton, as at note 23, p. 277.

27. The Stenberg brothers, Vladimir and Georgy, designed shipping sets for *The Line of Fire* (Nikolay Nikitin, 1931) and Eugene O'Neill's *The Hairy Ape* (1926). Sergey Efimenko designed the ship's prow set for Sergey Tretyakov's Guangzhou port-based *Snarl, China!* (1926).

28. One of the very few Soviet books that Tatlin illustrated was Sergey Segal's *On a Sailship* (Moscow, 1929).

29. The first production of the play was actually at the Great Drama Theatre, Leningrad (opened 17 October 1935). Directed by Vasily Fedorov, the *sudno* stage design

was by Vadim Ryndin. In 1938 a competition for a monument 'To the Rescue of the Chelyuskinites' was announced. For this, Vera Mukhina, recently acclaimed for her figurehead-like sculpture *Worker and Collective Farm Labourer* atop the Soviet pavilion at the 1937 Paris International Exhibition, created *Boreas*, a figurall allegory of the violent god of the cold north wind (1945, bronze and glass version, Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow). The commencement of the Second World War meant that the monument remained unrealized. For Emily Newman's *New Chelyuskinites* commemorative counter-monument performances at the Manifesta 10 Biennial of Contemporary Art, St Petersburg, see <http://emilynewmanartist.com/chelyuskinites> (accessed 24 March 2015).

30. Called the *Dezhnev* in the play, to signify, like the *Chelyuskin*, an early, major Russian navigator and explorer. For photographs of the maquettes, which have not survived, and a sketch of the *Dezhnev* caught in the ice, see Anatolij Strigalev and Jürgen Harten (eds), *Vladimir Tatlin Retrospektive*, Cologne, DuMont, 1993, pp. 304–05. For a press photograph of the first act set with actors, see, for example, John Milner, *Vladimir Tatlin and the Russian avant-garde*, New Haven, CT, Yale University Press, p. 229. With much of the action taking place in the darkness of an Arctic winter the play's production was also a masterpiece of stage lighting art by the lighting engineer G. Samoylov.

31. For a comprehensive visual record of the *Zangezi* drawings and maquette, as well as Tatlin's associated work, see Strigalev and Harten, as at note 30.

32. For a useful, well-illustrated discussion of Miturich's *volnovniki*, see Christina Lodder, *Russian Constructivism*, New Haven, CT, Yale University Press, 1983, pp. 217–23. The quote from Miturich here is on p. 220.

33. The painting is in the State Russian Museum, St Petersburg. It dates from c.1911.

34. The most complete study of Izenberg's artistic career is Olga Krivdina, 'Khudozhnik-skul'ptor Konstantin Vil'gel'movich Izenberg (1859–1911)', in Tatyana Shrader (ed.), *Nemtsy v Sankt-Peterburge*, 4, St Petersburg, MAE RAN, 208, pp. 115–22.

35. For a study of this metaphor, see Hans Blumenberg, *Shipwreck with Spectator: Paradigm of a Metaphor for Existence*, Cambridge, MA, MIT Press, 1997.

36. Stepan Ogorodnikov, *Model'-kamera vposledstviy Morskoy Muzey imeni Imperatora Petra Velikogo*, St Petersburg, Golike and Vil'borg, 1909, p. 107.