

Superyacht interior design specialists share their knowledge and expertise on the challenges they face and highlight the importance of good teamwork

WORDS MARIA HART

The art of living

There are many obstacles to overcome in order to deserve accolades and awards in the world of superyacht design.

"This is horrible!" Jon Bannenberg did not disguise his opinion when, as a young designer, a client asked him to look at plans for the interior of a sailing yacht he was having built. He then had the task of coming up with something better, which he did. This was in the sixties and proved a turning point, introducing yacht interior design as a creative stream distinct from naval architecture or interior decorating.

Challenges

Envisaging a stunning superyacht interior is one thing, but addressing the practicalities while still designing something unique and personal for the owner is where a talented designer excels. Safety, time, money, function and durability all must be factored in.

"First and foremost we have to make sure the interior is safe, that you can move about the vessel without hurting yourself, that it's going to last, and that it's going to look good in two to five years time. Things to bear in mind for the marine environment are handholds, lamps being bolted down, everything being fixed, weight and suitable materials and finishes," explains Adam Lay, of Adam Lay Studio.

The designer Jean Guy Verges agrees that one must consider what's going on at sea. "The oceans are a very nice playground but sometimes they can also be the worst place. So you've got to be in a good boat." The



Ancora's interior by Art-Line Interiors

International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) specifies minimum standards for the construction, equipment and operation of ships, compatible with their safety. Among other designers, Jonny Horsfield of H2 Yacht Design has noticed increasing regulations: "which is not a bad thing" he stresses, "but it's a challenge when it comes to materials. There's a lot more concentration on fire, safety, emergency exit routes, general safety at sea, and giving crew the space allowance they require."

Weight

Nigel Spooner, technical and design director at Trimline Superyacht Interiors knows that weight can be an issue. He says: "The higher in a yacht you are, the further away

you get from the centre of gravity. You can get top-heavy very easily."

Weight can also affect both the fun and fuel efficiency of a yacht. "Sometimes clients just want the yacht to go fast . . . and the lighter you can make it, the faster it's going to go," says Spooner. On another front, some owners are becoming a little bit 'greener' and want to burn less fuel, which will obviously also reduce running costs.

Crew and functionality

The use of the yacht influences the design: entertaining, conducting business, children or extra storage for long journeys are all considerations. But a constant in all of these is the need for effective crew spaces.

Functionality and crew spaces go hand in hand. Antonio Romano from Hot Lab comments: "You know you have rules to follow about minimum space, but it's also about practicality. A bad designer may make something really 'wow' but in the end you don't even have room for a single plate, or your flooring is ruined after a week."

Horsfield from H2 finds that teamwork is important when looking at the best use of space and tries to keep the crew happy and involved. "Particularly on a refit. If it's an existing crew who've been with a client a long time they'll know how the owner operates. The experience of the stewardesses, in particular, can bring valued input on storage and I think it would be crazy not to listen to them and try to integrate some of their wishes. After all, they're still there after we've left," he says.





Interior design by Art-Line Interiors

that someone can use that's different, the designers will find it and use it. When the designer has a practical understanding of how things go together, how they're made, what stands up well in life and a technical understanding, it helps. You tend to find the older designers, who have been through the loop many times, gradually acquire this experience.

"We have to design interiors that will last and are practical, that conform to the class of the yachts being built and to SOLAS regulations. We want to be constructive and we get to the end by helping each other."

Hot Lab takes great care in selecting an outfitter, to the point of having mock-ups made of a piece of furniture for example. They know it's not just about price but also quality. "We try to suggest good companies who build the interior in a proper way," says Romano, "What is hidden sometimes is more important than what you can see."

Suppliers

Suppliers are an essential cog in the design wheel. With the high level of quality Metrica's craftsmen produce, they require suppliers who have the same understanding and are able to deliver this globally and on time. They look out for strategic suppliers: "We're not jumping on the cheapest bid. We look for quality, time and an appropriate budget," explains Dittmar, he says technical achievements are also important: "Because you are not buying something off the shelf; things need to be planned, engineered and developed by our subcontractors."

Client involvement

Clearly yacht design is a process that involves a great deal of communication between all involved: the owner and designer, the outfitters and suppliers, the project managers and the yard. Some owners are very involved in their project, like a passionate hobby, while others may only show up once due to other commitments. In the latter case, the designer must interpret their wishes and get it right first time. It is then their responsibility to balance the practicalities of yacht living with meeting the owner's brief.

Dickie Bannenberg from Bannenberg Rowell Design concludes: "Despite the free hand in design terms that having a less-involved client suggests, it is invariably more beneficial to the outcome of the project if the client is engaged in the design process. It's also more fun for them."

Outfitters

Outfitters are key to the final product. They take designs and technical drawings from the designer and bring them to life. Frank Pieterse of Art-Line Interiors puts it this way: "Designing is trying to create something that has not been made before, therefore it is important to explain to the craftsmen what we have in mind and their skills enhance the results."

Metrica Interior, Struik & Hamerslag Yacht Interiors and Refits, and Trimline Superyacht Interiors, are examples of outfitters who bring their expertise to design projects. Metrica is a German outfitter which was founded in 1681 and run as a family business for over 320 years. CEO Kai Dittmar still focuses on perfection from

Refits, based in the Netherlands, are celebrating their 50th anniversary this year and continue to specialise in the production, finishing and installation of custom made yacht interiors.

Their focus is on premium quality. "When low costs are the top priority it may well be that the Netherlands is not the best place to build a yacht," managing director Marco Struik suggests. He continues: "when durable quality, transparency and delivery of the yacht on time is the main issue, the Netherlands is the best place to build."

Struik feels that the strength of the Dutch business model is that specialists are brought together and really work together to achieve

It's about practicality. A bad designer may make something really 'wow' but in the end there's no room for a plate or your flooring is ruined after a week

this long tradition of quality craftsmanship, he explains: "With a team of over 200, we always use our own installers because of the complexity of our projects, the drawings, and the very expensive materials we're handling."

Although the company began as a carpentry shop, woodworking is only a part of what they currently supply. Dittmar confirms: "We collect and fit everything round the world. We've even placed a two tonne Michelangelo stone monument on a fitting which allows the owner to change it."

Struik & Hamerslag Yacht Interiors and

the best results for the owner.

Trimline Superyacht Interiors has nearly 50 years experience in ship interiors. Their website refers to the many close relationships they have built with owners and their captains, brokers, designers, shipyards, project managers and other contractors to ensure the realisation of a unique vision for style, luxury, quality and performance.

Nigel Spooner offers some thoughts on a good designer/outfitter relationship: "The capacity to surprise is never-ending in terms of materials. If there is a material out there



The busy design studio in south-west London



The Bannenberg & Rowell-designed interior of *Galactica Star*

BANNENBERG & ROWELL | Exacting design

"I THINK THERE would be a broad consensus within the yachting industry that my late father, Jon Bannenberg, was the founder of what we consider the modern yacht design industry," reflects Dickie Bannenberg. "Compared to my dad's day, there are many more design houses, often continuing a family tree which originally had him at the top of it. You come up against competitors and often friends sometimes in what we call a little disrespectfully a 'beauty parade.' So it's a fact that the Bannenberg name carries this connection and resonance."

As the company lead of Bannenberg & Rowell, Bannenberg has noticed a natural kind of pre-filter in terms of who comes through their door. "People will recognise our handwriting as a studio, both interior and exterior. We tend to attract those looking for something very fresh and contemporary, although not minimalist. More often than not, they don't have any preconceived ideas and are looking to us to guide them along the way, taking the creative lead as we should. We try, as early as possible in the process, to give our projects a distinct sense of identity — be it with a project name or overriding theme."

Bannenberg is cautious when it comes to trends and trend-spotting due to the very diverse nature of the yachting world and the personalities in it. However, he has seen the general trend for making more of exterior spaces and the way interior spaces

relate to them. "Yacht design, by its very nature, is often a more constrained design environment and it's this complexity and density that we work within."

On trend

"Material trends are, I think, led by the sense of slight fatigue which can come with seeing, say, Emperador Brown marble again. It's smart. You can understand why you would want to use it. But it's slightly had its day. There are moves towards using interesting synthetic materials like acrylics, as well as more sustainable natural materials like woven grasses and canes. But for every trend like this, there is an equal and opposite — an eye for high glass mahogany, or some particularly blingy combination of onyx and gold-plate," notes Bannenberg. "But it's important to be on the lookout for new stuff: nobody wants to see

the same chair or light fitting used in several projects, so we have suppliers come and visit our studio or we visit them."

The design process encompasses sketches, renderings, mood images, sample boards and a very comprehensive package of technical drawings and design information. "We manage the process of our design work being turned into an interior by regular coordination and visits to the shipyard, interior subcontractor and relevant suppliers. We make it our business to ensure that our interiors are always practical and approachable. Otherwise it's not a successful project."

But there's more to a successful career in design than simply designing. Over the years, he's seen a range of challenges. "Headwinds in the form of legislation and regulation can all be accommodated. Environmental issues are ever present and it's very hard to make the case for an environmentally friendly yacht, although I'd be pleased personally to see less use of teak, rare woods and other natural materials. The overriding challenge is having new yacht customers. Political events can always make the ground very shaky beneath our feet."

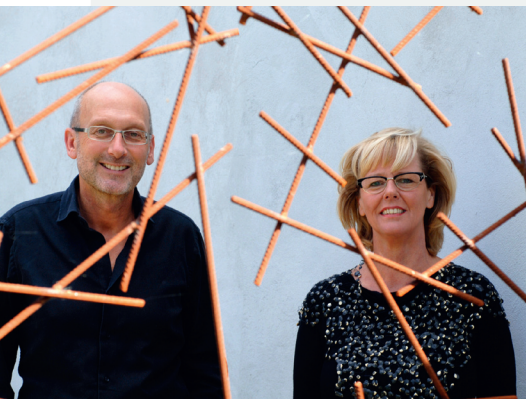
Bannenberg has a simple philosophy about the interior yacht design industry. "Nobody needs to buy a yacht. The fact that they do keeps us all in business. We owe it to the clients to do the best possible job, both from a design and management perspective, to make the process enjoyable and memorable. The end result needs to be of the very highest standard."

VITAL STATS

► **Company:** Dickie Bannenberg worked alongside his father, Jon Bannenberg, for almost twenty years before joining forces with Simon Rowell in 2003 and officially became Bannenberg & Rowell in 2009. With a team of 11 based in London, it continues to offer industry leading contemporary custom motor and sail interior designs.

► **Web:** www.bannenbergandrowell.com

ART-LINE INTERIOR DESIGN | The art of space



Frank Pieterse and Marilyn de Vaal

WITH 30 YEARS of experience, several design awards and many regular customers, Art-Line Interiors continues to seek out originality. Co-owner Frank Pieterse reveals where the company finds it: “We invest the most in travelling to look for inspiration; visiting art and furniture shows and viewing architecture. At first glance, this seems unrelated to yachting but the developments in these areas are so inspiring that we have always more ideas than contracts to realise them!”

As well as new builds, Art-Line enjoys refit work. In them Pieterse finds: “more unexpected shapes and forms, reflecting the beauty of the past.”

Pieterse describes how he goes about designing a project: “The expectations of the owners are always the key factor. It is his or her ship, so I need to get a feeling for their expectations, their dreams and how their lives onboard will be enjoyed for a long time to come.” He also considers how old the owner’s children will be at the time of launch and which horizons will be explored.

“Then we start to define the boundaries of the available space, not only in layout, but maybe more importantly in a 3D analysis. In the Netherlands we have 17 million people in a very small country. So using the limited available space in an optimum way is a focal point in our designing,” explains Pieterse from his spacious loft studio.

In depicting yacht interior design vs. a land-based design, Pieterse describes it with a unique visual picture: “In land-based design, you are a part of a community in a certain landscape. The parameters are clear. A ship design is more like creating your own little kingdom, independent and detached from the rest of the world . . . like high-class gypsies,” he jokes. “The interiors however

VITAL STATS

- **Company:** Since 1983, the two person design company owned by Marilyn de Vaal and Frank L. Pieterse has focused on comfortable modern superyacht designs. Based in Velp, Netherlands, it is mostly involved in new builds, but also contributes to refits, sailing yacht interiors and small cruise ship projects.
- **Web:** www.artline-design.com

can grow into a more integrated part of the total project, with a seamless blend of interior and exterior areas.”

Ideas and vision

The layout must be visualised in three dimensions: vertical perspectives in connecting atriums, indoor-outdoor connections on a large scale, the light, the horizon, the connection between different deck levels, volume balance, ceiling openness, as well as technical spaces and traffic lines.

After this, they will create mood boards “a palette to illustrate the intended atmosphere” in combination with hand-made sketches and impressions of the possible areas. It is here that Art-Line takes great pleasure in discussing plans, ideas and direction with the owners, and where good feedback can take the creative process in new directions.

They then move from the delight of the creative process to the challenge of the exacting definitions of required dimensions, space and object arrangement, technical tunnels, traffic lines, constructive elements, and weight saving cut-outs in “a grand jigsaw puzzle, creating the impression of space with the art of leaving out all the unnecessary. This is definitely the most challenging phase, in which you use all your knowledge and experience in trying to push the borders,” says Pieterse. “Of course the most effective colours, materials, structures and surface treatments must also be chosen to emphasise rhythms with patterns, colour choices, and light balance. Sunlight is brought into the heart of the ship by mirroring and atriums, for example.”

The finishing touch is then the decorative layer and the art. “Choices of subtle, blending china or bold out-of-this-world sculptures can make the difference,” Pieterse explains.

During the whole building stage the company stays in close consultation with the owners and the interior contractor. Art-Line has worked with many shipyards in different countries. “It is one of the most interesting parts of our work to see how people with such different cultural backgrounds can all work with so much dedication to a ship, and all with the same goal — to build something unique and outstanding. We like to work with many different subcontractors. As long as nobody works on automatic pilot, we are happy and able to create designs never seen before.”



The stylish cream and brown tones of *Vive la Vie*'s interior, designed by Art-Line



A rendering of a studio terrace for a 45m yacht

DESIGN UNLIMITED | An eye on innovation

"AS A COMPANY we've tended slightly to do more sailing boats," notes Stephen Rice, creative director of Design Unlimited. "We've got a lot of experience now and can quite quickly give advice to the naval architect in the very early stages in order to maximise the space, making it a more practical and useable yacht as well as being very beautiful inside. In a sailing yacht that's particularly tricky because of the shape of the hull." As well as space, weight, movement and materials are significant factors in yacht interior design.

Weight is a significant factor says Rice: "Particularly on a performance sailing yacht where a client might wish to take part in a lot of regattas, and who wants the maximum performance for the yacht." In a case like this, Rice describes how they optimise interior weight: "We'll do quite a lot of investigation into the latest materials that are lightweight, into joinery, and into the latest methods of making strong furniture as lightweight as possible. There are a lot of lightweight materials being developed constantly and we're always keeping our eyes on these other industries. We have to make sure that we're not using very heavy marble or old fashioned techniques, and that we're using the latest technology in carbon fibre and lightweight joinery construction. We'll design the whole of the interior so it can be measured exactly, using computer programs, in order to tell the naval architect

how much our interior is going to weigh before it's even in the yacht. We can then either continue to reduce, or add a few more fixtures or fittings to make it more opulent.

Constant movement

There are unique challenges presented by the ocean itself. "Using the yacht on an angle, something you never would do in a house or building, is one of the main issues. The yacht is constantly moving, and sometimes quite vigorously, so everything has to be much more stringently fastened and secure. We design it flat, then rotate it 20° in both directions to simulate how it would be on the sea while it's heeling. We see if there is anything that could make it dangerous and ensure it is it easy to walk around while the boat is moving," explains Rice.

VITAL STATS

► **Company:** Design Unlimited was formed in 2000 by Mark Tucker. Based in Hampshire, UK, the company has 11 staff. They custom design interiors for both sail and motoryachts, with particular expertise in the special considerations necessary in designing sailing yacht interiors.

► **Web:** www.designunlimited.net

"The sea is a very harsh environment. Metals require a higher level of protection because of the salt water, and fabrics are more prone to getting damp and mouldy due to the humidity. We work to find the materials with marine grade resilience for this kind of environment."

"There are a lot of trade shows, and we have many suppliers that come to us with the latest ways of treating material to stop mould, fire, and stains from accidental spilling like red wine," continues Rice. "Additionally staff read magazines and check the internet to discover the latest ideas and what people are doing."

This foresight pays off. "Sometimes there might be a very early concept idea such as a new power source, but it's something we might consider because we might be working on a project that'll take four years, so in four years we might want to use that technology."

Rice is pleased with the versatility that Design Unlimited offers: "We offer what we consider as a broad range of services. I think some companies can limit themselves to having only one way of working, or let their own egos interfere. We try to offer as many ways as possible because each client is different, their requirements are different, and how they envisage their yacht is different." He believes in the importance of listening to what their clients want: "It's their product, it's their creation, it's their dream. And we're here to help them create their dream."

HOT LAB YACHT & DESIGN | Young and talented

ANTONIO ROMANO'S ENERGY is palpable when he describes his team: "As one of the youngest design studios on the market we put a lot of passion into our work; we still love what we're doing every single day." Extreme attention to quality and detail as well as rapid results also mark their style. One of the partners in Hot Lab Yacht & Design, Romano continues: "We coordinate the team to give the best results in the shortest time possible as well as respond to the requests of the client promptly."

In order to control the final result, find new ways to enhance or modify an interior and to continue to learn, they are very present during the build. "We always follow the construction process onboard. It's important to be updated, not just with respect to new materials, but with new ways of working with the most known materials. For example, with new wood treatments, even teak can be used in the dining area."

Though tending to the contemporary, Romano knows that they have to adapt to suit the clients' lifestyle on their boat. This has seen Hot Lab create a range of designs from glamorous motoryachts to sleek and contemporary sailing yachts. "We prefer to follow fewer clients at a time but follow their projects in detail, and in the end we have a very good relationship."

VITAL STATS

► **Company:** Partners Michele Dragoni, Enrico Lumini and Antonio Romano are celebrating their first decade as Hot Lab Yacht & Design. They and their staff of six are based in one of the major design capitals of the world, Milan, and specialise in motoryachts over 24m with a contemporary style.

► **Web:** www.hotlab.it

With a high-end design studio located in what is arguably the design capital of the world, Hot Lab sees trends in design and incorporates them readily into their custom yachts to suit their client's tastes and lifestyle.

"Yachting is something that is slower to adopt trends than other things like architecture and even cars but we've seen trends in new kinds of wood, texture and metal. The best part of the new trend we are seeing is with light; light that not only creates a scenario, but creates and divides areas. Another current trend is the glass — huge windows that go from the floor to the ceiling. It is becoming a structural element and not thought of anymore as something fragile or easily broken. This allows



Hot Lab keeps up to date with design trends

more sun and more light inside the boat, as well as having more connection between the inside and the outside. So on one hand you have much more light inside so the living area seems bigger; but on the other hand you have less space for storage, so you try to compact some elements," says Romano.

Crew considerations

A very practical and integral component of interior design is the crew quarters, and a good layout here will in turn contribute to a satisfied owner. "Have good and creative balance between spaces and you will have a happy crew; and a happy crew is the most important thing for spending a lovely summer onboard," says Romano. He gives tips on designing this space: "Something important for the crew area in my opinion is the staircase. The crew always need a private staircase to connect their quarters to working areas such as the galley and the wheelhouse." If the crew is already confirmed during the construction process, Romano finds it crucial to talk with the chief stewardess or first mate. This provides insight into defining storage spaces and efficient service flow from those who know best how to work in a "proper way, without disturbing the clients and guests onboard."

The crew considerations continue beyond the design to the maintenance. "When we suggest a new element or material, we try to give information to the crew and the project manager on what products have to be used to maintain it. This is another part of the work a good interior designer should do to ensure lasting beauty, well after the voyages are underway, because a beautiful boat is not something that is just beautiful during the photo shoot."



Enrico Lumini, Antonio Romano and Michele Dragoni of the Milan-based Hot Lab design company

OTHERS ON THE MARKET

Six more experienced interior design companies that specialise in creating projects for the exacting demands of superyacht owners. The importance of listening to their clients is clear

Adam Lay Studio

After gaining experience in naval architecture and then working for John Munford for eight years, Adam Lay set out on his own in 2003 to create a company with an artisan, boutique approach. He now co-owns Adam Lay Studio in Hampshire, with his wife Kelda. "It was tough starting from nothing but we celebrated ten years in business last year at the Monaco Yacht Show with a cocktail party onboard our latest launch, the 33m (107ft) Frers Baltic Yachts *Inukshuk*.

"*Inukshuk's* owner wanted the interior to remind him of his favourite place in the world — a specific lakeland region of North America, so we spent a lot of time talking about what he liked about it." Lay even researched plant species native to the region. "It was nature, not glamour that

then shaped the design," while still keeping an eye on 'future proofing' the yacht.

Coming from a long line of boatbuilders, Lay is making his own unique mark on the interiors of sailing yachts, but also works on motoryachts and refits that have safety, seaworthiness, longevity and timelessness at their core. Lay explains: "What we bring to the motoryacht sector is the more space efficient philosophy of sail; optimising and maximising the interior space.

"We're a smaller outfit and only focus on one or two projects at a time, with projects ranging from two to five years each and no two designs alike. By doing fewer projects, our clients know they are a priority for us. Our clients get, we think, better personal attention than they can from larger offices — a more personalised service."

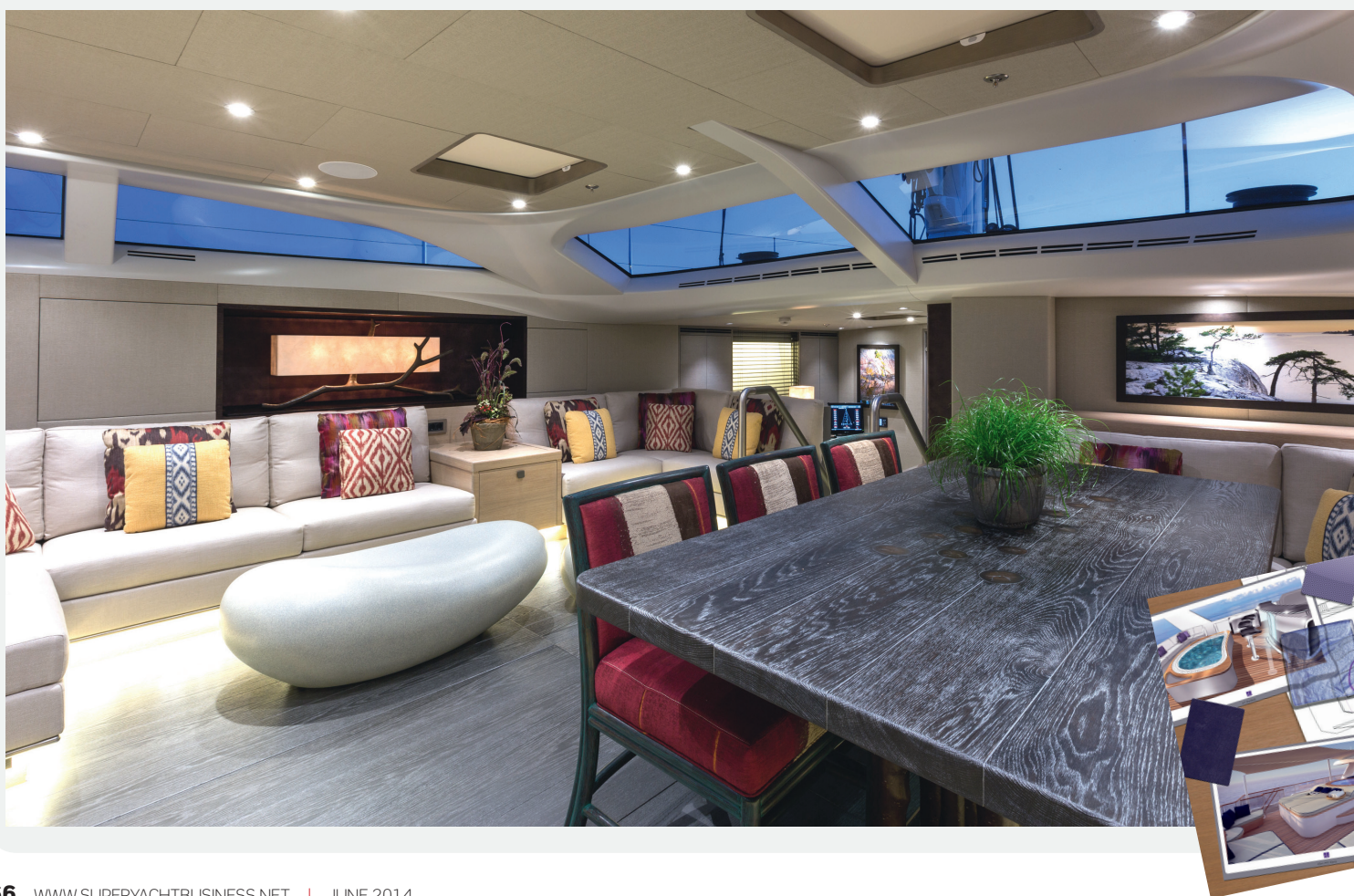
www.adamlaystudio.co.uk

J G Vergès Design

Located in the French Riviera until last year, Jean Guy Vergès has relocated to Port de Plaisance, Arcachon, France. This June will see the opening of his new 200m² showroom, Shoreline.

Twenty-eight years in the luxury superyacht field has seen him involved with many projects, but after all this time he says: "I never do the same design twice. When you can catch the spirit of a person you can design something that really matches their lifestyle and personality." For this reason, he is very careful with trends.

"I once had a client who wanted me to design according to a certain trend, only to find that the result wasn't really 'them' so the design radically shifted," Vergès explains. To get a good result, he first has to get a feel for the person and the way they live, and then



compare it to what they want. Added to that are all the practicalities of the boat; its use, storage and comfort so that the client is happy and has a great time every time they are onboard. "You always adapt yourself and what you're going to design."

The tendency, however, is a boat that is very relaxed and comfortable, with open space, a simple flow and: "not too busy, not too much, not too overdone." Vergès likes to use a lot of natural materials and natural light. "Natural light inside is very important to the way people feel, so I use large openings and also play with mirror panelling to reflect the natural light."

www.j-g-verges-design.com

Yacht Interiors by Shelley

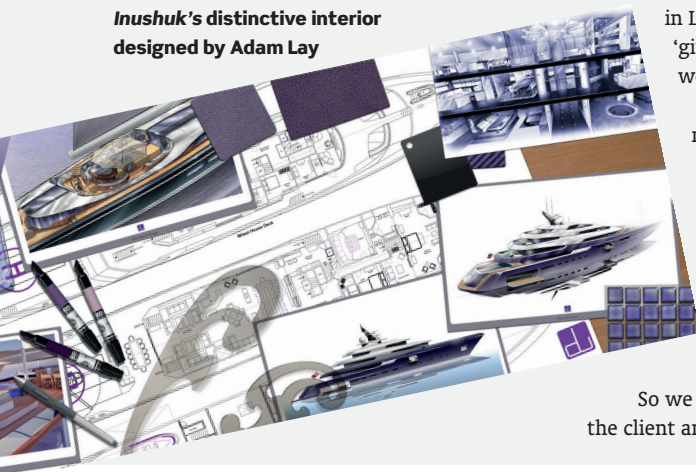
Shelley DiCondina is the owner and principal designer of Yacht Interiors by Shelley (YIBS). A long association with Hargrave Yachts, also located in Fort Lauderdale, has seen her involved with almost all the space planning, interior specifications, and décor of their boats and they continue to be her biggest client.

Her company, formed 20 years ago, has four staff who specialise in custom and semi-custom new-build motoryachts. One big difficulty for the team comes in trying to fit in all the desires of her clients; such as a large master, private dining area, and lots of outdoor space, into the shell of a 30-45m (100-150ft) yacht. "That's probably our biggest challenge which will continue. But the goal of the design is always volume, comfort and functionality. The spaces have to be designed to be intimate and functional for crew service at the same time," she says.

DiCondina enjoys her work. "It's a great job to have; you meet lots of great people, which is definitely one of the perks. I love my clients and I get a kick out of them; they're all such fabulous, special people."

www.yachtinteriorsbys Shelley.com

**Inushuk's distinctive interior
designed by Adam Lay**



H2 Yacht Design

With 20 years in the business H2 Yacht Design's CEO Jonny Horsfield knows what his clients want: a reliable, professional service that isn't going to cost them the earth. His clients tend to be very pragmatic and short of time.

Because of H2's extensive refit background, they are accustomed to working to strict time frames and are sensitive to the cost of fitting out an interior. "It's very easy to spend money like water, but we don't want clients to invest more money into a project than they need to. I think they appreciate that."

Around ten years into the business, H2 began to work with new builds as well as

they're saying in terms of the design, but we also listen to those other little messages that they're giving: if there's a particular place that they enjoy sitting, their lifestyle, their choices, and if they need certain things beside them for convenience — we listen and notice these things. They all wrap themselves into the design and only then, once we've really started to get under the skin of the client do we start the design process."

Kate Maclaren, senior designer, continues: "It must be completely fitted to them like a tailor made suit, so it's not just about the aesthetic; it's got to be the correct overall design."

www.andrew-winch-designs.co.uk

Every yacht is a great opportunity to innovate. We certainly take every chance to do so and always encourage owners to express themselves

refits, but lately has noticed a resurgence of those wanting refits. "It seems to have come back into fashion," continues Horsfield.

H2's staff of 13 takes a holistic approach to design, creating a more connected relationship between the interior and the exterior rather than seeing them as two individual items. "But as a design company we don't have a house style that we repeat project after project," says Horsfield. "Our house style is that we actually listen to clients and give them that something unique that they're looking for."

www.h2yachtdesign.com

Andrew Winch Designs

Andrew Winch has been a design specialist since 1986 when he founded the company alongside his wife, Jane.

Boasting a large staff located in London, the company also 'gives back' by donating to worthwhile charities.

Kitty Kier, PR and marketing manager, describes how the company conducts its design process: "One of the things that Andrew has always said is 'before we do anything; before we apply any sort of pencil to paper and start the design process, that we really listen intently to the client.'"

So we will have the initial meeting with the client and we just listen to exactly what

Ken Freivokh Design

Ken Freivokh and Liz Windsor are partners in Ken Freivokh Design. The company was formed in 2001, though Freivokh has been designing for 20 years. The pair has ten staff and covers the full range of superyacht interior designs — motor, sail and refits.

While priding himself on out-of-the-box concepts, Freivokh gets very excited at the technical aspect of design as well as the creative, and considers it a key feature of its projects. He says: "Every yacht is a great opportunity to innovate. We certainly take every chance to do so and always encourage owners to use it as an opportunity to express themselves and what they want, how they want to live at sea, and how they want to see themselves."

"As a fully qualified architect as well as a fully qualified industrial designer, I like to explore the possibilities of metal, composites and carbon with the latest technology. A lot of our current projects are working with glass, a technology which is moving very quickly. Structural glass is very strong; just as strong as steel in many cases and offers unique opportunities, especially on a yacht. Glazed bulwarks, which are very unusual, are something we're developing on our current projects."

Freivokh concludes: "The clients should liberate their ideas, and then go to innovative designers that can help them achieve those dreams." **SB**
www.freivokh.co.uk