

Superyacht

INTERIOR DESIGN EXTERIOR SPACE CREATIVITY AND ARCHITECTURE



Pictured: MLP-14-5000, Volume 15 Contemporary Lacquer Collection

DESIGN

DOMUS DESIGN

The Wetzels Brown Partners approach to home interior and yacht design.
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Converting a working vessel into a luxury superyacht with Philippe Briand Design.
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TOP YACHT

With an interior by Porsche Design, the first RFF135 catamaran nears completion.
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yacht's logo on them. Sounds simple enough, but the company refused to make the custom towels the client wanted for such a small order. "I tried and tried and eventually called H2 to tell them that it simply wasn't possible," he tells us. "Their disappointment was too much, so I kept on searching and eventually found a manufacturer that would do it."

Going above and beyond the call of duty is all part of what makes his big-name clients—the Winches and the Disdales—come back again and again. "We tell our clients that we are like an extra member of staff for them that they don't have to pay," he says. "What this means in principle is that a designer can call up and say—and this is a real example—'We want 24-carat gold mosaic tiles, and they cost £2,000 per square metre and that is way beyond our budget. Can you find something else?', and we will do our best to find it."

Many of the 'tests' seem as though they would be unsolvable, but Khalique insists that it is all about "lateral thinking". He notes down anything that takes his fancy and always keeps his eyes open for the next big thing. He used to attend most of the trade fairs and material shows, but these days designers often ring him to tell him about someone new who they think needs to be represented. "It was in this way that I very quickly went from my one collection to more than 26 now," he says, gesturing around the showroom.

One such hidden gem that was brought to Khalique's attention by a designer is Nigel Atkinson. With an impressive background working for fashion luminaries, he now uses heat-reactive inks on sheer and sculpted fabrics to create stunning prints.



DAVID CHURCHILL

His fabrics can all be customised or backed for upholstery, and Khalique shows us a gunmetal grey satin whose reverse is just as beautiful as its front, making it ideal for upholstery but also for curtains.

Unusual textiles that shirk the typical 'hard-wearing' feel of many interior fabrics are all over Khalique's studio. Hanging from the ceiling is a selection of beautiful sheers that look as though they would be just as at home in a Victoria's Secret store as they would in a luxury interior. Danish artist and designer Pernille Holm's fabrics use sand and glass to add texture to wispy sheers, which can be fire-treated to code. But with all his unusual collections, Khalique's continual struggle is to move designers

away from their tried-and-tested favourites.

"It can be frustrating because we always hear 'we want something new' but then through sheer lack of time designers tend to go for the same types of things," he confesses. The trick is to get the designers to come to them—preferably with their clients. "Often the end clients don't know what is out there," he says. "We had a lady in the other day who has a vast property portfolio but is a trained architect, so she knows design. She was really excited by what we showed her. I wish we could do this with more clients. I had a lovely experience a few weeks ago when a client of Redman Whiteley Dixon from Australia specifically asked to meet me when she was in London.



“For me superyachts are all about custom luxury. When you are spending that much money, everything about the space should be special and unique to you.”



LOBBY, PRINCESS 40M

It was such a lovely moment for me to meet her and really encourages me to keep going and finding new things all the time.”

Uniqueness, innovation and excitement is what Khaliq feels superyacht interiors, indeed all luxury interiors, should be about and for him this comes down to customisation rather than just filling the space with designer labels. “It strikes me as funny that if you are going to spend £50 million or more on a superyacht you would want to have an off-the-shelf designer coffee set, for example,” he says. “For me superyachts are all about custom luxury. On certain types of yachts and private jets, the client gets short-changed with luxury pieces that are actually just readily available. When you are spending that much money, everything about the space should be special and unique to you.”

This normally comes down to materials that make you say ‘wow’. Most popular on superyachts at the moment are Khaliq’s eglomise and decorative panels, semi-precious stones, the leather and silk fabric from Be Inthavong, Chella performance fabrics (“Disdale are using this a lot”) and a pioneering outdoor leather collection perfect for use on deck. In his eyes, yacht interiors have really changed over the past few years. “The quality and attention

given to finishes is amazing now,” he says. “The interiors are every bit as luxurious as homes, which, given that they serve as a floating home, they should be.” He also points out that production manufacturers such as Princess are starting to produce 40m-plus boats where the client has a real say in the quality and styling of the interior. “Even expectations of what the interior looks like on the smaller vessels has grown incredibly,” he comments. “Production or not, they are spending a lot of money and want something special.”

With plans to move to a new studio soon—“I need a bigger larder for my clients to raid!”—and an ever-growing list of clients and catalogue of materials, Khaliq will no doubt continue to be ‘the material man’ for some time to come, but he maintains that this will only be as long as he is still finding innovative material gems. “I don’t take anything on unless I love it,” he says. “So I am kind of relying on the fact that there will always be new artists and designers creating exciting new things for me to find. Once you have a reputation, you have to work doubly hard to maintain it and the last thing I ever want to do is let my clients down.” ■