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THE DESIGN ISSUE

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on board 66m Vanish

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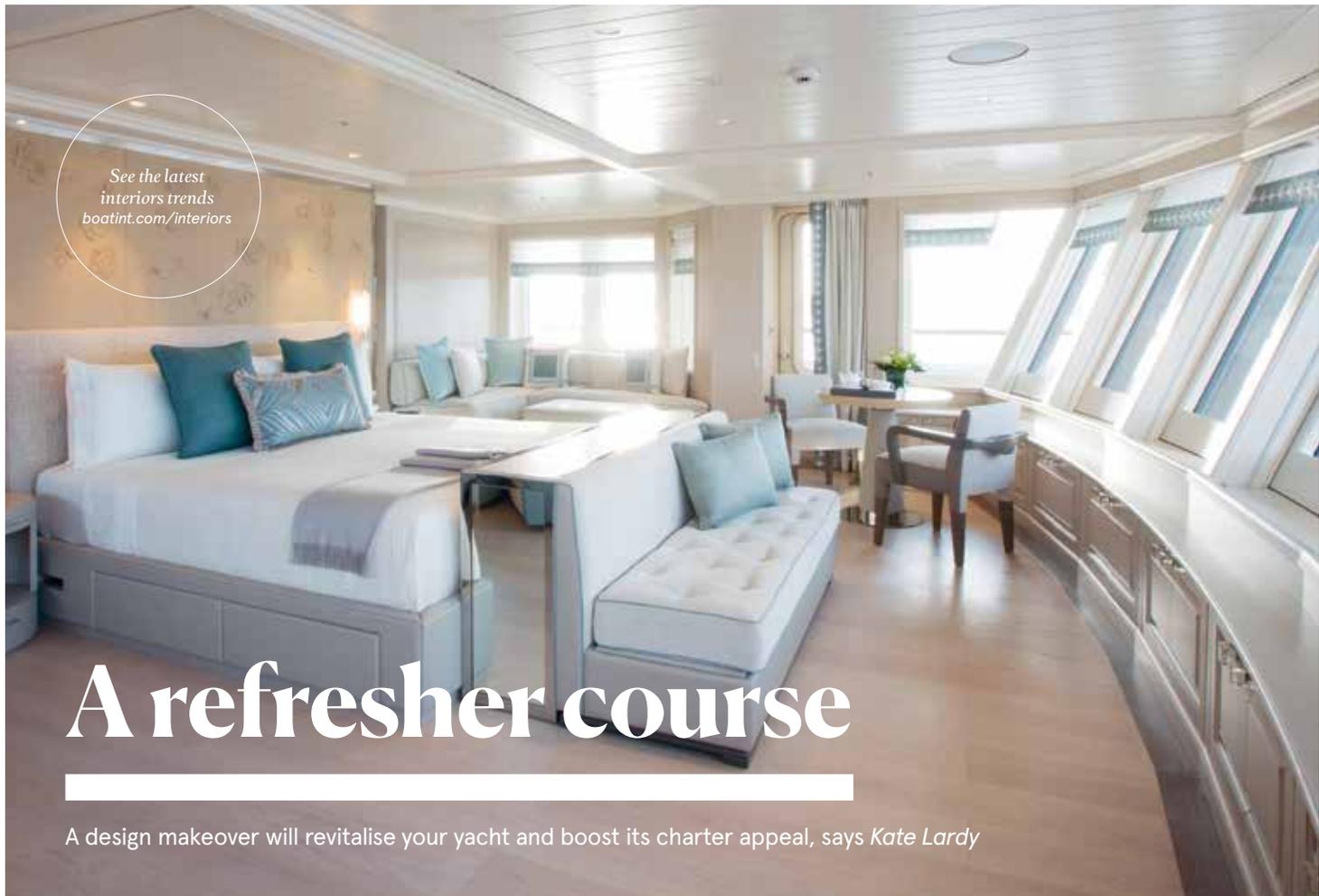


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A refresher course

A design makeover will revitalise your yacht and boost its charter appeal, says *Kate Lardy*

A yacht functions like an ecosystem, says interior designer Francesca Muzio: touching some aspects can compromise others, affecting comfort on board. “That is why we suggest approaching a refit in a cosmetic way,” says the head of FM Architettura d’Interni. Her firm’s philosophy is to reinterpret a yacht’s style without intervening too much in the existing structure. This also means a fast turnaround for owners who want their yachts ready for the next season.

With 2017 being a record year for brokerage sales, the refit market is correspondingly strong as buyers snap up boats, many of which need a design refresh to reflect today’s tastes. “I’ve got something on my desk at the moment which is a very traditional, American-style interior, with dark woods and raised-and-fielded panelling,” says Jonny Horsfield of H2 Yacht Design in London. “It’s quite heavy and classic, and not what people want so much any more. The demand is for a lighter,



fresh and more Mediterranean feel. The palette is much more neutral now with a little splash of colour.”

Painting or staining the existing wood panelling “completely changes the feel of the yacht”, adds Horsfield. Another trick is to cover it with leather. Other easy fixes, he says, include re-upholstering wall panels, replacing carpets and loose furniture, changing light fixtures and door hardware and adding new artwork. Horsfield recommends not swapping out the marble if possible, which he describes as a slow, messy process and it is “by far the most expensive item to change”. Another item he recommends to avoid is the ceiling – the cost doesn’t justify the limited difference it makes.

Ceilings were pretty much the only area he left untouched during the interior refit of 55 metre *Turquoise* three years ago. The new owner intended to keep her on the charter market, but first she needed a new look on a tight budget. “It hadn’t been chartering well; it looked drab in photos,” says Horsfield, who gave her a lighter but richer finish, using a bit of gloss and varnish played against beige leathers and stitching. “It is much >



The interior of 63m *Lürssen Polar Star* (before, above; after, top) was redesigned by FM Architettura d’Interni



DKT Artworks created the églomisé panels for Studio Indigo on the 70m Feadship Joy

more residential in feel, luxurious without offending anyone.”

For yachts being decorated for their owner’s sole use, Muzio points out that it’s no longer about being a slave to a particular style. “Today, the first conversation [with my clients] is about what they love to do on board, the experience that they want to have, the places they want to cruise.” She then creates something that reflects the owner’s lifestyle, not a design style.

Muzio says that without moving bulkheads or dismantling built-in furniture when possible, her company can transform a space. An example? The 63 metre *Polar Star*, a 2005 launch whose interiors emulated a French country house: she removed the classical details, covered wallpaper and used leather to mask walls and built-in furniture, giving the motor yacht a clean, modern look.

“Our cosmetic approach relies on a keen eye for rich and

tactile materials, often handcrafted,” says Muzio. “It is a strategy we have perfected working with local craftsmen in our region of Le Marche in Italy. It allows us to modernise the style of a boat while giving it the character and comfort the owner desires.” Muzio recommends using bespoke pieces as much as possible. “A few years ago, people were attracted by brand names; today they want designs made specifically for them,” she says, and her firm fabricates these, working with a team of artisans.

Another company that loves to create is DKT Artworks in London, which specialises in bespoke artworks and decorative finishes, such as hand-painted and stucco finishes, and handcrafted murals – its artists often use fabric swatches from the designer as inspiration. They work with a lot of new-build projects, but co-founder and director Steve Keeling says that the pieces can be retrofitted. “Bedheads and feature walls can easily be done as long as what’s there already is in good shape and stable, and the structure behind can take the weight.”

In the end, the goal is to create something that feels like home. “A yacht is a place that is truly you,” says Muzio. “Surround yourself with things that are specific to you.” ■

6 PIECES THAT WILL UPDATE YOUR YACHT

Glass is the medium for Parisian atelier Bernard Pictet, which crafted these chiselled and silvered curved glass partitions for 50m *Satori*, developed in collaboration with designer Rémi Tessier.



These unique verre églomisé gilded sliding doors, by DKT Artworks in collaboration with Reymond Langton, take advantage of light that shines through the adjacent room. The hand-painted trees on each side give a shadow effect, and metallic gauze in between brings a sense of depth.



Don’t forget the decks. Summit Endurance Fabric, ranging from vivid patterns to textured neutrals, can revitalise their look with new cushion covers or throw pillows. Made of 100 per cent solution-dyed acrylic, it is ideal for the outdoors.



The silversmith house Puiforcat, famous for its tableware, ventures from the dining room to the onboard office with the Bureau d’Architecte collection, crafted in brass and plated in silver and gold. Designed by Joseph Dirand, it stays the course set by Jean Puiforcat at the height of the art deco era.



Creating bespoke artworks for superyachting’s top designers, Helen Amy Murray’s London studio hand sculpts textiles into three-dimensional decorative surfaces, such as this Bloom design sculpted in Majilite for the dining room of 88m *Quattroelle*.



Glyn Peter Machin’s latest collection of bespoke exterior furniture for superyachts draws inspiration from Japanese pagoda structures and koi imagery. The Nishikigoi marquetry series merges a solid teak frame and intricate artwork that is designed exclusively for each client.

