

Art on yachts

Miniature or masterpiece, vase or Van Gogh, art on board can be a bold statement of style or very personal expression, but there is a lot more to putting art on yachts than simply hanging a picture from a bulkhead. Frances and Michael Howorth investigate the process from selection to security



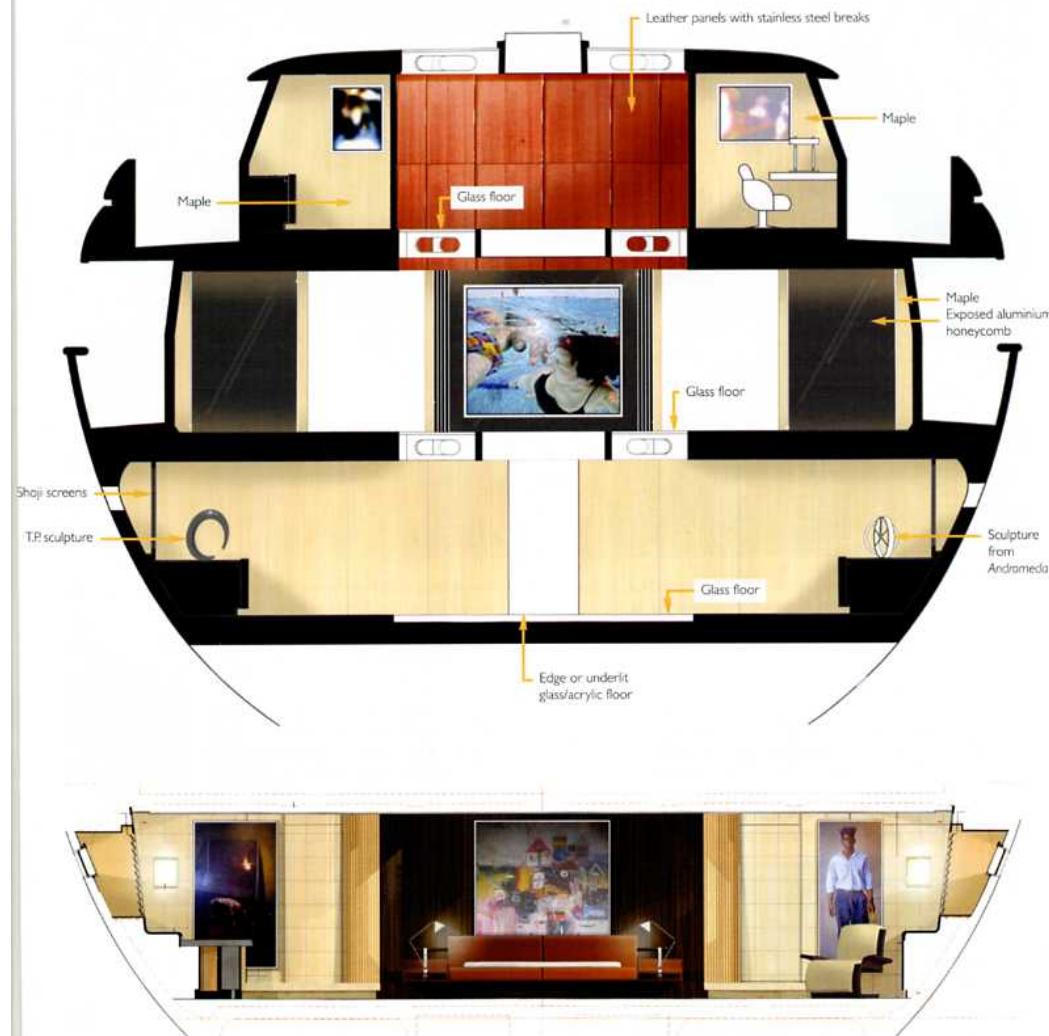
Hanging on a bulkhead, painted on a deckhead or standing on a plinth in the middle of the saloon, art aboard a yacht comes in many forms. It could be a painting, perhaps an old masterpiece in oil, a modern acrylic or a delicate watercolour. It may be a glass sculpture, a limestone fossil, a marble bust or an anthropological artefact. Whatever form art takes – ugly, beautiful, striking or thought-provoking – creations such as these are found aboard almost every large yacht. It is the integration of this artwork into the décor of a yacht that is, to quote designer Pascale Reymond of Reymond Langton, 'what makes a yacht a home not a hotel'.

The format of the art placed aboard any yacht will, to some extent, be dictated by the intended use of the yacht, be it personal or charter. Many owners are keen collectors and want to display and enjoy pieces from their personal collections. For them, art comes first and the design of the vessel's interior must flow around it. For others, art is the final piece in the overall jigsaw and they prefer their chosen designer to source unique pieces, perhaps even some produced specifically for them, to compliment the overall theme of the yacht.

ARTWORK FIRST, DESIGN SECOND

Designer Ken Freivokh feels it is very important to consider artwork at an early stage of every design. As he says, 'it is very hard if a colour scheme has already been decided and we then suddenly receive artwork that does not fit'. Aboard the 35 metre classic sailing motor yacht *Atlantide*, Freivokh ensured that the leather, carpets and the complete colour scheme revolved around the delicate hues of the paintings that grace the bulkheads. When the same owner commissioned Freivokh to design his 88 metre Perini Navi, *Maltese Falcon*, he had already earmarked paintings he wanted included aboard. The design team photographed the artwork and carefully noted all dimensions so they could be included within the CAD images from the very start. From the beginning, it was established where each painting would hang and the owner commissioned a statue of a falcon to be displayed between the dining room, library and writing room, and asked Ken Freivokh to design a suitable polished aluminium falcon motif for the main saloon wall.

Another yacht named after a bird of prey is the 48 metre Bloemsma & van Breemen motor yacht *Flying Eagle*, from the design studios of Reymond Langton. She is another example of where art precedes yacht, in this case even before the superstructure was cut. Reymond Langton Design went shopping with their client at a very early stage and brought limestone fossils and glass artwork; the design of the finished product flowed from there. At Redman Whiteley Dixon, placement of special art, collected over many years by owners, was a major consideration in the design and layout of the 55 metre Feadship *Twizzle*. Like *Maltese Falcon*, artwork was scanned into the visuals some two years before she was completed. For another of Redman Whiteley Dixon's designs, the sailing yacht *Cbarlatan*, the owner raided his home for the grand scale nautical artwork, much



The artwork aboard *Maltese Falcon* was chosen and planned into the design from the start, with the renderings showing the positioning of particular pieces of art on various decks (top) and in the owner's cabin (above). Too large to fit through any opening while mounted in its frame, the painting in the atrium, 'Swimming Pool Scene', an acrylic on canvas by Lorraine Shemesh T (left), was installed by creating a special recess in the bulkhead



to his wife's surprise, and Justin Redman created a traditional raised-and-fielded panelling backdrop for it, setting the tone for the yacht.

DESIGN FIRST, ARTWORK SECOND

On other yachts, artwork does not lead a design and is, instead, sourced or commissioned especially to complement an agreed design. Some owners supply their own once a theme has been agreed. Redman Whiteley Dixon gives owners an artwork book early on that shows elevations of every room together with marked up proposed artwork sizes and positions. The 28 metre Sparkman and Stephens-designed cruising ketch *Marguerite* has an art deco flavour



interior complimented by a collection of modern Canadian art from the 1920s and 1930s, found by the owner while the yacht was under construction. It told a personal story and made the project very special for him.

SUPPLY TO ORDER

Where an owner has no preferences or artwork available, designers choose art to integrate with an overall design. This can occur early on in the project, or as the yacht nears completion and gaps are filled with appropriate paintings, sculpture and artwork. The owner of *Ilona IV*, the 73 metre Redman Whiteley Dixon-designed Amels motor yacht, was so pleased with a tapestry specially commissioned for a previous *Ilona* that it was repositioned aboard his new yacht. More of the individually handmade tapestries were commissioned from The Victorian Tapestry Workshop in Melbourne, Australia, featuring special and relevant themes for the different areas of the boat. On board a 68 metre German-built motor yacht designed by Raymond Langton Design, spaces were left for the art and an artist especially commissioned to fill them. Terence Disdale included an artwork creation of his own as the focal point in the main saloon aboard the 86 metre Feadship *Ecstasy*.

Specialist source and supply companies such as Perspective and Project Art obtain art for yachts as well as private houses, offices and hotels. They advise, commission, frame and deliver all formats including pictures, tapestries,



Top: pieces from the owner's glass collection are displayed on *Flying Eagle*, including a glass boat by Bertli Vallien and a spectacular piece by William Morris, placed between saloon and dining area (above). **Left:** the owner's fine art was incorporated into Twizzle's design

murals, wall hangings, sculptures and mirrors. Project Art specialises in 'off-the-peg' or specially commissioned artwork from a brief that may be very specific including size, subject and colour scheme with samples supplied of chosen fabrics to match. Not every artist finds it easy to work within such defined limits and deadlines but Project Art has some 30 such artists on their books whom it regularly uses. More than one artist is usually selected to produce artwork for any one area, so the overall appearance is of a collection built up over time.

The specialist firm Davies Keeling Trowbridge (DKT) started out in 1979 as a group of decorative artists and muralists, working on small residential projects. The company's creative team of about 20 now offers gilding, decorative design, *trompe l'oeil*, murals, Italian stucco, mosaic, high-quality furniture treatments and sculpture and is as much at ease working within traditional styles, as it is exploring the potential of new materials and emerging ideas. The company's work on yachts with designers such as Raymond Langton, Donald Starkey, Andrew Winch and Bjorn Johansson has included bas-relief artwork carved in the studio and hand painted to give the impression of cast bronze, an art deco bird of paradise ceiling and a 10 metre high mural, covering five decks, of an island from the top of a palm tree, in which a monkey hangs, dangling a captain's cap, to the bottom of the ocean below, which runs the whole length of a lift shaft on board the 64 metre Feadship *Lady Marina*.

ON DISPLAY

The marine environment takes a heavy toll on every yacht including the artwork it carries. Maintaining art in the finest of conditions demands that air conditioning and humidity levels are kept within preset limits. Problems can occur when, for instance, the large doors of a saloon that open



Above: a hand-painted canvas ceiling depicts birds of paradise in the owner's private massage room on *Lady Marina*



Above and right: a 10 metre mural by DKT is viewed from the lift in *Lady Marina*, taking guests from tree top to ocean bed

onto a deck are left open for some time, negating the air-conditioning. Penetration by strong sunlight from overhead hatches and large windows is a huge concern, and ultra-violet protected, anti-reflective glass is often used in an attempt to combat this. Ken Freivokh always specifies canvas covers for all artwork that must be used when only crew are aboard or when the yacht is undergoing refit or maintenance. Where environment deterioration might be a problem, Terence Disdale recommends the use of an exact copy of high valued artwork.

Additional special protective arrangements, beyond those found ashore, are necessary at sea to ensure artwork is not affected by movement afloat, particularly aboard sailing yachts. Colin Morris Associates, a company specialising in the design, display and mounting of all kinds of artwork, feels that presenting art well and safely is the most important aspect of its work. Three-dimensional objects are the most tricky to secure and generally need to be semi-permanently mounted with an invisible fixing. Sometimes special cabinets may be needed to display fragile objects. Sculptural pieces can pose difficulties because of their weight. Terence Disdale Design recently installed some stone and glass structures that fitted together by gravity; they had to be invisibly glued. Aboard *Maltese Falcon* the curvature of the bulkheads in some places where artwork is hung has necessitated modification of frames to fit properly. One large painting presented a special problem for the Freivokh team because it was so big it could not fit through any opening while mounted in its frame. A special recess was created in the bulkhead in the atrium and the artwork was secured permanently into position; clearly a special case because most artwork is designed to be removed when owners sell yachts.

Lighting art is an important factor. For traditional yacht designs normal picture lights can be used, but more modern



designs may involve fibre optic or LED fittings to compliment the overall design.

GONE FOR GOOD

Some yachts carry artwork worth millions, others have nothing of significant value. On some, what appears to be highly valued pieces of art are in fact copies with originals kept safely in a vault. There is no correlation between the value of a yacht and worth of artwork aboard. Keeping artwork safe on a yacht involves more than simply securing it to prevent accidental movement. Sadly, paintings, sculptures, personal effects including watches and jewellery, and confidential business information have all been stolen, and even owners themselves have encountered attacks from on-board intruders. Ninety per cent of all art theft is undertaken to order and is seldom opportunistic. Picassos appear to be a popular targets; thieves have stolen two off yachts in recent times. Billionaire Al Sheik Modhassan lost the abstract oil canvas painted by Pablo Picasso in 1938 known as 'Dora Maar'. Said to be worth around \$4 million, it was stolen from the yacht *Coral Island* in Antibes, in 1999. It is said that the painting was about to be sent to England, while the vessel was going to Barcelona for a refit. A second Picasso was stolen from the 44.8 metre Trident *Tajin*. This charcoal sketch, a partial draft of Picasso's painting 'Les Trois Danseuses', was worth about \$200,000 and disappeared while the yacht was undergoing a refit in Jones Boat Yard on the Miami River. Witnesses chased the thief through the boatyard, but, according to a police report, he escaped into a waiting car. Other artwork thefts have recently targeted marinas in the South of France. One involved a small pencil drawing worth six figures, another a pair of duelling pistols of similar worth.

SECURITY ISSUES

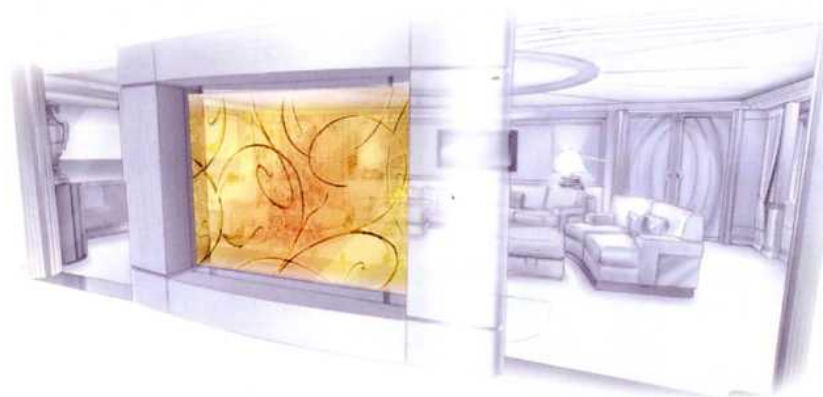
ISPS has increased security awareness aboard yachts. Crew understand that providing anti-theft protection involves common sense to ensure existing or planned security is both adequate and non-restrictive to owners. Robberies are probably rare on yachts because the perception is that there is heavy security aboard a large yacht. To some extent this is



Buying fine art afloat

Art for the pleasure of an owner and his guests is not the only type kept aboard a yacht. *Grand Luxe* might look like an ordinary yacht of 71 metres, five decks high, with her sparkling topsides, sleek white hull and immaculately turned-out crew waiting to welcome visitors up the gangway. But look again and you will notice her lack of portholes and windows in every compartment save the navigation bridge. Marvel that such a large vessel is floating in just 2 metres of water and then ask yourself why. In fact, *Grand Luxe*, due into service in December 2006, is not a yacht in the conventional sense at all, but a floating art gallery. She is the brainchild of David Lester, president of Expo Ships and sponsor of many art shows around the world. Having sold his art exhibition firm, he is taking a new approach to showing some of the most renowned artists from around the world. This floating art gallery occupying three enclosed decks, will sail into the ports and marinas of the United States eastern seaboard that are home to affluent people. Selected guests will board, view and purchase displayed artwork perhaps to hand over to their designers for incorporation into their next yacht.

Above: silhouetted against the saloon window of a Feadship is an example of the ancient art of Japanese root sculpture by artists using natural roots
Left: tapestries adorning the dining room in *Ilna IV* replicate watercolours by Australian artist Christopher Pyott from his 365 scenes of Port Philip Bay



true – most employ permanent crew and many have CCTV systems fitted. However, many high profile CCTV systems do not have recording facilities and thus keep no record of incidents that occur. In a bid to highlight security shortcomings, Dean La-Vey of Secure Yacht Ltd regularly test-boards yachts for owners and has never yet been detected doing so. A member of his team often places printed red cards inside owner's areas or the engine room to let crew know someone uninvited has been aboard. On one yacht, in Turkey, they took the owner's 9 millimetre pistol from his suite, returning it to him at his home the next day.

Drum Cussac, the largest of the specialist yacht security firms, provides risk assessment analysis of yachts and artwork they carry. The firm analyses the extra risk of carrying valuable art and recommends ways of reducing risk of theft or damage using additional or improved security. One common problem it highlights is that of pan and tilt CCTV cameras, which are often not correctly aligned, and it recommends replacement with fixed versions. The firm monitors valuable

art using discreet security systems, employing miniature electronic devices affixed to frames or display cases to allow remote satellite tracking if removed. Secure Yacht supplies on-board security systems including sensors attached to paintings and sculptures that are connected to the yacht's alarm system, and independent micro-sounders. New products on the market include GSM telephone appliances that alert designated people when artwork is moved. The Aspects ARTS system from ISIS protects, tracks and audits art and personnel on board. The software communicates with RFID receivers, tags and hard-wired sensors. Pressure-sensing, magnetic switches, panic alarm key fobs and many more sensors all form part of the system. On the bridge, the software displays alarm graphics of art objects, people and their locations. The software can then trigger any number of third party devices such as the CCTV cameras, audio-visual alarms, alpha-numeric pagers, or GSM.

Storing valuable works ashore in secure warehouses or aboard the yacht inside a safe are both effective ways of protecting them when owners are not aboard. Victor Caminada of yacht builders Amels believes one of the strengths of a custom build is that it is possible to incorporate climatized and hidden areas especially for this purpose during the early stages of design. Copies of the work are then displayed so that no blank spaces show on bulkheads.

INSURANCE AND LEGAL MATTERS

An owner whose yacht boasts a masterpiece is likely to be fully aware of its cost, but it is easy to forget the individual values of each and every piece of lesser artwork, and to simply include them under personal effects rather than separately listed or insured. 'There are undoubtedly plenty of yachts with artwork aboard that are not properly insured,' says Steven Laurie, vice president of Marsh yacht division.

Costs of insuring artwork depend upon what is important to the owner, does he prefer a lower premium or is freedom from rigid security the priority? Art can be insured as part of



Left: Raymond Langton's design drawing shows where a commissioned multi-coloured glass artwork for the cinema/saloon of a 68 metre superyacht will go
Below: DKT's sketch and prototype sample of artwork proposed for the main staircase of the same superyacht



Left: stainless steel door panel detailing on *Flying Eagle* depicts 'The Great Wave' by 19th century Japanese artist Hokusai



Above: Vladimir Zbynovsky's 'Lame', a glass and stone sculpture, creates interesting effects in a Feadship interior

the yacht's own policy or can be subject to a separate special fine art policy. There are several differences between the two; under the yacht's policy, the artwork is included among the owner's personal effects and is generally subject to a single article limit of \$10,000. Nicholas Hales, managing director of Underwriting Risk Services, leading yacht and fine art underwriters, suggests that 'If artwork exceeds 1 per cent of the value of the yacht it would be better covered by a separate Fine Art Policy.' Art insured this way with worldwide cover benefits from the most comprehensive cover and most artwork is insured without the need to inform the underwriters, even when removed for storage or to be swapped with other

works, for example. Artwork insured under a yacht policy is only covered aboard the yacht, and every piece, regardless of cost, must be individually listed and valued. Under a fine art policy, lower valued artwork need not be individually listed.

The insurance pay-out in the event of an accident is also affected by the policy chosen. If one of a pair of paintings insured with the fine art policy is damaged, for example, an owner can claim for repairs or, should that not be feasible, can claim to replace both paintings. Where the pair is included as part of the yacht policy only the damaged painting would be subject to claim.

Whatever insurance is chosen, Cheryl Meachen, international



Above: a glass 'seahorse' by Czech artists Michael Pavlik and Vladimir Klumpar graces a niche in the sky lounge of Flying Eagle. Left: a piece called 'Standing Stones' by Peter Hays is a focal point at the end of a corridor in a Feadship superyacht

key account director specialising in fine art at Marsh, recommends regular valuations every three to five years to reduce arguments over value in the case of loss. All artwork policies exclude losses due to atmospheric damage, wear and tear, gradual deterioration and generally on removal before a refit.

Tony Allen of Hill Dickinson advises owners to 'check insurance policies carefully and make sure to comply with any conditions or limitations of cover. Full and frank disclosure to insurers of artwork installed or carried on board, as with all other types of marine insurance, is a must.' Keep insurance brokers advised of precisely what is insured and the manner in which it is kept, maintained and transported. The insurer is interested in the risk represented by the insured property; he should, accordingly, be kept advised of any changes in the circumstances that might affect his evaluation of that risk. Failure to adhere to these principles may put owners in breach of policy terms and cause cover to be invalidated. □



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When Terence Disdale could not find the right artist for a painting he had in mind for the aft bulkhead of Ecstasea's main saloon, he decided to do it himself. It is a striking combination of wood, canvas, gesso and acrylic, which he describes as 'something stimulating to look at and enhance the decorative nature of the room'