

HONG KONG TATLER

YACHT

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issue

CHARTERING IN HONG KONG

PEOPLE ERIC FOK REGATTA LORO PIANA SUPERYACHT
REGATTA MOTORYACHT BAIA EXTREME PLANETSOLAR SEATRIAL
BENETTI MARLYN NANSHA MARINA



GERALD LORENZ / COURTESY OF LÜSSEN

The Lighter Side

Even when the sun goes down, superyachts continue to shine, thanks to Beatrice Witzgall and her interdisciplinary design team at I3D, who focus on creating unique lighting solutions for these seaborne pleasure palaces.

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I3D / ANNA MUSLIMOVA



RICHARD LANGDOY / TEAM PHREDO



Lighting is an essential conduit for any spatial experience, bringing an emotional and ephemeral character to architecture. Lighting speaks to the unconscious.

Pleasure boating has been very much focused on lifestyle in recent years, and the growth of the superyacht industry has turned boats into an art form. And every last detail is customised – except lighting, which is frequently ignored. When the sun sets and the lights come on, these beautiful multi-million dollar yachts are often a disappointment, featuring only the most generic forms of illumination, and outdated lighting technologies.

On many modern yachts, very little stands out at night time. They become undefined masses looking like ‘black holes’ from shore when moored in a bay. The hours that exterior stylists spend on creating signature shapes are wasted as the shapes themselves disappear into amorphous darkness and can’t be seen at all - private residences, restaurants and nightclubs often have more unique lighting than a multi-million dollar yacht.

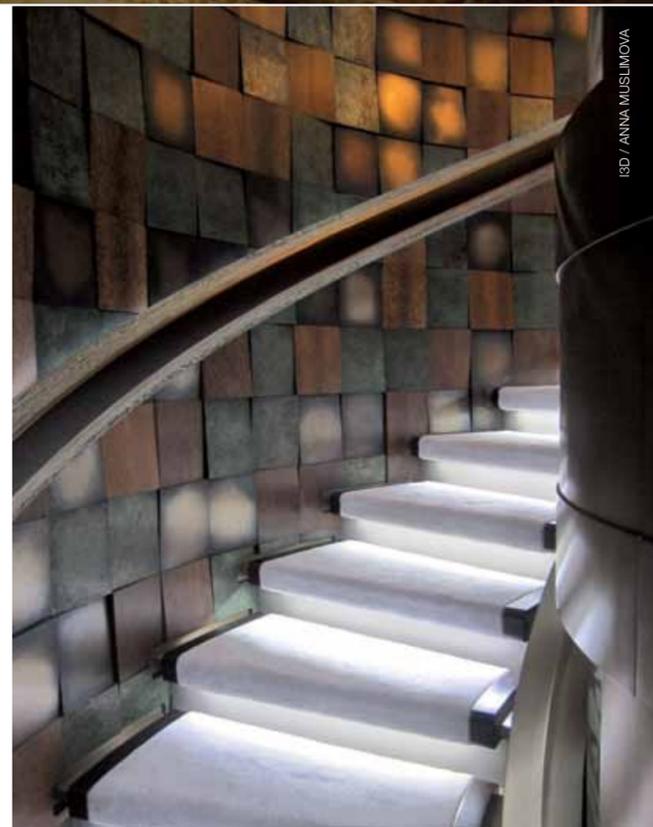
But that was yesterday. Today, meet award-winning designer Beatrice Witzgall and her design consultancy company I3D. This is a company that primarily focuses on lighting design, and was founded by Witzgall in 2007. The designer’s background in fields such as architecture, lighting, graphic design, and interactive digital technologies, enable her to think dynamically, and see bold new opportunities. She says that she “takes an emotional and unique approach to yacht lighting. It was my passion for performance sailing, combined with lighting expertise, that allowed me to see the untapped potential for stunning new lighting designs for luxury yachts, and to understand the opportunities that lie beyond the traditional and bland lighting

approaches - such as repetitive downlights.”

“The key is in how lighting interfaces with people and spaces, and how it transforms to meet their needs. Lighting addresses the unconscious in an intangible way, and affects how people interact within a space. I create lighting that accentuates subtle moods that add both pleasure and value to a yacht by reflecting not only an owner’s personality and the selected design style, but also the feel and identity of a space. These lighting techniques put a signature stamp on form and function, adding sophistication to luxury.”

The award-winning Witzgall entered the world of lighting when she won a 1998 competition for a ‘Light-Play House’ for the Expo 2000 in Germany. With her graduate degree in architecture from the Technical University of Braunschweig, Germany, she later pursued her interdisciplinary and technology-driven interests through the graduate programme of the prestigious Rhode Island School of Design, where she also collaborated with the MIT Media Lab on designing interactive environments.

In 2002, along with her graduate students at the Parsons School of Design in New York, she investigated how lighting can act as an ambient information source capable of influencing people’s behaviour, interactions, and movement patterns. Her groundbreaking discoveries in responsive architecture, and in creating interactive spaces with lighting, were published to wide acclaim. She then went on to join the world-renowned lighting design boutique firm ‘L’Observatoire International’ where she worked for six



years, participating in over 40 projects around the world.

In her role as a Senior Design Associate and Project Manager, Witzgall worked on a number of projects recognised by industry leaders as unique examples where lighting went beyond functional aspects and was used to define the identity, mood and brand of an environment. Major projects include the New York Olympic and Jets Stadium proposal, Frank Gehry’s Novartis Headquarters, Taikoo Hui in Guangzhou, and various casino hospitality projects in Las Vegas, Atlantic City and Macau, as well as the 2010 Lumen Award-winning Lincoln Center Renovation in New York City.

According to Witzgall, “Exterior lighting creates a signature, revealing a project’s iconic character at night. “ She believes that interior lighting has the power to transform mood and atmosphere. “Lighting is an essential conduit for any spatial experience, bringing an emotional and ephemeral character to architecture. Lighting speaks to the unconscious. It’s about creating an experience, a lifestyle. Successful lighting should be ‘felt’ and not visibly seen in form of fixtures or glare.”

Witzgall believes it is important to integrate various architectural lighting strategies into the early phases of the design process, as then “we are able to create solutions that enable us to develop unique identities, perceptions and atmospheres for our projects which go hand-in-hand with the design and architectural features of the space. These concepts are already well-known and established in architecture, but are still recent innovations in the yacht environment. The lighting concept should be inspired by the ex-

PREVIOUS PAGES CLOCKWISE: Spa Lobby with integrated architectural lighting; Phaedo 66 Gunboat; 60m concept yacht with exterior lighting

THESE PAGES TOP CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: 60m concept yacht with integrated lighting into the hull structure; Superyacht VIP suite in lounge mode creating a cosy atmosphere; aft deck in cocktail hour mode; aft deck in late night cosy dim mode; 85m Lurssen with invisible integrated lighting in the handrail



Current lighting design merges art and technology in a rapidly-expanding field that stands at the forefront of modern architectural creativity.

isting architectural design. For instance, if a design is simple and traditional, then we will provide a more basic lighting language. If a design is more modern and features more complex materials, shapes, or user scenarios, then we will develop more sophisticated lighting approaches that are based on integrating, transforming, and illuminating these key textures.”

Various lighting scenarios are needed for different times of the day, and modes of usage such as a public or private entertainment space. Sunset cocktail hours, formal dinners, late-night cozy intimate drinks, and big special events each (ideally) require a different lighting setting. It’s about creating a hierarchy, and not just a flat illumination that is simply dimmed down depending on the hour of the night.

“When it comes to exterior lighting,” says Witzgall, “sometimes a designer or client wants a project to be entirely extroverted, to make a big splashy statement in the cities and harbours of the world. This requires a big, bold lighting scheme. Other owners or projects call for quiet, seductive, elegant – even introverted - lighting design. Sophisticated lighting techniques put a signature stamp on both form and function, adding extra cachet to a design.”

Until recently, lighting design was part of an architect’s responsibility, and not seen as a discrete profession. Manufacturers, too, often played the role of a lighting designer in order to ‘sell’ their products. Nowadays, there is not only a demand for neutral and objective lighting professionals who represent the client’s interests, but there is also an understanding that lighting designers are able to do more than just get the lights turned on: they create beauty,

bring forth a recognisable and unique character, and add value and pleasure to any environment.

Lighting design not only goes hand-in-hand with architecture, but it also interfaces with engineers, contractors, carpenters, and installers, as well as bridging the gap between these professionals and lighting manufacturers. The increase in design, project, and technology complexity, coupled with the incredible variety of fixture and lamp choices available today, requires lighting designers to keep up with a vast amount of specialised technical knowledge. Current lighting design merges art and technology in a rapidly-expanding field that stands at the forefront of modern architectural creativity.

Witzgall and her team at I3D have consulted on numerous yachts ranging from some of the most high-profile and prominent superyacht launches to high performance catamarans, and worked extensively with many acclaimed designers such as Bannenberg-Rowell, Reymond Langton and German Frers, and shipyards such as Lürssen, Abeking & Rasmussen, Nobiskrug, Hodgden and Gunboat.

I3D projects have included the 85m Lürssen m/y Pacific, which received a judge’s commendation at the World Super yacht Awards, 2011. “The owner’s brief was clear”, says Witzgall, “to ‘impress and surprise’ with something that hadn’t been done before on any yacht.” This opened up an amazing opportunity to incorporate a number of unique design visions into a quite outstanding project. “All spaces were defined by different light settings for the various user scenarios. Integrated lighting accentuated the multitude of complex materials and textures as well

as the complex and outstanding architectural design details. A mood-altering colour scheme linked interior with exterior spaces and created a fluent spatial experience. Together, these and other innovative lighting features created m/y Pacific’s unique signature look, pushing the envelope for innovative lighting design and setting a new industry standard.”

The 66’ Gunboat catamaran Phaedo was “something completely different. This project truly pushed the envelope and redefined what a fully-equipped ‘performance cruising boat’ can mean today. Not only did it incorporate race boat technology, pushing weight and performance to the limit without compromising or sacrificing luxury lifestyle elements in a highly designed loft-type space, but it also rethought every system, detail, and technological addition.” The result is a custom, modern, cleanly-designed, stylish and open penthouse space that has every feature of a fast, light-weight performance racing yacht. At just 66’, Phaedo is equal in many aspects to a 100ft+ superyacht in terms of space, speed, performance, and quality of finishes. However, it is optimised in terms of crew, maintenance costs, fuel, and energy savings. It sets new standards for catamarans, bringing the possibilities to an entirely new level. The boat has recently participated in several high-profile regattas such as Antigua Race Week, the Caribbean 600, the Transatlantic Race and the Rolex Fastnet Race. I3D was not only involved in the design of the lighting systems, but also participated in developing the architectural layouts for the boats as well as the striking ‘signature’ graphics.

There’s also a 60m high-performance concept superyacht on

the drawing board, for which I3D are designing the ‘exterior recognisable identity’. Witzgall says that “incorporating architectural lighting strategies into the early phases of the design process has enabled us to develop discrete and unique identities and perspectives for the exterior. A structural reveal - involving linear resin-encased, high-power LED striplight fixture optics in a pocket housing on the exterior hull - grazes the hull surface with light, and accentuates the exterior characteristic shapes of the yacht, marking the yacht’s presence and revealing its style and volume. We also considered a careful balance for the surface finishes: matte finishes carry the light further, accentuating design features and reducing reflective glare.”

Lighting is one key aspect in developing a brand identity for a boat, but it also has to interweave with the other design disciplines to create a strong comprehensive character. “With I3D’s strong understanding of the various design disciplines, we understand the underlying design principles, concepts and themes enabling us to develop a representative image. Graphics strengthen and accentuate identity and have a unique, but specific, character and should reflect the overall design principles of the project.” Architectural design features and graphics, such as boat logos, all belong to another important aspect of the company’s work.

Every owner has unique objectives, needs, and visions. Design consultants such as Witzgall allow superyachts and their owners to ‘shine’ in an entirely new way – by breaking out of the traditional and often outdated mould of pure repetitive engineering, and presenting us with something more unique and creative. 🐦

THESE PAGES FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:
Aft deck of the 66 Gunboat Phaedo; Graphic spinnaker action on Phaedo; Projection on the mast of the 85m Lürssen; Aft deck in Party mode and cocktail mode