

DESIGN THE LUXURY NEW DIMENSION

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE: THE INTERIOR DESIGN OF YACHTS, JETS AND HELICOPTERS

What is the common point between private jets, super yachts and helicopters? First idea to come: they are all three very exclusive means of transportation for sure. For that reason they are considered as “happy few” objects. Why is that? Because of the price of such beautiful machines of course.

But now ask randomly to any person in the street: what would you do if you were to become a billionaire?

Lot of people would come in their answer to one of these 3 items, and you would see immediately their eyes sparkling. If you go further and ask this question to a woman, the dream might be as follow: “I wear a Christian Dior dress, and beautiful diamonds, a Swiss watch. I come out of a five-star hotel cocktail in London, and a limo drives me to the airport where my private jet waits for me. I get onboard and sit down in a comfortable leather armchair, then take a shower, and go to bed while the plane is reaching Spanish Marbella. Arriving there, I walk only few meters from the plane to my helicopter heading to the yacht”.



PREMIUM CLASS NAUTILUS A380 BY DESIGN INVESTMENT FOR AIRBUS



So now think about it; what makes this dream so “exclusive”: Price? Service? Location, Time Saving? Of course all of the above, but the other common point between all these dream slices that no one really ever think about at first is design. Design in a dress, a jewel or a watch this is obvious, but also in the interior design of a yacht, a helicopter or a plane.

Any of these “machines” is an engineering jewel, but like a raw diamond only becomes a piece of art by the hands of the jeweler, a private jet, a yacht or a helicopter will only become a master piece thanks to a designer as, in fact, private jets are the ultimate personal status symbol.

The interior designer’s work asks to propose beautiful material, esthetic looking, high standard comfort but is also dealing with very strong constraints: reduced space, high level of noise, important vibrations or salted water for instance.

All these elements are totally contradictory: luxury is often associated with space and silence. A helicopter for instance is basically very noisy and offers only very narrow space for the passengers section of the aircraft.

For all these reasons the work on interiors design is not only limited to “have a good taste” but also to deal with real engineering and sometimes research work. This has led to the creation of a brand new industry specifically dedicated to this work.

THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME IN THE PRIVATE AVIATION MARKET

Out of dreams and coming back to life, is there really a market for such projects and who might be interested? In fact more people than you think: corporations and the super wealthy are ready to empty their pockets to ensure that their private jets will satisfy their needs and demands. No expense is spared to make these planes as comfortable as the homes, offices and hotel rooms that they are used to.

Even in China private aviation becomes more and more popularized in the corporations, and high net-worth individuals are willing to spend opulent amounts to ensure that their private jets will satisfy various personal requirements and tastes like their affluent counterparts in the West and the Middle East. Exactly as in the rest of the world, business leaders and the wealthy elites in China not only prefer travelling exclusively and hassle-free in their private aircrafts, they are increasingly seeking customization to make their jets a truly “private statement”.

The traditional geographical areas of this market used to be North America and Europe, but it has drastically changed and all continents are now part of this highly globalized market. This easily explains why in 2007 Airbus corporate jetliners won 38 firm orders from customers around the world and a total of almost 50 orders and commitments.

DREAMS OF COMFORT

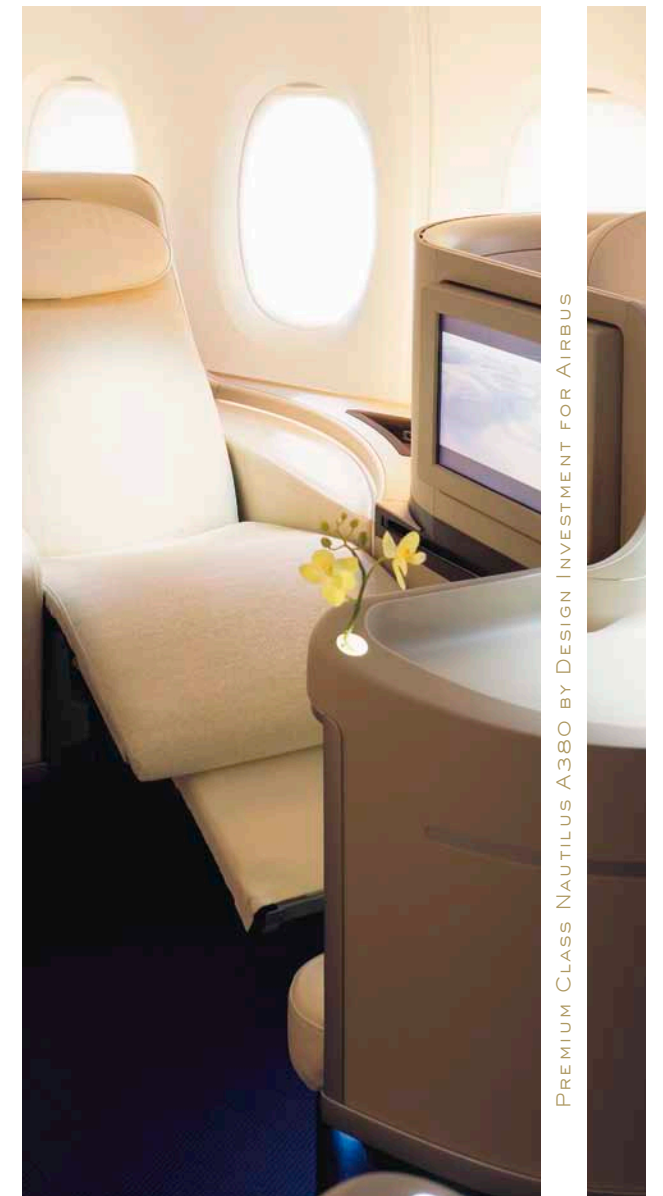
Apart from the privacy of business aviation, wealthy travelers are also looking to put a personal stamp on their own aircraft as an additional element of exclusivity and to reach their notion of “comfort”.

Indeed if master word is comfort, who wouldn’t be comfortable in a space with gorgeous bedrooms, bathrooms made out of gold, and sometimes a kitchen and an office?

Therefore there is a real inflation on this field and the most luxurious private jets or yachts keep getting more and more luxurious.

The luxury touch often comes from high value materials used but can also be induced by the use of the entertainment equipment which offers endless possibilities. More and more these cabins are equipped with electronics that would make the most technology-savvy entertainment system owner shed a tear of happiness. They all include air-to-ground phones, satellite radio, DVD players and giant flat-screen monitors. Need to surf the internet while in the air? Not a problem, these private jets come with wireless networks so that everyone can access their e-mail, surf the Internet and text message during their flight.

Fifteen years ago private jets were basically planes to carry 5 to 10 passengers but it is not the case anymore since people are looking for one of the biggest element of luxury in an ever shrinking world: space.



PREMIUM CLASS NAUTILUS A380 BY DESIGN INVESTMENT FOR AIRBUS



PRIVATE JETS

If looking for space in the private jet field, even Boeing and Airbus are now on this market. Airbus is now offering a complete range of aircrafts for corporate, and VIP aviation - from its A318 Elite, Airbus Corporate Jetliner (ACJ), A320 Prestige to the wide body A330 and A340, and even the A380. Keeping in mind that this latest can seat over 800 passengers on two levels as a commercial jet, and embarks 248 tons of kerosene with a total length of 73 m (240 ft) and a wingspan of 79.75 m (261.6 ft).

The first A380 private jet version has been sold in 2008 to an “anonymous middle east customer” who seems to be Prince Al-Waleed bin Talal bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud, followed months later by Russian billionaire Roman Abramovich, Chelsea FC owner and UK’s richest man. The price is evaluated around the \$300 million, but has to be refitted and customized to every owner’s personal specifications.

In the case of Abramovich it includes three bedrooms, a lounge and dining area, a sauna and exercise bikes. Prince Talal on his side will spend additional \$175 million to outfit the jet according to his opulent tastes therefore the design aesthetic has been described as “Lawrence of Arabia meets Star Wars”. His “flying palace” should feature 20

“normal” first class sleeper suites and five private quarters featuring king size beds, a dining room, business center and lounge. And for relaxation: a concert hall (with a baby grand piano), a movie theatre, as well as steam room, exercise room, hot tub and sauna.

The special touch is the cylindrical elevator that comes out of the bottom of the plane. Finally chauffeurs can drive his Rolls Royce up the ramp on the rear, and park it in his on-board garage. What’s most impressive about Prince Alaweed’s customization may not be in the plane’s interior as His highness has outlaid \$60 million to paint the plane’s fuselage in gold leaf.

But the biggest part of the market concerns much smaller planes of course. With smaller aircrafts, customers are more focused on ergonomics and ambience. This desire for quality is encouraging more conventional interior design processes and materials, such as wood to give a warm touch at a reasonable price. These trends follow design styles seen more in five-star hotels and luxury yachts.

YACHTS AND SUPER YACHTS



Y708 BY OCEANCO

Talking about endless luxury and interiors, let’s have a look at the new World Most Expensive Yacht.

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Al Maktoum still remains the proud owner of the “Dubai”, the world’s largest yacht. But “Hull 6154” the latest super yacht under construction in Italy is by far the most expensive. It boasts seven decks, two helicopter pads and storage space for a submarine. Yet the most significant fact about the secret yacht-building project in Genoa is the price tag – a record-breaking £140 million.

The Hull 6154 is being built by Fincantieri, one of the world’s leading yacht builders at its base in Genoa and the interiors are being designed by the British-based designer Pascale Reymond. It will have an internal sea water swimming pool and will have storage for a submarine that can reach a depth of up to 300 feet. Measuring 438 feet long, the 60-strong crew of the world’s most expensive privately-owned yacht will entertain guests in 15 state rooms fitted with the latest entertainment systems, gold and marble bathroom fittings and jacuzzis. The vessel’s top deck will be divided into three areas; an arch with a heli-platform, an enclosed gym with 360 degree views and a sun deck.

If guests ever grow weary of the onboard delights, they can go further afield on one of the vessel’s five jet skis or two speed boats. The owner of the yacht, due for completion in 2010, is as yet unknown but it is believed to be a Russian billionaire.

However, Roman Abramovich, who already has four yachts, has recently announced that he is buying a fifth vessel called The Eclipse, priced at more than £100 million. The Eclipse, currently under construction in Hamburg, Germany, will have two helicopter landing pads, a swimming pool and a submarine. Its security will include bullet-proof glass and a missile detection system.



The increasing use of helicopters in conjunction with modern mega yachts makes the integration of landing areas a significant part of overall yacht design. But not only are the landing pads themselves important, so is the question of stowage, as more yachts are being built to carry their own helicopters. Here again the majority of the Yacht business concerns much more reasonable vessels, but still the key words remain: luxury materials, ergonomics, entertainment, and to fit it all in a more or less reduced space you need ... designers!



ALFA NERO BY OCEANCO



Y708 BY OCEANCO



LUXURY MARKETS: THE EXPANSION OF COMPLETION CENTERS?

As we have seen there is a market for luxury interior designs. This high demand has now resulted in an industry that is focusing their efforts and research on these newly termed "completion centers." A completion center is the location where these private jets are customized, kind of motorcycle customization store. As more and more completion centers open up, the standard of private jet interiors is only going to increase and make it more interesting as new designs and products are launched.

This new industry is basically taking private jets and turning them into places that the wealthy can spend an entire day in. This trend can be verified everywhere: in North and South America and in Europe of course, but now even in China. Nevertheless Middle East and GCC countries are once again an exceptionally high rate growing market for years now.

Rapid growth in the Middle East's business aviation fleet and rising regional ownership of private jets is spurring the local interior design market, according to the Association of Professional Interior Designers (APID), which represents interiors professionals throughout the Arabian Gulf.

"The opportunities are there and it is now up to designers to embark on a learning curve and assimilate the engineering

requirements of business jets with aesthetic design to enter this lucrative segment", said Laidler the APID boss.

At the beginning not many designers were specialized in aircraft interior design as this has primarily been a closed market with a handful of contracts going to a few companies. However, as more people own their aircraft and the business aviation fleet grows, we will see more contracts up for grabs, which will spur the industry to sit up and take notice.

WHEN "HAUTE COUTURE" MEETS TRANSPORTATION

This market is not only a good business in itself but also offers a public relation coverage and in this new age of private flying, the top designers really are jumping at the opportunity to design private jet interiors. In light of this, aircraft manufacturers have joined forces with the most influential in haute couture design to offer exclusive interior design service for private aircraft owners, catering to their specific needs. In these collaborations, aircraft makers provide expert know-how on the logistical, technical as well as management aspects of private aviation, while luxury designers work with aircraft owners on the interior design and stylistic aspects, tailored to their own individual tastes and preferences. Companies like Versace, BMW Group, Edese Doret and Lufthansa Technik are creating new interior designs tending to be more classy than opulent.



Boeing asked BMW Group to visualize what a young billionaire would want in their Boeing 787 Dreamliner: big-screen theatre, cocktail bar and gourmet kitchen are proposed, not to mention the two levels of living space that will include a sauna and gym.

In another notable partnership, Versace and TAG Aircraft Interiors also combined their expertise in 2007 for an exclusive interior design service catering to the needs of private jet owners. The crossover effort between Versace and TAG-AI is covering the range of interior design applications for Bombardier Global XRS, Boeing BBJ, Gulfstream 550 and Airbus ACJ aircraft.

WHAT ABOUT HELICOPTERS ?

In the helicopter market also, things are moving fast. “While growth in business aviation is robust, it is a segment that also places extremely high premium on quality of design”, explains Senior Executive Vice President of Eurocopter Philippe Harache.

As an example Versace is teaming up with fellow Italian company, Agusta Westland to design, develop and produce interiors for the airframer’s entire helicopter range knowing that AgustaWestland is nowadays one of the leading provider of high quality executive transport helicopters

from the 2.8 ton single engine AW-119 Ke to the 16 ton three engine AW-101. Therefore helicopter owners will be allowed to personalize the decor of the craft.

It is the second foray into the business aviation arena for Versace after the partnership with Swiss business aviation services provider TAG Aviation. Versace chief executive Giancarlo Di Risio says: “Interior design for helicopters is a natural extension within the Versace world following our recently announced expansion into luxury resorts, private jets and exclusive cars that represent our house’s unique style and design. AgustaWestland is the ideal ambassador to develop this new project for fronting the highest level of excellence and expertise in its sector”. Versace will supervise the research, creative development and production of the interior specifications of the helicopters. AgustaWestland will oversee all technical and regulatory issues.

With the helicopter coming out of the production floor, this goal had been achieved – the ultimate in luxury and elegance while at the same time creating functional space. A first in the helicopter industry, the Versace-Agusta Westland partnership offers specific target customers the opportunity to personalize the interior of their helicopter aircraft in the ultimate Versace style synonymous with contemporary luxury, through its unmistakable visual references.

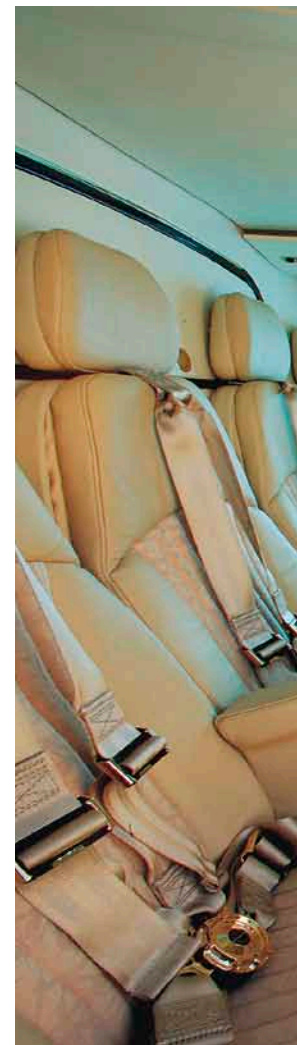


ALFA NERO BY OCEANCO



In March 2008 AgustaWestland announced that the first two helicopters fitted with Versace-styled interiors have been delivered to their customers. The two aircrafts comprised a Grand light twin turbine engine helicopter ordered by Ioan Tiriac Air of Romania and featuring a black and white interior and paint scheme; and an AW-109 Power with a grey-colored Versace-styled interior ordered by Elimarca of Italy.

Eurocopter also has recently launched the same move. Targeting this emerging market of affluent flyers, the House of Hermès, a renowned player in the fashion world, has recently confirmed a partnership with Eurocopter to create the Helicopter by Hermès. Aiming to enhance the experience of business travel, the collaborative effort will see Hermès designer Gabriele Pezzini working with the engineers from Eurocopter. Evident in the features of its spacious cabin and storage compartments, the signatures of Hermès are apparent in the interior design of Eurocopter's EC135 helicopter. A minimalist exterior paint scheme of the spacious cabin interior is complemented with the Hermès' "Toile H" canvas, with calf leather upholstered seats and banquette. "We set out to create a product that would add value and appeal for a highly desirable, but discriminating market segment", Harache of Eurocopter adds.



AGUSTA WESTLAND 139 VIP INTERIOR



AGUSTA WESTLAND 119 KE



FUTURE TRENDS : NOTHING SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE

With new technologies, will giant airships be the future of luxury air travel in a move that will soon mix yacht and jet industry? According to the new project makers, era of the “Flying Yachts” is close. Designed and built on the basis of new concepts these aircrafts will provide a more comfortable and safer way to enjoy the luxury flying experience.

For instance the Aeroscraft ML866 defined by its designers as “a new paradigm in air transport – an aircraft that utilizes a combination of buoyant and dynamic lift creating unique operational capabilities beyond what is available from any other air platform today”. It is about the length of three football fields and can take off vertically, without taking up runway time at crowded airports the bottom of the aircraft being a glass-floor.

Another project is the “Manned Cloud” developed by french National Aerospace Research body and designed by Jean Marie Massaud. It will accommodate up to 40 people and should include a restaurant, library, fitness area, spa, and even a sun deck on top.

Finally, billed as a “lifestyle zeppelin”, the Strato Cruiser Airship will include a gourmet restaurant, a spa, a swimming pool and a resident DJ. This “new Zeppelin” combines the luxury cruise experience with Richard Branson’s futuristic visions of space travel.

The cruiser’s Sky Lounge will offer incredible views during its flight. Designed by Tino Schaedler and Michael J. Brown, this one will be aimed at super-wealthy only.

It definitely seems to be a trend towards airships in coming decades, but the theme of security with an helium filled bag would have to be seriously addressed in order to become a reality people can feel confident.

DESIGN IS MOVING FASTER THAN EVER

Interior design concerns more and more aircrafts and yachts and covers a much wider range than it used to. From the regular airlines first and business class to super yachts and flying palaces, the range is always expanding for this new born industry. This market is now challenged by renowned “general designers”, aircraft manufacturers as well as haute couture houses.

Nobody can tell now what the luxury transportation market will be in the future, but one thing is sure it won’t ever return back. The most convincing argument for that can be seen in the catastrophe movie “2012”, in which passengers of the boats to save the humanity include huge private cabins at 1 billion dollar each.

It seems that even at the end of the world, there will always be a place for luxury interior’s design!



FIRST CLASS A380 BY DESIGN INVESTMENT FOR AIRBUS



INTERVIEW OF DESIGN INVESTMENT

Somewhere in the heart of the historical city of Geneva is a secret building and its secluded entrance leads to a design studio composed of simple white lines. A space so discreet and confined that it is hard to believe that within these walls a team of five people envision, plan, and complete the design of private jet or yacht interiors, and do so for specific projects such as the 73m Mega Yacht or even the Airbus A380 Premium and Super First Classes; all in house and from start to finish.

Husband and wife Alexandra & Mark Collins, who are not only part of the designing force but also the founders of Design Investment, kindly welcomed the GoldSky team into their conceptual factory and creative space.

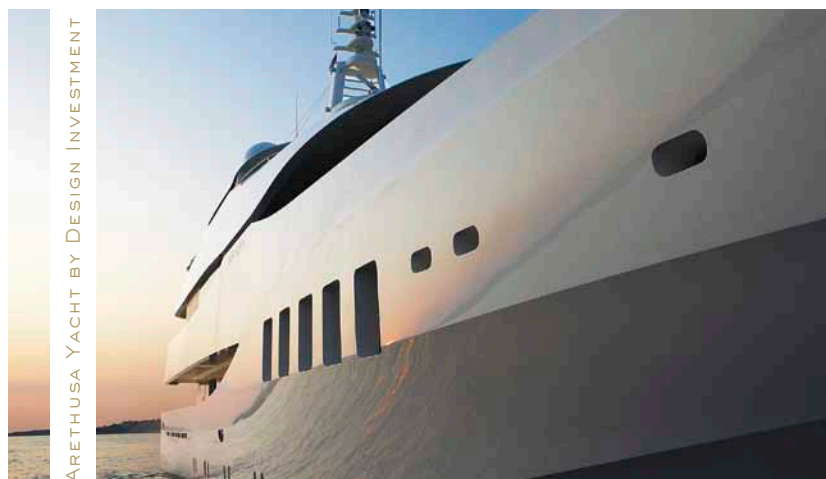
As our conversation with the duo comfortably moved from talking about design to discussing their inspirations, one cannot but take notice of the sparkle of enthusiasm and drive that forms in their sharp blue eyes when they speak of their work.

During our exchange, pictures of their studio's realisations are projected on a large screen and we are immediately impressed and astonished by the precision, the detail, and the style of their work.

Logically, one assumes that in order to turn a helicopter, a yacht, or a private jet into a desirable living space, designers are only able to express their creativity within the limits of major technical constraints. Thus, when sitting down to discuss design, we were expecting to be looking at mostly "decoration". Yet, we found ourselves discover-

ing the detailed work of engineering, where function and leisure are matched and where technical restrictions don't seem to hinder creativity.

It seems therefore no surprise then that Design Investment has been chosen by Airbus to participate on the design of such a prestigious project as the cabin of the new A380 aircraft. The key question of this project: how to create comfort along with a sense of cocooning-like travel for 26 passengers sharing one same and limited space? Design Investment's conceptual response to this question: a simply stunning and perfectly harmonious premium class seat called Nautilus.



ARETHUSA YACHT BY DESIGN INVESTMENT

Although technical and creative skills are without a doubt world class at Design Investment, an hour in their company helped us understand that soft facts and human factors play a crucial role at the very heart of this design studio. It is no wonder that some of their VIP clients ask them to design a full package: their private jet, their yacht, and their family house.

GoldSky: What is your business philosophy?

Mark Collins: *The client is king!*

GS: But in what way?

Alexandra Collins: *Whether it's an individual wanting a dream interior or a corporation that requires a highly successful product, the client's needs are constantly the center of our reflections. We help the client identify those needs and bring our answer through premium design; embodying his vision.*



ALEXANDRA COLLINS

MC: *In the VIP market in particular it is important for us that the client enjoys the experience of the creative process at least as much as he will enjoy the final result of our collaboration. In the end, the client shouldn't only own a beautiful yacht or aircraft, but he should also have experienced an enriching creative path tailoring his personal vision.*

GS: Could you please describe your management skills?

AC: *I am responsible for business development and project management and Mark for technical coordination and supervision and also the development of new mobility projects.*

GS: Do you have a dream project?

MC: *A dream project... difficult question. As all our mobility projects are closely related to energy; I dream of a renewable source of energy that would radically redefine the constraints and the design possibilities of the mobility world.*

AC: *Working on the Airbus A380 First and Premium cabin in a commercial configuration made me realise the extraordi-*

nary potential of that aircraft in a private use. That would be my dream project: the design of an Airbus A380 in a private configuration.

GS: What are the constraints if you wish to build a helicopter's platform on a yacht?

MC: *A helicopter's platform is a must have for many Mega Yachts owners. But it is always very challenging from a design point view. You first need to clear the deck for access from the air. If the client wants his helicopter to be stored on board his yacht this immediately becomes a much more complex challenge, mainly due to the regulations that govern the storage of aviation fuel on board. Another major constraint remains in finding a pilot capable of landing on what are essentially moving targets!*

GS: Could you tell us more about the similitude and the arrangements of a yacht and an aircraft?

AC: *Ever stricter safety regulations mean that many of the constraints in the choice of materials for aircraft now apply to yacht interiors.*

MC: *Similarly increasing demands for efficiency mean that weight considerations, although not nearly as extreme, apply even on the larger yachts.*



MARK COLLINS

GS: ... what about the differences?

MC: *The differences come from how they are used; the private aircraft is an extremely efficient means of transportation between destinations, the private yacht is a destination in itself; its role as transportation is secondary.*

