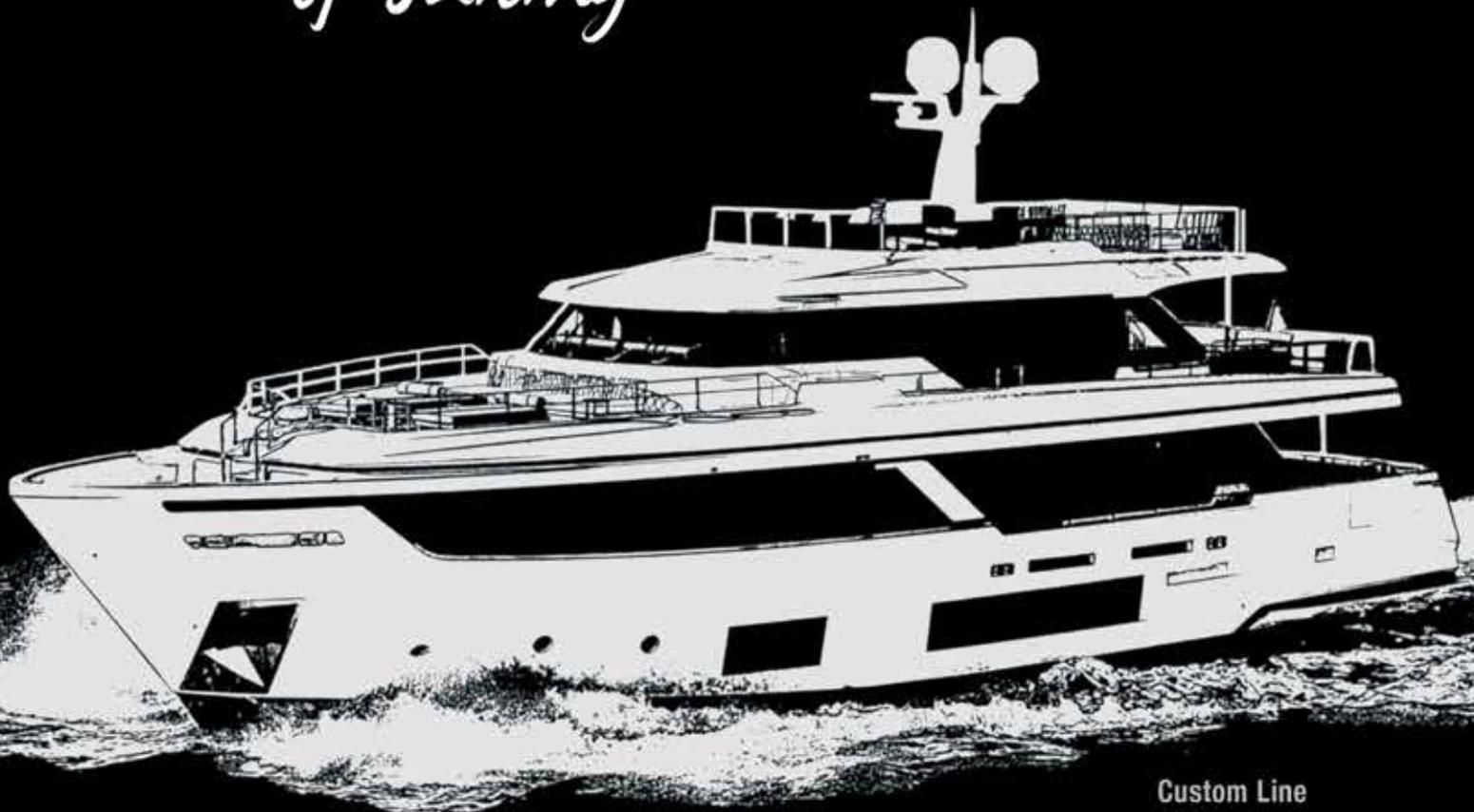


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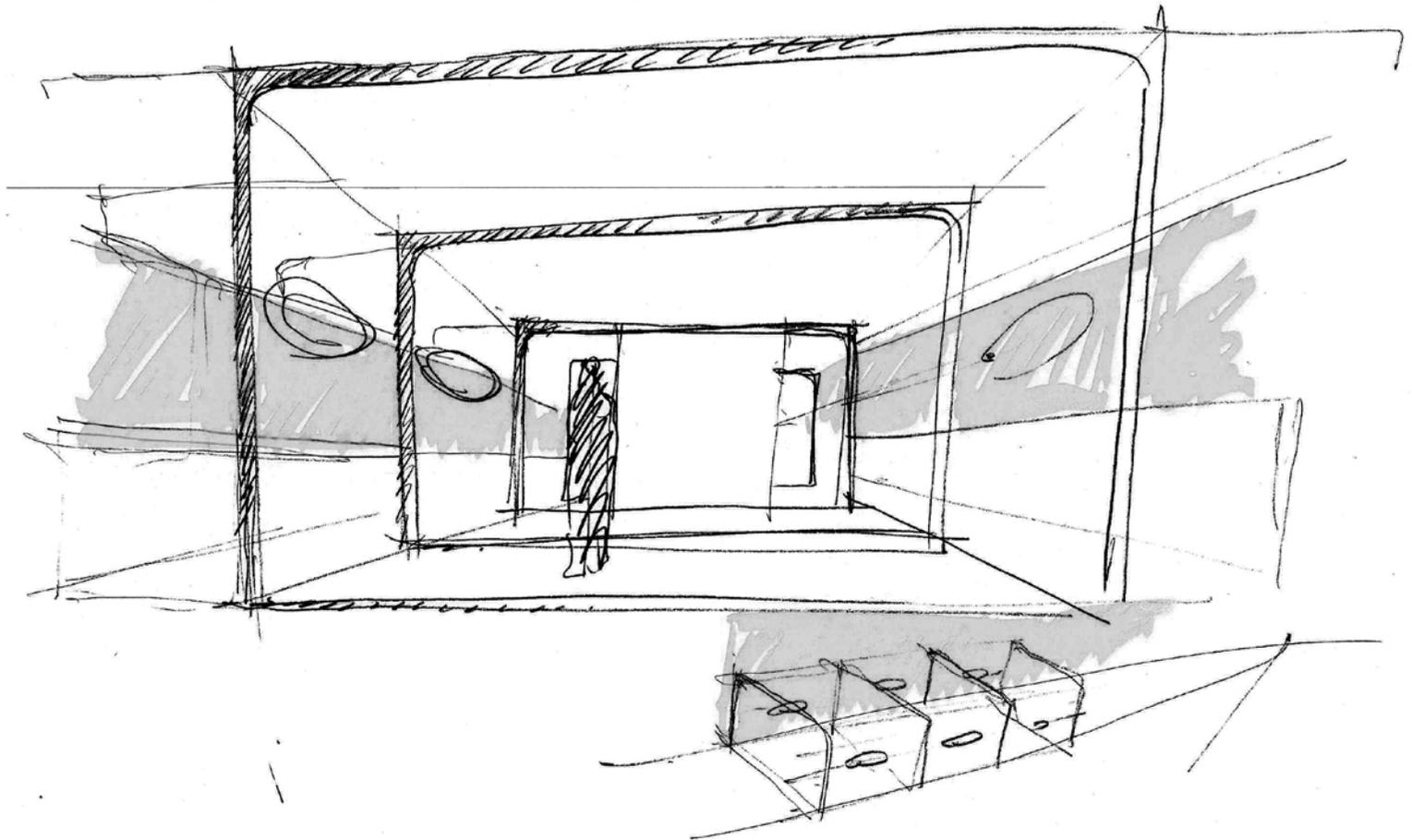


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WE THINK WITH EMPATHY AND DESIGN WITH COURAGE

by Marta Bernasconi - ph. courtesy by Lazzarini Pickering Architetti

Claudio Lazzarini and Carl Pickering successfully explore different areas of architecture and design. This fluid cross-fertilisation inspires a philosophy of transverse projects that overturn accepted ideas and revolutionise an industry where everything had previously seemed set in stone



Opening, a sketch of the new Benetti Motopanfilo, whose interiors and exteriors have been developed by the Lazzarini Pickering Architetti studio. Claudio Lazzarini and Carl Pickering (photo) identified some traditional elements of 1960s motoryachts and reinterpreted them, blending classic and contemporary into a new language



[TREND SETTERS]

A fresh way of thinking that shuns preconceptions is the most striking aspect of the career path followed by Claudio Lazzarini and Carl Pickering. With a studio in Rome and completed projects throughout the world the architects handle designs in a range of contexts, based on a cross-fertilisation of ideas that prioritises an ability to listen. “Our main inspiration comes from our readiness to get to know the places where we find ourselves and the dynamics of the people who live there. We have a highly contextualised approach, and a secret that allows us to assess whether we’re doing a good job – we ask ourselves “Would we like to live here? Would we eat in this restaurant?” The residential buildings by the two architects display the main elements of their design language, which cross over into other areas like yachts. A perception of space is the underlying concept. “We think it’s very important to be able to perceive all the spaces visually. We place great emphasis on continuity and fluidity, and this translates into creating long perspectives that can be interrupted by systems of sliding or pivoting doors to create areas of privacy”. One example of this concept is the design for the villa The Bluff, a large, seamless space that includes study, lobby, kitchen in an extended visual sweep that can be divided into three sections with pivoting panels. This idea can also be seen on board yachts. The studio began working in this sector twenty-five years with a design for the interiors of 80’ sail yacht Wally B. “We liked race yachts, empty, where you could see the hull, which from an architectural point of view offers the most exciting surfaces. As a result we emptied the interiors and affixed containers that followed the sides”. On the yacht this idea of spatial fluidity inspires revolutionary solutions that culminate in eliminating the partitions between bathroom and cabin – the bathroom in the glass cube on Benetti Sai Ram marked a turning point and has frequently been copied. The dialogue between interior and exterior is another central theme in LPA’s work and is clear to see in their residential work – homes immersed in their natural surroundings and the paradigmatic design of Villa in the Chilterns, in the English countryside, where large windows create a spatial continuum and a skilful management of light. “When discussing light in an architectural project the subject is usually artificial light, but for us a natural light is just as important.



From top, the long perspective and extensive windows of the Villa in the Chilterns (UK) are distinctive elements in the LPA’s work, like the dialogue between interior and exterior that can be seen in the Sense Hotel, Sofia. The Al Bustan spa in Beirut shows the link with the cultural context of the locality





[TREND SETTER]



Top, a villa in the residential complex at Asproli, Umbria. Left, an interior in the restructuring project of an 18th-century villa in Positano where the architects are recovering traditional local materials and finding unusual ways to include them in the project



We look for a continuity between the two, so in a house we prioritise exposure to light and then introduce screening systems to modulate the light as desired". In terms of materials Lazzarini and Pickering describe themselves as omnivores. "We happily make the switch between carbon fibre and embroidered fabrics. Everything's on the table, whatever material fits so long as it's rooted in the culture of the place and the client". This choice is also evident on LPA-designed yachts like Sai Ram, where the choice of fabrics was inspired by the client's close link to India. The architects are also fascinated by how furnishing objects can be functionally transformed and superimposed. Take, for example, the cupboard doors in the Asproli residential complex, which when fully opened become shutters and close the homes from the inside, or the partition on the Magnum motoryacht that transforms into a table. With their latest project, the 37-metre yacht for Benetti's Motopanfilii series, Lazzarini and Pickering once again take to the sea. The yard's brief was to evoke the memory of 1960s yachts. "These days yachts increasingly resemble houses, so we identified in the ribs a distinctive nautical character". Lazzarini and Pickering also reinterpret this character through the eclectic, contemporary stylistic elements that inform all their diverse designs.



Left, the 37-metre Benetti motoryacht with exterior lines by Francesco Struglia. Claudio Lazzarini and Carl Pickering designed the interiors (above) like the inside of the skeleton of a great whale, with beams that add rhythm to the spaces. Below, right, the dinette on board Roma, a yacht that won a Compasso d'Oro honourable mention in 2008. Left, the bathroom in the glass cube on Benetti Sai Ram, an LPA design element that has achieved iconic status

