

Above: This is the Lapis Lounge on the legendary megayacht *Christina O*. The *Christina* was Onassis' "floating home" from 1954 until 1975. Friend of the family, Mr Papanikolaou bought and refurbished her and from 2001 she operates as an exclusive charter sailing yacht. This elegant lounge is named after the breathtaking lapis lazuli fireplace. Rare volumes fill the bookshelves surrounding the fireplace and fine pieces of art, including a Renoir, Le Corbusier and de Chirico line the walls.

The vessel's guest list was the ultimate who's who of dignitaries and Hollywood stars, including such luminaries as Marilyn Monroe, Frank Sinatra, King Farouk of Egypt, opera diva Maria Callas and numerous others. John F. Kennedy first met Winston Churchill aboard the yacht and two of the most celebrated wedding receptions of the century were held on her decks - Prince Rainier of Monaco to Grace Kelly and Onassis himself to Jacqueline Kennedy.

(See - [www.yachting-greece.com/Christina\\_O.htm](http://www.yachting-greece.com/Christina_O.htm))

Above centre: Classical elegance and simplicity in the Yachtwise fleet. (Courtesy yachtwise.com)

## Super fine for superyachts luxury for life at sea

A safe and luxurious life at sea is the goal of the superyacht interior designer. The space must be divided into the various areas required by owners, guests and the crew. The essentials of propulsion, health and safety are given priority in the designing of interiors, and all must be managed within the confines of the hull and exterior dimensions. From this sensible starting point, the imagination of the designer and owner take over. Success is guaranteed through close collaboration between naval architect, architect and the interior feature providers and installers. (See also CN Duodo's article *Superyacht#490* February 2003 <http://www.nauticalweb.com/superyacht/home.htm?490>)

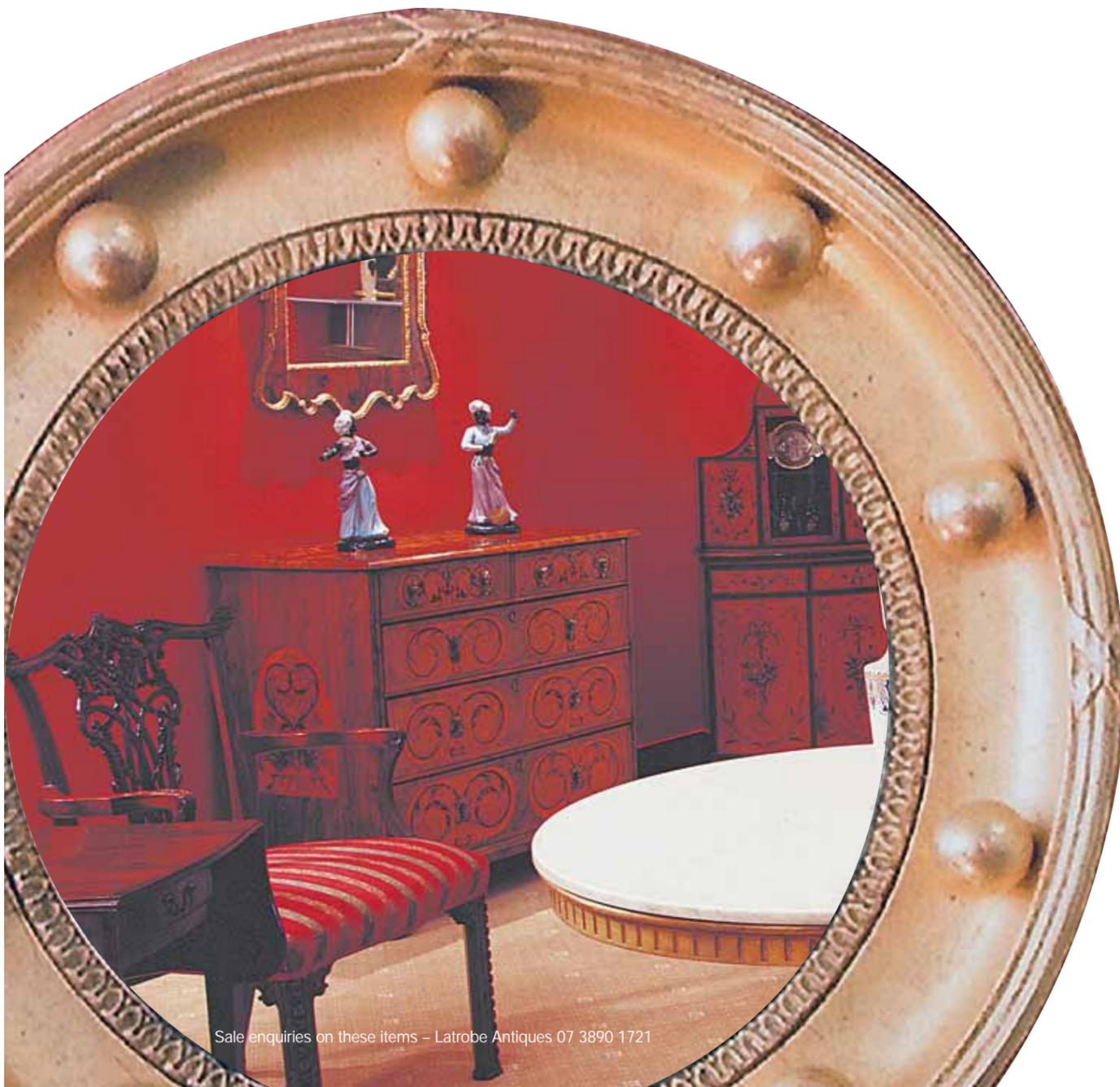
Interior styles are as diverse as one would find in any land-based interior, though obviously nautical themes of sea, sand and resort style living are ever popular. This is only natural when you consider the splendid views and surrounds of yachting environs. Three styles are examined in more detail as an overview.

The *minimalist/functional* trend is where space is given precedence over furnishings. Often a sense of luxury is achieved with a sense of peace through the use of natural materials such as rush mats and flatter finished natural timbers, usually of a contemporary design. This can appeal

particularly to yachts frequenting the Caribbean or Mediterranean. But many would say it only works well with the more spacious yachts of 45 or more metres in length.

A safe style is the *modern contemporary*, which many boat builders in the nineties requested. It ensured a wide range of clients would find it appealing. Although not as exciting as other styles, it still provides an opulent atmosphere with its abundant use of deep carpets, expensive leathers, extensive use of marble and the highly popular cherry wood. Typically, the furniture tends towards a heavy appearance. Unfortunately, it does not have a very relaxing feel about it, nor a holiday atmosphere.

*Classic contemporary* or neoclassic is a style with deep roots in the history of yachting. Sailing boats of the past had generous use of solid timber featured as columns, mouldings, and even the solid wood blocks with their anti-rolling function. Today's yachts can revisit this style in a manner which leans towards elegance or opulence yet still retaining individuality or personality, if preferred. Mahogany is the timber associated with this style, and is interspersed with wide fabric panelling, sofas and other seating in a comfortable, classic mode. Though not new, it is still a comfortable and welcoming interior which immediately brings to mind the earlier days of yachting. This style is very popular with big boat owners.



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Fine and antique furniture finds a place at sea as readily as they do on land. Furniture designers reflect interior design by considering the interior space, ambience and required function of each piece. The furniture designer places emphasis on style and comfort, as well as to weight, stability, dimensions and functionality. They will enquire about the desires of owners and architects and discover, for instance, whether furniture needs to convey elegance, status and prestige. It may be that a room requires an exquisite, eye-catching show piece. Alternatively, the objective maybe to have classic furniture which blends into its background and peacefully contributes to the serene ambience of a room.

Within the confines of a superyacht interior, it is a bonus to be able to have a furniture piece made which is designed and dimensioned to fit perfectly within its surrounds. There is no need to compromise on size or aesthetics. Too often an interior expression is compromised when items are chosen from the limited range in a showroom or catalogue.

A minor annoyance on land becomes a major nuisance at sea, when mass-produced furniture, with its dodgy cabinetry work, fails. Moving chair joints fail with disastrous results; cabinet doors won't shut fast; unsightly upholstery faults only get worse with use and poor quality polish doesn't stand up to the rigours of superyacht life and the inherent changes in climate. Much of this cheap, reproduction furniture looks okay to the uninitiated. It can even look very good, but this is the deception. It won't stand the test of everyday use and needs to be viewed as short term disposable furniture only. Seafarers shouldn't have any medium to long-term aspirations for its service. It is built to a price and the intrinsic quality reflects this.

The beauty of classic furniture is that it has a timeless quality and there are a multitude of



Light and airy salon from Water Fantaseas flotilla. (Courtesy www.waterfantaseas.com)



Above right: Trade Power International's 80.7m expedition yacht MV Bart Roberts, formerly the CCGS Narwal, has undergone a major refit to convert it from an ice-breaking navigation aids tender to one of the world's largest expedition yachts. This is the salon featuring stone and brick fireplace and grand piano in a comfortable 1920 style lounge setting. (Courtesy www.buyexploreryachts.com)

interiors which successfully integrate custom-made, classic, fine furniture and antiques. Also, it makes a pleasant change for the superyacht owner to be given a choice of opting for furniture which is so well made that it will be reliable, and even increase in value in the longer term. Such items are well worth conserving and restoring during the superyacht refurbishment cycles, should this be necessary from time to time.

In the end, interior design and in particular, furniture design, is a very individual decision, which has a major impact on the aesthetics, functionality, comfort and value of the yacht. The interior should marry with the exterior. When this is done successfully, the result is a synergistic increase in both the aesthetic and monetary value of the superyacht ■

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