

# SWISSPATH

## Yachting

### An Interview with International Art Consultants, Artelier.



May 2023

Superyachts and art come hand in hand, with owners wanting the beauty of their interior to match the breathtaking horizons when they step outside.

Superyacht owners are often art collectors themselves and, in fact, the value of the work on board can often outweigh the value of the yacht itself! It is no surprise then that curating the perfect pieces of art for a yacht can be a complex process; selecting the right artists, ensuring that the artwork is in synergy with the interior design and the owner's tastes, and then there are factors such as protecting the artwork from the elements and ensuring it remains secure whilst sailing. It is not uncommon for pieces to be built into the yacht's structure, requiring collaboration with the shipyard in the very early stages of the build, or for owners to request rare materials which need to be sourced and shipped specially.

We caught up with international art consultants, Artelier, for a glimpse into this fascinating world. They tell us how they go about curating art for yacht owners, and their predictions for superyacht art trends in 2021 and beyond...

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**What would be your dream addition to a superyacht interior?**

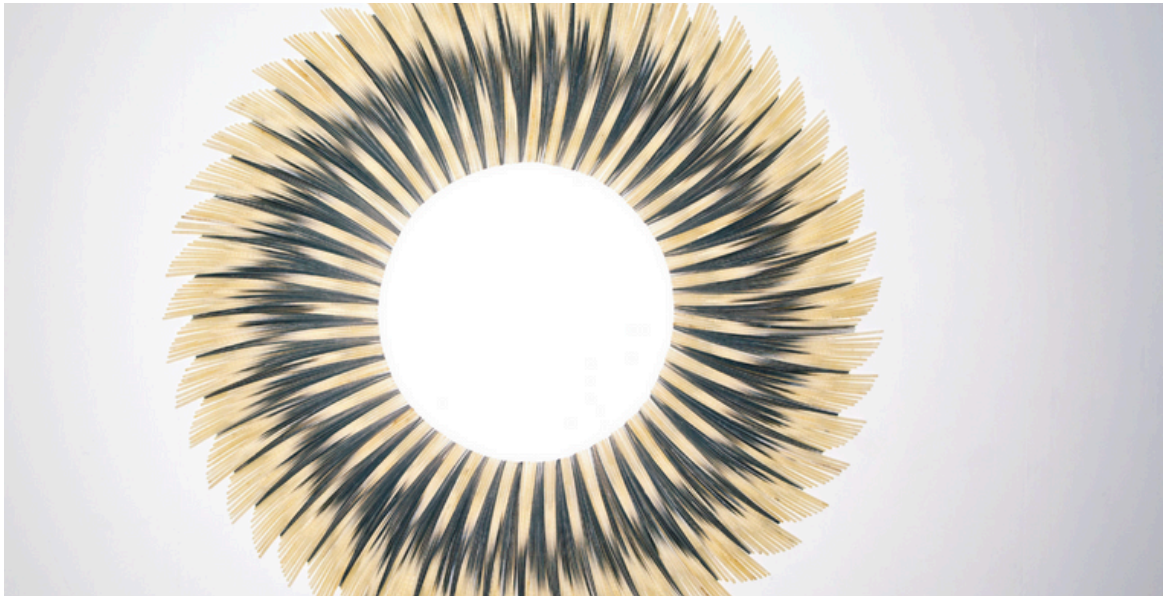
Rather than a single addition, a dream yacht project would be one that incorporated sustainability into every aspect of the engineering and design. There is a growing interest in innovative yachts that harness clean energy like wind or solar power, and even use recycled parts for the mechanics. The art we source could then tell the story of the project's sustainable ethos.

Artelier often collaborates with artists who work with natural and eco-conscious materials, and revive ancient craft techniques that are inherently a more sustainable way of working. For instance, Stuart Ian Frost is an artist who works with natural foraged materials, and transforms them into distinctly contemporary artworks.

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Initially, we get to know the client's interests, style and taste in depth, as well as tuning into the vision of the interior designer: We consider key materials, finishes and colours that are being used throughout the project, and imagine how they can be incorporated into art. It's also essential to understand the theme and intended atmosphere of the project, to then source art that enhances that experience.

Our art consultants then go through our database of 12,000 artists – carefully selected over a decade and pick artists who really have a synergy with that particular project. We curate and present different options for the client, and after their feedback, establish a group of selected artists.



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**What are the additional challenges you face with supplying artwork for yachts?**

Onboard yachts, there are many technical considerations that are unique to the yacht environment. It's necessary to consider if the artworks will be in areas with special conditions, such as the sea air of an open Beach Club, or the humidity of a spa. When developing the artworks, this has to be considered from the onset, and we develop specialist finishes together with the artists to protect the artworks. For instance, we created a porcelain wall sculpture for the yacht spa onboard M/Y Plvs Ultra – the fixings and finishes were adapted to resist the high levels of moisture. Artworks on yachts also need to withstand the vibration of the yacht and the movement of the sea, so when considering options for art it's necessary to work out whether they can be constructed robustly and securely fixed in place.

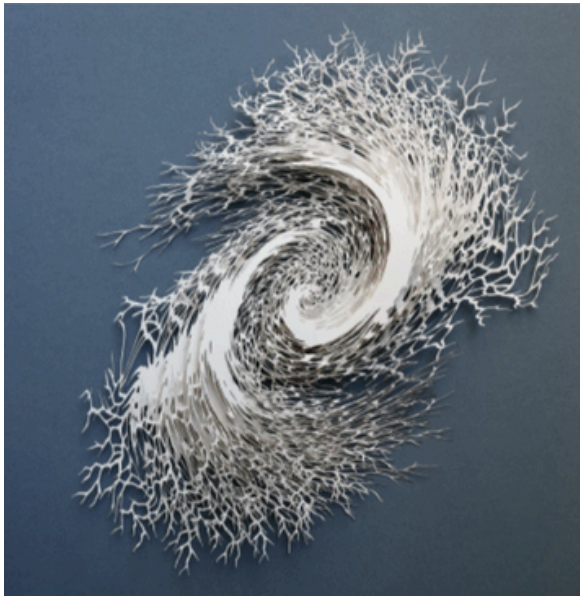
Our most challenging project to date of this kind is one that is currently under development, and will be launched next year at Monaco Yacht Show. We are collaborating with a glass artist to create an 8.5m carved glass installation, which will run up the staircase and lift shaft, spanning all three decks of the yacht.

The highly technical nature of integrating such an artwork has meant that the yacht structure has had to be engineered around the glass installation; this has led to us closely collaborating with the yacht yard and interior contractors. The movement and twisting of the yacht has also had to be considered when creating the artwork. The installation also features integrated lighting, which presents additional challenges.

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**Are there any trends in artworks onboard yachts/installations at the moment or are there any particular trends that you envisage for 2021?**

In line with sustainability becoming a growing trend, yacht design and art installations are moving away from precious metals, and instead favouring natural materials. Simplicity and minimalism, with a focus on craftsmanship and high-end quality, is a contemporary aesthetic that suits this trend. We have seen increasing interest in natural materials for artworks, such as wood, textiles, paper and ceramics. To give the artworks a contemporary edge and high-end finish, the artists we work with often interpret these materials in highly original ways: this encourages viewers to reconsider the possibilities for how humble materials can create low-impact luxury. In 2021, this will no doubt become even more of a prominent feature.