

STORY BOARD

A kinetic interactive art piece made up of 264 moving white flowers covers the wall above a buffet composed of hand-painted Portuguese majolica tiles that depict stories of the sea.

THE INTERIOR OF THE 353-FOOT BENETTI *LUMINOSITY* DRAWS INSPIRATION FROM TIME, THE EARTH, THE SEA AND LITERATURE.

story Jill Bobrow





ZANIZ PORTRAIT: AKIRA TREES; INTERIORS: GIULIANO SARGENTINI; EXTERIORS: NICO FULCINITI

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A portrait of designer, Zaniz. **Facing page:** The interactive LED rainforest video wall runs down the five-deck stairwell and out along the main deck.

“Every space should tell a story,” says the principal designer behind the 353-foot (107.6-meter) Benetti *Luminosity*, whose interior design incorporates multilayered themes involving light, nature, the sea, art and time—all heady concepts and a lot to fathom in the confines of a yacht. “Each space aboard represents a different chapter,” says Zaniz, the American/British principal of Zaniz Ltd. who is professionally known by her singular first name.

Since establishing her design studio in New York in the 1980s, Zaniz has garnered clients ranging from the American Ballet Theater and the Trump Organization to the royal family in Doha, Qatar. While much of her career has focused on land-based architecture, she also has been involved with design work on the *SS Norway*, the *QE2* and a few smaller yachts. Zaniz moved her studio from New York to London in 2003. In 2011, when the *Luminosity* project took root, she established a base in Carrara, Italy.

When the build contract for *Luminosity* was awarded in 2014, she found it beneficial to be close to the Benetti yard in Livorno, Italy. *Luminosity* is Zaniz’s first superyacht project involving exterior and interior design from gestation to launch. She has collaborated with the owner of *Luminosity* for 20-some years on residential and commercial projects and describes the client as an experienced and knowledgeable yachtsman who has clear

ideas of what he wants. He made her the honorary godmother of the yacht; she cut the ribbon for the traditional Champagne christening ceremony at the launch.

Luminosity is one of the largest yachts Benetti has built. Her exterior represents a collaboration among Azure Naval Architects, Reymond Langton Design, Giorgio M. Cassetta, and Zaniz Ltd.

Zaniz says hundreds of drawings were generated prior to sign-off. The owner did not want an extreme-looking vessel; he wanted

a modern yacht with straight lines and a plumb bow, creating a timeless profile. The design has nearly 9,000 square feet (836 square meters) of glazing, either as sole-to-ceiling windows or skylights, all of which benefit Zaniz’s interior design.

The interior spaces feel generous, as each deck’s height is nearly 10 feet. The décor is contemporary with a palpable sense of artistry.

“An overriding element of the design brief was to achieve connectivity to the sea and light. The owner wanted to be surrounded by light,” Zaniz says. “The GA guided me on how the outside would form because if I could walk in light, why on earth would I walk down the middle of a boat?”

And indeed, absent is the claustrophobic feeling of long hotel corridors. Zaniz opened up the walls and allowed natural light to cascade throughout the six decks. The central features of the nearly 60-foot (18-meter) entryway’s height are a glass staircase and glass elevator.

“The interactive LED video wall ... is a biophilic design that connects the occupant to the natural environment through the use of indirect nature as a sensory experience offering a new state of mind—a poetic surface that creates a relationship of space without walls.”

—Zaniz



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A glass staircase in the shape of an eye seems to float as you ascend from the lower deck upward toward the skylight.
Facing page: The master suite features a hydro-massage tub sculpted out of a single block of Carrara marble. The piece weighs 1.4 tons.

“Beam me up, Scotty,” Zaniz says, referring to the elevator. “We wanted the sensation of floating through the forest up to the sky while looking at the sea. We minimized the amount of steel that would be necessary in order to make it as translucent as possible.”

Guests enter the glass box within its glass shaft onto an illuminated sole. There are full-height, low-iron safety glass walls and doors, clear acrylic handrails and a seamless glass ceiling. The stringers reflect the surfaces around.

The yacht also has a 3,983-square-foot (370-square-meter) interactive LED video wall that stands 60 feet (18 meters) high. It runs down the five-deck stairwell and out along the main deck. Currently, the digital art portrayed on it is an interactive rainforest that has built-in sensors enabling butterflies to follow guests, while trees and leaves move and sway as guests pass by. The owner can change the art at any time.

“It is a biophilic design that connects the occupant to the natural environment through the use of indirect nature as a sensory experience offering a new state of mind—a poetic surface that creates a relationship of space without walls,” she says.

Zaniz has spent her career in environmental architecture—the concept of designing with a connectivity to and immersion in one’s surroundings. For example, on the wall of *Luminosity*’s main salon is an art installation she designed called *264 flowers in motion* in the shape of white magnolias that open and close as someone passes by.

Other breakthrough technology includes windows whose size is unprecedented on a Passenger Yacht Code vessel. The structural mullions were kept as small as possible, and excerpts from Herman Melville’s *Moby-Dick* are engraved into the cladding of the mullions. “As you walk down the entrance hall and around the main salon, you can read excerpts from this timeless classic novel,” she says.

For yet more storytelling, guests can look in the salon above a customized console, where hand-painted Portuguese majolica tiles provide visual tales of the sea. Also in the salon is a 16½-foot (5-meter) rotating marble platform that lets guests change vantage points while viewing the great outdoors or watching a movie on the 10-foot (3-meter) drop-down screen.

Above the dining table is a chandelier that resembles a sea creature and invokes Thomas Edison and the incandescent filament bulb. It is made of more than 700 hand-blown Bohemian crystal shapes, 400 of which have mirror-surface finishing. It uses LED chips and fiber optics for illumination. Zaniz wove an art timeline into the fabric of the overall design, paying homage to artists such as M.C. Escher, Henri Matisse and Roy Lichtenstein.

Luminosity has a layout that accommodates 27 guests in 12 staterooms, each of which has its own thematic twist. The theme in the owner’s office is time.

“As we measure time on a 24-hour cycle,” she says, “the floor and ceiling are divided into the 12 segments of a clock. The cen-

Luminosity

LOA
353ft. 7in. (107.6m)

BEAM
55ft. 9in. (17m)

DRAFT (full load)
14ft. 11in. (4.55m)

CONSTRUCTION
steel/aluminum

GROSS TONNAGE
5,844

SPEED (max./cruise)
16/10 knots

RANGE
8,000 nm

NAVAL ARCHITECTURE
Azure/Benetti Yachts

EXTERIOR DESIGN/STYLING
Azure, Reymond Langton,
Giorgio Cassetta, Zaniz Ltd.

INTERIOR DESIGN
Zaniz Ltd.

BUILDER
Benetti Yachts

Luminosity's profile represents a collaboration of several different designers. One notable feature is the yacht's 8,611 square feet of glazing.

tral lapis lazuli ‘carpet’ is beneath you where the eyes of malachite punctuate the hours. Both precious stones are used to remind us that time is precious. The ceiling has a skylight and two mirror-polished stainless-steel discs that bring the outside time in. The ceiling ‘clock’ uses dynamic lighting with a direct reference to our biological clock, stimulating well-being and keeping you feeling alert and refreshed whatever time you are working.”

The owner’s office has a custom-designed computer desk in mirror-polished stainless steel and leather. The desk looks uncluttered and uncomplicated, but accommodates five screens, telephones and other hookups. It conceals a complex web of technology, just like a watch.

“Since the room was based on the concept of time,” Zaniz says, “We based the design of the desk on a watch strap.”

All the communal spaces aboard the yacht have multiple func-

tions for a multigenerational family. The wellness area and beach club on the lower deck include a gym, a counterflow swimming pool with underwater speakers, a cold plunge pool, and a bottom that rises to transform the space into a cinema or dance floor. Sea terraces are on either side for fresh air, and there’s a passage through the beach club to the swim platform.

“Light from the mirrored skylight to the main deck above and a backlit textured glass floor help keep you connected to the outdoors and fill the area with light,” Zaniz says.

On the yacht’s transom, the letters of the nameplate are wedged forms of mirror-polished stainless steel, so the sun reflects into the shape and makes them luminous. *Luminosity* lives up to her name.◇

For more information: **benettiyachts.it; zaniz.com; fraseryachts.com; burgessyachts.com**