





Part 4:

# Wonder Walls

Immersive International's stateroom concept is surrounded by mesmerizing digital wallpaper.

Rock the Boat  
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**In 2011, when designer Zaniz** Jakubowski decided to add a giant, interactive rain-forest wall to the interior of the 353-foot *Luminosity*, her imagination was years ahead of available technology. “I’d wanted to use OLED panels, but nobody had them in that scale,” she says. “I’d also planned to use holograms, but at that point they were fairly crude. Had the technology been around, I could’ve enhanced the experience.”

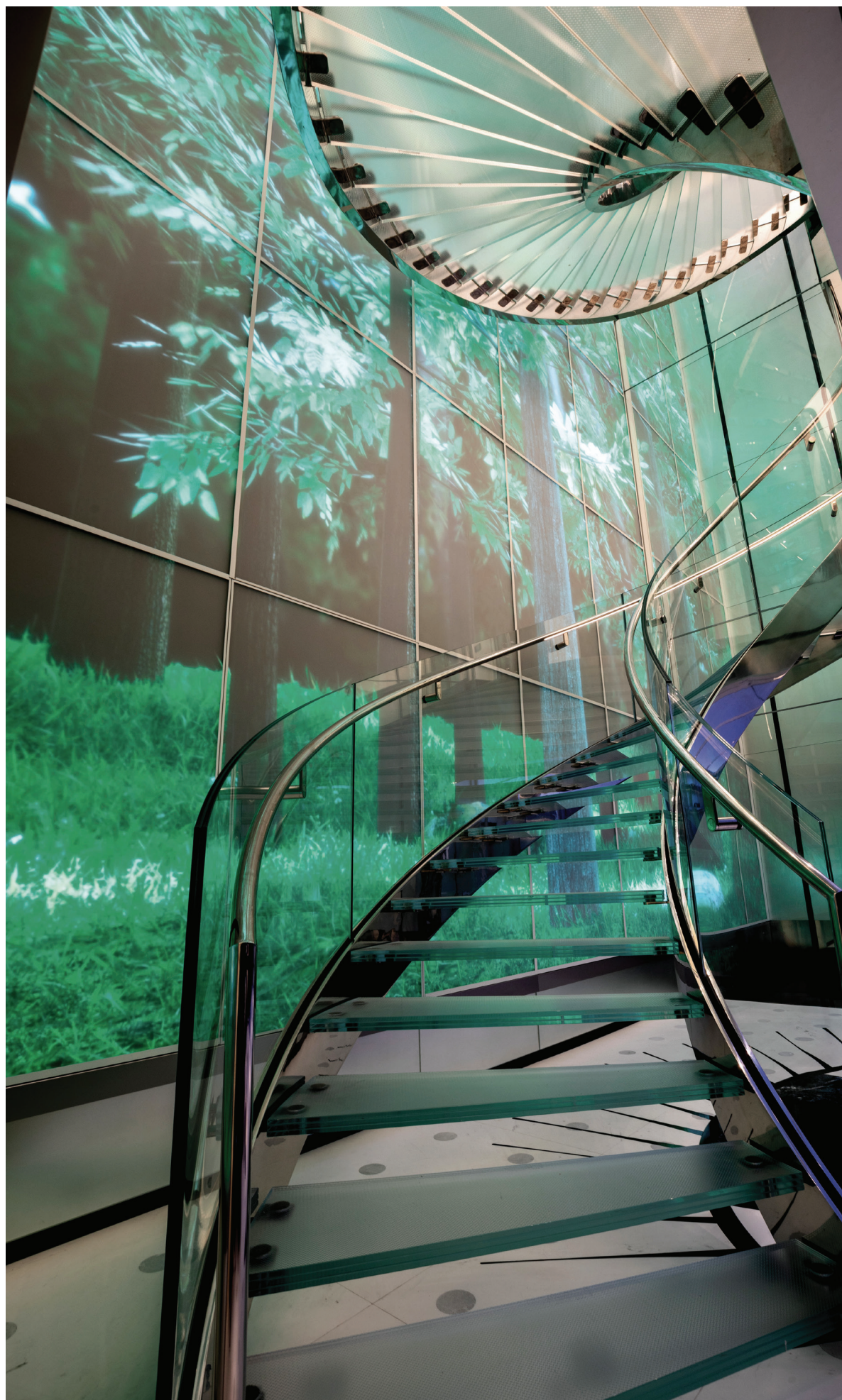
Jakubowski persevered, and eventually the multi-walled design—where sensors prompt butterflies to follow guests as they move along uncannily realistic screens—came to life. It’s a technical marvel, at one point rising 60 feet to the ceiling, while elsewhere it runs on both sides of the hallway, providing a 52-foot-long walk through a rain forest. “The owner wanted a wow factor,” says Jakubowski. “My goal was not to feel as if you had a wall next to you. I wanted to do a 3-D piece, so you could feel like you’re going through a forest.”

In the past five years, digital art has progressed from 2-D screens displaying films to hyper-realistic, 3-D environments whose projections “blur the lines between the physical and virtual worlds,” says Jakubowski. The latest form is interactive, where the space reacts to the viewer.

This fast-evolving medium is now moving into the superyacht world, but in much more personalized forms. “What we’re trying to achieve is spatial storytelling,” says Tommy Lexen, managing director of Immersive International. “We bring people on a narrative arc that they follow on multiple levels across the yacht.”

The work can range from a meditation room where the ceiling changes gradually over an hour to soften the mood to a mural that transitions with the seasons or even with the current weather, in a slow, constant flux. “Having a yacht evolve over weeks or months involves a high level

FOREST WALL AND 264 FLOWERS IN MOTION: GIULIANO SARGENTINI





“What we’re trying to achieve is spatial story-telling.”



264 Flowers in Motion, another interactive installation aboard Luminosity

Zaniz Jakubowski's forest wall follows guests through five levels of the superyacht Luminosity.

of technical sophistication,” says John Munro, CEO and chief creative officer of Immersive International, who has been working in the field for 20 years. “It can be lovely for the viewer to see essential changes happening. When they gaze at a piece of our art, it’s our hope that it takes them outside of themselves.”

The immersive experience doesn’t have to be enormous, either. “There are lots of opportunities to do small, charming, incidental things that surprise the clients,” says Kevin Andrews, founder of Ideaworks in London. He envisions a “beautiful powder room” in a vessel’s nightclub offering a new scenario whenever someone enters. “Maybe people dancing around you, then fish swimming by, and the next time it’s the night sky,” he says. “These surfaces really are a matter

of imagination.” Might be a bit much for some seafarers to process after a night’s libations, but it’s impressive nonetheless.

“Digital wallpaper,” as Andrews calls it, can also multitask. “Given the high square-footage costs of say, a dining area, if it’s repurposed for different events, it increases its usefulness.” Owners can also bring aboard their NFTs and alternate them as the mood strikes.

Of course, it’s not mere wallpaper, and the technical challenges remain daunting. “For the forest wall, we had engineers for heating and cooling; engineers for lighting, structure and vibration; and materials specialists,” says Jakubowski. “We even built a mechanical system to repair each part if there was a breakage. It requires a new toolbox that includes animation, algorithms and mathematics.” It

also required hands-on supervision: She opened an Italian studio at the beginning of the build process so she could be closer to Benetti’s shipyard in Livorno and ensure the installation was accurate.

Though still a novelty, this work is getting easier to incorporate into yachts as servers become smaller and faster and lighter OLED screens deliver more realistic colors. Jakubowski creates her own work, but Immersive International and Ideaworks collaborate with dozens of artists.

No one thinks these emerging experiential installations will replace conventional works. “Fine art has provenance and history, while different creative forces are at play when the art is interactive,” says Andrews. “When done right, it really is art.” *M.V.*