

Seventy Seven Design evolved the stealth-like Zycraft IUSV shape to create the distinctive exterior styling for ZETA



# GRAND DESIGNS

*What will the superyacht of the future look like? Longitude caught up with Jody Chapman of Singapore's Seventy Seven Design to find out*

**The yacht market's centre of gravity is steadily shifting East. Do Asian yacht buyers look for different things than clients in the West?**

The market here is relatively new, so there's less precedent for what's considered typical in a yacht layout. That opens up a certain space to try new things, which is very exciting. Clients here are often more open to experimenting with concept design. Working with innovative technologies, with hybrid vessels; exploring what an eco-yacht might look like – all these possibilities can come on to the table. It's a bit of an open book, though. I predict unpredictability.

**What are the current trends in yacht design?**

The new 260ft Feadship superyacht, *Venus*, rewrites the rulebook in certain ways, as you might expect from a collaboration between Steve Jobs and Philippe Starck.

The use of structural glass is very innovative – the cabin windows run almost from floor to ceiling, while the main living area has glass walls 40ft long and 10ft high.

There's also been an influx of architects and designers with bar and restaurant

experience moving into the industry, with interesting results. Rather than designing the galley as a purely functional area for the kitchen, why not make it the centrepiece? After all, many owners bring excellent chefs on board, so there's a trend now of allowing them to show off their skills and making that part of the action.

I'm seeing a bit of a technology backlash, too. On some boats you almost need a degree to work out how to dim the lights or turn the stereo up, but now it's all about integrating systems and making the technology more intuitive. On many high-spec yachts with integrated entertainment systems, for instance, you can now log on to the bridge from any room on the boat, as well as see over the stern or your position on the world map. It's about being fully interactive without trying to be too clever.

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The interior lounge can easily be converted into a berth for overnight stays



**Commissioning a superyacht is obviously a huge project. What are the main challenges clients need to be aware of?**

Clients who have fixed tastes in vision or style – and of course that doesn't have to be my style at all – is a very good thing for a yacht's integrity. If you're too eclectic, you run the risk of the end product looking a bit like a theme boat.

My aim is to make the design and development of a yacht a very simple and enjoyable process.

The idea is that Seventy Seven Design reports directly to the client and I represent them in protecting the design, handling all the consultants and suppliers, so the client has only one stream of decisions to make. I work hand-in-hand with yacht brokers such as Simpson Marine, which has extremely good relationships with its clients. That certainly makes it much easier for me.

**How did you first get into the business?**

I graduated in industrial design from Brunel University in the UK and then spent six years in the automotive industry, where I had the honour of working for Aston Martin, Jaguar and Land Rover. But the more I progressed in these companies, the less design I did. I was one of many people

working on the Jaguar XK, for example, but I didn't have any real sense of ownership, whereas with yachts everything I've designed

has been made in some capacity. And that's the kick I get from it.

## NEXT STEPS

**Jody Chapman** is managing director and yacht designer at **Seventy Seven Design**, a turnkey project management and design service.

For more information, visit [seventysevendesign.com](http://seventysevendesign.com)

**Simpson Marine** provides a wide range of yacht services throughout Asia and is the exclusive dealer for some of the world's most respected yacht brands, including Azimut, Beneteau, Lagoon and Nautor's Swan. Key services include new yacht constructions, working with designers such as Jody Chapman's Seventy Seven Design, new yacht sales, yacht brokerage, international yacht charters, yacht servicing, management and maintenance.

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**Can you tell us about an exciting job you're working on right now?**

I've been working with the Singaporean maritime company Zycraft on a powerboat made from an extraordinary new derivative of carbon fibre using nanotechnology. The material is incredibly strong, yet light, which means you get an inherent efficiency in the boat structure. This results in better range, handling and performance.

Zycraft had previously used this technology to build a state-of-the-art unmanned military vessel designed for coastal surveillance and transport, and this is the first time it's been used on a private boat. I've augmented the stealth-like styling for the exterior and it's created something very distinctive from a typical powerboat.

**In terms of design features, what's the most unusual request you've ever had?**

I've had a client who requested a zip wire to go from the crow's nest all the way down to a tender stationed near the yacht. We did it, but we had to tell the client it would be used at their own risk. I was told recently that it's the ride of a lifetime!