

THE YACHT

The leading magazine for the design, construction,
management, ownership & operation of luxury yachts

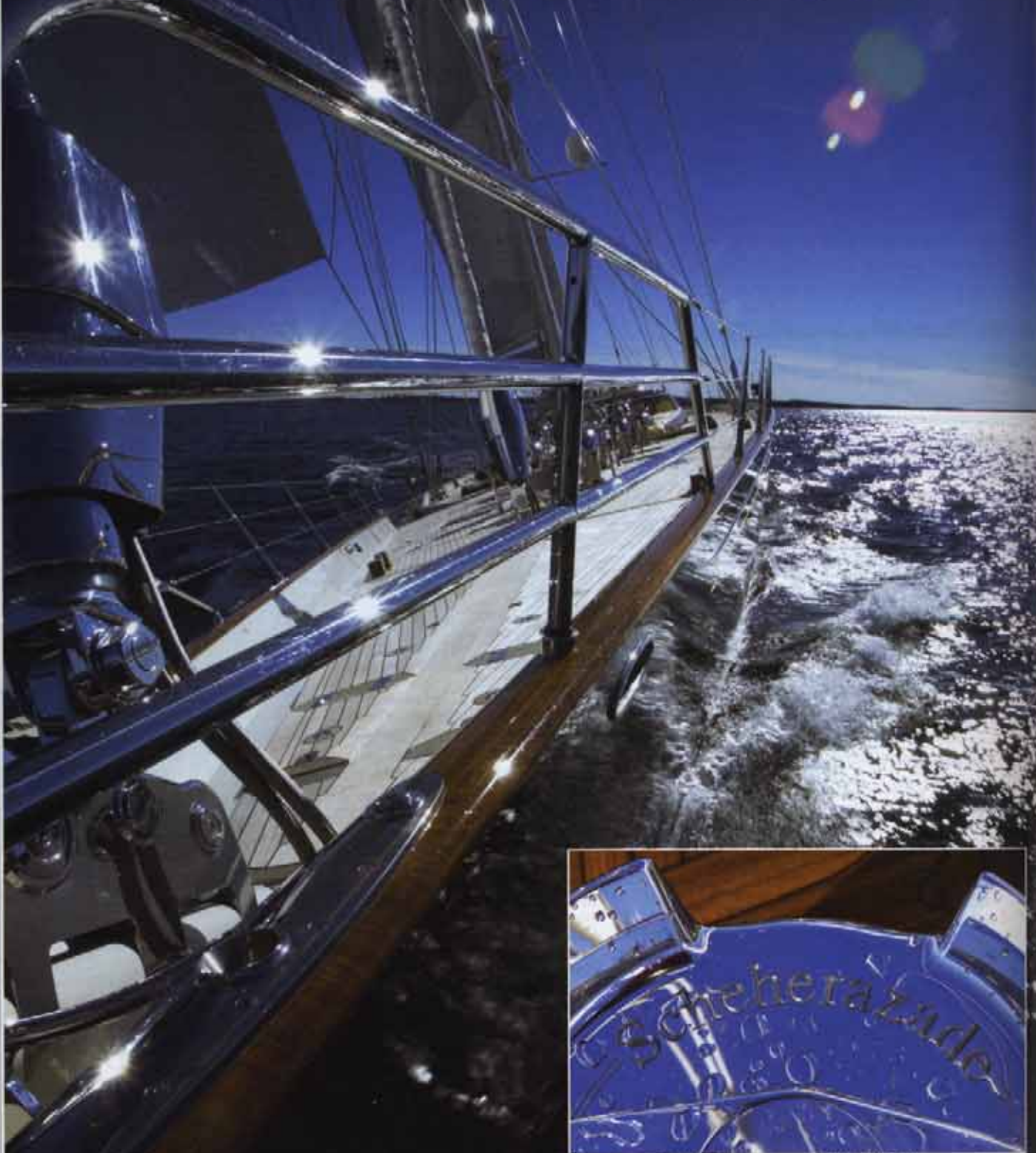
report

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The Art Of SEDUCTION



© Chris Van der Wal



In the way that the legendary Scheherazade woo'ed her lover, many stories and words can be told of this incredible lady, a purist floating masterpiece. Anecdotes, tales and fables have followed this yacht from her first penned outline to her misty mystic launch date. Thousands of painful and painstaking hours all contributed to the final seduction laid upon the several hundred guests and artisans who watched her slip into the water shielded by the early morning New England veil.

It is rare for *The Yacht Report* to dedicate a significant report, albeit primarily photographic, to a yacht that has not been personally inspected by a member of our editorial team; however, when the package arrived on our desk, it confirmed our suspicions that here was a very special and unique delivery. For the past five years, this stunning home-grown beauty has matured and blossomed like a Maine-lander pageant queen, breaking the hearts and minds of all who touched her. In her early months of her seaborne life, she has already blinded many by her exquisite lines and overwhelming purity. She was the star of the show at St Bart's, with all who witnessed her carving through the waves or lying seductively in the harbour, happily falling in love with her 'sheer' beauty. The Hodgdon built ketch S.Y. *Scheherazade* is not only an exceptional example of yacht building, she is probably one of the finest examples of what our industry stands for, "a true labour of love for all who participate".

Perhaps she is not the greatest and most exciting project technically, but she is a yacht that deserves constant recognition for the overwhelming desire to create a masterpiece, a yacht that would evoke passion in all who built her and all who witness her lively character afloat.

line, surface, texture and material seamlessly intertwining in an almost organic orgy. This yacht stimulates the senses, even on paper or on screen; the images are evocative, sensual aromas perforate and permeate the media. Well balanced like a stunning catwalk model, towering in her statuesque manner over all lesser mortals, gleaming and shimmering while tethered to the sea bed. This is a true 'Siren of the Sea'.

While we seldom inflict such rapturous applause in print, this yacht is unique and deserves every award that could possibly be bestowed upon her. She is the pure result of dreams, fantasies and seemingly endless patience – designer, architect, yard and, ultimately, the recipient of her floating love, the Owner and his wife have all waited and watched unstintingly. Even our own frustrations are stirred by the simple fact that we are unable as yet to witness the pleasures of her curved carved flesh.

The couple that now possess, or are possessed by, *Scheherazade* will enjoy her majesty at the water's edge of their house on Mount Desert Island in Maine. At 154 feet in overall length, she is a landmark for the local yard in East Boothbay; as is often the case for these demanding ladies of the sea, both a new shed and slipway were required, allowing her the privacy

The Project

To give you some technical insight into the project, without seeing the yacht or being able to speak to the yard directly, this is what we have been able to bring you. This 155-ft Bruce King designed wood/epoxy ketch is Hodgdon Yachts' largest wood/epoxy vessel to date. The project is roughly 60% larger than *Antonisa*, the 124-ft sailing yacht they launched in 2003. As a direct result of the contract, the yard required a new Hodgdon Yacht facility with a 164' x 50' centre bay, large enough to accommodate rollovers of large vessels with a 400-ton overhead crane, 100' x 20' wings each side which are three levels high. The overhead crane traverses the length of the main bay, allowing quick placement of large components. Full-size mock sections of *Scheherazade's* interior were laid out so craftsmen could build the furniture 'in place' without actually being in the hull, and this obviously greatly increases efficiency. For many years, interiors have been built inside the actual vessel; this can take additional time and can be a nightmare near the end of the project because of the number of joiners required inside the vessel, for finishing and detailing. Installing furniture that is completely finished will dramatically minimise the time required inside the boat.

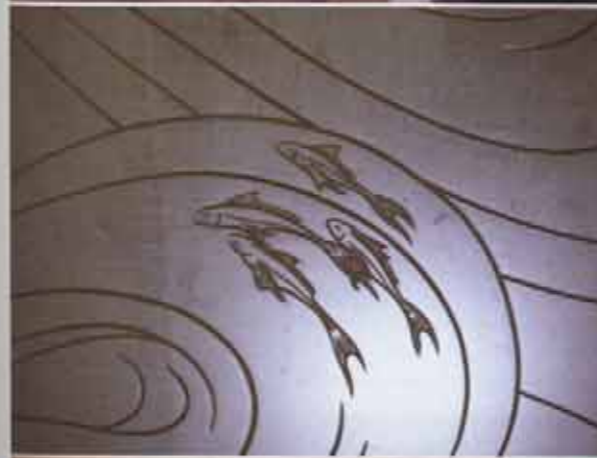
Judging by the imagery, *Scheherazade* is clearly a piece of floating furniture, comprising exquisite cabinets being built from fiddle backed sycamore and burlled walnut. The contrast between the dark walnut accents and the light coloured and beautifully grained sycamore is exquisite.

An example of their attention to detail has to be the hundreds of hand carved pieces, all executed by one pipe-smoking craftsman. An interesting little anecdote is the fact that this man was unable to work in the yard due to Health and Safety requirements: wooden yachts, epoxy and tobacco pipes don't mix. As a result, he spent one and a half years carving these unique pieces, shells, sea horses and other solid wood aquatic artefacts, in his own woodwork shop at home – a true labour of love.

As Andrew Winch explained, this whole project may have taken many years of painstaking labour, in the quest for perfection, but the results speak for themselves. When asked what is the most memorable aspect of the build, he pondered for a while and explained that the sensory experience was overwhelming. Not only the sheer beauty but the impact of the organic perfumes, all of the woods and materials blending into a heady concoction, a musky aroma enough to arouse any yachtsman. Once again, *Scheherazade* continues to seduce but not just with her physical beauty.



top picture © Steve Loring for YACHT



middle and bottom pictures © Clive Loring for YACHT

bottom picture © Steve Loring for YACHT



The Hull Form

In addition to the incredible craftsmanship, the application of yacht building techniques, combining the traditions with the high tech, make this project wholly unique. *Scheherazade's* hull is constructed with multiple layers of Douglas fir, western red cedar and epoxy. Total hull thickness is 3 1/2'. The first layer glued to the frames is vertical grain Douglas fir, 7/8" thick and oriented longitudinally. The next four are 7/16" thick and oriented diagonally, primarily western red cedar with occasional substitutions of Douglas fir in highly loaded sections of the hull. The last layer will be another layer of 7/8" thick Douglas fir oriented longitudinally. The hull will be encapsulated with two layers of fiberglass cloth and epoxy before it is faired and finally rolled over. The hull reinforcing members, frames and floors are made of multiple layers of vertical grain Douglas fir laminated with epoxy. Carbon fibre has been used between layers on some of the highly loaded members. For the hull and frames of *Scheherazade*, Hodgdon decided to use only lumber that had been processed from trees that had fallen from natural causes. These were purchased through a firm specializing in processing windfall. Trees that met project specifications were found on the Olympic Peninsula. The quality of this salvaged old-growth lumber is very high; for example, the Douglas

fir trees used to produce the lumber for the frames and hull planking were over 600 years old, ensuring the strength and quality of grain. The western red cedar trees used for the diagonal planking were mined from the forest floor. It was explained that the trees had fallen at least 300 years ago; roots from full-grown trees surrounded sections of the cedar trees that were chosen. The trees settled into the forest floor and the forest had literally grown over them. Logs were cut to length from the well-preserved deadfalls and removed via helicopter. The steep mountain slopes on which the trees were found and the limited access made any other removal method impossible. Not only does this contribute to the unique nature of *Scheherazade*, it also proves that she is an antique of the highest pedigree. Due to the modular interior approach, the deck was built in place after the hull was rolled over and after some of the larger sub-assemblies have been positioned and secured inside the hull. The 38-ft-long, 153,000-lb ballast keel will be attached to the hull by 40 two-inch-diameter stainless-steel keel bolts; the total weight of the keel bolts exceeds two tons. The ballast keel is about 38 ft long and weighs 153,000 lb. It will be attached to the vessel with 40 stainless-steel keel bolts and potted in epoxy. The two-inch-diameter keel bolts range in length up to 8' 6" long. The lead keel was poured at Mars Metal in Burlington, Ontario, Canada, and was cast in a continuous



pour. Not only did it require eight hours of continuous casting, solidification took more than five hours and 24 hours later, the keel box would still be hot enough to fry bacon and eggs. We discovered it was the largest ever poured in North America, if not the world. The keel was shipped on the road via a specially built truck. To give you a few additional facts and figures for this massive assembly, the CAD time and man hours required to design the frame to hold the keel bolts in place exceeded 400 hours.

Seductive Designs

Scheherazade is by the far the largest sailing yacht designed by Bruce King (now retired), who has made a name of himself with his classic-styled sailing yachts. This effort, compared with past ones, is a bit more contemporary although, as with all King designs, it is designed to turn a few heads; the reverse transom is a first for King. When designing this yacht King faced a few

unique challenges: first, the owner wanted two offices on board, one for him and one for his wife; off the master, along with his and her heads. Second, King faced a draft restriction since the owner will keep the yacht off his house on Mount Desert Island. Third, King needed to lengthen the boat midstream to accommodate more features and had to do it with the least amount of disruption possible. Winch worked very closely with the Owner team and King, to ensure that the complex skeleton of the hull was evident throughout the interior space. Rather than hide the structure, they chose to enhance the beams and frames; the experience created demonstrates that organic nature of the project. Why hide such majestic craftsmanship behind panels and boxes? By enhancing their shape, you clearly understand the workmanship and man hours required to achieve such beauty. This is one yacht that is bound to create gasps of awe when stepping below deck. The complete nature of this project is wholly exciting. Many yachts are driven by external forces, size, resale, charter and designer ego. It is apparent that *Scheherazade* demonstrates a



unique feminine stubbornness and independence, not to follow the fleet, but to be herself. A yacht of this nature needs to be applauded as do the Owners: their patience remained unstinted and their goals unswayed, and they were rewarded by this incredible yacht, destined to be used for their pleasure. Vast space has been used for their own enjoyment and a token pair of guest cabins have been designed, just in case they feel the need to invite someone to join them, although one perceives a sense of selfishness when you read between the lines. This has to be one of the first yachts that has been designed for the pure unadulterated pleasure of the principal couple. The helm station is a masculine space, designed for dusky passages while watching the horizons glimmer off the Maine coastline. This is clearly his space, and as Winch confirmed, the Owner intends to sail this yacht by himself with a skeleton crew, just for sheer pleasure. Scheherazade is clearly his mistress and one that will keep him entertained day or night, as she should.

The Launch

While we were not present, *Scheherazade* was launched on Saturday 27th September 2004 on a misty morning at Hodgdon Yachts in Maine. The following is an extract from the yacht's website and gives a summary of the passion and seduction she has woven over all of her followers:

Scheherazade is a beautiful and highly powerful sailing yacht of the 21st century built of a material used for centuries past but created with the latest technology for the future.

Shrouded in a mysterious fog, the lady loomed, tall and sleek. True to her name, she was the embodiment of romance, adventure and intrigue. A symphony sounded dramatic chords in the background, and she slowly, smoothly glided off, touching down quietly in her watery milieu. As she came to rest, the sun broke through and shone on this new resident of the deep, colors waving brightly and trimmings gleaming like jewels. It was the water birth of a star, a re-birth of a legend.

Despite the heavy mist which at first obscured the top of the vessel's 185-foot main mast, the event went off smoothly, witnessed by an estimated 3,000 spectators on land and sea and punctuated periodically by the thunderous boom of nearby cannons. The names of the yacht's owners, Bill and Barbara Stewart, were revealed for the first time during speeches by Tim Hodgdon, president of Hodgdon Yachts, and interior designer Andrew Winch of London, ending some of the mystery surrounding the vessel.

"... It has been Mr and Mrs Stewart's vision that has brought concept to reality and turned lines on paper into this dynamic yacht," said Hodgdon in his remarks. He thanked the Stewarts for entrusting their complex, world-class project to



the Hodgdon team and congratulated all of the craftsmen for their achievement. "She is being built at this yard because of the skill level of the people in this area, and credit goes to the Stewarts for recognizing this fact. The Boothbay region and the state of Maine should be proud.

... The level of talent that has assembled here is second to none ... Everyone who has worked on Scheherazade, in whatever capacity, has left their mark on this vessel. On behalf of the yard, I thank you all for your efforts and I congratulate you publicly for building such an uncompromised sailing vessel. These individuals worked towards a single-minded unity of purpose to produce what is before you today ..."

Hodgdon called attention to *Scheherazade's* connection to the past, both in her legendary namesake and in her manufacture, combining traditional wooden ship-building craftsmanship with space-age materials and state-of-the-art technology. "Thousands of vessels have slid into this section of the Damariscotta River over the past 200 years," said Hodgdon, alluding not only to the family business which has been building boats since 1816 but to the history of other ship builders, past and present, in the area as well.

Scheherazade, he said, named for the clever and exotic heroine of *The 1,001 Arabian Nights*, "will continue with unimagined adventures on her voyages to distant ports of call ... *Scheherazade* will add her name to the illustrious list of ships that have started their sagas in this harbor. Not only is she a powerful and sophisticated sailing machine, but, like her namesake, she is elegant, captivating and has many stories yet to tell."



Editor's Note: *One day we hope to be physically seduced by this magnificent masterpiece, but in the meantime our glimpse into the achievements of all who painstakingly worked their magic and created this Siren has reassured us that craftsmanship is not dead. Traditional boat building is still alive in Maine and large yachts are not just becoming part of a manufacturing process. Anyone who has the time, patience, dreams and money can achieve the closest thing to perfection; anything is possible in this technology driven world. What is even more special about *Scheherazade*, is the fact that her keepers have incredible taste and style and ultimately wanted to create their perfect dream yacht, and not a culmination of other people's ideas, wants and desires. This is what is so special.*