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410-FOOT *MARYAH*, FROM ELEFSIS SHIPYARDS

Stefano Pastrovich holding a model of 99-meter (325-foot) X-Vintage, a concept developed in conjunction with Fincantieri and Wärtsilä.

A FERTILE MIND

FOR MAVERICK YACHT DESIGNER STEFANO PASTROVICH, THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX IS ALL IN A DAY'S WORK. BY JUSTIN RATCLIFFE

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As a young architecture graduate, Stefano Pastrovich cut his teeth with design luminaries Martin Francis and Luca Bassani on iconic projects such as 194-foot (59-meter) explorer *Senses* and the WallyPower 118. The experience rubbed off on the Genoese designer and molded his interest in expedition-style vessels and bold design statements. *Senses* led to a commission to devise the exterior styling and general layout of 370-foot (112.8-meter) explorer *Le Grand Bleu*, formerly owned by Roman Abramovich, and Pastrovich went on to become chief designer for the entire WallyPower range. These groundbreaking projects remain the cornerstones of his total-custom approach to yacht design.

"You have to start from scratch with a unique style and redouble your efforts to produce something excellent every time," says the Monaco-based designer. "I design made-to-measure yachts, and the satisfaction the owner gets out of it is directly proportional to the effort I put into it."

His "all or nothing" philosophy has kept Pastrovich constantly researching and developing concepts that appeal to owners seeking originality. This, in turn, has led him to rethink the way he markets his next-generation designs. As gigantic playthings, superyachts are expressions of individual owners' lifestyles. To better match yacht styles and amenities to clients' expectations, Pastrovich has developed four design categories that reflect states of mental and physical well-being.

"We wanted to see things from a different point of view and took sport as the starting point," he says. "So we named our yacht categories after leisure activities: Backpacker, Freeride, Dressage and Parkour [also known as Freerunning]."

His reasoning is broadly similar to how automobile manufacturers entice buyers of SUVs, station wagons, limousines or convertibles. The difference is that Pastrovich's clients are not in the market for a standardized series or production vessel, but a one-of-a-kind superyacht.

Among his most innovative proposals are the concepts prefixed with an "X"—an appellation borrowed from the car industry to signify "crossover"—that began with the X-Vintage in collaboration with Fincantieri and Wärtsilä. Presented in 2011, the 325-foot (99-meter) yacht was designed to be powered by a dual-fuel system using liquid natural gas and marine gas oil, in anticipation of 2016 International Maritime Organization Tier III regulations that will restrict exhaust emissions. Further innovations included an A-frame crane integrated into the aft deck for launching and retrieving a 40-foot sailing trimaran, fold-down stern bulwarks and a double-helix staircase from the beach club to the main deck. As with many of Pastrovich's yacht projects, X-Vintage showed a pronounced preference for natural materials and finishes. "Architecture is a way to listen to nature," says the designer, "not the other way around."

What was intriguing about X-Vintage, which spawned other X series concepts, was how designer, builder and supplier came together to challenge conventional thinking with a feasible blueprint for more efficient and environmentally responsible cruising. But beyond the novel choice of fuel, the focus of the design was the aft beach club, an area that could be transformed from a stowage bay into an open-air living area thanks to an inner "sleeve" of gently wafting drapes that extends out of the garage. Pastrovich had experimented with a similar feature during the refit of 164-foot (50-meter) shadow vessel *Mystere*. Other refit projects, such as *Falkor*, a 272-foot (83-meter) former fisheries vessel, have influenced his approach today.

"On a shadow vessel like *Mystere*, it might take the crew a whole day to launch and retrieve all the tenders and toys," he says. "A lot of what I do is about integrating the privacy of owners and guests with the operational needs of the crew, which got me thinking how best to combine the two."

His radical solution with the X R-evolution concept was deployable bungalows for owner and guests. When the yacht is at anchor, the bungalows would launch from the aft deck and moor at a distance from the 253-foot (77-meter) mother ship. The shallow-draft,

At 253 feet (77 meters), X R-evolution, shown here with with bungalow detached, aims to enhance privacy for owners and guests without overlooking operational needs.

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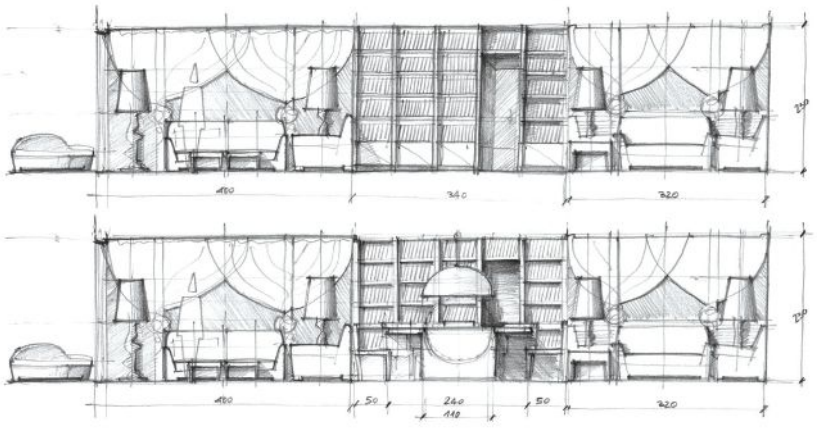
The X-Easy, Pastrovich's latest concept, includes many of his signature design features in a simplified 180-foot (55-meter) package.



composite multihull would also allow the yacht to get close to shore. Inflatable pathways, inspired by the hexagon structure of beehives, would provide floating jetties for tenders and connect the boat to the beach. Moreover, a system of gyroscopes and hydraulic pistons, similar in concept to a flight simulator, would keep the upper deck stabilized in a swell.

To maintain the purity and integrity of his exterior lines, Pastrovich is adamant that he also has to design each yacht's interior. He likes to quote Frank Lloyd Wright, who spoke of "organic architecture that develops from within outward in harmony with the conditions of its being, as distinguished from one that is applied from without."

Whereas most superyachts have a beach club with more laid-back fixtures and fittings, Pastrovich prefers to extend the seaside ambience throughout the yacht. Indeed, the X-Beach Club is a concept for refitting a 302-foot (92-meter) oceangoing tug with decidedly casual décor and a relaxed, open-plan layout. During his research, the designer came across a U.S. firm that manufactures realistic-looking steel palm trees that conform to structural, fire and safety specifications, and he incorporated the trees into the open aft deck design. The idea is that the owner can take his own "island" with him wherever he goes.

Not all of Pastrovich's projects are out on a limb. He is working on a 16,046-square-foot (1,490-square-meter) villa on the French Riviera for a Russian client and has two 236-foot (72-meter) projects in build at a commercial shipyard in Qatar. The studio's most recent concept is 180-foot (55-meter) X-Easy. Easier to build and operate with a smaller crew, the pared-down yacht would combine key features of larger cousins in a simpler and less costly package.

Although the practicality of some of his more playful solutions might be questionable, the designer takes an impish delight in challenging norms. His childlike enthusiasm for his chosen subject (as a youth he designed and built model boats and planes) is infectious,

ABOVE: The drive-in tender bay/swimming pool on 302-foot (92-meter) X-Ballet. **BELOW:** A rendering of the interior refit on 164-foot (50-meter) *Mystere*.

and when he's on a roll, his eyes light up and his Errol Flynn-style mustache bristles with excitement. It is no coincidence that one of the first concepts to develop from X-Vintage was called X-Kid Stuff. With the same dual-fuel system developed by Wärstilä and Pastrovich's expansive aft deck for stowing—explorer style—large tenders that could be launched through hull-side openings, it even offered a climbing wall between decks.

"It's very easy to get lazy and just reproduce ideas that have proved successful, but I'm not interested in doing the same thing as everyone else," he says. "I've always believed in full custom, and that means I have to make an effort and sometimes swim against the current." YI

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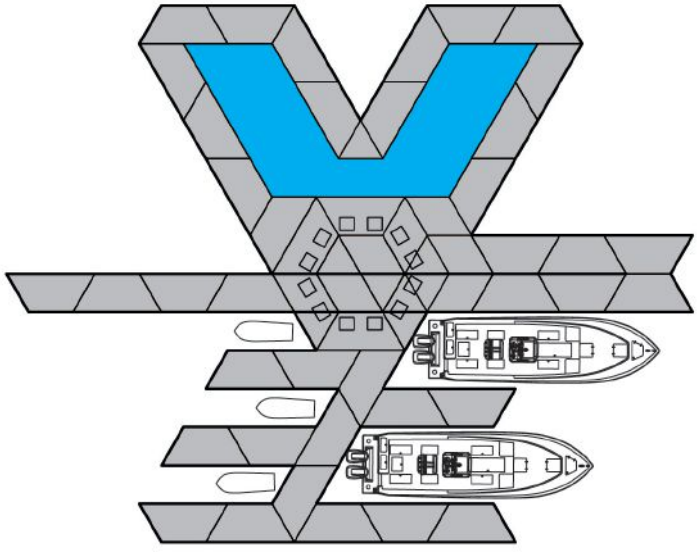

SEE more groundbreaking designs from Pastrovich at yachtsinternational.com