

# CUTTING-EDGE TECHNOLOGY

Is what drives Vanguard, a new project from Sergio Cutolo. This pilot concept draws on all the integrated design experience gained over 25 years by his studio where creativity, architecture and engineering are honed to perfection

by Désirée Sormani



Vanguard is a 65-metre concept, an explorer combining design, architecture and engineering. Its name reveals its nature – cutting edge technology, power and safety. Left, Sergio Cutolo has worked in the yacht design world for over 35 years

**A** quarter of a century is a significant milestone, and when it's reached it's also a moment to reflect and take stock of objectives achieved. But like every turn around a mark it's also an opportunity to set new challenges and new aims. Now it has reached its 25th year, Hydro Tec, an integrated design studio founded by Sergio Cutolo, is crackling with the electricity of contagious enthusiasm. Design is a passion here "in the workshop", even taking priority over profit as a fundamental motivation. It creates yachts of all types and sizes, especially technological explorers. "The passion still burns, because I'm surrounded by people who've been working with me for a long time, 10-13 or even 17 years", says Sergio Cutolo. "They remind me of myself during the first 10 years of my training, before I opened my studio, when I was working under the wing of engineer Alcide Sculati, or while I was with the Baglietto and Rodriquez yards – always eager to soak up and build on what they were teaching me. Now I see that the kids in my team are independent and can find solutions without needing my input. We've now developed the design-technical expertise that enables us to do fairly complex, even daring things. Our great insight was that there would be



a change and owners would eventually seek to experience the sea and explore different places. It's one of humankind's deepest urges. I know owners who in this time of pandemic boarded their yachts and didn't put into shore for 15-20 days at a time, safe on their own little private island".

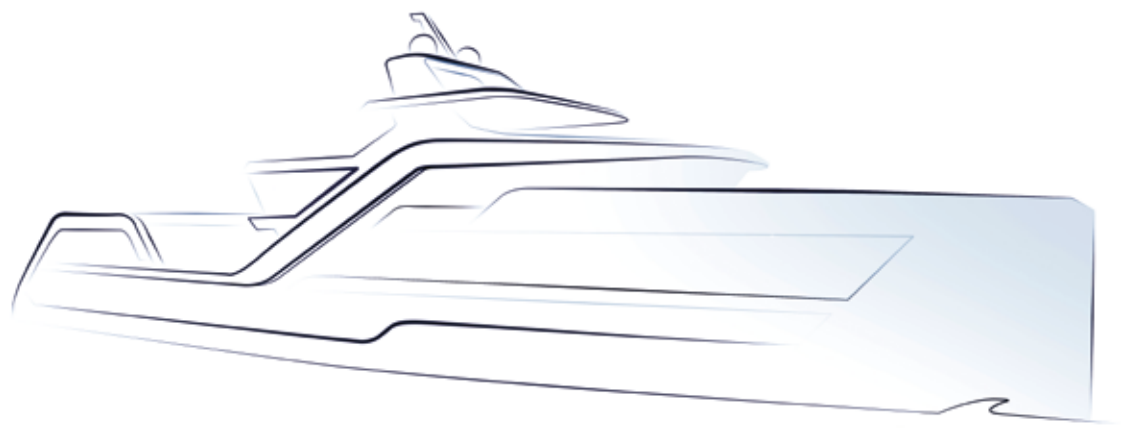
So the yard's 25th anniversary is celebrated by Vanguard, a 65-metre concept, an explorer that combines design, architecture and engineering. Its name reveals its nature – cutting edge technology, power and safety. "Like the British Royal Navy ships of the mid-19th century, opening up the seas and oceans across the world".

But Vanguard is also an inaccessible fortress – like the stronghold of Mont Saint-Michel on France's Atlantic coast, displaying all its great beauty in the transparent glass of its Gothic cathedral. Vanguard is a hybrid with elements of innovative design. Its transparency means it's a yacht intended for an intimate contact with the sea. "These days yachts depend on communication between interior and exterior. You can't ignore this integration of spaces. It's the only way to create striking effects. The interior spaces must communicate

with the exterior, and at the same time it has to be possible to convert all the exteriors so they can be enjoyed in cold climates. They should be versatile, available for use in all conditions".

The play of levels is another feature - Vanguard has an imposing straight bow for sailing in all seas and in all conditions. In the centre stands a superstructure that resembles an airport control tower with slanting full-height windows for the helm station and in the aft section - here there is a lounge where guests can enjoy the maritime experience in warmth and comfort during Arctic voyages. The design has drawn on a number of sources – the inward-slanting windows, for example, are a legacy from commercial vessels, a configuration that protects the bridge from the glare of sunlight while providing a clear, full-height view.

The aft area is also interesting. On the Vanguard it is covered, and develops like a sort of drawbridge. The swimming pool has a series of moveable glass walls to shelter it when sailing in very cold regions. Above, the decks are intended for toys, tenders and a helicopter, and are designed in such



Above and left, the beach club. The pool can be entirely enclosed by sliding glass screens when sailing in cold waters. Below, the Hydro Tec design team, a close-knit group that has been together for many years, driven by enthusiasm and passion



## [ CREATIVE MINDS ]

The integrated design study for Vanguard also included the interiors, creating a wonderful harmony with the exteriors. Current trends in home design were an important source of inspiration. Below, Sergio Cutolo in his studio



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a way that they can be furnished with loose items to become spacious areas for socialising. The guest cabins are below decks. “On Vanguard the main deck and below deck are parameters that we’ve revolutionised, each is quite high on the water and has its own fold-down balcony when at berth. The idea was to create an austere, masculine look when they are closed, under way. When at anchor, though, the yacht reveals its open character”. In line with its preference for holistic designs, the studio also

sketched out the interiors to ensure a cohesive look. “We created an impression, a suggestion reflecting current trends, drawing inspiration from home design. Houses are transparent, too, with uninterrupted transitions from interior to exterior. The modern decor is accentuated by the use of wood, itself a powerful evocation of the natural world. It’s a pilot project for us that reflects our way of thinking. Something new!” says Cutolo with great satisfaction. And we can’t wait to see it under way.