

Lunar

WITH HER CURVING LINES AND GENRE-BLENDING DESIGN, CONRAD SHIPYARD'S BIGGEST BOAT YET IS A MOTOR-SAILER OF VERY SPECIAL AMBITION

In time for its 10th anniversary last year, Polish yacht builder Conrad unveiled its largest yacht yet, a custom motor-sailer combining features from different genres into one very original 35.3 metre cruiser named *Lunar* – a finalist for both the 2014 ShowBoats Design Awards and the World Superyacht Awards.

Docked at the end of the yacht extension at the Cannes boat show, in full view of all ferries and water taxis, she attracts quite a few looks, comments and a few questions too. That's because she hardly fits into a neat category. Her shapely metallic silver hull features high bulwarks arching up to a high point just forward of amidships to envelop the foredeck before sloping toward the bow. In sharp contrast with her rather organic hull shapes are a vertical bow and large rectangular portholes. A flybridge tops her white superstructure, which incorporates a raised pilothouse. A ketch rig rises high above her decks. Yet, her volume (owing in part to her exceptional beam) and her amenities are more closely related to that of a motor yacht.

If she fits with any genre, it is that of motor-sailer, a

relatively fluid concept, which occasionally attracts derisive comments, especially from sailors, as a 'neither-nor' type of craft. But it is the type of vessel that provides the pleasure of sailing without some of its discomforts. Perhaps the best definition of a motor-sailer is a craft able to motor and sail at about the same speed, and *Lunar* can do just that, reaching 12 knots under sail with good wind conditions or cruising with her twin Caterpillar C18 engines.

A progressive Eastern European client of the shipyard, located in Gdansk, provided the impetus for the custom design of this first Conrad 115, now being marketed by brokerage firm YPI.

The client was familiar with the riverfront shipyard, as he had a 20 metre Conrad sailing yacht, one of the first models developed in-house. Conrad Shipyard was established in 2003 as an offshoot of Marine Projects Ltd, a private company that builds hulls up to 100 metres. The new yard set up shop in an existing facility bearing Polish-born mariner and author Joseph Conrad's name. The first yacht to come out of the yard was a custom Bill Dixon-designed



words: Cecile Gauert photography: courtesy of Conrad Shipyard





motor yacht for an American client, the 26.8 metre steel-hulled *Escape S*, in 2005. Conrad, which also does refits, has gone on to build 16 more vessels, most in steel or aluminium, a pace that allows for customising each yacht.

The owner of *Lunar* enjoyed his Conrad 66 for years but wanted something bigger and more comfortable to cruise with his multi-generational family. He started a dialogue with Conrad chairman Mikolaj Krol, outlining several imperatives: a family friendly yacht with extended range (able to cruise under power from Gdansk to Tarragona, Spain) and a small crew. He did not want too much heeling, which his wife does not enjoy, and specified a maximum 10-degree list angle. He also wanted to be able to see the

bow area at all times from a comfortable entertainment-oriented saloon occupying half the main deck. Cooking on board was to be a family affair. A large pool was a must for the kids, who also had to get around the deck safely.

The owner trusted Conrad to build a quality interior as well as to come up with the ideal layout according to his wishes. The shipyard developed the interior concept to include many social areas, spacious guest cabins and ample deck spaces, while concurrently working on the naval architecture with Vripack and Yacht Studio Strawinski. Krol also tapped designer Frank Neubelt, who was then principal of Newcruise Yacht Projects & Design, for styling and exterior design.

Neubelt was at first not quite sure what to make of the motor-sailer idea. 'Being a sailor, I wanted to see some performance,' he says. Ultimately he also got involved in the hull lines and the choice of rigging, making the case for high-performance carbon fibre masts and booms. The designer and the client, who do not speak the same language, relied on sketches to flesh out the initial concept for the exterior lines. The conversation progressed with a succession of thumbs ups and thumbs downs. Several weeks went by before a second meeting, and Neubelt could not stop thinking about the concept. He knew the client liked cars and so he began inserting a few fluid lines, inspired by automotive design.

By then, the project had moved forward, with the client pleased with the layout and overall concept for a 35.3 metre two-masted all-aluminium motor-sailer. The design Neubelt worked on included a wide hull flattening out at the transom and low-resistance entry with a vertical bow. He accentuated the automotive features while striving for an overall streamlined look. When Neubelt unveiled his idea, the client was quiet at first. Taking his time to consider the

The living area aft (above) accommodates a large family spending extended time on board. The main saloon (opposite above) is a bright, comfortable space, designed with entertainment in mind

unconventional design in front of him, he enthusiastically embraced the final drawings. 'I very much like what we created together,' says Neubelt. 'I was impressed with this gentleman. He is open minded and creative.'

Knowing more about the background helps appreciate what was accomplished on this family cruiser. *Lunar* is very stable with two rudders, a long keel and two gyro-stabilisers housed in her engine room working in concert with the hull form. She also sails nicely, with her top speed to date recorded as 13.5 knots in reaching seas.

'The typical motor-sailer is a sailboat that tends to be more superyacht. This is much more a sailer,' says Vripack's Bart Bouwhuis. His challenge was an engineering one, due in part to class requirements and to the hull shape and uncluttered decks presenting few options for the vertical rigging. 'What I like very much about the boat is that it is a family boat,' Bouwhuis says.

Indeed, the specific and detailed ideas the owner had all contributed to a very comfortable yacht that makes it easy for anyone to get around.

I take a tour in Cannes and find myself settling quite comfortably on board, so much so that I lose track of time. The saloon is hospitable, with sunlight pouring through the windows. As I talk with Krol and Neubelt, standing by a large attractive bar and a glistening case of stemware, I cast a glance at the video of *Lunar* under sail running in a loop on the TV screen. She looks majestic.

Designers, when discussing yacht design, often mention ergonomics. This yacht, while conceived by and for a gentleman from the Baltic, has the kind of dimensions, space and comfortable furnishings that would appeal to American or Mediterranean boaters. There is no squeezing into anything. Everything, from passageways to the saloon seats to the 8.5 metre-wide master suite and the

giant plasma screens, would satisfy anyone placing comfort and size high on their list.

Her exterior features, including two stairways flanking the transom, are that of a motor yacht. The yacht is fitted with an Opacmare Transformer platform and passerelle that adjusts to the dock height and also lowers below the water surface to make ocean access easier for all.

From the aft deck, set up as a social and entertainment area, walking around the deck proves easy. Most deckware is concealed, leaving the deck clear and presenting few opportunities to stub your toes. The teak-laid side decks are wide, and the bulwarks, getting higher as you move forward, provide a sense of safety. You get the feeling as you walk forward that you are going down (and you are), an intentional design trick to optimise the view forward. The pool, which can drain in two minutes to satisfy class requirements, is at the centre of the foredeck area but leaves plenty of room to move around.

A very good paint job has been applied on the superstructure and the seals around the storm-resistant double-pane windshield are perfect. The hatches are by Rondal; the sturdy wipers are by Speich; the masts and custom-made booms by Lorima; the sails by North Sails and the winches by Maxwell.

An automated system manages the sails and furlers with a helm station on the flybridge offering a pleasant post in fair weather. With the owner's desire to operate this big yacht with a small crew, the ketch rig and automation make perfect sense. High-low tables and sofas nearby allow the family to cruise together. Since this is a long-distance cruiser (with a range of 3,600 nautical miles under power) and likely to run into some weather, a second bridge with full electronics by Furuno is located inside the raised pilothouse.



The shipyard opted for this raised pilothouse design, in part, as a way to divide the main deck into two distinct saloons, without closing up the interior space. It creates a logical flow on the main deck. On the starboard side are stairs leading to the pilothouse, with a decorative stainless steel banister designed and built in-house; on the other is a large pantry serving an impressive bar and dining area aft. Light floods in from skylights onto flooring in light oak and easy-to-maintain tiles. The walls are attractively finished with a glossy veneer alternating with Alcantara upholstery. The first saloon is more a family room, with a dining area. The second one is an entertainment lounge with swivelling chairs, sofas and a 213 centimetre screen.

The unconventional layout below decks also reflects the owner's wishes for a family yacht. The crew cabins and mess are forward and not connected to the yacht's main galley, which is located with the guest cabins,

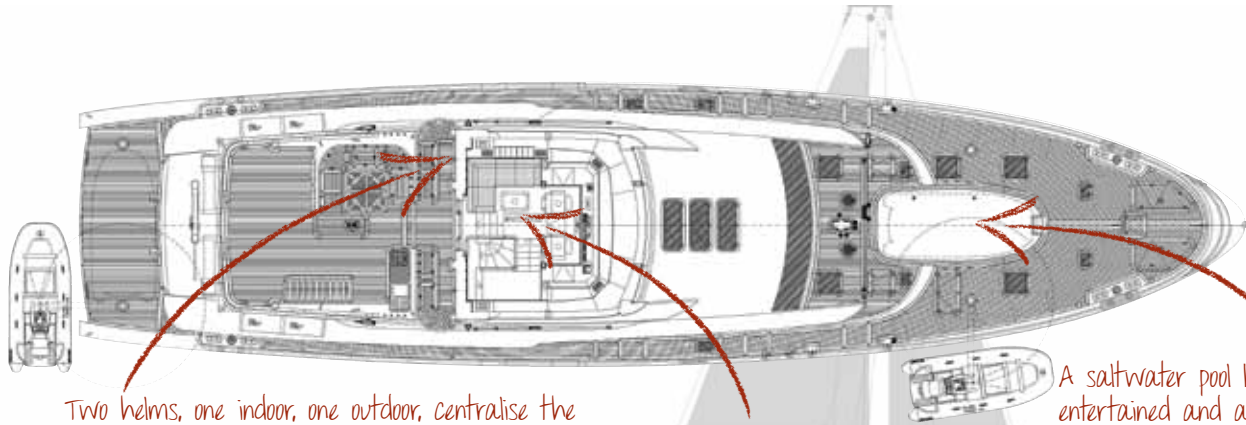
though removed from the master. The fully equipped galley benefiting from hull windows is the family's domain. For practicality it is equipped with a dumbwaiter.

The spacious guest cabins can be converted from twins to a double with sliding berths. The palatial master suite is located amidships where it is the least susceptible to motion. A backlit onyx headboard and sparkling steel accents enliven the warm wood. Here again, a close-up look reveals good finishes, matching veneers and tight fitting doors and drawers. It's all been done in-house under Krol's supervision, as Conrad's head designer. He is justifiably proud of the results. In addition to boat building, furniture making has been a side business for Conrad, which has built pieces for its clients' homes and offices.

As I disembark after a thorough visit, I have a new appreciation for the vessel and the thinking behind her. 'There will be comments on the style and ideas, but from my point of view *Lunar* is inventing a new category of performance motor-sailer yacht,' Neubelt says. So when I hear someone on the ferry ask what that silver yacht is, I chime in knowingly: 'That is *Lunar*; she's a whole new thing.'

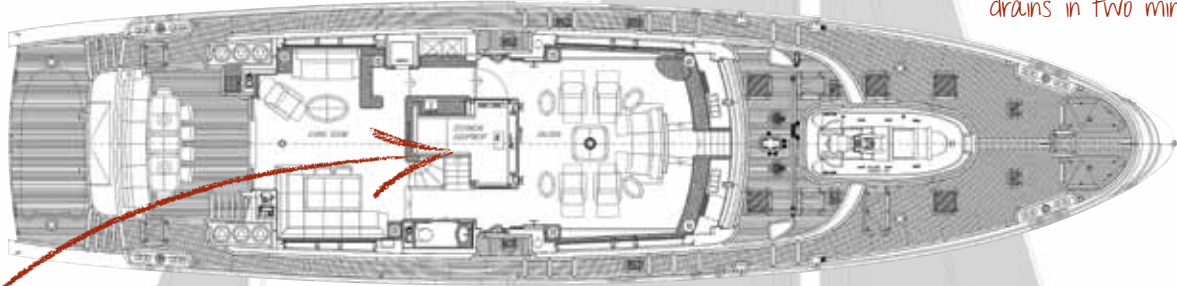
The full-beam master suite (above), located amidships, is a large, impressive space, featuring warm wood, offset by steel accents. The wheelhouse, with seating area (left)





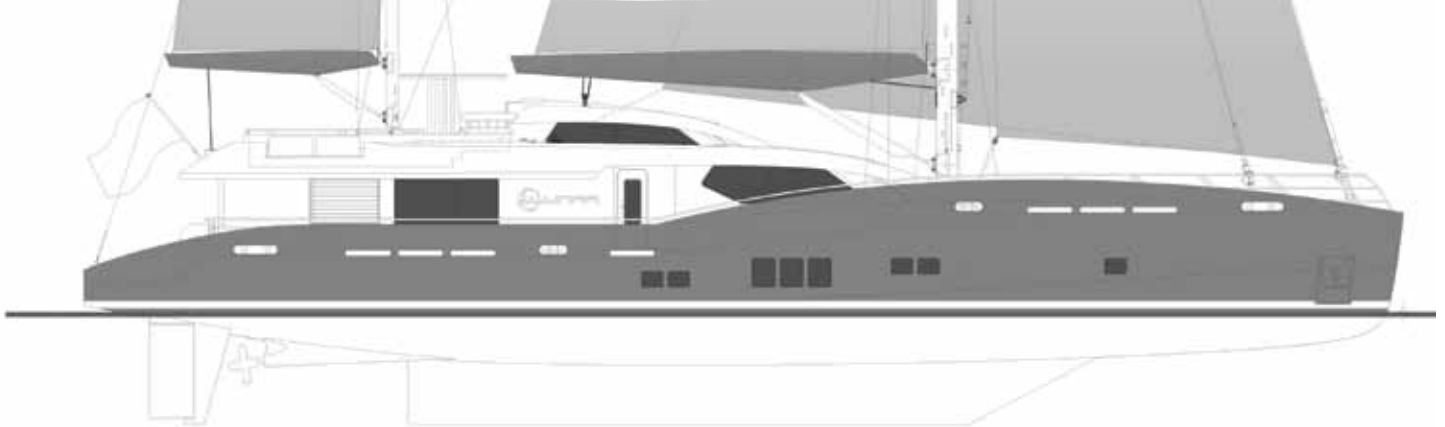
Two helms, one indoor, one outdoor, centralise the automated sailing system's controls, ideal for shorthanded sailing

A saltwater pool keeps children entertained and accommodates one of two possible tenders; it drains in two minutes



The raised pilothouse provides a logical division between the two saloons and a stream of light from skylights

Two well-finished crew cabins forward have their own entrance and private mess for meal times



LUNAR Conrad Shipyard

LOA 35.3m
LWL 32.1m
Beam 8.6m
Draught 3m
Displacement (lightship)
 82 tonnes
Gross tonnage
 243GT

Engines
 2 x Cat C18 ACERT, 715hp
Speed (max/cruise under power)
 14/12 knots
Range at 12 knots
 3,600nm
Sails
 North Sails

Spars and rigging
 Lorima
Stabilisers
 2 x Seakeeper gyro
Generators
 2 x 86kW Cat C4.4
Fuel capacity
 36,300 litres

Freshwater capacity
 6,100 litres
Owner and guests 8
Crew 4
Tenders
 1 x 4.54m Williams TurboJet 445
Construction
 Aluminium

Classification
 Lloyd's # 100 A1, SSC, Yacht, Mono, G6, # LMC; MCA LY 2 compliant
Naval architecture
 Conrad; Vripack; Yacht Studio Strawinski
Exterior design
 Newcruise Yacht Projects & Design

Interior design
 Conrad Shipyard
Builder/year
 Conrad Shipyard/2014
 Gdansk, Poland
 t: +48 58 320 56 00
 e: conrad@conradshipyard.com
 w: conradshipyard.com