



Above Deck

The Wiseman Group takes their talent to the seas

by **LINDSEY SHOOK** photography by **ROGER DAVIES**





On an upper deck, the chairs are by Dedon; the pillow fabrics are by No. 9 Thompson.

All the magic happens in the wheelhouse, where the sofa fabric is from Perennials and the desk surface is by Kravet.



With over 40 years in the interior design industry, The Wiseman Group has envisioned a variety of spaces and places throughout the world. However, in 2019 they embarked on the journey of a lifetime, transforming a vintage ship into a sophisticated expedition yacht that would travel the world.

Originally a Dutch naval ship built in 1973, the current owners, who spend about a third of each year on the boat now named *Just B*, needed a design team with global sensibilities. “They have a love for travel but also use the boat for worldwide conservation research work, bringing scientists and divers alike on board to explore and study,” says Paul Vincent Wiseman, founder of The Wiseman Group. “The boat has an ice breaker bow and is a comfortable home that is used for entertaining, Alaskan voyages—the ship has a wood-burning fireplace—and tropical dive trips.”

“Because it is a rugged expedition yacht and can go nearly anywhere in the world, we asked ourselves what would be equally comfortable in the ice fields of the North and South poles and in the Polynesian islands,” Wiseman recalls. “The design philosophy was that the interior needed to work in all seasons whether cooled with air-conditioning or warmly heated, as in having the fireplace



In the dining room, the table is by Liaigre, the chairs are from DDC and the carpet is Jab Anstoetz.



In the den, the sofa is upholstered in fabric from Kerry Joyce; the chair is from Poltrona Frau covered in Kvadrat by Raf Simons.



The owner's suite features a custom bed covered in upholstery fabric by Pindler. The daybed was custom designed by The Wiseman Group and the club chair is by A. Rudin.



Fabric from No. 9 Thompson covers a custom bench on a private exterior deck.



All faucets and fixtures in the primary bathroom are from Waterworks.

lit." They turned to Finnish architect Alvar Aalto's 1939 Villa Mairea—where the materials and natural light created warmth—for inspiration.

The overall goal was to design a home away from home that was durable, environmentally sound, safe and most of all—stylish. "The Scandinavian aesthetic seemed most appropriate to accomplish our goal of comfort in all climates," Wiseman notes. "We needed to have airy divisions and get some vertical elements because everything was horizontal. We achieved that through continuing vertical slat design details throughout and by elongating the windows." One of the most significant new details on the boat, the wood slats found in several of the main living spaces that evoke a modern, Scandinavian feel, also capture The Wiseman Group's signature contemporary aesthetic. "When the boat first came to us, it was heavily paneled in a dark mahogany-stained wood, a not-very-well-done pseudo men's club aesthetic," he recalls. "You'll see that we did leave some of the mahogany paneling where it felt appropriate, like in the hallways and den where there is a bar, and the paneling suited the room."

The firm's first yacht design project presented challenges uncommon

to traditional residential work. "The difficulty was working with various vendors who had not approached a boat design from such a residential point of view, especially for a boat that is not your typical Mediterranean white boat," Wiseman says. "It's a highly customized and detailed boat and intentionally lacks the glitz in order to provide a backdrop and environment for true worldwide exploration and conservation work."

Despite all the unusual twists and turns unique to yacht construction, The Wiseman Group transformed the historic vessel into an exquisite place of rest for not just the clients but their family, friends and network of scientists and researchers. "One of the clients' first trips was bringing the yacht to San Francisco," Wiseman remembers. "We saw firsthand their pleasure in what we were able to create." Since completion, the yacht set sail across the South Pacific and Australia, providing the clients with a desirable retreat for the four-month journey. Wiseman says with great pride, "Watching a client thoroughly enjoy their time with friends and family in the spaces we create is the best possible validation of our design."



In the library, the daybed and bookcase are by Rose Tarlow and the game chairs are by Moore & Giles.