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5 Questions with... Igor Lobanov

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Design

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Though the superyacht business is a relatively small industry, it is packed with international professionals from all walks of life, and it can certainly be easy to get lost in the sea of faces we're presented with at boat shows, yachting events and beyond. In this series of articles, we take a step back from rushed business meetings and hurried networking and sit down with

professionals from across the wide spectrum of the superyacht business to learn more about who they are and what they do for the industry. In this week's episode, we get to know Igor Lobanov, founder of the Lobanov Design studio.



Photo: SuperYacht Times

At this year's edition of the Dubai International Boat Show, you unveiled an exciting new design in collaboration with Oceanco: the 115-metre *Tuhura*. Tell us more about the development of the project.

It was a childhood dream of mine to design an ultra-modern yacht with a very classic hull. I love the shape of canoes and wanted to make a serious yacht project out of it. I think this hull works very well and deserves its revival. It's a project we did without having any particular client in mind, just the chance to create a pure beauty, just as herself.

You collaborated with Oceanco and BMT Nigel Gee. Were they involved from the inception?

To check the feasibility of the project, I called BMT Nigel Gee in the very early stages to research together what could be achieved for the canoe-shaped yacht at 90 and 100-metres in length. Having shown these projects to a few people in the industry, I soon realised that a project of this unique nature should be published. Oceanco expressed an interest to become a part of this project and proposed a collaboration with the scale model and a video production, which was unveiled during the Dubai Boat Show this year.



The project was also missing an interior design, so I called Achille Salvagni, who was very kind in accepting this invitation to the project and has contributed a beautifully styled interior in a very short period of time. To me, personally, interior matches exterior in a very natural way. I'm very proud of this project and the team behind it.





***Tuhura* is certainly an eye-catching, unique design. When presenting fairly radical concepts, what kind of feedback do you receive from owners and industry professionals alike?**

It all depends on the individual as to how radical a particular project is perceived, everyone has a different concept as to what is radical and what is not. I don't see *Tuhura* as a radical concept at all. Radically beautiful – yes. This project can be built and will work well.

***Tuhura* is not your first collaboration with Oceanco, with the 110-metre *Jubilee* delivered last summer, and the 85.5-metre *St Princess Olga* (now *Amore Vero*) before that. Can you tell us more about your relationship with Oceanco?**

We had a great time building those yachts at Oceanco, they are an outstanding shipyard and I will be happy to build any new projects with them in the future. However, we are an independent company and there is no kind of 'exclusivity' deal between us, we're working with other shipyards, including competing ones, as they work with other designers. There cannot be any prevention. The market is open.



What's on your drawing boards right now?

Right at this moment - 30, 36, 50, 50, 74, 75, 85-metre projects of various types: sport, classic, explorer. The only yachts we try to avoid designing are boring ones!