

GIRL OF THE MOMENT,  
LOOKS FOR NOW

# the style

## THE STYLE - Sofia Mantouvalou

**1. You specialize in rebuilding and designing yachts, leaving your touch mainly on their interior design. How did you decide to get involved with this particular area?**

Anyone who has known me since childhood will surely recognize my main characteristics; how much I am fascinated by aesthetics and how much I love the sea. Yacht design turned out to be the best way to combine and harmoniously integrate what I love most in my everyday life. The start came entirely effortlessly. While studying Fine Arts, I was asked to help design the interiors of a mega-yacht undergoing a refit. I accepted with great pleasure but also with excitement. Although sleep was scarce, once the project was completed I felt great fulfillment. There, I saw how much I was inspired and satisfied by witnessing my plans and ideas utterly transforming the image of a yacht.

**2. Did it scare you that this sector is male-dominated, and how did your colleagues treat you in the beginning?**

It never scared me. On the contrary, I approached it as an intriguing challenge. It was expected - unfortunately - that not everyone would be happy with the presence of a 23-year-old girl -at the time- who decided to rebuild boats in Perama. There was a lot of controversy and reaction from some people. But this process has matured me, grounded me, got me out of my safety zone and was one of the most valuable experiences of my life because it brought me to my core self. I became very empowered. In terms of the dominance of men in the field, in practice, the only meaningful criterion is results. Therefore, as over time, my work was recognized, the parameter of gender was neutralized. Of course, there have been people who aligned with my vision and were very supportive. And I thank them. I believe that when you approach something with love and good intentions, your value will be seen sooner or later.

**3. What advice do you give to other young women who want to excel professionally in areas where the female presence is dwindling?**

Don't budge! I believe that being a woman in a male-dominated field takes a delicate but also "cool" approach. The feminine energy and all the qualities that make it up are magical. The essence of it is that it brings unity. A woman is like the Earth, whose soil supports all beings. If she manages to escape the trap of competition, has her feet firmly on the ground and manifests cooperation and inspiration, then the result will be brilliant. So embrace your beautiful nature. Set clear boundaries and values. Look where you want to go. Trust your inner strength, which is immense.

**4. What aesthetic rules do you follow in your work, and how? Would you describe the style with which you design and decorate yachts?**

Yacht owners want their unique approach because they have different needs and preferences. I aim to satisfy the needs of each owner and at the same time present the best aesthetic result. To achieve this, I highlight the boat's strong points and improve those I consider lacking aesthetically and functionally. Also, I love bright spaces, so I often use colors in light tones and works of modern art to give tension in a space.

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ΣΟΦΙΑ  
ΜΑΝΤΟΥΒΑΛΟΥ

ΜΙΑ ΝΕΑ ΓΥΝΑΙΚΑ ΠΟΥ ΜΕ ΠΟΛΛΗ ΔΟΥΛΕΙΑ  
ΚΑΙ ΑΦΟΣΙΩΣΗ ΔΙΑΚΡΙΝΕΤΑΙ ΣΤΟΝ  
ΑΝΔΡΟΚΡΑΤΟΥΜΕΝΟ ΧΩΡΟ  
ΤΟΥ YACHT DESIGN ΟΠΟΥ ΕΡΓΑΖΕΤΑΙ,  
ΑΝΤΙΜΕΤΩΠΙΖΟΝΤΑΣ ΤΗΝ ΑΡΧΙΚΗ  
ΑΜΦΙΣΒΗΤΗΣΗ ΣΑΝ ΠΡΟΚΛΗΣΗ.

φωτογραφίες ΝΙΚΟΣ ΜΑΛΙΑΚΟΣ  
styling PENNY ΙΩΑΝΝΙΔΟΥ

Τοπ και παντελόνι  
Azzedine Alaïa, από  
προσωπική συλλογή.  
Σανδάλια Clergerie, από  
προσωπική συλλογή.  
Κοσμήματα από  
προσωπική συλλογή.

**5. Is Greece a suitable place for the specific type of work?**

Of course. Our country is opportune for everything sea-related. Very remarkable and pioneering reconstructions are taking place in Greece because there is experience and sufficient know-how. I believe that this sector's development will be impressive in the coming years.

**6. Many yachts you refit and design are decorated with your signature paintings. Was the art of painting something that had always fascinated you?**

Music and dance had won me over when I was little. Later, in my teenage years, I turned to painting. For me, the canvas was a field of expression and even the release of my creativity. Then, I further developed my painting skills during my studies. So when, I am undertaking the artistic curation of a space, the works I create for each yacht, complete the desired result, leaving "nuggets" of my love and inspiration.

**7. Your work has been published by Boat International magazine. What is the secret of success?**

In my opinion, the team has tremendous strength. Success presupposes team spirit, good collaborations and, in general, healthy professional relationships of the contributors of a project. Therefore, I consider the right choice of partners to be crucial. I feel fortunate and grateful for my partners and our solidarity and harmony. At the same time, I firmly believe that each person identifying and expressing their talents creatively and with authenticity is headed towards success.

**8. Getting to know you, one realizes that your style also has its unique look. What is fashion for you, and how would you describe your fashion aesthetic?**

Fashion, for me, is a means of daily expression. I listen to my mood, and that is what shapes my aesthetic. Of course, I follow fashion trends and their guidelines, but I adapt them to my style, instead of letting them bind or limit me in my stylistic choices.

**9. Will we see you working abroad, and if so, in which city could you develop this work more creatively? What are your plans?**

Already a large part of my business is handled abroad. The fact that I have consciously chosen my base to be in Greece does not mean that this limits me from developing international partnerships. I love Greece very much, and as I said, there is an expectation of significant development in our sector in the coming years. Currently, I am going through a very creative period and I approach the future with interest and optimism. I hope to continue to improve and take on even more innovative projects so that I build an enriched and gratifying workflow.

